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## **I. Introduction and Response to Priorities**

### **1. Executive Summary**

Providence Public School District (PPSD) is the largest school district in the state of Rhode Island and the largest in the City of Providence. The district serves more than 20,000 students and their families within 37 schools. PPSD employs more than 3,200 professionals who work in and provide support to our schools, which include 21 elementary schools, 7 middle schools, 9 high schools, and 2 charter schools.

Our diverse student body is 69.3% Hispanic or Latino, 14.5% Black, 6% White, 3.8% Asian, 0.8% Native American, 0.1% Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 5.5% Multi-Racial. The population served includes the highest percentage of English Language Learners (ELL) in Rhode Island (38.4%) and continues to grow daily with new arrivals from all over the world. In addition, 16% of PPSD students receive special education services. Providence Public School District's (PPSD) vision is to be a national leader in educating urban youth. Our mission is to prepare each student to succeed in the nation's colleges and universities and in their chosen professions.

PPSD is a Local Education Agency (LEA) as defined by the state of Rhode Island and the US Department of Education. PPSD will partner with TNTP, Inc. and the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) to meet the goals of this project.

Providence Public School District (PPSD) proposes to build upon our most recent Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program (TSL) grant to improve and expand the district's Human Capital Management System (HCMS). Our previous grant allowed us to enhance our existing HCMS by redesigning our leadership development model, updating the school leader

evaluation, performance-based compensation system (PBCS), and career pathways, and implementing a holistic approach to coaching and development. The HCMS and PBCS were built to realize the vision of the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) to use systematic, research-based, data-driven reforms to close inequities, increase opportunity for all students, and prepare, recruit, and retain a diverse and talented workforce.

PPSD's work in the proposed program will focus on four critical areas: Educator Evaluation, Leadership Development, Career Pathways and Compensation, and Educator Recruitment. Together, these areas comprise the **PPSD Leadership Institute**. TSL grant funds will support the continued refinement of the district's new evaluation system, the development of a new Principal Pipeline and Induction program, the launch of an Advanced Assistant Principal (AP) role with targeted supports for future leaders, and a marketing and recruitment campaign intended to strengthen the district's pipeline of diverse leadership candidates.

## **2. Absolute Priority 1: HCMS or PBCS and Career Advancement Opportunities**

Recruitment, placement, and retention are critical pillars of any Human Capital Management System (HCMS). PPSD will refine and improve upon the work we did to build a high-quality HCMS through our previous TSL grant by expanding on the district's Career Pathways work with the development of a Principal Pipeline and Induction program. This includes launching an Advanced Assistant Principal (AP) role to provide high-performing, aspiring school leaders with differentiated, targeted, and personalized feedback and support for continuous improvement. Advanced AP candidates will receive additional compensation and training to become a principal, including professional development and coaching.

We will also design and implement a new Principal Induction program that provides early career principals with coaching and support to meet rigorous expectations for school leader

effectiveness. The Principal Induction program will be differentiated to the specific needs of new school leaders and will provide opportunities for collaborative learning amongst a supportive peer group as well as mentorship from more experienced leaders. Alongside the Principal Pipeline and Induction program, PPSD will launch a recruitment campaign and hiring process for school leaders to attract talented and diverse educators into leadership positions.

Finally, PPSD will design and implement a leadership development program that supports all school leaders to meet more rigorous expectations for effective instructional leadership in a turnaround environment, grounded in PPSD's school leader evaluation system. This system will attend to the unique needs of leaders along the vertical spine of support from schools to central office administration, including assistant principals, principals, and supervisors of principals.

The proposed HCMS/PBCS incorporates clear and fair measures of performance, based in part on demonstrated improvement in student academic achievement. The program is grounded in the expectations for school leader performance articulated in the new school leader evaluation system. To qualify for a bonus, school leaders must meet Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) aligned to Math, English Language Arts (ELA), and student attendance. In addition, the new evaluation system assesses school leader performance based on demonstration of Turnaround Leadership Competencies that are crucial for turning around underperforming schools, using observations, artifacts, and student data to inform rubric ratings. The new evaluation system will be used to determine who is selected for promotion and the expectations all leaders in Providence will be held accountable to.

## **2. Absolute Priority 2: High-Need Schools**

The vast majority of students in PPSD schools are from low-income families and demonstrate substantive need. The proposed project will operate at the district level, **thereby serving all 37 high-need schools in the district.**

Providence is an urban setting that exposes our students to a number of environmental stressors. 85.6% of students in PPSD qualify for free and reduced priced lunch subsidies (FRPL), a federal measure of poverty. At individual schools within PPSD, the range of students eligible for FRPL is between 57.9% and 96.0%. We have a fast-growing number of English language learners, refugee students, and unaccompanied minors that come to our city each year. In fact, the population served includes the highest percentage of Multilingual Learners (MLLs) in Rhode Island (26%) and continues to grow daily with new arrivals from all over the world. In addition, 16% of PPSD students receive special education services.

As of 2022, only 10.2% of Providence students were performing at or above grade level in Math and 14.9% in ELA. Student data from the last several years show that the vast majority of students are not performing at grade level. These poor outcomes are also reflected in PPSD graduation data. Only 25% of students are graduating college-ready in ELA, and fewer than 16% of students are graduating college-ready for Math. The district's overall graduation rate is just 77.6%, which significantly underperforms the state average of 85.3%.

### **3. Competitive Preference Priority 1: Promoting Equity in Student Access**

While we realize that many strategies are needed to improve student achievement, this proposal will focus on the continued enhancement of the HCMS to ensure there is a systematic approach to improving leadership across PPSD. The proposed project includes activities that will allow PPSD to recruit, select, prepare, support, and develop talented individuals to lead our high-need schools in turnaround status. According to research reviewing the relationship between

principal characteristics and student achievement, “Principal preparation was a positive predictor of student achievement growth” (Osborne-Lampkin, 2015). We believe that a strong focus on leadership development is crucial to accelerating the change that PPSD students deserve.

The proposed program gets to the source of inequities in PPSD by focusing on building a strong and diverse cohort of school-level leaders. In the K-12 education sector, staffing challenges are widespread, persistent and complex and have historically been exacerbated by poor coordination among local education agencies and educator preparation providers. However, effective partnerships like those between PPSD and TNTP are a promising means of ensuring schools are able to provide the high-quality and diverse educator workforce students deserve (Duke, 2015; Turnbull, 2012).

Increasing the number of school leaders from diverse racial, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds will contribute to a more inclusive, equitable, and enriching educational environment (Andrews, 2019). The goal of the activities proposed is to create a strong pool of best-in-class leaders to enter a career pipeline that includes roles at the school and district levels. Ultimately, all students at PPSD will benefit from an increased sense of belonging, greater cultural competence, and empowerment to embrace their own diversity while preparing them for an increasingly diverse and interconnected world.

