

Hyde Leadership Charter School - Brooklyn

Building Leaders Project

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Building Leaders: Project Narrative

Hyde Leadership Charter School-Brooklyn (HLCSB) is a high-need LEA serving students in grades K-8. HLCSB is located in the 75th NYPD precinct of Brooklyn, New York. HLCSB is recognized as an independent school district and is part of the Hyde Foundation’s public-school initiative. All Hyde Foundation schools are designed to ensure every student is prepared for the challenges of college and life beyond. HLCSB’s mission is to develop the deeper character and unique potential of each student. This mission requires qualified and talented principals, education leaders, and teachers committed to raising student growth and academic achievement. Thus, the proposed ***Building Leaders Project*** focuses on strengthening HLCSB’s Human Capital Management and Performance-Based Compensation Systems.

Absolute Priority 1: Human Capital Management System – Expansion and Improvement

Hyde Leadership Charter School – Brooklyn (HLCSB) has adopted a coherent and comprehensive Human Capital Management System (HCMS) that places significant weight on teacher and principal evaluation outcomes. The HCMS’s current Evaluation and Support System for Teachers and School Leaders is based on the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching,ⁱ which is a research-based set of components of instruction aligned to the INTASC (Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium) standards, and grounded in a constructivist view of learning and teaching. The framework is a guide for teachers and an evaluation or assessment tool to determine teacher performance that directly impacts student success. Using the framework as a guide and tool, the four domains and their associated activities lead to teachers having a greater impact on students and the school community while remaining in the classroom, encouraging career advancements, and providing an outline for teacher leadership models and activities. The framework’s rubric for assessing teacher performance presents the expectations for teacher-led

instructional improvement, leadership opportunities, and support for students' academic success. The complex activity of teaching is divided into 22 components (76 smaller elements) clustered into four domains of teaching to ensure students learn and are prepared for the next step in their education pathways:

Domain 1: Teacher Planning and Preparation 1-a. Demonstrating Knowledge of Content and Pedagogy; 1-b. Demonstrating Knowledge of Students; 1-c. Setting Instructional Outcomes; 1-d. Demonstrating Knowledge of Resources; 1-e. Designing Coherent Instruction; 1-f. Designing Student Assessments. **Domain 2: Classroom Environment** 2-a. Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport; 2-b. Establishing a Culture for Learning; 2-c. Managing Classroom Procedures; 2-d. Managing Student Behavior; and 2-e. Organizing Physical Space. **Domain 3: Instruction** 3-a. Communicating with Students; 3-b. Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques; 3-c. Engaging Students in Learning; 3-d. Using Assessment in Instruction; and 3-e. Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness. **Domain 4: Professional Responsibilities** 4-a. Reflecting on Teaching; 4-b. Maintaining Accurate Records; 4-c. Communicating with Families; 4-d. Participating in the Professional Community; 4-e. Growing and Developing Professionally; and 4-f. Showing Professionalism.

In conjunction with the Instructional Team, the Head of the School conducts two formal, structured observations and multiple informal observations each school year. Teachers receive an overall score based on a scale of 1-5. Observation data is entered in the school's **Observe4success** database, a web-based software tool for classroom observations and walkthroughs, teacher evaluation, coaching, and mentoring. Danielson Framework scores are averaged across educators. A teacher must earn an average minimum score of at least 3.0 to be eligible for a bonus. All teachers who are eligible for a bonus receive a proportionate share of available bonus funds at the

end of the year based on their Danielson Framework score. On average, teachers who are eligible for a bonus receive between \$250 and \$350 per year, but this is not enough, and enhancements to the HCMS teacher incentives must be addressed.

HCMS Expansion: With the support of Teacher/Leader grant funds, HLCSB will deploy ***Building Leaders***, which will enhance and expand the current HCMS by substantially increasing the connection between incentives, expanding and supporting educator leadership opportunities, and student academic performance outcomes.

2) *Personalized Support and Feedback:* Teachers and school leaders who receive combined average Danielson Framework scores of less than 3.0 will work with the Head of School and Instructional Team to develop a personalized Individual Improvement Plan (IIP) that will outline specific, measurable improvement goals, objectives, strategies, and timelines. Personalized support strategies may include (but are not limited to): specialized professional development, one-on-one coaching with a senior teacher, and attainment of specialized certifications. HLCSB will leverage Title I and Title II funds to support professional development and the attainment of certifications. The IIPs will be collaboratively reviewed and updated twice per year. In addition, to support further growth among HLCSB teachers and school leaders—including those who score 3.0 or higher on the Danielson Framework—will collaboratively develop an IIP that includes individualized professional development goals, objectives, strategies, and timelines. HLCSB will leverage Title I and Title II funds to support professional development, providing even further incentives for teachers and school leaders to provide quality education leading to improve student learning. *Feedback and Data Collection:* The ***Building Leaders*** initiative will utilize the school's existing **Observe4success** database, which is fully customizable and sufficiently robust to manage the expanded Evaluation and Support System/HCMS. The system guides users through structured

classroom walkthroughs, teacher evaluations, classroom observations, and more to provide a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the current HCMS that has a direct correlation to student performance. *Driving Decision-Making*: As described in the Evaluation section (Page 22), the updated HCMS will use performance information obtained from the Evaluation and Support System to inform key school- and district-level human capital decisions on preparation, recruitment, hiring, placement, retention, dismissal, compensation (including performance-based compensation), professional development, and promotion. Additionally, the ***Building Leaders Project Advisory Council***, created to review Project activities and progress and recommend improvements, will use performance feedback to drive decision-making (also described in the Evaluation section—please cross-reference for full details).

Absolute Priority 2: High Need Schools: HLCSB serves an extremely at-risk and in-need student population in an urban center overwhelmed by high crime rates. Currently, **85% of HLCSB students face poverty** and are at-at risk of educational failure. HLCSB is in a residential neighborhood in the eastern section of the borough of Brooklyn in New York City, home to 201,248 residents (zip codes 11207, 11208, and 11239).ⁱⁱ Since the late 1950's infor East N1950sk, the area with the highest crime rate was Brooklyn, with its notoriety for its high rate of murders. The community is plagued by violent crime rates, property crime rates, and gang activity focused on a thriving drug trade. Children cannot play outside, and they cannot walk to the corner store. Their lives are indelibly marked by the negative impact of extreme poverty, family drug addiction, and pervasive violent crime. Despite a decline in recent years in crime compared to its peak period in the 1980s and 1990s, crime continues to be a problem in the NYPD 75th Precinct.ⁱⁱⁱ Higher rates of poverty, alcohol and drug use, youth violence in the community, coupled with a changing population, including many with limited English proficiency and different cultural backgrounds

and experiences, have strained schools and the community.

