

Pontiac GAINS

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ABSOLUTE PRIORITY. School District of the City of Pontiac—a.k.a Pontiac School District (PSD), in partnership with Oakland University’s Department of Music, Theatre and Dance (OU), Progression, Inc. (PI), Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA), and the Oakland County Intermediate School District (ISD), will provide exceptional, research-based, arts-integration training for K-8 teachers in four elementary schools and one arts laboratory middle school that provides a K-8 Arts pathway to the district’s high school. This approach, collectively called *Pontiac GAINS – Growing Arts Integration Network for Students* will use Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) and Art Connections (AC) as the framework to integrate standards-based arts instruction with core academic content areas. Linking State and National standards will enable ALL students to meet challenging expectations and improve academic achievement at Alcott, Jefferson/Whittier, Owen and Whitman elementary schools and Pontiac Arts Laboratory middle school. Programming will be aligned with Michigan’s Arts Content Standards (state standard) and the Consortium of National Arts Education Association (NAEA) Arts Standards (national standard), both of which enable all students to meet challenging expectations for improved school performance in a diverse, rapidly-changing world.

1. NEED FOR PROJECT.

a. *Magnitude of Need:* Pontiac School District, considered a satellite city of Detroit, Michigan faces a number of persistent challenges: academic under-achievement, poverty, substance abuse and ongoing school/community fiscal crises. These conditions undermine the efforts of dedicated educators and promote a cycle of academic failure and high-risk student behavior.

At-Risk Community: The first settlers arrived in what is now the city of Pontiac in 1818. Two years later, there were enough people gathered to form a village named after the famous Ottawa Indian Chief who had made his headquarters in the area only a few years before. The village was incorporated as a city in 1861. Best known for its General Motors manufacturing plants, the Pontiac automobile was first made in 1907 and named after the city. In April 2009, amid

painfully-public financial struggles, GM announced that the Pontiac would be phased out. The car and the city it was named for were having a very bad year, for on February 20, 2009, the State of Michigan placed the city of Pontiac into receivership, appointing a financial manager to oversee the city’s budget. Pontiac is projected to have a \$12 million budget deficit and state officials say the mayor's office and city council have "exhibited an ongoing inability to resolve the City's budget issues." Several layoffs have taken place, including within the police department, but the budget deficit still looms large. Taxpayers were dismayed to see their beloved Silverdome, home to the National Football League’s Detroit Lions for many years, sold in November 2009 to a Canadian businessman for 1% of the \$55.7 million dollars it cost taxpayers to build. As the chart below highlights, the community struggles with both financial and social issues. Residents earn less money, are less educated and raise more children in single parent families than their state and national counterparts:

Poverty / Demographic Indicator*	Pontiac	Michigan	Nation
% Children Living in Single Parent Households	25.2%	19.6%	9.7%
Median Family Income	\$31,207	\$48,606	\$50,233
Per Capita Income	\$15,842	\$28,820	\$27,466
% Children Living in Poverty	19.7%	16.8%	17.2%
% Population with Bachelor’s Degree	10.7%	24.7%	27.4%

* *Statistics from US Census, MI Census, Economic Research Service, 2008*

Lack of resources in the city of Pontiac severely impacts funding for arts programming and a lack of linkages with arts program providers in the community and immediately outside its boundaries impairs both school and community growth in all forms of the arts.

At-Risk School District: The tough conditions that impact youth, families and the community at large also undermine the efforts of educators and school community partners who strive to create and maintain safe, protective schools that nurture the development of successful, respectful students and citizens. This past year has been an especially difficult one for Pontiac School

District. The city of Pontiac is surrounded by affluent Metro Detroit suburbs. Since 1996, Michigan has allowed districts to accept students from outside their boundaries. Parents who felt their child's school was failing have accepted the transfer offers in increasing numbers each year—6,200 students transferred the first year this program began. Last year, 183,358 students were enrolled in schools of choice throughout Michigan, including charter schools. In recent years, many residents of southern Pontiac have begun sending their kids to Bloomfield Hills Schools and Waterford Schools causing a notable swell in the number of children attending those schools and a serious decline in Pontiac schools. In the past two years, Pontiac School District has lost nearly 2,000 students to choice, along with the \$15 million dollars that the state provides in school funding. Severe budget shortages in Pontiac School District forced its board to close one half of its schools at the end of the 2009 school year—going from 16 schools to 9. (*One of the schools in this grant (Jefferson-Whittier) was Jefferson Middle School last year and is now Jefferson-Whittier Elementary School*). Dealing with fallout issues as a result of painful decisions, has placed the city of Pontiac and its school district under tremendous emotional stress. To stop the bleeding, the School Board hired Dr. Thomas Maridada, a proven turnaround expert and Michigan's 2008 Superintendent of the Year, to create the kind of reform and structure in Pontiac that will return students to the district. The hard work has begun and exemplary arts integration programming and new and renewed partnerships are keys to providing opportunities that Pontiac students and their families can understand and embrace.

At-Risk Students: Pontiac teachers must overcome a number of challenges that impact the overall physical and mental health of students and influence their ability to learn. According to the Michigan Department of Education, **Pontiac, Michigan, at 29.58%, has one of the highest Census Poverty Index scores of any district in the state (state average is 17%)** and schools have free/reduced lunch rates that are among the highest in Michigan, averaging over 90%. In addition, the composition of the district, compared to that of the city of Pontiac, has changed over time, due in large part to families with resources participating in school choice. Majority students have left the district, increasing the percentages of minority students as shown:

Ethnic Composition – Pontiac vs. Schools		
	City of Pontiac	Pontiac School District
African-American	48%	63%
Hispanic	12%	22%
Caucasian	37%	11%
Asian	2%	4%
Other	1%	0%

The widespread poverty and limited resources for minority families in the target area reduces student access to arts programming of any kind because limited economies cannot support the diversity of programs needed to prepare struggling youth to succeed in Pontiac schools.

Risky Behaviors: A review of *Prevention Needs Assessment (PNA)* and *Tobacco Alcohol Prevention Project (TAPP)* results in Oakland County (2007) reveals the unhealthy social and emotional condition of students and identifies risky behaviors all-too-common in Pontiac:

- 85.1% Grade 12 students report lifetime alcohol use; 39% drink to intoxication regularly;
- 24.3% report attending school drunk; 54.8% began drinking BEFORE entering high school;
- 68.8% have smoked cigarettes; 50.8% started smoking BEFORE they entered high school;
- 30% of Grade 8 students report initiating a fight – 16 % attacking with intent to harm;
- 28.2% of Grade 6 students report lifetime alcohol use;
- 57% of Pontiac students express favorable attitudes toward antisocial behavior; and
- 59% of Pontiac students report low commitment to education and school.

Risky Behaviors*	Pontiac	Michigan
% Students Bullied at School	36.7%	21.2%
% Students 30-Day Alcohol Use	49.7%	40.1%
% Students Driving While Drunk	29.1%	16.6%
% Students in Physical Fight Last 12 Months	49.0%	31.3%

**Prevention Needs Assessment, Tobacco Alcohol Prevention Project, 2007*

Students need resources and programming to begin reversing the risky behaviors which are so pervasive in the community. The arts offer a positive alternative that will, over time, strengthen the protective factors that Pontiac youth so greatly need to be successful at school and in life.

Academic Failure: Students attending targeted schools fail to meet State of Michigan standards in core academic subjects, fall short of national averages on standardized tests and **attend schools that are designated Title 1 Schoolwide programs.** Academic performance indicators paint a dismal picture of participating schools. According to 2009 Michigan Educational Assessment Performance (MEAP) results, on average, more than half of fifth grade students failed both English Language Arts and Mathematics grade level standards—53% ELA; 55% Math; for middle school students in grade eight, failure rates were 58% ELA and 61% Math. In addition to academic failure, Pontiac youth struggle to maintain positive attitudes toward school and exhibit little motivation to achieve high standards. On average, **nearly one quarter of targeted students (24%) are designated Limited English Proficient (LEP)** – 18 native languages are spoken among the district’s students. In addition, special education students number nearly 10%. District leaders must successfully address the needs of diverse learners and help multi-cultural families overcome language barriers to become strong advocates for their children. The following chart outlines alarming academic performance data that verifies the significant needs of low-performing Pontiac schools:

Target Schools	# of Students	% Free/ Reduced Lunch	% Special Ed	% Minority	% Limited English Proficiency	% Grade 5, Grade 8 Students Below State Standard	
						Reading	Math
Alcott Elementary	415	82.8%	9.6%	81%	21.6%	32%	45%
Jefferson-Whittier ES	663	82.0%	8.6%	94%	28.7%	N/A	N/A
Owen Elementary	391	77.3%	10.7%	88%	24.8%	63%	58%
Whitman Elementary	376	90.1%	5.9%	75%	19.4%	63%	61%
Pontiac Arts Lab MS	455	93.0%	7.9%	89%	23.6%	58%	61%
TOTALS	2,300	85%	9%	85%	24%	54%	56%