#### **4. Competitive Preference Priority 2: Supporting a Diverse Educator Workforce**

The recruitment campaign and hiring practices proposed herein will focus on sourcing multilingual leaders and leaders of color and ensuring a fair and equitable hiring process to increase representation of diverse educators in leadership roles in PPSD. In addition to expanding the external talent pool, this proposal seeks to grow talent from within PPSD.

Providing internal candidates with career pathways and intentional support will allow the district to develop and retain effective individuals to mitigate lower retention data for school leaders.

One of the key indicators realized in our previous TSL grant was an increase in the number of leaders of color recruited to the district. 46% of participants in the previous grant-funded Leadership Cohort were people of color, as compared to 33% of current leaders in PPSD who identify as people of color. The proposed project seeks to build on this success to increase the proportion of well-prepared, diverse, and effective educators serving high-need students in Providence.

## **A. Need for Project**

### **1. Gaps or Weaknesses Addressed by the Proposed Project**

In 2019, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE) Commissioner enacted the Crowley Act to initiate a governance takeover for the transformation of PPSD. In June 2020, PPSD, in partnership with the community, laid out a vision for school improvement and district turnaround through the development of the Turnaround Action Plan (TAP). In many ways, the TAP lays out an approach to school improvement that is systematic, coherent and truly driven by PPSD's core values: Engaged Communities, Excellence in Learning, World Class Talent, and Efficient District Systems. This FY23 TSL proposal builds on the TAP plan and the work undertaken previously with TSL funds to further enhance the district's HCMS and PBCS.

The proposed enhancements to our HCMS system seek to address the challenge of retaining and growing strong leaders in PPSD. According to historical data, overall retention of PPSD principals is lower and school transfers are more frequent than national benchmarks. For example, in 2016-2017, the national benchmark for principals staying in their role was 90%, while PPSD averaged just 83%. Retention of assistant principals (APs) has decreased since

2016-2017, with just 65% of APs staying in their role in 2020-2021. 78% of new APs in 2022-2023 were external hires, while 80% of principals were promoted from within, pointing to a critical need to build an AP pipeline in PPSD. In general, PPSD has been adding more AP roles as AP retention has been declining, leading to increased AP hiring needs.

PPSD students continue to fall behind their peers across the country in terms of academics. District-wide, in the 2021-22 school year, just 11% of PPSD students were rated “proficient” or better in Math, and 15% were rated “proficient” or better in ELA. The entire district remains in turnaround status, which is why an increased focus on supporting leaders in understanding and excelling in the leadership capacities central to turnaround schools is an essential part of the proposed program.

Lack of school culture and engagement districtwide and concerns for student and teacher safety are also primary concerns for PPSD. In 2019, the Hopkins report noted, “*School culture is broken, and safety is a daily concern for students and teachers*” and “*racial equity is a low priority.*” Low academic performance, in particular poor reading skills, has been linked to poverty and crime: 64% of welfare recipients are high school dropouts (Levin, 2007). In Providence, 49% of non-high school graduates in the city live in poverty, and among recent cohorts of African American men, 68% of those who dropped out of school served time in state or federal prison. These are serious implications for the future of our students if we are unable to provide them with a high-quality education.

TNTP previously supported a talent landscape analysis that looked at the pipeline and projected needs for school leaders in Providence in the years ahead. The landscape analysis revealed additional gaps that this proposal seeks to fill. For one, school leader retention in PPSD is low compared to the national average. Providing access to rigorous training and support as well



as growth pathways will support overall retention of existing talent (Learning Policy Institute, 2019). The strongest pipeline for principals within PPSD is, unsurprisingly, assistant principals. The proposed model will formalize support and programming to cultivate those leaders so that they can be most effective in those roles.

As demonstrated through the success of the Leadership Cohort program under the previous TSL grant, PPSD aims to take the practices and training that participating Fellows received and deliver those trainings to all school leaders. By focusing on Educator Evaluation, Leadership Development, Career Pathways and Compensation, and Educator Recruitment, we firmly believe that school leaders will become a driving force of change in our schools.

## **2. Integration with Previous Efforts to Improve Outcomes**

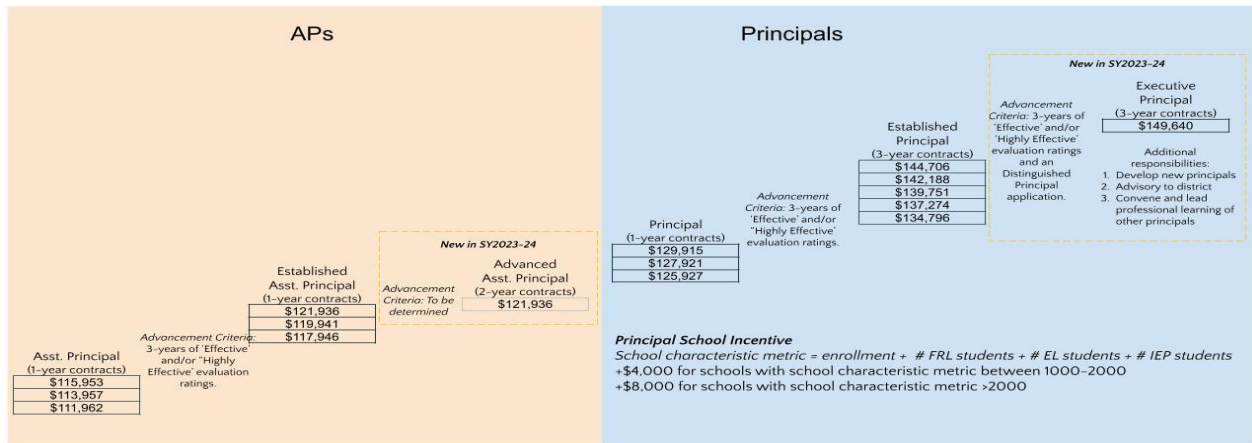
PPSD's previous TSL grant focused on four key objectives: establishing a Leadership Cohort to build out a strong assistant principal pipeline; providing professional development and coaching to develop leader's skills; designing a performance-based compensation ladder that rewards high-performing leaders; and creating a revised leader evaluation system that articulated a vision for equity-centered leadership in turnaround school environments.

The Leadership Cohort program built through the previous grant was a resounding success. All Leadership Fellows from Cohort 1 are now fully certified and have successfully graduated from the cohort. All Cohort 2 Fellows have accepted full-time assistant principal roles for SY23-24. Additionally, they have all received their provisional building level certification, and are on track to receive full certification at the end of Year 2. Based on the rubric developed for the grant, there was an average of 27.3% growth across all metrics for all Fellows from Cycle 1 to Cycle 3. The teachers that were coached saw an average growth of 42.7% as evidenced by student work, classroom observation, and coaching based on TNTP's core rubric.

