

**Denver Public School’s Investing in Innovation Validation Grant Application on
Collaborative Strategic Reading**

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Competitive Priority Preference (CPP) Response

Denver Public Schools (DPS) is responding to CPP 7: Innovations to address the unique learning needs of Limited English Proficient Students (hereafter referred to as ELLs) and Students with Disabilities. For DPS, this means a districtwide focus that converges on ELL strategies as a core component in all aspects of the school system including, but not limited to, teacher effectiveness, curriculum, principal professional development, parent engagement, ELA courses for school staff, assessments, and district growth models. DPS proposes to partner with the University of Colorado in Boulder (CU Boulder) to implement and validate the effectiveness of a reading practice called Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) in eight middle schools. CSR is not a curriculum, but a practice dependent on teacher effectiveness in the instruction of ELLs, students with learning disabilities (LD), and struggling readers.

The rationale behind this proposal is clear. CSR was developed by researchers and has shown success in small studies in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms from fourth grade through middle school. In DPS, forty-four percent of the total enrolled populations of students in DPS are ELLs. These students as a group, across all heritage languages, consistently struggle with reading comprehension and writing, both of which negatively impact academic achievement and graduation. DPS is committed to a partnership focused on the goal of addressing the unique needs of all ELLs and understands that effective teachers are able to thrive only if the whole school system is committed to adopting and implementing best practices for ELLs and students with disabilities. Over the five years of the grant, it is hoped that the preliminary research will be validated as effective, and DPS will have in place a comprehensive program it is able to systematize and bring to scale to address the needs of high needs students.

A. Need for the Project and Quality of the Project Design

A(1) - DPS proposes this project to address Absolute Priority #1, Innovations that support effective teachers and principals by validating a research-based intervention, CSR. CSR is a research-based intervention for cross content area teachers to improve discipline specific reading comprehension. DPS and its partners will use CSR to catalyze a whole school strategy to increase middle school teacher, principal, and school staff effectiveness and overall academic achievement for ELLs, students with LD, and struggling readers (i.e. below proficient on the State reading assessment, CSAP). These student groups are not exclusive and many ELLs cross these groups. This project will be conducted with our official nonprofit partner, CU Boulder, and is intended to build on a school- and districtwide coherence model through our partnerships with CU Boulder and our collaborative partnerships with the University of Colorado at Denver (UCD) and Padres Unidos, a 20-year-old community-based organization that works on educational equality issues with Spanish-speaking parents and youths in Denver. Padres Unidos is a strategic partner as they will help create sustainable ELL parent engagement vehicles for DPS. DPS, CU Boulder, UCD and Padres will hereafter be referred to as the partnership.

The partnership will use CSR to close the ELL achievement gap by: 1) Creating validation sites (eight middle schools by the end of the grant period) where CSR will be used to organize a school around research-based best practices for ELLs to include instruction, leadership, counseling, parent outreach, and student scheduling; 2) Promoting districtwide adoption of CSR; 3) Advocating for statewide implementation of CSR; and 4) Disseminating findings and supporting nationwide implementation of CSR for districts with growing numbers of ELLs. CSR will also be used as the strategic lever for districtwide change that focuses on the pervasive and urgent need to address ELL academic achievement. DPS is committed to having a

highly effective teacher in every classroom, and is building strategies to support this commitment. DPS are working collaboratively with the Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA), the teachers' union, to develop a comprehensive teacher performance assessment system, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). This system will be grounded in a shared, research-driven definition of effective teaching, incorporate multiple measures of effectiveness including student outcomes, and link to targeted, aligned, and highly differentiated professional development. However, DPS' efforts have not focused on ELLs' and their teachers' needs, as if the work of "effective teaching" is generic to all students, rather than specifically addressing the needs of ELLs and what their teachers must do to support them.

Currently, DPS has 78,352 ECE-12 students. ELLs total 32,125, or 44% of the total student population (see Appendix H); 71.5% of DPS students qualify for free/reduced lunch (DPS Website, 2009-2010 Facts and Figures); 15 DPS middle schools have more than 40% of their students on free/reduced lunch (out of 17) and will be available for participation in this project. Demographically, DPS includes the following: American Indian: 1.1%; Asian: 3.5%; Black: 16.2%; Hispanic: 54.1%; and White: 25.2%. About 44% in K-12 are ELLs (24,519). About 11% receive some special education services. Students with IEPs were 1.7% American Indian, 22.1% Black, 1.6% Asian, 53.8% Latino, and 20.8% White (compared with 1.1%, 16.2%, 3.5%, 54.1%, and 25.2% in the total population, respectively). About 26% of all students with IEP were ELLs.

Of great concern to DPS are ELLs', exited ELLs', students with LD, and struggling readers' low reading comprehension levels. Many ELLs struggle with reading comprehension, and determining their reading comprehension trajectories leading to proficiency is difficult, due to the lack of research on this specific population and lack of longitudinal growth data for ELLs

on required standardized assessments. Reading comprehension in middle school is the gateway to later school success, and student inability to comprehend leads too many of them to become disaffected learners. To succeed in middle school, students must gain meaning and learn from texts. Yet, poor reading comprehension is a national crisis. Less than 32% eighth-graders across the U.S. comprehend what they read at or above proficient levels (NAEP, 2009), with significant differences in comprehension among demographic groups, favoring white students over those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students in rural and suburban schools over those in urban schools, and students from higher income households over those from lower income homes (Lapp, Grigg, & Tay-Lim, 2002). Many secondary school teachers assume that students who can read words accurately can also comprehend and learn from texts simply by reading. Therefore, they neglect to adequately instruct students on how to read for learning and understanding (Pressley, 2000; RAND Reading Study Group, 2002). Also, the readability level of typical texts used in secondary classrooms may be too high for below grade-level readers, and the “unfriendliness” of many texts can result in comprehension challenges for many students (Mastropieri, Scruggs, & Graetz, 2003).

Suggestions to enhance students’ reading comprehension focus on improved teacher education and professional development (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; NICHD, 2000; Snow, 2002). Research shows that effective comprehension instruction teaches students to summarize, generate and answer questions, and monitor their own comprehension (Kamil, 2004). Explicit strategy instruction helps improve comprehension for a wide variety of students (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; Gersten et al., 2001; National Reading Panel (NICHD, 2000); RAND Reading Study Group, 2002; Swanson, 1999). However, teaching these strategies generally falls primarily to language arts teachers, and many teacher preparation programs inadequately prepare them to

meet their ELLs' needs. Furthermore, content area teachers tend to be ill-prepared to effectively support students' comprehension needs, particularly for their ELL students. Thus, the need is great to ensure effective and relevant professional development to enhance teacher effectiveness.

