

**Project Narrative Table of Contents**

|      |  |     |
|------|--|-----|
| I.   | Introductory Statement, listing addressed Priorities .....                                   | 2   |
| II.  | Planning Grant Absolute Priority 1 Proposal .....  | 2   |
|      | A. Priority Alignment Areas  |     |
|      | 1. Priority Alignment Area 1: NEED .....   | 2   |
|      | a. Required Section 1: Need for the Project .....  | 2   |
|      | 2. Priority Alignment Area 2: STRATEGY .....   | 16  |
|      | a. Required Section 2: Quality of the Project Design .....                                   | 16  |
|      | b. Required Section 3: Quality of the Project Services .....                                 | 30  |
|      | 3. Priority Alignment Area 3: CAPACITY .....   | 42  |
|      | a. Required Section 4: Quality of the Management Plan ...                                    | 42  |
|      | B. Required Section 5: Commitment to Work with a National Evaluator ...                      | 70  |
| III. | Competitive Preference Priorities .....  | 70  |
|      | A. Competitive Preference Priority 4 (CP4): Comprehensive Local Early Learning Network ..... | 70  |
|      | B. Competitive Preference Priority 5 (CP5): Quality Internet Connectivity .....              | 72  |
| IV.  | Invitational Priority (Not applicable) .....   | N/A |

## I. Introductory Statement

The following priorities will be addressed in the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods Planning Grant Application:

- Absolute Priority 1 (AP1): Promise Neighborhoods Plan
- Competitive Preference Priority 4 (CP4): Comprehensive Local Early Learning Network
- Competitive Preference Priority 5 (CP5): Quality Internet Connectivity

## II. Planning Grant Absolute Priority 1 – Proposal to Develop a Promise Neighborhood Plan

|  |
|--|
| <b>Absolute Priority 1</b><br><b>Priority Alignment Area: NEED</b><br><b>Required Section 1: <i>Need for the Project</i></b> |
|--|

The Fresno (Calif.) Promise Neighborhoods collaborative represents a unified body of concerned citizens that includes parents, students, school personnel, human service agencies, institutes of higher education, law enforcement, and city and county entities – together – rallying resources, ideas, and human power to promote the success of Fresno’s greatest at-risk students and their families. A major goal of Fresno Promise Neighborhoods is to erase the barriers that continue to overwhelmingly impact student learning and to provide every student with equal opportunities for success.

Unfortunately, a “cradle to nowhere” pipeline has developed in Central/Southwest Fresno, propelling far too many of the community’s children into incarceration or struggling to survive at or below poverty. This diverse neighborhood has great assets, which are overshadowed by the disparities plaguing it. By every measure, from youth violence to incarceration rates, to educational and wealth attainment, this area of Fresno is at the bottom of

the list, leading the nation in inequalities along geographic, racial, and class lines. Children living in this area of Fresno at the ages of seven and eight, face lives that are a statistical nightmare: The majority will drop-out before graduating from high school; most will live on public assistance at some point in their lives. These children are the most immediate and vulnerable targets for gang recruitment and perpetuation of gang activities; a significant percentage will be incarcerated for years and some for life; many will develop substance abuse problems before they are 12; and most will never develop more than minimal job skills. (Please refer to page 6 for the start of a statistical narrative).

The levels of destitution are painfully evident: Consensus exists among local leaders (both grassroots and systems) that troublesome statistics are attributable to a low-wage economy, lack of skills among the workforce and teenage pregnancy; these factors are most often cited as the root causes for the desperate quality of life in Central/Southwest Fresno. In 2005 and again in 2008, The Brookings Institution reported this and other areas of the city as having the highest concentration of urban poverty than any other area in the United States. Fresno is located in the San Joaquin Valley, which is among the poorest regions in the United States. Children and families in Central/Southwest Fresno are essentially the “poorest of the poorest.” Although flagrant needs are identified in Fresno and the San Joaquin Valley, only recently has the area garnered attention from funders. In past decades, the entire region was frequently bypassed in favor of larger metropolitan areas, such as Los Angeles, San Diego, and the Bay Area.

In addition to anecdotal evidence from different levels of leadership (systems, including educational and government institutions; and grassroots, (including residents and non-profit organizations) a historical review of initiatives spawned to solve problems rampant among the eight-county San Joaquin Valley, and particularly, the Central/Southwest area of Fresno and the

Fresno Promise Neighborhoods collaborative cited specific systemic failures of each initiative. It concluded it would not duplicate past flawed planning efforts by thoroughly understanding the obstacles that stood in the way of attaining our goals.

At the top of the list of unsuccessful interventions is the “silo” mentality, a consequence of the sheer magnitude of issues associated with poverty, leaving residents out of the planning and implementation and the tendency of agencies and organizations purporting to have the answers. As a result, rushed decisions or one agency seizing power simply cannot produce a cohesive strategy. As local, state and federal resources are pared down, organizations depending on grants and contracts are competing against themselves by submitting applications for the same area, with the same funder.

Formed in early 2009, the Fresno Promise Neighborhood partnership sought models that worked in other communities, in addition to champions (individual or organization), used the lessons learned, and emulate tried-and-true models.

This public-private collaboration has wholly agreed upon compatible goals and outcomes, and understands that each partner has an important role to fulfill while maintaining full responsibility toward residents and the partnership and surpassing outcomes. The overarching principle is that by working together with residents, the partnership will enhance participants’ abilities to reach their goals and that the benefits of collaboration are far greater than the costs.

The collaborative was inspired by the success of the Harlem Children’s Zone (HCZ) in New York City. The Fresno Promise Neighborhoods effort is led by local non-profit organization Reading and Beyond, which led an on-going series of intensive meetings. Its intent is to form a collaborative effort that could translate and apply the promise of the HCZ to a contiguous

neighborhood within Central/Southwest Fresno. The notable difference about this neighborhood revitalization planning effort is the diversity of partners that includes loyal systems, providers, grassroots organizations, local funders, corporations, and residents. Lead agency Reading and Beyond is a grass-roots provider with demonstrable experience in sizable initiatives involving systems partners, such as Fresno Unified School District and the City of Fresno. Thus, Reading and Beyond has earned the respect and trust of Fresno's providers and residents. Partners believe Reading and Beyond's depth and breadth of experience as the perfect champion to lead and sustain this cross-sector collaboration, and ability to easily lead adaptation as the partnership evaluates and re-evaluates what is working and what must be changed.

**The time for Fresno Promise Neighborhoods is now.** Fresno is fast reaching its tipping point, the moment of critical mass, the threshold, the boiling point for change to occur. The type of change and sustainability of this massive change depends on our approach, requiring us to implement methods in a holistic manner. No one plan will eliminate all of Fresno's problems, but collaboration, tenacity, and inclusiveness in planning and implementation will help us achieve and overarching goal of a replicable model that can transform Fresno's and the Valley's neighborhoods of poverty.

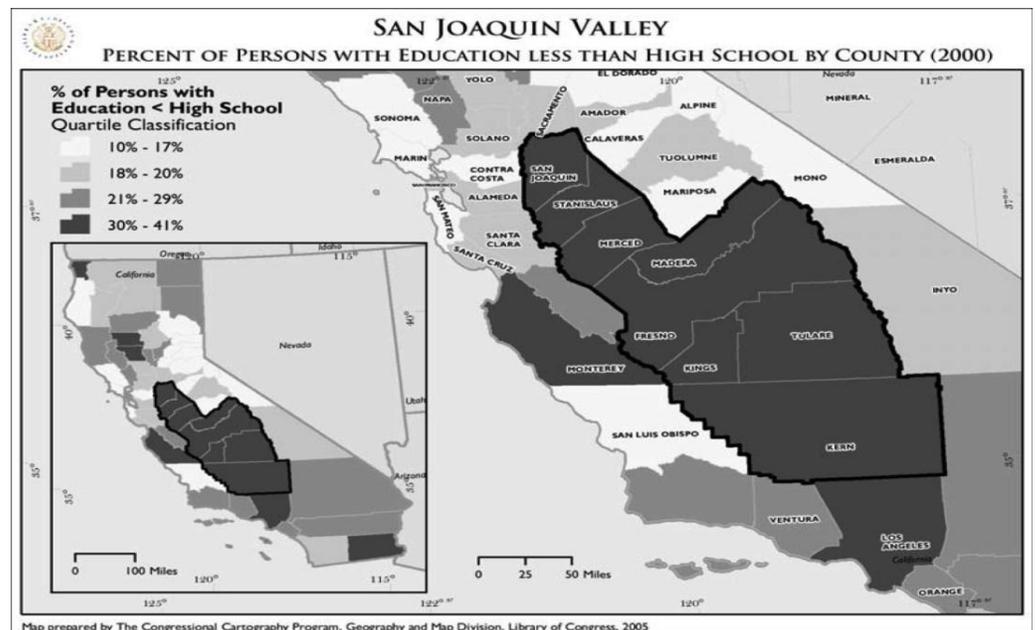
Although the city faces obstacles, Fresno also boasts great assets, including the following:

- 1) The City of Fresno has developed a Comprehensive Revitalization Plan for the Lowell/Jefferson neighborhood, which is Fresno Promise Neighborhood's target zone.
- 2) Fresno's recent designation as a *Strong Cities, Strong Communities* (SC2) site by the federal government is expected to be an excellent partnership. Fresno was one of six cities across the country (the only city West of the Mississippi) to be designated as an SC2 site. The overarching goal of the SC2 initiative is to strengthen local capacity and spark

economic growth in local communities while ensuring taxpayer dollars are used wisely and efficiently. The federal government will be sending representatives from various federal agencies to help the City of Fresno. These federal teams will work with local governments, the private sector, and other institutions to leverage federal dollars and support the work being done at the local level to encourage economic growth and community development. Fresno Promise Neighborhoods relates directly with this endeavor.

- 3) Fresno Promise Neighborhoods is located within and aligned with the California Endowment's *Building Healthy Communities* initiative. California Endowment committed to making a 10-year investment in only 14 communities in California, including the Central/South West Fresno area.

Fresno County is located in the middle of California's San Joaquin Valley. While it is one of the world's most productive agriculture areas,



Fresno County is also among the nation's most impoverished regions. Referred to at times as the "Appalachia of the West," Fresno and the surrounding counties of the south San Joaquin Valley are characterized by chronic double-digit unemployment, high incidence of poverty, and low

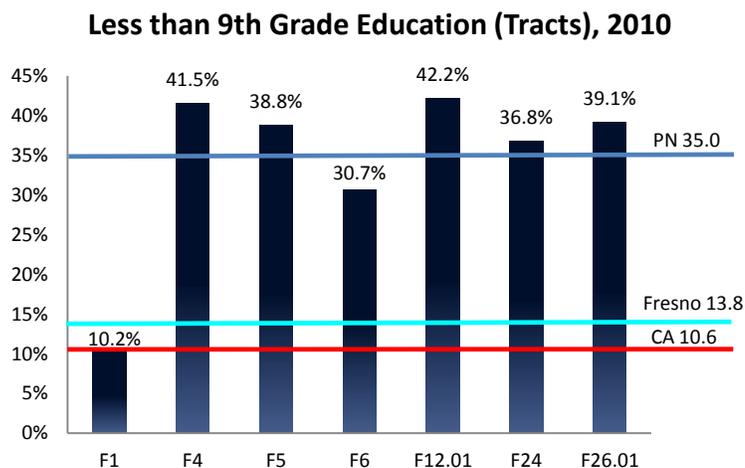


quarters of the population in the area identify as Hispanic/Latino as compared to less than 50% for both Fresno and California. Similarly, more than two-thirds of the neighborhood area (69%) does not speak English at home; 70% of this population speaks only Spanish (Healthy City, 2011).

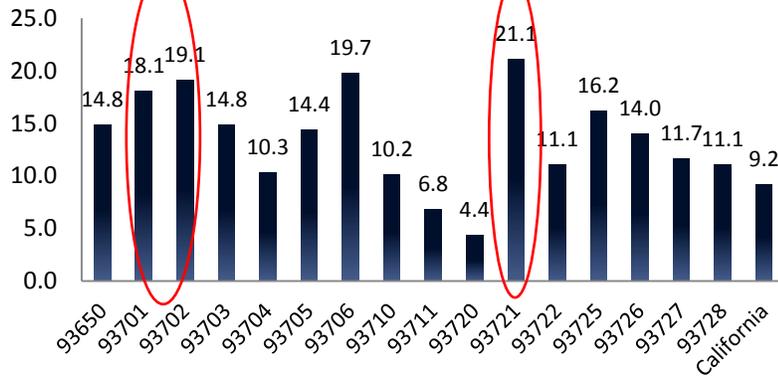
Still reeling from the effect of the Great Recession, residents of Fresno have been facing unemployment rates higher than that of both California and the nation. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Fresno has consistently been in the double digits with the exception of 2007 and 2008. With agriculture, an industry not projected to grow very much in the future, still the largest industry within Fresno, the expectation is that the unemployment rate will remain high. Fresno is not expected to begin its climb out of the recession until 2012. Data from 2010 show us that the proposed area has a higher number (9.5%) of individuals that are unemployed as compared to both Fresno (5.7%) and California (4.7%) (Healthy City).

In addition to high unemployment, Fresno also has a population with low educational attainment, a common trait within the proposed area. More than half of residents in the area have not obtained a high school diploma. While there are variations from tract to tract, in total 35.0% of the adult population has less than a high school education. When combined with those individuals who only have their high school diplomas (or equivalent), estimates show more than three-quarters of the population have

never attended college (Healthy City, 2011). One factor attributed to low educational attainment is teenage pregnancy. Women who have children at a young age are less likely



**% of Births to Mothers Under 20 Years of Age in Fresno (Zipcode), 2009**



to complete their education.

