Part I: Narrative Description

Section A – Cover Page

1. Atlantic Research Partners, Inc.

1093 A1A Beach Blvd., Suite 422

St. Augustine, Florida 32080-6733

904-501-1901 – Office number

866-408-8119 – Fax number

jw@atlanticresearchpartners.org

2. Dr. Joseph Wise – contact person

904-651-6700 – contact number

3. FEIN 26-1392943

4. Geographic areas we will serve: Cook County Region I-A, Cook County Region

I-B-B, Cook County Region I-B-C, Cook County Region I-B-D, Region I-C,

Region II, and Region V.

5. Grade spans – Pre Kindergarten – 12

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Section B – Executive Summary

Atlantic Research Partners (hereinafter "*Atlantic Research*") seeks to become a Lead Partner for the Illinois School Improvement Grant. *Atlantic Research* is comprised of a team of experienced education and management professionals focused on providing schools and school districts nationwide with analysis of organizational, pedagogical, and leadership practices affecting student academic achievement, while providing sustainable, research-established supports affecting employee performance in education. Our team also provides leaders with specific tools essential to recruiting, retaining and supporting "top-talent" for maximum institutional efficacy. Reliable, results-driven methods are crucial to achieving and sustaining organizational effectiveness; practical, research-tested tools, strategies and protocols are pivotal; and *Atlantic Research* seamlessly provides those necessities to all schools it serves.

Atlantic Research services begin with a dedicated team of experienced professionals clinically analyzing school needs and current practices through a performance audit, then ultimately building—with substantial client input and clear concurrence—specific management, education, organizational and leadership programs exclusively tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of each building. *Atlantic Research* recognizes that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to mastering the complex issues schools, administrators, building leaders and teachers face each day. All school improvement

services for underperforming schools, including transformation and turnaround services, are based on sound research and proven methods.

Atlantic Research provides daily, onsite intervention in school buildings with the goal of increasing student achievement and improving school performance. The *Atlantic Research* team provides hands-on, technical training and modeling for teachers by working alongside them in the classroom to improve teaching techniques. Building leaders receive in depth coaching as team members work with them to improve their schools and learn important management and leadership skills. Systems within the school, including rules, discipline, and procedures, are also evaluated and adjusted as needed to improve school climate, ultimately increasing achievement. *Atlantic Research's* approach of creating partnerships with teachers and school leaders and working with them in the classrooms allows for meaningful reforms that become embedded in the school culture to remain long after the *Atlantic Research* team completes its onsite responsibilities.

Atlantic Research's reform efforts to increase student achievement have realized great success throughout the United States. States, districts, and schools confidently rely on *Atlantic Research* to provide consistent, high-quality school improvement services that train teachers and building leaders, improve underperforming schools, and deliver increased student achievement.

Please find enclosed, our responses to the Illinois State Board of Education RFSP. Your

consideration of our proposal and credentials are greatly appreciated.

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David M. Sundstrom, President

Atlantic Research Partners

Part I: Narrative Description

Section C – Service Area and Capacity Limitations

Service Area and Capacity Limitations - Cook County Region I-A, Cook County Region I-B-B, Cook County Region I-B-C, Cook County Region I-B-D,   Region I-C, Region II, Region III, Region V. There are no capacity limitations.

 Part I: Narrative Description

   Section D – Work Plan

   1. <u>**Comprehensive Audit:**</u>

   Describe the process and measures that will be used to perform a comprehensive audit that carefully analyzes the LEA's and school's current programs, practices, and policies in order to assess the overall structure, curriculum, school climate, instruction, finances, program effectiveness, human capital, and governance of the system so as to address areas of need and plan for systemic change.

For each school receiving its services, *Atlantic Research Partners* (hereinafter "*Atlantic Research*") will provide a systematic, thorough and comprehensive performance audit of programs, systems, and personnel; this initial site-specific process will establish baseline data upon which *Atlantic Research* analysis, determinations and ultimate recommendations shall be based. Determinations shall be rendered solely upon the basis of validated and documented evidence, and in accordance with clearly articulated criteria. Further, *Atlantic Research* will identify educational standards achieved and not achieved at each school site, and provide detailed strategies for school leadership teams on implementing critical changes within their buildings; changes specific to identifiable needs, and deeply focused upon student academic performance.

Crucial to *Atlantic Research's* value is the collaborative involvement of school leaders and teachers themselves at each building in which our teams work. Longitudinal studies by *Atlantic Research* and efficacy researchers nationwide establish that effective interventions and sustainable change occur only if those affected by the interventions "own" and participate in

implementation. Consequently, *Atlantic Research* maintains a rigorous focus on collaboration, professionalism, respectfulness and sensitivity in all of its school improvement work. Issues are explored and probed *with* stakeholders—not independently or in isolation. High standards and high expectations are not compromised by collaboration; instead, opportunities for sustained growth are data-proven to be enhanced.

The *Atlantic Research* performance audit process will also provide each school with verbal and written feedback that is clear, easily understood and—most importantly—constructive. The core focus of the *Atlantic Research* performance audit team will be on six areas affecting each school: student academic achievement, teaching quality, curriculum alignment and rigor, school culture, resource management/efficiency, and school leadership. Briefly, each component is summarized below:

1. **Student Academic Achievement:** The audit team will examine with close scrutiny each of the following:

   - The school's results in national, state and other standardized assessments;

   - Trends over time;

   - The school's progress towards AYP goals;

   - Whether students have made satisfactory gains in their learning over the course of their career in the school as evidenced by all available baseline assessments;

   - The rate of office referrals, suspensions and exclusions of students;

   - Graduation and retention rates, (when applicable);

   - Students' attendance rates and punctuality and any incidents of truancy;

- The progress of students with special educational needs—particularly students with individual education plans; and

- Formative, interim and summative achievement data.

When determining how well students are achieving, the audit team members will consider all relevant factors, including but not limited to:

- Student state and national test results (including data establishing whether the results match or exceed the average for all students within the district and region);

- Whether students from a high school's feeder schools are likely to develop the necessary skills by the time they enter Grade 9;

- Whether the school is maintaining high standards and improving;

- Whether at risk students are making appropriate progress;

- Whether special education students are making adequate progress;

- Whether students with limited English proficiency are making sufficient progress;

- Whether student achievement is consistently high across all content areas;

- Whether students of different gender or ethnic background achieve at rates equal to or greater than general population students;

- Whether the school's academic achievement results compare favorably with other similarly-situated schools within the district and the state;

- Whether students are actively engaged in lessons;

- Whether student behavior is appropriate in and beyond the classroom;

- Whether students demonstrate empathy, tolerance, understanding and respect for others;

- Whether students engage in—or evidence interest in— non-academic aspects of school

life (Example: engagement in after school activities);

- Whether relationships are constructive between students and adults in school;

- Whether the school environment is free from bullying, sexism, racism, and other forms of prejudice and discrimination;

- Whether students demonstrate an understanding of the impact their actions have upon others; and

- Whether students achieve high levels of attendance and low tardiness rates.

The audit team will evaluate and report on multiple factors. Student academic work is examined thoroughly for evidence of whether appropriately high levels of achievement, knowledge, and academic reasoning are present and consistent. Student behavior is also examined closely; individual and group behaviors are proven to evidence engagement (or the lack thereof) in academic content, and often reveal substantive anomalies in adult-student communication.

2. **Teaching Quality:** The audit team will focus on the following:

   - Observed and quantified teaching behaviors and the impact of those behaviors on student engagement and learning;

   - How effectively specific teaching behaviors meet the needs of all diverse students, particularly students with special education needs, and students evidencing age, gender, ethnicity, or English proficiency variances;

   - An emphasis will be placed on the effectiveness of reading, writing and mathematics instruction, but teaching in all content areas will be fully examined;

   - The sufficiency of resources to support effective teaching;

- The characteristics of and variances in student behavior management;

- The extent and parameters of teacher preparation and support; and

- The effectiveness of professional development.

When examining the effectiveness of teaching, the audit team members will consider the extent to which:

- Teachers demonstrate sufficient content-area knowledge and effectively share their knowledge with students;

- Teachers plan strategically, maintain high expectations of students, set clear objectives (based on state standards that students understand) and ensure that all state and local requirements are being met;

- Teachers use time effectively, ensure that the pace of learning brisk and purposeful, and make the most of every teaching opportunity;

- Teachers have the necessary technical skills required to deliver specific curriculum (such as competency in phonics, spelling, computational skills and speaking ability);

- Teachers have established positive relationships with their students and insist on high standards, both academically and behaviorally;

- Teachers use day-to-day assessments effectively to appropriately meet the needs of all students;

- Teachers use a range of teaching methods and strategies to enable all students to successfully learn;

- Teachers deploy classroom assistants, paraprofessionals and any other supporting adults productively;

- Teachers use classroom and teaching resources to maximize student engagement in content;

- Teachers create a stimulating learning environment that reflects the curriculum, students' interests and celebrates student achievement;

- Teachers involve parents and guardians through purposeful outreach efforts (Examples: telephone and e-mail communication, occasional delivery by students of messages celebrating student accomplishments, etc.), and homework that strategically reinforces and extends what has been learned in school;

- Teachers are provided opportunities for consistent professional development;

- Monitoring and data analysis is used to identify professional development needs, for the entire school, for various grade levels, and for individual teachers;

- Professional development is planned effectively to meet the actual and identifiable needs of teachers; and

- Teachers' individual professional development plans accurately reflect their specific needs.

3. **Curriculum Alignment and Rigor:** The audit team will focus on all relevant instructional factors, including but not limited to:

   - The alignment of the curriculum to state and local standards;

   - How well the curriculum is mapped to ensure appropriate coverage with sufficient breadth and depth;

   - The educational programs employed by the school, and how well they match the needs and achievement levels of the students;

- Character education and citizenship programs; and

- The sufficiency of resources to support effective teaching.

When analyzing the attributes of curriculum the performance audit team members will consider:

- Whether the curriculum contains the necessary content to address state and local standards at the appropriate stages of students' school careers;

- Whether the content and skills taught are sufficiently rigorous and promote high levels of achievement;

- If the school uses student data to constantly improve instructional programs;

- If the programs used by the school provide opportunities for instruction to be differentiated to meet the needs of all students;

- If the school provides a wide range of curricular opportunities to met the specific needs and interest of students, especially at-risk students and special education students;

- If the programs used across the curriculum include effective strategies for promoting the necessary skills of literacy and numeracy;

- If all students—including the youngest—are provided a wide range of learning experiences that prepare them for greater rigor;

- If the school's curriculum and learning resources sufficiently meet all students' needs;

- If the curriculum promotes students' understanding of their own values and those of others;

- If the curriculum promotes responsible citizenship and the reasons for it;

- If the school provides opportunities for enrichment activities within the school day and beyond (Examples: athletics, clubs, tutoring, Saturday school) and

- If the school has cultivated relationships with local industries and businesses, and local

  colleges and other institutions of higher education

4. **School Culture:** The audit team will focus on all relevant factors affecting school

   culture, including but not limited to:

   - How the school uses assessment to modify instruction and address identifiable

     students' needs;

   - Personal support offered to individual students;

   - How the school promotes regular attendance and punctuality;

   - Extra-curricular and social activities;

   - Counseling and career advice;

   - The extent to which students with disabilities are integrated into the full life of

     the school; and

   - The level and quality of community and family involvement.

When examining the effectiveness of student interventions and adult/student interactions the

audit team members will consider all relevant factors, including but not limited to:

- How the school provides for students' safety and protection;

- How well teachers know their students, recognize student needs and respond to

  individual student circumstances;

- Whether students evidence behaviors evidencing a belief that they are respected by and

  have authentic relationships with staff;

- How the school collaborates with students and their parents/guardians, in conjunction

with teachers, specialist support personnel and other community agencies to promote successful learning outcomes for students;

- How the school identifies factors that can be barriers to learning and development, and how the school plans or assists in interventions or programs that can help students achieve positive outcomes;

- How the school assesses student achievement and progress;

- Whether academic assessments are aligned with state standards;

- How the school assesses student program quality and specialist support needs, particularly for at-risk students, students with disabilities, students with advanced skills and students with limited English proficiency;

- How or whether the school provides personal counseling to individuals on safety and crisis management;

- How the school helps students manage relationships and behavioral difficulties;

- How the school provides assistance with study skills, subject and course selection, and career planning and decision making; and

- What strategies the school employs to encourage regular and punctual attendance.

5. **Resource Management and Efficiency:** The audit team will focus on the following:

  - The extent to which school leaders fulfill their responsibility in managing the school's resources;

  - The relationship between a school's budget and its commitment to raising achievement;

  - The mission of the school;

- Management of the budget

- The efficacy of staff deployment;

- The level of teacher-use of classroom and teaching resources; and

- Management of all additional external resources, including those received from state and federal sources.

When analyzing levels of student care, the audit team members will consider:

- To what extent the school makes the best possible use of the available resources to achieve high student outcomes;

- The efficacy of resource allocation;

- Financial management of all resources, and the methods by which financial resources are managed to implement the priorities set out in the school's improvement plan;

- Whether the school considered any likely changes in its income, perhaps due to predicted enrollment increases or declines, and prepared appropriate contingency plans;

- Whether school leadership specifically budgets systematically for new expenditures;

- Whether outcomes from expenditures are evaluated to ensure maximum benefit to the school (students, staffing building and learning resources, for example);

- Measures or criteria established to quantify expenditures and their effects on student achievement;

- The efficacy of school staffing, particularly in relation to how the curriculum is organized, class sizes and planning time for teachers;

- School use of learning resources that are available for students (appropriateness of the resources, resource accessibility, and actual student need);

- Whether time within each school day is used well.

6. **School Leadership:** The audit team will focus on all relevant leadership factors, including but not limited to:

    - How effectively the principal and other school leaders manage and lead the school;

    - The extent to which the school monitors and evaluates its performance;

    - The extent to which the school plans for raising student achievement, and how effectively those plans are implemented;

    - The efficacy of the school's use of available resources, including staffing.

