

Cleveland Municipal School District (CMSD)

CFDA 84.215G

Gateway to Successful Readers

Innovative Approaches to Literacy

Narrative

Context- The Cleveland Municipal School District (CMSD), currently known as the Cleveland Metropolitan School District is a large urban district that encompasses 112 schools and serves almost all of the city of Cleveland in Cuyahoga County, Ohio. This district, which is the only district in Ohio that is under direct control of the mayor, is the largest PreK-12 district in the state, with an enrollment of approximately 44,000 students. Data obtained from the District's website indicate that one of the primary goals of the CMSD is to become a premier school district in the United States of America by moving towards expanding 21st Century learning through the use of individualized academic strategies, innovative programs, highly qualified teachers, schools of choice and early learning intervention programs. The district faces a number of challenges due to the fact that most of its students are economically disadvantaged and roughly 5.5 percent are English-language learners (ELL), where Spanish is the language predominately spoken by ELL students. Other languages, however, are also spoken and include but are not limited to Arabic, Albanian, Cambodian, Chinese, Hindi, etc. Although the district encompasses 112 schools, this proposed project, *Gateway to Successful Readers*, will focus on enhancing literacy instruction and student achievement for 20 of these schools. Data for 2011 reveal that these identified schools (Appendix A) did not meet the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and are, therefore, each categorized Academic Emergency, under Academic Watch, or requiring Continuous Improvement.

Priorities- This proposed project will focus on the Absolute Priority defined by the grant guidelines and competitive priority number one: Turning around persistently lowest-achieving schools. The goals of the grant program are to (1) improve the performance of participating K–3 students on early reading assessments; (2) increase the oral language and pre-literacy skills of participating preschool children; (3) increase the percentage of participating students who meet or exceed proficiency on the state English language arts assessments in grade 3; (4) increase the use of data and data analysis to inform all decision making in participating schools and classrooms; and (5) increase the implementation of effective literacy instruction through the *Let's Talk About It!* Oral Language Reading & Writing Program; and (6) Increase the exposure to informational texts in accordance with the new Common Core State Standards by the use of InfoPairs and nonfiction guided reading kits.

Twenty schools from the CMSD have been identified for this proposed project. Two of the identified schools (Kenneth Clement and Douglas McArthur) encompass grades kindergarten through seven, while the remaining 18 house students in grades kindergarten through eight. This project, however, will only focus on students and teachers from grades kindergarten through three. The schools, their respective accountability status, number of teachers in grades K-3 to be serviced, the total number of students who will receive the interventions as described in this application, and the poverty status for each are listed in Table one below.

Table 1

School	Accountability Status Designation	Total Number of K-3 Teachers	Total Number of K-3 Students	Poverty Status
Carl and Louis Stokes	Academic Emergency	13	258	High poverty
Franklin D. Roosevelt	Academic Emergency	11	224	High poverty
Luis Munoz Marin	Academic Emergency	15	303	High poverty
Marion-Sterling	Academic Emergency	13	255	High poverty

Mary B. Martin	Academic Emergency	9	170	High poverty
Mary M. Bethune	Academic Watch	8	155	High poverty
Patrick Henry School	Academic Emergency	7	141	High poverty
Paul Revere Ele.	Academic Watch	8	165	High poverty
Wade Park	Academic Watch	8	167	High poverty
Andrew J. Rickoff	Academic Watch	13	252	High poverty
Bolton	Academic Emergency	8	156	High poverty
Case	Academic Emergency	9	170	High poverty
George W. Carver	Academic Emergency	14	272	High poverty
Euclid Park	Academic Emergency	8	152	High poverty
Buhrer	Continuous Improvement	9	162	High poverty
Watterson-Lake	Continuous Improvement	5	175	High poverty
Kenneth W. Clement	Continuous Improvement	8	96	High poverty
Douglas McArthur	Effective	10	157	High poverty
Walton School	Continuous Improvement	8	191	High poverty
Harvey Rice	Academic Emergency	10	178	High poverty
Total		194	3,799	

As noted above, eleven (55%) of the identified 20 schools for this project are Academic Emergency schools and, therefore, are among the lowest achieving schools in the State. The Academic Watch schools which comprise an additional 20% of the schools are among the lowest five percent of Title I schools in the State based on the proficiency levels and lack of progress of the “all students” accountability group. The remaining 25%, although higher performing, are still not performing to potential, as defined by the State’s accountability system and are deemed to require Continuous Improvement or have an Effective rating. As is also noted above, 100% of the student body in all of these schools is economically disadvantaged. 3,799 students and 194 teachers from these schools will participate in this project.

