TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence

(a nonprofit organization as defined in 2 CFR 200.70 / fiscal agent)

and PARTNERS –

Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at the University of Arkansas
Blytheville School District
Brinkley School District
Cross County School District
Dumas School District
Earle School District
Hope School District
Lee County School District
Osceola School District
Strong-Huttig School District

PROPOSE –

ACHIEVE:

Arkansas Consortium Harnessing Innovation, Equity & Verifiable Excellence!

PROJECT NARRATIVE

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1: Human Capital Management Systems (HCMS) or Performance Based Compensation Systems (PBCS). The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence (CSL - Nonprofit Applicant as defined in 2 CFR 200.70 and fiscal agent) in partnership with the Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at the University of Arkansas and nine Arkansas rural school districts (Blytheville, Brinkley, Cross County, Dumas, Earle, Hope, Lee County, Osceola and Strong-Huttig) proposes *ACHIEVE* (**A**rkansas **C**onsortium **H**arnessing **I**nnovation, **E**quity & **V**erifiable **E**xcellence!). These nine rural districts, having formed a collaborative consortium, seek an investment of federal resources from the U.S. Department of Education's *Teacher and School Leaders Incentive Program Grant* to advance educational transformation work in high-poverty, low-performing rural schools, many of which are along the Mississippi Delta in rural Arkansas.

Human Capital Management Systems (HCMS): *ACHIEVE* schools will use educator performance results to inform key school- and district-level human capital management decisions, including: preparation, recruitment, hiring, placement, retention, dismissal, compensation (including performance–based compensation), professional development, tenure, and promotion, particularly as they affect educators working in High-Need Schools served by the project. 100% of *ACHIEVE* districts have Free and Reduced Lunch rates averaging 85% of enrollment, with 4 of the 9 districts over 90%, meeting *TSL* criteria of 50% or more students eligible under the National School Lunch Program. *ACHIEVE* stakeholders across our nine districts include:

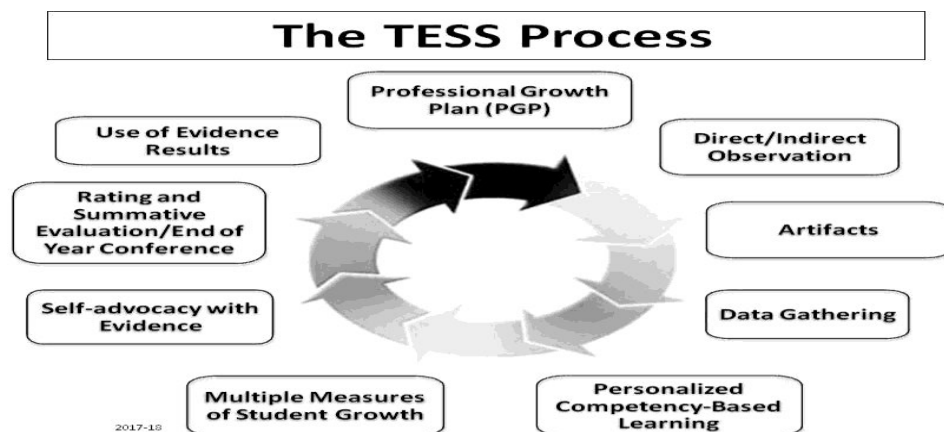| Schools	Students	Teachers	Principals	Assistant Principals	Other Administrators	Total Administrators
27	8,558	810	27	11	12	50

The resources requested for the *ACHIEVE* TSL grant will be used to: 1) design, develop and implement a technologically-advanced Human Capital Management System which provides 24/7 access to tools to improve teacher and school leader efficacy; 2) create a Performance Based Compensation System to recruit and incentivize highly effective and accomplished teachers and principals; 3) target and meet the urgent learning needs of students in high-poverty/low-performing schools in nine remote rural school districts in Arkansas along the Mississippi Delta; 4) use job-embedded *blended coaching*, evidence-based professional learning, micro-credentialing, and badging to significantly improve teacher and school leader effectiveness; 5) generate, grow and retain a pipeline of diverse highly effective teachers and school leaders who will serve schools in the consortium high priority schools; 6) implement and integrate all of these strategies as a part of a comprehensive

large-scale transformation plan to significantly raise student achievement in nine high poverty rural school districts in Arkansas. This approach, of combining a Human Capital Management System (HCMS) with the use and expansion of a Performance Based Compensation System (PBCS) to dramatically improve the efficacy of teachers and school leaders, as this proposal will demonstrate, explicitly addresses the Absolute and Competitive Priorities. The HCMS will be used as the mechanism to support and advance teacher and school leader efficacy; the PBCS will be used to incentivize the competence that our districts want to grow.   Program components and services are detailed in the *Project Design* section.

(a) Clear measures of educator performance, with demonstrated improvement in student achievement.

As we increase our investment in providing pathways towards excellence to improve the effectiveness of our teachers and school leaders, it is important that as an organization that we concomitantly direct resources towards rewarding highly effective teaching and school leadership and attracting teachers to teach in schools where they are needed most. We believe that one of the most important data points for highly effective teaching is growth in learning and increases in student achievement. We want to be clear that a "highly effective" rating can only be paired with an increase in growth in student learning. The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) TESS Model (TESS is the Teacher Excellence and Support System and is based on the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teacher Evaluation), which is used for teacher evaluation in the state of Arkansas, will be used as the evaluation framework. The Arkansas Department of Education will train all teachers and administrators in our *ACHIEVE* districts in how to effectively use TESS. In the high priority schools receiving intensive support, the ADE will work closely with administrators, teachers and coaches to facilitate formal teacher evaluation, collect data, and use digital portfolios to identify areas of improvement in practice.

The TESS Process

Professional Growth Plan (PGP)

Use of Evidence Results

Direct/Indirect Observation

Rating and Summative Evaluation/End of Year Conference

Artifacts

Self-advocacy with Evidence

Data Gathering

Multiple Measures of Student Growth

Personalized Competency-Based Learning

2017-18

Educator Effectiveness Formulas – Annual effectiveness ratings will be based on formula calculations that combine multiple factors – equal weight is given to Student Achievement and non-achievement-based metrics (observations / surveys / school commitment).

PEER REVIEW: One of the critical components that we are adding to the *ACHIEVE* Evaluation and Effectiveness Formula is PEER REVIEW which will account for 10% of the total weighted score of the evaluation. A team of 3-5 teachers who have been evaluated as "Highly Effective" for at least 3-5 consecutive years will provide an evidenced-based assessment of the teacher's efficacy using video observation footage; notes from critical feedback from *SIMBE Huddles*; formative and assessment data; evidence from Virtual Networks for Improvement; and running notes from lesson studies facilitated by the teacher. The PEER REVIEW team will develop a digital portfolio that will chart the teacher's growth in effectiveness throughout the course of the academic year. The PEER REVIEW team will be provided with a stipend and bi-weekly release time to provide support and hold critical conversations with teachers.

ACHIEVE Effectiveness Formulas					
Component	**Component Score**		**Percent of Score**		**Weighted Score**
Essential Practices (EP)	0.0 - 4.0	x	20%	=	0 – 80
Peer Review	**0.0 – 4.0**	**x**	**10%**	**=**	**0 – 40**
Individual Value-Added Student Achievement Data (IVA)	0.0 - 4.0	x	35%	=	0 - 140
Teacher-Assessed Student Achievement Data (TAS)	0.0 - 4.0	x	15%	=	0 - 60
Student Survey of Practice (SSP)	0.0 - 4.0	x	10%	=	0 - 40
Commitment to the School Community (CSC)	0.0 - 4.0	x	10%	=	0 - 40
Total *ACHIEVE* Evaluation Score Range:					**0 - 400**
Core Professionalism (CP)	Meets Standard				No Change

Educator Effectiveness Labels – Upon completion of annual effectiveness evaluation procedures and after annual student growth data is linked to observational results, each educator will receive an Effectiveness Performance Rating aligned to a numerical score:

ACHIEVE Educator Effectiveness Rating (Score)			
Ineffective	**Progressing**	**Effective**	**Highly Effective**
(0.0 – 200)	(201 – 299)	(300 – 349)	(350 – 400)

Educator performance ratings and scores will influence placement in Professional Growth Tracks and will help administrators and teachers develop Professional Growth Plans that promote improvement (see Tier 2). Educators who attain a *Highly Effective* and *Effective* rating will be eligible for annual performance-based compensation awards.

Performance-based Compensation System (PBCS): *ACHIEVE* district schools will distribute performance-based compensation incentives and sustain beyond federal funding a PBCS that links salary advancement and promotion to annual educator evaluation results and willingness to serve lowest performing schools. Educators will be eligible to receive annual performance-based compensation based on effectiveness evaluation ratings, high-priority hiring and placement incentives and *Targeted Support / Improvement* school retention incentives.

ACHIEVE: Teacher Performance-Based Compensation Rewards *		
Area	**Highly Effective**	**Effective**
Overall Educator Effectiveness Rating Award • 50% Educator Evaluations / Observations / Surveys/ Peer Review • 50% Student Achievement Measures (IVA and TAS)	▆▆ per year	▆▆ per year
High-Priority Content Area Placement Incentive (Placement of ESL / Special Ed. / World Languages / Math educators in <u>Priority Level 1 schools</u> – 50% upon hiring; 50% upon completion of first school year contingent on *Highly Effective or Effective* rating)	▆▆	▆▆
Maximum PBCS Awards	Up to ▆▆	Up to ▆▆

* Actual PBCS reward amounts subject to change, based on number of eligible candidates.

TEACHERS PERFORMANCE BASED COMPENSATION
Tier 1 Compensation: Recruitment. Teachers who accept a position at one of the high priority schools designated for intensive support will receive a $3,000 signing bonus.
Tier 2: Compensation: Performance Category A – Teachers. Teachers who receive a rating of "Highly Effective" or move from "Effective" to "Highly Effective" will receive an $8,000 dollar yearly bonus. Overall effectiveness rating will be based on 50% Educator Evaluations/ Observations/Surveys/Peer Review and 50% Student Achievement Measures (IVA and TESS).
Tier 3: Compensation Performance Category B – Teachers. Teachers who receive an "Effective" rating or move from "Developing" to "Effective" will receive a ▆▆ dollar yearly bonus. The Overall effectiveness rating will be based on 50% Educator valuations/ Observations/Surveys/Peer Review and 50% Student Achievement Measures (IVA and TESS)

SCHOOL LEADERS PERFORMANCE BASED COMPENSATION
Tier 1: Compensation: Recruitment. School leaders who have shown evidence of consistently raising student achievement (5 years or more as a "highly effective" teacher or a "highly effective" school leader) and accepts a position at one of the high priority schools designated for intensive support will receive a ▮▮▮▮ signing bonus.
Tier 2: Performance Based Inventive Category A – School Leaders. School leaders who receive a "Highly Effective Rating" based on 85% of the students in the building showing 1 year of growth in student learning on the Arkansas Department of Education Statewide Assessment and achieves and maintains an accountability grade of a "B" or higher will receive a bonus of ▮▮▮▮.
Tier 3: Compensation: Performance Category B – School Leaders. School leaders who receive an "Effective" or "Highly Effective" whose state accountability grade is elevated (e.g. moving from a "D" to a "C"; from a "C" to a "B", etc.) and sustains the accountability grade of a "B" or higher will receive a bonus of ▮▮▮▮.

The ultimate goal is to create job-embedded supports which empower teachers and administrators with a pathway towards fostering classrooms and buildings where student learning remains the foremost important function of the work occurring in schools.

(b) Provides educators with ongoing, differentiated, targeted, and personalized support and feedback for improvement, including professional development opportunities designed to increase effectiveness.

Implementation of *ACHIEVE* will empower Arkansas districts to launch, refine, improve and sustain a project designed to meet the needs of schools, educators, students and families impacted by significant challenges impeding success. *ACHIEVE* will provide two Tiers of Service aligned to needs, gaps and weaknesses identified by the Planning Team (see *Project Design* for services and project goal, objectives and outcomes):

ACHIEVE Project Design Framework	
Tier 1: Comprehensive HCMS	**Tier 2: Educator Quality Supports**
Evidence-based Human Capital Management Talent Management Educator Effectiveness Model High Quality Evaluation Plan Performance-Based Compensation	Professional Growth Tracks Professional Development Principal Network Instructional Coaching New Teacher Network Career Ladders

Need	*ACHIEVE* Strategies
Need 1: Nine Rural Arkansas districts lack resources to implement effectiveness-based HCMS across all schools.	• *ACHIEVE* will conduct districtwide HCMS audits to identify strengths, weaknesses and gaps in systems capacity / functionality to transition to data-driven decision-making. • Harvard University Strategic Data Project training will prepare HCMS administrators to analyze and interpret data to impact all facets of human capital management. • Expanded Talent Management systems will increase capacity to integrate HCMS components and connect Educator Quality Supports to Educator Effectiveness data.
Need 2: Nine Rural Arkansas districts lack sufficient capacity to objectively evaluate educator effectiveness across all schools.	• Districts will utilize Arkansas' *Teacher Excellence and Support System* (*TESS*) to increase rigor and improve alignment between educator performance ratings and student achievement with a minimum 50% of evaluation ratings determined by student growth measures. • Professional development – coaching, critical friend observations, educator evaluation process training – will support central administrators and school leaders responsible for conducting educator evaluations to increase fidelity to model and inter-rater reliability.
Need 3: Nine Rural Arkansas districts lack a process to connect educators with supports that increase effectiveness.	• Professional Growth Plans will connect educator evaluation results to professional learning opportunities that address individual needs and solve shared problems of practice. • *ACHIEVE* will expand Coaching and Career Ladder opportunities to elevate performance and promote career advancement for principals, assistant principals and teachers. • Instructional Coaching, Principal Network, New Teacher Network and Career Ladders will provide supports to raise educator effectiveness and student achievement.
Need 4: Nine Rural districts lack strategies and resources to meet state/local equity plans.	• *ACHIEVE* will hire an Equity Instructional Coach deployed to address issues of inequity in teaching and learning and facilitate strategies that reduce / eliminate equity barriers. • Retention PBCS bonuses / High Priority Content Area signing bonuses will motivate *Highly Effective* educators to teach in and remain serving high-need schools.
Need 5: Nine Rural Arkansas districts lack resources needed to integrate and accelerate systems change disrupted by COVID-19 pandemic.	• *ACHIEVE* will expand HCMS systems using Talent Management software to ensure Educator Quality Supports (professional learning) are connected to individual educator Professional Growth Plans to address instructional improvement needs of teachers and school leaders. • Performance-based Comp. will be distributed to educators who meet *Highly Effective* rating standards and retention bonuses for educators serving high-poverty/low-achieving schools. • Educator Quality Supports will target individual professional learning needs, expand instructional coaching and diversify Career Ladder opportunities for educators.

ACHIEVE: ABSOLUTE AND COMPETITIVE PRIORITIES

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 2: HIGH-NEED SCHOOLS.

ACHIEVE **will serve 27 Arkansas schools in 9 districts.** All schools (27 of 27) meet the *TSL* definition of a High-Need School. All 27 schools have Free and Reduced Lunch rates exceeding 50% (see chart below) and are impacted by significant equity issues (high numbers of minority students) and low performance (average ELA / Math and Science proficiency is 16.7%, in addition to poverty (average 84%: range 73% - 99%).

School	Grade Level	District	Student Enrollment	% Minority	% Low Income	Reading Proficient	Math Proficient	Science Proficient
Blytheville Elementary	3-5	Blytheville	384	89%	80%	12%	12%	10%
Blytheville Middle	6-8	Blytheville	411	86%	83%	13%	6%	9%
Blytheville New Tech High	9-12	Blytheville	492	86%	74%	14%	5%	13%
Blytheville Primary	K-2	Blytheville	429	89%	81%	*	*	*
Brinkley High School	7-12	Brinkley	181	72%	76%	20%	10%	13%
C.B. Partee Elementary	K-6	Brinkley	245	76%	81%	12%	11%	5%
Cross County Elementary Tech	K-6	Cross County	315	8%	73%	49%	57%	48%
Cross County High New Tech	7-12	Cross County	292	10%	73%	47%	37%	43%
Central Elementary	PK-2	Dumas	237	78%	88%	*	*	*
Dumas Junior High	7-9	Dumas	283	85%	73%	32%	24%	25%
Dumas High School	10-12	Dumas	232	81%	74%	9%	8%	13%
Reed Elementary	3-6	Dumas	332	83%	84%	15%	10%	14%
Earle Elementary	K-6	Earle	236	98%	96%	10%	7%	7%
Earle High School	7-12	Earle	194	99%	94%	8%	2%	5%
Beryl Henry Upper Elementary	5-6	Hope	240	83%	89%	15%	10%	11%
Creative Action Team School	K-12	Hope	28	93%	89%	15%	0%	0%
Hope Academy of Public Service	5-8	Hope	236	71%	84%	43%	34%	39%
Hope High School	9-12	Hope	616	81%	73%	18%	7%	11%
Wm. Jefferson Clinton Primary	P-4	Hope	932	81%	88%	17%	14%	13%
Yerger Junior High	7-8	Hope	234	81%	80%	19%	7%	14%
Anna Strong Intermediate	PK-6	Lee	384	91%	94%	9%	14%	5%
Lee High School	7-12	Lee	294	91%	87%	11%	2%	5%
Carroll Smith Elementary	1-4	Osceola	319	89%	92%	16%	18%	14%
North Elementary	PK-K	Osceola	94	88%	91%	*	*	*
Osceola High School	9-12	Osceola	310	90%	87%	8%	7%	9%
Osceola STEM Charter	5-8	Osceola	314	94%	89%	14%	8%	12%
Strong-Huttig Schools	K-12	Strong-Huttig	294	79%	93%	18%	8%	15%
Totals / Averages	-	-	**8,558**	**80%**	**84%**	**19%**	**13%**	**15%**

Source: 2020-2021 Arkansas Department of Education; 2019 Arkansas State Standardized Test Data; * Not Tested

All *ACHIEVE* Arkansas District Consortium Schools meet the *Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program* definition of High-Need School (see Appendix for NCES data for all participating schools). All 27 *ACHIEVE* schools have free and reduced lunch rates exceeding 50% -- districtwide free and reduced lunch rates across all schools average 85%, with 4 of 9 districts over 90%. TSL grant activities are 100% focused on these schools.

COMPETITIVE PRIORITY 1—**Supporting Educator Growth and Professional Development**

This initiative will create opportunities for teachers to incorporate on-going, recursive feedback to improve classroom efficacy while cross-populating solutions to problems of practice which offer promising practices for highly effective educator development. This initiative will also use job-embedded blended coaching, evidence-based professional development, Virtual Networks for Improvement, micro-credentialing and badging to significantly improve teacher and school leader effectiveness.

(a) Efforts to recruit, select, prepare, support, and develop talented individuals—to serve as mentors, instructional coaches, principals, or School Leaders in High-Need Schools who have the knowledge and skills to significantly improve instruction.

The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence and ACHIEVE consortium partners will implement a comprehensive approach to recruiting, selecting, preparing, supporting and developing talented individuals to serve as mentors, instructional coaches and school leaders in high-need schools. Efforts to build a pipeline of instructional leaders include a comprehensive Career Ladder that prepares educators who attain *Highly Effective* performance ratings to succeed in leadership roles and raise student achievement, including:

Component	*ACHIEVE* Career Ladder Strategy
Harvard Strategic Data Project (see Layer 2)	• *ACHIEVE* educators – central administrators, principals, assistant principals, HCMS administrators and / or teachers – will complete outstanding professional learning through the Harvard University Strategic Data Project. The Strategic Data Project Fellowship is a two-year program that strengthens the capacity of education agencies to use data to drive instructional improvement.
Micro-Credentials (see Layer 2)	• Educators who attain *Highly Effective* performance ratings will be eligible to complete micro-credentials to ensure a diversity of perspectives shape educator growth and improve educator instructional capacity and knowledge with a focus on equity in learning throughout each course.
Badging (see Layer 2)	• Badging will promote self-directed professional growth by allowing eligible educators to choose from a menu of Badging options – aligned to Career Ladder positions – to increase individual

	opportunities to advance careers as they move up the Career Ladder. Badging professional development – coaching, mentoring, professional learning communities, e-learning modules and / or co-instructional, embedded professional learning – will increase educator quality and expand capacity within schools to address teaching and learning problems of practice and needs.
National Board Certification (see Layer 2)	• *ACHIEVE* will support educator attainment of National Board Certification. Educators who maintain *Highly Effective* ratings for a minimum of three consecutive years will be eligible to apply for the National Board Certification initiative. Educators who complete the rigorous program will be eligible to pursue advanced Career Ladder positions within their schools.

