

Soquel Union Elementary School District

Scale-Up Grant

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

This proposed project meets the primary goal of Investing in Innovation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA): *To improve student achievement through school improvement and reform* and addresses the following three Key Assurances:

1. Improvements in teacher effectiveness and ensuring that all schools have effective teachers,
2. Gathering information to improve students learning, and teacher performance through enhanced data systems, and
3. Improving achievement in low performing schools through intensive support and effective interventions.

Project Need: Soquel Union Elementary School District is located in Santa Cruz County, California. The district serves 1900 students. Fifty-nine percent of the student population is designated as White with 29% being Latino/Hispanic. Twelve percent are of other ethnic origins. Thirty-two percent of the students participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), a federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. Eleven percent of the students are English Learners (Limited English Proficient). The project will serve 10,000 students in three Pre-K-5 schools and one 6-8 middle school over the course of this five year grant. One of the district schools received the Title I Achieving School Award two years in a row. Two schools received the California Distinguished School Award. One hundred percent of the teaching staff is highly qualified as defined by “highly qualified” standards of the State of California.

The district is applying for federal funds to scale-up its current research-based intervention systems into one seamless general and special education intervention system based on Response to Intervention (RtI) systemic change efforts. RtI is a systematic, data driven approach to

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instruction that benefits every student and members of the Learning Community. The needs to be addressed are below:

Students need to be provided with the appropriate research-based interventions to close the achievement gap for all identified sub-groups (Socioeconomically disadvantaged, English Learners, and Special Education)

Staff needs training in research-based interventions, use of assessment data for problem solving, and differentiated instructional strategies for targeted interventions.

Parents need training to understand assessment results, the RtI model, and how to participate in developing their student's achievement goals.

California has expanded the concept of RtI to communicate the full spectrum of instruction, from general core to supplemental or intensive, for both the academic and behavioral needs of students. RtI integrates resources from general education, categorical programs, and special education through a comprehensive system of core instruction and interventions to identify all students who are at risk for academic failure, address their individual needs, and monitor the effectiveness of interventions provided. (Determining Specific Learning Disability Eligibility Using Response to Instruction and Intervention (RTI2), California State Department of Education, 2009). RtI implementation allows schools to intervene early, as students display the first signs of academic or behavioral risk. Depending on how a particular student responds to interventions provided, he or she may either be exited from the intervention or placed into increasingly intensive interventions, thereby moving up the tiers of the response to intervention model. Individual response to intervention data is used in conjunction with traditional psycho-educational assessment data at the highest tier in order to identify students who may have a specific learning disability. The benefit of RTI is that this model allows schools to intervene early rather than waiting for students to fail, as in the special education discrepancy model.

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In addition to the academic interventions provided through the RTI model, behavioral and social interventions are also targeted. Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support (PBIS) is an integral component of improving student academic and behavior outcomes by ensuring all students have access to the most effective and accurately implemented instructional and behavioral practices and interventions possible. PBIS provides an operational framework for achieving these outcomes. More importantly, PBIS is not a curriculum, intervention, or practice, but is a decision making framework that guides selection, integration, and implementation of the best evidence-based academic and behavioral practices for improving important academic and behavior outcomes for all students. The data-driven, preventative nature of PBIS fits effortlessly into the framework of RTI and allows school to address psychological and behavioral needs of students, removing potential barriers to learning.

The purpose of this exceptional approach is to meld the Soquel Union Elementary School Districts' general education program and the Special Education program into one seamless plan for providing early intervention to ensure all students, including students with disabilities and English Learner students (Limited English Proficient), achieve academic success. Specifically, there is a need to expand the successful intervention program to ensure that special education students progress at the same rate of achievement as the English Learners and Socioeconomically Disadvantaged students. There is a need to provide better interventions for special needs students so that they are not unnecessarily referred to Special Education. There is a need to increase the number of the low socio-economic students into accelerated classes.

The Soquel Union Elementary School Districts' Governing Board has adopted RtI as part of its strategic plan for systemic change and improving student achievement. One site in the district, Santa Cruz Gardens Elementary School, runs a long-standing, successful Title 1 general education intervention program that has always included most of the research-based elements of

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RtI. Data from Santa Cruz Garden Elementary in Language Arts shows positive academic outcomes for students from all subgroups. Clearly, "scaling up" the good intervention practices districtwide would provide a systemic model for achieving the same results with all students. The project is focused on *Absolute Priority 3: Innovations that Compliment the Implementation of High Standards and High Quality Assessments* by increasing the development and use of formative assessments or interim assessments, and other performance-based tools that are aligned with high student content and academic achievement standards and translating the standards and information from assessments into classroom practices that meet the needs of all students, including high-need students. Additionally, the project addresses *Competitive Preference Priority 5--Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes* and *Competitive Preference Priority 7--Innovations to Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students with Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students*.

The Soquel Union Elementary School District Mission Statement is directly aligned with the Investing in Innovation priorities:

“Staff, students, parents and the community share the responsibility for each child’s success. We are committed to insuring that each student develops the skills and confidence for lifelong achievement and is prepared to make a positive contribution to our world.”

Goals and Quantifiable Objectives- The project goals are aligned with the absolute and competitive priorities targeting Curriculum, Instruction and Student Achievement identified in the District Strategic Plan as areas of focus for systemic change.

Goal 1: Close the achievement gap between the various state and federal identified subgroups in district schools.

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Objective 1.1: There will be an overall 10% decrease annually in the number of students who are referred to Special Education screening and services as a result of early intervention as measured by the change in rates of placement annually.

Objective 1.2: The number of Special Education, English Learners and low socio-economic disadvantaged students will score at the Proficient and Advanced levels on the California Standards Test (CST) at a rate greater than the those students in the County and States as measured by CST assessment results annually.

Objective 1.3: English Learners will advance at least one level towards English proficiency as measured by: English Language development standards and the California English Language Development Test (CELDT).

Objective 1.4: By the end of Year 2, 75% of the students receiving interventions will have made greater than a year's growth as measured by: the district assessment system of multiple measures of student achievement.

Objective 1.5: By the end of Year 3, the number of Socio-economically Disadvantaged students placed in advanced classes at the middle school will mirror the proportion of these students in the school population.

Goal 2: To provide a professional development training program directed towards improved teaching and learning.

Objective 2.1 100% of the staff will participate in training relevant to curriculum, instruction, and student achievement as measured by: Components to Ensure Success in RtI: A Self-Assessment Tool (Ca. Department of Education) and principal observation matrix documenting applied best practices.

Goal 3: To ensure parental communication regarding all programs.

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Objective 3.1: 100% of the parents of students receiving interventions will receive information regarding their students' achievement goals.

The Project Design provides strategies and practices to ensure attainment of the project goals.

The district established the Sustainable Interventions Task Force (composed of a broad base of stakeholders) to create a vision for the implementation of a district-wide intervention program.

