
SIGNIFICANCE

Building Local Capacity – A Nationally Relevant Model

The McGraw Central Schools’ proposal will build local capacity to enact, refine and sustain a replicable model for literacy learning including, book distribution and childhood literacy activities, as well as, targeted professional development and the integration of technologies to enhance teacher effectiveness and the achievement of students from birth to grade 12 in a high-need, rural Local Educational Agency (LEA). Designed by Dr. Laura Payne-Bourcy, an expert in literacy learning and rural education, the proposal is attuned to the dynamics of resource-poor, isolated rural communities and targeted to affect meaningful, sustainable change.

This proposal is of national significance as there are many small, rural communities – like



McGraw – that may learn and benefit from the work proposed and replicate what the evaluation study deems effective, as aligned with GPRA. The proposed project will position serve as an exemplar for improving the quality of education, helping children meet challenging

state, college- and career-ready academic content standards. Achievement in rural communities – like McGraw – is further stymied by lack of public services such as transportation or community-based services. If “it’s” not provided at the local school, “it” doesn’t happen in a place like McGraw situated at the northern-most end of the Appalachian Mountain chain.

Drawing from the village and surrounding area, the District serves 577 students, more than half of whom are eligible for free/reduced price lunch.¹ While the District's enrollment remains steady, it has lost 7% of its teaching staff and 10% of its paraprofessionals in the last five years in budget cuts. The District's combined wealth ratio, reflecting its ability to generate funds via property taxes, ranks in the bottom 20% of New York. The comprehensive model of services proposed is significant to the Department and other impoverished, rural communities.

Dr. Laura Payne-Bourcy advised McGraw in developing this proposal. She holds a Ph.D. in Reading & Language Arts and Educational Leadership from Syracuse University where she defended her 2001 dissertation with distinction, which was awarded 3rd place in the American Education Research Association's (AERA) Dissertation of the Year competition in rural education. She is Associate Director of the Office of Professional Research and Development at Syracuse and has served as visiting faculty in the Department of Reading and Language Arts at Syracuse University and SUNY Oswego. Dr. Payne-Bourcy's research and development work focuses on enhancing student achievement related to literacy development in high-needs rural school systems. Holding NYS certification in school administration (SDA), English teaching (7-12), and elementary grades from nursery school to grade 6, Dr. Payne-Bourcy, a consultant to higher education and public schools, has presented her work at the state and national levels and published her findings in peer reviewed journals related to rural education, literacy learning and the integration of technologies to support student achievement. For McGraw, Dr. Payne-Bourcy designed the intervention based on an analysis of achievement and related resources. Dr. Payne-Bourcy will serve to advise the implementation teams and ensure that the project is implemented

¹ The New York State Education Department's 2009-2010 New York State Report Cards, accessed July 10, 2012.

<https://reportcards.nysed.gov/>.

with fidelity. IAL funds will be directed to build local capacity by: a) adding book distribution, putting books in the hands of children, families and other caregivers from birth; b) extending outreach from the school into homes where high-need children live and learn; c) adopting the *Big 6* and *Super 3* models, documented to support information literacy attainment in a technology-based, information-rich society; d) expanding the use of *Scholastic READ 180*, which the district could previously only afford at selected middle-level grades; and e) integrating technologies that this high-need, low resource school could not otherwise provide.

Promising Strategies. The proposed project involves the development and demonstration of promising new strategies that build on, or are alternatives to, existing evidence-based strategies. Specifically, funds are dedicated to expand the use of the *Scholastic Reading 180* while the *Big 6* model will provide a common framework and approach for engaging students in research, where none existed previously. In addition, the proposal ensures that all students have access to a library and a certified library media specialist. Due to significant budget cuts, currently there is only one (1) certified staff member serving two (2) school sites. ***Scholastic Read 180 Next Generation.*** Newly aligned to the Common Core and the expectations that students develop higher order thinking skills, the program features updated content, especially non-fiction, and digital e-reads to foster 21st Century Literacy Skills. The evidence-based program features writing instruction to help students build competence and confidence to make and support arguments. Studied extensively, seven studies reviewed by the *What Works Clearinghouse*, a randomized trial and six quasi-experimental designs, documented significant impact for adolescent learners. ***Big 6/Super 3.*** The *Big 6/Super 3* was developed by Michael B. Eisenburg and Robert E. Berkowitz to promote effective information processing and related skill. Aligned to national and state standards for technological and information literacy, the *Big 6* includes the

following steps: *task definition, information seeking strategies, location and access, use of information, synthesis and evaluation*. The model focuses on problem-solving across the curriculum. The *Super 3* promotes just three (3) steps for young children: *plan, do* and *review*.