ACHIEVE Career Ladder professional learning will prepare educators to compete for and fill Career Ladder positions – Instructional Coaches; New Teacher Mentors; Professional Learning Team members; Principal Coaches – that meet instructional leadership needs, catalyze school improvement and raise student achievement.

(b) Supporting High-Need Schools-recruiting, preparing, hiring, developing, retaining effective educators.

Consortium schools will implement a comprehensive approach to recruiting, selecting, preparing, supporting and developing talented individuals to improve instructional quality and raise student achievement in high-need, low-performing Arkansas schools, including:

Component	*ACHIEVE* Improvement Strategy
Recruiting (see Layer 1)	• *ACHIEVE* will strengthen the screening and selection process to assess the effectiveness of prospective teachers, principals and administrators by identifying candidates who understand and embrace the consortium's instructional vision. Because recruiting quality candidates is a challenge, districts are mindful of the efficacy of alternative certification programs, partnerships with colleges and universities, and "grow your own" recruiting programs to best provide teachers and principals able to raise student achievement. <u>CSL will collaborate with *ACHIEVE* partners to develop and implement a plan to recruit, employ and retain underrepresented educators.</u>
Selecting (see Layer 1)	• *ACHIEVE* will provide equal opportunity for employment without regard to actual or perceived age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or other protected class. Prior to selecting individuals for positions (both internal and external candidates), school leaders will review previous educator effectiveness ratings and heavily weigh letters of recommendation to ensure applicants for positions have a history of raising student achievement and a history of maintaining *Highly Effective / Effective* performance ratings. If candidates are new to the field of education, HMCS leaders will review references and select

	candidates who possess the strong support and expertise of educator preparation professors.
Preparing (see Layer 2)	• *ACHIEVE* will launch and sustain multiple strategies to help educators raise student achievement and improve instruction in Arkansas consortium schools and classrooms, including: ○ Professional Growth Tracks – all educators will be assigned annually to one of four Professional Growth Tracks based on length of education experience and annual educator effectiveness evaluation ratings to ensure individual educators receive the professional development and supports they need to improve practice (Track 1: Initial Professional Development; Track 2: Ongoing Professional Growth; Track 3: Professional Development – Concern and Track 4: Professional Development Warning). ○ Principal Network – school leaders will engage in a district-wide network for support connecting Principals and Assistant Principals to leadership preparatory strategies (Principal Coaching; SAM Innovation Project Training; Leadership Evaluation Development and Professional Learning) designed to prepare school / district administrators to successfully lead. ○ New Teacher Network – all new teachers (new to the profession and / or new to Consortium Districts) will participate in the multi-year network for support that connects new classroom educators to multiple supports (Induction Support; New Teacher Professional Learning Community; New Teacher Mentoring) designed to reduce attrition and improve the instructional expertise of new teachers educating Arkansas students. ○ Professional Learning – all educators (teachers, instructional personnel, school leaders, district administrators) will complete annual professional development (Self-Selected Professional Learning; High Impact Professional Learning) connected to individual Professional Growth Plans and informed by annual educator evaluations to address problems of practice, elevate instructional leadership strengths and raise student achievement.
Supporting (see Layer 2)	• *ACHIEVE* will implement an extensive Instructional Coaching model that connects educators to *Highly Effective* Coaches to provide classroom-embedded instructional support and professional learning aligned to individual problems of practice identified in annual educator evaluations. Educators from all schools and grade levels, PK – 12, will benefit from Coaching support.
Developing (see Layer 2)	• *ACHIEVE* will provide opportunities for talent development, professional growth and advancement linked to educator performance. A Career Ladder will offer multiple strategies (Harvard University Strategic Data Project; Micro-Credentials; Badging; National Board Certification) to advance *Highly Effective* educators to higher leadership and instructional positions.

(c) Increasing number of teachers with advanced educator certification or certification in shortage area.

ACHIEVE, through its Career Ladder strategy (see Layer 2), will provide *Highly Effective* educators with opportunities to attain National Board certification, multiple Micro-Credential certifications and Harvard University Strategic Data Project certification that improve instructional leadership in consortium classrooms and schools and increase the number of educators who possess advanced educator certifications.

(d) High-quality professional development opportunities that meet needs of diverse learners.

ACHIEVE will adopt an innovative approach to professional learning that couples high-impact, high-priority professional development that meets consortium-wide needs with opportunities for educators to choose professional development that addresses individual problems of practice or elevates strengths which educators choose to further develop.

Personalized Professional Learning (see Layer 2)	• Individual educators – teachers, instructional personnel, administrators – will be empowered to choose professional learning options that address issues identified in annual educator evaluations. Professional learning choice strategies will reduce educator fatigue caused by mandatory professional learning experiences that do not address individual growth needs and will allow greater flexibility in the delivery of professional learning that results in targeted improvement aligned to individual Professional Growth Plans.
High Impact Professional Learning (see Layer 2)	• *ACHIEVE* resources will invest in High Impact Professional Learning that will help districts meet high-level priorities and implement transformative, consortium-wide improvement strategies. High Impact Professional Learning will include but not be limited to opportunities for administrators and teachers offered by Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at the University of Arkansas, Harvard University Strategic Data Project, National SAM Innovation Project, The National Board and The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence.

COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY 2—INCREASING EDUCATOR DIVERSITY.

ACHIEVE will engage as many stakeholders as possible in the implementation and decision-making process impacting consortium schools to broaden support for reform efforts and increase engagement in education. Districts will recruit stakeholders from traditionally-underrepresented groups to serve on Advisory Committees, planning teams and sub-committees – persons of color; persons from non-English speaking households; persons with disabilities; persons of poverty – to learn firsthand about the ever-changing needs of under-represented

communities and groups. Districts seek to hire and retain a diverse workforce and are uniquely positioned to amplify initiatives through new teacher recruitment that connects HCMS personnel with partner universities, including the University of Arkansas, Arkansas State University, Central Arkansas University, and Arkansas Tech University). Targeted recruitment at partner institutions of higher education with diverse student enrollment and respected educator preparatory colleges / programs will ensure *ACHIEVE* school students learn from the best trained faculty and learn in schools whose educators reflect the rich diversity of Arkansas communities and schools. Meaningful engagement of members from traditionally under-represented groups served by consortium schools will ensure grant management and grant implementation aligns to the priorities and needs of communities impacted by *ACHIEVE* reform efforts.

(a) Preparation strategies focused on underrepresented teacher candidates, and which may include "grow your own programs," / clear pathways and intensive support to enter teaching profession.

CSL is partnering with The Center for Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Boyd Griffin Associates to conduct consortium-wide Equity Audits of teaching and learning programs. Results of the Equity Audit will illuminate systemic biases, if they exist, that impact equity in professional opportunities and equity in student opportunities. Based on Equity Audit findings, administrators and partner equity experts will design a plan to eliminate biases influencing representation of groups impacted by systemic inequities in student programs and educator programs. Equity Audit results and subsequent recommendations will provide the consortium with an equity map leading toward improved outcomes for educators, students and the community. A key objective of the *ACHIEVE* Equity Audit will be to identify barriers that reduce representation across diverse groups in faculty, administrators and staff (particularly representation of Black and Latino men) and devise a plan to overcome barriers that reduce educator diversity in Arkansas consortium schools. Equity Audit findings will provide the data needed to develop recruitment, marketing and support plans that increase educator diversity, promote retention of diverse educators in Arkansas schools and improve representation of traditionally-under-represented groups in faculty, administration and staff in our 27 rural, consortium schools.

(b) Professional growth and leadership opportunities for diverse educators, including opportunities to influence school, district, or State policies and practices in order to improve educator diversity.

ACHIEVE will include a Career Ladder strategy that provides educators opportunities to attain advanced certification and complete professional learning that prepares them to fill instructional leadership, school leadership and district leadership positions. Career Ladder professional learning will nurture the professional

growth of educators with a focus on equity in learning. An equity focus throughout professional learning will help prepare educators to respond to systemic biases that manifest themselves in achievement gaps and education attainment gaps throughout *ACHIEVE* consortium schools and school communities. The *ACHIEVE* Advisory Committee and Professional Learning Teams will actively recruit diverse membership to ensure a diversity of perspectives influence the implementation of *ACHIEVE* during federal funding and beyond the grant period as successful components of the project are sustained.

(c) High-quality professional development on addressing bias in instructional practice and fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive workplace and school climate for educators.

Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at the University of Arkansas will offer multiple professional development opportunities focused on increasing inclusivity and reducing bias in instruction, workplace and school policies / procedures. Professional Learning choices (see Layer 2) will include multiple options related to two Critical Themes that address bias in instructional practice and school learning environments: School Climate and Equity and Social and Emotional Learning. A menu of Micro-Credential courses (see Layer 2) – will help educators implement practices that build equity in learning across Literacy, STEM and Computer Science, Educational Leadership and Improvement Science approaches to improve access to quality programs for all students that reduce achievement gaps separating students of color and /or poverty from others.

(d) Data systems, timelines, and action plans for promoting inclusive and bias-free human resources practices that promote and support development of educator and school leader diversity.

In addition to conducting an Equity Audit, HCMS experts and *ACHIEVE* partners will work with consortium schools to create a recruitment and marketing plan designed to attract candidates from traditionally under-represented groups in the field of education (Black and Latino men) to support *ACHIEVE* Consortium HMCS practices and strategies in need of improvement. The Equity Audit and HCMS reforms will focus on identifying opportunities to increase the diversity of instructional and school leadership. Combined with results from the Equity Audit, partners and administrators will identify systems, policies and plans in need of revision to better reach and engage traditionally under-represented groups in the field of education.

(A) NEED FOR PROJECT

The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence, Inc. (CSL), a non-profit organization as defined in 2 CFR 200.70 and fiscal agent, in partnership with the Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at the University of Arkansas and nine, rural Arkansas school districts (Blytheville, Brinkley, Cross County, Dumas, Earle, Hope, Lee County, Osceola and Strong-Huttig), proposes *ACHIEVE*: **Arkansas Consortium Harnessing Innovation, Equity & Verifiable Excellence!** These nine districts struggle to overcome daily challenges that impact the quality of education programs serving high-poverty, low-performing students.

(i) Identifying gaps/weaknesses in services, including nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

To meet diverse and changing needs, *ACHIEVE* districts convened a *TSL* Planning Task Force – comprised of district administrators, HCMS professionals, finance officers, curriculum specialists, principals, assistant principals and teachers – to design a comprehensive *TSL* initiative that will help the nine districts improve the quality of education, elevate educator effectiveness, raise student achievement and increase equity in learning. During planning, the Task Force identified multiple barriers / needs that impede the success of Arkansas students and diminish district efforts to promote ongoing improvement of education, including: (1) Educator Needs; (2) Student Needs; (4) COVID Reentry Needs; and (4) Gaps and Weaknesses. **(1) Educator Needs:** There are 810 Certified Teachers in our nine, rural districts – almost half of them 390 (48%) are Inexperienced Teachers and 58 are on Emergency Credentials. Of 62 teachers who were evaluated during the 2019-2020 school year, only 40 (65%) were rated Proficient or Above. Our districts have a critical need for the services outlined in *ACHIEVE,* especially professional development in improvement science and equity and the support system found in Instructional Coaching, Personal Growth Plans and Virtual Networks of Improvement.

School District	Certified Teachers	Teachers Evaluated	Proficient or Above	Emergency Credentials	Inexperienced Teachers
Blytheville	163	0	0	7	64
Brinkley	40	4	2	0	17
Cross County	48	0	0	2	15
Dumas	134	13	12	3	107
Earle	50	5	0	30	32
Hope	179	37	24	10	66
Lee County	66	0	0	2	33
Osceola	89	3	2	2	41
Strong-Huttig	41	0	0	2	15
TOTALS	**810**	**62**	**40**	**58**	**390**

Source: Arkansas Department of Education, 2019-2020.

Page | 1

Educators across all *ACHIEVE* District schools – teachers and school leaders – lack access to professional learning and educator quality supports that reflect professional growth needs. High-need schools are unable to engage in programs that elevate educator expertise and increase educator capacity to integrate proven instructional strategies that raise student achievement in classroom learning. Ongoing struggles to maintain adequate school funding given a trend of decreasing enrollment as students leave the district for education alternatives has also resulted in the reduction and elimination of professional learning programs in high-need rural schools. Federal support is needed to expand educator access to professional development opportunities and to expand educator capacity to utilize proven, research-based instructional strategies to increase the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Deep cuts to professional growth programs limit the capacity of rural educators to engage in the learning needed to raise student achievement and increase equitable access.

(2) Student Needs: The nine rural Arkansas districts participating in *ACHIEVE* struggle to educate high-poverty (average 84% Free/Reduced Lunches and SAIPE U.S. Census Poverty of 30% / low-achieving (average 15.7% proficiency in Reading, Math and Science). The chart below highlights our schools' demographics/scores:

School	Grade Level	District	Student Enrollment	% Minority	% Low Income	Reading Proficient	Math Proficient	Science Proficient
Blytheville Elementary	3-5	Blytheville	384	89%	80%	12%	12%	10%
Blytheville Middle	6-8	Blytheville	411	86%	83%	13%	6%	9%
Blytheville New Tech High	9-12	Blytheville	492	86%	74%	14%	5%	13%
Blytheville Primary	K-2	Blytheville	429	89%	81%	*	*	*
Brinkley High School	7-12	Brinkley	181	72%	76%	20%	10%	13%
C.B. Partee Elementary	K-6	Brinkley	245	76%	81%	12%	11%	5%
Cross County Elementary Tech	K-6	Cross County	315	8%	73%	49%	57%	48%
Cross County High New Tech	7-12	Cross County	292	10%	73%	47%	37%	43%
Central Elementary	PK-2	Dumas	237	78%	88%	*	*	*
Dumas Junior High	7-9	Dumas	283	85%	73%	32%	24%	25%
Dumas High School	10-12	Dumas	232	81%	74%	9%	8%	13%
Reed Elementary	3-6	Dumas	332	83%	84%	15%	10%	14%
Earle Elementary	K-6	Earle	236	98%	96%	10%	7%	7%
Earle High School	7-12	Earle	194	99%	94%	8%	2%	5%
Beryl Henry Upper Elementary	5-6	Hope	240	83%	89%	15%	10%	11%
Creative Action Team School	K-12	Hope	28	93%	89%	15%	0%	0%
Hope Academy of Public Service	5-8	Hope	236	71%	84%	43%	34%	39%
Hope High School	9-12	Hope	616	81%	73%	18%	7%	11%
Wm. Jefferson Clinton Primary	P-4	Hope	932	81%	88%	17%	14%	13%
Yerger Junior High	7-8	Hope	234	81%	80%	19%	7%	14%
Anna Strong Intermediate	PK-6	Lee	384	91%	94%	9%	14%	5%
Lee High School	7-12	Lee	294	91%	87%	11%	2%	5%

Carroll Smith Elementary	1-4	Osceola	319	89%	92%	16%	18%	14%
North Elementary	PK-K	Osceola	94	88%	91%	*	*	*
Osceola High School	9-12	Osceola	310	90%	87%	8%	7%	9%
Osceola STEM Charter	5-8	Osceola	314	94%	89%	14%	8%	12%
Strong-Huttig Schools	K-12	Strong-Huttig	294	79%	93%	18%	8%	15%
Totals / Averages			**8,558**	**80%**	**84%**	**19%**	**13%**	**15%**

Source: 2020-2021 Arkansas Department of Education; 2019 Arkansas State Standardized Test Data; * Not Tested

(3) COVID Reentry Needs: Our *ACHIEVE* district schools, like schools throughout the nation, have faced significant challenges imposed upon them by the COVID-19 pandemic and health crisis. All schools have been pretty much closed to in-person instruction since March 2020; most finished the 2021 school year in some form of hybrid learning environment. Challenges and obstacles faced by our rural schools include: isolation, limited technology, no Internet services, no transportation to/from remote areas and no way to stay in touch with teachers and schools. Now, as schools face the reality of student and educator reentry into pre-COVID educational environments, personnel recognize the duration of the COVID-19 hiatus from school settings will result in social and emotional challenges among students AND educators that schools and faculty are ill-prepared to address and mitigate. Our schools require new supports to help students, families and educators transition from more than a full year of remote learning to in-person educational environments. *ACHIEVE* will launch educator quality supports that include strategies that prepare educators to support youth as they reenter school-based social and academic environments and cope with the trauma / stresses of COVID-19 reentry.

(4) Gaps and Weaknesses: In response to significant challenges and barriers impacting the success and future potential of students, The Center for Strategic Leadership, and partners, convened a *TSL* Planning Task Force to assess district needs and propose solutions that fill gaps and strengthen weaknesses. *ACHIEVE* – the result of collaborative planning, research, design and compromise – will improve educator quality in **27 high-need rural schools in 9 high-need districts**, enhance learning opportunities for **more than 8,500 low-performing students**, fill gaps in current programs and strengthen teaching and learning weaknesses that impede success.

Arkansas School Districts: Gaps	*ACHIEVE* Improvement Strategies
Need 1: Districts lack resources to consistently implement an effectiveness-based HCMS/PBCS across all schools.	
Gap 1: Multi-districtwide implementation of effectiveness-based Human Capital Management and Performance-Based Compensation Systems in nine rural districts is limited by resources.	*ACHIEVE* will improve and expand the Human Capital Management and Performance-Based Compensation Systems (Tier 1) and enhance educator effectiveness in high-need schools across nine rural districts (Tier 2) to promote equity across all schools and districts.

Need 2: Districts lack sufficient capacity to objectively evaluate educator effectiveness across all schools.	
Gap 2: Use of *TESS Evaluation Framework* to assess educator effectiveness is vulnerable to rater bias and lack of fidelity to the model.	*ACHIEVE* will provide educators Improvement Science training to increase fidelity of tool; coaching and "critical friend evaluations" will increase inter-rater reliability / reduce bias (Tier of Support #1).
Need 3: Districts lack a process to connect educators with supports that increase effectiveness.	
Gap 3: Our nine districts do not utilize systems of support that align professional development to individual strengths and weaknesses.	*ACHIEVE* will utilize Professional Growth Plans linked to effectiveness ratings to connect educators to extensive professional development designed to improve practice (Tier of Support #2).
Need 4: District lacks strategies and resources to meet Local and State Equity Plans.	
Gap 4: HCMS strategies do not adequately address equity gaps that impair equal student access to high quality learning across the nine districts participating in the project.	*ACHIEVE* will provide professional development to administrators and HCMS personnel to equitably distribute *Highly Effective / Effective* educators across ALL schools; incentives will encourage teachers to serve Targeted Support and Improvement schools.

Our nine partner, rural Arkansas school districts face significant challenges. Policies and systems do not support school districts prepared to overcome the challenges of educating high-need youth impacted by chronic failure, poverty, low education attainment and underprepared educators. *TSL* funding will provide resources to implement positive reforms that build local capacity to raise educator and student achievement.

(ii) Improve outcomes using existing funding streams supported by community, state, federal resources.

ACHIEVE schools are committed to district-wide improvement that leads to positive social and academic outcomes for high-need students. During the past ten years, our Arkansas districts have implemented multiple complementary projects targeting improvement across district priorities: (1) Learning Pathways to improve education alignment and increase student readiness for college and careers; (2) School Climate Initiative to increase student access to safe, supportive learning environments; and (3) Social and Emotional Learning and Mental Health to strengthen school and family supports for vulnerable students. After extensive investment in improvement initiatives focused primarily on student-centric strategies and currently funded with CARES Act and Recovery Act dollars, *ACHIEVE* seeks to focus reform efforts on improving educator quality across all grade levels and content areas to promote school improvement, increase equitable student access to high-quality educators and elevate student academic and social outcomes. *ACHIEVE* will leverage lessons learned implementing complementary reform efforts and support continuous improvement of transformation initiatives:

- **Learning Pathways:** District-funded Learning Pathways provide real-world learning opportunities for students aligned to career and college readiness. Each pathway (Arts; New Tech; International

Baccalaureate; STEAM; World Culture / Languages; Manufacturing / Skilled Trades) is designed to offer students relevant and engaging coursework in partnership with business and industry. Pathway partnerships provide theme-based instruction, internships, mentoring, and shadowing opportunities for students as they explore diverse career and college options. Learning Pathway efforts ground PK – 12 teaching and learning in career/college readiness strategies that better position underserved students for career and college success.

- **School Climate Initiatives:** *ACHIEVE* district schools are in the middle of a multi-year initiative to improve learning environments, strengthen mental health support systems, increase social and emotional learning supports for vulnerable students, reduce violence impacting schools / students / families and increase equity in learning by reducing barriers impeding the success of students of color / refugee students / students of poverty. School Climate Initiatives are designed to create safe, supportive, productive school environments that improve instruction, grades PK – 12, and empower positive academic and social outcomes in high-need students.