The state uses six designation measures, including: excellent with distinction; excellent; effective; continuous improvement; academic watch; and academic emergency which are based on four measures of performance (state indicators, performance index, adequate yearly progress, and value-added). Determining each school’s accountability designation is a multi-step and

complicated process. For further information, please refer to www.ode.state.oh.us/reportcardfiles.pdf. Information from the state's 2010-2011 report cards indicated that the percent of third graders who achieved at proficiency and above on the state-mandated reading assessment for the identified school ranged from 14.8% to 95%, with an average of 52.53%. The state requirement is 75% for this indicator and, as a result, all of the schools with the exception of the Kenneth W. Clement School (95%) have fallen below the state prerequisite. It is important to note that although the Clement School had an achievement rate of 95% in 2010-2011, it did not meet the other three measures of accountability. In addition, results from 2011-2012 for these 20 schools on the same measure indicate a decrease in performance. Therefore, these schools continue to not meet the State's accountability measures, as described above.

Cleveland Municipal School District recognizes the need for Oral Language Instruction-

Research consistently demonstrates that children arrive in kindergarten with huge discrepancies in oral language development . . . and the gap between language-advanced and language-delayed children grows throughout the elementary school years (Biemiller, 2001) and that young children who demonstrate oral language proficiency and early abilities in processing print do better in learning to read in first, second, and third grades (Scarborough, 2001). This means that learning achieved during these early years is likely to be sustained throughout the primary-school years and is an important basis for successful early performance in school. Success in literacy learning during the primary grades is even more indicative of later literacy achievement. Seventy-four percent of children who perform poorly in reading in third grade continue to do so into high school, further underlining the importance of preparing children to enter school ready to learn (Fletcher & Lyon, 1998).

In 1997, the U.S. Congress requested to have a review of research to be conducted to ascertain what could be done to improve reading and writing achievement. The resulting *Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching Children to Read* (NICHD, 2000) has been significant in helping to guide reading-education policy and practice in the United States. However, that report did not examine the implications of instructional practices used with children from birth through age five. To address this gap in the knowledge base, the National Early Literacy Panel (NELP) was convened. The panel was asked to apply a similar methodological review process to that used by the National Reading Panel (NRP) to issues of instructional practices for young children so that parents and teachers could better support their emerging literacy skills. NELP was appointed in 2002 and carried out its work under the auspices of the National Center for Family Literacy (NCFL). The National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) funded the panel's work in consultation with the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), the U.S. Department of Education, and the Office of Head Start in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NELP's primary goal was to identify interventions, parenting activities, and instructional practices that advance the development of children's early literacy skills. NELP adopted a methodology that allowed for the identification and selection of published studies relevant to the panel's questions, a coding system that allowed for the combination and comparison of studies, and an appropriate method of statistical analysis. This led to the identification of approximately 500 research articles that were used in the meta-analyses conducted by the panel. The meta-analyses summarized both correlational data showing the relationships between children's early abilities and skills and later literacy development and experimental data that showed the impact of instructional interventions on children's learning

In their 2008 research report, NELP identified 11 variables including oral language that consistently predicted later literacy achievement for both preschoolers and kindergartners. Oral language, however, was found to play a bigger role in later literacy achievement when it was measured using more complex measures that included grammar, the ability to define words, and listening comprehension than when measured using only simple vocabulary knowledge. As Benner, et.al (2002) assert, oral language leads children to amass more experiences, exposures, connections and knowledge in literacy. In fact, an increasing body of evidence has identified oral language as **THE** key indicator of literacy success or failure (Chan and Dally, 2000). NELP (2008, p. 43) defines oral language as the ability to produce or comprehend spoken language, including vocabulary and grammar. It is a broad construct consisting of a range of language skills such as expressive and receptive vocabulary, grammar, definitional vocabulary, syntax, and listening comprehension. Children's early phonemic awareness (i.e. their ability to distinguish among sounds within auditory language) was also found to be an important predictor of later literacy achievement (NELP, 2008).

As a result of research findings on the critical role oral language plays in children's literacy development and success, this proposed project will focus on teachers who instruct students in grades kindergarten through three from 20 schools within the CMSD. The interventions will primarily focus on the growth of students' oral language development with an emphasis on the listening and speaking Common Core Learning Standards; however, enhancing students' reading and writing skills overall will continue to also be a major focus.

The primary goal of this project is to improve early learning outcomes in literacy in grades kindergarten through three by means of enhancing students' oral language development. Full implementation of an oral language program will require new and varied instructional

materials for the classroom teachers identified for this proposed project. As previously stated, oral language is a foundational element of both reading comprehension and writing. As Bruner (1983) noted, proficiency in oral language provides children with a vital tool for thought. Without fluent and structured oral language, children will find it very difficult to think. Munro (2008) states, "...that language and the ability to communicate effectively is a key foundation to students' capacity to learn. An appropriate level of oral language knowledge helps facilitate academic growth in both in all learning areas. As successful learners, students require an appropriate level of vocabulary."

