

LENSES: High-Quality Literacy Education Nationwide - Scaling, Evaluation, and Sustainment

The Kentucky Educational Development Corporation, the Maine Department of Education, Impact Florida, Carnegie Learning, and WestEd propose an Expansion EIR project to enhance, scale, and perform a randomized controlled trial (RCT) of *Lenses on Literature*, a comprehensive, research-based 6-12 ELA core curriculum designed to engage students in thinking critically, reading joyfully, and writing confidently. The program can build the knowledge, skills, and competencies students need to engage with a wide range of complex texts and complex tasks in order to help high-needs students across the states of Kentucky, Maine, and Florida, particularly within schools in rural areas and those with high-needs students. High-needs students include those far below grade level and those from low-income backgrounds.

The Kentucky Educational Development Corporation will use its established and trusted network across Kentucky and beyond to bring this project to life. The scaling and expansion required by the project will be supported by the Maine Department of Education and Impact Florida. This project addresses the Absolute Priority (Field-Initiated Innovations: Promoting Evidence-Based Literacy) with strong evidence. It also addresses the Competitive Preference Priority 1 (Returning Education to the States) and Competitive Preference Priority 2 (Expanding Education Choice). To address Competitive Preference Priority 1, the project is led by a statewide organization in Kentucky and supported by another in Florida, as well as the state department of education in Maine. To address Competitive Preference Priority 2 the project, the project focuses on *Lenses on Literature*, which incorporates NSSA recognized high impact tutoring as a core component for Tier 3 students and small group and whole-class components for Tier 2 students. The impact of these subgroups will be considered in all analyses.

The proposed impact study will engage 300 teachers and 10,000 students in 120 schools with middle grades across our three partner states. This project will allow the improvement and implementation of *Lenses on Literature*, which will increase leaders' knowledge of standards and evidence-based instructional practices, teachers' instructional knowledge and proficiency, and students' enjoyment of literacy, engagement in reading, reading and writing performance, and standardized English and Reading test scores.

Section A – Significance

Overview of the Intervention. *Lenses on Literature* is a comprehensive, research-based English Language Arts (ELA) program for grades 6–12 that integrates instructional materials, assessment, professional learning, and high-impact tutoring into one coherent system. Developed through more than fifteen years of philanthropically and federally funded research and validated through multiple *What Works Clearinghouse* studies, *Lenses* engages students in reading complex, grade-level texts, discussing ideas collaboratively, and producing authentic writing and speaking tasks scored against SCALE analytic rubrics. Embedded professional learning, Plan–Do–Study–Act (PDSA) cycles, and automated formative assessment provide teachers and leaders with real-time data to guide instruction. Its tiered design (Tiers 1–3) ensures equitable access to rigorous literacy learning for all students, while the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) implementation model builds lasting capacity among teachers and administrators to sustain improvement over time.

Innovation. *Lenses on Literature* represents an innovative, evidence-based approach that unites high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) with a capacity-building implementation model to close the persistent gap between curriculum quality and consistent classroom practice. Whereas most literacy programs offer only Tier 1 instruction or disconnected professional learning,

Lenses integrates five types of innovation:

1. **HQIM Extension.** Expands a validated ESSA Tier 2 evidence-based modular program into a full ELA core curriculum. See Appendix J.1.a for full *Lenses on Literature* Program Overview and Appendix J.1.b for the complete Table of Contents.
2. **Emerging Component Development.** Introduces validated AI-enabled formative and summative autoscoring of writing and speaking using SCALE analytic rubrics, yielding inter-rater reliability above 0.80 and providing real-time, standards-referenced feedback. See Appendix J.1.c for the SCALE ELA Standards Rubrics.
3. **Unique Composition of Components.** Integrates Tier 1 and Tier 2 classroom instruction with Tier 3 high-impact tutoring, delivered by certified teachers within one coherent framework so that all tiers share common standards, texts, and rubrics. See Appendix J.1.d for an overview of Carnegie Learning’s high impact tutoring—one of only 24 tutoring programs badged by Stanford University’s National Student Support Accelerator.
4. **Modification of Evidence-Based Component.** Implements a sustainable Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) model that prepares KEDC and district or site teacher leaders to facilitate professional learning, coaching, and ILT structures independently.
5. **Integration of Evidence Generation and Implementation.** Embeds research design within daily improvement cycles, allowing practice-based evidence from Kentucky, Maine, and Florida schools to inform national replication and scalability. Together, these innovations move beyond adoption toward a replicable model that fuses HQIM, technology, and implementation science, producing both high-quality instruction and enduring local capacity.

This EIR Expansion project represents a significant scaling of prior federal investments.

Whereas the 2015–2020 *Investing in Innovation (i3)* Validation study examined a 4–8-week Tier 1 instructional treatment focused on writing in response to text (Wang et al., 2019), the current proposal expands the model to a full 180-day ELA curriculum cycle across an entire academic year. The expansion embeds the same theory of action—task design, collaborative scoring, and continuous improvement—within a comprehensive HQIM program that includes Tier 1 core instruction, Tier 2 formative supports, and Tier 3 high-impact tutoring. This transition from a short-term intervention to a year-long core program will allow the impact to deepen and more schools to participate through curriculum adoption. This will extend both the intensity and reach of a previously validated model to produce system-wide, sustainable, and scalable improvement.

Competency-Based Implementation Phases. Implementation of these innovations follows a three-phase, competency-based progression that develops teacher and leader expertise over time. See Appendix J.1.e for the *Lenses on Literature* Phase 1 Workplan. See Appendix J.1.f for the Carnegie Learning Literacy Teacher Competencies and Artifacts.

Phase	Implementation Focus	Teacher Competencies Developed	Evidence of Mastery
Phase 1	Grade-Level Content and Tasks	C1, C5, C7	Teachers recognize focus standards in tasks and rubrics; score end-of-unit writing using SCALE rubrics.
Phase 2	Formative Assessment and Instructional Sequences	C2, C3, C6, C8	Teachers conduct formative assessments and analyze patterns in student work to inform instruction.
Phase 3	Data-Driven Differentiation and Continuous Improvement	C4, C9, C10	Teachers differentiate and revise instruction using formative and summative evidence across units.

This sequencing transforms implementation from one-time training into a structured system for building expertise that aligns with EIR’s emphasis on innovation with sustainability.

The Need and Potential Impact. Adolescent literacy is a strong predictor of postsecondary success, yet in 2024 only 29 percent of Kentucky 8th grade students performed at or above the

NAEP proficiency benchmark for reading (Kentucky Department of Education [KEDC], 2024d). Rural and economically disadvantaged students face additional barriers to accessing grade-level instruction and sustained writing feedback. The majority of students in Kentucky fall into one of these two categories, and both sets of students had significantly lower scores on the NAEP assessment in reading than their non-rural peers (KEDC, 2024a). Research confirms that middle school is the inflection point when literacy must shift from foundational reading to disciplinary reasoning and extended writing (Hill et al., 2008; Wexler, 2020).