** Jefferson Middle School, closed June 2009, reconstituted into Jefferson-Whittier Elementary*

With a high school graduation rate of 70%, district leaders are looking for ways to decrease the

dropout rate and engage students in an education they will be eager to receive and proud to have obtained. Given the academic shortcomings and challenges facing PSD schools and the extremely limited resources available, *Pontiac GAINS* will help address chronic academic failure by equipping teachers with the skills to utilize arts in education and employ engaging, interactive teaching techniques that will capture student interest through the arts to convey complex core curricular topics in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

b. The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses. After analysis of district programs and after conducting a needs assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses, a planning Task Force of administrators, curriculum specialists, teachers and community partners identified the following programming/curriculum gaps at targeted schools:

Gaps / Weaknesses in Targeted Schools	Proposed Solution
Because of severe budget cuts, PSD lacks district resources to provide district-based guidance and training to help teachers facilitate arts integrations across targeted schools.	<i>Pontiac GAINS</i> will fund ‘Foundation’ and ‘Train-the-Trainer’ professional development in <i>Visual Thinking Strategies</i> to build immediate capacity to integrate arts and increase district ability to provide district-based training that sustains efforts beyond the grant period.
Students do not participate in core curriculum activities that integrate arts education into daily lessons (Math, ELA, Science, Social Studies).	<i>Pontiac GAINS</i> will include use of two research-based arts model programs that integrate visual, performing, dramatic and folk arts into core curricular instruction.
Target schools fail to meet minimum Michigan Arts Content Standards across all grade levels, Kindergarten through Grade 8.	Arts integration across all curricular subjects, expanded partnerships, training and increased emphasis on creative arts in elementary/middle grades will prepare schools to meet/exceed minimum Michigan arts content standards.

<p>Pontiac educators, K – 8, do not receive professional development designed to integrate Michigan State and NAEA Content Standards (both arts and academic) and grade-level expectations into daily classroom instruction.</p>	<p><i>Pontiac GAINS</i> will create a Curriculum Team responsible for revising K – 8 arts curriculum aligned to Michigan & NAEA arts and core academic standards and grade level benchmarks. Art Forum sessions will link Curriculum Team with teachers to review standards and expectations.</p>
<p>Target schools do not sustain effective partnerships with arts groups and museums that expose Pontiac youth to visual, performing, media and folk arts.</p>	<p><i>Pontiac GAINS</i> will partner targeted schools with expert partners including Oakland University, Progression, Detroit Institute of Arts and Oakland ISD to offer arts expertise, training and student enrichment programming.</p>
<p>Teachers lack the resources and expertise to integrate primary arts materials and art forms into daily classroom lessons.</p>	<p><i>Art Forums</i> will provide teachers with peer discussion groups, presentations and sharing of best practices to integrate updated arts content into instruction. University professors and teaching artists will provide classroom embedded coaching and modeling.</p>
<p>Students lack enrichment activities (before, during, afterschool, weekend, summer) that help them develop creative talents and pursue advanced instruction in the arts.</p>	<p>Arts partnerships with OU, PI and local and regional providers will offer student enrichment programs to increase student engagement in the arts; teachers will be better able to utilize local resources into daily lessons.</p>

Local dollars are limited and targeted Pontiac schools need assistance to fund innovative programs that will increase student achievement in low-performing schools. To reinvigorate academic programs, PSD seeks to initiate arts integration strategies and ground the study of core subjects in culturally-relevant arts through implementation of *Pontiac GAINS: Teaching Integration and Modeling Excellence*. *GAINS* will provide much-needed assistance to schools striving to provide the best possible education and services to underserved youth and families.

2. SIGNIFICANCE.

a. The likely utility of the products (such as information, materials, processes, or techniques) that will result from the proposed project, including the potential for their being used

effectively in a variety of other settings. The proposed project is the result of planning Task Force efforts that included the completion of a needs assessment across the Pontiac School District, analysis of gaps in available student programs and services, research to identify effective practices that fill gaps and outreach to build partnerships that expand the diversity and enhance the quality of learning resources in Pontiac schools. To address a renewed statewide emphasis on arts education and to provide failing schools with innovative strategies to teach core academic subjects through the arts, the planning Task Force designed a multi-layered approach to arts integration in underserved urban schools. **Magnitude of Results:** *Pontiac GAINS* activities will have an immediate, lasting and significant impact on student interest in the arts and academic performance in core subjects while allowing PSD to attain compliance with state reform efforts – *Pontiac GAINS* positions the district as a statewide leader in arts education while providing a model for arts integration that other Michigan districts can replicate to meet reform standards. The initiative (described in detail in the *Project Design*) includes the following key elements:

- Implementation of validated instructional models (*Visual Thinking Strategies, Art Connections*) that provide clear structure for arts integration across grade levels and schools;
- Classroom embedded professional development (coaching and modeling by Oakland University Department of Music, Theatre and Dance professors and Progression Teaching Artists) to improve teacher quality and enhance classroom lessons;
- Culturally-relevant arts enrichment for traditionally underserved students (partnerships with the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Oakland County Intermediate School District) that increases student exposure to the arts, encourages development of undervalued creative talents and builds family support for arts integration in schools.

Implementation of arts curricula and intensive, sustained professional development will result in improved academic performance by equipping teachers with the tools to excite disengaged youth and help students identify and strengthen artistic talents. Integration of arts into academic programming will allow dedicated educators to: 1) expand use of effective, research-based

teaching techniques to reach students who respond to multi-disciplinary, creative, interactive lessons; 2) teach arts-infused core curriculum classes that promote creative thinking and problem solving and 3) pilot an approach that can be replicated to serve more students. Increased academic achievement catalyzed by enhanced programming that captures student interest will translate into improved school climate that motivates youth to succeed and meet the demands of elevated expectations and a challenging curriculum. **Utility of Products:** The potential for increased student achievement through arts integration motivates district administrators and teachers to initiate programming that will alter our approach to classroom instruction. The results of comprehensive arts integration using research-based arts curricula in targeted schools will provide a model for expansion of *Pontiac GAINS* components to additional district schools as well as schools in other areas seeking to utilize innovative programming to engage struggling youth. Because our schools serve impoverished urban communities afflicted by significant economic and social issues, it is critical for Pontiac School District to seek new and exciting educational programs that will encourage not only student engagement but also reach out to our communities to make the education of Pontiac youth a shared, collaborative effort. Demonstrated effectiveness of this strategy will serve as an example for other school systems that face similar challenges to design and implement innovative programs that serve youth and facilitate community/parent outreach. Further, successful implementation of *Pontiac GAINS* will provide a programmatic template for PSD administrators and teachers to use when initiating other theme-based curriculum integration programs (the arts could be replaced with themes such as technology, life sciences, reading, mathematics, etc.). As PSD refines *Pontiac GAINS* through teacher, student, parent, partner and evaluator feedback, a more effective management structure and professional development regimen will be developed that may improve programs in other district schools and promote theme-based integration of other academic and educational topic areas into curricular subjects. **Replicability and Dissemination of Results:** The Task Force designed a clear structure for arts integration that relies on an evidence-based curricular framework to provide support and purpose to arts-based learning. The curriculum will serve as

the foundation of programming and will be supplemented by high-quality professional development to promote teacher mastery of concepts and pedagogy. Coaching and modeling will help teachers refine skills and incorporate specific instructional practices. Student and family enrichment opportunities will generate and sustain elevated interest in arts integration and complement classroom-based arts activities. This concise model fills district needs and can be replicated in multiple settings with a different combination of partners, schools and curricula depending on the location and availability of resources. To disseminate both components of the project and products of ongoing training, coaching, curriculum development and enrichment, PSD will launch a *Pontiac GAINS* web portal that serves as an online resource library for participating teachers and broadens project outcomes by providing access to colleagues across Pontiac School District, Oakland ISD and beyond. The *Pontiac GAINS* portal will provide a mechanism to disseminate arts-based educational materials, lesson plans, schedules, program outlines, professional development opportunities and project updates to keep all stakeholders informed. A thorough, scientific evaluation of *Pontiac GAINS*, conducted by an independent evaluation firm, will provide valuable feedback for project managers and measure program effectiveness (see *Evaluation* section for measures and details). Results of evaluation analysis will help project managers maximize results, refine the model to ensure outcomes, prioritize effective components for project sustainability and summarize data for dissemination.

3. QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN.

Our 2,300 targeted students, enrolled in four elementary schools and one middle school, live and learn in impoverished communities with few economic, social, cultural or educational resources. *Pontiac GAINS* will help teachers better reach Pontiac students through improved arts integration that provides teachers with a new approach to teaching core curricular subjects and the arts in low-performing schools. **Project Goals and Objectives:** *Pontiac GAINS* goals and objectives reflect the mandatory GPRA performance indicators identified by the U.S. Department of Education: **GPRA #1:** The percentage of students participating in arts model projects funded through the AEMDD Program who demonstrate proficiency in mathematics compared to those

in control or comparison groups and **GPRA #2:** the percentage of students participating in arts model projects who demonstrate proficiency in reading compared to those in control or comparison groups. Through implementation of *Pontiac GAINS*, PSD seeks to meet and exceed the following project goals: **Goal 1:** Increase student achievement in core academic subjects through arts integration; **Goal 2:** Enhance teacher content knowledge of the arts; **Goal 3:** Implement research-based arts in education model programs, and **Goal 4:** Provide students with supplementary arts learning experiences. See *Evaluation* for objectives/performance measures.

a. The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practices. Participating Pontiac district schools must overcome significant barriers to prepare young learners to succeed, both in school and in life. Multi-cultural, multi-disciplinary arts education programs create an inclusive educational environment in which students from diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds can benefit from personally-relevant arts and academic instructional techniques (Catterall, 1998; Parsons & Blocker, 1993). After the Task Force conducted a thorough needs assessment to identify gaps and weaknesses in current arts integration programs, an extensive literature review was completed to gain insight into evidence-based learning, teaching and professional development strategies that yield positive student outcomes. The idea of arts integration is related to structural, conceptual and philosophical notions that are connected to curricular movement in schools (Burnaford et al, 2007). A clear and concise definition of the arts integration movement has proven difficult to craft given the complexities of diverse learning environments, the varying degree of arts integration intensity across learning sites and the breadth of intended outcomes pursued by practitioners in the field (Parsons, 2004). Based on research that identifies multiple definitions for arts integration that vary depending on the contextual applications of the term, *Pontiac GAINS* will adopt a multi-layered approach to arts integration that encompasses activities across three primary research-based applications (Burnaford et al, 2007): 1) Learning “Through” the Arts; 2) Arts Integration as Curricular Process and 3) Arts Integration as Collaborative Engagement. **Learning “Through” the Arts:** Extended learning through the arts creates school

environments that promote thorough academic conversations between teachers and students and intensifies internal contemplation of the significance, meaning and impact of classroom discourse (Catterall, 2005). Learning with or through the arts promotes acquisition of knowledge across disciplines in response to the neurological changes that arts-based learning stimulates (Scripp & Subotnik, 2003). Students engaged in learning through the arts are more likely to develop diverse learning competencies that increase acquisition, retention and comprehension of factual and conceptual lessons (Rabkin & Redmond, 2004) and therefore promote accelerated academic growth and enhanced student academic outcomes. *Pontiac GAINS* will provide professional development opportunities that equip teachers with the skills needed to effectively promote learning through the arts in Pontiac elementary and middle school classrooms. Teachers will master evidence-based teaching strategies that provide a structured approach to arts integration in schools (*Visual Thinking Strategies – VTS, Art Connection – AC*). **Arts Integration as Curricular Process:** Arts integration is a layered process that extends beyond simplistic connections between areas of study to stress the common intellectual concepts that impact all areas of inquiry – problem-solving, reasoning, cognitive development (Weiss & Lichtenstein, 2008). Curricular development that integrates the arts with core subjects must involve authentic strategies that utilize the arts to enhance the study of academic subjects without compromising the integrity of the art form or the subject of interest (Burnaford, 2007). Curricular integration yields increased student visual and conceptual literacy and fosters deeper inquiry across all subjects by helping students gain insight into the interconnected nature of traditionally-segregated curricular topics – the arts serve as an ideal link bridging gaps across core subjects that too often prevent student conceptual understanding, problem-solving and self-discovery (Popovich, 2006). *Pontiac GAINS* will provide teachers with a common conceptual framework for integrating authentic works of art across curricular subjects (*VTS*) and in-depth coaching and modeling by Oakland University Department of Music, Theatre and Dance professors and Teaching Artists from Progression, a local arts-integration firm whose Executive Director has an impressive resume as an award-winning arts teacher in Pontiac-area schools.

Arts Integration as Collaborative Engagement: Research suggests that effective arts integration is a collaborative engagement that connects classrooms with practicing artists to fully engage students in the creative process and apply the creative process to core curricular learning (Booth, 2003). The intensity of collaboration can vary depending on the level of desired integration but collaboration to ensure authenticity is necessary to enhance learning through the arts and the effectiveness of curricular linkages (Grumet, 2004; Heath, 2001). Further, appropriate and meaningful partnerships that enhance collaborative arts integration also increase school resources that improve education programs. Research confirms that effective school partnerships with museums, institutions of higher education (Erskine-Cullen, 1995; Bullough et al, 1999; Howey, 2000) cultural organizations (Parsons & Blocker, 1993; Horowitz & Abeles, 1999) and local resources increase the sustainability of programs beyond grant funding. *Pontiac GAINS* will connect Pontiac teachers with Teaching Artists who will immerse teachers and students in the creative process across diverse art media, helping them to develop arts skills/talents and strengthen conceptual competencies that improve academic performance across core subjects and the arts.

b. The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students. Arts integration will provide Pontiac educators with an expanded repertoire of teaching skills that better meets the changing needs of at-risk youth. Through the arts, teachers will be able to ground core curricular topics in accessible art that students can appreciate and understand. Arts integration will include visual, performing, dramatic and folk arts of all genres, including current pop art and music, to promote critical thinking/creativity and highlight the relevance of academics. Use of art will encourage connections between core academic subjects and the life experiences of targeted youth, providing them with the ability to not only appreciate the value of art in their lives but also gain understanding of complex language, mathematics, social studies and science topics through art. *Pontiac GAINS* will include the following program components: 1) Multi-Layered Arts Integration Framework and 2) Meaningful Community Partnerships. **1) Multi-**

Layered Arts Integration Framework: Based on research in the field of school-based arts integration programs, *Pontiac GAINS* will implement a multi-layered arts integration framework that improves teaching and learning in Pontiac schools. Framework components include: a) Learning “Through” the Arts; b) Arts Integration as Curricular Process and c) Arts Integration as Collaborative Engagement. **Learning “Through” the Arts** – Pontiac School District will serve students – attending four elementary schools and one middle school – living and learning in high needs urban communities. Schools were identified based on teacher and administrator commitment to arts integration and based on schoolwide need to invest in innovative strategies that engage at-risk youth in school and learning. After reviewing available arts model programs and after aligning various options with the specific needs of participating schools, the planning Task Force selected two arts integration curricula that will expand content knowledge and enhance teaching in our classrooms. **Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS):** Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) is a visual arts program that engages the arts to teach higher-order thinking, communication and visual literacy skills. VTS promotes intellectual growth by exposing students to art of increasing complexity, posing developmentally-based questions that stimulate problem-solving and cognitive development of reasoning skills, and facilitating learner-centered classroom discussions that promote individual expression and creative thinking. Use of VTS in Pontiac classrooms will encourage: a personal connection to art from diverse cultures, times and places; student/teacher confidence in interpreting meaning from art; active class discussions and group problem-solving; development of written and verbal communication skills and transfer of these skills to core curricular areas. Through professional development offered by VTS accredited trainers, teachers will learn to use *Visual Thinking Strategies* as an instructional framework for all core subjects. VTS consists of ten lessons taught by classroom teachers during each school year. Each lesson involves a discussion of carefully sequenced images chosen from different cultures and times, utilizing various media. Each discussion revolves around three consistent questions: "What’s going on in this picture?" "What more can we find?" "What do you see that makes you say that?" Teachers facilitate classroom discussions and the thinking process

but never act as an expert with a definitive interpretation. As students develop their connection to art, they exercise a wide variety of cognitive skills that are useful in many contexts. VTS underscores diverse cultural connections to the arts and strengthens the role of museums as a valuable resource in students' lives. It produces growth in all students, including struggling readers and learners, English language learners and high achievers. After participating in outstanding professional development through expert VTS practitioners (see proposed PD outline below), Pontiac teachers will hone VTS competencies during classroom embedded coaching and modeling sessions conducted by Oakland University arts professors and Teaching Artists from Progression – who will demonstrate the use of the instructional framework across curricular subjects and art media (PSD will seek Teaching Artists and Residents with expertise in arts integration in mathematics and English language arts to nurture student mastery of foundational skills). Field-tested since 1991, VTS has been validated during multiple studies in diverse settings and promotes improvement in both classroom and test performance (see www.vue.org for evidence of effectiveness/research base). Pontiac School District will utilize Visual Thinking Strategies as a teaching technique with all targeted youth, grades K – 8, including special education students. Art Connections (AC): *SRA Art Connections* is a complete visual arts curriculum approach for art teachers, that provides fundamental instruction in the elements and principles of art. Lessons utilize expanded arts knowledge to promote academic growth across core subjects (English/language arts, math, science and social studies). AC equips art teachers with the tools to present art instruction that develops critical thinking and problem solving skills while nurturing creativity and self-expression in the classroom. Lessons incorporate the research-based components of effective arts instruction – art history/culture; aesthetic perception; creative expression, and art criticism – to enhance student understanding of the arts and make the arts accessible for youth. AC will provide art teachers with a structured, activity-driven, arts-intensive curriculum program that enhances student competencies in the arts and promotes increased student comprehension of arts-integrated instruction in academic

classrooms. *Art Connections* will complement classroom-based activities and will prepare art teachers to infuse art education with academic topics:

- Writing – Students develop writing skills with Art Journal activities throughout each lesson.
- Literature – Integrate literature into art lessons with Illustrator Profiles and Literature Art video experiences in every unit.
- Vocabulary Development – Key vocabulary terms are highlighted, defined, and reviewed to develop the language of art.
- History – Develop historical understanding through exploration of art history and culture.
- Cross-Curricular Integration – Integrate ELA, math, science, social studies and technology concepts in every lesson through teacher guides and improved instructional techniques.