When analyzing the components of a school's leadership, auditors will consider:

- Whether the school has a clear sense of purpose and vision;

- If a shared commitment to improvement and capacity to succeed is demonstrated;

- The extent to which school leaders guide the work and vision of the school;

- Whether and how leadership provides clear direction for the work and development of the school, and promotes high levels of student achievement;

- Whether the school's leadership nurtures and sustains a school culture and educational opportunities that enable students to learn and provide for teachers' professional growth;

- How well the school analyzes and understands data, and the extent to which it uses information to improve performance;

- Whether delegation of any management responsibility occurs, and if it does, whether it is designed to appropriately empower teaching staff;

- Whether the school rigorously monitors, evaluates and develops the quality of teaching;

- Whether the school holds teachers accountable for achieving specific goals set by teachers themselves and whether rewards and consequences for such goals are established for teachers;

- If a commitment to continuous professional development is evidenced;

- The functionality of teams within a building;

- The extent to which curriculum coordinators/heads of department support curriculum implementation;

- The levels of collaboration and cooperation among all members of the school staff;

- All school-wide efforts to raise student achievement, and the effect of those efforts upon student achievement;

- The actual procedures employed in school improvement planning, and the individuals engaged in these procedures;

- Whether strategic and improvement plans have been implemented effectively; and

- The extent to which leadership supports student behavior management.

The performance audit process itself is divided into three phases: Pre-Audit, Site Work, and Post-Audit.

Phase One – Pre-Audit: During the Pre-Audit phase the audit team gathers information from a multiplicity of sources including the school itself, the parents/guardians of the children served, and the district that supports the school. Additionally, the team will analyze a comprehensive range of statistics and information including achievement, attendance and discipline data. Much

of the information gathered from the local school district will be through electronic records,

district documentation, district policies, and discussions with district personnel. Parents',

teachers', and students' views of the school will be explored through surveys developed in

accordance with *Atlantic Research* protocols. An additional opportunity will be offered to

parents to meet with the audit team to discuss their views of the education provided for their

children at parent meetings; focus groups may also be facilitated. All school data will be

analyzed to identify trends and will also be compared to local and state averages.

The district will be asked to provide information about the support and services that are currently

provided to the school, including:

- School Report Card

- Professional development

- Leadership development

- Principal and teacher appraisal

- Special education support

- Support for English language learners

- School improvement planning

- Student management and discipline

- Career counseling

- Data analysis

The school will be asked to provide any and all existing documentation that may provide the

audit team with insight into the work of the school, including:

- The school's scope and sequence and its alignment to state standards;

- The school's policy on lesson planning;

- School improvement planning;

- Student management planning, including student code of conduct

- Any analysis of test scores undertaken by the school;

- A Principal's Statement;

- Teachers' self-review;

- A copy of the school's schedule that details both student and teacher schedules;

- A map of the school; and

- Any other documentation that the school feels will help the team to develop a clear view of the school.

Phase Two – Site Work: The school site work gives the performance audit team the opportunity to begin to get to know the school. It gives the principal the opportunity to expand upon his/her written statement about the school, and to highlight key characteristics. It also provides an opportunity for the outline schedule of the audit visit to be agreed between the lead faculty member and principal. Key interviews can be arranged. The lead faculty member can ensure that students selected for interviews and work scrutiny reflects the school's population in terms of grade, ethnicity, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

From this site work the performance audit team will also be able to formulate some hypotheses about the school that will be tested by the whole team during the audit. The initial site work will focus on teaching and learning, and how the school is organized to support the work in the

classrooms. Students' work will be examined, especially in the areas of language arts and

mathematics. Classrooms will be visited. Students will be interviewed; their reading will be

listened to, and their mathematical knowledge will be examined. Senior faculty and a

representative group of teachers will be interviewed. The audit team will have daily contact with

the principal. The site work provides opportunities for clarification on evidence gathered, and

discussion of any concerns that the school may have. It also provides the principal an

opportunity to present further data and clarify existing information. If necessary, additional

evidence from district personnel may also be sought.

Additionally, a meeting will be held to which all parents are invited. The audit team will explain

the purpose and scope of the audit process and will provide parents with the opportunity to share

with the audit team their views on the work of the school.   To ensure candor, only the parents or

guardians of students registered at the school may attend this meeting.

Phase Three – Post-Audit: The performance audit team will write a summary of the findings

and will include strengths and the points for improvement identified at the end of the

instructional performance audit process. Together the school (and school district, if applicable)

and members of *Atlantic Research* will prepare an action plan that addresses the next steps

identified in the report. This action plan will be integrated with the school's student achievement

plan and will be used by *Atlantic Research* as a basis for the intervention at the school.

2. Community Involvement and Engagement: *Describe how the applicant intends to develop and maintain meaningful partnerships with parents and the community; include any formal partnerships with community based organizations. Indicate how the applicant plans to integrate parents, the business community, community organizations, state, and local officials, and other*

stakeholders into the reform process. Discuss how parents, guardians, and family members will be engaged to establish and support a culture of high expectations, with a description of specific tactics and strategies. Finally, describe system wide strategies that will be employed to listen and communicate with parents and the community members about expectations for student learning and goals for improvement.

Parental involvement and community support are crucial components of all successful schools. The first step toward assessing and then increasing parent and community engagement is to identify current levels of that engagement. One component of *Atlantic Research's* audit is the analysis of school culture; analysis that consists of deep inquiry into counseling available to students, attendance of students, community and parent attendance at school functions, existing behavioral rules/discipline for students, conflicts, if any, that have historically occurred at the site, parental complaints, perceptions of the school by members of the immediate community, and a multiplicity of related factors more focused on *perception* than academics. Community engagement becomes a central component of the school's culture. As members of *Atlantic Research* conduct the performance audit, team members will be analyzing parent and community involvement, and will be reaching out to those beyond the school walls who affect the way students in the school are perceived. This outreach will be followed up with extensive communication efforts; *Atlantic Research* will provide recommendations and strategies to assist leadership and staff in such efforts, with the caveat that the actual messaging must bear the distinctive and authentic voice of the school and its leaders, teachers and students (research reveals that any message perceived as having been crafted by a third-party is generally viewed as disingenuous and inauthentic. Consequently, *Atlantic Research* supports and assists a school's staff in these messaging efforts, but recognizes that each message must ultimately come from the school itself, with the school's own distinctive "voice").

The first step in developing and maintaining meaningful partnerships with parents and guardians and the community is to identify precisely the school's targeted audience. *Atlantic Research* begins with the fundamental understanding that "family" includes far more than two biological parents and their children; at a minimum "family" (for school outreach purposes) must also include guardians, custodians, grandparents, step-parents, siblings and step-siblings. Consequently, after-school family activities that traditionally targeted only parents can no longer be presumed to resonate with extended families because they target only parents. Nor can those who interact most with our students at home be totally comfortable with communications that identify them as parents when they are not. The bottom line is, "relationship-building" starts, according to sociological studies, with acknowledgement of who we are seeking to establish a relationship *with*. *Atlantic Research* recognizes that the family and community engagement supports and strategies it ultimately recommends must reflect this fundamental reality.

Targeting audiences within the greater community—the community beyond families of students—involves not only sensitivity to neighborhood-focused interests and formal or informal geographic boundaries, but also to interest-based businesses and organizations that may have an interest in education, or an interest in helping children.

Atlantic Research supports and assists individual schools in ascertaining precisely which organizations and interest groups affecting the school or the immediate neighborhood may be best positioned for outreach. Neighborhood groups and not-for-profit organizations that provide services or conduct work within the general area serviced by the school are generally where we start. Religious institutions also may play a role (however, certain First Amendment parameters

must be clarified at the outset so that privacy and religious beliefs continue to be respected; *Atlantic Research* readily assists schools in the messaging on this sometimes sensitive issue, when such assistance is requested).

Social behavior research demonstrates that individuals within a community who have never been inside a specific school (at least not since childhood) express a willingness to attend afternoon or evening events if those events involve (i) general entertainment like a carnival-type fair or (ii) interesting food. Consequently, in its community outreach and support services, *Atlantic Research* assists school personnel in mapping out appropriate strategies based on specific factors and anomalies associated with each school's particular community and neighborhood. The business community also may be actively engaged by the school through an initial outreach; this initial action may simply include a letter from the principal to all businesses in the area inviting them to partner with the school in educating their future customers, employees and their families. Within the letter, there may be a solicitation involving one or more of the following:

i. An opportunity to come into the school or have students travel to a facility to learn more about a particular industry or business. This is tangible process where companies can develop a connection with the school. It also can lead to the businesses and their employees volunteering in the schools as reading partners or as after school tutors.

ii. A request for financial contributions. A general request seldom works, but a targeted "ask" can yield benefits. (Examples: asking businesses to contribute to a school uniform fund or to sponsor the renovation of the computer lab).

iii. An inquiry relating to the expertise of the business and its ability to assist in the school.

A letter of this nature alone will fail to encourage business support; research reveals that the

effectiveness of such a communication is wholly dependent upon follow-up efforts. A call or subsequent letter from the principal inviting the recipient to informally meet with the principal one-on-one or with a small group may be persuasive. Again, these examples are very broad; *Atlantic Research* tailors its actual recommendations and supports to the individualized community outreach needs of each school.

The key component of parent, community, and business engagement is targeting their interests and connecting those interests in tangible ways to the school and its students, faculty and leaders. It is only then that messaging on the issue of reform and its processes begins to take shape. When parents are familiar and connected with the school, they are much more likely to share in the desire for success of the school. Likewise, when businesses and community groups understand that they have, but nature, a connection to the school through students and families as customers, they are much more likely to be interested in progress in the school.

Atlantic Research will analyze and facilitate the continuous monitoring of classrooms; it will work with students and teachers on a multiplicity of fronts. Business, community, and family groups have a different perspective, and often times different priorities, that require different kinds of actions. The work of engaging them involves not just initial outreach but a willingness to *listen* to their concerns. Part of what *Atlantic Research* does in its work is support and assist building leaders and teachers on different strategies for structuring what is often a lengthy process. Especially when school reform is also on the table. Periodic meetings with these groups and individuals as well as state and local government leaders, will occur throughout the reform process. Such meetings will serve as two-way sharing of information: Members of the

school team, with the support and counsel of *Atlantic Research*, will share the progress and strategies with the attendees and ask the attendees for their concerns and feedback on the reform process. *Atlantic Research* will want and rely upon their ideas and contributions.

Atlantic Research also works with schools to either create or augment formal parent groups within the school (e.g., PTA, LSC, etc.). Such organizations have been pivotal in bringing disparate interest of adults together to focus on one altruistic goal: changing the academic landscape for their children. By creating a leadership base within these formalized organizations, the school is able to develop a base of support within its parent community. These parents can be called upon to provide some of the outreach to business and community groups, as well as provide assistance in the reform process through their volunteerism in the school building and through acting as a sounding board for prospective school policies. A school-based parent committee provides a mechanism for parental involvement; its members disseminate information and listen to parent concerns. Regular meetings with building leadership (coupled with the assistance of *Atlantic Research*) will be encouraged, and regularly scheduled communication with parents is essential (parent newsletters, parent handbook, phone calls, etc.). Likewise, community stakeholders will have opportunities to participate in the reform process in tangible ways by active involvement in the school and by attending community meetings where the school leadership (with *Atlantic Research,* if requested) will discuss reform at the school, seek input from the community groups, request their involvement in more tangible ways.

3. Intervention Plan

A. Prior Experience

i. Describe the organization's prior experience with turning around and improving student achievement in low performing schools. Include the theory of action that guides and informs the organization's practice and specify the strategies that have proven to be most effective for stimulating rapid change.

Atlantic Research has participated and led significant positive change in student achievement in several ways:

1. Teaching Quality. *Atlantic Research* serves multiple school districts in 22 states with its *Power of Teaching* textbook, research, training, and technical assistance. Notably, many of these schools and school districts attribute their affiliation with *Atlantic Research* and *Power of Teaching* as highly correlative and/or causal to specified academic gains. Names and contact information for these clients are available and shall be provided upon request.

2. Performance Management Technical Assistance. *Atlantic Research* serves as a technical assistance provider in numerous urban settings on matters related to improving school and school-support performance. Among these clients include Chicago Public Schools Area 13 (28 schools), Area 1 (30 schools) and the CPS Autonomous Schools Area (100 schools) where we focus on academic data management at the school-level, instructional leadership efficacy, teacher effectiveness, and instructional performance audits (currently conducting 5 high school audits on the south side of Chicago. Names of these Chicago and outside of Chicago clients are available and shall be provided upon request.

3. Instructional Coaching Research and Training. *Atlantic Research* serves multiple school districts with its *Power of Coaching- Teachers and Teaching* textbook, research, training, and technical assistance. Notably, many of these schools and school districts, where academic gains

have been realized, attribute their affiliation with Atlantic Research as highly correlative and/or causal to their gains. Names and contact information for these clients are available and shall be provided upon request.

4. Case Study and School/Program Efficacy Research. *Atlantic Research* has conducted a number of case studies and program evaluations documenting best academic and instruction practices as well as frailties and flaws in practice. These studies have included whole school and district instructional practices, drop out prevention and intervention, and special education programs/services audits. Copies of samples of this work are available and can be provided upon request.

5. *Atlantic Research* Faculty Credentials. Only educators who have led or supported strong gains in academic achievement are admitted to the firm's faculty. Examples of these include the leadership of Managing Director, Dr. Joseph Wise. Among his achievements with students and teachers are the rapid gains minority and socio-economically disadvantaged students realized where he served as a school superintendent or senior executive. Highlights of these accomplishments from Dr. Wise's tenure in the Duval County (FL) Public School include the following:

Academics & Student Achievement
1. Increased the number of schools achieving an "A" rating in Florida's Accountability program from 52 to 57 (2006 to 2007)

2. Adopted the most rigorous high school graduation requirements in the State of Florida (2006)

3. Increased the high school graduation rate from 60.5% to 63.5% (2006 to 2007; FLDOE Preliminary cohort completion calculation)

4. Increased enrollment in Advanced Placement courses by more than 230% (from 4,253 students enrolled in 8,624 AP seats in 2005 to 14,037 students enrolled in 24,498 AP seats in 2007)

5. Increased the number of all students earning a 3 or higher on Advanced Placement tests by 34% (2006 to 2007)

6. Increased the number of African-American students earning a 3 or higher on Advanced Placement tests by 52% (2006 to 2007)

7. Increased the number of African-American students taking the SAT by 10% (2006 to 2007)

8. Outperformed the state and nation with the performance of African-American students on the SAT (2007)

    a. 11 points higher in Critical Reading against state cohort and 16 points higher in Critical Reading against national cohort

    b. 4 points higher in Mathematics against state cohort and 5 points higher in Mathematics against national cohort

    c. 8 points higher in Writing against state cohort and 6 points higher in Writing against national cohort

9. Increased the number of Hispanic/Latino students taking the SAT by more than 23% (2006 to 2007)

10. Outperformed the state and nation with the performance of Hispanic/Latino students on the SAT (2007)

     a. 19 points higher in Critical Reading against state cohort and 42 points higher in Critical Reading against national cohort

     b. 24 points higher in Mathematics against state cohort and 36 points higher in Mathematics against national cohort

     c. 20 points higher in Writing against state cohort and 33 points higher in Writing against national cohort

11. Reclaimed more than 925 students who had previously opted to drop-out of high school through a cost-neutral, public-private partnership, *Drop-Back-In* (2006); 98 students have already graduated from high school via *Drop-Back-In* Academies (2007)

12. Increased elementary reading performance by 8.5 percentage points on state administered FCAT (61.2% in 2006 to 69.7% in 2007; measured by students gaining a level or maintaining proficiency)

13. Increased the improvement rate of bottom-quartile elementary readers by 6.4 percentage points (61.1% achieving higher level of mastery in 2006 to 67.5% achieving higher level of mastery in 2007)

14. Launched 23 new high school Career Academies to increase students' access and success in more rigorous academics while also improving their marketable skills for high wage jobs and college education. Each academy has a college and business sector partner.