- **Social and Emotional Learning and Mental Health:** *ACHIEVE* district schools are implementing district-funded strategies to strengthen Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and Mental Health supports for students, families and educators. Our districts recognize the need to invest in SEL and Mental Health to help both students and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions, achieve personal and collective relationships and make responsible and caring decisions. SEL and Mental Health improvement strategies include professional development, restorative practices, implementation of PK – 12 SEL curricula, expanded mental health access through partnerships with mental health providers and school-based counseling. Strengthening SEL / Mental Health supports while improving instructional practices and academic content facilitates transition to a holistic approach to child development and learning. After nearly a year and a half of COVID, SEL supports are critical.

ACHIEVE will provide the resources needed to expand upon existing student-centric improvement efforts and help our nine Arkansas school districts elevate educator effectiveness through comprehensive, data-driven Human Capital Management Systems connected to educator effectiveness, educator support systems, performance-based compensation and complementary district improvement and reform strategies.

(iii) Comprehensive effort to improve teaching/learning, support rigorous student academic standards.

This collaboration is historical and monumental – the first of its kind among high-poverty, high-priority rural districts in Arkansas. The collaboration grew out of a convening of teachers and school leaders from the region

with the Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at the University of Arkansas (which received seed funding from the Walton Family Foundation). As a result of that convening, the consortium developed an understanding of the shared, urgent need to advance educational equity in each of our districts. First, we discovered that we had not worked with the level of intention and urgency to ensure that we meet the needs of all of our students despite their demography. Secondly, we developed an understanding of the pragmatic organizational steps that we needed to take in order to create equity-driven organizations. Third, we left equipped with a toolkit of tangible and concrete strategies and protocols we needed to take to accelerate learning in our districts. Fourth, we discovered that across rural districts in this region, each of us, had similar problems of practice that needed to be solved. We concluded that if we were going to eradicate stubborn and persistent achievement gaps in high poverty rural schools in our region that we would need to leverage the collective expertise of all instructional stakeholders across each of the districts. Our goal through this critical work is to: 1) create a technologically-advanced platform that enables all stakeholders across districts to provide the substantive feedback and supports needed to significantly improve teacher and school leader quality and efficacy; 2) incentivize exceptional performance in the classroom and accelerate school-wide transformation; 3) eradicate achievement and opportunity gaps for the most vulnerable students in high-poverty, high priority rural schools; 4) attract and retain a diverse pipeline of highly effective teachers and school leaders; 5) provide, use and implement evidence-based professional learning opportunities that will be the catalyst for igniting, accelerating and sustaining continuous improvement in all of our schools.

Particularly challenging in rural districts is the isolation faced by educators. District by district, we can discover solutions to solve problems of practice; however, sometimes that process is slower moving in rural districts which have the compounded challenges of poverty and limited resources for professional development, and release time for teachers to engage in collaboration. However, when we collaborate across districts and pool our financial resources and intellectual capital together, the power of that collaboration empowers us to go *further faster*. We benefit by hearing from teachers and school leaders from across multiple districts, with similar problems of practice, and solutions that eventually create a clearinghouse of promising practices that can be used to close the achievement and opportunity gaps for all students in our districts. Said differently, our isolation *stymies* us; however, our collaboration *accelerates* our ability to facilitate deep learning for children in classrooms facilitated by highly effective teachers whose mission is to ensure learning growth for every child in their classroom.

We also discovered that our districts individually did not have sophisticated or technologically-advanced platforms or protocols (Human Capital Resource Management Systems) for our teachers and school leaders that enabled us to observe exceptional classroom practice, to collaborate virtually, or to receive deep, evidence-based, multiple-layered and nuanced feedback for improvement that was driven by both qualitative (anecdotal) and quantitative (formative and summative assessment) data. We also had not been intentional in creating a vehicle which honored "teacher voice" as a tool for school or district transformation. The critical significance of our work is that we intend, through our collaborative work together, to change the paradigm of what drives district continuous improvement and that is – elevating teacher voice and using promising practices from the classroom to inform what measures are needed to place our schools on a path of continuous improvement. This means, each of us are committing to doing away with a top-down management approach and allowing the work of highly effective and accomplished teachers to inform how we grow excellence and competence in each of our districts. We are adding *Peer Review* as a weighted evaluation measure for all of our teachers. <u>Peer Review</u>, as one component of a comprehensive evaluation tool, will empower a team of "Highly Effective" teachers who will receive compensation and release time to evaluate, support and mentor teachers in an effort to increase the pipeline of *Highly Effective* teachers. We believe that adding Peer Review as an essential component of the evaluation process creates a collective and shared sense of ownership among all instructional staff for teacher efficacy and student achievement results in our schools. We have created a Districts Collaborate Advisory Committee (DCAC) which includes superintendents, school leaders and accomplished teachers across districts who will provide thought leadership, based on the data-informed results which emerge from exceptional classroom practice to inform how we incorporate, grow, magnify and accelerate results in achievement in all of the rural, high-poverty and high-priority schools within the consortium.

In essence, we, as a consortium are learning that through collaboration, implementing theoretically-sound, evidence-based protocols and using the outcomes from those experiences to grow competence allows what once appeared daunting to become doable. This paradigm shift in using promising classroom practices across districts to drive district transformation is helping us to evolve into learning organizations that will become "equity-driven; data-informed and student focused." We are chipping away quickly at the old paradigm of allowing bureaucracy to become an impediment to school and district transformation. We are

shifting to creating organizations where teacher and school leader quality, practice, efficacy and voice inform critical decision making. Ultimately, all of our member districts want to facilitate what Goodfellow, Bengio and Courville (2018) coined as *deep learning* in all of our schools. <u>The consortium is committed to fostering the conditions that accelerate schools that work for all children</u>. This new paradigm is powered by our collective embrace of a growth mindset which drives us to believe that we can eradicate stubborn and persistent achievement gaps and prepare our students to compete globally. Working in collaboration (as districts) will give us an opportunity to elevate and cross-pollinate promising evidence-based teaching practices to all teachers in our consortium; support instructional staff by giving them 24/7 access to critical feedback, tools and resources that will support their instructional efficacy; allow us to recruit a diverse pipeline of highly effective school leaders and teachers; and incentivize exceptional classroom practice among teachers and school leaders.

(iv) Project design appropriate to, and will successfully address, needs of target population.

Implementation of *ACHIEVE* will empower Arkansas districts to launch, refine, improve and sustain a project designed to meet the needs of schools, educators, students and families impacted by significant challenges impeding success. *ACHIEVE* will provide two Tiers of Service aligned to needs, gaps and weaknesses identified by the Planning Team (see *Project Design* for services and project goal, objectives and outcomes):

ACHIEVE Project Design Framework	
Tier 1: Comprehensive HCMS	**Tier 2: Educator Quality Supports**
Evidence-based Human Capital Management Talent Management Educator Effectiveness Model High Quality Evaluation Plan Performance-Based Compensation	Professional Growth Tracks Professional Development Principal Network Instructional Coaching New Teacher Network Career Ladders
Need	***ACHIEVE* Strategies**
Need 1: Nine Rural Arkansas districts lack resources to implement effectiveness-based HCMS across all	• *ACHIEVE* will conduct districtwide HCMS audits to identify strengths, weaknesses and gaps in systems capacity / functionality to transition to data-driven decision-making. • Harvard University Strategic Data Project training will prepare HCMS administrators to analyze and interpret data to impact all facets of human capital management. • Expanded Talent Management systems will increase capacity to integrate HCMS components

schools.	and connect Educator Quality Supports to Educator Effectiveness data.
Need 2: Nine Rural Arkansas districts lack sufficient capacity to objectively evaluate educator effectiveness across all schools.	• Districts will utilize Arkansas' *Teacher Excellence and Support System* (*TESS*) to increase rigor and improve alignment between educator performance ratings and student achievement with a minimum 50% of evaluation ratings determined by student growth measures. • Professional development – coaching, critical friend observations, educator evaluation process training – will support central administrators and school leaders responsible for conducting educator evaluations to increase fidelity to model and inter-rater reliability.
Need 3: Nine Rural Arkansas districts lack a process to connect educators with supports that increase effectiveness.	• Professional Growth Plans will connect educator evaluation results to professional learning opportunities that address individual needs and solve shared problems of practice. • *ACHIEVE* will expand Coaching and Career Ladder opportunities to elevate performance and promote career advancement for principals, assistant principals and teachers. • Instructional Coaching, Principal Network, New Teacher Network and Career Ladders will provide supports to raise educator effectiveness and student achievement.
Need 4: Nine Rural districts lack strategies and resources to meet state/local equity plans.	• *ACHIEVE* will hire an Equity Instructional Coach deployed to address issues of inequity in teaching and learning and facilitate strategies that reduce / eliminate equity barriers. • Retention PBCS bonuses / High Priority Content Area signing bonuses will motivate *Highly Effective* educators to teach in and remain serving high-need schools.
Need 5: Nine Rural Arkansas districts lack resources needed to integrate and accelerate systems change disrupted by COVID-19 pandemic.	• *ACHIEVE* will expand HCMS systems using Talent Management software to ensure Educator Quality Supports (professional learning) are connected to individual educator Professional Growth Plans to address instructional improvement needs of teachers and school leaders. • Performance-based Comp. will be distributed to educators who meet *Highly Effective* rating standards and retention bonuses for educators serving high-poverty/low-achieving schools. • Educator Quality Supports will target individual professional learning needs, expand instructional coaching and diversify Career Ladder opportunities for educators.

(B) QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN

The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence, Inc. (CSL), a non-profit organization as defined in 2 CFR 200.70 and fiscal agent for this proposal, in partnership with the Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at the University of Arkansas and nine, rural Arkansas high-poverty, low-performing districts, serves 8,558 students enrolled in 27 district schools. All 27 schools meet and exceed minimum 50% free and reduced lunch rate threshold and qualify as high-need schools (districtwide Free and Reduced Lunch Rate = 85%). To address the needs of educators and students, raise student academic achievement and increase

equity in access to highly effective educators and high-quality education programs, The Center, in partnership with Blytheville, Brinkley, Cross County, Dumas, Earle, Hope, Lee County, Osceola and Strong-Huttig, proposes *ACHIEVE*: **Arkansas Consortium Harnessing Innovation, Equity & Verifiable Excellence!**, a *Teacher and School Leader Incentive Fund* project. Implementation of *ACHIEVE* will launch and sustain systemic improvements that elevate the function / effectiveness of Human Capital Management Systems, Performance-based Compensation Systems, Educator Evaluation Systems and Educator Quality Support Systems.

Goal, Objectives and Outcomes: After an extensive needs assessment, the *ACHIEVE* Planning Task Force designed a comprehensive effort to initiate, strengthen and sustain strategies supporting improvement in high-need schools. Implementation of *ACHIEVE* will help Arkansas district schools meet and exceed the following goal and objectives (see *Evaluation* in *Project Design* section below for measurable Performance Indicators):

GOAL: To improve student achievement by increasing access to effective educators in high-need schools.		
Objective 1: Reduce equity gaps through effectiveness-based Human Capital Management System.		
Outcome 1.1: Improved educator quality ratings in *ACHIEVE* schools.	**Outcome 1.2:** Diversified teachers and school leaders educating students in *ACHIEVE* schools.	
Objective 2: Assess educator effectiveness using validated tools to ensure objectivity.		
Outcome 2.1: Increased teacher effectiveness ratings.	**Outcome 2.2:** Increased administrator effectiveness ratings.	
Objective 3: Improve educator effectiveness through individualized learning and supports.		
Outcome 3.1: Professional Growth Plans for teachers and school leaders.	**Outcome 3.2:** Reduced numbers of teachers and school leaders rated *Progressing* or *Ineffective*.	
Objective 4: Increase student attainment of state academic performance standards.		
Outcome 4.1: Increased ELA / Reading Proficiency rates.	**Outcome 4.2:** Increased Math Proficiency rates.	**Outcome 4.3:** Increased Graduation Rates.

(i) Proposed project Demonstrates a Rationale.

Our Theory of Change is that horizontal and vertical organizational alignment leads to sustainable system change which, in turn, leads to significant and sustainable improvement in student achievement. Horizontal and vertical alignment, in this instance, means that organizational stakeholders at all levels (classroom teachers, principals, HR/instructional supervisors, and the superintendent/central office) will all utilize similar tools, language and protocols to solve problems of practice in student learning. This multi-pronged approach (leveraging the combined efforts of the development and implementation of a technologically-advanced Human

Capital Management System [which provides tools for professional learning and coaching], as well as, the development and expansion of a Performance Based Compensation System) intersects, aligns and works in tandem to meet the needs of high priority schools. The goal is to both build and implement an on-going recursive system of supports to improve teacher and school leader effectiveness and increase, reward and incentivize the number of skilled educators who can effectively raise student achievement, especially for the most vulnerable students. It is not an "either/or," but an "and/both" proposition. We know that all students deserve access to a highly-effective teacher and school leader and studies have shown that students who consistently have access to accomplished teachers do well academically. In order to well-educate all students in our nine, rural districts, there is no goal that has greater urgency than accelerating the closure of persistent achievement gaps and raising student achievement for all of our students. This means the district must grow and cultivate a culture of competence by improving teacher and school leader effectiveness.

ACHIEVE is the result of collaborative planning among each of the districts within the consortium aligned to state reform initiatives, state equity plans and the need of each our districts to implement systems that support and create a sense of urgency to accelerate improving achievement in teaching and learning in all schools, particularly high-poverty/low-achieving schools. The *ACHIEVE* Planning Task Force completed extensive research and review of proven human capital management systems, performance-based compensation strategies, educator evaluation protocols and educator improvement plans. The Task Force was deliberate in its selection of school improvement strategies supported by Evidence of Effectiveness studies that meet U.S. Department of Education *What Works Clearinghouse* standards. Multiple strategies central to the *ACHIEVE TSL* Project Design are supported by strong and / or moderate Evidence of Effectiveness. By utilizing programs supported by Evidence of Effectiveness, the Planning Task Force is confident *ACHIEVE* will yield positive, relevant outcomes for educators and students during the grant period and beyond (see *Appendix* - Literature Cited):

Program	*ACHIEVE*: Evidence of Effectiveness
Evidence of Support Study # 1: Teacher Induction	
Citation	Schmidt, R., Young, V., Cassidy, L., Wang, H., & Laguarda, K. (2017). Impact of the New Teacher Center's New Teacher Induction model on teachers and students. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.
WWC **Rating**	Meets *What Works Clearinghouse* design standards Without Reservations.
ESSA **Rating**	Tier 1 – At Least One Statistically Significant Positive Finding
Process	Review Standards 3.0; Teacher Training, Evaluation and Compensation Review Protocol 3.2
Evidence	Strong Evidence of Support.
Study Outcomes	Results of the randomized control study found that new teacher participation in induction support and new teacher mentoring / coaching increases student achievement in ELA / Reading and Math.

Relevance to Project	The *ACHIEVE* New Teacher Network provides three years of new educator supports including induction orientation, new teacher professional learning communities and new teacher mentoring / coaching to support instructional excellence.
Evidence of Support Study # 2: National Board Certification	
Citation	Cowan, J., & Goldhaber, D. (2015). National Board certification and teacher effectiveness: Evidence from Washington. Technical Report 2015-1, Center for Education Data and Research, Seattle, WA.
***WWC* Rating**	Meets *What Works Clearinghouse* design standards With Reservations.
***ESSA* Rating**	Tier 2 – At Least One Statistically Significant Positive Finding
Process	Review Standards 3.0; Teacher Training, Evaluation and Compensation Review Protocol 3.2
Evidence	Moderate Evidence of Support.
Study Outcomes	A quasi-experimental design study demonstrates National Board Certification leads to improved student achievement in elementary and middle school mathematics.
Relevance to Project	*ACHIEVE* proposes a Career Ladder strategy that promotes National Board Certification attainment for educators that increases educator ability to pursue instructional leadership positions.
Evidence of Support Study # 3: Transfer Incentives	
Citation	Glazerman, S., Protik, A., Teh, B., Bruch, J., & Max, J. (2013). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, USDOE.
***WWC* Rating**	Meets *What Works Clearinghouse* design standards Without Reservations.
***ESSA* Rating**	Tier 1 – At Least One Significantly Positive Finding; Strong Evidence of Effectiveness
Process	Single study review protocol, Review Standards 3.0
Evidence	Strong Evidence of Support.
Citation Outcomes	Results of randomized control study demonstrate transfer incentives increase high-quality teaching in high-needs schools and improves achievement in Math and Reading.
Relevance to Project	*ACHIEVE* includes transfer / signing bonuses to incentivize *Highly Effective* teachers to teach in high-needs schools.
Evidence of Support Study # 4: Professional Development and Coaching	
Citation	Parkinson, J., Salinger, T., Meakin, J., & Smith, D. (2015). Results from three-year i3 impact evaluation of Children's Literacy Initiative (CLI): Implementation/impact findings of an intensive professional development & coaching program. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research.
***WWC* Rating**	Meets *What Works Clearinghouse* Standards Without Reservations. At Least One Statistically Significant Positive Finding
Process	Review Standards 3.0; Teacher Training, Evaluation and Compensation Review Protocol 3.1
Evidence	Strong Evidence of Support.
Citation Outcomes	Results of randomized control study demonstrate evidence that providing teachers with coaching and professional development focused on pedagogical content knowledge can lead to positive changes in teachers' practice and students' achievement.
Relevance to Project	*ACHIEVE* proposes extensive professional development and an Instructional Coaching Model for educators to improve competency and instructional practice.
Evidence of Support Study # 5: Professional Development	
Citation	Heller, J., Daehler, K., Wong, N., Shinohara, M., & Miratrix, L. (2011). Differential Effects of Three Professional Development Models on Teacher Knowledge and Student Achievement in Elementary Science. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching 49(3)* 333- 362.

WWC **Rating**	Meets *What Works Clearinghouse* design standards Without Reservations.
ESSA **Rating**	Tier 1 – At Least One Finding Shows Strong Evidence of Effectiveness
Process	Single study review protocol.
Evidence	Strong Evidence of Support.
Citation Outcomes	Results of randomized control trial demonstrate that investments in professional development improve educator/student achievement on content knowledge assessments.
Relevance to Project	*ACHIEVE* includes extensive professional development designed to improve educator instructional practice and increase student academic achievement.
Evidence of Support Study # 6: Principal Coaching	
Citation	Gates, S. M., Hamilton, L. S., Martorell, P., Burkhauser, S., Heaton, P., Pierson, A., … Gu, K. (2014). Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.
WWC **Rating**	Meets *What Works Clearinghouse* design standards With Reservations. At Least One Significantly Positive Finding
Process	Single study review protocol; Review Standards 3.0
Evidence	Moderate Evidence of Support.
Citation Outcomes	Results of quasi-experimental design study demonstrate principal development model providing coaching and mentoring support improves student achievement in Reading.
Relevance to Project	*ACHIEVE* includes Principal Network supports that partner struggling and / or new principals and assistant principals with mentors and coaches to improve leadership practice.
Program	*ACHIEVE*: Research Base
HCMS with PBCS	Evidence of Effectiveness: Pay-for-performance bonuses generated slightly higher student reading achievement, and gains in math were similar in magnitude. Researchers confirmed that positive impact of pay-for-performance on student achievement was reflected in positive impacts on educator effectiveness, as measured by ratings educators received from their districts (Chiang, et al, 2015).
Teacher Supports	Evidence of Effectiveness: After controlling for initial ability (as measured by test scores) and other student characteristics, teacher effects are statistically important in explaining 9th-grade math test score achievement (Aaronson, Barrow & Sander, 2007).
Principal Supports	Evidence of Effectiveness: Leadership is second to teaching (among school-related factors) in its impact on student learning and the impact of leadership is greatest in schools where student learning needs are most acute (Leithwood, et al, 2004).
Educator Induction	Evidence of Effectiveness: Results of a randomized control study conclude teacher induction and new teacher support increases the test scores of average students by 4 percentile points in reading and 8 percentile points in math (Glazerman, et al, 2010).
Educator Retention	Evidence of Effectiveness: Analytical, random study of a Boston Teacher Residency retention incentive program in high-need schools indicates attrition stabilizes after three years of service and incentive recipients more likely to remain in school five or more years (Silva, et al, 2014).

