

Introduction

The proposed consortium, *Impacting Literacy in Rural Kansas Districts*, is a unique project consisting of thirteen local education agencies (LEA) in Kansas. All LEAs were selected based upon their eligibility as a high-need local educational agency according to the 2010 Census data provided by the US Department of Education. LEAs were also selected based upon their designation under the Small Rural Achievement program (SRSA) or the Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) program authorized under Title VI, Part B of ESEA.

Table 1 – Consortium Districts, Number of Students, Poverty Indicators

LEA Name	LEA Code	% Pov-erty	SRSA	Estimated Birth to Age 5	Total Students (K-12)	Free/Reduced Lunches (K-12)
West Elk USD 282	2007500	25.31%	Eligible	112	326	56.75%
Erie USD 101	2006000	27.37%	Eligible	140	542	61.99%
Pittsburg USD 250	2010710	25.11%		972	2,846	64.02%
Marmaton Vly 256	2009660	33.54%	Eligible	72	328	62.80%
Elk Valley USD 283	2005760	26.95%	Eligible	48	179	74.30%
Chautauqua USD 286	2011520	25.74%	Eligible	120	372	59.41%
Pleasanton USD 344	2010770	31.84%	Eligible	92	331	65.56%
Riverton USD 404	2011130	25.63%		296	819	54.95%
Marais Des Cygnes 456	2009480	29.08%	Eligible	72	297	60.27%
Columbus USD 493	2005070	26.85%		308	1,066	54.50%
Galena USD 499	2006360	28.89%		216	830	73.61%
Oswego USD 504	2010350	27.57%	Eligible	152	499	58.92%

Baxter Springs 508	2003810	26.92%		316	1,043	61.46%
Total				2,916	9,478	62.20%

(a) Significance (10 points). (i) Likelihood to build capacity to expand services

While there is little ethnic diversity within the 13 consortium districts, they still face socioeconomic factors that put them at risk of academic failure. The 13 districts included in this project are comprised of primarily white students (86.6%) followed by Hispanic students (4.2%), and American Indian at 3.1%. The greatest diversity observed in this consortium is in Pittsburg School District USD 250 with 72.7% white, 4.1% black, 12.9% Hispanic, and 7.8% multi-race. As noted in Table 1, these districts are facing high rates of poverty. The average Free and Reduced Lunch Rate for all 13 school districts as reported by the Kansas State Department of Education is 62.2%. Elk Valley observed the highest Free and Reduced Lunch Rate of the consortium at 74.3% while Columbus exhibited the lowest Free and Reduced Lunch Rate at 54.5%. Additionally, the average poverty rate for all 13 communities is 27.75%. The highest poverty rate of the 13 districts is observed at Marmaton Valley with a rate of 33.54% and the lowest poverty rate is 25.11% at Pittsburg.

There is an extensive amount of research indicating the strong correlation between high poverty and academic failure. In fact, children from poor families are twice as likely to repeat a grade level and close to 10 times more likely to drop out of high school (Rokosa, 2011). Early childhood is the most crucial period of development for children. Children of poverty often do not have access to the same educational and developmental tools as children from higher-income families. It is estimated that children from professional families are exposed to 45 million words by the age of four while children in working class families only hear about 22 million and

children in poverty are exposed to 13 million words (Risley and Hart, 1995). Additionally, more than two-thirds of households in poverty do not possess a single book that is developmentally appropriate for a child under five years old. In order to grow up emotionally healthy, children under the age of three need a caregiver that is strong, reliable, and provides consistent and unconditional love, guidance, and support. Children raised in poverty are much less likely to receive these needs than their more wealthy peers (Jensen, 2009). The proposed program is designed to remove any barriers to provide equal opportunities for all children to succeed.

(ii) Demonstration of new strategies building on existing strategies. (5 points)

This project will provide funding for four districts to expand **Study Island** to encompass all grade levels. As research shows, Study Island is a viable innovative program to increase student achievement. Study Island is a web-based program designed as a supplemental educational tool geared specifically to each individual state's achievement tests and is offered in all 50 states. Study Island's high impact, low cost Kansas and Common Core Standards mastery and Kansas State Assessment Preparation programs ensure that students receive quality academic support and practice. The Study Island Kansas State Assessment Preparation Program is specifically designed to help K-12 students improve performance in all skill areas tested on the Kansas State Assessment and master knowledge and skills outlined in the Kansas Academic Standards and Common Core Standards. Study Island utilizes a user-friendly interface, allowing students to move through the program step-by-step. Each section has a pretest and posttest and incorporates research-based principles to support students and schools in meeting their goals in major content areas.