Our previous TSL grant allowed us to deliver professional development to district-based leadership to ensure a cohesive direction across PPSD. With many assistant principals (APs) newer to their roles, PPSD launched a monthly professional learning series for all APs focusing on foundational skill-building. All APs attended full-day sessions from October through June, and feedback from the learning experiences was overwhelmingly positive with 95% of respondents saying that they found “*the session was impactful to their role as APs,*” and that “*the session increased their capacity to lead their school effectively.*” Assistant principals were also separated into tiers of support based on need, and APs who had the greatest needs were provided with additional support from a designated Leadership Coach. PPSD now aims to expand these professional learning and coaching opportunities to principals as well as assistant principals and move beyond foundational skill building in alignment with the Turnaround Leadership Competencies.

PPSD began implementing a career ladder compensation system and career pathways model during the 2022-23 school year. The new system rewards school leaders that demonstrate sustained high performance with increased compensation, greater job stability in the form of longer contract lengths, and access to career advancement opportunities to expand their impact. Additionally, the district adjusted school leader base salaries to be competitive with districts across the region.

**Career Ladder Compensation Model**



PPSD partnered with TNTP to design a new evaluation system for school leaders that articulates a vision for equity-centered leadership within a turnaround context. The system incorporates critical shifts that increase focus on rapid and continuous improvement, equity, and stakeholder voice. PPSD recognizes that turnaround leaders drive the initiative to facilitate rapid, significant improvement for schools facing challenges (Leithwood, 2010). School leaders are widely recognized to be one of the most important factors for improving outcomes for students (Branch, 2013; Duke, 2015; Osborne-Lampkin, 2015). However, we know that school leaders need more aligned support, better development opportunities, and other changes to make the role more sustainable.

The new evaluation system leverages national research on the requisite skills leaders need to transform outcomes for students. PPSD leveraged focus groups, interviews, and surveys, as well as a district advisory committee to inform the initial design. From this information, the district developed a list of the leadership competencies required in a turnaround district and drafted a new performance rubric to reflect those requirements. PPSD then drafted an evaluation model informed by current research and stakeholder input and used three rounds of focus group feedback to refine the model. The evaluation system was submitted to the state for approval in March 2023 and will

roll out to school leaders across the district for the first time in the fall. All leaders will be trained in the new evaluation model by August 2023 during Leadership Academy, and all principal supervisors will experience a sequence of onboarding sessions throughout the summer of 2023 to build foundational knowledge and understanding of the new model.

To realize the full potential of the new evaluation model and achieve PPSD's vision for school leadership, district leadership requires comprehensive training and ongoing norming and calibration activities to ensure that the model is implemented equitably and with fidelity. Likewise, school leaders will need professional learning experiences to support them in achieving a new, more rigorous bar for effective school leadership in alignment with the turnaround competencies. Achieving the goals of the new evaluation system represents significant change, and attending to the needs of multiple stakeholders to navigate these changes through strategic communications and coalition-building will be essential to sustaining the changes at all levels of the system.

PPSD is working with District Managing Group (DMG), who are working with a subset of selected schools that are identified as particularly high-need, and/or are in redesign status to provide coaching support and capacity building for school leaders and instructional leadership teams. The Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) has also played a critical role in supporting overall district operations and building the capacity of district leadership.

The proposed adjustments to the HCMS will support the recruitment, curation, development, and retention of high-potential school leaders who are positioned to lead PPSD schools through transformation. While PPSD has successfully established and implemented several components of its HCMS, the district needs to continue improving these systems to ensure that the talent practices are cohesive and grounded in a set of evidence-based leadership

competencies. PPSD must likewise respond to the growing needs of the district and its leaders by continuing to assess its current systems and making the changes necessary to improve them.

In addition to the previous TSL grant, PPSD has utilized its general funds and other local sources of funding to support its leadership pipeline efforts. For example, the salary increases in the career pathways system were funded through local sources for sustainability purposes. The city of Providence has also contributed an increasing share to our efforts, and the district has utilized ESSER and other Federal funds to fill gaps as they arise.

### **3. Comprehensive Effort to Improve Teaching and Learning**

District leaders understand that maximizing student learning requires that all students have access to grade-appropriate assignments, strong instruction, student engagement, and high expectations. Access to these four key resources are critical drivers to improved classroom experiences (TNTP, 2018). Research has shown that school leadership is the key lever in creating these conditions for students (Education Policy Center at AIR, 2017).

As EdReports stated in 2020, introducing high-quality instructional materials into the classroom is a key starting point to ensuring students are accessing standards-aligned content. But the materials are just a first step. Infusing culturally responsive practices through the quality implementation of standards-aligned curricula is the work that requires a coherent approach to professional development, coaching and support. Building a clear vision for instructional leadership, and aligned professional development, coaching, and support for school leaders is key to ensuring that leaders are equipped to support their teachers to continuously improve classroom practice.

Although the Hopkins report noted the lack of support for school leaders, it also relayed that one notable success that emerged across all constituencies was praise for certain school

leaders within the district, stating, “*every group noted the presence of devoted teachers and principals who go above and beyond to support student success*” (Hopkins, 2019).

PPSD has selected and adopted new high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) that serve as the basis for ensuring that all students have consistent access to grade-appropriate content and standards-aligned instruction. Each of the materials selected are on Rhode Island's approved list of high-quality curriculums. PPSD selected American Reading Company (K-8) and StudySync (9-12) for ELA; Eureka Math, Illustrative Math, and Sava for Math, and Amplify Science for K-8 Science. Since adoption, PPSD has provided professional development to orient and support teachers and leaders to the new materials. In TNTP's work, our professional learning and coaching for school leaders emphasized the importance of instructional leadership. In alignment with PPSD's new materials, TNTP has supported leaders to understand what effective instruction looks like in Math and ELA within the context of the new instructional materials and introduced observation and feedback cycles to improve the quality of instruction.

We believe that the proposed program will support the expansion and retention of a coalition of excellent leaders. This leadership development model will sustain a culture of equitable and consistent development to support school leadership and provides an opportunity for PPSD to prioritize the leadership, teaching, and learning standards that will combat the challenges school leaders face across the district. Noting the critical importance of developing, preparing and supporting effective school leaders who are committed to engaging in the work of turning around struggling and high-needs schools, we propose the PPSD Leadership Institute as a seminal approach to transform school leadership. The Leadership Institute will include support for three different workforce pipelines: teacher to AP, new APs, and new principals and/or

principals new to the district. It also comprises workstreams in the areas of Educator Evaluation, Leadership Development, Career Pathways and Compensation, and Educator Recruitment.

#### **4. Proposed Project Will Address the Needs of the Target Population**

The students of PPSD are just as capable of meeting high academic standards as the students from other Rhode Island school districts. However, for generations PPSD students have not been provided with an equitable, quality education. Findings in the Hopkins report revealed that *“PPSD has an exceptionally low level of academic instruction, including lack of quality curriculum and alignment both within schools and across the district.”* An energetic and culturally responsive school environment contributes significantly to the academic success and personal growth of all students and enables a motivated and energized staff. To address the needs of students, PPSD seeks to create and implement systems and structures that support our educators, administrators, and teachers with the appropriate skills to meet the needs of our diverse student population.