Leadership & Organizational Development

1. Implemented Pay-for-Performance/Results into Principals' compensation system (2006).

2. Selected as the newest city to be affiliated with *Teach for America* -- Raised $5 million in 5 weeks with philanthropy partners to fund the program (2007). First cohort of teachers to begin in 2008

3. Selected as one of three school districts in the nation to be awarded a three-year *EXCELelerator* grant for high school redesign by the College Board and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation—(first three year grant awarded in 2006, second three year grant was awarded in 2007)

4. Achieved Duval's largest ever Magnet School Application Program grant--awarded $11 million over three years to launch numerous *International Baccalaureate Programme* sites and a Medical Arts high school academy (2007)

5. Achieved Duval's largest Small Learning Communities grant from USDOE--$14 million over three years (2007)

6. Achieved commitments for $10 million for a *Knowledge is Power Program* Academy trust fund to help launch multiple *KIPP* sites on Jacksonville's north side (pending due diligence and school board approval; scheduled for Spring 2008)

7. Launched new leadership development curriculum and academy and developed new intellectual property for this curriculum through our partner organization *Schultz Center for Teaching and Leadership.*

8. Re-branded the school district with launch of two major campaigns: *Dreams Begin Here* (in 2006) and *Learning to Finish* (in 2007) to better engage students and families with a college-going culture and higher levels of academic rigor for all students. This work is in part due to significant partnerships with Jacksonville's Community Foundation, United

Way of NE Florida, Pew Partnership for Civic Change, and Jacksonville's Alliance for World Class Education.

Business & Support Services

1. Achieved $6 million in savings and cost avoidance through *Project INVEST*—major corporate CFOs coming together to lend corporate expertise and assistance to the District's CFO; included consultation and counsel on the District's re-engineering of all facets of cash management, investments, and business processes (2006)

2. Achieved 16.6% decrease in staff headcount and/or operating budget in each central office department and redeployed savings from non-instructional to instructional (school-based) purposes (2006).

3. Achieved the largest amounts and highest percentage of cash (emergency) reserves (budgeted and actuals) in the past 10 years.

4. Increased teacher (and all other non-managerial) salaries by 14% (2005 to 2007)

5. Increased Principal compensation by 18% (2005 to 2007)

6. Negotiated the district's first ever multi-year contract with teachers (and all non-managerial employees) with less than a 9% discretionary increase in available state and local funds over the same period of time (2006).

7. Achieved $6 million in savings and cost avoidance through a conversion to self-pay insurance (2007--includes health and life insurance programs for all employees and retirees).   Unlike practices adopted by other employers regionally and nationally, the District was able to achieve these significant savings without requiring additional employee contributions.

8. Procured and installed more than $35 million of instructional support technology including 14,000 additional student computer stations in an 11-week period (summer of 2007)

9. Accelerated the deployment of more than $80 million of replacement computer hardware and infrastructure equipment for student and educator use by more than 3 years (from a planned 5-year period to a period of 20 months)

10. Implemented rigorous new protocols and tracking system to guide the summer progress of 160+ schools. System led to the most successful school opening in DCPS' recent history. Opened 2007-2008 school year with:

    a. less than 0.3% of the 8,900+ certificated staff positions vacant (an historically significant development for DCPS),

    b. more than 95% of high school and middle school student schedules in place on day one, and more than 99% of textbooks delivered on time from a summer order of more than 900,000

ii. Provide specific examples, which can be substantiated with data, demonstrating successful and effective work with academically underperforming LEAs and schools and provide evidence of ability to implement rapid and dramatic improvement in schools. Include student achievement data if available. Also include contextual information for each example (i.e., rural, urban, elementary, middle, high school, union involvement, school size, demographics, socioeconomics, change in performance measures etc.).

Contextual Participation – *Atlantic Research* continues to provide training and technical

assistance to schools and school districts serving students in rural, urban, intense poverty, ELL,

and middle and upper socio-economic circumstances.

Academic Results –*Atlantic Research's* work is based on authors and practitioners Dr. Joseph

Wise and David Sundstrom (*Power of Teaching--the Science of the Art* and *Power of Coaching--Teachers and Teaching*). As a practitioner Dr. Wise served as superintendent of Schools and led sweeping reforms in our Nation's 20th largest school district. Some of the results as follows:

- Increased the number of schools achieving an "A" rating in Florida's Accountability program from 52 to 57 (2006 to 2007)

- Adopted the most rigorous high school graduation requirements in the State of Florida (2006)

- Increased the high school graduation rate from 60.5% to 63.5% (2006 to 2007; FLDOE Preliminary cohort completion calculation)

- Increased enrollment in Advanced Placement courses by more than 230% (from 4,253 students enrolled in 8,624 AP seats in 2005 to 14,037 students enrolled in 24,498 AP seats in 2007)

- Increased the number of all students earning a 3 or higher on Advanced Placement tests by 34% (2006 to 2007)

- Increased the number of African-American students earning a 3 or higher on Advanced Placement tests by 52% (2006 to 2007)

- Increased the number of African-American students taking the SAT by 10% (2006 to 2007)

- Outperformed the state and nation with the performance of African-American students on the SAT (2007)

    11 points higher in Critical Reading against state cohort and 16 points higher in Critical Reading against national cohort

4 points higher in Mathematics against state cohort and 5 points higher in Mathematics against national cohort

8 points higher in Writing against state cohort and 6 points higher in Writing against national cohort

- Increased the number of Hispanic/Latino students taking the SAT by more than 23% (2006 to 2007)

- Outperformed the state and nation with the performance of Hispanic/Latino students on the SAT (2007)

  19 points higher in Critical Reading against state cohort and 42 points higher in Critical Reading against national cohort

  24 points higher in Mathematics against state cohort and 36 points higher in Mathematics against national cohort

  20 points higher in Writing against state cohort and 33 points higher in Writing against national cohort

- Reclaimed more than 925 students who had previously opted to drop-out of high school through a cost-neutral, public-private partnership, *Drop-Back-In* (2006); 98 students have already graduated from high school via *Drop-Back-In* Academies (2007)

- Increased elementary reading performance by 8.5 percentage points on state administered FCAT (61.2% in 2006 to 69.7% in 2007; measured by students gaining a level or maintaining proficiency)

- Increased the improvement rate of bottom-quartile elementary readers by 6.4 percentage points (61.1% achieving higher level of mastery in 2006 to 67.5% achieving higher level of mastery in 2007)

- Launched 23 new high school Career Academies to increase students' access and success in more rigorous academics while also improving their marketable skills for high wage jobs and college education. Each academy has a college and business sector partner.

Atlantic Research's most recent client activity where results and improvements were tracked include Chicago Public Schools Area 13, the lowest performing 40 schools in Columbus, Ohio, Hampton School District 2 (South Carolina), and selected schools in the Edison learning network. As an example, Hampton School District 2 realized double-digit gains in almost every subject area in more than seven grade levels, with improvements in their high school as some of their most dramatic. Client (and Superintendent of Schools there) Dr. Deonia Simmons attributes our work with his district as a major driver to their improvements. Dr. Simmons can be reached at (803) 942-3633. Upon your request, we can provide more information about any/all of our clients' performance.

Union Involvement – *Atlantic Research* holds positive relationships with unions as high-stakes and critical to the success of children and adults on behalf of children. Each of *Atlantic Research's* faculty has a strong practitioner background in union and non-union environments. Where unions have been organized and involved, we have specific experiences where collaboration, problem solving, and negotiations have been components of the work. *Atlantic Research's* Managing Director and point-person for this proposed project, Dr. Joseph Wise is a former labor negotiator and two other key members of the team (David Sundstrom and Todd Zoellick) are licensed attorneys with labor law and education law backgrounds.

B. School Reform Model

i. Describe the organization's framework/model for turning around low performing schools. Include information related to governance and management, instructional design, staffing, professional development, and student and supports. Explain the research base connected to this model and the conditions necessary to ensure the greatest likelihood of improving student outcomes.

Atlantic Research's School Reform Model is a robust and multifaceted approach to evaluating, intervening, and training teachers, staff, and systems. The most common component of low performing schools, particularly low performing high schools, is a lack of systems in place within a school. The lack of systems can arise from multiple factors, including inadequate rules and regulations, ineffective teaching and building leadership, and/or failure to provide professional development and coaching. Nationwide research establishes one fundamental tenet: sustainable and effective school reform must begin with systems that meet both (i) the academic and (ii) the logistical needs of a school and its faculty.

The first step in altering the trajectory of a low performing school is scrutiny of all ongoing functions at the school site itself (including analysis of teaching practices, leadership behaviors, and the systems currently relied upon). *Atlantic Research's* approach begins with a systemic, thorough and comprehensive audit of the site (described above) with an intense focus on six key areas:

1) student achievement

2) teaching behaviors

3) curriculum alignment and rigor

4) school culture

5) resource management and efficiency, and

6) school leadership.

The specific methods *Atlantic Research* employs every day at each school site are differentiated to meet the needs of the school and customized to the issues affecting the building, but there are some common themes in our approach to school reform.

Student achievement is the driving purpose of our work. The primary measure of successful schools is a student population engaged and achieving at or above grade level. There are, of course, multiple measures used to determine student achievement, and *Atlantic Research* will provide evaluations and assessments to determine precise achievement levels. Once student achievement is determined both globally and individually, strategies must be employed to positively impact achievement and increase learning. There are a variety of methods that must be utilized to do so. *Atlantic Research* will work with schools to provide rich and rigorous curriculum offerings. The robust curriculum offerings must ensure that a rigorous high school curriculum is available to all students. Additionally *Atlantic Research* will ensure that interventions are differentiated and provide students with the academic support they need to succeed. The evaluation of the current curriculum is an essential component to this process and the freedom to work with teachers, staff and building leadership to alter the existing curriculum and inadequate systems within a building. *Atlantic Research* will provide experts in various content areas to work with teachers and administrators to create a comprehensive and sustainable approach to improving the curriculum and ultimately student achievement.

To effectively impact student achievement and reverse underperformance in high schools,

teaching quality must be evaluated and changed into a highly effective process for educating students. Impacting teaching quality is an art, and *Atlantic Research* has extensive experience — and has established a reputation nationally as a leader—in this field. It is clear that simply providing teachers with a list of what to do is unacceptable and fails to in any manner address underperformance—or more importantly, to ultimately increase achievement. *Atlantic Research* joins teachers in the classroom on a daily basis to model effective teaching and offer practical, real-time strategies and interventions to improve individual teaching methods. *Atlantic Research* utilizes *Power of Teaching* strategies in providing classroom instruction and professional development for teachers. *Power of Teaching* is designed to make the work done in classrooms more effective. The strategies contained within *Power of Teaching* recognize that schools generally have not been doing enough of the right things to effectively support the work of our teachers and their students. It is easy to track what gets taught in the classroom—effective or ineffective—but *how* content is taught and delivered is more difficult to measure and influence. The *Atlantic Research* team of individual education experts has been instrumental in implementing *Power of Teaching* methodologies and in ensuring that teachers are empowered to more effectively influence and engage their students in the classroom.

All professional development for teachers must be on-going and aligned to documented strategies for increasing student achievement. Using a "train-the-trainer" model, *Atlantic Research* implements systems that create a culture in which strategies are learned and ultimately imbedded into classroom practices, teachers subsequently train other teachers in *Power of Teaching* practices, and the school itself is able to continue on with professional development after the duration of the grant. One component of *Power of Teaching* is its ability to create a

system where teachers have the time and resources to understand and utilize formative

assessment data, diagnostic assessment data, and student work to improve student learning and

achievement. Simply possessing data is not sufficient; nor is it effective for administrators alone

to have access to the data. Teachers are on the frontline of data collection and they are the ones

best positioned to both interpret and use the results of that data. We empower teachers to use

data in their daily processes in the classroom and to readily recognize the important connection

between teaching, learning, and student performance data. *Atlantic Research* will work with the

school to evaluate student data and work with teachers and administrators alike to use data in

their decision-making and teaching; it is through this process that low performing schools and

classrooms are substantively altered.

For teaching and learning to be effective, the curriculum must be properly aligned and rigorous.

Although virtually every educator understands curriculum, not all educators or school systems

understand the concept of properly *aligning* curriculum, or the importance of ensuring rigor

throughout the system. *Atlantic Research* specializes in developing rigorous curriculum and

properly aligning it to state standards. Our on-site team will work with building level and district

level administrators daily to address the shortcomings in the curriculum and will train teachers to

evaluate and implement a rigorous approach to teaching and learning in their classrooms. One

example of an impact on curriculum is to employ school-wide content area literacy strategies,

where reading and writing strategies are applied to basal texts in core and elective subjects to

enhance the skills of struggling readers. *Atlantic Research* will employ its team of experts to

work alongside teachers and leaders to redevelop struggling curriculum into a robust and

rigorous system that effectively meets the educational needs of students.

There are many methods of addressing curricular needs and increasing rigor, and *Atlantic Research* will take a multifaceted approach to each school site. One method of increasing that rigor and creating strategies to impact rigor and student learning is the SpringBoard program for both English and Mathematics. SpringBoard English is a comprehensive ELA curriculum designed to enhance classroom rigor and prepare students for advanced course work. Springboard enables students to build the skills and understanding they need for success in AP courses and college-level work. SpringBoard strategies build critical thinking in collaborative learning environments, with embedded assessments to monitor strategy use. It results in college readiness for students below, at, or above grade levels. The SpringBoard Mathematics curriculum provides teachers with strategies to implement and sustain increased rigor in classroom instruction. Students learn how to "think deeply" and take personal responsibility for their learning in a collegial climate. SpringBoard math activities add context and meaning to mathematical concepts and facts. The curriculum also sharpens students' problem-solving skills and adds valuable context to the math curriculum. Springboard Mathematics is a core instructional framework and easily integrates with other resources. These methods are aligned with the college readiness standards and correlate to state standards. *Atlantic Research* will employ the methods and programs contained in the SpringBoard methodology to positively impact student achievement.