Similar challenges exist in the partner states for this expansion. In Florida, only 25 percent of eighth graders scored at or above the NAEP Proficient level in reading in 2024, and the state's average score of 253 fell below the national average of 257 (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2024). Despite modest state-assessment gains in 2025, Florida students remain more than three-quarters of a grade level behind pre-pandemic reading levels (Education Recovery Scorecard, 2024). In Maine, just 26 percent of middle-grade students meet state literacy proficiency benchmarks, and the state recently recorded its lowest reading scores in three decades (Maine Department of Education, 2024). Both states face widening gaps for multilingual learners and students in rural or economically disadvantaged regions, underscoring the national urgency of improving adolescent literacy outcomes.

Lenses on Literature addresses this need by ensuring every student engages daily with complex, grade-level texts and authentic, standards-aligned writing tasks. Its AI-enabled scoring system provides daily blueprints for targeted instruction, drastically reducing grading time while improving feedback precision—particularly in writing, where time constraints are the largest barrier to equity. AI-enabled scoring of writing tasks increases teacher capacity to engage students in iterative writing which in turn promotes stronger reading comprehension skills

(Graham & Hebert, 2010; Kim & Zagata, 2024).

Prior quasi-experimental and i3 Validation studies demonstrate four to nine months of additional literacy growth within a single year, alongside significant increases in teacher instructional quality, efficacy, and use of formative data (Herman et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2020). Scaling this model through three statewide organizations (KEDC, Impact Florida, MDE) offers high probability of population-level impact across rural and other high-needs systems.

Building Local and Organizational Capacity. The Lenses Implementation Model ensures capacity is built simultaneously at the classroom, leadership, and system levels. Each school establishes implementation goals; identifies instructional leaders; protects collaborative planning time for PDSA cycles; and schedules coaching, walkthroughs, and data-review routines. These structures ensure that professional learning, curriculum use, and data practices become institutionalized, not dependent on external support.

Each site forms an Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) of administrators, coaches, and lead teachers. ILTs set goals, monitor implementation, and lead professional learning by modeling how to use student-work evidence to drive decisions. Administrators participate in ELA PLC walkthroughs and classroom observations using SCALE rubrics, ensuring instructional alignment and consistent standards of rigor across classrooms.

Implementation progresses through six complementary components that operate within recurring PDSA cycles for each *Lenses* unit. See Appendix J.1.e *Lenses on Literature* Phase 1 Workplan for detailed milestones:

Component	Purpose	Frequency	Sustainability Mechanism
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High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM)	Provide coherent, standards-aligned curriculum and embedded professional learning that equip teachers to sustain evidence-based practice without reliance on external training	Continuous, through daily instruction	Curriculum materials include embedded teacher guidance, assessment rubrics, and professional learning notes that remain with schools after the grant period
High Impact Tutoring	Deliver Tier 3 support aligned to the same grade-level texts, standards, and analytic rubrics used in core instruction; provide personalized feedback and reteaching for students performing below proficiency	10-week cycles of weekly or bi-weekly sessions for 1–6 students (~5 percent of enrollment)	Certified teachers serve as tutors using the HQIM and SCALE rubrics; tutoring structures, materials, and data protocols are institutionalized within district staffing models
In-Person Launch and Final Scoring Workshops	Establish a shared vision, calibrate leadership teams, and align HQIM conditions	Annual (Implementation Years)	Creates district implementation teams
Bi-Weekly Virtual PLCs	Analyze student work using SCALE rubrics; Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles	Ten PLCs per year per teacher cohort	Builds teacher-leader facilitation capacity
Two Virtual Scoring Workshops	Deepen disciplinary literacy, differentiation, and formative assessment practice	After Units 2, 4, and end of year	Recorded sessions expand statewide reach
In-Class Coaching Cycles and ILT Support	Model lessons, co-plan, and provide individualized feedback	1 onsite visit per school with periodic virtual support	Transfers expertise to local coaches and ILT leaders

Teachers and leaders engage in repeating Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycles throughout the year: *Plan* (analyze tasks and texts), *Do* (implement and collect student work), *Study* (score and analyze evidence), and *Act* (adjust instruction and plan next steps). Administrators mirror this cycle through structured walkthroughs, feedback discussions, and data-review meetings, ensuring coherence across tiers of support. Over time, these cycles build organizational habits of evidence-based reflection and continuous improvement, core to EIR’s definition of sustainable capacity. See Appendix J.1.e for the *Lenses on Literature* Phase 1 Workplan for details of each PDSA cycle and the role for teachers and administrators.

Strength of Prior Evidence and Potential for Further Validation. The *Lenses on Literature* model rests on more than 15 years of federally funded research establishing a clear theory of action and consistent positive impact on literacy outcomes. The prior i3 Validation Grant demonstrated statistically significant gains after only 2–4 weeks of implementation; this Expansion grant would build on that evidence by evaluating the model as a full-year, core ELA program delivered across 120 schools—extending both the dosage and population reach required to achieve Tier 1 evidence.

As summarized in Appendix J.1.g: *Lenses on Literature* Initial Research and Evidence Base, the model evolved from the original *Literacy Design Collaborative* framework (Dougherty, 2012; Research for Action, 2009–2015) and has been validated through a continuum of large-scale, independent studies by RFA, CRESST at UCLA, the *What Works Clearinghouse*, and Johns Hopkins University CRRE.

Across these studies, the *Lenses* model demonstrated statistically significant gains in student achievement (+0.06 to +0.09 effect sizes or 4-9 months of additional growth) and measurable improvements in instructional quality and teacher collaboration. This evidence base establishes *Lenses* as an ESSA Tier 2 intervention and positions this project to generate Tier 1 causal evidence through a new multi-state randomized controlled trial led by WestEd.

- **Research for Action (2009–2015)** – Established the theory of action linking task design, collaboration, and student writing gains.
- **U.S. DOE i3 Validation Grant (2015–2020)** – Independent CRESST/UCLA studies found statistically significant positive effects (4–9 months added learning).
- **What Works Clearinghouse (2018)** – Rated as meeting standards with reservations (ESSA Tier 2 – Moderate Evidence).

- **Johns Hopkins CRRE (2025)** – Designated *High-Quality Instructional Material: Promising Practice*, with a clear pathway to Tier 1 through randomized controlled trials.

The proposed Expansion will conduct a multi-state RCT (2026–2030) led by WestEd to generate Tier 1 causal evidence of impact while testing the transferability of the GRR and ILT implementation model within a state-level cooperative system.