With the exception of two zip code areas, Fresno has a higher percentage of teen births as compared to California

(California Department of Public Health, 2009). These are factors that contribute to the high

number of families in the proposed area that are living in poverty (44.4%).

**SCHOOL PERFORMANCE**

|                       | <b>% Free Meals</b> | <b>% English Learners</b> | <b>% Lang. Arts Proficient</b> | <b>API Rank</b> | <b>Similar Schools Rank</b> |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Jefferson</b>      | 95.6                | 54.0                      | 35                             | 3               | 8                           |
| <b>Lowell</b>         | 98.6                | 52.6                      | 24                             | 1               | 4                           |
| <b>Webster</b>        | 95.3                | 44.2                      | 30                             | 1               | 2                           |
| <b>Fresno Unified</b> | 67.7                | 26.4                      | 37                             | -               | -                           |
| <b>California</b>     | 23.7                | 55.0                      | 52                             | -               | -                           |

The Academic Performance Index (API) identifies all three schools as having low State Characteristics Index (SCI) values (Jefferson, 160.9; Lowell, 162.9; Webster, 163.5). SCI values measure the likelihood schools will receive low test scores due to

such characteristics as limited education among parents or caregivers and a high number of English Language Learners. The index takes into account student demographics including socioeconomic indicators and the percentage of students classified as English Learners. All three

schools have a large number of English Language Learners (Jefferson, 54.0%; Lowell, 52.6%; Webster, 44.2%) and an overwhelming number of students who receive free and reduce price meals (Jefferson, 95.6%; Lowell, 96.9%; Webster, 97.9%). Index values range from 100 to 200; the lower a school's score, the more likely a school is going to have low test scores. In the case of all three schools, California's Student Testing and Reporting (STAR) scores show that many of the students are not proficient in English-Language Arts. SCI values are also used to compare schools. All three schools, on a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being lowest, rank lower than California schools with similar SCI scores (California Department of Education, 2011).

#### MAGNITUDE AND SEVERITY OF THE ISSUES ADDRESSED

*Economic Disparity-* While poverty is prevalent among many Central Valley communities, the residents of our Promise Neighborhood consistently demonstrate greater need than that measured for the rest of the county, state, and nation. An astounding 32% of Fresno County's children come from families living below the Federal Poverty Line (FPL), yet within the zip codes comprising our Promise Neighborhood, over 44% of families are living below these standards. Both of these rates figure alarmingly above the state (9.8%) and national (9.2%) rates (California Health Interview Survey 2005, US Census 2000, 2005-2009).<sup>1</sup>

In order to effectively abate our community's economic distress, we must take into consideration the demographic factors that characterize the area, and how they relate to poverty. Although no current data is available describing income distribution among ethnic groups in our neighborhood, the 2011 California Human Development Report indicates a clear disparity between the median wages of Whites and those of African Americans and Hispanics in the entire San Joaquin Valley. The report shows that Whites in the region earn a yearly average of \$34,000, while their African American and Latino counterparts earn \$24,000 and \$18,000, respectively. These large gaps are similar to those that exist among differences in educational attainment

between races. While these disparities require attention, we must also consider how low the general median earnings in the San Joaquin Valley are; at \$23,000, they are equal to those of the typical American worker in the mid 1960's, in today's dollars.

*Housing-* In looking at the number of residents who own their homes compared to the number of residents who live in rented property, we get a clear picture of the lack of community development present in our proposed Promise Neighborhood. Only 25% of our area's residents own the homes in which they live, much less than 58% statewide and 67% nationally (US Census 2010).

*Education-*The geographic region in which we hope to effect change has consistently demonstrated indicators of need for educational development. According to the 2000 US Census, the 93701, 93702, and 93721 zip codes are home to a population where only 40% of residents age 25 and over graduate from high school. This is less than half of the national rate, 80%. Furthermore, only 4% of those residents in our neighborhood possess a bachelor's degree, again, falling far below the national level of 24%.

The three elementary schools in the proposed Promise Neighborhood feed into three separate high schools: Roosevelt, Edison, and McLane. All schools in FUSD publish an annual school accountability report card, providing information on areas such as school finances, student performance, and postsecondary preparation. These reports show that on California Standardized Tests, the three secondary schools in our neighborhood have low numbers of students attaining proficient or advanced scores. In every core subject, these three schools perform significantly below the district and state averages. Furthermore, at all three schools, African American and Latino students perform lower on standardized tests than their White classmates. The reports also show that few students from these schools graduate having

completed the necessary coursework to enroll in either of California's two public university systems. At Roosevelt High, only one in five enrolled students meet these qualifications. With such a weak preparation to continue on to postsecondary education, the neighborhood is left with an under-prepared workforce.

| <b>California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) 2009-2019 Academic Year</b>             |                  |               |               |                   |                 |              |  |
|---|------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|--|
| % Students achieving proficiency or advanced level in English language arts and mathematics |                  |               |               |                   |                 |              |  |
|   | <b>Roosevelt</b> | <b>McLane</b> | <b>Edison</b> | <b>PN Average</b> | <b>District</b> | <b>State</b> | <b>Percent PN performs below the State</b> |
| <b>English language arts</b>  | 27               | 24            | 57            | 36                | 41              | 54           | 18   |
| <b>Mathematics</b>  | 31               | 40            | 61            | 44                | 46              | 53           | 9  |

| <b>California Standards Test (CST) 2009-2019 Academic Year</b> |                  |               |               |                   |                 |              |  |
|--|------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|--|
| % Students achieving at the proficient or advanced level       |                  |               |               |                   |                 |              |  |
|  | <b>Roosevelt</b> | <b>McLane</b> | <b>Edison</b> | <b>PN Average</b> | <b>District</b> | <b>State</b> | <b>Percent PN performs below the State</b> |
| <b>English language arts</b>                                   | 23               | 24            | 53            | 33                | 37              | 52           | 19   |
| <b>Mathematics</b>   | 5                | 12            | 18            | 12                | 39              | 48           | 36   |
| <b>Science</b>   | 20               | 20            | 49            | 30                | 38              | 54           | 24   |
| <b>History - Social Science</b>                                | 1                | 19            | 5             | 8                 | 32              | 44           | 35   |

*Health*-Scientific literature from across the world demonstrates the persistent coexistence of poverty, low educational attainment, and poor health—our neighborhood is no exception. A look at the following diverse indicators of health shows the areas in which we are struggling.

- In 2009, 18% of births in our proposed PN were to teenage mothers; this is nearly double the state figure, 9%

- 20% of adolescents in the city of Fresno are obese; again, this is a higher than county (15%) and state (14%) rates
- In the SJV, fewer Latino girls (52%) engage regularly in vigorous physical activity than do White girls (63%).
- In 2005, SJV was home to a higher percentage of adult smokers (17%) compared to the rest of the state (14%)
- Fresno County has higher rates of Chlamydia and Gonorrhea infections than over half the counties in the State.
- Only two in five of Fresno County's sexually active adolescent males report having used a condom. Statewide, nearly four in five report having used this method of birth control.
- Fresno County, along with three other SJV counties, appear in the American Lung Association's 2007 top ten list of Most Ozone Polluted Counties in the Nation, reporting over 65 days of unhealthy air quality that year. A recent local study provides evidence for the linear increase in rates of asthma ER and hospital admissions with increasing levels of air pollution, with effects more pronounced for children (Capitman, 2011).

#### ASSETS AND GAPS IN SERVICES

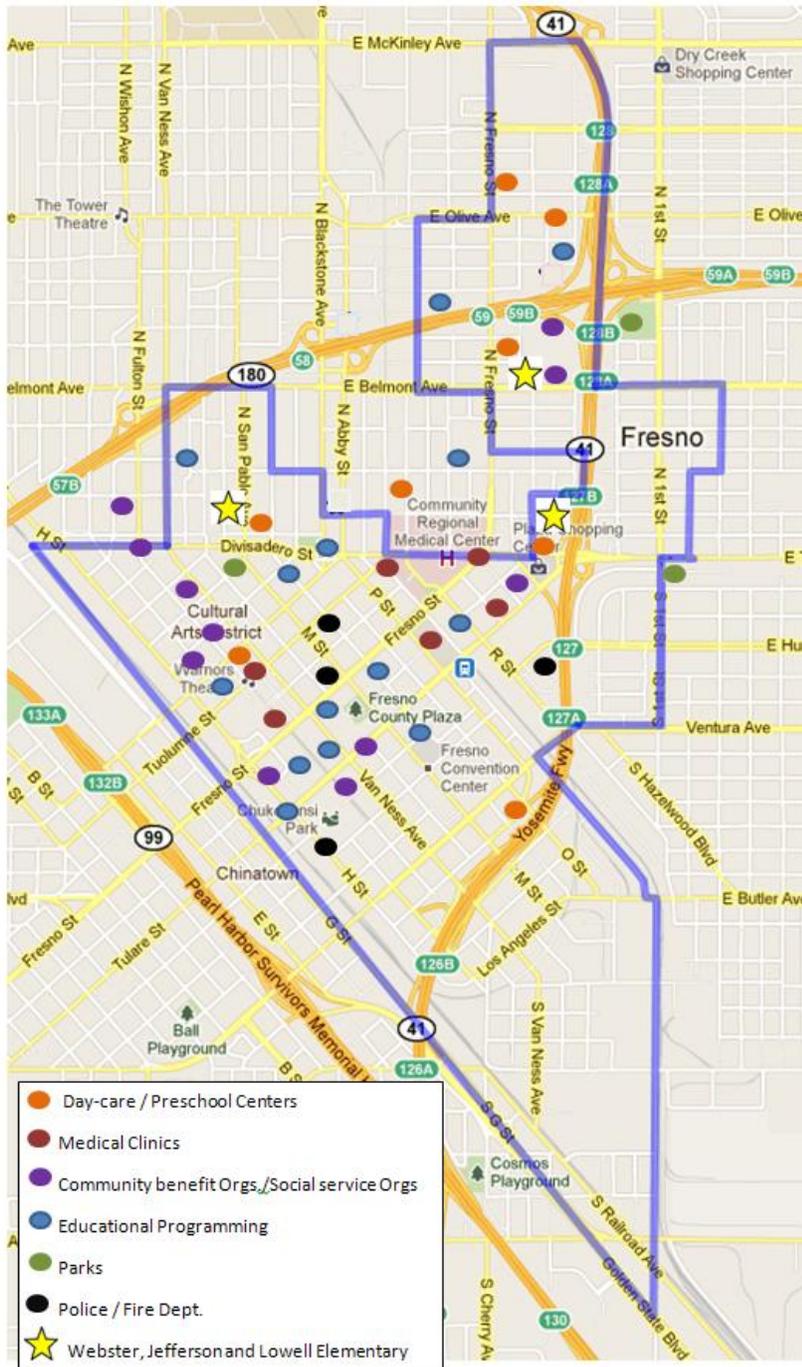
A preliminary needs assessment demonstrates the proposed Fresno Promise Neighborhoods area contains many assets, despite the overwhelming areas of deficit and ongoing challenges faced by the community. The asset map on page 15 shows the critical services available to residents, including; medical clinics, childcare, parks, schools, and educational and social services programming. The neighborhood is home to several nonprofit community benefit organizations, including formal Promise Neighborhood partners Catholic Charities and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central California. Several education programs are also scattered

throughout the area, ranging from pre-K to continuing education. What is unclear based on this assessment is how many of the service providers respond to immediate needs, such as food and shelter, versus long-term needs and strengths based programming, such as job development and training, parenting classes, and violence prevention. Issues such as service duplication, a lack of collaboration and the quality of services also appears to be somewhat disparate based on the preliminary data, though we know from the partnerships developed over the past year that overlap in certain service areas (despite gaps in others) and service accessibility remain key issues.

There are only three parks in and around the neighborhood, providing very few safe places for children to play and exercise outdoors. A walk through the neighborhood reveals that liquor stores and fast food outlets are vastly more abundant than grocery stores or healthy food alternatives. The lack of opportunity for preventive health measures, such as daily physical activity and access to fresh, affordable food, compound the problems contributing to broader areas of deficit, such as poor school attendance and preventable emergency room visits.

Clinics are scarce in the Fresno Promise Neighborhood area, and it is unclear if those that do exist are affordable to the vast majority of low-income residents. “Avoidable Hospitalizations” as categorized by the 2010 Community Regional Medical Center Community Needs Assessment, were 25% higher in the Central San Joaquin Valley than state rates during the same period. The rate of uninsured residents in Fresno County is also high, at 16.2% for youth ages 12-17, compared to just 9% for the same age group in the State overall (Community Regional Medical Center, 2010 Community Needs Assessment). Numerous reports on health disparities demonstrate that minority populations, the uninsured and those of low socioeconomic status are more likely to end up in the emergency room unnecessarily; the

majority of residents in the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods area fit into one or more of these categories.



For children to enter school healthy and ready to learn, they must have access to preschool and childcare services to nurture development, yet such programs are few and far between in this neighborhood. Despite increasing numbers of education-based programming, the community is in great need of quality pre-K services. This area is actually designated as a Priority Level 1, which means that there are more children than available early childhood development and learning services.

Gaps exist not only in the availability and quality of services, but when service providers fail to communicate, scrambling for resources instead of working collectively to ensure community needs are being

addressed. Fresno Promise Neighborhoods will work to facilitate effective collaboration among several of these agencies, many of which already have similarly aligned goals, helping to minimize duplication and use resources more efficiently, using existing community assets to reach our goals.

