A Proposal in Response to the

State of Illinois

Request for Sealed Proposals (RFSP)

From the

Illinois State Board of Education

Now Submitted to

Illinois State Board of Education

Attn: Jason Perry

100 North First Street

Springfield, IL 62777

"Lead Partners to Support

District and School Improvement Efforts

for the 1003(g) School Improvement Grant # 22031496"

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Submitted by

Strategic Learning Initiatives

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Table of Contents

1.3.1. Executive Summary: Briefly describe the overall objectives and activities of the project. Summary limited to five (5) pages.

1. Introduction and SLI's School Reform Model

Strategic Learning Initiatives (SLI), a not-for-profit Chicago school reform agency, proposes, in collaboration with its community partners, to implement as a School Improvement Grant (SIG) lead partner three-year *SLI* demonstration and scale-up projects. SLI's project is entitled the *Focused Instructional Process (FIP)*, which demonstrates how elementary and high schools, through the innovative use of technologies (including utilizing and leveraging the internet) and digital media, can both be turned-around or transformed into high-performing and accelerated learning organizations of adults and children, and be scaled-up at low cost. Such a nationally recognized break-through 21st century model, is a world-class teaching and learning system within schools.

Moreover, SLI utilizes a theory of change that integrates key systemic components for rapid school transformation:

- Identifying the Problem: Low student achievement levels of students of poverty attending schools without either a systemic, research-based model for transformation or access to appropriate technological support.
- Developing a Strategy: SLI integrates a research-based school and district success model which increases student achievement: Rigorous Instruction, Shared Leadership, Professional Capacity, Family and Community Engagement, Culture of Trust, Collaboration, Continuous Quality Improvement, Networks of Neighborhood Schools, and Systemic Problem Solving.

Focused Instruction Process
Model for Closing the Achievement Gap
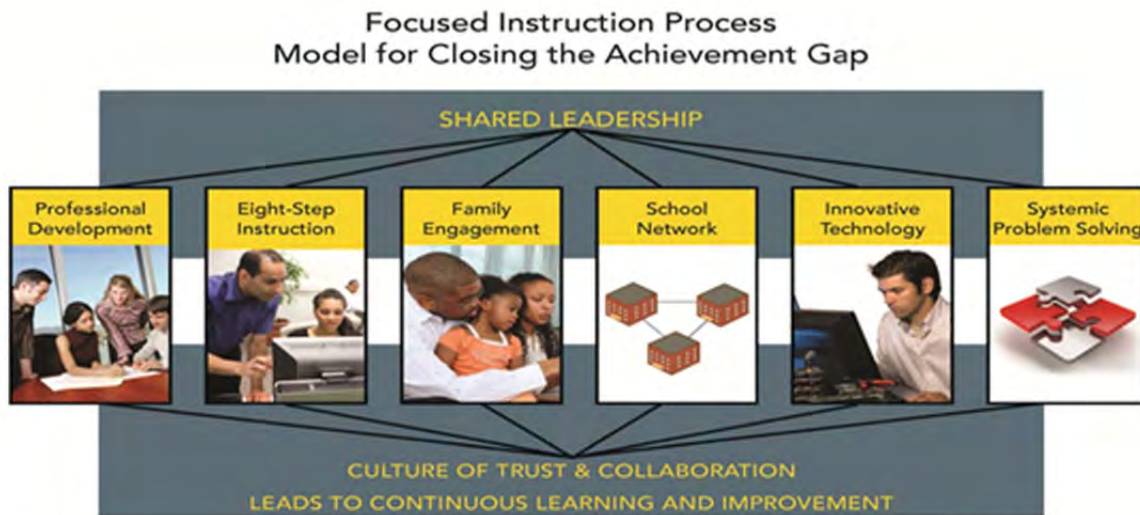
- Clarifying Assumptions: The success of the model depends on buy-in from district leadership and school staff, the commitment to SLI's continuous improvement process,

immediate access to best practice tools, including technology, support for professionals, and an acceptance of change.

- Acknowledging Challenges: Funders and schools have limited funds available to pay for SLI's services. Continuous change of district level vision, priorities, and personnel can be an obstacle for achieving and sustaining high performance.

As a lead SIG partner, the overall goal will be to accelerate improved student and adult performance by leveraging systemic change focused on improving school culture, principal and teacher effectiveness, and family engagement, the primary drivers of student success. Using over forty years of systemic research from high performance schools and businesses, SLI works with low-performing schools to develop a dynamic system of data-driven decision making, professional development and peer support. These elements maximize the value and impact of the organization's processes to sustain and continuously improve positive learning results. Over more than two decades, SLI has worked with more than 70 schools in Chicago, Springfield, Decatur, East St Louis, De Pue, IL, Baton Rouge, LA, Tucson, AZ, and Los Angeles. In Illinois SLI has served five school districts, and three more outside the state, supporting more than 70 principals, 1,400 teachers, and 28,000 students.

SLI believes that a powerful transformation process is within the reach of virtually every low performing school district in the nation. It can be quickly demonstrated and scaled using the resources that most districts had before the economic meltdown began five years ago. Some districts have already begun to implement such processes. They apply the existing, systemic, research-based knowledge from organizations in many sectors of the economy, including education. SLI's programming provides comprehensive assistance to the most challenged schools and districts in the nation. SLI's school reform model reflects an accelerated pace of learning for both the students and adults in the district. Moreover, the school and district leadership focuses on transforming the process of instruction, using school leadership teams plus existing strategies and tools. Finally, the stakeholders learn how to continuously improve their results and sustain them with a commitment to data-based decision making on a daily basis, and sharing the results within and across neighboring schools in the same network. Moreover, SLI project takes advantage of over 40 years of systemic research from education and business. The best results from this research about turbocharging organization performance and instruction have been integrated to create the break through the model, the Focused Instructional Process (FIP).

2. Prior Experience

SLI's prior experience is persuasively illustrated (from 2006-2010) by its work with a network of 8 failing Chicago K-8 schools, SLI, the CPS district leadership, and the schools leadership team partnered to deliver dramatic results with the SLI's Focused Instructional Process (FPI) model. Those results over a two- and four- year period (see bar graphs below) clearly demonstrated that students at the 8 schools involved in FPI had increased their state test (ISAT) performance in reading over two years by 6.5% per year beyond their baseline rate of improvement per year of 1.1% for the average school. This jumpstart is a six-fold increase per year over the two years. At the end of the fourth year, June, 2010, the ISAT average reading score for the eight schools was increasing reading 5 times faster than the average school citywide was increasing. In 2010, the eight schools average increase was 3.4% compared to only a .07% increase in Chicago's city-wide average. Since three of the eight schools jumpstarted their improvement in the first year, and three more jumpstarted theirs in the second year, the fourth year results demonstrated the model's ability to sustain and continuously improve student reading achievement. The four year results of the eight schools have been validated by the American Institutes of Research. This independent evaluation compared SLI schools with comparison sites as part of a quasi-experimental evaluation design. In addition to

these results, SLI has also been able have a major impact on students' academic achievement around the state of Illinois and in California, often in only a year raising school achievement scores several times over what they were before SLI's interventions.

3. Comprehensive Audit *School-Wide Assessment, Orientation, and School-Wide Leadership Training and Coaching:* The first step Strategic Learning Initiatives (SLI), the SIG lead partner, will take in collaborating with school districts or schools will be to focus on conducting an assessment of needs in a wide range of areas; including: the overall structure of the district, curricula, school climate, the quality of instruction, school finances, program effectiveness, human capital, the governance of the district and school system, student achievement, current parent/family participation in school programming, student attendance, mobility and truancy, language needs of students (e.g. Limited English Proficiency needs), special education programming, cultural instructional needs, and substance abuse, school climate, and teacher instructional needs. This assessment process will include an initial interview and audit conducted with the principal and the Leadership Team at each school, as well as a human capital management survey, teacher focus groups, and classroom observations. This assessment/audit will jump-start the SLI's relentless focus on data and on the sharing of information with administrators, teachers, students, and parents/families to contribute to the students' and schools' improved performance. As part of that audit, expectations, roles, responsibilities, and key performance measures and school change metrics will be reviewed and clarified by the school leadership teams collaborating with SLI.

4. Community Involvement and Engagement
SLI's approach to community involvement is to create community schools that are hubs of learning for their communities, where there can be a wrap-around of community resources to serve students and parents/families. It is where community agencies continually contribute major resources to the school. It is where schools are centers of learning both during and after the school day to meet not only the needs of students, but whole families within the communities that surround the school SLI's whole school change and community schools model will function in the following ways: First, SLI and the School Leadership Team will develop close working relationships with school boards, the exclusive bargaining representatives, elected officials, community agencies and existing parent organizations at the school, community partnerships in the school's neighborhood, e.g. hospitals, mental health and counseling services, recreation centers, after-school programs, the park district, and community colleges. In part this will be accomplished due to the presence of an on-site steering committee, which will serve as an effective vehicle for primary planning and leadership. Meeting regularly, this group in tandem with the School Leadership Team will identify how community stakeholders and resources can be brought into the whole school reform process and better address the needs of students, parents, and families in ways that can effectively support community programming.

5. Educational Program
SLI's FIP model has an immediate and once fully implemented, increasingly-positive influence on overall school culture and climate to create a stable learning environment, and improve transitions from one grade to the next. That transformation is the result of growing a community of learners among students and adults, in which high expectations are the norm. Continuous learning leads to the continuous improvement of daily work, which then accelerates closing the achievement gap, including developing shared leadership across grade levels of the building and the district. Primary improvements in school culture will create a positive and stable learning environment as a result of this project.

6. Staffing

SLI's plan for implementing a rigorous, transparent, and equitable performance evaluation system for teachers and principals. In summary, those plans are rigorous in that specific criteria are provided for assessing teachers and principals. In addition, both principals and teachers are evaluated using the specific standards of performance. Those standards of performance are objective in that specific criteria are identified in order for teachers and principals to meet the standards of professional practice. The systems of evaluation are also rigorous and equitable in that multiple sources of data are used to arrive at these ratings, including, e.g.: observations, documents such as units and lesson plans, management plans, student academic performance (using value added measures and additional measures of student growth and development) and case material (e.g. videos, teacher developed resource materials, and individual student educational planning) documenting teacher professional practices. The plans are also transparent in that both teachers and principals are informed in advance as to what the standards and criteria are for levels of performance.

7. Professional Development

Standard components of SLI's comprehensive PD model will include sustained and intensive professional development (PD), which will play an instrumental role in the SLI school reform process. SLI's comprehensive approach to PD is designed around a reform model that substitutes one-time workshops for deeper, sustained learning opportunities for all school staff, with extensive on-going PD sessions (held at least monthly) supported by follow-up support in terms of coaching, demonstrations, and reflection sessions. In this regard, the project will create professional learning communities at each school, a system that has been shown to be effective in enhancing teachers' effectiveness, creating a shared sense of responsibility for students' success, increasing staff satisfaction and morale, contributing to greater likelihood of systemic change, and ultimately impacting student achievement.

8. Organizational Capacity

Strategic Learning Initiatives is a non-profit registered in Illinois under the 501(c)3 statute. The organizational structures include: a Board of Directors, President, Vice President for Operations, Directors of program teams including the Education Program Director, the Shared Leadership Team, Professional Development Team, and Family Engagement team, Comptroller and administrative staff. For twenty years SLI has had an independent auditor issue an Annual Audit Report. SLI staff and resources are able to support work with up to twenty to thirty schools and their districts through contracts, depending on the location of the districts in the USA. SLI has the capacity to work in the lowest income neighborhoods and rural areas with charter schools and regular public schools, with early childhood programs, family engagement programs in independent centers and K-12 schools.

9. Subcontractors

To be written by John
10. Sustained Improvement

Sustaining the project after funding ends will be successfully undertaken because funds received from ISBE to launch programming will be conceived of as seed monies. Staff hired with federal funds will no longer be needed once ISBE support ends, as new organizational structures will have been established to continue the project through, for example, teacher leadership teams as well as school-wide, planning, instructional leadership, grade-level, cross-grade level, lead teacher, and department teams. After the funding ends, school staff, along with

project teachers and partners, will continue their participation as part of their regular professional assignments. In addition, a wide range of systems will have been built at each participating school to ensure that the schools have the capacity to continue the school reform activities developed under ISBE funding by the lead partner. Finally, SLI will work with school districts and schools to develop their capacity to obtain external sources of funding.

11. Outcomes-Based Measurement Plan

SLI's programming has developed outcomes based measurements and indicators for the areas of: (1) leadership and management; (2) increased teacher capacity through comprehensive professional development; (3) students demonstrating continuous improvement in their academic outcomes; (4) community organization and parent/family outcomes; and (5) additional outcomes and indicators required by ISBE.

12. Staffing Requirements

The following staff will be provided for each school for the implementation of SLI's SIG project: Project Director, Process Facilitator, Finance Coordinator, Shared Leadership Facilitator, Professional Development Facilitator, and two Family Engagement Facilitators, These staff will be used as process support, as described in the proposal document, on an as-needed basis for leadership, professional development and family engagement initial training, workshops, seminars, staff, leadership team and administrator coaching and modeling of school improvement strategies and processes.

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1.3.2. Work Plan Requirements: Provide a work plan as specified in the Contract Deliverables
(section 1.4). The project 1.4 deliverables are specified in detail below in section 1.3.

1.3.2.1. Comprehensive Audit: 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.

1. Processes used to perform a comprehensive audit analyzing LEA and school programs, practices, and policies

School-Wide Assessment, Orientation, and School-Wide Leadership Training and Coaching: The first step Strategic Learning Initiatives (SLI), the SIG lead partner, will take in collaborating with school districts or schools will be to focus on conducting an assessment of needs, led by Perry Soldwedel and a team of SLI facilitators, in a wide range of areas, including: the overall structure of the district, curricula, school climate, the quality of instruction, school finances, program effectiveness, human capital, the governance of the district and school system, student achievement, current parent/family participation in school programming, student attendance, mobility and truancy, language needs of students (e.g. Limited English Proficiency needs), special education programming, cultural instructional needs, and substance abuse, school climate, and teacher instructional needs. This assessment will include an initial interview and audit conducted with the principal and the Leadership Team at each school, as well as a human capital management survey, teacher focus groups, and classroom observations. Guiding this audit will be 14 questions:

(1) To what extent is the management system focused on shared governance?
(2) To what extent does the learning environment promote high expectations and student achievement?
(3) To what extent is a comprehensive, clearly articulated, and robust curriculum that is aligned to state standards and the core curricula guiding instruction across the school?
(4) How does instruction focus on the effective delivery of the curriculum?
(5) What academic interventions are available for students who need additional academic support and for those students who are gifted?
(6) What professional learning opportunities that support instruction and learning are provided to teachers?
(7) To what extent do student-achievement data (formative as well as summative) inform academic programming, planning, and instruction?
(8) What problems exist in enabling students to transition from one grade to another?
(9) What staffing practices are utilized to effectively support teaching and learning across the school?

(10) To what extent are financial resources coordinated to priority areas of improvement?

(11) To what extent is there a culture supporting high expectations for student learning?

(12) To what extent has a safe learning environment and a system of equitable discipline been established in the school?

(13) To what extent are parents/families involved in supporting the learning of their children?

(14) To what extent do the broader community and the parents/families involved in the community support the provision of learning opportunity and high expectations for students?

This assessment/audit will jump-start the SLI's relentless focus on data and on the sharing of information with administrators, teachers, students, and parents/families to contribute to the students' and schools' improved performance. As part of that audit, expectations, roles, responsibilities, and key performance measures and school change metrics will be reviewed and clarified by the school leadership teams collaborating with SLI on this project.

First, by employing a Stakeholder Concept Mapping process, a series of focus groups will be conducted involving representative samples of school administrators, teachers, parents/families, and community. School/district programs and services will be identified and reviewed by these stakeholders against a set of questions or criteria in order to generate data about such things as access, opportunity, content, quality, resource allocation, and perceived and quantifiable measures of impact. Such focus groups will be engaged in creating a school community concept map. The process of creating a school community concept map will serve both (a) to identify the domain of learning opportunities that representatives from key stakeholder groups consider to be of greatest import, and (b) to prioritize which opportunities and experiences should be further cultivated and developed within the confines of the school community.

The second step, using data collected during the audit process, will be to: (1) conduct orientation and planning for district superintendents and principals (with a separate executive overview session) and appropriate school staffs to provide an overview of the SLI proprietary Focused Instructional Process (FIP) and the 8 elements needed for school improvement, all of which will set the stage for the projected three-year intervention; (2) review the audit and assessment data collected to co-interpret how those data can drive the proposed project (specifically the development of short-term and long-range goals, metrics, action plans, the use of technology and a program calendar), and (3) determine how technologies can support inclusive leadership, teacher professional development, and student instruction. The third step will be to provide additional days of training, as needed, on-site for all school staff on the implementation of the FIP process (which will occur between the project's first year of leadership training for the District or School Leadership Teams). On-site coaching will be provided for on-going support for the inclusive leadership process.

As appropriate, the leadership training will be coordinated with the professional development programming for school administrators and teachers (see sections 1.3.2.3.5 on professional development). Finally, the data-based analysis of the school change process will enable teachers to address nagging problems that have been difficult to solve. A SWOT analysis of *strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats* will enable the teams to more effectively conduct their planning and the implementation of school change activities.

The Establishment and Function of School Teams to Catalyze and Shape the Behavior of Key Change Agents: In the first year of the project, as part of the school-wide planning process, a number of teams will be established to energize the change process. They will serve as vehicles for participation in the assessment process, in school decision-making, in the joint coordination of the project professional development, and in parent/family participation, all of which will be aimed at creating professional learning communities. The teams described below are examples of those that can be developed at each school. The exact team structures will be tailored to each school and will build upon school teams that already exist at each school.

The SLI approach to school improvement does not require the removal of all staff. Instead, it will develop a highly motivated and able leadership supply of teams for schools and their districts. As part of a response to school improvement, a major charge of the leadership teams will be to design and develop a rapid transformation model aligned with Common Core Standards and 21st Century Standards. The leadership teams will organize, monitor, and adjust all project components to the school improvement plan and school assessed needs, and will work closely with key district and school leaders to coordinate activities and to monitor and support the implementation of the services outlined in this proposal. A priority will be placed on those issues that most affect the school and are most critical to specific school improvements.

In addition, as a lead SIG partner, SLI's project staff will collaborate with the leadership teams to customize the core SLI model to address the priority needs of each district and/or school, based on the assessment conducted above. As part of the educational change process, project staff will offer on-going support to the school district's superintendents or schools' principals in their efforts to share leadership among school superintendents, teachers, parents/families, and students.

School leadership teams may include the following: Lead Teachers, Grade Level teachers, Teachers from Across Grade Levels, and School-Wide Teacher Planning teams. These school-based teams will enable the project to implement the appropriate mix/match from the results of the audit with Strategic Learning Initiatives proven strategies. In addition, networking will be developed across a district's schools. As appropriate, all the teams from the district's schools will meet face-to-face or communicate with one another through distance learning technologies. This team structure will decrease the isolation of teachers, encourage collaboration and shared leadership at the district school level, increase systematic problem-solving, and contribute to the development of a culture of trust, creating a culture of continuous school learning and improvement.

2. Measures for 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

SLI's measures for the comprehensive audit will include those under the audit areas listed below. Providing an overall guide for this audit will be the Chicago Consortium on School Reform's *The Five Essential School Reports.* These audits will draw upon an extensive body of research conducted in Chicago by the Consortium (Bryk, et.al., 2010), which has identified five essential supports necessary for effective school improvement to occur; namely, effective school leadership, the development of teacher professional capacity, strong parent-community ties, a climate for authentic student learning, and a standards-based curricula.   That research identified the five essential supports for school improvement, upon which the *Five Essential School Reports is based.* That instrument is identified below as the FESR.

Overall school structure: A wide variety of measures will be used to assess the overall school structure of the schools in the districts served by SLI. Those measures include: school performance data (standardized state achievement assessments, the ISAT, PARCC, and the PSAE); certification and expertise of teachers in specific subjects; and review of organizational structures and their impact on school performance (e.g. levels of student performance by grade level).

Curriculum: School curricula will be measured by assessing: student academic performance data for grades and subject areas using state achievement tests; a review of curricula to determine the degree to which those curricula are in alignment with State Standards and the Common Core, and the FESR.

School climate: To assess school climate, SLI is proposing that school districts and schools employ the National School Climate Center's Comprehensive School Climate Inventory measure**,** (CSCI) which is a nationally-recognized school climate survey that provides an in-depth profile of a school community's particular strengths and needs. With the CSCI, schools can quickly and accurately assess student, parent, and school personnel perceptions, and get the detailed information they need to make *informed decisions* for their school audits. The CSCI school climate survey is an empirically validated tool that has been used by thousands of educators, students, and parents nationwide. The CSCI measures twelve essential dimensions of a healthy school climate in four broad categories: safety, teaching and learning, interpersonal relationships, and the institutional environment (including two distinct dimensions for personnel)

Instruction: The audit of instruction will be conducted by reviewing such test measures as: ISAT, PARCC, and the Prairie State Achievement Examination (PSAE); and analysis from the Danielson framework, which is described in detail in section 1.3.2.3.4; and the FESR.

Finances: Text yet to be added by John Simmons.

Program effectiveness: student achievement by program area, and grade level; and for special education groups (examples); and the FESR.

Human capital: To measure human capital, SLI is proposing to use either the Aspen Institute or the Consortium for Policy Research in Education/The Wisconsin Center for Education Research, the University of Wisconsin, Madison assessment tools for measuring human school capital. See the URL's below where those processes for measuring human capital are discussed in detail.

http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/docs/education/FrameworkCombined_071708.pdf

http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/publications/workingPapers/Working_Paper_No_2011_02.pdf

The Aspen Institute set of assessments includes the following types of assessment measures: teacher and administrator recruitment, selection, the quality of induction, mentoring, professional development, performance management, staff turn-over and compensation.

Governance system: The governance system will be audited using the school climate survey mentioned above and school administrator and leadership surveys (see 1.3.2.3.4.2 for details); and the FESP.

1.3.2.2. 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 community members about expectations for student learning and goals for improvement.

THE KEY ROLE of COMMUNITY AGENCIES in THE WHOLE-SCHOOL CHANGE PROCESS

1. **A community schools model for wrap-around support:**

   While there are many definitions of what is encompassed by a *community schools model*, SLI's approach has espoused the principles employed by the Illinois Federation of Community Schools. As defined by the Illinois Federation of Community Schools, community schools are institutions that have become hubs of learning for their communities, where there can be a wrap-around of community resources to serve students and parents/families. It is where community agencies continually contribute major resources to the school. It is where schools are centers of learning both during and after the school day to meet not only the needs of students, but whole families within the communities that surround the school.

   More specifically, these principles will be applied within this project's whole school change and community schools model in the following ways: First, SLI and the School Leadership

Team will develop close working relationships with all of the key stakeholder groups; school boards, the exclusive bargaining representatives, elected officials, community agencies, existing parent organizations at the school, community partnerships in the school's neighborhood, hospitals, mental health and counseling services, recreation centers, after-school programs, the park district, and community colleges. This will be partially accomplished through the presence of an on-site steering committee, which will serve as an effective vehicle for primary planning and leadership. Meeting regularly in tandem with the School Leadership Team, this group will identify how community stakeholders and resources can be brought into the whole school reform process to better address the needs of students, parents, and families in ways that can effectively support the school improvement process.

Partnerships with community agencies will enable the project to provide students with referrals for socio-emotional supports and other wrap-around services. Such services will address needs that have been identified and prioritized by the school's leadership team, including socio-emotional supports for students to address issues such as: pregnancy, drug-use, alcohol consumption, violence, anger, depression, suicide, peer problems, and bullying.

Program activities will be focused on the attainment of the following activities: (a) planning and implementing programs for students and intergenerational programs that engage parents/families as partners (including working with the NCLB school committee); (b) coordinating after-school activities with those in-school; (c) ensuring that families are aware of and registered for Supplemental Educational Service programs; (d) working with school staff members, parents, and administrators to align programs with the academic and developmental needs of students, thereby creating a learning community where teachers, parents, and students effectively share ideas and provide support to one another; (e) designing and offering community programs that inspire and imaginatively engage students and parents alike; (f) collaborating with parents to provide meeting places at the school and in the community where parents can meet with one another, attend workshops and classes (such as Family Nights, literacy sessions, computer learning classes, family holiday cooking, ESL, sewing, guitar, and GED), and access free and loaned materials; (g) identifying such parental and student needs as health and social/emotional counseling to extend beyond traditional school programming, and provide activities to meet those needs through community agencies in the neighborhood, providing a wrap-around of an array of services that can be provided to students and parents alike; and assessing other assets that parents have that could contribute to a school's development.

Specific after-school activities at the project school will be tailored to the needs of each school community. For families with unique parental needs, after-school programs will become a critical area within this project's model. Extended opportunities will be created for learning beyond the end of the school day so that students and parents/families can take part in enriching academic experiences and a myriad of after school programs that are aligned with their personal needs. Such programs will be designed and delivered by faculty, students, and community partner organizations. These programs will enable students, parents, teachers, and administrators to collaborate with one another on teams in workshops which will explore how learning can be enhanced and enlivened. All of the parent programs will emphasize how

parents can support students in ways that go beyond teaching just the basic skills to also include the acquisition of knowledge that is truly meaningful to their children. Workshops will explore family themes through several disciplines, including: the integration of reading and writing strategies with visual art, filmmaking, bookmaking, creative writing, and photography. Through this project, families would learn how to support student learning at home and to develop an additional understanding of how they can inspire student learning.