Early Childhood Outreach. Targeted outreach to young children (by way of at school literacy programming and home visits) will fill critical gaps in early childhood services available through Head Start of Cortland County (housed by McGraw's elementary school). Currently, no home-based early childhood services exist in the community, but are included in this proposal for a case load of 20 most-in-need families. **Literacy Across the Curriculum.** Funds are also dedicated for staff development related to Content Area Literacy, including sending a team to state and national conferences with turn-key training to guarantee school-wide dissemination to a broad range of teachers. Professional development will emphasize concept development, vocabulary acquisition, reading comprehension strategies and writing across the curriculum.

Library. Studies over the last decade examined library-related assets. Researchers analyzed the number of computers and licensed databases schools owned, the size of their book collections, the presence of a certified librarian, and the school's access. Their findings concluded that the more assets a school had, the more likely it was that students would score higher on standardized tests regardless of socio-economic factors.²

The McGraw Central School proposal succinctly aligns with the legislative intent of the Fund for the Improvement of Education (FIE), Title V, Part D, Subpart 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The proposal ensures that children in this rural community will have libraries that deliver high-quality literacy programming to them and their families and that they

² Keith Curry Lance, Library Technology Raises Test Scores Too; School Library Journal, 2/1/2002,

<http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA260694.html>.

and students have access to age- and grade-level reading material in their homes. In addition the proposal ensures that K-12 students are supported by certified library media specialists who works collaboratively with content area professionals.

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN

Specific, Measurable Goals, Objectives and Outcomes.

The goal of the McGraw Central School proposal is to enact, refine and sustain a replicable model of literacy learning, including book distribution and childhood literacy activities as well as targeted professional development and the integration of advanced technologies to enhance achievement and teacher effectiveness K-12. Baseline will be established using data generated in the 2011-2012 school year.

Objectives include:

- Enhancing reading readiness of children birth to 5 years of age by targeted outreach and activities for children and family members via programming at the school and in the homes with a case load of 20 families annually;
- Distributing books to children from birth to 8th grade in order to promote early literacy and prepare children to read and meet state, college- and career-ready academic content standards;
- Providing high quality childhood literacy activities with meaningful opportunities for parental engagement, including encouraging parents to read books often with their children and teaching parents how to use literacy resources effectively;
- Adopting the *Big 6* and *Super 3* models for teaching and reinforcing research, problem solving, and writing processes (K-12). The models are documented to promote research,

problem-solving and metacognitive skills through the cooperation of both school library media specialists and content area teachers;

- Extending formal reading instruction beyond 6th grade where explicit instruction ends in most New York State schools. A researched-based approach (*Scholastic READ 180*) will be implemented across the middle-level grades to ensure that instruction is targeted to student needs, that assessment informs instruction in an ongoing way, and that students have ample opportunities to read and discuss reading with others;³
- Developing a collection of high-interest, middle-level texts (electronic and print) as well as periodicals, non-fiction e-books, leveled paperbacks and audio-books to encourage engagement as aligned with the American Association of School Librarians' (AASL) *Standards for the 21st Century Learner*⁴;
- Providing professional development for all middle-level content area teachers (grades 4-8) related to, *Scholastic's READ 180* and content-area literacy, activating prior knowledge, teaching technical and general vocabulary and enhancing reading comprehension and student writing.⁵ and
- Strengthening literacy development across academic areas (K-12) by providing a wide range of literacy resources (print and electronic) and the technologies to promote related

³ International Reading Association. (2001) Supporting Young Adolescents' Literacy Learning: A joint position statement of the International Reading Association and the National Middle School Association.

http://www.reading.org/Libraries/Position_Statements_and_Resolutions/ps1052_supporting.sflb.ash. Accessed on January 10, 2012.

