

Applicant Name: President and Fellows of Harvard College

Project Title: Scaling a National Model of Reading Engagement (MORE) to Improve First to Fourth-Grade Students' Reading Comprehension

Type of Grant Requested: Mid-Phase

Absolute Priorities: Absolute Priority 1 (Moderate evidence), Absolute Priority 2 (Field-initiated innovations), Competitive Priority 2 (Address impact of COVID-19 through evidence-based professional development).

Total number of students to be served by the project: 100 schools, 10,000 students.

Grade level(s) to be served by the project: Grades 1 to 4

Definition of high-needs students: low to moderate poverty elementary schools

Project Description/Project Activities: This project aims to evaluate and scale an evidence-based, field-initiated innovation to improve reading comprehension outcomes for high-needs students in moderate to high poverty schools. The Model of Reading Engagement (MORE) is a flexible content literacy intervention for students in Grades 1 to 4. Elementary-grade teachers use MORE tools (lessons, digital app, formative assessments) to build students' background knowledge in science *and* their foundational word knowledge, with the ultimate goal of improving reading comprehension outcomes. To support the scaling of MORE within a district, professional development (PD) empowers classroom teachers to implement MORE with fidelity and flexibility, while ongoing systems-level support prepares leaders to maximize the depth, spread, sustainability, and reform ownership of MORE.

Summary of Project Objectives and Expected Outcomes: The purpose of this mid-phase Education Innovation and Research (EIR) grant is twofold: (1) to scale MORE regionally through a 100-school randomized controlled trial involving approximately 10,000 students and (2) to create a national model for scaling MORE cost-effectively from Grade 1 to Grade 4.

Describe how the proposed project is innovative: We create an interactive and flexible form of PD to support teachers' structured adaptations of MORE that will provide broad knowledge for the field as educators shift to a combination of online and in-person PD and seek guidance on how best to structure this support. Also, we leverage principles surrounding take-up of new ideas to scale MORE: (1) Creating a shared understanding of MORE's key principles and practices and how they relate to the district's ecosystem; (2) Developing a system-wide implementation and communication plan that uses daily data on implementation to enable systems leaders to send broad and targeted communications, effectively target resources, and adapt plans regularly.

Identify other studies and/practice related to the proposed project: In an RCT involving 674 students, MORE improved first-graders' argumentative writing skills and domain general, standardized reading comprehension outcomes (Kim et al., 2021). In a systematic replication study involving 2,952 students, we expanded MORE to include second grade and found that MORE improved the science reading comprehension outcomes (Kim et al., 2022).

Organizations Partnering with this Project: Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; Strategic Education Research Partnership Institute; Bits & Peace, LLC.