This school community component has benefited from significant research, especially related to the relationship between the community schools movement and enhancing student and parent/family learning (Davies, 2001; Henderson, *et. al.*, 2002, 2004, & 2007; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Kretzman & Mc Night, 1993; Lightfoot, 2003; Moore, 1998; National Coalition for Schools and School Districts, 2001; Rich, 1992; & Weiss, 2005). These research findings, used in developing the project's design, have been inspired by the work of Luis Moll at the University of Arizona (Moll, 2001), which emphasizes the assets and "funds of knowledge" that parents have. This approach recognizes and honors the "funds of knowledge" that parents bring to the school community and will enable parents to take leadership roles as mentors to their peers and as collaborators with teachers as true partners in supporting the learning and development of their children.

2. Parent/Family workshops in literacy, mathematics to support school success and to maintain a culture of high expectations for students:

SLI's Parent/Family Engagement Program, which includes parent/family workshops, will focus on maintaining high academic expectations for students, building school, family, and community partnerships, and strengthening the connection between parents and caregivers through interactive workshops. This approach supports the idea that parents and caregivers are a child's first teachers.

SLI will focus on teaching and coaching parents on how they can become more involved in and more supportive of their children's learning. The SLI model encourages parents to maintain high academic expectations for students and to understand that home is a place of learning, and that parents have a vital role in helping their children to become better learners. The Parent Engagement Program equips and coaches parents and caregivers with knowledge, strategies, and tools that enable them to perform effectively in assisting their children and others.

Parents/families will be recruited into the program by a variety of methods, including sending flyers home with students, advertising the workshops within the entire school via posters, personal direct invitations to parents/caregivers, and phone calls. Participation rates tend to be higher when schools participate in the program voluntarily. In addition, the participation rate is higher when school principals and the rest of the school community are committed to the workshop program. SLI has successfully offered incentives to parents directly (e.g., "bring in another parent to receive a free gift") through promotions conducted within the school to build excitement among parents and caregivers and to increase the all-important and very positive word-of-mouth that this program generates.

A cornerstone of SLI's work in parent/caregiver engagement is that its workshops are interactive, offer easily applied and practical education, and are very hands-on. SLI offers a series of annual participatory hands-on educational workshops for parents/families, teaching them strategies and methods they can use at home with their children to develop students' understanding of concepts and skills. To maintain high expectations for students, parents will be encouraged and coached on how to model learning as a continuous process.
This is crucial in fostering a lifelong love of learning in their children. With topics ranging from reading and math games and nurturing positive self-esteem to highly effective strategies for teens, the SLI workshops give parents useful and effective tools that strengthen learning for the whole family. These tools will help to build leaders in the home and community, and deepen the relationship between parent and child. SLI also will build leaders in the schools by training parents to lead the workshops and by coordinating ongoing parent involvement.

3. School transition workshops and information for parents/families and students:

Parent/family and student-focused workshops also will be available to help inform parents about the transitions across grade levels, from pre-school to elementary school, from elementary school to high school, from middle school to high school, and from high school to college or work. These sessions may include such topics as making transitions to another educational level, financial planning for college, school-to-work program information, helping students achieve high expectations, and human development across the age span. School leadership teams will be asked to provide guidance for these sessions.

Although the strategies described in this section offer a multifaceted approach to parent and community engagement, SLI recognizes that the needs of the school may be broader than what has been described in these foundational pieces. The procurement of additional resources, programs, or partners may need to be secured as a result of the needs assessment and action-planning process. As the Lead Partner for school turnaround, SLI will carefully coordinate and oversee any such additions.

1.3.2.3. Intervention Plan: Address the specific aspects of the applicant's approach for turning around low-performing schools.

1.3.2.3.1. Prior Experience

1.3.2.3.1.1. 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.

Strategic Learning Initiatives (SLI) is a 23-year old nonprofit with proven results in accelerating adult and student learning. The overall goal is to accelerate improved student and adult performance by leveraging systemic change focused on improving school culture, principal and teacher effectiveness, and family engagement, the primary drivers of student success. Using over forty years of systemic research from high performance schools and businesses, SLI

works with low-performing schools to develop a dynamic system of data-driven decision making, professional development and peer support. These elements maximize the value and impact of the organization's processes to sustain and continuously improve positive learning results.
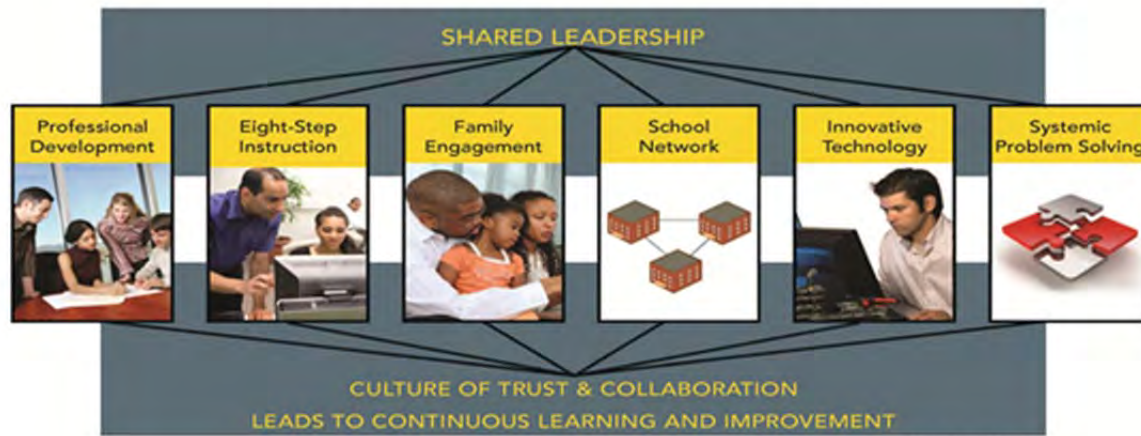
Over more than two decades, SLI has worked with more than 70 schools in Chicago, Springfield, Decatur, East St Louis, De Pue, IL, Baton Rouge, LA, Tucson, AZ, and Los Angeles. In Illinois SLI has served five school districts, and three more outside the state, supporting more than 70 principals, 1,400 teachers, and 28,000 students.

To support this work with school districts and schools, SLI has received a wide range of funding from: the Chicago Board of Education, individual CPS schools, the CPS Office of Early Childhood Development, the Illinois State Board of Education (Federal Recovery Act Funding), plus the generous commitment of foundations, corporations and individual supporters. They have included: The Chicago Community Trust, Cisco Foundation Ford Foundation, Polk Bros. Foundation, Woods Fund of Chicago, Boeing Company, McCormick Foundation, The Prince Charitable Trusts, Lloyd A. Fry Foundation, Motorola Foundation, the Steans Family Foundation, plus anonymous foundations and individuals.

Moreover, SLI utilizes a theory of change that integrates key systemic components for rapid school transformation:

- Identifying the Problem: Low student achievement levels of students of poverty attending schools without either a systemic, research-based model for transformation or access to appropriate technological support.
- Developing a Strategy: SLI integrates a research-based school and district success model which increases student achievement: Rigorous Instruction, Shared Leadership, Professional Capacity, Family and Community Engagement, Culture of Trust, Collaboration, Continuous Quality Improvement, Networks of Neighborhood Schools, and Systemic Problem Solving.

Focused Instruction Process
Model for Closing the Achievement Gap

- Clarifying Assumptions: The success of the model depends on the buy-in from district leadership and school staff, the commitment to SLI's continuous improvement process, immediate access to best practice tools, including technology, support for professionals, and an acceptance of change.
- Acknowledging Challenges: Funders and schools have limited funds available to pay for our services. Continuous change of district level vision, priorities, and personnel can be an obstacle for achieving and sustaining high performance. While implementing change is difficult, it is exciting and rewarding work.

   Strategic Learning Initiatives (SLI) a not-for-profit Chicago school reform agency, proposes, in collaboration with its community partners, to implement a three-year *SLI* demonstration and scale-up project. It is entitled the *Focused Instructional Process*, which demonstrates how elementary and high schools, through the innovative use of technologies (including utilizing and leveraging the internet) and digital media, can both be turned-around or transformed into high-performing and accelerated learning organizations of adults and children, and be scaled-up at low cost*.* Such a nationally recognized break-through 21st century model, is a world-class teaching and learning system within schools. It is exceptional in a number of ways:

   First, Strategic Learning believes that a powerful transformation process is within the reach of virtually every low performing school district in the nation. It can be quickly demonstrated and scaled using the resources that most districts had before the economic meltdown began four years ago.
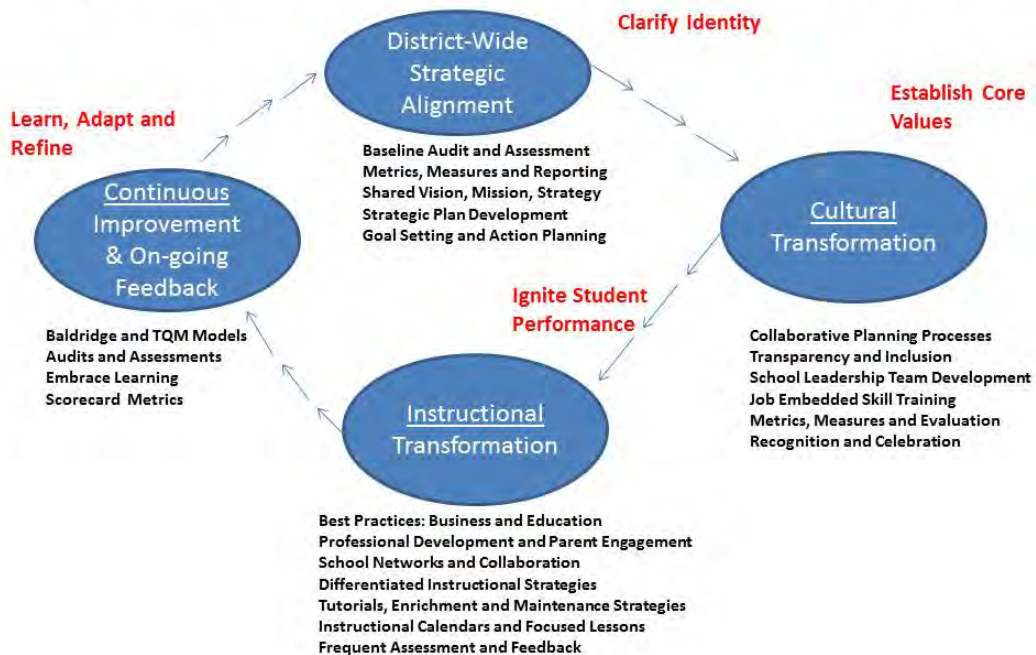
Some districts have already begun to implement such processes. They apply the existing, systemic, research-based knowledge from organizations in many sectors of the economy, including education. Here is what such a process looks like for use in the most challenged schools and districts in the nation.

It begins with a visioning and assessment process aligning the stakeholders in a school district, from the Board room to the classroom. The stakeholders establish the core values and collaborative planning they think are essential to creating and sustaining high academic achievement and social emotional development, from prenatal to graduation and career.

It reflects an accelerated pace of learning for both the students and adults in the district. Moreover, the school and district leadership focuses on transforming the process of instruction, using school leadership teams plus existing strategies and tools. Finally, the stakeholders learn how to continuously improve their results and sustain them with a commitment to data-based decision making on a daily basis, and then share their results within and across neighboring schools in the same network. (See the Diagram below for an overview of the SLI model.)

The remainder of this overview reviews the systemic research that draws the concepts together, and the implementation process that turns the concepts into activities, classroom results and sustainable high performance and stakeholder satisfaction.

Systemic School and District Transformation Process

District-Wide Strategic Alignment
Baseline Audit and Assessment
Metrics, Measures and Reporting
Shared Vision, Mission, Strategy
Strategic Plan Development
Goal Setting and Action Planning

Clarify Identity

Establish Core Values

Cultural Transformation
Collaborative Planning Processes
Transparency and Inclusion
School Leadership Team Development
Job Embedded Skill Training
Metrics, Measures and Evaluation
Recognition and Celebration

Ignite Student Performance

Instructional Transformation
Best Practices: Business and Education
Professional Development and Parent Engagement
School Networks and Collaboration
Differentiated Instructional Strategies
Tutorials, Enrichment and Maintenance Strategies
Instructional Calendars and Focused Lessons
Frequent Assessment and Feedback

Learn, Adapt and Refine

Continuous Improvement & On-going Feedback
Baldridge and TQM Models
Audits and Assessments
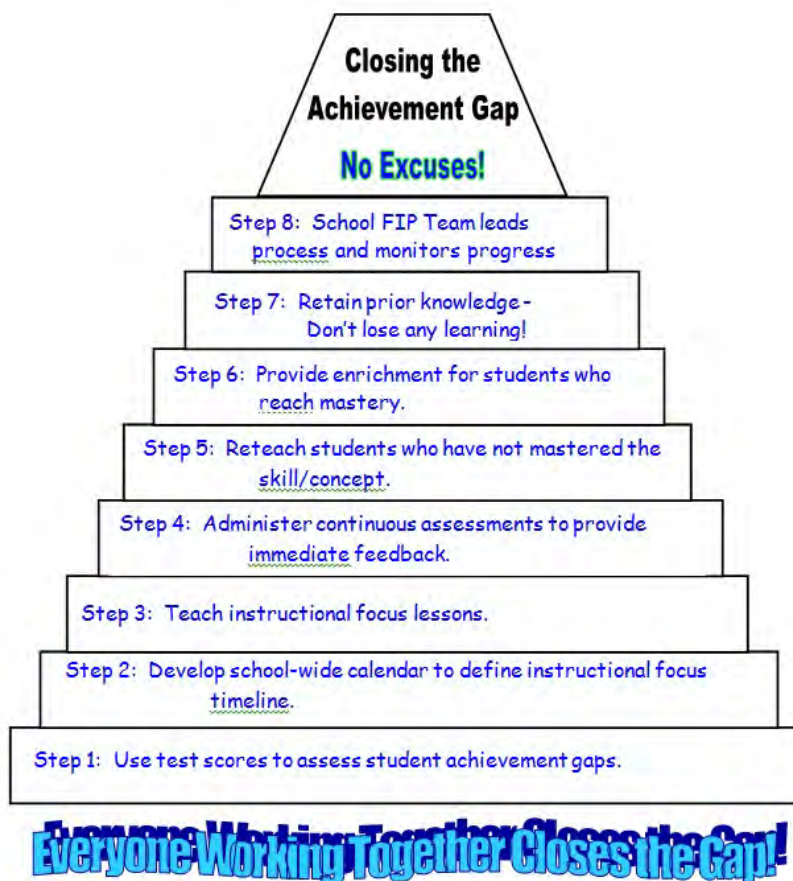Embrace Learning
Scorecard Metrics

Second, cutting-edge internet communications-based technologies, such as distance learning, webinars, and content in digital formats, (interactive visual learning games, graphing and data collection systems, audio, video, and social media) are appropriately aligned with and infused into each of the major components of the project as described in detail below.

Third, the SLI methodology takes advantage of over 40 years of systemic research from education and business. This research focuses on how to turbo-charge organizational performance and learning, and the best of these concepts have been combined to create the SLI break through model, The Focused Instructional Process.

From research in Education, SLI draws on the work of Larry Lezotte on Effective Schools in the 1970's and 1980's, (Lezotte, 1986) and the work of Tony Bryk (Bryk, et.al.; 2010) and his colleagues in the 1990's and 2000's on the Essential Supports. Linda Darling Hammond and Richard Elmore offered new ways of looking at the data to support the idea that all children can learn.

The rigorous eight step instruction process (see page 41 for a detailed description of the eight steps) was identified and developed by Patricia Davenport and Gerald Anderson (Davenport and Anderson, 2002). It works well when integrated with the "plan, do, check, act cycle, one of the organizational transformation strategies" used by Edwards Deming (1982).

Eight Steps for Mastery Learning

Closing the Achievement Gap

No Excuses!

Step 8: School FIP Team leads process and monitors progress

Step 7: Retain prior knowledge - Don't lose any learning!

Step 6: Provide enrichment for students who reach mastery.

Step 5: Reteach students who have not mastered the skill/concept.

Step 4: Administer continuous assessments to provide immediate feedback.

Step 3: Teach instructional focus lessons.

Step 2: Develop school-wide calendar to define instructional focus timeline.

Step 1: Use test scores to assess student achievement gaps.

Everyone Working Together Closes the Gap!

Source: Patricia Davenport and Gerry Anderson, *Closing the Achievement Gap*. No Excuses, Houston, American Productivity Center, 2002

From business, SLI draws on the research and experience of people who created and shaped the academic discipline of organizational development and behavior, plus those who helped create quality improvement and Total Quality Management (TQM). Together, their advocates transformed the performance of firms around the world beginning in the 1960's. This approach is informed by the work of Edwards Deming (1982) and J M Juran(1988) and Masaaki Imai, (I986) and focuses on the process for continuous quality improvement.

Richard Beckard (1969) Edward Lawler (1986) William Passmore (1988) focused on the organization issues along with Peter Senge (1994) and Dick Axelrod (2010).

As individual schools, and then districts, began to use the organization behavior and quality improvement strategies mentioned above, more people, began to research them and write about them. W. Patrick Dolan(1994), Peter Senge (1994) Mike Schmoker (1999 and 2006) and John Simmons (2006) began to integrate and adopt the organization behavior and quality

concepts for use in schools. See the list of references in the Additional Documents section of the proposal.

1.3.2.3.1.2. Specific examples, 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.).

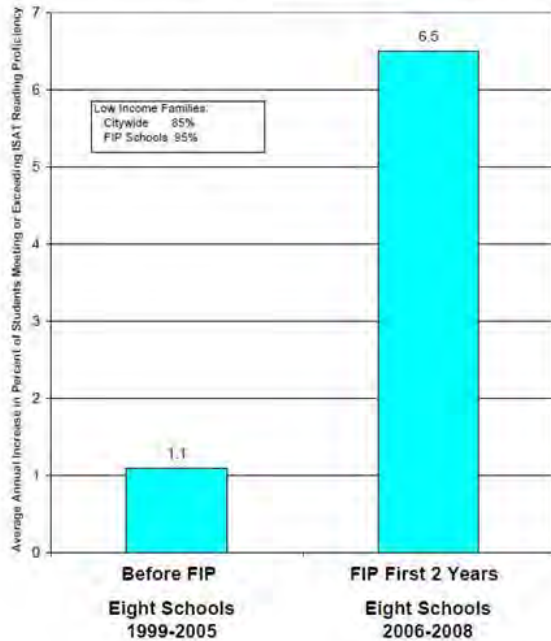### *Summary of Strategic Learning Initiatives results:*

Working recently (from 2006-2010) with a network of eight failing Chicago K-8 schools, SLI, the CPS district leadership, and the schools leadership teams partnered to deliver dramatic results using the SLI's Focused Instructional Process (FPI) model. Those results over a two- and four- year period (see bar graphs below) clearly demonstrated that students at the eight schools involved in FPI had increased their state test (ISAT) performance in reading over two years by 6.5% per year beyond their baseline rate of improvement per year of 1.1% for the average school. This jumpstart is a six-fold increase per year over the two years.

At the end of the fourth year, June, 2010, the ISAT average reading score for the eight schools was increasing reading performance 5 times faster than the average of schools citywide. In 2010, the eight schools average increase was 3.4%, compared to only a .07% increase in Chicago's city-wide average. Since three of the eight schools jumpstarted their improvement in the first year, and three more jumpstarted their improvement in the second year, the fourth year results demonstrated the model's ability to sustain and to continuously improve student reading achievement. The SLI systemic transformation model is described in detail in the Program Details section and at www.strategicleanrning.org.
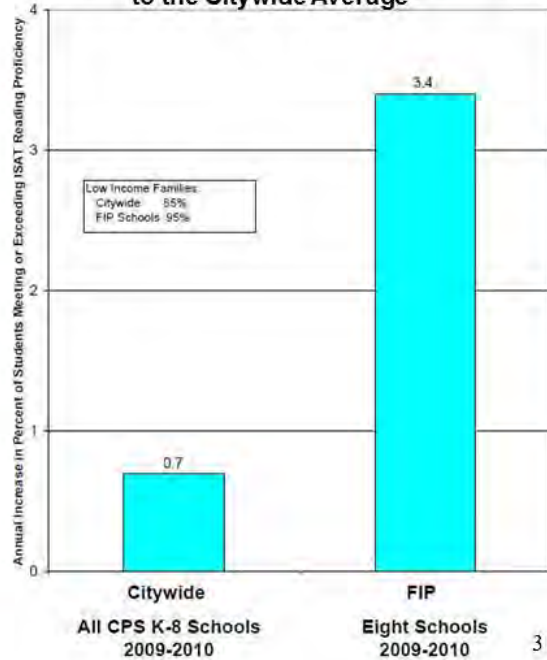
Eight Schools Two & Four Years Later....

FIP Schools Improve Reading 6 TIMES Faster per Year After Two Years Than Before FIP (% at or above Proficiency)

Low Income Families:
Citywide 85%
FIP Schools 95%

Before FIP — 1.1
FIP First 2 Years — 6.5

Before FIP
Eight Schools
1999-2005

FIP First 2 Years
Eight Schools
2006-2008

Y-axis: Average Annual Increase in Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding ISAT Reading Proficiency

FIP Schools Improve Reading 5 TIMES Faster in Year 4 when Compared to the Citywide Average

Low Income Families:
Citywide 85%
FIP Schools 95%

Citywide — 0.7
FIP — 3.4

Citywide
All CPS K-8 Schools
2009-2010

FIP
Eight Schools
2009-2010

Y-axis: Annual Increase in Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding ISAT Reading Proficiency

3

The four-year results of the eight schools have been validated by the American Institutes of Research. This independent evaluation compared SLI schools with comparison sites as part of a quasi-experimental evaluation design. Their conclusions were as follows: "Whether compared to pre-intervention achievement, or to the entire set of Chicago elementary schools, or to a carefully selected set of matched schools, the data suggest that the Focused Instructional Process has resulted in gains that are very unlikely to have occurred without the intervention. Well before decisions are made to reconstitute schools under the mandates of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), school districts would be wise to consider far less drastic, but clearly powerful interventions such as the Focused Instructional Process (AIR, 2008)." The American Institutes of Research's (AIR) full report can be obtained at www.strategiclearning.org.

The above bar charts use the data for the average performance across the FIP schools for all eight schools. What did the performance look like for the school that achieved the highest gains among the eight? In the first year with FIP, Willa Cather in Garfield Park, one of the lowest-income African-American neighborhoods in the city, achieved the largest increase of the eight in their ISAT reading scores. In fact, they were the most improved school in the city out of 473 schools in 2007, based on their ISAT composite score, which includes reading, math and science.

After five years, Cather's combined 3-8 grade scores still had the highest gains per year over

the period. It also out-performed the citywide average in reading, rising from 36 percent of the students at or above proficiency in 2006 to 75 percent in 20011. (See the graph below).

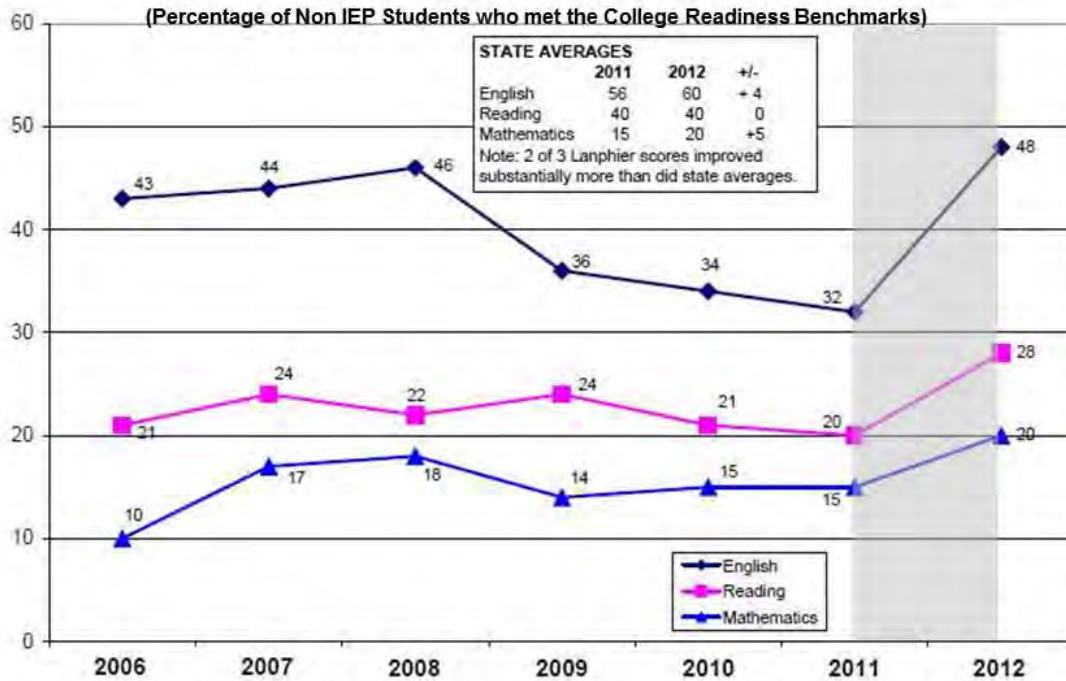Cather's 8th grade scores were in the 90's. A second FIP school Garfield Park, Faraday, had also reached the 90's.