From the task force, the following Vision Statement was developed: *“In collaboration with staff and parents, Soquel Union Elementary School District intends to implement a restructured and sustainable intervention program that is data driven, collaborative and has a three-intervention system implemented by highly trained staff for all students. The intervention system will be research-based and will include learning centers at each site for intensive, individual and small group instruction in areas of designated need. All students will have a general education home base with time in learning centers determined on an individual basis.”*

The following core components are critical to full implementation and fidelity to RtI.

1. **High quality classroom instruction.** Students will receive high quality and culturally relevant, standards-based instruction in their classrooms by highly qualified teachers. The RtI model will be designed in a way to address each school site's unique needs. District staff will insure fidelity of the research-based core instructional program across the district through ongoing evaluation conducted by an external evaluator.
2. **Research-based instruction.** The instruction that is provided within the classroom is culturally responsive and has been demonstrated to be effective through scientific research.
3. **Universal Screening.** School staff will assess all students to determine students' needs. On the basis of collected data, school staff members will determine which students require close progress monitoring, differentiated instruction, additional targeted assessment, a specific research-based intervention or acceleration. The district will identify and implement a K-8

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universal screening process as part of the district local assessments and explore the possibility of the consolidation of assessments. Additionally, the district will identify at risk students on the onset of every school year and provide research-based interventions.

4. Continuous classroom progress monitoring. The classroom performance of all students will be monitored within the classroom. In this way, teachers can identify those learners who need more depth and complexity in daily work and those who are meeting benchmarks or other expected standards and adjusted instruction.

5. Research-based interventions. When monitoring data indicates a students' lack of progress, an appropriate research-based intervention will be implemented. The interventions will be designed to increase the intensity of the students' instructional experience. Targeted early intervention will be based on student needs. The district will establish a Learning Center model at each school site so that a three tiered intervention system can be implemented. All schools will be staffed with at least one full time educational specialist. The district will include an RtI model for student behavior and will develop a continuum of scientifically based behavior and academic interventions and supports, use data to make decisions and solve problems, arrange the environment to prevent the development and occurrence of problem behavior, teach and encourage pro-social skills and behaviors, implement evidence-based behavioral practices with fidelity and accountability.

6. Progress monitoring during instruction and interventions. School staff members will use progress-monitoring data to determine the effectiveness of the acceleration or intervention and make modifications as needed. Carefully defined data will be collected on a frequent basis to provide a cumulative record of the students' progress, acceleration, and/or response to instruction and intervention. The district will establish a K-8 system of monitoring intervention and student progress.

7. **Fidelity of program implementation.** Student success in the RtI model will require fidelity of implementation in the delivery of content and instructional strategies specific to the learning and/or behavioral needs of the student. An external evaluator will monitor program processes to ensure fidelity.

8. **Staff development and collaboration.** All school staff members will be trained in assessments, data analysis, programs, and research-based instructional practices and strategies and the RtI model. Site grade-level or interdisciplinary teams will use a collaborative approach to analyze student data and work together in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the intervention process. The district will improve the integration of general and special education. The district will develop a plan to increase unity of staff around the RtI model. The district will restructure the existing staff meeting time to facilitate collaboration and training. The district will provide both an RtI and Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS) orientation for all staff at one of the teacher workdays prior to the start of school. Staff will participate in the Effective Intervention Academy Training provided by Cal State Technical Assistance and Training based on the work of Anita Archer. District staff development days will be dedicated to this training. District staff will share best practices for interventions, materials, and assessments in grade level and cross grade level articulation meetings at least once a month.

9. **Parent involvement.** The active participation of parents at all stages of the process will be essential to improving the educational outcomes of their students. Parents will be kept informed of the progress of their students in their native language or other mode of communication. Their input will be valued in making appropriate decisions. The district will create opportunities for parent input in the development and maintenance of the RtI program and create an efficient parent communication system to share student progress.

10. **Specific learning disability determination.** The RtI approach is one component of the process for determining a specific learning disability as addressed by IDEA of 2004 statute and regulations. As part of determining eligibility, the data from the RtI process may be used to ensure that a student has received research-based instruction and interventions.

In addition to the above components, the preschool, Campus Kids Connection, Inc., provides quality, on-site child care programs for two year olds and up, in a safe, fun filled, and enriching environment for a diverse population of families in the Soquel Union Elementary School District. The program provides a variety of activities for children in a pleasant environment and assures that each child has an opportunity to practice a broad range of skills. These skills include, but are not limited to, problem solving, interpersonal communication, building positive self-esteem, and conflict management. The program provides for the mainstreaming of special education preschool students with their general education peers. Campus Kids uses educational programs/curricula approved for preschool by the California Department of Education. Campus Kids Connection is the only licensed provider for before and after school childcare in the Soquel Union Elementary School District. Students who receive early intervention in the preschool learning center have the opportunity to access general education peers in the preschool through mainstreaming and reverse mainstreaming. This programmatic component represents the opportunities for our youngest learners through the RTI model.

To ensure that the components of RtI are fully implemented, a three-tiered approach will be used to efficiently differentiate instruction for all students. The model incorporates increasing intensities of instruction, offering specific, research-based interventions matched to student needs. Academic and behavioral interventions through this approach as described below:

- **Tier I- Benchmark: Screening and Targeted Instruction**

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In Tier I the focus is on the core instructional program that uses a scientifically validated curriculum (Houghton Mifflin reading, language arts, and math) with all students in the general education program. During the course of instruction the staff uses universal screening measures to identify each student's level of proficiency in key academic areas. The screening data are organized to enable the review of both group and individual performance on critical measures. Instruction is differentiated in response to this data for small groups and individual students. Students who continue to lag behind their peers despite the provision of targeted instruction may receive additional Tier I instruction or may be placed in more intensive interventions at Tier II.

• **Tier II- Targeted Short Term Interventions**

In Tier II, supplemental instruction is provided to those students who exhibit a poor response to the targeted instruction in Tier I. Tier II intervention is provided, in addition to, and not in lieu of, core instruction and can be delivered through an individualized problem-solving approach and/or a standard treatment protocol.

A problem-solving approach allows school teams to design individualized interventions to address the specific needs of each student. A standard treatment protocol uses a set of research-based practices to provide interventions in a systematic manner with all participating students who have similar needs. Such interventions are generally highly structured and have a high probability of producing positive results for large numbers of students.

Tier II supplemental interventions may be discontinued for students who improve in critical academic/behavioral measures as a result of the intervention. Some students may exhibit progress but continue to need Tier II supplemental supports. Those students who fail to display meaningful progress in spite of supplemental supports are considered for more intensive interventions in Tier III.