Another component of *Atlantic Research's* work in altering underperforming schools is its focus on school culture. School culture is often underestimated but vitally important for achievement and student success. It is important to remember that school culture is much broader than what

happens within the walls of the school building; it includes parents and community members and their relationship with the school (see Community Involvement and Engagement above). The culture within the building—and interaction among teachers/staff/leadership and students—can have a tremendous impact on student achievement. A culture of authentic and identifiably high expectations throughout a school has proven to radically affect academic achievement within that school. It is essential that this culture permeates every aspect of the school learning environment—from the teaching methods employed in the classroom to the subject matter and curriculum used to the systems in place within the building to keep students safe and on task. The creation of that positive culture begins by engaging students, parent, families and teachers in the planning process and giving all parties a stake in the success of the school. *Atlantic Research* will work with the school to build those connections between families and educators. We will also evaluate the operational systems in place, such as school rules and discipline policies, to ensure that the basic building blocks of a successfully managed building are in place and contributing to student achievement. Once the basics are in place and effectively utilized, the *Atlantic Research* team will work with all parties to ensure continuity of positive culture in every aspect of the building.

Research demonstrates that school culture must be changed from the inside out; it requires working with teachers and staff members to create positive factors daily. It requires the making of connections to enable students to understand and recognize the value of their work—and to recognize that their educational experience goes far beyond the high school world itself. For example, students must recognize that the ultimate goal of their high school experience is to prepare them for higher education and the workforce. *Atlantic Research* will work with schools

to establish a culture of college success by providing diagnostic tests such as the PSAT or PLAN to assist in identifying students for Advanced Placement (AP) courses and increase AP access, participation, and performance for all students. Additionally, there must be legitimate academic guidance services for students. It is important to train and support counselors, teachers, and staff on the importance of academic guidance for each student. *Atlantic Research* advocates for and assists in the establishment of school-wide advisory programs designed to increase personalization and support of students in their college and career goals. *Atlantic Research* will provide these and other services to schools to help positively influence school culture—and lay the groundwork for higher student achievement and improved school performance.

Management and effective use of existing resources is critical to student achievement within any school site. Evaluation of this management and use of resources will be part of *Atlantic Research's* initial audit. Additionally, school budgets will be evaluated to uncover any possible ineffective or wasteful use of finances. *Atlantic Research* will work with schools to align their budgets to the curriculum and teaching/learning strategies to ensure that financial resources are used in a manner that has the greatest impact on student achievement. Further, the use of time and processes within the school will be analyzed and evaluated. For example, evaluating the master schedule—and use of the master schedule process to increase rigor, relevance, and personalization—had proven to be an effective instrument for meeting certain students' high school and post-secondary needs. This is an oft-overlooked resource that can be manipulated to increase student achievement and improve underperforming schools. *Atlantic Research* will look at all resources, tangible, financial, and otherwise, to develop creative and efficient management systems for use of school resources.

School leadership is a necessary component to overall building success and student achievement. The principal is the building leader but needs a team approach and a support system in place to drive achievement and adequately maintain a school building. A principal and his or her administrative team often need training and support to fully manage the operations both in and out of the classroom and to ensure effective governance of the operation as a whole. *Atlantic Research* will provide leadership training and coaching for all principals and other members of the leadership team. Coaching will be provided by leadership experts who will work alongside the principal for the duration of the grant to:

i.   Support and guide the development of crucial leadership habits and processes,

ii.   Evaluate existing systems in the school to determine what needs to be altered to increase student achievement.

iii. For new principals, training designed to ensure that the transition into the school leadership role occurs in a healthy and effective manner.

In addition to leadership training, there will also be ongoing executive coaching for building leaders. Multiple coaching methods will be employed during this process and will include consultative dialogue with building leaders on a daily basis, ongoing reviews of performance data, individual interviews with teachers and staff within the school building, confidential feedback, and talent assessment review of the leaders (review that includes analyses of gaps and recommended solutions).

Atlantic Research will employ a variety of staff members and experts in content areas and school

management/leadership for the purpose of increasing student achievement in school buildings and addressing underperformance. *Atlantic Research* will provide a general project manager who will manage budgets, staffing and client relationships at each building. Further, *Atlantic Research* will provide an assistant to the general manager who will provide back-up assistance throughout the overall project. In addition to these logistical/facilities/staffing managerial positions, each school will have a lead team member charged with guiding academic performance and initiatives in the building. This individual will drive the school reform initiatives and will be assisted by an associate lead team member in the building. Finally, *Atlantic Research* will provide content area specialists for each building. The specific number of individuals in each content area will be determined after an audit and evaluation of the learning environment. These individuals will include literacy coach(es), math coach(es), science coach(es), special education/RTI coach(es), community engagement coach(es), technology coach(es), instructional design coach(es), and AVID support/college advancement coach(es). These individuals, and others as needed in the buildings, will be directly engaged in driving the reform efforts. They will be onsite providers who will work alongside teachers, staff, and building leaders to transform underperforming institutions into high achieving centers of learning.

In summary*:*

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT: Atlantic Research provides support and training in three critical areas for school leaders and faculty in low performing schools: (i) The development and implementation of protocols governing student behavior and academic expectations, (ii)

Leadership training focused upon consistent, readily identifiable goals and (iii) The use of data to drive instruction effectively.

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN:

Data Driven Instruction: *Atlantic Research* provides teachers supports and protocols for meeting student needs on the basis of student assessment data. Three major components govern this work: (i) formative assessments, (ii) summative assessments, and (iii) State standards that must be student mastered.   We assist teachers in analyzing data from student formative and summative assessments, using that data to develop strategic instructional plans, and ultimately assisting their students in attaining mastery of concepts required to be mastered by State standards. *Atlantic Research* customizes its work on the basis of each school's—and often each classroom's—specific needs.

Differentiated Instruction: *Atlantic Research* provides teachers supports and protocols to individualize instruction on the basis of student performance data. *Atlantic Research* further uses *Power of Teaching* to focus teachers on teaching behaviors established to maximize their ability to *engage* students; these teacher behaviors are supported by the works of Carol Ann Tomlinson, and are used to accelerate, remediate and provide alternative approaches for reaching students most effectively.

Meeting Special Needs: *Atlantic Research* understands inclusion and the specific needs of teachers to address anomalous learning patterns and special needs of individual learners. Our faculty of education experts assist teachers in analyzing the learning styles and abilities of special

needs students, and in drafting plans that specifically address those styles and abilities (see below for greater details).

STAFFING, PROFESIONAL DEVELOPMENT & SUPPORTS: Atlantic Research will provide managerial leadership, academic leadership, and appropriate support staffing in specific and identified high-needs areas. Additionally, *Atlantic Research* will provide coaching and support personnel to assist teachers and school leaders in all reform efforts. Professional Development shall be tailored to meet specific and identifiable needs at each school site (see below for greater details). We will work with staff on a daily basis to provide the support and training necessary for success.

ii. Explain the organization's approach for working with district superintendents and central office staff to improve district policies and practices; include, if available, actual examples of successful engagements with central offices.

Atlantic Research customizes its work in each client engagement; however, there are certain non-negotiables that we are compelled to identify from the outset:

A. An intense focus on teaching quality must underlie all our work, or sustainable gains will not be realized. (Please note: There is a distinction between teach*er* quality and teach*ing* quality: the intensity of our focus is not on individual attributes but on teaching behaviors and their effectiveness in engaging students and communicating academic content.)

B. We *blend* training, facilitation and organizational problem-solving rather than introducing

each in isolation. Our reasoning for this non-negotiable is straightforward: it ensures the highest

levels of candor and the most sustainable implementation of reform.

C. We will not implement any tactic, strategy or methodology that is not research-driven; our

work recognizes that authentic reform requires data-backed practices—practices arising solely

from valid and authenticated study.

D. Because reform is not sustainable without strong collaboration, candor and timely, two-way

feedback, our strategies employ on-site partnerships and joint problem-solving; top-down

mandates and isolated directives are proscribed.

E. *Atlantic Research* faculty members are selected wholly on the basis of their record in

accelerating student academic achievement, and on their demonstrated commitment to *Atlantic

Research's* driving principle: *all kids can and must succeed.*

Partial List of Successful Engagements with Central and Area Offices:

1. Columbus City Schools--Columbus Coaching Project. In this project *Atlantic Research*

supports the training and capacity building of the instructional coaches dispatched from the

Educational Service Center of Central Ohio. These coaches are dispatched into the Columbus

City Schools lowest performing schools to help accelerate improvements. Key Client: Dr. Bart

Anderson, Superintendent, (615) 554-4546.

2. Chicago Public Schools--Area 13, teaching quality training and support work. Key client: Dr.

Shawn Smith, Chief Area Officer, (773) 910-6682.

3. Hampton School District 2--Estill, SC--teaching quality training, instructional performance audits, and special education programs/services support. Key client: Dr. Deonia Simmons, Superintendent, (803) 942-3633.

4. Chicago Public Schools--Autonomous Schools Area, instructional performance audits, school-based data team training and analysis, instructional design and differentiated teaching capacity building. Key client: Ms. Melissa Zaikos, Chief Area Officer, (773) 553-2902.

5. Chicago Public Schools--Area 1, central offices leadership training and role clarity assistance to improve assistance to schools. Key client: Ms. Amy Mims, Chief Area Officer, (773) 841-1499.

6. Elgin, IL District U-46, position control and human resources organizational performance audit. Key client: Dr. Jose Torres, Superintendent, (847) 489-2378

7. Chicago Public Schools--Area 24, high school instructional performance audits and school principal training. Key client: Mr. Harrison Peters, Chief Area Officer, (407) 271-2233

iii. Briefly describe your organization's proposed activities in the school and district during the first six months of the school year.

Atlantic Research's initial activities in any school are dictated by the individual and specific needs of that school. *Atlantic Research* recognizes that methods required to impact underperformance at one site may be wholly inappropriate at another. Consequently, the approach implemented at each school will be tailored to specific circumstances affecting that

school. That said, there are certain general strategies *Atlantic Research* considers at the outset:

1. **The Performance Audit.** The first activity in any school is to conduct the performance audit described above. In order to tailor the solutions, *Atlantic Research* must first diagnose the issues within a building. An audit team of experts in all areas of school systems (e.g., curriculum, leadership, assessment, data, etc.) will be dispatched to the school to perform a system-wide analysis. The audit will include an analysis of all elements of the school building and also interviews with district personnel, teachers, staff, students, and other relevant parties. Once all of the data is collected, an in-depth analysis of the data is performed and reports are drafted clearly providing the successes and challenges of each building. Those reports are then utilized to customize the approach to affecting change and improving achievement in the buildings.

2. **Immediate Leadership Coaching.** The *Atlantic Research* team will begin immediately interacting with building leadership and teachers/staff throughout the building. There is a need to create a sense of urgency during the first six months of the school year; Atlantic *Research* team member generally begin working alongside the principal and other key building leaders immediately to ensure that the principal has support to develop the structure and capacity to begin implementing decisive reform. As part of this process, *Atlantic Research* will work with building leadership to evaluate existing systems of communication, rules/discipline structure, student guidance protocols, scheduling, professional development/planning opportunities for teachers, and many other basic components of successful schools. *Atlantic Research* works with school leaders to identify and remedy systems and protocols that are deficient or failing to serve the needs of the school. Often, antiquated protocols and processes are found; struggling schools are

often mired in inexplicable and inefficient practices. It is these practices that *Atlantic Research* intensely focuses upon during the first six months on any school site.

3. **Immediate Teacher Support.** In addition to working with the building leadership, *Atlantic Research* will immediately begin working daily with teachers in the classroom. The interaction with teachers typically commences with a meeting centered on how observation of their work in the classroom by *Atlantic Research* is purposefully designed to identify—objectively—what is and is not working for them relative to student engagement. It is clarified at the outset that this work is about *coaching* and not evaluation, and that it is solely a means to collaboratively identify teaching behaviors that work best for them, given the classroom dynamics. Following observations, *Atlantic Research* teams will then meet with each teacher individually to discuss behaviors observed. *Atlantic Research* team members may model effective teaching practices in the classroom with the teacher, and will discuss options related to how to course correct, how to change teaching methods that are not engaging students, and how to address off-task student behaviors in their classrooms. There will be intense follow up with teachers to ensure that they are implementing the necessary changes. This process will be an ongoing, collaborative effort to improve teaching and learning at the school.

4. **Communication.** Throughout this process, *Atlantic Research* will interact with district personnel to ensure that all members of the school community are continuously apprised of the ongoing reform work, its purpose, and the basis for changes as they occur.

5. **Student Assessment.** The first six months of the school year provide opportunity to assess students both formally and informally and to gather student achievement data to carefully tailor interventions. These assessments will allow *Atlantic Research* content

area experts to address specific problems with teaching and learning and will permit

Atlantic Research data experts to analyze student performance information and provide

recommendations for the building. It will also provide use-of-data training opportunities

for teachers and building leaders.

6. **Progress Monitoring.** *Atlantic Research* will, in addition to monitoring teaching and

student activities, continuously monitor its own activities and involvement in the schools

within the first six months and regularly report progress and accomplishments to school

and district personnel.

C. Educational Program

i. Describe the proposed curriculum and assessment program, detailing clear expectations for student learning. Description should address grade span and how the applicant will ensure equity and access for all students including, but not limited to, students with disabilities, English language learners, and students in at risk situations (e.g., low achievement, poverty, behavioral issues, truancy, drugs, pregnancy, and emotional issues).

Core Components of our high school academic acceleration program include the following:

1. The College Board *Springboard* programs and materials for back-mapping the work from

Honors and AP to pre-honors, regular and remedial performance bands.

2. *Northwest Evaluation Association*--Measure of Academic Progress, 3X yearly to monitor

progress of each student by-subject, by-strand, by-teacher, and by-student. This computer-

delivered adaptive assessment is aligned to IL standards and provides just-in-time performance

data for teachers and teams at the strand- and skill-level (using R.I.T vertical scale scores and

desCartes learning continuum).

3. *Power of Teaching--The Science of the Art* supplemented with Carol Ann Tomlinson

materials to guide classroom observations, teaching quality improvements, and differentiated teaching components of the work.

4. *Power of Coaching--Teachers and Teaching* to guide instructional coaching and school capacity building

5. School-wide use of *Achievement Via Individual Determination (AVID)* to strengthen students' study skills, college-going aspirations, and preparing for college success through high school studies

6. *Teacher Studio*--teacher collaboration, networking, and professional development support-- online.

