

## Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| A. Need for Project (25 points)  | 1  |
| (i) Identifying and addressing gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities.   | 1  |
| (ii) Integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve Relevant Outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs or policies.                                  | 6  |
| (iii) Part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.  | 9  |
| (iv) Address the needs of the target population or other identified needs.   | 11 |
| B. Quality of the Project Design (30 points)   | 12 |
| (i) Demonstrates a rationale.  | 12 |
| (ii) A review of the literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives. | 13 |
| (iii) The methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.   | 25 |
| C. Quality of the Management Plan (20 points)  | 28 |
| D. Adequacy of Resources (25 points)   | 33 |
| (i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.  | 33 |
| (ii) Build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.   | 35 |
| (iii) Resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant.   | 38 |

## Accelerating Beech Grove Learning Through Equity (ABLE)

### Introduction

Beech Grove City Schools (Beech Grove), an LEA located in the Indianapolis metropolitan area, is applying for a TSL grant to improve teaching and learning for 3,000 students across our 5 campuses that each serve a majority of high need students (Absolute Priority 2). We will strengthen our human capital management system (Absolute Priority 1) and create opportunities for professional growth (Competitive Preference Priority 1) by partnering with the non-profit National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) to increase the effectiveness of our teachers and school leaders, attract a more diverse group of educators, and increase the percentage of students reaching proficiency. Through the ABLE project (Accelerating Beech Grove Learning through Equity) Beech Grove will also expand and improve our grow-your-own program, and strengthen our partnership with Marian University's Klipsch Educators College to identify and recruit teachers of color (Competitive Preference Priority 2). **A. Need for Project (25 points)**

*(i) Identifying and addressing gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities.*

Beech Grove serves over 3,000 students across 5 campuses with 190 educators and 11 school leaders (Table 1). Arlo Steel, Firestone, and other manufacturing companies are located near the high school campus, although the manufacturing sector is a fraction of what it was at its height. All five of our schools are high need (Absolute Priority 2), with between 51% and 61% of students qualifying for free and reduced-priced lunch (FRPL) (Appendix E: High Need Schools Data). The number of economically disadvantaged students has been increasing, while student achievement has been decreasing steadily over the last decade.

**Table 1. Beech Grove City Schools Characteristics and High Need Status**

| <b>School Name</b>       | <b>Enrollment</b> | <b>FRPL</b> | <b>Grade</b> | <b>Teachers</b> | <b>Principals</b> | <b>Asst. Prin</b> |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Beech Grove High         | 1,005             | 58%         | 9-12         | 57              | 1                 | 2                 |
| Beech Grove Middle       | 486               | 60%         | 7-8          | 32              | 1                 | 1                 |
| South Grove Intermediate | 666               | 61%         | 4-6          | 43              | 1                 | 1                 |
| Central Elementary       | 418               | 60%         | 2-3          | 25              | 1                 | 1                 |
| Hornet Park Elementary   | 432               | 51%         | K-1          | 33              | 1                 | 1                 |

The pandemic negatively impacted student achievement, which was already low in all grade levels. In 2020, 3 of 5 schools earned a D on the state letter grade system, and Beech Grove ranked in the bottom 10% of reading and math proficiency in the state. Only 26% of students in grades 3-8 passed the 2020-21 Indiana assessment in ELA, a full 14 percentage points below the Indiana statewide pass rate. In math, 17.5% of students in grades 3-8 passed the Indiana assessment in 2020-21, which puts Beech Grove at the 7<sup>th</sup> percentile among Indiana districts, and 19 percentage points below the statewide pass rate. The same low levels of proficiency are evident in the high school, where student performance in ELA in Grade 11 is at the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile among districts in Indiana, and 18 percentage points below the Indiana statewide pass rate. In math only 14.2% of Grade 11 students passed the state assessment, more than 20 percentage points below the Indiana pass rate.

Another challenge is the performance of student subgroups (Table 2). While math achievement is low for White students in Beech Grove, with only 21% passing the math assessment, only 5% of Black students had a passing score. In ELA, 30% of White students passed the state assessment, compared with 27% of Hispanic students, 22% of multiracial

students, and 10% of Black students. The gap between Black students’ proficiency rates and White students is 20 percentage points in ELA and 15 percentage points in math.

A significant achievement gap also exists between for economically disadvantaged students. In 2021, districtwide, 23% of Beech Grove students eligible for free and reduced-priced lunch (FRPL) achieved a proficient score or better on the state ELA assessment compared to 33% of students not eligible for FRPL—a 10-percentage point gap. Finally, Beech Grove has an unusually high percentage of students identified for special education (19%). Among this group of students, 8% had a passing score in ELA and 6% in math in 2021. Low student achievement levels overall, and gaps based on race, poverty, and special education status, are found across our five campuses.

**Table 2: Percentage Passing 2021 State Assessment by special populations (Grades 3 - 8)**

| <b>Subject</b> | <b>All Students</b> | <b>Black</b> | <b>Hispanic</b> | <b>Multiracial</b> | <b>White</b> | <b>FRPL</b> | <b>Spec. Ed.</b> |
|----------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|------------------|
| ELA            | 26%                 | 10%          | 27%             | 22%                | 30%          | 23%         | 8%               |
| Math           | 18%                 | 5%           | 12%             | 15%                | 21%          | 13%         | 6%               |

Another challenge in Beech Grove is that our student population is rapidly becoming more diverse, with one-third of students identifying as people of color, while our teaching staff is 97% white. One of our schools does not have any teachers of color. Without a strong plan for change, most of our students of color will not have a single non-white teacher during their K-12 educational experience. We are committed to changing this, since research shows the importance of teachers of color in raising the academic performance and improving test scores, graduation rates, and aspirations to attend college among students of color (Carver-Thomas, 2018).

**Table 3: Racial/Ethnic Composition of Student and Teacher Populations**

| <b>Group</b> | <b>White</b> | <b>Black</b> | <b>Hispanic</b> | <b>Multiracial</b> |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Teachers     | 96.6%        | 1.0%         | 1.0%            | 1.0%               |
| Students     | 65.9%        | 12.8%        | 11.0%           | 9.4%               |

In recent years we have lost many teachers to retirement, and as a result, our current teaching faculty averages less than 8 years of experience. This younger cadre of teachers has contributed to a consistently high turnover rate, 17% on average over the last three years. As we start the 2021-22 school year, we have 17 teachers on emergency credentials and are fully staffed in only 3 of our 5 schools. Our percentage of teachers with under ten years of experience is 55%, compared to 42% of teachers statewide. In both elementary schools, more than two-thirds of teachers have fewer than 10 years of teaching experience. Over one-quarter of Hornet Park Elementary teachers have fewer than three years of experience, and we know that high teacher turnover and inexperience negatively impacts student learning (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). Contributing to this staffing challenge is our relatively low starting salary for new teachers of [REDACTED], compared to surrounding districts, including Lawrence and Decatur Townships, which offer [REDACTED]. Despite these challenges, virtually all of our teachers are rated effective or higher by our current evaluation process, which fails to differentiate on performance.

The challenge we face as a district is to put in place a system that will enable us to make sustained progress toward our vision of being among the top 25% of districts statewide. Our plan is to accelerate student academic proficiency by creating the district culture, systems and structures to sustain higher levels of teaching and learning in every classroom, and advance equity and inclusion. To do this, we must raise the skills of our current educators and attract new

talent. In our review of the root causes underlying our challenges, we identified weaknesses and gaps and developed strategies to address them.

