

# LA BOLD Teacher Incentive Fund Grant Application

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DeSoto, and Rapides Parishes; and six public charter schools that make up the Algiers Charter School Association in New Orleans and are each designated as LEAs (Appendix F).

**SIGNIFICANCE**

*Extent to which the project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population*

***Ensuring that every student has an effective teacher and principal every year is the most pressing need of the LA BOLD target population.***

The partner districts in this Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant all serve high-poverty, high-minority populations and the selected schools meet the high-need criteria. In fact, with an average poverty rate of 87%, the schools are among the highest poverty schools in the state. In addition, 12 of the targeted schools are identified by the Louisiana Department of Education as priority and/or focus schools with major learning gaps, based on the state’s ESEA waiver.

**Table 1: LA BOLD High-Needs Schools** [More details in Appendix B]

<b>School Name</b>	<b>High Poverty %</b>	<b>School Name</b>	<b>High Poverty %</b>
Landry-Walker High	92	Mahalia Jackson Elem	95
McDonogh #32 School	94	Benjamin Franklin Elem	78
William Fischer Academy	99	McDonogh 35 High	93
Eisenhower Academy	91	McMain Secondary	90
Martin Behrman Charter	89	Alexandria MiddleMagnet	96
Algiers Tech Academy	87	Brasher Elementary	98
Logansport High	69	Hadnot-Hayes Elementary	97
Mansfield Elementary	93	Hall Elementary	94
Mansfield Middle	89	Horseshoe Drive Elem	96
Mansfield High	85	Martin Park Elementary	93

North Desoto Lower Elem	51	Moore Elementary	90
North Desoto Middle	52	Peabody Magnet High	88
Stanley High	55	Raymond Elementary	92
Clinton Elementary	95	Smith Middle Magnet	94
Jackson Elementary	96	East St John High	78
Slaughter Elementary	67	West St John High	91
East Feliciana Middle	94	East St John Elementary	76
East Feliciana High	92	Emily C Watkins Elem	95
Tallulah Elementary	95	Fifth Ward Elementary	84
Wright Elementary	97	Garyville Mt Airy Elem	77
Madison Middle	97	John L Ory Elementary	71
Madison High	92	Lake Pontchartrain Elem	76
Christian Acres Alt School	100	LaPlace Elementary	89
Bethune Elementary	88	West St John Elementary	78

These partner districts share much more than the challenges of poverty, they share a common vision for their high need schools developed in collaborative conversations with fellow superintendents and NIET, with the encouragement of the State Department of Education over the last two years. This collaborative was led by State Commissioner, John White, along with District Superintendent Dr. Patrice Pujol and a number of superintendents from across the state. Dr. Pujol, who is now President of School Services and Partnerships at NIET has been nationally recognized for her work in creating an aligned HCMS built around the NIET/TAP rubric that significantly increased equitable access to highly effective educators.

Dr. Pujol has strong personal relationships with the Superintendents in this collaborative, and is based in Baton Rouge along with the proposed Project Director and the NIET Assistant

Director of School Services. As superintendent in Ascension Parish Dr. Pujol used the TAP System and the NIET Best Practices to make high need schools much more attractive to effective teachers and school leaders, and to provide the highest need students with *greater* access to effective educators than more affluent schools. The most effective educators were provided opportunities to improve their craft, take on leadership roles, and earn additional compensation in high need schools, thus increasing great classroom teaching for high need students. The success of the work in Ascension was featured in a 2012 Education Trust report “Building and Sustaining Talent”.

As these successes were noticed at the state level, State Superintendent John White and Dr. Pujol began to work together to create coalitions and opportunities where these practices could be shared with other superintendents. For example, Dr. Pujol and another Louisiana superintendent shared their work with 20 additional superintendents at the annual TAP conference in 2015 and again in 2016. State Superintendent White and his team not only identified and actively recruited superintendents to attend the conference, his message of support for the kind of transformative work happening in districts was backed up with two new state level grant programs designed to help additional districts to begin to engage in this work.

This created an opportunity for superintendents achieving transformative change in their districts, and driving equitable access to effective teacher and principals for high need students, to play a role in working with fellow superintendents to expand the work.

The partner districts’ readiness to take bold steps is informed and strengthened by this history of success in Louisiana around the NIET TAP System and educator effectiveness best practices. In 2003, Louisiana began piloting TAP: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement, a comprehensive initiative proven to increase teacher effectiveness and increase

the recruitment and retention of effective teachers. In the past several years, additional Louisiana districts have partnered with NIET to integrate elements of TAP's best practices in their districts. The NIET/Louisiana partnership has grown from 5 pilot schools in 2003-2004 to more than 164 schools in 2016. An analysis of student achievement data for schools that have implemented TAP continuously over a five-year period shows that students in Louisiana TAP schools have gained in student achievement faster than the state average, closing achievement gaps in math and English language arts (Barnett, Wills & Kirby, 2015).

Student academic challenges are directly related to the districts' struggle to recruit and retain effective and highly effective educators. The *Louisiana Equity Plan* reports that in Louisiana's high-poverty districts, 15.0% of the teachers are first year teachers, 15.8% are out-of-field, and 8.8% do not hold a valid teaching certificate (compared to statewide percentages of 8.9%, 10.8%, and 5.4% respectively). In addition, the districts are not able to reliably differentiate effective from ineffective teaching, and thus do not know whether students have an effective teacher. For example, the 2015 Louisiana COMPASS Teacher Evaluation Report, indicated that 93% of all teachers were scored as "Effective Proficient" or "Highly Effective" using the state evaluation rubric. Less than 1% were scored as "Ineffective." By *differentiating*, and supporting systems for *increasing*, the effectiveness of classroom instruction across partner schools and districts, LA BOLD will change high need students' educational experiences.

The districts submitting this proposal in partnership with NIET will use the research-based, NIET educator effectiveness best practices to create an integrated and comprehensive human capital system to increase educator effectiveness and student achievement. Evaluation data will be based on the NIET instructional rubric (approved by the state as an alternative to

COMPASS). COMPASS includes 5 indicators of teaching practice and the NIET rubric includes 19 indicators, providing districts with more detail to support decision-making.

***Collaborative builds local capacity to provide services at classroom, school, and district levels.***

The core of this integrated approach is the development of a cadre of teacher leaders working with administrators in each building to drive instructional improvements that will impact every classroom. First, through very specific structures and processes, teacher leaders are strategically and formally involved at the school level in setting school goals, evaluating and supporting teachers, providing job-embedded professional learning, and developing new teacher leaders. They are trained to identify and support the development of more effective teaching practices using a research-based instructional rubric which focuses on teacher growth. Involving teacher leaders in a formalized structure for distributed leadership creates and supports principals in becoming more effective instructional leaders and therefore builds leader capacity to provide services at the school level.

At the classroom level, these teacher leaders support teacher growth using a shared set of teaching standards. The instructional rubric guides teacher leaders in providing high quality professional learning opportunities for teachers, which align with evaluations and observations. The teacher leaders strategically create a growth plan for each teacher, ensuring that their needs are acknowledged and supported as they seek new and improved ways to increase student achievement. This embedded support structure for teachers, provided by teacher leaders, allows for capacity to be built at the classroom level on a daily basis.

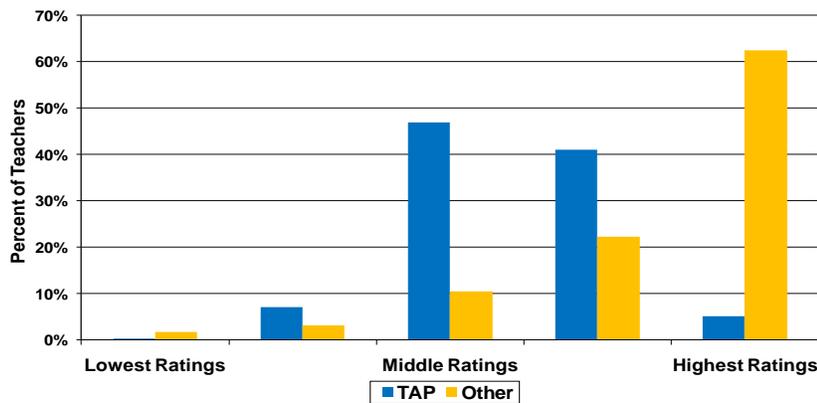
This integrated approach also provides services at the district level. As a result of the instructional focus on these schools' campuses, school leadership teams provide district leaders with the structure through which to drive a range of improvements in classrooms, including more

rigorous student standards, curriculum changes, or new assessments. This results in a coherent and connected HCMS, that is designed to continuously build the local capacity of teacher, school and district leaders to promote student academic growth, using student and teacher data.

***Collaborative supports local commitment to increase expectations for classroom instruction.***

LA BOLD districts will implement the rigorous NIET/TAP Instructional Rubric (Appendix F) as the teacher evaluation instrument district-wide, not just in the schools targeted through this proposal. As seen in Figure 1 below, evidence indicates that the NIET teaching standards rubric supports districts in differentiating instructional practice.