In summary, this EIR Expansion project extends a validated, innovative model that transforms how districts implement literacy improvement—integrating Tier 1–3 supports, AI-enabled assessment, ILT-anchored leadership development, and competency-based professional learning within a sustainable GRR system. Through the partnership of KEDC, Carnegie Learning, and WestEd, the project will build statewide capacity and generate Tier 1 evidence of impact—delivering sustained, equitable literacy outcomes for Kentucky, Maine, and Florida’s middle-grade students.

Section B – Strategy to Scale

B.1 Unmet Demand for Broader Implementation Aligned with Expansion Grants

Nationally, adolescent literacy outcomes remain disappointing. On the 2024 NAEP Reading Assessment, only about 30 percent of 8th graders scored at or above the proficient level, revealing that many students lack sufficient reading comprehension skills needed for college and career readiness (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2024).

Kentucky reflects—and in some ways exacerbates—these trends. The majority of Kentucky secondary students are not meeting grade-level expectations in reading. On the 2024 NAEP, only 29 percent of Kentucky’s 8th graders performed at or above the proficient level in reading and rural areas scored significantly lower than the average (Kentucky Department of Education, 2024a). Statewide 2023–2024 KSA data show that, at several grade bands, the

proportion of students scoring at *Proficient or Distinguished* in reading has held steady or slightly increased—but remains far from sufficient (Kentucky Department of Education, 2024b). In high school reading specifically, 45 percent of students achieved proficiency on 2024 assessments, and at the elementary level, approximately 40 percent met the standard (Kentucky Department of Education, 2024c; Kentucky Teacher, 2024). The gaps are especially pronounced in rural and economically disadvantaged counties, many of which are part of regional cooperatives with limited instructional support capacity.

The other partner states in this proposal—**Florida** and **Maine**—show parallel and equally concerning patterns. In Florida, only **25 percent of eighth graders** reached the NAEP Proficient level in reading in 2024, and the state’s average score of 253 fell below the national average of 257 (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2024). Despite modest gains on Florida’s statewide assessment, students remain more than **three-quarters of a grade level behind** pre-pandemic reading levels (Education Recovery Scorecard, 2024; Florida Department of Education, 2025; Waagmeester, 2025). Florida’s persistent proficiency gaps among economically disadvantaged and multilingual learners underscore the need for instructional systems that couple grade-level rigor with targeted feedback and coaching—precisely what *Lenses* provides.

In Maine, reading scores are the lowest they have been in three decades and results reported by the NAEP show a 10 percentage point drop in 2024 compared to scores before the pandemic, with 26 percent of 8th grade students scoring at or above proficient compared to 36 percent in 2019 (Maine Department of Education, 2024a). Rural schools and small districts report particular challenges in maintaining stable instructional leadership and providing sustained professional development for teachers as they work to implement high-quality instructional materials in their classrooms. Critically, *Lenses on Literature* emphasises embedded professional

development with a gradual release of responsibility which turns the teachers into the experts and meets the needs of teachers working in rural communities.

This proposal responds to the urgent literacy need in these states: improving adolescent reading proficiency and ensuring that all students, especially those in rural districts, receive rigorous, coherent literacy instruction and tutoring grounded in research.

Meeting the Demand. *Lenses on Literature* is supported by Tier 2 evidence from prior implementation. Independent evaluations (Wang et al., 2019, 2020) documented statistically significant improvements in student reading comprehension and writing quality equivalent to 4 to 9.4 months of additional learning. The What Works Clearinghouse reviews (#81562, #87633, #89261) confirm moderate-to-high evidence in literacy.

The Conceptual Framework ensures that instruction, professional learning, and continuous improvement are aligned. Through practices such as scaffolding complex texts, structured writing, feedback cycles, and active student voice, teachers support steady gains in comprehension and analytical writing. With Kentucky's baseline, less than 50% of students scoring proficient, projected improvements represent a substantive shift in literacy trajectories.

Building the Capacity of Participating Districts and Schools. To support sustainable literacy improvement, the intervention begins with In-Person Launch Institutes to align district leadership, calibrate Instructional Leadership Teams (ILTs), and set vision. Then ILTs, composed of administrators, coaches, and teacher leaders—will lead cycles of classroom observation, student work analysis, and aligned professional learning focused on reading instruction.

Teachers will engage in competency-based, job-embedded professional learning, mastering practices such as scaffolding close reading, facilitating text-based discussion, and

using analytic writing rubrics. The ILTs will guide Plan–Do–Study–Act (PDSA) cycles using real literacy data to iteratively refine instruction.

Given the high turnover and resource constraints in many Kentucky and other rural districts, this capacity-building model embeds expertise locally and supports sustainability beyond the grant period.

Contribution to Knowledge of Effective Literacy Practice. The project will advance knowledge about scaling evidence-based reading instruction in real-world secondary settings.

Key contributions include:

1. Empirical results on integrating HQIM-anchored continuous-improvement systems for literacy.
2. Insights into how competency-based professional learning affects teacher practice, retention, and student literacy gains in rural contexts.
3. Evidence on replicability of a validated literacy model across diverse districts with varying resources.

Kentucky’s NAEP and KSA data make clear that less than half of secondary students achieve reading proficiency—a reality that limits college readiness and widens equity gaps. *Lenses on Literature* offers a coherent, evidence-based system designed to accelerate reading growth, strengthen instructional leadership, and embed sustainable capacity in Kentucky’s schools. With these data in hand and the model grounded in robust evidence, this project is both timely and positioned to make meaningful gains in literacy outcomes across the state.

B.2 Management Plan

The Kentucky Educational Development Corporation (K) will lead the proposed project, collaborating closely with the Maine Department of Education, Impact Florida, Carnegie

Learning (CL), and WestEd (W). Appendix J.2 provides an organizational chart, which illustrates the structures of responsibilities across organizations. Table 1 lists the objectives by year and responsible organization and personnel, along with the corresponding performance measures.

Table 1. Project Goals, Objectives and Measures with bolded organization and lead personnel

Goals and Objectives	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Personnel	Performance Measure
Goal 1. Implement strategies to deliver services efficiently and effectively at scale							
1.1 Test new systems, tools, and supports using iterative implementation studies in each partner state	X	X				W , Principal Investigator	100% of new or adopted components of Lenses tested in at least 2 schools.
1.2 Build Instructional Leadership Teams and capacity during the first year of program adoption.		X	X			CL , CLLO	Leadership Teams identified and trained for 120 schools.
1.3 Build and disseminate a knowledge repository for effective scaling.		X	X	X	X	KEDC , Deputy Director	Compile all lessons learned quarterly and develop them into yearly scaling guides.
Goal 2. Evaluate the implementation and impact of Lenses on Literature							
2.1 Complete formative research to support Goal 1	X	X				W , Evaluation Lead	Write 3 reports, one from the scan phase and at least two from implementation research.
2.2 Measure and evaluate the fidelity of Lenses			X	X	X	W , Principal Investigator	100% of PL, PLC, unit, PDSA, and rubric data collected
2.3 Measure and evaluate the impact of Lenses			X	X	X	W , Lead Statistician	90% of data for each RCT measure is collected
Goal 3. Dissemination of resources and findings							
3.1 Release and distribute resources that would support replication and expansion		X	X	X	X	KEDC , Deputy Director	Two resources or reports per year released
3.2 Disseminate findings to research audiences			X	X	X	W , Evaluation Lead	3 submissions to peer-reviewed journals; 6 conference presentations
3.3 Disseminate findings to practitioner audiences				X	X	W , Principal Investigator	4 blog posts published; 3 conference presentations
Goal 4. Evaluate sustainment and scaling efforts							
4.1 Track and analyze cost and scaling efforts		X	X	X	X	W , Lead Statistician	Cost and Scaling Guides created and updated annually.
4.2 Track sustainment of program in schools		X	X	X	X	W , Evaluation Lead	80% of participating schools using Lenses in Y5.