**Table 4: Gaps and Weaknesses Aligned to Strategies for Improvement**

| <b>Gaps of Weaknesses/Root Causes</b>  | <b>Strategies</b>  |
|--|--|
| We do not have an accurate performance measurement system for teachers or school leaders, or the capacity to provide individualized support based on needs   | Create a vision for HCMS improvement and alignment that uses performance data to inform key elements, engage stakeholders, and create a multi-year plan for growth                 |
| We adopted, but lack adequate training on, a research-based evaluation tool; as a result, evaluations do not accurately differentiate effectiveness, making it difficult to support improvement or assess equitable distribution | Implement a valid and reliable evaluation process to accurately measure teacher and school leader effectiveness and provide detailed, accurate and timely feedback for improvement |
| We have mentor teacher roles in place, but they lack release time or specific training; we lack the role of master teacher which is key to improving instruction across a building   | Hire 7 master teachers (1 per school & 2 at MS and HS), strengthen and expand mentor roles, and create release time & training for teacher leaders                                 |
| Professional learning is outside the school day and lacks the rigorous planning needed for student impact; there is little follow-up due to  | Implement job-embedded, collaborative professional learning and coaching cycles for teachers, led by teacher leaders with collaboration of school leaders                          |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| time limitations for classroom coaching that would ensure deep application   |   |
| Starting salaries are 10% below surrounding districts, and we lack performance-based pay or recruitment bonuses for hard-to-staff positions (including special education, math and science) or teachers of color | Create a performance-based compensation system (PBCS) for teachers, teacher leaders, and school leaders that increases effectiveness and retention, addresses hard to fill roles, and creates a diverse faculty |

We are committed as a community to make the changes necessary to address these gaps and weaknesses. Our proposal for this grant will help us to create a more equitable and inclusive district and school culture, with the tools, training and capacity-building to enable our educators to close gaps and accelerate student learning.

*(ii) Integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve Relevant Outcomes using existing funding streams from other programs or policies.*

Beech Grove has already invested in some elements of NIET’s TAP System including adopting the state-approved NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric and creating mentor teacher roles. We have adopted the NIET Principal Standards Rubric as our tool for school leader evaluation and professional growth this coming year, replacing a district developed tool for school leader evaluation that is not producing useful results.

We propose to build on these investments to expand our implementation of the full TAP System. We are partnering with NIET based on their track record of success in closing achievement gaps in Indiana and accelerating learning. We also are partnering with NIET based

on the organization's expertise and resources to strengthen teachers' abilities to increase student engagement and ownership of their own learning.

For Beech Grove teachers and leaders, the pandemic and resulting shift to remote learning brought into stark relief the need for greater student engagement and ownership. As students returned for the 2021-2022 school year, we made a commitment as a district to support students to take greater ownership of their learning and spread these practices to all of our classrooms. The TAP structure of job-embedded professional learning and coaching, updates to the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric to strengthen student engagement and ownership, and related tools to support engagement in ELA and math (Appendix F3: NIET Rubrics and Look-for Tools), will enable all our teachers to improve their skills in building student engagement.

To recruit more educators of color (Competitive Preference Priority 2), this proposal builds on two current initiatives. The first is our partnership with Marian University's Klipsch Educators College, located in Indianapolis. Marian's Resident Teacher Program is an important source of new, high-quality teachers for our schools. In the spring of 2021 Marian announced a new initiative to recruit more candidates of color through a partnership with six of Indiana's community college "Ivy Tech" campuses throughout the state, including Indianapolis. The initiative will begin as a pilot program of 100 students in fall 2021 with a goal of 50% of the participants being students of color. By 2025, the partnership plans to enroll 500 students. As part of the program, our high school students can begin earning an associate degree at Ivy Tech before transitioning to the Klipsch Educators College, where they will earn a bachelor's degree with a teacher certification. In addition, Beech Grove has a "Grow-Your-Own" program that creates a pathway to teaching for non-instructional staff who already have strong connections to

the community. As part of this grant we will expand the percentage of candidates of color in this program to one-third.

This project's activities align with Indiana's growing commitment to invest in teachers through teacher leadership roles, opportunities for performance-based compensation, and evidence-based professional learning as described in plans for federal "ESSER" relief funds. Governor Holcomb's Next Level Teacher Compensation Commission released a report in 2020 calling for new investments in teacher performance pay, and leadership roles. The work in this proposal addresses key pillars of the state's plan for equitable access to effective educators including 1) additional compensation for teacher leaders; 2) professional development led by highly effective teachers to increase teacher effectiveness; 3) enhanced support to new teachers from mentor and master teachers; and 4) performance-based compensation to attract and retain effective educators in high-need schools (Appendix F2: Alignment to State Policy).

Indiana passed legislation requiring more rigorous teacher evaluation, including student learning measures, in 2011. The NIET rubric is one of three approved evaluation models. However, since 2011, the high quality evaluation processes that this legislation sought to create have not been consistently realized throughout the state. In fact, a report to the Indiana state board of education in February 2017 stated that the quality of teacher evaluation differs throughout the state and that there is a need for statewide technical assistance and support to districts in this area (Murphy & Cole, 2017). Through this grant, we will create a more accurate evaluation system, enabling us to target our state Teacher Appreciate Grant (TAG) funds to our most effective teachers.

*(iii) Part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.*

Beech Grove has made a commitment to building a culture of excellence in which all students meet high standards, become life-long learners, and become successful in a competitive global society. Our district's vision is to rank in the top 25% of all public schools in Indiana, and we recognize that achieving this goal will require a multi-year plan for continuous improvement that uses evidence-based strategies based on performance results. To this end, Beech Grove is partnering with NIET, a national nonprofit organization with a 20-year history in developing, implementing, expanding, and continuously improving comprehensive multi-layered performance-based compensation systems and human capital management systems for teachers, school leaders, and other school leaders (Absolute Priority 1). NIET has a strong track record of success in raising student academic achievement and closing achievement gaps for high-poverty students (Barnett et al., 2015; Buck & Coffelt, 2013; Daley & Kim 2010; Hudson, 2010; Mann et al., 2013; Schacter & Thum, 2005; Solmon et al., 2007).

The Center for American Progress report *Aligned by Design* describes NIET's work helping districts define the skills of an effective classroom teacher and integrate this vision across systems for evaluation, school-based professional learning, and compensation systems (Jerald, 2009). This report also describes the TAP System's success in creating distributed leadership teams led by school leaders with the active involvement of teacher leaders.

Among the most challenging aspects of this work is to build agreement that proficient teaching practice scores in the middle of the performance rubric, providing room to identify and grow toward exemplary practice (Weisberg et al., 2009). The NIET rubric (Appendix F3: NIET Rubrics and Look-for Tools) will enable us to differentiate instructional practice and

provide feedback that will support teaching practices toward deeper engagement and ownership of learning for all students, particularly our students that are working below grade level. The NIET rubric has four domains and 26 indicators describing teaching practice from unsatisfactory to exemplary. As teachers move toward exemplary, they move from *teacher directed* to *student centered* instruction in which students are invested in and take ownership of their own learning, in line with Indiana's expectations for college and career standards. The indicators in the Instruction domain describe how *each* student's learning must be understood and planned for in daily instruction. The level of detail in the research-based NIET rubric enables teachers to differentiate and support each student's learning needs, and builds a common language around strong classroom practice.

With more accurate performance data, we will be able to analyze staffing patterns and increase access to highly effective teachers for the highest need students *within* schools, and ensure that *between* schools, our highest need schools have equitable access to highly effective teachers and leaders.

### **Integrated HCMS and Data Management System**

To support this work, we will use the NIET Educator Effectiveness Preparation & Support System (EE PASS), which provides online access to professional development, training, evaluator certification, and data management through a single port of entry. Resources within EE PASS (Appendix F5: EE PASS) include filmed classroom lessons, coaching sessions, teacher professional development sessions, and instructional leadership meetings. NIET publications to support TAP implementation are housed in EE PASS, including the TAP Implementation Manual, TAP Evaluation and Compensation Guide, Career Teacher Handbook, and TAP Leadership Handbook. EE PASS also includes *Training Modules* on individual indicators of the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric.

Within EE PASS the NIET Human Capital Management Data System allows for storing and analyzing teacher evaluations as well as other school data. The use of this data system will facilitate our use of educator effectiveness data to make management decisions (recruitment, hiring, placement, professional development, advancement, compensation, retention, dismissal).