⁴ <http://www.ala.org/aasl/guidelinesandstandards/learningstandards/standards> Accessed on January 15, 2012.

⁵ Vacca, Richard T., Jo Anne L. Vacca and Maryann E. Mraz (2010). *Content Area Reading: Literacy and learning across the curriculum* (10th edition). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

access. Resources must span a range of both complexity and content to effectively support reading and writing.

Formative outcomes include:

- Implementation tracking by the evaluation team (document review, interviews with staff, survey of teachers, focus group with participating parents and documentation of shifts in resources availability, quality and age) to ensure fidelity to plan;
- Pre/post surveys of teachers related to professional development provided, its efficacy and use of new teaching strategies in the district's classrooms; and
- Review of student achievement gains as documented by *Scholastic READ 180* and student work reflecting collaboration between library media specialists and content-area teachers.

Summative outcomes include:

- Enhanced school readiness as demonstrated by significant gains in oral language skills on Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) for 4-year olds participants (pre/post participation) and the *Get Ready to Read!* assessment. These data will also be shared with school staff to support transition of the participating children.
- Improved student achievement as demonstrated by the percentage of students (in 3rd grade) who meet or exceed proficiency on state reading and language arts assessments.
- Improved student achievement as demonstrated by the percentage of students (in 8th grade) who meet or exceed proficiency on state reading or language arts assessments.
- Increased access to high-quality literacy materials as documented by size and age of library collections (including electronic databases), student counts (use of library),

student to computer and hand-held device ratios and numbers of books distributed to children and their families.

Coordination with Similar or Related Efforts/State and Federal Resources.

The proposal coordinates with efforts already underway as documented in a conducted needs analysis. More specifically, Federal Titles monies will be leveraged to supplement the efforts delineated in this plan and a recently acquired Performance Enhancement Grant (part of NYSED's *Race to the Top* initiative) further aligns and supports.

The District will leverage federal, state and local funds to both enact and sustain the program. More specifically McGraw will seek support from the Onondaga-Cortland-Madison Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) to identify ways to leverage the potential U.S. Department of Education investment and sustain the services enacted by REAP and Titles funds as noted.

Comprehensive Effort to Improve Teaching and Learning.

The McGraw proposal supports students from cradle to career with the strategies and approaches attuned to the dynamics of a small, rural community and grounded in research-based assumptions:

- Language learning begins at birth and access to books, print and quality interactions with caregivers, shapes readiness for formal school learning.⁶
- A balanced instructional program including systematic code instruction and meaningful reading and writing activities promotes achievement in the early grades.⁷

⁶ Whitehurst, Grover J. Keynote Address, developed at the White House Summit on Early childhood Cognitive Development, July 26, 2001.

- Daily opportunities to write varied texts for different purposes and intellectually challenging curriculum that expands knowledge of the world and vocabulary promoting positive student outcomes.⁸
- Integration of technologies motivates middle-level and high school students yielding positive results.⁹
- The library can and should serve as the information and learning hub of the District.¹⁰

Also underpinning this proposal are the five (5) recommendations from the U.S. Department of Education’s *Improving Reading Comprehension in Kindergarten Through 3rd Grade* report through the Institute of Education Sciences (IES). As such, the McGraw-led project will: 1) teach students how to use reading comprehension strategies; 2) teach students to identify and use the text’s organizational structure to comprehend, learn and remember content; 3) guide students through focused, high-quality discussion on the meaning of the text; 4) select texts purposefully to support comprehension development; and 5) establish an engaging and motivating context in which to teach reading comprehension.

⁷ National Research Association for Education of Young children (NAEYC) (1998). Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children. *Young Children*, July pp. 30-46.

⁸ Diamond, L. and S. Mandel (1996). Building a Powerful Reading Program from Research to Practice, California State University, Sacramento Inst. for Education Reform ; California University, Berkeley California Policy Seminar: 25.