A case study conducted in multiple schools in 11 different states support the effectiveness of Study Island in impacting student achievement in a positive manner (Watts 2008). The study

employed a quasi-experimental framework with design variations by each case. Specifically the study addressed the significance in growth over time in student achievement after the students used Study Island, and the difference in student achievement between schools using Study Island and schools not using Study Island. The results from this analysis support the effectiveness of Study Island in impacting student achievement in a positive manner. In general student achievement improved within a grade level over the course of a year across grade levels after students began using Study Island. Schools using Study Island had higher achievement scores than schools not using Study Island within each state.

All districts will expand the **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library (IL)** for children ages three to five, extending the current opportunity provided through the Parents as Teachers (PAT) program for ages birth to three. In addition, children not currently enrolled in PAT will be provided book access through this program. According to the National Commission on Reading, reading aloud to kids is the single most important thing you can do in terms of making sure they develop literacy. Research shows that reading aloud to children promotes their development of language, vocabulary, even motor skills (as they learn to turn pages) (Education.com, 2012). IL works under the premise that early childhood literacy is what children know before they learn to read. Providing high quality, age-appropriate books directly to children's homes insures that every child will have books regardless of their family's income.

Research conducted in Alaska by University of Alaska Anchorage researchers on the Alaska IL program shows many positive impacts on the children and families using the program (Seitz, Capuozzo, 2011). The study indicated that after receiving books for at least one year, more parents (77%) reported reading to their child every day as compared to 64% prior to enrollment in IL. Additionally, the percentage of children reporting being enthusiastic to read

increased from 62.7% to 76.8% within one year of being enrolled in the program. Data from the study suggests receiving books on a monthly basis is having an impact on several key areas in regards to children's early literacy development. A case study in Central New York found that after four months in IL, the likelihood of children being read to every day doubled and kept increasing each month. After 29 months in the program, the likelihood leveled off at 99%. Additionally, a study in Middletown, Ohio, found that low-income families were affected more by IL in terms of the changes in parental behavior. In this study, nearly 98% of low-income families reporting reading to their child more frequently after enrolled in imagination library as compared to 69% of middle and upper-income households.

This project will establish **Parents as Teachers (PAT)** programming in four districts who currently do not provide this early childhood and literacy program. As demonstrated in the following research, children who participate in high quality early childhood programs develop better language skills, score higher on school-readiness tests and have better social skills and fewer behavioral problems once they enter school. Because it's the earliest parent interactions that lay the foundation for a child's social and emotional health and intellectual growth (building attachment, trust and emotional self-regulation), parents who become involved in their children's development and learning from birth continue that involvement and engagement as their children progress through school. Early childhood education must begin at birth.

The early years are important because they are the time when children acquire the basic skills that lay the foundation for school readiness and later school success. (Source: Weiss, Caspe and Lopez, Harvard Family Research Project, 2006.) Research conducted in 2007 demonstrated that children who participated in PAT were more prepared for kindergarten. In fact, the added value of PAT carried over to third- grade achievement. (Source: Zigler and Pfannenstiel, 2008.)

(b) **Quality of the project design** (20 points). (i) **Goals, objectives, and outcomes**

Impacting Literacy in Rural Kansas Districts has designed the following goals, objectives, and outcomes for this project. **Goal 1: To provide professional development opportunities in technology and differentiated instruction for library media specialists and teachers from consortium districts.** Objective: To improve classroom literacy instruction within each district through the use of technology twice a month. Twice per month, districts will receive an on-site visit from a technology facilitator to work directly with teachers and library media specialists (LMS) on integrating technology within the classroom setting based upon needs identified through a technology needs assessment. In addition to these site visits, the facilitator will communicate with LMS and teachers through blogs, email, and telephone support. *Outcome: To increase teacher knowledge and skills in integrating technology and literacy across all core curriculum areas.*

Objective: To improve LMS and teacher rapport through the use of differentiated instruction methodologies once per semester. Each semester, library media specialists and teachers will have opportunities to participate in targeted specific training in differentiated instruction or other literacy based programming. This will ensure all participants will understand how to best provide instruction to all students based upon their readiness level, interests, and preferred mode of learning. *Outcome: To change teacher and library media specialists behavior and practice within the classroom to increase student literacy achievement.*

Objective: To increase LMS and teacher knowledge in literacy through a five-day summer institute format each summer of the project. Each summer, a five-day institute will be held for teachers and library media specialists of all participating consortium districts. The institute will be designed to help teachers and LMS make effective change by providing time, materials,

expertise, and support. The following design is based on content-based professional development and the professional development standards put forth by the National Staff Development Council (2000), Joyce and Showers (2000), and Loucks, et al. (1998).

All identified teachers and LMS will be involved in a study of content and pedagogy for integrating literacy skills and technology skills across the curriculum. A comprehensive needs assessment will be conducted for each district to determine areas of weakness and to help plan the summer institute for maximum effectiveness. A preliminary schedule of literacy content is provided below.

