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**INTRODUCTION – ABSOLUTE AND COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITIES**

Lindsay Unified School District (LUSD) is applying for funding for the 2023 Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program (TSL), **Cultivating Opportunities in the Redesign of Equity in Education: CORE Lindsay**. This program is designed to expand and deliver *effective leadership learning opportunities to all educators in Lindsay Unified and create highly competent leadership teams at every learning community* to highly skilled educators, teacher leaders, and leadership teams to ensure competence in the components of performance-based education and learner-centered leadership practices.

The proposed project aims to expand and improve the district's evaluation and support system and personalized professional learning (*Absolute Priority 1a*) which are integral parts of its strategic Human Capital Manage System (HCMS). Additionally, it seeks to establish *career advancement opportunities* that offer increased responsibility and compensation. These opportunities are designed to acknowledge and reward effective teachers, principals, and other school leaders in high needs schools, empowering them to expand their leadership and achieve positive outcomes for learners (*Absolute Priority 1b*). All Lindsay Unified School District (LUSD) leaders will participate in the project. One hundred percent (100%) of these leaders serve in high needs schools (*Absolute Priority 2*).

**COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY 1: *Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities***

**CORE Lindsay** addresses Competitive Preference Priority 1 by training teachers and leaders to excel in Lindsay's nationally recognized performance-based system, ensuring all components are personalized for learner success. LUSD's journey to personalized learning has its foundation in a comprehensive community-developed document referred to as the *Strategic Design* that serves as the district's equity framework and outlines and ensures the Ideal Learning Experience (ILE)

for all learners. (*Competitive Preference Priority 1*). In 2017, LUSD was awarded a Teacher and School Leader grant, *Empower Lindsay*, to strategically advance the established Human Capital Management System (HCMS) to foster equity in access to effective educators, learning resources, and career advancement opportunities. The HCMS framework provided a structured Performance-based Compensation System (PBCS) to improve instructional and leadership practice, recruit and develop educators, and recognize the outstanding performance of its teachers and school leaders. The HCMS implemented through *Empower Lindsay* reflects a commitment to clear and fair measures of educator performance, specifically based on demonstrated improvement in student academic achievement. *Through Empower Lindsay, LUSD has developed the foundation for systems change that supports CORE Lindsay's* focus on a learner-centered learning environment where every learner has an effective teacher, and every learning community has effective leaders.

Nearly 100% of Lindsay learners are socioeconomically disadvantaged. One-third of the households in the San Joaquin Valley earn less than the Federal Poverty Level, *a higher proportion than any other region in the state*. Poverty in the San Joaquin Valley disproportionately affects Latino, African-American and foreign-born residents (Central Valley Health Policy Institute). The most highly concentrated poverty areas are often those populated by the very farmworkers who produce the region's agricultural bounty. **CORE Lindsay** will prioritize the development of training of leaders and mentors who can effectively engage, and mentor families of poverty to ensure equitable access to school and community resources.

**COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY 2: *Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce and Professional Growth to Strengthen Student Learning***

LUSD is committed to developing a diverse teacher workforce that is representative of the community they serve, and preparing leaders that know and understand both the strengths and barriers to success of the Lindsay community. Through their *Grow Your Own* pipeline, LUSD has

achieved successful outcomes by recruiting educators who reflect the community's demographics. Before receiving TSL funding in 2017, LUSD had 45% Hispanic and 51% white educators, while the student population was 93.2% Hispanic, aligning with the Lindsay community. With the completion of the pipeline over five years, the number of Hispanic educators in the certificated staff has increased to 53%. The CORE Lindsay project will continue to support and enhance the existing Grow Your Own pipeline, providing a pathway to the teaching profession for the Lindsay community (*Competitive Preference Priority 2*).

### NEED FOR THE PROJECT

i. *Specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities*

Lindsay Unified School District (LUSD) provides educational services to 4,067 pre-K-12<sup>th</sup> grade learners in six elementary schools (K-8), one comprehensive high school, and one alternative education program. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of Lindsay learners are Hispanic/Latino, 40.3% are classified as English Learners (ELs), and 100% receive free/reduced-price meals. Lindsay is a small farming town of approximately 13,474 located in Tulare County, California, at the southeastern end of the San Joaquin Valley. Tulare County is one of the most impoverished counties in the nation, often referred to as the “*Appalachia of the West*” (The Economist, 2013) Lindsay Unified schools grapple with an alarming level of socioeconomically disadvantaged students, standing at a staggering 86%. This percentage surpasses even the county's average of 75% and is significantly higher by 30 points than the statewide average of 59%. The pronounced poverty levels place LUSD among the most high-need districts in the state. Given these immense challenges, even minor setbacks can have a debilitating impact on families, consequently affecting student learning outcomes. Economically dependent on agriculture and related industries, the San Joaquin Valley attracts an extensive population of migrant workers, and immigrant families who

settle in towns and smaller cities like Lindsay.

A significant percentage of families live below the federal poverty level (29.5%, U.S. Census, 2022). The community is 86.5% Hispanic; 77% of the population speaks a language other than English; and 45% of that population self-report that they do not speak English very well (U.S. Census, 2022). These conditions are very much like those in other communities in the region; however, unlike many other comparable cities, Lindsay is geographically, economically, and culturally isolated from other areas in Tulare County. This isolation is a crucial factor in trying to provide for the needs of local learners and families.

In response to a long history of stagnant student achievement, in 2007 LUSD began to deconstruct its traditional education system while simultaneously building new structures for a Performance-based System (PBS), a learner-centered approach where learners advance at their own pace, moving forward based on demonstrating mastery on measurable learning objectives. The LUSD *Strategic Design* delineates the vision for personalized learning and professional development across all stakeholders in the system, establishing initial buy-in from all those that would benefit from implementation. To further support the full implementation of LUSD's PBS, the district developed a digital Learning Management System (LMS) to deliver personalized curriculum and provide real-time learning progress and data to learners, staff, and parents. As the district phased in the implementation of PBS (2009-2013: K-12), formal evaluations provided tangible evidence of the effectiveness of the program on indicators such as attendance, school climate, and graduation rate. These outcomes have been significant and consistent.

The single biggest factor in learner achievement is the quality of teachers. The second highest factor is principal and leadership effectiveness. Effective principals establish a positive school climate, develop strong instructional practices, and support teacher development, thereby

positively impacting student outcomes (Grissom, Egalite, Lindsay, 2021). Studies such as the RAND Corporation's report titled "Learning from Leadership: Investigating the Links to Improved Student Learning" have provided empirical evidence linking principal leadership effectiveness to improved student achievement. To address the existing challenges and improve overall academic growth, highly skilled leadership is needed at every level of the organization. Academic achievement within the district, as evidenced by the data, has been relatively stagnant. There continues to be an achievement gap demonstrated by students with disabilities and English Learners (EL). This highlights the lack of progress and growth in student academic performance, indicating the need for leadership to improve skills to drive improvement.

The number of educators receiving the highest level of performance on the LUSD evaluation tool has demonstrated minimal growth over four years. In the past five years, the percentage of educators receiving the highest effectiveness rating has gone from 17 total in 2018 to 19 total in 2022 with few attaining the highest level of performance, highlighting the lack of competencies necessary to effectively lead and manage in a performance-based system. Results of evaluation and observation have drawn attention to the challenges leaders demonstrated in giving and receiving constructive and appropriate feedback that supports positive educational outcomes. Feedback provides support and developmental opportunities for leaders, and the absence of this communication can impede the capacity to improve performance and make meaningful contributions to the district's overall success.

LUSD's commitment to leadership development for effective site leaders utilizes proven methodologies and approaches from Michael Fullan's research, (Fullan & Quinn 2015) on evidence-based strategies and best practices that are essential for cultivating highly skilled leaders. Fullan's research will serve as a guide to address the leadership gaps - lack of highly skilled,

effective leaders, flat learner academic achievement, and limited ability for formal feedback to improve practice. By drawing upon this research, the district will leverage best practices and lessons learned to enhance leadership capacity, improve academic outcomes, and establish systems for regular and constructive feedback.

A wide body of research on the effectiveness of mentors for educators consistently demonstrates the positive impact of mentorship on professional growth and development. Mentorship significantly improved teachers' instructional practices, job satisfaction, and retention rates. The lack of highly trained mentors negatively impacts the professional growth and success of new educators and administrators. There is a pressing need for effective mentors who can provide support and guidance to new teachers and leaders within the district. For example, out of 25 mentor openings (teacher residency program) in LUSD, only 15 mentors applied; out of those, only 12 were deemed highly trained. This data indicates a shortage of mentors who possess the necessary skills and expertise to effectively mentor and develop new teachers and leaders. By addressing this need, the district aims to establish a robust pipeline of mentors that can enhance the support and development of its educators and leaders, ultimately leading to improved teaching and leadership practices within the district.