**Figure 1: TAP’s Observation Rubric Differentiates Effective from Ineffective Teachers**



Given that virtually all teachers historically were rated at the highest levels, among the most challenging aspects of this work is to build agreement that proficient teaching scores a 3 on a scale of 1 to 5, rather than a 5. This shared agreement that proficient teaching practice scores in the middle of the performance rubric provides room to identify and grow toward exemplary practice. Figure 2 provides a description from one of the twenty six indicators in the NIET instructional rubric, illustrating the range of teaching practice from exemplary to unsatisfactory. District-wide commitment to clear, detailed, high standards produces the data to drive the HCMS.

**Figure 2: Indicator from the NIET Instructional Rubric - "Academic Feedback"**

	Exemplary (5)	Proficient (3)	Unsatisfactory (1)
Academic Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral and written feedback is consistently academically focused, frequent, and high quality.</li> <li>• Feedback is frequently given during guided practice and homework review.</li> <li>• The teacher circulates to prompt student thinking, assess each student's progress, and provide individual feedback.</li> <li>• Feedback from students is regularly used to monitor and adjust instruction.</li> <li>• Teacher engages students in giving specific and high-quality feedback to one another.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral and written feedback is mostly academically focused, frequent, and mostly high quality.</li> <li>• Feedback is sometimes given during guided practice and homework review.</li> <li>• The teacher circulates during instructional activities to support engagement and monitor student work.</li> <li>• Feedback from students is sometimes used to monitor and adjust instruction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality and timeliness of feedback is inconsistent.</li> <li>• Feedback is rarely given during guided practice and homework review.</li> <li>• The teacher circulates during instructional activities, but monitors mostly behavior.</li> <li>• Feedback from students is rarely used to monitor or adjust instruction.</li> </ul>

***Collaborative builds on a foundation and established state policies, programs and funding***

This proposal builds on existing foundations and will improve and expand services that have been proven successful (Hudson, 2010; Schacter & Thum, 2005, Jerald & Van Hook, 2011; Solmon, White, Cohen, & Woo, 2007). Recent research on the implementation of TAP and the NIET Educator Effectiveness Best Practices in high need Louisiana schools, similar to the ones in this proposal, illustrates such success (Barnett, Wills, & Kirby, 2015; Mann, Leutscher, & Reardon, 2012). This initiative is further complemented by a series of recent state statutes, policies, programs, and funding sources (as described on pages 20-22) that will significantly contribute to the success and sustainability of this collaborative. Additionally, this collaborative is supported by 18-months of development, identification of matching funds, and consensus building that has the partner schools and districts prepared for implementation.

**PROJECT DESIGN**

*Comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students*

Although each partner LEA has existing practices and policies in place for making human capital decisions, these practices and policies are not systematic, connected, or comprehensive in nature, nor tied to the district's vision for instructional improvement.

Appendix F provides an abbreviated description of the HCMS in the individual partnering

districts. Table 2 is a summary of the most commonly expressed challenges around current HCMS practices/policies of partner districts. The “*Needs/Potential Interventions*” column reflects opportunities for improvement and bold actions that will be reflected in this proposal.

**Table 2: Summary of HCMS Current Status Challenges and Proposed Changes**

<b>Challenge: Current Status</b>	<b>Needs/Potential Interventions: LA BOLD</b>
<i>Recruitment</i>	
Districts report the use of traditional job fairs and online job postings, with little, if any, connection to the district’s efforts around instructional improvement.	The proposal includes a pool of resources from which to recruit hard-to-staff grades/subjects. These resources can be used to develop targeted recruitment strategies. Expansion of university/district partnerships will also expand the teacher pipeline and recruitment efforts.
<i>Teacher PD/Support</i>	
Wide variation in the types and frequency of support for teachers – varying from no school-based, job-embedded PD to school-based professional learning communities. Typically current PD efforts lack connection to a cohesive vision for instructional improvement.	PD will take place weekly in cluster groups led by master and mentor teachers; PD will occur during normal school hours; individualized follow-up from the school leadership team. PD informed by teacher evaluation results and performance data management system reports. District networking opportunities through this proposal will move all districts to their next higher level of PD implementation.
<i>Principal PD/Support</i>	
Districts typically indicate PD for principals is provided through monthly/quarterly district-level meetings or workshops held at central office. Minimal connections to teacher effectiveness and support.	PD for principals in areas of collaboration, feedback, and coaching will be provided on site and in regional trainings based on principal evaluation data. PD will be informed by school level performance data management system reports and analytics.

<b>Challenge: Current Status</b>	<b>Needs/Potential Interventions: LA BOLD</b>
<i>Teacher Evaluation</i>	
<p>Most districts using state COMPASS Teacher Evaluation rubric, providing little differentiation in effectiveness and minimal information to inform PD and support for teachers. Some districts using COMPASS in some schools and NIET/TAP rubric in others.</p>	<p>NIET Teaching Standards Rubric will be used in <u>all</u> schools in partner districts. The single rubric will provide a common language and vision as to what constitutes effective teaching. At least 2 classroom observations/year, classroom value added VA score (as applicable) or classroom student learning target SLT score will be combined with observation rating (SKR score) for overall measure of effectiveness annually.</p>
<i>Principal Evaluation</i>	
<p>Most districts report use of COMPASS Leaders evaluation rubric (state authorized leader evaluation instrument) or a district-developed rubric.</p>	<p>Multiple measures will inform principal evaluation, including school wide VA, School Leadership Team observation, COMPASS Principal Rubric to create an overall measure of effectiveness annually.</p>
<i>Teacher Performance Pay/Incentive</i>	
<p>Act 1 Louisiana Legislature 2012 requires teacher compensation to be partially based on effectiveness, districts report little actual progress in that area. Most report small bonuses (\$250 on average) for teachers who are rated effective or highly effective.</p>	<p>Teachers can earn substantial salary augmentations by taking on additional roles as master or mentor teachers; teachers may earn additional incentives based on multiple measures of performance including their observation and student achievement scores.</p>
<i>Principal Performance Pay</i>	
<p>Minimal effort by most districts in this area</p>	<p>Principals may earn additional incentives based on their overall effectiveness scores.</p>

<b>Challenge: Current Status</b>	<b>Needs/Potential Interventions: LA BOLD</b>
<i>Career Advancement</i>	
Most districts report that teachers are randomly “encouraged” to apply for advanced positions (instructional coaches, school administrators). A few districts provide for teacher leaders; however, these positions generally do not have the time, resources or authority necessary for impact.	Teachers with a <u>record of effectiveness</u> are recruited to take on roles as master or mentor teachers. Master and mentor teachers have defined roles that support school-wide efforts and are provided with professional development. They form a school leadership team along with administrators.
<i>Retention</i>	
Most districts report no specific resources designated for retention efforts.	The grant will include resources for retention bonuses for teachers in hard-to-staff grades/subjects in high need schools. In addition, overall performance incentives and PD support are retention tools.
<i>Dismissal, Tenure, Placement</i>	
Currently districts do not have accurate evaluation data that can inform these decisions.	The evaluation data developed in LA BOLD will be used by districts to inform dismissal, tenure, and placement of educators in classrooms and schools.

Within LA BOLD, the HCMS implemented by each partner district:

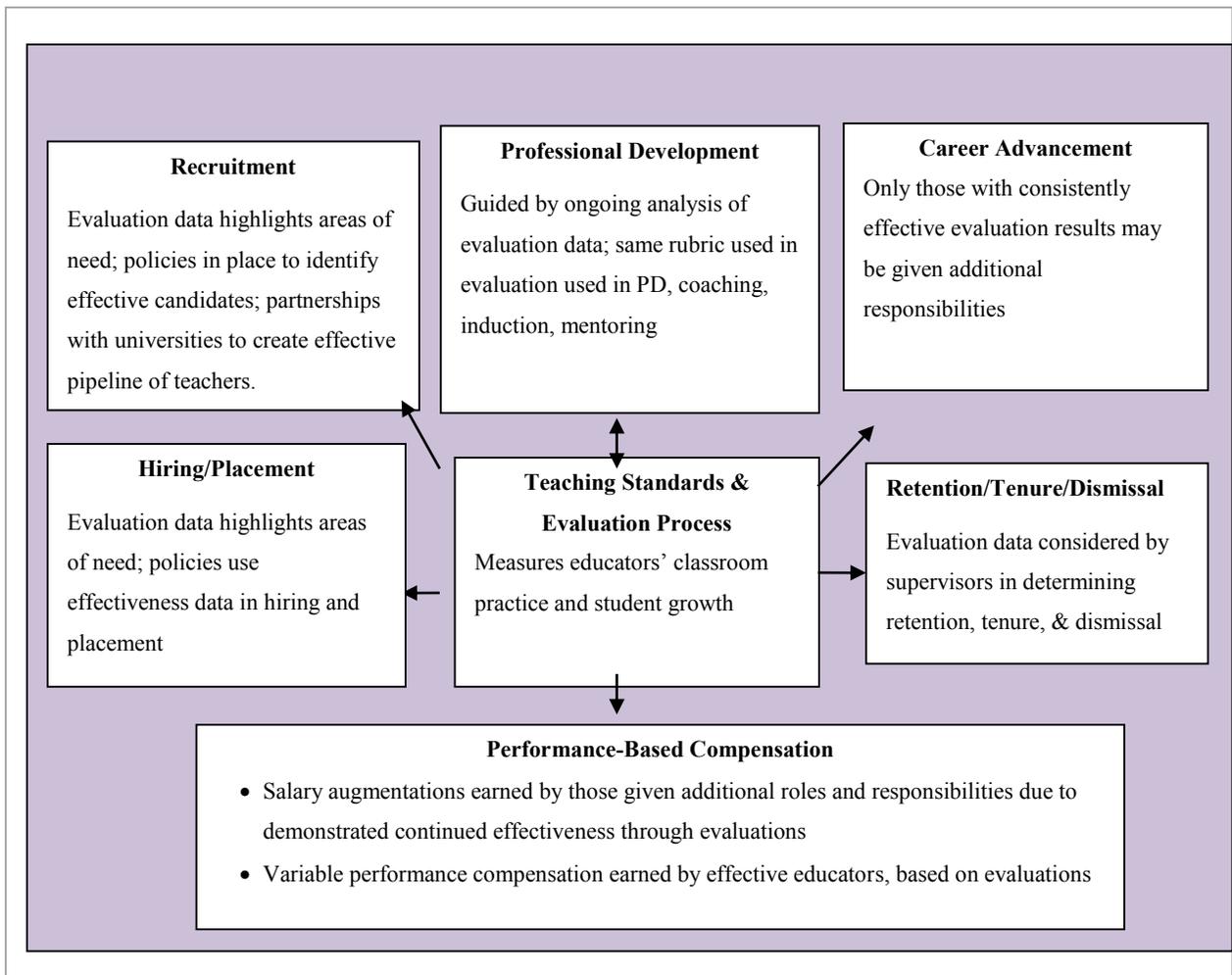
- Aligns with the district vision for instructional improvement and,
- Has clearly established decision points that use educator effectiveness data (recruitment, hiring, placement, support/professional development, advancement, compensation, retention, and dismissal).

**Figure 3: HCMS Aligns to Vision for Instructional Improvement across Districts**

**The vision for instructional improvement is grounded in improving the practice of teachers and building leadership capacity among its school leaders through clearly identified instructional practices and on-going, job-embedded professional development.**



**Human Capital Management System**



***Providing High Need Students with Equitable Access to Effective Educators (Comp Priority 2)***

The TIF opportunity is particularly powerful in Louisiana where early efforts have demonstrated how this approach is able to not only “equitably” distribute effective teachers and principals, but to provide high need students with **greater** access to effective educators than non-high need students. LA BOLD districts will use evaluation data and the HCMS to equitably distribute effective educators across schools as well as within schools.

Each LA BOLD district will build its HCMS to use teacher and principal evaluation and student achievement data across multiple functions and decision points:

**Teacher and Principal Evaluation** - The educator evaluation system, driven by the NIET/TAP instructional rubric for teachers and COMPASS leader rubric for principals, will serve as a central driver of decision-making and human capital management. The description of strong instructional and leadership practices used for evaluation also forms the basis for professional learning and informs recruitment, hiring, placement, promotion, dismissal, and tenure. In high need schools, they will be used to determine performance based compensation.

**Career Advancement** - Teacher leaders (master and mentor teachers), along with administrators, are trained and certified in the evaluation process and in the performance indicators and descriptors that give meaning to the instructional rubric (recertification required annually, using NIET web-based portal). Teacher leaders also lead weekly professional development and provide individualized support based on teacher data.

**Recruitment/Hiring** – Districts will use evaluation metrics in recruitment, including working with IHEs to integrate these measures into teacher preparation programs.

**Placement** – Districts will use evaluation data to review and determine equitable distribution of educators within and between schools.

**Dismissal** – Districts will use evaluation data and other data to determine dismissal.

**Tenure** – State law rewards tenure to teachers who are highly effective 5 out of 6 years and removes tenure from teachers who are ineffective.

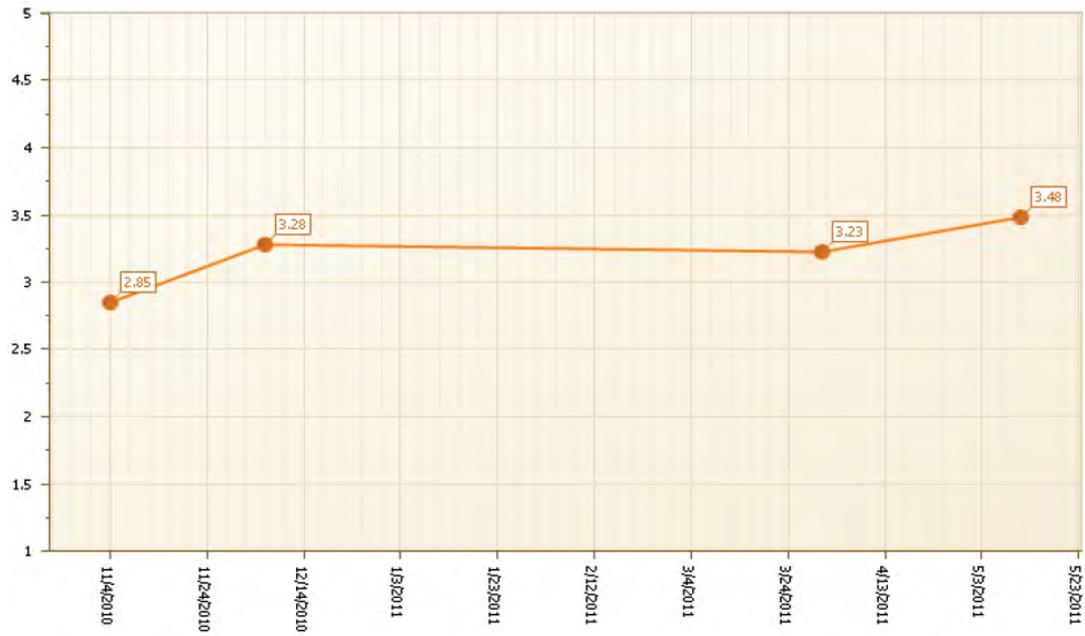
**Professional development** - Weekly professional learning, delivered by trained master/mentor teachers, includes all teachers and provides for meaningful teacher collaboration focused on student needs and work. Professional learning will support the same instructional practices used in evaluation.

**Performance based compensation** - A system of performance based compensation will provide differentiated compensation for teacher leaders based on their additional roles and their effectiveness, and offer all teachers and principals the opportunity to earn additional compensation based on multiple measures of performance including competencies defined in evaluation rubrics as well as student achievement growth.

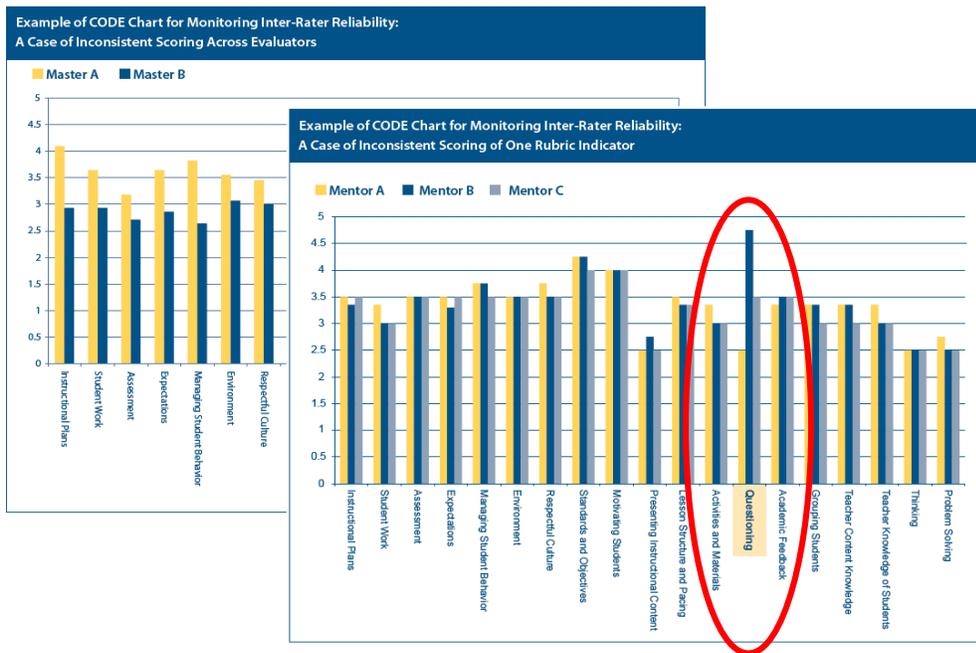
#### **CODE: Integrated Performance Data Management System**

The LA BOLD proposal will provide each district with access to CODE, the NIET Performance Data Management System, for storing and analyzing teacher evaluation data and other school data. CODE's analytics identify areas of strength and weakness in order to help inform professional development. The reports also provide tools for ensuring inter-rater reliability and consistency of evaluators overall, and on specific indicators. CODE can calculate performance-based compensation based on educator effectiveness measures and weightings provided by the district or school. Sample CODE reports are below in Figures 4 and 5.