HLCSB students are often overlooked and underserved while struggling to overcome emotional scarring and early trauma that would prove too overwhelming for most adults. Within classrooms, HLCSB students are expected to work diligently towards academic success with far too few supports and resources available to build their resiliency, mental health, and coping strategies. Ironically, in a charter school modeled around the importance of nurturing character development, our students’ extreme levels of need have left existing services incapable of addressing the challenges they must overcome.

The demographic composition of the targeted school (2021-22)^{iv}					
	English Language Learners	Students with Disabilities (SWD)	Economically Disadvantaged	Black	Hispanic
HLCSB	8%	19%	85%	70%	26%
NY Avg.	10%	19%	56%	16%	29%

The pervasive poverty of the communities in which our students live, coupled with the multiple daily challenges they face, such as crime, violence, drugs, and gangs, affect student behavior at school. Behavioral issues, such as defiance, tantrums, and physical altercations, have resulted in 13% of students receiving suspensions, compared to a state average of just 4%. There can be little wonder that HLCSB students are at high risk for academic failure. In 2021-2022, the following student Proficiency rates were recorded on New York State Assessments:

Assessment	Hyde Leadership Proficiency Rate	NYS Average Proficiency Rate
Grade 3 ELA	19%	46%
Grade 3 Math	24%	48%
Grade 4 ELA	28%	42%

Grade 4 Math	22%	43%
Grade 5 ELA	21%	38%
Grade 5 Math	19%	37%
Grade 6 ELA	50%	57%
Grade 6 Math	18%	38%
Grade 7 ELA	46%	48%
Grade 7 Math	16%	36%
Grade 8 ELA	58%	50%
Grade 8 Math	29%	24%

Overall, just 36% of HLCSB students in grades 3-8 achieved proficiency in ELA and 21% achieved proficiency in math. The student group who consistently scored low in both ELA and math were students with disabilities. High-need students fail grade-level expectations in all subjects – a challenge during foundational years that will continue to reverberate throughout their academic journey.

Competitive Preference Priority 1: Equitable student access to educational resources and opportunities through continued professional development and enrichment opportunities that grow and retain teachers: Supporting Educators and Their Professional Growth

Providing high-quality professional development opportunities to all educators in High-Need Schools to meet the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities and English learners. The proposed Project has a significant professional development component available to all educators of Hyde Leadership Charter School – Brooklyn. HLCSB is a high-need school with a high turnover of staff and teachers. Once teachers and school leaders (Principals) learn about the Project, its purpose, and intended strategies, we expect renewed interest in teaching and leading at HLCSB

with a commitment to increase student performance that leads to increased pay and/or bonuses. A survey will be conducted with teachers and school leaders annually to learn what preferences or specific requests they may have for professional development. Teachers and school leaders will be very aware of the new incentives and a target of a revised salary schedule to be implemented during the grant Project's third year. Investing time and effort in professional development will empower teachers to help students increase their academic performance.

The HLCSB student population is diverse in terms of learning abilities. Less than half of the students are proficient in any subject. The academic performance of students with disabilities is dismal and needs attention. Nineteen percent (19%) of the total enrollment are students with disabilities (SWD). Low proficiency levels and the reality that nearly one in five studies have a disability make meeting the education needs of this student population essential. Professional development will include relevant training to increase student academic proficiency among the SWD. Evidence-based programs that have been effective with SWD will be identified, such as *Self-Regulated Strategy Development and Repeated Reading*.

Self-Regulated Strategy Development^v studies involved students in grades 2-12. The approach was determined to have potentially positive effects on writing skills. The intervention is designed to improve students' academic skills through a six-step process that teaches specific academic strategies and self-regulation skills. The practice is especially appropriate for SWD. The intervention begins with teacher direction and ends with students independently applying the strategy, such as planning and organizing ideas before writing an essay. This intervention is one example of an EBP for teachers to implement that is appropriate for SWD.

Repeated Reading^{vi} is another EBP listed by What Works Clearinghouse that is appropriate for students with disabilities. This approach is an academic practice that aims to increase oral reading

fluency. It can be used with students who have developed initial word reading skills but demonstrates inadequate reading fluency for their grade level. Among the outcome domains for this intervention, the rating for reading comprehension had potentially positive effects. This intervention is appropriate for grades 5-12 and students with disabilities.

Both interventions are based on strategies teachers can learn, practice, and implement. In addition, 7% of the students are English Learners, which presents additional challenges and teacher attention for academic improvement. What Works Clearinghouse identifies **Peer-Assisted Learning/Literacy Strategies**^{vii} as a strategy to use with English Learners rated as having potentially positive effects for the Alphabetic Outcome Domain. Otherwise known as PALS, this peer-tutoring program supplements the primary reading curriculum.

All programs identified to enhance teaching and leading at HLCSB will be high-quality as part of professional development and empower teachers to use the intended strategy for Students With Disabilities and English Language Learners.

Competitive Preference Priority 2: Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce and Professional Growth to Strengthen Student Learning

High-quality professional development on addressing bias in instructional practice and fostering an inclusive, equitable, and supportive workplace and school climate for educators. HLCSB is part of the Hyde Foundation’s public-school initiative, and all Hyde Foundation schools are designed to ensure that every student is prepared for the challenges of college and life beyond. HLCSB’s mission is to develop the deeper character and unique potential of each student. Fulfilling this mission requires qualified and talented principals, education leaders, and teachers who are committed to raising student growth and academic achievement. An essential application of the HLCSB mission is providing an inclusive, equitable, and supportive workplace and school

climate. These areas align with the values of character development and identification of each person’s individual potential. If teachers and school leaders embrace these values for their students, they must first understand and apply them with their colleagues.

Current HLCSB staff ethnicities are diverse and represent the students served. Sixty percent (60%) of the school’s teachers are Black/African American/American Caribbean, and the remaining 40% are Hispanic or White. School administrators’ ethnicities are 75% Black/African American and 25% White. All teachers and school leaders are full-time.

Listed in What Works Clearinghouse, the **Balanced Leadership Program**^{viii} is based on instructional specialists who provide professional development to groups of school leaders during in-person sessions offered at the onsite school location. School leaders participate in professional development sessions with trained facilitators over one or two years, practice what they learn between sessions, and receive additional coaching and online support. A professional development focus on school leaders ensures that the Project interventions are professional development programs specifically for helping school leaders influence and challenge teachers and understand and lead an inclusive, equitable, and supportive workplace and school climate for all educators.

The program/interventions mentioned above serve as examples of high-quality professional development trainings and topics that address this competitive priority. Professional development for the purposes covered in this competitive preference priority complements and enhances the culture at HLCSB to develop our students' deeper character and potential.