• **Tier III- Intensive: Interventions with Increased Intensity**

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In Tier III, students receive a greater degree of intensive interventions. Modifications in frequency, duration, or student-teacher ratio, or all three strategies are used to increase intensity for student achievement. State Board of Education approved intervention programs based on research may serve as the core curriculum for students in this intensive level of intervention at fourth grade and above. As in Tier II, interventions are provided flexibly depending on the school site resources and careful blending of all interventions.

Students who do not respond to those integrated interventions are referred for a comprehensive evaluation to determine eligibility for special education and related services under the category of Specific Learning Disability (SLD). The student's response to interventions, as reflected in the data collected during the RtI process, is reviewed as part of the eligibility determination.

Participation in “Communities of Practice”: The district is committed to participating “Communities of Practice” with other grantees. While resources are an issue for the district, we believe that, in addition to occasional travel for the purpose of collaboration with other grantees, that low-cost methods of collaboration through the use of telecommunications media such as Skype and Chat can maximize funding usage and communicate successful practices.

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

Research synthesis on RTI: A total of 14 studies met the selection criteria for inclusion in this particular review and served as the current research base regarding the efficacy of RtI. Analyses included an appraisal of the quality of research methods as well as descriptions of the characteristics of study participants, the nature of the interventions, and methods of assessing student progress and outcomes. The findings suggest that there is an emerging body of empirical evidence to support claims that RtI is an effective method for identifying children at risk for learning difficulties and for providing specialized interventions, either to ameliorate or to prevent the occurrence of learning disabilities. Although there was general agreement across studies

about the conceptualization of RtI in terms of its key components and tiered implementation, there was less agreement about the nature and focus of specialized interventions, the duration or intensity of the interventions, and the benchmarks used to determine when more intensive interventions were needed for individual children. Despite these limitations, the research synthesis findings suggest that RtI is a promising approach, particularly because of its focus on sound instructional principles such as effectively teaching all children, intervening early, using research-based interventions, monitoring student progress, and using assessments to inform instructional decision-making. (Recognition and Response: An Early Intervention System for Young Children at risk for Learning Disabilities, Mary Ruth Coleman, Virginia Buysse, and Jennifer Neitzel, 2006. LD Online)

The RtI framework and other implementations have a more systematic and preventive orientation toward identifying students who are at risk and providing effective instruction immediately. The goal is to engage teachers in considering all aspects of the instructional context that may affect student performance and progress (e.g., delivery of instruction, instructional activities, instructional materials, instructional intensity) and to minimize a deficit orientation in which the problem is perceived as being within the student. Given such an emphasis on instruction and students' response to it, implementation of an RtI framework creates a systematic change focused on meeting all students' needs while at the same time providing an impetus for shifting educators' thinking about students' needs and RtI, especially for students with the most significant learning needs, who may be candidates for later retention. (e.g., Marston, Muyskens, Lau, & Canter, 2003; O'Connor, Fulmer, Harty, & Bell, 2005; Simmons, Kuykendall, King, Cornachione, & Kame'enui, 2000; Speece, Case, & Molloy, 2003; Vaughn & Chard, 2006)

Evidence of Research: The following research is cited as strong evidence of the efficacy of the Response to Intervention, which documents systems change and improved student outcomes in

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the Heartland Area Education Agency in Iowa, in multiple school sites. Heartland began the transition from refer–test–place to an RtI-problem-solving system in the early 1990s. Heartland’s educational reform efforts began 20 years ago. Research-based practices continue to guide the Heartland reform efforts. Small-scale quantitative projects and larger scale qualitative projects support decision-making about enhancements to problem solving that are needed. Decisions about special education entitlement have been made without use of published tests of intelligence and achievement, for over 10 years, across all disability categories. The challenge now is to effect performance of the educational system, so that specialized resources are applied only to students truly in need of specialized instruction, and not to students whose academic performance is the result of a misalignment between curriculum, instruction, and assessment. At present, RtI is the best option for aligning curriculum, instruction, assessment, and resources. The effectiveness of RtI on student achievement is promising. As sites engage in RtI, more evaluation data, and more systematic evaluation data, should help judge the effect of RtI practices. Both RtI and non-RtI sites are challenged to gather student achievement data to understand the effects of practices. Only through such collaborative efforts will researchers and practitioners understand practices that impact students in meaningful ways.

Research by Grimes and Kurns (2003) and Tilly (2003) provide summaries of outcomes data in Heartland. Grimes and Kurns (2003) describe implementation at one elementary site in which data-based decision-making is systematized. Data indicate near 100% attainment of benchmarks on dynamic indicators of basic early literacy skills (DIBELS; Good, Gruba, and Kaminski, 2002), and increases in oral reading fluency (from a first-grade median of 32 words per minute (wpm) in 1994 to a 2003 median of 60 wpm, second-grade median of 78 wpm in 1994 to a 2003 median of 92 wpm). In addition, The Heartland Area Education Agency proficiency rates of fourth-graders as a whole, on the district-wide assessment, is improving, going from 55% of

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fourth-graders proficient in the triennium 1999–2001 to 70% of fourth-graders proficient in the triennium 2001–2003. Grimes and Kurns (2003) summarize results of surveys done with between 5% and 8% of school assistance teams within Heartland’s boundaries. For these teams, most referrals were at either first or second grade, and roughly half of meetings had parents in attendance. Most interventions (69%) were in the academic areas, with another 29% targeting behavior. Some 25% of students had interventions through assistance teams prior to the intervention summarized, 16% of interventions were reported as resolving the problem, and another 39% continued with intervention. About one-third of the students received specialized instruction within an IEP. At present, about 13% of students are entitled to special education.

Grimes and Kurns (2003) also summarize consumer satisfaction data (generalized results). Teachers and administrators are surveyed as part of the accreditation process that occurs once every 5 years. For 2003, general education teachers (90% of 416), administrators (97% of 46), and special education teachers (87% of 126) reported that the problem-solving process supports teachers in improving performance of students. Similar responses were obtained when constituents were asked about the relevancy of applying problem-solving practices to students receiving support through general education, as well as students receiving support through specialized instruction. Ikeda and Gustafson (2002) were the source of some of the data in Grimes and Kurns (2003). Tilly (2003) described the evolution of practices at Heartland from being individual based (teacher referred) to being data based. The set of practices now emerging relies on student achievement data on systems-wide screening measures, to help school staff align instructional resources. In evaluating an early literacy project in which DIBELS were used to group students by instructional need and to help school systems enhance core and supplemental instructional practices, Tilly (2003) reported gains over time on all DIBELS measures, moderate to large effect sizes for the majority of the 36 participating elementary

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schools, and reductions in new special education placement rates. Missing, however, were comparison data from non-implementing schools. Rahn-Blakeslee, Ikeda, and Gustafson (2005) evaluated 32 reading intervention cases generated from problem solving. Rahn-Blakeslee et al. rated interventions for quality, examined goal ambitiousness, and calculated student growth over time. Results suggested strong ratings for the presence of quality indices and goal setting.