Based on research of evidence-based HCMS, PBCS, educator evaluation and educator improvement practices, the Planning Task Force developed a Logic Model grounding the project in a strong theory of support and rationale. The validated logic model framework – developed by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL)

Northeast & Islands and WestEd and aligned to the FORECAST evaluation strategy (see *Program Design* below), grounds *ACHIEVE* in strong theory and demonstrates a rationale supporting project elements:

ACHIEVE Logic Model				
GOAL: To improve student achievement by increasing access to effective educators in high-needs schools.				
Objective 1: Reduce equity gaps through effectiveness-based Human Capital Management Systems.				
Objective 2: Assess educator effectiveness using validated tools to ensure objectivity.				
Objective 3: Improve educator effectiveness through individualized learning and support.				
Objective 4: Increase student attainment of state academic performance standards.				
INPUTS >	**ACTIVITIES >**	**OUTPUTS >**	**SHORT TERM OUTCOMES >**	**LONG TERM OUTCOMES**

• **TSL Grant Resources**
  o District expertise implementing educator evaluations.
  o TSL Project Personnel Expertise
  o TSL Partner Expertise / Resources
  o TSL Vendor Expertise / Resources
• **In Kind Match Resources**
  o Multi-year use of state-approved Educator Evaluation System
  o Experience distributing Performance-based Compensation
  o Existing Personnel Capacity
  o Experience
	•**Tier 1: Comprehensive HCMS**
	  o Conduct HCMS Audits
	  o Update and Improve Strategies
	  o Expand *Talent Management* systems
	  o Conduct annual Educator Evaluations
	  o Distribute *Highly Effective* PBC Incentives
	  o Distribute Retention / Signing Incentives
	•**Tier 2: Educator Quality Supports**
	  o Establish / Maintain Professional Growth Plans
	  o Equity in
		•**Tier 1: Comprehensive HCMS**
		  o Effectiveness-based HCMS
		  o Annual Educator Performance Ratings.
		  o Annual Performance-based Comp. awards.
		  o Professional Growth Plans for all educators.
		•**Tier 2: Educator Quality Supports**
		  o Annual New Teacher Induction Coaching, Mentoring, PLC.
		  o Annual Principal Network Coaching and Mentoring.
		  o Annual Professional Development Linked to Growth Plans.
		  o Annual Career Ladder
			•**Tier 1: Comprehensive HCMS**
			  o Improve Retention of *Highly Effective* Educators in High-Need Schools.
			  o Increase Racial Diversity of Applicants for new Positions.
			  o 100% of Educators will Receive Annual Effectiveness Rating.
			  o Increase Educator Eligibility for PBC Incentives by 3%.
			  o Increase # *Highly Effective* Educators by minimum of 3%.
			•**Tier 2: Educator Quality Supports**
			  o 75% of New Teachers will Receive Mentoring / Coaching / PLC Support.
			  o 75% of New Teachers will Complete Annual New Teacher Orientation.
			  o 75% of Educators will Maintain Professional Growth Plans.
			  o Reduce % *Minimally*
				•**Tier 1: Comprehensive HCMS**
				  o Improve Retention of *Highly Effective* Educators in High-Need Schools 10% by 2024.
				  o Increase Racial Diversity of Applicants for new Positions 10% by 2024.
				  o 100% of Educators will Receive Annual Effectiveness Rating.
				  o Increase Educator Eligibility for PBC Incentives 10% by 2024.
				  o Increase # *Highly Effective* Educators a minimum 10% by 2024.
				•**Tier 2: Educator Quality Supports**
				  o 90% of New Teachers in Mentoring / Coaching / PLC Support.
				  o 90% of New Teachers Complete Annual New Teacher Orientation.
				  o 90% of Educators will Maintain Professional Growth Plans.
				  o Reduce % *Minimally Effective and Ineffective* 10% by 2024.

with Instructional Coaching Model ○ Existing Partner Expertise / Resources	Teaching and Learning ○ Principal Network ○ Instructional Coaching ○ New Teacher Network ○ Career Ladders ○ Professional Development ○ Virtual Networks for Improvement	Opportunities – Microcredentials, Badging, Lead Teachers, Coaches, Mentors • *ACHIEVE Evaluation* ○ Data Collection. ○ Data Analysis. ○ Site Visits. ○ Progress Monitoring. ○ Annual / Final Performance Reports.	*Effective and Ineffective* by 5%. ○ 75% of Aspiring Leader Cohort will Complete Annual Programming. ○ 50% of Educators will Participate in Instructional Coaching. ○ Professional Learning in 100% of Schools. ○ Increase ELA, Math and Graduation Rates a minimum of 3%.	○ 90% of Aspiring Leader Cohorts Complete Annual Programming. ○ 75% of Educators will Participate in Instructional Coaching. ○ Professional Learning in 100% of Schools. ○ Increase ELA, Math and Grad Rates a minimum of 10% by 2024. ○ Increase % *Highly Effective* Educators in *ACHIEVE* Schools a minimum 10% by 2024.

Grant managers, the *ACHIEVE* Districts Collaborate Advisory Committee (DCAC - see *Management Plan*) and evaluators will utilize the Logic Model to ensure alignment of activities with the project goal, objectives and timeline, ensuring equitable delivery of the Tiers of Support and proposed services.

(ii) Thorough, high-quality review of relevant literature, high-quality plan for project implementation.

Podolsky, A., Kini, T. and Darling-Hammond, L. (2019) concluded that teacher efficacy, when supported with evidenced-based professional learning and job embedded-professional coaching, can significantly improve over time. First, the authors find that teaching experience (supported by job-embedded coaching and professional learning) is positively associated with student achievement gains throughout much of a teacher's career. Second, as teachers gain experience (and have access to multiple pathways for professional growth and development), their students are more likely to do better on measures of success beyond test scores. Third, teachers make greater gains in their effectiveness when they teach in a supportive, collegial environment, or accumulate experience in the same grade, subject or district; and finally, more experienced teachers confer benefits to their colleagues (serving as mentors who can offer strategies to eradicate persistent problems of practice).

The National Strategic Planning & Analysis Research Center (2017) reported that an analysis focused on Kindergarten and third grade students attending Mississippi public schools during the 2015-2016 school year, enforces the notion that teacher quality matters. The report shows that students with a National Board Certified reading teacher had significantly higher literacy proficiency levels than those students who had a non-National Board Certified reading teacher on measures of reading ability. In particular, kindergarteners who received reading instruction from a National Board Certified Teacher were 5.1 percentage points more likely than other

kindergarteners to achieve a proficient score on the MKAS2 reading test, and 1.8 percentage points more likely to achieve performance growth on the MKAS2.

Researchers Goldhaber and Cowan (2015) used seven years of statewide data to study the effectiveness of National Board Certified Teachers in Washington State. Researchers found that Board-certified teachers produce nearly six weeks of additional learning gains in middle school math classrooms and one to two weeks of additional learning gains in elementary classrooms and middle school reading classrooms. Finally, they found that teachers who achieve Board certification on their first attempt produce four and a half weeks of additional learning gains compared to those teachers who pursue but never achieve Board certification.

Highly effective school leaders are also critical to fostering the conditions needed to raise student achievement in schools. Research studies show that strong principals play an important role in creating a positive school culture and raising student achievement. Hollingworth, Olsen, Asikin-Garmager, & Winn (2018) assert that highly effective school leaders are essential to retaining highly effective teachers and raising student achievement, in all schools, especially in schools that serve the most vulnerable students. Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond (2017) in their examination of teacher turnover attribute highly effective school leaders to being a critical element in growing teacher competence, establishing supportive Professional Learning Communities and ensuring that students' social and psychological needs are met. Adams, Olsen, & Ware (2017) conclude that there is a positive relationship between highly effective principals, student learning and academic achievement. Among a number of positive outcomes, Coelli & Green (2012) found that greater school leader effectiveness is associated with higher graduation rates especially in high priority schools. Research also bears witness to the fact that when principals are able to grow their competence through meaningful professional learning that improves their efficacy, those school leaders, in turn, have a positive impact on raising student achievement (Grissom, Kalogrides, & Loeb, 2015; Dhuey, E., & Smith, J., 2014; Branch, G. F., Hanushek, E. A., & Rivkin, S. G., 2012; Coelli, M., & Green, D. A., 2012).

Policy expert, Desiree Carver-Thomas (2018) in a research study, "Diversifying the Teaching Profession: How to Recruit and Retain Teachers of Color", conducted by the Learning Policy Institute found that: 1) Teachers of color boost the academic performance of students of color, including improved reading and math test scores, improved graduation rates, and increases in their aspirations to attend college; and 2) Both students of color and white students report having positive perceptions of their teachers of color, including feeling cared for and academically challenged. The report also provides several recommendations which guide and inform our work

in the *ACHIEVE* TSL Grant. First, the report recommends offering comprehensive induction to support teachers of color in their first years of teaching. Induction often includes being matched with a veteran mentor teacher and can also include seminars, classroom assistance, time to collaborate with other teachers, coaching and feedback from experienced teachers, and reduced workloads. Second, the research supports implementing *Grow Your Own* programs at the district level that recruit teacher candidates from nontraditional populations which can be supported through university-based partnerships and other financial and programmatic policies and support. Finally, the report suggests that districts should provide ongoing professional learning opportunities for school leaders (in diversity, equity and inclusion) to develop the skills to support teachers effectively.

The *ACHIEVE* Planning Task Force, based on extensive research of effective practices proven to yield positive outcomes relevant to the proposed *ACHIEVE TSL* vision, created a high-quality plan to implement a comprehensive, transformative project designed to raise student academic achievement through increased educator effectiveness and elevated equity in learning for all students. The *ACHIEVE* Framework includes the following elements: (1) Prioritization of Services; (2) Goal, Objectives and Outcomes and (3) Tiers of Support.

(1) Prioritization of Services: *ACHIEVE* will serve 27 Arkansas schools in nine districts – **average Free and Reduced Lunch rate is 85% and all schools meet the *TSL* criteria of High-Need School**. *ACHIEVE* will serve all 27 district schools to ensure consistency of efforts, promote equitable access for students to high-quality educators and education programs and because *ACHIEVE* schools have multi-year trends of increasing poverty and needs. To ensure services target highest needs students and schools, the Planning Task Force identified a **School Priority Level** strategy to identify schools most in need of improvement. Schools in Priority Level 1 will be served to the maximum extent possible; Schools in Priority Level 2 will receive moderate supports to the extent possible based on capacity of services beyond Priority Level 1 demand; Priority Level 3 schools will benefit from professional development and career ladder opportunities to the extent capacity allows upon meeting Priority Level 1 and Level 2 demand. Schools in all Priority Levels will benefit from HCMS systemic improvements and PBCS strategies. *ACHIEVE* Priority Levels include:

School Priority	*ACHIEVE* School Priority Level Classification
Priority Level 1:	Schools with 90-100% Free/Reduced Lunch rates performing in bottom 10% of state schools.
Priority Level 2:	Schools with 80-89% Free/Reduced Lunch rates performing in bottom 20% of state schools.
Priority Level 3:	Schools with 70-79% Free/Reduced Lunch rates performing in bottom 30% of state schools.

Our Arkansas Consortium designed a project based on Evidence of Effectiveness and peer-reviewed research. A Logic Model grounds *ACHIEVE* in strong theory. Prioritizing services using a Priority Level strategy provides a rationale for ensuring *ACHIEVE* benefits highest-poverty / lowest-performing schools and closes education equity gaps impacting all grades, PK – 12.

(2) Goal, Objectives and Outcomes: Implementation of *ACHIEVE* will help schools meet/exceed the following goal and objectives (see *Evaluation* in *Project Design* section below for measurable Performance Indicators):

GOAL: To improve student achievement by increasing access to effective educators in high-need schools.		
Objective 1: Reduce equity gaps through effectiveness-based Human Capital Management System.		
Outcome 1.1: Improved educator quality ratings in *ACHIEVE* Priority Level 1 schools.	**Outcome 1.2:** Diversified teachers and school leaders educating students in *ACHIEVE* schools.	
Objective 2: Assess educator effectiveness using validated tools to ensure objectivity.		
Outcome 2.1: Increased teacher effectiveness ratings.	**Outcome 2.2:** Increased administrator effectiveness ratings.	
Objective 3: Improve educator effectiveness through individualized learning and supports.		
Outcome 3.1: Professional Growth Plans for teachers and school leaders.	**Outcome 3.2:** Reduced numbers of teachers and school leaders rated *Minimally Effective* / *Ineffective*.	
Objective 4: Increase student attainment of state academic performance standards.		
Outcome 4.1: Increased ELA / Reading Proficiency rates.	**Outcome 4.2:** Increased Math Proficiency rates.	**Outcome 4.3:** Increased Graduation Rates.

Evaluation of the goal, objectives and outcomes will include assessment of required GPRA performance indicators and project-specific measures, as well as a quasi-experimental design study with research questions.

(3) Tiers of Support: Implementation of *ACHIEVE* during the initial three-year grant period will provide diverse services and supports across two Tiers of Support: Tier 1 - Comprehensive Human Capital Management System; and Tier 2 - Educator Quality Supports.

Tier 1 - Comprehensive Human Capital Management System – *ACHIEVE* schools will launch an initiative to reimagine Human Resource Departments into data-driven Human Capital Management Systems linked to effectiveness data. *ACHIEVE* will expand district-funded efforts to reform their HCMSs and will provide district and school administrators with the tools to support verifiable improvement in highest-need schools. Supports include: (1) Effectiveness-based Human Capital Management; (2) Talent Management; (3) Educator Effectiveness Model; (4) High Quality Evaluation Plan; and (5) Performance-Based Compensation.

- **Effectiveness-based Human Capital Management:** Annual evaluation of educator effectiveness using the *Teacher, Instructional Support Personnel, School Leader and the District Leader Evaluation Models* (below) will provide data to inform all elements of AR Human Capital Management Systems, including:

Component	*ACHIEVE* HCMS Improvement Strategy
Recruitment	• *ACHIEVE* will strengthen the screening and selection process to assess the effectiveness of prospective teachers, principals and administrators by identifying candidates who understand and embrace our instructional vision. Because recruiting quality candidates is a challenge, the district is mindful of the efficacy of alternative certification programs, partnerships with colleges and universities, and "grow your own" recruiting programs to best provide teachers / principals able to raise student achievement. *ACHIEVE* will collaborate with the Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at the University of Arkansas to develop and implement a plan to recruit, employ and retain minority educators and will utilize the *Oracle* system to post positions and produce a recruitment video to highlight unique aspects of *ACHIEVE* schools.
Hiring	• *ACHIEVE* schools will provide equal opportunity for employment without regard to actual or perceived age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or other protected class. Prior to conferring employment offers to highly-qualified candidates, HCMS officers will disclose to candidates the components of the Educator Effectiveness Model. Upon hiring, new educators or educators new to our schools will be assigned to the New Teacher Network and Professional Growth Track # 1 (see Tier 2) to facilitate extensive induction, on-boarding, multi-year coaching and mentoring. Districts will streamline current hiring processes by implementing the *Applicant Tracking* and *Employee Records* with Sync systems.
Placement	• Districts will seek equitable placement of *Highly Effective* teachers / principals in highest need schools aligned to the School Priority Level classification (see above). New teachers and current educators willing to teach in highest poverty / lowest-performing schools who meet *Highly Effective* standards will qualify for compensation incentives that promote equitable access to *Highly Effective* educators for students in failing schools (see *PBCS* below).
Retention	• Multiple initiatives – New Teacher Network, Instructional Coaching, Principal Network, Career Ladder and Professional Development (see Tier 2) – will provide professional growth opportunities to increase educator quality and promote retention. _ACHIEVE_ will offer _Highly Effective_ teachers who complete a minimum of two consecutive years of service in designated highest poverty / lowest performing schools Retention Bonuses to increase equity in learning and improve student access to high-quality teachers in high-need schools.
Promotion	• *ACHIEVE* districts do not currently implement a system to promote educators based on proven

	ability to raise student achievement. *ACHIEVE* will connect promotion to an Educator Effectiveness Model that uses validated evaluation rubrics and student growth measures. Promotion will be linked to performance-based compensation strategies that reward *Highly Effective* educators through incentive pay and Career Ladder (see Tier 2) professional growth.
Dismissal	• *ACHIEVE* districts will assist employees in any way possible as they pursue professional growth and will customize individual Professional Growth Plans to improve skills and raise achievement. Educator Quality Supports (see Tier 2) – comprised of *Professional Growth Tracks* and *Professional Growth Plans* – will promote educator improvement and facilitate courageous discussions that consider alternative roles for, or dismissal of, ineffective educators.
Compensation	• *ACHIEVE* districts will adopt a Performance-based Compensation System for teachers and school leaders (see PBCS below).
Professional Development	• Effectiveness data will allow *ACHIEVE* districts to prioritize use of limited professional development funds to target district and school needs while facilitating individual educator improvement. Performance labels – *Highly Effective, Effective, Progressing, Ineffective* – connect to one of four Professional Growth Tracks and determine components of Professional Growth Plans (see Tier 2). *Talent Management* platforms will track effectiveness ratings, categorize professional development, inform educators of opportunities and monitor completion of PGPs.

- **Talent Management:** We believe that highly effective organizations are not produced serendipitously, but with intention. In order to create a culture of competence, all of our stakeholders must have a shared understanding and language, along with a vast toolkit that we can use to strategize on how to improve teacher practice, as well as, achievement outcomes for students. With the use of these technologically-advanced digital tools, teachers and school leaders at all levels can engage in anytime-anywhere learning, choose from different professional learning pathways, receive and incorporate feedback from coaches through differentiated pathways for professional development and job-embedded on-going professional learning used to significantly improve their effectiveness. We believe that developing modules for learning at every level sends a powerful message to all of our stakeholders that learning is happening at all levels, especially if all stakeholders are encouraged to provide feedback. When we empower our stakeholders with agency in this manner, we increase buy-in and create a learning community in which everybody is expected to learn and grow together, while also understanding that it is our collective responsibility to ensure that all of our students are learning at very high levels in our districts. Over time, using a technologically-advanced Human Capital Management System, coupled with a Performance Based Compensation System, will enable

our organizations to manage the entire talent lifecycle—from effectively sourcing and recruiting to onboarding new hires, managing goals and performance, rewarding for performance, providing continuous learning, developing careers and conducting talent reviews and planning for best-fit successors—all while ensuring *ACHIEVE* districts continually improve and build capacity to achieve the following:

o **Talent acquisition***:* We believe that educators enter the profession with a desire to be effective. We can attract compelling candidates when they know they will be supported and have an opportunity for career growth and will receive the supports they need to be highly effective in their practice. With this investment we have the opportunity to leverage innovative technologies as tools to make education attractive as a career choice which leads to high impact.

o **Performance management***:* Align student learning and achievement goals with teacher and school leadership effectiveness and support employees with frequent checkpoints to optimize performance.

o **Career development***:* Identify career opportunities for aspiring teacher leaders and school leaders and maintain a development plan to bring employees closer to their career aspirations.

o **Talent review and succession management***:* Evaluate macro-organizational talent trends and proactively plan for future needs in leadership and other critical roles.

o **Learning***:* Cultivate a culture of competence, while providing opportunities for learning at all levels to foster a shared understanding and standard of effectiveness. Leverage innovative technology tools to provide a tailored professional development experience which can be used as a job-embedded tool for continuous improvement.

Educator Effectiveness Model: As we increase our investment in providing pathways towards excellence to improve the effectiveness of our teachers and school leaders, it is important that as an organization that we concomitantly direct resources towards rewarding highly effective teaching and school leadership and attracting teachers to teach in schools where they are needed most. We believe that one of the most important data points for highly effective teaching is growth in learning and increases in student achievement. <u>We want to be clear that a "highly effective" rating can only be paired with an increase in growth in student learning</u>. The Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) TESS Model (TESS is the *Teacher Excellence and Support System* and is based on the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teacher Evaluation), which is used for teacher evaluation in the state of Arkansas, will be used as the evaluation framework. The Arkansas Department of Education will train all teachers and administrators in our *ACHIEVE* districts in how to effectively use TESS. In the highest

priority schools receiving intensive support, the ADE will work closely with administrators, teachers and coaches to facilitate formal teacher evaluation, collect data, and use digital portfolios to identify areas of improvement in practice of teachers and administrators.

Educator Effectiveness Formulas – Annual effectiveness ratings will be based on formula calculations that combine multiple factors – equal weight is given to Student Achievement and non-achievement-based metrics (observations / surveys / school commitment).

PEER REVIEW: One of the critical components that we are adding to the *ACHIEVE* Evaluation and Effectiveness Formula is PEER REVIEW which will account for 10% of the total weighted score of the evaluation. A team of 3-5 teachers who have been evaluated as "Highly Effective" for at least 3-5 consecutive years will provide an evidence-based assessment of the teacher's efficacy using video observation footage; notes from critical feedback from *SIMBE Huddles*; formative and assessment data; evidence from Virtual Networks for Improvement; and running notes from lesson studies facilitated by the teacher. The PEER REVIEW team will develop a digital portfolio that will chart the teacher's growth in effectiveness throughout the course of the academic year. The PEER REVIEW team will be provided with a stipend and bi-weekly release time to provide support and hold critical conversations with teachers.