**Figure 4: Individual Teacher Progress on Observation Scores**



**Figure 5: Monitoring Inter-rater Reliability of Across Observers, and on Individual Measures**



*Services to be provided by the proposed project involve the collaboration of appropriate partners for maximizing the effectiveness of project services*

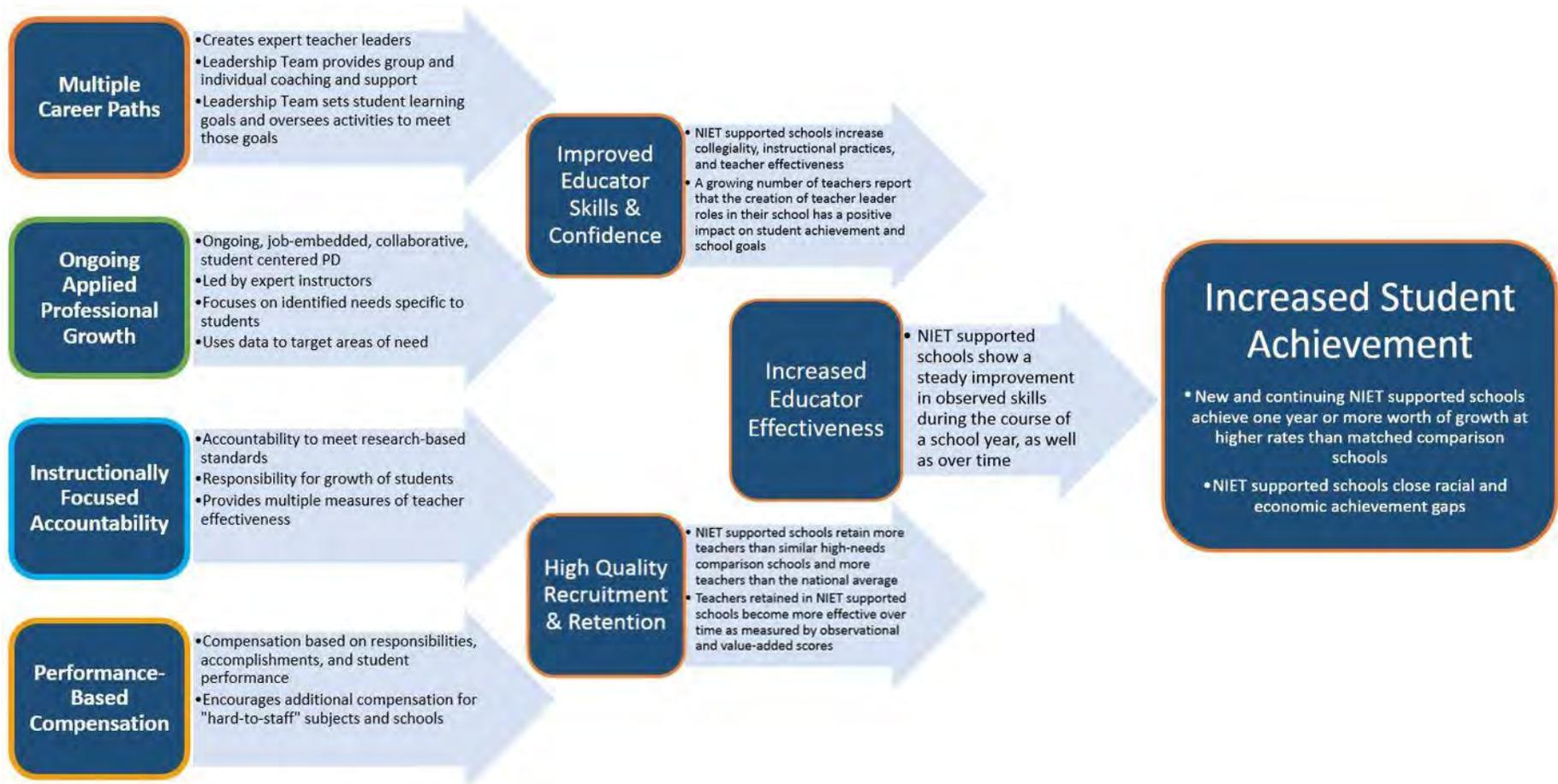
The focus and strategies of this proposal have been developed in consultation with leadership of each partner district over the course of the multiple conversations described above, written communications, and face-to-face meetings. This proposal combines the benefits of using a research-based model with proven results in high-need Louisiana districts across the state and the resources of a national non-profit partner, with the flexibility to use a varied and customizable approach to meeting the needs of individual districts. The strength of this collaboration is evidenced in (1) the state's decisions to implement policies and fund programs aligned with the LA BOLD best practices and (2) the overwhelming commitment articulated in letters of support from diverse stakeholders in each partnering district (Appendix E). As a result of early successes and initial statewide collaborations, partner districts have identified a list of services to support their HCMS development. Services will include, but are not limited to:

- *CORE Training* for leadership teams. 8-day training focuses on instructional rubric, evaluation, clusters, leadership development, and field testing.
- *NIET Educator Effectiveness Workshop Series*: NIET also offers districts and schools the opportunity to select from individualized trainings around a particular best practice. (Appendix F provides a sample list of offerings.)
- *NIET Onsite School Developmental Visits and Technical Assistance*: NIET provides onsite, school-based support in the forms of observation, coaching, consultation, and technical assistance to schools.

- *NIET National Conference and Training*: This conference is an annual professional development opportunity for master and mentor teachers, along with building and district level administrators to receive role-specific and practice-specific training.
- *NIET Training Portal*: An interactive web tool that provides real-time access to individualized trainings and support for advancing educator effectiveness. (Appendix F)
- *CODE - NIET Performance Data Management System*: NIET's Data Management system is an interactive online tool for storing and analyzing teacher evaluations and other school data.
- *University Partner Collaboration Symposiums*: Teacher Preparation programs in Louisiana are actively seeking and exploring the use of the NIET/TAP rubric for use with their teacher candidates. All of the LA BOLD districts have initiated university partnerships that will be strengthened through this proposal. These annual symposiums, jointly sponsored by the Louisiana Board of Regents and NIET, will build upon existing K-12/university partnerships and develop new partnerships to strengthen efforts around preparation, recruitment, and mentoring of teacher candidates.

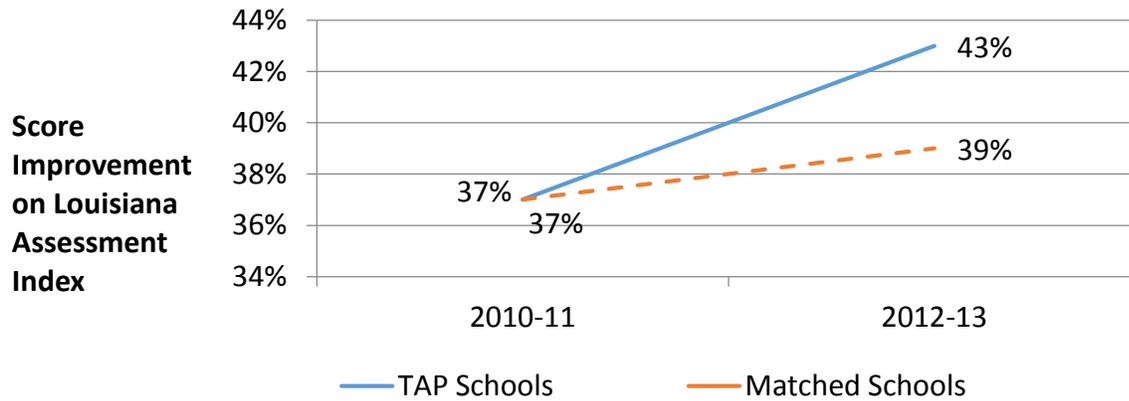
*The extent to which the proposed project is supported by a strong theory.*

NIET's work is built on strong theory with proven results (i.e. Barnett, Wills, & Kirby 2015; Berry, Daughtrey, & Wieder, 2010; Center for American Progress, 2014; Chingos & West, 2012; Stone-Johnson, 2014). Increases in teacher effectiveness will result from increases in the skills of current educators, improved recruitment and retention of effective teachers and school leaders given the combination of increased support and opportunities for leadership roles and for additional compensation. The theory of action (see Appendix C) includes vertical alignment between human resource practices and district goals, as well as horizontal alignment between human resource functions including using explicit strategies to *improve* these functions.