*(iv) Address the needs of the target population or other identified needs.*

This project will address the needs of our community in multiple ways. Over the three years of the grant, we will increase the percentage of students who meet or exceed grade level standards by 10 percentage points. This represents an overall increase of 40% in ELA and 50% in math over our 2021 scores. We will narrow the achievement gaps between white students and non-white students, high- and low-income students, and general and special education students. This will be achieved by ensuring that 80% of our teachers and school leaders are effective, and 85% of our effective teachers and school leaders are being retained each year. To increase the diversity of our faculty, one-third of our Grow-Your-Own pipeline will be candidates of color.

To achieve these goals, the project will improve the effectiveness of instruction through intensive on-site support for district leaders, school leaders, and teacher leaders:

- District leader coaching and support will occur quarterly to align and strengthen HCMS elements, monitor high-quality TAP System implementation in schools, and build stakeholder support for systems change.
- School leader training and support will occur monthly with comprehensive training on evaluation and leadership practices, and coaching support by NIET to ensure that principals and assistant principals can plan and facilitate strong leadership team

meetings to meet school goals and increase the instructional capacity of teacher leaders and teachers in their buildings.

· Teacher leader training and support will occur monthly. NIET will provide customized support for teacher leaders so that they deepen their understanding of strong instructional practices, lead professional development for teachers, and support teachers in the classroom by providing student-centered coaching.

## **B. Quality of the Project Design (30 points)**

### *(i) Demonstrates a rationale.*

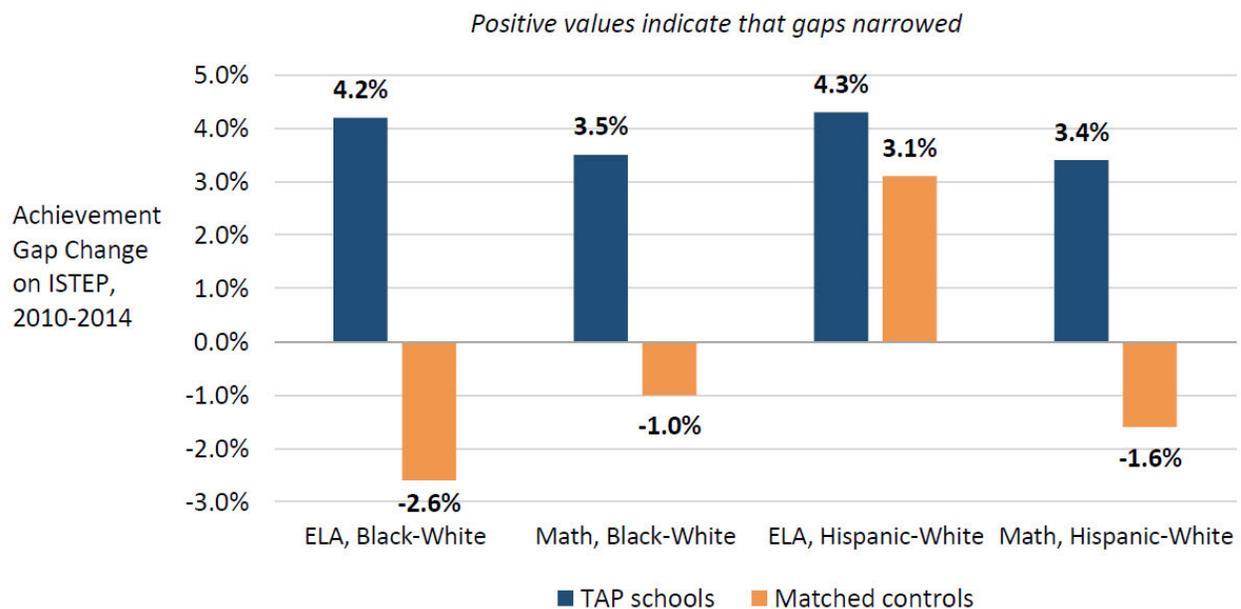
The rationale behind NIET's TAP System is that increases in teacher effectiveness result from both professional growth of *current* educators and the improved *recruitment and retention* of effective teachers and school leaders when provided the combination of increased support, opportunities for leadership roles, and additional compensation (i.e., Barnett et al., 2015; Berry et al., 2010; Center for American Progress, 2014; Chingos & West, 2012; Hudson, 2010; Schacter & Thum, 2005; Stone-Johnson, 2014).

Drawing on this rationale, Beech Grove will build structures for continuous improvement through five strategies: 1) create a clear vision for improvement and a plan to build alignment across elements of the HCMS; 2) implement valid and reliable evaluation processes using research-based rubrics for teachers and school leaders; 3) create formal, instructionally focused roles for teacher leaders in each building; 4) implement job-embedded, collaborative professional learning during the school day; and 5) create a system of performance-based strategic compensation, and incentives for hard-to-staff positions and recruitment of teachers of color. Together, these strategies form a project design that is aimed at improving equity, teacher and leader effectiveness and, as a result, student achievement.

*(ii) A review of the literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives.*

Our review of the literature confirms the elements of the TAP System that we plan to implement have resulted in improvements in teaching and learning for students like ours. Multiple research studies confirm that TAP consistently results in positive impacts on student and school outcomes (Barnett & Wills, 2016; Mann et al., 2013; Schacter & Thum, 2005; Solmon et al., 2007). In Indiana, TAP System schools have narrowed student achievement gaps for Black and Hispanic students as described in a study by Barnett and Wills (2016). The study compared achievement gaps in 32 TAP schools that began implementing TAP in 2010-11 with other Indiana schools. TAP schools narrowed gaps between Black students and White students in ELA and between Hispanic students and White students in ELA and math. Study results indicate TAP schools outperformed their matched schools: while achievement gaps at the TAP schools narrowed, most gaps at the matched schools widened (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. TAP Schools Narrow Achievement Gaps for Black and Hispanic Students.**



An essential first step in building teachers' and school leaders' capacity is implementing a valid and reliable evaluation process to accurately assess educator performance in order to improve their effectiveness and create relevant professional development (Looney, 2011). Teachers want professional development that models effective practice, incorporates active learning, promotes collaboration among teachers, and is sustained over time and relevant to their needs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Desimone et al., 2002). Indeed, research shows that student achievement and teacher learning increases when professional development is teacher-led, ongoing, and collaborative (Archibald et al., 2011; Bowgren & Sever, 2010).

Increasingly, schools are shifting away from traditional leadership structures toward an approach in which administrators work with teacher leaders to drive instructional improvements that impact every classroom (Wenner & Campbell, 2017; Torres, 2019). Shared instructional leadership also creates a culture of growth and collaboration as teacher leaders share their expertise through modeling effective instruction and mentoring other teachers (York-Barr & Duke, 2004). The literature also demonstrates that performance award programs are successful when integrated with strong leadership, professional development, reliable analysis of student performance, and strong feedback (Boyd et al., 2005; Chingos & West, 2012; Odden & Kelly, 2002; Ritter & Barnett, 2013).

We have developed a high-quality plan for project implementation and successful achievement of objectives that includes a partnership with NIET. Our theory of action (Appendix A: Logic Model and Theory of Action) is informed by the literature and evidence of TAP System effectiveness, and we will accomplish our project strategies using key actions at the district, school leader, and teacher levels (Table 5).