The results of the aforementioned studies provide several areas in which research can better inform RtI practice. First, simple indicators of “successful” RtI implementation need to be defined. If sites across the country used similar protocols, and if non-participating sites provided comparison data, then much could be learned. Second, the data underscore the importance of (a) staff development, (b) implementation monitoring, and (c) integrating research-to-practice with rigor. Concepts embedded in RtI are not intuitive, and in many cases are counter to how people have been trained. There needs to be a wealth of teaching and support for helping staff implement RtI. Treatment integrity is critical to examine. It is important to understand if instructional practices are implemented as needed to effect change. As such, research must inform practice.

By 2014, No Child Left Behind states that ‘all students must be proficient on their state-approved indicator’. Schools and supporters of schools will need to demonstrate that, through differentiated instruction, achievement happens. Problem solving and the standard treatment protocol both have potential for helping schools better align resources, and to focus intervention efforts on variables under the control of schools: (a) materials presented, (b) frequency and quality of opportunities to respond, (c) reinforcement schedules, (d) alignment between standards, instruction, and assessment, and (e) frequency and quality of formative assessment data. (Next Lessons for Learning: Bridging the Research-to-Practice Gap, Heartland Area Education Agency, Iowa)

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Significance: Research and evaluation from the “Implementing Response to Intervention: Practices and Perspectives from Five Schools” (Center of Instruction based on 5 schools implementing RtI-2009 Note: school names are not identified) document the significance of implementing RtI. Findings of the five school sites across the country reported that RtI has enabled them to better serve all of their students. Oregon Elementary School and California Middle School studies cited the variety of available interventions and the focus on matching each with students’ needs as benefits of RtI. They have gathered and, in some cases, developed a repertoire of programs that they believe meet the needs of all students, minimizing the possibility that students who need intervention will be overlooked. The teachers at Pennsylvania Elementary School commented specifically on RtI’s usefulness in efficiently and effectively serving the full range of students—those working to catch up with their peers, those struggling to keep up, and those who are well ahead of their classmates.

Another often-cited benefit of implementing RtI is increased collaboration among teachers and between teachers and instructional support personnel. Several sites noted that implementing RtI successfully is a schoolwide undertaking that requires a sense of shared responsibility for all students by all teachers. Wisconsin Intermediate and Pennsylvania Elementary Schools discussed the importance of having all school personnel work collaboratively to plan instruction and implement curriculum, noting that RTI strengthened local communities of practice by providing a more clearly defined purpose and structure. RtI’s focus on prevention has also fostered a more collaborative spirit in several of the schools. The past tendency of immediately referring a student having difficulties to special education has been replaced by an increased awareness of the possibility and benefits of prevention. Teachers are no longer immediately referring struggling students to special education but are instead asking, “What can we do better to help these students?” A teacher at Pennsylvania Elementary School summed it up nicely: “RtI

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has allowed all students to benefit from all teachers.” Wisconsin Intermediate School staff members felt that students’ motivation was on the rise, due in part to RtI’s implementation. Students are actively involved with their own progress-monitoring data (primarily through ongoing discussion with their teachers), providing them with opportunities to identify their strengths and areas needing improvement. Wisconsin Intermediate School’s intervention teachers have found this practice highly motivating for students and teachers alike. The goal setting inherent to progress monitoring, has also had a motivating effect, say Wisconsin Intermediate School teachers. Students understand what is required to “graduate” from an intervention and are able to work actively toward that goal.

Based on the above findings, full implementation and ongoing assessment of systemwide practices will have a significant impact on closing the achievement gap for all students including special needs students in Soquel Union Elementary School District. Taken together, the goals and objectives of this project constitute an ambitious agenda for systemic change. The process of restructuring our programs and services entailed in this agenda will affect many dimensions of our operations, including the structure of our programs, the way we team together and collaborate in order to deliver a high quality curriculum, the degree of coordination and integration between the various parts of our overall program, the curriculum itself, the way we assess student learning, and the way in which we relate to parents and the community.

Another significant impact relative to the implementation of RtI will allow the district to move towards helping students reach the No Child Left Behind Act’s goal of all students being proficient in reading and mathematics by 2014. Additionally, when the district implements the RtI model to determine whether a student has a learning disability and needs special education services, they are addressing the guidelines in the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004. (Autoskill, 2006).

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Magnitude: The magnitude of impact through the implementation of this comprehensive, systemic reform of services to students within Soquel Union Elementary School District will be achieved over a period of five years and will continue on well after federal funds are no longer available. Students will develop high levels of language fluency and literacy thus closing the achievement gap between and among all groups of students. All staff will have received appropriate training and support to continue to use the RtI process to improve instruction. The full implementation of RtI will provide a mechanism for special and general education to work together in ways that increase the accuracy of special education referrals and the number of students who are successful in the general education curriculum. Parents will be highly active in planning and decision making processes; provide support and assistance to their children in order to promote school success, participate in school activities, maintain good communication with staff, and benefit from family education opportunities at the school site. The policy changes inherent in the full implementation of RtI will be in place long after federal funding ends.

C. Experience of the Eligible Applicant

While Soquel Union Elementary School District is small, the district has provided leadership in bringing a variety of resources and speakers to address the professional needs of schools countywide. Abigail Norfleet James, a well-known author and expert on gender and gender equity presented a seminar on Gendered Classroom Teaching. Her area of expertise is developmental and educational psychology as applied to the gendered classroom. She has written on differentiated instruction at the elementary school level, on strategies for teaching the male brain, and on strategies for presenting math and science to the female brain. She has presented workshops and papers at many educational conferences and works with teacher and parent groups in interpreting the world of gendered education particularly in the coed classroom. Soquel also brought in the well-known futurist, William Strauss, an expert in generational

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relationships. This seminar presented ways in which the district could increase awareness of building a school community by understanding generational relationship. This training has provided teachers the necessary tools to close the achievement gap for all students.

Again, while the district is small, it has maintained high student performance in spite of dwindling resources. The district has administered a fifteen million dollar bond, a set of projects to update building sites and accommodate 21st century learning for academics and the arts.

Soquel Union Elementary School District has demonstrated its ability to close the achievement gap by implementing the RtI model at Santa Cruz Gardens Elementary School as documented by the following California Standards Test (CST) results for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. Scale score data for Santa Cruz Gardens is compared with district-wide, Santa Cruz County and State of California test results.