Tulare County ranks as one of the most impoverished counties in the country. *Every* school in

| School Name           | FRPM  |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Jefferson Elementary  | 90.4% |
| Kennedy Elementary    | 88.0% |
| Lincoln Elementary    | 83.9% |
| Reagan Elementary     | 88.6% |
| Roosevelt Elementary  | 78.3% |
| Washington Elementary | 89.6% |
| Lindsay Senior High   | 85.8% |
| Lindsay Community Day | 93.3% |
| JJC Continuation      | 83.3% |
| Loma Vista Charter    | 87.5% |

LUSD is considered a high-need school; they all far exceed the minimum threshold of 50% of students receiving Free or Reduced Price Meals (see table at left). A crucial need for LUSD is to have a team of qualified leaders and mentors who can effectively serve and advocate for the families in poverty within the district. Currently, none of the district's

staff members have received formal training to serve as mentors specifically for families facing poverty-related challenges. This lack of formal training in mentoring families of poverty suggests a gap in the district's ability to support and address the unique needs of LUSD's families. By prioritizing the development and training of leaders and mentors who can effectively engage and support families in poverty, the district aims to ensure equitable educational opportunities and outcomes for all students, regardless of their socioeconomic backgrounds (*Competitive Preference Priority 1*).

A growing body of evidence for Grow Your Own (GYO) programs shows that a successful GYO can provide an integrated system of support that spans the entire teacher development continuum. This includes mechanisms for recruitment, facilitating entry into the program, as well as comprehensive preparation through curriculum, pedagogy, and supportive learning structures which encourages their continued dedication to the community in which they teach (Gist, Bianco and Lynn, 2019).

Low-income schools with high minority populations such as LUSD are three to ten times more likely to have novice teachers in the classroom than school districts in more affluent predominantly white schools (Long, 2011). Lindsay's rural location and non-traditional learning environment often thwart efforts to recruit and retain the experienced, high quality teachers needed to see gains in learner achievement. Additionally, there have been a few significant efforts to encourage Lindsay learners to enter the teaching field and return to the community to teach.

The absence of a formal system for building future LUSD leaders from within the district, along with a significant reliance on external hires for key administrative positions, highlights the need to develop a college-to-teacher-to-leadership pipeline, a *Grow Your Own* model, aligned with the goals of creating an educator workforce that characterizes the community, holds a deep



understanding of the challenges that learners and families face on their educational journey and nurtures leadership talent from within the district. Seventeen (17) out of thirty-four (34), or 50%, of key administrative roles have been filled through outside hires. By addressing this need, the district aims to create a sustainable leadership pipeline, enhance leadership continuity, and capitalize on the expertise and commitment of its own educators to drive positive change and success within the district. This lack of a clear pathway hinders the district's ability to identify and develop diverse talent who are from the community and have the potential to assume leadership roles in the future.

All LUSD staff members must develop full competence in the components of LUSD's performance-based system. Currently, 100% of recruits to the residency program and outside hires have limited knowledge of Lindsay's unique personalized, learner-centered system. There is a significant gap in staff members' understanding and proficiency in implementing the specific components and principles of LUSD's performance-based system (i.e., the Ideal Learning Experience and the Adult Learning Curriculum) to support effective teaching and learning. This finding underscores the need for targeted training and support to ensure that all staff members, regardless of their experience or tenure, possess the necessary understanding and skills to effectively implement the competencies of the LUSD performance-based system.

ii. *Proposed project will integrate with or build on similar or related efforts*

Teaching, learning, and leading in Lindsay is grounded in a comprehensive, *learner-centered, performance-based system* rather than a teacher-driven, Carnegie unit or time-based system. In a traditional education system, time is the constant and learning is the variable. In a performance-based system, *learning is the constant and time is the variable*. Shifting from a time-based to a performance-based system has been a complex, multi-year journey that necessitated a full-scale dismantling of the traditional system, requiring the transformation of all systems, structures and

roles. As a result of this change, all programs are fully integrated and aligned with LUSD's *Strategic Design*. All systems, structures and processes are supported through the strategic allocation of resources from general funds, LCAP (Local Control and Accountability Plan funds), and other State, Federal and local funding sources.

Lindsay Unified has become a model of educational innovation in performance-based education as evidenced by the large numbers of educators and other stakeholders from around the nation who participate in learner-directed site visits. The district is invited regularly to present (in-person and more recently, virtually) at conferences throughout the U.S. LUSD's book, *Beyond Reform – Systemic Shifts to Personalized Learning* published in February 2017 by Marzano Research, has been widely embraced by the field and serves as a replicable model for change particularly in high need school districts.

The district advanced its approach to professional learning and developing effective educators in both depth and breadth, focusing on the “*in Lindsay, we are all learners*” mindset. This approach has been supported and refined by ongoing research science to validate that professional learning was achieving both educator development and gains in learner achievement.

Significant milestones were met through *Empower Lindsay* (TSL 2017), highlighting the district's capacity to implement and manage change in a learner-centered system. However, to strengthen the success achieved thus far, it is crucial for the district to prioritize the development and implementation of learner-centered leadership practices, focused on improving instruction and increasing learner outcomes throughout the organization. This entails ensuring that educators and leaders become fully competent in key instructional areas, including project-based learning, relevant learning outside of the classroom, motivational learning opportunities, culturally

responsive teaching practices, and leveraging AI (artificial intelligence) in the teaching profession and learning processes.

Currently, there are limited training opportunities offered in leadership practices in the critical areas identified above. To address this need, it is essential for the district to expand and enhance training initiatives that provide comprehensive support and development in these instructional domains. By offering targeted leadership training programs, mentoring support and career advancement opportunities, the district can equip educators and leaders with the necessary skills, strategies, and knowledge required to effectively implement learner-centered practices. These strategies ensure consistent high-quality instruction throughout the organization.

There is a pressing need for highly competent teacher leadership teams to enhance the effectiveness of learning communities. Data reveals a shortage of skilled teacher leaders within on-site leadership and coherence teams at school sites. Specifically, 75% of coherence team members lack the necessary skill set to effectively coach, mentor, and lead their peers. There is no established process for providing formal training or engaging new leaders in an induction program. Addressing this need requires the implementation of a comprehensive and structured training framework that supports new leaders in acquiring the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to excel in their roles. By establishing a structured training system and induction program, the district can expedite the competency-building process for new leaders, enabling them to make a positive impact in a shorter timeframe.

*iii. Comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning*

Shifting from a time-based to a competency-based system in LUSD required full-scale systemic change. All programs and policies are fully integrated and aligned with Lindsay's future-focused *Strategic Design* and supported through strategic allocation of resources. The development of open-sourced teacher and leader development pathways, design of learner-

centered leadership pathways, and expansion of Lindsay Unified’s Digital HCMS builds capacity to support and retain effective educators more intentionally. In order to uphold compliance with California's State Plan for Equitable Access to Excellent Educators in high-needs schools and align with the Lindsay *Strategic Design*, the Lindsay Unified School District (LUSD) is dedicated to leveraging various products, programs, and systems. Through this approach, LUSD aims to continuously enhance its evaluation and support system, providing comprehensive feedback and support to foster improved learner achievement.

The district’s persistence in building and optimizing systems *with learners always at the center* will continue to generate innovations contributing to continuous improvement. Over the *Empower Lindsay* project period, the district developed a comprehensive formative support system linking teacher and leader standards to clear expectations of practice including the development of rubrics based on California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) and California Professional Standards for Education Leaders (CPSEL). The Adult Learning Curriculum *Instructional Look Fors* are aligned with both the CSTP and CPSEL.

Through *Race to the Top* (2012) and *Empower Lindsay*, the district has spent more than a decade laying the foundation for systems change and has institutionalized effective strategies developed to ensure that every learner has access to an excellent teacher. The district has been actively studying the impact of these strategies to ensure they are producing both student achievement (Nair, P., 2014; Steele et al., 2017) and educator effectiveness (Hanewicz C., Platt A., Arendt A., 2017; Lee E., & Hannafin M., 2016).

The Learning Accelerator (TLA) is a national nonprofit working to drive promising education innovations and building an evidence base for promising new practices in personalized mastery-based practices. Findings and outcomes published from research studies conducted by TLA for

Lindsay Unified include: 1) *What Works in Professional Learning & PBCS to Produce Student Achievement; Scalable and Sustainable Pathways and Ladders*; 2) *Teacher and Leader Capacity Development; Open Source, Valid and Reliable Competency Framework for Personalized Learning Models*; and 3) *Teacher Residency Design and Best Practices*.

The Lindsay teacher residency partnership with Alder Graduate School of Education (GSE) is a reciprocal experience that leverages the mission and outcomes of all partner organizations with a common vision centered on learners and the community. Lindsay and Alder GSE have worked closely since 2019 to plan and operate the teacher residency to ensure that the program was developed considering local context and recruitment needs with a design that was sustainable in size, structure, and implementation.