A. Need for Project

(i) The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.

Hyde Leadership Charter School – Brooklyn conducted a comprehensive needs assessment in preparation for the design and implementation of this initiative. For further insight into the LEA’s student population, enrollment for 2021-22 was low at 522. (By the end of the 2022-23 school year, the enrollment numbers increased to nearly 600.) Of the 522 students reported on the New York City Education Department website, 47% were male and 53% female (non-binary – 0%). Student ethnicity shows that a majority of students are Black or African American (70%). Students identified as Hispanic or Latino comprise 26% of the student population. The remaining 4% of HLCSB students were identified as American Indian or Alaska Native (1%), Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (1%), White (1%), and Multiracial (1%).^{ix}

Data specific to student needs are described in the previous section and included extreme academic challenges where, overall, just 36% of HLCSB students in grades 3-8 achieved proficiency in ELA, and 21% achieved proficiency in math. Challenges are particularly significant for students with disabilities, which account for 19% of total enrollment. Students with disabilities consistently scored lower than other student groups in ELA and math. For example, scores for grade 6 math showed that 0% of students with disabilities scored proficient, and in the remaining grades, the portion of students with disabilities who were proficient in math was 13% or less.

Another contributor to low student proficiency and performance rates is the high number of students who miss more than ten school days. During the 2021-22 school year, the chronic absenteeism rate for the entire student population was 57.5%.^x This means that over half of the students at HLCSB are disadvantaged and challenged when learning or understanding concepts covered in the classroom. Absent students find it difficult to keep up when they are not in school. According to an article posted by the American University School of Education, *Why Is School Attendance Important? The Effects of Chronic Absenteeism and the harmful impact of chronic*

absenteeism threaten all students, but the risks are not borne equally. Students of color, live in poverty, and with chronic health conditions or disabilities, all have disproportionately high absence rates. The article says that when children are absent from school, they miss out on consistent instruction to develop basic skills, become susceptible to falling behind in fundamental skills, and negatively impact future learning.^{xi} Chronic absenteeism rates at HLCSB are consistent with the American University's assertions. Among students with disabilities, the chronic absenteeism rate was 69.9%. Chronic absenteeism among Black/African American students was 57.4%, and 54.8% of Hispanic or Latino students were also chronically absent. Among economically disadvantaged students, the chronic absenteeism rate was 60%. Missing school can result from many life challenges students face, yet engaging students in learning and having well-trained, qualified, and enthused teachers and leaders can motivate students to attend school. Teachers who want to make a difference, with school leaders supporting their efforts through rewarding these efforts, will make a difference.

In addition, HLCSB must overcome significant deficiencies in current staffing. In 2018-2019, HLCSB reported an overall teacher turnover rate of 49%. The rate has dropped since the COVID-19 pandemic; however, seven associate teachers were laid off in the past year due to a drop in enrollment and, therefore, a drop in funding. When a teacher leaves, whether by choice or lay-off, students are directly impacted, and academic progress is jeopardized due to inconsistency in instruction and often relearning concepts with teachers who have differing approaches to presenting the lessons. Recruiting qualified candidates for teaching positions willing to work at HLCSB is also challenging, where the pay scale must compete with the local public schools where teachers earn more. HLCSB is a small school serving high-need, high-risk learners in grades K-8. Budgetary restrictions severely limit the amount of professional development offered to teachers

each year – a particularly significant challenge among HLCSB’s unique staff population. In 2022-23, of the 70 full-time teachers, counselors, and associate teachers in Grades K-8, 36% did not have a valid teaching certificate, and 58% were “teaching out of certification,” which is significantly higher than the statewide average of 8%. Furthermore, 24% of HLCSB teachers are inexperienced, according to the LEA’s New York State report card.^{xiii} Based on these numbers, more than 50% of HLCSB students are taught by teachers without appropriate certification. Despite exhaustive teacher recruitment efforts, far too few qualified candidates apply for open positions each year. A core group of approximately ten qualified veteran educators remains from year to year. However, the other educators who also serve students in Grades K-8 lack experience and valid certifications. There is clearly a need to encourage and support (financially and with teacher-mentors) teachers to obtain certification.

Another challenge faced by HLCSB teachers and leaders is student behavior and discipline issues. According to the School’s Executive Director, Sandra DuPree, Ed.D., COVID-19 has greatly impacted student behavior since students returned to school after the pandemic lockdown. In fact, since students returned, the behavioral issues have been so numerous that the school has had little to no time to focus on its character education initiatives. The need for this Project has only increased. It is crucial that student needs are addressed by supporting and providing incentives for our teachers and our school leaders.

There can be little question that HLCSB faces significant challenges in all areas. The East New York City community struggles to address these needs and provide opportunities commonly available in more affluent sectors. HLCSB strives to overcome the shortfalls of a strict budget and a pool of teacher candidates that is too small. HLCSB students struggle to overcome intergenerational poverty, pervasive community violence, and academic failure. To address these

challenges, HLCSB will implement the ***Building Leaders Project***, a Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program designed to address these challenges and specific needs by: *Implementing a revised salary structure based on effectiveness for teachers and administrators; *Integrating reliable, validated teacher and principal assessment tools to inform the continuous improvement feedback loop; *Embedding instructional coaching for educators, personalized to specific challenges and weaknesses in core academic content delivery in a high-needs classroom; *Expanding professional development opportunities to ensure hired educators are better prepared to meet the needs of students displaying high needs in academics, behaviors, and social skills; and *Expanding and enhancing teacher recruitment, utilizing various strategies to attract and retain qualified, diverse candidates reflective of the HLCSB student body and the local community.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts to improve Relevant Outcomes using existing fundingstreams from other programs or policies supported by the community, State, and Federal resources.

HLCSB experiences high teacher turnover rates, resulting in a lack of stable instructional leadership. Quick-fix “band-aid” measures do not result in long-term, sustainable strategies necessary to improve student outcomes. The ***Building Leaders Project*** will integrate multiple funding streams (including Title I and Title II funds) to create systems-based change that will continue to benefit youth, educators, and administrators beyond the funding period by addressing **Absolute Priority #1 and Absolute Priority #2**, and ensuring the focus of **Competitive Preference Priorities #1 and #2** are implemented.

The goal of the ***Building Leaders Project*** is to *build the internal capacity necessary to improve student academic achievement through the integration of efficiency evaluations, support systems, and a formal and sustainable performance-based compensation system that ensures improvements*

in HCMS and increases the effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other school leaders.