Table 1

**CST ELA Test Results for Economically Disadvantaged Students
Mean Scale Scores by Grade- 2009**

| Grade | 2 nd | 3 rd | 4 th | 5 th | 6 th | 7 th | 8 th |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| District | 343.4 | 327.5 | 348.7 | 344.7 | 328.5 | 333.5 | 327.9 |
| SC County | 313.3 | 300.8 | 335.1 | 327.9 | 323.3 | 328.9 | 323 |
| California | 334.6 | 319.6 | 346.8 | 337 | 334.6 | 334.2 | 327.8 |
| SC Gardens Ele. | 350.2 | 338.1 | 371.8 | 345.7 | | | |

Clearly, ELA data demonstrates that Santa Cruz Garden Ele. School Economically Disadvantage Students (which include many of the English Learner students) are outperforming students in the district, county and State and are close to state identified proficiency rates. It is anticipated that the trend will continue to improve by at least 3 scale score points over the course of the project as the school continues to refine the RtI.

Table 2

CST Math Test Results for Economically Disadvantaged Students

Mean Scale Scores by Grade- 2009

| Grade | 2 nd | 3 rd | 4 th | 5 th | 6 th | 7 th | 8th | Alg. 1 |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------|--------|
| District | 383.5 | 374.2 | 343.5 | 341.4 | 316.4 | 324.7 | 319.5 | 0 |
| SC County | 346.5 | 345.2 | 347.8 | 336.7 | 311.8 | 325.4 | 313.8 | 343.5 |
| California | 355.8 | 364 | 362.3 | 351.3 | 332.1 | 237.7 | 310.8 | 326.5 |
| SC Gardens | 375.1 | 402 | 384.6 | 329.4 | | | | |

Again CST Math data demonstrates that Santa Cruz Garden Ele. School Economically Disadvantage Students (which include many of the English Learner students) are outperforming students in the district, county and State and achieving proficiency. 5th grade students tend to lag behind the comparison groups.

Table 3

CST ELA Test Results for English Learners

Mean Scale Scores 5th Grade- 2009

| School Sites | Scale Scores |
|-----------------|--------------|
| SC Gardens Ele. | 346.4 |
| SC County | 304.9 |
| California | 313.8 |

English learners at Santa Cruz Gardens significantly outperformed the comparison groups at the 5th grade level and are close to attaining proficiency.

Table 4 below shows the Academic Performance Indicator (API) rankings for the Soquel Union Elementary School District schools compared to district and State of California

Table 4

English Language Arts CST Results

Percent of Students Scoring Proficient- 2006-2009

| Year | District | | | Santa Cruz Gardens | | |
|------|----------|----------------|--------|--------------------|----------------|--------|
| | All | Socio-Economic | Sp. Ed | All | Socio-Economic | SP. Ed |
| 2006 | 60% | 36% | 10% | 53% | 26.3% | 10% |
| 2007 | 61% | 39% | 20% | 57.4% | 40.2% | 22% |
| 2008 | 60% | 38% | 19.7% | 66% | 47% | 39% |
| 2009 | 61% | 40.7% | 20% | 71% | 56% | 29% |

Santa Cruz Gardens Ele. School documents a steady increase of students scoring at Proficient on the English Language Arts tests from 2006 to 2009 for all subgroups and at a greater rate than students district wide.

Table 5

State Accountability Index- API Ranking Comparison- 2009

| | Schoolwide | Hispanic/Latino | White | Socioeconomically Disadvantaged |
|-------------------------|------------|-----------------|-------|---------------------------------|
| District | 719 | 730 | 845 | 719 |
| Main Street Ele. | 732 | 805 | 847 | 732 |
| Santa Cruz Gardens Ele. | 798 | 762 | 901 | 798 |
| Soquel Ele. | 736 | 706 | 867 | 736 |
| New Brighton MS | 685 | 706 | 829 | 681 |

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| | | | | |
|---------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| State of California | 696 | 698 | 828 | 696 |
|---------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|

The States’ targeted score for the Academic Performance Index (API) is 800. While the Districtwide API score is 81 points short of meeting the state performance goal, the district surpassed the State score. The identified sub-groups also outperformed the State sub-groups. High academic achievement for Soquel students indicates there is a culture of high performance at all sites and for all sub-groups. Implementing RtI in all the schools will further assist the district in meeting state targets. Clearly, promising CST test results from Santa Cruz Gardens and API rankings, document the need to ‘scale-up’ all schools within the Soquel Union Ele. School District in order to close the achievement gap for all students.

Soquel Union Elementary School District hires teachers and principals who have met the "highly qualified" standards of the State of California. As reported in the data collection instruments for the State of California, 100% of the teachers and administrators in the district meet "highly qualified" criteria. Soquel Union Elementary School District is known as a good place to work, focused on student achievement and quality educational programs. There is very little turnover of staff in the district. In addition, Soquel Union Elementary School District provides two years of support to new teachers, principals and assistant principals through the New Teacher Center, a nationally acclaimed organization that provides mentorship and training for educators.

NOTE: Students graduating from New Brighton Middle School go to Santa Cruz City High School District schools. The Santa Cruz City Schools do not track data by feeder school districts. As such, graduation rates cannot be addressed by this proposal.

D. Quality of the Project Evaluation

The district will conduct a well-designed quasi-experimental study of the proposed practice initiated by this Scale-Up grant. The evaluation plan described in this section will enable Soquel Union Elementary School District to meet all federal evaluation requirements for Scale-Up

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grants and document the efficacy of RtI implementation and impact on student achievement, specifically closing the achievement gap for identified sub-groups.

The plan provides for: (1) accountability in assisting students to achieve high academic standards; (2) use of reliable, valid and fair instruments and procedures; (3) appropriate assessment of student outcomes against State content standards and in comparison with a carefully matched comparison group (using data from state identified similar schools); and (4) assessment of program implementation and fidelity. The evaluation information will be used to determine program effectiveness and scale-up efforts to improve the program annually, and to identify successful indicators for replication.

The evaluation process will ensure accountability in assisting all students to achieve high academic standards. This will be accomplished by creating an *evaluation team* whose members will share responsibility for the collection, analysis and review of evaluation data and results. This evaluation team will consist of the Project Coordinator/Special Education Director, site Principals, RtI Site team members, and the external evaluator. The members of this team will meet regularly throughout the project to: (a) reach agreement on a refined evaluation plan and management system, basing their decisions on the federal regulations, project goals and objectives, and input from school staff (this refined plan will specify timelines and responsibilities for collection of data and other key evaluation activities); (b) take responsibility for the assessment instruments and collection of data; (c) review and interpret the data; (d) communicate the information on project assessments to staff and parents; and (e) make modifications in the program in response to conclusions derived from the evaluation process.

The assessment instruments to be used will measure student learning in a variety of ways in order to ensure that a multidimensional assessment of student progress is attained. The instruments to be used include: the California English Language Development Test (CELDT), a

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standardized test used to determine progress towards English language proficiency, the state mandated STAR test of academic performance, and district research-based multiple measures. These tests are used for assessing progress made toward proficiency in English Language Arts and Mathematics. The CELDT and the STAR tests are subject to rigorous validation procedures, have been approved by the California State Department of Education, and are considered to be reliable and valid measures of assessment. These tests have been validated with national norms and test data can be used for statistical analysis. Their results can be used for comparisons of student achievement both within the identified sub-groups and with the district and state. Reliability and fairness in test procedures will be assured by providing training to all testers in appropriate administration procedures, including communicating the importance of the test to all students and providing a comfortable and safe testing environment. No English Learner will be given an English language standardized test unless they have completed a full year of instruction in English.