7. Annual PSAT administration to accelerate students' access to rigor, and to gauge the strength of curriculum delivery in the school. Use of PSAT Summary of Answers used to affect positive change in the work of the school.

8. For Dropout prevention and credit recovery: use of Novanet, Achieve 3000, or Compass Odyssey (TBD) to intervene where students are over-age and under-credited.

9. Partner with Randy Sprick's CHAMPS and Delaware-based Maurice Pritchett's community models for improving the support of students from poverty backgrounds, parent supports and training, positive school culture and discipline, and teens with other personal challenges such as pregnancy, drugs and alcohol and other criminal activity.

ii. Describe how the applicant will coordinate and ensure ready access to instructional technology, information and media services, and materials necessary for effective instruction.

1. *Atlantic Research* will deploy a specialist in each of the following areas: instructional technology, current-day media services, and materials procurement and coordination. Through these specialists, teachers and students ultimately will be provided ready access to information

and services they may not otherwise have had.

2. *Atlantic Research* will collaborate with the school's faculty to plan the use of any/all instructional technology, media services, purchases and uses of all equipment and materials to increase fidelity and decrease uses of technology and media for the sake of technology (alone). It will be imperative that instruction and instructional intents drive these uses.

3. Outsourced assistance to interface with the district's and school's information technology specialists to ensure that each teacher and each student receives the best computer up-time, speed, and bandwidth capability as is reasonably possible.

iii. Describe the specific tactics and activities that will support attainment of a school culture and climate conducive to high expectations and student learning, including school wide student discipline policies integral to the intervention model.

Atlantic Research recognizes that school culture and climate are critical components of a high achieving school. Culture and climate are broad in scope and *Atlantic Research* interventions include creating or modifying systems that keep students safe, as well as care for students' academic and personal growth and development. *Atlantic Research* views school culture as a key area. It is one of the six general areas evaluated in the initial performance audit and is an ongoing focus during the onsite intervention in the school (please see above).

The first step in creating a school culture and climate conducive to high expectations and student learning is to create a coherent, logical and equitable system of rules and discipline. Statistical and other school climate data nationwide reveal that rules appearing arbitrary or capricious

wholly undermine efforts to address student behavior. In many underperforming schools, there is a general concept of right and wrong but no concrete source of rules that students and staff alike can refer to as policy. *Atlantic Research* assists underperforming schools in the drafting of new rules (or the amending of existing rules) to ensure clarity and logic, and to address specific behaviors. Once a finite number of rules are drafted or amended, *Atlantic Research* assists school leaders and teachers in *communicating* the content of those rules to the school population, and to the larger community as well. When appropriate, *Atlantic Research* also provides training on implementation of the rules and the fair and consistent enforcement of them.

To complement the rules, there must be a system of discipline and consequences for when they are violated.   Studies reveal that sanctions are most effective when they are divided into tiers of severity and identified with specificity. For example, a tier one violation might include excessive tardiness and result in a relatively minor sanction. Conversely, a tier three violation could be causing physical harm; logically, this would result in a more severe sanction (e.g., suspension, expulsion, or reporting to law enforcement if an alleged situation constituted potential criminal activity).

Atlantic Research's approach to assisting schools in improving their system of discipline is also grounded in three critical success factors:

1. Any successful system must be (and be perceived as) fair to all students,
2. Any successful system must be developed and continuously monitored by all adults affiliated with the school, and

3. Any successful system must also implement a reinforcing component to increase the

frequency of positive behavior and adherence to the school's behavioral expectations.

Successful educators adopt consistency as a key to any system of rules and disciplinary policies. After concise rules and disciplinary policies are established, they must be communicated to all relevant parties. First, *Atlantic Research* provides training and communications assistance to ensure that all teachers and staff members have a clear understanding of the school rules and the discipline policies. Second, *Atlantic Research* assists in training that ensures school personnel have the capacity to respond quickly and consistently to any threat to safety or to the learning environment. Third, *Atlantic Research* assists teachers and school leaders in informing students of all rules and policies. Finally, *Atlantic Research* may assist school leaders in the development of a student/parent handbook that identifies rules and disciplinary processes, the rationale for each, and the expectations focused on positive behavior. To ensure maximum awareness of these factors, *Atlantic Research* recommends that any student/parent handbook has a provision requiring parents and students to read and sign off on acceptance of the handbook's content.

Once a consistent set of rules and policies are in place, school administration can focus on broadening the scope of a positive school culture and a climate of high expectations. For students to achieve, research establishes what has long appeared obvious: they must be in school on time and ready to learn. Attendance and punctuality are of paramount importance yet often not viewed by parents as critical to actual learning—particularly in under-performing schools. Consequently, *Atlantic Research* assists schools in communicating to parents/guardians the pivotal need for timeliness and time management. Often, *Atlantic Research* and the school will

work together to create a system of rewards and consequences involving attendance or lack

thereof.

Positive school culture and climate must go beyond simple rules and policies, however. *Atlantic Research* recognizes that teachers and staff members must offer a system of personal support to students. This may include guidance counselors and social workers available onsite; it must include supports for at-risk students and special needs students. Assessments should be used to ascertain at-risk factors, and must be designed to ultimately match instruction and care to students' needs. Students must also be given the chance to participate in extra-curricular and social activities during and outside of the traditional school day. Nationwide data reveals what may appear incongruous—particularly in light of historic notion about American schools: heightened academic achievement is most pronounced in schools at which students are permitted to have fun in conjunction with their educational experience.

Finally, a holistic positive culture and climate in the school building remains dependent upon parent and community involvement. Schools that become a center of a neighborhood or community—and not just a place to send students for a few hours each day—have historically higher academic achievement, regardless of the social and economic status of those within the local environment. When a school serves as a community "center," school culture and climate extends throughout the community and not just within the walls of the building. Students and community members alike develop a vested interest in the school's success.

iv. Describe how the applicant will address student transitions throughout the P-20 continuum. Discuss how intervention models in elementary and middle schools will be integrated with high

school interventions, and vice versa. For high schools, discuss the partnerships that will be formed with community colleges, districts, and colleges and universities to address barriers to postsecondary access.

Nationally, studies recognize the critical nature of school transitions, and the correlation between seamless continuity and college-bound academic growth. Often, transitions for students attending low performing schools are abrupt and chaotic, and opportunities for post-secondary education profoundly limited. *Atlantic Research* recommends that elementary and middle schools should have transitioning intervention models in place and that those interventions should be consistent across the district. Education, social, and physical/emotional changes simultaneously occur during the transition from elementary to middle, and middle to high school. In light of these realities, it becomes crucial to work with incoming middle school students to create realistic expectations of what their middle school experience will be like, and provide positive first impressions (though, for example, a transitional program/tour and "buddy programs" with current middle school students). Although this transition process should focus on students, it must also include other stakeholders, particularly parents and teachers. All should be involved in the transition process through active participation in transition programs and introductory experiences at the new school.

Equally as important, this same type of transition experience should occur between middle school and high school. Because the Illinois School Improvement Grant provides resources exclusively for high schools in this round, we will primarily focus on the transitions involving students transitioning into and out of high school. For students transitioning into high school, the same types of programs that they experienced in their transition to middle school should occur, with appropriate adjustments. *Atlantic Research* assists schools in developing programs for

incoming high school students, with a particular focus on opportunity to visit the school prior to the first day of school. These programs are designed to appeal to all relevant stakeholders, including the incoming student, current students, teachers/staff, and parents. These types of program will assist with the physical and social/emotion transition into the high school. However, these types of programs alone are not sufficient to fully meet the needs of transitioning students.

The transition into high school is vital; *Atlantic Research* and experts in the field of adolescent development concur that academic success of students throughout their high school experience is dependent upon the effective transition from middle school to high school. Often students entering high school experience a decline in grades and attendance. *Atlantic Research* works with some high schools to combat this trend through creation of ninth grade academies that are either separate and apart from the high school itself or smaller learning communities within the high school building.   This allows entering high school students to have a more personalized approach to the beginning of their high school experience and more focused attention on their transitional needs. Specifically targeted monitoring and accountability systems can be created and utilized to track students and their education progress through the academies and/or smaller learning communities.

The diversity of academic needs among new high school students cannot be overstated. Students enter high school from a variety of middle schools and possess varying levels of preparedness for the high school experience. *Atlantic Research* recommends that high schools focus specifically on two vital areas of the academic transition: Algebra I and English I. Early

identification and support for ninth grade students struggling in those content areas is critical; essentially, it requires a certain amount of personalization in the learning process for incoming students. This may optimally include opportunity to earn online credit recovery and also participate in accelerated learning. *Atlantic Research* assists high schools in developing programs for extended student opportunities to earn high school credits if they fall behind in their transition process. These programs can include credit retrieval, Honors and Advanced Placement courses to meet individual education needs.

Further, many interventions can begin at the middle school level—with middle school teachers working together with high school teachers—to provide early identification of academic deficiencies or other transition issues. A focus on academic content that will be beneficial for the ninth grade year should be a priority for middle school teachers.

The transition out of high school can be equally challenging; multiple barriers are present in underperforming schools, particularly schools that lack relationships with higher education institutions. *Atlantic Research* works with its schools to remedy this deficiency when it is present.

Further, high schools can start, particularly in urban districts, by familiarizing students with college as early as their ninth grade year. By beginning the high school experience by talking about college and even visiting a college, students are more likely to have a mindset toward higher education. A primary focus of high schools that *Atlantic Research* assists in developing is preparation of students for a higher education experience. Multiple methods of this preparation

are available, and may be dependent upon the nuances present at each particular high school.

One successful method is the creation of career academies within a high school that allow

students to focus on an area of study and have experience throughout their high school

experience related to a particular field of study or career. Dual enrollment programs where

students are able to enroll in a community college or other higher education institution and earn

college credits during their high school experience are another method. The advantages of this

experience can be exponential: providing a higher education experience while in high school,

earning college credits that will cut down on cost and time in college (while still in high school),

and reduced remediation that often must occur at the community college or college levels. The

dual enrollment programs in particular break down barriers to postsecondary access by giving

students (who might not otherwise consider attending a postsecondary institution) an opportunity

to experience college. This provides a much-needed pipeline into higher education and access to

all students within the high school.

D. Staffing

i. Describe the applicant's plan to design and implement a rigorous, transparent, and equitable performance evaluation system for teachers and principals that takes into account data on student growth as a significant factor.

Atlantic Research assists schools in communicating that performance evaluation is a necessary

component of successful schools. The performance measures must be in place as an evaluative

tool for educators and a check on student learning. Multiple measures, including measurement

of student growth, must be used to in the performance evaluation system in order to provide a

clear picture of the value that teachers and principals bring to the school and, more importantly,

provide an accurate measure of students.

Atlantic Research designs a rigorous, transparent, and equitable evaluation system that takes into account performance measures in the school. The system is customized for each school, creating unique performance measures as appropriate for that building. However, there are certain commonalities that will exist in each of the performance evaluation systems created. Each will include individual and group facilitation and evaluation for school principals and teachers. The individual evaluations will allow for an analysis of student growth on a classroom level and provide opportunity for deep evaluation into the performance of the teachers and growth of the students. Group evaluations (in a particular grade level, subject area, etc.) will allow for a broader analysis of student growth and take a holistic approach to student achieve and educator performance.

Individual educator reviews will permit an analysis of performance data collected from a variety of sources and observations. Standardized test results will be one component of the analysis, along with a growth model method of evaluating teachers and student performance over time. Additionally, *Atlantic Research* will conduct individual and anecdotal observations to add to the analysis and overall evaluation process. The performance data collected from multiple methods and reflecting multiple measures will determine with specificity certain linkages, causality, and documentation related to student achievement. After the data on each individual teacher is collected, it will be analyzed from a performance evaluation standpoint and will also provide an opportunity to work with the school on planning, action, and processes for principals and teachers; this process enables team members to provide a greater impact on student learning both as individuals and as members of an institution.

There are four general phases to *Atlantic Research's* performance evaluation system and analysis of performance measures. As stated above, these phases will be customized in each school building to provide the most accurate information possible.

1. Phase I: Planning and Data Review. In the Planning and Data Review phase, *Atlantic Research* will work with school leadership and teachers to review past data collected on teacher performance and student achievement. This historical perspective will lay the groundwork for the analysis of individual teachers and provide for a growth model analysis centered on student academic gains over time as a measure of success. Past data will be thoroughly analyzed and evaluated to glean strengths and weaknesses, as well as provide benchmarks and a framework for evaluating student achievement and educator-success over time. During Phase I, those being evaluated will be fully informed of the process and how the evaluation will occur and what measures will be used.

2. Phase II: Research, Data Collection, and Diagnosis. *Atlantic Research* will independently research the processes of internal, school-based data collection. These data will be compiled by *Atlantic Research* and will be a component of the evaluation process. Additionally, *Atlantic Research* will conduct its own data collection. Assessments for both educators and students will be developed by the *Atlantic Research* team and applied universally across the curriculum and throughout the school. At the classroom level, *Atlantic Research* will collect and analyze student test scores and other key indicators of performance to be utilized in the evaluation process. This phase will

require open access to student assessments and regular access to educators.

3. Phase III: Data Analysis. *Atlantic Research* will compile the data collected and conduct a thorough analysis/evaluation of it. The analysis will be based on student growth and performance over time. The team will review the findings and evaluate each individual on a series of measures, including student data and observational data. Once the evaluation process is complete, *Atlantic Research* will create recommendations to determine staffing, building leadership, and building structure. The recommendations may possibly include the replacement of some individuals in leadership, teaching, or staff roles. A written report summarizing findings and presenting recommendations will be provided. Within the report, there may also be a transition plan for the removal of underperforming individuals and establishing a process to replace them quickly and seamlessly. There will also be an analysis in the report to develop procedures for improving outcomes for teachers and students.

4. Phase IV: Implementation. In Phase IV, the final report will be released and *Atlantic Research* will begin taking action on the removal and replacement of teachers and leaders that have not demonstrated high-level performance and student growth. As described below, *Atlantic Research* will use third-party company to provide search services to replace building leaders as necessary and will work with the district to replace and/or recruit new teachers as required and in compliance with union rules, district policies, and state law. In this Implementation Phase, *Atlantic Research* will work with new and existing school employees to address needed improvements, develop transition protocols,

and design a month-to-month plan for continuous improvements to achieve two goals:

increase student achievement and enhance faculty competency. Professional

development, coaching, and training will be provided to all incoming and returning

educators to ensure that there are no further gaps in student growth.

ii. Explain the applicant's plan to determine the effectiveness of the existing principal and whether the principal can serve as the instructional leader for the intervention.