Sample Summer Institute Schedule (Year 1)	
Monday	Common Core and the role of the library; Collaborative planning for implementing literacy across the curriculum
Tuesday	Social media for library and literacy promotion, online resources; Integrating technology into the classroom (iPads, tablets, ebook platforms & devices)
Wednesday	Creative budgeting and collection development; Differentiated Instruction
Thursday	Website development with shared resources and places for interaction; Imbedding literacy into a districts' website and how to maximize the internet
Friday	How to involve parents effectively in literacy; Career and technical education and the role of literacy for middle and high school

As a component of the institute, participants will also be trained in the use of the Staff Development for Educator's model of differentiated instruction within the classroom. This training will provide them with strategies to include all students, regardless of their level of achievement and ability, in class participation. These strategies allow teachers to address different learning styles, diversity, and to meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of all

students. In addition, follow up work will be provided to each district on differentiated instruction throughout the school year.

Another component of the training will be the integration of technology within the classroom. Targeted needs, identified on the needs assessment, will be addressed by a technology facilitator who will work with teachers on technology integration through personal site visits. These sessions will be driven by data analysis, the needs of the individual teachers for their own learning, reviewing student work, modeling technology integration lessons, and other services as needed. Integration strategies will also be introduced during the summer institute and cover such topics as finding free online resources, use of social media for library and literacy promotion, tablets, iPads, and ebook platforms and devices.

Every attempt will be made to bring in nationally recognized experts in literacy training for the participants during the summer institutes. This will allow participants to interact and become aware of growing trends in literacy and strategies to reach even the most challenging students within the classroom. *Outcome: To modify teacher and library media specialist practice and ultimately improve the classroom environments for increased literacy among students.*

Goal 2: To provide opportunities and materials for parents and their children, birth to school age to promote literacy-rich home environments. Objective: To increase parental involvement through targeted, district specific trainings offered by KPIRC each year.

Each district will have an opportunity to work with the Kansas Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC) to increase parental involvement and awareness of literacy reinforcement within the home for a successful child. KPIRC provides materials both to support literacy and to support the State of Kansas' Multi-Tier System of Supports and Schoolwide Positive Behavior Supports. This includes materials such as *The Family Guide to Multi-Tier*

System of Supports, The Family Guide to Schoolwide Positive Behavior Supports, The Kansas MTSS: Innovation Configuration Matrix and the Kansas MTSS: Research Base. KPIRC utilizes a variety of formats to provide parents with information regarding literacy. This includes podcasts, hands-on trainings, and increasing parental awareness of how they can work with their child to reach literacy developmental milestones. More information regarding MTSS can be found in Project Design, section (iii). *Outcome: To increase parental awareness in early literacy and how they can provide solid foundational learning environments for their children.*

Objective: To expand the Parents As Teachers program within four districts who currently do not have access to the program within the first 3 months of the project. Parents As Teachers (PAT) is a home-based early childhood development program based on brain development and neuroscience research. The model consists of four components: personal visits by a certified parent educator; parent group meetings; developmental, health, vision and hearing screenings for young children; and connections to community resources.

During monthly **personal visits**, parent educators foster and support parental involvement as they: help parents learn to observe their child and read their child's cues; help parents understand typical development; help parents know what developmental milestones to expect next and empower them to act when they have concerns; affirm parents' skills and strengths; emphasize the child's emerging literacy skills by bringing books to every visit from infancy on and showing parents how to read to their child; show parents how to capitalize on opportunities to enhance their child's learning and development by using everyday resources and contexts; and help parents recognize teachable moments with their children. Parent **group meetings** provide opportunities to share information about parenting issues and child development. Parents learn and support each other, observe their children with other children,

and practice parenting skills. By bringing families together, families can forge deep relationships, thus contributing to stronger neighborhoods and school communities. Periodic **developmental, health, vision, and hearing screening** provides for early identification of developmental delays and health, vision and hearing problems. Regular review of each child's developmental progress identifies strengths and abilities as well as areas of concern that require referral for follow-up services. Parent educators help families identify and **connect with needed resources** and overcome barriers to accessing services. Programs take an active role in establishing ongoing collaborative relationships with other organizations that serve families.

Four districts within the consortium have previously provided PAT but due to budget cuts have had to eliminate the program over the past five years. In order to increase early childhood literacy, these four districts will be provided with the PAT program. These districts include: West Elk USD 282; Chautauqua County Community Schools USD 286; Pleasanton USD 344; and Columbus USD 493. West Elk USD 282 will contract with the Southeast Kansas Education Service Center to provide PAT services to these districts. *Outcome: To implement research-based practices to increase literacy at an early age.*

Objective: To increase children's access to books within the home through the expansion of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library throughout the project. In order to increase literacy for young children the *Impacting Literacy in Rural Kansas Districts* project will expand the Imagination Library. IL provides books for preschool children and their families each month, mailed to their home. These high-quality, age-appropriate books ensure *all* children have an equal opportunity to receive books regardless of their economic status.