PPSD is committed to strong leadership development to build a robust, highly effective coalition of leaders. But it is critical that these most effective leaders are identified, supported and retained. Research shows us high-need schools typically have lower retention of effective leaders (Learning Policy Institute, 2019). Within the current system of leadership development, there is not adequate training, coaching and feedback to help improve student outcomes. PPSD and TNTP addressed these concerns in the AP meetings this year, and the APs rated these sessions as highly informative and helpful. This is in stark contrast to the professional development provided to Principals, which was mainly focused on operations and logistical issues rather than instructional leadership. As part of the proposed program, PPSD will extend the lessons learned from the AP meetings to principals in SY23-24.

This project aims to more clearly differentiate the effectiveness of its leaders through a meaningful evaluation system and proactively work to retain its top performers through career pathways, performance-based compensation, and other strategic retention activities. The introduction of a comprehensive approach to leadership development through the PPSD Leadership Institute will systematically improve the quality of leadership across our high-need schools and build the capacity to transform the educational experiences of students. PPSD will take what was learned in the previous grant and expand those gains to include all school leaders.

## **B. Quality of the Project Design**

### **1. Demonstrates a Rationale**

The goals, objectives, and associated outcomes outlined in the logic model (see Appendix A) illustrate the strategy that will be used by the district to meet the goal of enhancing leadership development, educator evaluation, and career pathways with performance-based compensation in service of improved student outcomes.

The PPSD Leadership Institute is grounded in strong theory, leaning on a breadth of research that connects leadership to teacher effectiveness and student performance. In fact, *“...highly effective Principals raise the achievement of a typical student in their schools by between two and seven months of learning in a single school year; ineffective Principals lower achievement by the same amount”* (Branch, Hanushek, and Rivkin, 2013). Core to this project is the commitment to enhance the quality of leadership across all PPSD schools.

Key to this work is ongoing professional development, coaching, and support for leaders. While research does connect leadership to student learning, principals need access to ongoing, high-quality professional development to be effective and continue to grow (AIR, 2017). Further, PPSD wants to ensure that high performers stay with the district and commit to continuously



improving and supporting the growth of others. Through the continued growth of career pathways and strategic compensation, PPSD aims to cultivate, grow, and retain excellence in leadership. Based on survey results in a large urban district, TNTP determined that high-performing teachers are more likely to stay in the classroom if they have access to career opportunities – even more so than due to compensation (TNTP, 2011).

The PPSD Leadership Institute is designed to specifically address gaps and weaknesses in PPSD’s existing HCMS to better meet the needs of leaders across PPSD schools, and ultimately positively impact student outcomes. In its previous iteration, the PLDA and Leadership Cohort helped to increase student achievement and diversify school leadership. The full breadth of the proposed project encompasses the areas of educator evaluation, leadership development, career pathways and compensation, and educator recruitment.

**Educator Evaluation:** PPSD will implement and refine the newly designed school leader evaluation system so there is both fidelity and integrity to the evaluation model and the vision for effective, equity-focused turnaround school leadership. Looking ahead, the district is committed to ensuring that school leaders and principal supervisors receive the ongoing training, support, and calibration experiences to facilitate the necessary shifts in leadership practices and realize the full potential of the new evaluation model to turn around schools. In partnership with TNTP, PPSD will facilitate quarterly norming and calibration sessions with principal supervisors to develop a shared understanding what effective leadership looks like in practice in PPSD schools, using protocols to review artifacts and data on school leader performance. Norming and calibration experiences will follow formal and informal evaluation cycles, ensuring timely engagement and just-in-time learning with the new model. In the first year of implementation, norming and calibration will be led by TNTP to support objective implementation of the new

model. Using a gradual release model, TNTP will build the capacity of PPSD leaders to maintain rigorous routines to ensure integrity of the model over time. Norming and calibration activities will intentionally engage leaders along the vertical spine of support for school leaders, including principals (who will evaluate assistant principals using the same tools), supervisors of principals, and central office staff who support leadership development activities in schools. These activities will ensure that school leaders in PPSD experience a system that is consistent and reliable across stakeholders. PPSD will use data and stakeholder feedback throughout the first several years to refine the model and make continuous improvements in service of leader growth and student achievement.

**Leadership Development:** PPSD's commitment to building a diverse team of highly effective leaders is further realized through a renewed leadership development strategy. PPSD will design and launch a comprehensive learning series for all PPSD school leaders grounded in the evidence-based leadership competencies that serve as the basis of the evaluation model. Through this professional development experience, all PPSD leaders will engage in shared learning, reflection and planning to build their capacity to lead PPSD schools. The leadership series will be grounded in the higher standards of performance articulated through the new evaluation framework and will prepare all PPSD leaders to lead a successful turnaround effort. Ongoing data-driven coaching and support will build upon the work of this leadership learning experience. This comprehensive learning opportunity for all PPSD leaders will take place in small cohorts, co-led by the Executive Director of Leadership Development and TNTP, and supported by principal supervisors, integrating this work into the structure of the district. With the benefit of the cohort model, professional development designers and facilitation teams can build a community of peer-directed support for school leaders that extends beyond time spent in

professional learning sessions. Through goals-based coaching, school leaders will also benefit from differentiated opportunities that reflect the varied levels of need, experience, and readiness across the district.

**Career Pathways and Compensation:** PPSD's commitment to expanding the capacity of our leaders and retaining our highest performers is reflected in its career pathways & compensation model. Because of our previous TSL grant, PPSD designed a career pathways model that invites high performing leaders to take on advanced leadership roles, with more responsibility and compensation. Guiding design principles for the career pathways and compensation model include competitiveness, transparency, equity, and providing rewards and compensation to recognize leaders with a record of success in turning around school performance. As a result of this work, PPSD adjusted school leader base salaries and contract lengths for the 2022-23 school year. This enabled PPSD to be competitive with peer districts in the region and provided greater job stability for the highest performing leaders in PPSD.

PPSD is excited to build on the career pathways and compensation work to provide a pathway to principalship through the PPSD Principal Pipeline and Induction program. PPSD has articulated an advanced assistant principal career pathway, with aligned compensation, that recognizes and rewards high-performing assistant principals with additional compensation. The next phase aims to extend the impact of this role by designing a program that supports advanced assistant principals to achieve readiness for the principal role. Advanced assistant principals will receive differentiated supports and coaching, aligned to expectations for performance outlined in the new turnaround competencies, to ensure that they grow their knowledge, skills, and capacity to become effective principals for PPSD. The Leadership Institute will also provide comprehensive support, coaching, and mentorship to early career principals during their first

year as a principal in PPSD through a Principal Induction experience. This experience will likewise be grounded in the turnaround competencies outlined in the new school leader evaluation system. Through this experience, new school leaders will put in place the systems and routines that lay a strong foundation for success and receive timely and formative feedback from coaches and mentors on their performance so that they can rise to effective leadership early.