Studies by *Atlantic Research* and others establish that a public school's success or failure is

immensely dependent upon the quality and competency of its leaders. The principal of any site

simply must be effective not just instructionally but in terms of human capital leadership.

Principal evaluations must be multifaceted and consider student achievement, teacher

effectiveness, and leadership abilities. *Atlantic Research* will utilize strategies developed by

New Leaders for New Schools ("NLNS") to accomplish a complete evaluation of each principal.

These strategies are derived from NLNS, but *Atlantic Research* will also augment the NLNS

strategies with its own additional evaluators.

The process for evaluating principals will include three steps: process development, data

collection/analysis, and evaluation. The first step will include a meeting with the principal and a

discussion of the evaluation process and the ultimate goal of the evaluation. The second step

involves collecting data from multiple sources, including student achievement data, interview

data of teachers and staff, and observational data by *Atlantic Research*. Finally, the data and the

result of the evaluation will be shared with the principal. If it is determined that the principal can

no longer serve in a leadership role in the building, a transition plan will be created and

implemented. Conversely, if the principal is determined to be qualified to lead the building during the intervention, then ongoing professional development and future evaluations will be discussed.

Within the data collection/analysis step, there are several components that must be included. First, student achievement will be evaluated. The evaluation system for the principal will include an evaluation of student growth and attainment of skills. Both are vital components of overall achievement. Student data will be collected from individual classroom teachers and internal school records to be used in the evaluation. Greatest weight will be given to the growth aspect of student achievement.

Second, teaching effectiveness will be a component of the principal's evaluation. Teaching effectiveness will include a component of growth evaluation to analyze the support systems put into place by the principal to create gain for student achievement. Additionally, the principal must be evaluated on the selection and retention of high-quality teachers in the building, while removing or intensively training underperforming or ineffective teachers.

Finally, the principal will be evaluated on leadership and capacity to drive results. NLNS identifies six components of leadership should be evaluated: 1) vision and results for equity, including goals and a thriving environment; 2) planning and operations, including identifying problems and developing action plans; 3) culture, including creating a culture of high expectations and parent/community outreach; 4) learning and teaching, including curriculum, instructional practice, and use of data; 5) staff development and management, including

managing personnel, professional development, and evaluation systems; and 6) personal

leadership and growth, including creating a focus for the school, responding to issues, and

communication. *Atlantic Research* will incorporate all six components into its evaluation of the

principal. Additionally, *Atlantic Research* team members will interview teachers and staff

members to provide a complete picture and analysis of the principal's leadership abilities in the

school.

iii. Provide information about the applicant's plans for recruiting, hiring, and developing leaders (i.e., principals, other administrators, and teachers) for all schools in which the intervention model will be implemented.

Atlantic Research will partner with the school community, school district, and ISBE to source,

recruit, assess, and select replacement members of the turnaround school. Further, *Atlantic*

Research will leverage its other existing partnerships and establish relationships with Teach For

America, The New Teacher Project, Teachers Placement Group (India sourcing), and Illinois

higher education venues to build candidate pipeline for teaching, school leadership, and other

critical roles for the work ahead.

Atlantic Research has also engaged in more than 15 years of research in recruitment, selection,

and retention of top-talent educators and leaders. Its meta-analysis of behavioral-based

interviewing protocols has been used to certify hundreds of school leaders, and other

organizational hiring managers and executives in several states. Among the TAO of

Interviewing clients *Atlantic Research* has served in this capacity are the Charlotte Mecklenburg

(NC) Schools, The Walt Disney Organization, US Relocation, Edison Learning, state

departments of Education in TN and FL as well as the Seminole County (FL) and Orange County

(FL) Public Schools. The research and expertise *Atlantic Research* has established in

recruitment and selection is a positive fit for this project.

Additionally, *Atlantic Research* has several team members with direct experience negotiating, hiring, and recruiting qualified staff members. Dr. Joseph Wise (resume attached) was a union negotiator and a superintendent who recruited and hired many qualified individuals for positions throughout his districts. Dr. Howard Kutcher (resume attached) was the human resources director for two large urban school districts and an administrator for New Leaders for New Schools, and he has extensive experience in all human resource issues. Finally, David Sundstrom (resume included) and Todd Zoellick (resume included) both have a background in labor and employment issues and experience negotiating employment contracts and other related skills.

For any additional assistance needed beyond *Atlantic Research's* expertise in this area, the firm will outsource the search process of recruiting principals, administrators, and teachers to PROACT Search, a national executive search firm specializing in leadership searches for education institutions (see details below). PROACT Search conducts statewide, regional, and national searches for superintendents, principals, administrators and teachers and has over 14 years of experience conducting searches and will provide all external search services for the schools.

Atlantic Research and its team, along with relevant building and district personnel, will conduct all interviews with finalists from the search process. District hiring criteria will be utilized, but *Atlantic Research* and relevant school and district personnel will make final hiring decisions.

As stated above, *Atlantic Research* will provide teacher and leadership training throughout the

school building for both new and existing teachers and administrators. This development will

include executive coaching using the *Power of Coaching* methods, teacher training using *Power

of Teaching* methods, and other onsite, ongoing professional development training. In addition

to the professional development programs, *Atlantic Research* team members will provide hands

on coaching, training, and modeling in the classroom alongside teachers.

*iv. Describe how the applicant will work with the LEA, the teachers' union, and, as applicable,
other organizations to design and implement a fair and consistent method to evaluate staff
members' ability to effectively participate in the intervention model.*

Atlantic Research recognizes and affirms that fairness and accuracy are paramount when

evaluating teachers and staff members. All interested and relevant parties must be involved in

the design and implementation of a fair and consistent evaluation system. The system will be

slightly different in each school that *Atlantic Research* services due to the input of the LEA,

unions, and any other relevant organizations, which will presumably differ from school to

school.

Atlantic Research will initially create an evaluation system for both teachers and principals

(described above in detail). The first step after creating that evaluation tool will be to meet with

the teachers' unions (and any other relevant labor organizations) to receive comments on the

evaluation system. *Atlantic Research* works to ensure that each affected labor organization

participates in the construction of the evaluation system. *Atlantic Research* will explain its own

processes of the evaluation and the details on how the system is used and invite comment and

suggestions. Each component of *Atlantic Research's* evaluation system is research-based; each component is steeped in logic and equity and its rationale concisely articulated. *Atlantic Research* team members will also discuss teacher contracts with labor organization representatives to ensure that the evaluation system will not violate the spirit of any relevant labor policies. Each affected labor organization will be provided deep opportunity to participate in the design and implementation and will be anticipated to sign off on the final evaluation system.

After both *Atlantic Research* and the affected labor organization agree on an evaluation system, *Atlantic Research* will provide the document to the LEA for confirmation that the evaluation system is consistent with district policies. The LEA will be provided an opportunity to influence the creation of the policy. *Atlantic Research* will meet with the superintendent, director of human resources, general counsel, and other relevant parties to ensure that the evaluation system adequately reflects the goals of the district and the obligations of *Atlantic Research* to create a fair, consistent, and complete evaluation system.

E. Professional Development

i. Explain how the applicant will assess and plan for the training and professional development needs of the staff. Include information about standard components of the professional development design and the areas that will be customized to fit the school and district.

Professional development is regularly discussed but often overlooked by underperforming schools. Providing effective, practical and site-specific training and professional development is an area of expertise for *Atlantic Research*.

Atlantic Research will assess existing needs at a site and ultimately plan for the training and

professional development of faculty on the basis of that assessment. The assessment of whether staff members need professional development is a relatively straightforward process. *Atlantic Research* believes that every teacher, regardless of his or her experience, competency, or the quality of the school, needs ongoing training and professional development. Professional development provides teachers with the opportunity to receive the latest information and trends in education and put that knowledge to work in the classroom. Unfortunately, many underperforming schools fail to set aside adequate or consistent time for training or professional development. Each school in which *Atlantic Research* provides services will mutually develop with *Atlantic Research* a detailed schedule and required time for professional development.

Atlantic Research will work with school leadership to include regular and dedicated mandatory professional development, outside of the regular school day, for teachers and staff. This schedule will be included in the master calendar. There may be additional opportunities for full-day professional development if the LEA is able and willing to build it into the district-wide calendar. Further, *Atlantic Research* will work with building leadership to provide common prep times for grade level teachers or content area teachers. Common prep times are research-established to serve as an effective vehicle for teachers to collaborate on all issues related to their teaching. Additionally, common prep times allow for targeted professional development and training, which can be provided by grade level or content area. *Atlantic Research* will ensure that the school bell schedule and teaching schedule is structured in a manner that allows for common prep times throughout the buildings. It is an essential component of successful schools and teachers.

Atlantic Research will utilize *Power of Teaching* methods for professional development and teacher training. It was originally created by *Atlantic Research* and is now a nationally recognized and utilized system of teacher training and development. *Power of Teaching* is a comprehensive, research-driven program to accomplish two fundamental objectives: measurably increase student engagement and deepen teaching effectiveness within the classroom. Data about teaching behaviors are crucial to the development of educational strategies and those strategies in turn produce measurable academic gains. Data from *Power of Teaching* training enables the pinpointing of often unconscious teaching behaviors, both effective and ineffective, that greatly influence student engagement and learning. Data supports instructional leaders, coaches and teachers with critical information about instructional practices that are working, and not working, within each classroom.

Based on a meta-analysis of more than 440 teacher efficacy studies, *Power of Teaching* is a useful tool and an excellent source of professional development because it identifies and records site-specific data that enables entire schools, groups of teachers and individual teachers to assess teaching behaviors that drive learning and academic achievement, provides a framework for differentiated professional development that best meets individual teacher and site needs, and supports teachers with practical tools and strategies for improving student learning outcomes. Collaboration and constructive analysis of classroom practices establishes a culture in which teachers possess a high comfort-level with having their work studied, discussing patterns of behavior that both work and do not work for them, receiving and giving feedback on their interactions with students in the classroom, and identifying and supporting teaching strengths. *Power of Teaching* protocols prescribe that teachers need increased support in the classroom and

that support comes in the form of professional development and training strategies that can used

to improve student achievement.

*ii. Describe how the applicant will evaluate the fidelity of implementation, quality, relevance,
and utility of the professional development.*

Atlantic Research has a strong history of providing quality professional development to schools

and districts throughout the United States. The successes in professional development training

have allowed members of *Atlantic Research* to further hone their skills and develop the processes

for providing high quality training to teachers and staff at all levels of education. Fidelity of

implementation connotes a fulfillment of duties and obligations in the implementation process of

professional development. The professional development evaluation process that *Atlantic

Research* relies upon to ensure quality of implementation is a practical evaluation of how the

professional development has impacted teaching in the classroom. It also examines whether

student learning has been enhanced through new teaching methods and/or data usage. *Atlantic

Research* team members will be able to evaluate the effectiveness of the professional

development by its impact in the classroom and on the basis of student academic growth.

The quality and relevance of the training is evident to participating teachers because it contains

practical applications in the classroom. To ensure that *Atlantic Research* professional

development team members are meeting the expectations and needs of the training participants,

teachers and staff members will consistently provide feedback to *Atlantic Research* and the

professional development instructors. This feedback may be specific to a particular teacher or

may be anonymous. If participants need information that is not initially covered in the

professional development, *Atlantic Research* team members will integrate additional training in

particular areas in future professional development session.

The professional development provided to teachers and staff will be dictated by the needs of the teachers. In some cases, these may be requests directly from teachers for assistance; however, it is more likely that *Atlantic Research* team members will observe (i) areas needing improvement in the classroom or (ii) inadequate teaching techniques being implemented in the classroom. *Atlantic Research* will respond by integrating appropriate training into professional development sessions. All *Atlantic Research* professional development, including *Power of Teaching*, will use practical teaching methods that can be put into place in the classroom and everything discussed will be data driven. Teacher will learn to interpret, and rely on data in their classrooms and in planning lessons for students. *Atlantic Research* team members will also evaluate whether the professional development training is having a positive impact on the classrooms through observations, coaching, and interaction with teachers on a daily basis. These supports additionally allow for further professional development instruction where needed.

F. Organizational Capacity

i. Describe the applicant's organizational structures, financial stability, and organizational capacity. Please include the type and number of schools that the applicant can serve.

David Sundstrom, Esq.—President serves as the chief executive of the Firm and also serves as the firm's general counsel, and chairperson of the firm's Board of Directors.

Dr. Joseph Wise—Managing Director reports to the President and manages the professional staff dispatched to clients and client sites. Dr. Wise also serves as the Firm's chief of research and chief education officer.

Mark Sundstrom--Chief Operating Officer serves as *Atlantic Research's* chief financial and chief business official and supervises the office support team.

Dr. Howard Kutcher--Senior Vice President, School Improvement Services reports to the Managing Director and supervises team members and oversees quality assurance on products and services *Atlantic Research* provides to help accelerate the performance of our clients' educators and students.

Dr. Brenda Tanner—Chief Academic Officer reports to the Managing Director and ensures quality of products and services delivered by the *Atlantic Research* faculty.

Todd Zoellick, Esq.—Regional Vice President and Lead Faculty member reports to the Senior Vice President for School Improvement Services and manages client relationships in the firm's Midwest region. For this ISBE sponsored project Zoellick will serve as general manager of the team.

Kevin L. McKinney—Regional Vice President, reports to the Senior Vice President of School Improvement Services and manages client relationships in the firm's Southeast region.

Victor Frush—Creative Director, reports to President David Sundstrom, and manages all facets of the Firm's technology, video production for client training and support, and all technology interfaces between the firm's clients and the firm.

Donna Damiano—Office Manager, reports to COO Mark Sundstrom and manages office workflow and transactions to maintain client satisfaction and operational efficiency.

Becky West—Bookkeeper, reports to COO Mark Sundstrom and manages client billing, accounts payable, tax document preparation for our tax advisor and all matters related to the Firm's business office.

Lila Bradley--Office Assistant reports to COO Mark Sundstrom and manages, edits, and deploys the Firm's written and printed assets.

Joshua Gilliam--Instructional Designer reports to Managing Director, Joseph Wise, and leads the creation of workshop- and online-based training products for *Atlantic Research*.

Financial – *Atlantic Research* staff will be happy to disclose any other financial records of the Firm, the firm's officers, or otherwise in conjunction with compliance with policies of the State of Illinois. The firm is in excellent fiscal condition, has no outstanding judgments, no outstanding payables, and operates on a cash (not an accrual) accounting method. *Atlantic Research* operates on an accounts payable cycle of net-20 days.