Currently children enrolled in the PAT program are automatically enrolled and receive books through the age of three. This project will extend this program to children and their

families who are not currently enrolled in the PAT program, as well as expand the program for all children up to the age of five (school age) in consortium districts.

The SEKESC PAT Director will coordinate with the local PAT parent educators to identify additional children within each catchment area to expand this component of the project. This will ensure no duplication of efforts with children already receiving the benefit through their PAT programming. *Outcome: To motivate parents and young children to read, as well as impact the childrens' social and emotional development.*

Goal 3: To monitor continuous improvement through assessment and evaluation of students' reading/literary skills utilizing a triangular methodology. Objective: To increase student literacy achievement each year from baseline as measured by Get it, Got it, Go assessment (preschool), Dibels, Study Island, AIMSweb, or iSTEEP assessments (elementary), and the Kansas State Reading Assessment (Grades 3-8, 11). Through an experimental pre/post evaluation design, the project will assess student achievement in reading and literacy utilizing assessments currently being utilized by the consortium districts. Existing data sources will be triangulated and compared to baseline data collected within the first three months of the project. Please see the evaluation section for more information. *Outcome: To expand student knowledge and literacy skills for lifelong benefit.*

Goal 4: To provide career exploration opportunities aligned to state standards for middle and high school students. Objective: Increase middle and high school access to career and college-ready programming through the Kansas Career Pipeline throughout the project.

All consortium members of the *Impacting Literacy in Rural Kansas Districts* program will receive training in the use of the Kansas Career Pipeline to more effectively utilize the programming with their students at the middle and high school level.

The Kansas Career Pipeline (KCP) is a Kansas non-profit organization with the mission of providing top quality career discovery and career development to the youth and adults of Kansas. The KCP works with nationally recognized Kuder, Inc. and uses it's web based assessment and career investigation program. The KCP is currently providing no cost services to Kansas schools and workforce centers. The KCP supports the Kansas Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and initiatives. Individual student Career Education Plans are based upon their unique career goals and support participation in Kansas Career Pathways. Educators have access to the individual students' career portfolios including their individual career assessment results. Embedded into KCP are high-quality lessons plans that can be used in multiple disciplines such as Art, Foreign Language, Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and CTE. As a component of this project, districts will be provided with specific training on KCP at a centralized location each semester of the project (four times). *Outcomes: 1) To inspire student aspirations regarding potential careers. 2) To improve student decision-making in selecting a career based upon their individual strengths and interests.*

Goal 5: To expand access for districts to on-line literacy programming for all students, Pre-K through Twelfth Grade utilizing the Study Island web-based program.

Objective: To increase access for four school districts in acquiring and utilizing the Study Island program to increase literacy. Four districts were identified through the needs assessment as not having access to Study Island programming for all grade levels. The *Impacting Literacy in Rural Kansas Districts* program will provide a two-year license for those districts in order to fill in the literacy gaps within each school. The four districts receiving this include: Elk Valley USD 283 (all grade levels); Riverton USD 404 (all grade levels); Columbus USD 493 (all grade levels); and Baxter Springs USD 508 (6-12th grades). The technology facilitator and coordinator will

work with all 13 districts to achieve maximum benefit from Study Island. *Outcome: To enhance learning and practice for students through technology & aligned lessons for increasing literacy.*

(ii) Coordinated with similar efforts & community, State, and Federal resources. (5 pts)

As mentioned throughout this proposal, the *Impacting Literacy in Rural Kansas Districts* program is closely tied to existing initiatives both within the state and within each individual district. The project will be integrated to and coordinated with the Parents as Teachers program, the Kansas Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC), and existing preschools within each school district. This will ensure no duplication of effort with the Imagination Library or Study Island. Additionally, the program will capitalize on existing partnerships and comprehensive efforts of Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS), Common Core Standards, the Kansas Career Pipeline, and the Career & Technical Education Programming for student engagement, technical assistance, resources, and research-based programming.

(iii) Part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning (5 points)

The *Impacting Literacy in Rural Kansas Districts* program will be integrated into Kansas' reform initiative, **Multi-Tier System of Support** (MTSS) <http://www.kansasmtss.org> (in some states called Response to Intervention or RtI.) MTSS is a coherent continuum of evidence-based, system-wide practices to support a rapid response to academic and behavioral needs, with frequent data-based monitoring for instructional decision-making to empower all regular and special education Kansas students, to achieve high standards. MTSS provides schools and districts with the tools and training necessary to ensure that: 1) students who need additional support are identified early; 2) identified students are provided support targeted at their specific needs using sound instructional programs or strategies; 3) students progress is monitored frequently; and 4) teachers and schools are using the data to change the path when needed and a formal system of

support to assist with these changes is in place. All professional development will be tied to MTSS effective practices to ensure equal delivery of literacy programming for all children.