Moreover, SLI's success in implementing the Focused Instruction Model is not limited to K-8 schools. SLI has been working with a number of high schools, six in Illinois, one in Baton Rouge, Lousiana and two in Tucson, AZ.

Lanphier High School School improvement as a result of SLI programming

Lanphier high school in Springfield, IL demonstrates how SLI can have a major impact on students' academic achievement. Lanphier is an urban school with 67% low income families and a student population with 39% African American students out of a total of 1,137. Planning for the Lanphier High School project started in the spring of 2011 and the training was delivered in September, October and November, 2011. As more faculty learned about the impact the process was having on student achievement and motivation, more staff wanted to get involved. By the end of November, virtually the entire faculty, 105 teachers, had volunteered for training. As a result, Lanphier was implementing a full school English/Language Arts Instruction process in all the classrooms by the Middle of December. Lanphier had the highest gain in the ACT composite measure of any of the sixteen federally supported School Improvement Grant (SIG) schools and by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). The graphic below documents how student's academic performance had improved dramatically after only one year of SLI program interventions; reading scores increased on the average from 33.3 meeting state benchmarks to 41.7, an 8.4 percentage improvement. Increases in mathematics were even more pronounced, with an 11.1 increase. This project was undertaken through a SIG sub-contract for the American Institutes of Research's (AIR).
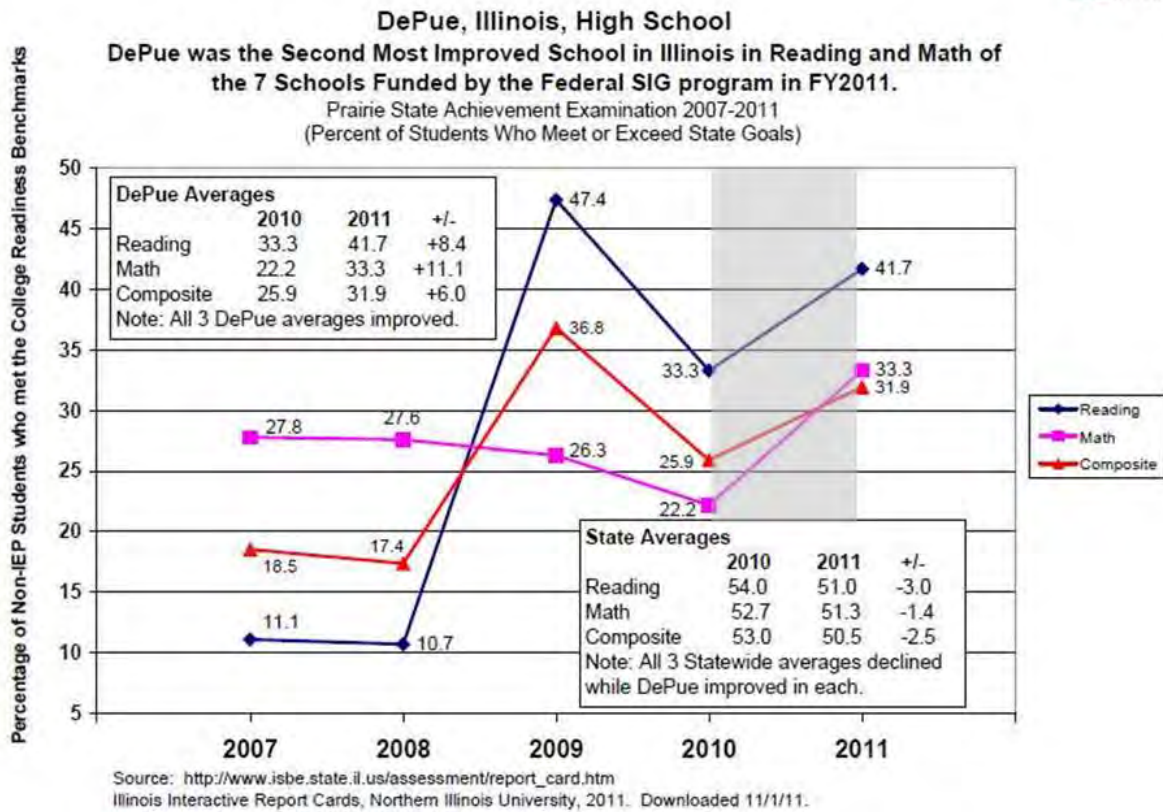
Lanphier High School, Springfield, Illinois
ACT College Readiness Benchmarks Grade 11, 2006-12
Lanphier was the most improved of all the Illinois SIG HS in 2012

(Percentage of Non IEP Students who met the College Readiness Benchmarks)

STATE AVERAGES	2011	2012	+/-
English	56	60	+ 4
Reading	40	40	0
Mathematics	15	20	+5

Note: 2 of 3 Lanphier scores improved substantially more than did state averages.

The shaded area in the chart indicates when SLI's improvement process was implemented. Illinois State Board of Education. Interactive Report Cards at http://iirc.niu.edu/Default.aspx.

9

Another example of how SLI has had an impact on school achievement is in a rural DePue, Illinois High School, a School Improvement Grant (SIG) recipient in Northern Illinois. During the first year, 2010-11, the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks for English Language Arts (ELA) went from 17 percentage points to 35 points, doubling the gain over the prior year. Mathematics also doubled from 7 to 14. Strategic Learning's support focused on ELA and Math. It was the second most improved high school in the State among the nine School Improvement Grant high schools in 2011. This project also was undertaken through a SIG sub-contract for the American Institutes of Research's (AIR).

DePue, Illinois, High School
DePue was the Second Most Improved School in Illinois in Reading and Math of the 7 Schools Funded by the Federal SIG program in FY2011.
Prairie State Achievement Examination 2007-2011
(Percent of Students Who Meet or Exceed State Goals)

DePue Averages

	2010	2011	+/-
Reading	33.3	41.7	+8.4
Math	22.2	33.3	+11.1
Composite	25.9	31.9	+6.0

Note: All 3 DePue averages improved.

State Averages

	2010	2011	+/-
Reading	54.0	51.0	-3.0
Math	52.7	51.3	-1.4
Composite	53.0	50.5	-2.5

Note: All 3 Statewide averages declined while DePue improved in each.

Source: http://www.isbe.state.il.us/assessment/report_card.htm
Illinois Interactive Report Cards, Northern Illinois University, 2011. Downloaded 11/1/11.

Moreover, the table and graphic below provides yet another example of the sustainability of SLI's interventions.   After SLI provided school improvement interventions for four years, Willa Cather showed marked improvements in scores in reading, with a 13 fold increase in student achievement.
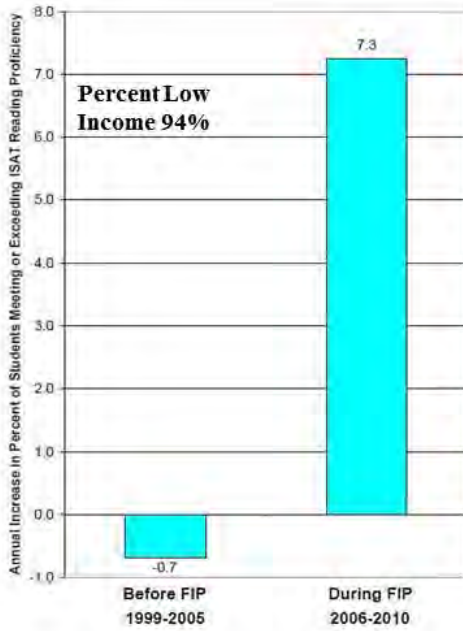
Willa Cather School (K8) 4 Years Later...

Most Improved School of 473 Schools in 2007 & Next 4 Years (Composite Score)

Cather Improves Reading 8 TIMES Faster Across All Grades per Year than Before FIP (% at or above Proficiency)

Cather Improves 8th Grade Reading 13 TIMES Faster per year than Prior to FIP (% at or Above Proficiency)

Percent Low Income 94%

Before FIP 1999-2005 : -0.7

During FIP 2006-2010 : 7.3

Percent Low Income 94%

Before FIP 1999-2005 : -2.5

During FIP 2006-2010 : 10.8
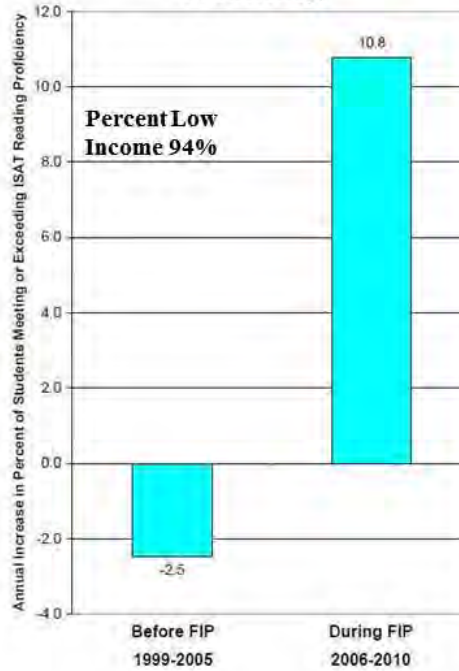
4

Willa Cather Elementary
ISAT Reading Scores, Grades 3-8, 2001-2011
Compared to the Citywide Average ISAT Reading Scores
Before, During & After the Focused Instruction Process(FIP)
(Percent of Students at or above Proficiency)

*Note: The 11+ percent increases in the Cather and Citywide average 2005-2006 is due to a redesign of the test, not to an increase in the skills of the students just before starting FIP.

Sources: CPS isat_schools_2001_to_2011_mexc_yracross_Without_ELL_20110830.xls
isat_district_2001_to_2011_mexc_yracross_by_grade_Without_ELL_20110904.xls

5

SLI has also provided school improvement programming to a Charter Middle School in Los Angeles; namely, Para Los Ninos. As demonstrated in the graphics below, within one year of providing FIP at this school, student academic performance had increased dramatically.

Most Improved Charter Middle School in Los Angeles
Para Los Ninos 2010-2011
(Points on California Academic Performance Index)
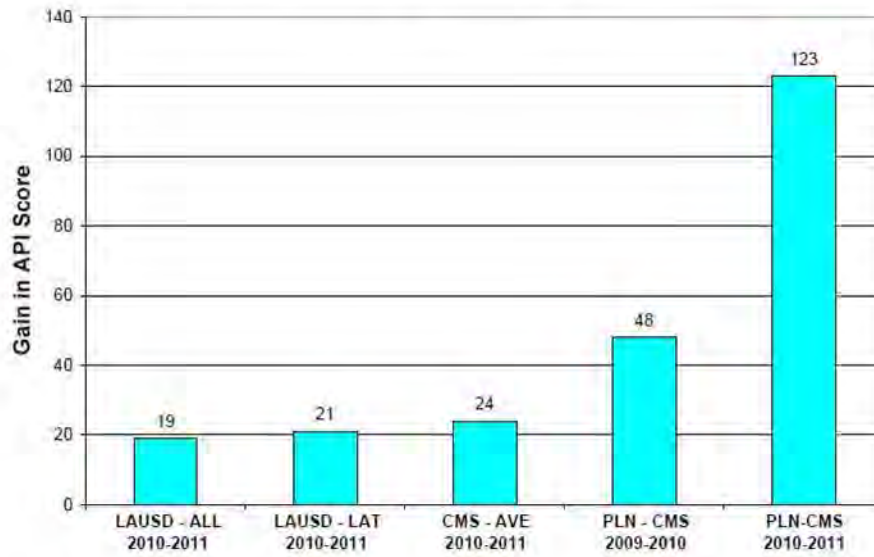
LA Unified School District All Schools Average; All Latino Schools Average;
Charter Middle/Elementary Schools Average. Source: Dept of Ed, State of California

6

Elementary Charter School Turnaround in One Year
Para Los Ninos Los Angeles 2010-2011
(Points on California Academic Performance Index)
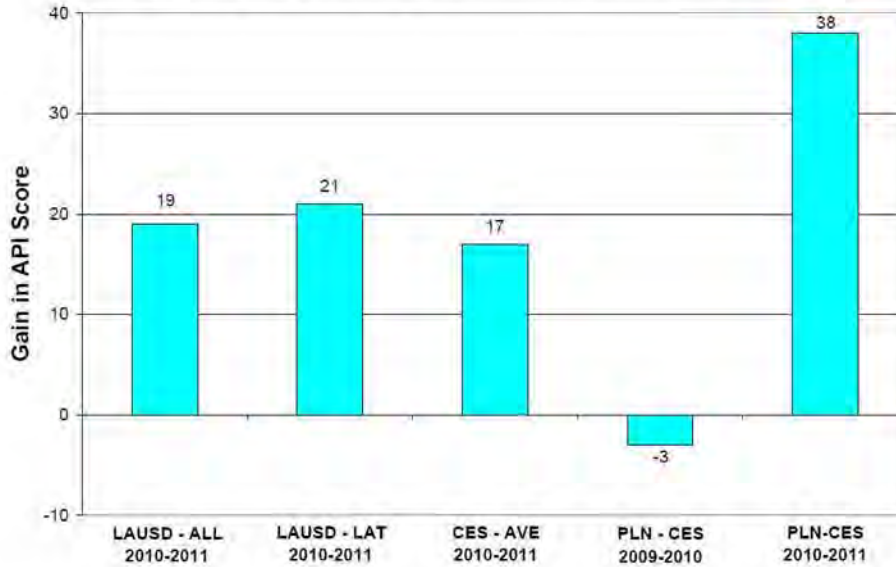
LA Unified School District All Schools Average; All Latino Schools Average;
Charter Middle/Elementary Schools Average. Source: Dept of Ed, State of California

7

Finally, when SLI provided FIP at Eisenhower High School in Decatur, Illinois, after only one year of programming, 50% more students in 9th grade exceeded benchmarks in reading as compared to 8th grade performance (see graphic below).

Eisenhower High School, Decatur, Illinois
Explore Scores for English Language Arts (ELA)
8th and 9th Grades, 2011 and 2012

One Year Later, 17 Percent More Students Met or Exceeded Benchmark Scores
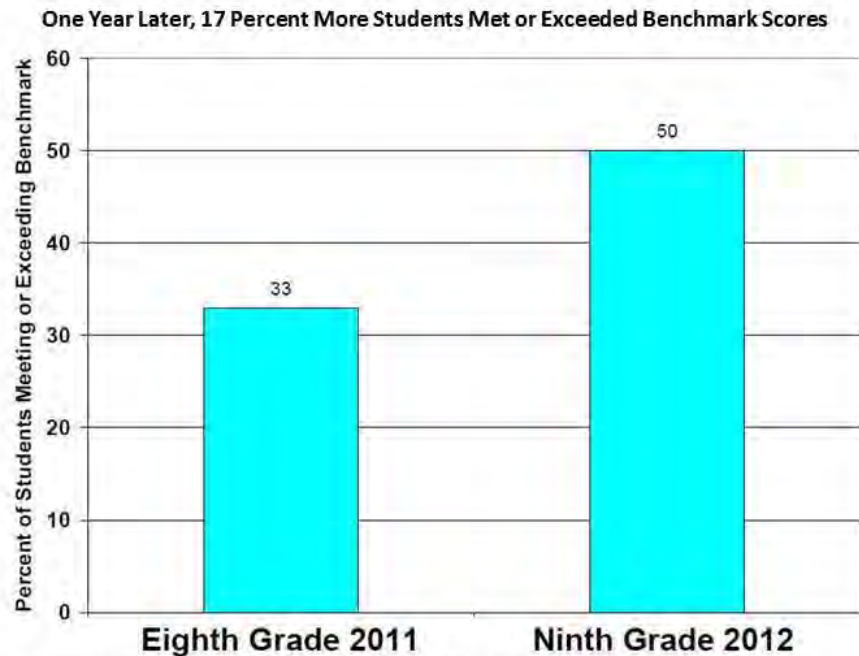
Note: These percentages are based upon the same 200 students in both 8th and 9th grade.

Source: Illinois State Board of Education Interactive Report Cards at

10

1.3.2.3.2. School Reform Model

1.3.2.3.2.1. Describe the organization's framework/model for turning around low performing schools. Include information related to governance and management, instructional design, staffing (evaluation, hiring and retention), professional development, scheduling, assessment, curriculum, and family and community engagement. Explain the State of Illinois RFP 23 Specifications/Qualifications/Statement of Work
V.13.4 research base connected to this model and the conditions necessary to ensure the greatest likelihood of improving student outcomes.

Introduction and overview to SLI's school reform model:

SLI has developed a research-based strategy for turning around low-performing schools. It includes: (1) a research- based and independently validated systemic school reform model, (2) an inclusive governance and management process, (3) an integrated approach to curricula and instructional design addressing diverse student academic needs at all educational levels, (4) a comprehensive process for evaluating, hiring, and retaining staff, (5) sustained and intensive professional development for all school staff that includes onsite training, modeling and

coaching, (6) scheduling to maximize student learning time, (7) on-going assessments to inform learning, and (8) in-depth involvement and engagement of families and community agencies.

To provide school improvement services to Illinois school districts and schools, SLI's overarching goal, as a lead SIG partner, is to accelerate the rate of improvement of adult, student, and organizational learning by applying an expanded model where teams of teachers, students, administrators and parents/families implement a continuous, sustainable, quality improvement process. This research-based *Focused Instructional Process (FIP)* has seven drivers to transform schools, including: (1) Shared leadership on school-wide leadership and grade level teams; (2) A culture of trust and collaboration developed through teamwork; (3) Networking across neighborhood schools; (4) Professional development (PD) of teachers and administrators in .PD sessions, plus coaching/reflection sessions; (5) Rigorous Common Core instruction while implementing an 8-Step Focused Instructional Process (FIP); (6) Parents supporting their children ; and (7) The identification of problems in school-wide, cross-level groups that school staff can't resolve.

1. The research base for the SLI school reform model and the conditions necessary to ensure the greatest likelihood of improving student outcomes:

A school reform model based on recent research: This project's design draws upon the most recent research on improving student achievement (Bryk et.al., 2010; Diamond, 2007; Kochanek, 2005; Payne, 2008).   That theoretical framework views the school as an organizational system composed of essential supports for student learning: professional capacity; an effective school-learning climate; strong parent, school, and community ties; and a climate for student centered learning. This seminal quasi-experimental research of Bryk (2010) and others has persuasively shown that for schools to have the most effective impact on student learning in core subjects, the above-named essential supports need to be present in a program design. Accordingly, this project is designed so that: (1) teachers develop an in-depth knowledge of innovative instructional strategies, (2) students conduct relevant problem-solving in classrooms and after-school through tutoring, mentoring, and academic coaching; (3) parents become engaged in their children's academic progress; and (4) standards-based and student-centered learning is geared to student academic needs in core content areas.

Moreover, this SLI school reform model takes advantage of over 40 years of systemic research from education and business. The best results from this research about turbo-charging organization performance and instruction have been integrated to create the break through model, *The Focused Instructional Process*.

From Education, SLI draws on the work of Larry Lezotte on Effective Schools in the 1970s and1980s, (Lezotte, 1986) and the work of Tony Bryk (Bryk, et.al.; 2010) and his colleagues in the 1990s and 2000s on the Essential Supports. Linda Darling Hammond and Richard Elmore offered new ways of looking at the data to support the idea that all children can learn.
The rigorous eight step instruction process was identified and developed by Patricia Davenport and Gerald Anderson (Davenport and Anderson, 2002). It worked well when integrated with the

"plan, do, check, act cycle", one of the organizational transformation strategies used by Edwards Deming (1982).
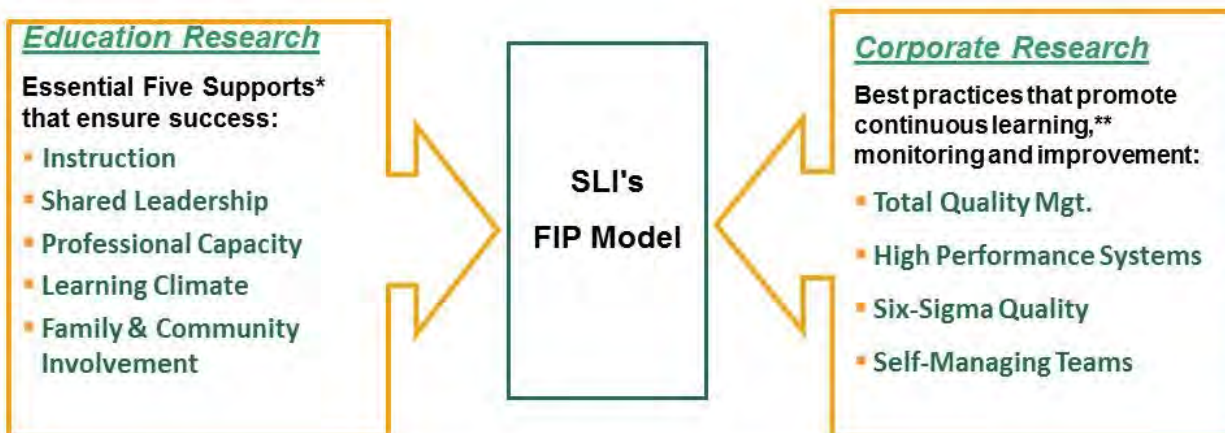
From business, SLI draws on the research and experience of people who created and shaped the academic discipline of organizational development and behavior, plus those who helped create quality improvement and Total Quality Management (TQM). Together, their advocates transformed the performance of firms around the world beginning in the 1960's. This approach is informed by the work of Edwards Deming (1982) and J M Juran(1988) and Masaaki Imai, (I986) and focuses on process improvement and continuous quality improvement.

Richard Beckard (1969) Edward Lawler (1986) William Passmore (1988) focused on the organization issues along with Dick Axelrod (2010). As individual schools, and then districts, began to use the organization behavior and quality improvement strategies, more people began to research and write about them. W. Patrick Dolan(1994), Peter Senge (1994). Mike Schmoker (1999 and 2006) and John Simmons (2006) began to integrate and adopt the organization behavior and quality concepts for use in schools. (See the list of references in the Additional Documents section of the proposal).

Finally, the diagram below, "Stop Guessing: Use What the Research Has Proven," summarizes how some of the key activities from the education and business research identified above that contributed to the SLI school reform model. This research shows that using the Focused Instructional Process, schools will jump-start their standardized state test scores across grade levels 2-6 times faster than prior average progress rates.

Stop Guessing: Use What Research Has Proven

The SLI – FIP Model: Accelerating Improvement

Education Research

Essential Five Supports* that ensure success:
- Instruction
- Shared Leadership
- Professional Capacity
- Learning Climate
- Family & Community Involvement

SLI's FIP Model

Corporate Research

Best practices that promote continuous learning,** monitoring and improvement:
- Total Quality Mgt.
- High Performance Systems
- Six-Sigma Quality
- Self-Managing Teams

*The Consortium on Chicago School Research, University of Chicago, 2006
**John Simmons, *Breaking Through: Transforming Urban School Districts*, 2006.

In line with the research cited above, school leadership teams, with SLI's support, customize school structures and processes to focus the school stakeholders on the unique priority needs of each school. In addition, an extensive process of networking is established both within and among schools to eliminate teacher isolation and support collaboration. Such scaling strategies employed by SLI will demonstrate how break-through, turn-around school change programs can be delivered in a cost-effective manner, utilizing technology (e.g. webinars and distance learning) as appropriate in each project.

The strength of the proposal submitted by SLI lies in its applicability to all K-12 school levels. Aligned with an effective coaching process that uses weekly formative assessment data for the common core standards to monitor student progress and plan instructional interventions, the Focused Instruction Process (FIP) model has repeatedly demonstrated success across K-12 classrooms, in the lowest income neighborhoods around the country. It is a process that is continuously adjusted to meet diverse student needs, providing a level of flexibility that results in better utilization of resources and increased effectiveness.

The basic structure at the elementary school level in which all teachers typically teach literacy and mathematics enables whole staff engagement in the main subject focus areas of the FIP process. This generates a school-wide or whole school concentrated effort focused on improving student achievement.

At the high school level where teachers are subject-matter experts who are not all engaged in these main focus areas of literacy and mathematics, careful engagement of the entire school staff is required. The FIP model is not limited in its application to literacy and mathematics; therefore, regardless of subject area, teachers will be able to engage in the same strategies and processes to improve student performance. The focus of this engagement will center on the "discipline literacy" of specific content areas. For example, the FIP process will focus on the skills and understanding required of students to develop scientific literacy so that they might more fully apply conceptual understandings and knowledge.

At the high school level, the engagement of students in the needs assessment and action planning processes adds a layer of insight into the strategies that will be effective in positively impacting school climate, culture, and engagement. Actively seeking participation by students in the turnaround strategies begins to lay the groundwork for greater student engagement in their own learning.

This approach to high school turnaround works well with the FIP model, with the emphasis on frequent and regular use of diagnostic and formative assessment tools and the collaborative approach to implementation of best practices and strategies for both academic intervention and enrichment.

Strategic Learning Initiatives is skilled in assessing systemic needs and working with its clients to design systematic strategies for improvement. SLI's approach is to work with school and district leaders to effect change. SLI accomplishes this by efficiently and systemically "working the levers" of student achievement to build strategies that enable all students to meet high academic standards. These levers are apparent in the elements of the SLI needs assessment model, where the health of the school system is critically evaluated through rigorous data collection methods. Curriculum, assessment, professional development, leadership supports, and instructional programs are levers that must be aligned in order for a school to effectively achieve a turnaround in student achievement.

A key outcome of the SLI model is increased collaboration among all staff through a process of identifying and resolving problems. This improved way of working together improves classroom results while deepening the respect among all the staff for previously unrecognized creativity, energy and commitment, thus growing a more effective collegial culture. SLI emphasizes that a change in the culture is important ally in the transformation of a school.