An additional need is to ensure that the professional development DPS provides is part of a coherent schoolwide and districtwide model (Newmann, King, & Youngs, 2000). Simply providing more professional development to struggling schools will likely be counterproductive. Supporting teachers and principals in low-performing schools requires a theory of coherence that leads to sustainable school capacity building. Individual teacher competence is the foundation for improved classroom practice, but teacher competence alone is insufficient without a concomitant improvement of the overall organizational capacity of a school.

A(2)—The overarching goal of this proposal is to validate that CSR increases teacher and principal effectiveness as measured by improvements in student outcomes.

The Intervention: Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR)

CSR is a research-based intervention that has been successfully implemented and studied in culturally and linguistically diverse, inclusive classrooms from fourth grade through middle school. Yet, this innovative approach for high-need students has not yet been widely adopted. In keeping with the requirements for a Validation grant, CSR as implemented in this project will be the same as, or very similar to, the corresponding version studied in prior research. CSR addresses ELLs' linguistic and academic needs as well as unique learning needs of students with LD (Competitive Preference Priority 7). CSR was not developed by a for-profit organization and it is not a packaged program; rather, it was designed by researchers to improve teachers' abilities to help their students improve reading comprehension. The partnership expects that CSR will benefit all students, with disproportionate benefits for high-need students.

CSR facilitates reading comprehension for struggling readers, students with LD, and ELLs, no matter what their heritage languages, included in diverse general education classrooms, as well as resource rooms (Klingner et al., 2001). Built on a foundation of reciprocal teaching (Palincsar & Brown, 1984) and incorporating many features associated with effective instruction (e.g., collaborative group work, interactive dialogue, procedural strategies), CSR addresses four prevailing educational challenges, how to promote (a) students' reading comprehension, particularly of discipline-specific expository text; (b) ELLs', students' with LD, and struggling readers' text-based content learning; (c) students' engagement in high-level academic discussions; and (d) ELLs' language acquisition through academic discourse with peers.

CSR helps students develop metacognitive awareness and learn specific strategies associated with enhanced reading comprehension, including: (a) Brainstorming (i.e., connecting with prior knowledge) and predicting or setting purposes for reading (*preview*); (b) Monitoring understanding and taking steps to figure out unknown words or confusing ideas (*click and clunk*); (c) Determining main ideas and gist statements (*get the gist*); and (d) Generating questions and reviewing key ideas or summarizing (*wrap up*). CSR also gives students opportunities to work in small cooperative groups of about four students where each student plays an important role (e.g., leader, clunk expert, gist expert, question expert) associated with the group's effective functioning and strategy implementation. Cue cards help students learn their roles. The teacher first teaches the comprehension strategies to the whole class using explicit instruction, modeling, think alouds, and guided practice. Once students know the strategies, they apply them while working in cooperative groups and reading content area text with their peers. Students record what they are learning in CSR learning logs (see Appendix H

for sample CSR materials). CSR emphasizes the effective application of comprehension strategies as well as meaningful discussions about text content.

DPS will work with CU Boulder to implement CSR in eight middle schools during the next five years. CU Boulder will provide CSR professional development and ongoing support to teachers, teacher leaders, guidance counselors, parents, and administrators. DPS and CU Boulder will work together to ensure that CSR is implemented in a manner that promotes school-wide coherence to support effective teaching and learning for ELLs and other high-need students. The illustration on page 11 shows how DPS will take CU Boulder's CSR implementation findings from the research sites to inform districtwide practices to ensure that ELL curriculum, professional development (teacher effectiveness and ELA courses and principal leadership), assessments, and parent engagement are delivered in the most relevant ways.

DPS is also creating a steering committee comprised of members of the partnership, who will hold DPS accountable for the implementation and achievement of milestones, outcomes, objectives, and districtwide coherence strategies and further, identify ways to inform the national conversation and practices on ensuring quality ELL education.

Objective 1: Validate CSR as a best practice, disciplinary-specific reading comprehension strategy for ELLs, students with LD and other struggling readers and disseminate all findings to inform districtwide, statewide, and nationwide practices, policies, and strategies for meeting ELLs' needs. Activities under this objective include:

- 1) Implement CSR in eight DPS middle schools;
- 2) Perform and evaluate CSR research with CU Boulder from both teacher effectiveness and student achievement perspectives;
- 3) Implement CSR districtwide and disseminate findings:

- a. Create a project steering committee made up of all project partners to design and oversee project implementation, conduct ongoing project reflection and evaluation, and design and plan project expansion for DPS institutional rollout;
- b. Create a national consortium of ELL educators and administrators that meets biannually to discuss policy, program design, and CSR implementation and other English Language Acquisition (ELA) strategies;
- c. Publish research findings and lessons and disseminate them in multiple ways.

Outcomes will be demonstrated primarily by student achievement and increased districtwide, statewide, and nationwide adoption. Dissemination measures will include the number of high-quality reports published as a result of this project, the execution of a biannual national consortium hosted by DPS, and DPS' institutional adoption of CSR as a whole school strategy.

Objective 2: Ensure that DPS' definition of teacher effectiveness contains best practices for ELA. Activities under this objective include:

- 1) Conduct CSR-based professional development and evaluation on observable teacher behaviors, document student growth and achievement, develop the principal leadership necessary for whole school adoption, and create resources for professional development;
- 2) Build CSR-related and ELL-specific measures of effective teaching to accompany the data gathered from the Measurements of Effective Teaching (MET) project;
- 3) Build a coaching and observation rubric for teachers based on CSR practices;
- 4) Contribute ELL-specific, data-based goals for teacher performance; and
- 5) Build data-based, ELL-specific mechanisms to improve performance-based teacher rewards, retention, and support teams and integrate these performance goals into the DPS Teacher Performance Management System (TPMS).

The outcome will be a definition and measures of teacher effectiveness in DPS that contain best practices for ELLs, students with LD and struggling readers. This outcome will be measured by an external review of the national consortium.

Objective 3: Increase principal professional development opportunities to drive instructional leadership that supports ELL achievement. Activities include:

- 1) Conduct CSR seminars for principals at CSR school sites;
- 2) Hire a principal coach to provide executive mentorship and guidance as s/he transitions his/her school towards the adoption of a whole school CSR implementation strategy; and
- 3) Design and deliver professional development for principals to create schoolwide structures that promote ELL, students with LD and struggling reader achievement.

This outcome will be measured by an annually increasing percentage of principals participating in CSR and ELA professional development opportunities.