ACHIEVE Effectiveness Formulas						
Component	**Component Score**		**Percent of Score**		**Weighted Score**	
Essential Practices (EP)	0.0 - 4.0	x	20%	=	0 – 80	
Peer Review	**0.0 – 4.0**	**x**	**10%**	**=**	**0 – 40**	
Individual Value-Added Student Achievement Data (IVA)	0.0 - 4.0	x	35%	=	0 - 140	
Teacher-Assessed Student Achievement Data (TAS)	0.0 - 4.0	x	15%	=	0 - 60	
Student Survey of Practice (SSP)	0.0 - 4.0	x	10%	=	0 - 40	
Commitment to the School Community (CSC)	0.0 - 4.0	x	10%	=	0 - 40	
Total *ACHIEVE* Evaluation Score Range:					**0 - 400**	
Core Professionalism (CP)	Meets Standard				No Change	

Educator Effectiveness Labels – Upon completion of annual effectiveness evaluation procedures and after annual student growth data is linked to observational results, each educator will receive an Effectiveness Performance Rating aligned to a numerical score:

ACHIEVE Educator Effectiveness Rating (Score)			
Ineffective (0.0 – 200)	**Progressing** (201 – 299)	**Effective** (300 – 349)	**Highly Effective** (350 – 400)

Educator performance ratings and scores will influence placement in Professional Growth Tracks and will help administrators and teachers develop Professional Growth Plans that promote improvement (see Tier 2). Educators who attain *Highly Effective* and *Effective* ratings will be eligible for annual performance-based compensation awards.

Performance-based Compensation: The ACHIEVE district consortium will distribute performance-based compensation incentives and sustain beyond federal funding a PBCS that links salary advancement and promotion to annual educator evaluation results and willingness to serve lowest-performing schools. Educators will be eligible to receive annual performance-based compensation, based on effectiveness evaluation ratings, high-priority hiring and placement incentives and *Targeted Support / Improvement* school retention incentives.

ACHIEVE: Teacher Performance-Based Compensation Rewards *		
Area	**Highly Effective**	**Effective**
Overall Educator Effectiveness Rating Award • 50% Educator Evaluations / Observations / Surveys/ Peer Review • 50% Student Achievement Measures (IVA and TAS)	▮▮▮ per year	▮▮▮ per year
High-Priority Content Area Placement Incentive (Placement of ESL / Special Ed. / World Languages / Math educators in <u>Priority Level 1 schools</u> – 50% upon hiring; 50% upon completion of first school year contingent on *Highly Effective or Effective* rating)	▮▮▮	▮▮▮
Maximum PBCS Awards	Up to ▮▮▮	Up to ▮▮▮

* Actual PBCS reward amounts subject to change, based on number of eligible candidates.

TEACHERS PERFORMANCE BASED COMPENSATION
Tier 1 Compensation: Recruitment. Teachers who accept a position at one of the high priority schools designated for intensive support will receive a $3,000 signing bonus.
Tier 2: Compensation: Performance Category A – Teachers. Teachers who receive a rating of "Highly Effective" or move from "Effective" to "Highly Effective" will receive an ▮▮▮ dollar yearly bonus. Overall effectiveness rating will be based on 50% Educator Evaluations/ Observations/Surveys/Peer Review and 50% Student Achievement Measures (IVA and TESS).
Tier 3: Compensation Performance Category B – Teachers. Teachers who receive an "Effective" rating or move from "Developing" to "Effective" will receive a ▮▮▮ dollar yearly bonus. The Overall effectiveness rating will be based on 50% Educator valuations/ Observations/Surveys/Peer Review and 50% Student Achievement Measures (IVA and TESS)

SCHOOL LEADERS PERFORMANCE BASED COMPENSATION
Tier 1: Compensation: Recruitment. School leaders who have shown evidence of consistently raising student achievement (5 years or more as a "highly effective" teacher or a "highly effective" school leader) and accepts a position at one of the high priority schools designated for intensive support will receive a ▮▮▮▮ signing bonus.
Tier 2: Performance Based Inventive Category A – School Leaders. School leaders who receive a "Highly Effective Rating" based on 85% of the students in the building showing 1 year of growth in student learning on the Arkansas Department of Education Statewide Assessment and achieve and maintain an accountability grade of a "B" or higher will receive a bonus of ▮▮▮▮.
Tier 3: Compensation: Performance Category B – School Leaders. School leaders who receive an "Effective" or "Highly Effective" whose state accountability grade is elevated (e.g. moving from a "D" to a "C"; from a "C" to a "B", etc.) and sustains the accountability grade of a "B" or higher will receive a bonus of ▮▮▮▮.

The ultimate goal is to create job-embedded supports which empower teachers and administrators with a pathway towards fostering classrooms and buildings where student learning remains the foremost important function of the work occurring in schools.

TIER OF SUPPORT 2: Educator Quality Supports – The districts in the *ACHIEVE* consortium will implement a HCMS, guided by use of the *ACHIEVE Evaluation System* that yields annual educator ratings, influences distribution of performance-based compensation and triggers development of Educator Quality Supports designed to increase the number of educators who attain *Highly Effective* and *Effective* performance ratings. Implementation of *ACHIEVE* will begin with a comprehensive, external audit of each district's professional development and examine its impact on student achievement. The Arkansas Academy of Educational Equity, Learning for Justice and Boyd Griffin Associates will complete a thorough audit of all professional learning and professional growth initiatives serving participating schools to determine strengths, weaknesses and gaps in professional development and educator supports. Audit results will guide the future selection of specific professional development and support strategies during the grant period and beyond. Implementation of *ACHIEVE* will support the hiring of three *ACHIEVE* Improvement Specialists – one for each Region supporting three of our districts (see *Management Plan*) to coordinate educator effectiveness improvement strategies that connect district and school leaders and instructional staff to professional learning aligned to the individual needs of educators. Coordinators, linked to district, school and individual achievement benchmarks will catalyze improvement across all performance levels and include: (1) Professional Growth

Tracks; (2) Equity in Teaching and Learning; (3) Principal Network; (4) Instructional Coaching; (5) New Teacher Network; (6) Career Ladders; and (7) Professional Development.

(1) Professional Growth Tracks: The *ACHIEVE* HCMS drives all aspects of the educator evaluation process and influences all of its components. An essential component of the *ACHIEVE HMCS System* is the Professional Growth Tracks strategy. Annually, all educators – newly-hired and experienced – will be assigned to a Professional Growth Track based on effectiveness data and ratings:

ACHIEVE : Professional Growth Tracks		
Track	**Audience**	**Professional Growth Strategies**
Track 1: Initial Professional Development	• All educators with less than 3 years experience	• Designed to support growth of new educators – both new educators and new to *ACHIEVE* district schools – during probationary period. • Strategies promote assimilation of educators into district culture and promote mastery of district instructional / administrative strategies.
Track 2: Ongoing Professional Growth	• Experienced Educators – *Highly Effective*, *Effective*	• Designed to support experienced educators demonstrating mastery of educator effectiveness domains. • Strategies promote development of leadership skills, advanced certifications and peer support to promote sharing effective practice.
Track 3: Professional Development – Concern	• Experienced Educators – *Developing*	• Designed to support experienced educators demonstrating single-issue concern or single-issue deficiency in effectiveness domains. • Strategies promote development of skills aligned to effectiveness domains and strengthen weaknesses identified during evaluations.
Track 4: Professional Development – Warning	• Experienced Educators – *Ineffective*	• Designed to support experienced educators demonstrating less than satisfactory performance across multiple effectiveness domains. • Strategies develop skills aligned to effectiveness domains / strengthen multiple weaknesses identified during evaluations. • Strategies mitigate deficiencies to avoid potential dismissal actions.

Annual assignment of educators to Professional Growth Tracks will trigger Professional Growth Plans that connect educators to support, professional development and quality improvement strategies that promote educator attainment of *Highly Effective* and *Effective* performance ratings. **ACHIEVE seeks to raise student achievement by connecting all students attending schools with *Highly Effective* and *Effective* educators**.

(2) Equity in Teaching and Learning: *ACHIEVE* districts, guided by work with The Arkansas Academy of Educational Equity, Learning for Justice, and the Center for Justice, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will engage in professional learning opportunities that elevate the skills and competencies needed by educators to ensure that

instruction is culturally responsive, equity-driven and data-informed. Both The Arkansas Academy of Educational Equity and The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence will collaborate with superintendents, central office staff and school leaders to ensure that equity resonates in all teaching and learning decisions, education administration and human capital management decision-making. Equity in teaching and learning is critical to the success of the students in our districts, the success of *ACHIEVE* schools and the success of the communities in which students live and learn. Professional development and leadership training will ensure equity is a key factor in all *ACHIEVE* programs and experts from The Academy and The Center will provide technical assistance and professional development for district administrators, school leaders, instructional leaders and teachers to increase leadership and instructional coherence across all district and school programs serving high-needs schools through the lens of equity. The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence will also collaborate with *ACHIEVE* districts to implement a comprehensive plan that aligns with the goal and objectives of *ACHIEVE* to accelerate student achievement in high-priority schools.

(3) Principal Network: The *ACHIEVE* Principal Network will improve educator effectiveness through individualized learning and support for assistant principals and principals. Principal Network professional learning and professional growth strategies will include:

o Blended Coaching: Leadership coaches will work with principals and assistant principals to provide the following supports: review and discuss school level data; assist in setting and reaching professional goals; engage in coaching conversations related to Culturally Responsive PBIS behavior management protocols; provide best practices to ensure objective teacher evaluation; assist in supporting data-driven decision-making and curriculum design; engage in shared professional learning; reflect on day-to-day leadership challenges; model effective school management practices and support implementation of the Charlotte Danielson Model educator evaluation tool. Leadership Coaches will provide monthly coaching to participating principals / assistant principals. Coaches will be assigned to school leaders in their first year of school administration or to principals / assistant principals who receive *Progressing* or *Ineffective* ratings. Principal Coaches will complete leadership training offered by The Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity, The Center for Strategic Leadership, and Boyd Griffin Associates.

o Leadership Evaluation Development: *ACHIEVE* districts will collaborate with The Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity (AAEE) and the Center for Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) to improve the ability of principals and evaluators to conduct high-quality instructional observations and use evidence-

based targeted feedback to educators. JEDI will develop Equity Score Cards which provide school leaders with teachers' disaggregated data, coupled with a root cause analysis to show areas where there are gaps in equity-driven practice and strategies to close the equity gap. Both AAEE and JEDI will develop professional learning that will nurture the growth of aspiring instructional leaders within districts by helping current and future school leaders develop a shared vision for high-quality instruction that is equity-driven; utilize non-judgmental methods for observing and analyzing instruction with a lens geared towards cultural responsiveness; employ transformative skills in providing targeted feedback; promote development of professional learning communities focused on student learning and grow a deeper culture of public practice.

- SAMS Leadership Training: SAMS is a professional development process using a unique set of tools to change principal focus from school management tasks to instructional leadership – activities directly connected to improving teaching and learning. *ACHIEVE* will provide SAMS professional learning to ensure participating principals and assistant principals from all Priority Level 1 high-need schools complete the leadership development model. SAMS was developed by the Wallace Foundation and has an exceptional reputation for yielding outstanding leadership outcomes for school leaders serving high-needs schools (see http://wordpress.samsconnect.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/sam-redifining-the-prinicpals-role-journal-of-school-leadership-2017.pdf for Research Base).

o Professional Learning: *ACHIEVE* will offer extensive leadership professional development to support the growth and continuous leadership improvement of central district administrators, principals and assistant principals. The *ACHIEVE* HMCS platform will include a catalog of professional development options designed to elevate effectiveness and fill gaps in expertise / knowledge identified during the annual administrator effectiveness evaluation process (see chart below for menu of professional development – additional opportunities will be available during the three-year grant period). *ACHIEVE* district administrators will complete annual professional development. Options will include, but not be limited to: Facilitating Deep Learning; Equity-Driven Assessments; How to Facilitate Better Coaching Conversations that Significantly Improve Teacher Effectiveness; Blended Coaching; Strengths-based Leadership; Culturally-Responsive Pedagogy, and Using Data to Lead School-wide Transformation.

(4) Instructional Coaching: *ACHIEVE* districts will utilize a *Blended Coaching* model for educators. Instructional Coaches from the Arkansas Academy of Educational Equity will ensure that Instructional Coaches support *ACHIEVE* educators with research-based, validated coaching and mentoring strategies. The

Instructional Coaching effort will support educators with embedded professional development that raises competencies in instructional practice, teaching with equity and social and emotional learning. *ACHIEVE* will engage a team of Coaches that will be deployed to schools on a weekly basis to supplement existing Coaching capacity at each school with expertise in specialized pedagogies and competencies that can work with educators across grade levels and schools to address common instructional growth needs. Instructional Coaches will increase instructional support strategies in Special Education; Math; Science; English Language Learners; Social Studies/History; and Social / Emotional Learning and Equity. A team of four coaches will provide specialized supports across *ACHIEVE* schools; Coaches will be assigned to schools using the School Priority Level strategy.

(5) New Teacher Network: *ACHIEVE* will offer multi-year support for new teachers entering district schools to prepare them with skills to meet the urgent needs of students in high priority schools; understanding policies and practices in each district; and elevating the quality of the practice of new teachers during the early phase of their careers. <u>This is a critical need because 390 of our 810 teachers (48%) are Inexperienced Teachers</u>.

o **Induction Support:** *ACHIEVE* districts will offer an Annual Induction Orientation – a blended learning experience of one day workshop and online modules – that prepares new teachers who choose to serve in *ACHIEVE* consortium schools who may have had previous experience in other districts prior to serving in the consortium district. Teachers will learn how to effectively use the *ACHIEVE* HCMS, educator evaluation systems / effectiveness tools, district policies, Arkansas state standards / expectations and instructional / assessment philosophies.

o **New Teacher Virtual Networks for Improvement:** *ACHIEVE* districts will assign new teachers (Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 teachers) to specialized Learning Communities to connect them with New Teacher Network Mentor Teachers through a Virtual Network for Improvement. New Teacher Network Mentors and Instructional Specialists (Career Ladder position) will lead monthly Virtual Networks for Improvement and connect new educators with instructional / curricular resources and support vital to ensuring new teachers meet and exceed performance standards.

o **New Teacher Mentoring:** Every first-year teacher entering *ACHIEVE* schools from a university teacher preparation program or alternative certification program will be assigned a New Teacher Mentor (Teacher Mentors have maintained a *Highly Effective* rating for at least three consecutive years) from the same grade level or curricular subject. New teachers will meet with Mentors monthly throughout their first three years of teaching to learn from experienced educators and increase support for new teachers vulnerable to attrition

from the profession. Mentor Teacher assignments will be maintained for the first three years of teaching. Mentors will complete the Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity Coach Academy training.

(6) Career Ladders: Professional learning opportunities will be provided which link professional growth to educator performance. Career Ladders will offer multiple strategies to advance eligible *ACHIEVE* educators to higher level leadership and instructional positions. Educators who maintain *Highly Effective* ratings for a minimum of three consecutive years will be recruited to pursue career advancement positions in instructional or school leadership positions. Career Ladder opportunities will include:

o **Harvard University Strategic Data Project:** *ACHIEVE* will engage outstanding educators from nine participating, rural Arkansas school districts – central administrators, principals, assistant principals, HCMS administrators and / or teachers – in outstanding professional learning through the Harvard University Strategic Data Project. The Strategic Data Project Fellowship is a two-year program that strengthens the capacity of education agencies to use data to drive instructional improvement. The Fellowship prepares data strategists to advance critical analytic initiatives, uncover valuable insights, measure solutions, communicate evidence to stakeholders and build a strong data culture in schools vital to advancing educational priorities impacting the success of educators and students. *ACHIEVE* consortium districts will recruit up to eight candidates per year to complete the Harvard University Strategic Data Project Fellowship. The goal is to develop a brain trust of talent (teachers and school leaders) whose skills can be leveraged across districts to serve as thought leaders in developing evidence-based protocols to accelerate putting each of the high priority schools in *ACHIEVE* on a path of continuous improvement.

o **Micro-Credentials:** *ACHIEVE* will advance knowledge in the field pertaining to the concept of micro-credentials and the role they play in the ongoing effort to improve educator effectiveness. *ACHIEVE,* in partnership with The Arkansas Academy of Educational Equity, will clearly define through practice what micro-credentials are and provide multiple opportunities to engage educators in micro-credential courses of study that will demonstrate the benefit micro-credentials add to the educator preparation and development field. *ACHIEVE* will demonstrate that micro-credentials are powerful change agents allowing aspiring, novice and experienced educators to increase knowledge and competency through intensive study of targeted education topics that deconstruct barriers impeding student success and perpetuating cycles of inequality in K – 12 education access / opportunity. Educators who attain *Highly Effective* or *Effective* performance ratings will be eligible to complete micro-credentials. Upon successful completion of micro-

credential courses of study, *ACHIEVE* educators will then qualify to fill Career Ladder positions of elevated instructional leadership and school leadership responsibility and compensation (New Teacher Mentors, Instructional Coaches, Principal Network Coaches, Virtual Network for Improvement Facilitators, Curriculum Design Specialists, PBIS Behavior Support Team members, etc.).

Creating Shared Practices and Language for Improvement Through Micro-credentialing	
Stakeholder	**Micro-credential / Outcomes**
Teachers	The Micro-credential in *Equity, Culturally-Relevant Pedagogy and Improvement Science* designed by the Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity. Teachers will receive a micro-credential and develop the competency do the following: 1. Effectively use strategies that create a culture of equity in the classroom. 2. Incorporate equity-driven pedagogy. 3. Use high-yield, culturally-relevant strategies to create engagement and inquiry in the classroom. 4. Identify and solve problems of practice. 5. Use data to conduct root-cause analysis. 6. Implement strategies for course-correction to accelerate learning and closing achievement gaps.
HR Directors/ Instructional Supervisors	Provide an inquiry-based learning and technical support group for District HR Directors and Instructional Supervisors. Learning sessions will lead to a micro-credential designed in collaboration with The Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity, Human Resource Management faculty at the Sam M. Walton School of Business at the University of Arkansas, The Leadership and Supervision faculty at University of Arkansas College of Education and the Arkansas Department of Education. Participants will learn the following: 1. How to develop an outcomes-based Human Capital and Talent Management System with "best-in-class" strategies to increase teacher efficacy. 2. Study, implement and expand district-wide Performance-Based Compensation Systems which promote, sustain and incentivize "highly-effective" teaching practices. 3. Learn to effectively use and calibrate the Arkansas Department of Education TESS (*TESS* = Teacher Excellence Support System) evaluation tool. 4. Effectively use SIBME software platform to create job-embedded professional learning and virtual coaching to significantly improve teacher effectiveness and use technology as a tool to conduct on-going "instructional rounds". 5. Learn to effectively use Charlotte Danielson Model and a blended coaching model as drivers to improve instruction.
	This micro-credential, designed in collaboration with The Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity, the Human Resource Management faculty at the Sam M. Walton School of Business at the University of Arkansas, The Leadership and Supervision faculty at University of Arkansas College of Education and the Arkansas Department

Superintendent/ Principals	of Education, will target district and building leaders to develop coherence in leading large-scale change. Leaders will learn the following: 1. How to effectively use, and evaluate the quality, consistency and reliability of Human Capital and Talent Management Systems. 2. Study the effectiveness of HMCS as a driver to improve teacher effectiveness. 3. Learn to effectively implement a Performance-Based Compensation System which maximizes teacher efficacy. 4. Learn how to effectively cultivate, grow, sustain a "culture of competency." 5. Effectively use technology as a tool to conduct on-going "instructional rounds." 6. Study the most effective frameworks for improving instruction. Learn how to incorporate the tenants of improvement science to effectively raise student achievement and close persistent achievement gaps.

o **Badging:** *ACHIEVE* will introduce the emerging professional growth concept of Badging to *ACHIEVE* district schools. Similar to the micro-credential approach, Badging will serve as a Career Ladder strategy to promote the internal development of education leaders. *Highly Effective* and *Effective* educators who maintain ratings a minimum of three consecutive years will be eligible to develop priority skills from existing *ACHIEVE* district specialists in instructional leadership and school leadership areas of focus (Coaching, Social and Emotional Learning, ELL / Special Education Instruction, Educator Evaluation, Literacy, Equity in Education, etc.). Badging will promote self-directed growth by allowing educators to choose from a menu of Badging options – aligned to Career Ladder positions and outlined in the *ACHIEVE* HCMS – that advance their careers as they move up the Career Ladder. Badging will include coaching, mentoring, PLCs, e-learning and / or embedded professional learning to increase educator quality and expand *ACHIEVE* districts' capacity to address the learning needs of students.

o **National Board Certification:** *ACHIEVE* teachers who maintain *Highly Effective* or *Effective* ratings for a minimum of three consecutive years will be eligible to apply for participation in the National Board Certification initiative. Annual cohort of educators who complete the rigorous program will then be eligible to pursue advanced Career Ladder positions (New Teacher Mentors, Instructional Coaches, Principal Network Coaches, PLC Leaders, Curriculum Design Specialists, PBIS Behavior Support Team members).