The State of Kansas was recently granted a **ESEA Flexibility Waiver** by US Department of Education from certain provisions of the No Child Left Behind act. This waiver will significantly change the accountability system for Kansas schools from one that is focused on all students achieving proficiency on the state math and reading assessments to a system that recognizes student growth, closing the achievement gap, and reducing the number of students below proficient. While MTSS is an integral component of the waiver, the state also incorporated the 2010 adoption of the **Common Core Standards** into the waiver. These core standards provide the basis for transitioning the current state standards to align on a national level, with college and career readiness initiatives, and aligned to the rigorous core curricula (reading, math, science, and technology). By aligning all activities to these three key components, the project ensures adherence to rigorous academic standards.

(iv) Performance feedback and continuous improvement in design of the project. (5 points)

In an effort to ensure performance feedback and continuous improvement so integral in the operation of the proposed program, *Impacting Literacy in Rural Kansas Districts* will utilize an advisory board to monitor the program's efforts and suggest improvements for the program. The advisory board will be responsible for ensuring that the program meets the mission of providing high-impact literacy activities for students, families, and professional development for teachers and library media specialists. The board will meet four times per year to provide guidance in activities, review data collected, and allow all schools a voice in determining the focus for each summer institute and other professional development to be provided. The Advisory board members come from all sectors, school districts, service providers, technology specialists, and

state agencies, with each member bringing their own unique perspective. This will ensure that the program represents all sectors of the community for maximum benefit.

(c) Quality of the project services (25 points). (i) Strategies ensure equal access (10 points)

The activities and services provided through this project will help the high-need LEAs to ensure equal access and treatment for eligible project participants who are members of groups who have traditionally been underrepresented. While there is little race/ethnic diversity among the consortium districts, there are still underrepresented groups this project will address, including those deemed at risk due to poverty, special education groups, and in a few of the districts, those who are English language learners or migrant students. To this extent, all children, from birth to grade 12 in each of the 13 LEAs will have access to either the book distribution program or the literacy programming through Study Island. All families within the consortium schools will also have access through the parental programming delivered by KPIRC. As defined within the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) statement, every effort will be made to ensure equal treatment regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

(ii) Services are appropriate to the needs of the intended recipients (10 points)

In preparation for this project, all consortium districts were assessed as to types of programming they currently provide to students within their individual catchment areas. This needs assessment was two-fold, first it was to identify any *gaps* in services currently being provided and secondly, to ensure there was no *duplication of effort*. For each of the proposed project components, the following information was determined: **Parents as Teachers** – four of the 13 districts currently do not offer the programming. **Book Distribution** – *No* consortium district provided continuation for a monthly book distribution program beyond the PAT program for children age 3 and 4 (up to age 5). Nor did any district provide a book distribution program for

children who were *not* enrolled in PAT. **Study Island** – three of the 13 districts did not offer Study Island literacy components at *any* grade level, with one district only providing it for 2nd to 5th grade. **Technology Integration** – All consortium schools were eager to have access to a facilitator dedicated to their school to work individually with teachers on technology integration. All district administrators felt this was a significant *gap* in their ability to meet students’ individual achievement needs. **Professional Development** – Quality, research-based programming targeting library media specialists and teachers for implementing literacy across the curriculum was another significant *gap* in all consortium districts. **Kansas Career Pipeline** – All districts have access to the Career Pipeline, however, all districts agreed the pipeline was not being utilized effectively. Several districts only implemented the program at the high school level and would like to expand it from Sixth grade to Twelfth grade. **Parent involvement** – All consortium district administrators indicated there was a significant *lack* of parental engagement within their district.

(iii) Professional development is of sufficient quality, intensity, and duration (5 points)

The *Impacting Literacy for Rural Kansas Districts* proposes to provide 13 rural school districts’ teachers (PreK-12) and library media specialists to access of more than 1,900 hours of professional development per year. Specifically targeting literacy, the project proposes approximately **40 hours of professional development for up to 104 teachers**. This intense opportunity will allow for participants to be immersed in literacy integration across curricular areas as well as providing technology integration within the classroom for increased literacy. Additionally, **twice a month**, a technology facilitator and/or the coordinator will be in each district to work one on one with teachers and LMS within their classrooms and libraries, for an **average of 16 hours per month per district for the nine months** schools are in session. Other professional development includes training in Differentiated Instruction, **16 hours per year; three**

days per year per district for parent sessions with KPIRC; and individualized training on the Kansas Career Pipeline, approximately **8-10 hours per district per year**.