Objective 4: Increase the capacity of school staff, including guidance counselors, to support ELL, students with LD and struggling readers. Activities include:

- 1) Create a cohort of teacher leaders that will model CSR implementation in the classrooms and coach other educators on using CSR in the classroom;
- 2) Hire parent coordinators at CSR sites and create advisory bodies to build sustainable tools for ongoing parent/community engagement and communication;
- 3) Hire a bilingual counselor for CSR schools sites and include CSR-related professional development for all counselors at CSR school sites;
- 4) Provide additional training to secretaries to support ELL parents at CSR school sites;

- 5) Use technology, including Promethean Boards, SchoolNet, and Teacher, Administrator, and Parent Web portals, to share information, best practices, and diverse educational strategies and tools that meet the needs of a diverse learning community; and
- 6) Create an ELA Academy that integrates CSR practices with an apprenticeship model for principal and teacher teams from non-validation sites.

This objective will be measured by increased student achievement from ELLs at 3.5% per year and increasing numbers of schoolwide personnel who feel confident in knowing how to support ELLs, students with LD, and struggling readers.

Objective 5: Align DPS’ professional development requirements to best practices for ELLs, students with LD and struggling readers. Activities include:

- 1) Redesign a model of observable teacher behaviors for classroom instruction;
- 2) Redesign UCD ELA course curricula. UCD has partnered with DPS since 2005 to offer courses for all teachers new to teaching in ELA-designated classrooms; and
- 3) Integrate newly redesigned ELA professional development opportunities with DPS teacher evaluations and the TPMS.

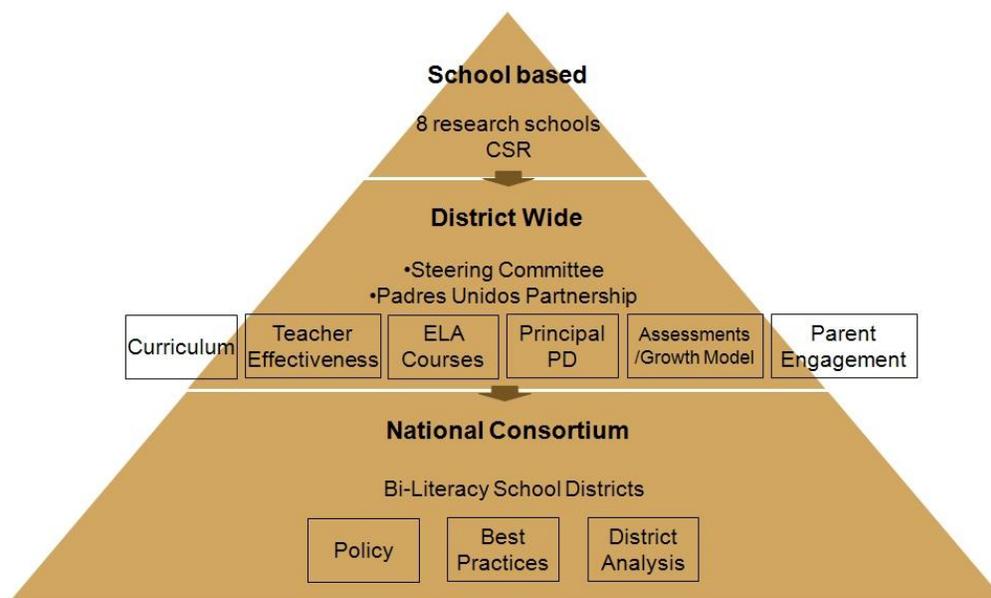
The outcome is a professional development curriculum and trajectory for DPS employees anchored in research-based best practices for ELLs, students with LD and struggling readers and aligned to teacher performance evaluation and management systems. This will be measured by data collected on student achievement improvements and observable teacher behaviors.

Objective 6: Develop a learning trajectory that accurately captures ELL student learning in language and content. Activities include:

- 1) Analyze CSR practices against new DPS curriculum standards;
- 2) Redesign English and Spanish classroom materials;

- 3) Identify performance measures with regards to student achievement;
- 4) Track data to determine if ELLs in CSR site schools are “on track” to graduate and develop relevant assessments that accurately capture student growth;
- 5) Integrate ELL performance measurements, indicators, and methodologies into DPS assessment tools; and
- 6) Redesign DPS assessments to accurately reflect ELLs’ learning trajectories.

The outcome will be districtwide assessments that accurately measure ELLs against their unique learning situations. This outcome will be measured by the number of assessments and tools developed at the end of this project specific to ELLs’ needs.



A(3)—CSR Professional Development

Through CU Boulder’s and others’ research, DPS knows a great deal about what professional development helps teachers learn new practices (e.g., Klingner, 2004). DPS realizes that teachers’ beliefs, feelings of self-efficacy, attitudes, and perceptions all affect the extent to which they try new instructional approaches and persist in using them even when confronting challenges (Artiles, 1996; Sparks & Hirsh, 1997). Supportive communities of teachers and

researchers provide needed assistance while teachers shift towards improved practice (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). Teachers need to see concrete examples of how theories relate to their students and circumstances and try them out in their own classrooms (Englert & Tarrant, 1995). By adapting new instructional approaches to fit their needs, teachers make them more relevant to their local context and develop ownership, which in turn promotes change (Datnow, McHugh, Stringfield, & Hacker, 1998). Enacting research-based changes in practices requires a flexible relationship between teachers and researchers to allow the implementation of the approach in a way that fits the unique needs of the school context without losing sight of the instructional model's purpose. Coordinating district standards and curricula with CSR will influence the extent to which CSR is integrated into practice. In this study, we will create a curriculum committee comprised of university researchers and teacher educators, professional development personnel, and school district content area specialists to help teachers understand how CSR aligns with and can be integrated into their standards and curricula in the content areas.

To implement CSR as a coherent strategy in DPS, the partnership will: (a) plan and implement professional development activities; (b) engage school administrators in discussions about how to support teachers' efforts to implement CSR; (c) design principal professional development that builds instructional leadership versed in building coherent school strategies that support ELLs, students with LD and struggling readers; (d) explain how CSR aligns with DPS content standards and curricula; (e) provide resource materials that align with their content areas; (f) offer ongoing in class support; (g) provide protocols with observable teacher behaviors to assure that teachers have learned CSR to a level that it can be used independently; (h) provide systematic and ongoing feedback to teachers about student progress, including parent interviews and surveys; (i) facilitate opportunities for teachers to observe effective CSR implementation in

peers' classrooms; (j) provide time for teachers to reflect on CSR and talk with other teachers about issues related to the practice; (k) encourage teachers to adjust and fine-tune CSR to work in their settings with their students; (l) capture effective practices to inform the district's definition of teacher effectiveness and related observation and feedback tools; (m) video effective CSR teaching to facilitate district professional development efforts; and (n) integrate CSR strategies with science and social studies technology-based curricula using Promethean Boards to meet diverse student learning and engagement needs.