Project Objectives & Benchmarks
<p>Objective #1: Establish ongoing support for and commitment to the performance-based compensation system with incremental increases for educators and leaders. Benchmarks: 75% support for educators in Year One, 85% in Year Two, and 95-100% in Year Three.</p>
<p>Objective #2: By the end of Year One, HLCSB will establish and adopt differentiated levels of compensation that will serve to recruit and retain effective teachers and administrators. Benchmarks: Full implementation in Years One through Three; differentiated compensation levels based on teacher effectiveness. (Performance-Based Compensation System)</p>
<p>Objective #3: By the end of the Project, the capacity of teachers and administrators at HLCSB will be raised incrementally to positively impact student achievement levels through the provision of professional development and the implementation of professional learning communities. Benchmarks: 80% of participants will indicate acquisition of new knowledge and skills in Year One, 90% in Year Two, and 100% in Year Three</p>
<p>Objective #4: For each year of the three-year Project, establish and implement a fair, rigorous, and objective process to evaluate teacher and administrator performance by using valid and reliable measures throughout the school year. Benchmarks: Full implementation during each grant year with teacher and leader reviews three times per year using relevant review tools.</p>
<p>Objective #5: Student achievement in core academic subjects will statistically improve each year when compared to baseline figures. Data indicator categories include student results from NYS (approved) Assessments. Benchmarks: 5% increase over baseline in Year One; 7% over baseline in Year Two; 10% over baseline in Year Three, with continued annual increases</p>

<p>Objective #6: By the end of Year One, 60% of HLCSB teachers and administrators will qualify for incentive Payments, 80% in Year Two, and 95-100% in Year Three. Benchmarks: Annual results recorded and continued post-grant period.</p>	
<i>Building Leaders Project Strategy</i>	<i>Coordinated Funding / Policies</i>
HLCSB will develop and implement a salary structure based on effectiveness for teachers and administrators.	<u>Title I and Title II funds</u> will support professional development
HLCSB will embed comprehensive instructional coaching for educators, personalized to specific and demonstrated challenges and weaknesses in core academic content delivery in classrooms serving high-needs students.	HLCSB will leverage <u>Title I and Title II funds</u> to support instructional coaching and professional development
HLCSB will integrate reliable, validated teacher and principal assessment tools to inform the continuous improvement feedback loop.	HLCSB will leverage its existing Observe for Success and Danielson frameworks
HLCSB will dramatically expand professional development opportunities to ensure hired educators are better prepared to meet the needs of students displaying high needs in academics, behaviors, and social skills, as well as increase leadership skills to assist school leaders.	<u>Title I and Title II funds</u> will support professional development provided (minimum)four times/ year.
HLCSB will expand and enhance recruitment efforts using various strategies to increase the attraction and retention of highly qualified and diverse candidates reflective of the HLCSB student body and community.	General operating funds will be used to support outreach and recruitment efforts.

School Leaders have the autonomy to schedule, staff, and make school-level decisions in a manner that meets the needs of the school. As leadership partners develop through training, teachers will enhance and strengthen decision-making at all levels, strengthening overall school operations. This approach will enhance the practical impact of the Project.

(iii) The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.

HLCSB utilizes a coherent and comprehensive Human Capital Management System (HCMS) that places significant weight on the outcomes of the teacher and principal evaluations. The HCMS guides employee attraction, selection, training, assessment, and rewarding, oversees organizational leadership and culture, and ensures employment and labor laws compliance. However, these strategies and activities are very limited due to financial constraints, with a portion, if not all, of programs eliminated due to a lack of resources, such as financial assistance to pay for teacher education tuition.

The HCMS outlined in this proposal is directly aligned with HLCSB’s overall integrated strategy for strengthening its educator workforce, which includes using data and evaluations for professional development, teacher recognition, and retention. These strategies align with the School Improvement Plan, which is updated yearly. To illustrate, the HLCSB Improvement Plan includes goals such as: “recruit and retain highly qualified staff.” Strategies employed to realize this goal include: participation in job fairs; outreach to ethnically diverse cultural and professional organizations; presentations at community events; coordination with the Workforce Development Board, and website promotions. Other retention strategies include improving the teacher mentor program to support new and beginning teachers, assigning all new teachers a mentor, and providing staff development to promote professional growth. Additionally, following the School

Improvement Plan for this Project strongly emphasizes data-driven decision-making utilizing student-level data. Again, these initiatives are limited and new initiatives cannot be implemented due to nearly non-existent resources.

(iv) The extent to which the proposed project’s design is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.

The *Building Leaders Project* addresses and will meet the specific needs of HLCSB. A review was completed to ensure strategies align with specific areas of need and were validated through qualitative and quantitative data sets. With needs clearly identified, the *Building Leaders Project Advisory Council*, including administrators, representative teachers, partnering agencies, and volunteer parents, could research and select evidence-based tools and strategies proven to overcome and improve relevant gaps and weaknesses.

Strategies	Related Needs
Implement a salary structure based on effectiveness for teachers and administrators.	HLCSB must compete with public schools that pay more, the search for highly dedicated and qualified teachers is difficult.
Integrate reliable, validated teacher and principal assessment tools to inform a continuous improvement feedback loop.	In 2022-23, of all teachers, counselors, and associate teachers in Grades K-8, 36% did not have a valid teaching certificate, and 58% were “teaching out of certification.”
Embed comprehensive instructional coaching for educators, personalized to specific challenges and weaknesses in core academic delivery in high-needs classroom.	24% of HLCSB teachers are inexperienced. Despite teacher recruitment efforts, far too few qualified candidates apply for positions.

<p>Expand professional development opportunities to ensure hired educators are prepared to meet the needs of students displaying high needs in academics, behaviors, social skills and motivate students to attend school.</p>	<p>36% of Hyde Leadership Charter School students achieved ELA Proficiency. In addition, only 21% of students achieved Proficiency in Math. Over half (57.5%) of all students miss at least ten school days per year and are chronically absent.</p>
<p>Expand and enhance recruitment efforts, utilizing various strategies to increase attraction and retention of qualified, diverse candidates reflective of the HLCSB student body and the communities we serve.</p>	<p>Despite teacher recruitment efforts, too few qualified candidates apply for positions. Previous incentive programs have been eliminated (i.e., tuition assistance) due to lack of funding. Other districts offer opportunities to earn bonuses.</p>

B. Quality of the Project Design (30 points)

(i) The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a Rationale.

A logic model informed by research and illustrating how project components are likely to improve relevant outcomes is appended, as required.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project’s design includes a thorough, high-quality review of the relevant literature, a high-quality plan for project implementation, and the use of appropriate methodological tools to ensure successful achievement of project objectives.