Arts Integration as Curricular Process – The planning Task Force identified five schools for inclusion in *Pontiac GAINS*. Targeted schools represent two ends of the arts integration spectrum and will implement two different approaches that utilize similar resources, a common curriculum and the same partners to develop a seamless approach to arts integration. Multiple curricular elements will be introduced in participating schools based on two implementation tracks and curriculum enhancement activities: 1) Laboratory School Track; 2) New School Track and 3) Arts Curriculum Development. Laboratory School Track: Pontiac Arts Laboratory Middle School was launched to address the long-standing district struggle to achieve desegregation. The school promotes a K – 8 learning pathway in the arts that prepares students to succeed in Pontiac High School’s 9-12 ‘Arts and Communication’ pathway. While the middle school strives for full arts integration, faculty need further training, coaching and modeling to achieve true arts integration across grade levels and curricular subjects. *Pontiac GAINS* will provide teachers engaged through the Laboratory School Track with opportunities to connect with Teaching Artists from Progression who will team-teach effective classroom lessons, model arts-based instructional strategies and observe teachers to provide coaching. Teaching Artists will visit classrooms across all grade levels to help the Laboratory School Track site create an arts magnet with exceptional learning opportunities for students that include learning through the

arts in all subject areas. New School Track: Four Elementary Schools will initiate new arts integration projects to improve the quality of teaching and learning in failing schools. Using the laboratory arts school as a flagship, PSD seeks to expand arts integration to serve additional schools and low-performing students. Implementation of the New School Track will begin with the training of teacher teams from each school in both *Visual Thinking Strategies* and *Art Connections* to build the foundation skills teachers need to launch and sustain meaningful arts integration instruction. Upon completion of professional development workshops in *VTS / AC*, led by accredited trainers in each model, teachers will connect with university arts professors and Progression Teaching Artists to hone skills, improve arts integration instructional techniques and receive ongoing coaching from trained personnel with expertise in diverse arts media and across all core subject areas. Arts Curriculum Development: Implementation of *Pontiac GAINS* will result in the formation of a Curriculum Team that will revise the district-wide elementary and middle school arts curriculum. The Curriculum Team will study the principles of arts integration and the instructional framework introduced through grant programming – *Visual Thinking Strategies* and *Art Connections* – to link core academic benchmarks with complementary arts topics and media to guide teachers as they infuse the arts into daily education in targeted schools. The Curriculum Team – comprised of members of the Advisory Board, Project Director and *Pontiac GAINS* teachers – will review early project evaluation results in collaboration with an external evaluator to ensure data-driven decisions regarding curriculum development and mapping. Completion of an extensive arts curriculum revision will occur during the grant period and will include progress-monitoring activities to ensure revisions meet the needs of targeted students and teachers. Curriculum development, in combination with a dual track approach will allow PSD to serve multiple schools committed to arts integration but entering the project at varying levels of preparation and with different needs. All schools will receive coaching and modeling from Oakland University arts professors and/or Progression Teaching Artists and all schools will have access to outstanding teacher training in evidence-based curricula (though teachers from New School Track will receive priority training in *VTS / AC*). **Arts Integration**

as Collaborative Engagement – Arts integration in public schools must be a collaborative process to ensure authentic learning experiences for students (Burnaford, 2007). In response to both research in the field and the lack of resources in targeted schools, PSD will initiate two collaborative components that will connect classroom teachers to local, regional and national partners (Arts Immersion Weeks) and support development of professional learning communities in targeted schools (Art Forum). Arts Immersion Weeks – *Pontiac GAINS* will launch a collaborative effort to achieve arts integration in schools by partnering schools and arts-based organizations and museums to expand teacher competency in Pontiac classrooms. Partners will link Pontiac teachers with Teaching Artists to provide embedded instructional guidance in both the arts and arts integrated curriculum lessons. Each participating school will host four Arts Immersion Weeks that focus solely on one core subject area and effective ways to teach that core subject using an arts integration approach to instruction (Week 1: English Language Arts and Reading; Week 2: Mathematics; Week 3: Science; Week 4: Social Studies). During Arts Immersion Weeks, Teaching Artists will work, one-on-one, with participating teachers to prepare them to utilize the arts in learning across subjects. Teaching Artists will provide classroom materials for lessons, model effective arts integration techniques and strategies, coach teachers based on structured observations of arts-based lessons and help teachers identify components of the curriculum that can be effectively taught through the arts to increase student comprehension and interest. Arts Immersion Weeks will occur during all four years of the grant period at Pontiac Arts Laboratory Middle School and will commence at New School Track sites upon completion of VTS and AC foundation training (Year 2). Art Forum – To encourage consistent communication and collaboration between teachers participating in *Pontiac GAINS*, an Art Forum will convene every two months in targeted schools to provide an opportunity for focused discussion and for peer education. Teachers will work with the Project Director and Advisory Board to identify key themes, curricular areas, state standards and arts topics to address and will lead discussions based on identified content. Discussion topics – identified by the Advisory Board and participating teachers – will further examine arts integration strategies introduced

during professional development and challenges experienced during classroom implementation of curricular elements and arts-based instructional strategies. Teachers attending Art Forum will be responsible for researching topics, modeling arts integrated core curriculum lessons aligned to Michigan and NAEA Content Standards and sharing lesson plans that integrate the arts and core subjects. The Forum will promote collaboration by providing a venue for sharing best practices, modeling effective strategies, mentoring and planning for team-teaching sessions. Art Forum will consist of teacher presentations, peer training and review of lesson plans, introduction of innovative teaching techniques and round-table discussions. Teaching Artists will attend Art Forum sessions when they coincide with Arts Immersion Weeks to provide group coaching and modeling and nurture lasting relationships between visiting artists and Pontiac teachers.

Professional Development Plan: The planning Task Force proposes a tiered approach to professional development for both classroom teachers and arts instructors. Professional development will include training to implement the *VTS* arts integration framework, classroom embedded coaching that links University Arts Professors and Teaching Artists with educators (Art Immersion Weeks) and capacity-building efforts to promote development of district resources to initiate, sustain and expand the initiative during the grant period and beyond:

Tiers of Training	<i>Pontiac GAINS</i> Professional Development Framework
Arts Laboratory School Track	<u>Year 1:</u> VTS Professional Development Institute (2 teams per school); AC Training (all art teachers); Art Immersion Week – ELA / Reading; Progression Workshops
	<u>Year 2:</u> VTS Professional Development Institute (2 teams per school); VTS Lead Teacher Institute (2 teachers per school); AC Training (all art teachers); Art Immersion Week – Mathematics; Progression Workshops
	<u>Year 3:</u> VTS Practicum; VTS Lead Teacher Institute (2 teachers per school); Art Immersion Week – Science; Progression Workshops
	<u>Year 4:</u> VTS Practicum; VTS Lead Teacher Institute (2 teachers per school); Art Immersion Week – Social Studies; Progression Workshops
New	<u>Year 1:</u> VTS Professional Development Institute (1 team per school); AC Training

School	(all art teachers); Art Immersion Week – Language Arts / Reading
Track	Year 2: VTS Professional Development Institute (1 team per school); AC Training (all art teachers); Art Immersion Week – Mathematics
	Year 3: VTS Practicum, Art Immersion Week – Science; Progression Workshops
	Year 4: VTS Practicum, Art Immersion Week–Social Studies; Progression Workshops

2) Meaningful Community Partnerships: Implementation of *Pontiac GAINS* will be a collaborative effort connecting targeted Pontiac School District schools with outstanding arts partners, including: Oakland University Department of Music, Theatre and Dance, Progression, Inc., Detroit Institute of Arts and the Oakland County Intermediate School District.

- Oakland University Department of Music, Theatre and Dance: The Oakland University Department of Music, Theatre and Dance offers world class performances and diverse education outreach programs with a long history of excellence and success. *Pontiac GAINS* will enable PSD schools to participate in OU workshops that better prepare teachers and administrators to implement successful arts integration programs. *GAINS* will link PSD educators with Oakland University professors to provide follow-up coaching and modeling designed to build teacher confidence/competency in arts integration instructional techniques.
- Progression, Inc.: Progression is a recognized community leader in arts programming, arts education and youth outreach. Progression Teaching Artists deliver outstanding resources and programming and offer an exceptional opportunity for schools to access local artists and arts education resources. Progression offers year-round student education programs and will expand current teacher development programs in partnership with *Pontiac GAINS* schools.
- Detroit Institute of Arts: The Detroit Institute of Arts is a dynamic, education-oriented museum that serves as a center for interdisciplinary learning that enriches the entire Metro Detroit community. The museum promotes growth in student and scholar knowledge of the arts and cultivates aesthetic sensibility across a diverse audience. DIA seeks to achieve these goals through its commitment to collect, preserve, research, interpret, instruct and present significant works of art and design from all periods of history. Varied programming is

designed to meet the educational/cultural needs of Michigan’s highly diverse population and to foster intellectual discourse among faculty/students/staff and community. *Pontiac GAINS* will strengthen school bonds with an important cultural resource serving teachers, students and families through exploration of visual arts/guided learning through aesthetic experiences.