While many areas of school change need to be addressed for dramatic, sustainable improvements, research affirms that student-teacher interaction and personal bonding is the pivot point for school turnaround. In order for any school to see improvements in student achievement, significant improvements in the focused interaction of students and teachers must be the central strategy. The Focus Instruction Process (FIP) of Strategic Learning Initiatives is

the key strategy for effecting change in classroom instruction. FIP is a research-based strategy designed by classroom teachers. It is based on the highly successful strategies used by schools and businesses that integrate high performance and continuous improvement principles (Sebring, et. al., 2006; Simmons, 2006).

FIP will provide teachers, principals, and district staff with a powerful framework of new structures and processes for integrating school improvement strategies, which research shows consistently results in significantly improved student achievement. Those strategies are as follows:

- ***A district and school vision, and audit process*** *for rapidly closing the achievement gap* that specifies a process for designing and implementing the support system needed by the schools, based on the Essential Supports for School Improvement (Sebring, Allensworth, Bryk, Easton, & Luppescu, 2006).
- ***Shared leadership that empowers teachers and principals*** *to* make decisions in the best interests of their students. This includes a collaborative approach to developing and sharing effective teaching strategies through a school-wide leadership team, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and grade-level or content area teams within a school,
- **An eight step instructional process** that includes a common instructional calendar across classrooms and schools that keeps administrators, teachers, students and parents/families aligned, continually improving their strategies and tools, and moving toward the shared goal of accelerating student learning (Davenport & Anderson, 2002). This includes the Eight Steps process (see page 41 for a detailed description of the eight steps) and *formative assessments* given to students every 5-7 school days that enable teachers to determine who has mastered a skill from the Common Core Standards and who needs additional help.
- ***Professional development that includes SLI coaching, modeling, and support*** to help teachers and principals implement and continuously improve the instructional process.
- ***Engaged parents/families who help their children learn at home*** lessons that reinforce the skills, as defined by the Illinois and or Common Core Standards, being taught as that week's focus.
- ***The development of a school culture of trust and collaboration among the key stakeholders:*** The teachers, students, parents/families, community members, and administrators are a powerful driver of student achievement (Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Sebring eta!., 2006). When there is trust, people work more effectively together and accomplish more in the same amount of time.

2. SLI's inclusive governance and management approach to school leadership

a. Creating visionary and inclusive school leadership:

SLI also has helped to facilitate a strong school culture through the mission-driven implementation of the FIP model. Both elementary schools and high schools undergoing the Focused Instructional Process (FIP) approach share a mission that is based on the following beliefs about effective schools:

- All stakeholders believe that all children can learn--no excuses.
- High expectations for student achievement and behavior are held by all who convey those expectations.
- An instructional leader creates a shared vision among the stakeholders, a focus, and a plan that leads to the success of all.
- Data drive instruction, yielding measurable results, with all stakeholders accountable for the results.
- Establishing effective forms of performance management.

Although a school can articulate a mission of "all students succeeding" or "lifelong learners," without buy-in from the staff, families, students, or the community, they remain merely words and not a mission that every stakeholder is committed to pursuing. Therefore, the process features the engagement of all key school stakeholders in determining what specific strategies a school needs to pursue in order to improve school attitudes and culture, all of which are critical elements in developing an effective school improvement plan.

From the beginning of the needs assessment throughout the implementation of the intervention plan and strategies, the school's mission and high expectations for students will be guideposts. The School Leadership Team, composed of school administrators, teachers, community representatives, and parents/families will have as a key strategy the articulation of high expectations for students and staff through active engagement and monitoring of intervention strategies, assessments of student progress, and visible actions of accountability. In *Leading Change,* John Kotter describes the importance of articulating a vision of the future picture as a key element in creating transformative change. Through constant communication, careful strategy alignment, and "walking the walk" of accountability, school leaders will model the vision and mission of the school for teachers, parents, staff, and students. In turn, they will ask the entire school faculty to do the same through active agreement and participation in the turnaround strategies and process.

Along with regular and frequent work with grade/department-level teams, SLI will meet on a regular and frequent basis with the School Leadership Team to provide technical assistance and coaching. The focus of this coaching will be to build the school leadership team's capacity to initiate, monitor, and evaluate turnaround strategies, and to establish a collaborative decision-making process. Student achievement and engagement data, classroom observations, and frequent communication with teachers will become structured tools for the articulation of the school's vision, mission, and strategies for turnaround. In addition, the School Leadership Team will focus on developing a community school by engaging community agencies and parents/families in the work of the school so that that school-site can be a hub of community learning.

SLI also recognizes that a principal's evaluation must be ongoing, not an activity conducted solely at the onset of a formal assessment process. The FIP model provides for regular data collection and assessment that can be used as a component of the evaluation process. Student assessment scores and teacher evaluations contribute to the evaluation of the effectiveness of the principal, provide feedback for the principal and leads to discussion about how the school's

leadership can be more collaborative and inclusive. In short, if all aspects of the FIP process are implemented and embraced, research has shown and SLI believes that an improvement in test score results will occur, even within a short time period. Obtaining this result means that the principal is being effective in implementing the FIP process. SLI will work with the school district's principal-evaluation tools and will provide feedback directly to both the district and the principal regarding the ability of the principal to lead the FIP process effectively and rigorously. Feedback on the principal's effectiveness in implementing the FIP process would include the following criteria:

- *Creates a vision:* working toward a shared understanding of the goals and progress toward their achievement; coordinating curricula, instruction, and assessment; and putting forth high expectations for student achievement for all students
- *Translates the vision into action using the plan, do, check, act process:* working with the School Leadership Team, emphasizing school wide goals and expectations, and ensuring that the school has a strong instructional focus on key skills
- *Creates a supportive environment:* promotes an academically oriented, orderly, and purposeful school climate--a safe and orderly school climate conducive to teaching and learning
- *Knows what is going on in the school:* monitors classroom instruction on a regular basis, meets regularly with the grade-level teams to monitor the instructional progress of students, uses data to make decisions regarding the student instructional program and teacher effectiveness
- *Acts on knowledge:* intervenes when necessary, makes the hard decisions on staff effectiveness and its impact on student achievement
- Creates effective performance management standards agreed upon and assessed by the School Leadership Team

b. A Distributed leadership strategy for school transformation:

Although a highly effective principal is needed for a strong school transformation, a strong and collaborative leadership team will enable a school to make lasting change for the benefits of students, teachers, and families. The establishment of a School Leadership Team comprised of the principal, academic department chairs, the assistant principal, the turnaround coordinator, and other specialized teacher roles, as well as the family support coordinator and parents will be a key initial step. Starting with the needs assessment, the School Leadership Team will be involved in the planning for data collection and bringing key stakeholders, including teachers, together for the co- interpretation of the needs assessment as well as action planning. In the event that the School Leadership Team has not been identified, SLI will work with the principal and key district staff to identify key stakeholders to assist with the needs assessment phase as well as participation in planning sessions. Through engagement in the needs assessment and strategy development phases, SLI will assist the principal in selecting the members of the School Leadership Team. Typically, leadership teams in both elementary and high schools are determined at the school level. Our model requires that the team be representative of all groups within a school. At the elementary level, there would be one person per grade (or in a small school (200 or fewer students) one per grade level cluster - primary, intermediate, and upper), a special education teacher, the reading specialist, and/or the curriculum coordinator. At the high

school level, the leadership team would include department heads or a department representative, a special education teacher, specialists, and the principal.

The training and development of this team is a key mechanism for beginning the implementation of the transformation strategy. In order to develop and enhance the skills of the School Leadership Team and principal who will assume responsibility for the design, implementation and monitoring of the process, SLI will establish a system of regular meetings that promotes/enhances shared leadership across the school and shared responsibility and accountability for meeting the needs of all learners. School Leadership Team meetings will be held on a weekly basis. The meetings will be led by the principal, with the assistance of the School Turnaround Coordinator, School Professional Development Coordinator, and Family Support Coordinator, and will be focused on the implementation of the Plan, Do, Check, Act process. The SLI coach will support the School Leadership Team during meetings through the coaching and modeling of effective meeting strategies and by asking probing questions regarding school practices and their impact on teaching and learning at the school. The use of quality tools will be emphasized during the meetings.

3. An integrated approach to curricula and instructional design

a. Collaboratively developed curricula, instructional design, and assessments

The SLI Focused Instructional Process does not require the use of a specific curriculum or specific materials. All lessons including tutorial support and enrichment will be designed by the teachers using various resources and guided by the Common Core and College Readiness Standards. Through collaborative review and planning, teachers will enhance the materials available to them to meet the needs of the students. Moreover, FIP does not require specific curriculum materials. Through SLI's experience, SLI knows that low-performing schools typically lack the curricular supports needed to be successful. Based on the needs assessment, additional curricular supports will be provided.

As a formative assessment process that emphasizes teacher use of data and collaborative reflection on accountability, FIP does require well-developed formative assessment tools in alignment with the standards. Rather than mandating specific formative assessment tools, those resources already in place in the school will be reviewed. In the event that teachers cannot design or are in need of more structure formative assessment supports, SLI has experience with several systems and will advise the school leadership in the selection process. Many schools have opted to purchase an online standardized formative assessment system to support their instructional reforms.

b. The implementation of comprehensive instructional designed services

After data have been used to create a plan, the instructional focus areas for the Common Core and/or College Readiness Standards will be developed. That plan includes the development of the instructional calendar. Areas of instructional focus will be selected from the state accountability requirements and matched to student learning needs. Teachers also will be asked to implement the instructional focus in the following five steps:

1. Posting and highlighting the instructional focus at the beginning of class when student attention is at a peak
2. Building upon success and student's prior knowledge with a warm-up of previously covered standards-based material to maintain and retain student understanding.
3. Delivering a lesson plan focused on the new standards.
4. Guiding practice to reinforce the new skills and concepts.
5. Assessing for understanding, enriching, and remediating when necessary.

The FIP instructional delivery will be aligned with school curricula. After a focus lesson has been taught for a period that is determined by the leadership team designed instructional calendar, that skill will then be tested/assessed. Based on the results of this assessment, students will be assigned to a success group for re-teaching, or enrichment. At this point, the students will undergo additional lessons at their appropriate level (i.e., re-teach, maintenance, or enrichment) for another period as designated by the instructional calendar.

c. An instructional design effectively supporting student academic growth

Based on the results of the assessments, students will be grouped for "Success Time" in two groups:

1. Tutorials/re-teach-students who missed three or more questions demonstrating a lack of mastery of the skills
2. Enrichment group--students who demonstrated mastery of the skills by missing only one or none of the questions

Success time occurs for approximately 30 minutes, at least four times a week. The purpose of this is to address students' individual needs in mastering the focused skill. Because students have been regrouped after each lesson cycle, student needs in specific skill areas will be carefully met.

Vertical alignment of the program will be achieved in several ways. During the needs assessment phase, the school and district curriculum will be assessed for alignment to the Common Core and College Readiness Standards for both content and cognitive demand. Vertical alignment will be maintained throughout the initial phases of implementation through vertical sharing of student data and lesson plan strategies. In the event that vertical articulation of the curriculum is deemed a high-needs area or a strategy for dramatic improvement through the needs assessment or initial phases of implementation of the FIP model, the School Leadership Team will be advised of strategies to improve curriculum alignment.

4. A Comprehensive process of evaluating, hiring, and retaining staff

SLI will collaborate with school districts and schools to develop comprehensive processes for evaluating, hiring, and retaining staff. Detailed systems for evaluating teachers and principals are provided in sections 1.3.2.3.4.1 and 1.3.2.3.4.2. Those sections describe in detail how SLI proposes to use the Charlotte Danielson framework for evaluating teachers and for

principals, the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders Rubric Evaluating the Practice of Principals.

In the case of hiring school staff, SLI will collaborate with school districts and schools on plans to recruit teachers and principals from institutions of higher education in Illinois. That hiring will be based on the need for teachers at various grade levels and in academic areas identified under the audit process described at the beginning of this document. SLI will review with school districts their policies to ensure that they are consistent with affirmatively hiring diverse school staff.

Accordingly, for any vacant positions in the school district or in schools, SLI will review with the School Board and administrative staff the following possible procedures that can be used to encourage applications from individuals from a wide range of backgrounds. In this recruitment effort for personnel, the following initiatives could be undertaken for every search and screen:

a. Job announcements will be posted in community agencies and businesses in the target school areas, and ads will be placed in a variety of local newspapers, including those frequently read by residents of the areas served by the grant.

b. Job announcements also will be sent to local schools, colleges, and neighborhood community centers.

c. Letters describing the positions open will be sent to local schools and organizations involved in the project.

d. Public affairs announcements of the positions will be made on local T.V. and radio stations and at community meetings in the target area.

Other procedures that will be used to aggressively recruit personnel:

a. Before a search is undertaken, the school administrators will meet with SLI to insure that all procedures followed are consistent with state and federal laws and school district policies mandating nondiscrimination and affirmative action in employment.

b. The school superintendent or the principal will interview candidates using Martin Haberman's interviewing process (1995), which focuses on such areas as leadership, persistence, organization and planning, values towards student learning, integrating theory and research into practice, approaches to serving students at risk, how to effectively function within a bureaucracy, explanations as to what makes a successful principal or teacher, and factors that enhance student success like holding high expectations for learning.

c. As part of the search and screen effort, advertisements will be placed in a variety of local newspapers in addition to those listed above (including those frequently read by minority persons). All ads will include the following type of statement: "The school district is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer and Invites Applications from Women and Minorities as well as Other Qualified Individuals."

d. In order to attract candidates from those groups traditionally under-represented, letters and announcements will be sent to organizations representing those groups such as the Council for Opportunities in Education, the Illinois Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel, the Chicago Urban League, Women in Higher Education, LULAC (the League of United Latin American Citizens Educational Centers), and Centro Nuestro.

f. Before the final hiring decision is made, the Director of Diversity Access and Equality of the University will certify that the procedures followed by the Student Support Services director have been consistent with state and federal laws and district policies.

In order to effectively retain principals and teachers, SLI will review with school administrators how effective programs of induction can be established, which include programs of professional development (PD) and mentoring focused on the needs of teachers and principals in the initial years of service at their schools. Those PD programs will be job imbedded, based on the latest research on effective teaching and administrative practice, as well as teacher and principal needs. For teachers, the Danielson framework will be used to guide the character of the PD and the induction programming for teachers. The domains of that induction program are discussed in detail in section 1.3.2.3.4.1. Likewise the principal PD will be guided and informed by the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders and the Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders Rubric Evaluating the Practice of Principals. A description of that process and how principals can become effective instructional leaders is provided in sections: 1.3.2.3.4.1 and 1.3.2.3.4.2. Finally, SLI will explore with school administrators how incentives for growth and advancement, can be provided for teachers and principals, along with the use of systems documenting both teacher and principal performance, in part through value-added teaching administration and teaching based on student academic performance.

5. Sustained and intensive professional development for all school staff

Introduction: Sustained and intensive professional development (PD) will play an instrumental role in the SLI school reform process. SLI's comprehensive approach to PD is designed around a reform model that substitutes one-time workshops for deeper, sustained learning opportunities for all school staff, with extensive on-going PD sessions supported by follow-up support in terms of coaching, demonstrations, and reflection sessions. In this regard, the project will create professional learning communities at each school, a structure that has been shown to be effective in enhancing teachers' effectiveness, creating a shared sense of responsibility for students' success, increasing staff satisfaction and morale, contributing to greater likelihood of systemic change, and ultimately impacting student achievement (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006; Hord, 1997; Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 1997). The project's focus on school-wide and grade level teams is an approach which helps schools to sustain improved teaching practice beyond the life of PD services (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). The content of SLI's focus on developing teachers' content knowledge and understanding of how students learn content, as recommended by research (Cohen and Hill, 2000; Kennedy, 1998; Supovitz and Turner, 2000).

a. Professional development for school leadership teams:

School Leadership Team meetings will be held on a weekly basis, with technical support from SLI staff. The SLI coach will support the School Leadership Team during meetings through the coaching and modeling of effective meeting strategies and by asking probing questions regarding school practices and their impact on teaching and learning at the school. The use of the eight step instructional process and development of a culture of collaboration and mutual respect within the school community, behavior management, including positive behavior supports, will be emphasized during the meetings.

The School Leadership Team will participate in process checks designed to share successful teaching strategies, problem-solving processes and challenges, and plans to take next steps in the improvement of student learning.

Ongoing support of the principals and the School Leadership Team will be provided by the SLI shared leadership coaches. Based on the school's needs assessment and intervention plan, professional development will be provided on an ongoing basis throughout the school year. High school and elementary schools would operate in the same manner to develop leadership skills through PD.

b. Professional Development (PD) for teachers to provide cutting-edge teaching strategies and student academic supports and intervention to meet the diverse needs of learners:

The professional development that teachers experience during FIP provides them with new teaching and learning strategies. FIP is largely organic in terms of a teacher's professional development. Each of the eight steps (see below for a detailed descriptions of the eight steps) of the process will empower teachers to communicate better with their students, with parents and guardians, with other teachers, and with district-level officials. It will have a cumulative effect of establishing truly shared leadership within a school.

More specifically, FIP will begin with a series of workshops whereby teachers learn how to incorporate the eight steps of the process into their curricula. Teachers will transfer information to students through the standards-based FIP focus lesson. Through the focus lesson step, skills are highlighted that allow students a vehicle for navigating and comprehending knowledge in all content areas in a meaningful way. As the process begins to unfold, improved teaching results lead to improved learning, which leads to continuous improvement of daily work. The final results are what every teacher strives for: students' improved comprehension of written text, which leads to improved higher order thinking skills. Based on school choice of content implementation, this same process will be used in problem solving across school subjects.

Through continually communicating with one another in weekly planning time about lesson planning, re-teaching, and enrichment, teachers will undergo a transformation in communication and delivery of instruction, and they will receive the myriad benefits of teamwork. By the end of Year One of the process, the teachers will be pleased with what they will have accomplished, individually as well as with their colleagues. Teachers will have built much tighter bonds within

their schools through creating an atmosphere of trust through collaboration. Improved teacher skills, closer collaboration, and greater trust will be the end results of the FIP process, as well as demonstrably improved student achievement and improved student and teacher morale. Teachers will also participate in regular all-staff meetings at the school to keep them abreast of and engaged in the other, non-instructional elements of the school turn around. As part of this FIP approach, teachers will undertake the following eight step instructional process in their PD sessions:

(1) **Test Score Disaggregation**: Teachers under this step will use standardized achievement scores to identify and address any gaps in academic achievement within each classroom so that students can take ownership of their test performance.

(2) **Developing an instructional calendar**: Teachers also will design instruction according to a time-line that emphasizes areas of greatest student need. These calendars will outline weekly objectives for classrooms, which will be shared throughout the school, to identify common problems and targets for improvements in instruction.

(3) **Delivering the instructional focused lesson**: Teachers will use classroom time to provide lessons focused on student academic needs, while at the same time choosing to use instruction that draws upon strategies acquired in PD workshops.

(4) **Administering frequent assessments**: After the instructional focused lessons have been taught, teachers will administer assessments to determine whether students have mastered the content and skills taught. Students will also monitor their own progress by using computers to graph their progress to provide added motivation for students to achieve mastery.

(5) **Using tutorials to re-teach non-mastered focused areas to meet the needs of learners with diverse academic needs**: For non-mastered target content and skills, tutorial time will be provided so that students can attain mastery.

(6) **Providing enrichment opportunities for mastery students**: Students who have mastered the basic academic content will have opportunities to engage in higher-level forms of critical thinking and additional digital media technologies, which will challenge students intellectually so that instruction is more ambitious.

(7**) Reinforcing learning through maintenance**: To reinforce the learning that has occurred, students will be provided with materials to ensure on-going maintenance and re-teaching of content knowledge and skills.

(8) **Monitoring student performance**: As part of the Focused Instructional Process, the principals will play a critical role as instructional leaders by continuously collaborating with teachers in reflecting on and improving classroom instruction and devising strategies for students to attain even higher levels of performance.

6. Scheduling to maximize student learning time

a. Extending student learning time: An approach to master scheduling to maximize learning time:

Research by Marzano (2003) estimates that students have approximately 1,008 instructional hours during the course of a school year, assuming a school calendar of 180 days and approximately 5.6 hours per day devoted to instruction in all academic areas. For students who are well below grade level and in schools with poor student performance, additional time in the school day is needed to close achievement gaps. An additional one hour of time per school day would add 180 instructional hours or 30 instructional days to the school year. This would

significantly increase time for core academic subjects, targeted academic intervention for students, and enrichment.

One use of this additional time will be for the implementation of Success Time, a key instructional intervention and master scheduling strategy of the FIP model. As stated earlier, within the FIP model, one period per day (30 minutes) is set aside to re-teach or enrich a skill that was taught previously. Groups are formed on the basis of results of the FIP skill assessment administered according to the FIP Calendar of Skills. Instruction in Success Time is delivered in several ways, depending on the amount of staff available within a school building:

- Based on skill assessment results, students are grouped homogeneously in one classroom for the 30-minute period.
- Students are placed in their respective groups all in one classroom, with the teacher and at least one other adult for the 30-minute period.

As an approach to master scheduling, each of these models and a combination of the two has been successfully implemented in SLI schools. Some SLI network schools have used the FIP model in their afterschool programs. Most implement this time during the school's regularly scheduled reading and mathematics blocks.

The best approach for each school will be determined by the School Leadership Team during the needs assessment and action planning phases. One critical aspect of this determination will be the availability and effectiveness of the schools' existing afterschool programs.

b. Extending teacher collaboration time: An additional approach to master scheduling:

An additional hour per school day will provide additional schedule flexibility to the school's master schedule. This flexibility will enable the master schedule to accommodate time for teacher collaboration by grade-level or department-level for the purposes of collaborative review of formative assessment and progress monitoring of student learning. Based on these formative assessment pieces, teachers also will be planning lessons and activities to focus on the development of student conceptual knowledge and skills. The FIP intervention model requires collaborative teacher preparation time to review student results on formative assessment, development of lessons plans, and the organization of the Success Time learning blocks. Frequent and regular teacher collaboration time and activities will be woven into the school schedule and serve as a primary vehicle for school turnaround strategies.

c. Enrichment time for students as part of master scheduling:

SLI will explore with each school district how time could be utilized in a different way. For example, the addition of an hour a day to the school schedule could provide for a variety of student support and enrichment activities. Moreover, the Strategic Learning Initiatives model provides for the flexible grouping of students during Success Time when students who have demonstrated proficiency on skills and concepts receive extension and enrichment.

7. On-going assessments to inform learning

a. Conducting frequent assessments

After the Instructional Focus Cycle has been taught, a formative assessment (a standardized test) will be administered to identify mastery and non-mastery students. Using a best case scenario, this assessment will be scored and results will be posted within 24 hours.

After the assessments, it is important that the teachers meet together to review how different classes and students fared on the tests. Teachers will meet weekly to discuss this stage of the process, thereby improving intra-teacher communication. During these meetings improvement ideas can be shared. Teachers will meet on a regular and frequent basis to review the skills-focused assessments and plan for such interventions

b. Effectively acting on the assessments to support student academic growth and student intervention support:

Based on the results of the assessments, students will be grouped for "Success Time" into two groups:

1. Tutorials/re-teach-students who missed three or more questions, thus demonstrating a lack of mastery of the skills
2. Enrichment group--students who demonstrated mastery of the skills by missing only one or none of the questions

Success time occurs for approximately 30 minutes, at least four times a week. The purpose of this is address students' individual needs in mastering the focused skills of the week. Because students have been regrouped after each lesson cycle, student needs in specific skill areas will be carefully met.

Vertical alignment of the program will be achieved in several ways. During the needs assessment/audit phase, the school and district curriculum will be assessed for alignment to the Common Core and College Readiness standards for both content and cognitive demand. Vertical alignment will be maintained throughout the initial phases of implementation through vertical sharing of student data and lesson plan strategies. In the event that vertical articulation of the curriculum is deemed a high-needs area or a strategy for dramatic improvement through the needs assessment or initial phases of implementation of the FIP model, the School Leadership Team will be advised of strategies to improve curriculum alignment

c. A plan to employ specific student achievement assessment data to improve student academic performance and to provide intervention support for students:

Pre-School Grades: SLI will use the following types of assessments at the pre-school grade levels: Developmental: the Batelle Developmental Inventory; Cognitive: the Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Early Development Revised; Communication: the Comprehensive

Receptive and Expressive Vocabulary Test and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test; Social-Emotional: the Social Skills Rating System of the American Guidance Service or school forms of this instrument.

Grades K-2: SLI in the past has used data from the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) tests as well as from curricula-based tests. (Oral language skills are covered in the DIBELS tests.)

Grades 3-8: The Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT), Chicago Public Schools District benchmark assessments and/or other district assessments have been used by SLI in the past as relevant, grade-level curriculum measures (as they relate to the curriculum being used in the school), and other classroom indicators of student academic achievement will be disaggregated by grade level, class, and student.

Grades 9-12: At the high school level, the Prairie State Achievement Test (PSAT) and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) tests will be used, as well as tests relating to specific curricula. In other words, the data is broken down or "sliced" so that there is information on how each student, in every class, performs on each test. Data analysis will be ongoing, usually every six to seven days. The data analysis will be specific enough to provide instructional direction for individual students, but also general enough to demonstrate trends and direct teachers' instructional program. Assessments will be used as a continuous tracking tool to identify any problems a student may have learning a specific standard. Data will be used for the purpose of determining weak and strong areas. Data not only will evaluate students, they also will evaluate instructional effectiveness in teaching specific content and skills. Students in this way will learn what they are taught. Continual reflection on the part of teachers on the effectiveness of their instructional strategies is a key component of this process. From this analysis and reflection, teachers will continue to plan for instructional interventions for individual students and upcoming lessons.