As the map also reveals, most services (including emergency services such as police and fire departments) are concentrated in NorthEast portion of the community. Fresno Promise Neighborhoods will help to revitalize the region not only by building the capacity and effectiveness of existing agencies, but either expanding current services and/or bringing more community partners directly to the area. A further needs assessment is needed to better determine the scope of existing services, identify additional family and community support indicators and barriers to effective service provision. Information on the comprehensive needs assessment and data analysis can be found in the “Major Activities” section of this proposal.

**Absolute Priority 1**  
**Priority Alignment Area 2: STRATEGY**

**Required Section 2: *Quality of the Project Design***

**10 Points:** Extent continuum of solutions is aligned with a comprehensive strategy for the improvement of schools in the neighborhood.

Fresno Promise Neighborhoods’ target school site is Fresno Unified School District school, Webster Elementary, which was cited this past school year as a “persistently-low-achieving school.” Thus, Fresno Unified School District has already begun to implement school reform procedures as dictated by the California Department of Education – and has applied for a School Improvement Grant (SIG) to assist in implementing a Turnaround model. The Fresno Promise Neighborhoods collaborative will support Fresno Unified School District in this endeavor by implementing community-based recommendations outlined by the Handbook on

Effective Implementation of School Improvement Grants (Center on Innovation and Improvement, 2010) including providing opportunities for increasing parental/caregiver involvement in the schools, extended learning opportunities (including, after-school tutorial programs), and supporting parents in helping their children improve academic achievement at home.

Fresno Promise Neighborhoods will help partner with schools by 1) increasing school and community safety, 2) increasing parent understanding of the importance of supporting reading and language development at home 3) provide parents with the tools/strategies to provide an academically enriching home environment, and 4) empowering parents and community members to hold schools publicly accountable for providing a rigorous academic program and the supports that students need to be successful.

**5 Points:** Extent applicant describes a proposed plan to create a continuum of solutions.

To build a place-based continuum of solutions capable of being sustained and scaled significantly throughout Fresno, a partnership was carefully constructed among longstanding allies already delivering effective programs and services in the target area: Reading and Beyond (applicant); City of Fresno Mayor's Office; Fresno Unified School District; California State University, Fresno; Fresno City College; Fresno County Office of Education; County of Fresno Department of Social Services; United Way of Fresno County; Catholic Charities; Children's Services Network, Central Valley Afterschool Foundation, and California Charter Schools Association. These partners have joined together to break the cycle of poverty through the tenets of the Promise Neighborhoods program: a full continuum of academic, family and community supports, a college-going culture, and seamless integration of services.

**Further, we take this step together as a long-term campaign to build the platforms of policies, practices, systems, and resources to address the needs of the target**

**neighborhood, then sustain and scale up the initiative to deliver a full continuum across Fresno.** There are literally dozens of programs currently serving the target neighborhood, albeit often fragmented and lacking the coordination that can be delivered by Promise Neighborhoods.

School sites located within the neighborhood include Lowell, Jefferson, and Webster Elementary School, and Tehipite Middle School. Children attending the target schools who do not live in the neighborhood will still have full access to Fresno Promise Neighborhood programs.

### **Planning Process**

As explained earlier in this narrative, past neighborhood revitalization planning efforts in Fresno have not been as effective or inclusionary as the model the partnership created as described in this narrative. For a successful transition from “plan” to “action or implementation” all of a community’s resources must become integrated and seamless, offering a wide array of services to those with the least access to such programs. A primary goal of this partnership is to bridge the gap among various public and private individuals and entities toward the ultimate outcome of successful delivery.

Thus, our goals over the 12-month planning phase include:

- GOAL 1)** Develop a structure and practice of mutual learning and inclusive decision-making that ensures the initial strategic plan, implementation efforts, and subsequent experience-based modifications of the plan are driven by Fresno Promise Neighborhood residents and maximize the use of CBO and institutional resources;
- GOAL 2)** Develop a 10-year strategic implementation plan that incorporates an evidence-based continuum of solutions designed to improve educational and community-

wrap-around systems and create sustainable physical, social, economic, service environments that support education in our community;

- GOAL 3)** Develop resources and strategies to identify the implications of our experiences for local, state and national improvements in public understanding and policy response, as well as scale-up and replicate to other areas

To meet these goals, the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods collaborative has developed a team (led by Reading and Beyond and consultants) to conduct required activities, in addition to several planning teams. Each team leader will report to residents and stakeholders and are comprised as follows:

- A. **Steering Committee** – composed of a combination of residents who live in the geographic area proposed to be served, residents who are low-income (50%) and other stakeholders, including providers (see page 56 for more detail on the Steering Committee and Governance Structure)
- A. **Fresno Public Sector Workgroup** composed of the following key leaders: Mayor Ashley Swearengin of the City of Fresno; Fresno County Office of Education Superintendent Larry Powell; Fresno Unified School District Superintendent Michael Hanson; CAO of the County of Fresno John Navarrette; Fresno County Sheriff Margaret Mims; and First 5 of Fresno County Executive Director Kendra Rogers. The Public Sector Workgroup has committed to work together to essentially provide the systems leadership for Fresno Promise Neighborhoods (see Letter of Commitment in Appendices). The Workgroup creates a formal structure for local leaders to share information about place-based neighborhood initiatives, identify opportunities for coordination, and advance system changes that can support cradle to college to career

- efforts in achieving better results for families in Fresno. The Group includes all the major represents over \$32 billion in local public investment. The Public Sector Group will be support system for the Steering Committee and will link the Promise Neighborhoods strategy to similar activities across the city.
- B. Programmatic Committees** – composed of residents, providers of programs serving children across the age continuum, and researchers. These committees will be focused on developing evidence-based solutions across the cradle through college/career continuum. During the past year and a half (or pre-planning phase), the collaborative established committees and have began exploring evidence-based solutions. During the planning phase year, the collaborative will continue this process.
- C. Data Team** – composed of residents, providers, researchers, and led by our database consultant AJWI and independent research/evaluation firm CREAD of CSU, Fresno. This committee will be focused on assisting with the development of the longitudinal data management system, acquiring/analyzing benchmark data, and developing a 10-year evaluation plan. Since last 2009, Reading and Beyond has been exploring the development of the database system with LEA partner, Fresno Unified. Fresno Unified is currently developing a shared database in partnership with the City of Fresno Police Department for the entire school district – and has been planning this endeavor for the past 5-7 years. Rather than duplicate, Fresno Promise Neighborhoods is creating the Promise Neighborhoods database system in partnership with Fresno Unified. AJWI is working with both Fresno Unified and Fresno Promise Neighborhoods – and will design a system that will create a seamless integration.

**D. Community Engagement Team** – composed of residents and providers and led by Resident Leaders; residents in the target zone that will conduct outreach and engage additional residents. Union de Familia, a resident-led neighborhood association of the target zone will assist the collaborative in the selection of Resident Leaders. This team will focus on communication – both to and from community residents – and will utilize a variety of communication methods to reach out to different target audiences within the community

**E. Fund Development Team** – composed of residents, providers, and local funders. This team will work closely with the Fresno Public Sector Workgroup in building relationships with philanthropic partners to sustain efforts through the implementation phase.

**Specifically, the aforementioned teams will engage in the following strategies to accomplish tasks and activities:**

- a) Use multiple resident engagement processes to ensure the responsiveness of emerging plans to community needs and preferences, including radio and television (our partner Valley-PBS will showcase quarterly, mini-informational segments with opportunities for community response); social media (including, a Promise Neighborhoods website and social media, such as Facebook); door-to-door outreach; posting fliers; and holding public forums, in partnership with community activities.
- b) Use a collaborative decision-making process, local content and process expertise, and nationally prominent multi-component strategic planning consultant expertise to develop the 10-year strategic plan.

- c) Support relationship building activities through collaborative forums that allow multiple public systems and philanthropy to align their funding, policies, and programs to achieve results for young children and their families.

**Major Activities, Products and Responsibilities:**

The work plan is organized in temporal order, describing each major activity.

Activity 1: Needs Assessment and Segmentation Analysis: The Center for Research, Assessment, Evaluation, and Dissemination (CREAD) of partner, California State University-Fresno, will conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of children along the cradle-through-college-to-career continuum and includes the data for academic, family and community support indicators described in the Promise Neighborhoods notice. Secondary data on all indicators have been collected over the past year, including academic and health data. These data will be provided to California State University-Fresno which will in turn analyze the report and determine if additional secondary data is required.

In addition to the analysis of secondary data, community residents will be surveyed to assess perception of need. Resident leaders have been identified and will be trained to conduct door-to-door and small group survey sessions among community residents, using the *Promotora Approach*. The Spanish word, *promotor*, signifies an individual who promotes information – most often related to health. Promotores, are trusted community leaders who provide interactive presentations and outreach activities to reduce cultural and linguistic barriers associated with services. Promotoras serve as liaisons between ethnic communities and health, human and social services organizations.

The Fresno Promise Neighborhoods' partner, *Union de Familia*, a grass-roots, resident-led neighborhood association within the target community, will assist Reading and Beyond in

the recruitment and training of resident leaders, or *Promotoras*. The Center for Research, Assessment, Evaluation, and Dissemination (CREAD) will work with partner, Union de Familia, to develop and deliver a training protocol for Resident Leaders to survey community members.

Once data is collected, California State University-Fresno will conduct a segmentation analysis to better target solutions for the children in the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods area; in other words, community needs will be tied directly with evidence-based solutions that bring about targeted indicators. These evidence-based solutions will be integrated within the 10-year implementation plan.

Activity 2: Form planning teams and develop consensus on detailed planning process: The planning teams will be charged with addressing the specific indicators outlined by the U.S. Department of Education, as well as the development of the comprehensive, longitudinal database management system and a fund development and sustainability plan. During the pre-planning phase, planning committees were formed and collaborative partners and residents conducted research on evidence-based solutions across the cradle-to-college/career continuum. During the planning phase, Reading and Beyond and partners will continue the process outlined during the pre-planning phase.

The community engagement plan details the identification and recruitment of residents for participation in the planning teams. Fresno Promise Neighborhoods' partner, Union de Familia (a grassroots neighborhood association in the target zone) will assist in recruiting residents to serve on planning teams. In addition, residents will be recruited via "snowball sampling." Snowball sampling involves existing resident-partners of Fresno Promise Neighborhoods recruiting additional residents to engage in the collaborative from among their

acquaintances. This method of recruitment has been shown to be effective, especially among traditionally disenfranchised, hidden, and/or low-income to poverty-level populations (Goodman, 1961; Heckathorn, 1997). There will be honorariums for community resident participants in the planning teams, while CBO/institutional representatives will serve as volunteers. As appropriate, there will be paid simultaneous translation so that Spanish, Hmong, and English speakers can communicate freely at all planning team meetings. There will be a support staff person that will provide technical assistance and support for planning teams.

Activity 3: Planning teams will meet and develop draft strategic plan proposals: During this period regular meetings will be held between representatives from each of the planning teams to ensure a parallel process in each planning group and identify/resolve any emergent planning challenges impacting multiple teams. This group will be called the Planning Consensus Group. Each planning team will meet at least 3 times (and probably more often based on their preferences).

Activity 4: Each planning team seeks input from other planning teams and additional residents Because of the potential overlaps and synergies among the strategic initiatives developed by each planning team, there is a need for each group to have the opportunity to understand other teams' proposals. Further, although community members have been the majority of participants in each of the planning teams, there is a need to engage community members in reviewing and commenting on the proposed activities. We recognize the need for forums and diverse opportunities for resident participation in reviewing these proposals. Several community organizations will organize and host community events to share and provide input on draft elements of the strategic plan. These would be organized in diverse locations, times, and formats

to maximize resident engagement and input. In addition, the resident leaders will engage residents via door-to-door interaction to gauge feedback on plan components.

Activity 5: Planning teams revise plans, collaborate with consultants to develop final integrated strategic plan, and seek input from residents: Each team will provide detailed summaries of all recommended improvements and additions to the planning team's strategic plan elements. Based on this input, each team will develop a final series of recommendations about how to achieve U.S. Department of Education-specified indicators and address priority challenges in central Fresno.

The Fresno Promise Neighborhoods' Project Director, Steering Committee, and Ruben Gonzalez of the Center for the Study of Social Policy (a nationally recognized consultant) will be charged with assembling the comprehensive 10-year strategic plan based on these recommendations, as well as accessing research studies and best practice models which showcase solutions supported by moderate and/or strong evidence (tested using experimental designs, with high level of validity and reliability). The consulting organization will assist in developing new concepts on how to most efficiently sequence and connect the strategic plan elements developed by the planning teams. The consulting organization will also be asked to identify additional opportunities for maximizing the synergistic impacts of the plan components, and identifying elements that could be financed by U.S. Department of Education and/or other organizations.

Activity 6: Community Endorsement of Final Strategic Plan: The Steering Committee (along with support from the Project Director and other support staff and Consultants) will complete a draft integrated final 10-year strategic plan based on information developed by each of the planning teams and the extended series of community resident consultations. The draft plan will

be widely disseminated. In response to recommendations from the multiple community forums, community representatives will make recommendations for changes in the 10-year comprehensive plan. The Project Director and Consultants will adjust the final document to reflect these changes at a major community meeting.

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| <p><b>5 Points:</b> Extent to which solutions leverage existing neighborhood assets including programs supported by Federal, State, local, and private funds.</p> |
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Most families residing in the geographic area of the Fresno Promise Neighborhood target zone are eligible for programs offered by the county, state and federal governments. Reading and Beyond's charge will be to avoid duplication of services but provide access to service not previously available. Several Fresno Promise Neighborhood partners have made an in-kind and/or cash match toward the Planning Grant in the amount of \$1,216,730 (see Appendix D – Documentation of Match).