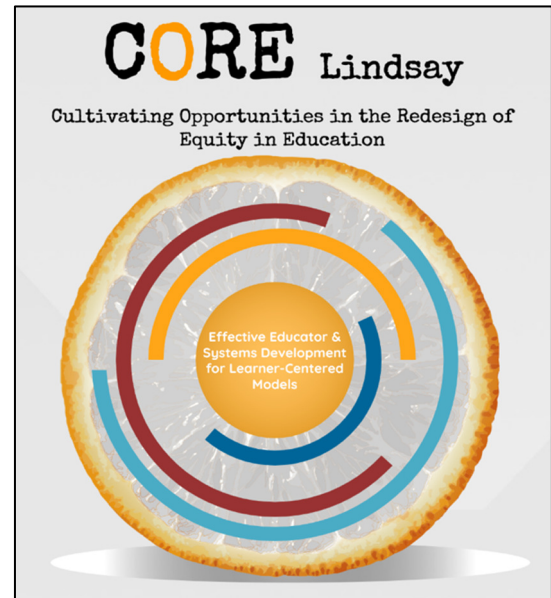
iv. Design is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population

| GAPS   | SOLUTIONS   |
|--|---|
| PBS = Performance-based System; ILE = Ideal Learning Experience; MTSS = Multi Tiered System of Support; LCLLL = Learner Centered Leadership Lab Local; LCLP = Learner Centered Leadership Pathway; LL = Lindsay Leads QFI = Quality First Instruction; ALC = Adult Learning Curriculum |   |
| Lack of formal career pathways to create a pipeline into teaching and leadership   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personalized leadership career pathway for all educators</li> <li>• Advanced professional learning</li> <li>• Grow Your Own pipeline</li> <li>• Learner Centered Leadership Lab Local LCLLL</li> <li>• Lindsay Leads internal consultant team</li> <li>• Opportunity Community Poverty Response Project</li> <li>• Feedback portal in HCMS expanded to include support plan to be used at all leadership levels</li> </ul> |
| Lack of trained mentors to provide coaching and support for all levels of the organization   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentor pathway for support at all levels</li> <li>• Emerging Teacher Pathway, individualized professional learning and mentorship</li> <li>• Expanded HCMS to track and support professional learning for all educators</li> <li>• Training on components of peer coaching and support</li> <li>• Develop coaching structure for mentors to support teachers post completion</li> </ul>                                    |
| Lack of administrative skills in instructional coaching, feedback, supervision, and evaluation   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership Academy focused on formal feedback</li> <li>• Internal Coherence Teams at all school sites</li> <li>• Training in instructional coaching and developing teacher leaders</li> <li>• Mentor/coaching support</li> </ul>   |
| Lack of training in PBS components for LUSD classified staff entering classrooms as teachers   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emerging Teacher Pathway</li> <li>• Professional learning modules (PBS, ILE, QFI, and MTSS)</li> <li>• Coaching/Mentor support</li> </ul>  |
| Low numbers of educators reaching highest level on formal evaluation   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced professional learning</li> <li>• Professional learning around QFI, PBS, ALC, Site Conditions (SC)</li> <li>• Professional learning in areas of peer feedback, instructional rounds, effective data analysis</li> <li>• Qualitative tool for leadership self-assessment/monitoring of ALC and Site Conditions</li> <li>• Pathways structure</li> <li>• Coaching /mentor support</li> </ul>                         |
| Slow student achievement growth in core learning areas   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional learning to strengthen best practices in components of PBS</li> <li>• Cadre of highly effective mentor teachers</li> <li>• Team of highly effective administrators</li> <li>• Comprehensive professional learning and mentoring</li> </ul>  |

## QUALITY OF PROJECT DESIGN

*i. Project demonstrates a Rationale*

Cultivating Opportunities in the Redesign of Equity in Education is designed to advance the district's educational community to the next level to ensure that every learner has an effective teacher and every school has effective leadership. The project will enhance its integrated, restructured, and robust Human Capital Management System (HCMS), its performance-based compensation system and valid, equitable, educator



development with *targeted leadership pathways*. Through **CORE Lindsay**, the district will focus on **1) ensuring that great teaching is happening for every learner in every classroom and 2) building a local, sustainable and instructionally focused leadership pipeline to formally advance educators as they demonstrate effectiveness, competence and confidence to take on educational leadership positions.**

*Theory of Action/Rationale: By designing and delivering effective leadership learning opportunities to all district educators, LUSD will have highly competent learner-centered leadership teams at every learning community and with every initiative.*

Four key areas form the cornerstone of the project in LUSD's high-need schools and build on the work completed over the last five years: 1) Pipelines into Teaching and Leading; 2) Leadership Pathways; 3) Advanced Professional learning; and 4) Expansion of the HCMS to track and support professional learning for all educators. Through the implementation of these key strategies, LUSD expects to increase educator evaluation ratings, effectiveness, retention, and certification in

learner-centered structures. Preparing teachers and school leaders to be more effective in the LUSD PBS will ensure that all Lindsay learners are prepared for success in college and careers.

In all key areas, LUSD is focused on alignment with the *Strategic Design*, the ILE, and core values which will facilitate the outcomes identified in our logic model (Appendix A). Performance-based Compensation (PBC) structures are in place in the HCMS and will be calibrated based on new roles and responsibilities of **CORE Lindsay**.

### **Component 1: Pipelines into Teaching and Leading.**

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A. “*Grow Your Own*” pathway for Lindsay Unified graduates and members of the school community. This section addresses Competitive Preference Priority 2 (CPP2). Lindsay’s *Grow Your Own* (GYO) model encourages Lindsay learners, paraprofessionals, and community members to pursue careers in education. This model is aligned with the goals of creating a teacher workforce representative of the community, a deeper understanding of the hurdles that learners and families face navigating the educational journey, and the challenges of high needs families experiencing multi- generational poverty. This emphasis on diversity and representation within LUSD’s teaching workforce is essential for fostering a culturally responsive and inclusive learning environment. Learners benefit from having teachers who understand their backgrounds, experiences, and needs, leading to increased achievement, advanced equity and access, and accelerated college and career readiness. The GYO pipeline was originally developed through the 2017 TSL project; the pipeline enrolled 92 Lindsay graduates and paraprofessionals in a broad range of university and credential programs. Thirty-Five (35) Pipeline members are now teaching in Lindsay classrooms. Of the 92 participants in the Pipeline, 82% are first generation college, 81% are LUSD alumni, 17% are first generation high school graduates, and 33% are classified staff. Results demonstrate the evidence of effectiveness of the GYO pipeline in diversifying the



teacher workforce for high needs classrooms. Financial assistance will be provided (\$15,000 for 10 participants) each year of the project.

**Participants:** *Ten (10) undergraduate learners will be enrolled in this program annually.*

**B. Teacher Residency Program.** Lindsay's innovative teacher residency program model (conceptualized through TSL funded project 2020-21; fully implemented through state funding 2022) supports an evidence-based teacher preparation model that is grounded in the philosophy, teaching and learning structures, and mindset of learner-centered models. In partnership with Alder Graduate School of Education (AGSE), the residency offers a unique synthesis of theory, research and practical hands-on experience combining a rigorous full-year immersive apprenticeship experience with masters-level education content. The model residency program is focused on developing the instructional competencies required in personalized, learner-center teaching and learning to contribute to the field and inform best practices in preparing a diverse teacher workforce to increase achievement, advance equity and access, and accelerate college and career readiness for learners in high needs schools. One of the key strengths of the residency program is its commitment to retaining the newly trained educators within LUSD. Participants in the residency program make a commitment to teach in the district upon completion of their training and work alongside highly qualified mentors in the classroom. The district benefits from having a cohort of highly skilled and knowledgeable educators who have been specifically trained in Lindsay's unique Performance-based System. These educators bring a deep understanding of the district's instructional practices, ensuring continuity and consistency in learner-centered teaching approaches. The project will support a Residency Coordinator (.40 FTE) that will facilitate collaboration and integration of work between LUSD and Alder GSE. Residents receive living stipends of \$25,000 funding (in kind) through a state residency grant.

**Participants:** 25 candidates are enrolled and will receive their teaching credential and M.A.

**C. Emerging Teacher Pathway.** Traditional induction programs operated by university and/or other

induction providers are not structured to support teachers in learner-centered environments. **CORE Lindsay** will develop and implement a comprehensive Emerging Teacher Pathway that includes professional learning modules on the foundations of Lindsay’s PBS and Ideal Learning Experience, Quality First Instruction, MTSS, Instructional Look Fors (see graphic above right)



and all aspects of the ALC. Modules will be presented in established professional learning structures including pathways, seminars and self-paced courses that are aligned to instructional and/or leadership topics for district initiatives. Modules will be presented by district facilitators or consultants with skills and knowledge of PBS.