(7) Professional Development: *ACHIEVE* will generate objective effectiveness data used to inform all aspects of the HCMS (Tier 1) and will connect educators – through Professional Growth Tracks (see Tier 2), monitored by the Center for Justice, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (see Tier 1) – to diverse and evidence-based professional development that reflects individual needs. *ACHIEVE* proposes an innovative professional

development delivery model that expands upon the outstanding work which began with The Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity. The *ACHIEVE* Professional Development strategy will be to provide weekly, job-embedded coaching, and provide 24/7 access to both online and hybrid professional learning modules that all schools will be able to access that address diverse content areas, leadership skills and instructional competencies. Weekly *ACHIEVE interactive* modules will be taught by a rotating team of Coaches, Instructional Specialists and experts from partner organizations with expertise in teacher and school leader effectiveness. *ACHIEVE* interactive modules will provide a cost-effective, sustainable approach to ongoing professional development that provides weekly opportunities for educators to address professional growth in collaborative, *Deeper Learning Communities of Practice* that provide extensive and diverse options for professional learners. Implementation of *ACHIEVE* will supplement the district-driven weekly interactive modules (an expansion of the effective AAEE strategy) with external professional development provided by outstanding, respected leaders in the field of educator quality improvement.

o **High Impact Professional Learning:** *ACHIEVE* will utilize resources to invest in High Impact Professional Learning that will help districts meet high-level priorities and implement transformative, districtwide improvement strategies. High Impact Professional Learning will include:

ACHIEVE: Professional Development	
Program / Provider	**Purpose / Impact**
The Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at the University of Arkansas (AAEE)	The Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity has served as the convener of each of the nine district consortia and crafted the MOU for cross-district collaboration among each of the regional stakeholders. In the *ACHIEVE* TSL, AAEE will provide Instructional Coaches (trained by AAEE and the Harvard Data Project) who will provide blended coaching to improve teacher efficacy; design competency-based micro-credentials that increase efficacy; drive recruitment, selection, training and retention of new candidates through its alternative teacher certification process who will serve in high priority schools within the nine districts; provide professional development for both teachers and school leaders that will provide new pathways to certification in areas of teacher shortages (e.g. STEM, special education, world languages, etc.). AAEE will facilitate Networks for Improvement to train teachers to facilitate "deep learning". AAEE will provide blended professional learning that will include in-person job-embedded coaching and workshops and robust online courses to help district administrators and school leaders effectively use SIMBE to support the implementation of objective educator effectiveness evaluation systems.
The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence (CSL)	CSL will design and assist in the implementation of a comprehensive plan for large-scale transformation (which includes the Human Capital Management Framework and a Performance-Based Compensation System adopted by the *ACHIEVE* consortium districts). CSL will support the learning needs of superintendents and school leaders and help

	stakeholders at the central office level clearly define goals, capture data, and outline and roll-out the implementation of HCMS and the PBCS across the nine districts. CSL will work across districts as a strategist at the macro level to ensure that there is intersectionality among each of the components (coaching support, professional learning, talent management, recruitment, performance based compensation) of the strategic plan and proposal. CSL's goal is to ensure that the *ACHIEVE* proposal is implemented in alignment with GPRA measures, targets and goals of the TSL grant.
The New Teacher Project	Given the number of novice teachers new to the profession who are serving in consortium districts, we are making a bold and robust investment in new teacher quality by enlisting the evidence-based expertise of The New Teacher Project. TNTP will design our New Teacher Induction Support System to include in-person support, curriculum design and on-going virtual coaching for teachers in their first three years of service. They will provide critical feedback to improve teacher efficacy, support and build capacity with teachers who have a "developing" skill-set. The goal will be to grow teacher competence and move all teachers from "developing" to "effective" and "highly effective," raising student achievement.
Harvard University Strategic Data Project	This two-year Fellowship will transform educators into data strategists and research professionals with skills to build schoolwide / districtwide cultures driven by use of data to inform strategic decisions impacting district, school and instructional practice.
Learning for Justice (LFJ)	Learning for Justice upholds the mission of the Southern Poverty Law Center to be a catalyst for racial justice in the South and beyond. Learning for Justice will provide professional development, supplemental curriculum materials and a train-the trainer model for equity-driven education. LFJ will facilitate conversations to spark deep learning on the impact of culturally-relevant and responsive pedagogy and how our perspectives, attitudes and actions impact student learning and achievement in the classroom. School leaders will develop management skills to increase the effectiveness of culturally relevant conversations about student learning with peers at all levels of performance, competence, and commitment. Coaching will provide educators the ability to positively impact employee competency, engagement and retention.
The Center for Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI)	The Center for Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) will mine, disaggregate and conduct a root cause analysis by pairing student achievement and professional expertise gaps indicated through teacher evaluation data to design an evidence-based action plan with strategies to close equity / achievement gaps for each high priority school. JEDI will support teachers / school leaders to use data to drive improvements in student achievement.
Boyd Griffin and Associates (BGA)	Boyd Griffin Associates, which has developed and designed professional development solutions for the Association of Supervisors of Curriculum Development (ASCD) and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards among others, will conduct an audit (along with AAEE) of all of the professional development offerings in each of the districts. After reviewing the offerings, examining student achievement data and teacher efficacy data, BGA will work with AAEE to design and present professional learning options for teachers where professional expertise gaps may exist.

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards	Educators receiving *Highly Effective* and *Effective* performance ratings will pursue National Board certification to develop mastery of advanced competencies – National Board certification will promote advancement through Career Ladder opportunities.
National SAM Innovation Project	Principals / Assistant Principals will complete the Wallace Foundation *SAM* Project – time management and prioritization strategy – to increase efficiency of school leaders so more time is spent engaged in instructional leadership versus managerial tasks.
International Baccalaureate Program (IB)	The International Baccalaureate Program will provide professional learning opportunities for teachers and school leaders, aligned with international standards. Through the IB, professional development for educators in high priority schools will obtain the tools needed to engage students by interweaving rigor, relevance and relationships as they facilitate learning in high priority schools and advance opportunities for teachers to engage students and foster inquiry in the classroom. The goal of IB professional development is for teachers and school leaders to learn classroom strategies that facilitate *deep learning* in classrooms. We want to improve teacher efficacy by providing them with strategies that facilitate, foster and ignite deeper engagement and inquiry in daily classroom instruction.
Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning	*ACHIEVE* teachers and school leaders across districts will learn to use improvement science protocols: 1) identify problems of practice; 2) conduct root-cause analysis of those problems; 3) design a plan of action to address the problem; 4) implement the plan; 5) monitor the implementation; 6) course – correct if needed; and 7) teach to mastery (solve the problem). Accomplished and novice teachers will learn from each other across districts on the effective classroom tools for raising and sustaining student achievement. Teachers will be able to conduct virtual instructional rounds and observe and give substantive feedback to each other to strengthen their practice.
Micro-Credentials	*ACHIEVE* will connect educators with diverse and respected leaders in the field of education leadership and instructional practice to offer micro-credential courses linked to Career Ladder positions available throughout targeted schools.

- **Virtual Networks for Improvement:** Through research and training facilitated by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning teachers and school leaders will be trained to facilitate *Virtual Networks for Improvement*. Not only are teachers isolated within classrooms as they struggle with the conundrum of how to raise student achievement, that isolation is exacerbated as teachers attempt to collaborate outside of their schools with other educators. The goal is to empower teachers and school leaders across districts to use improvement science protocols: 1) identify problems of practice; 2) conduct root-cause analysis of those problems; 3) design a plan of action to address the problem; 4) implement the plan; 5) monitor the implementation; 6) course – correct if needed; and 7) teach to mastery (solve the problem). Accomplished and novice teachers will learn from each other across districts on the effective classroom

tools for raising and sustaining student achievement. Teachers will be able to conduct virtual instructional rounds and observe and give substantive feedback to each other to strengthen their practice.

ACHIEVE and its Tiers of Support will provide each of the district partners in the consortium with a mechanism to make effectiveness-based HCMS decisions, improve instructional leadership, enhance classroom education, improve equitable access to quality teaching for all students and raise achievement in high-need schools.

(iii) Methods of evaluation will provide feedback / assessment of progress toward outcomes.

The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence plans to contract with EduShift, Inc., a 21-year-old grants and program evaluation organization, to implement an objective evaluation of *ACHIEVE*. Project Leader, Carol Guse, is a seasoned grants administrator and evaluator. She has served as principal investigator in over 100 federal and state government grants since 1990 – including six previous *Teacher Incentive Fund* and *Teacher and School Leader* projects – and has been a field instructor with Indiana University and St. Francis College. She has substantial experience administering federal, state, corporate, and foundation grants and has served as an evaluator for the United States, Indiana and Michigan Departments of Education, as well as dozens of school districts throughout the country. With a strong background in education, administration, accounting, auditing, research and program implementation, Guse, and her team of professionals have over 50 years of combined grant experience and offer tremendous expertise that will ensure objective, ongoing evaluation of *ACHIEVE* across multiple GPRA measures, locally-developed project measures and two research questions. Evaluation of *ACHIEVE* will include: (1) Evaluation Methodology; (2) Process and Outcome Evaluation; (3) Evidence of Promise and (4) Objective Performance Measures.

(1) Evaluation Methodology: Evaluators will utilize the research-based *FORECAST* model (*FORmative Evaluation, Consultation, And System Techniques*) to guide an objective evaluation structure (Goodman 1994; Goodman 1998; Goodman 2006; Katz, Wandersman, Goodman, et al., 2013). Four tiers of assessment provide a validated evaluation planning framework:

MODEL – Action Model of Project	Evaluators will construct an action model for each year of the project that includes all events, linking the implementation timeline and logic model with evaluation activities to ensure all facets of the evaluation process are aligned.
MARKER – Indicators of Progress	Evaluators will collect baseline data and identify annual benchmarks based on performance measures (including annual growth targets) to determine if progress is sufficient to attain goals and determine the magnitude of results.
MEASURE –	Evaluators, project personnel and partners will implement assessment tools (educator

Tools to Assess Achievement	effectiveness rubrics, state content exams, surveys) aligned to *ACHIEVE* strategies to collect data. Analysis will link statistical relationships to outcomes.
MEANING – Assess Outcomes, Verify Impact	Data analysis will equip evaluators with indicators needed to draw conclusions / assess strengths and weaknesses. Interpretation of data will provide feedback that helps stakeholders make informed decisions about strategy effectiveness.

The *FORECAST* model will provide evaluators, the Project Director and Advisory Committee with feedback regarding the effects of specific program elements. Evaluation of *ACHIEVE* using the FORECAST model will allow evaluators to address two critical questions (see below for description of Treatment / Control Groups):

ACHIEVE Research Questions
Do ACHIEVE schools receiving TSL funds (Treatment Group) measure greater student achievement gains than non-ACHIEVE schools that do not receive TSL funding (Control Group)?
Does TSL funding improve equity in education by improving student access to *Highly Effective* educators in Targeted Support and Improvement schools compared to Control Group schools?

(2) Process and Outcome Evaluation: EduShift, Inc will conduct a thorough evaluation of all project elements that measures both process and outcome indicators. **Process Evaluation:** Process evaluation will provide feedback pertaining to the achievement of operational benchmarks and milestones in accordance with proposed timelines. Process measures will ensure that all program activities occur in a timely manner so that completion of the project will yield outcomes. The *ACHIEVE* Timeline, Logic Model (see *Project Design*) and FORECAST action model will serve as process tools allowing EduShift personnel to determine compliance with the scope and schedule of the proposed project. Process Evaluation will: (1) evaluate and document fidelity and variability in program implementation across sites and student subgroups in relation to Logic Model, Timeline and proposed scope of the project; (2) monitor dose of interventions across *ACHIEVE* sites and across intended recipients of interventions; (3) provide accountability data needed to inform stakeholders and partners of implementation progress and (4) generate feedback data to promote improvement of project, refinement of services and replication of effective strategies. **Outcome Evaluation:** Outcome evaluation assesses the impact of the *TSL* grant on *ACHIEVE* schools, educators and students. Evaluators will use nine Required GPRA Measures and project-specific indicators to evaluate the impact *ACHIEVE* strategies have on Human Capital Management Systems (including Performance-based Compensation Systems) and Educator Quality Support Systems. Outcome evaluation will focus on the measurement of performance indicators that correspond to the purpose of the program – including improving equity in education, increasing educator effectiveness and raising student achievement – and will measure program success and its impact on students / families / schools /

communities. Outcome evaluation will generate data that verifies the impact of implementation rather than focusing on the timely completion of proposed activities. Outcome evaluation will equip grant managers with the information needed to analyze results by project component and by subgroups / schools to determine if interventions yield positive growth and promote success; analysis will promote replication and sustainability of effective practices and refinement of strategies to maximize results. **Treatment and Control Groups:** Evaluators will collect data to facilitate evaluation that meets *What Works Clearinghouse* standards:

TREATMENT GROUP	Targeted Support and Improvement – Arkansas state-designated Targeted Support and Improvement schools administered by *ACHIEVE* School Districts as of October 1, 2021.
CONTROL GROUP	Arkansas Targeted Support and Improvement – Random selection of six Arkansas Targeted Support and Improvement schools as of October 1, 2021 matched to grade levels, poverty levels, achievement levels, etc. of Treatment Group schools.

(3) Evidence of Promise: Design Meets *What Works Clearinghouse* Standards – Evaluation will include Quasi-Experimental Design (QED) assessment of outcomes through comparison of Treatment and Control Group educators. Matching - In the impact evaluation, EduShift will use a propensity-score matching (PSM) approach designed to meet WWC standards with reservations. The evaluation will examine outcomes for *ACHIEVE* students enrolled in high-need schools in our participating nine districts. *ACHIEVE* is estimated to reach more than 8,500 students annually who will enroll in 27 district schools. ESI will use administrative records from schools within the district to create a sample of treatment schools (serving students enrolled in *Targeted Support / Improvement* schools) that are closely matched to Arkansas non-*TSL* state-designated *Targeted Support / Improvement* control group schools on key characteristics – including ethnicity, gender, poverty, academic performance, enrollment, grade level configuration and funding allocations (control school and treatment school will be matched to ensure paired schools receive similar funding other than TSL funding). Other factors to be considered will include: school size, pre-intervention student achievement in ELA, math and science, and the proportion of economically-disadvantaged students, students of color, racial group isolation, special education and English learners. ESI will evaluate the quality of the matching by examining whether the matched treatment and control group means for each measure included in the matching process are within 0.25 standard deviation of each other (the baseline equivalence threshold to meet *WWC* standards with reservations). If the differences are greater than 0.25 standard deviation, ESI will refine the matching approach to achieve a baseline equivalence acceptable to meet WWC standards with reservations. Once treatment (*Targeted Support / Improvement*) schools are matched to comparison (non-*TSL* Arkansas *Targeted Support / Improvement*) schools,

evaluators will use <u>ANOVA</u> (analysis of variance) to analyze results. Since ANOVA only measures if a difference exists between control and treatment groups and whether it is significant, evaluators hope to demonstrate, due to the matching process, that the program was the cause of the variation in measured objectives. <u>Statistical Adjustment</u> - In accordance with *What Works Clearinghouse QED, with reservations*, evaluators will also perform ANCOVA (analysis of covariance) on control and treatment groups to assure there are no confounding factors (or control them if they exist) between control and treatment groups. <u>Effect Size</u> - Effect size will be calculated by taking the difference in means between two groups and dividing that number by combined (pooled) standard deviation. Effect size tells evaluators how many standard deviations of difference exist between the means of the intervention (treatment) and comparison conditions (an effect size of 0.25 indicates treatment group outperformed comparison group by 25% of one standard deviation). For *ACHIEVE*, evaluators will use an effect size of 0.25 as the threshold to meet "Practice with Rigorous Scientific Evidence" standard. Evaluators selected a 0.25 effect size because it represents a conservative estimate of effects and because it meets USDOE *WWC* "substantively important" threshold. <u>Cross-Contamination</u>: Evaluation will assess cross-contamination of control / treatment groups and remediate contamination if needed. Evaluators will complete statistical treatments of data to assess results, casual inference of outcomes, relationships between interventions / results and correlation of variables.

(4) Performance Measures: The goal, objectives, GPRA measures and indicators will be used to assess implementation progress and the impact / outcomes of services. Evaluation will review program activities and budget expenditures to assess progress in meeting the goal and objectives of *ACHIEVE*. Evaluators will collect Baseline Data for each measure to facilitate progress monitoring/promote improvement across project outcomes:

ACHIEVE: Goal, Objectives, GPRA Measures, Project Indicators October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2024	Evaluation Source
GOAL: To improve student achievement by increasing access to effective educators in high-need schools.	
GPRA A: The percentage of teachers and School Leaders within the TSL-assisted schools rated effective or higher by their districts' evaluation and support systems.	
GPRA B: The percentage of teachers and School Leaders across the participating district(s) that show improvements, over the previous year, on the student growth component of their evaluation rating.	
GPRA C: The percentage of teachers and School Leaders within the TSL-assisted schools that show improvements, over the previous year, on the student growth component of their evaluation rating.	
GPRA D: The percentage of teachers and School Leaders in TSL-assisted schools for whom evaluation ratings were used to inform decisions regarding recruitment, hiring, placement, retention, dismissal, professional development, tenure, promotion, or all of the above.	
GPRA E: The percentage of teachers and School Leaders within the participating district(s) who earned performance-	

based compensation based on their individual evaluation ratings.

GPRA F: The percentage of teachers and School Leaders in TSL-funded schools who earned performance-based compensation based on their individual evaluation ratings.

GPRA G: The number of teachers receiving performance compensation disaggregated by race, gender, and where available, disability status.

GPRA H: The number of School Leaders receiving performance compensation disaggregated by race, gender, and where available, disability status.

GPRA I: The number of teachers receiving performance compensation for leadership responsibilities disaggregated by race, gender, and where available, disability status.

Objective 1: Reduce equity gaps through effectiveness-based Human Capital Management Systems.	
Indicator 1.1: A minimum of 80% of educators in Targeted Support and Improvement schools will attain *Highly Effective* or *Effective* rating by end of grant, 10/1/21 – 9/30/24.	Effectiveness Rubric
Indicator 1.2: Increase the racial diversity of educators teaching in targeted schools a minimum of 15% by end of grant period, 10/1/21 – 9/30/24.	Employment Data
Objective 2: Assess educator effectiveness using validated tools to ensure objectivity.	
Indicator 2.1: 100% of instructional staff will receive an annual educator effectiveness rating, using state-approved evaluation tool, each year of the grant, 10/1/21 – 9/30/24.	Teacher Ratings
Indicator 2.2: 100% of principals / assistant principals will receive an annual educator effectiveness rating, using state-approved evaluation tool, each year of the grant, 10/1/21 – 9/30/24.	Leader Ratings
Objective 3: Improve educator effectiveness through individualized learning and support.	
Indicator 3.1: 100% of educators (instructional and leadership) will maintain annual Professional Growth Plans each year of the grant, 10/1/21 – 9/30/24.	Teacher Portfolios
Indicator 3.2: Reduce the number of educators who receive a *Minimally Effective* or *Ineffective* rating a minimum of 15% compared to previous year, 10/1/21 – 9/30/24.	Educator Ratings
Objective 4: Increase student attainment of state academic performance standards.	
Indicator 4.1: Increase the % of students who achieve ELA proficiency benchmarks a minimum of 10% by end of grant period, 10/1/21 – 9/30/24.	AR Test Data
Indicator 4.2: Increase the % of students who achieve Math proficiency benchmarks a minimum of 10% by end of grant period, 10/1/21 – 9/30/24	AR Test Data
Indicator 4.3: Increase graduation rate a minimum of 10% by end of grant period, 10/1/21 – 9/30/24.	AR Data

Evaluation of *ACHIEVE* will produce data to assess impact of the project and promote continuous improvement:

- **Data Collection:** EduShift and the Project Director will collect data to establish baseline benchmarks for each performance measure. Baseline data (collected at beginning of Year 1) will facilitate comparative analysis of interim, annual and end-of-project data to measure outcomes. Data collection using project-specific tools will facilitate outcome analysis and reporting of results. Data collection will involve grant staff, school faculties, students, families and partners to ensure data reflects a diversity of stakeholders.

