

U.S. Department of Education

Washington, D.C. 20202-5335



APPLICATION FOR GRANTS UNDER THE

**APPLICATION FOR NEW GRANTS UNDER THE TEACHER INCENTIVE FUND
PROGRAM**

CFDA # 84.385A

PR/Award # S385A100128

OMB No. 1810-0700, Expiration Date: 11/30/2010

Closing Date: JUL 06, 2010

****Table of Contents****

Forms

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	e1
Texas TIF Congressional Districts	e5
2. Standard Budget Sheet (ED 524)	e6
3. SF-424B - Assurances Non-Construction Programs	e8
4. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	e10
5. ED 80-0013 Certification	e11
6. 427 GEPA	e12
Section 427 Statement	e14
7. Dept of Education Supplemental Information for SF-424	e15

Narratives

1. Project Narrative - (Project Abstract...)	e16
Texas TIF Proposal Abstract	e17
2. Project Narrative - (Application Narrative...)	e18
Texas TIF Proposal Narrative	e19
3. Project Narrative - (High-Need Schools Documentation...)	e81
Monte Alto High School Feeder Data	e82
4. Project Narrative - (Union, Teacher, Principal Commitment Letters or.....)	e83
Texas TIF Letters of Support	e84
5. Project Narrative - (Other Attachments...)	e225
Other Attachments	e226
6. Budget Narrative - (Budget Narrative...)	e252
Texas TIF Budget Narrative	e253

This application was generated using the PDF functionality. The PDF functionality automatically numbers the pages in this application. Some pages/sections of this application may contain 2 sets of page numbers, one set created by the applicant and the other set created by e-Application's PDF functionality. Page numbers created by the e-Application PDF functionality will be preceded by the letter e (for example, e1, e2, e3, etc.).

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

Version 02

* 1. Type of Submission	* 2. Type of Application: * If Revision, select appropriate letter(s):	
<input type="checkbox"/> Preapplication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application	<input type="checkbox"/> Continuation	* Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Changed/Corrected Application	<input type="checkbox"/> Revision	

* 3. Date Received:	4. Applicant Identifier:
7/6/2010	

5a. Federal Entity Identifier:	* 5b. Federal Award Identifier:
	N/A

State Use Only:

6. Date Received by State:	7. State Application Identifier:
----------------------------	----------------------------------

8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:

* a. Legal Name: [REDACTED]

* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN):	* c. Organizational DUNS:
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

d. Address:

* Street1:	[REDACTED]
Street2:	
* City:	Austin
County:	
State:	TX
Province:	
* Country:	USA
* Zip / Postal Code:	[REDACTED]

e. Organizational Unit:

Department Name:	Division Name:
[REDACTED]	

f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:

Prefix:	* First Name:	[REDACTED]
Middle Name:		

* Last Name: [REDACTED]

Suffix:

Title: [REDACTED]

Organizational Affiliation:

Educator and Student Policy Initiatives

* Telephone Number: [REDACTED]

Fax Number: [REDACTED]

* Email: [REDACTED]

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

Version 02

9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:

A: State Government

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

* Other (specify):

10. Name of Federal Agency:

U.S. Department of Education

11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:

84.385A

CFDA Title:

Application for New Grants Under the Teacher Incentive Fund Program

*** 12. Funding Opportunity Number:**

84.385

Title:

Teacher Incentive Fund

13. Competition Identification Number:

84.385

Title:

Teacher Incentive Fund Main Competition

14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

*** 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:**

Texas Teacher Incentive Fund

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Attachment:

Title :

File :

Attachment:

Title :

File :

Attachment:

Title :

File :

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

Version 02

16. Congressional Districts Of:

* a. Applicant: 21

* b. Program/Project: multiple

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

Attachment:

Title : Texas TIF Congressional Districts

File : Texas TIF Program Congressional Districts.pdf

17. Proposed Project:

* a. Start Date: 9/1/2010

* b. End Date: 6/30/2015

18. Estimated Funding (\$):

a. Federal	\$ [REDACTED]
b. Applicant	\$
c. State	\$
d. Local	\$
e. Other	\$
f. Program	\$

Income

g. TOTAL \$ 3253707

*** 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**

a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on .

b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.

c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

*** 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes", provide explanation.)**

Yes No

21. *By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)**

** I AGREE

** The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

Authorized Representative:

Prefix: * First Name: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Name:

* Last Name: [REDACTED]

Suffix:

Title: Chief Financial Officer

* Telephone Number: [REDACTED] Fax Number:

* Email: [REDACTED]

* Signature of Authorized Representative: * Date Signed:

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424 Version 02

*** Applicant Federal Debt Delinquency Explanation**

The following field should contain an explanation if the Applicant organization is delinquent on any Federal Debt. Maximum number of characters that can be entered is 4,000. Try and avoid extra spaces and carriage returns to maximize the availability of space.

N/A

Texas TIF Program Congressional Districts

TX-005

TX-003

TX-032

TX-015

TX-017

TX-030

TX-031

TX-023

TX-011



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUDGET INFORMATION
NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

OMB Control Number: 1894-0008

Expiration Date: 02/28/2011

Name of Institution/Organization:
 Texas Education Agency

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS

Budget Categories	Project Year 1(a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] 7
2. Fringe Benefits	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
3. Travel	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
4. Equipment	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
5. Supplies	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED] 0
6. Contractual	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
7. Construction	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
8. Other	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
10. Indirect Costs*	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
11. Training Stipends	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

***Indirect Cost Information (To Be Completed by Your Business Office):**

If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, please answer the following questions:

(1) Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government? Yes No

(2) If yes, please provide the following information:

Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From: 9/1/2009 To: 8/31/2010 (mm/dd/yyyy)

Approving Federal agency: ED Other (please specify): _____ The Indirect Cost Rate is 16%

(3) For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:

Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement? or, Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)? The Restricted Indirect Cost Rate is 0%



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
BUDGET INFORMATION
NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

OMB Control Number: 1894-0008

Expiration Date: 02/28/2011

Name of Institution/Organization:
 Texas Education Agency

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

SECTION B - BUDGET SUMMARY
NON-FEDERAL FUNDS

Budget Categories	Project Year 1(a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel	\$ █	█	█	█	█	█
2. Fringe Benefits	\$ █	█	█	█	█	█
3. Travel	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
4. Equipment	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
5. Supplies	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
6. Contractual	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
7. Construction	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
8. Other	\$ █	█	█	█	█	█
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	\$ █	█	█	█	█	█
10. Indirect Costs	\$ █	█	█	█	█	█
11. Training Stipends	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	\$ █	█	█	█	█	█

ASSURANCES - NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

Standard Form 424B (Rev.7-97)

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0040), Washington DC 20503.

PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.

NOTE: Certain of these assurances may not be applicable to your project or program. If you have questions, please contact the awarding agency. Further, certain Federal awarding agencies may require applicants to certify to additional assurances. If such is the case, you will be notified.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant:

1. Has the legal authority to apply for Federal assistance, and the institutional, managerial and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal share of project cost) to ensure proper planning, management, and completion of the project described in this application.
2. Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States, and if appropriate, the State, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
3. Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.
4. Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.
5. Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. "4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the 19 statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 C.F.R. 900, Subpart F).
6. Will comply with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. "1681-1683, and 1685-1686), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. '794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps; (d) the Age Discrimination Act
9. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. "276a to 276a-7), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C. '276c and 18 U.S.C. "874) and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. " 327-333), regarding labor standards for federally assisted construction sub-agreements.
10. Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.
11. Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved State management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. "1451 et seq.); (f) conformity of Federal actions to State (Clear Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clear Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. "7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended, (P.L. 93-523); and (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, (P.L. 93-205).
12. Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. "1721 et seq.) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.
13. Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance

of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. " 6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) the Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) " 523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. " 290 dd-3 and 290 ee 3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. ' 3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the specific statute(s) under which application for Federal assistance is being made; and (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.

7. Will comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of Federal or federally assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project purposes regardless of Federal participation in purchases.
8. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. "1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.

with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. '470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. "469a-1 et seq.).

14. Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.
15. Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. "2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.
16. Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. "4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead- based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.
17. Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and OMB Circular No. A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations."
18. Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations and policies governing this program.

Signature of Authorized Certifying Representative:

Name of Authorized Certifying Representative: Shirley Beaulieu

Title: Chief Financial Officer

Date Submitted: 07/06/2010

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Complete this form to disclose lobbying activities pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352

1. Type of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> Contract <input type="checkbox"/> Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative Agreement <input type="checkbox"/> Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Loan Guarantee <input type="checkbox"/> Loan Insurance	2. Status of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> Bid/Offer/Application <input type="checkbox"/> Initial Award <input type="checkbox"/> Post-Award	3. Report Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Initial Filing <input type="checkbox"/> Material Change For Material Change only: Year: 0 Quarter: 0 Date of Last Report:
4. Name and Address of Reporting Entity: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prime <input type="checkbox"/> Subawardee Tier, if known: 0 Name: Address: City: State: Zip Code + 4: - Congressional District, if known:	5. If Reporting Entity in No. 4 is a Subawardee, Enter Name and Address of Prime: Name: Address: City: State: Zip Code + 4: - Congressional District, if known:	
6. Federal Department/Agency:	7. Federal Program Name/Description: CFDA Number, if applicable:	
8. Federal Action Number, if known:	9. Award Amount, if known: \$0	
10. a. Name of Lobbying Registrant (if individual, last name, first name, MI): Address: City: State: Zip Code + 4: -	b. Individuals Performing Services (including address if different from No. 10a) (last name, first name, MI): Address: City: State: Zip Code + 4: -	
11. Information requested through this form is authorized by title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. This disclosure of lobbying activities is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed by the tier above when this transaction was made or entered into. This disclosure is required pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352. This information will be reported to the Congress semi-annually and will be available for public inspection. Any person who fails to file the required disclosure shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.	Name: Shirley Beaulieu Title: Chief Financial Officer Applicant: Texas Education Agency Date: 07/06/2010	
Federal Use Only:		Authorized for Local Reproduction Standard Form LLL (Rev. 7-97)

Section 427 of GEPA

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about a new provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P. L.) 103-382).

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct

description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

- (1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.
- (2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.
- (3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is **1894-0005**. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. **If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to:** U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4537.

Applicants should use this section to address the GEPA provision.

Attachment:

Title : Section 427 Statement

File : [Section 427 statement.pdf](#)

GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA) SECTION 427

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) will comply with Section 427 of the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). As an example, the Texas TAP team recognizes that a significant portion the Texas TIF targeted audience is Spanish-speaking. Therefore, our proposal includes plans to translate all communication material to Spanish in an effort to strengthen stakeholder engagement.

**SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION
REQUIRED FOR
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GRANTS**

1. Project Director:

Prefix: * First Name: Middle Name: * Last ████████ ████████
████████

Address:

* Street1: 220 West 7th Street
 Street2:
 * City: Austin
 County:
 * State: TX * Zip / Postal Code: 78701 * Country: USA

* Phone Number (give area Fax Number (give area
 code) code)
████████████████████

Email Address:

██

2. Applicant Experience

Novice Applicant Yes No Not applicable

3. Human Subjects Research

Are any research activities involving human subjects planned at any time during the proposed project period?

Yes No

Are ALL the research activities proposed designated to be exempt from the regulations?

Yes Provide Exemption(s) #:

No Provide Assurance #, if available:

Please attach an explanation Narrative:

Attachment:

Title :
 File :

Project Narrative

Project Abstract

Attachment 1:

Title: **Texas TIF Proposal Abstract** Pages: 1 Uploaded File: **Texas TIF Proposal Abstract revised 7.4.10.pdf**

Texas Teacher Incentive Fund (Texas TIF) Main Competition Program Abstract

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) respectfully requests \$ [REDACTED] over the next five years to implement a comprehensive performance-based compensation system in 36 schools and 11 districts in Texas that serve high poverty populations with low student achievement.

The primary goal of the Texas TIF Program is to improve student achievement in high-need schools through a comprehensive strategy aimed at rewarding teachers and principals for effectiveness with performance-based differentiated compensation; recruiting and retaining high quality teachers and principals in high need schools defined by low student achievement and high concentrations of minority and economically disadvantaged students; and recruiting and retaining high quality teachers in hard-to-staff subject areas such as mathematics and science. The Texas TIF program has strategically aligned partnerships between the Texas TAP System, the New Teacher Project, and Teach for America in an effort to maximize the effectiveness of the Texas public school human capital strategy.

Objectives are 1) By August 2010, provide substantial financial recruitment incentives for effective teachers and principals; 2) By August 2011, all TIF schools funded under this grant will be fully operational with differentiated compensation given to teachers based on their level of increased responsibility; 3) By May 2012, improve student achievement by at least one standard error above the control group (as measured by value-added growth); 4) By August 2012, begin the school year with 100% of certified positions filled with effective teachers; 5) By May 2013, expand TIF so that two additional schools for every TIF school will implement a similar performance pay system (funded through sources other than this grant); and 6) By June 2015, produce an in-depth report that examines the results and lessons learned and develop a toolkit that other states can use to replicate the implementation of the Texas TIF program.

Project Narrative

Application Narrative

Attachment 1:

Title: **Texas TIF Proposal Narrative Pages: 61** Uploaded File: **TIF Program Narrative revised 7.4.10.pdf**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. Need for the Project 1**
 - Selection Criteria 1, Factor 1: High-Need Schools..... 3*
 - Selection Criteria 1, Factor 2: Low Student Achievement 4*
 - Selection Criteria 1, Factor 3: Definition of Comparable School..... 6*
- 2. Project Design..... 9**
 - Overview of Project Design..... 9**
 - Project Goals and Objectives..... 36**
 - Selection Criteria 2, Factor 1: Statewide Strategy 38*
 - Selection Criteria 2, Factor 2: Stakeholder Engagement 39*
 - Selection Criteria 2, Factor 3: Strong Evaluation System 39*
 - Selection Criteria 2, Factor 4: Data Management System 41*
 - Selection Criteria 2, Factor 5: Professional Development 44*
 - Meeting the Absolute Priorities 45**
 - Meeting the Competitive Preference Priorities 50**
- 3. Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project 52**
 - Selection Criteria 3, Factor 1: Quality Management Plan..... 52*
 - Selection Criteria 3, Factor 2: High Quality Support Plan 55*
 - Selection Criteria 3, Factor 3: Use of Matching Funds..... 57*
 - Selection Criteria 3, Factor 4: Reasonable Budget..... 58*
- 4. Quality of Local Evaluation 58**
 - Selection Criteria 4, Factor 1: Measurable Performance Objectives 58*
 - Selection Criteria 4, Factor 2: Qualitative and Quantitative Data 59*
 - Selection Criteria 4, Factor 3: Ensure Feedback and Continuous Improvement 59*

1. Need for the Project

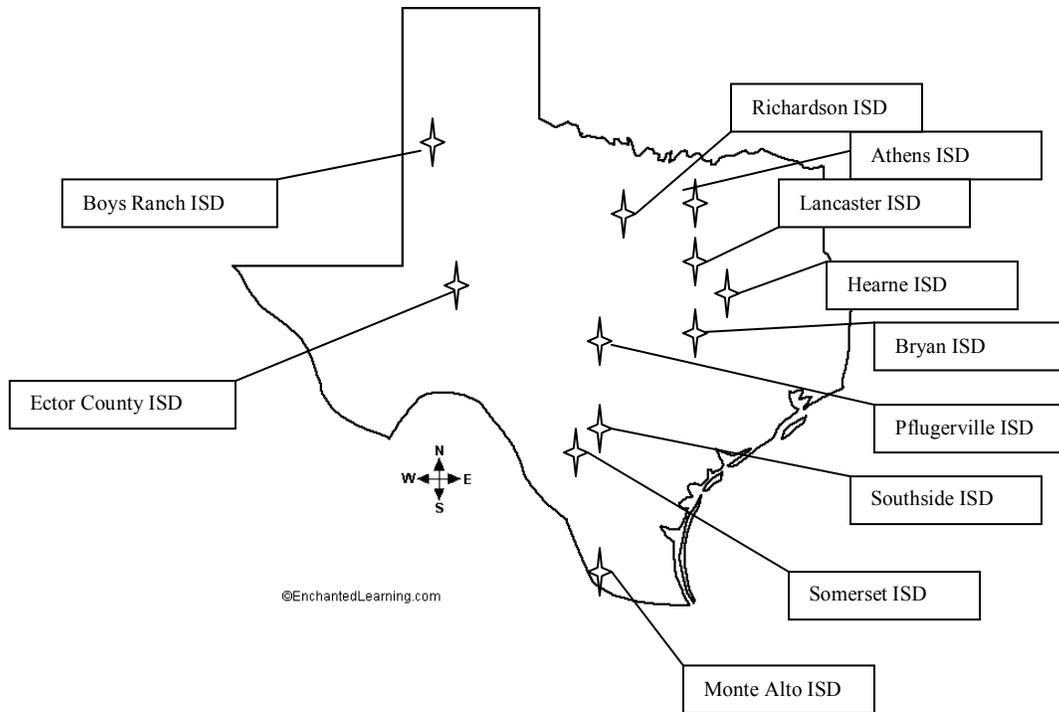
The Texas Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Program involves 11 public school districts across the state of Texas, and includes 36 schools, over 1,700 professional staff, and over 25,000 students. The districts and campuses that were selected for inclusion in this proposal have demonstrated high-need for a program with TIF goals. The campuses selected share similar challenges such as low student achievement, low socioeconomic status (on average, 72% of the students are classified as economically disadvantaged by the state of Texas, including 12 schools with over 80% of their students classified as economically disadvantaged), high minority populations (32 out of the 36 schools are majority minority, and of those, 14 are 90% minority) , and high teacher and principal turnover (some as high as 70% teacher turnover in the past year).

Each of the partner districts—Athens ISD, Boys Ranch ISD, Bryan ISD, Ector County ISD, Hearne ISD, Lancaster ISD, Monte Alto ISD, Pflugerville ISD, Richardson ISD, Somerset ISD, and Southside ISD—faces unique challenges in increasing student achievement and recruiting and retaining effective teachers and principals. The partner districts represent both small and large school districts in rural, urban, and suburban locations. In addition, the partnership is representative of Texas in terms of demographics and geographic location, which helps with replication efforts across the state. Table 1 (p. 2) presents the percent of students who are economically disadvantaged, limited English proficient, and demographic composition for each of the TIF campuses. Figure 1 presents the geographic distribution of TIF campuses in Texas.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Participating Schools

District	Campus	% Economically Disadvantaged	%LEP	%African American	% Hispanic	% White	% Native American	% Asian/Pacific Island
Athens	Athens Intermediate	66.0	26.5	12.6	38.7	47.9	0.4	0.4
Athens	Bel Air ES	67.0	32.1	14.2	36.0	49.3	0.0	0.6
Athens	South Athens ES	66.0	29.4	15.2	35.5	48.6	0.2	0.5
Boys Ranch	Blakemore MS	86.1	0.0	11.4	17.7	69.6	1.3	0.0
Boys Ranch	Boys Ranch HS	89.0	1.2	10.4	17.1	69.5	0.6	2.4
Boys Ranch	STARR Academy	100.0	6.3	12.5	12.5	75.0	0.0	0.0
Bryan	Bonham ES	67.8	26.3	12.5	48.0	39.2	0.0	0.3
Bryan	Branch ES	71.6	3.4	32.7	32.0	34.3	0.2	0.9
Bryan	Davila MS	77.0	8.1	23.0	49.0	27.9	0.0	0.0
Bryan	Navarro ES	78.6	26.8	20.7	56.9	22.2	0.0	0.2
Ector County	Hood Jr	52.0	8.4	5.2	62.4	31.3	1.2	0.0
Hearne	Hearne ES	94.6	14.4	49.7	39.0	11.3	0.0	0.0
Hearne	Hearne JR	84.0	4.0	54.7	39.3	6.0	0.0	0.0
Hearne	Hearne HS	83.0	3.5	57.1	30.3	12.5	0.0	0.0
Lancaster	Lancaster HS	62.4	1.2	83.9	13.4	2.5	0.1	0.1
Lancaster	Lancaster MS	73.2	3.7	79.3	18.3	2.0	0.3	0.1
Lancaster	Pleasant Run ES	86.5	29.3	53.3	41.4	5.3	0.0	0.0
Monte Alto	Borrego MS	92.9	29.1	0.0	97.3	2.2	0.0	0.5
Monte Alto	Monte Alto ES	91.4	46.0	0.0	98.2	1.6	0.0	0.2
Monte Alto	Monte Alto HS	92.1	37.5	0.0	97.8	1.9	0.0	0.3
Pflugerville	Caldwell ES	55.7	31.3	16.8	45.5	28.3	0.5	8.9
Pflugerville	Connally HS	57.3	11.5	27.1	37.8	19.2	0.2	15.7
Pflugerville	Copperfield ES	80.8	54.0	12.5	72.7	9.8	0.0	4.9
Pflugerville	Dessau ES	73.3	42.9	17.7	57.0	15.4	0.2	9.7
Pflugerville	Dessau MS	60.6	16.0	26.5	45.3	16.5	0.1	11.6
Pflugerville	Highland Park ES	50.6	19.9	25.6	38.3	27.1	0.1	8.8
Pflugerville	Pflugerville MS	52.1	9.1	25.2	35.3	31.8	0.3	7.3
Pflugerville	Springhill ES	52.7	29.0	14.9	49.2	29.3	0.3	6.4
Pflugerville	Weiland ES	59.1	18.1	41.5	29.2	13.9	0.3	15.1
Pflugerville	Westview MS	62.6	17.2	25.0	49.0	17.3	0.2	8.5
Pflugerville	Windermere Primary	50.8	20.0	25.3	32.7	33.8	0.2	8.0
Richardson	Forest Lane Academy	86.5	41.9	46.4	48.9	4.4	0.0	0.3
Somerset	Somerset Jr	79.0	6.4	1.5	85.8	12.4	0.0	0.4
Southside	Gallardo ES	81.0	13.7	2.7	92.7	4.1	0.2	0.4
Southside	Pearce ES	93.1	16.2	1.3	91.3	7.1	0.0	0.4
Southside	Losoya Intermediate	76.0	11.4	1.7	86.4	11.5	0.0	0.4
Average		72.0	18.8	24.6	48.0	24.0	0.2	3.2

Figure 1. Geographic Distribution of TIF Campuses



Selection Criteria 1, Factor 1: High-Need Schools

The schools involved in the Texas TIF program are high-need schools ranging in percentage of economically disadvantaged from 50.6% to 100% with an average of 72%. The campuses selected for inclusion in this proposal are not currently participating in a TIF-supported initiative.

Teacher and principal retention has proven to be a challenge for the TIF campuses. Nearly one-third of the teachers in 34 of the 36 schools have five or fewer years of teaching experience, and more than half of the teachers at 19 of those campuses have five or fewer years of experience. This high turnover makes it very difficult to build and maintain success when administrators must continually recruit, motivate, and develop high quality teachers to increase student achievement. The Texas TIF grant will enable applicant schools to immediately address these critical needs.

The schools included in the Texas TIF program serve the needs of English Language

Learners, Migrant and Special Education students, and traditionally at-risk student populations. Somerset ISD recently indicated that only 20% of its high school graduates are college ready. Our partner schools wish to develop a systemic reform effort that requires extensive collaboration among the staff as well as district officials.

Strong campus leadership is critical to teacher retention. In addition to high teacher turnover, high principal turnover has been linked to low student achievement and is common in high-need, hard-to-staff schools. The schools included in the TIF grant have all experienced a high rate of turnover for their principals and other campus administrators. For example, Somerset Jr. High School has had *five principals in the past ten years*.

Selection Criteria 1, Factor 2: Low Student Achievement

The campuses identified in this application have demonstrated low student achievement as measured by the high-stakes standardized Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). Under the Texas Accountability System, each year campuses are given a rating, ranging from the highest rating of *Exemplary*, to *Recognized*, *Academically Acceptable*, and finally *Academically Unacceptable* for the lowest achieving schools. This rating is based on the percentage of students within the school passing the various TAKS tests administered by the state. Of the 36 campuses included in this application, 26 were rated Academically Acceptable or Academically Unacceptable last year. And while some of the campuses were rated academically acceptable or higher in 2009, this measure is based on a mere 55% of students passing TAKS mathematics, 50% passing TAKS science, and 70% passing TAKS reading/ELA, writing, and social studies tests. These results are not acceptable to the districts included in this proposal.

In addition, the Texas accountability standards will increase for the 2010-2011 school year. The standard for Academically Acceptable will increase to 70% of students passing the

reading/ELA and writing and social studies tests; 65% passing the mathematics test, and 60% passing the science test. *Recognized* will increase to 80% of students passing all tests. Furthermore, *Exemplary* will increase to 90% of all students passing all tests. Table 2 shows the ratings each school would receive utilizing the 2011 standards.

Table 2: State Accountability Ratings for Texas TIF Schools Utilizing 2011 Standards

Rating	# Schools
Exemplary	0
Recognized	6
Academically Acceptable	14
Academically Unacceptable	14

**Note: Two of the campuses are brand new campuses; therefore, they have no rating yet.*

If current performance remains constant, over 82% of Texas TIF schools would be rated by the state of Texas in the lowest two categories with nearly half being rated *Unacceptable*. Furthermore, the number of Exemplary schools would be zero. For the majority of these schools, the primary issues are the low performance ratings on the mathematics and science tests, with many schools having less than 50% of their students passing these tests. Here are a few examples:

- **Hearne Elementary School** in Hearne ISD sits in a community of just over 4,500 residents, only 35% of whom have graduated high school. Hearne ES experienced a teacher turnover rate of 35% last year and they received a state Accountability rating of *Academically Unacceptable* for the 2008-2009 school year¹. Less than 50% of 5th graders at Hearne ES are on grade level in reading, only 51% are on grade level in mathematics, and only 50% are on grade level in science.
- **Davila Middle School** in Bryan ISD also received a ranking of *Academically Unacceptable* during the 2008-09 school year. Only 50% of their African American students are on grade

¹ Please note that rankings for the 2009-2010 school year are not yet available.

level in mathematics, and only 33% of African American students are on grade level in science. Only 63% of Hispanic students are on grade level in mathematics, and 45% are on grade level in science. Furthermore, 77% of the students at Davila are considered economically disadvantaged by the state of Texas. And, similar to the other schools included in this grant, 55% of their teachers have five or fewer years of teaching experience.

- **Hood Junior High School** in Ector County ISD was similarly ranked *Academically Unacceptable* under the Texas Accountability System during the 2008-2009 school year. Hood JHS also has failed to meet Federal AYP requirements for the past two years. Only 55% of the students passed the TAKS science test, and only 62% passed the TAKS mathematics test. Only 44% of the Hispanic students passed the TAKS science test, and only 42% of Hispanic students passed the TAKS mathematics test. Nearly 40% of teachers in this school have fewer than five years of teaching experience.

In summary, there are two main risk factors for these schools: large numbers of novice teachers and low student achievement. These two factors are not mutually exclusive. The recruitment and retention of effective teachers in these schools must be addressed in order to improve student performance.

Selection Criteria 1, Factor 3: Definition of Comparable School

The state of Texas accountability structure identifies a set of 40 comparable campuses for each school in the state. To identify the 40 campus group, schools are first grouped by type (i.e. elementary, middle, or high school), and then compared by the percent of students who are: African American, Hispanic, White, economically disadvantaged, limited English proficient, and mobile.

An iterative process using the aforementioned characteristics is then used to identify the 40 schools closest in demographics to the selected campus. Comparisons can then be made to the group as a whole, as well as between individual schools within said group in an effort to match schools with similar size. When comparing the schools included in the TIF grant to their campus group, on average, these schools have 3.5% fewer students pass the ELA TAKS test than their comparable schools, 4.8% fewer passing the TAKS mathematics test, 5.7% fewer passing the TAKS science test, 3.4% fewer passing the TAKS social studies test, and 5.1% fewer students passing all of their TAKS tests in a given year.

When comparisons are made between the schools in this grant and individual campuses within their 40-campus group, the statistics present a bleaker picture . For example:

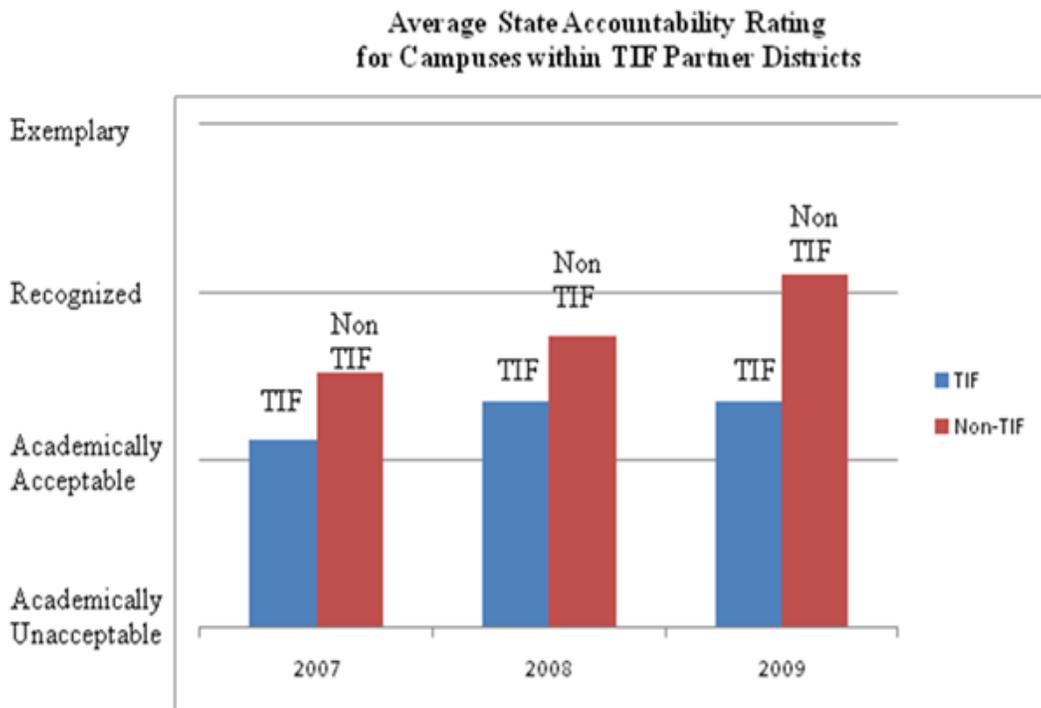
- **Lancaster Middle School** in Lancaster ISD, performed below its 40-campus group average on the TAKS ELA, mathematics and science tests and had a smaller percentage of their students pass all of the TAKS tests for the year. When comparing Lancaster to Key Middle School, fewer students at Lancaster passed each TAKS test, including 21% fewer students in mathematics and 32% fewer students in science. Fewer than 25%, 7%, and 21% African American students, Hispanic students, and economically disadvantaged students, respectively, passed the TAKS mathematics test at Lancaster than at Key. For science, those numbers are 32%, 27%, and 28%, fewer African American, Hispanic, and economically disadvantaged students, respectively, passing at Lancaster than at Key.
- **Caldwell Elementary School** in Pflugerville ISD also performed below its comparable 40-campus group on the TAKS ELA, mathematics and science tests². When compared to this group, 9% fewer students pass the TAKS ELA test at Caldwell, 9% fewer passed the mathematics test, and 16% fewer passed the science test. Furthermore, 13% fewer

² The Social Studies TAKS test is not given at the elementary level.

students at Caldwell passed all of their TAKS tests than the comparable group average. When comparing Caldwell to Lister Elementary, 22% fewer students at Caldwell passed the TAKS science test. Caldwell students are outperformed by Lister students in science by 23%, 43%, and 35% for the African American, Hispanic, and economically disadvantaged subgroups, respectively.

In addition to comparing against the state comparison group, the TIF campuses are among the lowest performing and high-need campuses within their own districts as shown in Figure 2. Factors that the districts examined to determine “high-need” include the percent of teachers retained, percent of economically disadvantaged students, and the greatest number of students who are labeled as “at-risk.” For high schools, districts also examined college readiness indicators and percent of students who enter a four-year university.

Figure 2 - Average State Accountability Rating comparison



2. Project Design

Overview of Project Design

The Texas TIF Project was designed utilizing the Texas TAP System as the primary model in partnership with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET). TAP is a comprehensive research-based reform model that provides differentiated compensation for teachers and principals based on teachers' performance in the classroom and the academic performance of their students. TAP balances a rigorous accountability system with strong support for teachers and school leaders. The program provides career advancement opportunities for teachers—including differentiated salary augmentations for increased responsibilities and duties—and time for ongoing applied professional growth during the school day.

TAP was developed by Lowell Milken and colleagues at the Milken Family Foundation to address the challenge of attracting, developing and retaining talented teachers in high-need schools. First implemented in the 2000-01 school year, TAP is now operated by the NIET. TAP is a proven, cost-effective teacher effectiveness reform model that creates opportunities for career advancement, professional growth, fair and rigorous evaluation, and competitive compensation for teachers. TAP has achieved consistent student academic achievement growth in high-need schools over multiple years and has increased the retention of effective teachers while reducing the retention of ineffective teachers (Daley & Kim, 2010).

The goals of TIF closely align to the mission and design of TAP™: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement. TAP enables schools to customize their support for teachers and students to meet local needs, but it has the advantage of using proven implementation strategies to ensure success. With over ten years of operation in the field, many challenges in

performance based compensation systems and their related support systems have been successfully addressed by TAP schools.

The TAP System addresses the most important element in a school—human capital—by working with teachers and principals to systematically increase their skills and thereby increase student achievement. Many school systems have tried to increase teacher effectiveness by addressing only one aspect of the problem, such as evaluation. They have discovered that while they often may solve this aspect of the problem, another is created. For example, a new evaluation tool may not result in substantial change without a sufficient number of trained and certified evaluators to apply the tool. A sufficient amount of time must also be available in the schedule for meaningful evaluation to occur. TAP approaches the multifaceted problem of teacher and principal effectiveness with a multifaceted, aligned approach. TAP intentionally aligns systems for recruiting, promoting, supporting, evaluating and compensating teaching talent to enhance not only teacher effectiveness, but also job satisfaction and collegiality, which directly impact recruitment and retention of effective teachers in high-need schools.

Even with the proven implementation of the Texas TAP System, we recognize that initially there are challenges with recruiting high-quality staff to low performing and high-need schools. Therefore, we have included a partnership between the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the New Teacher Project, and Teach for America as part of our program design. These partnerships will empower districts to hire high-quality teachers as explained later on pages 38 and 39. As part of the statewide strategy to improve teacher quality and student achievement in Texas, it is imperative that this project aligns with other successful state initiatives to achieve maximum potential.

To ensure excellence and academic rigor for every young person who walks in their doors, TIF campuses will use the TAP model to improve student achievement and educator effectiveness. In particular, participating schools will offer the following:

- opportunities to reward effective teachers and principals above their traditional salaries;
- opportunities for appropriate and consistent staff development for all faculty;
- one-on-one mentors to enhance reflection of teaching practices;
- continued growth in creating a professional learning community;
- use of data driven instruction and planning; and
- an accountability system needed to monitor rigor throughout daily instruction.

Each of these schools will institute a system that provides differentiated levels of compensation based at least 50% on student achievement in individual classrooms and the entire school. The other portion of a teacher's differentiated pay comes from classroom observations using a consistent, rigorous rubric that will be conducted at least three times during the school year. Also, teachers will be monetarily rewarded for remaining in the classroom while taking on additional responsibilities and leadership roles as Master and Mentor teachers. Finally, recruitment incentives will be given to teachers in hard-to-staff subject areas and principals in hard-to-staff schools.

The Texas TAP System

The Texas TAP System operates in partnership with NIET and TEA. The state of Texas began implementing the TAP System in 2005 by piloting the initiative in three schools in Richardson ISD. Each year the initiative has expanded to more campuses and there will be forty-six campuses implementing TAP during the 2010-11 school year. There are an additional twenty campuses that are planning for implementation for the 2011-12 school year.

Proven Success of the Texas TAP System

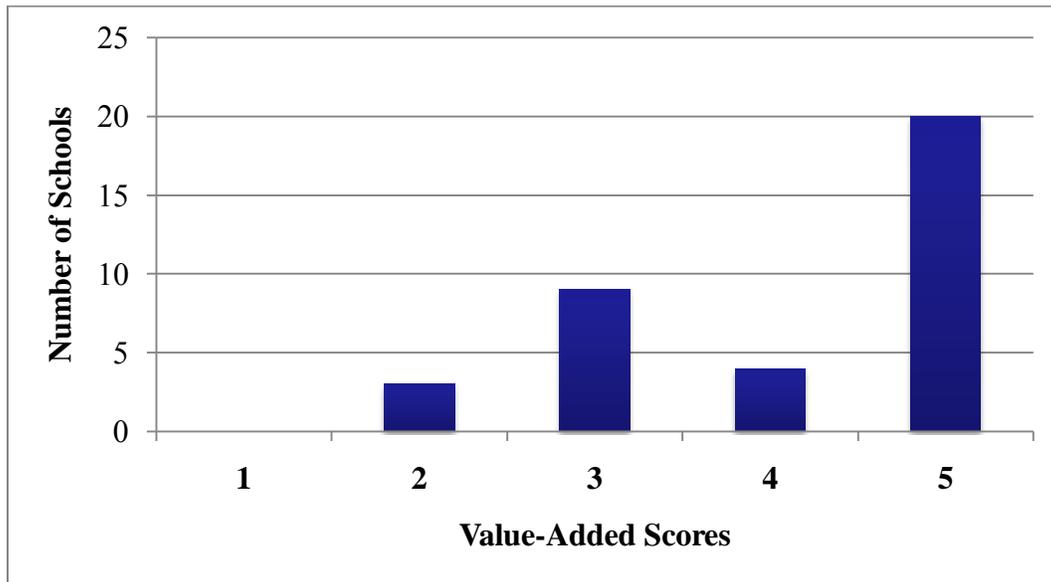
Texas TIF grant partners have chosen to implement TAP as the primary model because it has proven to be successful in Texas. Evidence of student achievement gains as well as teacher retention and effectiveness are just a few of the successes highlighted in the Texas TAP System.

Measure	Data
Number of TAP schools '08-'09	33 Texas TAP schools
Characteristics of Texas TAP schools	67% of students are eligible for free and reduced-price meals. More than 60% Hispanic with a high concentration having limited English proficiency
Impact on students in Texas TAP schools	20 of 36 schools achieved value-added scores at least 2 standard deviations above a year of growth. The average growth for all Texas TAP schools was 1 standard deviation above a year of growth.
Bonus range for teachers and principals ('08-'09)	Teachers: \$525-\$8,264 Principals: \$300-\$4,000

Student Achievement Results

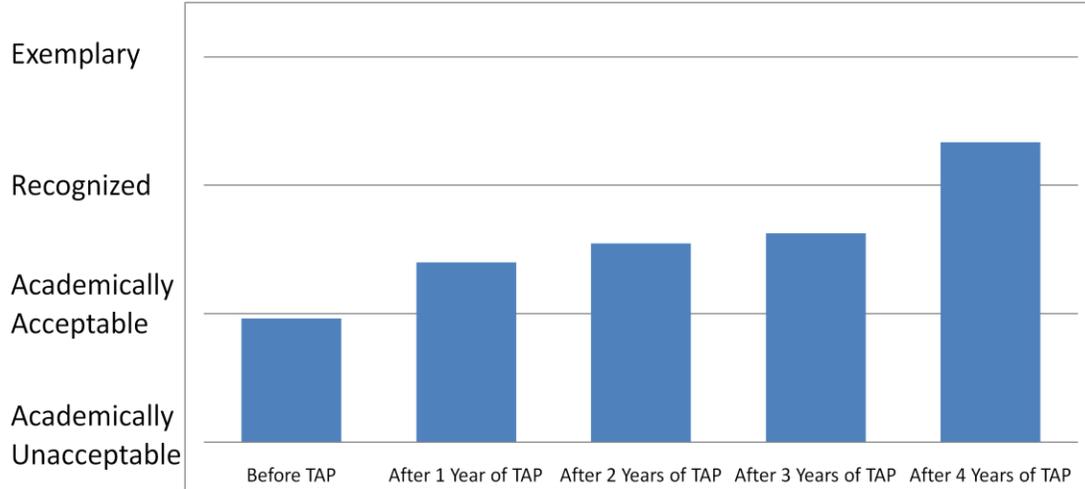
Texas TAP is having a demonstrable impact on student achievement. Students in Texas TAP schools average more than one standard error above a year's expected growth. The average growth in reading and mathematics on the TAKS for 2008-2009 for all Texas TAP schools was 4.13 on a 5-point scale. A value-added score of 3 represents one year of growth. Of the 36 TAP schools, 20 scored value-added 5s, which means that those schools achieved over 2 standard errors above one year's growth (See Figure 3).