The importance of Oral Language Development in Literacy has been acknowledged in the Common Core State Standards. As stated, "Including but not limited to skills necessary for formal presentations, the Speaking and Listening standards require students to develop a range of broadly useful oral communication and interpersonal skills. Students must learn to work together, express and listen carefully to ideas, integrate information from oral, visual, quantitative, and media sources, evaluate what they hear, use media and visual displays strategically to help achieve communicative purposes, and adapt speech to context and task." The Language standards include the essential "rules" of standard written and spoken English, but they also approach language as a matter of craft and informed choice among alternatives. The vocabulary standards focus on understanding words and phrases, their relationships, and their nuances and on acquiring new vocabulary, particularly general academic and domain-specific words and phrases"

In order to provide continuity in instruction and professional development across the 20 identified schools for this project, a core oral reading program for kindergarten through grade three becomes paramount. The selection and adoption of an effective, research-based oral

reading program in the primary grades is a critical step in the development of an effective school-wide reading initiative (Simmons & Kame'enui, 2003). As a result, the District will purchase for all kindergarten through grade three teachers involved in this project Mondo's *Let's Talk About It!* Oral Language Reading & Writing Program which aims to improve students' reading achievement by providing a sequential, structured approach for oral language development in small groups two to three times weekly. An oral language screening administered at the start of program implementation identifies students' understanding and control of English language structures. Instruction uses engaging photos, text cards, and detailed lesson plans to support language development. In the oral language-reading sessions, teachers encourage students to talk about the photos, and then record students' ideas to read back, reinforcing the concept that what we think, we can say and what we say can be recorded and read. The oral language-writing sessions build on this language work as students share in recording their thoughts for themselves. As their academic language structures and vocabulary develop, students comprehend more complex spoken and written language and learn to think logically, arrange ideas, solve problems, and draw conclusions (www.Mondopub.com). As a result, lessons explicitly model, build, and scaffold the language structures students need for reading comprehension and writing composition, the critical "missing link" for so many students. Scope & sequence/pacing charts delineate the lesson sequences and focuses for each instructional strategy. This enables teachers to set out individual instructional pathways based on students' assessed readiness needs. Correlated assessments, differentiated for grades kindergarten through two and three through five provide data to clarify instructional starting points for each student and allow for ongoing progress monitoring.

Cleveland Metro School District to include Informational text- The Common Core State Standards also require a greater focus on informational text in elementary school and literary nonfiction in ELA classes. This shift will help to build content knowledge and reading comprehension. Using *InfoPairs* during Guided Instructional Reading students develop comprehension strategies as teachers guide **close readings** to draw evidence and knowledge from the text. Lesson plans made available help teachers model focused teaching, with explicit teacher language which highlights text dependent questions of a specific nature that engages students in certain dimensions of the text. Sessions also include cross-text analysis in which students are guided to think and make connections across texts, compare and contrast, and synthesize information into new understandings.

In addition to InfoPairs, the nonfiction guided reading kits used during Guided Instructional Reading help students develop comprehension strategies as teachers also use **close readings** to draw evidence and deeper understandings of the subject matter. Lesson plans included provide an explicit sequence of instruction with examples of effective oral prompts to support exploration of the text. All texts provided have been analyzed quantitatively using the Lexile text measure as well as the Noun Frequency Method, devised by Elley (1969). Language features such as vocabulary analysis, as well as the meaning/purpose, text structure, and knowledge demands a text includes, have been considered when determining the text complexity of the reading material.

The use of Technology in Literacy instruction- Computer enhanced instruction has been consistently found to increase student achievement compared with control groups taught without the benefit of computer technology (Mann, Shakeshaft, Becker, & Kottkamp, 1999; Denton & Manus, 1995; Paolucci & Jones, 1999; Christmann & Badgett, 1999), with gains higher in schools that are

more successful in their technology integration. Penuel, Yarnall & Simkins (2000) in their five-year evaluation of the 6.6 million dollar Challenge 2000 Multimedia project found that students who used technology had higher developed critical 21st century job skills than their counterparts who did not have the same access to technology. Further, Grant (1998) found that the use of a computer-based instructional approach not only increased student learning but also their interest in school. Therefore, funds from this grant will also support the purchase of Mondo's e-book collections which offer more than 700 interactive e-Books and articles in both English and Spanish. The collections include leveled fiction and nonfiction texts with comprehension activities, games, open-ended writing response prompts, and printable activity masters. Word-by-word and sentence-by sentence highlighting synced to audio in grades kindergarten through two further enable students to make connections between the spoken and written language. Students also have the option to click on selected words they may not recognize or be able to read independently to hear their proper pronunciation and definitions. Incorporated into the e-book collection is a series of open-ended written response prompts which support in-depth engagement with texts by asking students to respond directly to a query regarding the text they just completed reading. All e-book assessments link to teaching foci in the lesson plans so students are tested on skills taught. There are two assessment activities per book. Teachers can access the Learning Management System at home or in school, on Mac, PC, or tablet. Reports include Common Core State Standards, class, and individual student levels.