During the planning phase of the proposed project, the Promise Neighborhood planning staff will comprise a comprehensive databank of all existing community, state and federal resources. This database will be continually updated as various program resources become exhausted and are no longer available. Likewise, there will be continual updates of any new resources which emerge. This will enable Promise Neighborhood staff to have full understanding of what resources will fit the needs of various students and families. It will also allow community partners to work together and coordinate efforts.

Preliminary assessment of programs and resources within the target zone indicate that there are substantial investments across the cradle-to-college/career continuum – however, they are not aligned. Some examples follow: Fresno Promise Neighborhood directly aligns with the City of Fresno's plan to revitalize this area of Fresno. The **City of Fresno** formed the Downtown & Community Revitalization Department (DCR Department) with the mission of revitalizing

downtown Fresno and the neighborhoods of poverty surrounding the downtown corridor. The Promise Neighborhoods community (referred to as the “Lowell Community” by the City of Fresno) was chosen for the following reasons:

1. Strategic location- Lowell is the gateway into Downtown as it is located directly north of downtown Fresno in between the revitalized Tower District and Downtown Fresno
2. Relative size-With around 700 properties Lowell is manageable size and allows us to learn how to revitalize neighborhoods in Fresno
3. Neighborhood’s historic status- The Lowell community is one of the oldest, most historic neighborhoods in the City of Fresno. There are 21 homes in this community that are on the Local Historic Registry of Homes.

Since 2006, the City of Fresno has invested millions in the target zone through State and Federal grants. The City of Fresno spearheaded the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods initiative and invited Reading and Beyond to serve as lead agency for the effort.

Partner and local funder, **First 5 of Fresno County** (California’s Proposition 10 Children and Families Commission) is currently making investments in the amount of \$50,000 in the target zone for programs geared for children zero to five years. First 5 Fresno County is a public organization that was created in 1998 when California voters passed Proposition 10, known as “The Children and Families Act.” Their goal is to “ensure that all children 0-5 are born healthy and raised in nurturing homes and communities where can grow up healthy and reach their full potential.”

The federal-based **21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers** funds are invested in the target zone totaling \$570,300; all of the schools in the area have an after-school program with academic and enrichment activities for school-age students (kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade).

The Fresno Promise Neighborhoods target zone is located within The California Endowment's *Building Healthy Communities Initiative*, which was launched in a total of 14 communities throughout the State. This initiative is premised on changing the health of individuals while changing the communities they live in. Since their launch they have provided funding in the amount of \$2 million in the target zone and anticipate another \$3 million during the planning phase year.

The largest nonprofit in Fresno and the second largest community action agency in the country, Fresno Promise Neighborhoods' partner **Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission (EOC)** has several programs and investments within the target zone including, Early HeadStart; HeadStart; a public charter school for high-risk 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students called *School of Unlimited Learning*; Home Energy Assistance and Energy Crisis Intervention Programs; Foster Grandparents Program; Farmers Markets; Health Services Clinic; Women Infants and Children (WIC); a Youth Shelter; and Local Conservation Corps (LCC) to name a few. Over the next fiscal year, EOC's level of investment in the target zone is estimated at a conservative \$100,000.

**Boys and Girls Clubs of Fresno County** operates one of their clubs within the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods zone. The Club provides a variety of activities for children ranging from education to recreation. In addition, the Club has a computer lab with computer access for students. Boys and Girls Clubs will invest nearly \$90,000 during the planning phase year for Fresno Promise Neighborhoods solutions.

Lead agency **Reading and Beyond** also has programs and investments within the target zone along the cradle-to-career continuum, including after-school programming; one-on-one reading intervention and academic mentoring for school-age children (Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade);

Parent involvement and education with a focus on navigating the school system and early literacy support for children aged 0-5 years; Workforce development and case management for youth through adults. Just over the past two years, Reading and Beyond has invested over \$30,220 in the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods zone – and plans to invest over \$190,000 during the planning phase year to support the planning grant.

### **Development of a Community of Practice**

Reading and Beyond and its partners will establish a peer relationship, or “community of practice” with other Promise Neighborhoods grantees across the country, and will develop (or integrate into) a dedicated website to share best practices, consultations, and conferencing to implement solutions. Reading and Beyond and partners will use available resources to establish and maintain connections, and will particularly target resources provided by the Department of Education, the Promise Neighborhoods Institute, and Building Neighborhoods ([unca-acf.org](http://unca-acf.org)) which offer academic and peer information for planning and implementation.

Reading and Beyond has been invited to participate in a network of Promise Neighborhoods’ communities across the state of California. At present, the Assembly Bill 1072 *California Promise Neighborhood Initiative* is being evaluated at the state level. If passed, AB 1072 will direct the Governor’s Office of Economic Development to oversee the California Promise Neighborhood Initiative and would work interdepartmentally with state agencies/departments to better align programs and services, in addition to giving priority to Promise Neighborhoods in various state or federal competitive funds.

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| <p><b>Absolute Priority 1</b><br/> <b>Priority Alignment Area 2: STRATEGY</b></p> |
| <p><b>Required Section 3: <i>Quality of Project Services</i></b></p>              |

**10 Points:** Extent applicant describes how the needs assessment and segmentation analysis, including identifying and describing indicators, will be used during the planning phase to determine each solution within the continuum.

A core goal of Fresno Promise Neighborhoods is to target services to the needs of each and every child – and this extends to identifying and serving those with the highest needs. During the planning year, we will complete and refine needs assessments, including segmentation analysis to disaggregate the data on our students and families by race, ethnicity, gender, special needs, and English Language Learner status. We will also segment the population by a number of factors relating to family, neighborhood and community status to help us plan programs for those at risk in different ways.

The following tables reflect the academic, family and community support indicators to be used for the needs assessment during the planning year:

**Table 1. Education Indicators and Results**

| INDICATOR  | RESULT   |
|--|--|
| <p>- # and % of children birth to five years old who have a place where they usually go, other than an emergency room, when they are sick or in need of advice about their health, as measured by the Fresno County Childcare Local Planning Council Needs Assessment.</p> <p>- # and % of three-year-olds and children in kindergarten who demonstrate at the beginning of the program or school year age-appropriate functioning across multiple domains of early learning as determined using</p> | <p>Children enter kindergarten ready to learn.</p> |

| INDICATOR   | RESULT  |
|---|---|
| <p>developmentally-appropriate early learning measures as measured by the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP).</p> <p>- # &amp; % of children, from birth to kindergarten entry, participating in center-based or formal home-based early learning settings or programs, which may include Early Head Start, Head Start, child care, or publicly-funded preschool, as measured by enrollment data collected by Fresno County Office of Education Early Childhood Education Department.</p> |   |
| <p>- # &amp; % of students at or above grade level according to State mathematics and English language arts assessments in at least the grades required by the ESEA (3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> and once in high school).</p>  | <p>Students are proficient in core academic subjects.</p>                                 |
| <p>- Attendance rate of students in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> grade as measured by school attendance records of school sites located within geographic zone.</p>   | <p>Students successfully transition from middle grades to high school.</p>                |
| <p>- Graduation rate as measured by the number of students that graduate from high school in proportion to those that do not graduate.</p>  | <p>Youth graduate from high school.</p>   |
| <p>- # &amp; % of Promise Neighborhood students who graduate with a regular high school diploma, as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b)(1)(iv), <i>and</i> obtain postsecondary degrees, vocational certificates, or other industry-recognized certifications or credentials without the need for remediation.</p>  | <p>High school graduates obtain a postsecondary degree, certification, or credential.</p> |

**Table 2. Family and Community Support Indicators and Results**

| INDICATOR  | RESULT   |
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| - # & % of children who participate in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity daily and consume five or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily, measured by California Healthy Kids Survey.   | Students are healthy.  |
| - # & % of students who feel safe at school and traveling to and from school, as measured by the California Healthy Kids Survey.   | Students feel safe at school and in their community.                             |
| - Student mobility rate, as collected by Fresno Unified School District.   | Students live in stable communities.   |
| - # & % of students who say they have a caring adult in their home, school, and community as measured by the California Healthy Kids Survey.<br><br>- # & % of families who read to their children, encourage their children to read, and talk to their children about college.  | Families and community members support learning in Promise Neighborhood schools. |
| - # & % of students who have school and home access (and % of the day they have access) to broadband internet and a connected computing device as measured by a self-report survey designed by California State University-Fresno professors specializing in program evaluation. | Students have access to 21 <sup>st</sup> century learning tools.                 |

Assisted by project partner, California State University-Fresno, Fresno Promise Neighborhoods plans to conduct a quantitative and qualitative needs assessment, followed by a segmentation analysis, beginning in January 2012, and completed by August 2012. Relationships with organizations and individuals who will potentially become part of the data team have already been developed, including local health agencies, school district, community organizations, and residents. Existing data sources have already been identified related to a majority of the project indicators and indicators of need. At the start of the project the Center for Research, Evaluation, Assessment, and Dissemination (CREAD), the research center housed within the Kremen School of Education and Human Development at California State University, Fresno, will work with the project partners to solidify agreements with partner agencies for data acquisition and identify liaisons. Initial planning of data elements to be acquired will also be informed by members of the neighborhood through community forums.

Existing data, including needs assessments already conducted within the project area, will be inventoried and matched to the desired data elements. Missing elements and elements with substandard data will be identified for inclusion in the survey instrument to be developed in conjunction with the Resident Leaders. This collaborative approach has been shown to enhance validity, credibility, and utilization as well as ensuring cultural responsiveness. CREAD will provide oversight focusing on maintaining the reliability and validity of the instrument.

CREAD will also support the development of a training program for the Promotoras, in collaboration with the resident leaders, who will ultimately serve as the Promotora trainers. Training methods may include presentations, role-playing, and “fishbowl” observational methods, depending on feedback from the participants. Interviewing procedures will be developed, including training and motivating respondents and standardized working. A stratified

sampling technique, using key demographic factors, will be used to ensure the sample is representative of the population. Statistical analyses, such as Chi Square, will determine if the sample is similar to the identified population. Coding and analysis of the data obtained by the community surveys will ultimately depend on the nature of the data that are gathered. All data will be subject to quality control measures, or *cleaning*, to ensure quality.

Initial data analysis will include descriptive statistics of all key indicators and demographic factors. During the segmentation analysis, data according to indicators of need from children and families in Lowell, Jefferson, and Webster Elementary School areas (the geographic area proposed to be served) will be grouped and analyzed. Additionally, a more holistic approach will analyze related indicators using multistage clustering. Two central issues in clustering are addressed by this approach: determining the appropriate number of clusters and assigning individual observations to the resultant clusters, with a goal to form internally homogeneous clusters that are externally heterogeneous. Feedback from stakeholders, particularly residents, will ensure the inclusion of culturally and socially specific elements, given the objective of identifying unique community segments. The findings will be presented in multiple formats, including a written report, graphic representations, and presentations dependent on the participating stakeholder's preference.

The analysis and inclusion of all groups will allow Fresno Promise Neighborhood project partners to differentiate and more effectively target interventions based on what we learn about the needs of different populations in the geographic area. Moreover, the development of a comprehensive, longitudinal database management system with data-sharing capability will allow our collaborative to identify instances of service duplication or gaps in service. Being

aware of this information will allow us to better target our resources and services for those that are most in need through a systematic and strategic process.

**10 Points:** Extent applicant describes how it will determine solutions based on best available evidence including, where available, strong or moderate evidence, and ensure that solutions drive results and lead to changes on indicators.

The Fresno Promise Neighborhoods is based on the premise that poor school performance is correlated with economic and social disenfranchisement as they affect distressed communities. Social skills, or the absence of those skills, factor into every part of living, such as perception of an event, coping skills, social support, and vulnerability to stress, which make individuals more likely to experience multiple adversities that directly affect behavior resilience (Sherrod et al., 1996).

Toddlers and young children are particularly vulnerable to poverty-induced parental stresses because brain development can be adversely affected. Children with strained bonds of attachment not only experience greater rates of failure in cognitive tasks but also struggle to acquire social emotions such as empathy, compassion, cooperation and patience. These deficits put many children at risk for continuous academic failure and delinquency throughout grade school and high school. While conventional wisdom for many decades identified the achievement gap as a school problem, the persistent disparity between poor and middle class African-American and Hispanic students and White and Asian students suggest other factors are at work (Robert Evans —Reframing the Achievement Gap, *Phi Delta Kappan*, May 22, 2005). For example, Black and Hispanic children tend to start school at least a full year behind others in reading, and frequently changing schools. They also experience a higher rate of single heads of households or abandonment, have significantly lower birth weights and experience more

negative attitudes about positive school experiences from peers. As well, low-income students experience a summer regression in academic progress.

Fresno Promise Neighborhoods will succeed by reframing the relationship among students, schools, parents and the community based on highly successful models. This partnership subscribes to John Dewey's conception (in *Democracy and Education*) that schools are the nucleus of the community that educates and provides life experiences for all its citizens. Dewey maintains that children are more likely to reach their potential if they receive enriched experiences that build on their capacity to take the initiative and develop a well-defined sense of individual efficacy. In so doing, **children view themselves as agents of their own actions that have consequences for other people.** Eventually, children are able to attain a level of reflective self-consciousness in which attention, memory and self-regulation play important roles in guiding their behavior.