**Table 5: Strategies and Key Actions**

| <b>Strategies</b>  | <b>Key Actions</b>   |
|--|--|
| <p><b>1. Create a clear vision for HCMS improvement and alignment, engage stakeholders, and create a multi-year plan</b></p>     | <p>1.1 Align and expand HCMS elements to advance strategic goals; use performance data at decision points</p> <p>1.2 Strengthen the capacity of leaders to engage stakeholders in the systems change process</p> <p>1.3 Provide coaching for district leaders as they work to implement a multi-year plan for improvement</p>  |
| <p><b>2. Implement a valid and reliable evaluation process to accurately measure teacher and school leader effectiveness</b></p> | <p>2.1 Train and annually certify observers to conduct teacher and principal evaluations using a valid tool and process</p> <p>2.2 Create time for two cycles of observation and feedback for school leaders and three cycles for teachers each year</p> <p>2.3 Use evaluation data to inform recruitment, retention &amp; placement decisions and plan professional development</p> |
| <p><b>3. Create opportunities for career advancement through identification and training of teacher leaders</b></p>              | <p>3.1 Establish teacher leadership roles and responsibilities</p> <p>3.2 Use teacher leader roles to attract and retain highly effective teachers and develop a leadership pipeline</p> <p>3.3 Support teacher leaders through on-site, job-embedded coaching and training</p>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>4. Implement job-embedded, collaborative professional learning for teachers, teacher leaders, and school leaders</b></p> | <p>4.1 Train school leadership teams to plan, deliver, monitor and improve job-embedded professional learning</p> <p>4.2 Create weekly collaborative learning for teachers in professional learning communities (PLCs)</p> <p>4.3 Provide robust professional development for school leaders</p>                            |
| <p><b>5. Create a PBCS for teachers, teacher leaders, and school leaders that advances district and school goals</b></p>       | <p>5.1 Use performance compensation for teacher leaders to incentivize, recruit and retain instructional experts</p> <p>5.2 Use recruitment incentives for hard-to-staff roles and to recruit teachers of color</p> <p>5.3 Develop valid and reliable teacher PBCS</p> <p>5.4 Develop valid and reliable principal PBCS</p> |

**1. Create a clear vision for HCMS improvement and alignment, engage stakeholders, and create a multi-year plan to manage the implementation**

*1.1 Align and expand HCMS elements to advance strategic goals and use performance data at key decision points.* In the planning year of the grant (Year 1), Beech Grove will engage NIET to provide coaching for district leaders to 1) assess district structures and create a plan for aligning elements of their HCMS to district goals; 2) strengthen evaluation processes to produce valid and reliable measures of teacher and principal performance; 3) identify key decision points where performance data will drive HCMS decisions including recruitment, hiring, placement, retention, career advancement, and dismissal; and 4) develop a strategic compensation plan that will advance a more effective staffing structure and more diverse faculty in schools. In the first two

months of the grant, NIET will conduct a strength-based needs assessment in each school with school and district leaders. NIET's Indiana Director [REDACTED] -- who has over a decade of experience supporting Indiana TAP districts -- will support Beech Grove to develop an action plan and schedule for training and support in learning recovery and acceleration and in the core elements of TAP (observation and feedback, facilitating professional learning, classroom coaching).

***1.2 Strengthen the capacity of leaders to engage stakeholders in the systems change process.***

By selecting our current Director of Elementary Education and Director of Secondary Education to be Co-Project Directors, we are building this work into our existing district structures and systems. These two experienced leaders will be supported by NIET to bring together district and school leaders to build a vision and commitment to the systems change process. Through our project Advisory Board, we will facilitate stakeholder engagement and systems change, and work to engage the community in our vision for change. We will engage a communications firm to support our efforts to create a more effective and diverse teaching faculty and sustain the commitment to improvement. The project Advisory Board will oversee the project, meeting quarterly to provide guidance, and a PBCS Committee will be created to oversee PBC.

***1.3 Provide coaching for district leaders as they work to implement a multi-year plan for continuous improvement.*** District leaders will receive support from NIET in the development of an overall plan for implementation of the TAP System. Beech Grove's Co-Project Directors will support a district leadership team that will include staff who provide support for instruction in schools (e.g., curriculum and assessment specialists, reading coaches). NIET will support district leaders on a monthly basis as they work with school leaders and teacher leaders to implement the TAP System at the school level.

## **2. Implement a valid, reliable evaluation process for teachers and school leaders**

### ***2.1 Train and annually certify observers to conduct evaluations using a valid tool and process.***

In the first year of the grant, Beech Grove will build a common understanding of strong classroom teaching that aligns to student learning growth and creates consistency in observation scores across classrooms and schools. Training will enable district leaders, school leaders, and teacher leaders to more accurately use the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric (Appendix F3: NIET Rubrics and Look-for Tools).

Evaluators (teacher leaders and school leaders) will be certified annually to ensure that they are able to provide consistent, valid, and reliable scores. The evaluator training also provides district and school leaders with a process for delivering high-quality feedback designed to impact instructional practices and student achievement. An area of reinforcement or strength and an area of growth are identified for teachers along with specific classroom follow-up coaching and support so that teaching and learning are strengthened. In addition, trends in areas of growth will be used to inform the new learning provided to teachers through weekly PLC meetings.

We have adopted the NIET Principal Standards Rubric (PSR) (Appendix F3: NIET Rubrics and Look-for Tools), which describes effective leadership across multiple domains and indicators of leadership practice. The Equitable Access indicator, for example, describes how effective principals ensure that students have equitable access to effective teachers, develop initiatives to ensure all students have academic and social supports that lead to success, and supports teachers to identify and use resources that provide students with equitable educational opportunities. Using the PSR, school leaders and district-level staff who coach and evaluate

school leaders will be trained in a mutual understanding of strong leadership practices and a process for feedback and support.

### ***2.2 Create time for multiple cycles of observation and feedback for teachers and school***

***leaders.*** Every classroom teacher will receive three cycles of formal observation with clear evidence of the level of teaching and learning. Within two days of the observation, an in-person post-conference provides action-oriented feedback for improvement. Principal supervisors will conduct two cycles of observations of school leaders to evaluate principal practice and provide high-quality feedback for improvement. School leaders and their district-level supervisors will train together and receive job-embedded coaching to strengthen observation and feedback.

### ***2.3 Use evaluation to inform recruitment and retention decisions and plan professional***

***development.*** Evaluation data from multiple measures of performance, including both teacher and student learning measures, will inform retention decisions and provide us with information to guide the equitable placement of effective and highly effective teachers. We will use NIET's EE PASS web-based portal to support our analysis and tracking of evaluation data and trends (Appendix F5: EE PASS). Evaluation data will be used to identify and recruit candidates for teacher leadership roles. Data from principal evaluations will be used to inform retention and placement decisions for leaders, as well as inform high-quality coaching and professional learning opportunities that will be differentiated based on individual needs. For school leaders, the standards for effective leaders that drive the evaluation process provide clear descriptions of leadership practices, providing a roadmap for improvement.

## **3. Create opportunities for career advancement through teacher leadership.**

***3.1 Establish teacher leadership roles and responsibilities.*** We will create two school-based roles: master teachers and mentor teachers. Master teachers will analyze data, lead professional

learning, conduct classroom observations and provide feedback, and participate in the school leadership team. Master teachers will support approximately 20 classroom teachers each. Mentor teachers will remain teachers of record and be released for several hours each week to lead professional learning, observe classroom practice, and serve on the school leadership team. Mentor teachers will support approximately 8-10 classroom teachers each. There will be one master teacher in each elementary school, two in the middle school and two in the high school. We will expand our current mentor teacher cadre from 22 to 27 by selecting five new mentors. Teacher leaders will be interviewed, hired, and trained by the spring of Year 1. By creating formal, instructionally focused teacher leadership roles, Beech Grove will significantly increase the expertise and capacity at each school as the teacher leaders will immediately engage in 1) providing high-quality observation and feedback for improvement and 2) leading weekly collaborative learning groups.

***3.2 Use teacher leader roles to attract and retain highly effective teachers, and develop a leadership pipeline.*** The opportunity to receive high-quality support for improvement is a strong tool for recruiting effective teachers, as are leadership roles that enable teachers to remain connected to the classroom while playing a role in school leadership. Formal leadership roles enable teacher leaders to influence their colleagues to engage in instructional improvement (Supovitz, 2018). Developing teachers' leadership skills creates a pipeline of leadership in schools, with effective classroom teachers moving into roles as mentor teachers, master teachers, and often into the school leadership. Beech Grove will also use leadership opportunities in our recruitment of teachers of color and teachers of hard-to-staff subjects.