Figure 3 – Average School Value-Added Score for Texas TAP 2008-2009



Not only is it imperative to utilize a growth measure to ascertain student academic success, it is also important to stakeholders to evaluate how the Texas TAP schools are performing under the state accountability system. The chart below depicts the average success of Texas TAP schools in the Texas state accountability system before TAP implementation and after each subsequent year of implementation. The trend outlined in Figure 4 indicates that the longer the campuses implement TAP, the more likely they are to improve their accountability rating.

Figure 4 - Average Texas TAP System School Accountability Ratings



Impact on Teacher Retention

In addition to student achievement data, the teacher retention rates for campuses have been examined before and after TAP implementation. For example, at Audelia Creek Elementary in Richardson ISD, teacher turnover was a grave problem before TAP was instituted. During the 2004-2005 academic year, the school lost 70% of its faculty. After TAP was introduced in the 2005-2006 school year, teacher turnover dropped to 12%. Similarly, Thurgood Marshall Elementary and Forest Meadow Junior high increased retention rates from 36% to 87% and 56% to 80%, respectively.

On a national level, TAP principals report that the program has a positive impact on teacher recruitment, including attracting more and better qualified applicants.³ TAP is credited with more effective teachers remaining or being drawn to TAP schools. TAP pilot sites in Texas mirror the program's stellar track record on a national scale. Texas TAP rewards and career opportunities provided the incentives needed to draw the most effective teachers from other areas

³ Agam, K. & Wardell, D. (2006). 2006 TAP principal survey results. Unpublished manuscript. Available: www.talentedteachers.org.

into TAP schools, even those that are traditionally hard-to-staff. At many of the TAP sites in Texas, highly qualified, effective teachers from high SES schools have transferred to lower SES schools participating in the TAP System.

Teacher Perceptions

The Texas TAP System administers an annual survey to Texas TAP teachers to obtain information concerning their attitudes and perceptions of TAP and how it is being implemented on their campus. It is important to examine these attitudes and perceptions to ascertain whether teachers are being supported and TAP is operating at maximum effectiveness. With a 90% response rate (over 1,300 teachers) on the survey, the following highlights are from the 2009-10 Texas TAP teacher survey:

- Over 88% of Texas TAP teachers indicated that TAP changed their instructional practices.
- Over 76% of Texas TAP teachers indicated that TAP helped them develop professionally and improve as an educator.
- Over 90% of Texas TAP teachers indicated that they had collegiality at their school.
- Over 93% of Texas TAP teachers said that they understand the evaluation rubrics used for TAP implementation.
- Over 87% of Texas TAP teachers indicated that they use their teacher evaluation results and feedback to improve their teaching and professional growth.

Texas TAP Case Studies

When **Audelia Creek Elementary in the Richardson Independent School District** opened its doors in 2003, almost half of the teachers were new to the profession and faced the challenges of working in a school with a high population of economically disadvantaged students

and a 43% student mobility rate. After the first year, teacher retention bottomed out at 33% and student achievement scores hovered below 50% passing on all tests. After only one year of TAP implementation, student scores improved by 15%. With each year in the TAP System, student academic gains climbed steadily and the school received a value-added score of 5. Teacher retention also increased with this high level of implementation fidelity. By Year 5 of TAP implementation, Audelia Creek received an *Exemplary* rating from TEA and teacher retention had reached 92% though the high mobility rate and economically disadvantaged population remained relatively unchanged. At the 2010 TAP National Conference, Audelia Creek received the TAP Founder's Award for exceptional implementation of TAP and commitment to teacher and student advancement.

Julian C. Gallardo Elementary School of the Southside Independent School District in San Antonio was established in the 2005-06 school year. The school population was 88% economically disadvantaged and after one year, the mobility rate was nearly 25%. Student achievement gains at Gallardo reached only 49% passing after the first year and topped out at 54% over the next two years. After one year of implementation of the TAP System, student achievement passing rates in reading improved from 77% to 90%, mathematics increased from 66% to 80%, and writing climbed from 75% to 94% resulting in a *Recognized* accountability rating from TEA and a value-added score of 5. At the 2010 TAP National Conference, Julian C. Gallardo Elementary was recognized for outstanding accomplishments in the early stages of TAP implementation and was honored with the TAP School of Promise Award.

Lancaster I.S.D. has experienced an impressive turnaround in accountability ratings during their tenure implementing the TAP System. All five elementary campuses in Lancaster

ISD have moved from *Academically Acceptable* to *Recognized* and several are expected to make *Exemplary* status for the 2009-10 school year (ratings are not final yet).

Reasons for Texas TAP success

Fidelity to the model, dedicated shared leadership, support for educator quality, belief in students, and a desire to grow professionally define the success stories in the Texas TAP System. The TAP System schools in Texas do not operate in isolation. With the partnership of NIET and TEA, the Texas TAP System provides the ongoing training and support that campuses need to be successful. The Texas TAP System state-level team currently consists of twelve individuals, with seven of those individuals spending 100% of their time working with the TAP schools. Every member of the state-level team has at least two years of experience working with TAP, and several individuals have in excess of five years of TAP experience, some of whom include former Master teachers and a principal of a school where the TAP System was implemented. The Executive Director for the Texas TAP System has over five years of experience managing and cultivating the Texas TAP System. The expertise provided by the state-level team has certainly made a considerable impact upon the success of the Texas TAP System. The types of support the team provides will be covered later in the proposal.

Understanding that principals and teachers have the greatest impact on student outcomes, the Texas TAP System team has worked ardently with district office personnel to ensure alignment of the TAP System with local initiatives. It is imperative that all stakeholders are educated about the reform happening within the TAP schools to ensure maximum success. Strong relationships with each superintendent, curriculum director, assessment director, human resources director, and other key district administration are essential to ensure that all teams are working together to enhance success in TAP System schools. These relationships are established

upon initial contact and communication with a district. Training sessions have been tailored to address specific areas of focus where district level individuals may have a vested interest. This initial training coupled with on-going communication contributes to the alignment of district initiatives and the ability for districts to work more efficiently.

Four Components of TAP

(1) Multiple Career Paths: Multiple career paths provide powerful career growth opportunities through new roles and responsibilities (Career, Mentor and Master teacher) and corresponding growth in pay. Teacher turnover and attrition is a mounting problem in education. Many teachers leave due to the lack of a career path recognizing and rewarding good work. TAP addresses this problem with its Multiple Career Path structure. TAP allows teachers to pursue a variety of paths—Career, Mentor, and Master teacher—depending upon their own interests, abilities, and accomplishments. As they move up the ranks, their qualifications, roles, and responsibilities increase, subsequently increasing their compensation. This structure enables good teachers to advance without leaving the classroom and also provides opportunities for shared instructional leadership. Master and Mentor teachers form a Leadership Team, which may include the principal or other administrator, to deliver school-based professional support and conduct classroom observations.

Master teachers are in the top-ranked teaching position. The Master teacher role is a completely new role in schools, with this individual(s) serving as instructional leader to the faculty. The Master teacher is a highly skilled professional educator who shares significant leadership responsibilities and authority with the principal. A Master teacher oversees the professional development of teachers, facilitates curriculum and assessment planning, team-teaches and provides demonstration lessons, and conducts teacher evaluations. Master teachers

receive a recommended salary augmentation of \$10,000 per year for their additional responsibilities and leadership roles. TAP schools in Texas have one Master teacher for every fifteen career teachers.

Mentor teachers provide day-to-day coaching and mentoring to a small group of teachers. They collaborate with Master teachers to construct benchmark lessons, team-teach, and model effective instructional practices. Mentor teachers receive a recommended salary augmentation of \$5,000 per year for their additional responsibilities. TAP schools in Texas have one Mentor teacher for every eight career teachers.

Master and Mentor teachers are hired through a competitive, rigorous, performance-based selection process. These teacher leaders can be from within the school or from outside schools or districts. Master and Mentor teachers must have expert curricular knowledge, outstanding instructional skills and the ability to work effectively with other adults. They take on additional responsibilities and authority, and are required to have a longer work year. Master and Mentor teachers are held to a higher performance standard than the career teachers in their school, and are compensated accordingly. Master and Mentor teachers form a TAP Leadership Team with the principal. The TAP Leadership Team members drive school planning, lead weekly professional development sessions and become trained teacher evaluators.

(2) *Ongoing Applied Professional Growth*: TAP teachers receive continuous, job-embedded development during the regular school day focused on specific student and teacher needs. In weekly “cluster group” development sessions, teachers learn instructional strategies, analyze student data and engage in collaborative planning focused on specific student needs. Strategies are field tested by Master teachers with students in that school to ensure relevance and effectiveness. Teachers receive individual support and coaching from Master and Mentor teachers.

TAP's ongoing applied professional growth model restructures the school schedule to provide time during the contracted day for teachers and administrators to meet, learn, plan, and share with other faculty. Unlike traditional professional development, TAP teachers constantly improve effectiveness of their instruction by focusing on ways to increase student achievement. TAP professional development focuses both on sustaining teachers' areas of strength, as well as identifying areas of improvement.

Central to TAP professional development is the aforementioned cluster group. A cluster is pupil-free time for teachers to meet. Texas TAP provides guidelines and works with schools to restructure their schedules to establish cluster time. While the teachers participate in cluster, students are involved in academically rigorous activities aligned with state standards. Clusters meet for a recommended 60-90 minutes each week during the contract day to focus on instructional practices as determined by analysis of formative and summative student assessments aligned with state standards. Master and Mentor teachers lead or co-lead clusters which include like groups of teachers. The school principal and other administrators are expected to participate in cluster meetings. The TAP System provides the rubric for monitoring this professional development.

Cluster groups analyze student work and teacher evaluation data to target areas of instructional focus. Unlike typical professional development, TAP also provides on-site experts (Master and Mentor teachers) to follow-up in the classroom to ensure that teachers effectively transfer the new instructional techniques they learn. TAP also provides recurring training opportunities to Leadership Team members to help identify best practices, demonstrate the effectiveness of new strategies, and model those strategies with other teachers. In Texas, Master teachers are primarily responsible for leading clusters and providing support and follow-up.

Cluster also exposes weaknesses in instruction, monitor student performance, and differentiate what is needed to challenge every student. Through these processes, students in TAP schools have greater access to results-driven instruction and coursework.

(3) Instructionally-Focused Accountability: Teachers are observed three or more times each year by multiple certified TAP evaluators. The TAP System encompasses formal and informal classroom observations conducted by Mentor and Master teachers and campus administrators. TAP has developed a rigorous, transparent, research-based, and fair evaluation system. TAP's evaluation system differentiates effective from ineffective teachers. Leadership Teams monitor the reliability and consistency of classroom evaluation scores allowing for meaningful differentiation in teacher effectiveness. Members of a school's Leadership Team are tested to certify as official TAP Evaluators at the end of their initial implementation training.

The TAP teacher evaluation system helps teachers and principals to focus on student data and to use those data to determine where teaching practices may need modifications to be more effective. Further, TAP professional development is driven by results from teachers' classroom evaluations and analysis of student work, and is designed to help the teachers become more effective in the areas they are observed as being less effective at meeting student achievement gains. Also, because of the many responsibilities a principal has outside of TAP, and the frequency of the activities in TAP, he or she would not have the time to lead the professional development and evaluation components of TAP on his or her own. Therefore, TAP's career path is structured to enable instructional leadership to be shared among the principal, Master and Mentor teachers. TAP also creates the opportunity for teachers to take on new and expanded roles in evaluation, professional development, and instructional support with commensurate compensation.

(4) Performance-Based Compensation: The TAP System recognizes instructional performance and student learning growth with differentiated performance bonuses. The TAP model provides incentives for teachers based on three components: (1) individual classroom value-added scores; (2) school-wide value-added scores; and (3) teacher scores on formal evaluations. The Texas TIF proposal includes a \$2,000 per teacher annual performance pay pool—this is, on average, 5% of a teacher’s annual salary in the TIF partner districts. Combining these bonus opportunities and salary augmentations, teachers in TAP schools can earn up to 20% above base pay.

TAP changes the current system by compensating teachers according to their roles and responsibilities, their performance in the classroom, and the performance of their students. This new system also encourages districts to offer competitive salaries to those who teach effectively in hard-to-staff subjects (e.g. mathematics, science, and special education) and schools. In many cases, the existence of the opportunities for taking on leadership roles with commensurate pay and the opportunity to be paid based on performance attracts the most effective teachers to typically hard-to-staff subjects and schools. There is clear evidence that highly effective teachers have been attracted to high-need TAP schools. This has occurred because the high-need TAP schools provide additional opportunities for compensation compared to non-TAP schools.

Components added to TAP as part of Texas TIF program

The Texas TIF grant includes a principal (including assistant principals) performance pay system in addition to the traditional TAP System for rewarding teachers. The proposed principal performance pay system includes two distinct measures: school-level value-added scores and principal evaluation scores utilizing a proven leadership assessment such as VAL-ED. A total of \$2,000 per administrator will be included in the annual performance pay pool. After much

thought and discussion, an amount of \$2,000 was selected to be synonymous with the level of incentives available for teachers.

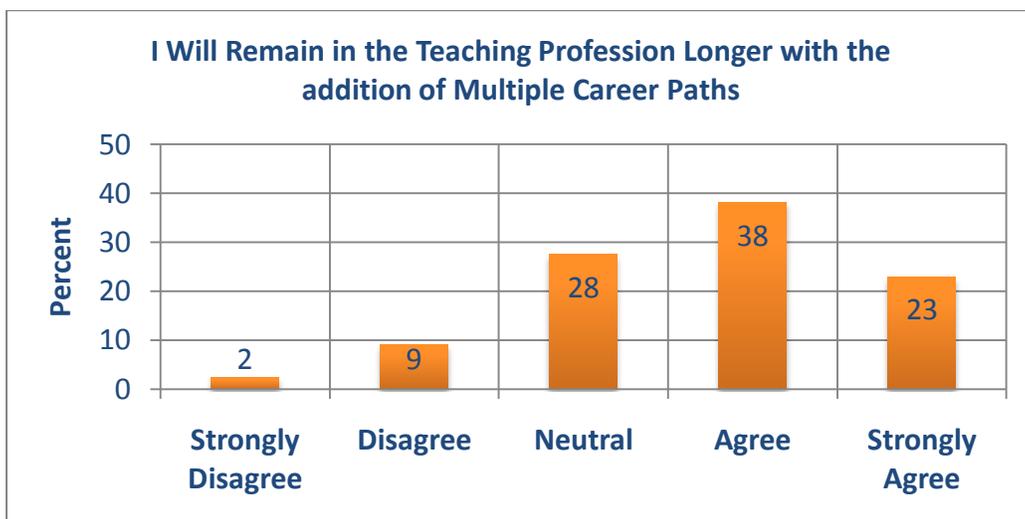
In addition to TAP's differentiated compensation structure, the Texas TIF program proposes an auxiliary incentive—a pool of \$6,000 in recruitment incentives for each campus. As mentioned earlier, the vast majority of TIF campuses struggle with teacher and principal recruitment and retention. The purpose of the recruitment incentive pool is to: (1) attract effective teachers to the TIF schools—particularly in hard-to-staff subject areas such as mathematics and science; and (2) attract effective campus principals and assistant principals to TIF schools. The recruitment incentive pool will be used to provide bonuses in amounts no less than \$2,000 and no more than \$6,000 to teachers and principals who are seeking employment in the TIF school and have proven to be effective in increasing student achievement. The specific compensation amounts will be determined by the campus and district administration based on need.

Providing Incentives to Educators who take on additional responsibilities and leadership roles.

The inclusion of multiple career paths within the TAP System provides opportunities for educators to take on additional responsibilities and leadership roles. The TAP System structure provides Mentor and Master teacher positions and those positions entail a salary augmentation of \$5,000 per year for Mentor teachers and \$10,000 for Master teachers. The roles of the Master and Mentor teachers are paramount to the success of the Texas TAP System.

In addition, the issue of teacher attrition from the field must be addressed. Providing multiple career paths along with financial incentives is likely to increase the retention rate of teachers in the profession. In a survey administered to Texas TAP teachers during February of

2010, 61% of teachers said they would remain in the teaching profession longer with the addition of multiple career paths.



Five Core Elements of a Performance-Based Compensation System. The comprehensive TAP System encompasses the five core elements of a performance-based compensation system. The following section details how we plan to address the five core elements.

- a. Plan for effectively communicating to teachers, administrators, other school personnel, and the community-at-large the components of its PBCS.

The vision for the Texas TIF program is to successfully implement the TAP model throughout participating school districts in Texas. With an extensive communications network, we plan to utilize the TAP model to achieve success with our partners. To continue successful implementation of the TIF Program, regular communication with school districts and key stakeholders is essential. The Strategic Communications Plan (see Appendix A) details the elements of communication both externally and internally. We will accomplish this vision through the following communication goals: (1) Increase visibility of the TIF Program throughout the State of Texas and across the nation; (2) Foster systemic school reform through consistent communication with school district officials, principals, and teachers; and (3) Develop

communicative leaders in our partner districts who will sustain the program beyond the life of the grant.

Texas TIF proposes hiring a public relations (PR) firm to assist us in accomplishing our action steps. A criterion for selection through the procurement process is that the PR firm must have experience in communicating about education. A key component of this relationship will be the development of a TIF/TAP website that will provide an evolving source of information for stakeholders. In addition, an integral step in reaching our targeted audience is to translate all communication material to Spanish.

- b. The involvement and support of teachers, principals, and other personnel and the involvement and support of unions in participating districts.

It is essential to the success of any performance-based compensation system to garner support for the reform from a multitude of stakeholders. This may include school level support (including building administrators and teachers), district level support (including the superintendent and school board), local teachers associations, the community (including parents and businesses), state-level support (including the State Department of Education and other policymakers), and any other groups that can contribute to or benefit from the process.

The Texas TIF partners understand the need to involve local stakeholder groups to establish ongoing support for the proposed performance-based compensation system in their local schools. We have learned through both research and field practice that performance pay cannot be imposed top down. Without exception, teachers must be involved in every step of the process. NIET has also found great value in working with teacher associations. In some cases the union has served as the chief advocate of TAP. This is only possible through an inclusive course of action.

TAP begins the communication process with the faculty in each school. Teachers are engaged in a dialogue about TAP which is led by their principal and administrators. Prior to implementation, the Texas TAP staff holds an on-site initial development visit which begins the information-sharing and consensus-building process. The Texas TAP representative may present an overview of TAP to a variety of stakeholders including school/district leaders, board members, or school faculties.

TAP is unique in its ten year record of successfully building buy-in and commitment among each school's faculty to this challenging reform. NIET recommends a 75% approval vote of the teaching staff prior to implementation of TAP. The process for involving teachers and principals in developing and sustaining a strong commitment to these reforms creates broad and deep stakeholder support. The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) has supported TAP since its inception and local chapters of both the AFT and the National Education Association (NEA) are active participants in TAP.

Another important way to garner support is by inviting stakeholder groups to visit TAP school sites. Many of the campuses included in this proposal visited schools operating under TAP guidelines. Participating campuses provided letters of support from the campus principal, teachers, the district superintendent, local school board members, parents, and members of the community. Furthermore, the Texas TIF Grant has received overwhelming support for this proposal from a number of key stakeholders, including the Texas Commissioner of Education, the Texas Association of School Boards, several members of U.S. Congress, and most importantly the teachers and principals in the TIF schools. (See Appendix B for letters of support).

Follow-up development visits allow new TAP implementers to further refine a specialized plan for the school or district including elements such as staffing, budgeting, professional development scheduling, and hiring of TAP Leadership Team members. These development visits may include advanced and/or detailed implementation information and planning such as: site implementation workshops, budget planning, question and answer sessions, and essential implementation discussions.

- c. Rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account student growth.

Teachers are evaluated by members of the TAP Leadership Team (principal, assistant principal(s), Master and Mentor teachers) three or more times a year in announced and unannounced classroom observations. To ensure the rigor of these observations, the TAP Leadership Team must undergo annual training and certification in the use of TAP's rigorous classroom evaluation standards, known as the *TAP Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Performance Standards*. The standards establish a 19-indicator, research-based rubric of effective teaching, spanning the sub-categories of instruction, designing and planning instruction and the learning environment. The rubric offers a content-neutral, objective means to evaluate teacher effectiveness. Higher classroom evaluation scores for teachers during the school year are associated with higher value-added student achievement scores for their students at the end of the year. Evaluators use a five-point scale, where a score of 1 indicates unsatisfactory performance and a score of 5 indicates exemplary performance on a particular indicator. All teachers are trained in the details of the rubric and know the standards to which they will be held accountable before they are evaluated. TAP teacher evaluations produce more than a score; after each

classroom observation, teachers have a “post-conference” session with their evaluator to discuss the evaluator’s findings. This offers teachers the opportunity to plan how to address any weaknesses and build on strengths identified during the evaluation. In addition, evaluators must present evidence supporting the score they assigned to the teacher, further increasing the credibility, relevancy and transparency of the evaluation system. The table below illustrates one of the instructional indicators on the rubric.

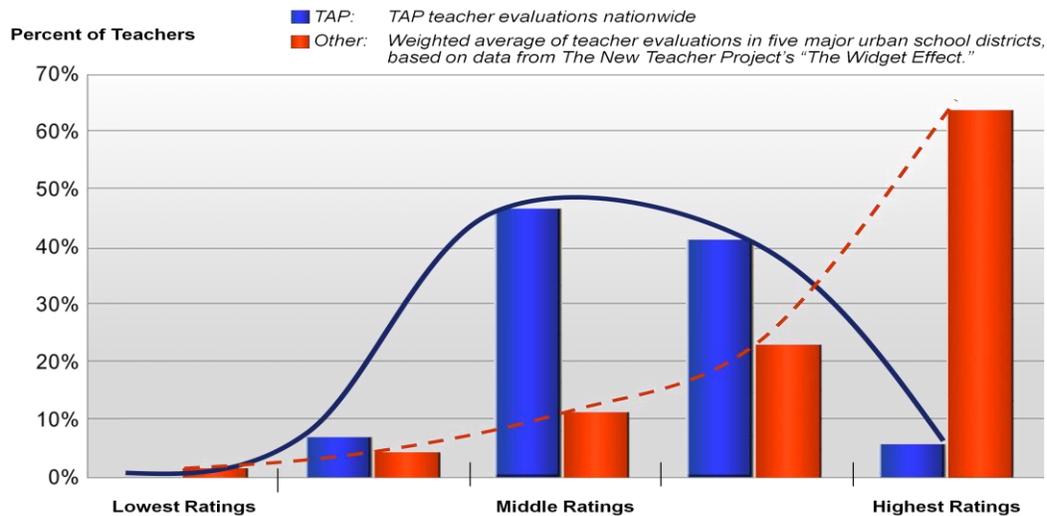
	Exemplary (5)	Proficient (3)	Unsatisfactory (1)
Lesson Structure And Pacing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All lessons start promptly. • The lesson’s structure is coherent, with a beginning, middle, end, and time for reflection. • Pacing is brisk, and provides many opportunities for individual students who progress at different learning rates. • Routines for distributing materials are seamless. • No instructional time is lost during transitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most lessons start promptly. • The lesson’s structure is coherent, with a beginning, middle, and end. • Pacing is appropriate, and sometimes provides opportunities for students who progress at different learning rates. • Routines for distributing materials are efficient. • Little instructional time is lost during transitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons are not started promptly. • The lesson has a structure, but may be missing closure or introductory elements. • Pacing is appropriate for less than half of the students, and rarely provides opportunities for students who progress at different learning rates. • Routines for distributing materials are inefficient. • Considerable time is lost during transitions.

Teacher Responsibilities Survey. Responsibilities performance standards are established for Master, Mentor, and career teachers to document areas and levels of effectiveness and provide benchmarks of performance. These aggregated responsibilities scores are included in an overall “SKR score.” The “SKR score” is comprised of the classroom evaluation scores and the responsibilities survey scores.

The TAP System of teacher evaluation differentiates effective from ineffective teaching, in contrast to many existing evaluation systems that rate all teachers as satisfactory. The TAP rubric sets high expectations for what effective teaching should look like. Because it is designed to identify a range of proficiency on various indicators, it is not expected that a teacher should receive a score of 5, indicating truly exemplary performance, on every indicator during an evaluation. As a result, there is a wide distribution of individual teacher performance ratings in TAP schools, providing a more accurate representation of teachers’ instruction. The chart below illustrates the difference between the

TAP evaluation and the traditional system. TAP evaluation scores produce a bell curve which more closely mirror student achievement results. .

Differentiated Teacher Evaluations in TAP



Principals will be evaluated using a leadership assessment such as the VAL-ED Instrument. The VAL-ED is a paper and on-line assessment which utilizes a multi-rater, evidence-based approach to measure the effectiveness of school leadership behaviors known to influence teacher performance and student learning. The VAL-ED measures core components and key processes. Core components refer to characteristics of schools that support the learning of students and enhance the ability of teachers to teach. Key processes refer to how leaders create those core components⁴. The following chart illustrates this evaluative process:

⁴ <http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/x8451.xml>

This table represents the conceptual framework for VAL-Ed. Each cell represents the cross-section of one core component and one key process of principal leadership. Every item in the Principal, Supervisor, and Teacher Response form represents a cross-section of one core component and one key process.

Core Components	Key Processes					
	Planning	Implementing	Supporting	Advocating	Communicating	Monitoring
High Standards for Student Learning						
Rigorous Curriculum (content)						
Quality Instruction (pedagogy)						
Culture of Learning & Professional Behavior						
Connections to External Communities						
Performance Accountability						

See page 49 for in-depth description of the VAL-ED evaluation process.

- d. A data-management system that can link student achievement to teacher and principal payroll and human resource systems.

All Texas TAP schools manage their teacher observations and performance-based compensation calculations using a third party web-based application, the Comprehensive Online Data Entry system (CODE). Using CODE, authorized personnel can generate a number of analytical reports summarizing teacher performance. TAP provides support to school personnel in how to monitor and utilize data to inform school goals and planning. This system also facilitates monitoring of evaluations to ensure inter-rater reliability. Any significant discrepancies between evaluators in scoring teacher evaluations are flagged and discussed. To determine payouts, CODE data is accessed and merged with school-level and classroom value-added scores.

The Texas TAP schools currently utilize the William Sanders method (SAS EVAAS) of value-added analysis. The Sanders method provides a comprehensive analysis of school and

student achievement. Utilizing CODE, teachers and administrators can link evaluation to student achievement data. The official value-added reports show how low, middle, and high students performed on the state test and provide schools with a web-based analytical tool that helps teachers utilize their student data to make informed instructional decisions.

To ensure the accuracy of the teacher linkage data provided for value-added calculations, the Texas TIF grant will partner with Battelle for Kids. Battelle for Kids is a non-profit organization that has developed an online tool called “Battelle Link” that simplifies the process of teacher linkages for value-added analysis. Rather than having only one person as a data checkpoint in a school or district, the Link software allows each teacher to verify what students they taught and the percentage of time in a given school year.

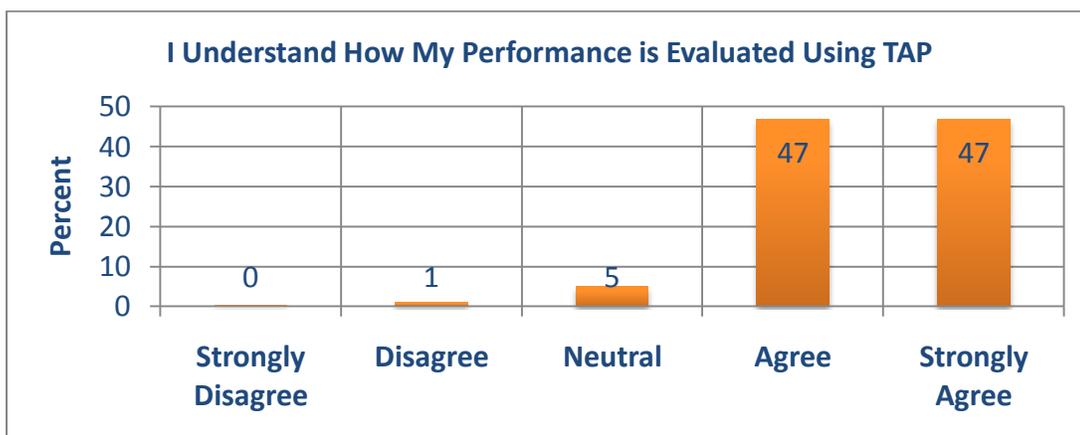
Texas TAP has long-term relationships with each of our data management partners. Therefore, we have great confidence in the accuracy and validity of the information that they will provide our participating districts. All data management partners are contractually bound to Texas TAP to guarantee secure data transfer and storage.

- e. A plan for ensuring that teachers and principals understand the specific measures of teacher and principal effectiveness in the PBCS and receive professional development that enables them to use data generated by these measures to improve their practice.

TAP Leadership Team members utilize scheduled in-service time to familiarize their staff with the TAP Evaluation at the beginning of the year. This in-service includes vital information regarding evaluations, payout structure, cluster expectations and the enhanced nature of TAP System support school-wide. As the school year begins, teachers participate in a practice evaluation to further help them understand the TAP evaluation system, and to allow for a deeper understanding of the expectations as outlined in the TAP Evaluation Rubrics. For new schools,

these practice evaluations must be administered by two evaluators in an effort to a) provide an avenue for feedback between the evaluators to improve their practice and b) to help with the inter-rater reliability on the campus. The practice evaluations are not entered into the evaluation database and are not factored into the performance payouts.

Additionally, new and returning TAP campuses are required to spend their first cluster cycle (typically 8-10 weeks long) providing intense training for teachers on the TAP Evaluation Rubrics. This time is spent supporting, developing and modeling effective teaching by the Master teachers and in reference to the Evaluation Rubrics. By the end of the first cluster cycle, all teachers in a TAP school have been exposed to the evaluation system in multiple formats, including whole staff professional development, individual ‘practice’ evaluation opportunities, and small group cluster learning focused on individual teacher needs. Below is a chart depicting the annual 2009-10 Texas TAP teacher survey results regarding understanding of the evaluation process.



Throughout the year, TAP schools are expected to use individual reflection, known as Individual Growth Plans (IGPs), to increase their knowledge of the TAP evaluation system and how it relates to effective teaching practices. Master and Mentor teachers use cluster time to allow for this reflection and provide feedback to teachers on a regular basis. This time is

especially purposeful in that it relates directly to teacher practice as outlined in the rubrics, and how that practice impacts student achievement. Master teachers have opportunities to see how other TAP schools have implemented reflection at Master teacher meetings, and during the annual TAP Summer Institute (TSI). By reflecting on their own teaching, teachers are continually challenging themselves to improve their instruction and their evaluations on a regular basis.

At the beginning and end of the year, all TAP schools are required to conduct a faculty presentation on performance payouts in an effort to ensure all TAP teachers clearly understand the performance measures. This faculty-wide presentation is typically led by the principal and is aimed at clarifying any questions that teachers may have about the payout process or performance measures. This presentation explains how their SKR (Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities) scores are computed, how value-added is decided (at the classroom and school-wide level) and the timeline for payouts the following school year.

Evaluation results directly provide professional development and therefore help improve teacher effectiveness. Professional development does not end with the cluster meeting; teachers also receive individualized support in their classrooms. This support is based on the needs of the teacher and may vary from lesson planning to a Master or Mentor teacher modeling the strategy in a teacher's classroom.

State and district analysis of TAP teacher evaluation data shows that teachers improve their skills throughout the year due to TAP's effective support system. As previously discussed, the TAP rubric breaks down and operationalizes the standards of effective teaching according to a five-point scale and clearly identifies what effective instruction should look like on each of 19 indicators. By identifying specific areas of improvement with detailed evidence from a teacher's

instruction and concrete examples to address these areas, the TAP rubric leads to genuine effort on the part of teachers to improve and, as a result, leads to higher quality instruction.

f. High-quality professional development system

NIET requires all members of the Leadership Team to receive TAP's CORE trainings, which are grouped into four main modules. The first module provides detailed explanation, research, and practice of the four elements of the TAP System, to introduce participants to TAP cluster group professional growth activities, and introduce the TAP Teacher Performance-Based Compensation and Instructionally Focused Accountability Systems. In the second module, TAP school leaders learn how to use the TAP Instructional Rubrics for evaluation and as professional growth tools to enhance teachers' instructional skills. The third module is an in-depth training on the two primary professional development components of TAP – the operations of a TAP Leadership Team (TLT) and the cluster group. As the fourth in the TAP Leadership Team training series, this training prepares TAP school leaders to become certified evaluators. Participants will sharpen their skills with the TAP Observational Rubrics to accurately analyze and rate classroom lessons and classroom environments, and plan for instructional conferences that reinforce and refine teacher skills in implementing instruction and establishing productive classroom environments. By creating experts in the school with both the responsibility and time to support teachers in analyzing data, TAP prepares teachers and principals to more effectively analyze and use student data to drive instruction.

TAP schools will restructure their schedule to allow for the weekly professional development clusters to occur during the normal school day. All teachers participate in cluster groups. Professional development continues into each classroom as Master teachers model lessons, observe instruction and support other teachers to improve their practice. Master and Mentor

teachers use evaluation data to inform areas of need for a particular teacher, and address these needs by working with a teacher in his or her own classroom. Organized by subject matter or grade level, these clusters provide time for teachers to focus on student data and student needs. Evaluation results directly provide professional development and therefore help develop ineffective teachers into effective teachers. Master and Mentor teachers use evaluation data to analyze areas for improvement across the faculty and address these areas of need in weekly cluster meetings.

The annual program review process involves NIET coming into a school for a day to observe how TAP is being implemented. One of the key areas of observation is cluster. The reviews conclude with a set of recommendations regarding the areas in which schools are particularly strong or need additional assistance. State-level TAP staff regularly conduct site visits in which they may assess the effectiveness of the professional development. These highly-trained individuals may tackle issues on-site as they arise. In addition, Texas TAP monitors trends in teacher effectiveness and student achievement to identify any broader areas of improvement in professional development.

Principals implementing the TAP System are required to attend three to four trainings per year. These trainings provide an opportunity to network with other TAP principals regarding TAP implementation challenges. The content for these trainings is primarily focused on effective leadership of the TAP System as well as meaningful data analysis. As the head of the Leadership Team, the principal takes away content that will directly address their student and teacher achievement needs of their campus.

In addition to the professional growth structure provided through the TAP System, the TEA staff will provide research-based training on curriculum for the TIF/TAP schools as an in-

kind contribution. TEA is committed to providing research-based technical assistance to TIF campuses who are struggling with curriculum needs. The involvement of Texas research centers in TIF/TAP will have the added benefit of informing higher education practices as well.

Project Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of the Texas TIF program is to improve student achievement in high-need schools. This goal will be accomplished through a comprehensive strategy aimed at rewarding teachers and principals for effectiveness with performance-based differentiated compensation.

Other program goals include:

- Recruiting and retaining high quality teachers and principals in high-need schools—defined by low student achievement and high concentrations of minority and economically disadvantaged students;
- Recruiting and retaining high quality teachers in hard-to-staff subject areas such as mathematics and science.

To achieve these goals, we establish the following objectives and timeline:

1. By **August 2011**, provide substantial financial recruitment incentives for teachers and principals (ranging from \$2,000-\$6,000) who have proven success in increasing student achievement. Incentives will be distributed based on hard-to-staff subject areas such as mathematics and science (for teachers) and hard-to-staff campuses (for principals) and incentive amounts will vary by individual campus based on need.
2. By **August 2011**, all TIF/TAP schools funded under this grant will be fully operational. Therefore, differentiated compensation will be given to teachers based on their level of increased responsibility (salary augmentations for Master and Mentor teachers).

3. By **May 2012**, improve student achievement by at least one standard deviation above the control group (as measured by value-added growth) by increasing teacher and principal effectiveness in TIF/TAP schools.
4. By **August 2012**, begin the school year with 100% of certified positions filled with highly qualified and effective teachers.
5. By **May 2013**, expand TIF/TAP so that two additional schools for every TIF/TAP school will implement a similar performance pay system (funded through sources other than this grant).
6. By **June 2015**, produce an in-depth report that examines the results and lessons learned and develop a toolkit that other states can use to replicate the implementation of the Texas TIF program.

Why is a planning year necessary?

Based on our experience with the TAP System, a planning year is necessary to implement the TIF project with the highest level of fidelity. TAP is a complex school reform model and the planning period is necessary to train all district and school staff on its processes. In the fall of Year 1, TIF/TAP principals will develop individualized implementation plans for their campuses. They will also have the opportunity to visit other TAP schools that are already fully operational. During the spring of TIF Year 1, campuses will go through an extensive process to hire Master and Mentor teachers and begin forming their Leadership Teams. In the summer, all new TIF/TAP schools will participate in TAP implementation training modules and the TAP Summer Institute. This comprehensive training schedule will prepare the TIF campuses for full implementation in the Fall of Year 2. See Appendix C for a timeline of tasks/activities.

Selection Criteria 2, Factor 1: Statewide Strategy

As mentioned earlier, we have included a partnership between TEA, the New Teacher Project, and Teach for America as part of our program design. As part of the statewide strategy to improve teacher quality and student achievement in Texas, it is imperative to align the successful statewide initiatives in which Texas has invested to achieve maximum potential.

Texas has had a partnership with Teach for America (TFA) and the New Teacher Project for nineteen and six years, respectively. While both initiatives as well as TAP have generated success in our state, they have largely been implemented in isolation. It is time to align the statewide initiatives into a comprehensive strategy. The goals of TIF provide an opportunity to do just that.

Teach for America provides an opportunity to bring talented recent college graduates into the teaching profession. The New Teacher Project provides an opportunity to bring in talented mid-career professionals. Because the Mentor and Master teacher positions in TIF schools require several years of teaching experience, the targeted positions for the TFA and NTP candidates will be career teacher vacancies in the TIF schools. We believe that through the Texas TAP System Human Resource strategies, we ensure a high level of Master and Mentor teachers. However, there is currently no specific strategy or HR mechanism to bring in talented career teachers to these schools. We believe the inclusion of TFA and NTP partnerships will further strengthen the quality of teachers within the TIF schools. This strategy will enhance the ability of the TAP System to operate at maximum effectiveness.

As indicated in the needs section, there are 11 districts and 36 campuses included in the Texas TIF proposal from all across the state of Texas. We have witnessed the power of having demonstration sites at Texas TAP schools and wish to provide outreach to all areas of the state.

The opportunity to showcase the TIF project across the state will assist in replication efforts as the project progresses.

TEA and partnering TIF districts recognize that state and district policies must be updated to accommodate the substantial changes represented by this project in order to ensure long term sustainability. Texas will utilize the expertise provided by NIET to identify, support, monitor and evaluate TAP schools. By building capacity and commitment to TAP at the state and local level, we will pave the way for long-term funding and policies that sustain the reform.

Selection Criteria 2, Factor 2: Stakeholder Engagement

As previously stated, stakeholder engagement is a key component to successful implementation of TAP. This engagement begins with the teachers who must approve the program with a recommended 75% vote before the school can participate. Prior to the vote, principals are given the opportunity to attend a TAP implementation workshop. Then, they determine if they would like to propose the system to their faculty. One of the most effective ways to educate stakeholders about TAP is to have them visit other TAP schools. This provides an opportunity for schools to observe TAP in action and to determine how they can make it fit their needs. See pages 26-28 for more info.

Selection Criteria 2, Factor 3: Strong Evaluation System

TAP's teacher evaluation system is consistent with TIF's requirement for a fair, rigorous and objective process that evaluates teacher and principal performance multiple times throughout the school year. Since the program was launched, TAP schools have been implementing a comprehensive system to evaluate and reward success. TAP teachers are held accountable for meeting the *TAP Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibility Standards* with 50% of their performance bonus based on multiple classroom evaluations each year.