Further, the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods model is based upon Harvard Family Research Project's *complementary learning* approach. The complementary learning approach centers on the philosophy that schools cannot achieve in-depth changes without ongoing assistance by a committed partnership long after preliminary grant funds are gone. Children must have multiple opportunities to learn and grow—at home, in school, and in the community. Complementary learning is a comprehensive strategy for addressing all of these needs and ensuring success for all children and youth. Complementary learning is the idea that a systemic approach—which intentionally integrates both school and nonschool supports—is able to ensure all children integrate the skills and behaviors they need to succeed. Fresno Promise Neighborhoods' complementary learning approach coalesces a community-based partnership to maintain benefits intrinsic to healthy children, families, and neighborhoods, including: Effective

schools; Supportive families and opportunities for family engagement; Early childhood programs; Out-of-school time activities (including sports, arts, mentoring programs, etc.); Health and social services; Community-based institutions (including community centers, faith-based institutions, cultural institutions such as museums and libraries, and partnerships with the business community); and Colleges and universities.

Thus, the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods' **theory of action** is, by implementing a complementary learning approach and aligning opportunities from cradle-through-college-to-career, children will no longer get lost in the system or drop out of school. Parents are also an integral part of the approach, in part to build a strong early-childhood foundation, but also build expectations that every child in this community will go to college or receive skills training.

The **theory of change** underlying the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods' model requires the coordinated application of the following core tenets:

1. Target a specific neighborhood based upon needs and assets – and work comprehensively and at scale. Engaging an entire neighborhood achieves three goals: it reaches children in numbers significant enough to affect the culture of a community; it transforms the physical and social environments that impact the children's development; and it creates programs at a scale large enough to impact the local need.
2. Implement a complementary learning approach through the alignment of cradle-through-college-to-career learning opportunities – linking school, community, and family systems; support the development of effective schools and create linkages with community-wrap-around programs and services; and provide programs and services to support families and the larger community.

3. The meaningful, effective collaboration among children and families (residents of target geographic area), institutions, and stakeholders, breaks down the silos among systems that can work effectively as a whole, thereby creating an environment necessary for children's healthy development
4. Create data and information rich systems capable of maintaining a comprehensive, longitudinal database management system and stringent evaluation of program outcomes that will be used in improving and refining program services. Key to success, such information will ensure children with the highest needs receive appropriate services to meet academic and developmental outcomes.
5. Foster a college-going culture, embedded in leadership, accountability, and collaboration among parents and throughout the neighborhoods this proposal will serve.

### **Process of Building Continuum**

The Fresno Promise Neighborhoods collaborative will work closely with the Steering Committee to identify a continuum of solutions to improve on these outcomes. The Steering Committee will provide technical assistance to the Management Team (both discussed in Section 2), especially with respect to 1) development and implementation of a needs assessment that will further identify areas in need of targeted solutions, 2) development of a continuum of *evidence based* solutions and 3) enhancement of the City of Fresno's 10-year Comprehensive Neighborhood Revitalization Plan that focuses on the Lowell/Jefferson neighborhood; the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods piece will include the evaluation, improvement, and alignment of education and family/community support programs and services.

In enhancing the comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plan, the Steering Committee will identify planning committees comprised of parents, residents, service providers

and content experts in the relevant subject areas. (Please refer to page 56 for governance and committee structure). It will make specific linkages with the English Language Steering Committees and parent groups at Lowell, Jefferson, and Webster schools to ensure that Fresno Promise Neighborhoods' work is aligned with other efforts in the community. Further, planning committee meetings will have Spanish language translators on hand and all recruiting materials and plans will be translated into Spanish. Emphasis on Spanish translations will help to capture residents' interest from that community. Meeting locations will be ADA compliant, with sign language interpreters provided if needed.

Partners will prepare development plans to (at a minimum) 1) focus on education and youth development, economic revitalization, and safety, 2) address special needs populations (e.g., people with disabilities, English learners, youth reentering the community from juvenile detention), and 3) be incorporated into the comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plan. Each planning committee will be charged with mapping out strategies and selecting best practice models for program implementation in the subsequent years. The work of each planning committee will be supported by the Center for Research, Assessment, Evaluation, and Dissemination (CREAD) which will ensure the Steering Committees have access to currently available local data, that they integrate best practice models, and that they address special needs populations.

The planning committees will span early childhood through post-secondary education and will cover academic and family/community support areas. The planning committees have committed representatives from resident groups, California State University, Fresno (CSUF), Fresno City College (FCC), Fresno Pacific University (FPU), Fresno Unified School District, Fresno County Office of Education, First 5 Fresno County, Fresno County Workforce

Investment Board, Fresno County Early Care and Development Local Planning Council, Fresno Regional Foundation, The California Endowment, and other representative stakeholders, as discussed above.

Partners will prepare an educational and child/youth development plan to 1) design strategies improving educational and social outcomes of children and youth in the Fresno Promise Neighborhood, through early childhood education, K-12 education, college going and career success, and 2) identify ways in which partners and programs can help to support program implementation.

The planning committees will report to the Steering Committee. Following completion of their planning process, they will provide the Steering Committee with a plan on their findings and on best practice models recommended for implementation. The Steering Committee will review these recommendations during the course of a facilitated retreat, a planning session that will give the group sufficient time to consider 1) the work that has been done by the task forces, 2) the practicality and sustainability of their recommendations and 3) whether the recommendations are based on evidence. This process will also take into consideration how the proposed strategy aligns with other county and city plans – with an emphasis on leveraging existing resources and political/social capital to increase chances for success and sustainability. The primary target school, Webster Elementary School, is already implementing the Transformational Change model in an effort to reverse its persistent low-performing status. A new principal has been recruited to replace the existing principal.

In addition, to improve instruction and instructional leadership, partners expect to develop a plan for transitioning Fresno children from preschool to kindergarten, from 3rd to 4th grade, from 8th to 9th grade and from 12th grade to postsecondary education. Developing these

critical transitions and providing full-time support for neighborhood children across all five grade spans is at the core of the planning year focus on education. The needs of special education students and English learners will be specifically targeted in this planning process to ensure that these vulnerable populations are effectively served. A longitudinal data system is currently being developed by Fresno Unified School District for the K-12 student population. Fresno Unified and Fresno Promise Neighborhoods will explore how to combine with data from external sources to produce a system of information that will be used to highlight problem areas and identify targeted solutions for optimal success.

In addition to academic interventions and outcomes, the partnership will cautiously implement evidence-based intervention programs for such things as: family engagement; youth development programming; programs to prevent substance use; health care services, and case management to connect high need children and their families to a wide array of services. As a part of the planning process, the Steering Committee and its planning committees will be charged with the responsibility of deciding which interventions and prevention strategies will be implemented in the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods zone, with the Center for Research, Assessment, Evaluation, and Dissemination (CREAD) conducting background research on evidence-based approaches that are suitable for this neighborhood.

Effective practices and programs that are already being implemented in the neighborhood and/or the city or county will be bolstered by the Fresno Promise Neighborhood's scope of work. Whenever feasible, these services will be provided in the school(s) or the neighborhood by culturally and linguistically competent providers. The plan for building the continuum is described further in Section 2: Quality of the Project Design.

**Solutions Based on Best Available Evidence**

During the planning period, the partnership will use available data and relevant data searches to help establish solutions for more robust, individual client centered systems including Promise Neighborhood-mandated indicators, archival longitudinal data and conducting surveys and focus groups until a client-specific data system is clearly important to implement. Following that implementation, partners will analyze data regarding the efficacy of the specific interventions. These data will be analyzed locally and provided to the Management Team and Steering Committee to enlighten policy formation. Use of client-specific data to measure service effectiveness, individually and in combination, will be extremely valuable. Such data will allow residents and the partnership to determine if PN services have a bearing on student or family outcomes while implementation is being introduced.

These data will drive decision making at multiple levels: 1) at the service level whereby the staff person can determine whether a specific intervention is working; 2) at the collaborative service level, where the Management Team can determine whether the mix of services are effective; and 3) at the collaborative level, where the Steering Committee can determine whether the project and/or specific programmatic elements are having the desired impact.

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| <p><b>Absolute Priority 1</b><br/> <b>Priority Alignment Area 3: CAPACITY</b></p> |
| <p><b>Required Section 4: Quality of the Management Plan</b></p>                  |

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| <p><b>10 Points:</b> <b>a)</b> Working with the neighborhood and its residents; <b>b)</b> the schools described in Absolute Priority 1; <b>c)</b> the LEA which those schools are located, Federal, State, and local government leaders; and <b>d)</b> other service providers.</p> |
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**Lead Agency, Reading and Beyond**

Since 1999, Reading and Beyond (RAB) has been empowering children and families to reach productive, self-reliant lives. RAB strives to provide holistic, comprehensive programs for the

entire family based on factors that impact student and family success. Major program areas include: literacy intervention, early childhood education, health education, college preparation, parent involvement, and workforce development. Staff see the nonprofit as bridging the providing holistic and long-term efforts to solve community problems. As a community-based organization, the agency has developed strategies and best-practices that successfully reach even the most difficult-to-reach families in rural and urban areas – including those families that are low-literate and poverty-level.

The philosophy of the organization is based on the research that says reaching out to the “whole” child and family will help children develop skills and abilities necessary for a successful life. RAB’s direct work with our children is critical – but working with the child’s entire family is equally important. This will ensure sustainable change and results, even after the child graduates from our programs. Further, working with our children and their families on a long-term basis will further prevent the likelihood of engagement in unhealthy and risky behaviors, as well as academic failure. Moreover, providing workforce development will ensure economic self-sufficiency and prevent reliance on public forms of welfare.

Recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, for quality literacy programming for children and youth, Reading and Beyond has assisted thousands of children (preK through high school) in gaining and improving literacy skills. Moreover, our training support to over 14,000 parents has been found to positively impact student achievement, or standardized test scores (as evaluated by an independent study conducted by the Center for Research, Assessment, Evaluation, and Dissemination [CREAD] of California State University, Fresno). Government agencies (including, the White House Office of Faith- and Community Based Initiatives and the U.S. Department of Education), other nonprofit organizations, school districts, and schools have

sought assistance from Reading and Beyond to help design literacy and other educational programs for the children and families that they serve.

Reading and Beyond has experience conducting and leading needs assessments and program evaluations (formative and summative – as well as quantitative and qualitative). Further, Reading and Beyond gauges research studies to select and/or design cradle-through college-to career solutions that bring about significant results among children and families.

As a local community leader, Reading and Beyond is well recognized and respected among larger systems' entities such as Fresno Unified School District and California State University-Fresno; the nonprofit sector, including faith-based organizations; community residents; and the for-profit sector, including local (and statewide) businesses and corporations. Reading and Beyond has led neighborhood, city, and regional resident-based advocacy campaigns in partnership with other entities. A most recent example is Reading and Beyond's *Fresno English Language Learner Advocacy Campaign*. Reading and Beyond collected and analyzed local data (e.g., state and school district data on reclassification rates and achievement data) and conducted interviews and focus groups with current and former English Language Learners (ELLs) and parents. Using this data as a benchmark, Reading and Beyond began providing empowerment and leadership training sessions with parents and residents; held a large-scale parent conference (with more than 200 parents in attendance); developed an advocacy plan alongside parents to improve our local reclassification system for English Language Learners; and at present is supporting parent leaders as they implement the advocacy plan. Reading and Beyond has successfully bridged the gap between research and practice – and will continue to apply these skills in leading the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods initiative.

Reading and Beyond has provided after school programming and literacy intervention for

students of target schools for the past two years. The Reading and Beyond Literacy Intervention is an established, comprehensive literature-based program comprised of expository and narrative trade books organized into weekly themes that match state grade level standards. The main goal of the Reading and Beyond program is to provide older elementary students with additional literacy support to increase their ability to comprehend texts. This is essential as students move into the later elementary grades and on into secondary school.

The Reading and Beyond program is based in the theory of differentiated instruction (Hall, Strangman, & Meyer, 2003; Tomlinson, 2001). The basic premise of differentiation is that instructional materials and processes are adapted to meet the varying needs of students. The program uses several key design features to provide differentiated instruction. First, student progress is continually monitored to determine students' reading levels and instructional needs. Every ten weeks the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA; Pearson, 2003) is administered to assess students' comprehension and word identification levels. Second, the assessment data are used to select trade books to match students' reading levels. Third, four to six students with similar reading levels and instructional needs are placed into small groups for instruction. This process of differentiated instruction ensures that students are reading texts at their independent and instructional levels, which supports the development of their fluency and comprehension (Allington & Woodside-Jiron, 2002; Kuhn & Stahl, 2003). Matching students with appropriate leveled texts is particularly beneficial to ELLs because they are provided comprehensible input that promotes language acquisition and facilitates comprehension (Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Krashen, 1993).

In Reading and Beyond, differentiated instruction is delivered in small-group settings. The use of small-group interventions has consistently shown positive effects on students' literacy

achievement (Foorman & Torgesen, 2001). Small-group interventions provide more intensive instruction that supports students' development, especially ELLs (Gunn, Biglan, Smokowski, & Ary, 2000; Linan-Thompson, Vaughn, Prater, & Cirino, 2006). Small-group settings provide opportunities for reteaching strategies in an environment that reduces anxiety levels and facilitates higher comprehension development (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994).