Design- As outlined in Table one, 3,799 students in grades kindergarten through three, 194 teachers, and 42 Instructional Coaches from the identified 20 schools within the CMSD will participate in this proposed project over a two-year period. The identified teachers for this project will instruct students using Mondo's *Let's Talk About It!* Oral Language Reading &

Writing Program. A detailed description of this program is outlined in the previous pages of this application. Professional development focused on effective implementation is difficult without coaching and modeling onsite to scaffold and support teacher efforts to effectively integrate this oral language program into their existing curriculum. Instructional materials have been carefully designed to provide opportunities for authentic learning to achieve expected outcomes. As a result, this project will allow the district to purchase this program for every participating teacher and associated professional development that will enable teachers to effectively implement it. Applicability of this content for students with special needs and/or whose primary language is other than English will be addressed in the trainings. The Mondo resources use systematic assessment procedures to inform instruction and ensure personalization of learning through small group instruction. An assessment battery will be customized to meet the specific needs of the District and will include *The Oral Language Assessment*.

Professional Development capacity building for CMSD- The 42 Instructional Coaches who are currently in the employ of the CMSD will participate and receive trainings annually from Mondo's National Literacy Consultancy team, a group of highly trained and qualified professional developers who will create a customized plan of focused support for the CMSD over a two-year period in Oral Language and Guided Reading using InfoPairs and Nonfiction Guided Reading kits.. This team will provide four cycles of Leadership Days and four cycles of Coach Days during the 2012-13 school year and two Coach Days in 2013-14. All Leadership and Coach Days will be facilitated by two Mondo National Literacy Consultants. School principals will be strongly encouraged to attend these Leadership Days, which will be jointly facilitated during the morning with participating principals and Instructional Coaches remaining as one group. Breakout sessions will be incorporated into the afternoon sessions for the

Instructional Coaches. Instructional Coaches will be divided into two cohorts. Coach Day sessions will be facilitated by the two Mondo National Literacy Consultants with breakout sessions structured to allow for the differentiated needs of the instructional coaches.

The sessions will emphasize the following:

- a) Making links between the Common Core Standards and Mondo's comprehensive curriculum maps for reading instruction using Mondo's "InfoPairs" program;
- b) Using data to drive differentiated instruction through the use of existing literacy data points, language proficiency levels and risk of reading failure;
- c) Providing differentiated small group reading instruction with a focus on teaching students how to talk, read and think purposefully about texts that increase in complexity as they progress through the stages of reading development;
- d) Explore the role of Oral Language in reading comprehension; and
- e) Further the development of the Instructional Coaches to become more reflective of their teaching and learning practices.

An additional focus of these trainings will be on building the capacity of the Instructional Coaches in the strategic use of best practice instructional strategies with an emphasis on oral language and reading intervention for students in grades K- 3. The trainings will also focus on establishing data-driven focused instruction within the context of the literacy block to support the needs of all students and supplemental interventions for those deemed to be at risk.

Mondo will also provide the first cohort of 10 schools with three cycles of site visits facilitated by two Mondo National Literacy Consultants (10 days in total for each cycle) in 2012-13. The site visits will help to ensure that the professional development from the Leadership Cycles is being effectively implemented and is differentiated to meet the specific needs of

individual schools and build the capacity of the Instructional Coaches. This will be replicated with the second cohort of 10 schools in 2013-14.

The CMSD's Instructional Coaches will serve as turnkey trainers, mentors, and supporters to the identified teachers. Since contractually required, the teachers for this project will be paid to attend after-school trainings to effectively implement this program and enhance student achievement overall. The teachers, in turn, will receive three trainings from the Instructional Coaches for two hours each session. Additionally, the Instructional Coaches will provide in-classroom support to the teachers to ensure appropriate implementation of material learned. The coaches will also provide modeling of strategies, if necessary, as well as facilitate discussions of student formative assessment results and next steps.