These standards were developed based on educational psychology research focusing on learning and instruction. They are also based on an extensive review of instructional guidelines and standards developed by numerous national and state teacher standards organizations, including the following: the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), the National Board for Professional Teacher Standards, Massachusetts' Principles for Effective Teaching, California's Standards for the Teaching Profession, Connecticut's Beginning Educator Support Program, and the New Teacher Center's Developmental Continuum of Teacher Abilities. The work of Danielson (1996) served as a valuable resource for defining the teaching competencies at each level of teacher performance.

Because the TAP teaching standards and rubrics are based on empirical studies from a diverse literature, when replicated these standards are expected to help teachers produce significant achievement gains.⁵ Research shows that when TAP rubrics are applied correctly, they serve as accurate, valid and reliable predictors of achievement gains.⁶

TAP Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Standards have four domains with indicators in each domain. They are outlined in the chart below. Although teachers are evaluated on their content knowledge, the focus of the evaluations is not linked to a specific curriculum. Therefore all teachers, including those in the special areas, can be evaluated fairly. The state teacher evaluation system is called the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) in Texas. Under state law, districts may decide whether to use PDAS or another evaluation system. TIF campuses will have the option to take the TAP evaluation system to their local

⁵ Schacter, J. & Thum, Y.M. (2004). Paying for high- and low-quality teaching. *Economics of Education Review*, 23, 411-430.

⁶ Schacter, J., Schiff, T., Thum, Y.M., Fagnano, C., Bendotti, M., Solmon, L.C. et al. (2002). *The impact of the teacher advancement program on student achievement, teacher attitudes, and job satisfaction*. Unpublished manuscript. Available: <http://www.talentedteachers.org/publications.taf>.

school board for approval to use in lieu of PDAS. In fact, all existing TAP districts in our state have made this decision. It is expected that all TIF districts will adopt the TAP Evaluation System as PDAS has not been updated in over a decade.

TAP Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibility Performance Standards Overview	
Designing and Planning Instruction Instructional Plans, Student Work, Assessment	The Learning Environment Expectations, Managing Student Behavior, Environment, Respectful Culture
Instruction Standards and Objectives, Motivating Students, Presenting Instructional Content, Lesson Structure and Pacing, Learning Activities and Materials, Questioning, Academic Feedback, Grouping Students, Teacher Content Knowledge, Teacher Knowledge of Students, Thinking, Problem Solving	Responsibilities Staff Development, Instructional Supervision, School Responsibilities, Mentoring, Community Involvement, Growing and Developing Professionally, Reflecting on Teaching

Evaluations are performed by the TAP Leadership Team (comprised of Master and Mentor teachers, the principal and other campus administrators). In Texas, half of the teacher observations are announced and the remainder are unannounced. All announced observations include a pre- and post-conference with the teacher. Unannounced observations include a post-conference, but not pre-conference due to the “surprise” nature.

TAP does not assume that effective teachers are also effective evaluators. Therefore, TAP Leadership team members receive rigorous training and must receive certification prior to performing evaluations. As part of the ongoing evaluator development, NIET provides an extensive DVD library of classroom episodes and teacher post-conferences graded against TAP standards. Practice evaluations are also used to build skills and trust among the teachers and Leadership Team. Annual evaluator certification is required and inter-rater reliability is continuously monitored. The Texas TAP System provides this testing and certification.

Selection Criteria 2, Factor 4: Data Management System

A strong and efficient data system is critical to the success of managing teacher

evaluation data as well as producing teacher and administrator performance payouts. Due to the current deficits in partner districts internal data systems, the Texas TIF grant utilizes the expertise of multiple contractors to achieve this goal. While the partner districts hope to expand the functionality of their internal data management systems, this will likely not happen by the time implementation of the TIF project begins; therefore, we will rely on the Texas TAP System and their partnerships to assist districts with this important and tedious process.

Value-added Results: Student Test Scores and Teacher Linkages

Individual student test scores—TAKS—will be transmitted from the districts directly to SAS via a secure FTP data transfer. TEA is not involved in student data transfers between the districts and SAS. TIF districts provide SAS with teacher and student level data (both demographic and student achievement data) from both TAP and non-TAP schools. SAS computes value-added scores for TAP schools at both the teacher level and the school level. At the teacher level, the student data is linked to teacher data.

Once computed, the results of the value-added analyses will be transferred to the Texas TAP Director via secure FTP transfer and will be reviewed by the Director and TIF Project Manager for possible anomalies. At this point, no individual student-level data will be associated with the transferred data. For TIF schools, the data will include teacher identification information; non-TIF school results will be at the school level. If any results appear to be out of line, the TIF Director will work with the school district and SAS to verify that the data transmitted to SAS were accurate and that no errors occurred in the computational stage for the value-added models. If errors in the original data submitted by the districts are identified, the district will correct and resubmit the data and SAS will re-compute the value-added scores.

Teacher Evaluation Data

All teacher evaluation scores are entered by the campuses into the TAP "CODE" system annually by May 1st. The CODE system provides reporting procedures to the districts and the Texas TAP System to generate "Skills, Knowledge, and Responsibility" (SKR) reports. Once complete evaluation data is entered, composite SKR scores are available to Texas TAP System personnel via a secure website (web servers are set up behind firewalls and require secure login for access).

Teacher and Administrator Payout Worksheets

The process for distributing payout checks to districts is a tedious process that requires a carefully constructed plan for communication and verification of award amounts. The CODE system provides an online module for computing performance payouts. The Texas TAP System was the first TAP site in the nation to utilize this system as we were an integral part in helping design it. The TIF Project Director and Project Manager are responsible for inputting the SKR scores and value-added scores into the payout worksheet in CODE to compute the specific payout amounts for individual teachers and principals. Appendix D is a flowchart of the TAP payout process utilized in the Texas TAP System.

The Texas TAP System has extensive experience in handling confidential information. We maintain a secure, centrally managed network protected by state-of-the-art firewall and security monitoring software. Policies specify that all sensitive and confidential data reside only on network storage devices. All computers use a password-protected screen saver which cannot be disabled by the users. All laptops are further protected by Safe Boot software, which encrypts all data on the local hard drive and renders the hard drive unbootable should the laptop and/or hard drive be lost or stolen.

Selection Criteria 2, Factor 5: High Quality Professional Development

All new schools and Leadership Team members entering into the TAP System are given implementation training before the school year starts. This four day training is called *Preparing for Success in a TAP School* or TAP 101. The objective for this training is to help schools initiate a plan for implementing TAP in the first year. During this summer, schools will also attend two teacher evaluation preparation trainings entitled *Preparing to Become a TAP Evaluator* and *Becoming a TAP Evaluator*. By the end of this implementation phase of trainings, members of a school's Leadership Team are tested and certified to become official TAP Evaluators. The test is scored by a Texas TAP staff member.

In addition to the implementation trainings, the Texas TAP Summer Institute provides four days of training and support for all TAP school Leadership Team members and other district personnel. A variety of topics ranging from Data Analysis to Understanding Performance Pay are provided to attendees. The Texas TAP team also supports districts and principals in making key implementation decisions about cluster configuration, the development of specific student achievement goals using data, and teacher support plans.

Once the school year starts, all TAP Leadership Team members are given role-specific training aimed at increasing implementation fidelity. Master teacher training takes place four times during the school year. At these trainings, Master teachers work through reflective protocols to analyze their practice, as well as such training topics as Supporting and Coaching Teachers, Field Testing and planning effective cluster meetings.

Principals are asked to come together three to four times a year for TAP Principal Training. At these meetings they have the opportunity to work with other principals to solve implementation issues, work on leadership skills and practice working with value-added and

CODE data to make informed decisions for their campus concerning teacher quality. This enables ongoing analysis of CODE data in order to align campus professional development to instructional needs.

Mentor training is the most recent level of support added to the Texas TAP training menu. Mentor training takes place regionally to prevent teachers from having to miss in-class time. Mentors teachers work on developing their role within their school as a support to other teachers.

Every school is also supported by three tiers of support: a Coordinator of Principal Leadership, a Regional Coordinator, and Executive Master teachers who visit at least once a month and communicate with Leadership Team members via email and phone. The Texas TAP Team meets monthly to triage the schools in the program to determine the greatest support needs. Schools in high-need receive more specific and intense support by team members.

All schools participating in TAP implement the weekly professional development cluster meetings referenced on page 20. Throughout the course of the year, Leadership Teams review data from the evaluation system to assess the impact of cluster on teacher growth. As a result of focused, high-quality professional development on the campus, teacher efficacy increases, which leads to gains in student achievement.

Meeting the Absolute Priorities

The Texas TIF grant proposal meets all three absolute priorities. The following pages depict exactly how we plan to meet these priorities.

Priority 1—Differentiated Levels of Compensation for Effective Teachers and Principals

The proposed TIF/TAP performance-based compensation is structured to reward teachers and principals who raise student academic achievement. The use of valid and reliable measures

of student achievement—including statewide assessment scores—will serve as the chief indicator of teacher and principal effectiveness. TAP provides differentiated rewards to teachers and principals based on their effectiveness, as measured by multiple valid and reliable measures: value-added assessments and classroom observations. The TAP System, several state education agencies and many contemporary researchers use a statistical method called “value-added” to measure the contributions of teachers and schools to student achievement during a school year. This method requires matching each student’s test scores to his or her own previous scores in order to measure the student’s progress during the year—not only the student’s attainment at the end of the year. Value-added separates the impact of a school year on a student from the student’s prior experiences in and out of school, individual characteristics, socioeconomic status and family conditions. As a result, schools and teachers can become more accountable for how well they teach rather than how advantaged or disadvantaged their students were at the beginning of the year. To put it another way, value-added tells you how much the school and teacher have contributed to student learning compared to other schools and teachers with similar students. Value-added data, measured at the classroom (when data is available) and school levels, accounts for half of teacher annual bonuses under the TAP performance-based compensation system. Teacher effectiveness in TAP schools is measured by meeting or exceeding proficiency on SKR scores and student growth measures.

The existing TAP schools in Texas have an established relationship with Dr. William Sanders at SAS EVAAS, who is a leader in the value-added field, to calculate value-added growth in their schools and classrooms. Dr. Sanders’s work in Tennessee set the gold standard for value-added research. The Texas TIF schools will also utilize the Sanders method to calculate the value-added scores for participating schools.

Performance-based compensation for teachers: The TAP model provides incentives for teachers based on three components: individual classroom value-added, school-wide value-added

scores and their scores on teacher evaluations. A bonus pool of \$2,000 per teacher is established and bonuses generally range between \$200 and \$5,000 depending on how a teacher scores on each of the three components.

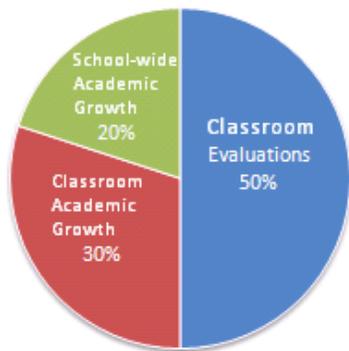
How is the teacher performance-pay configured? The Texas TIF program proposes a fair and rigorous process for determining teacher performance pay. Half of the TAP effective teacher bonus is based on student achievement growth which is broken down into two parts: 20% based on school-wide value-added growth and 30% based on value-added gains of an individual classroom teacher's students. If a teacher does not teach a state-tested subject, such as art or P.E., or his/her classroom does not meet the requirements to receive a value-added report, the 50% value-added bonus is based solely on the school-wide gain. The remaining 50% of the bonus is determined based on the teacher's classroom performance.

TAP requires schools to take several steps to ensure that the value-added calculations required for the bonus awards can be made. These steps include putting in place a testing program that aligns with No Child Left Behind (NCLB) for all students in grades 3 through 8, including additional grades when possible. Tests must be scaled and vertically aligned or capable of being equated.

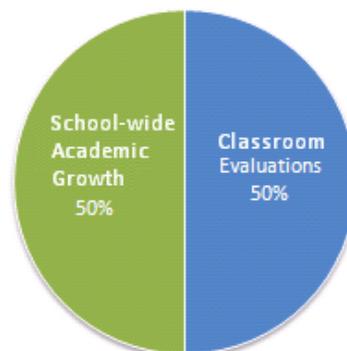
What kind of value-added score does a teacher need to receive a bonus? Value-added scores for individual classroom gain are based on a 5-point rubric and correlate to how much a teacher's classroom gains (or does not gain) in student achievement. A score of 3 means that the aggregate growth of all students in a teacher's class has met a year's growth; teachers must earn a score of ≥ 3 or higher to receive a payout in the individual classroom achievement category. A score of ≥ 5 is 2 or more standard deviations above the predicted value and a ≥ 4 is 1-2 standard

deviations above the predicted value. The greater the student achievement gain, the larger the bonus.

Performance-Based Compensation for Teachers with Classroom Value-Added Data



Performance-Based Compensation for Teachers without Classroom Value-Added Data



Performance-based compensation for campus principals: An annual performance pool of \$2,000 per campus administrator is allocated to this project. Bonuses will be paid to campus administrators based on two distinct measures: the school-wide value-added scores and an administrator’s score under a principal evaluation system such as VAL-ED. The VAL-ED model is a 360 degree evaluation in which principals are anonymously evaluated by all the teachers in their school and their supervisor. Principals also complete a self evaluation. With their scores, principals also receive a detailed scoring rubric which provides comprehensive feedback on their strong suits and areas of improvement.

How is the principal performance-pay configured? The school value-added score has to be at least a 3 (on a 5-point scale)—or one year’s growth for students—for school administrators to receive performance-based compensation under this measure. The higher the value-added score, the larger the bonus paid. Utilizing the VAL-ED Model, a principal score must have a score of 3 on a five point scale to be eligible to receive payout. The rating system is

as follows: 1=Ineffective, 2=Minimally Effective, 3=Satisfactorily Effective, 4=Highly Effective, and 5=Outstandingly Effective. The higher the evaluation score, the larger the bonus paid.

Priority 2—Fiscal Sustainability of the Performance-Based Compensation System

To be included in the proposed TIF project, each partner district committed to sustaining the program at the conclusion of the grant period and also to finding ways to replicate the program at other campuses within the district and across the state of Texas. For example, as part of this application, Lancaster, Bryan, Pflugerville, and Hearne ISDs are proposing a district-wide implementation of the TIF/TAP program. Richardson and Southside ISDs are in the process of developing a long-term expansion plan for the TIF/TAP program that includes all campuses in their district.

In addition, all TIF districts have committed to increased financial responsibility for the differentiated compensation systems throughout the five-year grant period and beyond. Sources that will be used to sustain and expand the TIF program include funds from local professional development and mentoring programs and federal Title I, Title II, and Title V programs. In addition, several TIF school boards are considering local proposals to gain additional resources for TIF sustainability and expansion.

Priority 3—Comprehensive Approaches to the Performance-Based Compensation System

We recognize that financial incentives alone will not maximize the effectiveness of educators. It is imperative to provide support and professional growth opportunities for teacher to maximize their effectiveness in the classroom. The comprehensive nature of the TAP System aligns performance pay with teacher career advancement, highly effective professional

development, and meaningful evaluations. Professional development is informed by the outcomes of teacher evaluations at the individual and school-wide levels.

Meeting the Competitive Preference Priorities

The Texas TIF grant proposal meets all three competitive preference priorities. The following pages depict exactly how we plan to meet these priorities.

Priority 4—Use of Value-Added Measures of Student Achievement

Half of performance bonuses for teachers and principals in Texas TAP schools are linked to value-added data utilizing the Sanders method mentioned above. In order to determine individual value-added bonuses for eligible TAP teachers, the Sanders method first estimates reference population growth averages for each grade and subject using the student test scores (from the same state test) of both TAP teachers and similarly matched non-TAP teachers. The reference population growth average is the average amount of growth a teacher is expected to make with his or her students in a particular grade and subject in a year.

TAP teachers that influenced student progress are then identified at a rate that is statistically different from the average teacher in a particular grade and subject. All TAP teachers are classified into five categories based on average student scores: 1) more than two standard error units below the average teacher's estimate, 2) between one and two standard error units below, 3) within one standard error unit above or below the average teacher's estimate, 4) between one and two standard error units above the average, or 5) more than two standard error units above in terms of their students' gains. Teachers with gain estimates at or above the average teacher's estimates (i.e., in groups 3, 4, or 5) are considered to have made one year's

growth or more with their students and therefore, in the TAP model, qualify for the part of the bonus that is based on their own students' gains.⁷

Critics sometimes argue that performance pay encourages competition among teachers. TAP addresses this issue by including both individual teacher-level and school-wide value-added scores in the bonus system. It also addresses the "free rider" problem – often an objection to performance pay when only school-wide achievement is used. This dual approach gives teachers the incentive to help each other improve their effectiveness while motivating them at a personal level.

If a part of the bonus is awarded for school-wide student achievement growth – as opposed to just individual classroom gains – this competition can be diminished. In annual attitudinal surveys of TAP teachers, teachers consistently rate the level of collegiality as very strong in their schools, despite implementing a performance-based compensation system.⁸ The school-wide value-added component provides the incentive for teamwork and collaboration, and gives teachers motivation to help each other improve their pedagogical skills. We also include the school-wide component as part of our bonus system because of the synergy among all teachers that is necessary to make the school better as a whole. Another reason for the split bonus is to provide teachers who do not have classroom achievement gains data, such as physical

⁷ A standard error indicates how variable the sample statistic (e.g., the class's average score) is from sample to sample. The standard error of a statistic depends on the sample size; the larger the sample size, the smaller the standard error.

The difference between the "standard deviation of scores on a test" and the "standard error of measurement on a test" is that when one refers to the standard deviation of scores on a test, usually this is referring to the standard deviation of the test scores obtained by a *group* of students on a single test. It is a measure of the "spread" of scores *among* students whereas the standard error of measurement on a test is a measure of the "spread" of scores *within* a single student (from one testing to another).

⁸ Agam, K., Reifsneider, D. & Wardell, D. (2006). The teacher advancement program: National teacher attitudes. Unpublished manuscript. Available www.talentedteachers.org.

education teachers or art teachers, but who nevertheless contribute to the school's learning environment, the opportunity to receive a bonus.

Priority 5—Increased Recruitment and Retention of Effective Teachers to Serve High-Need Students and in Hard-to-Staff Subjects and Specialty Areas in High-Need Schools

As previously mentioned, we will provide an annual pool of \$6,000 per campus for recruitment incentives for hard-to-staff subject areas and positions. In addition to this strategy, we have included the aforementioned partnerships between Teach for America and the New Teacher Project in an effort to recruit high quality career teachers to the TIF schools. The TAP system inherently works to retain effective teachers. Last year, the average Texas TAP school teacher retention rate was 90% and several campuses reported 100% teacher retention. The trend generally indicates the longer the campus has been a TAP school, the higher the teacher retention rate. We administered a survey in Summer 2009 to Texas TAP teachers who left their positions at TAP campuses and of those who left, the vast majority left due to spouse career relocation or decisions to become a stay-at-home parent.

Priority 6—New Applicants to the Teacher Incentive Fund

TEA is a new applicant to the TIF grant.

3. Adequacy of Support for the Proposed Project

Selection Criteria 3, Factor 1: Quality Management Plan

The Texas TAP team organizes trainings for the Leadership Teams that include a high focus on data analysis and guidance in using the data to improve instructional practices. Training opportunities and on-site visits allow the team to present the data systems that yield incredible opportunities for the Leadership Team members to analyze teacher and student performance

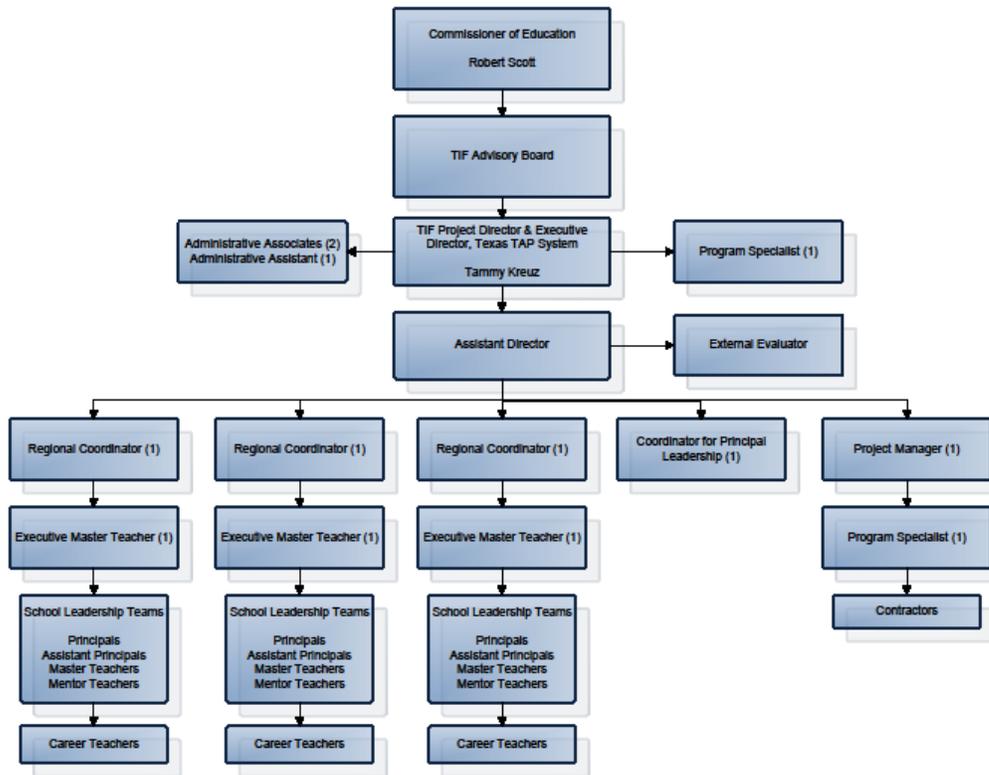
data. In depth analysis enables the Leadership Team to tailor support for teachers in a meaningful manner. Once campus value-added reports are available for review, campus administrators will be led through an in depth analysis of the data, determining how it is tied to teacher appraisal data from the CODE system. The administrators will then be guided through an action plan for the upcoming school year. The Coordinator of Principal Leadership and Regional Coordinators will follow up with campus administrators at site visits to address any questions or concerns that campuses may have while implementing the action plan. Please see Appendix G for an example TAP Implementation Calendar introducing TAP principals to the system.

Data within the TAP System is not limited to the two management systems. In addition to the observation data available to campus administrators analyzing specific instructional rubric indicators, the Regional Coordinators and Executive Master teachers work with campus Master and Mentor teachers to identify examples of student work that may be used from field testing and should be replicated in order to target individual student needs. Master and Mentor teachers receive on-going training on how to lead their career teachers through a reflective analysis of student work samples and classroom data that will allow them to purposefully address specific student needs.

As previously mentioned, the Texas TAP System is currently managed in partnership with NIET and TEA. This strong partnership has been in existence for the past five years. Because this is a state-wide effort, TEA has chosen to be the fiscal agent for this grant proposal. With support from NIET, the Texas TAP team will assist the partner districts and campuses with implementation of this program. The state-level team has extensive experience with TAP implementation and support within Texas. Several members have been with the initiative since its inception in Texas five years ago.

County Independent School District; Dr. Pedro Reyes, Director of the Educational Policy and Planning Doctoral Program at the University of Texas at Austin; and Holly Eaton, Policy Analyst for the Texas Classroom Teacher’s Association.

Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Management Organizational Chart



Selection Criteria 3, Factor 2: High Quality Support Plan

As previously mentioned, the Texas TAP system and state-level team has been operational for more than five years. The Texas TAP team currently consists of 12 staff members with experience ranging from classroom teacher to Master teacher to principal to state education official. The team has become a recognized leader among NIET and other TAP sites as having a strong infrastructure to support schools with implementation.

In addition to the formal training mentioned earlier, the Texas TAP team conducts countless site visits each year to the campuses to observe elements of implementation and provide feedback, on-site training, and support where needed to achieve the highest level of implementation fidelity possible. Each campus is visited at least once a month by someone from our staff. The Texas TAP team is also available to the campuses 24/7 via phone and e-mail for additional support. We recognize that many educators work outside of the normal workday and want to make assistance available when it is timely.

The Texas TAP team receives ongoing training and support from the NIET staff. There are regular director's meetings and opportunities for the field staff to engage in dialogue about support mechanisms for schools. We rely on the networks gleaned through the TAP System nationwide for additional expertise if necessary. The timeline for completing tasks/objectives is included in Table 3 and Appendix C.

Table 3

Activity/Related Objective	Person(s) Responsible	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3				Year 4				Year 5			
		Quarter				Quarter				Quarter				Quarter				Quarter			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Conduct TAP Implementation workshops in each district	RC, EMT, CPL	x	x																		
TIF campuses conduct site visits at existing TAP schools	Districts	x	x	x																	
TIF faculty presentations about incentive structure	PD	x			x	x			x	x			x	x			x	x			
Interview/hire Texas TIF staff	PD	x	x																		
Train Texas TIF staff on TAP implementation and process	PD and NIET Staff	x	x	x	x																
Interview/hire Master and Mentor Teachers	Districts, PD		x	x																	
Training and on-site support for TIF schools	RC, EMT, CPL, PM		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
TIF Advisory Board Meeting	PD		x		x		x		x		x		x		x		x		x		x
TIF campuses attend National TAP Conference	Districts			x																	
Publish RFP for External Evaluation	PD and PS			x																	
Hire Evaluator for External Evaluation	PD and PM				x																
TIF campuses attend National TAP Conference	Districts			x				x				x				x				x	
TIF campuses attend TAP Summer Institute	Districts				x				x				x				x				x
Texas TIF staff attend National TAP Conference	PD, EMT, RC, PM, PS			x				x				x				x				x	
Texas TIF staff attend NIET training	PD, EMT, RC, CPL	x	x			x	x			x	x			x	x			x	x		
TIF Leadership Teams are trained on Implementing TAP	EMT, RC, and School Staff				x			x				x				x				x	
Recruit effective educators/distribute recruitment incentives	Districts, PD			x				x				x				x				x	
Annual TIF Report to US Department of Education	PD, PM				x			x				x				x				x	
State TAKS test administration	Schools			x				x				x				x				x	
Contracts in place with contractors	PD, PM, PS				x																
MOUs in place with partner districts	PD, Acct, DC	x																			
Value-added calculations complete	Contractor								x												
Master teacher meetings	EMT, RC, and districts					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Principal meetings	Schools	x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	
District-level meetings regarding TIF implementation progress	Districts	x		x		x		x		x		x		x		x		x		x	
Annual External evaluation report due	Contractor, PD, AD							x				x				x				x	
Review TAKS scores for baseline data	Schools, PD, AD				x				x				x				x				x
Student achievement goal setting	Schools				x				x				x				x				x
End of Year School TAP program review	PD				x				x				x				x				x
TAP Summer Institute	PD, Staff				x				x				x				x				x
Report to NIET on student achievement progress	PD, PM								x				x				x				x
Teacher and principal incentive checks awarded	Districts, PD												x				x				x

Selection Criteria 3, Factor 3: Use of Matching Funds

Over the five-year grant period, Texas TIF will utilize 50,169,741 from the grant and add \$30,942,720 in matching funds from project partners including participating school districts, NIET, and TEA to achieve the program goals and objectives. Each year, the districts will assume more fiscal responsibility for the differentiated compensation of teachers and principals. Specifically, the districts will provide a 10%, 20%, and 40% match for differentiated compensation in Years 3, 4, and 5, respectively. In addition to these funds, the districts will provide matching funds for salaries for Master teacher positions and related fringe as well as travel expenses to attend trainings. The specific amount of matching funds for the supplemental resources varies by campus based on size. Over time, the districts are expected to develop the

capacity to sustain the system beyond the life of the grant and to look for ways to expand the program to other campuses within their districts.

Selection Criteria 3, Factor 4: Reasonable Budget

Of the \$50,169,741 in TIF funds being utilized, \$21,416,400 will be used for teacher and principal incentives, and the remaining \$28,753,341 will be used to provide support mechanisms such as: Master teacher salaries, data systems, meeting space for trainings, and Texas TAP team support to assist schools in meeting student achievement goals. As previously indicated, the Texas TAP team will provide all training and support necessary to assist TIF schools with implementation of the initiative. See the Budget Narrative in Appendix F for more information.

4. Quality of Local Evaluation

The purpose of the Texas TIF evaluation is to evaluate the effectiveness of the program goals and objectives and utilize formative data to improve upon elements in which schools are struggling. We will complete a formal external evaluation of the project based on the goals and objectives of the project. In addition to student achievement results and teacher effectiveness measures, the external evaluation will analyze other factors such as Adequate Yearly Progress, college readiness, teacher attitudes and perceptions, and teacher recruitment and retention data.

Selection Criteria 4, Factor 1: Strong and Measurable Performance Objectives

The Texas TIF program includes multiple strong and measureable performance objectives as detailed below. Ongoing analysis of formative and summative student assessment data, teacher and principal retention data, teacher and principal survey data, classroom observation data, and other project data will facilitate continuous monitoring of project

implementation and serve to guide appropriate adjustments in district- and school-level implementation to help ensure fidelity of implementation.

Selection Criteria 4, Factor 2: Use of Qualitative and Quantitative Data

The external evaluator will use a clearly defined set of evaluation standards, measures, and rubrics to analyze progress toward achieving the project goals. The evaluation will address the four key elements of TAP and will use both quantitative and qualitative data to assess TIF/TAP implementation.

Primary Goal: To increase student achievement: Our evaluation design will analyze the TAKS test results in reading, writing, and mathematics administered each spring. The TAKS results will be examined using multiple methods including: value-added scores (provided by SAS), passing rates, and campus accountability ratings.

Secondary Goals: To recruit and retain high quality educators in high-need schools and in hard-to-staff subject areas: The external evaluator will work with the district human resource departments to examine personnel data to identify effective teachers and hard-to-staff subject areas. The external evaluator will examine the recruitment incentive distribution on an annual basis as well as teacher retention results. They will also be required to examine the link between value-added scores and teacher SKR scores and principal scores under the leadership assessment.

Selection Criteria 4, Factor 3: Ensure Feedback and Continuous Improvement

An underlying premise for this proposal is continuous ongoing feedback and improvement to the TIF program. As mentioned in the budget narrative, each TIF campus will receive at least one site visit per month from the Texas TAP System personnel throughout the duration of the grant period. During these site visits, TAP program personnel will provide feedback and guidance to the TIF schools regarding program implementation. In addition, at the

end of each school year, TIF program personnel will meet with individual districts to discuss the success of the differentiated compensation system. Should modifications be needed, Texas TAP System personnel will assist TIF schools in this process. It is anticipated that the number of site visits during the first year of program implementation will be two to three times per month per campus. The TIF schools will need assistance in developing a local, sustainable effective differentiated compensation system for teachers and we are committed to making that happen.

The State TAP Director, the Regional TAP Coordinators, and Executive Master teachers will be responsible for providing ongoing feedback for continuous improvement in each TAP school. Feedback reports, data collection and personnel meeting documentation will be prepared and distributed regularly. An online database is utilized to track the implementation progress of each campus as well as communication efforts.

At the end of the school year the Texas TAP Team will review data from the TAP surveys, feedback reports and meeting documentation to assist schools with the development of an action plan. Each school participates in an End of Year Program Review where the analysis of the campus data is used to identify areas of strength and growth of TAP implementation. The Leadership Teams develop goals for their action plans based on this information. Throughout the course of the school year these goals are monitored and supported by the Texas TAP team to ensure successful implementation of the TAP System on the campus.

TAP schools in Texas are evaluated on an annual basis using NIET rubrics to ensure proper implementation of the TAP model. These evaluations, or Program Reviews, are based on a clearly defined set of evaluation standards and rubrics. The Program Review will address the four key elements of TAP 1) multiple career paths, 2) ongoing, applied professional growth, 3) instructionally focused accountability, and 4) performance-based compensation. In addition to

quantitatively assessing TAP implementation, the Program Review data will be analyzed to assess the qualitative aspects of each of these indicators. Data from the Program Reviews will be used extensively at the district and school level to help set goals for improvement, identify areas of refinement and reinforcement, and identify training and support goals for the coming year.

An annual report will be produced to inform all stakeholders of progress of this initiative. The State TAP Director has experience in facilitating TAP in Texas schools and will utilize these skills to address challenges and resolve any obstacles that may arise to support district and campus educators.

Project Narrative

High-Need Schools Documentation

Attachment 1:

Title: **Monte Alto High School Feeder Data** Pages: 1 Uploaded File: **Appendix I - Monte Alto ISD Feeder Data.pdf**

Appendix I

Monte Alto High School Feeder School Information

The following feeder school data was used from Monte Alto Elementary School and Borrego Middle School to calculate demographics for Monte Alto High School:

District	Campus	% Economically Disadvantaged	%LEP	%African American	% Hispanic	% White	% Native American	% Asian/Pacific Island
Monte Alto	Monte Alto ES	91.4	46	0	98.2	1.6	0	0.2
Monte Alto	Borrego MS	92.9	29.1	0	97.3	2.2	0	0.5
Monte Alto	Monte Alto HS	92.1	37.5	0	97.8	1.9	0	0.3

Project Narrative

Union, Teacher, Principal Commitment Letters or Surveys

Attachment 1:

Title: **Texas TIF Letters of Support** Pages: **141** Uploaded File: **Letters of Support.pdf**

**Letters of Support from
National Institute for Excellence in
Teaching (NIET)**

July 1, 2010

Dr. Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

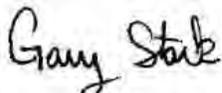
Dear Assistant Secretary,

I write to express my support of the partnership between the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) in the submission of a Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) proposal. The cornerstone of TEA's TIF proposal is the implementation of TAP™: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement (TAP). As developer and ongoing provider of support for TAP in schools across the country, we endorse TEA's inclusion of this comprehensive reform in their TIF project.

NIET began working with TEA's Texas TAP in 2005 to implement TAP in high-need schools. With just three schools in the first year, TAP is now integrated into over 30 schools statewide and that number is growing. The underlying premise of the Texas Education Agency's TIF proposal is the development and sustainability of the TAP system across the State of Texas. We are confident that this approach meets the requirements of TIF and will help to develop a more effective educator workforce. With more effective teachers and principals in the schools, we can begin to close the achievement gaps and ensure that all children have the opportunity to achieve. We believe that the performance-based compensation, instructionally focused accountability, multiple career paths and ongoing professional development that are integral to TAP are necessary elements in the building of an effective teaching profession over time.

We look forward to our continued partnership with the Texas Education Agency under this TIF project as TAP continues to expand in the state.

Sincerely,



Gary Stark
President, National Institute for Excellence in Teaching

**Letters of Support from
School District Superintendents**



10475 South Street, Athens, Texas 75751 • (817) 477-0664 • Fax: (817) 477-0665

<http://www.athensisd.net>

June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, Ph.D.
Executive Director,
Texas TAP
Austin, Texas

RE: Teacher Incentive Fund

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

Please accept this letter in support of the Athens Independent School District and the opportunity for three of its campuses to participate in the Teacher Incentive Fund project. As superintendent of the school district I fully understand the value of having our schools participate in grant initiatives, and utilizing targeted programs to assist our teachers and administrators in providing the very best education for the children of our community.

Three of our campuses, South Athens Elementary, Bel-Air Elementary, and Athens Intermediate schools are interested in pursuing grant funding through the TIF project. I wholeheartedly support their efforts in this endeavor, and the inclusion of the program in the TIF Evaluation competition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fred Hayes", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Dr. Fred Hayes
Superintendent of Schools
Athens Independent School District
Athens, Texas



Boys Ranch

Independent School District

June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz
Executive Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

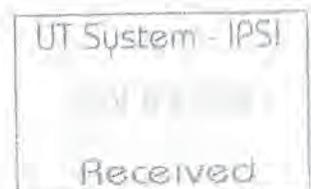
Dear Ms. Kreuz:

On behalf of Boys Ranch Independent School District, I am pleased to submit this letter of support to accompany The University of Texas System's application for a Teacher Incentive Fund grant. The district is excited about this opportunity to be part of a consortium of Texas school districts that will undertake innovative reforms that show great promise for increasing the academic achievement of our students through the Teacher Advancement Program. The district has implemented the essential components of the Teacher Advancement Program over the past two years and as a result of the program's research-based evidence of the model's positive effects on the learning and academic achievement of our students, wish to continue as participants of the Teacher Incentive Fund program.

As part of The Teacher Incentive Fund program, our district and community look forward to continuing work with The University of Texas System to implement practices, strategies, and assessments of TIF that will enable our students to become more motivationally and intellectually engaged in their learning and better prepared for college, careers, and life.

Respectfully,

Dr. Vita Sotelo
Superintendent
Boys Ranch Independent School District





June 28, 2010

Secretary Arne Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan,

As superintendent of Bryan Independent School District, I am pleased to be writing this letter of support for the Texas TAP System's application for a Teacher Incentive Fund grant. Our district is excited about this opportunity to participate in an innovative reform effort such as the TAP program. We have seen the positive influence that prior implementations of the TAP program have had within the state of Texas. Our district is enthusiastic about this program, and to achieve similar results, particularly increased teacher quality resulting in increased student achievement.

We are committed to bringing our students the best possible practices in school reform, particularly those that are research based. Furthermore, our commitment to our students is such that we recognize inherent to the success of any school reform is the quality of the teachers at the school. As such, we actively seek out those opportunities to attract and retain high quality teachers, as well as to increase the quality of the teaching staff already within our district. The TAP program meets all of the aforementioned requirements for a desirable reform model. It is with great pleasure that I fully place my support behind this grant application.

Sincerely,

Mike Cargill
Superintendent

101 North Texas Avenue
Bryan, Texas 77803
(979) 209-1000
www.bryanisd.org



ECTOR COUNTY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Phone: (432) 332-9151 • Fax: (432) 335-8984
P.O. Box 3912 • 802 N. Sam Houston Ave • Odessa, Texas 79760
www.ectorcountysd.org

June 10, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Texas Teacher Advancement Program

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

As Superintendent of Ector County Independent School District, I pledge the District's support of Hood Junior High School, in their efforts to obtain a Teacher Incentive Fund (FIT) Grant for the implementation of a Teacher Advancement Program (TAP). It is my belief that collaboration through this project can only serve to strengthen classroom instruction and lead to greater student achievement.

Ector County ISD supports the TAP's goal of preparing and strengthening the professional growth of teachers in order to improve student learning.

Sincerely,

Hector Mendez
Superintendent of ECISD Schools



HEARNE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

900 Wheelock St. • Hearne, Texas 77859 • (979) 279-3200
Jackie Kowalski, Ph.D., *Superintendent*

May 27, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

Hearne Independent School District is working to overcome the obstacles of students living in poverty, high teacher turn-over rate, and a large percent of teachers with less than 3 years teaching experience to increase student achievement. The Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) program would help the district support the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) at Hearne Elementary School and Hearne Junior High School and explore the planning process for Hearne High School. I support every effort to increase compensation for teachers based on the academic growth of the students in their classrooms.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jackie Kowalski". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Jackie Kowalski



Dr. Michael McFarland
Superintendent of Schools

June 28, 2010

Secretary Arne Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan,
As superintendent of Lancaster Independent School District, I am pleased to be writing this letter of support for the Texas TAP System's application for a Teacher Incentive Fund grant.

Our district is excited about this opportunity to participate in an innovative reform effort such as the TAP program. We have seen the positive influence that prior implementations of the TAP program have had within this district and the state of Texas. Our district is enthusiastic about this program, and to achieve similar results, particularly increased teacher quality resulting in increased student achievement.

We are committed to bringing our students the best possible practices in research-based school reform. Furthermore, our commitment to our students is such that we recognize inherent to the success of any school reform is the quality of the teachers at the school. As such, we actively seek out those opportunities to attract and retain high quality teachers, as well as to increase the quality of the teaching staff already within our district. The TAP program meets all of the aforementioned requirements for a desirable reform model.