The literature on after-school literacy programs demonstrates that individual tutoring has positive and significant impacts on students' literacy achievement (Foley & Eddins, 2001; Jefferson County Public Schools, 2002; Morris, Shaw, & Perney, 1990). However, Reading and Beyond uses small groups of four to six students. The rationale for this structure is that literacy research has not demonstrated significant differences between individual and small-group settings (Elbaum, Vaughn, Hughes, & Moody, 2000; National Reading Panel [NRP], 2000), and after-school literacy research has shown that even ratios of ten to one can have significantly positive impacts on students' literacy achievement (Klein & Bolus, 2002). Pilot data on Reading and Beyond report benefits attributed to groups comprised of four to six, which makes the program more practical than individual tutoring in meeting the needs of more students.

Reading and Beyond has provided classes and workshop sessions for parents and families at the Neighborhood Resource Center within the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods geographic area. Through implementation of Parent Education and Family Literacy programming, Reading and Beyond developed a trusting relationship with children and families that live in the priority neighborhood.

Reading and Beyond's Parent Education modules (described below) strengthen parental self-esteem and social success to foster strong and positive relationships between parent and child. Healthy relationships between parents and children are essential to positive academic, social and

emotional development for children. Through Parenting Education curriculum, the importance of parent-child attachment, parenting styles, positive discipline, and methods of encouraging positive behavior are discussed, in addition to providing parents with strategies on how to help their children perform successfully in school.

The four module courses of Parent Education are: *PASSport to Success*, *Leadership Development*, *Parenting Skills*, and *Family Literacy*. Parent training is based on *National Center on Family Literacy*, the US Department of Education's *Helping Your Child* content, and *Active Parenting Now*. Parent workbooks contain strategies and activities on building relationships with children through reading and mathematics to foster academic skills at home. This and other information was presented through interesting and interactive mediums to help parents process information through hands-on activities, and retain information through practice "homework" to be completed at home by both the parent and child.

Reading and Beyond program staff also provide class sessions on the following topics: Gang prevention, Navigating the School System, Understanding the English Learner Reclassification System, *Abriendo Puertos* (an early literacy program delivered over six weeks that helps parents build skills to help their children improve reading), and Helping Your Child Prepare for Kindergarten.

### **Management Plan**

Reading and Beyond places the utmost importance on delivery of the highest quality of services. Several factors combine to ensure quality service delivery. First, all Reading and Beyond staff must be culturally and linguistically similar to the client population. Staff diversity allows for equal inclusion of all persons seeking services. Second, the entire community is involved in project management through the representatives on staff as well as through the Board

of Directors and Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is made up of local residents sympathetic to the client population. Through their surveys and advice, and the guidance of the Board of Directors, Reading and Beyond ensures efficiency and balance between each level of operation. Third, outside independent evaluation conducts thorough and regular program assessments. Finally, the program management staff, headed by the Reading and Beyond executive director, maintains efficiency of day-to-day operations and program implementation, including planning and facilitating the professional development plan to ensure all Reading and Beyond staff is trained in the latest research-based strategies and best practices.

Reading and Beyond is overseen by a Board of Directors which provides administrative direction and support to Luis Santana, Executive Director. Luis Santana, the Reading and Beyond Board of Directors and Fresno Promise Neighborhoods Steering Committee will provide checks and balances to ensure quality service.

Mr. Santana was one of the original founders of Reading and Beyond and has extensive experience in administration, community organizing, counseling, outreach, recruitment, and professional development. Mr. Santana has over 25 years of business and management experience and over 15 years experience successfully managing grant-funded programs. His background includes work as a missionary in South America coordinating street outreach, working with families to strengthen bonds between members, and encouraging parents to become more involved in their children's lives. As Executive Director, Mr. Santana has developed programs that serve many of Fresno's poorest neighborhoods by creating partnerships with school districts and school sites, primarily within the Fresno Unified School District (FUSD), providing social and academic programming to help schools boost student academic achievement.

The Project Director, Dr. Matilda Soria will report to Mr. Santana and the Early Learning Network Director, Project Assistant, and Consultants will report to Dr. Soria. Through her 11 years at Reading and Beyond, she has directed several government and foundation funded projects. Dr. Soria has earned a Bachelors of Arts degree in Psychology and Minor degree in Ethnic Studies from California State University, Fresno; a Masters degree in Human Development and Psychology, with a specialization in Risk and Prevention from Harvard University; and a Doctoral Degree in Educational Leadership from California State University, Fresno. Matilda has extensive experience conducting scientific and behavioral research among ethnic and at-risk populations, as well as in the development and management of educational programs for children and families.

#### FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Reading and Beyond has established sound fiscal standards to assure financial stability. These standards include: 1) Consistent, internal control by using effective standard budgetary and accounting procedures; 2) Complete interim budget projections; 3) Careful review of all contracts with vendors and providers prior to entering into agreements; and 4) Adhere to all pertinent rules, regulations, and procedures. Reading and Beyond prides itself on its low overhead for generating additional funding for community support. As a nonprofit organization, funds used for fundraising purposes remains quite low in comparison to the organization's total operating budget. A yearly budget is prepared and adopted by the Reading and Beyond board each December for the following year. Reading and Beyond utilizes bidding processes when needed, tracks its expenditures using computerized programs, reallocates funds, and makes adjustments where necessary. Reading and Beyond follows systematic accounting practices with all revenues and expenditures properly accounted for. Final accounting reports are audited by an

independent CPA.

Reading and Beyond is financially sound and viable. Due to a strong fiscal accountability system and successful community-based programs, Reading and Beyond secures funding from multiple public and private sources, including the U.S. Department of Education, California Department of Education, James Irvine Foundation, Walter S. Johnson Foundation, The California Endowment, Fresno County Office of Education, County of Fresno Department of Social Services, City of Fresno Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), and First 5 of Fresno County. The Fresno Promise Neighborhoods' collaborative has developed a Fund Development Committee/Work Team that will develop and implement a fund development plan to ensure an appropriate match is acquired at the start of the implementation phase.

|   |
|---|
| <p><b>15 Points:</b> Collecting, analyzing, and using data for decision-making, learning, continuous improvement, and accountability.</p> |
|---|

Reading and Beyond's strategy will employ AJW, Inc. to develop and implement a longitudinal data system to measure academic, family, and community support and to disaggregate data by subgroup. AJW, Inc. uses an open architecture that allows, supports, and encourages the sharing of data from partners and schools. AJW, Inc. was selected based upon their quality of service and expertise in research and data management, in addition to our local school district partner, Fresno Unified, utilizing their service. LEA partner, Fresno Unified School District is currently contracting with AJW, Inc to develop a shared, longitudinal database management system in partnership with the Fresno Police Department. The consultant is designing both systems with the capacity to seamlessly integrate when Fresno Unified is prepared to bring aboard additional partners. Moreover, AJW, Inc has an understanding of Fresno Promise Neighborhoods and has designed systems for Promise Neighborhoods collaboratives that have been utilized by providers, school districts, and residents. In addition,

Reading and Beyond (through funding from the Comcast Foundation) will provide training sessions for residents on computer basics, navigating the Internet, and accessing the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods data. AJW, Inc will provide access to link to State database systems, in addition to abiding by all privacy laws and requirements (State, Local, and Federal).

Our collaborative felt that we should select the same data management firm so that our systems align. AJW, Inc. will design our database system so that there is a seamless integration with that of Fresno Unified and the Police Department. Eventually, other institutional partners will be added, including the County of Fresno Department of Social Services. Because of the confidentiality and legal issues related to sharing these type of data, the process of adding additional partners can be lengthy.

The overall goal for the database management system is an accessible, easy-to-use, real-time, web-based case management system that can coordinate efforts and provide a powerful early-warning system for all organizations providing services in the target neighborhood as well as support program evaluation and longitudinal research. In addition, financial data will be added so we can analyze performance on a cost per student basis, seek efficiencies, and ensure affordable scale-up. We also want to enhance analysis, decision-making, and presentation by developing a Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping capacity. All systems must comply with HIPAA, FERPA, and financial privacy laws.

**Three preliminary areas of need and opportunity:** First, the overall goal is an accessible, easy-to-use, real-time, web-based **case management system** that can coordinate efforts and provide a powerful early-warning system for all organizations providing services in the Neighborhood as well as support program evaluation and **longitudinal research**. Second, we will add **financial data** so we can analyze performance on a cost per student basis, seek

efficiencies, and ensure affordable scale up. Third, we want to enhance analysis, decision making, and presentation by developing a Geographic Information System (**GIS**) **mapping capacity**. All systems must comply with HIPAA, FERPA and financial privacy laws.

**Documenting the planning year activities:** During the fall of 2011, before the planning year begins, we will set up collaborative tools: document sharing, Web publishing, scheduling, community participation, and project management. These tools will make it easy to monitor progress, to make mid-course corrections in process as necessary, and to collate lessons learned and best practice to share with others and inform future efforts.

- **How the applicant will document the planning process, including by describing lessons learned and best practices;**

The Center for Research, Assessment, Evaluation, and Dissemination (CREAD) of California State University, Fresno will serve as the independent evaluator for this planning project. In addition to conducting the needs assessment and segmentation analysis, they will also conduct a formative assessment and document the planning process. CREAD will use participant (where warranted, such as participation on the Data Team and when training Promotoras) and non-participant observation strategies to document Fresno Promise Neighborhood activities. Interviews will also be conducted with key stakeholders to gather individual perspectives of the planning process. Field notes will be transcribed by the observer within a 24 hour period to ensure maximum reliability. Periodically the evaluators will review field notes and program documents to identify common threads and lines of future inquiry. Results and field notes will be analyzed and a report will be developed describing lessons learned and best practices. This documentation will be beneficial as Fresno Promise Neighborhoods expands and replicates to other neighborhoods in Fresno.

- **Provide examples of your organization's experience collecting, analyzing, and using data, and experience using longitudinal data across systems and agencies**

Reading and Beyond applies a stringent evaluation design for all programs. Moreover, both quantitative and qualitative data items are collected and analyzed to ensure outcomes are met, but most importantly that children and families served are receiving what was promised. Over the past years, the Center for Research, Assessment, Evaluation, and Dissemination (CREAD), has conducted independent evaluations of Reading and Beyond programs and has found significant, positive results. For example, in one study assessing the impact of Reading and Beyond's parent involvement program (which included workshops and one-on-one sessions on how parents can help their children improve in school), CREAD found that Reading and Beyond's program helped to significantly raise students' standardized test scores.

Reading and Beyond has established data tracking protocols (type of service, number of individuals served, units of service provided, etc.) and a training protocol for educating staff in data collection procedures, monitoring project compliance and program fidelity, and document program coordination. Reading and Beyond gathers data on behalf of process and summative evaluation designs. Data gathered as part of the process evaluation will provide a context in which to understand and interpret outcomes. It will also give project decision-makers critical information they can use to make modifications ensuring continuous program improvement.

Reading and Beyond uses the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyze quantitative data. Reading and Beyond conducts in-depth analyses, including descriptive statistics and comparison statistics (e.g., t-tests for matched pre/post data sets, correlations), as appropriate. Project staff and other appropriate stakeholders (e.g., students and teachers) will be given an opportunity to provide feedback regarding outcomes, and their responses. These comments will be incorporated into reports as they often lend rich insight to the interpretation of

outcomes. Qualitative data are analyzed as rigorously as quantitative data. Focus groups and interviews are taped and transcribed. Coding categories are established, and data are coded and analyzed for patterns and trends that may provide decision-relevant information, illuminate successes or failures in program efficacy, and provide a context for understanding program outcomes.

Dr. Matilda Soria oversees Reading and Beyond's program evaluation system. Her main role at Reading and Beyond is to develop and direct research- and evidence-based educational programming for children and families. Through her 11 years at Reading and Beyond, she has directed several government and foundation funded projects. Dr. Soria has earned a Bachelors of Arts degree in Psychology and Minor degree in Ethnic Studies from California State University, Fresno; a Masters degree in Human Development and Psychology, with a specialization in Risk and Prevention from Harvard University; and a Doctoral Degree in Educational Leadership from California State University, Fresno. Matilda has extensive experience conducting scientific and behavioral research among ethnic and at-risk populations, as well as in the development and management of educational programs for children and families.

A Governance Structure and Community Engagement Plan have been developed (see page 56 for highlights of the plan). Both documents provide guidance for collaborative members on transparency of information and data and inclusion of all stakeholders, especially residents. The Community Engagement Plan spells out preparations for broad participation access to information, public forums and public comment, complaint resolution, and technical assistance. The plan will be implemented under the leadership of Dr. Matilda Soria, who has forged deep and far-ranging relationships throughout the Neighborhood during her time with RAB. Assisting her will be other Partner representatives with similarly strong ties. A participation list will be

compiled of organizations, businesses, block clubs, churches, and individuals from the Neighborhood. Information will be widely accessible online and at locations in the Neighborhood. Public forums will be scheduled early and well-publicized.

**10 Points:** Creating formal and informal partnerships, including alignment of visions, theories of action, and theories of change described in its memorandum of understanding, and creating a new system for holding partners accountable for performance in accordance with the memorandum of understanding.

Since its beginnings in 1999, the effectiveness of Reading and Beyond has been due in large part to its collaborations with local school districts, colleges and universities, and health care institutions, as well as close ties to community and faith-based agencies. Reading and Beyond utilizes its referral network with outside agencies and its individualized service distribution to become not only an established community resource and system of care, but a safe haven for marginalized and at-risk residents.