Standardized tests are criticized for failing to distinguish differences in reactions to the testing situation that can affect outcomes. These differences include adverse effects due to variation in students' ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, as well as linguistic differences. For this reason, we will not rely solely on the STAR in assessing student learning but will also administer research-based multiple measures. The assessments are based on the California Content Standards and are guided by the state curriculum frameworks and performance standards. The validity of these measures will be assured by the use of the performance standards in the design of curriculum at each grade level, in order to ensure content relevance of the measures. Training staff in the administration of these tests will ensure reliability. Reliability statistics will be included in the evaluation reports. Fairness in testing practices is ensured by the use of these assessments in determining student performance.

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The data provided by these assessments will be used to evaluate student performance against the project objectives as well as in comparison with district and state outcomes. Data will be disaggregated by identified sub-groups, by grade level, by language proficiency, and time in the program in order to make reliable, valid and fair judgments about the program's effectiveness.

Table 6 shows the plan for assessing attainment of project objectives.

Table 6
Evaluation of Project Objectives

| Objectives | Assessments | Persons Responsible |
|---|--|---|
| <p>Academic Progress:</p> <p>1.1: Decrease in number of students referred to Sp. Ed.</p> <p>1.2: Increase in the number of students in identified sub-groups attaining proficient</p> <p>1.3: English Proficiency</p> <p>1.4: Students receiving intervention will make more than a years growth</p> | <p>Documentation of placement rates to Special Education</p> <p>1.2: STAR Assessments/ California Standards Test</p> <p>District research-based multiple measures</p> <p>1.3: Testing with California English Language Development Test (CELDT)</p> <p>1.4: Evaluation of student work and performance assessment using district multiple measures</p> | <p>Administered by classroom teachers annually</p> <p>Administered by classroom teachers trained on multiple measures three times annually</p> <p>Annual (Fall) administration of CELDT, by trained district personnel.</p> |

Table 6 continued

| Objectives | Assessments | Persons Responsible |
|---|--|---|
| 1.5 Increase in SED students placed in advanced classes | 1.5: Documentation of student placement in advanced classes | Annual review and documentation of placement |
| 2.1 Staff mastery of classroom strategies | 2.1: Classroom observations with agreed-upon rubric that measures application of strategies (to be developed) RtI Self Assessment Tools | Observations 4 times annually Self Assessment 2 times annually |
| 3.1 Parent Communication | Documentation of parent communiqués | Review annually |

The evaluation of program context is a key feature in the design. Several critical questions will need to be asked to determine fidelity to RtI, efficacy of the model, potential for replication as well as areas needing improvement.

The following questions will be embedded in the evaluation design:

- (a) Does problem-analysis result in interventions that effect student performance?
- (b) What factors predict better outcome for students?
- (c) How many students have problems solved without needing support through special education?
- (d) How many IEP goals have been developed directly from results of interventions?

From a standard treatment protocol perspective, questions include:

- (a) How many students receive supplemental support? For how long? With what effect?
- (b) How many students receive intensive support?

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(c) What supports do students need after their performance is “normalized”?

(d) What is the cost associated with implementation?

(e) What is the relationship of program activities, objectives and priorities to the overall district program?

(f) Is RtI instrumental in district and school functioning and systemic change?

The budget for this Scale-Up grant provides for a sufficient allocation for the External Evaluation consultant to conduct site visits for classroom observation and interviews with principals and other staff for the purpose of ongoing formative evaluation activities. Meetings with the RtI Site Teams will provide valuable input for the evaluation process. There will be sufficient days provided for data analysis and interpretation as well as developing the annual evaluation report to be submitted to the funding office. The total budget for evaluation will be \$10,000. This is a minimal cost to the project as the district uses a variety of local resources to carry out the program.

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The district will contract with an independent External Evaluation consultant to conduct all evaluation activities. The External Evaluator will conduct ongoing evaluation activities to determine the extent to which RtI is being implemented and the efficacy of implementation. Analysis of student achievement results will provide data needed to consider any programmatic changes that may need adjustment. Ongoing fair and reliable data analysis will make for a rigorous approach to determining program impact on student achievement. The district plans to devote meetings of the Evaluation Team to discussion of the effectiveness of implementation based on analysis of the data gathered pursuant to the plan shown in the table. The results of these analyses will be fed back to staff and other interested parties and used in the project evaluation reports. The hiring of an External Evaluator will lend objectivity and credibility to the evaluation.

E. Strategy and Capacity to Bring to Scale

Soquel Union Elementary School District is a small district. This gives our district some advantages in serving as a test bed for effective ideas. Our entire certificated administrative team consists of the Superintendent, a half-time Special Education administrator, four Principals, and a middle school Assistant Principal. We have a student oriented Assistant Superintendent for Business and a lean business and operations team. Our entire management group fits around the Superintendent's dining room table. We are a tight knit, collaborative work group that minimizes bureaucracy. Our teaching and support staff are highly qualified and highly dedicated. We have good labor relations. An example is the recent group decision to have every employee of the district, from the Superintendent on, take three furlough days in the wake of the devastating State of California cuts to education. We have planned the project roll-out to include steps that will ensure that there is participation by staff and parents in the development of the program and its implementation. Prior to becoming aware of this grant, we had already

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established a Sustainable Intervention Task Force to explore creative ways of leveraging the resources we currently have to sustain and grow our student achievement successes. This task force outlined a skeleton for a successful effort: update current research-based universal screeners and assessments, study and select from among the most successful strategies, implement the strategies, including providing collaborative, coaching-based staff development, involving parents in the goal setting process, and monitoring the growth of individuals, and adjusting interventions for individuals as needed. Rather than centering this effort at one school, and then slowly moving the effort to other schools, we believe that it is possible to create a model in which all schools simultaneously scale-up, with a districtwide collaborative effort facilitated by a skilled staff member.

We will struggle through this effort without grant dollars, however having grant resources to leverage for scale-up will result in a more thoughtful and efficient scale-up effort, increasing the speed with which we achieve a successful model.

The district participates in some federal programs such as Title 1, though federal dollars (including IDEA) which represents only 9.6% of our revenues. Soquel Union Elementary School District proposes to serve 10,000 students over the course of the project, including students served through Campus Kids Connection preschool programs. Soquel Union is a small district without extensive external resources but the organization functions effectively and has documented success in closing the achievement gap. It is this success that allows the district to offer a low cost program of interventions for students in need.