It is with great pleasure that I fully place support this TIF grant application to continue to recruit, develop, and retain excellent teachers and we stride for exemplary student achievement.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael McFarland
Superintendent of Schools

422 S. Centre Avenue, P.O. Box 400, Lancaster, Texas 75146
972-218-1400 Fax 972-218-1401

June 3, 2010

Texas Education Agency
Dr. Tammy Kreuz
Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
1701 North Congress Avenue
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

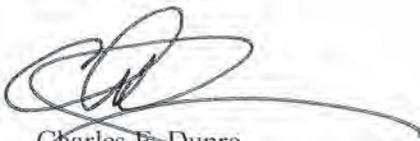
In Pflugerville ISD we are dedicated to preparing Each Child for Their Future in Our World. To achieve our mission we must attract, develop and retain outstanding teachers in every classroom. The Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) supports this goal through sound, research based practices that will enable teachers to grow and thrive in even the most challenging classrooms. In addition TAP provides a career path for teachers who desire leadership roles without having to leave the classroom for administrative jobs.

During the past three years we have invested a great deal of time and energy developing systems in the area of curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development to support improved student achievement. Through that work we have seen positive outcomes, however I am dedicated to the idea that the only way we will truly close gaps in achievement and address the needs of each child is to provide each student with a quality teacher each year. TAP is a system that will best address this need.

As superintendent of Pflugerville ISD I wholeheartedly support district participation in the Texas TAP System Teacher Incentive Fund Program grant. Our participation would enable us to implement TAP district wide by providing technical assistance and initial funding to begin the program. I am committed to building sustainability of the program into our local budget at the conclusion of the grant. The grant application has my full support.

If you desire additional information, please contact me at 512-594-0010 or via email at superintendent@pflugervilleisd.net.

Sincerely,


Charles E. Dupre

DR. JUAN ANTONIO JASSO
Superintendent of Schools

PHILLIP R. CHAVEZ
Assistant Superintendent,
Curriculum and Instruction

RICARDO R. VELA
Assistant Superintendent,
Business and Fiscal Services



SOUTHSIDE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION
LISA L. SALAZAR
President
MARGIE C. LOPEZ
Vice President
CRAIG KNAPP
Secretary
THERESA BALDERAS
RAUL G. MARTINEZ
RICK QUEBE
DANIEL RODRIGUEZ

1460 Martinez-Losoya Road
San Antonio, Texas 78221

Exemplary Behavior Begets Exemplary Performance!

Phone: (210) 882-1600
Fax: (210) 626-0101

May 20, 2010

Tammy K. Kreuz, Ph.D.
Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

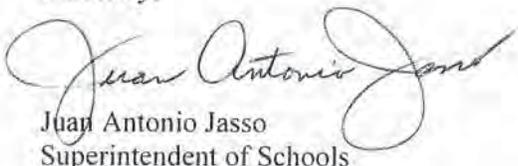
Southside ISD applauds and supports the efforts of the Institute for Public School Initiatives to partner with our schools to expand and maintain the researched-based Teacher Advancement Program. TAP creates small professional learning communities in our schools that focus on student achievement and build teacher effectiveness.

The administration and faculty of Gallardo Elementary, Pearce Elementary, and Losoya Intermediate thank the Institute for Public School Initiatives for the opportunity to become part of the proposed Teacher Incentive Fund Grant effort. Including districts with great needs (At-Risk - 59.9%, Economically Disadvantaged - 76.5%) allows for implementation of a performance-based compensation system for teachers and principals with a proven track record of significantly increasing student achievement.

In 2008-2009 the District Award for Teacher Excellence Grant provided Southside ISD with funds to implement the TAP model at Gallardo Elementary for three years. At the end of the second year, Gallardo Elementary received the "TAP School of Promise Award" at the 2010 National TAP Conference in Washington D.C., for significant improvement in their state assessment scores. One of the great benefits of the TAP model is the instructional leadership capacity gained by teachers. The Gallardo Elementary master and mentor teachers have increased their expertise in data analysis, instructional delivery, active research, and leading professional development efforts across the campus and the district. To date, 100% of the staff at Gallardo indicated they will return in 2010-2011.

We look forward to working with the Institute for Public School Initiatives in this effort. Should we be selected as a recipient of the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant, we are committed to support the TAP program enthusiastically and with complete fidelity.

Sincerely,



Juan Antonio Jasso
Superintendent of Schools

Letters of Support from New Teacher Project



The New Teacher Project

The University of Texas System
Institute for Public School Initiatives
601 Colorado Street Austin
TX 78701-2982

To Whom it May Concern;

Effective teachers can close or eliminate the achievement gap. Research has shown that teacher quality is the single most important variable that schools control in their efforts to provide students with an excellent education.

The New Teacher Project (TNTP) is a national nonprofit dedicated to closing the achievement gap by ensuring that high-need students get outstanding teachers. As an organization created by teachers, we find inspiration in the hard work, talent and impact of America's best educators. We undertake a range of activities to increase the concentration of highly effective teachers in high-need schools including creating innovative programs that bring high-quality teachers into hard-to-staff schools; identifying the policy barriers that keep schools from hiring the best teachers possible, and advocate for necessary reforms; working hand-in-hand with school districts and school leaders to staff the lowest-performing schools with excellent teachers; and developing new and better ways to prepare, develop, and certify teachers for public schools.

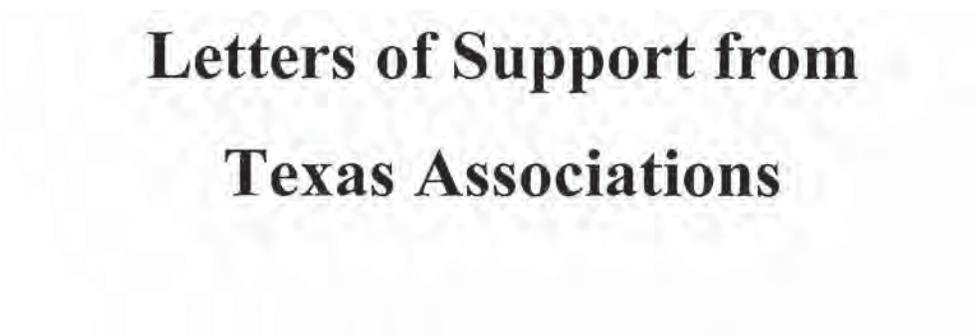
Our experience working closely with urban school districts and our research of urban school staffing policies have shown that *how* and *when* teachers are hired can have a dramatic impact on teacher quality. We believe that a key strategy to ensuring all schools are staffed with excellent teachers is educating principals and key school-based personnel to make smarter and more efficient teacher-hiring decisions. TNTP has designed a series of workshops focused on the essential skills school-based hiring personnel need to master in order to recruit, select, cultivate and hire high-quality teachers effectively. These skills are perhaps most important to principals of urban schools, who face multiple challenges on a daily basis and struggle the most to attract and secure the most talented teachers.

There is clear alignment between the work of TAP and TNTP as both take on a research based approach to teacher performance with the goal of increasing student outcomes. We look forward to our collaboration with TAP in working to increase the quality of teachers in Texas' classrooms.

Sincerely,



Dr. Kerry Moll
Partner
The New Teacher Project
PO Box 163165
Austin, TX 78716



Letters of Support from Texas Associations



Jimmy Earl
President

Kerri Ranney
Vice President Development

Ima Longoria
Vice President Programs

Jeff Monzingo, CPA
Treasurer

Hubert Stewart
Vice President Finance

Audrey T. Dearing
Secretary

Charles E. Dupre
Superintendent of Schools

Mike Callahan

Alicia Felan

Victor Gonzales

Cynthia Graves

Lloyd A. B. Lawrence Jr.

Gregg Miller

Wendye Mire

Winnie Mae Murchison

Juanita Rendon

Rob Reyes

Cheryl Sawyer

Mathew Thompson

Melvin White

Executive Director
Zenda Johnson

June 3, 2010

Dr. Tammy Kreuz
Texas Education Agency
220 W. 7th Street, Lavaca 1.100
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Dr. Tammy Kreuz,

The Pflugerville Education Foundation, PEF, is dedicated to Putting Education First. We seek to support PISD schools and its teachers through our fund raising efforts throughout the year. We also desire to show our support for the district by backing important initiatives such as the one they are undertaking with the application for the Federal TIF Grant.

PEF believes that one of the most effective ways to improve our schools is to provide our students with quality teachers and we are pleased with what we have heard about the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) as a system for attracting, retaining and motivating the best talent to the teaching profession. In Pflugerville ISD we want every child to have the most capable, talented, motivated, and supported teacher in his/her classroom.

The Pflugerville Education Foundation is pleased to see PISD become involved with a program such as TAP and enthusiastically endorse their efforts to obtain federal funds to support a research based reform effort to provide even better services to our students who deserve the best we can provide.

Sincerely,

Zenda Johnson

Executive Director
Pflugerville Education Foundation



Texas Association of School Boards • HR Services
P.O. Box 400 • Austin, Texas 78767-0400 • 800.580.7782

Serving Texas Schools Since 1949

June 7, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in support of the University of Texas TIF Project utilizing the Texas TAP System. In my role as the Director of Human Resource Services at the Texas Association of School Boards (TASB), I have had the opportunity to witness first-hand the promising practices and results that the Texas TAP System is bringing to our state. After decades of stagnant and ineffective compensation and professional development practices, this program is the most promising and well-designed reform model that we have seen in Texas.

TASB represents over 8,000 elected officials who serve to provide leadership for the students in our state. We are excited about the potential impact of TAP and would like to see this program grow to help more of our students and teachers.

Sincerely,

Cindy Clegg

Cindy Clegg
Director HR Services
Texas Association of School Boards
800-580-7782
cindy.clegg@tasb.org
www.hrservices.tasb.org

June 29, 2010

Dr. Tammy Kreuz
Director, Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute For Public School Initiatives
University of Texas Systems

RE: Support for the Texas Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Program

Dr. Kreuz:

I am writing to express my full support for the Texas Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) program as a model that values the responsibilities that school administrators and teachers have in effective school environments. The paramount role a teacher plays in student achievement is codified through the No Child Left Behind Act and will be further solidified through the next reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. While the school principal as instructional leader, and steward of the campus also plays a role by hiring and retaining effective teachers.

There are distinct features of the TIF program that I believe to be of particular importance. One of these features is the Teacher Advancement Program's Multiple Career Path structure. Education systems are often anachronistic and less evolved than private sector practices. In order to compete with the private sector for quality individuals, school systems must be assertive and offer incentives that make careers in education the most attractive of options. The Multiple Career Path structure is an approach that accomplishes this by firmly demonstrating the value of an educator as an individual with unique skill sets.

Another pivotal feature included in the TIF model is the approach to targeted professional development through cluster groups. As policy makers continue to increase expectations and standards for students, there is no time to waste on staff development that is not specific to the needs of student populations that may differ from campus to campus.

One of the most critical components of the Texas TIF model is the partnerships with groups such as the New Teacher Project that use research-based approaches to provide students at urban hard-to-staff campuses with teachers who are skilled and effective in improving student learning. The issue of teacher distribution was recently acknowledged by The U.S. Department of Education in the report, *A Blueprint for Reform*, which outlines federal intentions of ensuring an equitable distribution of effective teachers at high-need schools.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to attest to potential contributions to Texas education systems that the Texas TIF model is designed to provide.

Respectfully,


Casey McCreary
Assistant Executive Director, Education Policy and Leadership Development
Texas Association of School Administrators

Letters of Support from Federal Representatives

**COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND LABOR**

CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION,
LIFELONG LEARNING, AND COMPETITIVENESS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD,
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON CAPITAL MARKETS, INSURANCE,
AND GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED ENTERPRISES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS
AND CONSUMER CREDIT



House of Representatives
Rubén Hinojosa
15th District, Texas

WASHINGTON OFFICE:

2463 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
PHONE: (202) 225-2531
FAX: (202) 226-5688

EDINBURG OFFICE:

2864 WEST TRENTON ROAD
EDINBURG, TX 78539
PHONE: (956) 682-5545
FAX: (956) 682-0141

BEEVILLE OFFICE:

107 SOUTH SAINT MARY'S
BEEVILLE, TX 78102
PHONE: (361) 358-8400
FAX: (361) 358-8407

Rep.Hinojosa@mail.house.gov
www.house.gov/hinojosa

June 28, 2010

Secretary Arne Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

As the Congressman for the 15th Congressional district of Texas, I would like to convey my support for the Institute for Public School Initiatives (PSI), a division of the University of Texas System, which is submitting an application to the U.S. Department of Education. PSI is seeking funding for expansion and collaboration with other medical libraries in the border region.

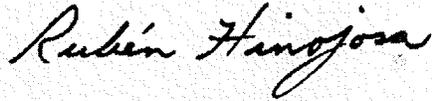
The Texas TIF project includes 11 school districts and 37 campuses across the state of Texas. Included within the grant proposal is the Monte Alto ISD school district which sits in the heavily-Hispanic Delta region of my congressional district. This region is a small unincorporated community which is economically disadvantaged and lacks public and educational opportunities. The following schools would be targeted within the grant and are typically low performing, high needs schools: Monte Alto Elementary School and Borego Middle School.

The proposal aims to promote a comprehensive research-based reform model that provides differentiated compensation for teachers and principals based on teachers' performance in the classroom and the academic performance of their students. The program would provide career advancement opportunities for teachers—including differentiated salary augmentations for increased responsibilities and duties—and time for ongoing applied professional growth during the school day. If funded, this would allow new training opportunities for staff to ensure that they are aware of the information resources available to them and know how to use them effectively and efficiently.

I support the Texas Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant application. I am very pleased that Monte Alto ISD, which is in my district, has been included in this proposal. Furthermore, the opportunities to align Teach for America and the New Teacher Project with the Texas TAP System shows great promise for advancing the quality of teachers in Texas.

I thank you in advance for your consideration of this proposal. If you have any questions regarding this application, please contact me or my Grants Coordinator, Desiree in my Edinburg District office at 956-682-5545.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rubén Hinojosa".

Rubén Hinojosa
Member of Congress

MICHAEL T. McCAUL
10TH DISTRICT, TEXAS

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY

RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON
INTELLIGENCE, INFORMATION SHARING,
AND TERRORISM RISK ASSESSMENT

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

REPUBLICAN POLICY COMMITTEE

ASSISTANT REPUBLICAN WHIP

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4310

WASHINGTON OFFICE:
131 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-2401

AUSTIN OFFICE:
5829 BALCONES DRIVE, SUITE 305
AUSTIN, TX 78731
(512) 473-2357

BRENNHAM OFFICE:
2600 SOUTH MARBLE, SUITE 303
BRENNHAM, TX 77833
(979) 836-8487

KATY OFFICE:
1550 FOXLAKE, SUITE 120
HOUSTON, TX 77084
(281) 398-1247

TOMBALL OFFICE:
TOMBALL ROSEWOOD PROFESSIONAL BUILDING
900 VILLAGE SQUARE, SUITE B
TOMBALL, TX 77375
(281) 255-8372

June 28, 2010

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan
Department of Education Building
400 Maryland Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Re: Grant ID CFDA #84.385

Dear Secretary Duncan,

I am writing in support of the Texas TAP System's grant application for the Texas Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Project. The Texas TAP System is a partnership between the Institute for Public School Initiatives, a division of The University of Texas, and the Texas Education Agency.

The Texas TAP System plays an important role in supporting local school districts such as Pflugerville ISD in their implementation of the TAP program, and will provide assistance to the district as a whole, as well as individual campuses, during the implementation process. The Texas TAP System has played an important role in Texas and I am excited about the opportunity to expand this initiative through the TIF funding.

This grant money would be used for performance incentive pay for teachers and principals; recruitment incentives to attract high quality teachers to low performing schools, specifically in hard to staff subject areas; salary augmentation for master and mentor teachers; trainings regarding the implementation of the TAP program; and support staff during the implementation process. Furthermore, the opportunities to align Teach for America and the New Teacher Project with the Texas TAP System shows great promise for advancing the quality of teachers in Texas.

I hope you will consider the Texas TAP System for this grant award. Please do not hesitate to contact my office if I may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Michael T. McCaul
Member of Congress

MTM: ch

MAC THORNBERRY
13TH DISTRICT
TEXAS



ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE
ON INTELLIGENCE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

June 29, 2010

The Honorable Arne Duncan
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Honorable Duncan,

I am writing to support Boys Ranch Independent School District in their efforts to be included in the Texas Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant application.

The Boys Ranch Independent School District, which is located in my district, has been included in the Texas TIF project proposal. I have heard great things about the program in our state and am excited about the opportunity to expand this initiative.

Within your rules and regulations, I respectfully ask that you give this grant application your full consideration. If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Jeff Stockdale in my office at (202) 225-3706.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mac Thornberry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Mac Thornberry
Member of Congress

WMT/js

905 SOUTH FILLMORE STREET, SUITE 520
AMARILLO, TX 79101-3541
PHONE: 806-371-8844
FAX: 806-371-7044

2209 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4313
PHONE: 202-225-3706
FAX: 202-225-3486

4245 KEMP BOULEVARD, SUITE 506
WICHITA FALLS, TX 76308-2829
PHONE: 940-692-1700
FAX: 940-692-0539

www.house.gov/thornberry

CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ
23RD DISTRICT, TEXAS

2351 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
PHONE: (202) 225-4511
FAX: (202) 225-2237

1313 S.E. MILITARY DRIVE
SUITE 101
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78214
PHONE: (210) 922-1874
FAX: (210) 923-8447
TOLL-FREE: (866) 915-3493



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

June 29, 2010

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

SUBCOMMITTEES:
HOMELAND SECURITY

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND
RELATED AGENCIES

LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

SUBCOMMITTEES:
HEALTH

DISABILITY ASSISTANCE
AND MEMORIAL AFFAIRS

The Honorable Arne Duncan
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Secretary Duncan,

It is with great pleasure that I write a letter of support for the Institute for Public School Initiatives, a division of the University of Texas System as they submit their Texas Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant application. I am very pleased that Somerest ISD and Southside ISD, which are in my district, have been included in this proposal. These districts serve distinct student populations that are often low performing and deserving of special attention. Schools in Somerset and South San Antonio stand to benefit tremendously from TIF resources.

I have witnessed the power of the Texas TAP System in our state and am excited about the opportunity to expand this initiative through TIF funding. Furthermore, the opportunities to align Teach for America and the New Teacher Project with the Texas TAP System shows great promise for advancing the quality of teachers in Texas. I know improving teacher quality through innovation and rigorous accountability is a high priority for the Administration. I share your commitment to improving teacher quality and sincerely believe TIF resources will help achieve this goal in Texas, and more specifically, in my district.

Please know that this grant has my full support, and I hope you will give their application ample consideration.

Sincerely,

Ciro D. Rodriguez
Member of Congress

DISTRICT OFFICES

SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT OFFICE
6363 DeZAVALA ROAD, SUITE 105
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78249
(210) 561-9421 TEL
(210) 561-9442 FAX

DEL RIO DISTRICT OFFICE
209 EAST LOSOYA
DEL RIO, TX 78840
(830) 774-5500 TEL
(830) 774-2200 FAX

EAGLE PASS DISTRICT OFFICE
100 SOUTH MONROE
EAGLE PASS, TX 78852
(830) 757-8398 TEL
(830) 752-1893 FAX

FORT STOCKTON DISTRICT OFFICE
103 WEST CALLAGHAN
FORT STOCKTON, TX 79735
(432) 336-3975 TEL
(432) 336-3961 FAX

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Letters of Support from State Level Representatives

State of Texas
House of Representatives



MARK STRAMA
DISTRICT 50

June 28, 2010

Secretary Arne Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

As a member of the Texas Legislature who represents a portion of Austin and Pflugerville ISD, I strongly support the Texas Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant application.

I have witnessed the power of the Texas TAP System's rigorous accountability system, strong support for teachers and school leaders, and I am excited about the opportunity to expand these initiatives with TIF funding.

As a part of the statewide strategy to improve teacher quality and student achievement in Texas, TAP leaders understand that it is imperative to collaborate with successful statewide initiatives to achieve maximum potential. The opportunities to align Teach for America and the New Teacher Project with the Texas TAP System and Texas Education Agency show great promise for advancing the quality of teachers in Texas.

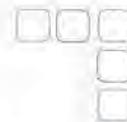
I strongly believe that TIF funding and the Texas TAP System's unique partnerships are the perfect platforms for implementing programs to improve teacher quality and student achievement in Texas. This project is an ideal way to utilize limited federal dollars, maximize innovation and have a real, measureable impact on education outcomes. I urge you to fund this grant proposal, and I pledge to help make it a success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mark Strama".

Mark Strama

**Letters of Support from
Local Government Officials**



June 1, 2010

Dear Dr. Tammy Kreuz,

In my role as Mayor of Pflugerville, I have a keen understanding that the success of Pflugerville ISD is directly related to the success of our city. PISD has an outstanding reputation for providing an exceptional education to its students, and that reputation plays a big role in the City of Pflugerville's status as a destination for families with school-aged children.

As a parent with children in PISD, I have seen firsthand the impact outstanding teachers can have on students, and I am proud to say my kids have received instruction from many amazing educators. I believe taking part in a program like the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) can help the District attract and retain talented teachers, as well as provide developing teachers opportunities for growth.

Pflugerville ISD is poised to become a lighthouse district in the state and in the nation. The systems the District already has in place are yielding tremendous results, and layering on the opportunities TAP would provide could help push the PISD to that level.

I hope you will strongly consider Pflugerville ISD's application for your program.

Best Regards,



Jeff Coleman
Mayor
City of Pflugerville

City of Somerset

7360 E. 6th Street • Somerset, Texas • 78069

t. 830.701.4100 • f. 830.429.3781

www.somersettx.gov

June 1, 2010

Paul G. Cuellar
Mayor

RE: Letter of Support

Dear Ms. Kreuz,

It is with great pleasure that I support Somerset ISD and specifically Somerset Junior High School in its efforts to participate in the United State Department of Education Teacher Incentive Grant (TIF) in partnership with the Texas Education Agency's Teacher Advancement Program (TAP). For the last several years, I have witnessed a steady change of teachers at the campus in the critical areas of math and science. They have left to be closer to home, receive better pay in San Antonio, attend quality professional development and have classroom support through research based mentoring. The teachers that have replaced them have been first year teachers with limited training and minimal preparation for the job. This change has affected the academic performance of our children in the critical junior high school years.

The campus participation in the TAP program would provide an immediate remedy for our teachers. It would provide teachers on campus support through master and mentor teachers who have been trained with high-quality professional development on current research based strategies. This program would further positively impact student performance. It would also help the district provide the necessary salary increase to retain those teachers that have been trained and have proven success with students.

Somerset Junior High School's participation in the TIF Grant is a win-win: Successful Students, Successful Teachers.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 830.701.4100.

Sincerely,



Paul G. Cuellar
Mayor
City of Somerset

Letters of Support from School Board Members

June 3, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, Ph.D.
Executive Director,
Texas TAP
Austin, Texas

RE: Teacher Incentive Fund

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

As a trustee of the Athens Independent School District school board, I am pleased to submit this letter in support of our district's efforts to pursue and participate in the Teacher Incentive Fund project. South Athens Elementary, Bel-Air Elementary, and Athens Intermediate schools have all expressed a desire to participate in the TIF project and I support their efforts.

School districts must utilize every opportunity and resource available to assist our teachers and administrators, and we are highly interested in participating in the TIF project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennie Mahmoud".

Jennie Mahmoud
Athens, Texas

June 1, 2010

Dr. Tammy Kreuz

Executive Director, Texas TAP

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

Because the teachers at Hood Junior High School here in the Ector County Independent School District want to turn their school into an exemplary campus, securing funds through the Teachers Incentive Fund is important to implement this change.

I believe that the concepts which will be implemented by using the TAP system will create a learning and teaching environment that can not only benefit the students but help the faculty become one of the strongest in Ector County ISD.

As a trustee for the school district and as a former teacher at Hood Junior High School from 1976-1990, I am writing to express my support to secure funding for the TAP System past the 2010-2011 school year. This program cannot only help the students and teachers at Hood Junior High, but it can benefit the entire District.

Sincerely,



Yollie Wilkins, Secretary

Ector County ISD Board of Trustees

Donnie Norwood Ed.D.
4029 E. 37th
Odessa, Texas 79762
May 30, 2010

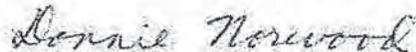
Tammy Kreuz, Ph. D.
Executive Director of Texas TAP

Dear Ms. Kreuz:

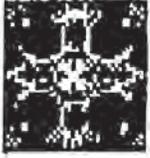
At our school board meeting on May 18, Mr. Shawn Almond, the principal of Hood Junior High, presented a summary of TAP program to the Ector County Board of Trustees. I was impressed with the four elements of TAP including the opportunity for multiple career paths, ongoing professional growth, instructionally focused accountability, and performance-based compensation. Each of these elements was explained in detail during the presentation.

As a former administrator in this district (retiring after 31 years) and currently serving as a member of the board of trustees, I am very familiar with the challenges the teachers and administration face at Hood Junior High. After the presentation and further review of the TAP information, I am convinced that this unique opportunity will benefit the students at this campus and fully support the implementation of the TAP program.

Sincerely,



Donnie Norwood
Member – Board of Trustees



REV. DONALD ADAMS

P.O. BOX 133
Hearne, TX 77859
979.739.5482

June 1, 2010

To Whom It Might Concern:

I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge that I am a Hearne Independent School Board Member and that I, Rev. Donald Adams support the Incentive Program for the Hearne ISD.

Sincerely,
Rev. Donald Adams
Rev. Donald Adams



HEARNE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

900 Wheelock St. • Hearne, Texas 77859 • (979) 279-6416

May 27, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

As Hearne ISD School Board President, I am writing to indicate my support for our school district to be involved with the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant in order to fully implement the Teacher Advancement Program at our campuses. I am confident that the District Administrators will keep me informed of all costs incurred with the use of these grant funds. Furthermore, I know Dr. Jackie Kowalski, Hearne ISD Superintendent, will represent this school district well as the acting agent.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Staten". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Mr. Doug Staten
Hearne ISD Board President



Dr. Michael McFarland
Superintendent of Schools

June 28, 2010

Secretary Arne Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20202

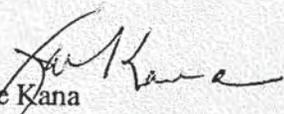
Dear Secretary Duncan,

As the Board President of the Lancaster Independent School District Board of Trustees, I am writing this letter in support of the Texas TAP System's Teacher Incentive Fund grant application. This grant can continue to provide Lancaster ISD with the continued support of The Teacher Advancement Program. It can make a significant difference in how our teachers plan, prepare, and execute their lessons for the students of Lancaster ISD.

It will also help us develop outstanding professional learning communities within the Lancaster Independent School District. The incentive program will make retaining outstanding teachers in our district much easier. Lancaster Independent District is committed to TAP and TIF and we will continue to sustain this program through local and federal funding to ensure success for our teachers and students.

Again, thank you for supporting Lancaster Independent School District as we continue to move towards excellence and high academic achievement for all of our students.

Sincerely,


Joe Kana
Lancaster ISD School Board President

422 S. Centre Avenue, P.O. Box 400, Lancaster, Texas 75146
972-218-1400 Fax 972-218-1401

May 31, 2010

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

It is with a great deal of excitement that I write a letter in support of Pflugerville I.S.D.'s pursuit of the Texas TAP System Teacher Incentive Fund Program.

As a life-long career teacher, retired professor in the UTeach-Liberal Arts Program at UT-Austin, and a veteran school board trustee, I have struggled for decades with the conundrum of how to employ a teacher pay incentive that is fair, balanced, and works for both the teachers and students. The various aspects of the Texas TAP Program including buy-in from the campus faculty, teacher training, master and mentor teacher support, planning time during the day, and incentive pay based on value add hit every mark that I would want to commit to for not just the time of the grant but to deeply infuse within our system for the future. Therefore, this model has all the elements that certainly appeal to me and it is with true enthusiasm that I support the administration in their desire to deploy the program throughout the district. In fact, I am will commit my personal time to take part in whatever training and other activities as deemed appropriate by the administration to show my support to the teachers and to be a strong advocate to the rest of the board.

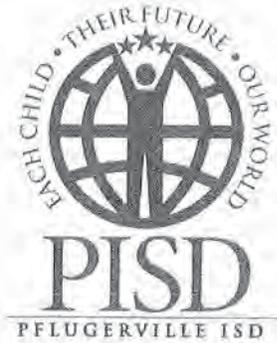
Furthermore, I believe that Pflugerville I.S.D. is a perfect match for the grantees to consider. Not only are we a diverse district with a low target revenue number but also we show strong student performance on high stakes exams. We are deeply committed to improving performance over time and these are not just words on paper-we back it up with directed, focused work that results in student achievement. TAP then would come at just the right time to help move our district further in our quest to delivering even higher quality instruction resulting in increased student growth for every child. Our teachers and administration have the keen work ethic and wholehearted dedication to vision that pays off not only in the present but also in the future.

Please feel free to contact me if I can be of further service.

Sincerely,



Elva Gladney
Vice-President Pflugerville I.S.D. Board of Trustees
1230 Hughmont
Pflugerville, TX 78660
elva.gladney@gmail.com
gladney@mail.utexas.edu
512.587.4035



June 2, 2010

Dr. Tammy Kreuz
220 W. 7th Street, LAV 1.100
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

I am writing you to fully endorse Pflugerville ISDs grant application to the TAP System Teacher Incentive Fund Program. Pflugerville ISD has made great strides over the last several years in improving our instructional services to students. As President of the Board of Trustees, I am eager to capitalize on the structure provided by the TAP program to take these reforms to the next level.

We are also very interested in researching the TAP program here in PISD to determine the relationship between TAP and dimensions of organizational culture, teacher retention, and student achievement. I am personally committed to working with staff to develop a research agenda and seek additional funding to support this more in-depth analysis. This type of thorough program evaluation should afford PISD with the data necessary to make informed decisions about providing continuation funding once grant resources are no longer available.

Sincerely,

Carol L. Fletcher, Ph.D.
President
Board of Trustees



SOMERSET INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

19644 Somerset Road • P.O. Box 279 • Somerset, Texas 78069

Mr. Leo Salas, Board of Trustee

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

Somerset Independent School District is a small semi-rural school district southwest of San Antonio, Texas. It provides educational services for 3,547 students from over an eighty-five square mile area. It was created in 1922.

Somerset ISD believes strongly in providing the best teachers who are well trained in current research-based strategies and supported by high quality professional development for our children over the last few years, the teachers at Somerset Junior High School have been leaving the campus to other districts for a multitude of reasons. Better pay, professional development, and classroom instructional support are just a few of those reasons. The 2008-2009 AEIS Report cites the junior high schools' teachers average only 3.8 years experience in teaching. Many in the areas of math and science have 0-1 years of experience. When the campus staff voted to participate in the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) in partnership with the University of Texas and the Texas Education Agency, the Board of Trustees was excited by the new direction that this endeavor would take the campus and ultimately for the district.

With its commitment to providing continuous campus support for building leadership capacity, master and mentor support for classroom teachers, high quality professional development on research-based strategies in working with students, on-going progress monitoring of student performance for immediate response to intervention, teacher compensation for excellence, and retention stipends; the TAP/TIF program will focus on both the strengths and weaknesses of the campus. With the TAP resources of highly trained and experienced staff, funding resources and guidance, the junior high campus will be able to retain it teachers and successfully impact student performance.

The United States Department of Education Teacher Incentive Grant would further the original investment to the district by expanding the TAP program for five additional years. The district would willingly use district and other resources to pay its share of the required 40% matching funds that is required by the grant.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Leo Salas'.

Mr. Leo Salas



SOMERSET INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

19644 Somerset Road • P.O. Box 279 • Somerset, Texas 78069

Dr. Omar Pachecano, Board President

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

Somerset Independent School District is a small semi-rural school district southwest of San Antonio, Texas. It provides educational services for 3,547 students from over an eighty-five square mile area. It was created in 1922.

Somerset ISD believes strongly in providing the best teachers who are well trained in current research-based strategies and supported by high quality professional development for our children over the last few years, the teachers at Somerset Junior High School have been leaving the campus to other districts for a multitude of reasons. Better pay, professional development, and classroom instructional support are just a few of those reasons. The 2008-2009 AEIS Report cites the junior high schools' teachers average only 3.8 years experience in teaching. Many in the areas of math and science have 0-1 years of experience. When the campus staff voted to participate in the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) in partnership with the University of Texas and the Texas Education Agency, the Board of Trustees was excited by the new direction that this endeavor would take the campus and ultimately for the district.

With its commitment to providing continuous campus support for building leadership capacity, master and mentor support for classroom teachers, high quality professional development on research-based strategies in working with students, on-going progress monitoring of student performance for immediate response to intervention, teacher compensation for excellence, and retention stipends; the TAP/TIF program will focus on both the strengths and weaknesses of the campus. With the TAP resources of highly trained and experienced staff, funding resources and guidance, the junior high campus will be able to retain its teachers and successfully impact student performance.

The United States Department of Education Teacher Incentive Grant would further the original investment to the district by expanding the TAP program for five additional years. The district would willingly use district and other resources to pay its share of the required 40% matching funds that is required by the grant.

Sincerely,

Dr. Omar Pachecano

DR. JUAN ANTONIO JASSO
Superintendent of Schools

PHILLIP R. CHAVEZ
Assistant Superintendent,
Curriculum and Instruction

RICARDO R. VELA
Assistant Superintendent,
Business and Fiscal Services



SOUTHSIDE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION

LISA L. SALAZAR
President

MARGIE C. LOPEZ
Vice President

CRAIG KNAPP
Secretary

THERESA BALDERAS
RAUL G. MARTINEZ
RICK QUEBE
DANIEL RODRIGUEZ

1460 Martinez-Losoya Road
San Antonio, Texas 78221

Exemplary Behavior Begets Exemplary Performance!

Phone: (210) 882-1600
Fax: (210) 626-0101

May 27, 2010

Tammy K. Kreuz, Ph.D.
Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

Southside ISD is excited about partnering with the Institute for Public School Initiatives to have the opportunity to become part of the proposed Teacher Incentive Fund Grant to expand the Teacher Advancement Program, TAP. Three of our schools will implement the TAP model in 2010-2011, Gallardo Elementary, Pearce Elementary, and Losoya Intermediate.

Through the TAP we expect an increase in academic performance and the number of students who receive Commended Performance on state assessments. We also anticipate a growth in teacher leadership that will empower staff to make data-driven decisions. The TIF grant will also increase and/or sustain district teacher retention by supporting a teacher incentive program. The TIF grant will also support our At-Risk, 59.9%, and Economically Disadvantaged students, 76.5%, to raise their achievement through increased teacher effectiveness.

We are looking forward to work with the Institute for Public School Initiatives in implementing the TAP program through the support of the TIF grant. If SISD is selected for the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant, the district will expend every resource to support the TAP program.

Sincerely,

Lisa L. Salazar
President
Southside ISD Board of Trustees

**Letters of Support from
Other Staff at the Included Schools**

SOMERSET JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



P.O. Box 279
7790 East, 3rd Street
Somerset, Texas 78069



Phone#: 1-866-852-9862 / Fax#: 1-866-448-2738

Connie Rodriguez, Principal
Rebecca Graf, Assistant Principal

Eduardo Miranda, Assistant Principal
Velma Cruz, Counselor

June 1, 2010

Mitzi Everts (Librarian)

Dear Ms. Kreuz,

Our district is excited to participate in the TAP program, and we believe it will be an important implementation for many reasons. Teacher retention at our Junior High is always a problem, partly because we are located outside the city and partly because we are not a big school district with all the monetary incentives that come with a larger tax base. This program will allow us a more equal footing with some of the larger school districts in addition to all the good advantages that come from being a smaller district (such as allowing most of the staff to personally know all the students). Keeping our experienced teachers in the district and in our classrooms to offer consistency and experience to the students is a major plus for us in advancing student performance. It will also build teacher morale and help create a positive work environment with greater productivity all around.

We would also like to extend the TAP program in order to help promote greater ongoing professional development by teachers and staff. Having highly-trained staff will also help us to strengthen our overall performance both as professionals and the performance of our students.

I personally commute 30 miles one-way everyday in order to work in the Somerset ISD. The extra monetary incentive will help offset some of the gas money and maintenance due to wear-and-tear on my car that 60 miles a day can bring. That's also an hour of time in the car that is being compensated for by the extra funding. Somerset can greatly enhance the efforts to keep good teachers despite some of the inconveniences of working outside the bigger districts by extending this grant.

Thank you for your consideration!


Mitzi Everts
Librarian

Somerset Junior High is proud to be an Accelerated School

SOMERSET JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



P.O. Box 279
7790 East, 3rd Street
Somerset, Texas 78069



Phone#: 1-866-852-9862 / Fax#: 1-866-448-2738

Connie Rodriguez, Principal
Eduardo Miranda, Assistant Principal

Velma Cruz, Counselor
Rebecca Graf, Assistant Principal

Sara Gonzales
Academic Interventionist

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

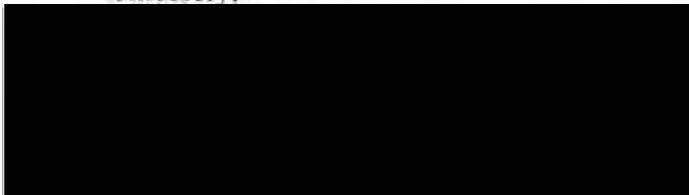
Somerset Junior High School is located in the southwest section of Bexar County in Somerset, TX. It provides educational services for approximately 600 students in the 7th and 8th grade. It believes strongly in providing the best educational experiences for all students by providing them with the best teachers who are well trained in current research-based strategies and supported by high quality professional development for its children.

Over the past few years our campus has suffered a high turnover rate for a multitude of reasons. Better pay, shorter commutes, available professional development and instructional support are just a few of those reasons. The 2008-2009 Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) report cites that the junior high teacher average years of experience is 3.8 years. Many of the areas of math and science have 0-1 years of experience and many of them have alternative certifications. Only 10% of the staff lives in the area, with the typical commute from the San Antonio area in excess of 30 miles. The junior high school teachers and staff voted this past spring to participate in the University of Texas and Texas Education Agency's Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) for the 2010-2011 school year. Our district was animated with the vote to participate in the TAP and the new direction that this endeavor would lead the campus.

With its promise to providing continuous campus support for building leadership capacity, master and mentor support for classroom teachers, high quality professional development on research-based strategies in working with students, on going progress monitoring of student performance for immediate response to intervention, teacher compensation for excellence, and retention stipends; the TAP/TIF program will focus on both the strengths and weaknesses of the campus. With the TAP resources of highly trained and experienced staff, funding resources and guidance, the junior high campus will be able to maintain our teachers and successfully impact student performance.

The United States Department of Education Teacher Incentive Grant would further the original investment of the DATE grant to the district by expanding the TAP program for five additional years. The successful achievement of the junior high school campus with this program will inspire other district campuses to follow in our pathway.

Sincerely,



Somerset Junior High is proud to be an Accelerated School

June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, PhD
Executive Director,
Texas TAP
Austin, Texas

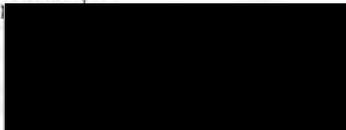
RE: Teacher Incentive Fund

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

Please consider Athens ISD as you award this year's Teacher Incentive Fund. As the librarian who services Athens Intermediate, South Athens Elementary, and Bel Air Elementary, I can assure you that you will not find a collection of administrators and teachers more worthy of the support your grant would offer.

Thank you greatly for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Deidre Pool
Library Media Specialist
Athens Intermediate School
Bel Air Elementary School
South Athens Elementary School

May 24, 2010

Tammy K. Kreuz, Ph.D.
The University of Texas System
Executive Director-Texas Teacher Advancement Program
702 Colorado Street, CLB 5.218
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

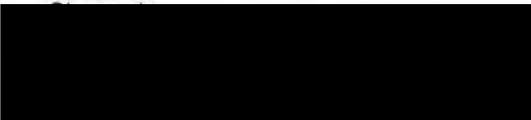
My name is Catherine Perkins and I have been a teacher in Southside ISD for eleven years. I have spent all eleven years at Pearce Primary School. Through the years I have seen many teachers come and go for one reason or another. Some teachers leave to be closer to home, some go to the bigger school districts where the pay is a little more, and some advance through the ranks and are now in administration. Whatever the case is, the bottom line is that when good teachers leave the classroom it impacts student achievement. This is where a program like the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) can be a great asset for our school and our school district.

Just recently our campus was presented information about TAP by one of your colleagues and after hearing about the benefits the TAP has to offer, a majority of teachers voted in favor of implementing the program at our school next year.