The attached Memorandum of Understanding describes the level of commitment from each of the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods' partner organizations. Partners began meeting in late 2009 to begin pre-planning the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods. After several meetings, Reading and Beyond was selected to serve the collaborative as lead agency. In addition to Reading and Beyond, collaborative partners include: Fresno Unified School District (and target school site Webster Elementary School), Fresno County Office of Education, the City of Fresno (their area of focus is the Lowell Elementary School attendance zone, which is within the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods target geographic area), California State University-Fresno (their area of focus is the Lowell Elementary School attendance zone, which is within the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods target geographic area Fresno City College), The California Endowment (a California based Foundation focused on improving health outcomes via place-based strategies

throughout the state; one of their place-based locations is Central/Southwest Fresno, which encompasses the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods target geographic area); resident-led groups, such as Union De Familia and Interlink; nonprofit organizations, including Boys and Girls Clubs of Fresno County, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central California, and Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission; and local business, including the Fresno Business Council.

Please see the letter from the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods Public Sector Workgroup (in Appendix F), which comprises the City of Fresno, the County of Fresno, First 5 of Fresno County, Fresno Unified School District, the Fresno County Office of Education, and the Fresno County Sheriff's Department. The Public Sector Work Group will work with the Promise Neighborhood to integrate programs and break down —silos to ensure that multiple systems within the Fresno Promise Neighborhood are working together to share information, solutions are implemented effectively and efficiently across agencies; and that there is a continued focus on improving outcomes. All partners in the Group will work closely with the Steering Committee to assist in developing a plan to deliver a linked and integrated seamlessly continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions to challenges.

### **Governance Structure**

Reading and Beyond includes a Board of Directors, Steering Committee, and Management Team. The Steering Committee will serve as the entity primarily representative of the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods. One half of the Steering Committee is comprised of a combination of residents of the target neighborhood or residents of the city who are low-income. The Steering Committee will have the power to inform and advise the Board of Directors on all matters and programs serving the target neighborhood and the effectiveness of all services and programs.

Both boards are “working boards” with members bringing their considerable talents to the works of Fresno Promise Neighborhoods.

### **Reading and Beyond Board of Directors**

|    |             |                    |  |
|----|-------------|--------------------|--|
| 1  | Chairperson | Eric Johnson       | Executive Director, AT&T                               |
| 2  | Vice-Chair  | Blake Konczal      | Executive Director, Workforce Investment Board         |
| 3  | Secretary   | Harinder Dhindsa   | Vice President, Bank of America                        |
| 4  | Treasurer   | Emil Milevoj       | Director, California State University, Fresno          |
| 5  | Director    | Elisabeth Tietjen  | Attorney, Baker, Manock & Jensen                       |
| 6  | Director    | Luis Chavez        | Chief of Staff, City of Fresno                         |
| 7  | Director    | Katherine Dill     | Director, Kaiser Permanente Hospital                   |
| 8  | Director    | Dina Gonzalez-Pina | Assistant Dean, Fresno Pacific University              |
| 9  | Director    | Marianne Jones     | Retired Professor, California State University, Fresno |
| 10 | Director    | Nancy Staggs       | Court Commissioner, Fresno Superior Courts             |

### **Fresno Promise Neighborhoods Steering Committee**

|   |  |                 |                                     |
|---|--|-----------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | The Way Ministries                     | Henry Oputa*    | Pastor / Resident                   |
| 2 | Fresno Institute for Urban Leadership  | Phil Skei*      | Executive Director / Resident       |
| 3 | Interlink International                | Patricia Beard* | Program Director / Resident         |
| 4 | Lowell Neighborhood Association        | Amy Arambula*   | Resident                            |
| 5 | Reading and Beyond                     | Luis Santana    | Executive Director                  |
| 6 | City of Fresno                         | Elaine Robles   | Neighborhood Revitalization Manager |
| 7 | California Charter Schools Association | John Madrid     | Director of School Development      |
| 8 | Fresno County Office of Education      | Michele Copher  | Educational Services Administrator  |

|    |                                |                   |                          |
|----|--------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 9  | Fresno Unified School District | Edward Gonzalez   | Associate Superintendent |
| 10 | Union De Familia               | Araceli Almarzon* | President / Resident     |

*Members with an asterisk (\*) are residents of the target neighborhood and/or are low-income residents of the neighborhood.*

The Governance Structure Committee was developed to create the systems and procedures that will guide the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods Collaborative through the Planning and Implementation Phases. The Committee began its work on September of 2010 and continues to meet on a regular basis. The Committee developed an agenda and, through discussions of the various items and issues raised, developed the governance structure by consensus. A draft of this proposal was submitted to the Greater Collaborative for review and was approved in December of 2010. Major sections of the approved governance structure follows:

**Overall Governance Structure**

- The Lead Agency will act as the fiscal agent for the initiative and a staff member of the Lead Agency will serve as head of the Steering Committee, due to fiscal accountability and responsibilities. In addition, a Board Member of the Lead Agency will serve as a member.
- The Greater Collaborative which acts to adopt a governance structure, ratify decisions of the Steering Committee, and adopt the Plan.
- The Steering Committee which acts as a board of directors and sets policy and shall be called the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods Steering Committee (the Steering Committee);
- Four Programmatic Committees which reflect the 10 Result Areas of the U.S. Department of Education’s Promise Neighborhoods’ initiative, are responsible for the development of the 10-Year Implementation Plan (hereafter referred to as the Plan) content;

- The Review Committee will provide an outside, expert review of plans developed by Programmatic Committees and will assist in ensuring alignment to each Result Area as required by the U.S. Department of Education, including ensuring adherence to a research- and evidence-based model
- Community residents of the targeted geographic zone will be engaged during the Planning Phase process. Draft plan proposals will be shared with community residents via focus groups and/or town hall meeting sessions. Input gathered will be incorporated to modify plan draft.

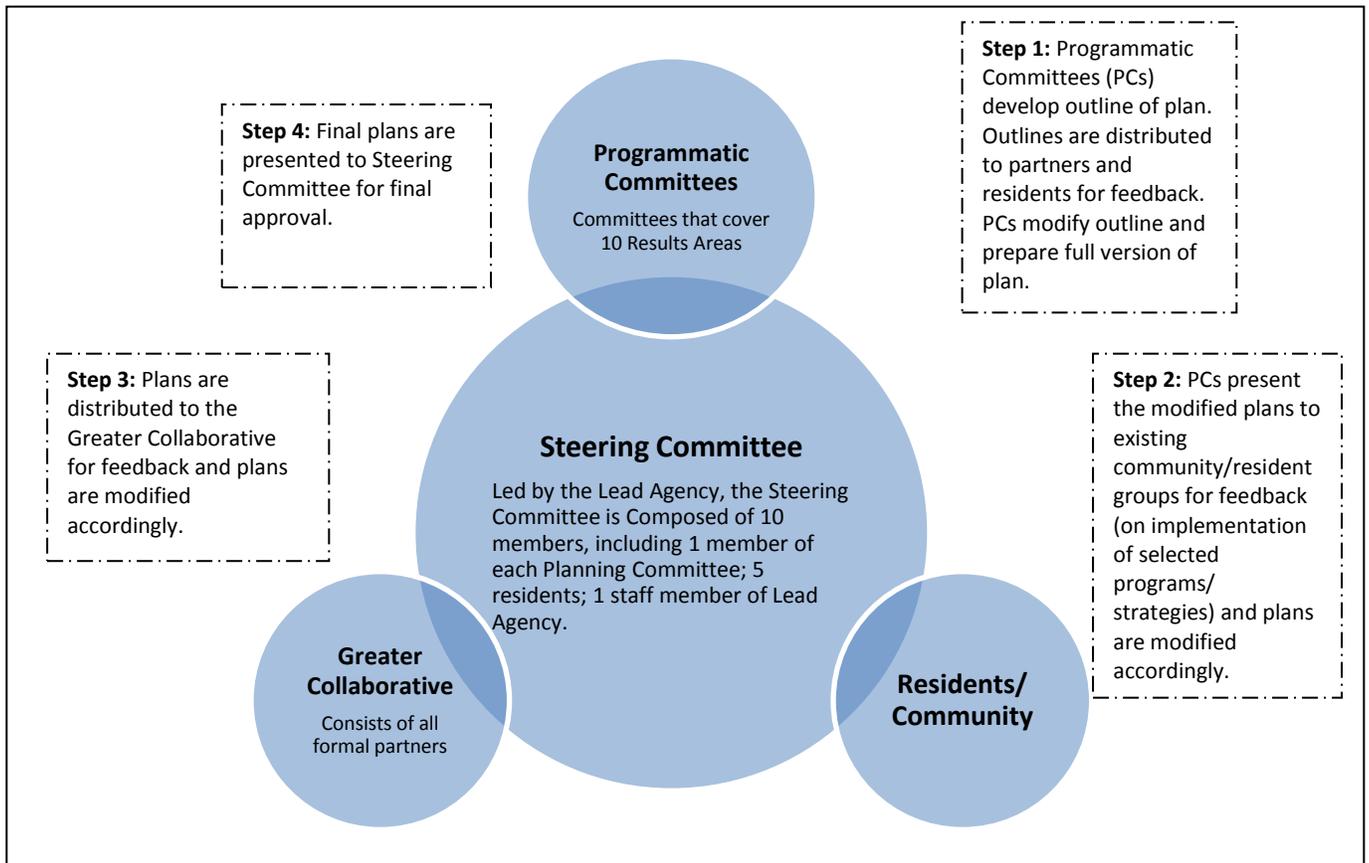
### **Decision-making Protocol and Process**

- All major decisions of the above bodies that pertain to the collaborative, including policies and procedures that impact the overall functioning of the collaborative, shall be communicated to the collaborative along with the decision-making process used to arrive at such decision.
- That decisions made by any of the bodies shall be made only by those individuals who have consistently participated in the work of the body. The Steering Committee shall develop the criteria for the casting of individual votes for all of the bodies.
- The Steering Committee shall have the responsibility and authority to develop and, when appropriate, modify, meeting policies, procedures, and operating rules for the conduct of business for the planning committees.
- Consensus will be utilized by all planning committee groups as a mechanism to make decisions on issues pertaining to Fresno Promise Neighborhoods.
- Conflicts shall be addressed at the lowest level and shall involve the team leaders. The Greater Collaborative shall recommend a list of third party conflict resolution organizations,

the qualifications of which shall be reviewed by the Steering Committee, in the event such an organization may be needed to assist in conflict resolution. It is strongly recommended that training and capacity building in this area be developed as part of this initiative

### **Programmatic Plan Approval Process**

- Programmatic Plan outlines will be emailed to the Review Committee for feedback. Once outline is modified, the Programmatic Committee will generate the full version of the plan.
- Programmatic Committee will present full version of the written plan to the Review Committee and will adjust plan based upon feedback.
- Once plan is modified, the Programmatic Committee will present to existing groups of community residents for feedback.
- The modified plan will be distributed via email to Greater Collaborative for feedback.
- Once modified, the plan will be submitted to the Review Committee for final recommendations before submittal to Steering Committee for approval.
- The structure used for the development of the Plan need not be the same structure used after the Steering Committee is formed or during the implementation phase of the Plan.



**Figure 1.** Graphic depiction of Programmatic Plan review and approval process

### Role of Lead Agency, Reading and Beyond

- The Lead Agency shall have fiscal responsibility for the funds and will be responsible for contract compliance and communication with funders.
- The Lead Agency will have final authority on actions pertaining to finance and compliance with funder requirements.
- A representative of the Lead Agency will serve as Chair of the Steering Committee and will have final approval and authority over issues pertaining to financial and compliance issues.
- When consensus cannot be reached, the Lead Agency will make the final decision.
- The Lead Agency will be responsible for staffing and coordinating all logistical needs. Other responsibilities include: the development and submission of all reports to funding entities as well as bookkeeping and accounting services; staffing the various workgroups; providing

note-taking and transcription throughout the planning phase; communicating with the Planning, Steering Committees and workgroups; and coordinating all media and communication.

### **Role of Greater Collaborative (all partners)**

- The Greater Collaborative acts to adopt the governance structure of the planning phase, ratify decisions of the Steering Committee, and adopt the Plan.
- Each Greater Collaborative meeting shall be open to all formal partners and stakeholders of Fresno Promise Neighborhoods, however, with respect to the ratification of policies or proposals by the only active participating members of the Planning or Support teams may vote.

### **Role of the Steering Committee**

- Within the authority of the Greater Collaborative, the Steering Committee acts to assure that a Plan is developed for adoption; in that regard, it has authority to make decisions, coordinate work, act as a clearinghouse, monitor the progress of the work undertaken by all other bodies, set deadlines, synthesize the separate plans as necessary, and assure that all bodies are achieving diversity representation.
- The Steering Committee may recommend to the Greater Collaborative adjustments to the proposed governance structure. The Steering Committee may establish ad hoc committees to accomplish the purposes of this recommended adjustment. For transition purposes, the Steering Committee may continue to operate up to ninety (90) days following the submittal of the Plan.
- The Steering Committee shall have the authority to assess and make recommendations regarding the membership of the other bodies.

- The Steering Committee shall establish four (4) Programmatic Committees, to coincide with the four age/grade spans that cover the 10 result areas of the U.S. Department of Education’s Promise Neighborhoods initiative.
- The Steering Committee shall coordinate the work of the Programmatic Committees and synthesize the final plans if necessary.
- The Steering Committee shall consist of 10 members selected in the following manner:
  - One (1) member will be selected by each of the four (4) Programmatic Committees
  - Five (5) members will be residents of the targeted geographic zone (hereafter referred to as the “Zone”). The Zone includes the school attendance areas of Webster, Jefferson, and Lowell Elementary Schools of Fresno Unified School District.
  - One (1) member will be of the Lead Agency, Reading and Beyond and will specifically consist of one (1) staff member
  - Two (2) members shall be appointed by the Steering Committee once it has been constituted.