Parent Involvement- Research has consistently demonstrated that the more involved parents are in their children's education, the greater the chance of success for the child. As a result, significant effort will be made by the school personnel to involve parents in their children's education on a consistent and regular basis. Workshops on a variety of topics will be conducted in all of the schools and at various times to accommodate working parents. To increase the likelihood of participation, small incentives will be provided for workshops. If necessary and available, translators will be available to assist non-English speaking parents or, if possible, workshops can be conducted in the parents' native language. Parents from each school will complete a needs assessment survey at the first workshop to elicit specific areas of interest. Those workshops will be offered in addition to those that will focus on oral and written language literacy workshops. Since all of the families from the 20 identified schools are high needs and are of high poverty, parent workshops will be provided to on an array of topics, including oral language development, effective reading/writing strategies at home, and educational ways of

using television programming with children. These workshops will also address ways parents can enhance the quantity and quality of their interactions with their non-school children to enhance the oral language development of these youngsters and, therefore, better prepare them for school later on. Each workshop presented to the K-3 parents will include a component that can benefit the pre-school age children so that parents can help these very young children enter school more readily prepared. This proposed project will include the recruitment and hiring of a part-time Teacher-Parent Resource Coordinator (TPRC) who will report directly to the ELA Flexible Content Expert currently employed by the CMSD. The TPRC who will have a solid background in early literacy will work with willing parents to foster verbal interactions between parents and their children, both school and non-school age. This will be accomplished through once monthly Parent Collegial Circles (PCC) at one of the identified schools over a two-year period. These opportunities will provide a strong emphasis on interactive literacy activities between parents and their children while also providing parent literacy training that leads to age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences. This collaborative program will also afford the parents meaningful opportunities to become the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children at home and school, while upgrading their own parenting skills. Instructional Coaches and participating teachers may contribute to these activities. The TPRC and/or the Instructional Coaches and teachers will model verbal interactions, reading/ writing techniques, and parenting techniques for the parent and child together using high quality books that will be offered as gifts to the family. This will be done in an effort to prepare the siblings of the identified students to enter school ready to learn. Documentation of these PCCs will be maintained by the TPRC and schools. Uniform guidelines, procedures, and record keeping will also be instituted by the TPRC. The

TPRC will be responsible for scheduling these PCCs on a monthly basis and strongly encourage parents to attend. (S) he will also gather pertinent information about needed services for these parents and recommending possible solutions to remedy situations at homes. The TPRC will attend monthly grade-level meetings to discuss specific families, provide opportunities to share and model integrated activities to enhance basic skills, and schedule specific training when the need arises. The TPRC will serve as the liaison between the schools and these families. In addition, the TPRC will be responsible for developing a schedule of parenting workshops which will consist of the effective components of literacy instruction for parents, pre-reading activities for children, parent and child together time, and parent group time for all parents of the K-3 students involved in this project. The TPRC will work to assess the ability of students and their parents in using learned activities. (S)he will schedule these PCCs at least once a month to monitor progress. Recognizing that arranging these PCCs may require creative scheduling due to finding a mutually agreeable time for both the TPRC and parent, if feasible (s) he may choose to go to the workplace of the parent if the parent is not able to be home during the day or early evening.

Research indicates that this type of parent-child-school program supports the premise that early and frequent parent-child verbal interaction stimulates children's intellectual development and promotes school success. NELP's 2008 study included parent and home programs ($n = 32$): Interventions using parents as agents of intervention. These interventions may have involved teaching parents instructional techniques to use with their children at home to stimulate children's linguistic or cognitive development. Statistically significant and moderate-sized effects on children's print knowledge, oral language skills, and general cognitive abilities were noted as a result of the home and parent programs. Equally important, this type of parent

outreach by the district/school gets parents involved in their child's education, bridges cultural gaps that might occur between student and teacher, and lets parents and children know how much their teachers/staff care. Of course, the long-term goal of this intervention is to increase the high school graduation rate of the children who participate in the program. Thirty years of research demonstrates that strong parent-school programs have a strong impact on children's school success, including their reading, math, task orientation, social development, and IQ scores. Research also indicates that parent-child home/outreach program children enter kindergarten and first grade better prepared to learn than their socio-economic peers and often better than the student body as a whole. These children also consistently perform at or above national norms on standardized reading and math tests throughout elementary school and well above the norms for low-income children. It is important that the TPRC concludes each of these monthly PCC by summarizing what has been accomplished, new learning, and to review the decisions that have been made so that all involved parties will be in agreement. The end of these meetings is a good time to tell the parents of upcoming events at the school or in the community. They can be assured that they are welcome and encouraged to participate in any and all activities that are taking place at the schools, especially those that involve their children. The TPRC, when possible, may accompany parents to parent-teacher conferences, CSE meetings, and other school events. As a result, the parents will be assisted in developing positive relationships and communication with school personnel, as well as to take a more active role in their child's education.