Appendix J.3 provides a more detailed timeline, with objectives and responsibilities designated for each milestone of the five-year project.

To accomplish these goals, the KEDC teams will be led by [REDACTED] who is a lifelong educator and education leader in Kentucky. The KEDC will also hire at least two project staff, including a full-time project manager to guide and coordinate the identification and participation of schools and teachers and to lead internal project management. In addition, the KEDC will provide the capacity to liaison with district superintendents and with state-level leadership. The KEDC staff will coordinate with the state-level literacy teams to collaborate on specific literacy foci, needs, and strategies, while exploring how *Lenses on Literature* can support them. The KEDC team will also manage tasks and responsibilities across all partners within this project. They will take responsibility for ensuring progress on meeting objectives and will recruiting, onboarding, and implementation monitoring.

WestEd will serve as the external evaluator. Their staff will include senior personnel with expertise in literacy education, program and research implementation, formative and summative evaluation, and advanced quantitative methods and statistics (see B.3). WestEd will be responsible for leading the independent impact evaluation and has a proven track record of successfully executing projects of similar complexity, scope, and focus, including multiple large scale, multi-site RCTs.

Carnegie Learning will lead any needed development while WestEd will perform the formative evaluation studies (see D.5) to improve new scaling features and administration models. Carnegie Learning will implement all training and support of *Lenses*. KEDC along with WestEd will monitor and measure implementation fidelity. The MDE and Impact Florida will provide state and district level connections to help with recruitment, program implementation,

and research logistics. They will hire project coordinators to support the initiative within their states, to ensure the program and components are successful for their populations of students. All parties noted above will contribute to dissemination of study activities and findings.

B3. Roles, Relevance, and Commitment of Partners

The Kentucky Educational Development Corporation, Maine Department of Education, Impact Florida, Carnegie Learning, and WestEd are very capable of bringing the proposed project to scale and executing all listed goals and objectives above. Carnegie Learning and WestEd are concurrently running another Mid-Phase EIR project (S411B230035) scaling a mathematics professional learning initiative. In that project, we successfully recruited **over 100 schools** for an RCT launching in the same time frame as the current proposal (fall of Year 2). We have worked diligently to exceed the scale required by the Mid-Phase grant program and will do so for this Expansion grant. KEDC and MDE are also committed to the project and are capable of supporting research at this scale. **KEDC** works regularly with 70 member districts statewide and is connected to many out of state districts. It has provided support in numerous roles for these districts over 50+ years of service as Kentucky's oldest and largest educational cooperative. These services include and surpass those within this proposal. They have led dozens of federally funded research projects. The **MDE** provides leadership and support to educators and families in preparing all Maine students for success in college, careers, and civic life through service to over 160 school districts or departments. They have extensive experience with grant contributions and coordination of this magnitude. **Impact Florida** works with districts Florida-wide, including their educators, policymakers, funders, and community leaders to connect these stakeholders with the experts, data, and resources they need. They have strong experience with large scale research projects, such as their current role as the prime organization on a Mid-Phase grant

(S411B230037). **WestEd** is a preeminent educational research, development, and service organization with over 900 employees and 13 offices nationwide. WestEd has been a leader in moving research into practice by conducting research and development programs, projects, and evaluations. Over the past five years alone, WestEd has carried out almost 2,500 successful projects representing major contributions to the field. **Carnegie Learning** is a leading provider of K-12 education technology, curriculum, and professional learning solutions across the country serving over 600,000 students. They have launched and supported several education initiatives at scale, such as MATHia, whose impact has shown to have ESSA Tier 1 and Tier 2 levels of evidence (Carnegie Learning, 2023). Their personnel have expertise in development, implementation, and scale of education programs, and the knowledge to use research findings and enact them for continuous program improvement. They have also shown **100% commitment to their current Mid-Phase**, working with North Carolina educators and staff to scale a top-tier math professional learning program across the state. We are therefore certain they will dedicate the appropriate resources and effort to make this project successful.

Table 2 provides details on the capabilities of the key personnel within these organizations and their project roles.

Table 2. Roles, Responsibilities, and Relevant Experience of Key Project Staff

Staff and Role	Primary Responsibilities and Relevant Experience
Kentucky Educational Development Corporation Key Personnel	
	<p>██████████ has overseen the successful implementation of 14 federally-funded grants by ensuring adherence to program/fiscal goals. ██████ will serve as Co-Principal Investigator and be responsible for the leadership, management, and integrity of the grant project, ensuring that it meets its objectives and adheres to all federal regulations and reporting requirements. ██████████, will serve as Co-Principal Investigator and be responsible for the overall direction of the grant project. ██████ brings almost 10 years of experience as Literacy Specialist with the Kentucky Department of Education combined with almost 30 years as an English Teacher, English Language Arts Curriculum Specialist, and as a Certified Literacy Coach. ██████████</p>

high-functioning, multi-layered teams, and expanding in-person and digital services. She will allocate and coordinate the CL staff on the project to ensure they have the appropriate skills and strategies to achieve project goals.

B.4 Delivering Services More Efficiently and Effectively

The key to successfully increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of scaling Lenses on Literature hinges upon successfully completing the three objectives of Goal 1. This project will scale an innovative literacy course across three geographically separated states. The program will include a model that transforms how districts across each state implement their literacy instruction and improvement (e.g. integrating Tier 1–3 supports, AI-enabled assessment, ILT-anchored leadership development, and competency-based professional learning within a sustainable GRR system).

Lenses is expanding lessons from its 2–4-week instructional treatment focused on writing within a single unit into a full 180-day ELA curriculum cycle across an entire academic year. Although the expansion embeds the same theory of action—task design, collaborative scoring, and continuous improvement—within a comprehensive HQIM program that includes Tier 1 core instruction, Tier 2 formative supports, and Tier 3 high-impact tutoring, formative research with school insight will be needed to make sure the full system can scale properly. For Objective 1.1, WestEd will run iterative implementation studies (see D.5) to help gauge the feasibility of scaling the program and any adapted components to possible varying contexts across our three state partners. WestEd will work with several schools in iterative testing and feedback cycles to ensure the systems will be limited in faults and challenge entering the impact study years.