(d) Adequacy of resources (10 points). (i) Costs are reasonable to objectives & design (5 pts)

The *Impacting Literacy for Rural Kansas Districts* planning committee invested considerable time to ensure that the proposed project will produce the maximum benefits at the lowest cost possible. Due to the complexity of the program, West Elk USD 282 will contract with the Southeast Kansas Education Service Center (SEKESC) for the coordination and delivery of the program's vast components. This coordination will ensure there is no overlap of services. SEKESC currently administers the PAT program, has the capacity to host summer institutes of this magnitude, as well as provide a literacy coordinator and technology facilitator. Personnel expenses account for █████ of the overall budget. Evaluation costs for the external evaluator are calculated at █████ of the overall budget. Travel costs account for █████ of the budget. █████ percent of the budget (█████) is allocated for parental training through KPIRC, professional development constitutes █████ of the overall budget. Approximately █████% is for book distribution.

(ii) Costs are reasonable in relation to the number of persons to be served (5 points)

It is estimated that 2,793 children from birth to age 5 will receive books once a month and an additional 9,478 school-age children will benefit from increased access to Study Island, the Kansas Career Pipeline, and KPIRC parent information sessions. Thirty, birth to age 3 children and their parents, in four districts will have access to PAT programming who have not previously had access. The estimated average cost per student in for the project is █████ **per child and/or teacher**. It is estimated 104 teachers and library media specialists will receive training through the summer institute each summer of the project and an additional 80 will benefit from technology coaching.

(e) Quality of the management plan (20 points). (i) Management plan is adequate (10 points)

The *Impacting Literacy for Rural Kansas Districts* will be under the direction of Bert Moore, Superintendent, West Elk USD 282. As **project director**, Mr. Moore will be responsible for program oversight, fiscal responsibilities, contracting with the Southeast Kansas Education Service Center for overall coordination of the project; the outside evaluator; following required policies and procedures; communicating with all stakeholders; and managing fiscal reporting to USDE. A **project coordinator** (TBD), will be contracted to provide leadership, day-to-day management, and support to all consortium partners. The coordinator will ensure the proposal's goals, objectives, and activities are completed in a timely manner. The coordinator will manage the project design; staffing; work closely with the project evaluators to supervise evaluation activities; prepare annual performance reports; and present at local and national conferences as appropriate. The coordinator will also provide each consortium district with on-site consultation on the integration of Study Island within their classrooms. The coordinator will also administer the Get It, Got It, Go assessment to the four-year old preschools at each district three times per year. Qualifications for the project coordinator are, at a minimum, a Bachelor's Degree in Education, Technology, or Library Media, classroom experience, certification in administering the Get It, Got It, Go and Dibels assessments, and knowledge of Common Core and Career & Technical Education standards. A full-time **technology facilitator** (TBD) will have at a minimum of a Bachelor's degree in Education or Technology Integration. Additional qualifications include training as an Intel Teach to the Future trainer, integrating curriculum focuses web-based resources, and expertise pertaining to integrating technology in all subjects, especially literacy. West Elk USD 282 will contract with The Center for Learning Tree Institute (LTI) to provide evaluative services for the project.

The following timeline has been established with clearly delineated responsibilities and key milestones.

Activity	Timeframe	Person(s) Responsible	Milestones
Activity: Notify school districts of funding, institute advisory board.	Timeframe: By October 15, 2012.	Person(s) Responsible: Project Director.	Milestones: Notification list, advisory board selected
Activity: Initiate contracts with SEKESC for project coordination and LTI for evaluation.	Timeframe: October 15, 2012	Person(s) Responsible: Project Director.	Milestones: Signed contracts
Activity: Hire coordinator and technology facilitator.	Timeframe: By November 15, 2012.	Person(s) Responsible: Project Director, SEKESC executive director.	Milestones: Staff contracts
Activity: Development of technology and literacy needs assessment survey.	Timeframe: By November 1, 2012.	Person(s) Responsible: External evaluator.	Milestones: Developed survey
Activity: Districts complete technology and literacy needs assessment.	Timeframe: By December 1, 2012.	Person(s) Responsible: Consortium districts, external evaluator.	Milestones: Survey results
Activity: Twice a month technology facilitator onsite visits begin.	Timeframe: December 2012, ongoing.	Person(s) Responsible: Technology facilitator.	Milestones: Onsite visit log
Activity: Advisory board meetings.	Timeframe: Oct 2012; Jan 2013; April 2013; June 2013; Oct 2013; Jan 2014; April 2014; June 2014.	Person(s) Responsible: Project Director, Project Coordinator.	Milestones: Advisory board minutes