⁹ Biancarosa, C., & Snow, C.E. (2006). Reading next – A vision for action and research in middle and high school literacy: A report to Carnegie Corporation of New York (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.

¹⁰ Small, Ruth V., Jaime Snyder, and Katie Parker (2009), “The impact of New York’s School Libraries on Student Achievement and Motivation: Phase I, *School Library Media Research 12*.

Key to this IAL project is professional development for teaching staff and ensuring that the kinds of texts needed to adopt these recommendations are available to students. Currently, fewer than 50% of the texts recommended to align with the Common Core curriculum are available to McGraw students. The timeline, included in the management plan, delineates the District's plans for book distribution, childhood literacy activities and plans to improve the literacy skills of children and students by promoting early literacy and preparing young children to read; developing and improving older students' reading ability and motivating them to read. Critical to the success of this project is to hire a 1.0 FTE Literacy-Certified staff member to coordinate the proposed activities as well as a .50 Teacher Assistant to staff the library during hours when the District's certified librarian is not available. Currently, one librarian is split between two buildings and the library is not staffed at all times for students and teachers to access materials.

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT SERVICES

Quality/Sufficiency of Strategies – Equal Access and Treatment

All eligible project participants (all enrolled children in the district) and any family with children in the targeted age ranges may participate in the proposed project including participants who are members of groups that have traditionally been under-represented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability. Due the small size of the school and community, the entire student population can and will be included in the project activities delineated.

Appropriateness of Services.

The services proposed are extensively appropriate for students and families in an isolated, rural community. Services, due to the rural nature of the region, are planned at the school and in families' homes. While most supports for K-12 students will occur during the school day,

transportation to and from home will be provided for activities that occur after school. All planned professional development aligns with New York State Standards, including the newly adopted Common Core, as well as all provisions under New York's *Race to the Top* initiative.

Book distribution will begin in December 2012 with a kickoff theme of "Books Under Your Tree" to coincide with holiday celebrations and to get families excited and interested in the proposed project. A team of staff members will to make appropriate book selections based on colleague feedback and relevance to the New York State English Language Arts and Common Core curriculum. Distribution will occur four (4) times for all students in grades K-8 during 2012-2013 and six (6) times during 2013-2014. Programs will be planned and conducted monthly (also starting in December 2012) by the project coordinator (who is Literacy Certified) who will also follow up with interested families through home visits. Each home visit will utilize research-based strategies, from the field of Family Literacy, to teach families to effectively use literacy materials in the home to prepare young children for school success. Utilizing community volunteers and staff, McGraw will develop a plan to provide each baby born in the community with a *WELCOME* gift including *Reading Right from the Start: What Parents Can Do in the First Five Years*, storybooks and an invitation to literacy-related events at the school. As with book distribution, efforts will begin in December 2012 and be ongoing.ⁱ

Literacy training and materials purchased will align with International Reading Association and National Council of Teachers of English, *Standards for English Language Arts*. To ensure that students with the greatest educational need find success, middle-level students will:

1. Read a wide range of print and non-print texts to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment;

2. Read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres;
3. Apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts;
4. Adjust use of spoken, written, and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes;
5. Employ a wide range of strategies to communicate with different audiences/purposes;
6. Apply knowledge of language structure, conventions, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts;
7. Conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions and by posing problems.
8. Use a variety of technological and information resources to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge;
9. Develop an understanding of and respect for diversity in language use, patterns, and dialects across cultures, ethnic groups, geographic regions, and social roles; and
10. Use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).¹¹

Acquisition of the proposed materials and technologies will foster better collaborative practice between core area teachers, the core curriculum and the library media specialists. “Effective collaboration with teachers helps to create vibrant and engaged community of learners, strengthens the whole school program as well as the library media program, and develops

¹¹ From the NCTE / IRA Standards for the English Language Arts. <http://www.ncte.org/standards/ncte-ira>

Accessed on January 10, 2012.

support for the school library media program throughout the whole school.”¹² Project activities are consistent with research-based practices for improving student reading achievement. “School library collections inform, educate, entertain, and enrich students at all levels. When students are able to explore information that is meaningful to them, they not only learn faster, but their literacy skills grow rapidly; they learn to learn.”¹³

Sufficient Quality, Intensity, and Duration of Professional Development.