Once implemented in the impact study, to ensure the program can both sustain and scale, it will be necessary to build effective Instructional Leadership Teams as discussed above (Objective 1.2). These teams will set goals, monitor implementation, and lead professional

learning by modeling how to use student-work evidence to drive decisions. The processes entailed are often new to both leaders and teachers. This is why Carnegie Learning expects schools to take a full year to adapt, test, and learn all program components before they can truly implement them all as intended. To account for this, Carnegie Learning will work diligently through its training and support mechanisms described above to ensure the leadership teams are built, functioning properly, and are satisfied with all program components and processes during the first year of implementation. This support will continue into Year 2, but the second year should have stronger fidelity and student impact. Our design incorporates this process by having the impact study for on the students' outcomes in the second year of Lenses implementation.

Objective 1.3 focuses on effectively tracking, communicating, compiling, and assimilating the massive amount of learnings we will experience across all the active partners in the study. KEDC will build a centralized learning repository that all partners can share and document processes, challenges, solutions, and other findings. These will be discussed and shared at regular intervals with each other, education partners, and the IER Program Officer. The knowledge repository for effective scaling will be compiling quarterly and yearly scaling guides will be created and released. Dissemination of these guides to inform future scaling initiatives and replication studies is another target for this study and reflected by Objective 3.1.

B.5 Dissemination

Each party involved will be active in relevant dissemination across each study phase. Dissemination will target practitioners, researchers, and will emphasize tools and findings centered around scaling and replication. All project implementation strategies will be diligently documented and made publicly available across KEDC, MDE, and Impact Florida's educator and research platforms and websites. These partners will use communication channels with regional

and district educators to ensure the information gets to local hands, even down to schools, teachers, and parents. This saturation of information will allow all interested parties to see the available resources that stem from the project. Our state organizations will also communicate to a more national audience to aid in scaling and replication efforts using study findings. They will use their communication channels, webinars, and conferences for these purposes. They will release **scaling guides, implementation guides, and cost effectiveness guides**, including cost calculators using contextual variables, that arose from this work to inform potential districts and state of strategies and cost implication for using Lenses on Literature at scale.

To reach research, policy, and practitioner audiences interested in issues related to implementation and impact, we plan to present research findings at national research conferences and publish findings in peer-reviewed journals. In addition, WestEd will submit presentations with at least one literacy leader from each state entity to national practitioner or policy annual conferences. WestEd will also highlight key findings through all of its communication networks (e.g. WestEd.org, Insights blog, R&D Alert Online, WestEd E-bulletin, etc.)

Carnegie Learning has a robust communication and dissemination structure in place to support leveraging the study's findings. Carnegie Learning plans to disseminate the findings in the following ways:

- Internally and externally to help design future professional learning (PL) programs, ensuring they are effective and aligned with educators' needs.
- Improving current offerings: Insights from the study will be used to enhance existing curriculum, instructional materials, and learning platforms.
- Informing educators through published communications: Articles, blogs, reports, and other publications will be used to share the study's evidence and inform educators about its findings.

- Collaborating with teachers in the Lenses Program: Close collaboration with teachers the Lenses Program will help apply the study's findings directly to their needs.
- Internal sharing of findings: The study's insights will be shared internally with over 150 PL staff members to enhance training and support services nationwide.

By implementing these dissemination strategies, all parties aim to support educators and contribute to evidence-based practices in education.

Section C – Project Design

C.1. Logic Model and Conceptual Framework

The *Lenses* Conceptual Framework articulates the research base and instructional design principles that underlie its program theory of action. Drawing from extensive evidence on disciplinary literacy, knowledge building, and culturally sustaining pedagogy, the framework defines how students, teachers, and systems work together to improve literacy outcomes through coherent, standards-aligned instruction. It positions knowledge as central to reading comprehension and situates speaking, writing, and assessment as active processes for meaning-making.

The framework's pillars are operationalized through an implementation model that emphasizes continuous improvement and professional learning within classrooms and schools. Curriculum-embedded Plan–Do–Study–Act (PDSA) cycles, professional learning communities (PLCs), and analytic rubrics create feedback loops that connect student learning evidence to instructional decisions. Together, these structures ensure that every student receives access to complex, grade-level texts; that every teacher receives ongoing, practice-embedded support; and that districts can monitor and sustain equitable, high-quality instruction at scale.

Table 3. Key evidence in support of each driver.

Conceptual Framework for Impact of <i>Lenses on Literature</i>	
1. Instruction Begins with Complex, Grade-Level Texts and Content	ACT (2006) and Shanahan (2020) show that exposure to grade-level complex texts is essential for college and career readiness. Instruction starts with—not below—grade level, supported by responsive scaffolds, multimodal resources, and accessibility tools (read-alouds, chunked rereading, guided discussion).
2. Knowledge-Building Assignments Engage Students in Disciplinary Literacy	Grounded in disciplinary literacy research (Moje, 2007; Shanahan & Shanahan, 2008), tasks are designed for students to apply discipline-specific reading, writing, and reasoning practices, interpreting and producing knowledge like experts. Assignments connect to authentic purposes, audiences, and genres to deepen understanding and promote transfer across contexts.
3. Reading Comprehension is Built through Knowledge Development within and across Content Areas	Research demonstrates that comprehension depends on topic and vocabulary knowledge rather than isolated strategies (Hirsch, 2003; Cervetti & Wright, 2020). The framework ensures cumulative knowledge-building through coherent, grade-level text sets and tasks that promote conceptual understanding, disciplinary thinking, and transfer across tasks, texts, and writing products. Embedded scaffolds and structured reflection support students in making connections across units and applying higher-order reasoning skills.
4. Culturally Relevant and Sustaining Content	Rooted in culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Paris & Alim, 2017), texts and tasks are intentionally selected to represent diverse voices, affirm students’ identities, and expand perspectives. This inclusive design promotes engagement, belonging, and equitable access to grade-level instruction for all learners—contributing to the elimination of opportunity gaps and ensuring every student engages in rigorous, standards-aligned learning.
5. Daily Speaking and Writing in Response to Texts	Writing and discussion are central vehicles for comprehension and knowledge construction (Graham & Hebert, 2010). Students engage daily in evidence-based speaking and writing tasks—low-stakes writing to consolidate understanding and structured discourse to rehearse and refine thinking—developing academic language and expression.
6. Curriculum-Embedded Assessments Drive Responsive Instruction	Grounded in adult learning research (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017), professional learning is organized around defined instructional competencies demonstrated through classroom practice and student evidence. Teachers develop proficiency through curriculum-embedded cycles and PLCs that use feedback, calibration, and PDSA protocols to refine high-leverage literacy practices. These supports ensure competency-driven professional learning that is directly tied to student outcomes and classroom implementation.
7. Teacher Professional Learning through PDSA Cycles and PLCs	