This project will begin with teachers, district professional developers, and administrators participating in a four-day CSR professional development summer workshop to see it modeled, view videos of students using the strategy, and engage in extensive hands-on practice. Teachers will learn how and why to implement CSR and develop an understanding of the underlying theoretical rationale for the comprehension strategies and cooperative learning components of CSR (Pressley & El Dinary, 1997). Instructional strategies that enhance CSR implementation with learners from diverse language and cultural backgrounds will be emphasized. For instance, teachers will learn how to promote ELA through CSR. (see Appendix H).

CU Boulder will conduct four follow-up booster sessions and assist with planning during early release days. Participants will review CSR components, share their successes, problem solve, and collaborate. In addition, university researchers and teacher leaders will visit teachers' classrooms regularly throughout the year to provide follow-up classroom support through coaching and demonstration lessons, collaboratively work with school personnel to solve problems when challenges arise, and identify teacher leaders to share their expertise with others.

Teacher leaders will be integral to DPS' long-term sustainability of CSR implementation. DPS teacher leaders will teach half-days in their regularly assigned content area classes (e.g.,

science, social studies) with one teacher per core content area per school. Teacher leaders will develop “lab classrooms” where they use CSR and demonstrate how to implement CSR for their colleagues. For the other half of the day, these teacher leaders will support other teachers in implementing these strategies, through in-class modeling, co-teaching, and coaching. Teacher leaders will learn about coaching practices in the district’s Teacher Leadership Academy designed to build schools’ leadership capacity among teachers who will design, lead, and facilitate professional development aligned to each school’s improvement plan. Finally, teacher leaders will also take one, 3-credit course at CU Boulder to advance their skills and knowledge in CSR as well as their ability to facilitate CSR learning for other teachers.

In addition, Padres Unidos will build on its existing relationship with DPS to enhance ELL parents’ knowledge and leadership with CSR. Parent engagement work will focus on supporting ELL communities to understand CSR and support its use outside of school and increase parent understanding of the data collection and dissemination of findings from the research study. To achieve these goals, a parent-district-university collaborative will be created to provide a variety of access routes to increase communication and dissemination of information, such as: (a) monthly strategy sessions in English and Spanish to inform parents of CSR strategies and provide resources for parents to support opportunities for strategic reading at home; (b) language appropriate newsletters, blogs, Webinars; and (c) in-person question and answer sessions at convenient times and locations. ELL parents will be strong members of the steering committee and will work with the district to create a cadre of parent leaders who support CSR as a successful and effective ELA teaching strategy to implement state- and districtwide.

B. Strength of Research, Significance of Effect, and Magnitude of Effect

B(1) - During a 12-year period, researchers have evaluated CSR's effectiveness using quasi-experimental and experimental designs and found that CSR yields positive outcomes for ELLs, students with LD, and struggling readers, average and high-achieving students. Researchers have implemented CSR with social studies and science texts in content classes, as well as with expository and narrative texts in language arts and reading classes. Recently, Jitendra, Burgess, and Gajria (2010) applied stringent quality indicators to determine which instructional practices designed to improve the reading comprehension of students with LD could be considered "research-based." They found that only two studies met all 10 quality indicators and could be considered "high-quality research." CSR was one of these (Klingner et al., 2004).

- Initial research was with 26 eighth grade ELLs with LD (Klingner & Vaughn, 1996). Even students who were poor decoders made significant improvements in reading comprehension.
- Next, in a quasi-experimental study (Klingner, Vaughn, & Schumm, 1998), researchers provided instruction in diverse, inclusive fourth grade classrooms. Students learned to use CSR while reading social studies texts. Comparison students received typical teacher-directed instruction in the same content. CSR students made statistically significant greater gains than students in the control condition on the *Gates MacGinitie Reading Test* (Effect Size = .44) and demonstrated equal proficiency in their knowledge of social studies content.
- Subsequently, researchers implemented CSR with fifth grade ELLs. Bilingual students' discussions were taped while working in collaborate groups. Students demonstrated high levels of academic engagement and were able to help each other understand word meanings and make sense of their science textbook (Klingner & Vaughn, 2000).
- Then, in another quasi-experimental study in culturally and linguistically diverse inclusive fourth grade classrooms, researchers compared five CSR and five comparison teachers and

their students (Klingner et al., 2004). Students used CSR while reading social studies texts. Students in CSR classrooms improved more in reading comprehension than comparison students. On the *Gates-MacGinitie Reading Comprehension Test*, post-test differences were statistically significant (Effect Sizes = .25 for high and /average-achieving students, .51 for low-achieving students, and .38 for students with LD). This suggests that CSR is helping to close the achievement gap for struggling readers.

- Currently, researchers are conducting an experimental study (i.e., randomized controlled trial) in diverse middle school language arts and reading classes, including ones in DPS. Teachers are serving as their own controls, providing students in control classrooms with “business as usual” instruction. Preliminary analyses of year one data show statistically significant differences in favor of CSR on the *Gates MacGinitie Reading Comprehension Test* ($p = .05$) (Effect Size = .21 for struggling readers). The same teachers will implement CSR during year two of the study. In years three and four, the study will focus on ELLs.

In sum, CSR has been found to effectively increase discipline specific reading comprehension in diverse elementary and middle schools through quasi-experimental research studies and in middle school language arts and reading classes in an experimental study. However, researchers have yet to test CSR’s efficacy in middle school content area classes in an experimental study. In the proposed study, CU Boulder’s researchers will continue to improve reading comprehension across content areas of ELLs, struggling readers, and all students within general education content area classrooms, including exited ELLs and ELLs who have waived ELA program services, allowing a comprehensive approach to teacher effectiveness across whole schools. The study will measure the extent to which CSR increases student achievement in

reading comprehension, enhances teacher effectiveness (fidelity to the model), and builds capacity to scale up and sustain CSR. The project will address the following research questions:

1. What is the efficacy of CSR with culturally and linguistically diverse middle school students across a range of achievement levels, as well as with specific subgroups: (a) ELLs, (b) students with LD, and (c) below-proficient readers, when implemented by well-trained and well-supported science and social studies teachers, in comparison with “business as usual” comparison groups?
2. What is the teacher effectiveness associated with CSR when teachers are well-supported using effective professional development practices and a collaborative university/district teacher leader support model?
3. How do social studies and science teachers sustain the use of CSR practices during a second year with follow-up support provided by the university/district collaborative teacher leader support team?

B(2) - The partnership expects that CSR will have a statistically and practically significant effect in improving DPS students’ achievement in reading. Previous effect sizes in CSR research studies with less power have ranged from .21 to .51 (on a standardized distal measure). This project can assume a minimum effect size of .3 (an average effect across prior studies), though anticipate that effect sizes probably will be higher (see Appendix H for a Power Analysis). The partnership also expects that students who use CSR in their classrooms will be better prepared to handle the rigors of text reading as they advance through their K–12 education. Application of this knowledge should help them compete for college entrance. Reading comprehension is a prerequisite for the *prose literacy* needed in the 21st century workplace to manage multiple daily encounters with texts (Kaestle, Campbell, Finn, Johnson, & Mikulecky, 2001).