What the TAP program means to our students is that they will receive high quality instruction from teachers who receive on-going, quality professional development. This will ensure our teachers can teach our student with the best practices in teaching. Our teachers will be taught strategies proven to produce student success. The TAP program means that our teachers will be trained on how to analyze data to drive instruction. It also means that teachers will be held more accountable for student achievement and upon demonstrating academic growth for their students, will be rewarded.

With these benefits, our school and district can attract and retain high quality teachers to stay at Southside ISD. Most importantly are the benefits our students will receive. Our students will receive a high quality education that will serve them well in all future endeavors.

These are the reasons why I am in support of the TAP program and I am very excited about the upcoming school year.



Catherine Perkins
Pearce Primary School
Math Science Interventionist
(210) 882-1605 ext. 1919

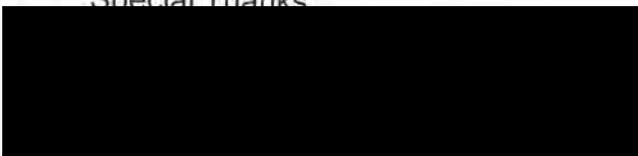
May 29, 2010

I, Brenda Borrego-Gonzales, am currently the instructional facilitator at Pearce Primary in the Southside ISD. As the instructional facilitator, I witness many of the tasks and challenges the students and teachers face on a daily basis. With expectations, assessments, and instruction I am a supporter of our staff and the implementation for the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP). I can not stress more the importance of rubrics, weekly cluster meetings, ongoing training, sharing or research based strategies, and collaborative planning for student achievement. With TAP, our campus will have the opportunity to implement these techniques and more.

Data disaggregation is also a very important component to the success of our students and teacher growth. With TAP, our campus will be able to provide the needed data review for each grade level and provide their contribution to the student body as a whole.

Our campus is in need of "something different" that unifies the staff, builds the community, and increases student achievement. For a faculty and staff that work hard already, TAP will help clarify the objective and continue to move us forward in our vision and mission as a district and growing campus. In a place where students build an educational foundation, are empowered with future endeavors, and where they become problem solvers and productive members of society, Pearce seeks only the best programs and opportunities to provide to our students and their families. Our students are our passion, drive for decisions, and influence for *moving forward*. They are the individuals who highlight our days, remind us why we went into education in the first place, and become the future decision makers of the society we live in. Thus, I highly support the decision to *move forward* and implement the TAP model at Pearce Primary.

Special Thanks



Brenda Borrego-Gonzales.

**Tammy Kreuz
Executive Director
Texas TAP**

Dear Ms. Kreuz

Since April 1983, when *A Nation at Risk*, a milestone evaluation of U.S. education, concluded that the “professional working life of teachers in on the whole unacceptable”, little has changed regardless of abundant state and national efforts. An elemental deficiency of that hard work is that the educational system treats teachers as *objects of change*—not *agents of change*. According to the report’s data, “The Commission found that not enough of the academically able students are being attracted to teaching; that teacher preparation programs need substantial improvement; that the professional working life of teachers in on the whole unacceptable; and that a serious shortage of teachers exists in key fields.” The Excellence Commission furthermore concluded that salaries were so low, scores of teachers had to supplement their annual earnings with part-time and summer employment; and teachers have too modest authority in decisive professional decisions. In actuality, educators are motivating up-and-coming reforms by opening schools where teachers desire to work and parents want their children to learn. Until recently, private schools were the solitary alternative to the long-established public-school system. The Teacher Advancement Program offers a solution for retaining and recruiting elite teachers while increasing the quality of both the school and the student population in attendance.

The TAP system is intended to make available to teachers’ leadership opportunities and professional rooted development, as well as individual and group cluster performance awards. The system provides specific professional development, targeted to suit each campus. This professional development is provided by master and mentor teachers—a core element to the system. Also, principals are integrated in the TAP system and are capable of earning bonuses based on their individual evaluations, and on overall school performance.

(2)

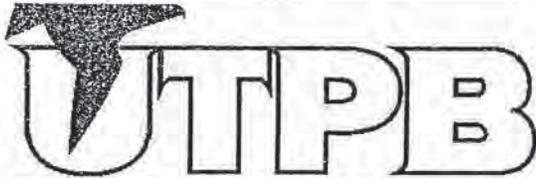
Imagine if teaching resembled the medical or legal profession. Like physicians and attorneys, teachers would select their areas and levels of specialization and elect to choose from a multiplicity of employers that best go with their exceptional specialties and interests. Analogous to hospitals and legal firms in the present day, schools would function according to an assortment of missions, attracting and helping broad-spectrum or precise populations. Schools would come in various sizes and work in cooperation with government and private sectors. To catch the attention of and preserve the finest and brightest, schools would have to put forward to teachers competitive salaries, flexible labor schedules, options for working values or far-reaching hours, opportunities for meticulous vocation enrichment and a proficient working environment in which teachers have sovereignty to innovate and are rewarded for their successes. The TAP system provides these remedies in its tried and true methods and opportunities.

TAP is the answer to many of the problems facing our district—not all, but many. TAP has many pluses. Today, over one hundred schools in nine states, help approximately 50,000 students to contribute in their classes, schools and communities. Under the TAP system, veteran teachers are promoted to ‘mentor’ or ‘master teacher’ status and strive with novice teachers to polish their skills and elevate student performance. The program consists of numerous career paths for teachers, constant useful professional development, instructionally focused liability and performance-based compensation. The TAP system could be the solution for Ector County ISD, if the appropriate amount of funding can be secured for the future to implement this system to its highest levels of performance.

Sincerely


Sharyn Smith, Library Media Specialist
John Bell Hood JHS
Odessa, Texas

**Letters of Support from
University Faculty**



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS OF THE PERMIAN BASIN

May 26, 2010

Dean of the School of Education

Tammy Kreuz, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Texas Teacher Advancement Program

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

The School of Education at The University of Texas of the Permian Basin supports Hood Junior High School and the Ector County Independent School District (ECISD) in their efforts to obtain a Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Grant to support the implementation of a Teacher Advancement Program. We believe that this program can only serve to strengthen the quality of the educational services that are provided to the students in ECISD.

The UTPB School of Education recognizes that research shows that students achieve at higher levels, if they are taught by qualified, effective teachers. By attracting, retaining and motivating talented teachers, the Teacher Advancement Program will contribute to the success of students. By combining ongoing professional growth with classroom support and coaching, teachers will be given the opportunity to become better instructors, leading in turn to greater student achievement.

We believe that strengthening the preparation and continuous professional growth of teachers is important to improving student learning outcomes and college and career readiness. As a longtime partner in education with ECISD, we fully support this request for funding of the Teacher Advancement Program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roy Hurst".

Roy Hurst, Ph.D.
Interim Dean
UT Permian Basin School of Education



School of Education

May 25, 2010

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

It is with the greatest pleasure that I write this letter of support on behalf of Hood Junior High School in the Ector County, TX Independent School District for the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Grant through the Teacher Advancement Program. Their application is for the next grant cycle (2010-2015). As a professor of Educational Leadership, the Chair of Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Professional Studies, and director of the doctoral program I am quite familiar with Hood and the commitment it has to meet the unique and individual needs of students. I have had the opportunity to be a guest at Hood on several occasions so I have seen the sincere efforts they are making in the areas of enhancing student learning as well as creating a supportive learning environment for both teachers and students. Indeed, the entire Ector County ISD is making great strides in each of these areas, continuously assessing student and teacher needs and creating innovative ways to address them.

If I can be of assistance to you in any way, please let me know. I may be reached by email at Wilmore_e@utpb.edu or by phone at 432.552.2128. I give Ector County ISD and Hood Junior High my highest recommendation for the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant.

Sincerely,

Elaine Wilmore

Elaine L. Wilmore, Ph.D.

Professor, Doctoral Director, and Chair

Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Professional Studies

4901 E. University - Odessa - Texas 79762-0001 - (432) 552-2120 - Fax (432) 552-2125

Letters of Support from The Community

June 3, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, Ph.D.
Executive Director,
Texas TAP
Austin, Texas

RE: Teacher Incentive Fund

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

Please accept this letter in support of the Athens Independent School District and the opportunity for three of its campuses to participate in the Teacher Incentive Fund project. As a member of the business community I recognize the value of having our schools participate in grant initiatives, and utilizing targeted programs to assist our teachers and administrators in providing the very best education for the children of our community.

I understand that South Athens Elementary, Bel-Air Elementary, and Athens Intermediate schools are interested in pursuing grant funding through the TIF project. I wholeheartedly support their efforts in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of David H. Mahan.

David H. Mahan
Senior Minister Eastern Hills Church of Christ
Athens, Texas

Michael Morrison
Cole Air Conditioning and Appliances
Athens, Texas

June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, Ph.D.,
Executive Director,
Texas TAP
Austin, Texas

RE: Teacher Incentive Fund

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

I am writing this letter in support of the Teacher Incentive Fund project for Athens Independent School District. It is my understanding that the grant will provide valuable assistance to our teachers in improving instructional programs. By providing this assistance, our district will then in turn improve achievement which will ultimately have a positive effect on our community.

Three elementary campuses are interested in pursuing the grant opportunity: South Athens Elementary, Bel-Air Elementary, and Athens Intermediate. As a business owner in the community of Athens, I wish to convey my support for these campuses in pursuing grant funding which would present the opportunity to improve student achievement.

Sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Michael Morrison.

Michael Morrison
Cole Air Conditioning



Come Home to Shop®
101 S Third Street
PO Box 483
Pflugerville, TX 78691-0483
512.251.7789
Fax 512.251.7802
gpcc@sbcglobal.net
www.pfchamber.com

June 2, 2010

Dr. Tammy Kreuz
220 W. 7th Street, LAV 1.100
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

Over the last 25 years, the Pflugerville Chamber of Commerce has seen the City of Pflugerville explode with business growth.

One significant contributing factor to that growth is Pflugerville ISD's reputation as an outstanding school district, which helps make Pflugerville a desirable place to live and work.

Participation in a program like the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) will help further set PISD apart from other districts in the area and in the state because of its unique approach to performance-based compensation.

We believe this model will help the District attract and retain high quality educators, and help the District live up to its motto - Each Child. Their Future. Our World.

The City of Pflugerville and the Pflugerville school district continue to grow at a staggering rate.

That growth presents both opportunities and challenges for our city, business community and school district that would all benefit from PISD's participation in this program.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, we urge you to accept Pflugerville ISD into this program.

Best Regards,

Patricia A. Gervan-Brown, IOM
President & CEO



ATHENS BANK

BRANCH OF FSB BROWNSBORO
P.O. BOX 1781

ATHENS, TEXAS 75751

903/675-4600 • FAX 903/675-3246

June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, Ph.D.
Executive Director,
Texas TAP
Austin, Texas

RE: Teacher Incentive Fund

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

This letter is sent to you with the purpose of expressing my support for three of our school district's campuses to participate in the Teacher Incentive Fund project. I am a trustee on the school board of the Athens Independent School District and am pleased that South Athens Elementary, Bel-Air Elementary, and Athens Intermediate schools have an opportunity to pursue grant funding through the TIF project. As a member of the board of trustees I understand the unique challenges faced by our schools, and the importance of utilizing every opportunity and resource available to assist our schools in providing a quality educational experience for the students we serve.

Again, I fully support the efforts of our schools to pursue and participate in the TIF project.



Athens Bank
Athens, Texas

May 29, 2010

I, Reynaldo Gonzales Jr, have been a Southside ISD community member for seven years. I currently am employed with Citigroup and volunteer at least two times a week at Pearce Primary. During my time at Pearce, I have had the opportunity to become a huge part of the students, staff, and school events. It is without a doubt, that the success of this campus depends on every aspect of community, staff, parents, and students.

The faculty and staff at Pearce Primary are very dedicated and involved individuals. However, a common goal for the staff should be the involvement of ALL faculty and staff. With a program such as the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), I believe the requirements for more staff involvement will occur and positively impact the students at Pearce Primary. As a community member, I would love to see Pearce more as a gathering place than just a building in a school district.

The students at Pearce Primary are very committed to the success of their learning. TAP will assist the futures of these students by requiring a higher standard for student achievement, delivery of instruction, use of data, and meaningful assessments. Our Southside ISD students should have the opportunity to successfully enter college, master a trade, or serve their country. As a district, Southside ISD should have the confidence that they sent every student into the world with the necessary skills and knowledge to pursue careers beyond the walls of our community. With TAP expectations and teacher training, student achievement will prosper as will our students who deserve only the best.

Many times as a volunteer, you hear the "wants" of a classroom or school. You also see the "needs" of a campus. I have heard several comments and concerns about meaningful staff development, useful assessments and data disaggregation, teacher expectations, classroom management, and involvement of administration in the learning of ALL students. TAP, I believe will address these concerns and lead the path of campus leaders at all levels and provide valuable learning experiences for each and every classroom. It's exciting to imagine administration, mentor teachers, master teachers, and faculty working together as a team to maintain EXEMPLARY status.

A program such as TAP is greatly appreciated and is fundamental to the development of campus structure and student learning. As a community member, this is an important investment of time and effort for academics. I will never know the true meaning of being in the "trenches" like Pearce teachers or administration. I will never know what it means to take a Texas Achievement of Knowledge Skills (TAKS) and fail. I will never understand the need of winter break, Thanksgiving Break, or Spring Break during the school year or why Fridays are the highlight of the week. However, I do know that as a

community member, it is my responsibility to take a part in the success of our school district, be active in the decisions made for the campus as a whole, and be an advocate for our students. With that said, I am a huge supporter of the decision to begin the TAP model at Pearce Primary, a campus in the Southside Independent School District I represent.

Special Thanks,



Reynaldo Gonzales Jr.

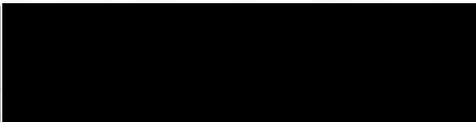
May 29, 2010

Dear Sir or Madam:

We at Ama's Mexican Restaurants believe that the quality and success of our schools directly impact our community. We support our local schools in any way possible, through donations, or through services provided by our business.

We are excited to learn that the junior high and elementary campuses are implementing the TAP school model. We believe that the TIF grant will help and be beneficial to our schools in this implementation.

We sincerely hope that you will award our local schools the TIF Grant.

Sylvia Montelongo , 
Ama's Mexican Restaurant

May 29, 2010

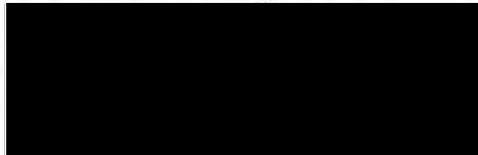
Dear Sir or Madam:

We at Seymore's Grocery believe that the quality and success of our schools directly impact our community. Our children and grandchildren have attended and attend Hearne ISD schools. We believe in and support the schools of the Hearne Independent School district and believe that they are making a difference in our student's lives.

We are excited to learn that the junior high and elementary campuses are implementing the TAP school model. We believe that the TIF grant will help and be beneficial to our schools in this implementation.

We sincerely hope that you will award our local schools the TIF Grant.

Barbara Seymore --
Seymore's Grocery



**Letters of Support from
Parents with Children Attending
the Included Schools**

JUNE 1, 2010

MS. DIANE VASQUEZ(PARENT OF KEVIN VASQUEZ)

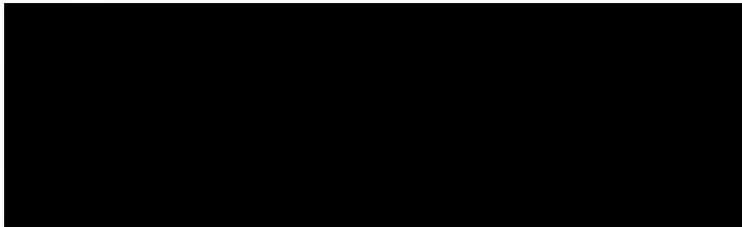
Dear Ms. Kreuz,

I have a student attending Somerset Junior High School in the Somerset Independent School District. It is with great pleasure that I am writing this letter of support for the implementation of the Teacher Advancement Program during the 2010-2011 school year and the TIF Grant.

For the last few years, the school has had to replace teachers that have chosen to leave the district in order to work closer to home, get better pay, and to get more instructional support for the classroom. It is my understanding that in participating in the TAP program, several of these reasons would be eliminated. The Tap program is committed to providing continuous campus support for its leadership team as well as support for its teachers through master and mentor teachers. The program also addresses on-going progress monitoring of students with the intent of providing immediate intervention for struggling students. The program would even pay teachers an incentive stipend when their students perform well on state assessments.

The United States Department of Education Teacher Incentive Grant would further the original investment of the DATE/TAP Grant to the district by expanding the TAP program for five additional years.

Sincerely,



June 1, 2010

Ms. Danielle Boldt, (Parent of Clint Boldt)

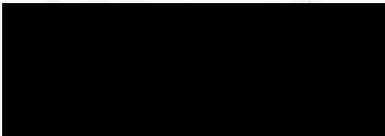
Dear Ms. Kreuz,

I have a student attending Somerset Junior High School in the Somerset Independent School District. It is with great pleasure that I am writing this letter of support for the implementation of the Teacher Advancement Program during the 2010-2011 school year and the TIF Grant.

For the last few years, the school has had to replace teachers that have chosen to leave the district in order to work closer to home, get better pay, and to get more instructional support for the classroom. It is my understanding that in participating in the TAP program, several of these reasons would be eliminated. The Tap program is committed to providing continuous campus support for its leadership team as well as support for its teachers through master and mentor teachers. The program also addresses on-going progress monitoring of students with the intent of providing immediate intervention for struggling students. The program would even pay teachers an incentive stipend when their students perform well on state assessments.

The United States Department of Education Teacher Incentive Grant would further the original investment of the DATE/TAP Grant to the district by expanding the TAP program for five additional years.

Sincerely,



June 1, 2010

Ms. Angie Trevino, (Parent of Breanna Trevino)

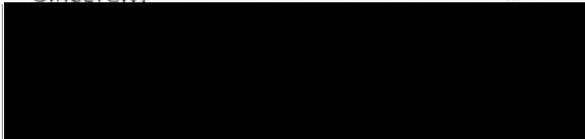
Dear Ms. Kreuz,

I have a student attending Somerset Junior High School in the Somerset Independent School District. It is with great pleasure that I am writing this letter of support for the implementation of the Teacher Advancement Program during the 2010-2011 school year and the TIF Grant.

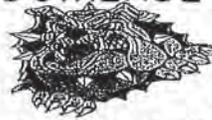
For the last few years, the school has had to replace teachers that have chosen to leave the district in order to work closer to home, get better pay, and to get more instructional support for the classroom. It is my understanding that in participating in the TAP program, several of these reasons would be eliminated. The Tap program is committed to providing continuous campus support for its leadership team as well as support for its teachers through master and mentor teachers. The program also addresses on-going progress monitoring of students with the intent of providing immediate intervention for struggling students. The program would even pay teachers an incentive stipend when their students perform well on state assessments.

The United States Department of Education Teacher Incentive Grant would further the original investment of the DATE/TAP Grant to the district by expanding the TAP program for five additional years.

Sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

SOMERSET JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



P.O. Box 279
7790 East, 3rd Street
Somerset, Texas 78069



Phone#: 1-866-852-9862 / Fax#: 1-866-448-2738

Connie Rodriguez, Principal
Eduardo Miranda, Assistant Principal

Velma Cruz, Counselor
Rebecca Graf, Assistant Principal

Sara Gonzales
Academic Interventionist

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

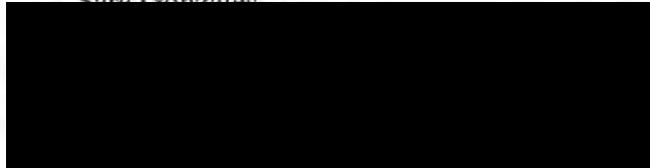
Somerset Junior High School is located in the southwest section of Bexar County in Somerset, TX. It provides educational services for approximately 600 students in the 7th and 8th grade. It believes strongly in providing the best educational experiences for all students by providing them with the best teachers who are well trained in current research-based strategies and supported by high quality professional development for its children.

Over the past few years our campus has suffered a high turnover rate for a multitude of reasons. Better pay, shorter commutes, available professional development and instructional support are just a few of those reasons. The 2008-2009 Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) report cites that the junior high teacher average years of experience is 3.8 years. Many of the areas of math and science have 0-1 years of experience and many of them have alternative certifications. Only 10% of the staff lives in the area, with the typical commute from the San Antonio area in excess of 30 miles. The junior high school teachers and staff voted this past spring to participate in the University of Texas and Texas Education Agency's Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) for the 2010-2011 school year. Our district was animated with the vote to participate in the TAP and the new direction that this endeavor would lead the campus.

With its promise to providing continuous campus support for building leadership capacity, master and mentor support for classroom teachers, high quality professional development on research-based strategies in working with students, on going progress monitoring of student performance for immediate response to intervention, teacher compensation for excellence, and retention stipends; the TAP/TIF program will focus on both the strengths and weaknesses of the campus. With the TAP resources of highly trained and experienced staff, funding resources and guidance, the junior high campus will be able to maintain our teachers and successfully impact student performance.

The United States Department of Education Teacher Incentive Grant would further the original investment of the DATE grant to the district by expanding the TAP program for five additional years. The successful achievement of the junior high school campus with this program will inspire other district campuses to follow in our pathway.

Sincerely,
Sara Gonzales



Somerset Junior High is proud to be an Accelerated School

June 1, 2010

Mr. and Mrs. Johnny Cantu, (Parents to Jenna Cantu)

Dear Ms. Kreuz,

I have a student attending Somerset Junior High School in the Somerset Independent School District. It is with great pleasure that I am writing this letter of support for the implementation of the Teacher Advancement Program during the 2010-2011 school year and the TIF Grant.

For the last few years, the school has had to replace teachers that have chosen to leave the district in order to work closer to home, get better pay, and to get more instructional support for the classroom. It is my understanding that in participating in the TAP program, several of these reasons would be eliminated. The Tap program is committed to providing continuous campus support for its leadership team as well as support for its teachers through master and mentor teachers. The program also addresses on-going progress monitoring of students with the intent of providing immediate intervention for struggling students. The program would even pay teachers an incentive stipend when their students perform well on state assessments.

The United States Department of Education Teacher Incentive Grant would further the original investment of the DATE/TAP Grant to the district by expanding the TAP program for five additional years.

Sincerely,



June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, PhD
Executive Director,
Texas TAP
Austin, Texas

RE: Teacher Incentive Fund

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

Please consider Athens Independent School District as a recipient of the Teacher Incentive Fund. As a parent, I have witnessed the joys and struggles of South Athens, Athens Intermediate, and Bel-Air Elementary as they have purposed to remain solid educational environments for our children. Winning this grant would make all the difference in the world.

Thank you for supporting education.

Sincerely,



June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, PhD
Executive Director,
Texas TAP
Austin, Texas

RE: Teacher Incentive Fund

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

As a parent, I am proud to have Athens Independent School District serve the educational needs of my children. Athens Intermediate School, South Athens Elementary, and Bel-Air Elementary already endeavor to create strong learning environments, however your acceptance of them into the Teacher Incentive Fund project would allow them the added assistance they not only need but greatly deserve.

Thank you for considering Athens ISD.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

DR. JUAN ANTONIO JASSO
Superintendent of Schools

PHILLIP R. CHAVEZ
Assistant Superintendent,
Curriculum and Instruction

RICARDO R. VELA
Assistant Superintendent,
Business and Fiscal Services



SOUTHSIDE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION

LISA L. SALAZAR
President

MARGIE C. LOPEZ
Vice President

CRAIG KNAPP
Secretary

THERESA BALDERAS
RAUL G. MARTINEZ
RICK QUEBE
DANIEL RODRIGUEZ

1460 Martinez-Losoya Road
San Antonio, Texas 78221

Exemplary Behavior Begets Exemplary Performance!

Phone: (210) 882-1600
Fax: (210) 626-0101

May 20, 2010

Tammy K. Kreuz, Ph.D.
Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

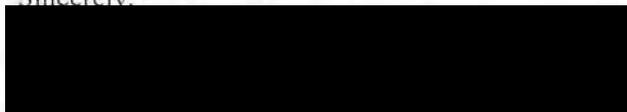
Southside ISD applauds and supports the efforts of the Institute for Public School Initiatives to partner with our schools to expand and maintain the researched-based Teacher Advancement Program. TAP creates small professional learning communities in our schools that focus on student achievement and build teacher effectiveness.

The administration and faculty of Gallardo Elementary, Pearce Elementary, and Losoya Intermediate thank the Institute for Public School Initiatives for the opportunity to become part of the proposed Teacher Incentive Fund Grant effort. Including districts with great needs (At-Risk - 59.9%, Economically Disadvantaged - 76.5%) allows for implementation of a performance-based compensation system for teachers and principals with a proven track record of significantly increasing student achievement.

In 2008-2009 the District Award for Teacher Excellence Grant provided Southside ISD with funds to implement the TAP model at Gallardo Elementary for three years. At the end of the second year, Gallardo Elementary received the "TAP School of Promise Award" at the 2010 National TAP Conference in Washington D.C., for significant improvement in their state assessment scores. One of the great benefits of the TAP model is the instructional leadership capacity gained by teachers. The Gallardo Elementary master and mentor teachers have increased their expertise in data analysis, instructional delivery, active research, and leading professional development efforts across the campus and the district. To date, 100% of the staff at Gallardo indicated they will return in 2010-2011.

We look forward to working with the Institute for Public School Initiatives in this effort. Should we be selected as a recipient of the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant, we are committed to support the TAP program enthusiastically and with complete fidelity.

Sincerely,



June 2, 1010

Tammy K. Kreuz, PH.D.
Director of Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas system

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

I am very excited about the Teacher Advancement program for Pearce Elementary. My son will be in first grade at Pearce next year. I really support the idea of focusing on concerns across the grade level. I think it is so important for the teachers to work together on getting the entire grade level where it needs to be. I like the idea of giving our teachers better tools to help the students become more successful.

I am strongly in favor of any professional development program that will give our teachers more expertise in analyzing data, teaching them better instructional delivery and more effective researching skills. It is comforting as a parent to see the teachers and the schools focusing on what the immediate needs of the students are and making an effective plan to implement what they need in order to be successful.

In short, I fully support the TAP program and will do anything I can as a parent to ensure its success.

Natalie Lanoue



May 20, 2010

Pearce Elementary
San Antonio, TX 78221

To Whom It May Concern:

I am pleased that my child will have the opportunity to attend a TAP school. I feel that TAP has all the necessary elements to improve my child's school in many ways. My understanding of TAP is that it helps ensure high-quality teachers, reduce teacher turnover rates, thus raising student achievement.

I believe education is extremely important and starting early is crucial to child development. Starting early can help develop life long skills that each child can use as they continue to move through each grade level and on into adulthood. Every teacher is a mentor to every child and can provide the training, guidance, and leadership necessary for a successful future.

Providing teachers the resources to improve their teaching skills and presentations can and will be reflected in every child's learning experience. The more each teacher knows the more each student will achieve.

Sincerely,



Deadra J. Bandy

Julian C. Gallardo Elementary



Reach For Success... Nothing Less
Yolanda Lujan
Principal

John Grosskopf
Assistant Principal

Rebecca Bridges
Counselor

1460 Martinez-Losoya Rd. 78221
Ph: (210) 882-1609 Fax: (210) 626-2161

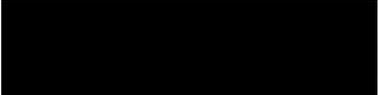
June 1, 2010

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

My child, a third grade student, attends Gallardo Elementary. The faculty and staff at Gallardo are the best in all of San Antonio. My daughter comes home every day talking about things she is learning at school. Being new to Gallardo, I have especially noticed that my daughter has increased her knowledge in all areas and it seems effortless.

Upon speaking to her teacher, she mentioned that for the past two years, Gallardo Elementary has changed their way of doing things. They no longer have after school tutorials. All instruction is done during the day in many creative ways. The teachers are working together and everyone involved with my daughter can comment on her progress, because she is everyone's student. This feeling of belonging to a greater support system has done wonders for my child. I know that there are Mentor and Master teachers who are continually researching how to instruct better and then they train the other teachers.

I am very happy that we came to Southside and to Gallardo Elementary.


Monica Iovar
Parent/Gallardo Elementary

Julian C. Gallardo Elementary



Reach For Success... Nothing Less
Yolanda Lujan
Principal

John Grosskopf
Assistant Principal

Rebecca Bridges
Counselor

1460 Martinez-Losoya Rd. 78221
Ph: (210) 882-1609 Fax: (210) 626-2161

June 1, 2010

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

I am a parent and a teacher at Gallardo Elementary. As a parent I am very pleased with the TAP program. My children are able to experience the best in the latest research because our mentor and master teachers are always researching and implementing strategies in our cluster meetings that have proven to be very successful.

As part of the educational team, I am also on the receiving end of best educational practices. The first year we implemented the TAP program at Gallardo we made significant gains in scores. This year we also made gains. We are able to look at our data and make decisions for the following year. Best of all, our students' scaled scores went up and our students are feeling confident in themselves.

It would be good if more schools became TAP schools. Many fear that it will require more work; however, we have found that we do not work harder, just smarter. Thank you for all you do and thanks to the Milken Foundation for making the TAP program possible.

Sincerely,


Josefa Crisostomo
Parent/Gallardo Elementary

Mashell Pierce
500 Trinity Street
Hearne, Texas 77859

May 25, 2010

David Saul
1210 Hackberry Street
Hearne, Texas 77859

Dear Mr. Saul:

In researching the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant through TAP, I think that it will be beneficial to our district in some ways. I do not agree with the fact that this is not an incentive for our paraprofessionals as well because they are just as effective as our teachers. TAP offers teachers with professional growth opportunities and the selection process is competitive, rigorous and performance-based. Our teachers should be afforded different opportunities according to their performance. No one wants to stay in the same position professionally. Professional development in TAP schools is ongoing, tailored to the school's particular needs and led by expert instructors. It is important that our teachers get the proper training they need to teach our children and to better themselves. Teachers are evaluated four or more times a year by trained evaluators using a standards-based rubrics. Evaluations are important in showing achievements and improvements that are evident in getting our students and teachers prepared educationally and professionally. TAP provides additional compensation to teachers based on skills, knowledge, responsibilities as well as the academic growth of their classrooms and their schools. Our teachers should be rewarded for a job well done. It is no reason that they shouldn't. I do not agree with anyone being compensated if they are not worthy. All of these things are important factors and needs for our district.

Sincerely,



Mashell Pierce
Hearne Elementary Parent

Letters of Support from School District Staff



104 Hawn Street • Athens, Texas 75751 • (903) 677-6903 • Fax (903) 677-6908

Dr. Fred Hayes, Superintendent

June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, Ph.D.
Executive Director,
Texas TAP
Austin, Texas

RE: Teacher Incentive Fund

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

Currently I serve as the Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction for the Athens Independent School District. I understand that three of our campuses, South Athens Elementary, Bel Air Elementary, and Athens Intermediate schools have expressed interest in participating in the Teacher Incentive Fund project. I support their efforts and will assist them in any way possible. Specifically, my office will support them by ensuring that the District Testing Coordinator completes all TIF evaluation requirements. Mrs. Regina Fluker, our District Testing Coordinator, is prompt and thorough in completing assignments and attends to details accurately and efficiently. She will support our campuses by complying with the TIF evaluation requirements.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jackie Cunningham". The signature is fluid and matches the printed name below it.

Jackie Cunningham
Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction



HEARNE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

900 Wheelock St. • Hearne, Texas 77859 • (979) 279-6416
Beverly Nigliazzo, *Business Manager*

May 25, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter to pledge my support for the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant. As Business Manager of Hearne ISD we will follow the cost principals and all guidelines of the TIF Grant as set forth. TEA financial accounting and auditing procedures will be used for reporting methods.

Sincerely,



Beverly Nigliazzo
Business Manager



HEARNE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

900 Wheelock St. • Hearne, Texas 77859 • (979) 279-6416

May 27, 2010

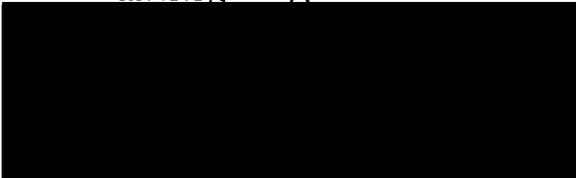
To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of participation in the Teacher Incentive Fund to be utilized to fully implement the Teacher Advancement Program in Hearne ISD, beginning in the school year 2010-2011. As Director of Instructional Services, I will be involved in the management of TAP in our district in the following ways:

- Working with the Business Manager to manage the budget
- Working with the Elementary and Jr. High Principals and Leadership Teams to initiate the first year of TAP
- Working with the High School Principal to investigate the implementation/planning of TAP on that campus
- Fulfilling the requirements of Teacher Advancement Program as it is aligned to the Teacher Incentive Fund.

In believing that the Teacher Advancement Program can successfully improve teacher quality and student achievement, I am dedicated to this duty.

Sincerely,



Director of Instructional Services

KEITH McBurnett
DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT

May 28, 2010

Dear Dr. Tammy Kreuz,

Three years ago Pflugerville ISD developed its Framework for Effective Teaching and Learning. Since that time, we have focused our efforts on developing systems in the area of curriculum, instruction, assessment and professional development. We have seen increases in student achievement through our work, but we know that the most effective way to improve our schools is to provide our students with quality teachers. We know that we must develop a system to address and support teacher quality.

It is with that realization that we have adopted the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) as our system for attracting, retaining and motivating the best talent to the teaching profession while increasing student achievement. Our Executive Leadership Team has spent time learning more about TAP and the successes that districts across the state have had when implementing TAP.

We believe in the TAP model so much, that we want the model to be deployed at every one of our campuses. The Texas TAP System Teacher Incentive Fund Program will allow us to begin that process by providing technical assistance and the seed funding to initiate the program. We are committed to then building the sustainability in our own local budget to continue the program even after outside funding has gone away.

Even with challenging demographics (i.e. 51% of PISD students are economically disadvantaged) Pflugerville ISD has an unwavering focus on each child, and the future they will have in our world. We believe strongly that TAP will help us to develop quality teachers that will ensure academic achievement for every child. The grant application has my full support and the support of the Executive Leadership Team. Please feel free to contact me if I can answer any further questions.

Sincerely,



Keith McBurnett
Deputy Superintendent



ACCOUNTABILITY & CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

RICHARDSON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Unlock Potential • Provide Opportunities • Enable Dreams

June 4, 2010

Tammy K Kreuz, Ph.D.

Executive Director, Texas Teacher Advancement Program

702 Colorado Street, CLB 5.218

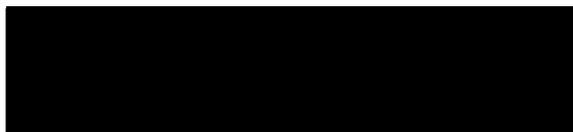
Austin, Texas 78701

On behalf of the Richardson Independent School District Department of Accountability and Continuous Improvement, I give my full support for the inclusion of Forest Lane Academy in this application.

Richardson ISD has had positive experiences and a good working relationship with the evaluation systems required to measure teacher success and performance outcomes with our previous TAP grant.

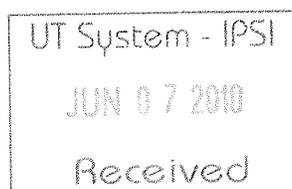
RISD welcomes all evaluation standards and processes of the grant, and assures participation to the fullest extent.

Sincerely,



Elvia Noriega
Executive Director

sh



**Letters of Support from
Principals of the Included Schools**



*Principal
Dr. Janie Sims
Athens, Texas 75751*

*Athens Intermediate School
307 Madole Street
(903)677-6960
(903)677-6987 FAX*

*Assistant Principals
Vicki Castleberry
Ginger Morrison*

June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, Ph.D.
Executive Director,
Texas TAP
Austin, Texas

RE: Teacher Incentive Fund

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

As the principal of Athens Intermediate School I am writing to express interest in having my campus participate in the Teacher Incentive Fund project. In recent years our campus has experienced significant academic growth, primarily assisted by funding from outside sources. We have a strong desire to continue these improvement efforts, and so, are highly interested in being involved in the TIF project. We believe our participation would lead to greater academic gains for our students and recognition for our teachers. I would be pleased to have my campus involved with the Teacher Incentive Fund project, and I support the inclusion of the program in the TIF Evaluation competition.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Janie Sims".

Dr. Janie Sims
Principal
Athens Intermediate School
Athens Independent School District
Athens, Texas

*Bel-Air Elementary School
215 Willowbrook
Athens, Texas 75751*

June 4, 2010

Tammy Kruez, Ph.D
Executive Director,
Texas TAP
Austin, Texas

Dear Dr. Kruez,

As principal of Bel-Air Elementary School in Athens, Texas, I am excited at the possibility of our campus receiving a Teacher Incentive Fund grant. Instructional leaders know the value of constantly striving to help teachers implement quality pedagogical skills which will ultimately benefit student academic success. As that leader for my campus, I am eager to help hone the skills of teachers through the structure and funding of the TIF grant.

Please know that I whole-heartedly support the efforts of our school district in its appeal for this grant. I look forward to the journey that this grant will help our campus embark upon. Too, I am supportive of our program being included in the TIF Evaluation Competition.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Renee Campbell
Principal
Bel-Air Elementary School
Athens, Texas

South Athens Elementary School

718 Robbins Road

Athens, TX 75751

June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, Ph.D.

Executive Director

Texas TAP

Austin, Texas

RE: Teacher Incentive Fund

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

I support Athens Independent School District in its initiative to participate in the Teacher Incentive Fund project. As Interim Principal of South Athens Elementary, I understand the importance of instruction and the value of providing the best education for our students.

I believe that our teachers, students, and community would greatly benefit from this program. Therefore, I support the inclusion of the program in the TIF Evaluation Competition.

Sincerely,



Susan Lay

Interim Principal



Blakemore Middle School
Boys Ranch ISD
P.O. Box 219
Boys Ranch, TX 79010
(806) 533-1445 Main
(806) 534-2384 FAX

June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz
Executive Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Ms. Kreuz:

Blakemore Middle School is excited about the opportunity to support The University of Texas System's application for a Teacher Incentive Fund grant. Blakemore Middle School has witnessed tremendous growth as a campus this past year as a Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) school, and we hope to be able to sustain this program in the future. Boys Ranch ISD is always searching for ways to grow the TAP program and ensure its sustainability.

The TAP model has brought about systematic change on this campus as measured by our recent TAKS scores. Because of the proven results of this program, Blakemore Middle School is excited about this opportunity to be part of a consortium of Texas school districts using the TAP model to exact positive change in student performance. The support Boys Ranch ISD receives from The University of Texas guarantees that each campus remains true to the TAP model and the program is carried out with fidelity.

The Teacher Incentive Fund program will allow Blakemore Middle School to continue working with The University of Texas System to implement practices, assessments, and strategies that will enable our students to become more motivated and academically challenged. The end result is young adults that are better prepared to enter the work force as engaged and productive citizens.

Sincerely,

Digital signature

Michelle Ellis
Principal of Blakemore Middle School

June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz
Executive Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Ms. Kreuz:

It is my pleasure to write a letter of support for the University of Texas System in its efforts to attain the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant. The Teacher Advancement program has had profound effects on Boys Ranch High School over the past two years, and the impact on instruction and learning is evident when you view our campus TAKS data. TAP has helped our campus develop a culture of instructionally focused accountability and high expectations of achievement for all students. The Teacher Incentive Fund Grant will enable us to sustain the program, motivate teachers, and continue the success of TAP implementation.

Sincerely,

Electronic Signature

Derek Davis
Principal
Boys Ranch High School

June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz
Executive Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Ms. Kreuz:

On behalf of STARR Academy at Boys Ranch ISD, I am pleased to submit this letter of support to accompany The University of Texas System's application for a Teacher Incentive Fund grant. We are excited about the opportunity to be part of a consortium of Texas school districts that will undertake innovative reforms that show great promise for increasing the academic achievement of our students through the Teacher Advancement Program. The STARR Academy has implemented the essential components of the Teacher Advancement Program over the past two years and as a result of the program's research-based evidence of the model's positive effects on the learning and academic achievement of our students, would like the opportunity to participate in the Teacher Incentive Fund program.