A review of the literature and the resources for this proposed Project have been included in the logic model and provide further rationale for the Project design and approach. The following table presents two resources that provided multiple peer-reviewed studies that were reviewed:

Resource	Subject/Topic
<p><i>Raising the Bar on Teacher Pay</i>, May 2023, American Institutes for Research, The Teacher Salary Project</p>	<p>This brief is intended to help state and district leaders determine whether the time is right to raise the bar on teacher pay.</p>
<p>Client Services – Teacher Preparation and Performance. American Institutes for Research – Education</p>	<p>List of studies that include professional development, including <i>Measuring the Impact of Teacher and Leader Evaluation Systems on Student Learning and Performance</i></p>

The Project has been designed based on best practices applicable to addressing the specific needs and achieving the Project’s goal and objectives. (Pages 15-16) HLCSB’s teacher evaluation model/tool, the Danielson Framework, will continue to provide the basis for teacher and leader evaluation and insight into the teachers' professional development needs for skills improvements. Various reviews point out the flaws or weaknesses of the Framework, however, far more resources point to the Danielson Framework and the four domains as a valuable tool – not to be used as an absolute or merely a checklist.^{xiii} The benefits of using a commonly accepted framework include offering educators a shared vocabulary to communicate excellence, provide novice teachers a pathway to excellence, provide a structure for discussions among teachers and sharpen the focus for professional development, and serve to communicate to the larger community the array of competencies needed to be an effective teacher. Another benefit of the Framework is the correlation that can be made to special education practices.

As such, methodological tools have been identified to ensure the success of Project objectives and enhance HLCSB’s Human Capital Management System. As referenced above, research has provided a neutral process HLCSB currently uses to determine bonuses and incentives

outlined below that are not dependent upon subjective reviews. HLCSB educators and administrators must achieve a minimum average score of 3.0 (effective) using the Charlotte Danielson Framework and the School’s formal and informal observations system. This review process uses equations that rely on actual numeric variables based on results to determine accountability. The numbers are applied to determine schoolwide, ELA achievement, math and reading achievement, and science achievement. (NYS Accountability System^{xiv})

To be eligible to receive performance-based compensation, staff must participate in professional development to 1) acquire skills and knowledge relating to data-driven student assessment; 2) acquire skills and knowledge about research-based strategies proven effective in boosting student academic achievement; and 3) assume new leadership responsibilities relating to student achievement (e.g., assessing students for learning deficiencies, developing interventions, developing individual education plans, etc.).

Professional Staff			
NYS assessment subject area	Grade	Metric	Bonus
Reading	3	Passing (80%); Proficient (45%)	\$1,000
Math		Passing (75%); Proficient (40%)	\$1,000
Reading	4	Passing (85%); Proficient (50%)	\$1,000
Math		Passing (80%); Proficient (45%)	\$1,000
Writing		Passing (85%); Proficient (50%)	\$1,000
Reading	5-8	Passing (90%); Proficient (60%)	\$1,000
Math		Passing (85%); Proficient (50%)	\$1,000
Science		Passing (90%); Proficient (35%)	\$1,000

Other requirements that must be met to qualify for performance bonuses include participation in

at least four professional development sessions/year and active participation in a professional learning community. The Building Leaders Project will coordinate with the Danielson Group to implement the Framework for Teaching Evaluation Instrument (FFTEI) to enhance the current evaluation practices. This assessment tool provides educators with a deep, shared understanding of what good teaching looks like and builds observers' and teachers' confidence in the observation process to maximize the impact of these efforts. *FFTEI* advances teaching effectiveness and includes both employee evaluation management and evaluation training/calibration – components critical to informing a coherent and comprehensive Human Capital Management System (HCMS) that places significant weight on the outcomes of teacher and principal evaluations.

The combination of the tools and methodologies discussed above provides evidence of reviewing relevant literature and identifying the necessary and relevant tools to ensure the successful achievement of the Project's objectives.

(iii) The extent to which the evaluation methods will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress towards achieving intended outcomes.

In addition to the teachers and leader evaluation and performance assessment strategies, it is equally important that the Project stay on track with activities taking place on time and within budget. To ensure ongoing, accurate, objective assessment of Project progress towards achieving the identified project goals, objectives, and outcomes, HLCSB will contract a highly qualified, skilled, third-party or External Evaluator. The External Evaluator will ideally be a Ph.D.-level researcher with an extensive background in Project or program evaluation. The successful candidate will be highly experienced in planning and implementing comprehensive formative and summative evaluation frameworks and has extensively evaluated education-focused programming. All procurement practices for contracted professional services will follow state and

federal procurement guidelines and requirements.

An efficient and comprehensive evaluation framework has been planned. Evaluation will include extensive feedback loops to ensure that the Project continually evolves to meet the dynamic needs of our student, teacher, and school leader populations. Evaluation will include a combination of formative (ongoing assessments such as using a fidelity checklist, gathering feedback from teachers, students, parents, or other entities, through meetings, focus group discussions, and staff surveys. Summative evaluation occurs at the project's end (or annually if desired). It will summarize the learning results over time, gathered through performance measure data collection tools, staff surveys, parent surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups. Data collection will be utilized to provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving the intended outcomes (formative). These qualitative and quantitative methodologies will allow ample opportunity for timely and regular feedback on collected student data to the project's stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, administrators, and others, as applicable. Performance feedback will be informally reviewed and discussed weekly among the Project Director and key personnel. To continuously respond to the needs of the school community, data collected will be analyzed continuously by the External Evaluator and the data specialist. This information will be used to refine, strengthen, and improve the Project approach as necessary to ensure a process of continuous improvement.

Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs) will present preliminary findings and summarize perceived trends apparent in data analysis. Progress reporting, consistent data analysis and review, and the commitment to using a data-driven decision-making process to improve interventions and support services continually will be key elements that ensure the Project will accomplish its set goal, objectives, and targeted outcomes. At the outset of the Project, a detailed evaluation plan will

be finalized, and timetables established, which will help to further align the evaluation activities with intended outcomes and build a common understanding of the role of Project evaluation in the Project’s implementation. Measurable indicators and target milestones will be assigned to all process and outcome/performance objectives. In addition, consistent data collection processes will occur throughout the Project on an ongoing and systematic basis. QPRs will also report on data collection, flow-through, quality, clean-up, and implementation/results gaps. Regular progress reports will also present preliminary findings and summarize perceived trends.

Survey and evaluation data analysis will be extensive and ongoing to ensure a constant flow of feedback to facilitate Project improvement. The Advisory Council will meet quarterly to review process and outcome evaluation results. The evaluation plan will also be reviewed monthly to ensure there are sufficient data to help Project leaders implement a highly effective Project. If desired outcomes are not seen in the evaluation results or feedback received, the Project Director and Advisory Council will solicit feedback and suggest and implement any modifications.