Inter-School Collaboration- Although the higher achieving schools within the 20 involved in this project have not yet reached their potential, best practices can be shared with the teachers

from the lower achieving schools. Therefore, inter-school collaboration will be implemented. Gable, Mostert & Tonelson (2004) reported that the increased use of teacher collaboration improved educational outcomes for special education and other students at risk of learning and/or behavior problems. This project will increase collaboration among teachers using collegial circles that will engage diverse groups of teachers together to study common areas of concern and explore strategies to improve teaching and learning in their schools. Moonlenaar, et. al (2012) reported that successful collaborative between teachers was related to teacher effectiveness and improvements in student achievement. The proposed project will allow the district to provide additional opportunities for teachers/Instructional Coaches to collaborate in professional learning communities. The goal of these voluntary collaborations will be on helping teachers to foster a wide range of language and literacy related dispositions and competencies, including the development of vocabulary, oral language abilities, phonological awareness, and print-related knowledge. The goals will also be on helping the teachers to be able to use a variety of instructional methods that are age and developmentally appropriate and have the ability to adjust those methods to the specific needs of individuals. Helping administrators and teachers to acquire strategies for using student data to enhance instructional practices will provide them with the necessary skills to use multiple methods of monitoring students' literacy development and interpreting assessments in order to make sound instructional decisions for improved student outcomes. Since teachers are contractually required to meet once a week, the focus of these meetings should include the examination of student data in order to plan instruction based on what students have learned and what needs to be retaught. The TPRC, when possible, can attend these opportunities to ensure the full participation of all involved teachers and to offer support and guidance. The Instructional Coaches involved in this project must

continue to provide the necessary expertise, training, and continuing support and guidance to the classroom teachers in order for this project to be successful. Additionally, the building administrators of these schools must also take an active role in these opportunities and in all professional development provided to the teachers so they can effectively supervise and evaluate the teachers and their instructional practices. Most importantly, professional development will have the greatest impact on those teachers that are held accountable for the content, including implementing newly gained knowledge, diagnostic strategies, teaching techniques and curriculum materials.

If it is not feasible for the teachers from these schools to consistently meet in person, using social media to connect and collaborate with one another should be considered. The CMSD may want to consider creating a blog or using Skype to enable teachers to collaborate, exchange ideas, and provide support to one another. Of course, training and specific guidelines of Dos and Don'ts will need to be established to avoid possible concerns/issues.

Book Distribution- It is referenced in the previous pages of this application that participating students will receive take-home books as gifts. The number of distributions will depend upon the amount of grant money awarded. This includes not only the 3,799 students in the K-3 classrooms but also the pre-school children, if sufficient books are available, to better prepare them for school readiness and school success. It is important to note that the availability of the e-Books will provide students with additional books for them to read and/or for the parents to read to the younger students. To increase the likelihood of students reading distributed books once they bring them home and to motivate them to enjoy reading in general, the following Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) guidelines should be considered:

- ✚ Book distributions should be held at least 30 days apart, if more than one distribution is possible. Children must receive free books at no cost to them or their families.
- ✚ Children should be able to choose their books free of adult interference.
- ✚ Motivational activities must occur in conjunction with each book distribution.
- ✚ Children who are absent during a book distribution need to be given the opportunity to select a book at another time.

Prior to distributing the books, the TPRC and school personnel will need to “spread the word.” This can be done through multiple means, including sending letters home (in different languages, if possible), posters, or other forms of communication and outreach to notify parents and guardians. Volunteers may be necessary to facilitate the distribution of books, so outreach will need to be done. According to RIF’s guidelines, parents should be as involved as much as possible in the book distribution process by helping students select a book, setting up and organizing the distribution, etc. Having an inviting environment for this purpose will also motivate the students to select and read (for younger children, having the book read to them). RIF suggests having a theme with corresponding motivational activities (www.RIF.org). It is important for students to be able to easily view and select these books, so each school will need to carefully and strategically organize these books. The TPRC and/or school personnel will need to create a system for recording and monitoring the distribution of these books to ensure all participating students receive one during each distribution. An end-of-year culminating event whereby school personnel and students dress up as their favorite book character and retell/summarize their favorite story is recommended. This allows the students to use the oral language skills/strategies they learned throughout the school year and addresses the speaking element of literacy, as well as the Common Core Learning Standards.