- **Evaluation Tools:** Evaluators will utilize multiple instruments to collect qualitative and quantitative data:

  (1) <u>Assessment Scores and Grades</u>: Student and teacher assessment results will measure academic

outcomes. School performance statistics (ELA/Reading and Mathematics state assessment results and / or NWEA academic assessment data) will assess impact of *ACHIEVE* on graduation rates, academic achievement and classroom performance. (2) Educator Effectiveness Data: Annual results of educator effectiveness evaluation systems will be measured to determine educator improvement and eligibility for performance-based compensation. (3) Participant Surveys: Students, teachers, Project Director and partners will complete annual surveys to assess perceptions of project quality, personal growth, attitudes toward *TSL* grant impact and impact of program on education outcomes. (4) Site Visits: EduShift, Inc. will complete multiple site visits (virtual and / or in-person) per year to solicit feedback and conduct observational analysis of progress. (5) Focus Groups: Evaluators will conduct annual focus groups (virtual and / or in-person) to collect data from diverse stakeholders (student, parent, teacher, partner) through structured interviews regarding project impact; (6) Formative Assessment Data: Evaluators will review student assessment data to monitor growth and provide administrators with performance data.

- **Data Analysis:** Statistical treatments of data will assess results, casual inference of outcomes, causal relationships between interventions and results (if any) and correlation of variables to results. Subgroup analysis will track changes in achievement / equity gaps. Evaluators will collect data for Treatment / Control groups to facilitate impact evaluation that meets *What Works Clearinghouse* standards.

- **Reporting:** EduShift, Inc. will collaborate with the Project Director to submit biannual performance reports to USDOE that present data for each measure, address strengths / weaknesses and include suggestions for improvement. Supplementary progress reporting of data to the Advisory Committee (see *Management Plan*) will ensure partners and stakeholders receive meaningful feedback. Analysis of data will be ongoing to ensure a constant flow of feedback to facilitate improvement and sustainability of effective strategies. Evaluators will monitor all components of *ACHIEVE* through continuous assessment of process and outcome measures to examine the effectiveness of the program as it evolves. Grant managers will implement a coordinated Dissemination Plan (see *Management Plan*) to facilitate replication of effective strategies in additional district schools and in learning environments across the region, state and nation.

- **Evaluation Timeline:** The EduShift, Inc. Evaluation Team, in collaboration with grant personnel and program partners, will complete a rigorous and ongoing evaluation of all activities. The timeline below details completion of evaluation activities during *ACHIEVE*:

ACHIEVE: ANNUAL EVALUATION TIMELINE

Annual Evaluation Milestones / Benchmarks
Collect baseline data for all required and project performance measures (Year 1). Collect annual data for all required and project performance measures (Years 1 – 3). Conduct annual participant surveys (students, teachers, parents, stakeholders – Years 1 – 3). Conduct multiple site visits to observe implementation progress at *ACHIEVE* schools (Years 1 – 3). Complete Annual Performance Reports (Phase 1 and Phase 2) as required by USDOE (Years 1 – 3). Present annual findings to Project Director and School Districts to promote improvement (Years 1 – 3).
Quarter 1: Annual Evaluation Activities
Work with grant personnel to create or revise annual FORECAST action model; Prepare or revise survey tools for *ACHIEVE* elements identified in action model; Initiate monthly conference calls with personnel; Review survey tools with grant personnel; Conduct surveys and compile Years 1 – 3 educator and student academic statistics.
Quarter 2: Annual Evaluation Activities
Monitor program activities; Collect surveys / analyze results; Conduct focus groups; Continue monthly evaluation conference calls; Implement process evaluation monitoring tool linked to Logic Model, Work Plan and Timeline.
Quarter 3: Annual Evaluation Activities
Administer post-survey for mandatory indicators and project specific outcomes; Administer year-end student, parent & teacher surveys; Continue monthly update conference calls with grant personnel; Conduct site visits and meet with focus groups; Prepare / submit Annual Performance Report Phase 1.
Quarter 4: Annual Evaluation Activities
Plan activities for upcoming year; Review evaluation results with district / grant personnel to identify and mitigate weaknesses; Offer improvement suggestions based on evaluation results; Prepare and submit Annual Performance Report Phase 2; Present evaluation results to Project Director / Advisory Board / Boards of Education.

(C) QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT PLAN

For more than 30 years, the practitioner-scholars at The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence (CSL) have led transformation initiatives that have significantly closed achievement gaps in high-poverty, low-performing schools throughout the nation. The mission of CSL is: *to lead large-scale change in school districts by collaborating with school leaders to develop and implement sustainable plans for improvement which address the issues of equity; human management capacity building; and designing systems which use data to inform strategies needed to accelerate learning and eradicate achievement gaps* (taken from Article II of CSL's Articles of Incorporation). CSL's goal is not to create a perpetual co-dependent relationship between ourselves and our partners. Instead, our goal is to: 1) build capacity by facilitating *Deeper Learning Communities of Practice* using Improvement Science as our mode of Inquiry; 2) growing the competencies of our partners to sustain the work of continuous improvement; 3) accelerating solutions to solve "problems of practice"; and 4) building the capacity of school districts to provide access daily to highly effective teachers and school leaders to every child, in every school, every day, despite their demography. What we are facilitating with this investment of federal TSL dollars is a large-scale transformation initiative designed to eradicate

academic underperformance in high-needs schools and significantly improve teacher and school leader effectiveness. While partners in *ACHIEVE* are many, this is not just a hodgepodge of players coming together to serve schools. Instead, this is a large-scale transformation initiative aimed at providing targeted assistance to remote, rural schools which have not had access to a large-scale investment of evidence-based professional learning. *ACHIEVE* Consortium stakeholders will use this learning to foster greater efficacy in serving vulnerable children significantly impacted by the precipitous effects of poverty. In this proposal, we are bringing a number of "best-in-class" educational partners together who have used evidence-based strategies to significantly increase teacher and school leader efficacy; used Performance Based Compensation as a tool to incentivize stakeholder effectiveness; re-designed Human Capital Management Systems to provide an ecosystem of support to improve student achievement; and have used protocols in Improvement Science to facilitate deep learning and solve problems of practice in schools. Our intention is to saturate our stakeholders with the competencies, tools, and skills to draw a line of demarcation between academic failure and academic growth and acceleration. Ultimately, CSL builds its work on the principle that learning to improve is iterative, recursive and cyclical. Improvement is continuous, perpetual and never-ending – we can always out-do our last best effort for the children that we serve. Our goal for the Arkansas *ACHIEVE* Consortium is to develop a systematic approach, through the implementation of a technologically-advanced Human Capital Management System, which has the tools that empower our district stakeholders to be engaged in the process of *learning fast in order to achieve quality outcomes reliably at scale.* Coupled with that, we want to foster the *habit of mind* that empowers our partners to develop an insatiable passion to "get better at getting better." In fact, we have a moral imperative to improve educational outcomes for children assigned to high-needs schools. We have to take note that we can only improve the educational outcomes of children in poverty by improving the efficacy and performance of those who are responsible for educating them – hence the investment of these TSL dollars.

Achieving objectives on time/within budget, clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones.

The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence, non-profit organization and fiscal agent, will implement a structured grant management plan to ensure thorough, timely, efficient implementation of *ACHIEVE* with fidelity to the Project Design. Intentional management connecting project administrators, educators, partners, school personnel, students, families and community representatives will ensure inclusive involvement of diverse stakeholders that aligns *ACHIEVE* to the needs of the target audience and aligns *ACHIEVE* to the program requirements outlined by the United States Department of Education. Grant

management strategies promoting continuous improvement of the project and facilitating efficient and effective implementation of *ACHIEVE* during the three-year grant period include: (1) Equal Access; (2) Timely Implementation; (3) Budget Oversight; (4) Procedures; (5) Personnel; (6) Timeline; (7) Feedback; and (8) Engaging Under-represented Groups. **(1) Equal Access:** The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence and all *ACHIEVE* partners will provide equal access for participation across all services regardless of actual or perceived age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or other protected class. All teachers, administrators, students, families and community stakeholders will be encouraged to participate in activities to maximize impact of project. *ACHIEVE* Tiers of Support (Human Capital Management Systems; Educator Quality Supports) will be administered to guarantee equal treatment of and equal opportunity for all participants. The Center for Strategic Leadership will fully comply with the equal access regulations outlined in the General Education Provisions Act section 427 (GEPA 427). **(2) Timely Implementation:** CSL will initiate *ACHIEVE* immediately upon funding and will manage all grant activities – to the maximum extent possible given the chance of unanticipated challenges – in accordance with the *ACHIEVE* Timeline (see below). Grant personnel and external evaluators will utilize multiple process evaluation tools to monitor implementation and align progress to the *ACHIEVE* Logic Model (see *Project Design* and *Appendix*). Evaluators will develop a FORECAST Model of *ACHIEVE* to guide ongoing evaluation of the effort and will share the model with stakeholders to ensure transparency of evaluation and reporting and provide managers with additional tools to support timely implementation of the project. Projected annual milestones (see Timeline below) will help CSL and grant administrators plan and schedule key activities to promote achievement of implementation benchmarks. **(3) Budget Oversight:** The Planning Task Force designed the budget to meet goals and objectives, ensure equal access and promote sustainability of strategies. Each line item is linked to one or more grant components, services and / or priorities. The budget is fiscally efficient while providing sufficient funds for comprehensive programming. The Project Director and CSL Finance Office will manage expenditures in accordance with state and U.S. Department of Education regulations and will prioritize allocations to ensure completion of project. The PD and Advisory Committee will identify complementary district / partner programming and funds that expand the reach of *ACHIEVE* and sustain systemic changes initiated during the grant. **(4) Procedures:** Coordination guided by management procedures will help CSL achieve the goal and objectives on time and within budget:

a) **Initiate Grant –** CSL will hire staff and brief project partners to launch *ACHIEVE*;

b) Convene Advisory Board – The Planning Task Force will transition into the *ACHIEVE* Advisory Committee; Advisory Committee will create Budget, Equity and Sustainability sub-Committees to provide critical implementation oversight during the grant period;

c) Ensure Equal Access – CSL and all partners will provide equal access / treatment for participants without regard to actual or perceived age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or other protected class for all services;

d) Implement Records Management Protocol – Project Director will maintain program file to document implementation, evaluation and fiscal milestones, from award to completion;

e) Implement Fiscal Management Protocol – CSL's Finance Office will establish a system of accounting / cost management / reporting to promote efficient expenditure of funds;

f) Implement Action Model – Project Director, Advisory Committee and Evaluation Team will develop/ revise action model to link project components to *ACHIEVE* Timeline, ensuring completion of all elements;

g) Implement Goods / Services Management Protocol – CSL will implement protocol to procure goods / services and manage acquisitions in compliance with applicable regulations;

h) Implement Evaluation Plan – Project Director, Advisory Committee and Evaluation Team will sustain ongoing evaluation to promote continuous project improvement.

i) Disseminate Results – Project Director, evaluators and grant personnel will present outcomes, data and progress to stakeholders and the public through reports, School Board presentations and outreach to increase transparency and engage the community in education.

j) Sustain Programs – CSL, grant administrators and Advisory Committee members will initiate a sustainability plan – from award through end of grant– to sustain *ACHIEVE* beyond federal funding.

(5) Personnel: The Center for Strategic Leadership will hire a team of highly-qualified educators to manage implementation of the three-year project. Management will be a collaborative effort guided by the following key personnel equipped with the skills, knowledge and expertise to successfully implement *ACHIEVE*:

ACHIEVE Personnel	
Qualifications	**Primary Responsibilities / Duties**
Advisory Committee: Planning Task Force will Transition to Ongoing Role	
• Comprised of *ACHIEVE* district Superintendents, school leaders, teachers, HCMS managers, union leaders, new members as recruited by grant personnel.	• Conduct quarterly oversight meetings to provide feedback to Project Director. • Ensure diversity of perspectives shape project to better meet identified needs. • Utilize evaluation data to strengthen weaknesses and promote improvement. • Conduct Budget / Equity / Sustainability Committee meetings and supports.

	• Coordinate sustainability efforts to ensure lasting impact of project.

Professional Learning Teams: Existing Educators	
• Comprised of *ACHIEVE* district Chief Academic Officers, Curriculum Specialists, Professional Development Coordinators, Teachers, Content Area and School Administrators.	• Research evidence-based professional learning opportunities aligned to Problems of Practice and create a draft menu of choices. • Solicit feedback from teachers to prioritize PL needs across grade levels. • Seek feedback from administrators to prioritize meaningful PL options. • Create final menu of PL options for teachers and administrators.

Project Director: 1.0 FTE – To Be Hired	
• Master Of Education or Higher. • Administrator Certification. • 10+ years in PK – 12 education. • Grant management experience. • Experience with professional growth initiatives / HCMS / PBCS efforts.	• Manage daily implementation of *ACHIEVE* and two Tiers of Support. • Coordinate Advisory Committee and oversee sub-committee meetings. • Supervise grant staff and coordinate partnerships. • Oversee HCMS and PBCS systemic improvements. • Oversee educator quality supports and manage recruitment of participants. • Manage fiscal resources to ensure efficient expenditure of funds. • Coordinate Dissemination Plan and sustainability / replication efforts.

***ACHIEVE* Improvement Specialists for Regions 1, 2 and 3: 3.0 FTE – To Be Hired**	
• Master of Education. • Administrator Certification. • 10+ years in PK – 12 education. • Experience coordinating professional growth programs. • Ability to build capacity/drive change	• Assess professional growth needs (3 school districts in each Region). • Align professional development to educator evaluation systems. • Manage principal and teacher coaching initiatives. • Manage Principal Network and New Teacher Network. • Collaborate with educators to maintain Professional Growth Plans. • Manage Career Ladder initiatives and recruit participants.

Administrative Assistant to Project Director: 1.0 FTE – To Be Hired	
•	•

Administrative Assistant to Improvement Specialists: 1.0 FTE – To Be Hired	
•	•

Leadership Coaches – To Be Provided by The Center for Strategic Leadership
CSL will provide Leadership Coaches for both the superintendents and principals in the district. We will partner with *Chiefs for Change* to provide coaches to the superintendents. The Chiefs for Change are a national group of superintendents who have successfully led large-scale transformation. We will also provide Leadership Coaches to principals. Our Leadership Coaches for facilitating building level transformation will be instructional leaders who have 5 or more years of experience significantly improving student achievement in high priority schools. Our Leadership Coaches will provide Blended Coaching; Model evaluation and feedback protocols that improve stakeholder performance; and teach leaders how to use Improvement Science to facilitate deep learning and create cycles of Improvement to raise student achievement. **(Tiered Capacity Building: Superintendents and Principals)**

Instructional Coaches – To Be Provided by The Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity
AAEE will focus its targeted assistance on building capacity to support and significantly improve teacher efficacy for teachers with more than 3 years experience. AAEE will provide side-by-side coaching; modeling; conduct lesson studies; provide critical feedback and assist teachers in incorporating feedback to improve their effectiveness and impact student achievement. AAEE will assist teachers in translating professional learning into high-impact and high-yield classroom

practices. **(Tiered Capacity Building: Teachers with more than 3 years experience)**

New Teacher Mentors – To Be Provided by The New Teacher Project
The New Teacher Project will focus its targeted assistance on teachers new to the profession in their first three years (0-3) of teaching to equip them with the skills needed to facilitate deep learning and raise student achievement. The New Teacher Project will facilitate a system of support for new teacher induction. TNTP will provide on-going support for new teachers: side-by-side coaching; modeling; conducting lesson studies; providing critical feedback and assisting teachers in incorporating feedback to improve new teacher effectiveness and help them build capacity in raising student achievement. **(Tier Capacity Building: New Teachers with 3 years or less experience)**

(6) Timeline: Coordination of Tiers of Support by grant managers will ensure delivery of high-quality services in accordance with an extensive Timeline and Logic Model. Grant managers, Advisory Board and evaluators will monitor progress, ensure fidelity with project design and assess milestones.

ACHIEVE IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE (10/1/21 – 9/30/24)	
KEY: Advisory Committee (AC); Project Director (PD); Improvement Specialists (IS); Instructional Coaches (IC); Principal Coaches (PC); New Teacher Mentors (NM); Aspiring Leader Interns (AI); Evaluation Team (ET); Human Capital Management System (HCMS); Educator Evaluation (EE); Performance-Based Compensation System (PBCS); Teachers (T); Principals (P); District Administrators (DA)	
ONGOING: Quarterly Advisory Board Meetings, Quarterly Advisory Board Committee Meetings; Implement Tiers of Support; Professional Development; Effectiveness Evaluations, Monthly Evaluation Conference Calls; Data Collection and Analysis; Dissemination of Results; Sustainability of Effective Project Components	
Year One	
Quarter 1 (Oct - Dec) & Quarter 2 (Jan - Mar)	**Quarter 3 (Apr - June) & Quarter 4 (July - Sept)**
• Hire Project Director (S) & Initiate *ACHIEVE* (PD)	• Complete Educator Effectiveness Evals (DA,P,T)
• Convene Advisory Committee; review grant (PD,AC)	• Conduct New Teacher, Principal *Forums* (PC,IC,NM)
• Launch Budget / Equity / Sustainability Committees (AC)	• Finish Year 1 activities / evaluate data (PD,IS,ET)
• Conduct HCMS audit (DA,PD,HCMS)	• Distribute Performance-Based Comp (DA,PD,HCMS)
• Initiate Professional Growth Plans (PD,DA,IS,P,T)	• Recruit Coaches/Mentor Teachers, Interns (IS)
• Plan Micro-Credential and Badging options (PD,EL,P,T)	• Offer Micro-Credentials / Badging study (IS,T,P)
• Schedule Professional Development, PLCs (PD,IS)	• Submit Y1 APR to Fed Program Officer (ET,PD)
• Launch / sustain leadership/instructional coaching (PC,IC)	• Plan and organize Year 2 programs (All)
• Develop evaluation tools / collect baseline data (ET)	• Inform stakeholders of Year 1 results (PD)
• Recruit Career Ladder participants (PD,IS,P,T)	• Launch Career Ladder initiatives (PD,IS,P,T)
Year 1: Primary Benchmarks / Milestones Aligned to Objectives	
• Tier 1: Use HCMS Audit results to fill gaps in programs and increase objectivity / credibility of systems.	
• Tier 2: Use Educator Quality results to improve educator support systems and professional learning strategies.	
Year Two	
• Launch new year of HCMS and EE (PD,DA,IS,P,T)	• Finish Year 2 activities / evaluate data (PD,T,ET)
• Conduct observations and feedback (DA,P,PC,IC)	• Complete annual educator evaluations (PD,DA,P,T)
• Sustain Professional Growth Plans (IS,P,T)	• Distribute Performance-Based Comp (HCMS)
• Continue leadership/instructional coaching (PC,IC)	• Recruit Career Ladder participants (IS,DA,P,T)
• Schedule/offer Professional Development (PD,IS,P)	• Submit Y2 APR to Fed Program Officer (ET,PD)

• Offer Principal, New Teacher *Forums* (MT,PC,IS)	• Plan and organize Year 3 programs (All)
• Offer Micro-Credentials / Badging study (IS,T,P)	• Continue Sustainability discussions (AC, PD,DA,P, T)
• Continue Career Ladder initiatives (PD,IS,P,T)	• Inform stakeholders of Year 2 results (PD)

Year 2: Primary Benchmarks / Milestones Aligned to Objectives
• Tier 1: Districts will fully utilize new/updated *Talent Systems* to align educator and student data to HCMS decisions.
• Tier 2: Professional Growth Plans will link educators to professional learning and supports aligned to individual needs.

Year Three	
• Launch new year of HCMS and EE (PD,DA,IS,CL,P,T)	• Finish Year 3 activities / evaluate data (PD,T,ET)
• Conduct observations and feedback (PD,DA,P,PC,IC)	• Complete annual educator evaluations (PD,DA,P,T)
• Sustain Professional Growth Plans (IS,P,T)	• Distribute Performance-Based Comp (HCMS)
• Continue leadership/instructional coaching (PC,IC)	• Recruit Career Ladder participants (IS,DA,P,T)
• Schedule/offer Professional Development (PD,IS,P)	• Submit Y3 Final APR to Program Officer (ET,PD)
• Offer Principal, New Teacher *Forums* (MT,PC)	• Plan and organize sustainability programs (All)
• Offer Micro-Credentials / Badging study (IS,T,P)	• Promote replication / scale up efforts (AC,PD,DA)
• Continue Career Ladder initiatives (PD,IS,P,T)	• Inform stakeholders of project results (AC,PD)

Year 3: Primary Benchmarks / Milestones Aligned to Objectives
• Tier 1: HCMS systems will measure a redistribution of diverse educators in high-need schools.
• Tier 2: Professional Growth Plans will measure improvement and career advancement among educators.