**Educator Recruitment and Selection:** PPSD's recruitment and selection approach will be significantly enhanced by a demonstrated commitment to diversity, leadership development, and a clear system of performance-based compensation and career pathways. PPSD will develop a marketing and recruitment campaign that articulates a comprehensive value proposition for school leadership that attracts diverse, talented educators to lead in Providence Public Schools. PPSD will update marketing and recruitment materials to include a Diversity Statement that captures the district's understanding of the importance of ensuring a diverse educator workforce is supporting PPSD students. In addition, the recruitment materials will highlight the district's range of career opportunities and compensation structure. Research has shown that including structures like blind resume reviews, systematic rating of interview questions and a diverse interview panel can all mitigate the implicit biases that impact the selection of more diverse candidates (Andrews, 2019). PPSD will use these new materials in a revised hiring process that applies to all principals and assistant principals. According to the Harvard Business Review, candidates who were hired based on an algorithm were 50% more likely to be successful on the job than candidates picked based on recruiters' human judgment (Kuncel, Ones, Klieger, 2014). PPSD will also update its hiring processes to ensure that systems and structures are established to mitigate bias in the selection processes. These efforts include an objective, research-based

application process, alignment to the new evaluation system, and support for improved community engagement.

This comprehensive approach to talent management demands meaningful data capacity to collect, analyze, and act upon data that are related to leadership competencies. Over the grant period, PPSD will focus on enhancing its central data tracking systems, calibration across the district, and norming on data storage and access.

## **2. Review of the Literature, Plan for Implementation, and Methodological Tools**

Turnaround schools, characterized by low student achievement and significant challenges, require effective leadership to drive positive change and improvement (Duke, 2015; Gill, 2022; Leithwood, 2010). Leadership development programs tailored specifically for turnaround schools have emerged as a critical strategy to address these unique needs. This literature review aims to provide an overview of existing research on leadership development in turnaround schools, focusing on its goals, strategies, outcomes, and best practices.

Leadership programs in turnaround schools typically seek to achieve the following:

1) Transformational Leadership: These programs aim to cultivate transformational leaders who can inspire and motivate stakeholders to work collaboratively towards school improvement. Leaders are encouraged to set a compelling vision, build a positive school culture, and engage teachers, students, and the community in the change process (Thompson, 2020). 2) Instructional Leadership: Effective leadership development programs emphasize the importance of instructional leadership in turnaround schools. Leaders are equipped with the knowledge and skills to promote effective teaching practices, analyze student data, and implement evidence-based instructional strategies that address the specific needs of struggling students (Hallinger, 2010). 3) Turnaround school leaders must be proficient in data analysis to identify areas of

improvement and monitor progress. Leadership development programs focus on developing leaders' data literacy and their ability to use data to inform decision-making and instructional strategies (Fullan, 2018).

The Providence Leadership Institute will support these goals by providing a differentiated structure for ongoing support and professional development, and through the use of a cohort structure that allows for sustained growth and change over time. The Institute will use the following research-based strategies to achieve its aim:

- **Intensive Professional Development:** Programs provide targeted professional development opportunities that focus on the unique challenges of turnaround schools. In PPSD, this includes workshops, coaching, and mentoring to enhance leaders' skills in areas such as instructional leadership, data analysis, school culture, and change management (Turnbull, 2012).
- **Collaborative Learning Communities:** These communities provide a platform for leaders to share experiences, exchange best practices, and engage in peer support and problem-solving (Gaudio, 2017).
- **On-Site Support and Coaching:** Leadership development initiatives in turnaround schools often provide on-site support and coaching to leaders. Experienced coaches work closely with leaders, providing guidance, feedback, and support tailored to the specific needs of the school (Duke, 2015).
- **Job-Embedded Learning:** PPSD emphasizes job-embedded learning, where leaders have opportunities to apply their newly acquired knowledge and skills directly in their school context. This hands-on approach enhances the transfer of learning and facilitates the implementation of effective strategies (Hallinger, 2010).

Research suggests that the proposed strategy will result in positive student outcomes, increased teacher effectiveness and retention, and enhanced school culture and climate (Gill, 2022; Leithwood, 2010; Tingle, 2017).

### **3. Methods of Evaluation**

PPSD will contract with an external evaluator to assess the progress of the grant project and determine course corrections. There will be regularly scheduled dialogue between the team supporting the design and implementation of the PPSD Leadership Institute and the external evaluator to ensure the use of formative data to make midcourse adjustments to achieve project goals and objectives. PPSD leveraged feedback from stakeholders throughout the first TSL grant to inform the design of the evaluation model and monitor feedback from participants on leadership development experiences and programs. PPSD will build on that strong foundation and will administer surveys, conduct focus groups, and convene stakeholders to ensure that program components are equitable and effective. PPSD, TNTP, and other selected partners will collaborate with the external evaluator to streamline data collection and ensure systems for ongoing monitoring and continuous improvement. The evaluation model will include a systematic assessment of the PPSD Leadership Institute project to better understand the effectiveness and inform strategic improvement. Further, the evaluation model will include a set of repeatable and focused analyses that can point to actionable and testable strategies for both district and state partners.

PPSD has experience partnering with external evaluators. The Leadership Development staff will work closely under the Chief Talent Officer, in connection with the larger Human Resources (HR) team, as well as the Equity and Belonging and Data Offices, to ensure an effective system of data collection is in place using qualitative and quantitative collection

techniques. The prioritization of building the data infrastructure to ensure that PPSD can access a range of data related to leader performance and needs will better equip PPSD and the external evaluator to work together to report out on the range of established metrics, including the USDOE’s GPRA metrics.

The table below reflects our goals, key activities, and metrics. This table, along with our logic model (Appendix A) will drive the design of the evaluation.

**TABLE 2.2: Goals, Objectives and Metrics**

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>Goal 1: Leadership Development: PPSD leaders are increasingly effective and have access to ongoing coaching and support that is driving improved teacher effectiveness across the district.</b></p>   |
| <p>Objective 1.1: All PPSD leaders are engaged in ongoing leadership development that supports them in achieving more rigorous expectations for performance aligned with PPSD’s turnaround leadership competencies and the new evaluation model.</p>  |
| <p>Metrics:</p> <p>A. By Winter 2024: PPSD plans and delivers leadership training aligned to the comprehensive turnaround leadership framework within the new evaluation model.</p> <p>B. By Spring 2024: Leadership Development team, HR, and Teaching and Learning use data to inform professional development, coaching and support needs across school leaders.</p> <p>C. By Spring 2024: 100% of PPSD leaders have participated in leadership training.</p> <p>D. By Spring 2025, 100% of PPSD leaders with prioritized needs have received goals-based leadership coaching.</p> |
| <p><b>Goal 2: Educator Evaluation: Evaluation ratings are an accurate reflection of performance and are a key driver for human capital decisions including development, promotion, compensation, and retention.</b></p>   |
| <p>Objective 2.1: The leader evaluation system accurately reflects leader performance across the performance measures that align with PPSD’s vision for effective leadership in turnaround schools.</p>   |



Metrics:

- A. By Fall 2023: 100% of leaders are evaluated with the new leadership evaluation model.
- B. By Fall 2023: The data infrastructure has been established to ensure that talent management decisions are data informed.
- C. By Spring 2024: 100% of principal supervisors have participated in norming and calibration activities and are implementing the new evaluation system with fidelity.
- D. By Spring 2024: Leadership evaluation ratings are showing a greater distribution than the current baseline data (90% are highly effective or effective).
- E. By Spring 2025: Leadership evaluation ratings reflect a more positive relationship to student performance indicators when compared to the relationship with the current evaluation model (i.e., RICAS and growth measures).