***3.3 Support teacher leaders through on-site, job-embedded coaching and training.*** Teacher leaders will receive robust training in the observation and evaluation system, PLCs, and

leadership development. These trainings will take place during Year 1. NIET will provide ten days of on-site support for each school every year, and this will include support for teacher leaders each month. NIET's visits will coincide with district monthly collaborative learning meetings for teacher leaders. Teacher leaders will have the opportunity for additional training and collaboration with teacher leaders from across the country during NIET's national conference and summer institute.

**4. Implement job-embedded, collaborative professional learning for teachers, teacher leaders, and school leaders.**

***4.1 Train school leadership teams to plan, deliver, monitor, and improve professional learning.*** Beech Grove will work with NIET to train school leaders to lead a high-functioning, school-wide Instructional Leadership Team (ILT), which is essential to the success of the TAP System. The ILT, led by the principal and joined by teacher leaders, develops the school plan for improving student learning. NIET's training builds the capacity of ILTs to manage and implement research-driven practices, utilize high-impact levers for improving instruction, lead collaborative learning teams, conduct meaningful observations and ensure all teachers benefit from individual coaching. District leaders will participate in the training, since they play an important role in reviewing existing practices and expenditures to ensure that school-based, job-embedded professional learning is the primary mechanism for teacher professional learning and that it can be sustained and supported.

***4.2 Create weekly collaborative professional learning for teachers through PLCs.*** The Co-Project Directors, in collaboration with NIET, will provide intensive, practice-based training for teacher leaders to enable them to provide high-quality professional learning for classroom teachers (Competitive Preference Priority 1). Our training and support visits in year one will

focus on learning recovery and acceleration, to address immediate classroom needs. In addition, teacher leaders will be trained to lead weekly collaborative professional learning teams, analyze teacher and student data, identify and field test student learning strategies, and develop coaching plans for classroom teachers. This intensive core training will occur in the summer of the first year of the grant.

**4.3 Provide robust professional development for school leaders.** NIET will support school leaders (including assistant school leaders) and principal supervisors to strengthen their coaching skills beginning in Year 1 with training on learning recovery and acceleration, and the core elements of TAP. In addition to individual coaching, observation, and feedback, we will create monthly collaborative learning groups for school leaders across the district. In Year 2, NIET's principal leadership training will significantly grow the capacity of school leaders to serve all students by focusing on three areas: creating and communicating a culture of equity, building shared instructional leadership, and sustaining reflective practice through continuous improvement.

**5. Create a system of performance-based compensation for teachers, teacher leaders, and school leaders that advances district and school goals.**

**5.1 Use performance compensation for teacher leaders to incentivize, recruit and retain instructional experts in high-need schools.** The TAP System supports districts to use performance-based compensation for high-performing teacher leaders who lead professional learning for groups of teachers as well as provide coaching and support for individual classroom teachers in their schools. We will use this approach to provide all teachers with high-quality opportunities to improve their skills, which in turn will be rewarded with performance compensation. Strengthening the observation system and evaluation process will enable us to

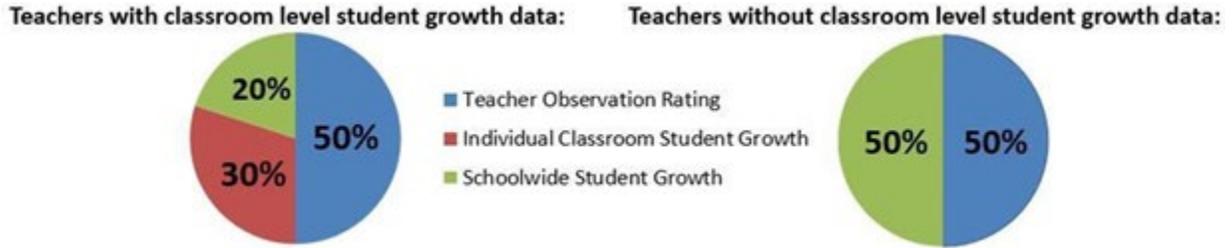
connect compensation to clear, detailed measures of performance. We will allocate [REDACTED] for each school leader, [REDACTED] for each assistant principal, and [REDACTED] per teacher into the performance-based compensation pools, respectively. By creating a pool for performance compensation, districts can offer significantly higher compensation to the most effective educators.

***5.2 Use recruitment incentives for hard to staff roles and to recruit a diverse faculty.***

We will expand our partnership with Marian University to improve our recruitment of teachers of color. Marian recently created a partnership with Indiana’s community college system to expand their teacher preparation programs, with the goal of attracting more candidates of color. In addition, Beech Grove has a Grow-Your-Own program focused on non-instructional staff that has proven a strong source for candidates of color, and it currently comprises 25% non-White participants. We will use recruitment incentives to strengthen our ability to recruit talent to this program. Our PBCS committee will determine the level and type of incentives, which will include multi-year commitments to teach in the district.

***5.3 Develop valid and reliable teacher performance-based compensation.*** As shown in Figure 2, teachers will be evaluated and earn performance-based compensation using 1) teacher observation ratings based on formal evaluations using the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric, 2) individual classroom student growth measures, and 3) school-wide student growth measures.

**Figure 2. Teacher Performance Pay Measures**



Observation Rating will be based on three observations using the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric, and it will account for 50% of the overall performance measure.

Individual Classroom Student Growth will be based on student performance on the Indiana state assessments. Indiana uses student percentile growth as its measure of individual student growth. Student percentile growth takes all students with the same score on a previous test and finds percentile ranks for those students on a current test.

Schoolwide Student Growth will be based on the schoolwide performance on the Indiana state assessments as computed in the state accountability system. Indiana computes school growth using a points system that assigns points based on students moving to higher performance categories on the current year's assessment vis-a-vis the previous year's assessment. The system emphasizes low performing students by weighting the lowest performing 25% of students equally with the top 75% of students.

#### ***5.4 Develop valid and reliable principal performance-based compensation***

Principal and other school leaders' effectiveness will be evaluated annually. Performance compensation will be based on the following measures: 1) principal evaluation rating determined by performance on the NIET Principal Standards Rubric will represent 50% of performance compensation and 2) student achievement growth at the school level based on the state

accountability system will represent 50%. The PBC Committee will review and determine the weighting of PBC elements annually.

*Timeline for PBCS Implementation.* We will establish a PBCS Committee that will meet regularly to develop the plan for PBC. The PBCS Committee will provide support to the district on its plan for sustaining performance-based compensation with local, state, or federal funds after the grant period. PBCS will be implemented beginning in Year 2 of the grant.

*Additional Roles and Responsibilities for Teacher Leaders.* For taking on additional roles and responsibilities, teachers will receive salary augmentations of [REDACTED] as a mentor teacher and [REDACTED] as a master teacher. Teachers must earn an “effective” rating to retain their additional roles and responsibilities. By combining performance-based compensation opportunities and salary augmentations, Beech Grove will be able to offer effective and highly effective teachers a significantly more competitive compensation package when compared to similar districts in the Indianapolis region.

*(iii) The methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.*

The project evaluation will be led by NIET’s Research and Evaluation Department, a department with extensive experience supporting large-scale evaluations of education programs (Appendix B: Resumes of Key Personnel). The evaluator will work collaboratively with Beech Grove personnel to lead a formative and summative evaluation with two purposes: 1) to supply key personnel with timely data to improve the project for the populations served and 2) to periodically assess progress toward outcomes. The evaluation plan aligns with the program’s theory of action that if programmatic structures, trainings, and supports are put in place at the district and school level to help strengthen and align our HCMS, there will be 1) an increase in

teacher effectiveness, 2) an increase in school leader effectiveness, and 3) improvement in student achievement. The evaluation plan (Appendix F1: Evaluation Plan Summary) is organized around four research questions which are aligned with the nine Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) measures and will serve as a working document to ensure the project is on track to meet objectives.