As part of The Teacher Incentive Fund program, our campus and community look forward to continuing work with The University of Texas System to implement practices, strategies, and assessments of TIF that will enable our students to become more motivationally and intellectually engaged in their learning and better prepared for college, careers, and life.

Respectfully,

Shelly Allen
Principal
STARR Academy
Boys Ranch ISD



HOOD JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

601 E. 38th St. • Odessa, Texas 79762

432-362-2371 • Fax: 432-368-2221

June 1, 2010

Shawn Almond
601 E. 38th Street
Odessa, TX 79760

Tammy Kreuz, Ph. D.
Executive Director of Texas TAP

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

My name is Shawn Almond and I am principal of Hood Jr. High in Odessa, TX. We will be implementing the TAP system into our school for the 2010-2011 school-year. I am writing this letter to gain funding through the TIF grant for our school following the 2010-2011 school year.

The TAP system will benefit our staff and students in several ways. First, it will allow leadership opportunities for our teachers. Second, it will promote a sense of unity from our staff in collaborating together and focusing on the needs of the campus. Third, it will allow teachers to become compensated for their time and effort and last it will impact students in their learning and test scores.

With the foundation for the TAP system being implemented this upcoming school year, I am requesting funding to continue this system for years to come. I strongly feel the TAP system will be a benefit for our students, staff, parents and communities.

Thanks for your consideration,

Shawn Almond

Hood Jr. High – Principal
Odessa, TX



Hearne Elementary School

1210 Hackberry
Hearne, Texas 77859
979-279-8012



Hearne Elementary is dedicated to ensuring the personal, social, and academic success of lifelong learners.

David Saul, Principal

Meta Golden, Counselor

Clem Washington, Dean of Students

To: Jerri Roemer

From: David Saul

Date: May 24, 2010

I am writing this letter to express my support in implementing the TIF/ Teacher Advancement Program in Hearne ISD. It is my belief that TIF/TAP will improve the quality of teaching in our district by providing support and research based best practices for the teachers. The program will also assist in retaining teachers in the district. The TIF/TAP will also help in recruiting highly qualified teachers to the district. I support the inclusion of the program in the TIF evaluation competition. Finally, the program will help improve student success in learning.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Saul".

David Saul
Principal
Hearne Elementary

HEARNE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
1201 B West Brown St.
Hearne, Texas 77859

May 25, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

During the 2010 – 2011 school year our campus, Hearne Junior High, will be implementing the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP). Our school leaders have spent the last year preparing for its implementation. This summer campus leadership will be trained in the application, and implementation of TAP.

Our campus has many challenges, some of which include, limited financial resources, high special education populations, and struggles with teacher recruitment. I, as campus principal, am fully in support of TAP and am confident that it will help our teachers grow and our students to achieve at higher levels.

This year the majority of our teachers voted strongly in support of TAP implementation. With the assistance of the TIF grant our campus leaders will be able to attend the TAP National Conference, visit TAP schools in year one or two of implementation, and can use other funds for the recruitment of highly qualified staff.

Sincerely,



Robert Garcia
Principal

HEARNE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



HEARNE HIGH SCHOOL



1201 West Brown St.
Phone: (979) 279-2332

Hearne, Texas 77859
Fax: (979) 279-8006

Jerry Deal, Principal

John Ward, Assistant Principal

Karla Robinson, Counselor

May 28, 2010

To Whom It May Concern;

As principal of Hearne High School, I am committed to bringing the best teachers possible to our campus and to providing them with the best possible professional development. As such, I would like to express my commitment to and support of the TIF project and the inclusion of TAP in the TIF Evaluation competition.

Jerry Deal
Principal
Hearne High School



**PFLUGERVILLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
FANNIE MAE CALDWELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

**Sonya Collins · Principal
Lara Labbé-Maginel · Assistant Principal**

May 21, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

Fannie Mae Caldwell Elementary would like to be considered for the TIF grant in order to have the TAP process on our campus for the 2010-2011 academic school year. This process will assist my school in reaching all students, improving achievement and continuing the professional development of all teachers at Caldwell Elementary.

Caldwell Elementary will pilot TAP for one year. We are excited to lead this process in Pflugerville ISD and ask for funds to continue this innovative program from the TIF Grant.

If you need additional information, please contact me at 512-594-6400.

Respectfully,

Sonya Collins
Principal
Fannie Mae Caldwell Elementary

John B. Connally High School

Pflugerville I.S.D.
13212 N. Lamar
Austin, TX 78753

Daniel Garcia
Principal

June 3, 2010

Dear Dr. Kruez,

We are thrilled to have the opportunity to implement the TAP program in the fall at the 9th grade level at each of our high schools. As we prepare to move forward, however, a nagging concern has been the issue of sustainability. When we went before our respective faculties for the original vote and told them we only had funding for TAP for one year, it caused an underlying worry about whether or not this would be another initiative in which we would invest heart and soul on behalf of our kids, only to have TAP not be sustained due to lack of funding. We want our teachers to give 110% to TAP without fear of it going away and we see the Federal TIF Grant as a means of helping us provide that sustainability over time.

With this letter, we want to express enthusiastic support for the TIF grant as a means to sustain the Teacher Advancement Program to PISD High Schools. We have engaged in a most rigorous selection process for our master teachers by conducting an assessment center with realistic simulations of master teacher work requirements. We have developed TAP leadership teams that are excited and ready to engage in genuine reform efforts this fall and we hope for years to come with funding from the TIF grant.

As high schools, we believe the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) will assist us greatly in the process of attracting, retaining and motivating the best talent to the teaching profession while increasing student achievement. The Texas TAP System Teacher Incentive Fund Program is exactly what we need at this time to move forward successfully to meet the needs of a growing population that is becoming increasingly diverse and complex in today's world.

Respectfully,



Daniel Garcia

Phone (512) 594-0800
Fax (512) 594-0805



DESSAU MIDDLE SCHOOL

PFLUGERVILLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Diana Saustaita
Principal

Kevin Bryant
Assistant Principal

Lisa Coston
Assistant Principal

Charles Hunt
Assistant Principal

Shawn Joseph
Assistant Principal

June 3, 2010

Dear Dr. Tammy Kreuz:

We are writing to you as a team of middle school principals in Pflugerville ISD to express enthusiastic support of the TIF grant as a means to bring the Teacher Advancement Program to PISD Middle Schools. We have watched our three high schools prepare for implementation in the fall through the DATE grant and have witnessed four of our elementary schools get on board with TAP this spring as well. We wondered at the time when our opportunity would come--and this TIF grant appears to be it!

As middle schools, we would like to adopt the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) as our system for attracting, retaining and motivating the best talent to the teaching profession while increasing student achievement. The Texas TAP System Teacher Incentive Fund Program will allow us to begin that process by providing technical assistance and the seed funding to initiate the program. As principals, we work together closely as a team of professionals who support each other in all endeavors. We have studied and attended training on professional learning communities and we view our campuses as uniquely suited for TAP implementation. We are primed and ready for deepening our work as PLCs through TAP.

Sincerely,

Lisa Coston, Principal
Dessau Middle School



◆ *Home of the Diamondbacks* ◆

12900 Dessau Road ◆ Austin, TX 78754 ◆ Phone (512) 594-2600 ◆ Fax (512) 594-2605





Pflugerville Middle School
Pflugerville Independent School District

Mary Kimmins, Principal
Martha Forney, Luis Ham, Robert Stell, Assistant Principals
Julia Engelmann, DeSharon Malunga, Counselors

June 3, 2010

Dear Dr. Tammy Kreuz,

We are writing to you as a team of middle school principals in Pflugerville ISD to express enthusiastic support of the TIF grant as a means to bring the Teacher Advancement Program to PISD Middle Schools. We have watched our three high schools prepare for implementation in the fall through the DATE grant and have witnessed four of our elementary schools get on board with TAP this spring as well. We wondered at the time when our opportunity would come--and this TIF grant appears to be it!

As middle schools, we would like to adopt the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) as our system for attracting, retaining and motivating the best talent to the teaching profession while increasing student achievement. The Texas TAP System Teacher Incentive Fund Program will allow us to begin that process by providing technical assistance and the seed funding to initiate the program.

As principals, we work together closely as a team of professionals who support each other in all endeavors. We have studied and attended training on professional learning communities and we view our campuses as uniquely suited for TAP implementation. We are primed and ready for deepening our work as PLCs through TAP.

Most sincerely,

Mary Kimmins
Principal



600 S. Heatherwilde
512.594.5400 phone

Pflugerville, TX 78660
512.594.5405 fax

May 21, 2010

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this letter as my interest in applying for the TAP program. This program will assist my school in reaching all students, improving student achievement and continuing the professional development of all teachers at Spring Hill.

Spring Hill Elementary will pilot TAP for one year. We are excited to lead this program in Pflugerville ISD and ask for funds to continue this innovative program from the TIF Grant.

If you need additional information, please contact me at 512-594-5400.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ralston".

Tere Ralston
Principal
Spring Hill Elementary



WESTVIEW MIDDLE SCHOOL

PFLUGERVILLE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Ronald Navarro Gonzales
Principal

Cynthia Sneed
Curriculum Principal

Cloteele Brinson
6th Grade Principal

Tony Festi
7th Grade Principal

Brendan Hale
8th Grade Principal

June 3, 2010

Dear Dr. Tammy Kreuz,

We are writing to you as a team of middle school principals in Pflugerville ISD to express enthusiastic support of the TIF grant as a means to bring the Teacher Advancement Program to PISD Middle Schools. We have watched our three high schools prepare for implementation in the fall through the DATE grant and have witnessed four of our elementary schools get on board with TAP this spring as well. We wondered at the time when our opportunity would come--and this TIF grant appears to be it!

As middle schools, we would like to adopt the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) as our system for attracting, retaining and motivating the best talent to the teaching profession while increasing student achievement. The Texas TAP System Teacher Incentive Fund Program will allow us to begin that process by providing technical assistance and the seed funding to initiate the program.

As principals, we work together closely as a team of professionals who support each other in all endeavors. We have studied and attended training on professional learning communities and we view our campuses as uniquely suited for TAP implementation. We are primed and ready for deepening our work as PLCs through TAP.

Most sincerely,

Martha Forney
Principal of Westview Middle School

Home of the Wildcats

1805 Scofield Lane, Austin Tx 78727 512-594-2200



"Pride...Honor...Determination"

Wieland Elementary School

900 Tudor House Road
Pflugerville, Texas 78660
(512) 594-3900
(512) 594-3905 fax

May 26, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this letter as Wieland Elementary School's interest in applying for the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP). This proven school reform model will improve student achievement through the structured collaborative professional development of teachers at Wieland.

Wieland Elementary School will pilot TAP during the 2010-2011 school year. The faculty and I are excited to be one of four elementary schools in Pflugerville ISD that will implement this program. We request funds to continue this innovative program from the TIF Grant.

Thank you for your consideration. If you need additional information, you may contact me at (512) 594-3900.

Sincerely,

Kevin L. Williams, Principal
Wieland Elementary School
"Pride...Honor...Determination"

SOMERSET JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



P.O. Box 279
7790 East, 3rd Street
Somerset, Texas 78069



Phone#: 1-866-852-9862 / Fax#: 1-866-448-2738

Connie Rodriguez, Principal
Rebecca Graf, Assistant Principal

Eduardo Miranda, Assistant Principal
Velma Cruz, Counselor

Connie L. Rodriguez
Junior High, Principal

Dear Ms. Kreuz,

Somerset Junior High School is located in the southwest section of Bexar County in Somerset, Texas. It provides educational services for approximately 600 students in seventh and eight grades. It believes strongly in providing the best teachers who are well trained in current research-based strategies and supported by high quality professional development for its children. Over the past few years, many of the teachers have left due to a multitude of reasons. Better pay, shorter commute, professional development, and classroom instructional support are just a few of those reasons. The 2008-2009 AEIS Report cites the junior high schools' teachers average only 3.8 years experience in teaching. Many in the areas of math and science have 0-1 years of experience and a large percentage of them are from an alternative certification program. Only 10% of the staff lives in the area, with the average commute from the San Antonio area in excessive of 30 miles. The junior high school teachers and staff voted this past spring to participate in the University of Texas and Texas Education Agency's Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) for the 2010-2011 school year. Our district was excited with the vote to participate in the TAP and the new direction that this endeavor would lead the campus.

With its commitment to providing continuous campus support for building leadership capacity, master and mentor support for classroom teachers, high quality professional development on research-based strategies in working with students, on-going progress monitoring of student performance for immediate response to intervention, teacher compensation for excellence, and retention stipends; the TAP/TIF program will focus on both the strengths and weaknesses of the campus. With the TAP resources of highly trained and experienced staff, funding resources and guidance, the junior high campus will be able to retain it teachers and successfully impact student performance.

The United States Department of Education Teacher Incentive Grant would further the original investment of the DATE Grant to the district by expanding the TAP program for five additional years. The success of the junior high school campus with this program will motivate other district campuses to follow in our pathway.

Sincerely,

Connie L. Rodriguez, Principal

Somerset Junior High is proud to be an Accelerated School

Julian C. Gallardo Elementary



Reach For Success... Nothing Less
Yolanda Lujan
Principal

John Grosskopf
Assistant Principal

Rebecca Bridges
Counselor

1460 Martinez-Losoya Rd. 78221
Ph: (210) 882-1609 Fax: (210) 626-2161

May 25, 2010

Tammy K. Kreuz, Ph.D.
Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

The administration and faculty of Gallardo Elementary thanks the Institute for Public School Initiatives for the opportunity to become part of the proposed Teacher Incentive Fund Grant effort.

In 2008-2009 the District Award for Teacher Excellence Grant provided Southside ISD with funds to implement the TAP model at Gallardo Elementary for three years. At the end of the second year, Gallardo Elementary received the "*TAP School of Promise Award*" at the 2010 National TAP Conference in Washington D.C., for significant improvement in their state assessment scores. The campus moved from "Acceptable" to "Recognized" with a significant gain in scaled scores for the students. One of the great benefits of the TAP model is the instructional leadership capacity gained by teachers. The Gallardo Elementary master and mentor teachers have increased their expertise in data analysis, instructional delivery, active research, and leading professional development efforts across the campus and the district.

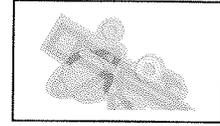
Not only has the TAP program allowed for teacher advancement and growth but has equipped the administrators with more time on task to be able to truly be instructional leaders.

We look forward to working with the Institute for Public School Initiatives in this effort. Should we be selected as a recipient of the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant, we are committed to support the TAP program enthusiastically and with complete fidelity.

Sincerely,

Yolanda Lujan
Principal/Gallardo Elementary

Pearce Primary School
A TEA Recognized Campus
"Navigating Toward the Future"



Dr. Mary E. Bandy, Principal

Tamara Wicker, Counselor

Philip Villanueva, Assistant Principal

Brenda Gonzales, Instructional Facilitator

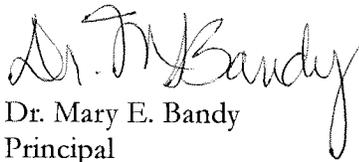
To Whom it May Concern:

Pearce Primary School is very proud and excited to have the opportunity to participate in the T.A.P. grant for the 2010-2011 school year.

Not only have we heard many positive things about the program, but we have seen our sister school Julian Gallardo Elementary show great gains in student achievement. Pearce Faculty and Staff are dedicated to increasing student achievement and we look forward to the trainings to help us focus in on areas we determine as areas for growth. We understand that this happens with much hard work and dedication on the part of the faculty and staff and I believe Pearce is ready for the challenges ahead.

We anticipate our student achievement will soar due to more focused delivery of instruction and a dedication to research based instructional strategies. We are ready for the challenges ahead.

Sincerely,

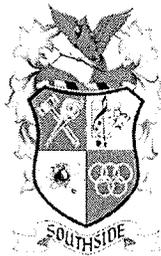


Dr. Mary E. Bandy
Principal

DR. JUAN ANTONIO JASSO
Superintendent of Schools

PHILLIP R. CHAVEZ
Assistant Superintendent,
Curriculum and Instruction

RICARDO R. VELA
Assistant Superintendent,
Business and Fiscal Services



SOUTHSIDE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION

LISA L. SALAZAR
President

MARGIE C. LOPEZ
Vice President

CRAIG KNAPP
Secretary

THERESA BALDERAS
RAUL G. MARTINEZ
RICK QUEBE
DANIEL RODRIGUEZ

1460 Martinez-Losoya Road
San Antonio, Texas 78221

Exemplary Behavior Begets Exemplary Performance!

Phone: (210) 882-1600
Fax: (210) 626-0101

May 20, 2010

Tammy K. Kreuz, Ph.D.
Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

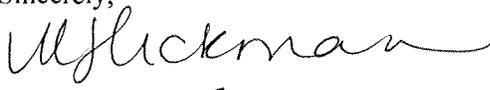
Southside ISD applauds and supports the efforts of the Institute for Public School Initiatives to partner with our schools to expand and maintain the researched-based Teacher Advancement Program. TAP creates small professional learning communities in our schools that focus on student achievement and build teacher effectiveness.

The administration and faculty of Gallardo Elementary, Pearce Elementary, and Losoya Intermediate thank the Institute for Public School Initiatives for the opportunity to become part of the proposed Teacher Incentive Fund Grant effort. Including districts with great needs (At-Risk - 59.9%, Economically Disadvantaged - 76.5%) allows for implementation of a performance-based compensation system for teachers and principals with a proven track record of significantly increasing student achievement.

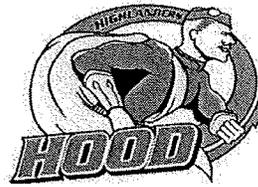
In 2008-2009 the District Award for Teacher Excellence Grant provided Southside ISD with funds to implement the TAP model at Gallardo Elementary for three years. At the end of the second year, Gallardo Elementary received the "TAP School of Promise Award" at the 2010 National TAP Conference in Washington D.C., for significant improvement in their state assessment scores. One of the great benefits of the TAP model is the instructional leadership capacity gained by teachers. The Gallardo Elementary master and mentor teachers have increased their expertise in data analysis, instructional delivery, active research, and leading professional development efforts across the campus and the district. To date, 100% of the staff at Gallardo indicated they will return in 2010-2011.

We look forward to working with the Institute for Public School Initiatives in this effort. Should we be selected as a recipient of the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant, we are committed to support the TAP program enthusiastically and with complete fidelity.

Sincerely,


Principal

**Letters of Support from
Assistant Principals
from the Included Schools**



Hood Junior High School
601 E. 38th Street
Odessa, Tx 79762
432-362-2371

Tammy Kreuz, Ph.D.
Executive Director of Texas TAP

June 4, 2010

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

My name is Susan Alvis and I am beginning my third year as assistant principal at Hood Junior High in Odessa, TX. One of the systems we are honored to begin this coming fall semester is the *Teacher Advancement Program* through the Institute for Public School Initiatives.

The reason for this letter is to request funding through the TIF grant for Hood Junior High's TAP program for years subsequent to the 2010-2011 school year.

We are looking forward to the many benefits the TAP program will be bringing to our campus. As a group with unique demographics and challenges, we know the TAP program will help us reach goals we have set for ourselves individually and as a faculty and staff. This opportunity will aid us in developing leaders and teachers who will in turn be better equipped to meet the needs of our student population.

Thank you for considering Hood Junior High in Odessa, Texas for the funding of the *Teacher Advancement Program*.

Sincerely,

Susan Alvis
Assistant Principal
Hood Junior High School
Odessa, TX

SOMERSET JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



P.O. Box 279
7790 East, 3rd Street
Somerset, Texas 78069



Phone#: 1-866-852-9862 / Fax#: 1-866-448-2738

Connie Rodriguez, Principal
Rebecca Graf, Assistant Principal

Eduardo Miranda, Assistant Principal
Velma Cruz, Counselor

Wednesday, June 02, 2010

Eduardo A. Miranda
Vice Principal

Dear Ms. Kreuz,

Somerset is a small Southwest community in Texas just outside the San Antonio area. At our Junior High School we serve approximately 600 students. There is a constant influx of new teachers coming and leaving the district because nearby districts offer incentives such as better salaries, shorter commuting distance and better staff development opportunities. Therefore, the district's retention rate of experienced teachers is low due to our inability to compete with these districts.

This last Spring our faculty and staff said "yes" to the TAP program and we are eager to benefit from the wealth of opportunities that this program provides such as continued campus support, master and mentor support for our teachers and researched-based professional development that will provide immediate intervention for our students, thereby enhancing the chances for them to perform better and get higher scores in our state mandated assessments. Along with better scores our teachers would receive better compensation for improved performance and higher morale which would increase our teacher retention rates.

As one of the Junior High Administrators, I am eager to provide the leadership and support needed for the success of our students, teachers and staff so that we can become a model district to help and motivate other districts that face similar challenges.

Sincerely Yours,

Eduardo A Miranda
Vice Principal
Somerset Junior High

Somerset Junior High is proud to be an Accelerated School

**Letters of Support from
Master and Mentor Teachers
at the Included Schools**

Julian C. Gallardo Elementary



Reach For Success... Nothing Less
Yolanda Lujan
Principal

John Grosskopf
Assistant Principal

Rebecca Bridges
Counselor

1460 Martinez-Losoya Rd. 78221
Ph: (210) 882-1609 Fax: (210) 626-2161

June 1, 2010

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

TAP has truly been a blessing for our school. As a master teacher I have learned so much in these past two years about instruction, data, and how students learn. I attribute this learning to the TAP program. Observing lessons has allowed me to learn from my peers, whether it be something wonderful that I want to share, or an area that may need to be addressed. Prior to the program teachers had few opportunities to discuss strategies and student learning in depth. This program allows opportunities for career teacher to have those important discussions and to receive assistance from a mentor or a master teacher.

TAP has helped the teachers at Gallardo Elementary become more conscious of their practice and how they deliver instruction. Cluster provides teachers and opportunity to participate in meaningful conversations about strategies that are beneficial to student achievement. Most importantly cluster provides an opportunity for reflection, allowing the teachers to refine or reinforce areas of their practice. Through TAP teachers and staff at Gallardo have all come together for a common goal, to help raise student achievement and teacher performance. Teachers are more data driven than ever before and as a whole the climate of the school has changed for the better.

I am honored to be a part of this program and I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to serve as a master teacher. This program has made me a more reflective learner and leader. The TAP program has done a wonderful thing for our school community and I am a true believer that our success is a result of implementing this program.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of Stephanie Cavazós.

Stephanie Cavazós
Master Teacher/Gallardo Elementary

Julian C. Gallardo Elementary



John Grosskopf
Assistant Principal

Yolanda Lujan
Principal

Rebecca Bridges
Counselor

Rebecca Sanchez
Master Teacher

1460 Martinez-Losoya Rd. 78221
Ph: (210) 882-1609 Fax: (210) 626-2161

Stephanie Cavazos
Master Teacher

May 28, 2010

Tammy K. Kreuz, Ph.D
Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

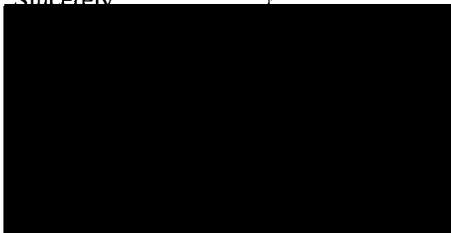
Julian C. Gallardo applauds and supports the efforts of the Institute for Public School Initiatives to partner up with the Southside Independent School District to expand and maintain the researched-based **System for Teacher and Student Advancement Program (TAP™)**. At our school, TAP has allowed for the creation of small, professional learning communities among our faculty and staff.

As a TAP Master Teacher, I have seen many changes at Gallardo that have helped improve teacher quality and student achievement. The teachers have internalized the Instructional Rubric and have become more aware of their teaching styles – both successes and areas of need. During cluster meetings, I love to see the teachers get excited about a new strategy and share with the other teachers the successes and challenges that they have had in their classrooms. A new level of honesty has come out of my teachers. I now have teachers that say, *“I need help with that...I’m not sure how to teach that particular concept...Can I see how that teacher does it?”* Before TAP, teachers rarely asked for help. When I was a classroom teacher, I never asked for assistance because I was too embarrassed to admit that I needed help. Everybody taught in isolation and there was minimal collaboration and planning. Sure, we shared activities and resources with each other, but there was no discussion on *how to teach the content*. That is why I love cluster! We can now talk about *how to teach* – not just what to teach.

I have been especially proud of my 1st grade team this year. All year, we have worked on math problem solving. The mentor teacher, Ms. Delacruz, and I have modeled with teachers, co-taught with them, allowed them to see each other teach, and more importantly, allowed them to make mistakes and corrections. I have made many contacts with math specialists from Region 20 because I wanted to make sure that we were aware of all the latest research and findings (and put them into practice). The 1st grade teachers made a huge gain in the area of problem solving this year! In January, 64% of the 1st grade students passed this objective (TAKS #6). In May, 82% of the 1st graders passed. Problem solving is their most successful objective and we hope to continue that success. We have also identified areas of need and the teachers and I are already talking about changes for next year.

Without The System for Teacher and Student Advancement, none of the above would have been possible. I am excited to hear that other schools in our district will be implementing TAP and I know they will have as much success with the program as we have had. Should we be selected as the recipient of the **Teacher Incentive Fund Grant**, we are committed to support TAP enthusiastically and with complete fidelity.

Sincerely,



Tamara M. Dugan
Hearne Junior High
7th Grade ELAR Educator
tdugan@hearne.k12.tx.us

Dear Sir or Madam:

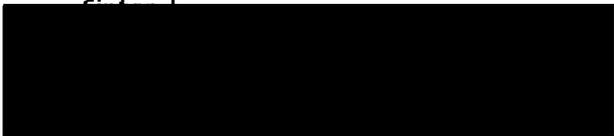
I am writing to express my support for implementing the Teacher Assistant Program in Hearne I.S.D. As an educator for fifteen years, I find this program to be a crucial asset for success in our growing district. I realize the importance of this program and how it will be implemented to aid new and veteran educators. The Teacher Assistance Program rewards dedicated work while guaranteeing professional development on a daily bases. This program will bridge the gap between first year teachers and mastery level educators. The real beneficiaries of this program are the students of Hearne, Texas.

In my professional opinion, I believe this guidance is the key factor for success in a district that supports and educates many at-risk students. Being a mentor teacher, I will be able to aid all my teachers in lesson planning, active engagement and weekly data analysis. I will be able to guide them to creating lesson that will foster critical thinking, active learning, and skills deemed necessary by our state. This will foster growth not only for our teachers but for our students as well. I see this program as a win/win situation for all involved.

I believe the issue in Texas is not a teacher shortage. I deem the issue to be teacher retention. I wish to be involved in retaining our best educators before they become tired and burned out and seek other careers. This is extremely important to me. I relish my profession, and I desire nothing but the best for Texas students and their educators.

The program allows for active reflection that fosters growth for educators. Teachers are able to look back on lessons and grow using guidance from experience educators. I believe this program will allow for Hearne teachers to have support, guidance, and professional development that is essential to preserve the employment of highly skilled educators.

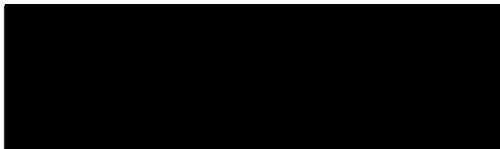
I look forward to being a pioneer for this new program at Hearne Independent School District. I know it will bring a positive change to our district that will benefit the community, educators, administrators, and most importantly, the students. I think with this new program, we will be able to retain educators who will be essential in our children's successful education. This program will elevate Hearne to a new level of learning, teaching, and guidance through positive leadership. I am proud to be a participant in such an outstanding program.



ELAR Educator/ Mentor Teacher

May 25, 2010

I am very excited about our campus becoming a TAP school. I believe that the systematic mentoring and professional development will help us define our goals, more effectively plan our approach to achieving those goals, and as a result become more effective educators. By providing mentors for every teacher and time to come together to discuss our progress I hope that TAP will facilitate team building and help us unite, as a faculty, to reach our goals.



Mary Ann Ward
Master Teacher
Hearne ISD

May 26, 2010

I am excited about our campus becoming a TAPS school. I believe that the accountability focused instruction will be a positive impact for our teachers that will therefore impact our students. The ongoing professional development will help teachers to grow and refine in the areas that they need and get new ideas. The master and mentor part of TAPS will get each grade level discussing and sharing areas that we need to focus on along with celebrating achievements. I feel that TAPS will bring our campus together uniting us to reach our goals.



Terry Kirksey

Master Teacher

Hearne ISD

5/26/2010

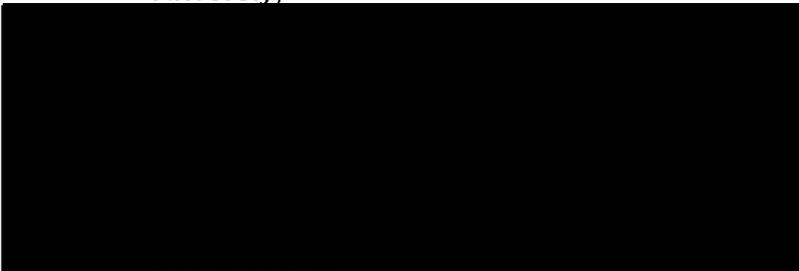
Dear Texas TAP Committee:

I believe that the entire Hearne Junior High School staff will be an enthusiastic partner with Texas TAP on implementing the TAP Program at our school. I know that I am excited to see the TAP implementation components and see how this project is designed to improve student achievement and teacher focused professional development.

I agree with the Texas TAP administrators that program fidelity within the TAP Program is essential to the overall success of the program. At Hearne Junior High School, we have had success in implementing innovative programs that have lead to student achievement. With the implementation of the TAP Program, I believe that these programs will have the increased focus that is needed in our areas of academic concern. This focus will enable Hearne Junior High School to overcome the community's minimum standard "Academically Acceptable" mentality and enable higher levels of student achievement that will be reflected in our state accountability achievement goal of "Recognized" for our school.

As a TAP Program Master Teacher, I give my full support to program fidelity and TAP Program implementation at Hearne Junior High School. I am excited to begin the process that, in my opinion, will have Hearne Junior High School become a leader in student learning in our surrounding community.

Sincerely,



Robert Wilson
Hearne Science
TAP Program Master Teacher

**Letters of Support from
Teachers at the Included Schools**

SOMERSET JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



P.O. Box 279
7790 East, 3rd Street
Somerset, Texas 78069



Phone#: 1-866-852-9862 / Fax#: 1-866-448-2738

Connie Rodriguez, Principal
Eduardo Miranda, Assistant Principal

Velma Cruz, Counselor
Rebecca Graf, Assistant Principal

Veric Michaelsen
Teacher

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

Somerset Junior High School is located in the southwest section of Bexar County in Somerset, TX. It provides educational services for approximately 600 students in the 7th and 8th grade. It believes strongly in providing the best educational experiences for all students by providing them with the best teachers who are well trained in current research-based strategies and supported by high quality professional development for its children.

Over the past few years our campus has suffered a high turnover rate for a multitude of reasons. Better pay, shorter commutes, available professional development and instructional support are just a few of those reasons. The 2008-2009 Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) report cites that the junior high teacher average years of experience is 3.8 years. Many of the areas of math and science have 0-1 years of experience and many of them have alternative certifications. Only 10% of the staff lives in the area, with the typical commute from the San Antonio area in excess of 30 miles, and up to 50 miles. The junior high school teachers and staff voted this past spring to participate in the University of Texas and Texas Education Agency's Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) for the 2010-2011 school year. Our district was animated with the vote to participate in the TAP and the new direction that this endeavor would lead the campus.

With its promise to providing continuous campus support for building leadership capacity, master and mentor support for classroom teachers, high quality professional development on research-based strategies in working with students, on going progress monitoring of student performance for immediate response to intervention, teacher compensation for excellence, and retention stipends; the TAP/TIF program will focus on both the strengths and weaknesses of the campus. With the TAP resources of highly trained and experienced staff, funding resources and guidance, the junior high campus will be able to maintain our teachers and successfully impact student performance.

The United States Department of Education Teacher Incentive Grant would further the original investment of the DATE grant to the district by expanding the TAP program for five additional years. The successful achievement of the junior high school campus with this program will inspire other district campuses to follow in our pathway.

Sincerely,



Somerset Junior High is proud to be an Accelerated School

June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, PhD
Executive Director,
Texas TAP
Austin, Texas

RE: Teacher Incentive Fund

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

As an educator, I have witnessed the vast benefits of teacher incentive programs. Not only are teachers empowered professionally through these programs, students profit greatly as a result.

Please consider Athens ISD – namely South Athens Elementary, Athens Intermediate School, and Bel-Air Elementary – as you select worthy educational institutions for TIF. The tremendous efforts of these campuses as they strive toward success are not only changing a district, they are transforming a community.

Sincerely,



5th grade teacher.
Athens Intermediate

June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, Ph.D.
Executive Director,
Texas TAP
Austin, Texas

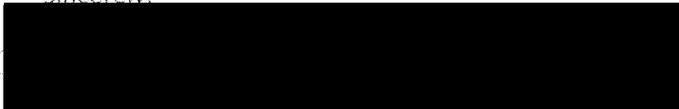
RE: Teacher Incentive Fund

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

I am writing this letter in support of the Teacher Incentive Fund project. Incentives provided by this project would greatly benefit the Athens Independent School District. As a teacher in the district, it is my desire to strive to reach higher levels of achievement. With incentive pay, teachers are provided extra motivation to learn new strategies and implement new programs. Ultimately my goal is for every student to be successful, and participation in this project could provide ways for this goal to be reached.

It is my understanding that South Athens Elementary, Bel-Air Elementary, and Athens Intermediate would like to participate in this project. By allowing the three campuses to participate, continuity, communication, and a common goal can be attained. Please consider allowing our district to be a part of success through participation in the TIF project.

Sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covers the signature area of the letter.

June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, Ph.D.
Executive Director,
Texas TAP
Austin, Texas

RE: Teacher Incentive Fund

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

Athens Independent School District is seeking the opportunity to participate in the Teacher Incentive Fund Project. It is my understanding that this project will provide opportunities to improve instruction and therefore help raise the level of academic achievement. The opportunity to participate in this project will enhance programs and provide the extra incentive to retain teachers and administrators.

As a teacher in AISD, I would like to express my support for South Athens Elementary, Bel-Air Elementary, and Athens Intermediate to participate in the TIF project. Thank you for your consideration in our district pursuing this project.

Sincerely,



June 4, 2010

Tammy Kreuz, Ph.D.
Executive Director,
Texas TAP
Austin, Texas

RE: Teacher Incentive Fund

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

As a teacher for the Athens Independent School District, I would like to express my support for three of our campuses to participate in the Teacher Incentive Fund project. South Athens Elementary, Bel-Air Elementary, and Athens Intermediate have dedicated staff to improving student performance. By receiving this grant, opportunities will be provided for teachers to be awarded incentives based on performance. As research has shown, performance based pay has in turn improved student achievement.

Again, I would like to express my support for the TIF project.

Sincerely,

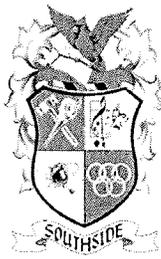
A solid black rectangular redaction box covering the printed name of the sender.

Teacher at Bel Air Elementary

DR. JUAN ANTONIO JASSO
Superintendent of Schools

PHILLIP R. CHAVEZ
Assistant Superintendent,
Curriculum and Instruction

RICARDO R. VELA
Assistant Superintendent,
Business and Fiscal Services



SOUTHSIDE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION

LISA L. SALAZAR
President

MARGIE C. LOPEZ
Vice President

CRAIG KNAPP
Secretary

THERESA BALDERAS
RAUL G. MARTINEZ
RICK QUEBE
DANIEL RODRIGUEZ

1460 Martinez-Losoya Road
San Antonio, Texas 78221

Exemplary Behavior Begets Exemplary Performance!

Phone: (210) 882-1600
Fax: (210) 626-0101

May 28, 2010

Tammy K. Kreuz, Ph.D.
Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

Southside ISD applauds and supports the efforts of the Institute for Public School Initiatives to partner with our schools to expand and maintain the researched-based Teacher Advancement Program. TAP fosters the creation of small professional learning communities in our schools and in doing so positively impacts student achievement.

I would like to express my gratitude for allowing Losoya Intermediate the opportunity to become part of the proposed Teacher Incentive Fund Grant effort. Our school and district serve a high percentage of At-Risk and Economically Disadvantaged students and including Southside ISD in The Teacher Incentive Fund will allow for implementation of a performance-based compensation system for teachers and principals with a proven record of increasing student achievement.

As a returning teacher to Losoya Intermediate, I look forward to improved instructional leadership, data analysis, instructional delivery, research, and implementation of said research that is fostered through the Teacher Advancement Program.

As a campus, we look forward to working with the Institute for Public School Initiatives in increasing student achievement. Should we be selected as a recipient of the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant, we are committed to support the TAP program enthusiastically and with complete fidelity.

[REDACTED]

Michael R. Vrzalik
Teacher, Losoya Intermediate

May 26, 2010

Tammy K. Kreuz, Ph.D.
Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

As a teacher at Pearce Primary School in Southside ISD, I appreciate the efforts of the Institute for Public School Initiatives and Teacher Advancement Program to develop and support student achievement and teacher effectiveness. Working in a district with great needs requires that we implement programs with a proven track record of significantly increasing student success. Seeing the growth made at Gallardo Elementary has inspired many of us here at Pearce Primary to strive for the same or greater progress.

I look forward to the challenges and achievements that the new school year will bring. I am committed to supporting the Teacher Advancement Program here at Pearce. Thank you for the opportunity.

Sincerely,



Teacher, Pearce Primary School

May 28, 2010

Tammy K. Kreuz, Ph.D.
Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

As a member of the faculty at Pearce Primary School, I am looking forward to working with the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) this coming school year. The continued success of another TAP elementary school in our district has proven to me and my colleagues the need for such an effective program at this school.

Having effective teachers and maintaining them in the classroom is a challenge that many schools face every year, thus impacting student achievement. With the implementation of the TAP, Pearce is proactively addressing this challenge. Benefits that I would expect to see from the TAP are more effective teachers in the classroom, increased student achievement, and beneficial collaboration with the faculty to address the needs of every student.

I am one of the bilingual teachers at Pearce who was nominated for Teacher of the Year last year. My TAKS scores are 90% and above with most of my students being commended in Reading and Math. Even with my past record I would like for all students to not only meet academic state standards but to perform to their full potential. The TAP will make it possible for me and other Pearce teachers to achieve this goal by staying abreast of the latest research in practice, experimenting with new approaches, and strengthening teacher instruction. In addition, I am also excited about increasing our professional growth.

I am grateful Pearce Primary has the opportunity to participate in the Teacher Advancement Program. The TAP will help our school come together and take active responsibility for the goals to which we are committed to practice in an exemplary way.

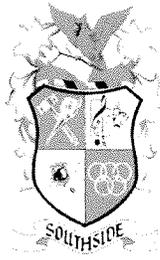
Sincerely,


Carla I. Escamilla
Third Grade Bilingual Teacher

DR. JUAN ANTONIO JASSO
Superintendent of Schools

PHILLIP R. CHAVEZ
Assistant Superintendent,
Curriculum and Instruction

RICARDO R. VELA
Assistant Superintendent,
Business and Fiscal Services



SOUTHSIDE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION

LISA L. SALAZAR
President

MARGIE C. LOPEZ
Vice President

CRAIG KNAPP
Secretary

THERESA BALDERAS
RAUL G. MARTINEZ
RICK QUEBE
DANIEL RODRIGUEZ

1460 Martinez-Losoya Road
San Antonio, Texas 78221

Exemplary Behavior Begets Exemplary Performance!

Phone: (210) 882-1600
Fax: (210) 626-0101

May 20, 2010

Tammy K. Kreuz, Ph.D.
Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

As a classroom teacher I am continually striving to improve my instructional delivery. The Teacher Advancement Program at Pearce Primary will give me many opportunities to increase student achievement through a structured method of staff development.

I have heard many positive things about the T.A.P. and look forward to working as a mentor teacher to assist my cluster in professional growth.