8. In-depth involvement and engagement of families and community agencies in the SLI school reform process

a. A community schools model for wrap-around support:

Section 1.3.2.2 describes in detail above the community schools model that will be employed by SLI in its programming with school districts and schools. A summary of SLI's community schools model is provided in this section. Under this model, SLI schools are centers of learning both during and after the school day to meet not only the needs of students, but whole families within the communities that surround the school. Partnerships with community agencies will enable the project to provide students with referrals for **socio-emotional supports and other wrap-around services**. Such services will address needs that have been identified by the school's leadership team, including socio-emotional supports for students to address issues such as: pregnancy, drug-use, alcohol consumption, violence, anger, depression, suicide, peer problems, and bullying.

Program activities will be focused on engaging parents as partners, working with school staff to align programs with the academic needs of students, and designing and offering community programs that inspire and imaginatively engage students and parents alike in improving student academic achievement.   Such collaboration with community agencies will provide a wrap-around array of services provided to students and parents; and assessing assets that parents have that could contribute to the school's development. Moreover, through SLI's community schools model, specific after-school activities at the project school will be tailored to the needs of each high school community.

To contribute to the alignment of those programs with those unique parental/family needs, after-school programs will become a critical area within this project's model. In this way, extended opportunities will be created for learning beyond the end of the school day so that students and parents can take part in enriching experiences in the arts and a myriad of after-school programs that mirror and are aligned with their personal needs. Such programs will be designed and delivered by faculty, students, and community partner organizations. These programs will enable students, parents, teachers, and administrators to collaborate with one another on teams and in workshops which explore ways in which learning can be enhanced and enlivened. Such an approach recognizes and honors the "funds of knowledge" that parents bring to the school community.

This will result in parents taking leadership roles in the school so that they can be mentors to their peers and can collaborate with teachers as true partners in supporting the learning and the college readiness of their children. A cornerstone of SLI's work in parent/caregiver engagement is that its workshops are interactive, offer easily applied and practical education, and are very hands-on. SLI offers a series of annual participatory hands-on educational workshops for parents, teaching them strategies and methods they can use at home with their children to develop students' understanding of concepts and skills. To maintain high expectations for students, parents will be encouraged and coached on how to model learning as a continuous process, which is crucial in fostering a lifelong love of learning in their children. With topics ranging from reading and math games and nurturing positive self-esteem to highly effective strategies for teens, the SLI workshops give parents useful and effective tools that strengthen learning for the whole family. These tools will help to build leaders in the home and deepen the relationship between parent and child. SLI also will build leaders in the schools by training parents to lead the workshops and by coordinating ongoing parent involvement.

1.3.2.3.2.2. 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.

The research on improving district policies and practices of both district superintendents and the staff of central offices emphasizes the importance of improving the processes used in managing various activities (Simmons, 2006; Imai 1986; Schmoker, 2001). These processes can range from the process teachers use in designing and delivering their classroom lessons, like the Eight Step Process the SLI model uses in this proposal, to the process that the district

uses for designing and continuously improving the bus service on a daily basis (See section 1.3.2.3.1.1).

Continuous process improvement is the most important strategy for transforming results in most schools and districts as there is wide variance between what the expectations are and what is actually being done. There is also wide variance between best practice and current practice. ISBE's Rising Star provides an excellent framework for determining effective practices. In Rising Star, Wise Ways provides the research base. District and school leaders would need to examine current policies, procedures and practices; comparing them with effective practice; updating; communicating; aligning with performance expectations for leaders and teachers; implementing with fidelity; monitoring, tracking and reporting results.

   Here's an example from Strategic Learning Initiatives' four year agreement with the Chicago Public Schools, beginning in 2006, which customized and implemented SLI's Focused Instruction Process in partnership the Chief Education Officer of the CPS. The school leadership teams met three to four times each year in a "Process Check" to review what was working and what needed improvement in SLI's Eight Step Process and developing and sharing their action plans for its improvement. In each of the 8 schools, grade level teams of teachers met weekly to review the data from their assessments of the Illinois Reading Standards and continuously improve the design of their lessons and the process of "Success Time" where students either worked to master Standards they hadn't mastered or had additional activities to reinforce their learning. Principals of the 8 schools met regularly to look at processes they wanted to strengthen like providing feedback to teachers. Four times a school year the SLI team met with the Chief Education officer or Deputy and the assistant superintendents to review the implementation process for the SLI model and identify what was working and what needed improvement, and developed an action plan for implementing improvements.

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

Month	School	District
One	a. Meet with school administration, school leadership team and parent/community members to review transformation process and begin to build leadership capacity to support the process implementation b. Conduct a needs assessment/audit to determine school	a. Meet with district leaders to review transformation process and begin to build support for process implementation. b. Set up a system of communication with district leaders to assist in process monitoring, supporting and sustaining identified school

	strengths, challenges and priorities for improvement. c. SLI will identify a team of SLI consultants who will work with the school/district and begin to build stakeholder support and involvement in the process. d. An SLI Process Facilitator will be provided to act as the on-site consultant three days a week	improvement efforts.
Two	a. Review needs assessment audit with school administration/leadership team in order to set priority goals and develop an action plan that addresses these goals b. Conduct a School Leadership Team orientation to review roles & responsibilities, decision-making parameters, team norms, processes and procedures c. Initial 4 day Focused Instructional Process training for entire school staff d. Develop a school instructional calendar that addresses identified priority instructional goals e. Selection of student mini-assessments for priority instructional goals f. Set up a system of progress monitoring and support for school improvement process	a. Review needs assessment audit with designated district staff and share school action plan for improvement b. Set up schedule for on-going communication with designated district personnel as related to process implementation c. Work with the district/school and teachers union to review union work rules/contract and set up a process for dialogue regarding principal and teacher evaluation and other work rule implementation d. Review district/teacher principal evaluation process and begin dialogue regarding district policies and expectations e. Establish a District Leadership Council for continuous

	with school administration/school leadership team g. Identify a School Partnership Steering Committee composed of teachers, teachers' union, school leadership, parents and community members that will meet quarterly to monitor project progress and communicate to the school community expectations and outcomes of the project	improvement composed of: district administration, building administration, union leadership, board of education, parents and community leadership
Three-Six	a. Implement school improvement strategies as identified in the school action plan b. Establish and support Professional Learning Communities as determined by needs assessment c. Grade /department level team meetings will be held weekly in order to facilitate and align instructional process d. SLI PD facilitators will provide professional development, including workshops, coaching, modeling and lesson design for school staff e. SLI Shared Leadership facilitators will provide coaching, modeling and support to the school administration and the School Leadership Team (SLT) f. Collect and analyze student achievement	a. District Partnership Council will review school progress toward stated goals , on a quarterly basis, and provide feedback on school improvement efforts b. District staff will track and monitor school improvement efforts and provide support and direction as needed

	data in order to refine and enhance instructional processes g. School/classroom monitoring snapshots will be conducted by SLI facilitators in order to identify successes and challenges in instructional program h. School administrators will conduct snapshot visits and classroom observations to monitor and refine school improvement efforts i. SLI facilitators will conduct monthly parent/family workshops designed to support student instructional and social/emotional growth j. SLT will conduct a quarterly Process Check of school successes and challenges in the implementation of the school improvement process and make recommendations for process adjustments	

1.3.2.3.3. Educational Program

1.3.2.3.3.1. Describe the proposed curriculum and assessment program, detailing clear expectations for student learning. The 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).

1. Meeting the needs of all students:

The FIP model has been designed as a general education strategy for use in all classrooms in the school. Special education and ELL teachers and students will participate in training, the FIP

lesson, and assessment cycle. Coaches from SLI will work with teachers to implement the model for the benefit of their students. Because the FIP model takes students "where they are" in terms of skill mastery and moves them forward in gaining mastery, all students can make gains using this approach. This approach also includes developing **alternative education** options for students who are at risk of dropping out, which will be designed by the leadership team (see below) to include such special supports as internships within the community, after-school enrichment activities, involvement in the arts, increased engagement in school extra-curricular activities, and referrals to community agencies for special after-school academic programming.

2. Ensuring an equitable education process for diverse learners:

SLI views school turnaround as civil rights responsibility. SLI consultants have all served as leaders, teachers, and parents in diverse schools and as appropriate have tailored curricula to the needs of students with diverse needs, including students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students at risk (e.g. students who are truant or face emotional issues). Although no major adjustments to curriculum materials are required to implement the FIP approach to serve diverse learners, SLI will model and advocate for culturally proficient policy, program, and instructional practices, which ensures that the needs of diverse learners (like those listed above) are met. On-going assessments of student learning also serves to ensure that teachers receive instructional feedback (see above on the 8 Step Focused Instructional Process on how well students needs are actually being addressed).

3. The Differentiation of instruction and academic intervention support for all students:

The SLI process works to ensure that the school takes responsibility for student learning and ensures the mastery of all skills for all students. To achieve mastery, it is necessary to take assessment results and provide tutorials, reassessments, and reinforcement of instructional focus areas. Success Time is an optimal time to differentiate instruction that meets the needs of students based on learning style, readiness, and interest. Tutorials provide additional time for review and re-teaching that is required if all students are to attain mastery. Tutorials should not be perceived as punishment but as an opportunity to catch up and potentially excel in a difficult content area. Enrichment for students who master the standards or those who are gifted allows students to extend their learning with advanced academic materials, special projects, and performance-orientated assignments.

At the High School level, groups have to be organized according to division homerooms or based on student performance data for English language arts or math initially. Department heads are the point persons in each curriculum area unless the school has a reading specialist on staff. There also will be a coordinator on-site to make sure that programs addressing students diverse needs are implemented properly. Again, at the high school level, this period could take place before or after school as a tutorial or during a student's study hall.

In addition teachers will receive additional coaching and mentoring related to differentiated instruction in their classrooms throughout the year. These concepts and skills will be reinforced through staff meetings and facilitated sessions during common planning time.

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

1. Access to technology through audits, planning in school teams, and professional development

In order to coordinate and ensure ready access to instructional technology, information, and media services, SLI will address a wide range of technologies in its audit of school expertise in the use of technologies, planning reviews that occurs in school teams, and professional development sessions for school administrators, teachers, and parents/families. First, the project in these forums will strive to increase the capacity of teachers to review all of the latest technological possibilities that they could gain access to, and also to understand and use such technologies as internet-based communication technologies and digital media integrated curricula in their classrooms, including learning games, software simulations, and student-centered learning projects, all focused on reviewing those technologies that are most effective for increasing student achievement. SLI, within planning teams and professional development sessions, will explore how creating project-based digital media integrated curriculum will increase teachers' student-centered learning practices that are experiential, holistic, authentic, challenging, developmental, constructivist, expressive, reflective, collaborative, and democratic. Second, the project's PD will be considerably enriched through the use of such videos as: *The Break-Through Model, Taking Steps to Success, and Teaching Strategies for Success.* Third, internet-based communication webinars and distance learning (including video conferencing) systems will also be reviewed to determine how they can augment and complement the on-site face-to-face coaching that will be provided to teachers.

2. Digital learning supporting student mastery and high-order thinking skills, with the support of media services and materials for effective instruction

Through increasing access to technologies, school administrators and students alike will thoughtfully consider how students will be able to develop a mastery of key academic concepts through the use of digital learning games, media services (e.g. distance learning and technology-based presentations, and blogs) and internet-based communication technologies to obtain data for analyzing and assessing their inquiry student-centered academic project.

Second, through using a wide range of digital technology, teachers will identify options for students to track their academic progress within the classroom through graphics, both as a way to reinforce what they have already learned or to identify areas where they need additional practice.

Third, once students have gained that mastery, they will explore other ways in which digital media and materials (e.g. video, animation, photos, audio recordings, and learning software) can enrich their learning and introduce them to more ambitious academic goals and higher levels of critical thinking, where students learn how to engage in questioning and investigating; observing and describing; reasoning and providing evidence; exploring multiple viewpoints; comparing and connecting; and uncovering complexity. Research in digital media and teaching

best practices indicates that the digital media instructional model of this project will engage students more deeply in their learning, increase their achievement in core content, improve their ability to create and analyze media, and develop important Common Core 21st century competencies in communication, and collaboration.

Based on a review of the latest research, the project's model will integrate digital media into formal classroom curricula, informal activities outside the classroom, and school-wide learning experiences as needed. Principals, teachers, students and parents/families will learn together in workshops or in student classrooms how to increase media literacy and skills, and then hone these skills by working together on real-life projects such as a school media plan and videos. Teachers could collaboratively design *project-based units of study* based on a continuum that integrates technology and digital media and materials with core academic content. Such units will help students increase media literacy skills by analyzing the context, purpose, and methods in works of film, video, photography, and digital media; as well as hone critical analysis skills and habits of mind by learning to identify points of view, gathering evidence, identifying implied values and perspectives, and exploring the social and political consequences of media.

1.3.2.3.3.3. 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.

1. Creating a positive and stable learning environment supporting high expectations for student learning

SLI's FIP model has an immediate and increasingly-positive influence on overall school culture and climate to create a stable learning environment. That transformation is the result of growing a community of learners, both students and adults, in which high expectations are the norm. Continuous learning leads to the continuous improvement of daily work, which then accelerates the closing of the achievement gap, and develops shared leadership across grade levels of the building and the district. The following are the primary improvements in school culture that will create a positive and stable learning environment as a result of the SLI intervention:

- Parents and guardians become more involved in their children's education at home and within the classroom.
- Teachers undergo a transformation in the PD programming and coaching as they learn to communicate more effectively.
- Trust, collaboration, and respect among parents and guardians and teachers grow enormously and create a positive climate for learning through PD and School Leadership Team activities.
- Teachers are easier to retain as a result of the improved environment where students are learning in a way that is measured and reinforced weekly.
- The principal and other administrators also are empowered to communicate better, and they are perceived by parents/guardians and teachers alike to be "part of the solution."
- Students themselves are transformed in that they experience improved results (many for the first time) and communicate better with their teachers in order to create a positive

and stable learning environment.

- Community members become more involved in the schools and become impassioned about the school's mission, as do the local businesses providing in-kind contributions and support.
- The development of positive behavioral learning and socio-emotional supports, and behavior management that reward positive student behaviors within the school, including addressing students with special emotional needs and those who are victims of bullying sets the stage for a positive and stable learning environment.
- Establishing open lines of communication among the school community, which includes the establishment of effective media relations within the school, including school publications, videos, effective power points, and internet forms of communication among all within the school community.

2. An approach to school-wide discipline policies: Positive Behavior Supports

Through the project's inclusive school leadership process, wrap-around community and parent/family intervention services, and the project's Focused Instructional Process, the end result is a far more tightly-knit, positive, and safer school culture and community. SLI stands behind this transformation of school culture and climate, and encourages contact with in-school references to corroborate the transformational effects of SLI's cutting-edge programming to transform schools.

Positive Behavior Supports (PBS), an approach to school-wide discipline policies that will be focused on in the leadership teams and in school administrator and teacher professional development, is an effective framework for creating school environments that promote appropriate behavior for all students. Within that framework, preventive methods are incorporated that address the behavior of all students, including targeted groups of students and students needing intensive individualized support. The result is a school-wide system in which a culture of appropriate behavior is expected and demonstrated by students and acknowledged frequently by adults. Problem behavior is largely prevented and when it occurs, is responded to swiftly and consistently. Data are collected and used to evaluate the effectiveness of the system and to make decisions about how to best address student behavior.

1.3.2.3.3.4. 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, colleges and universities to address barriers to postsecondary access.

1. Transitions in elementary and middle schools integrated with high school interventions

8th to 9th Grade Transition Programs: To support students in the critical transition from 8th to 9th grade, SLI will work with districts/schools on the development of a plan to offer a "High School Connections" program. This program would begin in 8th grade with the elementary/middle school counselor and high school counselors working together to build activities that will ease the transition. Some of these activities may be:

- High school students mentoring and tutoring elementary/middle school students
- Visits to the high school for various events (music, sports, clubs)
- Small group question and answer sessions about high school
- Arranging for high school teachers to visit the middle school to talk about their programs
- Identify students who are at-risk and provide more intense academic and social supports
- Host summer transition programs for interested and at-risk students
- Conduct a "Parent Orientation to High School" workshop to orient the parents to high school expectations and culture

These programs would provide an opportunity to build positive relationships with other students and adults in the school, who can provide support during the challenging 9th grade year. These activities to support academic readiness and interventions to promote attendance will contribute to the improved performance of students as they enter high school.

2. A SLI project design supporting the enrollment and the success of high school students in postsecondary education as a school-wide vision

Recent quasi-experimental research indicates that such *on-track indicators* as good school attendance and passing classes are very important in determining whether a student is likely to graduate from high school or go to college (Herlihy & Quint, 2006; Bridgeland et.al., 2006). Allensworth and Easton (2007) in their study of high school graduation rates, *using on-track indicators*, found that course passing rates (and high school completion) were primarily determined by improved attendance, strong trusting relationships with their teachers, and whether they perceived their coursework as relevant for their future. As stated below, this project, through its Leadership Team and professional development programs for teachers, will infuse into the regular instruction of the school and its milieu the advantages and benefits of attending college, both financially and personally. Research also establishes that when parents/families are actively involved in supporting their children's learning, students have positive attitudes, better attendance, and higher test scores and graduation rates, and greater enrollment rates in postsecondary education (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Moreover, this project extensively involves parents in the education of their children, employs early warning truancy systems, advocates calling the homes of absent students, and provides academic monitoring and counseling referrals to support credit recovery.

3. A project design enhancing students' ability to succeed in postsecondary education as part of the school's vision

Recent quasi-experimental research (Roderick, 2008), based on Chicago High School graduates, demonstrated that students' qualifications (as defined by ACT scores and GPA) often did not match the postsecondary institutions in which they enrolled. Students who were qualified for selective colleges instead chose to enroll in two-year institutions or non-selective four-year institutions. This research underlines how critical it is for students to be appropriately matched to postsecondary options so they are more likely to graduate with a BA in 6 years or less, a critical *indicator of postsecondary success.* SLI's project's staff, the schools' teaching and counseling staff and parents, will provide, as part of its school-wide vision, a more

structured support to guide students through the college search and application process. Finally, Heckman and Krueger (2003) stress the importance of study skills, work habits, time management, and social/academic problem-solving skills in supporting college persistence. SLI's approach, therefore, incorporates a school-wide system of coordinated activities into PD programming for teachers and the overall instruction of the school that address the development of these necessary collegiate skills. Moreover, by increasing student and school staff understanding of the benefits of post-secondary education and the paths necessary to achieve those benefits, a model cultural system supporting college attendance will be collaboratively established and will be central to the vision of the high school. Project professional development staff also will implement a series of workshops on Common Core Standards. Teachers who attend these professional development sessions will be provided with materials when they publish their units on Common Core and how the Common Core can contribute to raising students' college readiness academic expectations. In this way the project will build a foundation of trust and a system of working relationships to increase teachers' and parents' knowledge of how to prepare for college, and to fully engage them in the education of youth at this high school. As described in detail below, parents also will develop the capacity to navigate the pathways to college through the family college awareness sequence.

4. Services to increase the percentage of students taking rigorous courses targeted and personalized academic support for those students needing additional academic assistance, all of which will be Integrated into the overall instructional program and alternative programming so that all students can stay on track to graduate and to attend college

   A wide array of supports will be provided to students to support their plans for enrolling in college. These include: *Pre-College Academic Skills in Freshman/Senior Seminars* The project will utilize class time in seminars, which will be integrated into the overall instructional program through SLI's twice monthly PD workshops for teachers (with coaching and demonstrations), to teach students analytical skills, note taking, time management strategies and other academic support activities. *Activities to Enhance Academic Preparation for College.* As part of this PD programming, SLI will work with teachers to conduct College Nights and college prep workshops for parents/families and students so both can understand the need for postsecondary education, college requirements, and the importance of academic rigor to avoid remediation. *STEM Academic Enrichment.* Students, as part of the instructional program, also will be encouraged to participate in project-based enrichment programs at high school to master STEM skills. Students will create websites and smart phone apps designed to help their peers navigate online college resources. In classroom instructional program, teambuilding will be employed to bond students to peers and adults at the school and to raise student academic expectations of going to college. Students entering 10th and 11th grades who are on-track will attend *STEM Academies*, *ACT Prep* and *Pre-College Bridge sessions will be offered* to ready students for dual enrollment. Prior to 11th and 12th grades, *Summer AP Preparation Programs* project staff will collaborate with teachers to provide AP and honors courses. *Early College Placement Testing and Dual Enrollment/College Bridge.* Students also will be pre-tested using college placement assessments at the end of 10th and 11th grades. Students needing

additional academic assistance to prepare them for college will take summer classes after 11th and 12th grades to be on level by the time of college enrollment. _One-on-One Academic Mentoring._ Teachers, prepared by project staff in PD sessions, will meet with students to review academic, college and career plans, using performance data, class records and information from the student's portfolio in the Illinois online college awareness tool. An Individual Learning Plan will be developed for each student. Students will be counseled about appropriate course selection that matches goals and academic support resources, like tutoring and ACT Prep. _Tutoring & Academic Coaching to Address Needs Identified by Assessments and Observation and Credit Recover._ The project also will provide tutoring and academic support with Literacy and Math Tutors to provide targeted support in either after-school in classrooms or on Saturdays in order for students to recover academic credit.   _Research-based, intensive algebra program adopted in 9th grade._ The project, in collaboration with teachers, will support adoption of an intensive algebra curriculum, as part of overall instruction, for struggling students to become successful in one academic year. _Early Warning System to Combat Truancy:_ SLI and school staff will use existing data to establish systems to identify students at risk for absenteeism and low grades. Parent mentors will also promote parent understanding of their crucial role in supporting school attendance, to eventually set the stage for college attendance. _Mentoring to Ensure Graduation:_ During individual mentoring sessions, school staff in PD sessions will learn how to assist students in reviewing transcripts and teachers will counsel students on course selection that aligns with college and career goals, including AP courses and two years of math beyond Algebra 1 or credit recovery. _Alternative Approaches for Students to Stay on Track to Graduate:_ As stated earlier in this proposal, alternative education options for students who are at risk of dropping out, which will be designed by the leadership team (see below) to include such special supports as internships within the community, after-school enrichment activities, involvement in the arts, increased engagement in school extra-curricular activities, and referrals to community agencies for special after-school academic programming. All of these alternative education activities will build upon the eight step instructional and processes described above by providing opportunities to students to not only become more deeply engaged in meaningful learning, but to improve their academic skills and classroom credits so that they can graduate on time and be eligible for college enrollment.

5. Services to increase students' knowledge/access to financial aid and the college application process

   In partnership with community agencies and financial institutions, this SLI intervention will conduct workshops in classrooms on planning for college, even in the first years of high school, which will include assessing the availability of financial aid, the cost benefits of postsecondary education, and establishing savings accounts for students, thus reinforcing a college-bound identity. _Employing the State Online College and Career Planning Tool._ Beginning in the freshman grade, students will participate in sessions led by College & Career Coaches and Student Mentors using the State of Illinois online college and career-planning tool. The tool includes a personalized college readiness portfolio, and extensive college/career awareness activities. _College Visits and/or College Fairs._ The project will provide enrichment on college campuses, and hold at least one college fair annually. Students will visit a local college by the

end of their junior year. High school students will visit appropriately matched colleges led teachers and SLI staff. _Family College Awareness Sequence._ Workshops could include _Setting Goals for Success in College_; _Addressing the Barriers to Academic Success_; and _Planning for Successful Acceptance to a College of a Student's Choice._ Sessions will be provided in English and Spanish at school sites. _Family College Visits._ Parents will attend college visits beginning in the early years of high school and gain information about college entrance requirements, financing, and skills needed to succeed in college.. _Financial Education for Families._ The project will conduct a series of workshops focused on financial awareness for college enrollment. _College Savings Accounts._ As part of the Family Financial Planning Workshops, the project will partner with community agencies to explain to parents how they can develop a college savings and scholarship plan. _Application for Financial Support_ Using information from scholarship search engines, staff will assist students and parents to identify scholarships, support completion and review of scholarship applications. _FAFSA Completion Support._ SLI staff will assist 12th grade students in completing FAFSA early to qualify for federal and limited need-based state financial aid. _College/ Career Awareness Programming._ Students in their first year of high school will be introduced to postsecondary options that will set the stage for on-going discussions and planning for college admission. College Prep workshops will be offered to make students aware of the requirements they will need to meet in order to obtain admission into a postsecondary institution. Students will begin the college application process in their junior year, so they can be fully prepared to submit their applications in their final year of high school. _College Matching and Application Completion Support_. SLI will recruit and train student college mentors to provide support and models for 12th graders to complete three college applications aligned with their academic profile. English teachers will support students in preparing a personal essay for college and scholarship applications. The _Senior College Seminar_ will provide time in school to write essays and applications and prepare students for the social/emotional aspects of college. _Summer Transition Programs._ During 12th grade, students will be mentored by local college students on the demands and challenges of being a college student.

6. Parent/family workshops to support students transitioning from high school to college

Parent- and student-focused workshops also will be available at the secondary level to help inform parents about the transition from high school to college or work. These sessions may include such topics as making the transition from middle school to high school, financial planning for college, school-to-work program information, increasing student achievement to meet high expectations, and adolescent development. The School Partnership Council will be asked to provide guidance for these sessions, as will any local or regional institutions of higher education.