(7) Feedback: *ACHIEVE* is designed to engage multiple partners and solicit feedback from stakeholders to ensure diverse perspectives influence project quality and sufficient data is available to facilitate objective process and outcome evaluation (see *Project Design*):

Participants	*ACHIEVE* Feedback Mechanisms
Advisory Board	Convene quarterly meetings / committee meetings to monitor implementation / expenditures; Review evaluation data to assess magnitude of results and significance of outcomes; Review / update *ACHIEVE* Timeline and Logic Model to facilitate project completion.
Project Director	Coordinate and attend quarterly Advisory Committee meetings to guide progress; Participate in monthly Evaluator progress monitoring conference calls; Conduct quarterly data review to monitor results compared to goal / objectives / outcomes; Share evaluation results with Advisory Board and stakeholders and solicit input.
Evaluation Team	Oversee qualitative and quantitative data collection efforts from participants; Conduct quarterly data review to monitor results compared to goal / objectives / outcomes; Conduct monthly progress monitoring conference calls with Project Director; Conduct focus groups / site visits to ensure fidelity with Logic Model / Timeline.
Educators	Serve as members of *ACHIEVE* Advisory Committee and attend quarterly meetings; Complete annual surveys to provide operational / project quality feedback; Participate in Evaluator site visits / focus groups to provide operational feedback.
Partners / Coaches	Serve as members of *ACHIEVE* Advisory Committee and attend quarterly meetings; Complete annual surveys to provide operational / project quality feedback; Participate in Evaluator site visits / focus groups to provide operational feedback.

(8) Engaging Under-Represented Groups: The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence will engage as many stakeholders as possible in the implementation and decision-making process impacting *ACHIEVE* and participating schools to broaden support for reform efforts and increase engagement in education. CSL and *ACHIEVE* partners will recruit stakeholders from traditionally-underrepresented groups to serve on Advisory Committees, planning teams and sub-committees – persons of color; persons from non-English speaking households; persons of poverty, special education representatives and persons with disabilities – to learn firsthand about the ever-changing needs of under-represented communities and groups. Our nine, rural districts seek to hire and retain a diverse workforce and are uniquely positioned to amplify initiatives through new teacher recruitment that connects *ACHIEVE* districts with partner universities serving the state of Arkansas (University of Arkansas, Arkansas State University, University of Central Arkansas, Arkansas Tech University). Targeted recruitment at partner area institutions of higher education with diverse student enrollment and respected educator preparatory colleges / programs will ensure students in *ACHIEVE* schools learn from the best trained faculty and learn in schools whose educators reflect the rich diversity of our communities. Meaningful engagement of members from traditionally under-represented groups served by our schools will ensure grant management and grant implementation aligns to the priorities and needs of communities impacted by *ACHIEVE* reform efforts.

(D) ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence will leverage diverse district and partner resources to implement a *Teacher and School Leader* grant project that promises lasting, positive results that will extend beyond the grant period. *ACHIEVE* districts have a history of sustaining grant-funded initiatives beyond initial funding and will collaborate with partners and realign district resources to sustain effective elements of *ACHIEVE* beyond federal support, building long-term capacity to raise student achievement and promote positive systemic change in teaching and learning in rural school districts in the state of Arkansas.

(i) Likelihood that proposed project will result in system change or improvement.

The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence, in partnership with the Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at the University of Arkansas and nine, rural Arkansas school districts (Blytheville, Brinkley, Cross County, Dumas, Earle, Hope, Lee County, Osceola and Strong-Huttig) will implement a comprehensive *TSL* project to increase the quality of teaching and learning in high-needs schools, increase equitable access to education and raise student achievement. *ACHIEVE* will launch and sustain two Tiers of

Support – Tier 1: Comprehensive HCMS and Tier 2: Educator Quality Supports – to promote positive and lasting systems changes that improve outcomes for schools, educators and students. Strategies to promote systems change / improvement include:

ACHIEVE: Short-Term Systemic Improvement	
Tier 1: Comprehensive HCMS	**Tier 2: Educator Quality Supports**
• HCMS Audit will identify strengths and weaknesses in current efforts and prioritize improvement strategies. • Expanded *Talent Management* platforms will improve linkages between educator effectiveness data and HCMS decision-making. • Revised / expanded PBCS will increase educator motivation to improve practice.	• Educator Quality Supports Audit will identify strengths and weaknesses in current efforts. • Principal Network will increase supports for school leaders. • Instructional Coaching will connect educators in need of improvement with specialists to elevate practice. • Professional development will increase district / school leadership and classroom competencies. • Career Ladder will provide growth opportunities.
ACHIEVE: Mid-Term Systemic Improvement	
Tier 1: Comprehensive HCMS	**Tier 2: Educator Quality Supports**
• Strengthened human capital management systems will increase equity in employment opportunities. • Performance-based compensation will facilitate redistribution of educators across district schools. • Decreased bias and increased fidelity to educator evaluation systems will increase credibility of effectiveness data and educator ratings.	• Professional Growth Plans will increase transparency in educator improvement expectations. • Instructional Coaching will improve teacher quality. • Principal Coaching will improve fidelity to educator evaluation system models. • Career Ladder will increase number of educators with the skills to fill school / instructional leadership roles.
ACHIEVE: Long-Term Systemic Improvement	
Tier 1: Comprehensive HCMS	**Tier 2: Educator Quality Supports**
• Improved HCMS systems will increase equity in human capital management in district schools. • Data-driven HCMS will increase equity in learning by ensuring students have access to effective educators. • Sustainable PBCS will increase educator accountability for student performance outcomes. • Consistent data management strategies will increase objectivity in educator evaluation systems.	• Professional Growth Plans will increase transparency in educator improvement expectations. • Improved instructional practices will increase student academic outcomes. • Strong leadership will elevate expectations in high-needs schools and increase supports for underserved students. • Increased equity will close achievement gaps distinguishing racial / socio-economic student groups.

(ii) Building local capacity to provide, improve, expand services that address needs of target population.

Implementation of *ACHIEVE* will provide Osceola School District with the resources to improve human capital management systems and strengthen educator quality supports. *ACHIEVE* will build district, school and educator capacity to meet the needs of *ACHIEVE* district students enrolled in 27 high-need schools:

ACHIEVE: Building Capacity to meet Needs

Need 1: Districts lack resources to consistently implement effectiveness-based HCMS's across all schools.	
Tier 1: Comprehensive HCMS	**Tier 2: Educator Quality Supports**
• Districts will implement multiple, robust talent management and software systems to streamline the operation of their Human Capital Management Systems and increase transparency / efficiency in decision-making.	• Districts will connect HCMSs with Educator Quality systems through *Talent Mgmt* platforms to ensure professional growth is connected to HCMS supports that impact employment / compensation decisions.
Need 2: Districts lack sufficient capacity to objectively evaluate educator effectiveness across all schools.	
Tier 1: Comprehensive HCMS	**Tier 2: Educator Quality Supports**
• Central administrators and school leaders responsible for conducting educator evaluations will complete Improvement Science training to ensure objective implementation of Danielson Model educator evaluation protocols and promote inter-rater reliability.	• Increased objectivity, rigor and fidelity to the Danielson Model and *TESS Evaluation System* approved by the Arkansas Department of Education will increase alignment between educator growth needs and educator effectiveness ratings and will result in improved student achievement.
Need 3: Districts lack a process to connect educators with supports that increase effectiveness.	
Tier 1: Comprehensive HCMS	**Tier 2: Educator Quality Supports**
• Talent management / HCMS platforms will track educator performance ratings and the results of educator evaluations to provide data to shape district-wide professional development priorities that improve student achievement.	• Professional Growth Plans and Educator Portfolios maintained through *Talent Mgmt* will help educators identify professional learning that addresses individual needs to increase overall effectiveness of educators.
Need 4: Districts lack strategies and resources to meet local and Arkansas state equity plans.	
Tier 1: Comprehensive HCMS	**Tier 2: Educator Quality Supports**
• Performance-based compensation system that incentivizes placement and retention of *Highly Effective* educators in highest-need (Level 1) schools will increase likelihood students enrolled in highest-need schools are taught by highest-performing educators; thereby increasing equitable access to high-quality programs that align w/equity plans.	• Extensive professional development and Career Ladder strategies will nurture growth of educators and increase the overall quality of leadership / instructional practice in all schools, with emphasis on raising achievement in highest-need schools to increase equitable access for highest-need students, in line with local and Arkansas equity plans.
Need 5: Districts lack short-term resources needed to integrate systems change disrupted by COVID-19.	
Tier 1: Comprehensive HCMS	**Tier 2: Educator Quality Supports**
• Evidence-based HCMS protocols will help districts ensure all students have equal access to high-quality educators and programs needed to jumpstart learning impacted by COVID-19 school closures extending more than a year.	• Extensive professional development will include Social and Emotional Learning instructional strategies to help high-need youth cope with and overcome the trauma of COVID-19 and other social stresses, exacerbated over 17 months.

Dissemination Plan: *ACHIEVE* consortium partners will implement a Dissemination Plan to share products, lessons learned, best practices, implementation guides, outcomes, research and effective strategies. Dissemination of results will maximize the impact of federal investment in *ACHIEVE* by promoting scalability of effective practices to additional schools and replication of strategies in districts, schools and learning

environments beyond the boundaries of our nine Arkansas districts. The *ACHIEVE* Dissemination Plan will include strategies that increase the likelihood of replication on a much broader scale:

- CSL will launch an *ACHIEVE* website to share project services / products / strategies / outcomes.

- Evaluation results will be shared on the *ACHIEVE* website, presented at conferences and / or highlighted through education publications to inform the field of advances in knowledge, innovation, practice.

- Grant managers will participate in media reporting efforts to inform the field of *ACHIEVE* innovations.

- Partners will publish strategy papers / position papers on the *ACHIEVE* website to encourage replication.

- Partners will share progress, events and research via district and project-specific social media tools.

- Marketing materials designed to recruit internal participants and candidates will be posted on the *ACHIEVE* website to promote replication of recruitment strategies and disseminate project elements.

- Membership in multiple school / administrator / educator professional organizations and networks will connect *ACHIEVE* districts to regional PK – 12 schools to facilitate sharing of strategies and outcomes.

- Partners will host *ACHIEVE* Replication workshops during Year 3 of the grant and invite broad regional stakeholders to attend to gain familiarity with the initiative / assess suitability of replication.

- *ACHIEVE* will inform public of successes, challenges and best practices to broaden impact of project.

ACHIEVE **Project Matching Resources:** The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence, in partnership with the Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at the University of Arkansas and nine, rural Arkansas school districts (Blytheville, Brinkley, Cross County, Dumas, Earle, Hope, Lee County, Osceola and Strong-Huttig), will meet the required 50% non-federal match requirement. Matching resources will expand the impact of federal *TSL* funds. Among diverse match contributions, district resources will fund a core team of Coaches at each school to elevate instructional quality and support expanded Instructional Coaching effort. The demonstrated ability of our districts to sustain educator quality supports without federal funds confirms the level of commitment the district has for this vital initiative. Through capacity building efforts aligned to needs, dissemination of effective strategies and the leveraging of non-federal matching resources, districts will ensure lasting impact of *ACHIEVE*, meet the needs of schools, educators and students, promote sustainability and increase positive outcomes by scaling effective practices and catalyzing replication of services to expand the reach of federal investment dollars to this important, first of its kind, project.

(iii) Resources to operate project beyond length of grant, including multi-year financial/operating model and plan; demonstrated commitment of partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders.

The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence will efficiently manage *TSL* funds to maximize impact of limited grant resources. Upon completion of the grant, *ACHIEVE* partners will sustain the project to ensure federal investment in programs benefits students, families, schools and communities for many years. Strategies include: (a) Multi-Year Plan; (b) Partner Commitment; (c) Stakeholder Support and (d) Sustainable Practices. **(a) Multi-Year Operating / Financial Plan:** Our nine *ACHIEVE* districts will assume responsibility for operational costs of programming when funding ends in 2024. For our districts, it is the **start-up** costs that prevent them from developing and operating the programs described in the *Project Design*. OSD will pursue sustainable practices during the grant period and evaluate components to identify practices worthy of replication in additional district schools and prioritize practices to sustain beyond the grant period. The *ACHIEVE* multi-year operating and financial plan includes:

ACHIEVE **Multi-Year Plan of Operation** (see *Management Plan* for *ACHIEVE* Timeline)
***ACHIEVE* Year 1 (2021-22)** – Conduct external HCMS / Educator Quality Supports Audit; Launch Tier 1 program elements; Launch Tier 2 program elements; initiate ongoing evaluation of *ACHIEVE*; Convene Advisory Committee and Advisory Committee sub-committees: Sustainability Committee, Budget Committee and Equity Committee.
***ACHIEVE* Year 2 (2022-23)** – Adjust practices / improve systems based on audit findings; Continue / refine Tier 1 program elements; Continue / refine Tier 2 program elements; continue ongoing evaluation of *ACHIEVE*; Continue Advisory Committee and Advisory sub-committees: Sustainability, Budget and Equity Committees.
***ACHIEVE* Year 3 (2023-24)** – Continue / refine Tier 1 program elements; Continue / refine Tier 2 program elements; continue ongoing evaluation of *ACHIEVE*; Implement Dissemination Plan to promote replication of effective practices; Continue Advisory Committee and sub-committees; Continue Advisory Board Sustainability Committee – prioritize *ACHIEVE* elements to sustain beyond grant; Continue Advisory Board Budget Committee – identify non-federal funding sources to fund *ACHIEVE* programs and institutionalize performance-based compensation systems; Continue Advisory Board Equity Committee; Seek additional grant funds to expand support.
***Post-ACHIEVE* Plan (2024-beyond)** – Continue HCMS strategies; Continue distribution of performance-based compensation to *Highly Effective* educators; Continue Retention Incentives for educators serving high-need schools; Sustain professional development options / *ACHIEVE* professional development model to elevate educator effectiveness aligned to Professional Growth Plans; Sustain Career Ladders at sustainable capacity; Seek additional grant funds to support continuation, replication and improvement in additional schools, at a larger scale.
ACHIEVE **Multi-Year Financial Planning Procedure**
The Center for Strategic Leadership and the Advisory Committee will gather stakeholder feedback, via surveys, regarding all components of the HCMS and Educator Support System to develop a multi-year financial projection to sustain *ACHIEVE*. Data regarding project and component impact is critical when projecting costs; CSL will begin collecting and analyzing data after the project is launched across all schools. After collecting stakeholder and evaluation data, CSL will develop a data-informed Multi-Year Financial Plan aligned to four principles: **Objective Source and Structure of the Foundational Data** – Through use of the *ACHIEVE* budget structure, planners will determine the level of granularity needed to support sustainability decision-making.

> **Assessment of Variables that will Drive Future Revenue / Expenses** – District leaders will assess changing conditions impacting district funding to identify variables and their impact on future financial outcomes.
> **Creation of Accessible Outputs Clear to Diverse Stakeholders** – District leaders / Finance Officers will support projections with tabular and graphical data to improve stakeholder understanding of future funding projections.
> **Simulate and Track Changes** – District leaders and Finance Officers will catalogue scenarios and record changes to projected variables to generate multiple Financial Plan Projections adjusted for variation in assumptions.
> Partners will use *ACHIEVE* data to project a well-constructed and documented forecast to support sustainability planning, scalability of project elements to additional schools and replicability of the project in learning environments beyond the boundaries of our nine, rural Arkansas districts. Objective and consistent data collection from diverse stakeholders will ensure the *ACHIEVE* Multi-Year Financial Plan is both reasonable and attainable.

(b) **Partner Commitment:** *ACHIEVE* will be a collaborative effort linking district, school and partner resources to achieve the goal and objectives of the project. Key project personnel, partners and resources will contribute to the success and sustainability of *ACHIEVE* as outlined in the following chart:

ACHIEVE: Diverse Partner Contributions / Support	
Partner	**Implementation Role / Contribution**
University of Arkansas	The University of Arkansas will continue long-term support of teachers and administrators serving *ACHIEVE* district schools by offering access to teacher and administrator workshops, online professional learning modules and coaching designed to help educators raise student achievement and implement research-based educator evaluation systems with fidelity to models.
Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators	Experts from AAEA will provide external coaching to district and school administrators / principals in the completion of educator effectiveness evaluations; Coaching will provide secondary "shadow" observations of educator effectiveness to promote long-term inter-rater reliability of evaluations and raise educator confidence in the objectivity of effectiveness evaluation protocols / outcomes.
Harvard University Strategic Data Project	Fellows who complete the Harvard University Strategic Data Project program are connected to a robust Professional Learning Community of peers that provides support, shares best practices, promotes innovation and elevates the practice of data analysis and data management; frequent PLC events convene outstanding data specialists connected through common training and professional growth experiences to sustain learning and improvement – Harvard University provides partner districts with access to diverse, rich, extensive resources that will lead to unanticipated opportunities that extend positive outcomes.
Boyd Griffin and Associates (BGA)	Practitioners from BGA will conduct the initial Educator Quality Supports Audit – sustained partnerships with project personnel will help district and school leaders conduct internal quality checks and identify opportunities for growth to catalyze a system of continuous improvement and evolution in programs that reflect changing needs.
Institutions of Higher Education	Districts will continue / strengthen partnerships with Institutions of Higher Education to ensure a steady stream of high-quality applicants prepared to fill vacancies in schools – partnerships with IHEs (U of Arkansas, Arkansas State, Central Arkansas, Arkansas Tech) will contribute greatly to efforts to recruit and retain traditionally under-represented groups in PreK – 12 education.

EduShift, Inc.	EduShift will conduct a thorough and objective evaluation of *ACHIEVE*; during the project and beyond, EduShift is committed to providing technical support to facilitate internal assessment of programs and technical assistance in the review of evaluation data to promote systems change, capacity building and the internal knowledge and competency needed to interpret data.

(c) Stakeholder Support: During Year 3 of *ACHIEVE*, The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence, in partnership with the Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at the University of Arkansas, will implement a *K – 12 Survey* to gather feedback from all *ACHIEVE* stakeholder groups. Grant managers will engage stakeholders in independent assessment of project quality to identify meaningful components across diverse stakeholder perspectives. Data will be aggregated to generate districtwide results and disaggregated by stakeholders (teachers, non-classroom instructional professionals, assistant principals, principals, central district administrators, etc.) to compare feedback across groups. Results will be shared with district administrators and will be used in the identification of sustainable services and practices suitable for replication in other settings. The *K – 12 Survey* will provide an externally administered assessment to generate data independent of program staff; survey results will help inform sustainability planning, Advisory Committee Sustainability sub-Committee efforts and influence long-term Financial Plans designed to institutionalize impactful *ACHIEVE* strategies worthy of continuation.

(d) Sustainable Practices: *ACHIEVE* was designed to facilitate sustainability and replicability. While many project elements have substantial startup costs, most components have minimal continuation expenses that will be met by well-planned district and school budgets. Sustainable practices will ensure initiatives meet the future needs of schools, educators and students. Sustainability strategies include:

ACHIEVE Sustainability Strategies	
HCMS Supports	Upon completion of grant, HCMSs will become institutionalized in ACHIEVE districts, eliminating the need for Project Director, Improvement Specialists and Administrative Assistants. Districts will gain the capacity to implement a fully-reconfigured, data-driven HCMS, districtwide, beyond the grant period, that will fully inform human capital decisions. Investment in technology hardware and software is a start-up expense of *ACHIEVE*; ongoing costs for software and maintenance will be absorbed by newly-reconfigured HCMS Departments. Investment in technology-based evaluation strategies reduces long-term expense of disposable materials through use of digital evaluation, teaching and learning tools. Districts will work with union/HR partners to revamp traditional salary schedules and reallocate dollars to fund a compensation system that rewards effectiveness.
Educator Quality	Districts will realign Title I, II, III and IV funds to support evaluation data-driven professional development to sustain grant-funded strategies and Professional Growth Plans.

Supports	Planning Task Force selected strategies with manageable long-term costs – primary expenses for *The Center, Arkansas Academy, National Board, Harvard University, et al* are initial professional development costs with minimal long-term sustainability costs. Travel expenses beyond grant period are negligible – most travel costs associated with start-up professional development; continuing education for maintaining skills is available through on-line platforms at little cost to schools or educators.
Partnerships	The Advisory Committee will work to ensure that districts and their schools are linked to community partners whose resources enhance the depth and capacity of support options.

The Center for Strategic Leadership and Organizational Coherence and the Arkansas Academy for Educational Equity at the University of Arkansas will engage outstanding instructional and leadership models, partners, pedagogy experts, professional learning providers and vendor resources to improve teacher effectiveness, enhance learning in *ACHIEVE* schools and promote achievement of objectives. Efforts during the grant period will position schools to leverage expertise, facilities and stakeholder support to sustain and replicate *ACHIEVE*.