Teachers will have a mentor to support instruction and data review and will receive guidance and support following each module. Research (Callahan 2016) has shown that mentors who have the skills, training, and time to offer consistent and high-quality support are more effective at improving teaching and learning. Studies have also shown that well-designed mentoring programs lower the attrition rates of beginning teachers (Yan et al., 2019). Like many high need districts, Lindsay struggles to recruit and retain effective teachers as mentors. **CORE Lindsay** will invest in training and provide time for continued opportunities to strengthen mentors’ skills in coaching and providing feedback on classroom practice, thus building a cadre of mentors with the capacity to successfully support emerging teachers in a learner-centered environment.

**Participants:** *15 mentor candidates will be recruited and trained annually*

## **Component 2: Leadership Pathways**

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This section addresses CPP 1 by developing more effective educators, learners will have increased access to resources and opportunities for growth.

The district views Lindsay leaders as key enablers of *broad-scale systems* change; growing their capacity to foster conditions of innovation will accelerate the creation, replicability and scalability for the success of learner-centered environments. Implementation of the Leadership pathways will develop cohorts of leaders who can grow and sustain learner-centered models as evidenced by the growth and impact on the schools and learners within their systems.

Conditions at a school site can either help or hinder educators from taking actions necessary to positively impact students' experiences and equitable outcomes (Byrd, C., 2015). For leaders to effectively build equitable school sites, they, just like learners, need personalized pathways of learning, coaching, and support. In Lindsay, leaders set a variety of professional goals, create plans to achieve them, and improve their practice in a way that is *formative* and *supportive*. With *Empower Lindsay*, LUSD created innovative structures to support and develop leaders and testing what works in research. The foundation has been laid to refine the leadership development support system and deepen and differentiate professional development, leverage PBCS and establish advanced leadership pathway structures.

**A. Learner Centered Leadership Pathway (LCLP).** The LCLP is designed to develop capacity in all learning communities, coherence, and program leadership. **CORE Lindsay** will deliver a scalable, personalized pathway into leadership for educators that will be offered in a sequence of 5 Saturdays in Years 1& 2. Learning modules are aligned to Site Conditions (set of conditions consistently present in effective personalized learning sites) and/or Instructional Look Fors, a detailed and research-based articulation of six key principles and corresponding student and

educator experiences and action that foster personalized learning. Modules may be facilitated by district personnel with specific expertise and/or consultants in alignment with LUSD's vision for leading and learning in a learner-center model. The modules may include but are not limited to: a) Leading in a PBS Culture and Implementing the Ideal Learning Experience; b) Developing a shared vision, leading change management, disciplined results and, monitoring/continuous improvement; c) Implementation of the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS); and d) Coaching, Supervision, and Evaluation. A library of resources on learning, teaching and leading (i.e., *Dare to Lead* by Brene Brown, *Coherence: The Right Drivers in Action*, Michael Fullan) will be available on the Empower digital dashboard and in hard copy for participants.

The pathway will be open to all educators who will be vetted through a rigorous selection process. Formal instructional teacher leadership roles will be highly demanding positions that will require exceptional levels of expertise and commitment and always grounded in classroom teaching. A rubric will be utilized with specific job-related criteria. Educators who take on the role will receive ongoing coaching targeted to specific roles and responsibilities such as leading collaborative teams or conducting observations to provide feedback. In-person and virtual coaching will be provided by pathway facilitators. Instructional teacher leadership roles will represent a restructuring of school staffing to incorporate mentor teachers in site leadership and coherence teams to co-lead core instructional improvement systems in the school.

**Participants:** *50 educators annually*

***B. Learner Centered Leadership Lab Local (LCLLL)***. The LCLLL is designed for educators who are not administrators but are emerging leaders advancing in their leadership roles and considering career advancement as an administrator. A sequence of competency-based learning modules are aligned to foundational pieces of appropriate frameworks including the CPSELs, Ideal Learning

Experience and Adult Learning Curriculum and incorporate core district leadership practices, leading change, and creating aligned systems.

The LCLLL will build cohorts of systems leaders who focus on deep adaptive, future-focused leadership practices and the development of five systems conditions- clarity, conviction, coalition, culture of innovation, and capacity. This design will include an ongoing research science measurement of leadership development frameworks and practices and begin to build the literature on systems leader development for learner-centered systems.

The LCLLL provides an immersive experience that begins with a full-day kickoff, followed by six half-day sessions. Throughout the program, participants delve deeper into understanding their core as leaders and how it intersects with the unique contexts they encounter in their roles and



communities. The initial cohorts (2022-2023) included staff in formal administrative roles (Cabinet, Principals, Assistant Principals in cohorts). **CORE Lindsay** will expand LCLLL to include other key staff the opportunity for everyone in the organization to embrace who they are as learner-centered leaders and how to engage and behave and advance learner centeredness no matter their roles- whether a safety monitor, answering phones, coherence teams, teachers, counselors and classified staff learners and their families will exponentially impact the success of Lindsay learners.

**Participants:** *15 educators complete LCLLL annually.*

**C. Lindsay Leads.** With a focus on fostering a learner-centered approach and cultivating a culture

of continuous improvement, Lindsay Leads training (30 hours) empowers learners, educators, and community members to become effective leaders who can positively influence learner achievement, staff development, and overall school success within the district. The innovative program prepares internal stakeholders, including administrators and educators, to support and empower other educational entities towards personalized learning models. Participants will receive 30 hours of training with a focus on effective presentation and consultation skills aiming to equip Lindsay leaders with the necessary tools and strategies to become influential leaders within their educational communities. The program will foster a culture of strategic support, empowerment, and motivation, ultimately leading to the transformation of educational systems within and beyond the Lindsay Unified School District.

**Participants:** *40 participants annually.*

*D. Leadership Academy.* Research clearly demonstrates that improving feedback practices can significantly improve student learning and the quality of teaching in classrooms. Feedback from leaders should strengthen a teacher’s effectiveness to support a learning environment with high-quality instruction; appropriate and actionable feedback should help teachers to think deeply about their practice. With a focus on providing targeted and timely feedback, the Leadership Academy training aims to enhance leadership practices, drive continuous improvement in school performance, and cultivate a positive and supportive school culture. Through interactive workshops and practical exercises, administrators (Principals, site Learning Directors, District administrators, and leaders) will learn strategies to navigate difficult conversations and develop the skills and strategies necessary to deliver effective feedback that promotes professional growth, builds capacity, and empowers leaders to make meaningful impacts on student success. The

program will be designed and developed (Year 1) and implemented in Years 1-3 in a format consistent with LUSD's established professional learning structures.

**Participants:** 50 Educators annually.

### **Component 3: Advanced Professional Learning**

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Advanced professional learning opportunities will deepen and expand the knowledge and skills of participants within each stage of teacher and leadership development. A compendium of resources, courses, and personalized tools will be curated on the Empower HCMS dashboard to support participants advancement in each of the learning modules in all pathways.

**A. Lindsay Circles.** *Lindsay Circles* are a variation of Restorative Circles (Restorative Practices), a strategy to promote socioemotional learning (SEL) strategies creating a space for open, truthful and respectful dialogue. This process serves various purposes, including addressing conflicts or incidents in a restorative manner and fostering goal setting and academic progress among students. Circles provide a structured and inclusive space for dialogue, empathy, and accountability, allowing individuals to come together to discuss their experiences, perspectives, and aspirations. By embracing circles, LUSD demonstrates its commitment to creating a supportive and inclusive community where relationships are nurtured, conflicts are resolved in a respectful manner, and students' holistic development is prioritized.

**Participants:** Two (2) sites participating; 80 educators annually.

**B. Internal Coherence.** Internal coherence is a school's capacity to engage in deliberate improvements in instructional practice and student learning across classrooms over time. Research has shown that schools with high internal coherence have the capacity to overcome the traditional negative impact of poverty on student achievement (Spillane, J., Blaushild, N., Neumerski, C., Seelig, J., & Peurach, D., 2022). The purpose of the coherence training program is to equip principals, teacher leaders, faculty, and staff with practices and protocols that breakdown the traditional isolation of teachers, sharpen the

focus on teaching and learning, and build a collaborative culture across school campuses. Building internal coherence and collective teacher efficacy is a professional learning journey that reorients the culture of the school, allowing teachers to take the lead in instructional improvement and professional learning.

**CORE Lindsay** will build upon the work that began with the *Empower Lindsay* TSL grant and support training in the coherence framework. Each learning community (school) has an established coherence team consisting of learning directors, teachers, counselor, and classified staff. The team serves as an advisory group for the principal, providing leadership on any initiatives carried out at the site, fostering shared leadership, shared accountability for academic achievement, driving results for processes and systems at all levels. Coherence teams will participate in Phase 1: Mini Summit for Coherence in each year of the project (**CORE Lindsay** funded). Teams continue to participate in leadership learning activities throughout the school year (district funded).