Using turn-key training to develop local expertise, the training and professional development proposed will be sufficient in quality, intensity and duration during the grant period.

Responsible	Activity	Timeline
Evaluation Group.	Finalize a programmatic logic model, protocols and access to student data.	10/12
Director/Evaluation Group.	Review timeline, roles/ expectations with Implementation Team.	10/12
Evaluation Group.	Gather focus group data from middle-level ELA staff related to strengths/weakness of instruction in ELA aligned to NCTE standards.	11/12
Co-Coordiators/Director	Communicate project intent with parents/stakeholders.	11/12
Director.	Interview and hire staff delineated.	11/12
Director/Implementation Team.	Enroll staff in targeted conferences and craft plan for turn-key training.	12/12 – ongoing.

¹² Information Power: Building Partnerships for Learning. American Association of School Librarians and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology. American Library Association: Chicago, 1998. p 54.

¹³ School Libraries Work, Scholastic Library Publishing, 2008, p 5.

Responsible	Activity	Timeline
Implementation Team.	Recruit for 3 and 4 years participation in Early Childhood Activities.	12/12 – ongoing.
Co-Coordiators/Literacy Staff.	Order <i>Scholastic READ180</i> materials for teachers and targeted grades	12/12
Co-Coordiators/Literacy Staff.	Finalize schedule for <i>Scholastic READ 180</i> training.	12/12
Co-Coordiators.	Purchase literacy materials that fill curricular gaps.	12/12 – ongoing.
Implementation Team.	Provide each baby born in the community with a literacy <i>WELCOME</i> gift.	1/13 – ongoing.
Co-Coordiators/Director of Technology.	Purchase technologies scheduled for project implementation.	11/12 – ongoing.
Evaluation Group/Implementation Team	Confirm baseline data aligned with outcomes measures.	11/12
Co-Coordiators/Technology Director	Develop <i>follow-up</i> and <i>just-in-time</i> training protocols for teachers using new technologies.	11/12
Co-Coordiators.	Train cohorts of teachers (2) in the <i>Big 6</i> and <i>Super 3</i> models.	1/13
Director/Implementation Team.	Revisit staff training needs (accomplishments/challenges).	2/13 – ongoing.
Evaluation Group - Implementation Team.	Track student achievement within <i>Scholastic Read 180</i> , account for teacher training, student attendance and intensity of intervention.	12/12 – ongoing.

Responsible	Activity	Timeline
Director/Co-Coordination.	Finalize ELA PD schedule aligned to implementation of <i>Scholastic Read 180</i> and best practices for middle-level literacy.	12/12 – ongoing.
Co-Coordination.	Publish plans for improved library access. Reach out to teachers to ensure their awareness, plan for research project using IAL resources.	12/12
Co-Coordination.	Ensure that all students in grades 4-6 complete research projects with integration across two or more content areas.	Ongoing
Coordinator.	Ensure that all students in grades K-3 complete research projects with integration across two or more contents areas.	Ongoing.
Implementation Team.	Ensure that all students in grades 7, 9 and 12 th complete research projects with collaboration across one or more content areas.	Ongoing.
Implementation Team.	Ensure that all students in grades 8, 10 and 11 th complete research projects, with collaboration across one or more content areas.	Ongoing.
Implementation Team.	Expand recruitment for Early Literacy Intervention to include children Birth to 2 years, prioritizing families with significant needs.	3/13 – ongoing.
Director/Implementation Team.	Provide professional development related to content area literacy using an external provider (contracted as a part of grant) – emphasizing reading comprehension, vocabulary development (technical and general) and writing across the curriculum (aligned to Common Core).	Ongoing.