I am fully in support of the T.A.P. model and am excited that Pearce will have the opportunity to benefit from the experience and support of the Institute for Public School Initiatives

Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

Julian C. Gallardo Elementary



Reach For Success... Nothing Less
Yolanda Lujan
Principal

John Grosskopf
Assistant Principal

Rebecca Bridges
Counselor

1460 Martinez-Losoya Rd. 78221
Ph: (210) 882-1609 Fax: (210) 626-2161

May 25, 2010

Tammy K. Kreuz, Ph.D.
Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

Southside ISD applauds and supports the efforts of the Institute for Public School Initiatives to partner with our schools to expand and maintain the researched-based Teacher Advancement Program. TAP creates small professional learning communities in our schools that focus on student achievement and build teacher effectiveness.

The administration and faculty of Gallardo Elementary thanks the Institute for Public School Initiatives for the opportunity to become part of the proposed Teacher Incentive Fund Grant effort. Including districts with great needs (At-Risk-59.9%, Economically Disadvantaged-76.5%) allows for implementation of a performance-based compensation system for teachers and principals with a proven track record of significantly increasing student achievement.

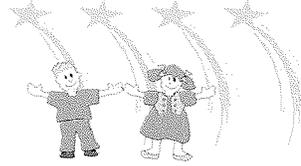
In 2008-2009 the District Award for Teacher Excellence Grant provided Southside ISD with funds to implement the TAP model at Gallardo Elementary for three years. At the end of the second year, Gallardo Elementary received the "*TAP School of Promise Award*" at the 2010 National TAP Conference in Washington D.C., for significant improvement in their state assessment scores. One of the great benefits of the TAP model is the instructional leadership capacity gained by teachers. The Gallardo Elementary master and mentor teachers have increased their expertise in data analysis, instructional delivery, active research, and leading professional development efforts across the campus and the district. To date, 100% of the staff at Gallardo indicated they will return in 2010-2011.

We look forward to working with the Institute for Public School Initiatives in this effort. Should we be selected as a recipient of the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant, we are committed to support the TAP program enthusiastically and with complete fidelity.

S


Cynthia Farr
Teacher/Gallardo Elementary

Julian C. Gallardo Elementary



Reach For Success... Nothing Less
Yolanda Lujan
Principal

John Grosskopf
Assistant Principal

Rebecca Bridges
Counselor

1460 Martinez-Losoya Rd. 78221
Ph: (210) 882-1609 Fax: (210) 626-2161

June 1, 2010

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

I am a teacher at Gallardo Elementary where the TAP program has been the driving force of our school. As a new teacher, there are many things that even though, they are taught in college, are not fully understood until you are in the classroom with 22 children looking at you with high expectations.

The on-going staff development through the Cluster Meeting has been outstanding. In talking to friends working in other schools who do not have TAP, I feel like I am bragging because it seems that no matter what problems they are encountering, I am able to provide feedback due to my training in cluster meetings, in co-teaching in the classroom and the many opportunities afforded me through the Mentor and Master teacher. As long as Gallardo Elementary has the TAP program, even if I have a long distance to drive to get to work, I will not even consider looking for a position anywhere else.

I highly recommend the TAP program. Thank you for all you do to encourage other schools to become a part of TAP.

Sincerely,



Teacher/Gallardo Elementary

Julian C. Gallardo Elementary



Reach For Success... Nothing Less
Yolanda Lujan
Principal

John Grosskopf
Assistant Principal

Rebecca Bridges
Counselor

1460 Martinez-Losoya Rd. 78221
Ph: (210) 882-1609 Fax: (210) 626-2161

May 28, 2010

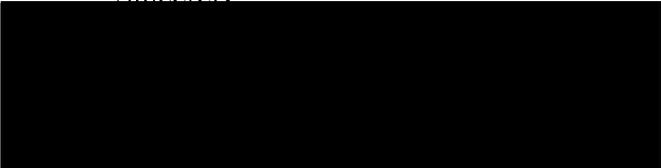
Dear Dr. Kreuz,

I would like to take this opportunity to share the outstanding benefits of the Teacher Advancement Program (T.A.P.) as seen on my campus over the past two years. Since the implementation of T.A.P. our campus climate has shifted to an instructionally focused campus, promoting collegiality and professional growth in each teacher as evident by the dramatic increase in our state test scores.

T.A.P. provides teachers with weekly professional development based on the needs of our students. This training is supported with co-teaching and modeling facilitated by mentor and master teachers in the classrooms. The T.A.P. instructional rubric provides teachers with ample feedback on the effectiveness of classroom lessons, but most importantly, the post-conference provides teachers with specific examples on how to improve their lessons. Because of the T.A.P. instructional rubric, I have become a more reflective teacher and more receptive to feedback provided by my colleagues. I have witnessed a shift in teacher attitudes to more instructionally focused and data driven.

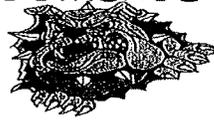
I support the Teacher Advancement Program and look forward to working in a T.A.P. school for many years to come.

Sincerely,



Fourth Grade Teacher
Julian C. Gallardo Elementary

SOMERSET JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL



P.O. Box 279
7790 East, 3rd Street
Somerset, Texas 78069



Phone#: 1-866-852-9862 / Fax#: 1-866-448-2738

Connie Rodriguez, Principal
Eduardo Miranda, Assistant Principal

Velma Cruz, Counselor
Rebecca Graf, Assistant Principal

Kelli L Taylor
History Department Head

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

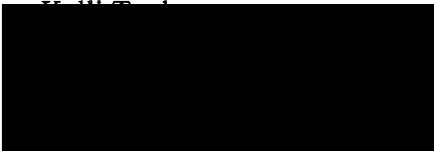
Somerset Junior High School is located in the southwest section of Bexar County in Somerset, TX. It provides educational services for approximately 600 students in the 7th and 8th grade. It believes strongly in providing the best educational experiences for all students by providing them with the best teachers who are well trained in current research-based strategies and supported by high quality professional development for its children.

Over the past few years our campus has suffered a high turnover rate for a multitude of reasons. Better pay, shorter commutes, available professional development and instructional support are just a few of those reasons. The 2008-2009 Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) report cites that the junior high teacher average years of experience is 3.8 years. Many of the areas of math and science have 0-1 years of experience and many of them have alternative certifications. Only 10% of the staff lives in the area, with the average commute from the San Antonio area in excess of 30 miles. The junior high school teachers and staff voted this past spring to participate in the University of Texas and Texas Education Agency's Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) for the 2010-2011 school year. Our district was excited with the vote to participate in the TAP and the new direction that this endeavor would lead the campus.

With its commitment to providing continuous campus support for building leadership capacity, master and mentor support for classroom teachers, high quality professional development on research-based strategies in working with students, on going progress monitoring of student performance for immediate response to intervention, teacher compensation for excellence, and retention stipends; the TAP/TIF program will focus on both the strengths and weaknesses of the campus. With the TAP resources of highly trained and experienced staff, funding resources and guidance, the junior high campus will be able to retain it teachers and successfully impact student performance.

The United States Department of Education Teacher Incentive Grant would further the original investment of the DATE grant to the district by expanding the TAP program for five additional years. The success of the junior high school campus with this program will motivate other district campuses to follow in our pathway.

Sincerely,



Somerset Junior High is proud to be an Accelerated School



SOMERSET JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

7790 East 3rd Street
Somerset, Texas 78069

Phone#: 1-866-852-9862 / Fax#: 1-866-448-2738



June 1, 2010

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

Somerset Junior High School is part of the Somerset Independent School district and is located in the southwest section of Bexar County in Somerset, TX. Our campus provides educational services for approximately 600 students in seventh and eighth grades. Our school strongly believes in providing the best teachers who are well trained in current research-based strategies and supported by high quality professional development for its children. Over the past few years, many of the teachers have left due to a multitude of reasons including better pay, shorter commute, professional development, and classroom instructional support. The 2008-2009 AEIS Report cites the junior high schools' teachers average only 3.8 years of classroom experience. The majority of our math and science teachers have 0-1 years experience and a large percentage of them are enrolled in an alternative certification program. Only 10% of the staff currently lives in the area, with the average commute from the San Antonio area in excessive of 30 miles. This past spring, the junior high school teachers and staff voted to participate in the University of Texas and Texas Education Agency's Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) for the 2010-2011 school year. Our district was excited with the vote to participate in the TAP and the new direction that this venture would lead the campus.

With its commitment to providing continuous campus support for building leadership capacity, master and mentor support for classroom teachers, high quality professional development on resear-based strategies in working with students, on-going progress monitoring of student performance for immediate response to intervention, teacher compensation for excellence, and retention stipends; the TAP/TIF program will focus on both the strengths and weaknesses of the campus. With the TAP resources of highly trained and experienced staff, funding resources and guidance, the junior high campus will be able to retain its teachers and successfully impact student performance.

The United States Department of Education Teacher Incentive Grant would further the original investment of the DATE Grant to the district by expanding the TAP program for five additional years. The success of the junior high school campus with this program will motivate other district campuses to follow in our pathway.

Sincerely,



Melanie De Leon
Somerset JHS Teacher

Ms. Kreuz,

Please accept this letter as my show of support for instituting the TAP system at John B. Hood Jr. High for the the 2010-2011 school year and hopefully for many years to follow. I believe based on the TAP presentation, that this system will meet many needs that we currently have at Hood. First, I think that our students need to have higher academic expectations placed on them. We want to increase the rigor of our curriculum at the jr. high level, so that even our average students can compete at the high school level. Second, I believe that one of our current problems is that we lack "across-the-board" consistency among our teachers and staff. TAP should be able to improve this through the weekly meetings guided by the master teachers along with the monitoring to make sure that consistent plans become consistent actions. Third, it is my hope that discipline throughout the school will improve if we have raised our academic standards and have become more consistent in everything from classroom management to being prepared for class. The TAP assessment tool appears to be very practical and when looking at it, I quickly saw areas where I thought, "I can improve this." To me that is what an assessment tool should do for teachers, just as we use assessments to help our students improve. I hope that you will afford us the opportunity to take our students, basically good, solid "kids", to a higher level than I think they currently see for themselves.

Sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Tammy Starcup.

Tammy Starcup

Choral Director

June 1, 2010

Dear Dr. Tammy Kreuz,

I am writing in support for Tap funding at Hood Jr. High in Odessa, Texas. I have been an educator for 21 years at ECISD, 18 of these years being at Hood Jr. High.

After reading all of the information on the Tap program, I feel like Hood Hr. High would benefit greatly from all the program has to offer. Not only would teachers have an incentive to step up their teaching knowledge and performance, but the reward would benefit our students tremendously. I truly believe our students totally deserve the rewards of the Tap program.

Hood Jr. High has an outstanding faculty and staff, however; I feel that all of us are eager to learn new and exciting new teaching strategies to use in the classroom. Students deserve the best that teachers can offer to them. With the Tap program I feel that both teachers and students will come out "on top of their game".

Thank you for considering funding for Hood Jr. High through the Teacher Incentive Fund. I appreciate your time.

Sincerely,



Angie Wood
Teacher
Hood Jr. High
Odessa, Texas
432-362-2371



HOOD JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

601 E. 38th St. • Odessa, Texas 79762

432-362-2371 • Fax: 432-368-2221

June 1st, 2010

Ms. Tammy Kreuz, Ph.D.

Executive Director of Texas TAP

Dear Ms. Kreuz

Subject: Letter of support

My name is Rocio Chacon. I have been teaching Spanish at Hood for the past four years. The purpose of this letter is to give support for TAP at Hood Jr. High.

Our school will greatly benefit with TAP implemented here at Hood Jr. High. TAP will allow ongoing on site professional development for classroom teachers that will help engage our students which in turn will help on our TAKS scores. This will also give teachers the opportunity to work together to discuss, plan and create lessons that are higher level thinking and student centered. The TAP program will help Hood be able to hire, train, support and reward our faculty for creating higher levels of achievement. This program will greatly benefit our students here at Hood Jr. High.

TAP is a program that has potential for success here at Hood Jr. High. I would like to ask for funding from the TIF grant for Hood Jr. High beyond the 2010-2011 school year. I feel this system will impact our school and community.

Sincerely,

Rocio Chacon



HOOD JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

601 E. 38th St. • Odessa, Texas 79762
432-362-2371 • Fax: 432-368-2221

Dr. Kreuz,

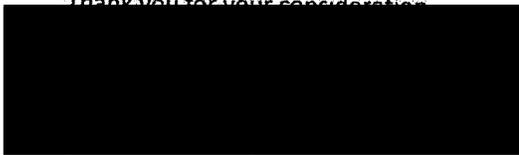
My name is Will Culpepper and I am a current 7th grade Science teacher at Hood Jr. High in Odessa. The purpose of my letter is to show my support for TAP for our school. I believe that the TAP program will lead to increase teacher moral, confidence, and most importantly, top education and development for the students at Hood Jr. High.

I come from a very different background than most teachers. This is not my first career out of college. My first career was as a high level salesperson and manager at #1 privately own recruiting company for 8.5 years. The company's pay structure was that of base salary plus commission. I see similarities in the TAP program in that there is development (Master Teacher and Mentor roles) and incentive (bonus structure) for teachers. Again, this will lead to teachers getting the best development, feedback, and opportunity to be the best individual teachers they can be. This is what Hood needs.

The students at Hood Jr. High will see the most rewards. With teachers that are more developed, mentored, and driven, the students at Hood will have more opportunity to learn and be challenged to be their best. While we have seen improvement in the 2009-2010 school year, our school needs a program like TAP to help ensure that each teacher is giving each student at Hood the best opportunity to be educated.

Dr. Kreuz, please consider additional funding for TAP program for Hood Jr. High.

Thank you for your consideration.



BURLESON ELEMENTARY

3900 N. Golder Ave
Phone: (432) 362-3101, (432) 368-3236
Fax: (432) 368-3241

The Ector County Independent School District's District Continuous Improvement Team (DCIT) met as a committee on Thursday, May 20, 2010. Mr. Almond, principal of Hood Junior High, with two of his staff members, presented the proposed *Teacher Advancement Program* (TAP). It is proposed that this program be implemented at Hood Junior High in the upcoming 2010-2011 school year.

The DCIT committee members unanimously voted in favor of the program. The committee felt that this program will:

- Bring academic success to the students
- Reward teachers for student academic growth
- Provide ongoing professional growth for the staff
- Create a sense of collaboration among **all** teachers

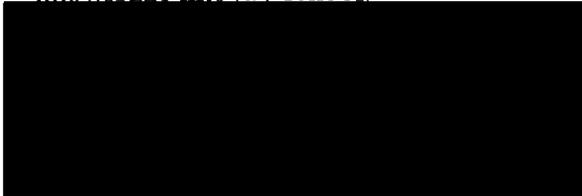
Respectfully



DCIT Chair Elect
5th Grade Teacher
Burleson Elementary

To whom it may concern,

I am so proud that Hearne ISD is implementing the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) in our Elementary and Junior High School. I feel as though it will have a direct positive impact on the teachers and as a consequence on our students' performance. As a new Mentor Teacher I am looking forward to learning more about TAP and bringing that knowledge into my school.



DeeAnn Smith
Hearne ISD Educator

Letter of Support for TAP Program

To Whom It May Concern,

As a teacher of Hearne Junior High School, I fully support the implementations of the TAP program at our campus. I believe that the TAP program will further help to develop the learning environment on our campus by providing quality professional development and a universal goal for our campus. In addition, I support the TAP program because I believe it will provide teachers with quality support and insight into proven teaching methods which will help all of us at HJH become better educators. I believe TAP will help to further support student achievement through the use of data driven decisions and best practices in our campus classrooms. In conclusion, I believe that the TAP program will



Hearne Junior High School

Letter of Support

To whom it may concern:

I am Dustin Stallones, Hearne 8th grade science teacher. The TAP program is a great way to attract and retain highly-qualified teachers. It offers multiple career paths, ongoing professional development, and performance-based compensation. The TAP program will give teachers the best opportunity to become the best they can. This will positively affect the achievement of our students. Because of the TAP program components, I am in full support of the implementation at Hearne Junior High School.

Thank you.



Dustin Stallones
Hearne Junior High
8th Grade Science

HEARNE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

HEARNE HIGH SCHOOL

1201 West Brown St.
Phone: (979) 279-2332

Hearne, Texas 77859
Fax: (979) 279-8006



Jerry Deal, Principal

John Ward, Assistant Principal

Karla Robinson, Counselor

May 27, 2010

To whom it may concern:

While our faculty recently voted not to become a TAPS school next year, I believe there is always benefit for teachers seeing other teachers teach. I also believe that seeing the TAPS model in progress would be a better way to evaluate this approach. Therefore, while not committing to becoming a TAPS school, I would certainly commit to visiting some of these schools and exploring the approach.

Sincerely



Becky Slovak
Teacher, Hearne High School

May 23, 2010

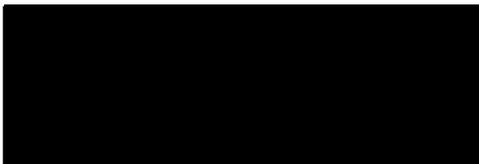
To Whom it May Concern:

When I was presented with the Teacher Advancement Program, I approached it with a skeptical attitude. I wanted to try to find a way that it was not something Hearne Junior High needed. However, the more I researched and found out about the program, the stronger it became apparent that this is a wonderful way to improve student achievement and help our school.

The part of TAP that I am most excited about and want to shout from the mountain tops is the unparalleled amounts of support that the program offers. All teachers will be encouraged and enabled to do the very best they can. When I e-mailed complete strangers (all career teachers) to ask about their experiences teaching in TAP schools, they said they have become better teachers than I thought possible. One teacher mentioned she is finally learning to "work smarter, not harder." Personally, this is my favorite aspect of the program, as I think there are often wonderful teachers who never fully develop due to inadequate support. Instead of presenting something during an inservice and allowing the teacher to forget everything they just learned, the master and mentor teachers will truly coach the teachers to make sure they use best practices in their classrooms.

Another aspect of TAP that amazes me is how *proven* the program is. The data does not lie. The value-added scores have greatly increased at TAP schools. The teachers of Hearne Junior High will no longer be satisfied staying "academically acceptable". It is time to increase student achievement! We finally have a research-based instructionally-focused accountability system. TAP also offers multiple career paths, enabling great teachers to stay in the classroom while still pursuing a career in which they can have a more powerful impact on the school as a whole.

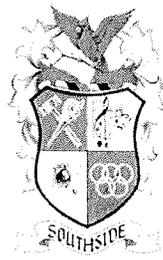
I am ridiculously excited about seeing what TAP will do to our little school in Hearne. I have great expectations, and I do not think I will be let down! I fully support the implementation of the Teacher Advancement Program at Hearne Jr. High.



DR. JUAN ANTONIO JASSO
Superintendent of Schools

PHILLIP R. CHAVEZ
Assistant Superintendent,
Curriculum and Instruction

RICARDO R. VELA
Assistant Superintendent,
Business and Fiscal Services



SOUTHSIDE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION

LISA L. SALAZAR
President

MARGIE C. LOPEZ
Vice President

CRAIG KNAPP
Secretary

THERESA BALDERAS

RAUL G. MARTINEZ

RICK QUEBE

DANIEL RODRIGUEZ

1460 Martinez-Losoya Road
San Antonio, Texas 78221

Exemplary Behavior Begets Exemplary Performance!

Phone: (210) 882-1600
Fax: (210) 626-0101

May 20, 2010

Tammy K. Kreuz, Ph.D.
Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

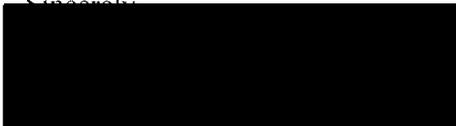
Southside ISD applauds and supports the efforts of the Institute for Public School Initiatives to partner with our schools to expand and maintain the researched-based Teacher Advancement Program. TAP creates small professional learning communities in our schools that focus on student achievement and build teacher effectiveness.

The administration and faculty of Gallardo Elementary, Pearce Elementary, and Losoya Intermediate thank the Institute for Public School Initiatives for the opportunity to become part of the proposed Teacher Incentive Fund Grant effort. Including districts with great needs (At-Risk - 59.9%, Economically Disadvantaged - 76.5%) allows for implementation of a performance-based compensation system for teachers and principals with a proven track record of significantly increasing student achievement.

In 2008-2009 the District Award for Teacher Excellence Grant provided Southside ISD with funds to implement the TAP model at Gallardo Elementary for three years. At the end of the second year, Gallardo Elementary received the "TAP School of Promise Award" at the 2010 National TAP Conference in Washington D.C., for significant improvement in their state assessment scores. One of the great benefits of the TAP model is the instructional leadership capacity gained by teachers. The Gallardo Elementary master and mentor teachers have increased their expertise in data analysis, instructional delivery, active research, and leading professional development efforts across the campus and the district. To date, 100% of the staff at Gallardo indicated they will return in 2010-2011.

We look forward to working with the Institute for Public School Initiatives in this effort. Should we be selected as a recipient of the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant, we are committed to support the TAP program enthusiastically and with complete fidelity.

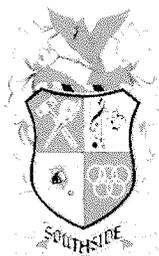
Sincerely,



DR. JUAN ANTONIO JASSO
Superintendent of Schools

PHILLIP R. CHAVEZ
Assistant Superintendent,
Curriculum and Instruction

RICARDO R. VELA
Assistant Superintendent,
Business and Fiscal Services



SOUTHSIDE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION

LISA L. SALAZAR
President

MARGIE C. LOPEZ
Vice President

CRAIG KNAPP
Secretary

THERESA BALDERAS
RAUL G. MARTINEZ
RICK QUEBE
DANIEL RODRIGUEZ

1460 Martinez-Losoya Road
San Antonio, Texas 78221

Exemplary Behavior Begets Exemplary Performance!

Phone: (210) 882-1600
Fax: (210) 626-0101

May 20, 2010

Tammy K. Kreuz, Ph.D.
Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

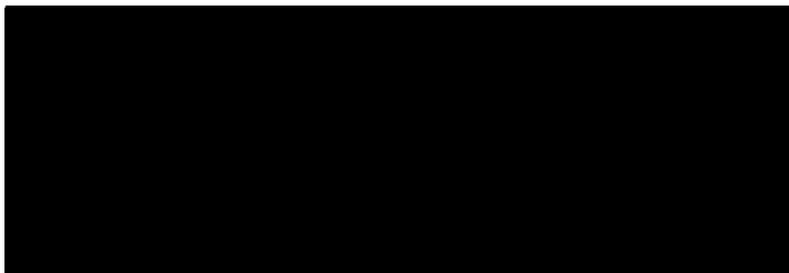
Dear Dr. Kreuz,

Southside ISD applauds and supports the efforts of the Institute for Public School Initiatives to partner with our schools to expand and maintain the researched-based Teacher Advancement Program. TAP creates small professional learning communities in our schools that focus on student achievement and build teacher effectiveness.

The administration and faculty of Gallardo Elementary, Pearce Elementary, and Losoya Intermediate thank the Institute for Public School Initiatives for the opportunity to become part of the proposed Teacher Incentive Fund Grant effort. Including districts with great needs (At-Risk - 59.9%, Economically Disadvantaged - 76.5%) allows for implementation of a performance-based compensation system for teachers and principals with a proven track record of significantly increasing student achievement.

In 2008-2009 the District Award for Teacher Excellence Grant provided Southside ISD with funds to implement the TAP model at Gallardo Elementary for three years. At the end of the second year, Gallardo Elementary received the "TAP School of Promise Award" at the 2010 National TAP Conference in Washington D.C., for significant improvement in their state assessment scores. One of the great benefits of the TAP model is the instructional leadership capacity gained by teachers. The Gallardo Elementary master and mentor teachers have increased their expertise in data analysis, instructional delivery, active research, and leading professional development efforts across the campus and the district. To date, 100% of the staff at Gallardo indicated they will return in 2010-2011.

We look forward to working with the Institute for Public School Initiatives in this effort. Should we be selected as a recipient of the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant, we are committed to support the TAP program enthusiastically and with complete fidelity.



May 28, 2010

Tammy K. Kreuz, Ph.D.
Director for Educator Quality Initiatives
Institute for Public School Initiatives
The University of Texas System

Dear Dr. Kreuz:

The faculty and staff at Losoya Intermediate would appreciate the opportunity to work with the Institute for Public School Initiatives. The partnership between our school and the Institute will allow Southside ISD to expand and maintain the researched-based Teacher Advancement Program. The idea that TAP will create small professional learning communities in our school focusing on student achievement and building teacher effectiveness encourages us to look forward to the improvements we will see in the upcoming school years. The anticipation and excitement that has been felt since we first heard about this program has spread rapidly amongst not just teachers but all staff.

The administration and faculty of Gallardo Elementary, Pearce Elementary, and Losoya Intermediate thank the Institute for Public School Initiatives for the opportunity to become part of the proposed Teacher Incentive Fund Grant effort. By including districts with great needs, (At-Risk - 59.9%, Economically Disadvantaged - 76.5%) it allows for implementation of a performance-based compensation system for teachers and principals with a proven track record of significantly increasing student achievement. The opportunity to not only make a difference in student's lives, but also receive an extra bonus for this would be greatly appreciated.

In 2008-2009 the District Award for Teacher Excellence Grant provided Southside ISD with funds to implement the TAP model at Gallardo Elementary for three years. At the end of the second year, Gallardo Elementary received the "*TAP School of Promise Award*" at the 2010 National TAP Conference in Washington D.C., for significant improvement in their state assessment scores. One of the great benefits of the TAP model is the instructional leadership capacity gained by teachers. The Gallardo Elementary master and mentor teachers have increased their expertise in data analysis, instructional delivery, active research, and leading professional development efforts across the campus and the district. To date, 100% of the staff at Gallardo indicated they will return in 2010-2011.

Hearing about the difference that this program has made at Gallardo Elementary was one of the main reasons we at Losoya Intermediate decided we wanted to be part of the TAP grant. The experience and expertise that we will be exposed to will allow our student's the opportunity to achieve what the students at Gallardo have accomplished. We have dedicated ourselves to giving 100% of our effort to this program and ensuring the success of our campus.

We look forward to working with the Institute for Public School Initiatives in this effort. Should we be selected as a recipient of the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant, we are committed to support the TAP program enthusiastically and with complete fidelity.

Sincerely,





SOMERSET INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

19644 Somerset Road • P.O. Box 279 • Somerset, Texas 78069

Mr. Saul Hinojosa

Dear Dr. Kreuz,

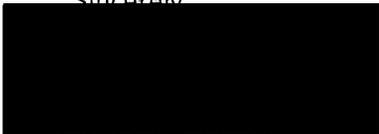
Somerset Independent School District is a small semi-rural school district southwest of San Antonio, Texas. It provides educational services for 3,547 students from over an eighty-five square mile area. It was created in 1922 and currently has six campuses.

Somerset ISD believes strongly in providing the best teachers who are well trained in current research-based strategies and supported by high quality professional development for our children. Over the past few years, many of the teachers have left due to a multitude of reasons. Better pay, shorter commute, professional development, and classroom instructional support are just a few of those reasons. The 2008-2009 AEIS Report cites the junior high schools' teachers average only 3.8 years experience in teaching. Many in the areas of math and science have 0-1 years of experience. Somerset ISD was excited when the campus voted to participate in the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) in partnership with the University of Texas and the Texas Education Agency and the positive impact that this partnership can make to the district.

With its commitment to providing continuous campus support for building leadership capacity, master and mentor support for classroom teachers, high quality professional development on research-based strategies in working with students, on-going progress monitoring of student performance for immediate response to intervention, teacher compensation for excellence, and retention stipends; the TAP/TIF program will focus on both the strengths and weaknesses of the campus. With the TAP resources of highly trained and experienced staff, funding resources and guidance, the junior high campus will be able to retain its teachers and successfully impact student performance.

The United States Department of Education Teacher Incentive Grant would further the original investment of the DATE Grant to the district by expanding the TAP program for five additional years. The district would willingly use district and other resources to pay its share of the required 40% matching funds that is required by the grant. The success of the junior high school campus with this program will motivate other district campuses to follow in its pathway.

Sincerely,



Mr. Saul Hinojosa

Project Narrative

Other Attachments

Attachment 1:

Title: **Other Attachments** Pages: **26** Uploaded File: **Other Attachments.pdf**



Education

Ph.D. in Educational Administration: Educational Policy and Planning

August 2005

The University of Texas at Austin

Austin, TX

- Major course work included educational policy and planning, school restructuring and renewal, measurement and evaluation of educational programs, organizational theory, economics of education, educational politics and policy, ethics and values, organizational behavior, and social and cultural contexts of education.
- Kappa Delta Pi (International Honor Society in Education)
- Active participant in school restructuring project in Austin I.S.D.
- Primary research focus—the highly qualified teacher challenge.

Master of Business Administration

August 2001

Southwest Texas State University

San Marcos, TX

- Kappa Delta Pi (International Honor Society in Education)
- Beta Alpha Psi (National Honors Fraternity for Financial Information Professionals)

B.B.A., Accounting

May 1999

Southwest Texas State University

San Marcos, TX

- Tau Alpha Chi (National Honorary Tax Association), Treasurer 2000-2001
- Order of Omega;
- Accounting Club, Secretary 98-99;

Public Education Work Experience

Director for Educator Quality Initiatives

December 2005-Present

Institute for Public School Initiatives, The University of Texas System

Austin, TX

- Provides managerial leadership for the development and implementation of various educator quality initiatives including the Texas TAP System and the Technical Assistance Program for the largest teacher incentive pay program in the nation—known as D.A.T.E.
- Successfully manages over \$30 Million in grant programs from federal, state, and private entities.
- Responsibilities include coordination of teacher quality and administrator leadership initiatives in conjunction with the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the P-16 Council.
- Serves as UT System liaison with Texas Education Agency and the P-16 Council on teacher quality and educational technology initiatives.
- Provides managerial leadership for TEA-sponsored educator quality initiatives such as the New Teacher Project and Teach for America.
- Other responsibilities include the analysis of educational technology projects, development of project plan, and managerial oversight of project expansion. Other responsibilities include the supervision of professional development and technical assistance activities among multiple service providers.
- Provide oversight on educational research and program evaluation projects for IPSI. Responsibilities include contract management and oversight on the development of RFPs. Provide oversight for the collection of progress and evaluation reports. Provide input on the research plan and help coordinate the collection of data for research and evaluation projects.

Project Manager, Office of Education Initiatives

January 2005-December 2005

Texas Education Agency

Austin, TX

- Provided managerial leadership for the development and implementation of various statewide education initiatives including the \$20 Million biennial Limited English Proficient (LEP) Initiative and \$2 Million+ Teacher Quality Projects.
- Provided managerial oversight of educator quality initiatives such as the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) and the New Teacher Project.
- Utilizing scientifically-based researched, targeted, planned and directed the professional development programs for teachers in a number of statewide initiatives, including LEP, the Science Initiative, the Texas High School Initiative, and TAP.
- Responsibilities included statewide policy development and implementation and managerial leadership for various contracts/grants with IHEs, ESCs, and other entities that assist the Agency in program implementation. These responsibilities included the coordination of professional development and technical assistance activities among multiple service providers.

- Provided oversight on educational research and program evaluation projects for statewide education initiatives including LEP, Texas High School Completion and Success, and CSR. Responsibilities included contract management and leading the development and review of RFPs to select an outside contractor for program evaluation services.
- Managed the development of RFAs and administration of the discretionary grant process utilizing the Standard Application System (SAS). Provided oversight for the development and collection of grant progress and evaluation reports and data analysis for monitoring program implementation.

Director of Special Projects, Educational Technology

October 2002- January 2005

Texas Education Agency

Austin, TX

- Provided managerial leadership for the planning, coordination, and implementation of state and federal educational technology pilot program legislation.
- Primary responsibility included the management and oversight of the \$14 Million Technology Immersion Pilot (TIP) project and the corresponding \$2 Million federal grant for the Evaluation of the Texas TIP (eTxTIP)—managed project team of six individuals consisting of TEA employees, contractors, and ESC personnel.
- Led the coordination with educational service centers, professional organizations, IHEs, and other entities regarding technology pilot projects.
- Directed the production and dissemination of numerous documents and presented to various audiences interested in the projects. Developed, edited and prepared reports and publications for the Legislature and other audiences.
- Prepared and administered administrative and program budgets.
- Developed RFAs, RFPs, MOUs and contracts.
- Managed contracts with external entities who provided technical assistance, professional development, or evaluation services for technology projects.
- Prepared and maintained documentation of programs or projects as required.
- Responsible for development and monitoring of TARGET grant evaluation reports.
- Other responsibilities included management of the Ed Tech PILOTS.

Auditor- School Financial Audits Division

March 2002- October 2002

Texas Education Agency

Austin, TX

- Planned, prepared and conducted audits in public and charter schools in Texas;
- Assisted in follow-up activities to ensure that appropriate action was taken by schools in response to audit findings; and
- Reviewed annual compliance and financial reports filed by public schools;

Technology Program Manager

August 2000- August 2001

Lockhart Independent School District

Lockhart, TX

- Provided leadership for the development and integration of K-12 technology curriculum on elementary campuses;
- Responsible for planning, coordinating, and delivering staff development on various technology topics;
- Managed campus staff development plans to ensure that technology integration was merged with core curriculum areas;
- Analyzed statistical data from on-line testing to provide reports to district administration and school board;
- Maintained campus technology budgets;
- Served as the Campus Network Administrator; Co-chaired the Technology Education Committee; Served as the TIF Grant and TIE Grant Campus Administrator.

Teaching Experience

Secondary Business Computer Information Systems Teacher

August 1999 to August 2000

Bastrop Independent School District

Bastrop, TX

Taught basic computer skills including Microsoft Office, Internet, and E-Mail; Computer Lab Manager; BPA Sponsor.

Publications

██████████ (2005). The Status of Teacher Quality in Rural High Schools: A Descriptive Analysis. *Dissertation Abstracts International*.

██████████ (2005). *The Highly Qualified Teacher Challenge in Rural Schools*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Montreal, CA.

Shapley, K., ██████████ and Givens, A. (2005) *Designing and Scientifically Evaluating a State Technology Immersion Pilot: Compelling Vision, Key Partnerships, and Stark Realities*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Montreal, CA.

Professional Licenses/ Certifications

Texas Teaching Certificate- Secondary Basic Business

Other Professional Experience

Internal Audit Manager

The 401(k) Company

August 2001- March 2002

Austin, TX

Managed project team of three in the development and analysis of financial statements for large market retirement plans; Performed various tasks relating to client's independent auditors; Compiled data and reconciled for the completion of Tax Forms 1099-R, 945, and 5500.

Computer Skills

Expertise in many software programs including Microsoft Office, SPSS, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Survey Said, and FrontPage.





Objective

To obtain a position where I can provide oversight for the program development and implementation of TIF and TAP at the principal level while assisting in the management of daily program operations.

Experience

2009-Current Institute for Public School Initiatives Austin, Texas

Coordinator for Principal Leadership and Program

Development

- Support/Coach Principals Implementing TAP System Model
- Develop and Deliver Principal Trainings
- Support Development Efforts for Future TAP Schools Across the State of Texas

2005-2009 Jones Elementary Bryan ISD, Bryan Texas

Campus Principal

- Manage Campus Facility
- Provide Instructional Leadership for grades PK-5th Grades
- Implement TAP Program

2003-2005 Central Office Bryan ISD, Bryan Texas

District Bilingual/Migrant Supervisor

- Supervise the Implementation of Bilingual/Migrant Programs Across District
- Supervise Compliance Procedures In Regards to Program
- Assist In Writing Grants and Reporting Annual Progress on Grants Such as Title III and Title I Migrant Services

2002-2003 Central Office Bryan ISD, Bryan, Texas

District Bilingual Master Teacher

- Mentor and Coach New Bilingual/ESL Teachers PK-8th Grades
- Assist Bilingual Teachers with Preparations of LPAC Meetings
- Research Materials to Support Learning In the Classroom

Summer 2003, 2004 Bryan ISD Bryan ISD, Bryan, Texas

Summer School Principal

- Served as Summer Principal for Three Campuses in Bryan ISD
- Organized and Lead the Implementation of Summer Curriculum
- Wrote TEA State Summer Report for Submission as per Chapter 89

Funding Requirements

1998-2003 Jones/Johnson Elementary Bryan ISD , Bryan, TX

Bilingual Teacher

Education

2003-2005 Sam Houston State University Huntsville, Texas

- Masters in Educational Leadership and Administration

2000-2002 Texas A&M University College Station, Texas

- Masters in Educational Psychology with Emphasis in Bilingual/ESL Services

1993-1997 Texas A&M University College Station, Texas

- B.A. Sociology Minor: Spanish

Professional Certifications

Elementary Self Contained PK-6

Bilingual/ESL/Spanish PK-6

Principal Certification PK-12

CERTIFICATION

Texas Elementary Certification (1-8) August 2003
Illinois Elementary Certification (1- 8) January 2001
GT Certification – Summer 2003

EDUCATION

August, 1998 -
May, 2000

MA Education - Saint Xavier University, Chicago IL

August, 1991-
August, 1994

BA Psychology - Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL

PROFFESIONAL EXPERIENCE

February 2008 –
Current

TAP (The System for Teacher Advancement) Regional Coordinator – Institute for Public School Initiatives – The University of Texas System

- Provide general oversight for the implementation of the TAP System in Dallas region
- **Facilitate and develop professional development workshops for local school districts and National level on TAP System and processes**
- Assist local districts in completing reporting documents necessary for TIF Grant
- Coordinate submission of data and reports between local districts and contracting parties
- Advise and assist local school districts with the budget process and sustainability plans for TIF grant
- **Develop and facilitate instructional training for schools on exemplary instructional practices**
- **Serve as coach for principals and teachers in attainment of high quality instruction at the campus level**
- Advise and assist local area school districts with hiring members of the TAP Leadership team
- Coordinate and facilitate informational meetings with school districts and program directors
- Observe and provide feedback on Cluster and Leadership Team meetings in order to enhance master teacher proficiency in implementation of TAP program
- Develop and maintain communication through various methods with local school districts and program director and team

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

August 2005 –
January 2008

***Richardson Independent School District - Thurgood Marshall Elementary
Master Teacher (Teacher Advancement Program)***

- Researched and Implemented latest Research Based Reading Strategies for Kindergarten through Second Grade Teachers
- Assisted Teachers with growth and development of instructional methodologies
- **Planned and Developed curriculum for reading and mathematics instruction for teachers and students**
- Evaluated teacher performance based on TAP Instructional Rubric for good teaching practices
- **Facilitated weekly professional development meetings for teachers in Kindergarten through Second grade**
- Modeled good teaching practices based on TAP Instructional Rubric for teachers in Kindergarten through Second Grade
- **Provided ongoing feedback for professional development of teachers**
- **Campus Leader - member of school wide decision making committee on Best Instructional Practices**
- Created and administered various methods of assessment for student achievement
- Analyzed student data to determine effectiveness of Instructional Strategies and Teaching Methodologies
- Composed long term and cyclic goals based on student data
- Performed other duties as member of leadership team necessary for professional growth and development of the school
- Participated in interviews and hiring of career teachers for Kindergarten through Second Grade

August 2004 –
May 2005

Carrollton Farmers Branch Independent School District- McWhorter Elementary Third Grade

- Taught lessons for all disciplines, language arts, sciences, reading, math and social studies.
- Developed lessons for Language Arts Curriculum to foster critical thinking.
- Designed a grade level writing program; that includes phonetic development, grammar and spelling principles, to serve as a foundation for future writing activities.
- Created portfolios of student work for evaluation of growth and development.
- Established an effective method for classroom management through the use of encouragement, rewards and praise.
- Created student centered classroom environment, kept students motivated and excited about learning.