Given evidence of CSR's potential to reduce achievement gaps, DPS is employing CSR as a critical strategy with the potential to meet the Board of Education's goals of decreasing the achievement gap by 3.5% per year. The additional time spent in reading activities and receiving reading instruction aligns with the attainment of content standards in content area courses. These goals are articulated in the National Literacy for History and Science (6–12) Standards. Also, the components of CSR correlate with the reading standards specified in the DPS document.

C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant

C(1) - In 2005, DPS adopted the Denver Plan, a reform effort that emphasizes great teachers, strong school leaders, and increased community involvement. In the last four years, DPS has shown greater achievement growth than any other major Colorado district and led the state in improvement in practically every tested subject at every grade level. At the same time, DPS has cut both its student dropout and teacher attrition rates by a third. DPS is creating significant improvements in teacher effectiveness, developing high-quality principals, building strong data systems, and reforming district systems to close the achievement gap between various groups of students. DPS has strong data systems in place to track student achievement, the support of voters to provide \$27 million/year in teacher incentive pay through ProComp, and a collaborative relationship with the DCTA. In 1999, DPS launched the DPS-DCTA Joint Task Force on Teacher Compensation to pilot ProComp. ProComp is one of the first teacher pay-for-performance programs in the country in 2005. In 2008, DPS and DCTA revised ProComp to increase tenfold incentives for enhancing student achievement and double incentives for serving in hard-to-serve schools and hard-to-staff positions.

DPS realizes the importance of aligning its entire human capital system, including recruitment, selection and placement, professional development, evaluation, tenure, and

compensation, around a common teacher effectiveness strategy centered on student achievement. DPS recently implemented a School Performance Framework (SPF), one of the nation's most thorough school evaluation tools and one based primarily on student achievement growth. Using a variety of longitudinal measures, it provides a comprehensive picture of how DPS schools perform in terms of student achievement and overall organizational strength. A Teacher Portal provides teachers online access to student data and analytics, and curricular resources. In addition, DPS is following recommendations from The New Teacher Project TNTP's report and working with all stakeholders—community, government, and private—to secure investments needed to align DPS' systems to the ultimate outcome of quality education for all students. In DPS, this system will focus on ELL strategies as a core component to all aspects of the school system, not just a “siloeed” initiative for a subset of students.

DPS received BMGF funding to align around a singular vision of effective teaching that advances student achievement, reforms DPS' human capital management system to differentiate top performers from struggling performers, creates an evaluation system to align with the incentive pay system, and defines a professional development strategy that coordinates with the teacher evaluation system. As part of the MET research project, DPS will collect and analyze primary research, lay the structural and cultural framework for its teacher performance management systems, engage teachers in the conversation on what it means to be a great teacher in DPS, design a system that will support performance management, create teacher career pathways like the teacher leadership academy, research established practices, and identify technology platforms and processes required to seamlessly integrate formative and summative teacher assessments, student achievement data, and professional development.

Furthermore, DPS has demonstrated the ability to execute large foundation grants and manage complex projects through design and implementation, on time and within budget. Most recently, DPS has demonstrated its ability to manage large, cross-functional, performance management projects through the successful execution of initiatives funded via a \$4.75 million grant from the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation and the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF). At the conclusion of this 15-month grant, the MSDF foundation made Denver a showcase district and asked DPS to share best practices with other districts starting this work.

C(2b) - CU Boulder is the leading major research institution in the Rocky Mountain area and will bring a significant amount of resources to scale this work based on the findings. The School of Education at CU Boulder is nationally known for their faculty and their contributions to educational research. The BUENO Center for Multicultural Education in the School of Education at CU Boulder will manage the CU Boulder portion of this project. The BUENO Center is a leading resource and capacity-building institution in the field of bilingual/ESL/multicultural education. The researchers/teacher educators at CU Boulder have a proven track record of improving student achievement through previous research with CSR.

D. Quality of the Project Evaluation

D(1) – The partnership will conduct a rigorous, experimental controlled comparison with sufficient power to establish significance and generalizability of this project. Because the CU Boulder implementers are led by one of the original developers of CSR who has also contributed substantially to the existing body of research on CSR, the study design proposed here mirrors the “teacher-as-own-controls” experimental design used in a recent IES-funded CSR study. If funded, a qualified external evaluator will be hired to design and carry out an independent evaluation of the project in coordination with DPS and CU Boulder. Before the start of the

project, the external evaluator will be asked to determine the adequacy of the study design and to review the appropriateness and adequacy of the proposed outcome measures. The implementer/researchers will work with the external evaluator to determine which data collection and analyses should be done by each party. The external evaluator will also need to conduct observations and interviews to document “key elements and approach of the project so as to facilitate replication or testing in other settings.”

In this study design, science and social studies teachers and their students in two middle schools per year will learn CSR during an “experimental design year” (EDY) (repeated over four years, for a total of eight middle schools). Each set of two schools will participate in one EDY schoolwide, with all science and social studies teachers participating and serving as their own controls, followed by an additional schoolwide implementation year. Follow up data will continue to be collected on all participating schools for the full five years of the project.

Science and social studies teachers will be paired in the EDY. Students will be randomly assigned to pairs of teachers. Pairing teachers and then randomly assigning students to pairs is feasible because the vast majority of middle school students, who do not have any special assignment such as honors, can be assigned to cohorts that follow the same schedule. Thus the experimental treatment unit will be pairs of social studies and science teachers, and CSR will be implemented in both social studies and science classes. Because teachers will serve as their own controls, they will not be included in the study if they are not teaching at least two parallel sections of a course. Classes with paired teachers will be randomly assigned to a condition (CSR or no CSR). In other words, Science Teacher 1 teaches four classes—A, B, C, and D—and Social Studies Teacher 2 teaches four classes—A, B., C, and D. Pairs consist of Science Teacher 1’s Class A and Social Studies Teacher 1’s Class A, and so on. Students, because of scheduling

conflicts, who are in a CSR class for science *or* social studies but not both, or switch classes mid-year, will be omitted from the analysis.

During the study, each science or social studies teacher will be asked to implement CSR for a minimum of 60 minutes per week in each CSR class (either in one class period or split over two class periods), while reading expository text. Thus, students will participate in CSR for 120 minutes a week (60 minutes in science plus 60 minutes in social studies). The primary outcome measures for reading comprehension will be the *Gates MacGinitie Reading Comprehension Test* and the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP), which provide both status and growth measures. Appendix H includes descriptions of the *Gates MacGinitie* and other outcome measures as well as ascertains the fidelity of implementation data.