Responsible	Activity	Timeline
Evaluation Group/Implementation Team.	Quarterly review of progress and data related to evaluation of program and participants (student achievement and other data).	Quarterly
Evaluation Group/Implementation Team.	Revisit scope and sequence of implementation and revise as appropriate.	Quarterly.
Director/Evaluation Group.	Develop project dissemination plan to include presentations of local, state and national conferences and publication of evaluation findings.	5/13 - ongoing

After funding is exhausted, training and services will continue using support from the Onondaga –Cortland-Madison Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES), local Titles and REAP fund. Community volunteers and the local PTA will be approached to support ongoing outreach to families and book distribution after the 24-month grant period.

ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

Costs proposed are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design and potential significance of the proposed project and relation to the number of persons to be served and the anticipated results and benefits. A full-time librarian and NYS Certified Teacher Aide are supported to ensure that all students and teachers have access to the library resources and support for resource use and so that all grant activities are accomplished. There will be careful culling and purchasing of necessary materials to support the Common Core (██████████ over 24 months). Fringe benefits for the 1.5 FTE are included ██████████ as well as travel for required grant meetings (██████████). Supplies include library books, database subscriptions, books for distribution, *Scholastic READ 180*, and funds to purchase one (1) laptop cart, one (1) iPad cart

and five (5) upgraded work stations (including software) for the two targeted sites in each year of the grant [REDACTED]. Conference costs are included ([REDACTED]) as are stipends for teachers [REDACTED] to attend trainings which will be offered in-house by staff who attended turn-key trainings and conferences. Modest funds are included for duplicating and printing [REDACTED]. A contractual budget of [REDACTED] is included each year to cover Head Start staff time to collaborate enacting Early Childhood Literacy activities and outreach to young children and their caregivers. Indirect costs are included at a rate of [REDACTED]. Finally, evaluation costs are included and are sufficient to cover the substantial plan for independent evaluation of the project.

QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Clearly Defined Responsibilities, Timelines and Milestones.

The librarians (one dedicated to the elementary and one to the middle/high schools) will serve as co-coordinators, the K-12 superintendent will serve as the director. The newly hired staff member will have considerable work to do to upgrade the high school collections and technologies and support content-area teachers in engaging students in collaborative research and other literacy-related study.

Objectives for the Library Media Specialist

- Develop a thorough knowledge of subject area and grade level curricula, and promote competency in information literacy across the curriculum.
- Establish Childhood Literacy Program planning as a priority and devote adequate time and resources to this process on an ongoing basis.
- Facilitate work of project Implementation Teams in both buildings.
- Collaborate with teachers and staff to integrate information literacy competencies.

- Model the effective and enthusiastic use of books, videos and multi-media.
- Work collaboratively and individually to design, develop and implement programs that encourage reading for enjoyment and for information.
- Maintain a collection that is diverse in format and content to support learning needs.
- Recommend, create, implement, and evaluate resources and activities in various formats.
- Model and promote effective uses of technology for learning and teaching.
- Orchestrate access to information resources within and beyond the school.
- Promote relationships with external information sources.
- Create and maintain an inviting, attractive physical environment.
- Promote the principles of intellectual freedom by providing services and resources that create and sustain an atmosphere of free inquiry and by serving as an active advocate for intellectual freedom within the school.
- Maintain an in-depth understanding of current legislation and regulations regarding access, copyright, and other legal issues that affect the library media program.

Teacher Aide. A NYS certified Teacher Aide will be hired to support this work, specifically acquiring and organizing supplies and materials for the monthly Childhood Literacy activities and for taking materials into family's home to ensure access for all current and future McGraw students. This individual will be trained in home-visiting strategies and techniques and will plan and facilitate home visits with a goal of one per month. This individual will keep thorough records including lesson objective, material uses with the family and reported use of the materials at follow up. This individual will serve as key point of outreach, including collaborating with the Head Start staff housed in the building.

Teachers, school administrators, parents and other stakeholders had meaningful involvement in the planning for this application. More specifically, a *Comprehensive Improvement Plan Committee* was formed in 2011-2012 school year and engaged stakeholders in gathering and analyzing data, making decisions at the classroom, building and district level aligned with findings and shared information with parents and community members. In addition, a *Literacy Committee* was formed this year to examine the K-8 reading program. The committee's charge was to find a solid K-5 reading program that supports and sustains students' ability to read and aligns with existing efforts at the middle and high schools and IAL funds may now help act on their recommendations.