Core Value	How data will be used
Establishes Focus	The system of data collection and the constant review and analysis of data will help to keep the focus on meeting the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the Project, leading to an enhanced level of understanding of successes, challenges, and solutions.
Project/Program Management	As noted in activity reports, sign-in sheets, and budget expenditure reports, data will be systematically collected by staff and shared with stakeholders. These data will allow for Project monitoring of activities and schedules - guiding short-term corrections and future planning to make sure timelines and commitments are efficiently met.

<p>Operational Efficiency</p>	<p>Knowing what has been accomplished and what still needs to be accomplished – using data and the grant proposal as the guide – will help streamline service delivery, enhance the coordination of services to school leaders and teachers, and have a greater impact on students.</p>
<p>Accountability to the funder, leaders, and teachers</p>	<p>Process data and outcome data will produce empirical and documented evidence that the Project meets its goal, objectives, and activity commitments.</p>
<p>Use the Evaluation and Support System to drive decision-making.</p>	<p>The Advisory Council will review semi-annual reports generated by the Observe4success database to monitor and assess progress toward improving teacher and school leader effectiveness. Information from these reports will be used to drive decision-making regarding activities including (but not limited to): recommended professional development and training; recommended certification programs; individualized coaching and support systems; and others. In addition, HLCSB uses information obtained from the system to drive decision-making regarding activities, including preparation, recruitment, hiring, placement, retention, dismissal, and compensation.</p>
<p>Sustainability of the Initiative</p>	<p>Project outcomes, formative reports, and summative data will produce evidence to demonstrate that the Project merits continued funding through grants or other funding mechanisms, including private funding sources.</p>

Replication of Best Practices	Project outcome data will produce evidence of Project merits for replication among other school districts and educational agencies nationwide. Reports and the documentation of Project practices and strategies will be compiled as a guide for replication.
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The table below illustrates the data to be collected, measurement tools, and collection frequency:

Data to be collected	Measurement tool	Collection Frequency
Student academic growth (aggregated)	NYS standardized assessments, quizzes, test results, school report cards	Baseline established at the beginning of the grant. Follow-up
Academic performance of students belonging to sub-groups (disaggregated)	NYS standardized assessments, quizzes, test results, school report cards	Administered following state testing schedule; data summarized quarterly
School-wide academic growth	NYS standardized assessments	Annually
Classroom-level teacher performance data principal/key administrator performance data	District appraisal system, structured observation, NYS assessments, formal appraisal system, surveys administered to parents, teachers, support staff	Formal observations are conducted twice/per year or once per semester
Perception of the Effectiveness of <i>Building Leaders</i>	Qualitative surveys for parents, teachers, support staff, administrators, students, and community members	Annually

Overall effectiveness of <i>Building Leaders</i>	Results of needs assessment at the start of the school year; Observe4success data reports	Baseline at start of implementation and yearly thereafter
Professional development data (e.g., #s and types/length of sessions, # participants, skills & knowledge acquired, etc.)	Surveys (needs assessment, post-participation, annual), sign-in records, school records, and student achievement data)	Upon notification of funding and continuously thereafter

In addition, HLCSB will track and report the following performance measures: a) The % of Educators earning Performance-Based Compensation; b) The gap between the retention rate of Educators receiving Performance-Based Compensation and the average retention rate of Educators; c) The degree to which HLCSB utilizes the Educator Evaluation and Support Systems to inform the following human capital decisions: recruitment; hiring; placement; retention; dismissal; professional development; tenure; promotion; or all the above; d) The % of Performance-Based Compensation paid to Educators with State, local, or other non-TSL Federal resources; e) The % of teachers and principals who receive the highest effectiveness rating; and f) The % of teachers and principals who receive the highest effectiveness rating. At the end of the Project period, the Evaluator will submit a final (summative) performance report as directed by the Secretary. HLCSB agrees to participate in any required evaluation(s).

(c) Quality of the Management Plan

Project staff are well-qualified to implement this Project. HLCSB has received other U.S. Department of Education grants successfully – on time and within budget. The HLCSB Executive Director works closely with the grantor program officer to address challenges or receive guidance if the use of funds or a potential change in performance measures is necessary. However, these

types of changes are not anticipated. The following table presents Project staffing..

Position	Current staff (Y or N)	Qualifications and responsibilities
Executive Director	Y	Primary leader and school authority
Project Director	N	Leads and oversees the Project
Data Collection Analyst	Y	Identify, collect, and analyze data
Chief of Operations	Y	Financial oversight
Admin. Assistant	Y	Facilitate activities and support staff
External Evaluator	Contract	Assess and analyze data that have been collected and create reports summarizing the connection between the data and the anticipated Project outcomes. Data analysis, formative and summative reports

A management plan with a timeline will guide Project staff, teachers, leaders, and the Advisory Council to ensure the Project is implemented on time, within budget, and focus on addressing the goal through achieving Project objectives. The following table presents the primary activities, milestones, persons responsible, and an anticipated timeline. School leaders’ and teachers’ incentives will begin in Year One, and a competitive salary schedule will be completed and implemented in Year Three. The Project’s management plan allows for the completion of target activities and a sustainability plan with initiation strategies in the third quarter of Year Three and implementation in the fourth quarter, so there is no break in activities.

Activity and Milestone	* Responsible	Timeline
Year One (Months 1-12)		

Share the award press release with HLCSB Board, staff, and community	ED	Month 1
Ensure that all fiscal accountability and grant Project compliance instruments are in place	ED; CFO	Month 1
Hire staff to fill open positions for Project implementation	ED	Month 1-2
Present information on the purpose and benefits of the project at faculty meetings and stakeholder meetings	AC; PD	Month 1
Present revised HCMS policy, which reflects the addition of the PBCS to the Board for approval, acceptance, and implementation	ED; PD; AC; Board	Month 2
Schedule all monthly Advisory Council meetings; arrange for automated “reminder” emails to be sent to alert members	PD	Ongoing
Assess student performance data; survey teachers and administrators to identify and prioritize educators’ professional development and training needs; notify trainers	PD; AC	Month 2
Obtain signed and executed contracts with all consultants/contractors, including deliverables and timelines.	PD	Month 2
Review and refine evaluation plan as appropriate; schedule monitoring visits; schedule teacher, principal, and support personnel reviews; execute evaluation plan.	EE; AC; PD	Month 2
Collect baseline student performance data; survey teachers and administrators to identify and prioritize educators’ professional development and training needs	PD; AC; EE; Teachers	Month 2