Organizational Capacity – The *Atlantic Research* team is well poised and prepared to provide support to up to five high schools in the regions previously designated. *Atlantic Research* embraces the opportunity to serve schools where high poverty taxes the work and where renewed

systems of curriculum, instruction, student and family engagement, educator recruitment and

selection, and sense of purpose and achievement are needed.

ii. Describe the non-negotiable commitments and decision-making authority the applicant requires to successfully manage the school turnaround model (i.e. autonomy over staffing, budgets, calendar etc.).

School turnaround must be a partnership among multiple parties that include Atlantic *Research*,

the school, the district, the State, parents/community, and possibly other organizations and

individuals. *Atlantic Research* will work collaboratively with all affected parties to manage the

school turnaround model. Of course, there are some areas where autonomy is required. *Atlantic*

Research will consult with interested parties to receive input and consultation, but *Atlantic*

Research will have final decision-making authority on turnaround services and specifically

addressed by its turnaround model.

First, *Atlantic Research* requires autonomy over scheduling within the school building. *Atlantic*

Research will operate within the bounds of the district master calendar for holidays, institute

days, etc.; however, *Atlantic Research* will require control over the local building schedule and

calendar. The purposes for this control are multiple:

- The building schedule must incorporate common prep times and designated times for professional development.

- Individual student schedules may require modification for school turnaround and true reform to occur.

- Students will need to spend time more time in certain content areas or in the school building.

The *Atlantic Research* team will carefully evaluate before making any changes to student schedules.

Second, *Atlantic Research* will require complete autonomy over staffing. *Atlantic Research* will remain accountable to the school, district, and the State for providing reform and turnaround at the building level. However, within the limits of collective bargaining agreements, Board policies and state law, *Atlantic Research* will need flexibility to reallocate the services of teachers and building leaders as required. The district and relevant labor organizations will be involved in decisions, but *Atlantic Research* will have ultimate decision-making authority on staffing matters. *Atlantic Research* will retain PROACT Search as the executive search company to conduct outside searches as needed for building leaders and teachers. PROACT Search and *Atlantic Research* will conduct interviews and make decisions on staffing.

Third, *Atlantic Research* will require autonomy over the school budget but will work with the district and building leadership to develop and implement the budget. The budget will reflect the daily needs of the school, always with an eye toward implementing successful and continuous school reform.

Finally, *Atlantic Research* will require complete autonomy over professional development and coaching for teachers. *Atlantic Research* will provide all professional development and coaching services and those trainings are logistically required to be completely under the control and decision-making authority of *Atlantic Research* for scheduling, content, attendance requirements, and related purposes. Professional development and training will be key components of the

school turnaround model and crucial to the work for which *Atlantic Research* is retained.

iii. Provide a summary of the qualifications of the staff who would be involved in the project and list their specific experience and success with school intervention efforts. Describe to what degree these staff will be involved in the day-to-day work with the district and school(s). In an appendix include one-page résumés for all individuals involved with the turnaround efforts.

David Sundstrom, Esq.—President. Serves as the Chief Executive Officer of *Atlantic Research* and also serves as the firm's general counsel, chairperson of the firm's Board of Directors, and Chief Business Officer. As an education attorney, has served in executive roles both in the public and private sectors; he has represented major public school districts in labor relations and collective bargaining, and additionally has served as chief of staff in two major public school districts within the United States. Sundstrom is the author of *Tao of Interviewing*, a text designed to build organizational capacity in the recruitment and selection of education employees. Sundstrom will provide the client sites with counsel on executive leadership, labor, special education, community engagement and public policy matters.

Dr. Joseph Wise—Managing Director, reports to the President and manages the professional staff dispatched to clients and client sites. Dr. Wise also serves as the firm's Chief of Research and Chief Education Officer. Former school superintendent of the 20th largest school district in the United States; he is the author of *Power of Teaching—the Science of the Art* (2006) and *Power of Coaching—Teachers and Teaching (2009).* Dr. Wise previously served the Disney organization as Director of Organizational Development, and served eSchool Solutions, Inc. (software company) as chief executive officer from 1998-2002. Dr. Wise will serve as executive coach and instructional and management consultant for all schools that *Atlantic Research* services.

Dr. Brenda Tanner—Chief Academic Officer develops the Firm's faculty in its training and development programs. She is a former school superintendent and former University of Virginia professor (Educational Leadership). Dr. Tanner provides to clients specific and tailored instruction relating to executive duties, managerial decision-making, and organizational development in expertise, guidance and coaching in the senior executive's role in instructional leadership.

Todd Zoellick, Esq.—Regional Vice President. Zoellick is an author, educator, and attorney. He has served in leadership roles in multiple education consulting firms and is the founder and president of an education advocacy organization for K-12 and higher education institutions that works to improve educational opportunities for students by providing support for administrators, teachers, and parents. He is also a university professor and lecturer on education, law, and public policy topics. Formerly, Zoellick served as the Deputy Regional Secretary at the United States Department of Education (2005-2009). Appointed by President George W. Bush, he served as one of Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings' top officials in the Midwest, visiting thousands of schools throughout the region and actively engaged students, teachers, parents, administrators, business and civic organizations, and government officials to explain education policy and to build bridges between practitioners and policy makers. Zoellick specializes in providing transformation and turnaround services to struggling school districts and will serve as the General Manager for all schools serviced by *Atlantic Research*.

Ronetta P. Wards—Regional Vice President and Lead Faculty member. Wards is a leader in Instructional Technology, implementing high-tech improvements through her work as an Executive Director for Mansfield City Schools in Ohio, and as Instructional Technology Coordinator for Duval County Public Schools in Jacksonville, Florida.

Patricia Deck—Program Director. Deck is an award winning former public elementary school teacher and served as director of the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program, a first-of-its-kind scholarship/loan initiative for outstanding high school seniors aspiring to be teachers. Deck also served as an Educational Program Specialist for SERVE, the federally funded research/development laboratory serving six southeastern states. She specializes in designing and delivering staff development tailored to specific needs and is a facilitator for school district/service provider partnership initiatives in two separate states to enhance teaching and learning. Deck was also co-author of *Success in Reading and Writing*, a K-6 total language arts program published by Scott Foresman.

Kevin L. McKinney—Regional Vice President. McKinney is a life-long educator and former school administrator specializing in the implementation of behavior management programs and strategies that serve schools. He has a focus on school culture and subscribes to the idea that student behavior is more readily influenced by reasonable and clear teacher expectations than it is by rules perceived as arbitrary or purposeless. He realizes that academic gains cannot be achieved or sustained without a school environment that is supportive and "safe"—both psychologically and in actuality, and he represents *Atlantic Research* in assisting communities, schools and families to ensure such environments are created—and sustained—nationwide. He

is currently working on a book about the practical realities of effective behavior management in American public school settings.

Dr. Howard Kutcher—Senior Vice President for School Improvement Services manages the Firm's portfolio of customized technical assistance to schools and school districts where acceleration of academic and operational performance are targeted.

Lynn Fardell—Senior Research Associate. Fardell is an expert in education and educational leadership services in urban and highly diverse school districts within both the United States and the United Kingdom. She has extensive experience providing professional development, support and training for principals—particularly focused upon their role in producing tangible and measurable results under ambitious academic standards. Before coming to the United States of America, Lynne was an Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education) Registered Inspector, working with Her Majesty's School Inspectorate and included leading and managing inspection teams, conducting school inspections according to the Ofsted Framework for the Inspection of Schools, writing and presenting comprehensive reports based on team findings as well as scheduling, planning and conducting multiple inspections across the country.

Maurice Pritchett—Community Engagement Coach. Pritchett has a great deal of experience in parent and community outreach. He has served community director positions in many school districts throughout the country.

Tom McDowell—Senior Advisor for Special Education. McDowell has over 40 years of educational experience in both regular and special education in public and private educational settings. He has served as a Teacher, Speech and Language Pathologist, Educational Diagnostician, Special Education Coordinator, Assistant Principal, Principal, Director, Executive Director and Educational Consultant to three major companies in the area of special education and students at risk. He has published two Programs: Language Development for Boys and Oral Language Communication for grades K-2 Standard American English and Reading.

Scott Flowers—Lead Faculty Member, High School Practices. In the role as Executive Director of High School programs for a nationally recognized Educational Management Organization/Educational Service Provider EMO/ESP, Flowers has supported regional teams and high school principals at fully managed charter schools and in District Turnaround Models to increase student achievement by raising student expectations, increasing teacher capacity, and installing interventions to support struggling readers by arming teachers with an arsenal research based strategies to effectively increase Adolescent literacy. In addition he has developed a college success program designed to engage students, parents and high school faculty and staff in the college going, college success process.

Josh Gilliam—Instructional Designer. Gilliam has solid experience in the creation, organization, and implementation of multiple learning strategies within education and government organizations. These strategies have included classroom, blended and online learning environments, utilizing a wide variety of learning applications and implemented training tools nationally during professional conferences. Gilliam's work experience represents a wide

array of tasks including hands-on computer instruction, LMS development/implementation, and

consultation of online curriculum development.

Carolyn Smith—Senior Advisor, College Preparation and Counseling. Smith has extensive

experience as an educator and education consultant. Her areas of expertise include broad-based

organization, management, and supervision of high school counseling programs and services;

college/academic readiness; academic/readiness monitoring; development of innovative and

research-based counseling projects; and strategic and project management.

G. Subcontractors

i. Identify the subcontractors and partnership organizations that the applicant will use in the implementation of its program. Information on each proposed subcontractor must be provided in accordance with #5 of the Contractual Terms and Provisions (Appendix A) of this RFP.

Atlantic Research will only be utilizing one subcontractor for services listed in this RFSP.

Atlantic Research will subcontract with PROACT Search to provide executive search services

for building leaders and teachers, as necessary. The following information is provided in

accordance with #5 of the Contractual Terms and Provisions in Appendix A.

PROACT Search

1215 Washington Avenue

Suite 100

Wilmette, IL 60091

PROACT Search is an industry leader in providing search services for schools and school

district. The company has a proven track record of success in school districts large and small

throughout the United States for the past 14 years. *Atlantic Research* is not a provider of search

services and does not have the necessary expertise to conduct statewide, regional, or national

searches for qualified building leaders or teachers.

PROACT Search will provide necessary search services, primarily for searching for new

principals, but also searching for teachers and other staff members, as necessary.

The cost to conduct a search for a new principal and relevant staff by PROACT Search is

approximately $30,000. Please see Budget for more specific details. PROACT's Taxpayer

Identification Number is: 263536698.

*ii. If the applicant proposes subcontractors, provide evidence that the applicant has carefully
vetted the providers and programs and obtained reasonable assurance of their efficacy.*

PROACT Search has a long history of providing quality searches for districts throughout the

United States, including Illinois. Some of their past search are as follows:

Superintendent Searches

Advance Baton Rouge (LA)

Alisal Union School District (CA)

Aurora Public Schools (CO)

Austin Independent School District (TX)

Baltimore City Public Schools (MD)

Bibb County School District (GA)

Colorado Association of School Boards (CO)

Chicago Public Schools (IL)

Cincinnati Public Schools (OH)

Cleveland Municipal School District (OH)

Denver Public Schools (CO)

District of Columbia Public Schools (DC)

Florida State Board of Education (FL)

Greenfield Union School District (CA)

Hillsborough County (FL)

Indianapolis Public Schools (IN)

Inglewood School District (CA)

Illinois State Board of Education (IL)

Las Cruces Public Schools (NM)

Memphis City Schools (TN)

Milwaukee Public Schools (WI)

Montgomery Public Schools (AL)

New Orleans School District (LA)

Newark Public Schools (NJ)

Norfolk Public Schools (VA)

Oakland Unified School District (CA)

Pittsburgh School District (PA)

Portland Public Schools (OR)

Providence School District (RI)

Racine Unified School District (WI)

Round Lake Area Schools (IL)

Savannah Chatham County Public Schools (GA)

School District of Hillsborough County (FL)

School District of Kansas City (MO)

School District U-46, Elgin (IL)

Seattle Public Schools (WA)

St. Louis Public Schools (MO)

St. Paul Public Schools (MN)

Toledo School District (OH)

Tucson School District (AZ)

Yorkville Community Schools (IL)

Administrators

Baltimore City Public School System - CFO, Deputy CEO, Chief Information Officer, Chief

Human Relations Officer, Executive Director of New Initiatives, Director - Effectiveness

Framework, Program Evaluator - Effectiveness Framework, Controller   **Beacon Education**

Management - Director of Education/ Vice President-Academics

Branchburg Township School District - Business Administrator

Buffalo Public Schools – CFO

Chicago Public Schools - Chief Area Officers

Cleveland Municipal School District - Executive Director of Special and Gifted Education, Executive Director of Multilingual Multicultural Education, Transportation Director, Human Resources Executive Director. Safety and Security Director

Columbus Public Schools - CFO

East Baton Rouge Parish School System - CAO

EdisonLearning, Inc - Regional Controller, 7 Regional Technology Managers, 3 Operations Managers, 5 Technology Positions

Kansas City (MO) School District - CFO

Lakota Local Schools - CFO

Los Angeles Unified School District - CFO, Chief of External Affairs, COO, Deputy Superintendent for Instruction, Director of Legislative Affairs

Milwaukee Public Schools - CAO, CFO, Chief of Human Resources, Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction

Minneapolis Public Schools - Chief Academic Officer, Associate Superintendent, HR Director

Prince George's County - CAO, Chief of Staff, Chief Human Resources Officer

Paterson Public Schools - CAO, Deputy Superintendent, Associate Superintendent of Administration, Executive Directors of Facilities, Personnel, Special Education and Instruction

Newark Public Schools - CAO, Director of Human Relations, Director of Performing and

Visual Arts, General Council, Ombudsman, Multiple Regional Superintendents, Director of

Student Services, Director of Guidance, Business Administrator

Seattle Public Schools - CAO

SchoolNet - Regional Account Executives

St. Louis Public Schools - COO

Success Charter Network - Dean of Students, Leadership Resident, Math Curriculum

Developer, Reading & Writing Staff Coordinator, Reading & Writing Staff Developer

Principals

Baltimore City Public Schools, MD (2 Principals)

Buffalo School District

Chester Upland School District (2 Principals)

Chicago Public Schools (100+ Principals)

CIVITAS Academy (2 Principals)

East Baton Rouge

EdisonLearning - Caddo, LA

EdisonLearning - Chicago, IL

EdisonLearning - Dayton, OH

EdisonLearning - Detroit, MI

EdisonLearning - Kansas City, MO

EdisonLearning - Shreveport, LA

Kansas City School District

Minneapolis School District (2 Principals)

Newark Public Schools (3 Principals)

Muskegon School District

Northern Bristol County

The School District of Philadelphia (4 Principals)

St. Louis School District

Success Charter Network (Assistant Principal)

Teachers

EdisonLearning - Shreveport, LA

EdisonLearning- Dayton, OH

EdisonLearning- Chicago, IL

Newark Public Schools

Atlantic Research is confident of PROACT Search's ability to conduct quality searches at a fair

price.