During each school's second year of implementation, CU Boulder will provide CSR professional development and ongoing support to additional content area teachers, in math and language arts. DPS teacher leaders will also provide support. All content area teachers will implement CSR in all of their classes (i.e, in the second year, teachers will not be required to teach "business as usual" in control classes). The goal will be to move to schoolwide implementation, with supports in place to enhance on-going sustainability, by the end of each school's second year in the project. CU Boulder involvement will phase out as the year ends, releasing responsibility of providing ongoing support, as needed (e.g., to new teachers), so that by the third year of a school's involvement, all support will come from DPS. This phased support is essential to build district capacity for the effective implementation of research-based practices that meet local schools' and student populations' needs. Student outcome data will be collected during each year a school is part of the project, and also fidelity of implementation data.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
School 1	EDY	SWI	Sustainability			
School 2	EDY	SWI				
School 3		EDY	SWI	Sustainability		
School 4		EDY	SWI			
School 5				EDY	SWI	Sustainability
School 6				EDY	SWI	
School 7						EDY
School 8		EDY	SWI			

Note. EDY = Experimental Design Year; SWI = Schoolwide Implementation

The design for the four-year experimental validation research follows. This design assumes that EDY teachers of Science and Social Studies each teach four classes and that each class includes 25 students. Of teachers’ four classes, two will be randomly assigned to “treatment” (T) and two will be randomly assigned to “control” (C).

Yr	DPS Schools	N Teachers	N Pairs of Classes	N Students
01	School 1	10 – 5 Sci & 5 SS	20 (20 Sci & 20 SS classes) 10 CSR & 10 Control	500-250 CSR 250 Control
	School 2	10 – 5 Sci & 5 SS	20 (20 Sci & 20 SS classes) 10 CSR & 10 Control	500-250 CSR 250 Control
02	School 3	10 – 5 Sci & 5 SS	20 (20 Sci & 20 SS classes) 10 CSR & 10 Control	500-250 CSR 250 Control

Yr	DPS Schools	N Teachers	N Pairs of Classes	N Students
	School 4	10 – 5 Sci & 5 SS	20 (20 Sci & 20 SS classes) 10 CSR & 10 Control	500-250 CSR 250 Control
03	School 5	10 – 5 Sci & 5 SS	20 (20 Sci & 20 SS classes) 10 CSR & 10 Control	500-250 CSR 250 Control
	School 6	10 – 5 Sci & 5 SS	20 (20 Sci & 20 SS classes) 10 CSR & 10 Control	500-250 CSR 250 Control
04	School 7	10 – 5 Sci & 5 SS	20 (20 Sci & 20 SS classes) 10 CSR & 10 Control	500-250 CSR 250 Control
	School 8	10 – 5 Sci & 5 SS	20 (20 Sci & 20 SS classes) 10 CSR & 10 Control	500-250 CSR 250 Control

Note: Sci = Science, SS = Social Studies, and the unit of analysis are pairs of Science and Social Studies classes.

The total number of teachers directly impacted by their involvement in this project in EDYs will be 80. In the SWI year of each school’s involvement, all Math and Language Arts teachers will also learn CSR (i.e., an additional 80 teachers, for a total of 160). The number of students participating in EDYs will be 4,000 (2,000 CSR and 2,000 control). A power analysis based on effect sizes found in previous CSR research suggests that power will be more than adequate to show effects for CSR participants in each EDY of the study, as well as for the subgroups of interest (i.e., ELLs, students with LD, struggling readers) when data are pooled across years (see Appendix H). All students in a school will learn CSR in subsequent SWI years.

Thus, the total number of students directly impacted by their involvement in the project will be 5,200. Additional students will learn CSR when DPS moves to districtwide implementation.

D(2) – As noted, DPS and CU Boulder will conduct an internal evaluation to support the ongoing implementation of the project as well as contract with an independent, external evaluator to assess the outcomes of this project. The external evaluation team will comply with all requirements of the technical assistance centers established by the U.S. Department of Education, including the design and implementation of an independent evaluation. The external evaluator will ensure that the evaluation is rigorous, independent and completely unaffiliated with the program and/or project. The external evaluator will review project impacts through 1) the outcomes and measurements listed under our six project objectives above; 2) the benchmarks and milestones listed under the implementation plan at the end of this proposal; 3) the internal research evaluation; 4) student progress and achievement as measured by a variety of student achievement indicators including but not limited to pretest and posttest scores of students in CSR classes, student logs, and CSAP scores; and 5) informal assessments and data collected through school demographics, teachers, students and parents about their observations since the implementation of whole school CSR. DPS and CU Boulder will use their evaluation results to proactively strengthen and improve the project, as needed, over the next five years.

Data that will be collected and reviewed for comprehensive evaluation of this project will include pre- and post-test measures administered with all students in the science and social studies classes. Pre-tests will be administered two to three weeks before CSR intervention and post-tests will be administered within two weeks post-intervention. Trained data collectors who are blind to treatment conditions will collect all assessment data and data collectors must demonstrate at least 90% reliability on administering and scoring all measures. Evaluators will

observe randomly selected testing sessions to check for interrater reliability. The reading achievement battery will include the *Gates MacGinitie Reading Test* (Gates & MacGinitie, 2000) and the *Test of Silent Reading Efficiency and Comprehension* (TOSRET; Wagner, Torgeson, Rashotte, & Pearson, 2010). This battery (a) provides distal measures of students' reading comprehension and (b) includes only measures with strong psychometric properties to assess students' application of reading strategies (see Appendix H for descriptions of these measures).

The evaluation will also review student learning logs three times every school year, student grades in science and social studies during the academic year as well as the reading scores from Colorado's state accountability test (CSAP) at grades 6, 7, and 8 and in science at grade 8. Interpretation of results from the CSAP is supported by a sophisticated Growth Model that provides a method of estimating for each student whether their growth rate is above, below, or equal to the average growth rate for other students with the same initial score. Working with the DPS Department of Assessment and Research and the external evaluator, psychometricians at CU Boulder will test whether a separate Growth Model needs to be developed for ELLs. Then these respective Growth Models will be used to quantify the magnitude of effects of CSR compared to controls. In addition, the evaluation will also take into account school provided demographic data for students, including grade level, school, birth date, ethnicity, gender, free and reduced lunch status, primary language, language proficiency, special programs (e.g., disability, gifted and talented, ELA program eligibility and services), and attendance. This demographic data will be used as moderator variables when determining CSR's effectiveness.