This theory of action has a record of effectiveness in supporting high need districts in Louisiana to increase student achievement as illustrated below.

**Figure 6: Louisiana TAP Schools Increase Student Academic Achievement Growth**



*The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve relevant outcomes, using existing funding streams from other programs or policies*

### **Curriculum**

Louisiana school districts are charged with implementing the Common Core Standards – Louisiana Revised Version, June 2016. With the exception of a few minor revisions, these standards have been implemented in Louisiana since 2012. The goal for educators is to teach each student at a challenging academic level and to personally connect with each child. Instructional decisions will be based upon data analysis; professional development will be embedded into leadership teams and cluster (teacher collaboration) meetings and will be focused on improving teacher performance and student success. This collaborative will help teachers to achieve strong Common Core implementation in their classrooms.

### **Assessment**

Louisiana students are assessed annually in grades 3 through 8 and high school grades. Statewide assessments, coupled with the Louisiana value-added methodology, provides LA BOLD districts with meaningful student data to inform district- and school-based professional development and a full complement of HCMS decisions and strategies. LA BOLD will build local capacity in the area of formative and summative assessment through teacher leaders and leadership teams and through the ongoing professional development and teacher collaboration.

### **Teacher Evaluation**

In 2010, the Louisiana legislature enacted ACT 54 which called for the creation of an educator evaluation and support system based on two measures: professional performance (observation/evaluation) and student performance (value-added score and/or student learning target score). The 2016 legislature passed an act that requiring the student performance component to be at minimum 35%. The state system, name COMPASS, includes a state-developed teacher rubric and a principal standards rubric. The NIET/TAP rubric was immediately approved as an alternate instrument that met or exceeded the requirements of the state system for purposes of teacher observation/evaluation. The NIET rubric includes more indicators of instructional practice and has the reputation as the “gold standard” for teacher evaluation and observation in the state. A subsequent legislative action (Act 1 of 2012) granted school and LEA administrators broad authority to make workforce decisions around hiring, termination, reductions in force, and tenure.

### **Louisiana Performance Pay**

Act 1 of 2012 legislative session, also referred to as the Talent Bill, directs that school personnel employment decisions be based on performance, effectiveness, and qualifications, and eliminates the use of seniority as the primary criterion when making personnel decisions. In

addition, local boards are directed to establish salary schedules for teachers and school employees based on effectiveness, demand by subject area or area of certification, and experience (with no single component comprising more than 50% of the salary formula). LA BOLD aligns to these new requirements.

### **Principal Support Initiative**

The Louisiana Department of Education Principal Support Grant identifies the expansion of NIET/TAP best practices as a primary vehicle for developing bold and effective leaders. The Improving Teacher Effectiveness and Student Achievement: Utilizing TAP Best Practices to Support Louisiana School District Success, 2015-2016 Guidance is part of Louisiana's ongoing efforts to support principals in their work to improve teaching and learning. LA BOLD Districts have received a Principal Support Grant and will use these resources to complement their LA BOLD efforts.

### **Believe and Prepare Initiative and Grant for New Teacher Candidates**

Through Believe and Prepare, the LDOE provides grants to empower schools and districts to design innovative, classroom- and school-based preparation experiences for aspiring educators. Experiences give educators the opportunity to practice their developing skills with real students and draw on the expertise of Louisiana's best educators. A priority of this grant is *Mentor Teacher Recruitment and Development*. School systems are to develop a vision for the role of the mentor teacher and establish a cadre of mentor teachers who are prepared to work with teacher candidates and practicing teachers and who have a defined role with respect to new teacher development. As an example, the application cites that this can be accomplished through "implementation of a program of professional support and development for mentors, accomplished by working with a partner with proven experience in this areas such as the

National Institute for Excellence in Teaching.” This state-funded grant will also allow many of the LA BOLD districts to strengthen their partnerships with universities and improve their ability to recruit effective and well prepared new teachers.

### **Believe and Succeed Initiative and Grant**

In the Believe and Succeed Grant, high-need districts are called upon to describe the actions that the LEA has taken, or will take, to design and implement a plan consistent with the final requirements of the turnaround model, restart model, school closure, transformation model, evidence-based whole school reform model, early learning model, or state-determined model. The TAP model, along with the NIET educator effectiveness best practices, has been accepted by the department as a whole-school reform model that meets the criteria of the grant.

### **Louisiana’s State Equity Plan for Ensuring Equitable Access to Excellent Teachers for All Students (Competitive Priority 2/Invitational Priority)**

Louisiana’s State Equity Plan calls for the development of district/university partnerships to better meet the workforce needs of districts that result in improve recruitment and retention of effective educators. The strategies of the LA BOLD proposal will substantially contribute to this goal in measurable ways. Eleven of the partner districts are participants in Believe and Prepare, the main strategy of the state equity plan. In addition, LA BOLD will encourage more and stronger partnerships between LEAs and preparation programs and will support innovative teacher recruitment and hiring practices (both key strategies of the equity plan).

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS TO SUPPORT THE NEEDS OF TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS IDENTIFIED THROUGH EVALUATION**

LA BOLD offers a sound professional development platform to develop teachers and teacher leaders and, most important, develop principals as strong instructional leaders.

Underlying NIET's powerful model of professional development is the NIET Best Practices Center Training Portal, an interactive Web tool that provides individualized trainings, resources and support for all educators (Appendix F). In addition to the online resources, LA BOLD provides a full complement of formal workshops/trainings, on-site follow-up support, and ongoing job-embedded professional development.

LA BOLD districts will be able to closely integrate evaluation results with professional development through (1) the evaluation system which produces detailed data on teacher practice and, (2) the cadre of teacher leaders (master and mentor teachers) who are trained in the rubric and evaluation process, observe in classrooms, and who provide the job-embedded PD. Each high-need schools will have 1-2 full time master teachers, depending on school size, and a minimum of 1 mentor teacher.

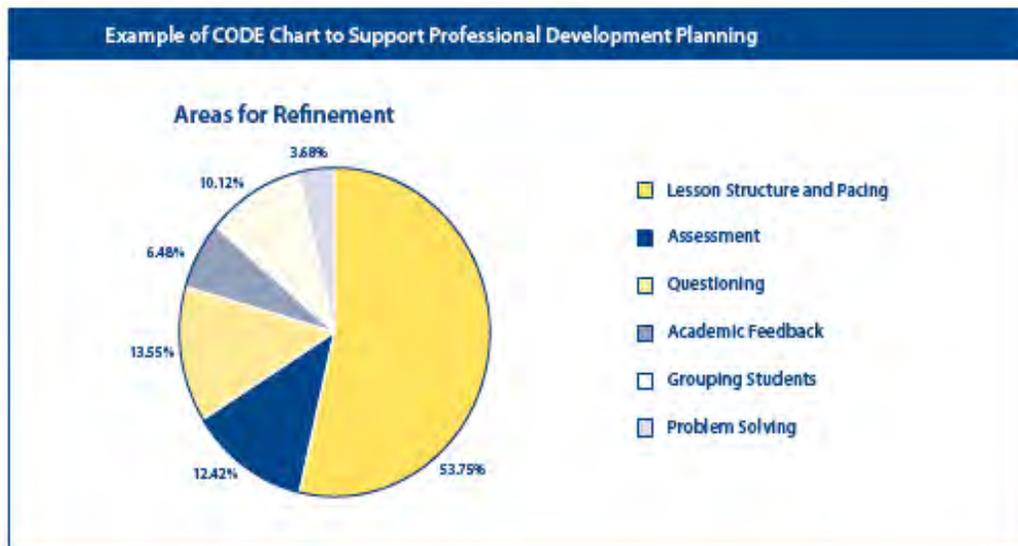
*Use the disaggregated information generated by the proposed educator evaluation systems to identify the professional development needs of individual educators and schools*

A key professional development structure within the LA BOLD schools is the school leadership team (administrators, master teachers, and mentors). The leadership team analyzes school-wide areas of strength or weakness, trends by grade or subject, and individual teacher performance. The data is used to determine professional development needs for individuals and groups of teachers in schools. As a result of the NIET evaluation process, every teacher receives an area of reinforcement (strength) and an area of refinement (weakness) through the post-

conference. This evaluation data also informs the development for each teacher of an individual growth plan to guide their own improvement efforts.

The following chart, generated using data for the NIET Performance Data Management System, shows how often particular indicators on the TAP Rubric have been chosen as the area of refinement (i.e., area of relative weakness) during the post-conference. In this case, more than half of observations at this example school have led to the “Lesson Structure and Pacing” indicator being targeted as an area for improvement, suggesting that master and mentor teachers might want to pay particular attention to this skill in upcoming professional development.