The project's logic model (Appendix A: Logic Model and Theory of Action) will be used to specify the inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes expected from the intervention. The evaluator will identify program implementation measures and data collection instruments that can be embedded into the program delivery (such as systems for tracking training session attendance and engagement) as well as data reporting systems that can be used to drive continuous monitoring and improvement of program implementation. The evaluator will track program progress and analyze fidelity of implementation (Research Question (RQ) 1: How well is the TAP System being implemented and to what extent is implementation sustainable by Beech Grove?). Data used to assess fidelity of implementation will include program artifacts, surveys, and interviews/focus groups. NIET's annual school review process, which consists of classroom, ILT, and PLC observations, will serve as one of these critical data sources for assessing fidelity of implementation and providing feedback to district and school leaders.

Each year NIET will survey teachers, school leaders, and district leaders to assess perceived quality of the program and program impact. To ensure reliability and validity, interview/focus group responses will be used in combination with a review of documents and system reports. This data triangulation allows for a higher level of validity in the qualitative research process. Interviews will be recorded, transcribed, and coded by at least two researchers.

This work, along with analyses of quantitative implementation fidelity measures, will help identify key variables that impact implementation and sustainability.

Qualitative and quantitative data will also be used to address the remaining research questions about program impact (RQ2: What are the effects of participation on teacher outcomes? RQ3: What are the effects of participation on principal and other school leader outcomes? RQ4: What are the effects of participation on student achievement?). Interviews and surveys will be conducted using methods outlined above. Additionally, the evaluator will obtain longitudinal administrative data on educator retention; leadership and teacher practices and skills; and student achievement. State and district data will include administrative records (e.g., position vacancies), school leader and teacher retention rates, educator practices, and student outcomes (primarily student achievement).

The evaluation will include regular communication between the evaluator and key project personnel during quarterly update meetings or conference calls to review plans, progress, and preliminary data. As detailed in the evaluation plan, program data and artifacts will be reviewed and findings summaries distributed quarterly to the project directors; feedback about training and support will be gathered at the end of each grant year (September/October), summarized, and shared with the project directors and other key personnel; and educator effectiveness and student achievement data will be examined and shared with the project directors and other key personnel annually. At the conclusion of the grant period, the evaluator will assess the overall accomplishment of goals and conduct a thorough analysis of lessons learned.

The evaluator and Beech Grove will disseminate reports at the local, state, and national levels through in-person presentations, academic conferences and journals, and print and online media. At the **local level**, NIET and Beech Grove will establish quarterly communications

through the TSL Advisory Board to monitor progress, to ensure implementation is on track and address any challenges they may be facing, and to share the results of TAP System implementation. Additionally, NIET’s Communications team will work with Beech Grove and our communications support team to promote schools’ success with community stakeholders and in local newspapers and media. At the **state level**, information about project implementation and findings will be shared at 2 state level conferences (e.g., Indiana principals and Indiana superintendents conferences) and communicated to state policymakers. Finally, at the **national level**, the project results will be presented at the annual NIET National Conference and a professional research conference (e.g., AERA; AACTE). Findings will also be disseminated via NIET publications including reports, newsletters, social media, webinars, and in professional journals. The evaluator will incorporate findings into the annual performance reports to address progress toward key performance measures.

**C. Quality of the Management Plan (20 points)**

Our management plan will enable us to implement our five key strategies for strengthening and expanding our HCMS in order to meet our project objectives of increasing teacher effectiveness, school leader effectiveness, and student achievement. Below we highlight project milestones, activities, responsibilities and timelines for each year of the grant.

Responsible parties include District Administration (DA), Co-project directors (PDs), school leaders (SL), teacher leaders (TL), and NIET. Quarter 1 begins in October of each year.

Milestones are in bold and the activities to meet those milestones are in plain text (Table 6).

**Table 6: Milestones, Activities, Responsibilities, and Timeline**

| Milestones (in bold) | Responsible Parties | Quarter |   |   |   |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------|---|---|---|
|                      |                     | 1       | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Activities           |                     |         |   |   |   |

**Year 1 – Planning year (start-up, planning, initial training, hiring)**

|  |              |   |   |   |   |
|--|--------------|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Complete Project Start-up</b>   | PD, DA, NIET |   |   | ✓ |   |
| Establish TSL Advisory Board   | PD           | ✓ |   |   |   |
| Develop data-driven process for project implementation   | PD, DA, NIET | ✓ |   |   |   |
| Conduct Strengths-based Needs Assessment in each school  | NIET, PD, DA | ✓ |   |   |   |
| Meet with Marian U. to set goals for recruiting under-represented groups through Ivy Tech initiative | PD, DA       | ✓ | ✓ |   |   |
| Develop goals & action plan for “Grow-Your-Own” program  | PD, DA       |   | ✓ |   |   |
| Establish PBCS committee   | PD           |   |   | ✓ |   |
| Hire communications firm and develop communications plan   | PD           |   | ✓ |   |   |
| <b>Project Advisory Committees, and Schedules Established</b>  | PD           |   |   |   | ✓ |
| TSL Advisory Board meetings (quarterly)  | PD, DA, NIET |   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| PBCS committee meetings (quarterly)  | PD, DA       |   |   |   | ✓ |
| Schedule PLC meetings during the school day for 2022-23  | SL, PD, DA   |   |   | ✓ |   |
| <b>Teacher Leaders Hired</b>   | PD, DA       |   | ✓ |   |   |
| Establish committee for master and mentor teacher selection  | PD, NIET     | ✓ |   |   |   |
| Recruit, interview, hire master and mentor teachers  | PD, SL, DA   |   | ✓ |   |   |

|   |                      |   |   |   |   |
|---|----------------------|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Foundational Training Delivered</b>  | NIET, PD             |   |   | ✓ |   |
| Learning Recovery and Acceleration Training   | NIET, DA             |   | ✓ | ✓ |   |
| CORE Training on elements of the HCMS (evaluation, professional learning, goal setting, instructional leadership) | NIET, DA, SL         |   |   | ✓ |   |
| NIET Annual Conference and Training   | PD, DA, SL, TL       |   | ✓ |   |   |
| Summer Institute  | PD, DA, SL, TL, NIET |   |   | ✓ |   |
| <b>Annual Coaching and Support Delivered</b>  | NIET, PD             |   |   |   | ✓ |
| NIET school level support and coaching (10 days/school/year)  | NIET                 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| NIET district support (bimonthly)   | NIET                 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Collaborative learning group for school leaders meetings (monthly)  | PD, DA, NIET         |   |   |   | ✓ |
| Collaborative learning group for teacher leaders meetings (monthly)   | PD, SL, NIET         |   |   |   | ✓ |
| <b>TAP Implementation Started</b>   | DA, PD               |   |   |   | ✓ |
| Teacher observations, PLC meetings, ILT meetings, aligned coaching and support                                    | SL, TL               |   |   |   | ✓ |
| School leader observations and aligned coaching   | DA, PD               |   |   |   | ✓ |
| <b>Project Monitoring and Evaluation Tasks Completed</b>  | PD                   |   |   |   | ✓ |
| School and classroom performance and growth data collected (baselines)  | PD, DA               |   |   |   | ✓ |
| <b>Years 2 and 3 – Full project implementation</b>  |                      |   |   |   |   |