Implementation is anchored in continuous improvement (Shakman et al., 2020) via curriculum-embedded Plan–Do–Study–Act (PDSA) protocols and professional learning communities (City et al., 2009). Teachers collaboratively examine student work, calibrate scoring, and adjust instruction based on formative data, increasing instructional coherence and efficacy.
8. Competency-Based Professional Learning
Grounded in adult learning research (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017), professional learning is organized around defined instructional competencies demonstrated through classroom practice and student evidence—not seat time. Teachers progress at their own pace within curriculum-embedded cycles, using feedback and calibration in PLCs to refine high-leverage literacy practices (Bloom, 1984; Shakman et al., 2020).
9. Standards-Aligned, Task-Driven Units with Scaffolds and Analytic Rubrics
Each unit integrates reading, writing, speaking, and listening around disciplinary tasks assessed via analytic rubrics (Smagorinsky, 2007). Embedded scaffolds in digital and print formats ensure equitable access while maintaining rigor, supporting consistent delivery of grade-level expectations across classrooms.
10. Leadership and System Supports for High-Quality Implementation
The implementation model includes HQIM provisioning, school and district leader tools, and data monitoring structures. These supports align stakeholders around common expectations, sustain high implementation fidelity, and reinforce equity of access to grade-level learning opportunities (City et al., 2009).

C.2 Achievement of Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes

This project aims to evaluate the efficacy of *Lenses on Literature* and support 9,000 8th grade students across 120 middle schools, using schools serving high-need students and at least 50% rural schools. To achieve this goal, there are several essential **Goals** and measurable **Objectives** outlined in Table 1. A table detailing a **comprehensive set of tasks and timelines** towards these proposed project goals, objectives, and measures can be seen in Appendix J.3. For Goal 1, we will develop. KEDC, ADE, Impact Florida, Carnegie Learning, and WestEd will contribute to the execution of Goal 1. KEDC will communicate with district leadership to gather current information on intervention needs, policies, and personnel. WestEd will help this process during its scan phase (see D.3), where they will survey and interview district leaders to find out

the concerns and challenges for implementing Lenses. WestEd and Carnegie Learning will connect with districts and schools through our state partner sites. They will work to iteratively problem solve, including implementation testing, to address any obstacles with the program or its supports. The information learned will help shape the potential exact administration process that Lenses will utilize at scale. These processes will be rigorously documented and disseminated to inform scaling and replication as discussed in B.4.

Ultimately, the key outcome of the study is the impact on students, which is the focus of Goal 2. WestEd has run formative and RCT studies of this size numerous times, including in the context of Expansion EIRs, and has a track record of completing these on time, within budget, and adhering to program requirements. In addition to what is discussed above, the formative studies will allow WestEd to better understand the landscape of the multiple sites where the program is being implemented to shape contextual understanding for instrumentation, analytics, and interpretation. WestEd's impact study will then occur over two years, allowing time for the program to be fully adopted and integrated into each school before measuring impact in the second year of adoption (see Section D). The impact study will include mediators and short term goals, such as student engagement and enjoyment of literacy, teachers' instructional knowledge, and proficiency, and program fidelity. The main impact analyses will center on students short and medium term outcomes, which are increased reading and language arts performance and higher standardized test scores. Long term outcomes are not within the scope of the proposed study.

With the RCT ending in 2029, there will be sufficient time during and after to collate and report all findings and pertinent information to a wide array of stakeholders as described in B.5. Goal 3 has measurable objectives for this dissemination that are reasonable and within the capabilities of the proposed parties. Dissemination will target practitioner and research

audiences, particularly those interested in running similar or replication studies. With the abundant communication streams by KEDC, MDE, Impact Florida, Carnegie Learning, and WestEd, we will likely exceed the stated objectives.

Goal 4 represents another key dimension to this project: cost, sustainment, and scaling. WestEd has extensive experience running these studies and will have a cost analysis expert on the team. The cost plan is discussed in Section D and is well within capabilities. Tracking sustainment and scalability will also be a communicative team effort with information coming directly from districts to state partners, but also include data from Carnegie Learning on realized adoption and implementation numbers. All parties will help track both continued use of *Lenses* in schools that participated in the study across the 5 years of the project and the scaling to additional schools who did not participate in the study.

Section D – Project Evaluation

D.1 Meeting WWC Standards Without Reservations

WestEd will conduct an independent evaluation of the implementation and impact of *Lenses on Literature* on 8th grade ELA teacher and student outcomes with the impact study designed to meet WWC standards without reservation. Following the formative evaluation for the new scaling-centered developments (see D.4), the impact study will evaluate the impact of *Lenses* on 8th grade student outcomes, including enjoyment of reading, engagement in literacy, reading and writing performance, and state standardized test scores in reading and writing. The evaluation will also analyze the scaling across each site and what factors, particularly cost, are influencing the adoption. This multi-faceted approach to the evaluation will provide actionable and policy-relevant outcome data to inform future scaling and implementation efforts, as well as potential replication studies.

The full set of research questions (RQ) is shown in Table 4. RQ 1–2 will first consider implementation and fidelity of *Lenses*, as well as contextual influences. RQ 3-8 guide the RCT which will study the impact on teacher and student outcomes, including RQ 3 which contains a WWC acceptable measure: state standardized tests for student achievement. RQ 9-10 explore mediating and moderating effects, which will unpack how key project components and contextual factors can influence outcomes. RQ 11-12 unpack the scaling, cost, and sustainability of *Lenses* as multiple states attempt to implement it.

Table 4. Evaluation Research Questions and Data Sources

Research Question	Primary Data Source(s)
Implementation	
1. To what extent is <i>Lenses</i> implemented with fidelity?	Training sign-ins, observations, coach and teacher logs
2. How does the implementation and completion of <i>Lenses</i> differ across contexts, such as school and teacher characteristics?	Relevant background and demographic data
Impact	
3. What is the impact of <i>Lenses</i> on students' states' standardized test scores?	English and Reading state standardized tests
4. What is the impact of <i>Lenses</i> on students' reading and writing performance?	State and district screening tools
5. What is the impact of <i>Lenses</i> on students' enjoyment of reading?	Reading Attitudes Scale
6. What is the impact of <i>Lenses</i> on students' engagement in literacy?	Direct Behavior Rating
7. What is the impact of <i>Lenses</i> on the nature of teachers' instructional activities?	Instructional Activities scales (on a study-administered teacher log)
8. What is the impact of <i>Lenses</i> on leaders' support practices around evidence-based instructional practices?	Leadership Activities scale (on a study-administered log)
Mediation and Moderation	
9. To what extent does the impact of <i>Lenses</i> differ across school contexts, teacher and classroom characteristics, and student characteristics?	All data from impact, and relevant background and demographic data
10. To what extent is the impact of <i>Lenses</i> mediated by the fidelity of implementation?	All treatment data for RQs 1–2
Scaling, Cost, and Sustainability	
11. How does <i>Lenses</i> scale and sustain across various contexts?	Usage data from schools and CL
12. What is the cost-effectiveness ratio for <i>Lenses</i> ?	Impact and cost data

Design. The evaluation of the impact of *Lenses* will be based on a school-level randomized controlled trial designed to meet What Works Clearinghouse recommendation standards without reservations (WWC, 2022). Participating schools will be assigned to the treatment or control condition using blocked random assignment. Blocks will consist of state, school-level demographic information, and prior literacy outcomes.