- Oakland County Intermediate School District: Oakland ISD serves 28 local school districts (including Pontiac). The ISD works with these districts, to help each one preserve its own unique identity, respect its special needs, and deliver quality educational programs to every student in Oakland County. Working closely with the Michigan Department of Education, Oakland ISD will assist Pontiac teachers as they strive to meet and exceed the Michigan Arts Education Content Standards and Benchmarks through grade level integrated arts curricula, professional development and related activities.

The chart below identifies key partners and summarizes the critical roles and responsibilities each will fulfill during the grant period:

GAINS Partner	Roles and Responsibilities
Pontiac School District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead applicant and fiscal agent. • Coordinate implementation of <i>Pontiac GAINS</i> programming. • Chair <i>Pontiac GAINS</i> Advisory Board and oversee grant activities. • Schedule professional development and recruit participants. • Collect data to fulfill control/treatment group evaluation requirements.
Partner Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify treatment teachers and control classrooms for comparison. • Encourage participation in professional development activities to promote arts integration and use of curricular programs (VTS / AC). • Collaborate with partners to provide classroom coaching / modeling. • Cooperate with evaluators to collect and analyze student data.
Visual Thinking Strategies / Art Connections Accredited Trainers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide professional development in research-based arts integration curricula – <i>Visual Thinking Strategies</i> and <i>Art Connections</i>. • Provide guidance to Pontiac teachers during the initial phase of VTS / AC implementation in classrooms.

<p>Oakland University Classroom Coaching</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify professors with expertise in diverse art media. • Guide Pontiac teachers in arts integration across core curricular subjects. • Help Pontiac schools locate and contract with appropriate arts educators with skills to meet identified priorities in both elementary/middle school. • Share resources to promote excellence, including: Eisenhower Dance Ensemble, Pontiac Oakland Symphony and Oakland Youth Orchestra
<p>Progression Teaching Artists</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with PSD to identify local Teaching Artists to coach and model arts integration lessons throughout the year. • Offer enrichment programs to teachers during Art Forum sessions. • Provide priority access to enrichment programs and summer camps to Pontiac youth from participating <i>Pontiac GAINS</i> schools.
<p>Detroit Institute of Arts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide teacher and student access to public and private collections to enhance arts resources available for integration across core curriculum. • Host VTS professional development trainings. • Offer docent-guided tours for students and their families to increase parent encouragement of student engagement in the arts.
<p>Oakland County Intermediate School District</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training in Content Standards, Benchmarks and GLCEs. • Support arts integration efforts as liaison to Michigan Dept of Education • Clearinghouse to replicate/disseminate efforts among member schools

Supplementary Arts Learning Experiences: The majority of students in the Pontiac School District have never seen a play or a musical, nor have they ventured beyond the twenty mile radius of Pontiac. Detroit offers a wealth of cultural arts programming and *Pontiac GAINS* promises to broaden the horizons of high-needs students by offering monthly artistic appreciation experiences in the district, including visitation by: the Detroit Chamber Winds, Eisenhower Dance Ensemble, Plowshares Theatre and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. Field trips will include places like: the Detroit Opera Hall, Orchestra Hall, Fischer, Fox and Gem Theaters. By exposing students to a variety of artistic performances, positive role models are created, allowing young people to view a more positive future for themselves and their community.

Progression ‘Camp of Modern Arts’: The goal of this summer camp experience is to provide youth with a positive, engaging and life changing program dedicated to the betterment of their community. The camp will engage students in the study of music, film, dance and visual arts, concluding with a multi-media concert showcasing their talents. With combined efforts of outreach, social education and artistic instruction, this program will serve as the impetus for a cultural renaissance in Pontiac youth. The camp will have Music Performance, Music Composition, Hip Hop Instruction, Film, Dance and Visual Arts. In addition to cultivating a wide range of artistic disciplines, this program will also teach students the importance of investing into the development of their community.

Vocabulary and Writing Workshops: Each vocabulary and writing workshop presentation will contain rap and authentic jazz, will engage students AND faculty and introduce grade specific vocabulary words. All content is aligned with the Michigan Department of Education’s Grade Level Content Expectations (GLCEs).

- The Expanding Vocabulary Presentation tackles the challenge of learning new words, understanding their meaning and finding ways to use them in every day speech. Each new piece of vocabulary will be used in a hip hop song to help students understand its meaning and usage.
- The Writing Series will teach several vocabulary words and provide in-depth analysis of different styles of writing. Topics include: “Telling Your Story”- Creating a Narrative; “Your Thesis”-How to build argument/support your claim; and “Poetry”-Art of Rhyming.
- Students will also have the chance to write lyrics to a song that will be performed to solidify the vocabulary and concepts learned, making writing a fun and engaging experience for everyone.

c. The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance. Building Local Capacity:

Pontiac GAINS will be the single source of content-rich arts professional development and arts integration programming available to teachers and students in Pontiac schools and will greatly

increase the diversity, quality and breadth of resources in classrooms. Design of the program by the planning Task Force (based on analysis of current gaps and weaknesses) targeted three stages of capacity growth: 1) Short-term Impacts; 2) Mid-term Impacts and 3) Long-term Impacts.

1) Short-term Impacts – Immediately upon implementation of the program, teachers will benefit from outstanding professional learning experiences and expanded access to classroom resources / instructional support:

- Teachers will benefit from the infusion of exceptional partner resources that improve the diversity of tools available for arts integration in Pontiac classrooms;
- Professional learning opportunities will increase teacher motivation to further develop personal skills, content knowledge and pedagogy expertise while incentives (stipends / continuing education credits) reward participation;
- Training in research-based curricular programs and arts-based instruction will increase teacher confidence to fully embrace arts integration and will reinvigorate instruction in core curricular subjects with culturally relevant arts that interest / engage young learners.

2) Mid-term Impacts – During the middle stages of the program, participating schools will report early systemic changes and measure increased capacity to teach academic subjects utilizing arts-based instructional strategies that link classroom lessons to a revised / improved curriculum aligned to state standards and student developmental abilities:

- *Pontiac GAINS* will increase teacher content knowledge of diverse art media, improve ability to teach the arts and promote mastery of integration strategies (using *VTS* and *AC*) that infuse core subjects with the arts to reach a broad range of learners from low-performing schools;
- Teachers will develop a lasting rapport with peers and nurture the growth of professional learning communities that promote teacher excellence through support (Art Forum);
- Teachers will enter classrooms with renewed confidence to integrate complex curricular content and the arts with primary learning materials into interactive, age-appropriate lessons.

3) Long-term Impacts – As *Pontiac GAINS* comes to a close, participating schools will report positive outcomes and lasting change that benefit the entire school community:

- Expanded content knowledge gained after four years of exceptional professional development and coaching / modeling by Teaching Artists will increase teacher competency in arts integrated instruction and benefit youth across all grades;
- Tiered professional development strategies will equip PSD schools with a team of accredited trainers fluent in both *Visual Thinking Strategies* and *Art Connections* to promote district sustainability and district-based expansion of the program to serve more students;
- Early partnerships will evolve into lasting relationships between national arts organizations, Teaching Artists, local artists and targeted Pontiac faculty, resulting in a strong support network for teachers who strive to implement innovative teaching strategies;
- Student achievement will increase because enhanced instructional methods allow teachers to present content in an engaging, age-appropriate, accessible format that stimulates student interest in learning through culturally-appropriate references and primary arts resources;
- The creation of professional learning communities will link teachers across grade levels and schools to increase collaborative development of effective arts integrated lessons, activities and teaching techniques that engage students in rigorous yet creative academic study.

The cumulative result of short-term, mid-term and long-term impacts will be the increased capacity of schools to effectively engage youth in the study of the arts and academic subjects in integrated, rigorous, creative learning environments.

4. QUALITY OF PROJECT PERSONNEL.

Pontiac School District will commit local resources and grant funds to ensure qualified, experienced, dedicated administrators, curriculum specialists, arts professionals and grant personnel are engaged in the implementation of *Pontiac GAINS*. **a. Encouraging Traditionally**