Director. The Superintendent, Mary Curcio, will serve as the Director. She holds degrees from Jefferson Community College, SUNY Oswego, Syracuse University and SUNY Cortland. Her areas of expertise are in instructional design and staff development. She has worked with thirteen schools in enacting targeted professional development efforts (similar to this IAL project). **Implementation Team.** The Implementation team for this project will meet monthly to review the proposed timeline, progress therein, barriers and other relevant issues. The project director and both building principals will attend and participate (taking on tasks each month along with others on the team) as will the technology director and other key staff appointed by the superintendent and co-coordinators.

Time Commitments of Project Director and Principal Investigator/Other Key Personnel.

The time commitments of the Project Director, Co-Coordinators are reasonable as are funds allocated to ensure that a professional librarian can serve each of the school buildings and bring to scale this project in both sites. The superintendent is the only McGraw staff member with experience monitoring a project of this scope, as such, her involvement is critical. She will,

however, delegate responsibilities to the co-coordinators as outlined in the management plan. The superintendent, co-coordinators and principals will work collaborative to bring this project to scale. All will attend Implementation Team meetings and will take an active role – ensuring that activities are completed and outcomes met. The superintendent will take the lead in communicating about the project with Board of Education members and other community stakeholders, while the director of technology will advise the purchase of and training of all technologies proposed. Classroom teachers will advise the purchase of texts while the co-coordinators will reach out to the Head Start staff and plan Childhood Literacy activities with input from the K-1 teaching staff. All hands will be on deck to ensure that this project is a model that others may replicate. Dr. Laura Payne-Bourcy will attend Implementation Team meetings quarterly to advise, support and troubleshoot any barriers or difficulties encountered. Dr. Scott Shablak and the Evaluation Team will be in contact with the co-coordinators and director monthly to plan for the gathering and analysis of all data and the use of findings for ongoing continuous improvement.

Adequacy of Mechanisms for Ensuring High Quality Products and Services. The checks and balances maintained by the support from an independent evaluator as well as reliance on an Implementation Team with broad representation will ensure high-quality products and services. The proposal brings together the resources of a small, rural school and community and evaluation experts and researchers at Syracuse University to meet IAL intent.

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT EVALUATION

The R/E/D Group will provide independent evaluation services to the McGraw IAL project. Employing both qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods, the team will provide feedback and technical assistance to the District and the two targeted school sites. The R/E/D Group

provides services to P-16 organizations, Institutes of Higher Education, community-based and other organizations to strengthen the capacity to meet and surpass expectations of state and federal funding agencies including New York State (NYS) Education Department, NYS Department of Health, the National Science Foundation, United States Office of Special Education programs and United States Department of Education. For McGraw, the R/E/D Group has tailored an evaluation plan that responds to the District's Performance Measures and related data collection will include qualitative and quantitative data.

Objective Performance Measures/Outcomes. Summative outcomes include: 1) enhanced school readiness as demonstrated by significant gains in oral language skills on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) for 4-year old participants (pre/post) and the *Get Ready to Read!* assessment; 2) improved student achievement as demonstrated by the percentage of students (in 3rd and 8th grades) who meet or exceed proficiency on state standards and review of curricular-based achievement aligned with *Scholastic READ 180*; and 3) increased access to and use of high quality materials as demonstrated by the size and age of the library collection (including databases), gate counts, student computer/iPad ratios, completion of collaborative student research units and the numbers of books distributed to children and families.