Sample, Power, Analytical Framework. The study will include 120 schools, roughly equally distributed across our state partner sites (Kentucky, Maine, and Florida). Half of the 120 schools will be randomly assigned to have their 8th grade literacy teachers participate in *Lenses* and the other half of schools will continue with business-as-usual ELA curriculum and instruction. Recruitment will target schools in rural areas, but will ensure an appropriate range of demographics for generalization. The sample will consist of all 8th grade teachers and students in participating schools. This design will allow participation from approximately 300 teachers (150 in each condition) and 9,000 students for the impact study. The control teachers will be offered *Lenses* following the impact study. The proposed study is powered for a minimum detectable effect size of 0.16 with an intent-to-treat approach using 3-level hierarchical learning modelling where students are clustered within teachers within schools. See Conditions below, and Appendix J.4 for full details about the power analysis, and Appendix J.5 for full details about the hierarchical linear models for the impact analyses.

WWC Acceptable Outcome: Student Reading and Writing Achievement. To measure students' outcomes for RQ3, WestEd will use each state's standardized assessments for 8th grades students: Kentucky Summative Assessment in Reading and in Writing, Maine Through Year Assessment in Reading, and the Florida Assessment of Student Thinking Assessments in

English Language Arts Reading, which are all considered valid and reliable by the WWC standards with high reliability and validity.

Outcome: Student Reading and Language Arts Performance. Students' scores from the district approved screening tools, such as STAR Reading and DIBELS Next, will be used as a supplemental, exploratory measure of student outcome. Because screening tools differ from teacher to teacher, these scores will not be interpreted as a precise measure of student learning. Rather, they will be equated among our population and interpreted as a marker of learning.

Outcome: Student Engagement in Literacy. WestEd will administer the Direct Behavior Rating (Chafouleas et al, 2010). This is designed to efficiently and systematically measure student behavior in classroom settings. The measure gauges behaviors such as academic engagement, disruptive conduct, and compliance. Inter-rater reliability coefficients for the measure range from 0.80 to 0.90 and test-retest reliability typically exceeding 0.70.

Outcome: Student Enjoyment of Reading. WestEd will administer the Elementary Reading Attitudes Scales (McKenna & Kear, 1990) adapted for middle school. The total scale has a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.79, and for the Recreational Reading subscale, reliability was 0.82, and for the Academic Reading subscale, reliability was 0.78.

Outcome: Teacher Instructional Activities. As part of the log teacher complete teachers complete three times per year, they will fill out Instructional Activities scales to gauge alignment of practice with the core activities in the Lenses program.

Outcomes: Leaders' support practices around evidence-based instructional practices. Leaders will complete an activity log three times per year documenting behaviors they exhibit around supporting key instructional practices with their teachers.

Conditions. After randomization, Carnegie Learning will begin enrolling teachers in the treatment group into its PL sequence. All teachers in the treatment schools who plan to teach 8th grade literacy will be included. Treatment schools will implement Lenses as described above **for two years**. The first year is for teachers to complete a full cycle of professional learning and coaching support throughout the year. During this time, they become acclimated to the program and gain experience with the materials and teaching strategies. The impact study will analyze student outcomes from the teachers' second year of implementation. The control schools will administer business-as-usual literacy classes and will not have training with or access to *Lenses*, its resources, or professional learning. Control PL and resources will include regular offerings from state partners and their districts. The offerings will vary widely, so corresponding data around them will be collected and controlled for in relevant analyses.

School-level random assignment was selected since schools typically implement *Lenses* as a school-wide program. Also, based on our prior school-level randomized studies, particularly with state-level support, we expect minimal school-level attrition during the RCT. The analysis of the intervention's impacts will use an intent-to-treat (ITT) approach, where schools and their teachers and students will be retained in their originally-assigned groups. Student rosters will be collected at the start of the 2026-27 school year to identify students in the ITT student impact sample. Given that the proposed evaluation is based on a school-level RCT that is expected to have low cluster-level attrition and a student analytic sample where joiner bias is not a threat, the evaluation has the potential to produce strong evidence about the impact of *Lenses*. Students who join the school after randomization will not be included in the analytic sample. In addition, based on research (Kim et al., 2020; Taylor & West, 2020) and WestEd's prior RCT experience, we anticipate manageable levels of student attrition during the study (i.e., less than 20%) and

minimal differential student attrition across conditions (i.e., less than 5 percentage points), so the student impact analyses will likely meet WWC standards without reservations (see WWC attrition White Paper; WWC, 2017).

D.2 Effective Strategies for Replication or Testing in Other Settings

The impact evaluation is designed to generate additional systems and information to inform broader adoption of *Lenses* across multiple states, including replicating impact testing in other states nationwide. Our approach aims to make findings generalizable so they may impact the most students as the program scales. To this end, our research questions explore how, when, and for whom *Lenses* is working. Additionally, with the measures and methods developed by this study, replication and on-going research can occur to ensure that the program is working for all teachers and students, and deficiencies can be identified and corresponding improvements made.

Our methodologies will help boost **generalizability and scalability**. In partnership with KEDC, MDE, and Impact Florida, we can evaluate *Lenses* across a large number of schools with varying contexts. Findings based on our large sample will provide valuable guidance for future replications of program implementation as the program scales throughout other states with similar populations. To inform generalizability, the evaluation will include a set of moderator analyses (RQ9) to assess the extent to which the effects of *Lenses* are moderated by the characteristics of students, teachers/classrooms, and schools. Appendix J.5 further unpacks the moderators and corresponding analysis plan.

To ensure this, we will diligently document all implementation strategies and occurrences, using systematic logs from the literacy interventionists and teachers, as well as usage data from all parties including students. This data will allow us to explore successes and challenges of implementation that may be faced when scaling. We can then document and

publish **implementation guides** with strategies to address each of the challenges to better support states and districts considering adoption.