Although the strategies described offer a multi-faceted approach to parent and community engagement, SLI recognizes that the needs of the school may be broader than what has been described in these foundational pieces. The procurement of additional resources, programs, or partners may need to be secured as a result of the needs assessment and action-planning process. As the Lead Partner for school turnaround, SLI will carefully coordinate and oversee any such additions.

1.3.2.3.4. Staffing

1.3.2.3.4.1. 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.

Introduction In the sub-sections below, SLI's plan for implementing a rigorous, transparent, and equitable performance evaluation system for teachers and principals. In summary, those plans are rigorous in that specific criteria are provided for assessing teachers and principals. In addition, both principals and teachers are evaluated using the specific standards of performance, as described in the sections that follow. Those standards of performance are objective in that specific criteria are identified in order for teachers and principals to meet the standards of professional practice. The systems of evaluation are also rigorous and equitable in that multiple sources of data are used to arrive at these ratings, including, e.g.: observations, documents such as units and lesson plans, management plans, student academic performance (using value added measures and additional measures of student growth and development) and case material (e.g. videos, teacher developed resource materials, and individual student educational planning) documenting teacher professional practices. The plans are also transparent in that both teachers and principals are informed in advance as to what the standards and criteria are for levels of performance. Finally, sub-section 3 below explains how data on student growth are incorporated into the evaluations of teachers and principals.

1. An evaluation system for teachers

a. Teacher Evaluation and Support

The Danielson Group and Teachscape will partner with Strategic Learning Initiatives to offer ISBE and Illinois districts a rigorous, transparent, and equitable performance evaluation system for the State's turnaround efforts.

In this regard, the Danielson Group and Teachscape will work with Strategic Learning Initiatives to provide powerful tools for observation and evaluation management and professional learning management as well as on-the-ground services to prepare observers and other staff in SIG schools to conduct accurate observations and evaluations engage in professional conversations, and guide professional learning.

The Danielson Group and Teachscape are able to offer ISBE the Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument. This research-based and validated instrument now includes precise rubric language and critical attributes at each performance level of each component to support evaluators in conducting highly focused, accurate, and consistent observations and examination of artifacts. Together, this complete approach provides participating campuses and districts with all of the tools and training necessary to implement a successful evaluation system that leads to continuous improvement in teaching and positive student outcomes.

Over the past year-and a half, ISBE and Illinois districts have used Teachscape's FFTPS (Framework for Teaching Proficiency System) to train and assess over 11,000 observers to

ensure they are proficient at scoring teaching practice accurately and consistently. This experience will provide, to all evaluators who were practicing as of September, 2012, an invaluable head start in conducting reliable observations.

b. Framework for Teaching

The Framework for Teaching is a research-based set of components of instruction, aligned to the InTASC standards, and grounded in a constructivist view of learning and teaching. The complex activity of teaching is divided into twenty-two components (and seventy-six smaller elements) clustered into four domains of teaching responsibility:

1. Planning and Preparation

2. Classroom Environment

3. Instruction

4. Professional Responsibilities

Each component defines a distinct aspect of a domain; two to five elements describe a specific feature of a component. Levels of teaching performance (rubrics) describe each component and provide a roadmap for improvement of teaching.

The Framework may be used for many purposes, but its full value is realized as the foundation for professional conversations among practitioners as they seek to enhance their skill in the complex task of teaching. The Framework may be used as the foundation of a school or district's mentoring, coaching, professional development, and teacher evaluation processes, thus linking all those activities together and helping teachers become more thoughtful practitioners.

The Framework for Teaching identifies those aspects of a teacher's responsibilities that have been documented through empirical studies and theoretical research as promoting improved student learning. Although not the only possible description of practice, these responsibilities seek to define what teachers should know and be able to do in the exercise of their profession.

c.New 2013 Edition: Integrating the Common Core

The Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument, 2013 Edition, provides more detailed descriptions of effective teaching, contributes to even greater accuracy, and helps school systems incorporate the new Common Core State Standards into assessments of teaching.

While the Framework for Teaching has always been grounded in student learning and included the big ideas of the Common Core, the 2013 Edition of the Evaluation Instrument now includes:

- Even more specific rubric language about curriculum and assessment in Domain 1

- Rubric language and critical attributes addressing the instructional implications of the Common Core in Domains 2 and 3

d. Updated with even clearer language. Further language refinement helps observers make tighter distinctions between performance levels for even better scoring accuracy.

Across the state of Illinois, 11,000 observers and administrators have already been trained and assessed in their ability to conduct accurate and consistent evaluations of teaching practice using the Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument. In order to help these observers in participating schools maintain proficiency and continue conducting accurate, high-quality observations, the Danielson Group will provide one day of follow-up training.

For those observers in participating schools who have not yet received observer training, the Danielson Group will provide three days of face-to-face training on the Framework for Teaching and observation skills. Furthermore, those observers will have access to Teachscape *Focus™* Observation Training and Assessment System. Teachscape *Focus™* is an online training and assessment system that helps teachers and observers develop a deep, shared understanding of how a common language such as the Framework for Teaching is applied in observations and evaluations to set the stage for continuous improvement in teaching practice. The training and scoring practice in Teachscape *Focus™* includes master-scored videos showing all four performance levels of the Framework for Teaching, multiple subject areas (English language arts, math, science, and social studies), and teaching examples from multiple grades K – 12. The proficiency assessment includes videos showing teaching across a range of proficiency levels, and observers are tested in relevant grade levels and subjects.

For all observers in participating schools, the Danielson Group and Teachscape will provide face-to-face training on conducting professional conversations and guiding professional learning, a one-day session. Observers will also receive two days of face-to-face calibration training and coaching, which features paired observations, trainers sitting in on teacher conferences, and coaching on both observing and conducting teacher conferences. Finally, the Danielson Group and Teachscape will provide face-to-face training in the use of Teachscape *Reflect™* and Teachscape *Learn™* (see descriptions below).

e. Exclusive Electronic Provider of the Framework for Teaching

Teachscape's unique partnership with Charlotte Danielson means Teachscape is the only company licensed to create and sell digital products based on the Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument. The formal evaluation system we are proposing, Teachscape *Reflect™*, is preloaded with the Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument so ISBE can designate a focus for observations centered on observable components of Domains 2 and 3 of the Framework for Teaching.

f. Components for Integrated Evaluations and Professional Learning

Through their partnership, the Danielson Group and Teachscape can provide participating schools with tools to conduct evaluations and individualize professional learning—all with one integrated system.

Teachscape *Learn*™ and Teachscape *Reflect™* work together as a complete professional learning program to enable the ISBE to provide systematic and targeted support for teachers based on data. With this approach, teachers can engage in ongoing and differentiated learning,

collaborate with peers, and receive feedback from all sources (not just principals) as they continuously work to improve their practice.

These tools for evaluation and professional learning may be purchased with special bundled pricing as detailed below.

g. Teachscape Reflect™ Observations and Evaluation System

- Complete system for formal observations and comprehensive teacher evaluations
- Accommodates the Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument, 2011 or 2013 Editions
- Flexible, customizable system with scheduling and workflow tools
- Data collection tools with surveys and survey creation tools for classroom walkthroughs
- Easy-to-use tool that functions on handheld devices, tablets, and laptops
- Reporting tools to track and monitor trends and progress on an ongoing basis

Teachscape *Reflect™* allows observers to input detailed evidence of teaching using tablet devices (iPad, Samsung Galaxy) and laptop computers, and digitally store and manage observation and evaluation data. Illinois districts can easily incorporate the Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument, 2011 or 2013 Edition, into the system. Principals can enter detailed evidence from classroom observations, associate that evidence with one or more of the components of the Framework for Teaching, and score teaching to arrive at a summative score for comprehensive teacher evaluations.

Teachscape *Reflect™* is a powerful yet flexible system to unite and streamline all aspects of evaluation.

Create Visibility and Transparency in Evaluations
- Develop teachers' trust by giving them visibility into all phases of evaluation.
- Engage teachers in the evaluation process.
- Provide meaningful feedback to teachers and promote self-reflection.
- Maintain all evaluation-related data and documents in one secure system.

Customize Evaluations and Workflows
- Customize processes and workflows to streamline evaluations and conduct them more efficiently.
- Define a formula and assign weightings for each observation and other measures of teaching.
- Integrate multiple measures of teaching effectiveness.
- Create and edit rubrics, forms, and surveys.

Conduct Walkthroughs As Well As In-Classroom and Video-Based Observations
- Informal classroom walkthroughs: Use preloaded surveys or create and edit custom surveys.

- Scheduled and unscheduled classroom observations using the Framework for Teaching.
- Video-based observations: Use any video capture device to record classroom video, then upload to Teachscape *Reflect™* to enter evidence and scores.

Integrate Multiple Measures and Supplemental Documents

- Student growth and achievement data
- Teacher self-assessments
- Parent/student survey data
- Lesson plans
- Student work products

Generate a Weighted Score

- Weight and score observation data and multiple measures according to the school or LEA's own evaluation formula.
- Calculate a summative score for evaluation.

Teachscape *Learn*™ Professional Learning System

- Comprehensive system to manage all professional learning in the school or district
- Includes an online library of over 160 online professional development modules with over 2,500 videos of effective teaching practices
- Courses include topics in the Common Core State Standards, mathematics, English language arts, science, effective instructional strategies, new teacher support, SDAIE/SIOP strategies for English language learners, and much more
- Learning management system (LMS) with video libraries and capture tools, collaboration and learning communities, and individualized learning plans

Teachscape *Learn™* is a video-rich professional learning system that includes a research-based preK-12 content library of more than 160 courses, classroom video, interactive exercises, online learning communities, custom course publishing, and personalized learning plans. Teachscape *Learn™* also includes learning management system (LMS) functionality, allowing administrators to easily track professional development registration, create reports based on completion, track certificates, add third-party professional development content, and take advantage of automated alerts and notifications. The system also provides video libraries and tools for video capture as well as for building and curating school- and district-specific video channels.

Video Capture Tools and Libraries

Teachers, principals, and professional learning communities can view and share videos of classroom practice, capture lessons on video for review and analysis, and create best-practice

Teachscape Channel

The Teachscape Channel is a collection of high-quality videos drawn from Teachscape's Professional Learning Suite content library.

- High-quality videos of classroom practice and expert commentary can be viewed and shared among educators

- Top educational experts including Charlotte Danielson, Carol Ann Tomlinson, and nearly 100 others contribute commentary and research-based insight

- Pre-populated library of more than 200 videos are organized and tagged by subject, grade, instructional strategy, keyword, and featured expert

Site Channels

Site Channels in Teachscape *Learn™* allow districts to create collections of local best-practice videos that educators can view, share, and comment on. With Site Channels, schools in the district can:

- Develop and curate libraries of their own best practices

- Organize libraries by subject, grade level, standards, competencies, professional learning communities, or any other factor

- Tag videos with key words so users can easily search for relevant video clips

My Channel

All users in Teachscape *Learn™* have access to My Channel, where they can store their own "best-of" collection of videos.

- Create user's own collection of videos from the Teachscape Channel or Site Channel

- Videos recommended by peers, coaches, principals, or professional development facilitators for group video review and commentary are stored in My Channel

My Video

My Video is a secure space managed by users for their own personal lesson videos and artifacts.

- Users can capture video of their own lessons (with their own capture devices or optional Teachscape camera kits) and upload videos with artifacts

- Videos can be shared with observers, peers, or coaches for lesson review

- Videos can also be kept private and used solely for self-reflection

2. A system for evaluating principals

SLI will work with school districts to develop and align evaluation standards and a rubric for principal evaluation using the **Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders** and the **Illinois Performance Standards for School Leaders Rubric Evaluating Practice of Principals** as the foundation of the evaluation rubric.   The standards will include:

I.   Living a Mission and Vision Focused on Results

        The principal works with the staff and community to build a shared mission, and vision of high expectations that ensures all students are on the path to college and career readiness, and holds staff accountable for results

II.   Leading and Managing Systems Change

        The principal creates and implements systems to ensure a safe, orderly, and productive environment for student and adult learning toward the achievement of school and district improvement priorities

III.   Improving Teaching and Learning

        The principal works with the school staff and community to develop a research-based framework for effective teaching and learning that is refined continuously to improve instruction for all students

IV.   Building and Maintaining Collaborative Relationships

        The principal creates a collaborative school community where school staff, families, and community interact regularly and share ownership for the success of the school

V.   Leading with Integrity and Professionalism

        The principal works with the school staff and community to create a positive context for learning by ensuring equity, fulfilling professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity, and serving as a model for the professional behavior of others

VI.   Creating and Sustaining a Culture of High Expectations

        The principal works with staff and community to build a culture of high expectations and aspirations for every student by setting clear staff and student expectations for positive learning behaviors and by focusing on students' social-emotional learning

The Principal Performance Evaluation will incorporate the requirements of (Article 24A of the Illinois School code, 105 ILCS 5/24A) and any other requirements established by the State Board by ad

3. An evaluation system that takes into account data on student growth as a significant factor

Illinois State Statute requires that 50% of the Principal Evaluation is comprised of data and indicators of student growth. The project's assessment and leadership teams, in collaboration with district staff and principals, will ensure that extensive data are regularly collected on student performance on academic assessments, improvement of attendance rates, reduction in discipline referrals/student suspensions, cohort graduation rate and/or "on track" rates and other interim assessments. The academic assessments, based on collaboration with school districts, could include: data from the implementation of Response to Intervention (RTI), Analysis of Engagement Time (AET), Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Aimweb.com, and Curriculum Based Measures (CBM), and a variety standardized state assessments, including the ISAT and EPAS, of student achievement in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science.   Based on previous and current student data, school district staff will analyze the degree to which value has been added to student performance or whether there has been significant growth at the .05 level.

By October 1 of the calendar year, the district will inform the principal which assessments, data and targets will be used to judge student growth for the year, and will specify the weights of each target and outcome.

1.3.2.3.4.2. 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.

1. SLI's plan to determine the effectiveness of the existing principal

SLI will collect data on the current principals' effectiveness during the initial audit process in collaboration with district supervisors. The data collected will include student achievement data over time, student attendance, student behavior and discipline, teacher retention, graduation rates, number of students on track, number of students enrolled in AP/gifted and talented programs and teacher, parent and student surveys (Illinois 5 Essentials Survey) and interviews.

A review of the school mission, goals and action plans for improvement will be conducted with the principal during an initial personal interview to determine the extent of the principals' vision of success for staff, students and the community. The review will focus on how goals and priority needs are identified and how interventions are monitored for effectiveness.

Other sources of data for the audit will include curriculum map alignment across the grade and school aligned to standards, teacher lesson plans, routines and school-wide practices, professional learning and teacher team structures, processes to monitor and evaluate staff performance and family engagement.

2. The effectiveness of the principal as an instructional leader

As described in **1.3.2.3.4.1** above, professional development will be provided and principals will be assessed as to how effective they are as instructional leaders. At the core of SLI's view of the teacher as a leader is the concept of learning communities that requires the principal to conceive the school as a learning organization under the principal's leadership, a school that has a continuing focus on the capacity to teach children to learn. Such a principal is continuously improving teachers' capacity to teach children. In this regard the principal in SLI's principal PD sessions will learn how to establish a culture of learning in their school, one where teaching and learning pervade the social life and the interpersonal relationships within the school building.

SLI's perspective on the principal as instructional leader means that the principal needs to become an expert on teaching and learning by keeping abreast of the latest research on curricular and instructional designs. Having that knowledge, however, is only the first step in being an effective instructional leader. SLI's Professional Development (PD) will demonstrate to principals how their actions must communicate that teaching and learning must be at the center of what happens at the school. This means that principals will need to regularly observe their teaching staffs and serve as coaches for improved instruction with the instructional leadership teams at their schools.

More specifically, SLI will collaborate with principals through PD to identify how they can acquire five essential skills: (1) learning how to become effective resource providers to teachers; (2) learning how to use interpersonal skills to maintain trust, spur teacher motivation, and develop a culture of collegiality among their teachers so that teachers can also continually learn from one another; (3) planning with teachers what the instructional vision and its accompanying objectives are for the school, and what concrete plans need to be implemented to reach those objectives; (4) providing teachers with on-going feedback on their teaching through frequent observations in classrooms, independent of formal teacher evaluations so that teachers can acquire new skills to be more effective instructors; (5) creating opportunities for teachers to learn about the most recent research on teaching and learning and planning how those research findings can be applied to individual teacher classrooms.

1.3.2.3.4.3. 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.

SLI will collaborate with school districts and schools to develop comprehensive processes for evaluation, hiring, and developing staff leadership. Detailed systems for recruiting and hiring teachers and school administrators are provided in section 1.3.2.3.2.

In order to effectively prepare principals and teachers to become leaders, SLI will review with school administrators how effective programs of leadership can be established (drawing upon the traits of leaders described in section 1.3.2.3.4.2). Those traits will be developed through programs of professional development (PD) and mentoring focused on the leadership needs of teachers and principals at their schools, including, for example, (1) learning how to develop a vision for a school and classroom instruction and how an inclusive and participatory style of leadership can be nurtured; (2) learning how to work with colleagues on developing leadership skills; (3) learning how to use interpersonal skills to motivate colleagues, and develop a culture of collegiality among teachers and principals; their teachers so that teachers can also continually learn from one another; (4) developing school improvement plans that are consistent with and aligned with State Standards and the Common Core Standards; and (5) keeping abreast of the latest research on what is required to become an effective school leaders and the instructional and management systems that are most effective in enhancing student achievement. Finally, SLI will explore with school administrators how incentives can be provided for teachers and principals as leaders, and the employment of systems documenting both teacher and principal leadership performance, including systems of merit that are based in part on student academic performance.

1.3.2.3.4.4. 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.

In order to design and implement a fair and consistent method to evaluate staff members' ability to effectively participate in the intervention model, SLI will involve the LEA, the teachers' unions, and other applicable community organizations in an inclusive governance and management process. That approach places a priority on creating shared management and governance through Leaderships Teams at each district and district schools to ensure that all stakeholders are participants in decision-making processes associated with implementing SLI's intervention model. Through this process of shared leadership, SLI will facilitate the development of a culture that will allow all parties to develop a deep understanding of the Focused Instructional Process (FIP) and how it can be customized to meet the individual needs of districts and schools. As already stated in the section on School Reform, the shared process for project implementation creates a discussion around the following key components of FIP; namely,

- All stakeholders believe that all children can learn--no excuses.
- High expectations for student achievement and behavior are held by all who convey those expectations.
- An instructional leader creates a shared vision among the stakeholders, a focus, and a plan that leads to the success of all.
- Data driven instruction, yielding measurable results, with all stakeholders accountable for the results.
- Establishing effective forms of performance management.

It is worth repeating that although a school can articulate a mission of "all students succeeding" or "lifelong learners," without buy-in from the staff, families, students, or the community, they remain merely words and not a mission that every stakeholder is committed to pursuing. Therefore, the process features the engagement of all key school stakeholders in determining what specific strategies a school needs to pursue in order to improve school attitudes and culture, all of which are critical elements in developing an effective school improvement plan.

From the beginning of the needs assessment throughout the implementation of the intervention plan and strategies, the school's mission and high expectations for students will be guideposts. The School Leadership Team, composed of school administrators, teachers, community representatives, and parents/families will have as a key strategy the articulation of high expectations for students and staff through active engagement and monitoring of intervention strategies, assessments of student progress, and visible actions of accountability. In *Leading Change,* John Kotter describes the importance of articulating a vision of the future picture as a key element in creating transformative change. Through constant communication, careful strategy alignment, and "walking the walk" of accountability, school leaders will model the vision and mission of the school for teachers, parents, staff, and students. In turn, they will ask the entire school faculty to do the same through active agreement and participation in the turnaround strategies and process.

Along with regular and frequent work with grade/department-level teams, SLI will meet on a regular and frequent basis with the School Leadership Team to provide technical assistance and coaching. The focus of this coaching will be to build the school leadership team's capacity to initiate, monitor, and evaluate turnaround strategies, and to establish a collaborative decision-making process. Student achievement and engagement data, classroom observations, and frequent communication with teachers will become structured tools for the articulation of the school's vision, mission, and strategies for turnaround. In addition, the School Leadership Team will focus on developing a community school by engaging community agencies and parents in the work of the school so that that school-site can be a hub of community learning.

SLI also recognizes that a principal's evaluation must be ongoing, not an activity conducted solely at the onset of a formal assessment process. The FIP model provides regular data that can be used as a component of the evaluation process. Student assessment scores and teacher evaluations lead SLI to measure the effectiveness of the principal and to provide feedback to the principal on how the school's leadership can be collaborative and inclusive. In short, if all aspects of the FIP process are implemented and embraced, SLI believes that an improvement in test score results will occur, even within a short time period. Obtaining this result means that the principal is being effective in implementing the FIP process. SLI will work with the school district's principal-evaluation instrument and will provide feedback directly to both the district and the principal regarding the ability of the principal to lead the FIP process effectively and rigorously. Feedback on the principal's effectiveness in implementing the FIP process would include the following criteria:

- *Creates a vision:* working toward a shared understanding of the goals and progress toward their achievement; coordinating curricula, instruction, and assessment; and

putting forth high expectations for student achievement for all students
- *Translates the vision into action using the plan, do, check, act process:* working with the School Leadership Team, emphasizing school wide goals and expectations, and ensuring that the school has a strong instructional focus on key skills
- *Creates a supportive environment:* promotes an academically oriented, orderly, and purposeful school climate--a safe and orderly school climate conducive to teaching and learning
- *Knows what is going on in the school:* monitors classroom instruction on a regular basis, meets regularly with the grade-level teams to monitor the instructional progress of students, uses data to make decisions regarding the student instructional program and teacher effectiveness
- *Acts on knowledge:* intervenes when necessary, makes the hard decisions on staff effectiveness and its impact on student achievement
- Creates effective performance management standards agreed upon and assessed by the School Leadership Team

1.3.2.3.5. Professional Development

1.3.2.3.5.1. 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.

1. Introduction and Overview of SLI's PD Needs Assessment Processes:

The first step in the PD program that SLI provides to schools is to conduct an assessment of individual school needs in a wide range of areas, e.g. student achievement, current parent/family participation in school programming, student attendance, mobility and truancy, language needs of students (e.g. Limited English Proficiency needs), state learning standards, the common core curriculum, special education programming, cultural instructional needs, substance abuse, school climate, and teacher instructional needs. In addition, as part of the plan to customize the PD to fit the school and district needs, other data will be collected as part of the PD planning process, including: school drop-out rates, student attendance, percentage of students completing advanced coursework, discipline incidents, truants, teacher attendance, surveys of the school climate and teacher effectiveness, surveys of areas where teachers need increased knowledge and skills, in such areas as: teaching students of varying grade levels, motivating students to learn, maximizing student engagement in learning, assisting students in making transitions from one grade level to another, collaborating effectively with parents/families to support student learning, identifying community resources to provide additional support to classroom instruction, learning about how to effectively to use a wide range of technologies in the classroom to enhance student learning, and keeping abreast of the latest research and how to effectively apply that research to classroom practice. These assessments will jump-start the project to maintain a relentless focus on data and on the sharing of information as part of an audit of expectations, roles, responsibilities, and key performance measures and school change metrics, which will be reviewed and clarified both before and after PD sessions have been offered.

The second step will be to: provide orientation and planning sessions for principals and school staffs to describe the SLI PD process. The third step is to conduct on-going needs assessments in order to ensure that there is a continual alignment with both local school and CPS district needs and network improvement goals.

In the first year of the project, as part of the school-wide PD planning process, a number of teams will be established. They will serve as vehicles for participation in on-going needs assessment, planning PD programming, school decision-making, the joint coordination of the professional development activities with each school's academic calendar, and parent/family participation, all of which will be aimed at creating professional learning communities in which SLI PD is networked to address school and district improvement goals.

2. On-Going Needs Assessment Infused into PD Programming

In addition, networking with on-going needs assessment within the PD offerings will be developed across schools receiving PD in the district for SLI, where all the teams from the PD schools will meet face-to-face and communicate with one another. A critical component, then, is the establishment of a network for on-going needs assessment and sharing among all of the participating PD schools. This network will utilize a variety of tools to share needs assessment results. Some possibilities are: the project's webinar system, website, and videos of classroom instructional practice. There will also be an end of year gathering to provide recognition, review of results, feedback, and general celebration of the school's accomplishments.

In order for Strategic Learning Initiatives to more fully and effectively develop the SLI PD, an emphasis will be placed on needs assessment that informs PD by teaching students to be good communicators, collaborators, and creative, critical thinkers that use the Framework for Teaching, based on the Danielson model. At the same time SLI will provide teachers with research-based programming, described in detail through this proposal, that carefully aligns instruction with school needs in order to offer challenging and engaging lessons, provide support for enhancing a positive, student-based culture and classroom climate, and creating opportunities for teachers to become reflective and communicative professionals. The SLI PD workshops, and the strategies contained within them, will provide teachers with the tools to create opportunities for students to make connections between what they have been learning and the real world. All such needs-aligned workshops are thereby designed so that they offer skills required by the Common Core Standards and 21st Century Learning: Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, Critical Thinking skills, the Framework for Teaching, as well as social-emotional and higher order thinking skills.