*C. Opportunity Community Poverty Response Project (OCPR)*. Addresses Competitive Preference Priority 1 and 2. Nearly 30% of the Lindsay families live below the federal poverty level; many are immigrants with limited English language skills. Multi-generational poverty is deeply entrenched in the community. **CORE Lindsay** will build on the work initiated preCovid with the Cost of Poverty Experience (COPE); every educator in LUSD participated in a simulation (experience) of what it is like to live for three months as a person of poverty. This experience was designed to disrupt educators' perceptions associated with families of poverty such as "they aren't interested in coming to back-to-school night," "they don't care about school success," "we made the referral but they didn't go." Families of poverty experience many setbacks/barriers that make it difficult for them to navigate any system, let alone their child's educational journey.

The OCPR Project is designed to train a set of educators at any level to become leaders of the



poverty response initiative. This initiative will train 15 educators who will become local experts in dealing with families of poverty. They will in turn, work on selecting 50 community (staff or community members) and train them to become family mentors; mentors will develop advanced skills in working with families of poverty and gain mentorship certification. Mentors will then be connected to a family of poverty and will act as a resource to teach them how to navigate the system to meet their individualized needs. For example, a family member may call the mentor to ask for help for their child who has a dental problem. The mentor would help the family learn how to access dental services so they can do it the next time themselves. Mentors will become leaders, supporting families at the home level.

The OCPR Project training for poverty-informed practices will greatly benefit Lindsay Unified by equipping educators with the knowledge and strategies to support students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. This training by expert consultants and advocates for cultural responsiveness and poverty informed practices ( [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] will provide a deep understanding of the unique challenges and barriers that students living in poverty may face, including limited access to resources, trauma, and varying home environments. By incorporating poverty-informed practices into their teaching, educators will be able to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment for all students. Training in poverty-informed practices will enable LUSD educators to better understand and address the specific needs of their students, promote equity in education, and enhance academic and socio-emotional outcomes for all learners.

#### **Component 4: Expansion of the HCMS**

In the last five years, LUSD has established a digital HCMS in Empower, that is aligned to educator competencies, the teacher and leader evaluation system, district priorities and is strategically managed to support performance-based compensation. This structure in Empower created coherence with a common, strategic framework and a common language around the

components of the system, framing the district evaluation system in the context of the educators' professional growth.

Lindsay Unified also coded and implemented a ground-breaking, AWS-based data infrastructure to streamline access to key teacher and educator performance and practice that normally exists only in silos or is missing or inaccessible prior to the infrastructure developed through *Empower Lindsay*. This system, *one of the first of its kind in the field*, allows Lindsay to make powerful, real-time data-driven decisions correlating student achievement to educator data, including classroom performance and professional learning and practice. This data includes learner achievement metrics such as pacing by grade level, the number of learners reaching Level 4 (Mastery) learning, graduation tracking for secondary learners, and integration with Aeries (SIS platform) for comprehensive learner data. These continuous improvements to the HCMS establish coherence across key indicators of student achievement, learning facilitator performance, and resources aligned with the Adult Learning Curriculum (ALC) and educator/leader pathways.

The proposed project will expand the current database to include all the **CORE Lindsay** teacher and leader professional learning data, including individualized learning plans and resources. The expanded HCMS will track and support professional learning and will expand the feedback portal to include support plans at all leadership levels.

*ii. Relevant literature, implementation plan, and the use of appropriate methodological tools.*

Research suggests that the key components of **CORE Lindsay** are poised to yield success based on promising research and evidence-based practices demonstrating the potential of the project to positively impact educator effectiveness and retention and increase learning outcomes in high-need schools. The effectiveness of an organization is a result of its people and human resource practices (Barney, 1991; Ferris et al., 2007). Strategic utilization of human capital management systems (HCMS) becomes even more pertinent in organizations such as public-school districts, where the

most important resources are people (Becker et al., 2001; Bowman, 2006; Drago-Severson, & Blum-DeStefano, 2018). Leaders in public education make personnel decisions regarding recruiting, hiring, training, evaluating, all the employees who, directly and indirectly, affect student learning (Fullan et al., 2002; Omebe, 2014; Seyfarth, 2002).

There is a genuine demand in schools for leadership development capable of meeting the imperative for finding innovative solutions enabling leaders and educators to remain effective (Coghlan & Coughlan, 2015). Leadership development is a source of considerable benefit, both in personal and professional terms, in a constantly evolving educational environment. The cultivation of effective leaders is pivotal in fostering learner success and meeting the evolving needs of the educational ecosystem. Considering that leadership is a complex but essential interaction between individuals and their social and organizational environment, it is essential to consider the development of leadership as an all-encompassing phenomenon (Turner et al., 2018). The learning of leadership is a holistic and cyclical process, often developed through experiences, reflection, mentorship, and formal leadership education (Kolb, 2014; Lewin, 1951; Mc Mahone, 2012).

Mentorship, in the form of assistance and modeling from a more capable colleague, can help the aspiring leader develop leadership competencies and problem-solving abilities through collaboration. Accordingly, leadership development programs must promote a holistic approach in their vision and actions (Turner & Baker, 2017). Furthermore, organizations must implement a genuine culture of leadership development to make leadership an integral part of educators thinking and behavior.

Fullan (2007) posits that professional learning in context is the only education that ultimately changes classroom practices. There is strong evidence that professional development is most effective when embedded in the teachers' specific subject areas (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2009).

Schools with strong educator communities seem to have higher student achievement (Bryk et al., 2010; Horn & Kane, 2015).

Several studies underscore the important role of leaders in teachers' professional development (Cravens et al, 2017; Haiyan et al., 2017; King & Stevenson, 2017; Liu et al., 2016; Silva et al., 2017). The importance of building trust and establishing productive learning environments is crucial for effective professional development in school systems. According to Timperley et al. (2007), teachers' need new knowledge to reflect on their teaching in alternative ways; therefore, inviting external visitors can be a helpful tool.

Effective instructional leadership combines an understanding of the instruction needs of the school with an ability to target resources where they are needed, hire the best available teachers, provide teachers with the opportunities they need to improve and keep the school running smoothly (DeVita C, 2010; Hitt, Tucker, & Young, 2012). Implementing a pipeline of teacher leaders and mentors at the site level brings an additional resource as co-instructional leaders (Christy, Thompson & Whiteley, 2009) build the capacity of the district to sustain improvement.

When anchored in the community (Skinner, Garreton, & Schultz, 2011; Valenzuela, 2016; Valenzuela, Zamora, & Rubio, 2016), Grow Your Own (GYO) efforts create more fluid and meaningful connections among parents, local advocates, partnering schools, and school districts. Research has shown that teachers of color, who share similar cultural backgrounds and experiences with their students, have a positive impact on the student-teacher relationship and the learning process. Additionally, students who have teachers of color as role models are more likely to pursue higher education and professional careers.

By recruiting and retaining more teachers of color, we can create a more inclusive and equitable education system that benefits all students (Bartlett & García, 2011; Espinoza-Herold, 2003;

Gutierrez-Gomez, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2004). Please see pages 29-31 for the implementation table.

The formal evaluation for the project will be finalized post-funding announcement and will be a comprehensive evaluation approach aligned to the project's overarching goal of creating effective educators and competent leadership teams in LUSD. The evaluation will include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of **CORE Lindsay** and will utilize qualitative and quantitative data from a variety of sources to strengthen the validity of the results.

Data sources (measurement tools) include: educator recruitment and retention data disaggregated by key demographics, teacher and leader surveys and focus groups; teacher and leader participation tracking/attendance logs; training observations; project leadership and district partner interviews; leadership pathways participation disaggregated by key demographics; longitudinal data on number of administrators hired from pathways; learner growth data; data on teachers and school leaders PBC and evaluation ratings; and data on learning opportunities including number of programs, characteristics, an number of participants. All data will be a part of the LUSD HCMS.