Underrepresented Participants: *Pontiac GAINS* is designed to provide equal access to both employment and services across all stakeholder groups regardless of gender, age, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. Equal access is critical in our diverse school district and the planning Task Force and implementation Advisory Board has and will continue to search for solutions that break down language and cultural barriers that impede equal access

and successful outcomes. PSD will adhere to all Americans with Disabilities Act and GEPA 427 regulations in hiring/participation practices. **b. Qualified Grant Personnel:** Implementation of *Pontiac GAINS* will be a collaborative effort linking PSD, participating schools and arts partners. A dedicated team of educators and partners will coordinate management of the grant and completion of daily arts integration and grant activities. The *Pontiac GAINS* team will include: **Advisory Board:** During the planning stages, PSD established a planning Task Force comprised of school district administrators, arts education specialists and community advisors. The Task Force assessed district needs, researched effective practices and suggested key programming elements. During implementation, the Task Force will transition into the *Pontiac GAINS* Advisory Board. The Advisory Board will oversee grant implementation and establish critical procedures, including; 1) developing a consistent arts integration initiative across participating schools; 2) facilitating sustained and intensive professional development to prepare teachers for arts integration in K – 8 classrooms; 3) coordinating partner activities to connect PSD teachers with Teaching Artists and enrichment; 4) collaborating with evaluation team to conduct a rigorous, scientific evaluation of arts integration in Pontiac schools and 5) assessing the cultural / linguistic parameters impacting each school to identify strategies for overcoming language and cultural barriers that impede positive outcomes. The Advisory Board will meet quarterly to monitor progress, review evaluation data to assess outcomes and disseminate results to all stakeholders. **Project Director:** PSD will appoint Dr. Robert Martin to serve as Interim Project Director until a full-time (1.0 FTE) Project Director responsible for all aspects of *Pontiac GAINS* can be hired. The PD will devote 100% of his/her time to *Pontiac GAINS* and will be responsible for overall completion of the project (see *Appendix* for resume). The Project Director will coordinate arts enrichment activities, update stakeholders, facilitate cooperation among partners, mentor teachers, provide opportunities for program improvement through project evaluation oversight and manage budget/fiscal responsibilities. Immersion in the project development process and working relationships with partners enables the PD to anticipate the needs of project personnel, ensure communication among stakeholders and guide

implementation along the proposed timeline. The PD will also be responsible for overseeing curriculum integration for all schools across all grade levels. **Arts Integration Teams:** Each participating school will identify and train Arts Integration Teams comprised of classroom educators from each grade level served at the site. Elementary and middle school Arts Integration Teams will complete partner training in *Visual Thinking Strategies* and *Art Connections*, work with Teaching Artists in classrooms and promote student and family participation in enrichment activities. Team members will participate in Art Forum professional learning communities and serve as school-wide arts integration resources. Each school will sustain at least one Arts Integration Team. **Lead Teachers:** Each school will identify a Lead Teacher who will serve as a school-wide resource for colleagues, facilitate Art Forum activities, attend VTS Lead Teacher Institutes to promote expansion and sustainability of the initiative, recruit peers for training events, schedule student enrichment activities and collaborate with evaluators to collect individual school data. Lead Teachers will be the primary link connecting classroom teachers to grant managers. **Evaluators:** EduShift, Inc. – an independent evaluation firm – will design and complete a scientific evaluation of all *Pontiac GAINS* project activities. The evaluation team will consist of a Principal Investigator who will oversee the evaluation process and evaluation specialists and support staff who will facilitate ongoing communication between district administrators, teachers and the evaluation team. Members of the evaluation team will conduct regular site visits at each participating school, collect and analyze data and monitor implementation of project activities in comparison to the proposed timeline. EduShift personnel will present outcomes and analysis of *Pontiac GAINS* to the Project Director, Advisory Board and district administrators. **Partnership Coordinators:** Each partner has identified a Coordinator who will oversee partner activities and ensure completion of services.

Partner	Coordinators
Pontiac School District (PSD)	Dr. Thomas Maridada, Superintendent
<i>Pontiac GAINS</i>	Dr. Robert Martin, Interim Project Director
Oakland University	Jackie Wiggins, Department Chair

Progression, Inc.	Damien Crutcher, Executive Director
Detroit Institute of Arts	Graham W. J. Beal, Executive Director

5. QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN.

a. *The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.* While Pontiac School District – applicant and fiscal agent – is ultimately responsible for administering *Pontiac GAINS*, the project is designed to foster a collaborative decision-making process linking district administrators, participating schools and partners. District administrators and liaisons from each school will prioritize gaps identified during the Task Force needs assessment and will work with PSD to coordinate delivery of services across schools and communities. **Implementation Oversight:** In determining the success of the project and facilitating continuous improvement, PSD will contract with external evaluation team to provide objective, third-party progress monitoring and feedback. Evaluation feedback will provide the data needed to facilitate data-driven decisions regarding implementation. The Advisory Board will convene quarterly progress monitoring meetings to review implementation, compare process outcomes to Timeline benchmarks and review evaluation data to inform modifications needed to best meet the changing needs of students and schools. **Timeline (see page 40):** *Pontiac GAINS* will commence immediately upon receipt of an *Arts in Education* grant award. While project elements are scheduled to begin during the first month of implementation, the delivery of all services will occur during the 48-month project period from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2014. The timeline (see last page of Narrative – attached to end of Evaluation) details the completion of significant administrative and program tasks during the four-year grant period. **Budget Oversight:** *Pontiac GAINS* will serve Pontiac School District, high-needs elementary and middle schools and community agencies, all collaborating to maximize the use of federal funding, local funds, in-kind services and district / partner resources. The planning Task Force designed the budget to meet program goals and objectives, emphasizing the need to expand the capacity of current arts integration programming

in underserved schools. The budget is fiscally efficient while providing sufficient funds for comprehensive programming. The Project Director and PSD Office of Finance will manage expenditures in accordance with State of Michigan school-spending regulations and will prioritize allocations to ensure complete implementation of the project. The Project Director and Advisory Board will review expenditures/implementation progress during quarterly meetings to set priorities/identify opportunities for collaboration with complementary district/local programs.

b. The extent to which the time commitments of the project director and principal investigator and other key project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the proposed project. Through strong program management and clearly defined responsibilities for key project personnel, Pontiac School District will ensure the success and continued improvement of *Pontiac GAINS*. Implementation of the project and delivery of services to participating schools will be a collaborative effort involving program managers, evaluators, partners and PSD teachers. Project management will include the following personnel who will commit appropriate time and resources to *Pontiac GAINS* (see *Personnel* section for roles, responsibilities and qualifications and *Appendix* for Job Descriptions and Resumes):

Project Personnel	Time Commitment
Project Supervisor – Dr. Tom Maridada	0.20 FTE
Project Director – Dr. Robert Martin	1.0 FTE
<i>Pontiac GAINS</i> Advisory Board	Quarterly Meetings
Partner Coordinators (one per partner)	0.25 FTE
Arts Integration Teams	Daily classroom instruction; Bi-monthly Art Forum meetings; professional development activities
Lead Teachers (one per school)	Bi-Weekly Meetings plus project participation
Evaluation Team – EduShift, Inc.	Monthly progress monitoring calls, site visits, annual performance reporting, ongoing data analysis

c. The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project. The *Pontiac GAINS* Advisory Board will meet regularly with

administrators and faculty of each participating school throughout implementation of the project to ensure continuous communication. The evaluation team, EduShift, Inc., will track *Pontiac GAINS* data to assure that activities are accomplished on time and within budget. Student, parent and teacher surveys will provide valuable feedback regarding the effectiveness of program elements, allowing the Advisory Board to implement a project that responds to the changing needs of our targeted students, families and schools. Review of student portfolios will provide managers and the Advisory Board with observational data that reflects the overall direction/impact of the program. Survey feedback will play a key role. Adjustments to project elements based on qualitative and quantitative data will guide improvement. Meaningful feedback will be critical to the success of the project. The Project Director and EduShift personnel will monitor program elements, suggesting improvements as needed for continuous progress toward goals and objectives and improved integration of arts education in Pontiac elementary and middle school classrooms.

6. QUALITY OF THE PROJECT EVALUATION.

Pontiac School District plans to contract with EduShift, Inc., a 10-year-old research / evaluation organization, to implement a management oversight program providing for continuous quality improvement throughout the duration of *Pontiac GAINS*. Principal Investigator and Senior Analyst, Carol Guse, is a seasoned grants administrator and evaluator. She has served as principal investigator in over 100 large Federal and state government grants since 1990 and has been a field instructor with Indiana University and St. Francis College. She has substantial experience administering complex Federal, state, corporate and foundation grants and has served as an evaluator for the U.S. Department of Education, Michigan and Indiana Departments of Education, as well as dozens of school districts throughout the country. With a strong background in education, grants administration, accounting, auditing, research and program implementation, Guse, and her team of grants professionals will offer tremendous experience and expertise to *Pontiac GAINS*.

a. The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible. Evaluation of the project will measure critical academic performance indicators to assess the impact arts integration programming has on student outcomes and achievement. Evaluation will assess project progress in relation to two Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) performance indicators identified by the U.S. Department of Education:

- (1) The percentage of students participating in arts model projects funded through the AEMDD Program who demonstrate proficiency in mathematics compared to those in control or comparison groups; and
- (2) The percentage of students participating in arts model projects who demonstrate proficiency in reading compared to those in control or comparison groups.

Specific performance indicators will assess outcomes across all goals and project components:

<i>Pontiac GAINS – Arts in Education grant</i> Outcome Objectives: July 1, 2010 - June 30, 2014	Performance Indicator (Evaluation Documentation)
GPRA Performance Measure 1: The percentage of students participating in arts model projects funded through the AEMDD Program who demonstrate proficiency in mathematics compared to those in control or comparison groups.	MEAP state assessment scores in Mathematics Grades 3, 5, 8
GPRA Performance Measure 2: The percentage of students participating in arts model projects who demonstrate proficiency in reading compared to those in control or comparison groups.	MEAP state assessment scores in English Language Arts/Reading Grades 3, 5, 8
Goal 1: Increase student achievement in core subjects thru arts integration.	
Indicator 1.1 Student achievement – treatment group – in core curricular areas (ELA, math, science and social studies) will increase 15% by 6/30/14	Pre and post testing, student grades, exit exam scores
Indicator 1.2 Use of <i>VTS & Art Connections</i> interventions will improve student ability to create and respond to the arts by 10% per year, 7/1/10 - 6/30/14	Classroom observations / performance evals, surveys
Goal 2: Enhance teacher content knowledge of the arts.	