H. Sustained Improvement

*i. Identify how the applicant intends to phase out the need for its services so that full
management of the school can be returned to the school district after the three-year grant period
with adequate capacity to sustain the improvements and growth made over the course of the
intervention.*

The model that *Atlantic Research* follows in providing school improvement services is

fundamentally a *train-the-trainer* prototype. Our staff and faculty works alongside teachers and staff members in the process of school reform, under the premise that once trained, the site's existing staff will continue the embedded work. *Atlantic Research* is responsible for intervention and manages all of the programs, training, initiatives and changes prescribed in the school. But *Atlantic Research* recognizes what nationwide data establishes: "top-down" management techniques are consistently resisted, and any implemented change employing such techniques is unsustainable. Consequently, the *Atlantic Research* team works *with* school leaders and teachers to initiate necessary changes and achieve results. By working alongside teachers, leaders, and staff, *Atlantic Research* establishes a collaborative environment that enables participatory buy-in to reforms that might otherwise appear threatening or initially overwhelming. The school will be ultimately a high achieving institution because the teachers and staff are part of the School-*Atlantic Research* team, and share in clearly defined goals. When *Atlantic Research* leaves the site at the end of its engagement, school leaders and teachers are positioned to seamlessly carry on the implemented reforms—primarily because the reforms are *theirs.*

I. Outcomes-Based Measurement Plan

i. Define the realistic and attainable outcomes that will be achieved at the end of a three-year grant period as the result of an intervention.

The goal of this intervention is to ultimately create a high-achieving school from one that is underperforming. This realistic goal can be achieved; *Atlantic Research's* track record—a record of providing school improvement services and teacher training—established it. *Atlantic Research* is confident in its ability to move schools from underperforming to high-achieving within this intervention program.

More specifically, there are many realistic and attainable outcomes from *Atlantic Research* services. First, many of the schools that we service will have radically modified strategies and intensively trained teachers. Its building leaders will have protocols in place that strengthen their ability to raise academic and behavioral standards, and communicate most effectively with members of the community.

Second, is the intense and effective teacher training through *Power of Teaching* and leadership training through *Power of Coaching*. The professional development and the skills that *Atlantic Research* imparts to the school building staff ultimately will be embedded in the structure and processes of the school. Professional development will be consistent, relevant, and specific. Further, building leaders and teachers will be empowered and trained to provide their own professional development in the building or within their grade levels or content areas. The schedule will be permanently altered in such a way to permit common preparation times for grade levels and content areas.

Third, school rules and discipline will be concise, reasoned, and reasonable. More importantly, systems will be in place to establish the sense among students and staff—reflecting the reality at the site—that equity and justice form the basis of rule enforcement. Finally, *communication* will be a pivotal component of school operations, both internally and in community interactions.

Finally and most importantly through the implementation of the above three efforts, student achievement will increase. All of the work that *Atlantic Research* will do and the primary focus of our organization is to provide to the adults and students within our schools the supports,

protocols and tools to increase student achievement in an authentic, rigorous and sustainable

manner. As stated throughout this document, we will provide hands-on classroom interventions

designed for both students and teachers, we will train and support teachers and building leaders,

we will assist in the development and use of assessments and measures for students and student

achievement, and we will implement structures and protocols that convert a school site's simple

functionality to an environment that instills and wholly supports advanced learning

ii. Describe the measurable indicators of progress that will be used against those outcomes.
Applicants are advised to refer to the *Scope of Work* section of this RFSP for a list of required
accountability indicators.

Development of MOU and Terms of Authority

Critical to success will be the ability of *Atlantic Research* to have the full range of authority and

the latitude to implement at each school site in which it is to work the specific programs and

terms as set forth above.

Indicators of Progress

Atlantic Research proposes accountability and progress monitoring between/among our team, the

LEA, and ISBE as follows:

1. *Atlantic Research* will budget and staff one research/data manager to coordinate accurate

collection of performance and attendance data in each school.

2. Our data manager will also coordinate accurate and timely data storage, aggregation,

disaggregation, and reporting between/among the schools, the LEA, ISBE, Northwest Evaluation Association (MAP data), The College Board (AP and PSAT data), ACT data, academic intervention partners, etc.

3. *Atlantic Research*, as part of the work will incorporate a "data dashboard" of data indicating key cultural and academic performance trends with school leaders and school faculty to facilitate mid-course corrections in the daily/weekly practices and interventions within the school. These "data dashboard" components will include the following:

A. Number of minutes within the school year;

B. Student participation rate on ISAT or PSAE in reading/language arts and in mathematics, by student subgroup and NWEA MAP progress monitoring data by-student, by-teacher, by-ISBE defined subgroup, and by- core area strand and desCartes skill level achieved;

C. Dropout rate and weekly response to those prone to dropping out;

D. Student attendance rate and trends sorted by-student, by-teacher, by-grade level, and by-students' residence ZIP Code;

E. Number and percentage of students completing advanced coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement (AP);

International Baccalaureate (IB), early-college high schools, or dual enrollment classes and participation rate of corresponding exams;

F. Discipline incidents by-infraction type, by-teacher, by-student;

G. Truants with weekly response to those missing from school;

H. Distribution of teachers by performance level on the LEA's teacher evaluation system;

I. Teacher attendance rate;

J. School climate and culture indicators; and

K. Teacher and principal effectiveness utilizing *Atlantic Research's Power of Teaching* and

Power of Coaching data collection instruments.

4. *Atlantic Research* will incorporate quarterly progress monitoring meetings with key staff of

the LEA and ISBE (if desired) and provide specificity using the "data dashboard" indicators (see

#3 above). In addition to communicating the status of each component of the work, this process

encourages discussion between *Atlantic Research,* the LEA and ISBE, as well as problem-

resolution not contemplated at the time of MOU drafting.

Part I: Narrative Description

Section E - References

1. Dr. Bart Anderson

Superintendent, Education Service Center of Central Ohio

andersonb@fcesc.org

614-542-4127

2. Dr. Deonia Simmons

Superintendent, Hampton2 County Public Schools, SC

simmdeo@hampton2.k12.sc.us

803-942-3633

3. Dr. Shawn Smith

Superintendent, Chicago Public Schools

sksmith5@cps.k12.il.us

773-910-6682

Part I: Narrative Description

Section F - Contractor's Qualifications

1. Atlantic Research Partners is team of experienced education and management professionals who have made a fundamental commitment to three objectives:

- Providing management and corporate leaders with specific tools essential to recruiting, retaining and supporting "best talent" for maximum organizational efficacy;

- Providing schools and school districts nationwide with analysis of organizational, pedagogical and leadership practices affecting student academic achievement, and

- Providing sustainable, research-established supports affecting employee performance—both within and outside the education field.

In today's climate of economic challenge and extraordinary competition, reliable, results-driven methods are crucial to achieving and sustaining organizational effectiveness. Practical, research-tested tools, strategies and protocols are pivotal. And seamlessly providing them is what Atlantic Research Partners does. For businesses, nonprofit organizations, and institutions engaged in delivery of preK-12 education services.

Our services begin with a dedicated team of experienced professionals clinically analyzing client needs and current practices, then ultimately building—with substantial client input and clear concurrence—specific management, education,

organizational and leadership programs exclusively tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of each client site. Atlantic Research Partners recognizes that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to mastering the complex issues facing managers, administrators, and leaders today. What we provide is real research. And real results. Immediate and long-term.

2. *Atlantic Research* is comprised of faculty members who bring the following (collective) qualifications to our organization and this work:

1. Large urban school superintendent experience

2. Public school labor negotiations experience

3. USDOE leadership experience

4. High school principalship experience

5. Teaching at elementary, middle school, high school and college teaching experience

6. Law firm, legal staff, state legislative policy, and student/family advocacy experience

7. Corporate business turnaround experience

8. School transformation and academic turnaround experience

9. High school reconstitution and new school launch leadership experience

10. Community organizing, community capacity-building facilitation and leadership experience

11. Teaching quality research, training, and professional development experience

12. Corporate and non-profit board leadership experience

13. Interviewing, recruitment, selection research, training, and professional development experience

14. Instructional and organizational performance auditing experience

15. High school accreditation inspection team leadership experience

For other specific information on the (collective) credentials, qualifications, and experience of our Firm, please see subsection (A) Prior Experience and subsection (F) Organizational Structure under Part I, Section D: Work Plan.

3. No contracts with Illinois State Board of Education in the past 5 years. All Illinois work has been school specific. Further information available upon request.

Part I: Narrative Description

Section G - Exceptions to the RFSP

There are no exceptions to RFSP.

Part II: Cost Proposal Bidders

  Section A- Cover Page

  1. Atlantic Research Partners, Inc.

   1093 A1A Beach Blvd., Suite 422

   St. Augustine, Florida 32080-6733

   904-501-1901 – Office number

   866-408-8119 – Fax number

   jw@atlanticresearchpartners.org

  2. Dr. Joseph Wise – contact person

   904-651-6700 – contact number

  3. FEIN 26-1392943

Part II: Cost Proposal Bidders

Section B - Budget

ATLANTIC RESEARCH PARTNERS
Budget for Illinois High School Turnaround Program (ISBE sponsored)
For Pre-Implementation Phase* (Year 1) and Implementation Phases (Year 2 & Year 3)
Reported in $000's

	Year 1*	Year 2	Year 3
REVENUE			
Revenue (assuming one school)	$ 1,675	$ 1,675	$ 1,675
DIRECT COSTS:			
Instructional Support Services (Personnel)	$ 849	$ 862	$ 875
Instructional Support Services (Non-Personnel)	$ 275	$ 279	$ 283
Instructional Materials & Supplies	$ 111	$ 113	$ 114
Travel (9 Consultants per school (x) 50 days at $400/day)	$ 180	$ 183	$ 185
OTHER COSTS:			
Administrative Support	$ 98	$ 85	$ 74
Comprehensive Liability Insurance	$ 2	$ 3	$ 3
Financing	$ 45	$ 42	$ 39
Subcontractor Expenses - Recruiting	$ 30	$ 30	$ 25
Temporary Housing	$ 35	$ 30	$ 28
Other (Contingency) Expenses	$ 50	$ 49	$ 48
Total Costs	$ 1,675	$ 1,675	$ 1,675

(a) Note: See Assumptions Page

ATLANTIC RESEARCH PARTNERS
Budget for Illinois High School Turnaround Program (ISBE sponsored)
Schedule of Instructional Support Services (Personnel)
Reported in $000's

	1 School/Yr
General Manager	1
Manage Budgets, Staffing, Client Relationship	
Total Salaries General Manager(s)	$ 168
Human Resources & Budget Manager	1
(reports to General Manager)	
Total Salaries - Human Resources & Budget Manager(s)	$70
Lead Faculty Member	1
Total Salaries - Lead Faculty Member(s)	$ 150
Professional Development Director	1
(reports to Lead Faculty Member)	
Total Salaries - Professional Development Director(s)	$ 100
Literacy Coach	1
Total Salaries - Literacy Coach(es)	$ 50
Mathematics Coach (also serves as Data Coach)	1
Total Salaries - Mathematics Coach(es)	$ 60
Science Coach	1
Total Salaries - Science Coach(es)	$ 50
Special Ed/RTI Coach	1
Total Salaries - Special Ed/RTI Coach(es)	$ 75
Community Engagement Coach	1
Total Salaries - Community Engagement Coach(es)	$ 50
Instructional Technology Coach	1
Total Salaries - Instructional Technology Coach(es)	$ 75
Total Instructional Support Services (Personnel)	$ 849

ATLANTIC RESEARCH PARTNERS
Budget for Illinois High School Turnaround Program (ISBE sponsored)
Schedule of Instructional Support Services (Non-Personnel)
Reported in $000's

	1 School/Yr
Instructional Performance Audits	$ 15
Atlantic Research Partners - Education Research & Advisement	$ 260

ATLANTIC RESEARCH PARTNERS

Budget for Illinois High School Turnaround Program (ISBE sponsored)

Schedule of Instructional Materials & Supplies

ASSUMPTIONS

A. 1,000 students per building.

B. Half of ARP Staff commutes via air-fare.

C. Half of ARP Staff recruited from and resides in local area.

D. School is located within driving distance of Metropolitan Chicago.

E. Instructional playbook includes College Board Springboard in Mathematics and ELA, Power of Teaching, NWEA progress monitoring and support, AVID, and development of a college going culture.

F. Sponsoring district will provide hardware, software, existing curricular materials, etc.

G. $400 travel cost per day consists of Car Rental ($60/day), + Lodging ($90/day incl tax), + ($40/day-meals),

  + 25% of total airfare ($660 (x) .25 = $165), + parking, tolls, gas, tips ($45).

H. Inflationary increment of approx. 1.5% per year.

Part II: Cost Proposal Bidders
    Section B - Budget

5. Subcontracting Information

(a) PROACT Search

1215 Washington Avenue

Suite 100

Wilmette, IL 60091

(b) For any additional assistance needed beyond *Atlantic Research's* expertise in this area, the firm will outsource the search process of recruiting principals, administrators, and teachers to PROACT Search, a national executive search firm specializing in leadership searches for education institutions (see details below). PROACT Search conducts statewide, regional, and national searches for superintendents, principals, administrators and teachers and has over 14 years of experience conducting searches and will provide all external search services for the schools.

(c) *Atlantic Research* will subcontract with PROACT Search to provide executive search services for building leaders and teachers, as necessary. PROACT Search is an industry leader in providing search services for schools and school district. The company has a proven track record of success in school districts large and small throughout the United States for the past 14 years. *Atlantic Research* is not a provider of search services and does not have the necessary expertise to conduct statewide, regional, or national searches for qualified building leaders or teachers. PROACT Search will provide necessary search services, primarily for searching for

new principals, but also searching for teachers and other staff members, as necessary. For

additional information please see Part I, D: Work Plan.

(d) The cost to conduct a search for a new principal and relevant staff by PROACT Search is

approximately $30,000. Please see Budget for more specific details.

(e) PROACT's Taxpayer Identification Number is: 263536698.

All other required documentation is provided in accordance with #5 of the Contractual Terms

and Provisions in Appendix A.