The evaluations will make sure that the project is being implemented with fidelity through: 1) fidelity observations - teachers will be observed four times per year in both content area classrooms and during typical practice in comparison classrooms. Observations will be

audio recorded and detailed field notes written to describe specific comprehension strategies and methods included in CSR lessons; 2) an implementation validity checklist (IVC) that will provide objective assessments of the extent to which teachers implement specific CSR components (see Appendix H); and 3) implementation logs that participating teachers complete to monitor use. Teachers will report days/times they use CSR, lesson focus, number of students, and implementation information. Video and written logs will complement fidelity data to provide an index of use and measure sustainability. Additionally, teachers will document student attendance in the logs to evaluate the dosage or amount of intervention students receive.

To document the possibility of using CSR or other reading comprehension practices in comparison classes, these same observations will be conducted for the same amount of time and with the same measures in both treatment and comparison classes. Any suggestion of contamination into a comparison classroom will be addressed individually with teachers. This method has been used in previous studies with little to no contamination across classes (Vaughn et al., 2009; Vaughn et al., in submission).

D(3) - The independent evaluator will be responsible for documenting all components of this project to facilitate the replication or testing of whole-school CSR as a strategy for middle schools with significant ELL and other high need student populations. The principal investigators at DPS and CU Boulder will also compile detailed information about all aspects of the project. Data and findings will be broadly available through formal outlets (e.g., peer reviewed journals, conferences), informal outlets (e.g., district newsletters, parent meetings), third-party researchers, at the biannual national consortium DPS will be hosting (see Section E).

D(4) –DPS and CU Boulder have sufficient resources -- institutionally, human and financial – to carry out the project effectively. Both have a strong track record. Ten percent of

the validation budget is earmarked for an external evaluator to ensure a quality, thorough and comprehensive evaluation is retained throughout the entirety of this proposal.

D(5) - As stated, we will contract with a qualified external evaluator to conduct an independent evaluation of this project. This evaluation will be designed and carried out independent of, but in coordination with, DPS and CU Boulder. This independence will help ensure the objectivity of the evaluation. DPS is required by regulations to release a Request for Proposals (RFP) and start an open and competitive bidding process for the independent, external evaluator. Therefore, this proposal allocates the necessary resources, both human and financial to hire a qualified evaluator to become part of the project in Year One.

The external evaluator will gather data and conduct analyses to evaluate the overall impact of the project and to provide advice about improvements to ensure fidelity of implementation and sustainability. For example, in addition to statistical and practical significance established by the experimental study, the external evaluator will be able to compare the growth of ELLs, students with LD, and struggling readers in DPS experimental schools with growth rates for these populations statewide, and will also be able to test (albeit, in a less rigorous way) the generalization of effects to non research schools in DPS, again using statewide growth rates as a basis of comparison. The external evaluator will audit and verify outcome data collected by the researchers and the district, but more importantly, will collect data from teachers, parents, and students about the strengths and weaknesses of the intervention and its implementation, which the researchers could not reasonably collect themselves.

E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale

E(1) – 5,200 students (in our initial eight schools) will be reached and monitored directly during the length of this grant. However, as a result of the sustainability built into the project

design where teachers are going to build the capacity of other teachers in DPS on CSR implementation, all DPS middle school students, current (15,536) and incoming, will be reached.

E(2) –To bring this project to scale districtwide, the partnership will provide professional development and materials to teachers, school leadership, and parents in the remaining DPS middle schools. During the project, the partnership will create teacher support materials that can be disseminated on a large scale as well as a professional development packet with materials for professional development providers, a DVD with classroom vignettes, and teacher materials for use in various content areas. Prototypes for these materials have already been created and will be enhanced and refined through the course of the project.

UC Denver (UCD) partners with DPS to offer ELA courses for all teachers new to teaching in ELA-designated classrooms. These courses are required by position, fully funded, and embedded within DPS culture. The partnership will take advantage of this structure to bring lessons learned in the project to scale by embedding them into UCD ELA courses. Padres Unidos will help to bring the project to scale by hosting additional parent sessions. DPS will provide in-kind technology supports to deliver CSR in the classroom through Promethean Boards and to increase all parents' and teachers' ability to learn more about effective ELA strategies on the Parent and Teacher Web portals. DPS will translate the Parent portals into the 9 most common languages at DPS as part of the grant as well as contributing financial, personnel, management, and technological resources to scale this project and private philanthropic resources to this grant by incorporating CSR into the ELA Academy and summer Teacher Leadership Academies.

The Colorado Department of Education will assist DPS and CU Boulder to bring this project to scale statewide (see letters of support in Appendix X). Lessons learned from the project, professional development expertise and materials, and other resources will be made

available for wide distribution. DPS will host a five-day train-the-trainers conference. At the conference, teacher leaders and administrators will be given professional development and support materials that will prepare them to implement CSR in their local districts. In addition, DPS plans to host a national consortium to bring together ideas, best practices, and methodologies that work for ELLs to proactively build and work with other districts to deliver quality public education to the growing ELL population in this nation.

E(3) - This project has many features built into it that enhance its potential to be replicated in a variety of settings and with a variety of student populations. The fidelity of implementation data to be collected throughout the project, along with plans to correlate fidelity of implementation with literacy outcomes, will provide feedback about ease of implementation. Previous participants in CSR studies and CSR evaluators have spoken positively about CSR. For example, the Director for Language Arts for Miami-Dade County Public Schools (the fourth largest school district in the nation) observed CSR and exclaimed:

You have worked out all the kinks. Reciprocal Teaching, as great as it is, seemed too challenging to implement with an entire class. But you've figured out how to make it work. I love it! If the superintendent were to say that starting tomorrow, every teacher in M-DCPS would have to implement CSR to keep their job in this district, I would jump up and down and shout "Hallelujah!"

E(4) - The estimated cost of the proposed project per student per year, including start-up and operating costs, totals \$594. This number accounts for reaching 15,536 students, the total number of DPS middle school students. This is one of the major outcomes of the grant, to have a sustainable DPS CSR solution for all middle schools. Furthermore, this project can be replicated without the investment in CU Boulder after this grant, given that CSR will be validated. At \$594,

reaching 100,000 students would cost \$59.4M, reaching 250,000 students would cost \$148.5M, and reaching 500,000 students would cost \$297M.

E(5) - DPS is well-positioned to disseminate results from this project. As mentioned earlier, DPS will host a national consortium to bring together educators and administrators to talk about ELA best practices. This consortium will be a prime dissemination point for the project's findings. DPS will make project results broadly available through formal (e.g., peer-reviewed journals) and informal (e.g., podcasts, webinars, blogs, newsletters) outlets. Evaluation data will be made available to third-party researchers (consistent with applicable privacy requirements).

CU Boulder also has significant capacities to disseminate findings, including (but not limited to) publishing findings in journals, presenting at national, state, and local conferences and training institutes, and providing professional development and teacher support materials that can be disseminated on a large scale. CU Boulder researchers have a strong track record of proving wide dissemination of research findings (e.g., J. Klingner has 100 publications).