3. Standard components of SLI's comprehensive PD model with follow-up and networking support

Standard components of SLI's comprehensive PD model (which has been briefly discussed in the earlier section on School Reform) will include sustained and intensive professional development (PD), which will play an instrumental role in the SLI school reform process. SLI's

comprehensive approach to PD is designed around a reform model that substitutes one-time workshops for deeper, sustained learning opportunities for all school staff, with extensive on-going PD sessions (held at least monthly) supported by follow-up support in terms of coaching, demonstrations, and reflection sessions. In this regard, the project will create professional learning communities at each school, a system that has been shown to be effective in enhancing teachers' effectiveness, creating a shared sense of responsibility for students' success, increasing staff satisfaction and morale, contributing to greater likelihood of systemic change, and ultimately impacting student achievement (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006; Hord, 1997; Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 1997). The project's focus on school-wide and grade level teams is an approach which helps schools to sustain improved teaching practice beyond the life of PD services (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). The content of PD activities in CREATES focuses on developing teachers' content knowledge and understanding of how students learn content, as recommended by research (Cohen and Hill, 2000; Kennedy, 1998; Supovitz and Turner, 2000).

As mentioned above, between each workshop session, SLI's professional development staff will support teacher networking by modeling the strategies presented during the workshops and facilitate reflective coaching to those participants teaching the strategies or co-designing lessons based on the PD presented research-based strategies. In the interim, from one PD session to the next, teachers will document and reflect on student classroom work so that those case study materials can be discussed and instructional strategies can be refined by the time teachers meet again in PD sessions. As a result, student work will be effectively shared and networked with colleagues, thereby examining how individual case work is reflective of the research that has been addressed in SLI PD workshop sessions. This type of comprehensive networking will enable teachers to creatively and more effectively adapt their instruction to individual student needs and to differentiate the instruction offered to students, especially those with language and special education needs.

4. A Research Informed PD Design

This PD project design will also utilize up-to-date research, including professional development strategies, best practice teaching, and school contexts for engaged learning for at-risk students. Drawing upon some of the most recent research on how schools can improve student achievement (Bryk et.al., 2010; Diamond, 2007; Newmann, et.al., 2001), the SLI model has been designed so that it views the school as an organizational system composed of five essential supports; namely, effective school leadership, the development of teacher professional capacity, strong parent-community ties, a climate for authentic student learning, and a standards-based curricula. The research of Bryk et.al., 2010 (Organizing Schools for Improvement: Lessons from Chicago), which has informed the development of SLI's PD design, is a ground-breaking seven-year research study that identified 100 elementary schools that had substantially improved in terms of student achievement in reading and mathematics and 100 that had not. Their findings provided valuable data on what factors are critical for schools so that they can accelerate student learning through networking. Bryk has persuasively made the case, based on his recent research in Chicago and those of others, that for schools to have the most effective impact on student learning in core subjects like reading and mathematics, all of the

above supports, whenever possible, need to be present in a program design.

5. In Inquiry and Constructionist Approach to Informing the PD Programming

Research also underlines the critical importance of reflection and sharing among teacher colleagues (Burton et.al., 2000). A networked inquiry and constructivist approach to teaching content areas such as reading, mathematics, and the social sciences undergirds the work of this project and is theoretically consistent with recent research demonstrating that student achievement is enhanced when students are involved in creating their own knowledge (Daniels & Zemelman, 2004; Newmann, 2005; Wilhelm, 1997) and have opportunities to participate in disciplined inquiry and elaborated discussion. Students participating in this type of intensive and sustained networked PD are more likely than those in a control group to pay attention, persevere, problem-solve, self-initiate, ask questions, take risks, cooperate, use feedback and come to school prepared (Luisselli, J. et.al., 2005). Challenging students with relevant, authentic, and culturally meaningful educational programs improves learning and attitudes toward school. Through its approach to PD, teachers can support student learning styles and tap background experiences. Moll and Gonzalez (1965) define these experiences as "funds of knowledge," essential for high quality learning. The project's approach to the teaching of academic content in the social sciences, mathematics, and reading draws upon research that demonstrates that student achievement in academic content areas will improve significantly with the use of authentic inquiry oriented strategies such as: identifying similarities and differences, meaningful practice with real-world problems, setting objectives and providing feedback, generating and testing hypotheses, and using advanced organizers, interactive learning, critical habits of mind, and thematically-based work (Marzano et.al., 2001; the Harvard Zero Project, 2008).

6. Leadership as part of the PD, including networking and collegial sharing

To enhance networking further, the SLI district and local networking PD models are structured so that: (1) principals play a key role in supporting project implementation, (2) teachers develop an in-depth knowledge of innovative instructional strategies in integrating the Common Core into curricula, (3) students have an opportunity to conduct meaningful inquiry in the classroom, (4) parents and community members can contribute to and support the development of the project, and (5) standards-based Common Core learning and classroom curricula are effectively connected.

7. Intensive and sustained comprehensive PD school and district networking is central to the PD design

SLI's PD networking design is aligned with research indicating that sustained and intensive professional development with networked follow-up support is much more likely to have an impact on enhanced teacher knowledge and skills, and ultimately student achievement, than shorter professional development activities. Professional development that is focused on practical classroom applications provides teachers, as they network with one another, with opportunities for "hands-on" work that is integrated into daily work of the classroom and in this way it is more likely to have a positive impact on student achievement. The National Staff Development Council's Professional Development Standards (2012) stresses the importance of features such as organizing teacher-learners into learning communities, providing sustained blocks of time for training and follow-up support, and aligning teachers' knowledge of content, instructional strategies, and assessment practices (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009). In line with recent research, this project will involve teachers and school

personnel into a progressively complex range of networked professional development experiences (Fullan, et.al., 2003; Lombardi, 2007).   Research shows that teachers are most likely to improve practice when they: (1) contribute to the planning of their own learning activities; (2) have opportunities to engage in on-going dialogue about their work with mentors and colleagues in network settings; (3) receive follow-up support and coaching; and (4) have the opportunity to observe the teaching of colleagues through networking to deepen their professional knowledge (Danielson, 2000; Odel & Huling, 2007).   Collaborative problem-solving, when modeled throughout a professional development program, can enhance professional knowledge and improve practice. (Fullan, 2000; Wilhelm et.al., 2001; Newman and Wehlage, 1997; 2000; Senge, 2001;)   Successful innovations are especially effective when they involved in on-going teacher reflection and peer discussion. (Fullan, 2003; Senge, 2001).

1.3.2.3.5.2. Describe how the applicant will evaluate the fidelity of implementation, quality, relevance, and utility of the professional development. State of Illinois RFP 24
Specifications/Qualifications/Statement of Work
V.13.4

1. Evaluating the fidelity of the implementation of the PD

   SLI will provide regular performance feedback on periodic progress in meeting the intended PD outcomes, employing a variety of formative methods of analysis to evaluate the **fidelity** of PD implementation. Such fidelity and formative assessments will include: interviews, focus groups, case studies of schools, teachers, students and parents, teacher and student journals, videotapes of classroom teaching practices, observation protocols, feedback satisfaction surveys (with Likert scales), lesson and unit plans, attendance logs; data on website use; meeting agendas and minutes, attendance logs, and reports from the project's staff. One of the instruments that will be used to measure the fidelity of program implementation in the elementary grade will be an adaptation of the *School Achievement Snapshot* (Slavin, Madden, Chambers & Haxby, 2008), identifying the presence or absence of school-wide structures associated with faithfully implementing programs.

   Formative Assessments and Implementation Fidelity to Support Continuous Progress of Implementing PD Effectively: To provide additional regular performance feedback on periodic progress in meeting the project's proposed outcomes and to measure the fidelity of the project, a variety of formative methods of analysis will be used. The first dimension will involve extensively documenting the processes that were used in developing the project's implementation of PD strategies. This documentation will describe the steps that were involved in implementing a particular PD strategy (in the form of Facilitator notes), what problems were encountered, and how those problems were overcome. In this way, the project will be able to document how it was able to achieve its various outcomes. The second dimension will involve determining which implementation strategies had the most impact on teachers.

   Using the fidelity evaluation system to provide on-going improvement in the project's PD programming: In addition, a number of systems will be put in place to use the evaluation of the

project's fidelity to improve its implementation. First, the PD Management Team will determine during each year the degree to which benchmarks and milestones have been met for the PD's objectives. The quantitative and qualitative measures and results (see above for a listing of teacher measures and assessments), for both formative and yearly summative evaluations will be shared on a quarterly basis by the PD Management Team and the School Leadership Teams.

Second, the Project Director will meet with all PD instructional staff to share the formative and summative evaluation findings and, in consultation with the PD Management Team and the School Leadership Teams, will determine what modifications in program implementation should be made to improve PD project impact.

Third, after these modifications have been implemented, the PD Management Team will determine the degree of impact and efficacy of the changes.

Fourth, this process will be repeated during each project year in which the PD is conducted in order to ensure progress toward intended outcomes, thereby creating an on-going feedback loop for on-going assessment and continuous program progress and improvement.

2. Evaluating the quality of the PD

To determine the degree to which the project has achieved its objectives, a wide range of quantitative summative measures will be used to assess whether project objectives have been attained. The PD Project Director, with the assistance of the PD Management Team, will employ a computer-based Evaluation Management System that will enable project staff to accurately track teacher and student outputs and outcomes resulting from the PD programming. Where appropriate, summary statistics, regression analyses, tests of measures of central tendency, and t-tests will be used to measure the significance of impact. The significance level for rejecting the null hypothesis will be set at .05 for all tests of significance, a level deemed appropriate in related research and evaluation. In addition, when appropriate, pre-post comparison designs will determine the degree to which the project has had an impact on student participants and the program's objectives (and associated outputs and outcomes) have been achieved. Where and if appropriate, quantitative data will be analyzed with summary statistics of impact, and if required with Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) strategies followed, and if justified by univariate analyses. The alpha level for significance tests will be set at .05, and appropriate effect size indices (e.g. omega square) will be calculated to estimate the magnitude of program effects on the quantitative outcomes.

Baseline and Post Assessment Data Collection, Availability of Results, Timelines for Data Collection, and Reporting: The PD Management Team will be responsible for conducting the project's evaluation activities in a timely manner and preparing reports to CPS, which will discuss the extent to which the project is meeting its PD objectives and outcomes measures, using a wide range of metrics. Baseline pre-assessment data for summative assessments will be collected at all PD schools for teachers and students (if appropriate) at the beginning and

end of its PD programming. Formative assessments also will be administered to administrators, teachers, students, and parents as necessary throughout each project year.

Objective Quantitative Assessments to Assess PD Quality and a Timeline for Their Development: The objective quantitative performance assessments will include such measures as: a time series of pre-post survey assessments of the instruction learned by teachers under SLI PD programming; surveys to assess the quality of teaching and learning against national, state standards, and CPS in academic content areas, and assessments documenting the intellectual quality of teacher outcomes; videos of teacher and student practices; self-assessment feedback questionnaires (with 5 point Likert scales, a sample of which is provided in Appendix O); logs of website use; meeting notes; standardized tests of student academic performance in reading; attendance records for meetings, individual and group follow-up sessions, and the number of participants in all project activities. The above quantitative instruments and the qualitative instruments listed below will be developed or prepared for administration (in the case of existing measures) by the PD Management Team. A sample teacher quantitative summative assessment is provided in Appendix P. Pre or baseline assessments for teachers will be administered at the beginning (if appropriate) and end of PD sessions.

Qualitative assessments to assess PD quality: The quantitative component will be reinforced with periodic measures of project processes and perceptions of participants. Consistent with an action research perspective, the qualitative aspect of the project will involve the evaluators and the participants themselves through an in-depth study of how change occurs within the context of the project. The qualitative measures could include such documents as a content analysis of documents such as PD planning and needs assessments, instructional curricula, classroom videotapes, and documents and programming developed through internet-based technologies; meeting agendas and minutes; case studies of schools, teachers, and students; teacher and student journals; the project website; focus group or interview transcripts; self-assessments; and written peer observation reports. Finally, throughout the program, such measures as questionnaires with open-ended items will be used to assess modifications to accomplish the project's goals.

3. Evaluating the relevance and utility of the PD

To determine the relevance and utility of the PD for school staff, a number of assessments will be undertaken. First, in the case of relevance, the objectives and activities of the PD sessions will be reviewed to ensure that the PD programming is consistent with the needs assessments undertaken and is described in detail in the previous sub-section. Second, teachers will assess the relevance and the utility of the PD sessions in feedback surveys administered both at the end of each PD session and once teachers have begun applying what they have learned in these PD sessions. Third, teachers will also have the opportunity during focus group sessions to indicate how relevant and useful the PD sessions have been. Fourth, observations of teachers by school and district staff coupled with follow-up reflection and discussion sessions will also provide an opportunity for teachers to express to what degree the PD has been

relevant and useful to their teaching. Finally, at the conclusion of each program year, teachers will complete a survey, with Likert type scales and open-ended items, to respond to a series of questions asking them how relevant and useful the PD has been. The data from all of these sessions will be reviewed by the school Leadership Team in order to see how the PD sessions could be made more relevant and useful for teachers in improving student academic performance in their classrooms.

1.3.2.3.6 . Organizational Capacity

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

Strategic Learning Initiatives is a non-profit registered in Illinois under the 501(c)3 statute. The organizational structures include a Board of Directors, President, Vice President for Operations, Directors of program teams including the Education Program Director, the Shared Leadership Team, Professional Development Team, and Family Engagement team, Comptroller and administrative staff. For twenty years SLI has had an independent auditor issue an Annual Audit Report.

SLI staff and resources are able to support work with up to twenty to thirty schools and their districts through contracts, depending on the location of the districts in the USA. SLI has the capacity to work in the lowest income neighborhoods and rural areas with charter schools and regular public schools, with early childhood programs, family engagement programs in independent centers and K-12 schools.

1.3.2.3.6.2. 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.).

Listed below are the non-negotiable commitments and decision-making authority that SLI requires.

These non-negotiable commitments include: (1) transformation structures and processes, including clarity of expectations and timelines, over-communication of expectations and timelines to all parties, and reinforcement/progress monitoring of expectations and timelines from all parties. (2) Commitment from the school district to allow district and school transformation work to be identified through a focus on priorities, including: collaboration time, a data system for monitoring progress, alignment of resources (time, people, and finances) to priorities, and celebration of gains and commitment to opportunities for improvement.

1.3.2.3.6.3. 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.

Project Director -Kathy Berry, Vice President of Operations, Strategic Learning Initiatives

Ms. Berry is an experienced leader and manager of tasks to ensure that organization operations are coordinated, responsive and effective, She has served as the Vice President of Operations at Strategic Learning Initiatives since 2008 and has coordinated SLI's SIG work in Springfield, Decatur, East St. Louis, DePue IL. and East Baton Rouge, LA.. Prior to assuming the job of VP of Operations, Ms. Berry was the Director of Professional Development at SLI where she supported and motivated a team of instructional leaders that built capacity of teacher leaders in the Focused Instruction Process.

Process Facilitator- to be named

The Process Facilitator will be the on-site coordinator of implementation of the school improvement process. This includes working closely with the school principals and district leadership in order to support strong academic support at each school. This will include coordinating network/school-wide professional development sessions, family engagement activities, analyzing and evaluating the data from the common assessments and working with school teams to codify and share best practice. The Process Facilitator will coordinate the work of the process consultants in order to insure alignment of all programs/processes implemented in the school/school district. The Process Facilitator also will coordinate a school/school district-wide annual process review of each school to capture best-practices and promote continuous improvement of instruction at each school.

Finance Coordinator-Monica Thompson, Strategic Learning Initiatives

Ms. Thompson has over fifteen years working in various capacities in the financial field. As the Finance Coordinator she will oversee the overall fiscal responsibilities of the grant. Ms. Thompson will coordinate the financial reporting to the district, state and federal government and other funders, create financial statements, payroll and budgeting, and cash management.

The staff listed below will be used as process support, as described in the proposal document, on an as-needed basis for leadership, professional development and family engagement initial training, workshops, seminars, staff, leadership team and administrator coaching and modeling of school improvement strategies and processes. One shared leadership facilitator; one professional development facilitator and two

family engagement facilitators will be assigned to each SIG grant site under the direction of the SLI Process Facilitator

Shared Leadership Facilitators-Karen Morris, Charlotte Blackman, Linda Coles, Susan Jensen and Mary Cavey-Strategic Learning Initiatives

Ms, Morris, Dr. Blackman, Dr. Coles, Ms. Jensen and Dr. Cavey are all experienced principals. They have worked extensively with urban, suburban and rural schools in the design and implementation of administrator/school leadership team school improvement models. All four have been coaches and mentors to aspiring, new and experienced principals assisting them in building a culture of high expectations for all stakeholders. They have facilitated seminars, workshops and coaching for school and district administrators and school leadership teams in the Chicago Public Schools, DePue, Springfield, Decatur, and East St. Louis, IL., East Baton Rouge LA., Los Angeles, CA. and Tucson, AZ. in the implementation of the Focused Instruction and School Improvement Process.

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Ms. Jirasek, Ms. Stankevicius, Ms. Starks and Dr. Atkins have designed and facilitated research based, professionally challenging workshops aligned to the Common Core Standards, that build relationships and impact student learning to increase student achievement. They have provided support to teachers individually and collectively to successfully implement the school improvement model called the Focused Instruction Model. They have coached, modeled, co-design lessons, as well as mentored staff and teacher leaders. They have designed and facilitated professional development for school staff in the Chicago Public Schools, DePue, Springfield, Decatur, Flossmoor and East St. Louis, IL, East Baton Rouge, LA, Los Angeles, CA. and Tucson, AZ.

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1.3.2.3.7. Subcontractors

1.3.2.3.7.1. 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 #4 of the Contractual Terms and Provisions (Attachment DD) of this RFSP .

Text to be provided by John Simmons

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

To be addressed by John

1.3.2.3.8 . Sustained Improvement
1.3.2.3.8.1. 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.

1. The Planned Reallocation of Resources for Sustaining the Project:

Sustaining the project after funding ends will be successfully undertaken because funds received from ISBE to launch programming will be conceived of as seed monies. Staff hired with federal funds will no longer be needed once ISBE support ends, as new organizational structures will have been established to continue the project, e.g. teacher leadership teams as well as school-wide, planning, instructional leadership, grade-level, cross-grade level, lead teacher, and department teams. After the funding ends, school staff, along with project teachers and partners, will continue their participation as part of their regular professional assignments. In addition, a wide range of systems will have been built at each participating school to ensure that the schools have the capacity to continue the school reform activities developed under ISBE funding by the lead partner. Those include systems for: audit and assessment, professional development, leadership programs, community and parent/family involvement, school safety, after-school programming, expanded scheduling for student learning, transition from grade to grade, evaluation of principals and staff, evaluation of program effectiveness, the infusion of effective learning technologies, supporting high expectations for student learning, equity and access to learning for students from all backgrounds, financial planning, and the development of human capital. Essentially, ISBE funds will enable the project to institutionalize the teams and systems provided by lead and partner organizations.

2. Setting the Stage for External Funding

The participating LEAs and schools, as part of the work of the lead partner, will also undertake planning to seek out public and private funding from local, state, and federal sources. SLI will offer workshops to the Leadership Teams in the districts and at schools on how to effectively apply for funding from such agencies. Those workshops will enable the districts and schools to identify potential public and private RFP's so that they can submit detailed grant

applications, and to develop a template that can be used for a variety of grant applications. Accordingly, in grant development workshops, district and school staff will learn how to develop, plan, and write the following types of sections for grant applications: needs; goals and objectives; outcomes and indicators for assessing those outcomes; project activities (including what will happen, where, when, and how); why the project is significant and exceptional; a literature review supporting the project's design; milestones and a time line for the administration of the project; plans for project institutionalization and dissemination; the adequacy of the budget; organizational structures needed to implement project activities; a management plan; an evaluation system for assessing the impact of the project. By the end of the project's three years, each LEA and/or school will have developed and written at least one grant proposal and submitted it to a public or private foundation for funding.

1.3.2.3.9. Outcomes-Based Measurement Plan

1.3.2.3.9.1. 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.

Introduction: SLI has established a series of realistic and attainable outcomes as listed below, all of which are achievable by the end of the three-year grant period as a result of SLI's leadership with school districts and schools. Moreover, these outputs and outcomes below demonstrate that the FIP project has potential for significant impact by catalyzing the behavior of school administrators, teachers, parents/families, and students.

1. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE OUTCOMES AS THE DRIVER OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE OUTCOMES -- Developing or establishing a culture of trust and collaboration using organizational learning strategies that encompass shared leadership and systematic school-wide problem-solving and networking across district schools

> *Outcome 1.a:* Staff members at the SLI participating districts/schools will report at the end of the third program year that they are strongly committed to shared decision making within a learning community, are involved in important decisions undertaken at those schools, engaged in collaborative problem-solving, have opportunities to influence what happens at the school, and are comfortable in voicing their concerns.

> **Outcome 1.b:** Staff members at the SLI participating school districts/schools will report that the school has developed a shared vision or mission by the end of the third program year.

> **Outcome 1.c:** The school culture at the participating schools will be conducive to developing high expectations for student learning, including improved school-wide discipline policies that support a safe learning environment.

> **Outcome 1.d:** A rigorous, transparent, and equitable performance evaluation system for teachers will have been established, which takes into account student growth as a factor.

Outcome 1.e: The school district will have developed a plan to seek outside funding to support school reform.

Outcome 1.f: The participating schools, with the participation of school administrators, teachers, parents/families, and students, will have developed the capacity to conduct on-going school audits and assessments of the school's overall structure, curriculum, instruction, finances, program effectiveness, human capital, and governance system in order to identify areas in need of improvement and to be able to plan for system effective change.

Outcome 1.g.: The participating schools will have developed a professional development system that enhances instruction, improved student-teacher relationships, and provides instruction to engage and motivate students' learning.

2. INCREASED TEACHER CAPACITY THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES -- Teachers continuously increasing skills and knowledge through PD, with the skills and knowledge to collaborate effectively on teams, employing a Focused Instructional Process in their schools, and offering challenging instruction to their students.

Outcome 2.a: The teachers, having participated in PD, will have demonstrated that they are able to effectively employ the Focused Instructional Process at their schools using internet-based communication and digital technologies.

Outcome 2.b: The teachers, having participated in PD, will have demonstrated that they are able to assist their students in employing employ higher-order thinking habits.

Outcome 2.c: The teachers, having participated in PD, will have become effective leaders and collaborated with their colleagues on implementing new instructional approaches in their classrooms, including within and across grade levels.

Outcome 2.d: The teachers, having participated in PD, will report that they have been able to keep abreast of new knowledge and research and to continue their growth.

Outcome 2.e: The teachers, having participated in PD, will report increased confidence and capacity to integrate technology into their instruction and their communication with colleagues.

Outcome 2.f: The teachers, having participated in PD, will report that they rate the workshops and coaching as having been relevant, useful, and effective in improving their instruction.

Outcome 2.g: The curriculum teachers employ in classrooms will have become consistently aligned with state learning standards and the common core.

3. STUDENTS DEMONSTRATING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN THEIR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OUTCOMES -- Students demonstrating continuous improvement in their academic achievement, increased academic engagement and satisfaction with school, and socio-emotional growth.

Outcome 3.a: The project elementary and high schools will demonstrate statistically significant gain in reading and mathematics scores on standardized tests each project year.

Outcome 3.b: Student academic engagement, motivation to learn, effective use of technology and satisfaction will increase.

Outcome 3.c: Students will demonstrate the ability to employ higher level thinking skills that will increase each year at a significant level from the project's pre to post assessments of these variables.

Outcome 3.d: Students from all sub-groups will have shown academic improvement.

Outcome 3.e: The hours each week students spend learning and engaged in academic pursuits will have increased. .

Outcome 3.f.: Students will have demonstrated that they are more effectively able to make transitions from middle school to high school, and from high school to college.

Outcome 3.g: Students will indicate that the learning environment at their schools is safe.

4. COMMUNITY ORGANICATION AND PARENT/FAMILY OUTCOMES -- Community organizations contributing resources to improve the demonstration schools and parents increasingly becoming engaged in supporting the learning of children

Outcome 4.a: Representatives from community organizations will report that they have increased their involvement with teachers at the participating schools.

Outcome 4.b: Parents at the schools served by SLI will report that they have been able to become more deeply involved and engaged in the learning of their children.

Outcome 4.c: Parents will have higher expectations for students' learning, including being supportive of and having acquired skills to assist their children from advancing effectively through the P-20 educational system.

1.3.2.3.9.2. 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.

Introduction: An Innovative set of outcomes with potential for broad impact: The detailed series of outcomes below demonstrate that the Strategic Learning Initiatives SIG project has potential for significant impact by catalyzing the behavior of school administrators, teachers, parents/families, and students.

A. Project Outcomes, Outputs, Assessment Measures or Metrics for Each Focused Instructional Process Project Objective Which are Specific, Measurable, and Achievable Metrics: In the sub-sections below, the project's outcomes, outputs, and assessment measures are described for each objective, which meet the SMART standards mentioned above.

1. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND GOVERNANCE OUTCOMES AS THE DRIVER OF CHANGE INDICATORS-- Developing or establishing a culture of trust and collaboration using organizational learning strategies that encompass shared leadership and systematic school-wide problem-solving and networking across district schools

> **Indicator for Outcome 1.a:** The percentage of staff members at each of the project schools will report at year end that they are strongly committed to shared decision making, are involved in important decisions undertaken at those schools, engaged in collaborative problem-solving, have opportunities to influence what happens at the school, and are comfortable in voicing their concerns.
>
> **Indicator for Outcome 1.b:** The percentage of the school staff at each of the demonstration schools will report that the school has developed a shared vision or mission by the end of each project year.
>
> **Indicator for Outcome 1.c:** The percentage of school staff indicating that their school culture is conducive to developing high expectations for student learning, including improved school-wide discipline policies that support a safe learning environment.
>
> **Indicator for Outcome 1.d:** The percentage of teachers and principals that indicate that the school has a rigorous, transparent, and equitable performance evaluation system for teachers, which takes into account student growth as a factor and includes a published planning document demonstrating that this performance evaluation system has been developed.
>
> **Indicator for Outcome 1.e:** Documents providing evidence that at least one grant application will have been submitted to a funding agency.