**Goal 3: Career Pathways & Compensation: Career ladder and PBCS support enhanced recruitment, curation, development, and retention of effective educators.**

Objective 3.1: PPSD has launched a turnaround-aligned career ladder model that works in tandem with the new leader evaluation and compensation model.

Metrics:

- A. By Spring 2024: The Advanced Assistant Principal role within the career pathways model, and aligned compensation, has been launched to the internal PPSD community and recruitment/selection is underway.
- B. By Fall 2025: A New Principal Induction experience is launched to provide ongoing, differentiated support and coaching to early career Principals in PPSD.
- C. By Spring 2025: Retention rate of high-performing leaders is higher than retention of lower performing leaders (as measured by the new leader evaluation model).
- D. By Spring 2026: Early-career school principals demonstrate higher performance and higher retention rates (as compared to baseline data to be collected in Fall 2023 using the new evaluation model).

**Goal 4: Educator Recruitment: PPSD has a robust and diverse pipeline of talented prospective school leaders who will lead efforts to turn around school performance and improve student outcomes.**

Objective 4.1: A PPSD school leader recruitment campaign and hiring selection process has launched and is facilitating a pipeline of diverse, highly effective leaders.

Metrics:

A. By Winter 2024: PPSD will develop a marketing campaign that articulates the PPSD school leader “value proposition,” including the career pathways, PBCS, and integrated coaching and support as key incentives to attract high-potential candidates to PPSD; all recruitment materials are updated to reflect the value proposition.

B. By Spring 2024: PPSD will utilize a revised selection and hiring process for new school leaders that aligns with the core competencies articulated in PPSD’s vision for effective leadership and school leader evaluation model; hiring committees will be normed on consistent use of the new selection model and process.

C. Spring 2025: PPSD will experience an increase in the quantity, quality, and diversity of applicants for school leader positions within PPSD.

D. By Spring 2026: Increase the percentage of leaders of color to 35% (baseline 31.5%).

## Quality of the Management Plan

### 1. Adequacy of the Management Plan to Achieve Program Objectives

Central to the Providence Leadership Institute are several key players selected given their track records of success in turnaround efforts and their ability to bring transformation to an educational environment (Resumes and Job Descriptions are listed in Appendix B). [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], Senior Advisor to the Superintendent at PPSD, [REDACTED], Deputy Superintendent of Operations for PPSD, and [REDACTED], Chief Talent Officer for PPSD will serve as the Key Sponsors. These personnel support the vision, design, and implementation of core talent practices that align with the district’s commitment to rigorous, culturally responsive educational experiences for PPSD’s students. These individuals will shape initiatives across the district to reach the strategic vision outlined in the TAP, in alignment with the state-wide educational priorities of RIDE. [REDACTED] provides direct oversight of the Assistant Superintendents of Schools, as well as the Chiefs of Academics, Equity, and Data and Assessment. [REDACTED]

provides the oversight of the Human Resources and Finance departments for the district. [REDACTED], the Chief Talent Officer, will provide direct oversight to the Leadership Development team, including the Executive Director of Leadership Development.

As a subgrantee, TNTP, Inc. will support the implementation of many of the grant activities including the leadership development and coaching experiences and calibration on the new school leader evaluation model. Shauna Hart, TNTP Partner, will lead a team to fulfill TNTP's role as reflected across the grant application and in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be developed if the grant is awarded. TNTP will establish a system of ongoing reporting with the PPSD team to demonstrate timely and effective support.

[REDACTED], the Executive Director of Leadership Development, is another key leader who has supervised the work of PPSD's current TSL grant and will continue to bring the vision for effective school leadership in a turnaround environment to life. [REDACTED] will lead the expansion and extension of this work in the proposed new grant and will be charged with the responsibility of project planning, development, delivery, meetings, and reporting for this grant project (see Table 3.1, Workplan). The Executive Director of Leadership Development will play the lead role in managing the partnership with TNTP to design a sustainable, comprehensive set of training and supports for all leaders that is aligned to the leadership competencies and to implement norming and calibration activities to support effective implementation of the new evaluation model. Reporting to the Chief Talent Officer, the Executive Director of Leadership Development will collaborate with the HR team to (1) support the connection to career pathways for advanced APs; (2) facilitate normed performance evaluation cycles for all school leaders with fidelity and integrity to the model; and (3) partner on recruitment and selection for APs and

principals, with ongoing collaboration around anticipated vacancies and the depth of a bench needed.

A key function of the Executive Director of Leadership Development will work with the PPSD Finance Division to navigate costs to support the work and planning for sustainability. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the Executive Director of Leadership Development and team will work closely with the assistant superintendents and principal supervisors, as well as with Colene Van Brunt, the Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, to ensure tight alignment across the priorities for leadership development. Given the scope of the project, a team of personnel with a broad range of specialized skills and expertise will join the Executive Director of Leadership Development to ensure the grant is implemented in a strategic and efficient manner.

Educator Evaluation will be supported by [REDACTED], Director of HR, who will partner with [REDACTED] and TNTP on the fidelity of implementation of ongoing school leader evaluation cycles. [REDACTED] will also work with the Research, Planning and Accountability (RPA) and Information Technology (IT) offices to support the development of data infrastructure to house and display data aligned to the leadership competencies. Recruitment, selection, and hiring into the advanced AP role will also be supported by the full HR team to ensure that educator evaluation data is used as criteria for hiring and cultivation and that vacancy and retention data is used to anticipate district needs for new school leaders each year. This work will happen in collaboration with the Finance department to help navigate the costs necessary to support career pathways and planning for sustainability, RPA and IT to ensure data are available to inform the recruitment and selection work, and executive directors to support the design and implementation work. Lastly, the HR team, led by [REDACTED], will work

with the Leadership Development Team to ensure that identified candidates are prepared and effective in the new roles.