Confirm professional development schedules with trainers, arrange for training assessments, materials, and handouts to begin to be uploaded on the project website	PD	Month 2
Ensure baseline data is correct and available for each performance indicator. Create charts and graphs that encourage staff to visualize baseline vs. progress vs. obtained goals and incentives	PD	Month 2
Finalize teacher leadership role descriptions, deliverables, and timelines with principals and stakeholders	PD	Month 2
Present introductory training sessions for educators, principals, administrators, and support personnel for buy-in and to ensure communication of goals, objectives, and expectations	PD; AC; Training Consultants	Month 3
Review and finalize the annual financial strategy plan. Ensure adjustments are made to plan so that resources are in place to meet annual cash and in-kind match requirements	ED; PD; CFO	Month 4
Work with HLCSB SDC to ensure that the mechanism to track professional development hours, training assessments, and leadership roles are in place; ensure all personnel are trained on how to use the database system and the system produces quarterly reports of progress on benchmarks; review reports with AC; ensure monthly AC meetings held and include budget oversight, data-driven Project refinements, and goals, objectives, and outcomes improvements; annual professional development schedule is enacted; year two plans final; follow-up student	PD; AC; EE; ED; SDC; CFO	Months 4-12

assessments conducted; surveys conducted		
Prepare and disseminate quarterly program and financial reports; share with the AC, teachers, and principals to help with data-driven-decision-making in the classroom and the charter school	PD; EE	Months 4, 7, 10, 13
Initiate development of teachers’ and principals’ salary structure based on educator effectiveness for implementation in Year Three	ED; PD; CFO;	Month 9 Ongoing
Annual program and financial reports are prepared/disseminated	PD; EE	Month 13
Year Two (Months 13-24)		
Adjustments to Project continue as a result of the implementation of the continuous feedback model	PD; AC	Month 13 Quarterly
Review and finalize the annual financial strategy plan. Ensure adjustments are made for resources to meet match requirements	ED, PD, CFO	Month 13
Ensure the mechanism to track professional development hours, training assessments, and leadership roles remain in place; review reports with AC to determine if benchmarks are being met.	PD; SDC	Month 13 Quarterly
Schedule all monthly AC meetings with email alerts for Year Two, conduct meetings	PD	Month 13 Ongoing
Continuous collection of student achievement data; analysis of information; complete salary structure for implementation (Yr.3)	PD; AC; EE; SDC	Month 13 Ongoing
Survey teachers and school leaders to prioritize professional development and training needs	PD; Teachers; Admin.	Month 14

Professional development and training schedule is finalized and executed for Year Two	PD; AC; Consultants	Month 15 Ongoing
Arrange for the database system to produce quarterly reports; performance and financial reports completed and submitted	PD; SDC; EE	Month 15, 18, 21, 24
Project sustainability planning to ensure identified resources remain for post-grant funding; identify priorities for continuation	PD; AC; ED; CFO	Ongoing
Year Three (Months 25-36)		
Adjustments to Project continue as a result of the implementation of the continuous feedback model	PD; AC	Month 25 Quarterly
Ensure any necessary adjustments are made to the financial plan so that resources are in place to meet annual match requirements	ED, PD, CFO	Month 25
Ensure the mechanism to track professional development hours, training assessments, and leadership roles remain in place; review reports with AC to determine if benchmarks are being met	PD; SDC	Month 25 Quarterly
Schedule all monthly AC meetings with email alerts for Year Three, conduct meetings	PD	Month 25 Ongoing
Salary structure for teachers and principals based on educator effectiveness is implemented in Year Three	PD; AC; EE, CFO	Month 25 Ongoing
Collection of student achievement data and analysis of information	PD; AC; EE; SDC	Month 25 Ongoing
Survey teachers and school leaders to prioritize professional development and training needs	PD; Teachers; Admin.	Month 25-26

Professional development and training schedule is finalized and executed for Year Three	PD; AC; Consultants	Month 26 Ongoing
Arrange for the database system to produce quarterly reports; performance and financial reports completed and submitted	PD; SDC; EE	Month 27, 30, 33, 36
Project sustainability planning to ensure identified resources will remain in place post-grant funding; identify priorities for continuation; position Project administration for continuation	PD; AC; ED; CFO	Ongoing
Salary structure for teachers and principals, based on educator effectiveness, implemented in Year Three	ED; CFO; PD	Month 26
* ED = Executive Director; PD = Project Director; AC = Advisory Council; EE = External Evaluator; SDC = School Data Analyst		

The management plan is not intended to be an absolute but provides a strategy for staff to follow. In addition, Project management will adhere to all policies and procedures established by the charter school and all federal grant requirements. HLCSB is experienced and well-qualified to ensure the successful implementation and sustainment of the Building Leaders Project. HLCSB has experience implementing grant-funded programs from the U.S. Department of Education and other funding entities. HLCSB will bring this exceptional track record to manage and implement this Project successfully.

(d) Adequacy of Resources

(i) The proposed project will likely result in system change or improvement.

The timeline presented in the previous section aligns with the Project strategy and shows a strategic approach to implementation, resulting in change and/or improvement. The Project approach will lead to sustainability by building the capacity of HLCSB with specific strategies to

support the attainment of the goal, objectives, and outcomes. A data-driven approach will be used to ensure that the needs of individual educators are met through ongoing, job-embedded professional development. Initial professional development and training topics will be determined by reviews of current teacher assessments (Professional Development Appraisal System), student academic achievement data, and educator input determined through an annual survey.

Cornerstones of the process that will guide change include a minimum of one 45-minute observation and completion of the Teacher Self-Report form. The overall approach includes 51 criteria within eight domains reflecting the Proficiencies for Learner-Centered Instruction. This

graphic illustrates this process. The evaluation plan serves as a rich source of data to differentiate the Project training approach to meet the needs of educators, improve educator effectiveness and drive student achievement. The continuous practice of data collection from these sources will allow Project staff to set professional development-related goals and determine the combination of offerings and incentives that are effective in raising academic achievement. The External Evaluator will work with the Executive Director and the Project Director to ensure consistency in data collection, analysis, and application toward the desired Project outcomes. Data reports will be compiled monthly and reviewed no less than quarterly throughout the grant period to track system change. This practice will continue post-grant funding to review and monitor the implementation of best practices defined through this Project period.



Studies show that professional development for teachers can have a little lasting impact on student learning when there are no plans for follow-up activities during the school year. Even when teachers become enthusiastic about a new approach, research shows that new concepts and strategies rarely transfer to classroom practice when support and assistance are not provided. As such, HLCSB will integrate professional learning communities (PLCs) into the professional development approach to provide ongoing peer support for teachers and ensure the transfer of newly acquired knowledge and skills into instructional practice with encouragement to take on leadership roles. Additionally, the Project’s professional development approach includes: clear, specific goals and objectives; intellectual teacher engagement; active participant involvement; multiple relevant professional development sessions conducted over an extended period; teachers learning with and from their colleagues; and opportunities provided for teachers to practice and adopt new strategies. PLCs and other professional development activities will provide HLCSB teachers with ongoing opportunities to collaborate, reflect on practices, exchange ideas, and share strategies and expertise with their colleagues. Overall, expansion of the school’s HMCS and the process of continuous review, feedback, and adjustment will result in system change and improvement in the long term.