The fiscal crisis in the State of California has had a huge impact in the Soquel Union Elementary School District. All possible flexibility of funding has been used to maintain core programs. There are only six administrators in the district: Superintendent; Assistant Superintendent for Business Services; three Elementary Principals; one Middle School Principal and one Middle

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School Assistant Principal. A retired administrator also functions as a Director of Special Services on a very limited contract. A retired administrator also functions as a Director of Special Education on a very limited contract. A retired Special Education administrator on contract is the sole administrative leader for all IDEA and Special Education services.

Currently the Superintendent monitors Title 1, strategic planning and plan development for categorical programs, provides assistance and oversight to the site principals, as well as handling certificated personnel. The principal of our smallest elementary school assists with plan development and monitoring of programs for English Learners. This Principal will oversee STAR testing and compliance for categorical programs in the 2010-11 school year. The Assistant Superintendent for Business Services supervises all business services, classified personnel, maintenance, transportation, food service, technology services and construction. Three classified managers work under his supervision. One manager coordinates technology services, another assists with the day-to-day running of construction, maintenance, and transportation and the third is in charge of the Child Nutrition (food service) Program.

A retired administrator on a contract provides some help with the coordination of categorical programs between sites, the Consolidated Application, STAR testing, G.A.T.E. programs, attends the countywide program coordinators meetings to disseminate compliance information and takes leadership for such activities as compliance reviews. One half-time bilingual resource teacher provides districtwide-coordinated services for CELDT testing, parent notifications for ELD testing and programs, and also provides some direct ELD services to students. Classroom teachers are released part time from the classroom to provide staff development support.

The above-mentioned administrators have extensive experience and are well qualified to manage the program and implement efforts to bring the project to scale on a State level. These managers and other district personnel are well positioned to disseminate grant benefits. The district will

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continue to work with out of district partners to ensure scale-up efforts are successful. Such partners include California State University of Monterey Bay, Santa Cruz County of Education, the New Teacher Project, the New Teacher Center, and other local non-profits.

If we can show a proof of concept in Soquel, it can be replicated elsewhere because it will be a concept that can be implemented with limited resources. The data tables shown later in this grant demonstrate our track record with closing the achievement gap. We have shown local leadership in bringing nationally known speakers and ideas to Santa Cruz County. We worked with the Center for Strategic Facilitation to build presenting and facilitation techniques in our team. The district encourages staff involved in this project to write, present, and participate in the dissemination of information regarding our journey through this project, our steps to success, and would be forthright about our missteps so that others might learn from them.

The district is committed to the utilization of all possible resources available in the home, school, and community to implement RtI with fidelity. The district is working to establish a collaborative, learning community, partnership with parents and categorical programs within the district's schools. Community based organizations and agencies will extend these efforts over the course of the project to ensure integration of services and greater community involvement. All staff will work collaboratively with district personnel to coordinate and integrate all activities. The instructional program is inclusive of all special programs at the sites including Gate, Special Education, and Title I to ensure students participate in a well coordinated program that meets their identified needs. Professional development and family/education programs, the upgrading of assessment and curriculum will be coordinated with all district efforts. Once staff are fully trained in the RtI process, have developed expertise in implementation, and have streamlined interventions for successful outcomes, the ease and ability to replicate this process will be evident. These efforts will assure that the systems and infrastructures are in place by the end of

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the grant and will yield positive results for replication. It is highly feasible to replicate an intervention system that marries excellent practices in the general and Special Education programs. This can be done in such a way that ensures continued high academic performance and can be replicated at a low cost for most districts.

The district has an extensive network of retired administrators and teachers who have the ability to speak on panels and provide professional development to other district. The district is committed to improving the profession by loaning out staff to agencies engaged in the work. This is evidenced by the large number of teachers loaned to the New Teacher Project as well as the number of teachers who have provided mentoring services to other districts.

The budget is adequate and costs are reasonable in light of the ambitious agenda of activities proposed in the grant and the number of students to be served. The following line item for grant costs are justified below:

Table 7
Annotated Budget

| Item | Notes | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 |
|---|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 80 Days of Sub Release Time | For collaboration meetings and staff development | \$8,480 | \$8,480 | \$8,480 | \$8,480 | \$8,480 |
| Salaries and benefits for Project Coordinator | Instruction leader who facilitates collaborative meetings and leads decision making processes; | 49730 | 49730 | 49730 | 0 | 0 |

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| | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| | faded out by Year 4 | | | | | |
|--|---------------------|--|--|--|--|--|

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Budget continued:

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Clerical Support for Project .20 FTE | Faded out by Year 5 | 14348 | 14348 | 14348 | 14348 | 0 |
| Additional .5 FTE Intervention Teacher | Important to provide 1.0 FTE intervention teacher at each site to build site team. Local funds used after Year 4. | 38000 | 38000 | 38000 | 38000 | 0 |
| Travel Needed for Grant Collaboration | Participation in grant collaboration activities | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2000 | 2500 |
| Equipment | All equipment provided by district | | | | | |

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Budget continued:

| | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Supplies | First, second and third year expenses include purchase of assessments and data management for assessment data, Basic supplies only years 4 and 5. | | | | | |
| Contractual | Staff Development and Evaluation contracts | 15000 | 15000 | 15000 | 15000 | 15000 |

As the district gathers evidence of effectiveness through project evaluation, they will make presentations regarding the project at professional association meetings around the State. Such entities might include: The National Association of School Psychologists, California School Boards Association, SELPA, and the Childcare Planning Council. The district will contribute to the dissemination of project success through written articles in relevant professional journals.

F. Sustainability

The project is designed in such a way that the Scale-UP grant acts as seed money to fund start-up and development of a program that can be sustained at low ongoing cost. The increase in staff background and skills acquired in training will be a permanent feature of the schools after federal funding ends. Teachers’ repertoires will be richer. The processes of coaching and support that go far beyond workshops will produce high levels of mastery of the targeted strategies. Students will continue to benefit from these highly skilled teachers. The alignment of

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curriculum, assessment instruments, and interventions with project resources will also be part of the project’s capacity building legacy. Ongoing staff development and curriculum development efforts will be sustained with local resources. The family education model will be institutionalized at the schools. Previously mentioned partners and other stakeholders (students, staff, and parents) are critical to the projects long-term success

G. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel

The project coordinator will oversee, coordinate and implement the project under the direction of the Superintendent. The project coordinator, along with the principals will provide direction and assurances for project implementation at the school sites.