**TABLE 3.1: PLDA & Residency Design and Implementation Workplan**

| <p><b>KEY:</b> <b>LDT</b>-Leadership Development Team, led by the Executive Director of Leadership Development; <b>AS</b> – Assistant Superintendents, <b>PS</b>-Principal Supervisors ; <b>HR</b>-Office of Human Resources; <b>LEAG</b>- Leader Evaluation Advisory Group, selected group of school leaders to engage in the refinement of the leadership evaluation model; <b>DSO</b>-Deputy Superintendent of Operations; <b>CTO</b> – Chief Talent Officer; <b>SAS</b> – Senior Advisor to the Superintendent; <b>RPA</b>-Office of Research, Planning &amp; Accountability; <b>FD</b>-Finance Division; <b>IT</b>-Office of Information Technology; <b>TNTP</b>-TNTP, Inc. is a national nonprofit working with PPSD, and is subgrantee on this application; <b>TL</b> – Office of Teaching and Learning</p> |                                 |                        |
|--|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Milestones   | Participants                    | Date                   |
| <b>Year 1 (2023-2024)</b>  |                                 |                        |
| <b>Educator Evaluation</b>   |                                 |                        |
| Build the data infrastructure to capture all performance related data  | LDT, HR, RPA, IT, TNTP          | Fall 2023              |
| Train Principals and Assistant Principals on new model and data entry expectations   | LDT, HR, TNTP, AS, PS           | Fall 2023              |
| Facilitate co-visits between principal supervisors, Executive Director of Leader Development, and TNTP to norm on school leader practice in alignment with the new turnaround competencies   | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS          | Fall 2023- Spring 2024 |
| Facilitate norming sessions in advance of informal and formal evaluation cycles for school leaders (4x) to support strong data collection and observation practices  | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS, CTO, HR | Fall 2023- Spring 2024 |
| Facilitate calibration sessions aligned to formal evaluation cycles (mid-year and end-of-year) to support consistency in   | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS, CTO, HR | Winter and Spring 2024 |

|   |  |                         |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| application of the evaluation model   |  |                         |
| Conduct focus groups, stakeholder interviews, and surveys to gather feedback on implementation of the model   | LDT, TNTP, HR                                | Winter and Spring 2024  |
| Step back on evaluation data and develop plans to address needs for following school year   | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS, CTO, HR, DSO         | Summer 2024             |
| <b>Leadership Development</b>   |  |                         |
| Develop and facilitate year-long professional learning scope and sequence for principals and assistant principals aligned to turnaround competencies and instructional transformation | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS, TL                   | Fall 2023-Spring 2024   |
| Identify and provide coaching for prioritized subset of school leaders based on data in partnership with vendor   | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS, TL                   | Fall 2023 – Spring 2024 |
| Articulate a sustainable vision and model for district-provided leadership coaching and articulate roles and responsibilities across team   | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS, TL, HR, DSO, CTO, FD | Spring 2024             |
| Hire for PPSD Leadership Coaches  | LDT, HR, DSO, CTO, FD                        | Spring 2024             |
| Reflect on school leader performance data and articulate revised priorities to support growth in leadership for SY24-25   | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS, TL, CTO              | Summer 2024             |

|   |                                 |                   |
|---|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Facilitate Summer Leader Academy to launch year 2 scope and sequence of learning  | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS, TL, CTO | August 2024       |
| <b>Career Pathways &amp; Compensation</b>   |                                 |                   |
| Design the principal pathway program experience for advanced APs  | LDT, TNTP, CTO, HR, FD, DSO     | Fall 2024         |
| Identify prospective candidates for advanced AP role and pilot program experience/supports to becoming principal                    | LDT, TNTP, HR, FD               | Spring 2024       |
| Design the Principal Induction experience for early career school leaders   | LDT, TNTP, CTO, HR, FD, DSO     | Winter 2024       |
| Recruit and select candidates for the Advanced AP pathway program for following school year   | LDT, HR, CTO, FD                | Summer 2024       |
| Launch Principal Induction experience   | LDT, TNTP, CTO, HR, FD, DSO     | Summer 2024       |
| <b>Educator Recruitment</b>   |                                 |                   |
| Articulate value-proposition and marketing campaign for school leadership in PPSD   | HR, CTO, LDT, TNTP, DSO         | Winter 2024       |
| Launch marketing and recruitment campaign   | HR, CTO, LDT, TNTP, DSO         | Spring 2024       |
| Revise selection model for school leadership positions in alignment with leadership competencies                                    | HR, CTO, LDT, TNTP, DSO         | Spring 2024       |
| <b>Year 2 (2024-2025)</b>   |                                 |                   |
| <b>Educator Evaluation</b>  |                                 |                   |
| Professional Development and learning walks to norm and calibrate all principals, assistant principals and principal supervisors on | LDT, HR, TNTP, AS, SAS, PS      | Fall, Spring 2025 |

|   |                                       |                         |
|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| expectations for leader performance in new evaluation system  |                                       |                         |
| Refine evaluation model to based on data and feedback   | LDT, HR, TNTP, PS, School Leaders     | Fall 2025               |
| Develop integration and sustainability plan for norming and calibration routines  | LDT, HR, TNTP, DSO, HR, CTO           | Spring 2025             |
| Ongoing review of the effectiveness of the model, stakeholder feedback, and performance data, monitoring implementation and relationship to student learning              | LDT, RPA, TNTP, SAS, AS, PS, CTO, DSO | Winter, Summer 2025     |
| Review and refine the data infrastructure as necessary to capture all performance related data  | LDT, RPA, TNTP, CTO, HR, DSO          | Summer 2025             |
| <b>Leadership Development</b>   |                                       |                         |
| Facilitate year-long professional learning scope and sequence for principals and assistant principals aligned to turnaround competencies and instructional transformation | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS, TL            | Fall 2025               |
| Revisit coaching priorities based on data and needs; provide coaching for sub-set of school leaders   | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS, TL            | Fall 2025 – Spring 2026 |
| PPSD and TNTP continuously align the development and support with broader leadership development priorities of PPSD   | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS, TL            | Fall 2025 (ongoing)     |
| PPSD Leadership Coaches are co-facilitating professional learning; create plans to integrate leadership coaching into existing structures                                 | LDT, TNTP, CTO, HR                    | Fall 2025 – Spring 2026 |



|   |                                 |                                   |
|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| All leadership development activities are monitored for effectiveness, and refined as needed  | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS, TL      | Fall 2025 (ongoing)               |
| Reflect on school leader performance data and articulate revised priorities to support growth in leadership for SY24-25                                       | LDT, RPA, TNTP, CTO, HR, DSO    |                                   |
| Facilitate Summer Leader Academy to launch year 2 scope and sequence of learning  | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS, TL      |                                   |
| <b>Career Pathways &amp; Compensation</b>   |                                 |                                   |
| Revise Advanced AP Pathway experience based on feedback and data from pilot program   | HR, CTO, DSO, LDT, TNTP         | Fall 2024 (ongoing)               |
| Provide ongoing coaching and support to leaders in the Advanced AP Pathway and the Principal Induction program  | LDT, TNTP, PS                   | Fall 2024 – Summer 2025           |
| Collaborate with Human Resources to support leaders in the Advanced AP Pathway program to secure principal positions  | LDT, TNTP, HR, CTO              | Spring 2025                       |
| Collaborate with Human Resources and principal supervisors to calibrate school leader evaluations for leaders in Advanced AP and Principal Induction programs | LDT, TNTP, HR, CTO, PS, AS, SAS | Fall 2024 – Spring 2025 (ongoing) |
| <b>Educator Recruitment</b>   |                                 |                                   |
| Ongoing refinement of school leader recruitment and marketing materials based on data and feedback  | LDT, TNTP, HR, CTO              | Fall 2024-2025 (ongoing)          |
| <b>Year 3 (2025-2026)</b>   |                                 |                                   |
| <b>Educator Evaluation</b>  |                                 |                                   |