**Figure 7: Example Performance Data Management System Report – Areas for Refinement**



*Provide professional development in a timely way*

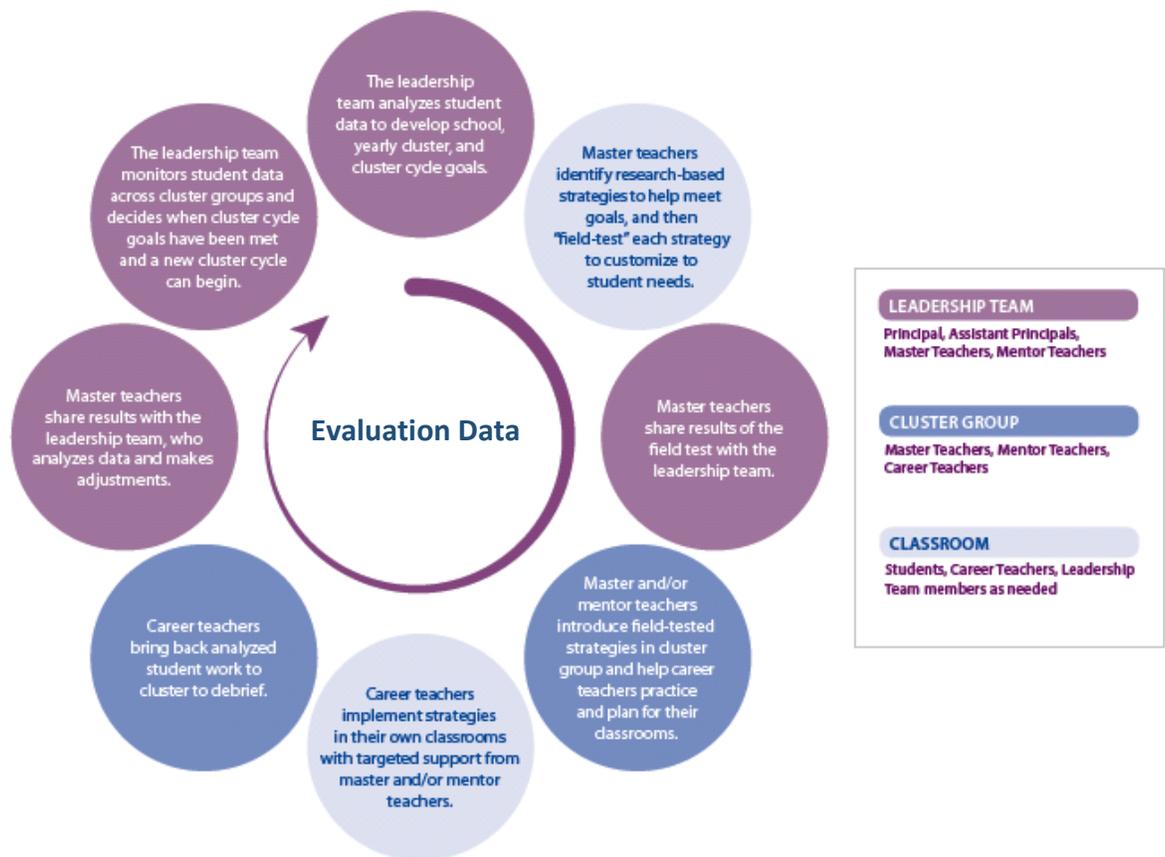
Each LA BOLD district will structure schools’ schedules to allow for professional development activities to take place during the school day. *Every week*, master and mentor teachers will lead career teachers in “cluster group,” or small professional development sessions. Cluster groups are grade- or subject-specific and typically have 5-8 members. Professional development will extend into each classroom as master teachers model lessons, observe

instruction and support other teachers to improve their practice. In addition, as part of the NIET Evaluation Process, following the classroom observation, teachers participate in a post-conference meeting with their evaluator. This post-conference, held within a week of the observation, provides the teacher timely feedback and a specific model to address the individual teacher’s area of refinement – real-time, personalized professional development.

*Provide school-based, job-embedded opportunities for educators to transfer new knowledge into instructional and leadership practices*

The following chart provides an illustration of how PD will work in schools. Note that *one hundred percent* of the PD illustrated occurs on-site and job-embedded.

**Figure 8: Overview of Professional Learning Cycle in LA BOLD**



*Professional development that is likely to improve instructional and leadership practices, and is guided by the professional development needs of individual educators*

The teaching standards inform not only the evaluation process, but also the daily and weekly, informal and formal professional development experiences. This does not happen by chance, but rather by strategic and mindful planning with the purpose of improving instruction and leadership across the entire school. In LA BOLD, as part of implementing NIET effective educators best practices, master teachers, mentor teachers and the principal have explicit responsibility for planning and leading a range of inter-related professional development activities. While the professional development structure is common across LA BOLD schools, the content is entirely driven by analysis of student and teacher needs in the specific school. Typical professional development activities include:

*Cluster Groups.* LA BOLD schools restructure the school schedule to provide time during the regular school day for groups of teachers to collaborate on analyzing student data and learning instructional strategies to improve student learning. Strategies are selected by master teachers based on detailed analyses of student achievement data and are only introduced to teachers in the cluster group after the masters teachers have successfully field tested or vetted the strategies in actual classrooms so they can demonstrate student learning gains. After master teachers introduce a new strategy, teachers use the strategy in their own classrooms, then return to cluster meetings with pre- and post-test data from formative assessments to discuss how well the strategy worked and refine it further if necessary. Additionally, within clusters, teachers engage in collaborative professional learning based on the standards of performance that are applied in their evaluations.

*Individualized Coaching.* In LA BOLD master and mentor teachers follow up after cluster meetings to provide every teacher with one-on-one coaching which is informed by evaluation data. These teacher leaders are provided training, authority, time, and additional compensation for these roles, and their work with classroom teachers is a key component of their responsibilities. Master and mentor teachers carefully calibrate the content and form of coaching to meet teachers' individual needs based specifically on the students in the teachers' classroom. For example, they might ask: *How well did the teacher understand the strategy overall, and did he or she struggle with a particular aspect of it?* What kind of coaching technique would work best for this teacher – observation and feedback, a demonstration lesson, co-teaching? *Will one of the “critical attributes” of the strategy be difficult for this teacher?* Master and mentor teachers regularly visit teachers' classrooms to provide intensive and personalized coaching that can take a wide variety of forms, from teaching demonstration lessons to modeling specific instructional strategies or skills to team teaching.

Additionally, the districts will use technology to support educator growth, including the on-line NIET Educator Effectiveness Best Practices System Training Portal (Appendix F) which provides access to instructional videos, strategies, and professional development modules.

## **QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

NIET will serve as fiscal agent for the proposed TIF grant. NIET has served successfully as the fiscal agent to a number of other large grants – including TIF grants – and will use the same strategies to assess human resource needs for this grant and to develop a clearly defined timeline, strategies, responsibilities, and milestones for accomplishing project objectives. The Management Plan describes NIET's management structure for meeting the goals and objectives

of this project on time and within budget, and is organized in three major sections: Project Personnel, Project Objectives, and Project Timeline/Tasks/Responsibilities.

*Project Personnel*

The LA BOLD project provides a team of seasoned and committed leaders and practitioners who understand what it means to collaborate with districts and schools toward mutual goals. The work of this proposal builds on the expertise and aspirations of the team listed in Table 3 (see Appendix D for key project personnel professional vitas and resumes).

**Table 3: LA BOLD Project Personnel**

<b>Project Personnel</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Project Role</b>	<b>%FTE</b>
Dr. Gary Stark	NIET CEO	Will work with NIET Sr Staff to oversee and ensure effective implementation	<i>In Kind</i>
Dr. Patrice Pujol	NIET President of Services and Partnerships	Serve as NIET’s escalation point for issues as needed; provide development oversight and strategic guidance	<i>In Kind</i>
To be Hired	NIET LA BOLD Project Director (Expert practitioner with a record of success in K-12 and project leadership)	Oversee all aspects of operation in districts; lead annual advisory board meetings; work closely with NIET senior mgt and district administration to supervise Senior Trainers; provide training and on-site technical assistance as needed	100%
Dr. Joshua Barnett	NIET Chief Learning Officer	As Principal Investigator provide oversight for project design, execution, and evaluation.	10%
Vicky Condalary	Assistant Director for School Service	Provide support to and coordination of Project Director and Senior Trainers	20%

Dr. Danielle Ferreira	NIET Director of Learning Technologies	Provide oversight and direct support for implementation of NIET Best Practices Portal and Performance Data Management System in all schools	10%
Dr. Ann Shaw	NIET Director of Training	Work with districts to develop district-specific plans for training district leaders and school leadership teams; facilitate development of district/higher ed partnerships	10%
To be Hired (4)	NIET LA BOLD Sr Trainers – Experienced, highly effective practitioners in NIET Best Practices	Provide on-site support to schools and districts; coach and support school leadership teams and district leaders; consult and support school level cluster work; provide field-level data for the project; identify additional resources and support needed	100%
Payton Parker	NIET Director of Grants	Serve as the grant manager and liaison for federal reporting	20%
Dr. Tanee Hudgens	NIET Sr Research Associate	Lead project evaluation	50%
Kristan Van Hook	NIET Senior VP for Policy	Develop and execute strategies for communicating with practitioners, communities, and policymakers	10%
Sheila Talamo	NIET School Services Business Manager	Support districts and schools in scheduling and coordination of trainings and technical assistance meetings.	10%

Dr. Josh Barnett will serve as the principal investigator for the project, providing oversight and direction for NIET. Management and coordination of this project will ultimately

be the responsibility of the LA BOLD Project Director who will oversee and administer the grant. The Project Director will ensure the goals and objectives are achieved on time and within budget through oversight of grant execution, management of grant activities, and support for implementation of the proposed HCMS in district. The LA BOLD Project Director will communicate *weekly* with key district points of contact and NIET personnel to ensure effective and proactive management of the project.