| Activities  | Timeline             | Person(s) Responsible                |
|---|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Project Coordinator (PC), Leadership Team (LT), Coordinating Committee (CC), Residency Coordinator (RC), Learner Centered Leadership Pathway Lead (LCL), Growth Mindset Lead (GML), Leadership Academy Lead (LAL), Lindsay Leads Lead (LLL), Opportunity Community Project Lead (OCPL), Evaluator (E), Curriculum & Instruction (C&I) |                      |                                      |
| <i>Grant Management</i>   |                      |                                      |
| Finalize project budget with key stakeholders   | Oct 2023; annually   | PC, LT, CC                           |
| Post positions and hire   | Nov 2023-Jan 2024    | PC, LT                               |
| Establish monthly meeting cycle for design, development and monitoring  | Nov 2023; annually   | PC, CC                               |
| RFP – contract for evaluator  | Dec 2023             | PC; LT                               |
| Finalize contract for evaluation services   | Jan 2024             | PC, LT, E                            |
| Design and planning sessions with partners  | Jan 2024; ongoing    | PC, LT, CC                           |
| Monthly project development meetings for progress checkpoints   | Nov. 2023; ongoing   | PC, CC                               |
| Design pathways and poverty work rollout  | Dec 2023             | PC, LT, CC LCL, GML, LAL, LLL, OCPL, |
| RFP - contract partners for professional learning   | Jan 2024; annually   | PC, LT, C&I                          |
| Finalize contracts with professional learning partners  | Feb 2024; annually   | PC, LT, C&I                          |
| Award PBC at appropriate intervals  | Mar 2024 and ongoing | PC, LT, HR                           |
| Adjust pathways based on results, measurements, outcomes  | Annually             | PC, E, LT                            |
| Design qualitative educator self-assessment tool aligned to leadership pathways, Academy, and advanced learning   | Feb 2024             | PC, E, LT, C&I                       |
| <i>Grow Your Own Pipeline</i>   |                      |                                      |
| Develop application criteria for Grow Your Own (GYO) Pipeline   | Nov 2023; annually   | PC, LT, RC, C&I                      |
| Refine contract for participants in GYO Pipeline  | Dec 2023; annually   | PC, LT, HR                           |
| Develop coaching structure for GYO Pipeline participants  | Jan 2024; annually   | PC, C&I, RC                          |
| Develop template for coaching/mentoring support plan for GYO participants   | Feb 2024; annually   | PC, C&I, RC                          |
| Solicit participants and launch GYO Pipeline  | Mar 2024; annually   | PC, LT, C&I, RC, CC                  |
| <i>Teacher Residency Pathway</i>  |                      |                                      |
| Utilize Teacher Residency (TR) selection/application process  | Mar 2024             | PC, RC                               |
| Refine TR contract for participants   | Mar 2024; annually   | PC, RC                               |
| Solicit participants  | Apr 2024; annually   | PC, RC                               |
| Implement teacher residency program   | July 2024; annually  | PC, RC                               |

| Activities  | Timeline                               | Person(s) Responsible     |
|---|--|---------------------------|
| Project Coordinator (PC), Leadership Team (LT), Coordinating Committee (CC), Residency Coordinator (RC), Learner Centered Leadership Pathway Lead (LCL), Growth Mindset Lead (GML), Leadership Academy Lead (LAL), Lindsay Leads Lead (LLL), Opportunity Community Project Lead (OCPL), Evaluator (E), Curriculum & Instruction (C&I) |  |                           |
| <i>Leadership Pathways</i>  |  |                           |
| Develop comprehensive Leadership Pathways – Learner Centered Leadership, Lindsay Leads  | Oct – Dec 2023; modify/revise per eval | PC, LT, C&I               |
| Contract with potential facilitators/consultants for components & coursework  | Oct – Dec 2023                         | PC, LT                    |
| Develop coaching structure for mentors to use after completion of pathway   | Jan 2024                               | PC, C&I, LCL, LAL,        |
| Develop template for coaching/mentoring support plan for leaders and mentors  | February 2024                          | PC, C&I, LCL, LAL         |
| Solicit participants and launch pathways  | Jan 2024; Jan 2025                     | PC, LCL, LAL, CC          |
| Assign mentees to mentors completing training   | Aug 2024; Aug 2025                     | PC, LCL, LAL              |
| <i>Emerging Teacher</i>   |  |                           |
| Develop pathway and professional learning modules to include PBS, ILE, QFI, MTSS, ALC and LookFors  | Oct-Dec 2023; modify/revise annually   | PC, C&I, RC, LCL, GML, CC |
| Contract with potential facilitators/consultants for components   | Jan 2024; annually                     | PC, LT                    |
| Refine mentor selection process developed for Leadership Pathways   | Feb 2024; annually                     | PC, C&I, RC, LCL, GML, CC |
| Develop coaching structure for mentors  | Mar 2024; annually                     | PC, RC, LCL, GML, CC      |
| Develop mentoring support plan for mentors  | Apr 2024; annually                     | PC, RC, LCL, GML, CC      |
| Launch Emerging Teacher Pathway modules and solicit participants  | Aug 2024; annually                     | PC, RC, LCL, GML, CC      |
| Assign mentor/coaches   | Aug 2024; annually                     | PC, RC, LCL, GML, CC      |
| Provide modeling and support  | Aug 2024; annually                     | PC, RC, LCL, GML, CC      |
| <i>Advanced Professional Learning</i>   |  |                           |
| Develop menu of advanced professional learning for teachers building on QFI, PBS, ALC, peer feedback, instructional rounds, and data analysis   | Jan 2024; annually                     | PC, C&I, CC               |
| Develop modules for Internal Coherence  | Mar 2024                               | PC, C&I                   |
| Develop modules for Lindsay Circles   | Mar 2024                               | PC, C&I                   |
| Develop modules for Opportunity Community Project   | Mar 2024                               | PC, C&I, OCPL             |
| Develop menu of coursework for APL and coaching model for implementation  | Apr 2024                               | PC, LCL, LAL, LT          |
| Select LUSD and partner facilitators for modules  | Mar 2024                               | PC, LT, C&I               |
| Launch professional learning and coaching   | April 2024; annually                   | PC, LCL, LAL, OCPL        |

| Activities  | Timeline                      | Person(s) Responsible |
|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Project Coordinator (PC), Leadership Team (LT), Coordinating Committee (CC), Residency Coordinator (RC), Learner Centered Leadership Pathway Lead (LCL), Growth Mindset Lead (GML), Leadership Academy Lead (LAL), Lindsay Leads Lead (LLL), Opportunity Community Project Lead (OCPL), Evaluator (E), Curriculum & Instruction (C&I) |                               |                       |
| <i>Leadership Academy</i>   |                               |                       |
| Design Academy that includes direct instruction and collaborative practice in key areas of supervision  | Dec 2023                      | PC, LT, LAL           |
| Select LUSD facilitators/consultants as appropriate   | Dec 2023                      | PC, LT, LAL           |
| Launch Leadership Academy   | Jan 2024                      | PC, LT, LAL           |
| Provide modeling and coaching support   | Jan 2024; ongoing             | PC, LAL, LT, CC       |
| <i>HCMS</i>   |                               |                       |
| Develop portal for documentation, demonstration/feedback  | Feb 2024                      | PC, Empower           |
| Integrate coaching/mentoring support plan into feedback tool  | Feb 2024                      | PC, Empower           |
| Integrate qualitative educator self-assessment  | Mar 2024                      | PC, Empower           |
| Design internal systems management (tracking, applications, progress measures, etc) for HCMS  | Mar 2024; ongoing             | PC, Empower           |
| <i>Measurement</i>  |                               |                       |
| Design qualitative tools for progress monitoring/performance  | Jan 2024                      | PC, Evaluator         |
| Design self-assessment tool   | Feb 2024                      | PC, Evaluator         |
| Finalize and begin baseline use of evaluation tool  | April 2024                    | PC, Evaluator         |
| Monitor progress of pathways, advanced professional learning, and Academy with mid-year/end of year self-assessment and other tools   | Mid- and end of year annually | PC, Evaluator         |
| Gather data for Annual Performance Report   | April-June annually           | PC, Evaluator         |



iii. *Methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment*

LUSD's Performance-based System requires that leaders, teachers, learners and school community use data extensively to guide them in decision making, setting and prioritizing goals, and monitoring progress. Data is used to define needs, set goals, plan interventions, and evaluate progress. Data demonstrating evidence of effectiveness is reviewed to determine return on investment ensuring that the district always uses its resources on what works best for learners.

The project evaluation is based on a continuous improvement model. Data regarding project effectiveness is collected throughout the life of the project and analyzed to inform modifications leading to continuous improvement. Data collection activities focus on data to measure both effectiveness of implementation of the strategies, activities in the project design and formal outcomes, and involve all persons served by the program.

Quantitative data collected for the evaluation include data for the nine (9) program-required performance measures and four (4) CORE project objectives:

1) There will be a 10% annual increase in the number of educators who improve by at least one level of performance on their evaluation. Baseline: 2023;

2) Increase the number of administrators by 2+ annually from baseline (2023) who achieve Proficient or Distinguished level on evaluation each year of the project. Baseline: 2023.

3) Ninety percent (90%) of teachers receiving mentorship will increase *in proficiency* on their evaluation annually as measured in HCMS. Baseline Year 2; and

4) There will be an annual 5% increase in student achievement in summative measures in ELA and math.