|  |                                 |                    |
|--|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Ongoing Professional Development to train and calibrate all new principals, new assistant principals and new appropriate district staff  | LDT, HR, TNTP, AS, SAS, PS, CTO | Fall 2025          |
| Finalize any modifications to the evaluation model based on data and sustainability  | LDT, HR, CTO                    | Fall 2025          |
| Integrate norming and calibration routines and activities into PPSD Leadership Development team roles  | LDT, HR, CTO, AS, PS, TNTP      | Fall 2025          |
| Review and refine the data infrastructure as necessary to capture all performance related data   | DSO, RPA, IT, LDT, HR, TNTP     | Spring/Summer 2025 |
| <b>Leadership Development</b>  |                                 |                    |
| Facilitate year-long professional learning scope and sequence for principals and assistant principals aligned to turnaround competencies and instructional transformation priorities     | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS, TL      | Fall 2025(ongoing) |
| TNTP will partner with PPSD to ensure tight alignment and readiness to take on the program beginning in Fall 2023  | LDT, TNTP, AS, PS, SAS          | Fall 2025          |
| <b>Career Pathways &amp; Compensation</b>  |                                 |                    |
| Monitor the effectiveness of the career pathways model to ensure it is attracting highly effective teacher and school leaders to support ongoing development efforts across the district | HR, FD, RPA, LDT, AS, TNTP      | Fall 2025          |

|  |                    |                         |
|--|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Review and revise (as necessary) selection and retention guidance with particular attention to retention of high performers and diversification of the teacher workforce | HR, CTO, LDT, TNTP | Winter 2026             |
| Ongoing coaching and support to leaders in the Advanced AP pathway and the Principal Induction program   | LDT, CTO, TNTP     | Fall 2025 – Spring 2026 |
| <b>Educator Recruitment</b>  |                    |                         |
| Review and revise (as necessary) recruitment and selection materials and guidance with particular attention to diversification of the leader workforce                   | HR, CTO, LDT, TNTP |                         |

**Adequacy of Resources**

**1. Likelihood of System Change or Improvement**

The most significant change that will be noted in the proposed plan is the continued improvement of the HCMS and PBCS for PPSD. Under the district’s previous TSL grant, the Leadership Development Academy & Leadership Cohort had a positive impact on PPSD. The proposed program seeks to expand on that project so that the impacts are felt across the entire district. Research has demonstrated the impact of high-quality leadership on teacher effectiveness and student performance (Gates, Baird, Master, Chavez-Herrerias, 2019). The commitment to a comprehensive approach to leadership development will yield systemic change in the way the district thinks about school leadership and supports school leaders. Through the launch of a new evaluation model, school leaders will have a clear understanding of what excellent leadership looks like, sounds like, and feels like in PPSD, and the broader community will understand what they can expect when they walk into a PPSD school. Aligned development

activities through a leader's tenure will ensure ongoing coaching and development that is goals and data-driven, ensuring that leaders in the district are continuously improving.

Utilizing a performance-based compensation system (PBCS) for our highest performers provides an incentive to improve and excel in the new evaluation model, and the career ladder opportunities also support the recruitment and retention of high performers. Lastly, the expansion of the PPSD Leadership Institute builds the capacity of current district teachers and leaders to take on more advanced leadership roles within the district. This offers a critical opportunity to build a diverse pipeline of high potential educators, prepare them for a leadership role, and then ensure ongoing support as they begin to lead a school. We believe that this comprehensive and coherent approach to leadership development will yield systems-level change in the way that our school leaders operate, and how they support our students.

## **2. Building Local Capacity**

The previous grant project built the capacity of the educator workforce to better support students, and the proposed project seeks to expand that to include all school leaders across PPSD. The PPSD Leadership Institute will help to increase the skill level and expertise of school leaders to be high-caliber, prepared and diverse participants in the system-wide transformation to meet the needs of PPSD. The career pathways model (particularly for advanced APs) will create opportunities to leverage local talent and expertise in supporting the development of educators across the district. The increased leadership capacity that will be developed through the PPSD Leadership Institute will support the retention of high-performing local talent, while building a robust leadership bench.

Further, the proposed program aims to accelerate change in PPSD. Our overarching goal is to sustain the accelerated change that we have seen in PPSD over the past three years. We will

be able to jump swiftly into our projects as in many cases, we have already begun the work, and have materials ready to go. With the swift design and implementation of comprehensive leadership development, PPSD will be able to more quickly reach the goals outlined in the Turnaround Action Plan, yielding better outcomes for PPSD's high-need student population. PPSD also submits this application with a clear plan to sustain the programs after the grant period. Building the internal capacity at the central office over the course of the grant will ensure that the reforms can be sustained, and continuously improved, putting PPSD on a pathway for ongoing progress to transformation.

### **3. Resources to Operate Beyond the Grant Period**

The Rhode Island Commissioner of Education took control of Providence Public School's programming, budget, and personnel decisions by invoking Rhode Island's Crowley act, which also obligates the City of Providence to increase its contribution to PPSD at the same percentage by which the state increases funding statewide. In addition, the mayor and city council have pledged significant, long-term investments in Providence's school infrastructure, with the hopes of funding between \$200 and \$400 million in improvements over the next decade. Planning for this effort, known as Our Learning Spaces, has relied on community input and feedback; it also leverages the recent statewide bond to help finance school improvements. This additional revenue will enable the Superintendent to increase investment in high priority areas, including support for leadership development.

While PPSD anticipates additional revenue as a result of the funding obligations of the Crowley Act, we also know thoughtful planning is required to support the sustainability of this effort. To this end, PPSD is taking several steps to address the need for sustainability of the proposed project. First, much of the grant funding will go towards building the necessary systems (evaluation, data) and capacity of staff (leadership development training and norming and calibration experiences) that can live beyond the life of the grant. Second, we will redeploy current resources (e.g., performance-based bonuses, district level professional development contracts) that are not clearly aligned to school and district-level improvement activities. Taken together, we are confident in our ability to continue this work beyond the life of the grant.

The potential to positively impact and provide long-term effective change to PPSD makes the Leadership Institute a beneficial investment. Ongoing support from Commissioner Infante-Green, the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), Community Advisory Boards, district leadership, external partners like TNTP, and school leader stakeholders who join in these impactful efforts will help PLDA achieve its goal of improving PPSD and addressing the needs of our high-needs schools (see Appendix C for Letters of Support). The funding of the PPSD Leadership Institute through the TSL grant will help to further increase the support of our students, improve the infrastructure and ignite additional support by external funding sources. The district's commitment to improving and enhancing the HCMS and PBCS system will be ongoing with an intentional effort to create long-term positive results in student achievement.

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