F. Sustainability (up to 10 points)

F(1) - DPS and CU Boulder have built in sustainability measures that include the buy-in and support of Colorado state-level leadership, community-based organizations, and universities. Letters of support attached in this application demonstrate these supports. DPS' commitment and political will are in place for this project to be implemented thoroughly and with fidelity. DPS and CU Boulder have a long-standing collaborative relationship that has always prioritized DPS improvement and developed research-based initiatives that support student success. The goal of this partnership is a coherent, sustainable districtwide program that fully integrates ELA strategies and best practices into all districtwide data collection, assessments, parental involvement, performance measures, curriculum design, and evaluation efforts.

The collaborative teacher leader support model has a number of features that predict a high level of sustainability. From the beginning, university and district personnel will work collaboratively to design and promote effective professional development and support systems. Teacher leaders will learn effective implementation models during district teacher leadership academies. Job responsibilities will be restructured to allow teacher leaders a 50% reduction in class time. Teacher leaders will develop leadership skills and CSR expertise to provide coaching to study teachers at their school sites. Researchers will support high-quality implementation in the lab classrooms, so that other teachers can observe model CSR teaching practices.

F(2) - The proposed support model offers two implementation phases. In the first year, CU researchers provide a large amount of support. EDY teachers and key central office staff learn CSR and develop implementation skills. Second year capacity is built because CU researchers support teachers and school administrators in using CSR schoolwide and promoting sustainability. Activities will include teacher leader and administrator collaborations, help for schools designing their own support systems, and capacity building at school sites. By the end of year two, the district will provide the majority of CSR support at individual school sites.

To incorporate coherent strategies that ensure comprehensive solutions to close DPS' ELL achievement gap districtwide, ELL parent engagement and school involvement must be intentional and effective. To this end, DPS is committing to hiring parent coordinators at CSR school sites and partnering with Padres Unidos. Padres Unidos is effective due to their community-led strategies that increase the quality of education and justice for youth and families of color. For example, at DPS' North High School, Padres Unidos worked with ELL parents and the school to institute restorative justice and end zero tolerance disciplinary policies, resulting in

a 50% two-year decrease in behavior incidents and a 45% two-year decrease in out-of-school suspensions. North's graduation rate increased by 12.1% in 2009, the largest increase in DPS.

G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel (up to 10 points)

G(1) – Attached in Appendix H is a comprehensive management plan with goals, responsibilities/leadership, milestones in years 1 – 5, end of program objective(s) and sustainability indicators beyond the grant period. The partnership articulated these goals: student impact, research, teacher leadership professional development, curriculum, parent engagement, steering committee, scale up and national consortium, technology, evaluation, assessments, teacher effectiveness/performance management, budget alignment and program support.

G(2) - CU Boulder brings experience and expertise from a team led by Dr. Janette Klingner, a professor at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Dr. Klingner was a bilingual special education teacher for 10 years before earning a Ph.D. in Reading and LD at the University of Miami. Over the years, she has been a Co-Principal Investigator on federally funded grants totaling more than \$27 million. She currently is a Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) on two IES research projects and a Co-PI for an Equity Assistance Center (Region VIII). She has extensive experience implementing large, complex projects, including a \$10,148,427 Teacher Quality Enhancement Partnership Grant. She also has been a Co-PI of a Sustainability project funded by the U.S. Department of Education. To date, she has authored or co-authored 100 articles, books, and book chapters, presented at numerous conferences, and conducted several professional development programs, many on CSR. In 2004, she won the American Educational Research Association's Early Career Award for outstanding research.

Integral to Dr. Klingner's team is Dr. Alison Gould Boardman, a research associate at the University of Colorado at Boulder. She conducts intervention research and is involved in

professional development efforts and curriculum development. Currently, she is the project director for two IES grants, the CSR efficacy study in middle schools, and the Literacy Learning Communities study to create and assess the value of a reading professional development model for elementary special education teachers where she is responsible for recruiting school districts. Dr. Boardman works with school districts and state departments nationwide to plan and implement effective professional development for struggling readers.

Dr. Klingner will also be supported by three expert academic subject consultants. Dr. Valerie Otero, an Associate Professor of Science Education at the University of Colorado, Boulder, will advise the program in the application of CSR techniques to Science instruction. Dr. Jeffrey Frykholm, an Associate Professor of Education at the University of Colorado at Boulder specializing in mathematics education, will provide guidance on Mathematics instruction. Dr. Cinthia Salinas, an Associate Professor of Education at the University of Texas with a concentration in Social Studies, will consult on Social Studies instruction. Derek Briggs, chair of the Research and Evaluation Methodology Program at the University of Colorado at Boulder, will consult on research design and serve as the program Statistician.

DPS' strong and committed leadership team offers significant collective education experience both nationally and in Denver. The team is committed to this proposal and will play an active role in ensuring the district executes the vision effectively and meets its milestones. The Superintendent, Tom Boasberg, the Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Ana Tilton, the Chief Human Resources Officer, Shayne Spalten, the Executive Director of Teaching and Learning, Susana Cordova, and the Executive Director of the Office of Teacher Learning and Leadership, Debbie Hearty, have all been actively engaged in developing this proposal and recognize the importance of this work to the district's success.

The DPS team is guided by Susana Cordova, the Executive Director of Teaching and Learning. Susana has an MA in Education Administration and Curriculum Development and has led initiatives such as: the development of K–9 reading and writing instructional planning guides; professional development in linguistically appropriate instructional practices for literacy coaches, teachers, and administrators; and whole school support projects, such as CORE Matters, a whole school literacy improvement initiative. She has helped develop district benchmark assessments, aligned to the Colorado standards and has previously been a middle and high school English and ESL teacher and building principal.

Debbie Hearty, DPS Executive Director of Teacher Leadership and Learning, will also provide program oversight. Debbie holds an MA in Social Sciences Education and has designed and implemented a comprehensive district approach to professional development. As a faculty member of the School of Education and Director of School and University Partnerships at the University of Colorado at Boulder, Debbie led the partnership between schools and faculty to develop an urban teacher apprenticeship program.

DPS will hire a full-time Project Director with expert knowledge of the ELL instruction research base and successful classroom teaching experience with English language learners. The Director will hold a bachelor's or master's degree in Education and have significant program development experience involving assessment, and curriculum and professional development to achieve district academic goals. DPS will also hire a full-time Project Manager, CSR Grant Accountant and Grant Coordinator. All will have bachelors' degrees and strong project management experience in Education and will coordinate all grant program activities and interim progress reporting to Director. The CSR Grant Accountant will have at least five years of experience in budgeting and expenditure management.