Data will be analyzed using appropriate statistical analysis techniques, including the use of descriptive statistics and more advanced statistical techniques, as appropriate. Please see the table below outlining the program and project measures for which data will be collected and reported.

| Data Collected  | PM/PO         | List of Performance Measures (PM)<br>Project Objectives (PO)  |
|---|---------------|---|
| Teacher and school leader demographics  | g, h, i       | PM(a) teachers and school leaders rated effective or higher   |
| Evaluation ratings for teachers and school leaders  | a, d, 1, 2, 3 | PM(b) teachers and school leaders (all district) that show improvements in student growth<br>PM(c) teachers and school leaders (TSL schools) that show improvements in student growth   |
| Performance-based compensation (PBC) awarded to teachers and school leaders including source of funds (TSL & non-TSL)               | e, f, g, h, i | PM(d) teachers and school leaders for whom evaluation ratings were used to inform decisions<br>PM(e) teachers and school leaders (all district) who earned performance-based compensation based on their individual evaluation ratings;   |
| Attendance at and certification in (if offered) professional development/learning modules, including academic topics and leadership | e, f, g, h, i | PM(f) teachers and school leaders (TSL schools) who earned performance-based compensation based on their individual evaluation ratings;<br>PM(g) teachers receiving performance compensation (disaggregated)<br>PM(h) school leaders receiving performance compensation (disaggregated); and  |
| Participation in mentoring program  | 3             | PM(i) teachers receiving performance compensation for leadership responsibilities (disaggregated)   |
| Student achievement (Math, ELA)   | b, c, 4       | PO(1) increase in educator effectiveness as measured by performance evaluation (overall)<br>PO(2) Proficient and Distinguished evaluation levels of school leaders<br>PO(3) increase in educator effectiveness as measured by performance evaluation (mentorship participants)<br>PO(4) increase in student academic achievement (math) |

Implementation progress will be monitored on an ongoing basis. The project Leadership Team (LT) meets weekly and the Coordinating Committee (CC) meets bi-weekly to review data, modify or refine activities based on data and evidence of progress, and revise policies or procedures to ensure that the project is moving forward. The LT and Evaluation Team will develop

implementation strategies at the start of the project and monthly throughout the project period. The LT will provide quarterly reports to the LUSD Board of Trustees. Annually, the evaluation will provide a report on major outcomes, progress on goals, objectives, and performance measures as well as recommendations for modifications and improvement. The Project Coordinator and the Project Evaluator will use this data to provide evidence of progress or gaps related to the project goals and outcomes and to assess attainment of the performance measures and show progress towards the overarching goal of the project, to improve outcomes for all learners.

The Evaluation Team (Evaluator, PC, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, Coordinator of Research & Evaluation) will also be responsible for the development of annual performance reports due at the end of each project year. These detailed reports will include summaries of implementation findings, as well as progress towards **CORE Lindsay** outcomes. Specifically, these reports will include data for the GPRA measures; feedback on the extent to which the program is impacting educator working conditions; and student performance on fundamental standards, including student outcomes not associated with test scores (i.e., unique life goals, interpersonal skills, and student engagement). Additionally, internal reports will provide findings related to school- and district-level implementation, including recommendations for improvement as suggested by evaluation findings and as appropriate.

The project will continue to build evidence on the research conducted over the last six years to focus on teacher and leader personalized development. The project will continue to work with our research partners at The Learning Accelerator to construct valid and reliable research on the Adult Learning Curriculum, including the Instructional Look Fors, and Mindsets. LUSD expects to expand the data infrastructure to include additional data sources and outputs. These studies will produce findings, reports, communications, and resources for Lindsay and the field at large to

continue to build on effective practices that work in educator and leader development. Findings from the evaluation and research will drive decisions about capacity building in teacher and leader recruitment and development. Results will be shared with partner organizations for dissemination and publication on their websites and in LUSD publications, presentations, and on the district and research website.

While the LT, in collaboration with the evaluator, will determine the final research questions, the district has identified the following questions to guide evaluation and research. 1) Does a formal leadership structure improve instructional practice? 2) Do the teachers that received mentorship increase learning achievement at a rate that is higher than those who do not? 3) What is the impact on learner achievement as teachers and leaders develop advanced competencies? 4) What is the difference in learner achievement between those teachers with a distinguished ranking versus those with only a proficient ranking? 5) What is the impact on learner achievement of future teachers that complete the Emerging Teacher Pathway and those who do not? 6) Does learner achievement increase at school sites where the leader has a distinguished evaluation ranking? 7) What is the impact of frequent formal feedback on instructional practice and learner achievement? And 8) Is the pipeline increasing the diversity of the Lindsay educator workforce?

#### **QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Lindsay Unified School District (LUSD) has full confidence in the expertise and dedication of its key project staff to successfully accomplish project objectives within the designated timeline and budgetary constraints. The project will benefit from the valuable contributions of partner agencies, the community, as well as school and district personnel, all of whom bring their unique time and expertise to support the implementation and attainment of project goals. A comprehensive

management chart has been prepared to outline the various activities, timelines, and the individuals responsible for executing them.

██████████ Lindsay Unified’s Superintendent of Schools oversees all grant and district strategies and ensures effective, fiscally-sound, sustainable project implementation. Superintendent ██████████ is a visionary leader and has played a vital part in the transformation of education in Lindsay from the earliest days of the *Strategic Design* (2007) through the adoption and acceleration of the Performance-based System. ██████████, in collaboration with the Coordinating Committee (see below) will support the **CORE Lindsay** Project Coordinator, to ensure alignment of project activities and deliverables to the district Mission and Vision.

A Coordinating Committee (CC) comprised of LUSD’s Superintendent, **CORE Lindsay** Project Coordinator (PC), Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, Director of Education Systems, Executive Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Coordinator of Research and Evaluation, and Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services will be established. The CC will meet monthly to provide feedback on the project and make certain that any necessary policy changes are made to ensure successful implementation of project components and accomplishment of all grant objectives.

A Project Coordinator (1.0 FTE) will be hired through the project to manage the day-to-day operation of the project. The Project Coordinator (PC) will be responsible for supervision of all staff, coordination of all components of the program, organization of the work of outside consultants, management of the grant budget, and facilitation of the project implementation and evaluation teams. The PC will also be responsible for coordinating all components of the project in implementing all programs related to the grant, as well as collaborating with the Superintendent and Human Resources Department to ensure that project components are integrated into the LUSD

HCMS. The successful candidate will have knowledge and proficiency in the following areas: successful project management, effective use of technology to enhance learning, including blended learning; effective communication skills and the ability to collaborate with staff and stakeholders.

Fostering an environment that promotes personalized learning experiences and tailoring education to meet their individual needs is a core role in this project. [REDACTED] Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, (.05 FTE, in-kind match) has held various leadership positions, showcasing his versatility and commitment to learner-centered education. Through his innovative approach, he has consistently demonstrated the expertise required to train and mentor all educators and leaders in the LUSD system.

The Director of Educational Systems, [REDACTED] (.15 FTE, in-kind match) plays a pivotal role in implementing effective systems within the district. Her work revolves around the development of curriculum across various subject areas, aiming to meet the diverse needs of all learners within the Performance-based System and she takes a lead role in all professional learning for LUSD.

[REDACTED] Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction at LUSD, (.2 FTE in-kind match) plays a crucial role in shaping the district's educational framework. She actively engages in continuing education to stay at the forefront of educational practices and helps all educators build competence in the Performance-based System.

The Secretary to the Project Coordinator (1.0 FTE) will assist in planning, organizing, and implementing professional development opportunities while providing administrative support by managing executive tasks and ensuring effective project management. They will communicate and maintain cooperative relationships through various channels, including email, phone, and written correspondence. Additionally, the secretary will manage schedules,

appointments, and travel arrangements, prepare and edit various documents, complete projects, and handle special assignments. The ability to work effectively with community members, maintain budgets, generate reports, foster cooperative working relationships, and handle diverse tasks is also essential. The minimum qualifications include a high school diploma or higher degree, proficiency in English and Spanish, knowledge of computer systems, and the ability to work independently to support the needs of the PC and this project.

The Coordinator of Research and Evaluation, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (.10 FTE in-kind match) has extensive experience in the K-12 and higher education sectors and has made significant contributions in measuring student progress, evaluating program effectiveness and improving academic achievement. He is responsible for preparing comprehensive narratives and statistical reports for district, state, and federal entities. He oversees the data collection process for research and assessment projects, ensuring the availability of accurate and reliable data.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] is the Assistant Superintendent of Administrative Services, responsible for budgetary oversight of all district financial operations. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] has extensive experience administering large state and federal projects and will play a pivotal role in fiscal oversight of the project (.05 FTE in-kind match).

With a strong background and knowledge and expertise in curriculum development, delivery, and implementation in both bilingual and regular education, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (.40 FTE) will serve as the Residency Coordinator within LUSD, ensuring alignment of activities between the district and higher education partners. She is committed to mentoring educators in the creation of student-centered learning environments, empowering them to analyze data and develop purposeful lessons and assessments that align with individual student needs and state standards. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] will work closely with the Project Coordinator on residency and Grow Your Own pipelines.