NIET, in collaboration with representatives from each of the partner districts, will hire four Senior Trainers to provide services to districts across the state. These Senior Trainers will be responsible for training school-based leadership teams and conducting regular site visits. These Senior Trainers will work directly with district leaders and school-based administrators and master and mentor teachers to anchor the training process. NIET will seek applicants who have at least five years of classroom teaching experience, preferably as a master teacher in a TAP school; master's degree in education, preferred; demonstrated expertise in curriculum development, test analysis, mentoring and professional development; and the ability to work with faculty in a diverse cross-section of schools.

NIET will use routine cost-control mechanisms that involve work and budget planning and systematic review. NIET believes that paramount to effective control of any project's costs are detailed work and budget planning, coupled with systematic reviews of actual performance against those plans and the ability to make adjustments as required. Actual accomplishments and their costs will be compared to the planned work flows and budgets. Each quarter, NIET will generate financial reports for the districts. These reports will allow NIET to closely monitor expenditures and make sure the project is within budget. NIET has assembled an exceptionally well-qualified team of managers and other personnel who will complete their project

responsibilities on time and within budget. The qualifications of the staff identified in Table 3 represent the full range of skills to guarantee quality and timely work on all project tasks. The time commitments these key personnel will devote to this grant are adequate to implement the project effectively.

In addition, upon notification of funding NIET will convene a TIF Advisory Board that will include: NIET's President (or designee); the TIF Project Director; the Senior Trainers; the Louisiana Department of Education State Superintendent (or designee), the superintendent (or designee) from each district; and principal and teacher representatives. The TIF Advisory Board will meet annually to provide a consistent platform for systematic review of the status and improvement of the TIF project. Based on the Board's findings and with approval of the U.S. Department of Education (ED), changes or adaptations will be made in the LA BOLD implementation to guarantee that all of the project's objectives are met. In addition, NIET and the districts will establish quarterly communications to monitor progress, ensure implementation is on track and address any challenges they may be facing.

### *Project Objectives*

In addition to the four required GPRA measures, our evaluation will collect and analyze the following measures of performance related to the goals of the project.

#### **Project Objective 1: Increase the percent of effective teachers**

- 1.a. Increase the percent of effective teachers as defined within the TIF grant.
- 1.b. Increase the percent of effective teachers retained each year.
- 1.c. Enhance the opportunity for principals to recruit teachers likely to be effective.

#### **Project Objective 2: Increase the percent of effective principals**

- 2.a. Increase the percent of effective principals as defined within the TIF grant.

2.b. Increase the percent of principals retained each year.

**Project Objective 3: Improve student achievement.**

3.a. Achieve a year or more of student growth at the school level.

*Management Plan Responsibilities, Timelines, and Milestones*

The management plan milestones, responsible parties, and a timeline for completion.

<i>Project Tasks</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Milestones</i>				
		<i>Y 1</i>	<i>Y 2</i>	<i>Y 3</i>	<i>Y 4</i>	<i>Y 5</i>
<b>Human Capital Management System (HCMS) Implementation and Expansion</b>						
Upload all school data to the NIET Performance Data Management system.	District Administration (DA)	x				
Districts sign a MOU with NIET*	NIET, DA	x				
Establish a TIF Advisory Board to meet annually to assess the progress of meeting the stated goals of the TIF grant*	Project Director (PD), DA	x	x	x	x	x
Convene initial collaboration meetings with higher education partnerships*	DA, NIET	x				
Plan for the performance-incentive pay metrics tailored to district needs and feedback	NIET, DA, Schools	x				
Incorporate performance into the salary schedule and teacher compensation package	DA, Schools		x	x	x	x
Identify and implement strategies to incorporate the vision for instructional improvement, as defined in the NIET Instructional Rubric (teaching standards), into recruitment and hiring practices	PD, DA, NIET	x	x	x	x	x
<b>PBCS Preparation</b>						
Hire Project Director and Senior Trainers	NIET, DA	x				
<i>Career Advancement</i>						
Establish a Staffing Committee for master and mentor teacher selection and accountability.	DA, NIET	x	x	x	x	x

<i>Project Tasks</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Milestones</i>				
		<i>Y 1</i>	<i>Y 2</i>	<i>Y 3</i>	<i>Y 4</i>	<i>Y 5</i>
LA BOLD districts recruit, interview, and hire master and mentor teachers.	DA, Schools, Staffing Committee	x				
Master and mentor teachers sign addendums to their contract, outlining the responsibilities, job descriptions and compensation.	Schools	x	x	x	x	x
<i>Professional Development</i>						
Schools restructure school schedule to allow for ongoing applied professional growth activities to occur during the school day.*	DA, Schools	x				
LA BOLD Senior Trainers visit targeted schools bimonthly to provide on-site implementation, consultation, technical, and management support.	NIET Senior Trainers	x	x	x	x	x
<i>Evaluation</i>						
Convene the Educator Implementation Committee to allocate specific weight given to student growth measures for purposes of performance pay	DA, Educator Implementation Committee	x				
Based on the Educator Implementation Committee recommendations, upload weights to the NIET Performance Data Management System	NIET	x				
<i>Calculating Student Growth</i>						
School-wide and Teacher-Level Student Growth Scores calculated and provided	La Department of Education	x	x	x	x	
<b>PBCS Implementation: LA BOLD Schools</b>						
Schools complete NIET Best Practices Trainings (Cluster,Leadership Team,Evaluation,Field Testing)*	SLT, NIET	x	x			
Members of the SLT will attend the NIET Summer Institute and NIET Natl Conference and Training.*	SLT	x	x	x	x	x
Districts will work with NIET to disseminate information about LA BOLD and the success of the schools to key stakeholders.*	DA, PD, NIET	x	x	x	x	x
Implement NIET Evaluation System district-wide.*	DA		x	x	x	x

<i>Project Tasks</i>	<i>Responsible Parties</i>	<i>Milestones</i>				
		<i>Y 1</i>	<i>Y 2</i>	<i>Y 3</i>	<i>Y 4</i>	<i>Y 5</i>
All participating schools receive a School Review.*	NIET, Schools		x	x	x	x
Districts will work with NIET to develop a plan for sustaining and expanding the NIET Best Practices, PBCS, and HCMS beyond the life of the grant.*	DA, PD, NIET	x	x	x	x	x
<b>PBCS Implementation: Teachers</b>						
Participating schools provide ongoing applied professional growth activities to teachers.	SLT	x	x	x	x	x
Districts ensure that evaluators are trained and certified, and recertified annually to ensure ratings align with national raters and value-added measures.	DA, Schools, NIET	x	x	x	x	x
<i>Evaluation:</i> All teachers receive a minimum of two full classroom evaluations and associated pre- and post-conference sessions.	SLT		x	x	x	x
<i>Evaluation:</i> Teachers in non-tested grades/subjects develop Student Learning Targets; SLT evaluate Student Learning Targets and determine growth	SLT	x	x	x	x	x
Districts reward effective teachers in participating schools with performance-based compensation.*	DA		x	x	x	x
<b>PBCS Implementation: Principals</b>						
District staff and NIET provide professional development for principals.	DA, NIET	x	x	x	x	x
Districts ensure that principal evaluators are trained.	DA, Schools	x	x	x	x	x
All principals receive a minimum of two observation evaluations using the Louisiana COMPASS Leader Rubric and the TLT rubric.	DA, Schools, NIET		x	x	x	x
Districts reward effective principals in participating schools with performance-based compensation.*	DA		x	x	x	x

\* Indicates actions that will lead to project sustainability.

## ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

*Extent to which the applicant demonstrates that PBCS are developed with the input of teachers and school leaders in the schools and local educational agencies to be served by the grant.*

LA BOLD will enable districts to develop and implement a PBCS in high need schools with input from the teachers and school leaders in each LEA. (Requirement 1) Based on teacher and principal needs and their vision for student achievement, LA BOLD districts, principals, and teachers have agreed upon multiple measures of performance for teachers and school leaders. They have also committed to a review of the measures to determine the weights of each through briefings, focus groups, and meetings at the school and district level. Districts have decided to put \$1,000 per teacher into annual performance award funds. This is four times the current state average among districts already implementing performance pay (\$250). From this pool of funds, teachers will be able to earn PBC based on the following measures of performance.

1. Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities score average of multiple observations,
2. Classroom level student learning growth using Louisiana value added scores and/or Student Learning Target Scores, and
3. School wide student learning growth based on Louisiana value added scores.

In the first year of the grant, stakeholders in each district will convene in a PBCS Committee with broad stakeholder representation, including teacher and principals, to recommend the *weights* to be assigned to each measure of performance for teachers and principals. Districts will determine the annual distribution of performance pay based on the measures and weights assigned, with student achievement measures equaling at least 35% per state law. As an example, the chart below illustrates how PBCS would be calculated if the weighting were 50% observation, 20% school wide growth, 30% classroom level growth, for 3 different teachers:

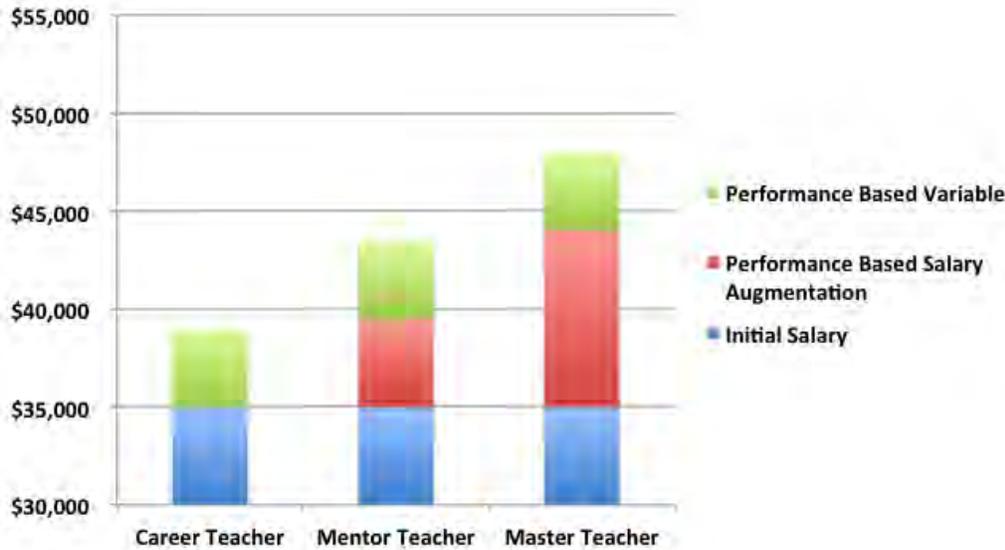
	Teacher A	Teacher B	Teacher C
Average of SKR observation scores	$2.5 * 50\% = 1.25$	$1 * 50\% = 0.5$	$4 * 50\% = 2$
School-wide learning growth	$4 * 20\% = 0.8$	$4 * 20\% = 0.8$	$4 * 20\% = 0.8$
Classroom learning growth	$2 * 30\% = 0.6$	$2 * 30\% = 0.6$	$5 * 30\% = 1.5$
Weighted Average Score	2.65	1.9	4.3

\*Only those educators rated as effective are eligible for performance based compensation. An effective rating is defined as a composite score of 2.5 or higher on the measures.

*Additional Roles and Responsibilities for Teacher Leaders*

For taking on additional roles and responsibilities, teachers may increase their pay with salary augmentations of \$4,500 as a mentor teacher and \$9,000 as a master teacher. Teachers must remain effective to retain their additional roles and responsibilities. Figure 9 illustrates opportunities for teacher performance based pay.

**Figure 9: Differentiated Pay for Teachers Based on Performance and Leadership Roles**



**Evaluating Principals and Assistant Principals**

Principal effectiveness will be evaluated annually and be based on student achievement growth at the school level for at least 35% of the measure, while the other measures will include scores the state COMPASS evaluation for principals, and School Leadership Team observation scores.

*Multiple observation-based assessments per year.* Principals will be observed two or more times a year during weekly School Leadership Team meetings that they facilitate. Principals' scores on the state COMPASS evaluation, two or more observations, will be an additional measure.

*Student growth measures.* 35% of more of principal effectiveness will depend on student growth measured by school-wide value-added scores.

As with weights assigned to teacher performance measures, the districts will review the measures and determine district-specific weights for each. The measures for evaluating Assistant Principals for PBC can be different than those for Principals, as determined by the PBCS Committee. Each district will put \$7,500 per principal and \$4,000 per AP into an annual performance award fund.

Within each measure used in their evaluations, teachers and principals receive a larger award as their scores increase, which differentiates pay and ensures performance awards are of sufficient size to affect behavior. Teachers can receive awards as low as \$0 and upwards to around \$6,000 (the range varies from school to school).

*Calculating Educator Effectiveness and Performance Pay.*

Districts will convene PBCS Committees in Year 1 of the grant that include school administrators, teachers, and other key stakeholders across the district to develop a district-specific performance pay formula tailored to their district's needs through the weights assigned to measures of performance. The NIET System provides the framework for the evaluation and

PBCS process but through educator involvement the structure becomes unique and individualized for each school.

As mentioned previously, principals and teachers have played a leadership role in each district's decision to join LA BOLD. Every partner superintendent has signed an MOU and submitted a written letter of support. In addition, principals and teachers from the participating LEAs express their support for the best practices of the NIET System, and enthusiasm for its overall potential impact (APPENDIX E – over 170 letters of support). Many echo the sentiments and enthusiasm of Tammy Hallett, a fourth grade teacher at Hadnot-Hayes School in Rapides Parish who states “we are excited to partner with NIET to implement practices to further our instructional effectiveness and sustain a cadre of highly effective educators.”

#### *Timeline for PBCS Implementation*

The PBCS will be implemented by each district in year two of the grant. In addition, each district will reconvene the PBCS Committee in year four of the grant to consider additional changes to the salary schedule. The districts believe that teachers and principals must first become familiar with and trust the accuracy and fairness of the new evaluation system before asking educators to make additional changes to the salary schedule. The details of the PBCS will be established by each district and its PBCS Committee over the course of the grant to build buy-in and ensure the design of the salary schedule reflects local needs. Further changes to the salary schedule identified by the year four review committee will be implemented in Year 5.

*The extent to which the applicant demonstrates a plan to sustain financially the activities conducted and systems developed under the grant once the grant period has expired.*

Our sustainability plan includes elements that will ensure long-term sustainability and success of this project: building buy-in, creating capacity through training and support, increasing educator skills and driving student growth, and establishing financial sustainability.

*Establishing financial sustainability.* To demonstrate their commitment to sustainability, districts will use non-TIF funds to take over an increasing share of performance-based compensation each year. Districts will adopt **25%** in Year 3; and **50%** in Year 4. By the final year of the grant (Year 5), the districts will fund **75%** of performance-based compensation with funds provided by other local, state and/or federal resources. Also in Years 4 and 5 of the grant, the districts will assume the costs of the second master teacher. Performance-based compensation and master teacher salaries are the largest components of the PBCS budget; therefore, these districts are demonstrating their commitment to implementing the system by shouldering these costs.

After the initial 5 years, schools within the districts and district leaders will have built instructional capacity among the faculty members; thus, districts will be able to reduce the number of master/mentor teachers needed. The role of NIET support will lessen as the district will have built their own training capacity. Consequently, costs of implementation will be substantially reduced after the project period, contributing to fiscal sustainability.

Sustainability also involves a commitment by key district and community stakeholders to remain engaged in the system's ongoing development. Ongoing communications efforts will build awareness, understanding and support for the PBCS and educator evaluation systems

among teachers, principals, other school personnel and the community (including parents). Three primary strategies to involve key stakeholders and build lasting support:

**Advisory Board.** Upon notification of funding, NIET will form an advisory board consisting of NIET's President (or designee); the TIF Project Director; the Senior Trainers; the Louisiana Department of Education State Superintendent (or designee), the superintendent (or designee) from each district; and principal and teacher representatives. The advisory board will meet annually to provide a consistent platform for a systematic review of the status of the project.

**School Leadership Teams.** To regularly communicate information about the HCMS to stakeholders on a site-level basis, partner districts will utilize School Leadership Teams, comprised of teacher representatives and facilitated by the school principal. They will also use the PBCS Committee to communicate details of the PBCS.

**Communications plan.** Districts will disseminate information through districts' newsletters, websites and public forums throughout the year. School principals and master teachers will distribute information at staff meetings, during in-service days and through campus newsletters.

The diversity of partners in this grant provides an opportunity to build a network that will inform their work, as well as impact other districts in the state. As Superintendent Kevin George, St. John Parish School, indicated, "We see tremendous value in working with other districts on this initiative. This will enable us to learn from others and to demonstrate the impact across multiple communities."