<p>Activity: Differentiated Instruction training or other literacy training. Timeframe: Once a semester, each year. Person(s)</p> <p>Responsible: Project Coordinator. Milestones: Scheduled Differentiated Instruction training, attendance logs</p>
<p>Activity: Implement PAT programming in four districts. Timeframe: By November 2012. Person(s) Responsible: SEKESC PAT director. Milestones: PAT programming instituted, educators hired, families enrolled</p>
<p>Activity: Implement Study Island for four districts. Timeframe: By November 2012. Person(s) Responsible: SEKESC technology director to initiate contract. Milestones: Study Island user names/passwords to districts</p>
<p>Activity: KPIRC family sessions. Timeframe: Ongoing, three days per year per district. Person(s) Responsible: KPIRC state coordinator. Milestones: Family session dates and agendas</p>
<p>Activity: Kansas Career Pipeline. Timeframe: Ongoing, centralized training, twice a year. Person(s) Responsible: Kansas Career Pipeline coordinator. Milestones: Training dates, attendance records</p>
<p>Activity: Imagination Library - institute procedures for identifying children birth to age 5 (not currently in PAT), begin enrollment. Timeframe: By November 2012. Person(s) Responsible: SEKESC PAT director, coordinator. Milestones: Procedures and Enrollment rosters</p>
<p>Activity: Data collection, including baseline data, Get It, Got It, Go three times per year; Study Island, Dibels, AIMSweb, and iSTEEP twice per year; state assessment data once per year. Timeframe: As per the evaluation timeline. Person(s)</p> <p>Responsible: External evaluator from LTI. Milestones: As per the evaluation timeline.</p>

(ii) Time commitments of the project staff are appropriate (5 points)

As the Project Management section (1) details the responsibilities of each key personnel essential to the program, the following time commitments of the project director, the principal investigator, and other project personnel are appropriate and adequate to meet the objectives of the project and are as follows:

Project Director - .05 FTE	Project Coordinator – 1.0 FTE
Technology Facilitator – 1.0 FTE	Principal Investigator - .50 FTE
SEKESC Executive Director – In-Kind	SEKESC PAT Director – contracted service to administer the PAT program and coordinate the Imagination Library (estimated two hours per week)

(iii) Mechanisms for ensuring high-quality products and services (5 points)

All activities proposed through this project are both high-quality, based upon scientifically valid research, and are coordinated with existing programs currently being utilized by the consortium districts. This coordination of programming was to ensure non-duplication of effort as well as to access programming at reduced costs by joining existing consortiums (for example, the PAT coordination program and access to a 15% discount on Study Island products.)

In addition, accessing services through the Southeast Kansas Education Service Center (the local regional service agency for consortium LEAs), all professional development to be provided through this project will be delivered by personnel specifically trained in all aspects of MTSS, differentiated instruction, literacy, and technology integration. This ensures the services provided are endorsed by the state’s board of education, state department of education, and delivered locally.

(f) Quality of the project evaluation (15 points). (i) Methods use objective performance measures related to outcomes (10 points) The project evaluation is based on a design that meets criteria for incorporating a universal design for learning, scientifically valid framework for guiding educational practices, Common Core Content standards; GPRA measures; standards for quality professional development; and a rigorous evaluation methodology. The evaluation will include both formative and summative components to meet the needs of the consortium members and provide information regarding program effectiveness to ensure continuous improvement and assess outcomes for providing increased access for students in rural settings with literacy needs.

The formative evaluation will focus on assessing and providing timely feedback on the quality and alignment of professional development opportunities, strategies, and activities with literacy standards; the extent of teacher participation; GPRA measures, and the increased student participation in literacy instruction and the integration of technology within the classroom. The evaluation will include empirical achievement data, qualitative contributions from those involved collected as consumer data, and process evaluation data from trainings.

Process evaluation from professional development opportunities will be consumer data from administrators and instructors. Through a pre-post survey format, participants will be assessed prior to the professional development in order to ascertain their level of competence in literacy instruction within their classrooms. Post survey data will indicate if the activities increased teacher competency in key aspects of literacy instruction. In addition, data will be collected from the parental information meetings to ascertain the likelihood of change in parent/child interaction. These process pieces will allow the advisory board to improve the program based on the perceptions of all stakeholders and to prepare data regarding parent/community involvement for program improvement documentation.