Combating the loss of skills in the summer with books is backed up by the research of Richard Allington and Anne McGill-Franzen of the University of Tennessee, who have documented that students who receive books to read during the summer showed significantly higher levels of achievement. That research found that students from low-income households lose more ground over the summer than their peers who have books at home and often experience learning gains from enriching activities during the summer like museum visits or family trips. Allington says the cumulative effects of the “summer slide” year after year can account for as much as 85 percent of the achievement gap between students from low-income and high-income families. Realizing the critical importance of ensuring kids read and keep their skills sharp during the summer and that they have access to books at home too, a book distribution will take place on the last day of school to students for summer reading enjoyment. If a distribution is not possible due to insufficient grant funds, parents will be provided with students’ login information so that they have access to the e-Books for the summer months. As previously stated, the number of books students receive will depend upon available funding. It is noted, however, that all students will receive an equal number of books. The schools may choose to assign grade-appropriate projects that students must turn in to their teachers upon returning to school the subsequent school year for which they may receive credit or a prize. Receiving credit/prize may provide the incentive for students to read the books/e-Books and complete the projects. Ensuring that students have books to read over the summer can help close the achievement gap between the rich and the poor, and give children an even better chance at succeeding in school and in life.

The following proposed timeline will ensure successful implementation of this project.

YEAR ONE

TIMELINE	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
10/12-11/12	<p>Grant is awarded; ordering of <i>Let's Talk about It!</i> and e-Books; InfoPairs and nonfiction guided reading kits;</p> <p>Development of six professional development hours for Instructional Coaches by Mondo professional developers;</p> <p>Development of two-hour after school professional development sessions for participating teachers from 20 participating schools by Instructional Coaches;</p> <p>Participating schools recruit teachers to participate in collegial circles focused on improving student achievement;</p>	<p>ELA Flexible Content Expert for the CMSD and TPRC</p> <p>TPRC, Instructional Coaches and school based administrators</p>
9/12 – 10/12	Advertising and recruitment of part-time (three times weekly) Teacher-Parent Resource Coordinator (TPRC)**contingent upon awarding of grant	District Human Resourced Dept. & ELA Flexible Content Expert
10/12 – 11/12	Invitation to parents of K-3 students Outreach & recruitment of parents	TPRC with assistance from school administrators
11/12-12/12	Meeting with parents to discuss program goals and expectations	TPRC
11/12-6/13	<p>Trainings of Instructional Coaches by Mondo professional developers;</p> <p>Trainings of participating teachers from 20 participating schools by Instructional Coaches;</p> <p>Professional development and other project activities are evaluated by the project evaluator</p>	<p>TPRC will plan & organize</p> <p>TPRC</p>
12/12-8/13	Book distributions to students	TPRC with assistance from school administrators

TIMELINE	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
12/12-6/13	Workshops for K-3 parents	TPRC
7/13	Preparation of grant project annual report	TPRC
8/13	If necessary, replenishing <i>Let's Talk about It!</i> and e-Books, InfoPairs and nonfiction guided reading kits or ordering for newly created K-3 classrooms;	ELA Flexible Content Expert for the CMSD and TPRC
YEAR TWO		
TIMELINE	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
9/13-11/13	Development of two professional development sessions for Instructional Coaches by Mondo professional developers; Development of two voluntary professional development sessions, each for two hours after school for participating teachers from 20 participating schools by Instructional; Participating schools recruit teachers to voluntarily participate in collegial circles focused on improving student achievement;	ELA Flexible Content Expert for the CMSD and TPRC TPRC, Instructional Coaches and school based administrators
9/13 – 6/14	Workshops resume for parents of K-3 students and siblings	TPRC with assistance from school administrators
11/13-12/13	Meeting with K-3 parents to assess/reflect on program goals and student progress;	TPRC
12/13-6/14	Two days of professional development for Instructional Coaches by Mondo professional developers; Voluntary trainings of participating teachers from 20 participating schools by Instructional Coaches; Voluntary Collegial circles meet for two hours a month where teachers brainstorm ways to improve student achievement; Professional development and other project activities are evaluated	TPRC will plan & organize TPRC and Instructional Coaches TPRC
12/13-8/14	Book distributions to students	TPRC with assistance from school administrators
12/13-6/14	Parent workshops	TPRC
7/14	Preparation of grant project annual report	TPRC with assistance from ELA

TIMELINE	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBILITY
		Flexible Content Expert
8/14-9/14	Preparation of final report to project funder	TPRC with assistance from ELA Flexible Content Expert

Performance Management- The evaluation activities proposed for this project are rigorous.

Both formative and summative procedures will be used to document program implementation and to measure its success. Evaluation results will be continually, analyzed and the results will be used for program review and modification. The table below lists each evaluation objective along with the planned assessment designed to measure objective attainment.