Table 8

Timeline for Project Implementation: 5 Year Time Frame

| Activities | Persons Responsible |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|
|-------------------|--------------------------------|

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| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Year 1 (2010-11):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of excellent and successful practices based on Title 1 programs. Sept, 2010 • Selection of updated Districtwide Multiple Measures that meld Special Education and Title 1/General Education and can be triangulated with state testing data, which is not growth based, updating tracking systems. By June, 2011 • Universal screening, student services meeting to determine needs, set individual goals, implement & monitor interventions September of each program year • Staff Development to enhance teacher knowledge of research-based strategies and the selection of strategies for implementation at each site, and across the district. October 2010 and ongoing thereafter • General and Special Education staff at sites collaborate on choices of strategies and receive additional staff development/training. Ongoing throughout program years, with major selections made by June 2011. • Development of Learning Communities and Communities of Practice at each site and across the district. September 2010 • Participate in any nationwide communities of practice set up through this grant process. Ongoing throughout grant years • Educate general and special education parents regarding RtI • Ongoing evaluation by External Evaluator to monitor & assess efficacy • Prepare and present annual performance report | <p>Superintendent</p> <p>Project Coordinator</p> <p>Principals</p> <p>Teachers</p> <p>External Evaluator</p> |
|--|--|

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| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Year 2 (2011-12)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructuring/Reassignment of intervention staff and special education staff and students (with parental support) to facilitate RtI based referrals and interventions at all sites • Implementation of updated Districtwide Multiple Measures and retooling of data management system districtwide • Update district elementary report card to reflect new assessments and data available on student performance • Additional staff development on selected research based strategies • Additional parent education, especially for parents of students with IEPs, regarding this model • Release time for Learning Communities and Communities of Practice at each site and across the district to meet and analyze data from Year 1 and Year 2 as available • Ongoing monitoring of program fidelity • Adjust program as appropriate based on data analysis. Participate in any nationwide communities of practice set up through this grant • Ongoing evaluation by External Evaluator to monitor & assess efficacy • Prepare and present annual performance report | <p>Superintendent</p> <p>Project Coordinator</p> <p>Principals</p> <p>Teachers</p> <p>External Evaluator</p> |
|--|--|

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| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Year 3 (2012-13)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with Learning Communities, Communities of Practice and data analysis • Monitor program for fidelity • Implement program adjustments based on data from Years 1 and 2 • Review additional research based strategies and update strategies implemented at sites and throughout the district • Disseminate program to other districts in the county through COE sponsored panels. • Ongoing evaluation by External Evaluator to monitor & assess efficacy • Prepare and present annual performance report. June 2013 | <p>Superintendent</p> <p>Project Coordinator</p> <p>Principals</p> <p>Teachers</p> <p>External Evaluator</p> |
|---|--|

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| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Year 4 (2013-14)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue with Learning Communities, Communities of Practice and data analysis • Implement program adjustments based on data from years 1, 2 and 3 • Review additional research based strategies and update strategies implemented at sites and throughout the district • Flowchart cycle of continuous improvement based on the experience of Years 1, 2, 3, with emphasis on continuous review of current research into effective strategies and best practice. • Compile data and present at statewide or national conferences, as opportunities exist. Submit articles to professional journals, as opportunities exist. • Ongoing evaluation by External Evaluator to monitor & assess efficacy • Prepare and present annual performance report. June 2014 | <p>Superintendent Project Coordinator Principals Teachers External Evaluator</p> |
| <p>Year 5 (2014-15)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By June of 2015, all activities and processes are “weaned” from grant funds. • Project coordination becomes unnecessary because processes are well established. • Prepare and present final evaluation report | <p>Superintendent Project Coordinator Principals Teachers External Evaluator</p> |

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Qualifications of Personnel: The key personnel for this project will be paid by both District and Scale-Up funds. A substantial contribution will be made by the District in terms of providing personnel. The job descriptions, required qualifications and time commitments of key personnel are as follows.

**Table 9
Time Commitment, Funding Source, Credentials**

| Position | Time Commitment | Funding Source | Credentials |
|---|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Superintendent | 5% | District In-kind | Admin Services |
| Project Coordinator/ Special Education Director | 50% 50% | Scale-Up funds District In-Kind | Dr. of Psychology Ca. Psychologist Credential |
| Clerk/Secretary | 20% | Scale-Up funds | H.S. Diploma |
| Principals (4) | 25% | District In-Kind | Admin Services |
| Site Teachers (99) | 100% | District In-Kind | California Teaching Credential |
| Campus Kids Connection, Inc | 100% pre- school program | In-Kind | Associates Degree: Business Admin. BS Degree |
| External Evaluator | 20 days | Scale-Up funds | Masters Degree in Education. Evaluation Fieldwork |

Superintendent (in-kind) will devote 5% of her time, in kind, to the overall administration of the project. She is responsible for collaborative efforts with outside agencies, coordination with related programs, and supervision of the project coordinator. She holds an Administrative

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Services Credential, a California Single Subject Credential, and a Lifetime Multiple Subject Credential and has more than twenty years experience in administration. Prior to being a Superintendent, she was a curriculum director.

RtI Coordinator (Grant funded) will devote 50% of her time to the project. She will be responsible for the daily administration and management of the project, and coordination of related programs. She will assist the schools in implementing the project according to federal guidelines. She will provide guidance and assistance to principals and the staff, maintain adequate records of staff training, program objectives, and completion of tasks according to the timelines. She will serve as a 50% Director of Special Education with district funds. She holds Doctorate in Psychology and a California School Psychologist Credential.

Classroom Teachers (in-kind) will be responsible for instruction in core curriculum, assessment, identification of interventions, and progress monitoring. They are district employees who hold appropriate California Teaching Credentials. Many have the CLAD credential. These professionals have experience working with special needs students and have knowledge of the target population. They are committed to this project and are district funded.

Site Principals (in-kind) will be responsible for the oversight of curriculum and instruction, assessment, and RtI implementation. They hold Administrative Services Credentials. They have been very successful in working with students and parents of diverse backgrounds. They are committed to this project and are district funded.

Campus Kids Connection Director (in-kind) will be responsible for all pre-school and after school programs provided to the district. She will work with district staff to ensure pre-school students receive the necessary interventions and special education services to ensure a seamless transition to Kindergarten. She holds an Associate Degree in Business Administration and a BS in Human Development, and has twenty years pre-school experience.

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Clerk/Secretary (Grant funds) will work in the District Office providing services that include record-keeping, maintaining project files, updating project databases, and other clerical duties as necessary. She has experience with both general and special education programs.

External Evaluator (Grant funds) will be responsible for ongoing evaluation (both qualitative and process) The qualifications of this consultant will include an advanced degree in education, extensive past experience in the evaluation of educational programs, and the ability to work collaboratively with staff in the design and implementation of the evaluation. The consultant will be responsible for observation of program operations, design of evaluation instruments, analysis of data, and writing of reports. The evaluators will meet frequently with the RtI Team and staff. The evaluation will be a team effort, but the external evaluation consultant will be an integral part of this team, providing technical expertise in evaluation methodology and in the analysis and interpretation of data.