Indicator for Outcome 1.f: Documents providing evidence (e.g. copies of surveys submitted and completed by principals, teachers, students, community members, and parents) of audits and assessments of school structures, curricula, instruction, finances, program effectiveness, human capital, and governance system.

Indicator for Outcome 1.g: Documents providing evidence (e.g. summaries of PD sessions and attendance records for the PD sessions and follow-up meetings) that a system of professional development exists to enhance instruction.

ASSESSMENTS FOR FIRST OUTCOME INDICATORS: First, a survey administered to school staff assessing the degree to which the demonstration schools employ inclusive and shared decision-making and other dimensions of organizational learning described, that the evaluation system is rigorous, transparent and equitable in Outcomes 1.a-d above. The project will employ a revised version of the Consortium for School Research's Survey, which assesses shared school leadership (Bryk, et.al., 2010). Second, the Five Essentials Survey, developed by the Consortium, will be implemented to determine how effective collaboration has been on the project's teams. Third, a survey will ask teachers to rate how effective networking has been across schools. All of the above surveys will employ Likert-type scales. Fourth, attendance records will be maintained in order to document that the leadership and teacher teams and networking across schools are fully functioning. In addition, documents will be provided for outcomes 1e-g providing evidence that those outcomes have been achieved.

2. INCREASED TEACHER CAPACITY THROUGH COMPREHENSIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS-- Teachers continuously increasing skills and knowledge through PD, with the skills and knowledge to collaborate effectively on teams, employing the Focused Instructional Process in their schools, and offering challenging instruction to their students.

Indicator for Outcome 2.a: The percentage of the trained teachers will have demonstrated that they are able to effectively employ the Focused Instructional Process at their schools using internet-based communication and digital technologies.

Indicator for *Outcome 2.b:* The percentage of teachers, having participated in PD, will have demonstrated that they are able to assist their students in employing employ higher-order thinking habits.

Indicator for Outcome 2.c: The percentage of teachers, having participated in PD, will have collaborated with their colleagues on implementing new instructional approaches in their classrooms.

Indicator for Outcome 2.d: The percentage of teachers, having participated in PD, will report that they have been able to keep abreast of new knowledge and research and to continue their growth because of their participation in the SLI's PD program .

Indicator for Outcome 2.e: The percentage of teachers, having participated in PD, will report increased confidence and capacity to integrate digital media into their instruction and their communication with colleagues.

Indicator for Outcome 2.f: The percentage of teachers, having participated in PD, will report that they rate the workshops and coaching as having been effective and useful in improving their instruction.

Indicator for Outcome 2.g: The percentage of teachers, having participated in PD, who indicate that there curricula are aligned with state learning standards and the Common Core Standards.

ASSESSMENTS FOR SECOND OUTCOME INDICATORS: A survey will be developed to assess how effectively teachers are employing the Focused Instructional Process, ambitious student instruction, teacher-to-teacher collaboration, knowledge of recent research, and use of digital media in their instruction and interactions with colleagues, and participating in PD sessions and that those sessions are aligned with state standards and the common core. A feedback questionnaire will be administered at the end of each PD session to measure the effectiveness of the PD. Attendance records will document PD and coaching involvement.

3. STUDENTS DEMONSTRATING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN THEIR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT INDICATORS--Students demonstrating continuous improvement in their academic achievement through increased academic engagement and satisfaction with school, and socio-emotional growth.

Indicator for Outcome 3.a: The percentage of elementary and high schools demonstrating a significant increase in reading and mathematics scores on standardized tests each project year, with gains significantly greater than those of matched comparison schools.

Indicator for Outcome 3.b: The percentage of students demonstrating that they have been academically engaged, and have used of internet-based communication and digital technologies.

Indicator for Outcome 3.c: The percentage of students demonstrating the ability to employ higher level thinking skill.

Indicator for Outcome 3.d: The percentage of students from such academic sub-groups as those with disabilities, those who are English language learners, and those academically at risk who have shown an increase in academic achievement.

Indicator for Outcome 3.e: Records of the number of hours that students are spending learning during and after school.

Indicator for Outcome 3.f: The percentage of students who demonstrate that they have successfully made the transition from middle school to high school.

Indicator for Outcome 3.g: The percentage of students who indicate that their learning environment at school is safe and conducive to learning.

ASSESSMENTS FOR THIRD OUTCOME INDICATORS: Standardized school assessments in reading and mathematics will be collected to provide one measure of student achievement. Surveys also will be administered to students and/or teachers at each demonstration school to assess student academic engagement and their ability to employ higher level thinking skills, their ability to make the transition from middle to high school, and whether the learning environment at their school is safe and conductive to learning. Teachers will document the degree to which they have employed the 8 Step Focused Instructional Process in their classrooms and how many students have used digital media. In addition, school records will document student attendance.

4. COMMUNITY ORGANICATION AND PARENT/FAMILY INDICATORS --Community organizations contributing resources to improve the demonstration schools and parents increasingly becoming engaged in supporting the learning of children

Indicator for Outcome 4.a: The percentage of representatives from community organizations reporting that they have increased their involvement with teachers at the demonstration schools.

Indicator for Outcome 4.b: The percentage of the parents at the demonstration schools reporting that they have been able support the learning of their children at home because of collaboration with their teachers.

Indicator for Outcome 4.c: The percentage of parents who have higher expectations for their child's learning, and who are satisfied that their child is successfully advancing through the P-20 educational system.

ASSESSMENTS FOR FOURTH OUTCOME INDICATORS: Surveys of parents/families and community representatives will be employed to assess community involvement in the demonstration schools, effectiveness of parent support to their children, and whether they have high expectations for their children's learning and are satisfied with their children's transition through the P-20 educational system. Attendance and partnership agreements will document parent workshop and community involvement.

1.1.2.3. Lead Partners and LEAs are required to participate in data collection, evaluation, and reporting activities as specified by ED and ISBE. Some of the accountability indicators to be included as a part of these activities (i.e., data collection, evaluation, and reporting) are listed below. Lead Partner applicants are advised that additional criteria may be added to the list by ED or ISBE as necessary. ISBE requires State of Illinois RFP 16 Specifications/Qualifications/Statement of Work

V.13.4 the specific incorporation of the following accountability measures into all contracts (i.e., MOU) between LEAs and Lead Partners.

ADDITIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY OUTCOME INDICATORS FOR WHICH DATA WILL BE COLLECTED BY SLI:

1.1.2.3.1. Number of minutes within the school year;

1.1.2.3.2. Student participation rate on ISAT or PSAE in reading/language arts and in mathematics,
by student subgroup;

1.1.2.3.3. Dropout rate;

1.1.2.3.4. Student attendance rate;

1.1.2.3.5. Number and percentage of students completing advanced coursework (e.g., Advanced
Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), early-college high schools, or dual enrollment classes);

1.1.2.3.6. Discipline incidents;

1.1.2.3.7. Truants;

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

1.1.2.3.9. Teacher attendance rate;

1.1.2.3.10. School climate and culture; and

1.1.2.3.11. Teacher and principal effectiveness.

1.3.2.3.10. Staff Requirements

1.3.2.3.10.1. Identify highly qualified staff who will be involved in the project and their specific experience and success with school intervention efforts.

1.3.2.3.10.2. Describe to what degree selected staff will be involved in the day-to-day work at the districts and schools. In an appendix, please include resumes representing the leadership team members that highlight those portions of their professional backgrounds relevant to school turnaround.

Project Director -Kathy Berry, Vice President of Operations, Strategic Learning Initiatives

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at Strategic Learning Initiatives since 2008 and has coordinated SLI's SIG work in Springfield, Decatur, East St. Louis, DePue IL. and East Baton Rouge, LA.. Prior to assuming the job of VP of Operations, Ms. Berry was the Director of Professional Development at SLI where she supported and motivated a team of instructional leaders that built capacity of teacher leaders in the Focused Instruction Process.

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1.4 MILESTONES AND SLI DELIVERABLES:

The Lead Partner has specific and significant responsibilities within the school and to the LEA that span structural and programmatic changes. The Lead Partner shall provide all labor and resources to meet these expectations, which may include, but are not limited to the following list.

SLI will provide the following DELIVERABLES:

1.4.1.1. Conducting a comprehensive examination/audit of the LEA and school to assess the overall structure, curriculum, instruction, finances, program effectiveness, human capital, and governance of the system in order to identify and address areas of need and plan for systemic change.

1.4.1.2. Implementing a coherent, comprehensive, research-based, whole-school reform model, that incorporates the requirements of the selected ED model, which will provide an immediate and dramatic turnaround in structural and programmatic operations and has the greatest likelihood of increasing student achievement.

1.4.1.3. Aligning, consistent with the State Learning Standards, curriculum, instruction, and

interim assessments.

1.4.1.4. Aligning sustained professional development with the curriculum and instruction to build rigor, foster improved student-teacher relationships, and provide relevant instruction that engages and motivates students.

1.4.1.5. Establishing strategies to improve student transitions from middle school to high school.
1.4.1.6.
1.4.1.6. Developing and implementing evidence-based discipline programs that minimize time out of school and/or class and cultivate a safe learning environment for students.

1.4.1.7. Providing staff with ongoing, high quality, job-embedded professional development that is aligned with the school's comprehensive instructional program and designed with school staff to ensure that they are equipped to facilitate effective teaching and learning and have the capacity to successfully implement school reform strategies.

1.4.1.8. Working with the LEA to ensure that teachers have time to collaborate, plan, and engage in professional development within and across grades and subjects.

1.4.1.9. Working with the LEA to secure sufficient operational flexibility for both the Lead Partner and principal to implement fully, a comprehensive turnaround strategy. Securing operational flexibility may include changes to staffing, calendars/time, and budgeting.

1.4.1.10. Working with the LEA 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.

1.4.1.11. Working with the LEA to recruit, hire, and place teachers and leaders who have a proven record of increasing student performance.

1.4.1.12. Securing parental commitment and involvement and increasing parental capacity to support student engagement, motivation, and learning within the school, at home, and in the community.

1.4.1.13. Assisting the LEA with identifying and implementing strategies that provide for increased learning time in core academic areas by lengthening the school day, week, and/or year.

1.4.1.14. Identifying and recommending outside resources needed to support the reform effort, including supporting partners.

1.4.1.15. Working with the LEA to seek outside funding from the greater community (e.g., business, private foundations, federal, and state sources) to support the reform effort.

1.4.1.16. Providing a performance management system featuring frequent formative and summative reports on program effectiveness to include, but not be limited to, changes in student achievement, parental involvement, student/staff attendance, staff performance, staff recruitment, and student discipline.

STAFFING

Vanessa Atkins Ed. D.

Kathy Berry

Charlotte Blackman Ed. D.

Mary Canchola

Mary Cavey Ed.D.

Linda Coles Ed. D.

Susan Jensen

Terezka Jirasek

Karen Morris

Perry Soldwedl

Fran Starks

Michelle Stankevicius

Monica Thompson

Clarissa Whitehead

Kathy Berry Strategic Learning Initiatives Vice President of Operations

Is responsible for finance, human resources, and office management. Kathy also works directly with SLI's Director of Educational Programs to ensure quality and coordination among programs. Prior, Kathy was SLI's Director of Professional Development, where she led all teacher-centered activities and supported schools in the Focused Instruction Process. In addition, Kathy facilitated and assisted in the design of a variety of workshops, coaching sessions, and other training opportunities, examples of which include Peer Coaching, Teacher Facilitator Training, Differentiated Instruction, and Teaching Strategies for Success. Berry also worked at the Johnson School in Chicago for six years where she taught first grade and Reading Recovery, co-designed a new lesson plan book, facilitated the assessment team, and led staff development in alternative assessments. Kathy has presented at several conferences including the ASQ 2010 National Quality Education Conference and has participated in a national collaborative for Looking at Student Work since its formation in 1998 at the initiative of the Annenberg Institute for School Reform and Project Zero at Harvard University. Ms. Berry has also been trained in Human Resources by the AMA and has participated in an Innovation course at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. She is a certified teacher with a B.A. in Elementary Education from North Central College and an M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction from National-Louis University.

Strategic Learning Initiatives Shared Leadership Staff

Charlotte Blackman, Ed.D. Shared Leadership Manager Strategic Learning Initiatives

 Charlotte serves on the management team for planning, marketing, and school support. Though initially responsible for new network development, her current focus is on training teachers and administrators on the Focused Instruction Process. Using her expertise as a mentor and coach, she engages the principals and their leadership teams in reflective practices using research based techniques geared to increasing student achievement. Charlotte ministered in Chicago Public Schools as a teacher, counselor, teacher facilitator, principal, and Principal Mentor for LAUNCH (Leadership Academy and Urban Network Chicago). Since retirement, Charlotte has served as a principal coach for new principals through the Leadership Initiative for Turnaround (LIFT) and the Office of Principal Preparation and Development (OPPD). She chaired a Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC) for teacher recertification for the Illinois State Board of Education, and identified candidates for Chicago's Alternative Certification Program. Dr. Blackman has served as a Principal in Residence and Process Observer for the School Development Program, Yale Child Study Center at Yale University. Additionally, she has taught as Senior Faculty for the National Institute for Teaching Excellence (NITE) at Cambridge College, Cambridge Mass. Charlotte, a National Board Certified Counselor, has a B.S. in Elementary Education, a M.S. in Counseling and Guidance from Chicago State University, and a Doctorate of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from Loyola University of Chicago.

Mary Lynn Cavey Ed.D.,Shared Leadership Facilitator Strategic Learning Initiatives

 Retired CPS Principal, Bilingual Educator and Consultant. Mary is new to the SLI team but looking forward to working with new schools and principals. While she continues her work with the Chicago Public Schools as logistic coordinator on the Summer Assistance Team for the Summer Bridge Program, she also provides support as a new principal coach and mentor in a suburban school district. As a "Small School" advocate, she is working on a restructuring project that is implementing the Small School Concept and Project Based Learning in three Middle Schools. Mary served as principal for 16 years in Chicago where she had the opportunity to create small school environments, work with teachers and staff on Professional Development designed to activate student critical thinking skills while using research based instructional strategies, open a new primary school focusing on inclusive classrooms and completed a phase-out for a school with one of the largest autistic populations in the city. In 2002 she was one of 15 principals selected to receive the *Outstanding Leadership Award* by demonstrating the progress and growth made at John Spry Community School over the previous five years. Mary received her B.A. in Secondary Education from the University of

Illinois at Chicago, a Masters in Administration from Roosevelt University, and a doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction from Loyola University.

Susan Jensen Shared Leadership Facilitator Strategic Learning Initiatives

Susan has worked with a group of Chicago Public School (CPS) principals with a focus on implementation and monitoring SLI's Focused Instruction initiative pilot through CPS schools. Susan concentrates on the improvement of teaching and learning in the area of language arts. Susan has worked for the Chicago Public School system for 35 years, as a teacher, a counselor, an assistant principal at Drummond Elementary, Gray Elementary and Finkl Academy. Prior to her retirement she was the principal of Chicago's Finkl Academy. As principal she was instrumental in increasing Illinois State Achievement Test (ISAT) composite scores from 23.3% to 79.9% in 2007. Also in 2007, Finkl Academy was recognized as one, of only ten, Chicago Public Schools to have increased their science ISAT scores beyond 80%. In addition to increasing the ISAT test scores her responsibilities included selecting, monitoring and evaluating 73 staff members, as well as curriculum and programs for 850 students. Susan also led strategic and tactical improvement planning and managed Finkl's $2.5 million budget. Susan has a B.S. in Elementary Education and her M.Ed. in Reading and Learning Disabilities from DePaul University. In addition, she is a state certified in guidance and counseling and English as a second language (ESL). Prior to becoming a principal she received a fellowship at the Leadership Academy and Urban Network for Chicago (LAUNCH) through Northwestern University in cooperation with the Chicago Public Schools. Jensen has also served as a mentor to new principals in Chicago Public Schools. She has also worked on the principal eligibility process, with the Office of Principal Preparation Development at CPS, reviewing portfolios and interviewing prospective principal candidates.

Karen Morris Strategic Learning Initiatives Director of Educational Programs

Karen Morris serves as the Director of Educational Programs at SLI and is responsible, in collaboration with the Vice President of Operations, for the development, management and quality control for the educational programs implemented by the organization. Karen also serves as the Director of Shared Leadership at SLI. In this capacity, she coordinates the work of a group of retired school leaders who act as facilitators, coaches, and mentors to school administrators and school leadership teams in their quest for high achieving, student centered schools. Karen is the retired principal of the Maria Saucedo Scholastic Academy in the Pilsen/Little Village neighborhood in Chicago. At Saucedo, Karen led a staff of seventy, in the development and implementation of a student-centered, high performing culture where all stakeholders were involved and valued. In addition, she has served as a mentor principal for over one hundred school principals in LIFT and LAUNCH, Chicago Public Schools Principal Development Programs, and the Urban Leadership Program at the University of Illinois-Chicago. Ms. Morris holds certification from NAESP as a National Principal Mentor. Karen holds a B.S. in Elementary Education from Western Michigan U., an M. Ed. in Curriculum and

Instruction from the University of Illinois-Chicago and an Advanced Certificate in Supervision from the University of California-Los Angeles.

Strategic Learning Initiatives-Professional Development

Vanessa Atkins Ed.D. , **Professional Development Facilitator**

Vanessa serves as a Professional Development Facilitator with SLI. Her educational training reflects extensive knowledge in delivering Best Practice Workshops and instructional support to schools whose goal is to improve and increase student achievement and teacher accountability. Vanessa holds a BS degree in Elementary Education from Illinois State University, a Masters Degree in Educational Administration and Supervision from Governors State University, and a Doctorate Degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Loyola University. Her dissertation was a qualitative and quantitative study of Mentoring Behavior and Academics: A Case Study of a Mentor and Protégé program for At-Risk Junior High School Boys in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade. She is a former elementary and high school teacher, an assistant principal for two high schools and she just retired from the principalship of a high achieving junior high school where she was employed for the past 15 years. Vanessa supervised over 95 teachers and ancillary staff. She provided professional development in areas such as: the Charlotte Danielson Evaluation Framework, Professional Learning Communities, aligning data and instruction, Response to Intervention, differentiated instruction, how to write Common Core Curriculum guides and facilitated school improvement team initiatives. Vanessa's believes in giving teachers and administrators the educational tools to transform their school district, which will have a positive effect on all children to experience success academically, socially and emotionally.

Linda H. Coles, Ed.D.-Professional Development Facilitator

Dr. Linda H. Coles has served the Chicago Public Schools for 39 years. She has served in CPS as a teacher, assistant principal, Principal Mentor for LAUNCH (Leadership Academy and Urban Network Chicago), and LIFT (Leadership Initiative for Transformation).

She was assistant principal at Poe Classical School. She has served as principal of Keller Regional Gifted Center and started the college prep program at King College Prep. She has attended coach training through the National Association for Elementary School Principals' (NAESP) Peer Assisted Leadership Service (PALS), Adaptive Schools for Developing Collaborative Groups, Success for All reading training, and Kids at Hope, a process for building student success through high expectations for all children-no exceptions. She has also received training in School Administrative Manager (SAM). The SAMs training recognizes time management for principals to fulfill the role of instructional leaders.

She currently serves as a principal coach for New Teachers Center collaborative with OPPD (Office of Principals Preparation) for first year principals. She has done work with Teacher

Recertification for the Illinois State Board of Education. She also has experience in curriculum writing in addition to presenting administrator, teacher, and parent workshops.

Dr. Coles currently serves as the high school facilitator for SLI joining the team in January 2011. In this capacity, she has done training for teachers and administrators on the Focused Instruction Process.

Dr. Coles received a B.A. in elementary education from Chicago State University, M.A. in Administration and Supervision from Roosevelt University, and a Doctorate of Education in School Leadership from Nova Southeastern University.

Terezka Jirasek, Professional Development Manager Strategic Learning Initiatives

Terezka began working with the SLI team as a facilitator in Fall 1999. In her work with SLI, she has support elementary and High Schools in their implementation of Focused instruction Process. She has also helped to design and facilitate workshops, training sessions, and meetings on a variety of topics. Terezka Jirasek came to education in 1989, after 14 years in management as a long-term care administrator and executive director of eight skilled-nursing facilities. Although she believes her business experience has proven extremely beneficial in the educational arena, she has never felt more challenged than in the classroom. Since completing her Masters 1992, Terezka has taught elementary school in the Chicago area at the primary level for six years, as well as English at the high school level in the Czech Republic for one year. Following completion of her Library-Media endorsement at Dominican University, she served as the sole librarian of a 950+ student, K-8 bilingual school on Chicago's West Side. While with the Chicago Public Schools, Terezka received national recognition by the *School Library Journal* (01/99) for her student-centered librarian efforts. As noted in the article, "She has an uncanny grasp of how to get kids to invest themselves in reading. She's someone the profession should clone as soon as possible."

Fran Starks Professional Development Facilitator Strategic Learning Initiatives

Fran is responsible for delivering Best Practice Workshops, and providing leadership, and instructional support, to schools working to increase student achievement. She often serves as an Interim Principal and additionally provides training in Team Building to school districts. Fran has been a School Improvement Coach for the State of Illinois and a staff coach for "Turning Points" (a National School Reform Organization). She is a former elementary and high school science teacher and a retired principal who has served in both Elementary and Middle School. As a principal, Fran supervised over 90 teachers plus ancillary staff. She provided professional development in areas such as data analysis, differentiated instruction and lesson planning and delivery. Fran is skillfully trained in current Best Practices and other essential areas required for Professional Development in Education. She continues to be asked to formally mentor new administrators. Fran is known for her ability to present information in ways which allow learners to easily internalize the information. She is creative and has a wealth of background knowledge related to how students learn. She has earned recognition as a Master Teacher and as an Outstanding Principal from the Illinois Principals Association. Fran holds a BS Degree in Biology

from Chicago State University, a Masters Degree in Education from Governor's State University as well as an Administrative Certificate.

Michelle Stankevicius Professional Development Facilitator and Lead Technology Team Member Strategic Learning Initiatives

Michelle provides workshops, leadership and support to a variety of public and private schools. She facilitates and co-designs a variety of workshops, coaching sessions, and other research-based professional development for teachers. Michelle leads the SLI Technology Team in developing, writing and administration of a new website, social media and blog. Previously, Michelle worked at Maria Saucedo Scholastic Academy in Chicago where she instructed students in grades pre-k through 8th in the Computer Lab and as a Reading Resource teacher, as well as a self-contained classroom teacher. Michelle served as the Least Restrictive Environment facilitator, School Based Problem Solving leader, mentor to new teachers, Chairperson of the PPLC, Chairperson of the Social Committee and on the School Improvement Plan Committee. Mrs. Stankevicius was selected as a participant in Chicago Foundation for Education's Teacher Advisory Board to the Commission on Improving Curriculum-Based Assessment. She also participated in the City of Chicago's Goals 2000 program in which she planned and implemented a school wide thematic unit. She wrote and was awarded the ASPIRE grant (Alliance for School-based Problem-solving and Intervention Resources in Education) for Saucedo Academy in 2006. Mrs. Stankevicius received her B.A. in Elementary Education from the University of Illinois and M.Ed. in Educational Leadership from Saint Xavier University.

Perry Soldwedel Audit Facilitator

Perry works with districts on system change. In that capacity, he facilitates the Compact for Quality and serves as a coach/consultant with district leaders as they strive to improve their performance results.

Perry also leads external review teams at both the district and school levels to provide organizations with feedback related to continuous improvement framework and processes. His expertise is in the areas of shared leadership, strategic planning/visioning, and data systems to improve instruction. In addition he is a facilitator or the S.M.A.R.T. goal process. He supports district and school leaders in providing the support and resources necessary to build a systematic improvement process.

Mr. Soldwedel worked in Illinois public education for 34 years, as an elementary teacher, assistant middle school principal, elementary principal, director of curriculum, assistant superintendent, and superintendent.

Perry has participated in certification programs with Jim Shipley and Associates, the American Society for Quality, PQ Systems, and Quality Leadership By Design. He is a continuous improvement examiner and has attended institutes with Professional Learning Communities and Effective Schools. In addition, he has served as an adjunct instructor for the University of Illinois teaching Quality Improvement in Educational Settings. He co-authored [The School Board Fieldbook: Leading with Vision](#) in 2009 published by Solution-Tree.

Monica Thompson Finance Coordinator Strategic Learning Initiatives

Monica Thompson serves as a Finance Assistant and is one of the newest member s of the Strategic Learning Initiatives (SLI) team joining SLIin July 2013. Monica brings with her an extensive knowledge of office functions, bookkeeping procedures, and an excellent work ethic. Prior to coming to SLI, Monica worked for CDK Enterprises, Inc./dba Build-Rite for 5 years as an Office Manager processing monthly reconciliations, payroll, payroll taxes, and end of year accounting. Prior to CDK Enterprises, Inc. Monica worked for Steven W. Reichert Homes, LLC for 9 years as an Office Manager/Architectural Drafter, where in addition to drafting she was in charge of maintaining construction budgets, sworn contractor statements, and handling construction loan payouts for new home construction.   Monica has also previously worked as a lead teller for First National Bank.