Transcend has a long history of partnership with LUSD in bringing evidence-based practices in competency-based systems to support educational transformation. Over the past seven years, Transcend has collaborated with Lindsay on various projects aimed at redesigning learner experiences and creating more equitable learning environments. Transcend will offer guidance and assistance in developing and refining the district's leadership pathways, professional learning, and human capital systems. Transcend's involvement will help Lindsay Unified enhance their professional learning opportunities and structures for educators and leaders.

Alder Graduate School of Education has partnered with Lindsay Unified for the past three years and plays a crucial role in the development of an effective and diverse educator workforce through the Lindsay USD Teacher Residency Program. See Letter of Support in Attachments.

Digital Promise will support **CORE Lindsay** with expertise and guidance in implementing leadership development programs that incorporate technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in educational settings. They will deliver professional development opportunities for teachers and leaders, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to leverage technology effectively in their instructional practices. See Letter of Support in Attachments

Defined Learning will provide training and support in project-based learning (PBL) for LUSD. They will deliver a comprehensive training program that equips teachers and leaders with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to effectively implement PBL in their classrooms, guiding educators in designing authentic, real-world projects that will engage students, foster deeper understanding, and cultivate essential 21st-century skills. See Letter of Support.

With expertise in educational research and innovation, The Learning Accelerator's involvement will ensure that **CORE Lindsay** is grounded in evidence-based practices providing



the district a data rich environment to continuously improve their programs and interventions. See Letter of Support in Attachments.

The Empower Center for Competency-Based Education will support **CORE Lindsay** with the refinement of the HCMS. With their deep expertise in competency-based education and human capital development, the Empower Center will provide guidance, resources, and best practices to help Lindsay Unified optimize their HCMS. See Letter of Support in Attachments.

██████████ an experienced educator and expert in learner-centered leadership, will provide invaluable support to **CORE Lindsay** through her role in conducting learner-centered leadership pathway training. ██████████ will guide district leaders and administrators in developing the necessary knowledge, skills, and mindsets to lead with a learner-centered approach.

██████████ a highly skilled trainer and advocate for growth mindset, will play a crucial role in supporting **CORE Lindsay** by conducting growth mindset training.

██████████ Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, brings his expertise and experience by conducting comprehensive training sessions for administrators in the Leadership Academy.

Expert consultants will provide advanced professional learning for leaders in literacy (Read/Write Consulting, ██████████ and ██████████ Instructional leadership development will be led by Advanced Collaborative Solutions (██████████ Professional learning in advanced math will be provided by ██████████ (██████████ Consulting) and ██████████ will conduct Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract (CPA) approach with an emphasis on concrete concepts in mathematics training.

██████████ an experienced educator and leadership development specialist, will be facilitating training sessions on the Lindsay Leads program. As a dedicated professional with a deep understanding of effective leadership practices, ██████████ is uniquely qualified to guide

participants in honing their leadership skills and fostering a positive impact within their school community.

██████████ (Three Rivers Special Services Cooperative) brings a wealth of expertise in fostering learner agency and empowerment and will assume a pivotal role in Lindsay Leads equipping administrators and educators with the knowledge and skills necessary to empower educational entities in their transition towards personalized learning models.

In addition to the contributions of time and expertise provided by key staff and partners identified above, two organizations that are integral to supporting learners are the Rural Education for Americans Project (R.E.A.P) and the Lindsay Educational Foundation for Learning (LEFL). R.E.A.P. targets learners from low-income families providing guidance and scholarships for college (in-kind \$200,000 annually). The LEFL provides funding and training for initiatives such as the Opportunity Community Poverty Response Project and provide in-kind donation of \$200k/year.

See Project Design, section ii, page 29 for detailed Implementation Management Chart

**ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES**

*i. The likelihood the project will result in system change or improvement*

LUSD is confident that implementation of the components of **CORE Lindsay** will result in system-wide improvements in several ways. First, leveraging the *Grow Your Own* approach to expand from the Pipeline and Residency program for emerging educators to formal *leadership pathways for teachers and administrators* through **CORE Lindsay** will create a local sustainable, instructional leadership pipeline at the site and district levels. This career advancement approach provides a path from high school graduation to post-secondary education, to the classroom and to district leadership with mentoring and coaching support to improve skills and knowledge along

the way. This will also build capacity for the development of key teaching and learning competencies and strategies to promote instructional leadership for scalability in other systems. Further, the integration of the PBC structure will assist in attracting, developing, and retaining highly qualified teachers and leaders. Next, the design of the personalized development pathways will ensure that teachers and leaders build capacity and skills that support their own goals and experiences. Fourth, the Adult Learning Curriculum and expansion of the feedback tool in the HCMS to include a formalized support plan will build teacher and leader capacity to provide high quality personalized instruction. Lastly, the findings from evaluation and research will drive decisions for continuous improvement and serve as a blueprint of effective educator recruitment, development, and retention.

ii. *Likely to build local capacity to provide, improve, or expand services to address needs*

The systemic change from a time-based to a Performance-based System in LUSD has been a complex, multi-year journey that necessitated a full-scale dismantling of the traditional system, requiring the transformation of all systems, structures and roles. As a result of this systemic change, *all programs and policies* are fully integrated and aligned with LUSD’s future-focused *Strategic Design* and supported through strategic allocation of resources further building capacity and sustainability.

LUSD’s transformative work has become a **national model for advancing highly reliable education systems throughout the United States**. LUSD’s vision for learning and leading in a performance-based learning environment is uniquely owned by the local community; the LUSD *Strategic Design* is a mandate from the community to its leadership which promises sustainability over time, leadership change and staff turnover. LUSD’s publication, *Beyond Reform: Systemic Shifts Toward Personalized Learning* (2017), was created to unpack Lindsay’s vision for learning, articulate the steps taken to achieve the vision, and share lessons learned along the way. The

district's persistence in building and optimizing systems with learners always at the center will continue to generate innovations contributing to continuous improvement. There is widespread support among teachers and school leaders for the support, professional learning, and career opportunities provided through grant funding as evidenced by letters of support attached to this proposal.

The technology build-out of the digital HCMS, the development of a pipeline of instructional leaders and the expanded pathways of professional learning opportunities and support structures of this project will leave a lasting legacy on the district for many years to come. There will be cohorts of current educators getting in-depth certifications, advanced degrees on myriad curricula and learning methods giving them the tools to grow into resilient educators supporting year after year of Lindsay learners to succeed in school, college, career, and life. Further, LUSD's *Grow Your Own* is creating a pipeline of dedicated, homegrown talent native to PBS with a deep understanding of the socioeconomic and cultural needs of Lindsay learners which will last for decades into the future.

iii. *Demonstration of resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant*

The district will contribute \$4,349,932 in match funding over three years (51.2% of requested federal funds), demonstrating a significant commitment to the components of the project. LUSD has a broad base of stakeholders including the Lindsay Teachers Association (LTA), classified union, teachers, principals, community leaders, businesses, parents, and learners who were involved in the creation of the *Strategic Design* and have continued their commitment to work together in a learner-centered school system. (See Non-Federal Budget information for LEA Match)

The district has a long history of collaboration to meet the needs of Lindsay learners and families. LUSD is one of the few districts nationally that has effectively redesigned and

implemented a highly effective personalized model at scale. This has prompted a wide range of educational organizations that broadly share in the district’s instructional and system-level strategies to significantly invest in the transformative journey. The district has sustained partnerships that have and will continue to contribute their support, time and expertise to **CORE Lindsay** including: The Learning Accelerator (Research/Data Science/Communication), Empower Center (Digital HCMS Platform), Digital Promise (Leadership and Development in Technology and AI Training), Defined Learning (Project Based Learning), Alder Graduate School of Education (Teacher Residency and Mentorship), Poverty Informed Practices (Donna Beegle Training), Professional Learning Pathways, (██████████ and ██████████ Lindsay Leads, ██████████ Learner Centered Leadership, ██████████ – Growth Mindset, ██████████ Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract, and ██████████ Leadership Academy) ██████████ (Literacy) and Scaling Student Success (██████████), and Hannigan Ed Equity Group, LLC (MTSS Coaching). See Letters of Support in Appendix C.

**CORE Lindsay** is designed to build on a sustainable infrastructure supported by policies and procedures aligned to the *Strategic Design* and district initiatives. The enhanced HCMS horizontally aligns all the key pieces of the LUSD Human Resources system (recruitment, selection, staffing, induction/mentoring, professional learning, performance/evaluation) to measures of educator effectiveness, creating a framework aligned to key educator competencies that will be sustained over time with district resources. Key integrations of PBCS as part of a valid, functioning HCMS ensure a return on investment of state and federal funds with increased educator effectiveness and retention. As an additional measure to ensure sustainability, the district will continue to source funding opportunities at the local, state, and federal levels that support the strategies incorporated in the project.