August 2001 -
December 2003

**Houston Independent School District – Roosevelt Elementary
Third and Fourth Grade Sights**

- Developed thematic units centered on multiculturalism designed to encourage critical thinking and foster problem solving.
- Taught lessons for all disciplines, language arts, sciences, reading, math and social studies.
- Established an effective method for classroom management, cooperative - grouping and self-control.
- Established a meaningful rapport with parents, faculty, and administrators.
- Kept ongoing records of Parental Contact, Student Achievement and Attendance.
- Evaluated student achievement and provided direction for future development.
- Participated in full staff meetings and small grade level development groups.
- **Third Grade Level Chair for 2002-2003 school years.**
- Facilitated weekly meetings with team members, supervised curriculum based instruction, arranged and prepared field lessons for grade level, established tutorials for at-risk students.
- Created student centered classroom environment, kept students motivated and excited about learning.
- Participated in several trainings geared toward self improvement.
- Completed training for Gifted and Talented Students.
- Developed plays and arranged music for student programs.
- Served on several school wide committees including School Decision Making Committee.
- Attended training and assisted with administration of TAKS Standardized training.
- Served as a presenter for several trainings on curriculum and instructional methods.
- Social Studies Chairperson for 2002-2003

January 2001-
June 2001

Houston Gateway Academy (Houston, TX) Second Grade

- Developed lessons to encourage critical thinking and foster problem solving.
- Taught lessons for all disciplines, language arts, sciences, reading, and math.
- Established an effective method for classroom management, cooperative - grouping and self-control.
- Established a rapport with parents, faculty, and administrators.
- Prepared student progress reports.
- Evaluated student achievement and provided direction for future development.

- 
- Participated in full staff meetings and small grade level development groups.



Education:

- **Doctoral Student:** The University of Texas at Austin. Department of Educational Administration, Education Policy and Planning Program.
- **Masters:** The Johns Hopkins University, May 2004. Masters of Arts in Teaching.
- **Bachelor of Arts:** The University of Texas at Austin, May 2002. Major in History, minor in English.
- **Business Certificate:** From the McCombs School of Business, May 2002.
- **Honors:** Golden Key Honors Society, Liberal Arts Honors Program, University Honors (Fall 1999).

Recent Work Experience:

- **Regional Coordinator:** The University of Texas System, Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), July 2008 to present. First point of contact for multiple large school districts in Texas. Primary responsibilities include:
 - Provide assistance and support at the district and campus level in reference to budgets, personnel and overall implementation of TAP.
 - Plan and lead trainings for teachers, school and district level administrators.
 - Coach, support and give actionable feedback to Principals, Master Teachers and Mentor Teachers.
- **Graduate Research Associate:** The University of Texas System & Texas Education Agency, November 2007 to July 2008. Provide technical assistance for school districts in the planning and implementation of the DATE (District Award for Teacher Excellence) grant, including but not limited to: creating a high level of stakeholder engagement, helping to build district-oriented performance measures, successfully writing grant proposals and crafting financially sustainable plans.
- **University Facilitator:** The University of Texas at Austin, August 2007 to July 2008. Collaborate and communicate with school level administration and staff at AISD and RRISD campuses. Teach education seminar for undergraduate students. Coordinate placement, provide support and give timely feedback to intern and apprentice teachers.
- **University Research:** The University of Texas at Austin, October 2007 to December 2007. Worked with Dr. Julian Heilig in the Education Policy

- and Planning Program to study the effects of campus based leadership on school culture before, during and after the reconstitution process.
- **Teacher/Team Leader:** Fourth grade teacher in Round Rock, Texas, 2004-2007. Team leader for the 2005/2006, 2006/2007 school years. In 2006 the fourth grade as a whole showed a 12% increase in math scores and a 10% increase in reading scores compared to the previous year.
 - **Teach for America:** Fourth grade teacher in Baltimore City, Maryland, 2002-2004. Taught at a high need school in central Baltimore.

Conference Presentations:

- TAP National Conference 2009, 2010
- Texas TAP Summer Institute, 2008, 2009, 2010
- Louisiana, Chicago and Arizona TAP Summer Institutes, 2010
- District Award for Teacher Excellence (DATE) Summer Institute, 2010

Grants:

- **Lead Contact/ Grant Writing Team Member:** “Seeds to Reading and Writing”, January 2006. Helped to obtain \$5000 used to purchase picture books for reading and writing instruction.
- **Grant Writing Team Member:** “Putting the Pieces Together”, January 2005. Helped to obtain thousands of dollars used to purchase math manipulatives.

Professional Competencies:

- High level of expertise and comfort with communicating and collaborating with district and school level leadership.
- Extensive knowledge of high quality instructional techniques.
- Proficiency in Cognitive Coaching and other teacher mentoring models.
- Passion for providing support and guidance for successful implementation of educational interventions.

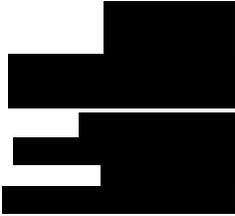
Computer Skills:

- Microsoft Office (all applications).
- SPSS (working knowledge).

Professional References:

- Dr. Tammy K. Kreuz, Executive Director
The University of Texas System
Institute for Public School Initiatives
(512) 322-3757

- Jason Culbertson, Senior Vice-President
National Institute for Excellence in Teaching
(864) 387-9011
- Julie Nelson, Principal
Union Hill Elementary School
(512) 424-8700



Objective

To improve educator quality in the state of Texas resulting in increased student achievement.

Work Experience

Executive Master Teacher, Teacher Advancement Program (TAP)

2007 – Present Institute for Public School Initiatives, University of Texas System, Austin, TX

- Design training materials and professional development meetings for Teacher Leaders and Principals.
- Lead/Facilitate statewide professional development for schools participating in TAP.
- Coach and support teacher leaders in TAP schools.
- Evaluate implementation of TAP system in schools.
- Work with state and national team to monitor and support program implementation.
- Facilitate information sessions and training sessions at TAP National Conference.

Master Teacher, Teacher Advancement Program

2006 – 2007 Blake Manor Elementary, Manor ISD, Manor, Texas

- Design and facilitate weekly job embedded professional development.
- Model research-based strategies and instruction techniques in classrooms.
- Professional evaluation of classroom instruction.
- Analyze data for goal-setting and develop assessments for monitoring progress toward goals.

Special Education Teacher

2002 – 2005 Nancy Jane Cochran Elementary, Dallas ISD, Dallas, Texas

- Classroom instruction in reading, language arts and math.
- Development of Individual Education Plans (IEP) and facilitation of annual IEP meetings.
- Track Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for special education populations.
- Collaborate with general education teachers to implement accommodations and modifications for students receiving special education services.
- Co-teach with general education teachers in inclusive settings.

Special Education Liaison

2003 – 2005 Nancy Jane Cochran Elementary, Dallas ISD, Dallas, Texas

- Serve as liaison between District and local campus to disseminate information and provide direction.
- Analyze district data and its impact on the local campus.
- Facilitate school wide professional development meetings.

Special Education Department Chair

2003 – 2005 Nancy Jane Cochran Elementary, Dallas ISD, Dallas, Texas

- Organize weekly meetings with teachers in special education department.
- Responsible for legal paperwork in regards to special education IEP meetings.
- Plan annual IEP meeting schedule and organize weekly IEP meetings.
- Facilitate campus IEP meetings.
- Creation and maintenance of monthly special education newsletter.
- Designed a reading assistance brochure for parents.

Committees

Leadership Team

2006 – 2007 *Blake Manor Elementary, Manor ISD, Manor, Texas*

- Data-driven decision making.
- Research curriculum materials for campus-wide adoptions.
- Review evaluation procedures and inter-rater reliability.
- Development and monitoring of annual campus improvement plan.

Campus Instructional Leadership Team

2003 – 2005 *Nancy Jane Cochran Elementary, Dallas ISD, Dallas, Texas*

- Data-driven decision making.
- Development and monitoring of annual campus improvement plan.

Student Support Team

2003 – 2005 *Nancy Jane Cochran Elementary, Dallas ISD, Dallas, Texas*

- Collaborate with team to develop interventions for struggling students.
- Work with teachers and parents to provide support for struggling students.
- Participate in the referral process for special education services.

Professional Presentations

- Teachers Standing with a Foot in Two Worlds: Finding, Supporting and Developing Teacher Leaders, *TASSP Conference*, Austin, TX
- Teacher Advancement Program, *TASA/TASB Conference*, Dallas, TX

Education

2007 – 2009 The University of Texas, Austin, Texas

- Master of Education, Educational Administration
- 4.0 GPA

1999 – 2001 Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas

- Bachelor of Arts, Art History/Communication
- 3.66 GPA

Certifications

- Special Education Certification EC-12, State of Texas
- ESL Certification, State of Texas
- Professional Development Appraisal System (PDAS)

Texas Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Strategic Communications Plan

External and Internal Action Steps

Texas Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Strategic Communications Plan

During the planning year for the project, Texas TIF will develop effective partnerships with our school districts through a diverse communication strategy. In addition, we will provide our partners with a comprehensive knowledge of the TAP System through a well-established training program. The expertise of our project staff will be a significant contribution to ongoing communication efforts with our partner schools.

Along with the Project Director, Texas TIF will have several key staff members to provide support to school districts, principals, and teachers. The staff positions and their communication responsibility are as follows:

- Regional Coordinators (3) - School District Officials, School Principals, Teacher Leadership Team
- Coordinator for Principal Leadership and Program Development- School Principals, Key Stakeholders
- Executive Master Teachers (3) - School Principals, Teacher Leadership Team
- Project Manager- Key Stakeholders, School District Officials, School Principals
- Program Specialists (2) – School District Officials, Texas TAP Team Support
- Administrative Associate (2)
- Administrative Assistant

Vision and Goals:

The vision for the Texas TIF program is to successfully implement the TAP system throughout participating school districts in Texas. With an extensive communications network, we plan to utilize the TAP model to achieve success with our partners. The elements of TAP include multiple career paths, ongoing applied professional growth, instructionally focused accountability, and performance based compensation. We will accomplish this vision through the following communication goals:

1. Increase visibility of the TIF Program throughout the State of Texas and across the nation.
2. Foster systemic school reform through consistent communication with school district officials, principals, and teachers.
3. Develop communicative leaders in our partner districts who will sustain the program beyond the life of the grant.

External Communications

Goal: To increase visibility of the TIF Program throughout the State of Texas and across the nation.

Objective 1: To develop relationships with media outlets with a statewide presence.

Actions - Communication with the Media

Vehicle	Purpose	Frequency	Person Accountable
Hire Public Relations Firm	To utilize outside expertise to develop press releases, fact sheets, and other key communication components.	Ongoing	Project Manager

Objective 2: To sustain the TIF/TAP program beyond the life of the grant through established stakeholder relationships.

Actions - Communication with Stakeholders

Vehicle	Purpose	Frequency	Person Accountable
Educational Conference Proposals	Develop interest with key school district officials, practitioners, researchers, and policymakers to provide information about the program and encourage participation in the project.	Annually	Project Director
School District Presentations	Increase the number of partners for project expansion and offer opportunities for practitioners to interact and build internal networks.	As Needed	Project Director
Texas TAP System Website	Offer real time information, resources and tools about the project to the public.	Monthly	Project Manager
TIF/TAP Newsletter	Update stakeholders on the progress of the project and provide a vehicle for sharing program successes and contact information.	Quarterly	Project Manager
Educational Journal Articles	Provide details on the TIF/TAP project success to educators, researchers, and policymakers.	Quarterly	Project Director

Internal Communications

Goal: To foster systemic school reform through consistent communication with school district officials, principals, and teachers.

Objective 1: To create longstanding partnerships through effective relationships with TIF school district leaders and support staff.

Actions - Communication with Districts

Vehicle	Purpose	Frequency	Person Accountable
Emails	Inform district about fiscal monitoring and progress in the schools.	Monthly	All appropriate Texas TIF staff
Face to Face Meetings	Discuss implementation progress, budget requirements and plans for sustainability.	Quarterly	All appropriate Texas TIF staff
Phone Calls	Facilitate open dialogue about project.	As Needed	All appropriate Texas TIF staff
TIF/TAP Newsletter	Update districts on the progress of the project and provide a vehicle for sharing program successes.	Quarterly	Project Manager
Expenditure Reimbursements	Provide timely fiscal reimbursement for district invoices.	Monthly	Project Manager

Objective 2: To create longstanding partnerships through effective relationships with TIF school principals and teachers.

Actions - Communication with Schools

Vehicle	Purpose	Frequency	Person Accountable
Emails	Inform and facilitate project implementation.	Weekly	All appropriate Texas TIF staff
Site Visits	Provide guidance and support for project.	As Needed	All appropriate Texas TIF staff
Phone Calls	Facilitate open dialogue about project.	As Needed	All appropriate Texas TIF staff
TAP 101 Training	Train new schools to implement the TAP program.	Annually	All appropriate Texas TIF staff
TAP Summer Institute Training	Facilitate planning and programmatic knowledge before the new school year.	Annually	All appropriate Texas TIF staff

Actions - Communications with Schools (cont.)

Vehicle	Purpose	Frequency	Person Accountable
Evaluation Certification Training	Certify current TAP teacher evaluators.	Annually	All appropriate Texas TIF staff
TAP Summer Institute Training	Facilitate planning and programmatic knowledge before the new school year.	Annually	All appropriate Texas TIF staff
Master Teacher Meetings	Train master teachers on successful TAP implementation.	Quarterly	All appropriate Texas TIF staff
Principal Meetings	Train principals on successful TAP implementation.	Quarterly	All appropriate Texas TIF staff
SharePoint Site	Share knowledge and information about TAP.	As Needed	Administrative Associate
TAP Listserv	Develop an internal communication network to share best practices.	As Needed	Administrative Associate

Partner Communications

Goal: To develop communicative leaders in our partner districts who will commit to sustaining the program beyond the life of the grant

Objective 1: To establish leaders in the school district offices who will communicate with TIF schools regularly about the project.

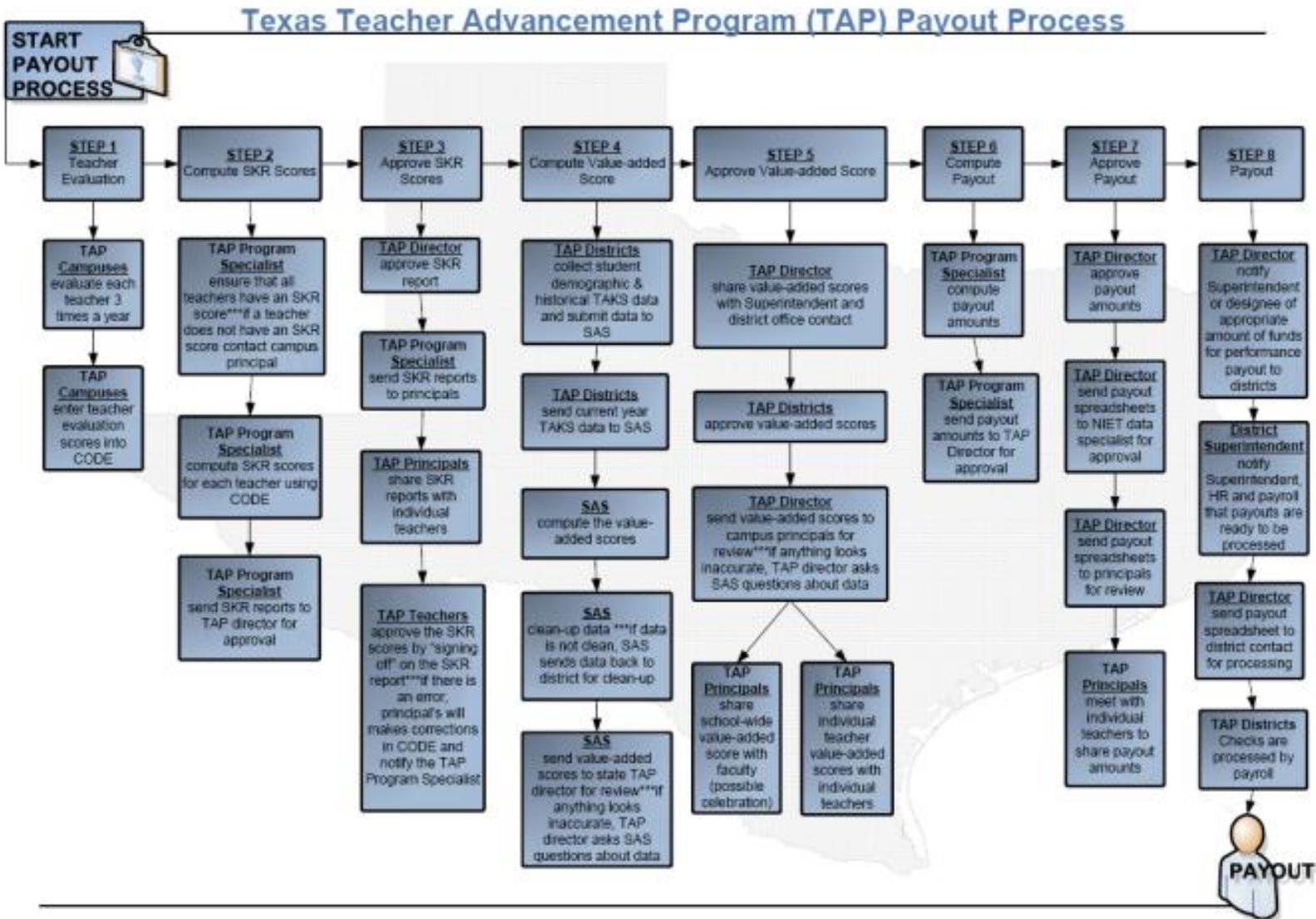
Actions - District Level Communications with Schools

Vehicle	Purpose	Frequency	Person Accountable
Emails	Forward any pertinent info from UT System about fiscal monitoring or changes and updates to the project.	Monthly	TIF District Contact
Face to Face Meetings	Communicate regularly with school leaders about implementation fidelity.	Quarterly	TIF District Contact
Phone Calls	Facilitate open dialogue to schools.	As Needed	TIF District Contact
Expenditure Reimbursements	Provide timely payment for TIF expenditures to school administrators and teachers.	As Needed	TIF District Contact

Objective 2: To establish administrative leaders in the TIF schools who will effectively communicate with their teachers.

Actions - School Administrator Communications with Teachers

Vehicle	Purpose	Frequency	Person Accountable
Emails	Forward any pertinent info from the district about changes or updates to the project.	Weekly	School Administrator
Face to Face meetings	Attend TAP Leadership Team meetings and Cluster groups.	Weekly	School Administrator
TAP Trainings	Provide teachers with the appropriate release time to attend UT System and district level TAP trainings.	As Needed	School Administrator
Faculty Presentation	Present teachers with detailed info on how performance pay is calculated.	Annually	School Administrator



Appendix G

TAP Implementation Calendar: A Guide for TAP Principals

(Please note that this is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but rather a guide to help you.)



<p>On or before August 1, 2010</p>	<p>Ensure all TAP Leadership Team (LT) members have been to OR are scheduled to attend the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAP 101 • Evaluation Certification training #1 • Evaluation Certification training #2 • Recertification training (for returning LT members only)
<p>On or before August 16, 2010</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All LT members have completed TAP 101 2. Complete TAP school plan and send to your TAP Regional Coordinator for review 3. Complete your TAP Organizational Chart (cluster configurations) 4. Complete your TAP Evaluation Schedule and send to your TAP Regional Coordinator for review 5. Enter all teachers into CODE system
<p>On or before August 31, 2010</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce TAP to faculty. At least a full-day is recommended for this. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is TAP? • Who is the LT? • What are the LT's responsibilities? • How does this program affect me? • How will our campus operate differently as a TAP school? • What are the cluster configurations/schedule? • What is the evaluation schedule? • Presentation on TAP Performance Pay model 2. Begin weekly cluster meetings (1st cluster cycle on TAP rubrics)
<p>On or before September 30, 2010</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finish practice evaluations for all teachers 2. All LT members completed Evaluation #1 and Evaluation #2 trainings 3. All LT members are Certified TAP Evaluators

On or before October 1, 2010	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin 1st round of teacher evaluations that count towards performance pay 2. Begin entering teacher evaluation scores into CODE system
On or before November 1, 2010	Begin compiling historical data for SAS
On or before November 15, 2010	Begin analyzing teacher evaluation scores in CODE (check for inter-rater reliability and whether campus is on target with evaluation schedule)
On or before February 1, 2011	Send historical data to SAS (triple check for reliability)
March 11-13, 2011	National TAP System Conference
On or before April 30, 2011	All teacher evaluations should be completed (a minimum of 3 for each teacher not including the practice evaluation)
On or before May 1, 2011	All teacher evaluation scores entered into CODE system
On or before May 15, 2011	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give faculty presentation on performance pay again. 2. Principals review and confirm that all evaluation scores were entered correctly
On or before May 20, 2011	Hand out SKR summary report to each teacher and discuss results
On or before June 15, 2011	Send 2009-10 TAKS data to SAS
Summer 2011	Send LT to Texas TAP Summer Institute (TSI)

Texas Teacher Incentive Fund Grant Partnership Memorandum of Understanding

This is a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET), the Texas Education Agency (hereafter referred to as “the state education agency,” or SEA), and the following school districts: Athens ISD, Boys Ranch ISD, Bryan ISD, Ector County ISD, Hearne ISD, Lancaster ISD, Monte Alto ISD, Pflugerville ISD, Richardson ISD, Somerset ISD, and Southside ISD (hereafter referred to as “the local education agencies,” or LEAs).

The purpose of the partnership is to develop and implement goals for TAP™: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement, a project that will be funded through a federal Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant. The primary purpose of this project is to implement a comprehensive performance-based compensation system for teachers and principals to help increase educator effectiveness and improve student achievement in high-need schools. TAP accomplishes this goal by implementing TAP, a systems reform to identify, recruit, develop, place, reward and retain highly effective teachers. NIET will work with the partner SEA and LEAs to fulfill the activities that are listed in the TIF grant application to accomplish the following goal:

- Develop and implement performance-based compensation systems (PBCSs) for teachers, principals, and other personnel in order to increase educator effectiveness and student achievement, measured in significant part by student growth, in high-need schools.

To achieve the goals mentioned above, the SEA and LEAs will agree to the following terms throughout the grant award period (2010 – 2015).

The *Partners* agree to perform the following activities:

1. Intentionally implement the four TAP elements outlined in the *TAP Implementation Guide* and which are consistent with state and federal laws, and the respective district policies, procedures and regulations. The partners will carry out each of these elements simultaneously using the TAP planning and implementation materials, resources and workshops provided by NIET
2. Commit to hiring effective candidates to participate in all grant activities;
3. Implement the TAP system with fidelity to the model as measured annually by NIET School Reviews;
4. Ensure adequate funding in budget for NIET services provided based on the agreed upon terms in the Cost Service Agreement. Including, but not limited to, ongoing training, annual school reviews, attendance at TAP Annual TAP Conference and TAP Summer Institutes.
5. Appoint a person in a leadership position who will serve as the primary liaison to NIET for TIF grant responsibilities;
6. Promote and participate in the specific activities listed in the TIF grant;
7. Work in collaboration with NIET on all grant activities;
8. Give priority to accomplishing the activities in collaboration with NIET;

9. Immediately report to the Project Director any misdeed, deficiency or inability to fulfill any SEA or LEA responsibilities;

10. Adopt consistent policies across participating TAP schools.

NIET agrees to the following:

1. Assign specific staff to serve as a liaison to partner SEA and LEAs;
2. Promote and participate in the specific activities listed in the TIF grant;
3. Work in collaboration with partner SEA and LEAs on all activities;
4. Disseminate reports on accomplished work to state groups, districts and other interested parties as requested.

TERMS

This MOU binds NIET and the partner SEA and LEAs to every statement and assurance made in the Teacher Incentive Fund grant application. If funded, this MOU shall be in effect for the length of the Teacher Incentive Fund grant from the U.S. Department of Education. In the event the grant is not funded, this MOU will terminate upon the receipt of notification that the grant is not funded.

COSTS

It is the intent of the parties that no additional costs will be incurred, except those that are set forth in the grant proposal or those that are funded in the grant. In the event that the cost of implementing this MOU exceeds grant funds or grant expectations, any party may terminate this contract upon giving the other parties thirty days notice.

Texas Education Agency, Commissioner of Education

Date

National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, President

Date

Athens ISD, Superintendent

Date

Boys Ranch ISD, Superintendent

Date

Bryan ISD, Superintendent

Date

Ector County ISD, Superintendent

Date

Hearne ISD, Superintendent

Date

Lancaster ISD, Superintendent

Date

Monte Alto ISD, Superintendent

Date

Pflugerville ISD, Superintendent

Date

Richardson ISD, Superintendent

Date

Somerset ISD, Superintendent

Date

Southside ISD, Superintendent

Date

Budget Narrative

Budget Narrative

Attachment 1:

Title: **Texas TIF Budget Narrative Pages: 10** Uploaded File: **Appendix F Texas TIF Budget Narrative revised 7.4.10.pdf**

Appendix F - Texas TIF Budget Narrative

██████████ Executive Director of the Texas TAP System, will serve as **TIF Project Director**. Dr. ██████████ primary role will be to provide direction and oversight for the TIF program. To achieve this goal, she will spend 60 percent of her time (at a salary of \$125,000 per year) on the TIF program, with 40 percent of her time and salary being provided as an in-kind contribution from her existing contracts with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) and the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The majority of the personnel required by TEA to be the fiscal agent for this grant is included as an in-kind contribution.

The TIF program will hire one **Assistant Director** (based on a salary of ██████████ year) to assist the TIF Project Director with management of daily operations for the program. The Assistant Director will also collaborate with TIF staff on implementation workshops and the development and facilitation of trainings and presentations. To achieve this goal, the Assistant Director will spend 100 percent of his/her time working on the TIF program.

The TIF program will hire a **Coordinator for Principal Leadership** (at a salary of \$██████████) to provide direct TIF/TAP implementation support to campus administrators. The Coordinator for Principal Leadership will assist campus principals with the hiring process for Master and Mentor teachers and will manage the planning, development, facilitation and follow-up of principal meetings.

The TIF program will hire three **Regional TAP Coordinators** (██████████) to serve as a resource to enhance Master and Mentor teachers' proficiency in both implementing the TAP processes and building teacher knowledge of exemplary instructional strategies in these districts. The Regional TAP Coordinators will work collaboratively with Dr. Kreuz to ensure implementation and support of the TIF/TAP program with the respective school district officials.

To achieve this goal, each Regional TAP coordinator will spend 100 percent of his/her time working with the TIF schools.

The TIF program will hire **three statewide Executive Master teachers** (at a [REDACTED] [REDACTED] per year), to serve as resources to enhance Master and Mentor teachers' proficiency in both implementing the TAP processes and building their knowledge of exemplary instructional strategies. Each Executive Master teacher will each spend 100 percent of his/her time working on the TIF program, 90 percent of which will be spent traveling to and directly supporting the TIF schools.

Additionally, a **Project Manager** will assist the Project Director with coordination and management of the performance pay calculations, and will coordinate the external partnerships and data management systems. The Project Manager will spend 100% of his/her time working on the TIF program at a salary of \$ [REDACTED]. The program will also require two **Program Specialists** to work on the TIF program 100% of the time at a salary of \$ [REDACTED] per year. One Program Specialist will assist the Project Director and Project Manager in the development and administration of the MOUs with the 11 partner school districts as well as the external partnerships and CODE data management. This individual will maintain direct contact with participating districts. The second Program Specialist will assist the Project Director with general contract development and financial matters pertaining to the TIF budget. Both Program Specialists will assist with grant reporting responsibilities.

The program will require one **Administrative Assistant** to work on the TIF program 50 percent of the time based on a salary of [REDACTED] per year. The Administrative Assistant will support all program staff with communication and administrative duties associated with the grant, but will primarily be responsible for the management of program travel. Two

Administrative Associates will also assist the Project Director and program staff with coordination and management of event planning and administrative support as needed. Each Administrative Associate will spend 50% of their time based on a salary of \$ [REDACTED] per year.

TEA will hire a **Program Specialist** at an annual salary of \$ [REDACTED]. This individual will spend 50% of their time managing the pre- and post-award management of the grant, facilitating the award administration process, providing support for partners, monitoring all deadlines, and assisting with aspects of project implementation, documentation and paper and electronic records. The TEA Program Specialist will also establish systems for tracking budgets and time and effort reporting, process expenses and transactions and track agency outcome measures.

The program will require a total of 36 **Master teachers** to support the TIF/TAP schools. A Master teacher (salary based on an average of \$ [REDACTED] year) occupies the top-ranked teaching position in a TAP school. Master teachers, in collaboration with the campus principal, are responsible for the overall implementation of TAP on their respective campuses. They monitor goal setting, activities, classroom follow-up and goal attainment for cluster groups and individual growth plans. Master teachers also assess teacher evaluation results and maintain inter-rater reliability. To achieve these goals, Master teachers will spend 100 percent of their time working on the TIF/TAP program.

The **Master and Mentor teacher salary augmentations** are provided at \$ [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] teacher, respectively. The TIF program will provide 100% of salary augmentations for Year 2, 90% for Year 3, 80% for Year 4 and 60% for Year 5, for a total of \$7,590,000 over the grant period.

Finally, each TIF campus will need **substitute teachers** to fill in for the Master and Mentor teachers during training (Evaluation Certification training and monthly Master teacher

meetings) in Years 1 and 2 of the program. Each campus is allocated \$1,000 for Year 1 substitute pay for a total of [REDACTED] Year 2 substitute pay provides for eight days per campus at the daily rate of \$80 per Master and Mentor teacher, for a total of \$23,040. The TIF districts will assume any additional costs related to substitute pay in Years 3, 4, and 5 of the grant period.

Total personnel costs for the life of the grant are: Year 1 - [REDACTED] Year 2 - \$ [REDACTED] Year 3 - [REDACTED] Year 4 - \$ [REDACTED] Year 5 - \$ [REDACTED] a total of \$ [REDACTED] over the grant period.

Fringe Benefits: Fringe Benefits are included for all program personnel at the rate of 27 percent per year for teachers and 28 percent per year for Texas TAP and TEA personnel. All salaries and benefits for Texas TAP and TEA personnel are projected to be adjusted three percent each year on a cost of living basis. The fringe benefits for Texas TAP and TEA personnel in Year 1 (total of \$2 [REDACTED] are as follows:

- [REDACTED]

The fringe benefit calculation for the five-year grant period is [REDACTED]

Travel: The first year of the TIF program will be a planning/development year for TAP. Therefore, it is essential to familiarize district/campus staff with the TAP System during this

development year. To do so, each participating TIF campus is allocated \$1,000 per person to send 8 representatives to the National TAP Conference. Furthermore, campuses are allocated an additional \$7,000 in travel to: (1) send individuals to existing TAP schools to observe the system in action; (2) send TAP leadership team members to the initial trainings; and (3) send TAP leadership team members to the TAP Summer Institute. The total amount of travel funds allocated to TIF campuses is \$ [REDACTED] Year 1. In Years 2 and 3, each campus will be allocated a total of [REDACTED] per person for the campus principal, assistant principal, and master teachers to attend training at the National TAP Conference and the TAP Summer Institute, for an annual total of \$ [REDACTED]. The ongoing training provided to the TIF campuses will help ensure long-term high quality implementation of the TAP program.

In addition to the travel allocated directly to the TIF campuses, a total [REDACTED] per year is allocated for Texas TIF staff to attend annual training provided by NIET. The total is calculated based on: (1) the Project Director, Assistant Director, the three Executive Master teachers, the three Regional TAP Coordinators, the Coordinator for Principal Leadership, and the Project Manager traveling to a national site for 5 days of NIET TAP training per year; and (2) these same individuals attending the National TAP Conference each year. In addition, a total of \$90,000 will be allocated per year to the Texas TIF program staff to travel to TIF campuses to provide ongoing training and support for development and implementation of the TIF/TAP program. In this figure, it is estimated that Texas TIF staff will make an estimated twenty-five site visits per month to TIF/TAP schools. Due to the distance needed to travel in Texas, the trips are calculated on an average of [REDACTED] visit (\$ [REDACTED] per plane ticket, \$ [REDACTED] hotel, [REDACTED] rental car, and [REDACTED] n food). Each district participating in TIF/TAP will receive a site visit by Texas

TIF staff at least once per month during the five-year grant period. Total travel costs for Years 1 through 5 are \$ [REDACTED]

Equipment: The program will need eight (8) desktop computers at \$1,350 each (for the Project Director, Assistant Director, the two Texas TAP Program Specialists, the Project Manager, the two Administrative Associates, and the Administrative Assistant). All eight computers will be purchased in Year 1 for a total of [REDACTED]. The program will also need eight (8) laptops at \$1,200 each (for the three Executive Master teachers, the three Regional TAP Coordinators, the Coordinator for Principal Leadership and the Project Director). The laptops will also be purchased in Year 1 for a total of [REDACTED]. The computers and laptops are needed to provide ongoing communication, administration and support to the TIF program. Costs are figured based on recent desktop purchases in Texas. Equipment costs for the duration of the grant are \$ [REDACTED].

Printing & Supplies: A total of [REDACTED] year is allocated for program supplies and printing costs. These include supplies for trainings such as the initial “Preparing for Success in a TAP School” and the “Evaluation Certification Training” as well as the monthly Master teacher meetings and the TAP Summer Institutes. Supplies include items such as post-it notes, pens, pencils, markers, highlighters, and chart paper. The printing costs are associated with printing materials such as the TAP Implementation Manuals (campuses use these to plan and develop their local TAP program) and the TAP Training Manuals (campus leadership teams use these manuals as a reference throughout TAP implementation). Total Printing & Supply costs for Years 1 through 5 are \$ [REDACTED]

Contractual: An amount of \$ [REDACTED] in Year 1 [REDACTED] per year in Years 2 through 5 is budgeted for the external evaluation of the TIF program. No contractor is named in this

proposal as Texas TIF will release an RFP to select the highest quality evaluator. In finalizing these contractual agreements, Texas TIF is committed to following procedures for procurement under 34 CFR Parts 74.40 – 74.48 and Part 80.36. Additionally, Year 1 provides for a [REDACTED] contract with our non-profit partner NIET while Years 2 through 5 allow for subsequent annual contracts totaling \$ [REDACTED]. NIET will provide training and support to the Texas TIF team along with access to a new training portal for TAP schools. The training portal will cost approximately [REDACTED] per TAP school, annually. Furthermore, we have allocated \$ [REDACTED] in Year 1 and \$ [REDACTED] per year for Years 2 through 5 for a contract with a public relations firm. The firm will provide valuable program resources, such as a Texas TAP system web site, as well as marketing pieces to promote Texas TAP. Annual contracts will enable timely and accurate updates to the program information shared with stakeholders as well as the general public. In addition, an annual total of [REDACTED] will be allocated during Years 2 through 5 to contract with vendors such as: (1) Innovative Architects (\$ [REDACTED]—calculated at [REDACTED] per year per campus) to provide the CODE (Comprehensive Online Data Entry) services to TIF/TAP schools; (2) Battelle for Kids, a non-profit partner, (\$ [REDACTED] per year) to utilize “Battelle Link” tool in analyzing value-added data; (3) a principal evaluation system such as VAL-ED ([REDACTED]—calculated at [REDACTED] per campus administrator); and (4) a contractor ([REDACTED]—calculated at \$1 per student and [REDACTED] per teacher per year) to utilize the Sanders method for computing value-added scores for the performance pay. These services are essential to assist in the timely calculation of the performance payouts for the TIF/TAP schools. Because of these services, it is anticipated that performance pay will be distributed to the TIF/TAP teachers during the fall following the applicable school year. Finally, an annual total of \$ [REDACTED] will be used to secure meeting space for the initial TAP trainings as well as the TAP Summer Institute, Master teacher meetings,

Mentor teacher trainings, principal trainings and TIF advisory board meetings. Total contracted services for Years 1 through 5 are [REDACTED]

Other costs: Annual performance pay for the TIF/TAP schools is calculated at \$ [REDACTED] per teacher and campus administrator. With 1,900 teachers and 100 campus administrators, the annual teacher and principal performance pay total will be \$ [REDACTED]. During Year 1 of the TIF program, there will be no performance pay because it is a planning/development year. However, performance pay will be distributed for Years 2 through 5. TIF will fund 100% of the Year 2 performance pay total. In Years 3, 4, and 5, the districts will provide 10 percent, 20 percent, and 40 percent of the performance pay totals, respectively, as matching contributions.

In addition to the TAP performance pay, each TIF campus is allocated [REDACTED] year in recruitment incentives for teachers and administrators in hard-to-staff subject areas and schools. The annual recruitment incentives for program Years 1 and 2 total \$ [REDACTED] for 36 campuses). The recruitment incentives are calculated into the TIF program costs in the first three years of the grant period, with the districts providing 10% of the recruitment incentives in Year 3. The program will cover a total of \$ [REDACTED] recruitment incentives for Year 3. The districts will be responsible for the total cost of recruitment incentives in Years 4 and 5 if they deem necessary.

Finally, additional costs included in the TIF program include communications costs of \$ [REDACTED] year for the Texas TIF team, who will be available 24/7 for phone and email support. Operating costs of [REDACTED] per year are also allocated to TEA. A total of \$ [REDACTED] will be provided by TIF toward these "other" costs listed above.

Total direct costs: In Year 1 of the TIF program, the following cumulative totals are allocated per budget category: Personnel (\$ [REDACTED]) Benefits (\$ [REDACTED]) Travel

(\$660,000); Equipment [REDACTED] Supplies (\$ [REDACTED] Contractual (\$ [REDACTED] Construction (\$0); and Other (\$ [REDACTED] The total direct costs for Year 1 are [REDACTED]

Indirect costs: The federal approved indirect cost rate for TEA is 16% percent; therefore, indirect costs for Year 1 total \$4 [REDACTED]

Total costs: The total cost of the TIF program for Year 1 is \$ [REDACTED] Year 2 is [REDACTED] 6, Year 3 is \$ [REDACTED] Year 4 is \$ [REDACTED] and Year 5 is \$ [REDACTED] Total program cost for the five-year period is \$5 [REDACTED]

In order to reimburse grant funds to the partner school districts, the TEA and Texas TIF staff will prepare and administer a MOU with each participating district. Included in this MOU are the salaries for the Master teacher positions, the salary augmentations for the Master and Mentor teacher positions, fringe benefits for Master and Mentor teachers, the performance pay pool for teachers and campus administrators, the recruitment incentives, travel costs, and substitute pay. The fiscal and programmatic responsibilities of the partner districts will be detailed in the MOU.

Texas TIF Grant Budget Years 1-5

	Year 1 2010-11	Year 2 2011-12	Year 3 2012-13	Year 4 2013-14	Year 5 2014-15	TOTAL
	School year					
Salaries:						
Job Title	%					
Project Director (\$125,000 salary)						
Assistant Director (\$90,000 salary)						
Coordinator for Principal Leadership (\$84,000)						
Regional Coordinator (\$80,000)						
Regional Coordinator (\$80,000)						
Regional Coordinator (\$80,000)						
Executive Master Teacher (\$70,000)						
Executive Master Teacher (\$70,000)						
Executive Master Teacher (\$70,000)						
Project Manager (\$60,000)						
Program Specialist (\$50,000)						
Program Specialist (\$50,000)						
Administrative Associate (\$38,000)						
Administrative Associate (\$38,000)						
Administrative Assistant (\$34,000)						
TEA Program Specialist						
Master Teacher Salaries						
Master Teacher Salary Augmentation (\$10,000)						
Mentor Teacher Salary Augmentation (\$5,000)						
Substitute Pay						
Subtotal Salaries:						
Fringe benefits:						
UT System staff						
K-12 Teacher fringe (cumulative) (27%)						
Subtotal fringe benefits:						
Travel:						
UTS Staff: Monthly visits to TAP sites						
UTS Staff: National TAP Conference/Trainings						
District Travel (see narrative)						
Subtotal Travel:						
Computer Equipment:						
Laptop computers (8 @ \$1,200/each)						
Desktop computer (8 @ \$1,350/each)						
Subtotal Computer Equipment:						
Contracted Services:						
Evaluation contract						
NIET: Training and support for initial implementation						
Innovative Architects: CODE System (\$2,000 per campus)						
Battelle for Kids: Link System						
Principal Evaluation System						
Public Relations Firm						
Meeting space and related expenses						
Value-added calculations (\$1/student and \$25/teacher)						
Subtotal Contracted Services:						
Miscellaneous:						
Printing/Supplies						
Communications Costs (\$100/month for 15 staff members)						
TEA Operating Costs						
Performance Pay for Teachers (\$2,000/teacher)						
Performance Pay for Campus Administrators (\$2,000/administrator)						
Recruitment Incentives (\$6,000/campus)						
Subtotal Miscellaneous:						
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS:						
INDIRECT COSTS:						
TOTAL COSTS:						