OBJECTIVES	EVALUATION MEASURES
Participating students in grades K-3 will demonstrate increased oral language skills, increased vocabulary, and oral language presentation	Reports from Mondo's <i>Oral Language Assessment</i> & e-Book Learning Management System
Participating third grade students after two years in the program will demonstrate an increase of 10% or more on the state assessment in reading.	Third grade student performance on the state assessment in reading in year two of the program
Participating third grade students, by the end of year two, will meet AYP in ELA and for all subgroups; All participating students will attain the Common Core Learning Standards	By the end of year two third grade student performance on the state assessment in reading for total student groups and all subgroups
Teachers will report a 20 percent increase in the duration and frequency of reading at home after the two years of the program.	Parents will report the number of hours students spend reading or being read to at the on-set of the program. Teachers will require students/parents to maintain book logs of books read or read to and the duration of time spent reading at home on a daily basis.
All participating teachers will utilize available data systems including Mondo's e-Book Learning Management System reports to examine student performance on assessments; All teachers will report using data available to them to diagnose weaknesses and target and differentiate instruction. The proportion of special education and ELL students who attain	Satisfaction surveys/focus groups/interviews with teachers to determine how they used data to track students over time and how they modified and differentiated their teaching based on student data; Student subgroup data proficiency in attaining State and Common Core Standards;

OBJECTIVES	EVALUATION MEASURES
proficiency on State assessments in ELA will increase by at 10 percent or higher after two years in the program.	
At least 90 percent of participating teachers will report that collegial circles have helped them improve their teaching	Survey of teachers involved in collegial circles
Build capacity of teachers through collaboration	Teacher survey about the value of collegial circles, mentoring, and increased contacts with Instructional Coaches and the TPRC.
The proportion of all students who attain proficiency in oral language development and reading in general will increase by at least 10 percent (including ELL and special education);	Reports for students in K-3 Mondo's e-Book Learning Management System
Sustain program after program funding ends	Survey of Instructional Coaches, participating teachers, and parents concerning student progress/reading habits
Undertake rigorous evaluation of the outcomes of the programs and strategies	Statistical analysis of achievement of student subgroups on state and local assessments; Teacher and leader attitudes about their training including obstacles to implementation and recommendations for future training and tools.
Modify the project based on evaluation results; Increase relevance and effectiveness of program	Recommendations for modifications will be made based on evaluation results

Data from formative assessments will be used by the district to determine how much growth individual and groups of students make from administration to administration and year to year, with data used to inform instruction. These assessments should be aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards in 2012-13. Mondo's *Oral Language Assessment* will be administered to students three times annually and results will determine individual and class needs. Additionally, Mondo's e-Book Learning Management System will allow teachers to track work and progress both at school and at home. Individual and class reports for all comprehension and writing activities will provide teachers, administrators, and Instructional Coaches with pertinent data relative to individual and group progress. The easy-to-use writing rubric included in this

Management System will provide additional data to assess student progress, as well as to facilitate teacher, literacy coach, administrator, and parent discussions and collegial circles sessions. All reports available within this system are aligned with Mondo's Reading Indicators and with the Common Core State Standards. This will enable teachers to gauge the level at which students are meeting the Common Core Literacy Standards and their preparedness for the mandated state assessments (grades 3-8). Practice reading assessments will also be used in a formative manner. Summative assessments used by the district include the state-mandated assessments in ELA and other subject areas. Short-term evaluation results will also focus on implementation issues including engaging professional development providers, and the first year's use of the *Let's Talk about It!* Program and its components. The TPRC will also assist the district in developing, administering, and analyzing survey data to gauge the effectiveness of professional development activities. Intermediate results will provide continual feedback for program review and modification as well as interim outcome data pertaining to teacher effectiveness and student achievement as measured by the results of the State or local assessments in ELA. State assessment data will need to be analyzed to inform and direct instruction. The evaluator will survey teachers and leaders about the effectiveness of staff development activities and identify obstacles to implementation. These results will be communicated back to the district and providers so that they can remediate obstacles to ensure optimal project implementation. Long-term evaluation results will focus on teacher, leader, and student long-term outcomes relating to improvements in professional practice, and student performance on state-mandated tests of high standards. In addition, teacher perceptions of changes in their teaching using e-Books and other resources will also be evaluated to determine changes in their practice. Further, teacher perceptions of their professional development

experience will be used to modify program objectives and activities. The district will also conduct a needs assessment annually in which staff is asked what they specifically need in order to better serve their students.

In addition to the measures described above, project staff will collect qualitative measures related to the intended outcomes through the number of books read and duration of time spent reading at home on a daily basis, student attendance records, parent attendance/participation at meetings, observations made and documented by the classroom teachers, class achievement records, and the involvements of the participating families in school and district activities.

It is important to note that the District is fully in support of and committed to the success of this project, as is the Mayor of the City of Cleveland, Frank G. Jackson. He has provided a letter, which has been attached to this application demonstrating his support. Eric Gordon, Chief Executive Officer of the Cleveland Municipal School District, has also declared his full support in a letter attached to this application.