Indicator 2.1 Integration of the arts into core classroom lessons will increase by 15% per year during course of <i>Pontiac GAINS</i> , 7/1/10 - 6/30/14	Lesson plans, <i>Pontiac GAINS</i> PD classroom observations
Indicator 2.2 100% of treatment group teachers will attend professional development activities throughout the duration of the grant, 7/1/10 - 6/30/14	Attendance logs, shared data, implementation in classrooms
Goal 3: Implement research-based arts in education model programs.	
Indicator 3.1 Innovative teaching techniques learned during <i>Visual Thinking Strategies</i> will be integrated into current instructional methods, 7/1/10 - 6/30/14	Written lesson plans, teacher observations by grant staff
Indicator 3.2 Innovative teaching techniques learned during <i>Art Connections</i> will be integrated into current instructional methods, 7/1/10 - 6/30/14	Written lesson plans, teacher observations by grant staff
Goal 4: Provide students with supplementary arts learning experiences.	
Indicator 4.1 30% of treatment group students will participate in supplementary arts enrichment activities each year, 7/1/10 - 6/30/14	Attendance logs, student portfolios, student journals

b. The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

Rigorous Experimental Design: Pontiac School District, in collaboration with EduShift personnel, will design and complete a randomized controlled trial (RCT) of *Pontiac GAINS* interventions. Evaluation at each grade level K-8 will include random assignment each year of 50 students per grade level to a treatment group and 50 per grade level to a control group. The randomized controlled trial (RCT) is arguably the most scientifically-rigorous type of design for assessing causal relationships between an intervention and observed outcomes. But the application of RCT can be problematic when researchers apply random assignment to promising programs that exclude needy students. PSD has addressed this issue by carefully outlining the requirements of the *Pontiac GAINS* grant with each participating school, to ensure that they could make an informed decision about whether they would participate. All five schools participating in the grant – Alcott Elementary, Jefferson/Whittier Elementary, Owen Elementary, Whitman Elementary and Pontiac Arts Lab Middle – are committed to implementing the interventions and the associated rigorous evaluation requirements according to the plans

described in this application. Within schools, there are no recruitment issues, since both school-wide and targeted interventions will be considered part of the normal educational activities the schools provide. For other evaluation activities, such as student surveys, that are not part of the schools' normal educational activities, EduShift, Inc., *Pontiac GAINS* external evaluator, will prepare materials and procedures to secure parental consent allowing students to participate in such activities. EduShift has ample experience in preparing relevant surveys and in securing parental consent to gather student responses. **Power Analysis** - The proposed project, which will start with 900 students (treatment and control group) and add to that number each year, will have adequate power to detect meaningful differences associated with program delivery, should such differences exist. Although different inferential tests and statistical estimators have different power formulations associated with them, in general, statistical power is influenced by three major factors: the size of the effect in the population (termed effect size, [ES]), the size of the sample used to estimate the population parameter, and the size of the Type I error rate selected for inferential testing. For a comparison of means between two groups, the effect size represents the difference between the means divided by their common standard deviation. Power can be increased by designing the research to include blocking of subjects and use of a covariate. The proposed research design involves the random assignment of students into two groups (treatment and control), by grade level, within each of the five participating schools. Thus, students are blocked by school, which helps control for school-level variation in student performance on the outcome measure (since students are likely to be more similar to other students in the same school than to students in different schools). For the first year of the study, each student will complete a pre-test standardized, norm-referenced assessment, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills – ITBS, at the beginning of the school year and a corresponding post-test at the end of the school year. The pre-test is thus a covariate for the post-test, accounting for pre-intervention individual differences on the outcome measure. Blocking and the use of a pre-test covariate decrease the common standard deviation and therefore increase both the effect size and power. **Attrition** – We know from experience that not all 900 students who start the project will remain in either

treatment or control groups at the completion of the grant. Attrition is natural in scientific studies and must be acknowledged during the evaluation design process. In constructing a valid evaluation, EduShift and PSD administrators prepared for a 20% annual attrition rate. Taking into account school mobility and possible attrition, the proposed research design still involves the random assignment of approximately 500 students, K – 8, given an anticipated 20% exit rate of targeted students. Though an initial design that includes 900 students is preferable, an end group of 500 students during Year 4 is sufficient to yield valid results in a treatment / no-treatment control design. We assume a Type I error rate (“alpha”) of .05, a two-tailed test of significance, and a t-test for independent samples comparing the treatment and control groups. We also make the following conservative assumptions: blocking accounts for a proportion of variance in the dependent variable of .05 (In 2001, Raudenbush and Liu reported that the intra-class correlation for U.S. data sets on school achievement typically range from .05 to .15); the pre- and post-intervention covariate measure yields a correlation of at least .7, which represents .49 of variance accounted for by the covariate measure. (In 1990, Lipsey noted that the correlation between the pre-test covariate and the post-test often approaches the measure’s test-retest reliability coefficient). Together, these two sources of control account for about .55 of the variance in the dependent measure. Thus, the proposed study has a power of .91 to detect an effect size as small as .20, based on procedures described in Lipsey, 1990. In other words, the proposed study has high power to detect an effect even smaller than the size expected (i.e., .4). **Student Assignment** – Finally, we turn to the question of allocating students to treatment and control conditions in proportions that allow the greatest number of students to be served without compromising the power of the evaluation design. Other factors notwithstanding, power is maximized when an equal number of students is assigned to each condition. Within limits, the number in one condition (e.g., control) can be reduced if the number in the other condition (e.g., treatment) is increased (Lipsey, 1990). The power calculations presented above would hold if the treatment group was increased by 1.1 (to 275) and the control group decreased by .9 (to 225). **Random Assignment Procedures** – We propose to employ a blocked design in which

randomization to treatment versus control status occurs at the student level within each of the *Pontiac GAINS* schools. The pool of eligible students, identified solely by numerical codes, not names, will be provided to EduShift by the district. EduShift will use a random number generator to produce a list of random numbers (e.g., 0 for control and 1 for treatment) in the same quantity as the sample that can be accommodated at each school, then will assign student identification numbers to treatment or control status according to the random list. Upon assignment of the initial group of 900 students, assigned students will remain in either the treatment or control groups for the duration of the study. EduShift then will return the assignments to the schools to be matched with the students' identities so that targeted services can commence for the students assigned to receive them. EduShift will maintain the list of assignments and PSD will assume responsibility for ensuring that students are placed in appropriate groups based on random assignments. PSD administrators will track participating students to monitor attrition throughout the study and to ensure students receive the correct treatment based on random assignments as they progress from one grade level to the next. Professional development will be required for teachers in the participating schools so that evaluation requirements are fully explained – understanding will help to ensure compliance.

Contamination / Attrition Controls – Evaluation will include periodic assessments of possible cross-contamination of control and targeted students. Documentation of such contamination (or its potential), by the evaluators, and prompt remediation by the Project Director and Task Force will be performed. Attrition levels were taken into account in initial discussions between PSD and evaluators, and the study was powered to handle projected attrition. Also, in any given year, a large percentage of students who leave the school enroll in another school in the same district. If the new school is also a participant in the project, the project will track that student and continue to provide appropriate treatment or control experiences for that student. In this way, attrition will be reduced. The district estimates 20% attrition from the schools per year which takes into account the specific stability rates for each school in the study, uses a weighting of stability proportional to the rates observed at elementary schools versus middle schools, and adds

five additional percentage points for attrition from the program due to factors other than stability. As described in the section that follows, the power analysis shows that the study is amply powered to withstand 20% attrition per year. **Integrity of Sample** – To ensure that results are not contaminated by adding students to either treatment or control groups as the study progresses, the initial sample of 900 students will be the sole sample. While additional students can participate in *Pontiac GAINS* activities as district capacity increases during grant implementation, they will not be included in outcome measurements. Pontiac School District wants to serve as many students as possible with arts integration programming, but for the purposes of the randomized control evaluation, only the initial cohort of students will be assessed. **Implementation Analysis** – The successful evaluation of *Pontiac GAINS* depends to a great extent on careful specification of what it means to provide an intervention and what it means to achieve desired outcomes from an intervention. Simply put, we cannot arrive at a scientifically-rigorous answer to the question, “Is it effective?” until we have carefully specified what “it” is and what “effective” means. For this reason, we will treat the strength and fidelity of program implementation and the achievement of outcomes as complementary focal points throughout the evaluation. EduShift will collaborate with the substantive program experts to define program fidelity requirements and design tools for measuring the level of implementation of the treatment. EduShift will carefully specify measurements of outcomes that relate directly to empirically-defined components of artistic/academic skill. During the fall of 2010, before the professional development or student interventions begin, the evaluators will collaborate with Pontiac School District to conduct a contextual analysis of the existing art integration efforts. This analysis will help evaluators identify and interpret possible differences in school ability to implement the program and may also help identify explanations in the event that some schools are more successful than others in achieving the desired outcomes. Indicators of implementation will be developed in the fall of 2010 and the spring of 2011. Measures of targeted implementation, along with the sources of data to be collected, will be recorded several times per year at each school, and will commence with observations of professional development activities