|  |                      |   |   |   |   |
|--|----------------------|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Project Advisory Committees, Hiring</b>   | DA                   |   |   |   | ✓ |
| TSL Advisory Board meetings (quarterly)  | PD                   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Recruit, interview, hire new teacher leaders (if necessary)                          | PD, SL, DA           |   |   | ✓ |   |
| Collaborate with Marian U. to monitor progress, adjust goals and advance partnership | PD, DA               |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |
| Review data and strengthen Grow-Your-Own program                                     | PD, DA               |   | ✓ |   | ✓ |
| <b>Continuing Training Delivered</b>   | NIET, PD             |   |   |   | ✓ |
| Quarterly trainings with master teachers   | NIET                 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Quarterly trainings with school leaders  | NIET                 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| NIET Annual Conference and Training  | PD, DA, SL, TL       |   | ✓ |   |   |
| Summer Institute   | PD, DA, SL, TL, NIET |   |   | ✓ |   |
| <b>Coaching and Support Delivered</b>  | NIET, PD             |   |   |   | ✓ |
| NIET school level support and coaching (10 days/school/year)                         | NIET                 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| NIET district support (bimonthly)  | NIET                 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| NIET support for school leader evaluation process (quarterly)                        | NIET                 | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Collaborative learning group for school leaders meetings (monthly)                   | PD, DA, NIET         | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Collaborative learning group for teacher leaders meetings (monthly)                  | PD, SL, NIET         | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| <b>TAP Implementation Continues</b>  | PD, DA               |   |   | ✓ |   |

|  |            |   |   |   |   |
|--|------------|---|---|---|---|
| Teacher observations, PLC meetings, ILT meetings, aligned coaching and support                   | SL, TL     | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| School leader observations and aligned coaching  | DA, PD     | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| School Reviews   | NIET       |   |   | ✓ |   |
| <b>PBC Calculated and Awarded</b>  | DA, PD     |   |   |   | ✓ |
| PBCS committee meetings (quarterly)  | PD         | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Enter PBC data into data management system   | PD, SL     | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Calculate PBC awards for teachers and school leaders   | PD, DA,    |   |   |   | ✓ |
| Award PBC for teachers and school leaders  | DA         |   |   |   | ✓ |
| <b>Project Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Completed</b>                                      | PD, NIET   |   |   |   | ✓ |
| Beech Grove and evaluator meetings (quarterly)   | PD, NIET   | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| School and classroom performance and growth data collected; analyzed for human capital decisions | DA, SL     |   |   |   | ✓ |
| Collect/Analyze data from Marian U. and Grow-Your-Own programs for human capital decisions       | PD, DA     |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |
| Present finding at state and national conferences  | PD, DA, SL |   |   | ✓ | ✓ |

**Key Personnel.** Beech Grove has the capacity and expertise within our team to successfully implement this proposal (Appendix B: Resumes of Key Personnel). Our Superintendent [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has 14 years of experience as a district leader and is recognized statewide as a transformative leader who achieves results for students, as noted in the letter of support from State Superintendent [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] has a strong record of success in managing large projects, and developing financial and management plans to ensure sustainability.

██████████ is Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, leading core programming and district initiatives, as well as professional development. His deep experience in the district and long-standing relationships will ensure strong support for the project.

██████████ is the Director of Elementary Education and will be Co-Project Director. She brings a deep knowledge of the needs and challenges of elementary education, and her expertise in research-based professional learning, community outreach, data analysis, and curricular programs provides a solid foundation for her role.

██████████ is the Director of Secondary Education and will serve as the second Co-Project Director, bringing a deep knowledge of programs, testing and data analysis. ██████████ is an expert in the TAP System, having provided support to teacher and school leaders across the state in her prior position as the TAP State Regional Coordinator at the University of Indianapolis.

██████████ will serve as NIET's director for the project, coordinating all training and support, and serving as a point of contact on other aspects of the grant including data management and reporting. ██████ brings more than a decade of experience working with Indiana districts to strengthen teaching and learning, and is a highly skilled trainer and coach.

██████████ is NIET's Director of Research. She has experience evaluating large, multi-year projects, and is well prepared to lead the evaluation team.

#### **D. Adequacy of Resources (25 points)**

*(i) The likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.*

Beech Grove has a clear vision for the systems improvement we will achieve through the TSL grant. We have in place key elements for success including:

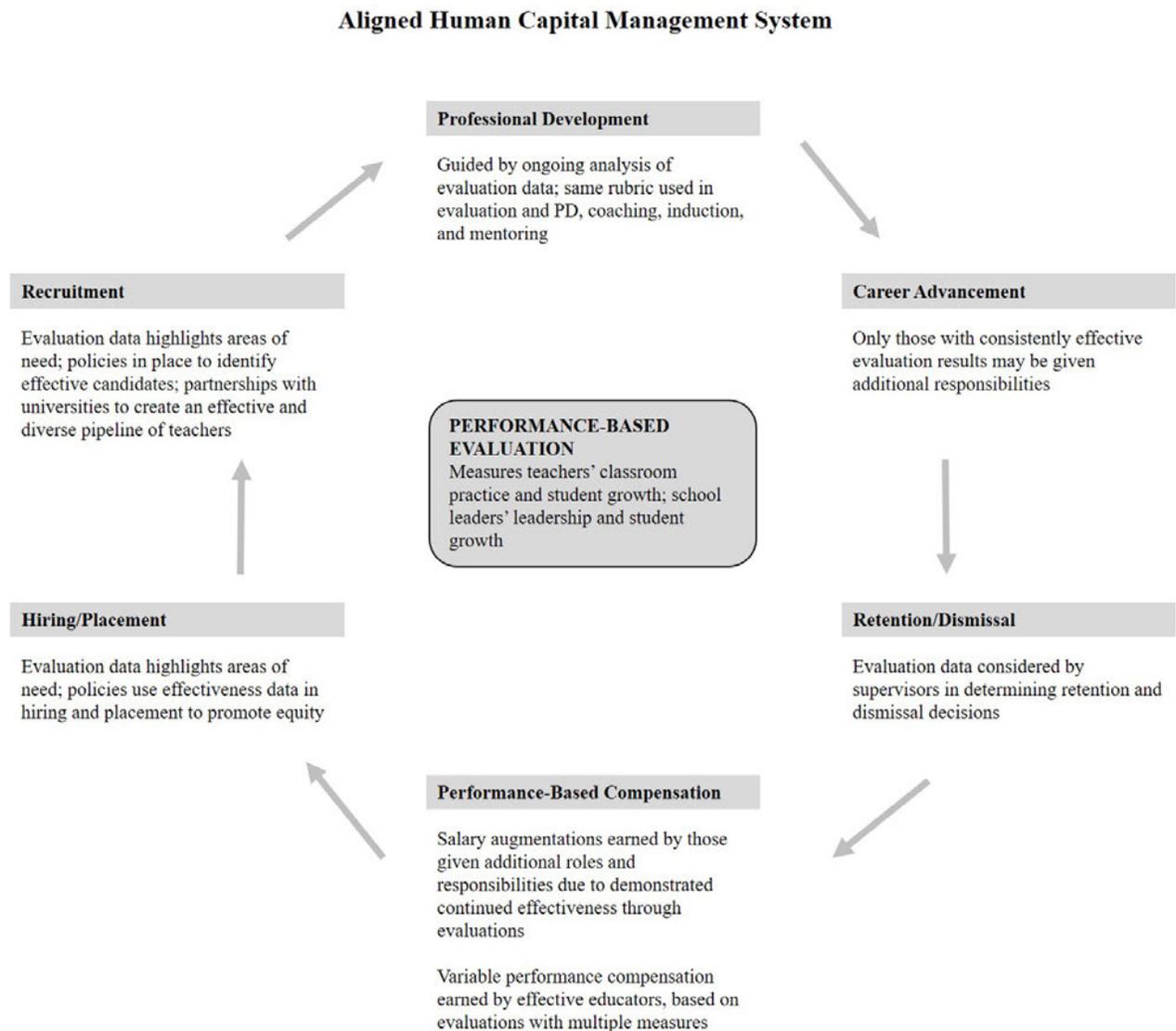
- Our Superintendent has experience successfully implementing TAP in another district
- Our School Board and community leaders are committed to this work

- Our Directors for Elementary and Secondary Education will be Co-Project Directors, building this work into our leadership team structure; each has experience with TAP
- Our five school leaders support using TAP as a model for continuous improvement, and this school year we adopted the NIET Principal Standards Rubric
- We have 22 mentor teachers already in place, who are ready to strengthen their role in coaching and supporting classroom teachers
- Our partnership with Marion University and our Grow-Your-Own program provide a foundation to increase the diversity of our faculty

We will build on this foundation, to create a high-quality HCMS that supports improvement in student outcomes. This project will result in systems change at three levels. At the district level, district leaders plan and deliver training for school leaders and use observation and feedback to create a consistent and coherent message for school leaders about priorities and goals. At the school level, school leadership teams will build overall instructional leadership capacity to drive school-level change, using data to set goals, design professional learning, and ensure that coaching and feedback are impacting teaching and learning. As a result of the evaluation process, every teacher receives an area of reinforcement (strength) and an area of growth through the post-conference. School leadership teams analyze school-wide areas of strength or weakness, trends by grade or subject, and individual teacher performance. Data are used to differentiate professional development based on the needs of individuals and groups of teachers in schools, creating a cycle of continuous improvement. This project will create change in classroom practice through weekly collaborative learning teams led by trained teacher leaders and individual instructional coaching to provide teachers with hands-on guidance as they implement student learning strategies. District and school leaders will be able to use EE PASS to

analyze how teachers scored on individual indicators of instructional practice to inform planning for professional learning and other HCMS decisions. The HCMS is illustrated in Figure 3.