(ii) The extent to which the proposed project is likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services that address the needs of the target population.

The Project approach strongly focuses on providing ongoing, reference-based job embedded professional development for the school’s educators, administrators, and support personnel (e.g., curriculum specialists, counselors, special needs staff, etc.). Professional development is a key component to expanding the LEA’s capacity to provide services that address student learning social and emotional, and behavioral needs. Professional development will equip educators and

leaders with the skills and tools necessary to impact outcomes during the Project and after. Professional development is also a strategy to increase educator motivation to help themselves, their professional community, and ultimately – their students. All professional development and training will align with the five core features or principles for professional development from Project Learning Tree^{xv} as one example of strategically addressing professional development so intended outcomes are achieved. The core principles are 1) Integrated content & pedagogy; 2) Coherence with standards and policies; 3) Active learning chances; 4) Mentoring, coaching, apprenticeship; and 5) Individual learning.

Qualified professional development providers will be identified and the contracting process completed to ensure that Project personnel develop skills, techniques, and understanding of effective, innovative, and research-based strategies for demonstrably boosting student academic achievement. The training approach will be based on research-based practices that have been proven effective. For instance, a study conducted by the American Institutes for Research (American Educational Research Journal)^{xvi} shows that three core features of professional development activities significantly positively affect participants' self-reported increases in knowledge and skills and changes in classroom practice. These include: 1) focus on content knowledge, 2) opportunities for active learning, and 3) coherence with learning activities. Therefore, all training activities will follow this and other similar proven research-based strategies.

Professional development will be provided for all teachers, school leaders, counselors, and educational facilitative professional staff. Specific professional development topics and activities will be based on the outcomes of a comprehensive survey to assess the individually identified needs of teachers, principals, and other staff, along with educator evaluations. The needs assessment will be conducted upon notification of the funding award.

Professional development will be conducted both on- and off-site and will support teachers, principals, and professional staff (guidance counselors, etc.) to better understand and use the measures of effectiveness in the HLCSB performance-based compensation system to improve practice and student achievement. Professional development approaches include a process for assessing the effectiveness of the training program. Continuous review will improve teacher and leadership practices to increase student achievement and make modifications to improve effectiveness. HLCSB principals will participate in professional development and training in Human Capital Management and Performance-Based Compensation systems.

Project leaders will participate in professional development explicitly relating to data-driven evaluation of student growth. Other topics may include conducting observation-based assessments of teacher and principal performance at multiple points during the year using objective, evidence-based rubrics for observation. Developing and sustaining PLCs is a key component of the Project's professional development approach. The term professional learning community describes a collegial group of administrators and educators who are united in their commitment to student learning. They share a vision, work and learn collaboratively, visit and review other classrooms, and participate in decision-making as leaders. The benefits to the staff and students include reduced isolation of teachers, better informed and committed teachers, and academic gains for students. Overall, the professional learning community is a powerful staff-development approach and a potent strategy for school change and improvement. Teams determine areas where additional learning would be helpful and read research-based studies, attend workshops or courses, or invite consultants to assist in acquiring necessary knowledge or skills. In addition to the regular meetings, participants observe one another in the classroom and conduct other job-related responsibilities. Among the many benefits of professional learning, communities include: decreased teacher

isolation; increased commitment to the mission; fostered shared responsibility; created more powerful learning; and leads to a higher likelihood of fundamental, systemic change. The advent of information technologies facilitates opportunities for community learning, fostering collaborative learning environments for teachers where they can reflect on instruction and curriculum, share ideas in a distributed knowledge framework, and create a common understanding of teaching and learning. PLCs allow teachers to collaborate in a safe and risk-taking environment that serves as another project component to show the LEA's commitment to providing incentives for educators to become excellent educators.

A second core focus of the sustained professional development approach will be to encourage school-wide adoption of inquiry-oriented learning approaches that incorporate the use of digital resources and computer technologies. Traditional teaching approaches tend to be linear, with teachers preparing highly structured curricula and activity plans. In contrast, inquiry-based learning projects are driven by students. Instructors act more as coaches, guides, and facilitators who help learners arrive at their true questions—their true interests. When students choose the questions, they are motivated to learn and develop a sense of ownership of the Project. Instructors who adopt an inquiry-based learning approach help students identify and refine their real questions into learning projects or opportunities. They then guide the subsequent research, inquiry, and reporting processes. In addition, all teachers and school leaders will participate in intensive professional development relating to data-driven student instruction for academic performance.

(iii) The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multi-year financial and operating model, and accompanying plan critical to the project's long-term success; or more than one of these types of evidence. The project's initial phase during the grant-funded period is expected to

firmly establish this initiative as a critical component of HLCSB practices and be sustained beyond Federal funding. HLCSB will continue to provide ongoing training, coaching, and other educator support activities as necessary. During the project's first year, school leaders and Project staff will estimate any funding needs required to sustain the initiative beyond the Federal funding period (primarily to support professional development and a performance-based compensation system). HLCSB is committed to utilizing local funds to sustain the incentive program. To demonstrate its commitment, HLCSB is providing matching funds totaling 50% of the total funding request for each year of the grant-funded project.

There is support for this Teacher Incentive Initiative. This is largely because individuals recognize the potential for raising academic achievement and providing services and support for students and educators. Teachers, principals, and stakeholders will continue to be included in the Project's roll-out through their involvement in the Project-specific Advisory Council and participation in the evaluation process. The Advisory Council will continue to meet no less than quarterly to assess the status of the Project during and after the grant funding. School leaders will support the Project Director in developing leadership descriptions, monitoring incentive payout reports, collaboratively planning events, and reviewing and disseminating results to education leaders and stakeholders to justify future and expanded support. The Advisory Council will finalize a sustainability budget for the incentives and program support during the first year to further support the Building Leaders Project. The Council will then identify a list of potential private, local, state, and federal funding sources, along with a list of action items, timelines, roles, and responsibilities for approaching each. Entities that are expected to play a role in Project activities and contribute to the Advisory Council include Momentum Education (professional development), Generation Ready (professional development), NYC Special Education Collaborative (ongoing

access to resources), and Brooklyn College (online courses).

Hyde Leadership Charter School-Brooklyn is seeking this funding to ensure teachers are recognized for their efforts, teachers know they are supported, and student academic achievement improves. Through this grant-funded project, this K-8 school/LEA will have resources to establish a teacher and educator supported environment that will be ready to continue long-term.