during the 2010-11 school year. Throughout the school year, site visits will include observations of the targeted intervention. Results of the individual measures of implementation will be entered into a composite implementation scorecard, the completion of which will result in school-wide implementation score, a targeted implementation score and a combined score. Scores will be entered into some of the outcome analyses (described in the following section) to determine whether relative strengths of implementation are reliably associated with strengths of observed outcomes. **Administration of Assessments** – To measure the impact arts integration has on student achievement, evaluators will analyze performance on state-administered and standardized assessments at multiple grade levels (MEAP grades 3, 5, 8 – ITBS grades K - 8) in each of the core curricular subjects (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies). Michigan Department of Education MEAP exams are administered on an annual basis; PSD will administer the ITBS using a pre-test (fall) post-test (spring) format to measure annual growth. **Assessment of Outcomes** – Data analysis for targeted students will proceed along three lines to determine: 1) the extent to which the *Pontiac GAINS* program was implemented with fidelity, 2) the extent to which students participated in the program, and 3) the effect of the program on student outcome measures. Fidelity will be assessed using an implementation checklist completed by staff responsible for arts integration in classrooms and by evaluators conducting site visits. In addition, sub-samples of both control students and targeted students will complete an annual survey designed to corroborate observational data by asking whether treatment students received certain critical components of the program (e.g., for targeted students, was instruction provided in small groups; was the instruction individualized, etc.). A sample of school staff will be interviewed each year to determine whether and how the school understands and supports the project. Evaluators will summarize survey/interview data using descriptive statistics and will provide periodic feedback to schools to help them monitor implementation progress. School-wide implementation fidelity labels – high, medium, or low – will be used in the analysis of student outcome measures. **Student Participation Measures** – Teachers will use attendance logs and journals in targeted intervention classrooms to record student participation in arts

integration activities to assess project “dosage.” Student outcomes will be measured by the assessments described previously. Outcome measures – focused on academic growth indicators – will be analyzed using a repeated measures analysis of covariance, with experimental condition (treatment and control) and school (i.e., blocks) as independent variables, program dosage and baseline assessment as covariates, and post-tests as dependent variables. This analytic approach will be applied at two levels: within the treatment group (to show the extent to which the targeted students improve their artistic/academic skills) and between the treatment and control groups (to show the extent to which the gains made by treatment students exceed those of the control group). Information obtained during site visits and interviews will be summarized qualitatively to reveal key themes and variations on those themes. These qualitative results will provide contextual information to inform the interpretation of the quantitative data.

Feedback Promoting Improvement and Dissemination of Results: PSD and project partners will collaborate to collect qualitative and quantitative data needed to promote continuous project improvement through data-driven decision-making. Dissemination of project strategies and results will promote replication of successful *Pontiac GAINS* elements, thereby increasing the impact of programming and maximizing efficiency of federal funds. **Continuous Feedback –** Management oversight by EduShift, Inc. will provide for effective, ongoing monitoring of progress toward all *Pontiac GAINS* goals and outcome objectives. Progress will be evaluated during regular meetings scheduled throughout program implementation. The *Pontiac GAINS* Advisory Board and administrators will review Interim and Annual Performance Reports – developed by EduShift – required by the U.S. Department of Education. Evaluators will prepare in-depth analysis. Recommended program changes proposed by EduShift staff will be considered for implementation as needed to ensure successful outcomes. Teacher, student, parent and administrator surveys will provide ongoing feedback to help grant managers improve program elements, strengthen identified weaknesses and recommend changes – within the scope of the grant and within the parameters of the evaluation design – that promote continuous improvement and a more effective delivery of services. The Timeline found in the *Management*

Plan outlines the broad scope of the work, data collection parameters and the persons responsible. **Replication Strategies** – One of the chief aims of the Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination grant is to achieve the common goal of *Pontiac GAINS*: sharing the challenges and successes of ongoing work in arts education. The ability of arts education projects to report trends found in carefully-designed research promises to bring growth and attention to all forms of art media. Working hand-in-hand with Oakland University arts professors and Progression teaching artists promises a magnitude of results that can yield local, regional and national outcomes. *Pontiac GAINS* will include continuous sharing of ideas and lessons learned, collegial review, and dissemination of strategies to promote replication of the model:

- *Pontiac GAINS*' web portal will serve as an online library of arts integration curricula, lesson plans, instructional resources and primary source teaching tools for Pontiac School District educators and a broad stakeholder audience;
- *GAINS* personnel will make the development and dissemination of grant products and results available through Open Educational Resources (OER), a public domain for teaching, learning and research.
- Key lesson components for planning, teaching, and assessment; *Visual Thinking Strategies* and *Art Connections* pedagogical tools;
- Distinct and shared roles of Teaching Artists and classroom teachers in teaching the arts;
- Strategies for data collection, analysis, and interpretation, using all forms of arts media;
- Viable arts and traditional assessments that describe learning gains to students/families;
- Authentic academic measures that are aligned with Michigan State and NAEA National arts learning standards, benchmarks and Grade Level Content Expectations.

Pontiac School District looks forward to implementing *GAINS* as the new superintendent works tirelessly to create “A World Class School District” where students come first!

Pontiac GAINS : Timeline, Milestones and Responsible Parties

KEY: Administration (AD); Project Director (PD); Arts Integration Team (AIT); Lead Teachers (LT); Art Teachers (AT); Oakland U. Dept of Music, Theater and Dance (OU); Progression, Inc. (PI); Detroit Institute of Arts (DIA); *Visual Thinking Strategies* (VTS); *Art Connections* (AC); Teaching Artists (TA); Evaluation Team (ET); Curriculum Team (CT); Advisory Board (AB); Annual Performance Report (APR); Open Educational Resources (OER)

ONGOING: Quarterly Advisory Board Meetings (AB, PD, LT); Bi-Monthly Art Forum Professional Learning Community meetings (LT, AIT, PD); Evaluation data collection and data analysis (ET, PD); Arts integration in Core Curricular subjects (AIT, LT)

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Quarter 1 (July – September)			
1.Assume finances; hire PD (AD) 2.Review evaluation plan, verify/ gather baseline data (PD, ET) 3.Schedule Year 1 training / Art Immersion Week (PD, AB, LT) 4. Recruit teachers for AIT (PD)	1. Review evaluation plan, verify/ gather baseline data (PD, ET) 2.Schedule Year 2 training / Art Immersion Week (PD, AB, LT) 3. Recruit teachers for AIT (PD) 4. Convene Curriculum Team (PD)	1. Review evaluation plan, verify/ gather baseline data (PD, ET) 2.Schedule Year 3 training / Art Immersion Week (PD, AB, LT) 3. Student summer activities (PI) 4. Recruit teachers for AIT (PD)	1.Review evaluation plan, verify/ gather baseline data (PD, ET) 2.Schedule Year 4 training / Art Immersion Week (PD, AB, LT) 3. Recruit teachers for AIT (PD) 4. Continue sustainability plan (All)
Quarter 2 (October – December)			
1. VTS Professional Development Institute (PD, LT, AIT, VTS) 2. AC training (PD, Art Teachers) 3. Develop web portal (All)	1. VTS Professional Development Institute & Lead Teacher Institute (PD, LT, AIT, VTS) 2. AC training (PD, Art Teachers)	1. VTS Professional Development / VTS Lead Teacher Institutes, VTS Practicum (PD, LT, AIT, VTS) 2. AC training (PD, Art Teachers)	1. VTS Lead Teacher Institute & VTS Practicum (PD, LT, AIT, VTS) 2. AC training (PD, Art Teachers) 3. After school student workshops (PI)
Quarter 3 (January – March)			
1.Conduct Art Immersion English Language Arts / Reading Week (PD, LT, OU, PI, AIT) 2. Schedule student enrichment activities (PD, LT, PI, DIA)	1.Conduct Art Immersion Math Week (PD, LT, OU, PI, AIT) 2. Schedule student enrichment activities (PD, LT, PI, DIA) 3. Share results with OER (PD)	1.Conduct Art Immersion Science Week (PD, LT, OU, PI, AIT) 2. Schedule student enrichment activities (PD, LT, PI, DIA) 3. Begin sustainability planning (all)	1.Conduct Art Immersion Social Studies Week (PD, LT, OU, PI) 2. Schedule student enrichment activities (PD, LT, PI, DIA) 3. Collect final evaluation data (ET)
Quarter 4 (April – June)			
1.Conduct student enrichment (PD) 2.Gather test data/surveys (ET, PD) 3.Prepare Yr 2 program (All) 4.Submit Yr 1 APR (PD, AB, ET) 5.Present project results (PD, AB)	1.Conduct student enrichment (PD) 2.Gather test data/surveys (ET, PD) 3.Prepare Yr 3 program (All) 4.Submit Yr 2 APR (PD, AB, ET) 5.Present project results (PD, AB)	1.Conduct student enrichment (PD) 2.Gather test data/surveys (ET, PD) 3.Prepare Yr 4 program (All) 4. Submit Yr 3 APR (PD, AB, ET) 5.Present project results (PD, AB)	1.Conduct student enrichment (PD) 2.Gather test data/surveys (ET, PD) 3.Submit Final Performance Rpt (ET) 4.Implement sustainability strategies (PD, AB, LT, ET)