Performance Feedback/Periodic Assessment. To assess the impact of professional development as well as gather information to refine training, surveys will be conducted three times during the 24-month project reflecting staff members' perceptions of their developmental needs as well as the efficacy of training provided. Focus group interviews with parents of participating students will be conducted once annually (three groups will be targeted – elementary, middle and high school students). Implementation tracking by the evaluation team (document review, interviews with staff, survey of teachers, focus group with participating

parents and documentation of shifts in resource availability, quality and age) to ensure fidelity to plan will occur in an ongoing way. **Data Collected.** Baseline PPVT tests will be administered in November/December 2012. Participants in the Childhood activities, including home visiting, will be post tested in June/July of 2013. Additional initial assessments will be conducted the subsequent October/November 2013 and follow-up in May/June or at interval of related length within the 24-month project. *Scholastic READ 180* baseline data will also be gathered in October/November of 2012 and twice after that during the school year. The exact nature of the reports produced and analyzed by the evaluation team will be negotiated with the District's Reading Specialist. The range of reports possible must be narrowed to ensure that the analysis is consistent and useful over time. The evaluation team will attend quarterly Implementation Planning meetings and use those opportunities to gather updates related to implementation tracking as well as progress towards the completion of prescribed training, collaborative student research projects and books distributed. Baseline gate counts will be garnered from the 2011 school year and these data (gate counts, student- computer/iPad ratios) gathered again in June 2013/14. **Instruments.** Teacher surveys will be developed in October 2012, as soon as funding is confirmed to gather baseline data. Focus group and individual interview protocols will also be developed in October 2012 and amended over the course of the project to assess fidelity to implementation, progress and barriers to attainment of outcomes and related mid-course corrections. The PPVT, *Get Ready to Read!* and *Scholastic READ 180* assessments will also be utilized as outlined. **Data Analysis.** Quantitative data will be analyzed to determine shifts in percentages or ratios and if student gains (*Scholastic READ 180*) are statistically significant (using t tests). Quantitative data will be analyzed to document patterns or themes that related to the implementation of the project and to ensure that the range of perspectives presented in the

school and community and known and used to ensure project success. Quantitative data will also be disaggregated by subgroups to evaluate individual participant outcomes and progress towards performance indicators. **Logic Model/Feedback Loop.** In addition, the R/E/D Group will develop and share with the Implementation Team a logic model so that all team members appreciate the relationship (from the start of the program) of inputs to outputs. As needed, the R/E/D Group will train project staff to use assessments outlined (*Get Ready to Read!*, for example). The R/E/D Group will assist in the completion of required reports for funders, and facilitate three feedback sessions (a feedback loop) with project staff to understand how it is coming to scale and how measures indicate impact on participating students, teachers and their families. **Reports.** Reports will be produced twice annually with four (4) over the course of the 24-month project. Each report will summarize data gathered to date, analysis of that data, implementations for program and participant outcomes and data-grounded recommendations for continuous program improvement,

Dr. Scott Shablak, Partner, will lead the evaluation effort. He spent 35 years in educational leadership as a teacher, school administrator, faculty member, and assistant dean for professional development and executive director of the School Study Council at Syracuse University, a consortium of more than 125 school districts across New York State. Consulting experiences with more than 150 organizations include: professional development in educational settings; best technology and leadership practices research and dissemination; program and training assessments and evaluation; planning for quality and excellence; effective leadership and supervision; collaborative management; collaborative and interactive research; effectiveness assessment and long-range planning; curriculum and instruction redesign; motivational instruction; data based decision making; improving organizational work settings for adults; and

leadership development for school improvement. He holds degrees from Colgate, Harvard and Syracuse Universities.

Anna Dahlstein is a research and evaluation consultant with The R/E/D Group, LLP. She holds an M.A. in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a B.A. in Government from Harvard University. Her library experience ranges from managing the news clippings and reference service at UW-Madison's University Communications office to serving as the Director of External Relations for the North Carolina State University Libraries. In Syracuse, NY, she contributed to an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation music cataloging grant at the Syracuse University Library and collaborated with an SU iSchool faculty member on researching the scholarly literature, methodologies and best practices for demonstrating the value of libraries (including school, college/university, public, and special e.g. corporate, law, and medical libraries) for a major report commissioned by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL). Before becoming a librarian, she worked as a news analyst, writer and editor in Argentina, where she also taught English as a second language to executives and professionals. She is fluent in Spanish and Swedish and brings a wealth of experience related to collections management and the implication for student learning to the McGraw project.

ⁱ Bickart, R. & Trister Dodge, D. (2000). Reading right from the start: What parents can do in the first five years. Teaching Strategies, Washington, DC.