The evaluation also includes a focus on **cost effectiveness** through continual cost analysis based on the Resource Cost Model (Levin & McEwan, 2002). This will provide states and potential districts with information about the cost of implementing *Lenses*, including materials, associated PL and support, and whether it is cost effective relative to the BAU condition. Costs will be identified in both the *Lenses* and BAU conditions using the “ingredients method” (Levin et al., 2017). Analyses will identify the costs associated with each component of the program, distinguish start-up costs from ongoing costs, and convert total costs to per-student costs. We will combine the cost information and effect size estimates to describe the impact of *Lenses* on a per dollar basis following the most up-to-date recommendations for cost analyses (Cost Analysis Standards Project, 2021). With these findings, Carnegie Learning and partner states will be able to identify areas for cost-effective improvements and will be better able to address any barriers to implementation found across various contexts. We will also create and publish **cost analysis guides** to help future districts and states better understand the cost implications of using *Lenses*.

Dissemination will focus on sharing process related information, including challenges and successes with the study itself and with program implementation. All partners in the project will collaborate on continued information sharing with practitioners, researchers, and education leaders. Through webinars, conferences presentation, journal articles, and less formal social media and blog outlets, we will share information on ongoing lessons around program strategies, developments, fidelity, and cost implications of implementation. The goal will be to provide as much up-to-date information available as possible to those interested in program adoption or study replication. We will regularly release our latest implementation and cost analysis guides.

D.3 Fidelity and Acceptable Thresholds of Implementation

The design of *Lenses* within the proposed project is informed by clearly articulated key components, mediators, and outcomes as depicted in the Conceptual Framework presented in Section C and in Appendix G. To capture the relevant fidelity components of this complex program, we will need to use a multi-faceted approach to data collection. Our data instruments will be complimentary and will span the various components of *Lenses* and its implementation. **Fidelity instrumentation** will include: logs and usage data from trainers, coaches, and teachers. Included in these fidelity considerations is the **dosage** of the program received by students within each school. Fidelity measures will incorporate the key components of the program.

- 1) High-Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM): Teachers will be expected to implement 80% of embedded Lenses lessons for high fidelity and 60% for medium fidelity.
- 2) High Impact Tutoring: 80% of expected tutoring will be completed, based on student needs, for high fidelity and 60% for medium fidelity.
- 3) In-Person Launch and Final Scoring Workshops: These all must be attended for high fidelity. No medium fidelity measure will be included.
- 4) Bi-Weekly Virtual PLCs: 80% attendance rate for high fidelity, 60% for medium.
- 5) Two Virtual Scoring Workshops: Both attended for high fidelity, one for medium.
- 6) In-Class Coaching Cycles and ILT Support: 80% of expected cycles and support behaviors documented for high fidelity, 60% for medium.

Overall fidelity, as it relates to each teacher, will be collated across these measures. Each data point will be normed and the aggregate will be put on a 0 to 1 scale. Expected fidelity for “high fidelity” teachers will be over 0.8 and for “medium fidelity” will be 0.5. Other teachers will be considered low fidelity. This measure will be **critical to our analyses** as well, shown in

RQs 2 and 10 in Table 4. These analyses will include descriptions of fidelity levels across schools and contexts, moderator effects of fidelity on all student outcomes, and potential mediation models where fidelity directly influences how students learn from the program.

Lastly, WestEd will work with Carnegie Learning and our partner state organizations to make sure it has all relevant fidelity information on an ongoing basis. This will allow Carnegie Learning to see where implementation may be struggling and how and when they could best support it. WestEd will provide fidelity on an aggregate and school-level basis to inform both program and systematic adjustments, as well as specific, targeted supports for schools or teachers. This will inform continual improvement across the first year of the study, going into the impact year school year, and will inform support mechanisms for further scaling and replication.

D4. Guiding Possible Replication

The project plan and evaluation embed methodologies to facilitate replication within and beyond each of our three partner states. For example, our **study design** will include an RCT that will meet WWC standards without reservation. The design ensures that replication studies will use methods with the highest of rigor. Having a design with strong **generalizability and scalability** (see D.2) will guide replication studies to recruit samples across a broad range of contexts and to demonstrate sound practices in exploring mediation and moderation (see D.1).

Part of the design is the inclusion of **measurements with high reliability and validity** (see D.1). Each instrument was intentionally selected for ease of use, wide acceptance of use in the research community, and strong psychometric properties. In addition, our **fidelity measures** will provide a multi-faceted approach to tracking the implementation aspects of the program. How program activities should and do look, and what factors can support or hinder each, will all be built into our published **implementation guides**. These guides will be produced on a rolling

basis and **disseminated widely** to get this critical information to all those interested in both program adoption for scaling and research through study replication.

Scaling and sustainability will also be tracked, including strategies that were and were not successful in supporting these efforts, communications, implementation strategies, and contextual influences. In addition to the implementation guides, **scaling guides** and **sustainability guides** will also be produced to help ensure program success in new contexts, as well as the success of replication studies by disseminating any lessons learned from our efforts in recruitment, onboarding, and to limit attrition.

Lastly, **cost effectiveness calculators** will be created and made publicly available. These will give guidance to districts and states, who are considering the program, on the cost implications of how it might be enacted in their state, particularly around technology, infrastructure, and needed staffing and training. We will also create **cost guides** with examples from the project on the specific ingredients considered and how they varied across contexts. These guides will also support researchers in replication studies by fully unpacking our cost model and how those ingredients were collected and analyzed to form the composite ratios.

D5. Formative Evaluation

During the first one and a half years of the evaluation, performance feedback and periodic assessment of progress will be addressed through formative evaluation. In the spring of 2026, WestEd will help perform a **scan phase** within our partner states, in which they will survey the district and regional leaders to assess school needs and possible challenges. At the same time, WestEd will gauge interest in *Lenses* implementation, competing priorities and initiatives, and other potential limiting obstacles to initial scaling and sustainability.

During the 2026-2027 school year, WestEd will perform **iterative implementation studies** to help gauge the feasibility of scaling the program in our various contexts during the RCT. WestEd will work with 3-5 schools to research all aspects of scaling, program alignment to current curriculum and pacing guides, professional learning feedback, and using *Lenses* intervention tools. Through surveys, interviews, and observations, WestEd will capture data related to the implementation and potentially effective models of support. WestEd will produce corresponding reports with findings that provide **actionable recommendations to Carnegie Learning, KEDC, MDE, and Impact Florida** throughout the year.

During this formative period, WestEd will help develop the ideal scaling and sustainment models and support in partnership with Carnegie Learning and the state organizations. The models will attempt to make the most effective use of *Lenses*, its resources, state partnerships, and district and school resources. The goal will be to ease the burden upon onboarding districts during the RCT to maximize their first year of experience with *Lenses*, while minimizing attrition. Any major needed deviations or concerns arising from these formative studies will be discussed at regular meetings among all stakeholders, including the Program Officer.

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