### **Role of the Programmatic Committees**

- Each of the Programmatic Committees shall be organized around the 10 Result areas of the U.S. Department of Education’s Promise Neighborhood initiative, which shall constitute their charge and scope of planning. Each Programmatic Committee shall have a minimum of seven members. Each Programmatic Committee may establish as many sub-teams as may be required or desired.
- The Programmatic Committees will develop the Plan content and engage the community seeking direction and input on the Plan content

- The Programmatic Committees shall maintain records of the attendance of their members in order to comply with the voting policy established by the Steering Committee.
- The Programmatic Committees are responsible for the development of a plan consistent with guidelines published by the U.S. Department of Education for each of their area of interest.

**10 Points:** Integrating funding streams from multiple funding streams from public and private sources, including its proposal to leverage and integrate high quality programs in the neighborhood into the continuum of solutions.

Fresno Promise Neighborhoods is comprised of major Fresno institutions backed by a wide variety of public and private funding sources. We have the relationships to secure local contributions and the capacity and national reach to pursue State, Federal, and foundation support. In short, we are resilient – able to connect to a wide range of funding sources.

Moreover, Fresno Promise Neighborhoods is a model for interagency collaboration targeting children. Sustainability is an immediate result of strong partnerships which effectively link community resources together to meet the needs of the target schools. Sustainability and growth of the Fresno Promise Neighborhood begins with the committed support of private and corporate partners, upholds public and private partnerships, and ends with maintaining a cash reserve target minimum of 5%, as demonstrated by the following strategy:

| <u><b>Funding Source</b></u>                 | <u><b>Funding Share</b></u> |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Leveraging Private and Corporate Commitments | 65%                         |
| In-Kind Partnership Support                  | 15 – 18%                    |
| Public Funding for ‘Zone’-Aligned Programs   | 10 – 12%                    |
| State and Federal Grants                     | 10%                         |

|                                       |               |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|
| Local Business Community Partnerships | 5%            |
| <i>Cash Reserve</i>                   | <i>(5%)</i>   |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>≥ 100%</b> |

### *Leveraging Private and Corporate Commitments*

In recent years, California’s Central San Joaquin Valley has received considerable attention from private funders and public agencies committed to working with and in the region to address the area’s well-documented needs related to concentrated poverty and workforce and economic development. Toward that end, several local organizations and intermediaries have developed durable partnerships with much larger private and corporate foundations. In particular, the Fresno Regional Foundation has become the region’s most dynamic and prominent Central Valley-focused funder. As a demonstrated partner in this project, the Fresno Regional Foundation has affirmed its role in aligning the various funding priorities of current and future private foundations, individual donors, and corporate sponsors to the objectives and programs of the project. As a core strategy for supporting the project, as well as to ensure the wise and effective use of donor funding, the Foundation will first target shared or mutual funding partners of the project’s partner organizations. In particular, the James Irvine Foundation, the Hewlett Foundation, the Packard Foundation, Wells Fargo, Bank of America, and others have expressed a substantial, long-term commitment to the Central Valley to—and through—several of the project’s partner organizations. The Fresno Regional Foundation is committed to strengthening and increasing the support of the funding partners. Similarly, as a trusted partner to many of the region’s most charitable individuals, the Fresno Regional Foundation has both the ability and opportunity to garner sizeable commitments from a very engaged and generous community.

### *In-Kind Partnership Support*

As a means of reducing expenditures, a portion of the project's operational capacity will be provided by partner organizations' in-kind contributions, e.g.: staffing, communications, supplies, etc.

### *Public Funding for 'Zone'-Aligned Programs*

A portion of the programs and services to be provided to the community within the zone are and will have public funding sources. While funding from state and local funding for the public education, supplemental educational services, behavioral health, and several more service intended to be provided through this effort will be used first and primarily for its intended programmatic use, portions of selected funds can be used to offset the projects' operational expenditures in the delivery of services to the zone, as appropriate.

### *Local Business Community Partnerships*

The Fresno Business Council has been an active participant in the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods collaborative – and has committed to continuing to engage and participate during the Planning Phase. The Fresno Business Council represents the for-profit, business sector and sees the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods initiative as a model to improve system alignment, thereby improving outcomes for children and families in Fresno.

### *State and Federal Grants – and other Funding Opportunities*

Led by partner, Fresno Regional Foundation, the Fund Development Team created during the Pre-Planning Phase of the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods, and the Fresno Public Sector Workgroup will continue to meet, discuss, plan, and apply for State and Federal Grants, as well as other funding opportunities to support Fresno Promise Neighborhoods. Members of the Fund Development Team represent grant-makers, grant-writers, and other grant-fund acquisition

experts. Each member has committed to continue their efforts during the Planning Phase of Fresno Promise Neighborhoods to ensure a sizeable match upon the launch of the Implementation Phase, one year later.

In addition, Reading and Beyond has created a Public Sector Work Group in Fresno that consists of the Mayor's Office of the City of Fresno; the Superintendent of Fresno County Office of Education; the Superintendent of Fresno Unified School District; the County Administrative Officer of the County of Fresno; Fresno County Sheriff; and the Executive Director of First 5 of Fresno County. The Fresno Public Sector Work Group will work with the Promise Neighborhood to integrate programs and break down "silos" to ensure that multiple systems within the target neighborhood are working together to share information, solutions are implemented effectively and efficiently across agencies; and that there is a continued focus on improving outcomes. All partners in the Group will work alongside the Steering Committee to assist in developing a plan to deliver a linked and integrated seamlessly continuum of cradle-through-college-to-career solutions to challenges.

Each agency in the Public Sector Group will support the efforts of the partnership by working with public systems in building the infrastructure of policies, practices, systems, and resources needed to sustain and "scale-up" proven, effective solutions across the broader region and beyond the initial neighborhood. The group will serve as a portal for Reading and Beyond to work with public and private agencies and leverage existing resources needed to support the financial sustainability of the plan, which will include identifying the sources and amounts of current Federal, State, and local funds, which can be used for the implementation of the project. Partners will also identify strategies for building upon and leveraging existing and anticipated investments in high-quality academic programs and family and community supports that are

funded by federal agencies such as the U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, and the Department of Labor and Justice.

The following timeline reflects project activities planned during the planning phase:

| <b>Project Activity</b>                  | <b>Timeline</b>   | <b>Personnel Responsible</b>  |
|--|---|---|
| Hire Project Staff                       | January – February 2012   | Director; Steering Committee  |
| Staff Orientation                        | February 2012 and quarterly   | Director with Reading and Beyond HR   |
| Professional Development                 | Throughout the Planning Year  | Director  |
| Needs Assessment                         | February 2012 – August 2012   | The Center for Research, Assessment, Evaluation, and Dissemination (CREAD) of California State University, Fresno; Director; and Reading and Beyond's research department |
| Segmentation Analysis                    | September-November 2012   | CREAD; Director; and Reading and Beyond's research department   |
| Develop Implementation Service Plan      | November – December 2012  | Director working with residents, partners, and staff  |
| Steering Committee / Planning Committees | January 2012; Steering Committee meets quarterly, Planning Committees monthly | Director working with staff, residents, and partners  |
| Gather /Leverage Financial Resources     | September –December 2012  | Director; Reading and Beyond's Finance Manager; partners  |

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| Community Outreach meetings, interviews          | February 2012, ongoing-quarterly meetings, direct outreach using Promotora Model                     | Director working with Resident Leaders; CREAD   |
| Community Input Report                           | November 2012  | Director, Resident Leaders  |
| Build, customize data system                     | September – December 2012  | Director, partners, AJW Inc.  |
| Work with National Evaluator                     | Ongoing  | Director, Steering Committee  |
| GIS Mapping, Community Need                      | November 2012  | CREAD   |
| Develop Community of Practice                    | January 2012 and ongoing   | Director working with partners; Steering Committee; Promise Neighborhoods in CA and across U.S. |
| Final list of programs, outcomes, and objectives | Finished by November 2012. Approved by Steering Committee and Greater Collaborative by December 2012 | Steering Committee; Greater Collaborative; Director   |
| Final MOU created/signed                         | December 2012  | Director; Steering Committee  |

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| <b>Absolute Priority 1</b> |
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| <b>Required Section 5: <i>Commitment to Work With a National Evaluator for Promise Neighborhoods</i></b> |
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Reading and Beyond and its partners are committed to working with the U.S. Department of Education and the selected national evaluator to ensure that data collection and program design are consistent with a rigorous national evaluation. The Director will work alongside the Steering Committee as well as with a national evaluator to ensure that the project design and data collection plans are congruent with national evaluation and that they meet standard methodologies. This will include written agreements from FUSD and partners to provide all necessary data. It will include full access to all data gathered weekly, monthly, quarterly, and yearly by the customized database. In addition, it will include all assessment data by case managers, all school academic data, referrals, and community surveys addressing need and changes to academic, family and community indicators.

### **III. Competitive Preference Priorities (CPPs)**

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| <b>Competitive Preference Priority 4 (CP4): Comprehensive Local Early Learning Network</b> |
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Fresno Promise Neighborhoods will align with the efforts of Fresno County Office of Education, the Fresno County Early Care and Development Local Planning Council, Children's Services Network, First 5 of Fresno County, and the Central Valley Afterschool Foundation in their sustainability of a Fresno-based comprehensive local early learning network. Furthermore, Fresno Promise Neighborhoods will integrate with Fresno's current early learning network and will develop a plan to expand and enhance early learning programs and services to ensure they are high-quality and comprehensive for children from birth through third grade.

In September 2007, the Fresno County Office of Education engaged a cross-section of the community in the design of a comprehensive voluntary preschool plan for children four years of

age in Fresno County. With the assistance of consultant Dr. Karen Hill Scott, more than one hundred community leaders, with representation from parents, elected officials, businesses, civic/social and governmental agencies and preschool educators from public, private, and faith-based programs, convened in this process. The result of their work is an inclusive, networked and articulated plan of action. Fresno Promise Neighborhoods will utilize the momentum from this endeavor and access this network to expand the plan to include 0-3 year olds and 5-7 year olds; partner, Fresno County Office of Education has committed to assist Fresno Promise Neighborhoods in planning convenings with stakeholders from this planning effort. Moreover, all stakeholders are current partners of Fresno Promise Neighborhoods. The overarching dimensions of the goals of the plan are as follows:

- **Program Quality and Monitoring:** to develop both a Quality Rating System and a workforce mentoring system so that the centers of excellence can be expanded countywide.
- **Articulation and Coordination:** to develop a plan that aligns preschool to K-12 institutions by acquiring input from personnel in both sectors of education along with the engagement of parents.
- **Parent and Community Engagement:** to create neighborhood hubs connecting preschools, parents and elementary schools and to engage parents, including increased involvement from fathers in home-based support of children's learning.
- **Workforce and Professional Development:** to integrate a system of ongoing consultation and mentoring for existing and new personnel entering the early education workforce while coordinating program requirements and transition among post-secondary institutions offering degree and certificate early care and education programs.

The network will explore the incorporation of early learning opportunities on multiple platforms and in multiple locations. For example, Fresno Promise Neighborhoods' partner, Valley Public Television currently has an early learning and development broadcast geared for families with young children. Valley Public Television has committed to evaluating the effectiveness of their program for Fresno Promise Neighborhoods' families.

A partner of Fresno Promise Neighborhoods, early care and development consultant Nancy Richardson will assist Fresno Promise Neighborhoods in the selection of an Early Care and Development Director. Nancy has served as a Fresno Unified School District School Board Member and as a consultant for First 5 Fresno County and Fresno County Office of Education. She has also authored several research studies and papers on quality early care and development for young children.

The Early Care and Development Director will be responsible for overseeing and integrating the early learning initiatives. The Early Care and Development Director will possess the appropriate California certification and will have experience managing and administering high-quality early learning programs, including in coordinating across various high-quality early learning programs and services.

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| <b>Comprehensive Preference Priority 5 (CP5): Quality Internet Connectivity</b> |
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Building off of the local and statewide momentum to bridge the digital divide for low-income families, the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods collaborative will build into its 10-year comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plan, a plan for quality Internet connectivity. Reading and Beyond will partner with the Comcast Foundation to fulfill this priority. Comcast's *Internet Essentials* directly aligns with Promise Neighborhood's *Quality Internet Connectivity* competitive preference priority. *Internet Essentials* from Comcast is an ambitious and

comprehensive broadband adoption initiative created to help close the digital divide. The goal is to get more low-income Americans online at home by addressing the three main barriers to adoption identified by the FCC: 1) the cost of internet service, 2) the cost of a home computer, and 3) a lack of understanding of how the Internet is relevant and useful.

As an *Internet Essentials* training partner, Reading and Beyond will assist children and families within the target geographic zone in breaking past these barriers through providing access to computer labs with Internet access at community centers (located in the target neighborhood and within walking distance); access to low-cost Internet service at home (for \$9.95 a month + tax); and access to free Internet training. In addition, Comcast will contribute funds to Reading and Beyond to launch a micro-lending program for families enrolled in Internet Essentials to purchase a computer. Reading and Beyond will loan the funds to families and set-up an installment payment plan that accommodates the families' financial needs. Once the money is paid back by the family, Reading and Beyond will then make a loan to another family.

Thus, Comcast's financial commitment to help Reading and Beyond and the Fresno Promise Neighborhoods' initiative fulfill the Quality Internet Connectivity priority is \$40,000 per year (starting in September of 2011 through May 2014) for three years, for a grand total of \$120,000. In addition to Comcast's financial commitment, Comcast is also providing in-kind support to Reading and Beyond in the form of professional development, technical assistance, and the materials/ resources to implement the *Internet Essentials* initiative in Fresno.