EVALUATION MEASURES

GPRA 1 – The percentage of 4-year-old children participating in the project who achieve significant gains in oral language skills. **Activity:** Participation in a 4-year old preschool at each district. **Measure 1** – Get it, Got It, Go assessment, (preschool equivalent of Dibels). **GPRA 2** – The percentage of participating 3rd-grade students who meet or exceed proficiency on State reading or language arts assessments. **Activity:** Participation in Study Island programming. **Measure 2** – Dibels, iSTEOP, AIMSweb, and Study Island assessments for 3rd grade students. **GPRA 3** – The percentage of participating 8th-grade students who meet or exceed proficiency on State reading or language arts assessments. **Measure 3** – Study Island, Career Pipeline data for 8th grade students. **GPRA 4** – The percentage of participating high school students who meet or exceed proficiency on State reading or language arts assessments. **Activity:** Participation in Career Pipeline programming. **Measure 4** – Study Island, Career Pipeline data for HS students. **Timeline:** Each semester 2012-13; 2013-14. Data will be collected throughout the project period and reviewed quarterly with the advisory board. **Note:** Get it, Got It, Go will be assessed three times per year.

(ii) Methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback (5 points)

Methods of evaluation: *Impacting Literacy in Rural Kansas Districts* will use a pre/post experimental design utilizing both **quantitative and qualitative** types of data. The **methods of data collection** include: pre/post professional development participant data at each session and student performance data on a variety of local assessments. Data Sources (below) reflect the **types of data** to be collected while **Benchmarks** (below) represent **when the data will be collected**. The Outcome Measures: Impact column reflects **how the stakeholders will use the information collected** to monitor impact and progress of the project.

Outcome: Goal 1A – To increase teacher knowledge and skills in integrating technology and literacy across all core curriculum areas. Goal 1B – To change teacher and LMS behavior and practice within the classroom to increase student literacy achievement. Goal 1C – To modify teacher and LMS practice and ultimately improve the classroom environments for increased literacy among students. **Data Sources:** Pre/post surveys of professional development; technology facilitator and coordinator logs. **Benchmarks:** Each PD offering; monthly TF logs.

Outcome Measures: Impact Participant usage for personal growth

Outcome: Goal 2A – To increase parental awareness of early literacy and how they can provide solid foundational learning environments for their children. Goal 2B – To implement research-based practices to increase literacy at an early age. Goal 2C – To motivate parents and young children to read, as well as impact the childrens’ social and emotional development for long-term success. **Data Sources:** 2A - KPIRC parent assessments. 2B – Personal visit logs with families, developmental screenings for children birth to age. 2C – Imagination Library distribution logs, Imagination Library parent usage survey. **Benchmarks:** 2A – At least three times per year per district. 2B – Personal visits every four weeks throughout, developmental screenings as needed/required by PAT. 2C – Monthly enrollment status and distribution log. **Outcome Measures: Impact** 2A - More engaged parents and intense focus on literacy instruction at home. 2B – Early identification of learning difficulties, laying the foundation for early childhood literacy proficiency. 2C – Children from birth to age 5 will receive books that are age appropriate and delivered right to their home

Outcome: Goal 3A – To expand student knowledge and literacy skills for lifelong benefit. **Data Sources:** 3A – Get it, Got it, Go (preschool); Dibels, AIMSweb, Study Island, iSTEEP (elementary) and State Reading Assessments (Grades 3-8, 11). **Benchmarks:** 3A – Preschool,

three times per year; Dibels, AIMSweb, Study Island, iSTEOP, fall/spring; State Assessments, spring each year. **Outcome Measures: Impact** Student achievement benchmarked and monitored for appropriate interventions

Outcome: Goal 4A – To inspire student aspirations regarding potential careers.

Goal 4B – To improve student decision-making in selecting a career based upon their individual strengths and interests. **Data Source:** Kansas Career Pipeline Assessments. **Benchmark:**

Ongoing as students transition through the programs and lesson plans. **Outcome Measures:**

Impact Students are more engaged in learning about careers that truly interest them

Outcome: Goal 5A – To enhance learning and practice for students through technology and aligned lessons for increasing literacy. **Data Source:** Study Island assessments. **Benchmark:**

Fall/Spring each year, more often if necessary. **Outcome Measures: Impact** Student achievement benchmarked and monitored for appropriate interventions

As noted above under Benchmarks, **periodic assessment** of progress toward achieving intended outcomes occurs at multiple points throughout each year. The ongoing assessments are integrated with the continuous improvement model upon which the Differentiated Instruction and Technology Integration are based. All professional development is also based upon MTSS methodologies. Evaluation of progress (benchmarks) enables stakeholders to regularly assess program interventions, activities, and growth. The continuous improvement foundation for project outcomes **provides accountability information** about the success of the project and about effective strategies for replication in other settings. The lead evaluator will share **project evaluation results and outcomes at a minimum annually** with stakeholders and will work closely with the USDE *Office of Elementary and Secondary Education* to report key program information related to the project's goals, objectives and outcomes on the APR.