**Figure 3: Aligned Human Capital Management System**



*(ii) Build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.*

Beech Grove faces significant challenges in raising student academic achievement and closing achievement and equity gaps. We have identified strategies for strengthening our systems

to achieve our goals, but we currently lack the capacity to improve and expand services in ways that will provide the level of support required to meet student, teacher, and school leader needs. This grant will enable us to build that capacity.

By creating master teacher roles in each school, we will create the capacity for improved collaborative professional learning and classroom based coaching. Master teachers will work closely with school leaders and mentor teachers, and their role is critical to our ability to increase the effectiveness of classroom instruction across all of our classrooms. This structure of support is also foundational to our plans to diversify our teaching faculty. By offering these high levels of support, we will create the opportunities for teachers of color to come to and remain in a district dedicated to increasing their own effectiveness rapidly and which offers opportunities for career advancement into leadership roles. We will also plan to recruit highly effective teachers of color directly into these leadership roles.

Selecting our current Director for Elementary and Director for Secondary as Co-Project Directors for this grant enables us to create a strong start to the three year project, and to start our training and support in the first year for mentor teachers and school leaders. We anticipate that some of our current mentor teachers will apply for master teacher positions, and their expertise in the evaluation and professional learning systems will facilitate their early success in that role.

Our partnership with Marian University provides us with the opportunity to create a strong plan for recruiting teachers of color. Marian University has developed a new partnership with Indiana's community college system to recruit teachers of color, and will work with Beech Grove to place these candidates in our schools. We will simultaneously work with other teacher preparation programs and alternative certification providers to recruit teachers of color, using our support systems and leadership opportunities as a draw. Our current Grow-Your-Own initiative

to recruit within our non-instructional staff for new teacher candidates provides us with another avenue for recruiting and supporting candidates of color from within our community to become successful classroom teachers. Our Grow-Your-Own program is currently 25% candidates of color, and we will increase that to 33% candidates of color.

We have a strong foundation of support for this work from our community and key stakeholders as illustrated in letters of support (Appendix C: Letters of Support) from the School Board, the Chamber of Commerce, Marian University Klipsch Educators College, and all of our school principals. State Superintendent [REDACTED] letter of support notes the alignment between this project and state priorities. Our Co-Project Directors will continue in their leadership roles following the grant, with their duties shifted to support the success of our TAP System work across the district.

Our plan will enable district and school leaders to implement the TAP System with fidelity and continuously improve the model, while maintaining support from diverse stakeholders. NIET's district-level coaching and support will improve district practices and embed those improvements in ongoing structures and systems to ensure their continuity. This support will strengthen district systems of instructional support for schools by collaboratively identifying high-impact action steps to improve instruction and providing coaching for district leaders aligned to those action steps.

In addition, NIET will support Beech Grove to create structures at the district level to provide professional learning and coaching for school and teacher leaders. The district leadership team will be strengthened as the focal point for strategic support for schools – bringing together central office leaders with different portfolios or areas of focus to work collaboratively to create coherence in these initiatives at the school level.

Support for school leaders includes monthly collaborative meetings that are facilitated by the Co-Project Directors and which focus on specific areas for improvement based on classroom observations. This collaborative work will extend strong practices and develop a shared commitment to district goals while building leadership capacity. School leaders will also develop a more consistent approach to evaluating classroom practice, reinforcing expectations across buildings.

Teacher leaders will attend similar collaborative monthly meetings led by the Co-Project Directors. Master teacher meetings provide opportunities to address shared problems of practice based on teacher and student needs and develop strategies for supporting more effective professional learning teams at the school level. Master teachers also work to calibrate their understanding of strong instruction, creating consistency across the district. This systemic approach builds capacity at all levels.

*(iii) Resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant.*

This TSL project has broad support from stakeholders as evidenced by the xx letters of support submitted by teachers, school leaders, district leaders, our project partner NIET, Marian University, community and business leaders, and elected officials including State Superintendent .

***Financial Sustainability.*** Beech Grove has several large capital projects that are nearing completion that will free up financial resources for other initiatives. This will enable Beech Grove to reallocate federal title funds to this work. Title I funds will support master teacher salaries, and Title II funds will support teacher and principal professional learning. State and local revenues will support release time for professional learning for all teachers, and the district is already funding mentor stipends for 22 mentors out of the total of 27 mentors. Finally, our

Teacher Appreciation Grant plan will allocate those state resources (traditionally averaging \$500 per teacher) for effective and highly effective teachers using the new evaluation system and process. Our Superintendent has experience in creating long-term funding for this work in another district and has convened senior leaders in the district to create a multi-year financial sustainability and management plan.

***Sustainability planning.*** Our long-term sustainability and success plan for this project includes building collective buy-in, creating capacity through training and support, increasing educator skills and driving student growth, and establishing financial sustainability. The project is exceeding the 50% match requirement through in-kind time and effort of Beech Grove's career teachers and administrators and a 5% district share of performance bonuses. Additionally, NIET is providing in-kind support valued at \$85,000. The transition of the structure of the school day, personnel time and effort, and implementation of the HCMS make up our in-kind contribution, thereby demonstrating our commitment to implementing the system in the long-run. In addition, we will continue to review other expenditures to determine if funds can be shifted as the improvements supported by the project show impact.

***State-level policy and funding.*** Compensation for teacher leader roles is a core strategy included in the Governor's Next Level Teacher Compensation Commission report and the state's Equitable Access to Excellent Educators plan, and it is an approved use of state funds for schools in need of improvement. State Teacher Appreciation Grants provide an ongoing source of funding for performance-based compensation, and our district TAG plan will align those funds to our HCMS. In addition, state approval of the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric as an approved evaluation rubric ensures continuity in the evaluation system.

***Communications.*** We understand that communication, both internal and external to the school community, is essential to our success. We will hire a communications firm to support our efforts to create ongoing communications to build awareness, understanding, and support for the HCMS, PBCS and educator evaluation systems among teachers, school leaders, other school personnel, and the community (including parents). We will also use the communications firm to support our recruitment efforts for hard to staff positions and a diverse faculty. Together with our communications partner, we will disseminate information through newsletters, websites, and other public forums throughout the year. In addition to these areas, other communication outreach will include the district improvement committee (which includes parents and community members) and board presentations.

These sustainability strategies will enable us to integrate the improvements made to the HCMS into budgets, policies, and practices. This will sustain and grow the district and school culture shifts required to support a system of continuous improvement and high expectations. Overall, the project will result in long-term, systemic change to our district and school structures and systems, creating continuous improvement in the effectiveness of *current* teachers and school leaders, and increasing the recruitment and retention of *more effective* teachers and school leaders. Our work to recruit and better support teachers of color will improve our ability to create a culture that celebrates and sustains diversity, equity and inclusion. These improvements will enable Beech Grove to accelerate student learning and close achievement gaps.