Detroit Public Schools Turnaround School Leaders Program Grant – Narrative

U.S. Department of Education

Turnaround School Leaders Program – CFDA 84.377B

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Introduction

In May 2009, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan labelled Detroit "ground zero" for education in the United States. Since then, through the Michigan ESEA waiver to NCLB, the Detroit Public Schools (DPS) has worked with Michigan State University's Office of K-12 Outreach in the College of Education (hereafter known as MSU) for school reform and turnaround. In that time, systemic improvements have been made and in November of 2013, the Michigan Department of Education removed the high-risk designation from the district. With support from the Turnaround School Leaders Program Grant, DPS will work in partnership with MSU to create a robust and sustainable principal pipeline that will identify, develop, and support the placement and retention of highly trained, committed, and effective leaders on an ongoing basis, leaders who can implement positive changes in Detroit schools that lead to significantly higher student achievement.

DPS is Michigan's largest school district, educating 48,730 students in 92 schools throughout Detroit. African Americans represent 84% of the student population, while Hispanics are the second largest ethnic group, representing 12% of the student population. The district's primary mission is educating students to perform at high academic levels; however, with a student population of 81% economically disadvantaged students, DPS must concern itself not only with students' academic success, but also the social and emotional issues that can stem from poverty. In 2012, the graduation rate for DPS was 64.7% – the highest since the state began new cohort methodology in 2007. That is up more than five percentage points since 2009. The dropout rate also inched down over four years, from 21.1% in 2009 to 19.3% in 2012.

DPS is on a mission designed for the 21st century: to become the most rapidly improving urban district in America by providing a safe, intellectually challenging, and

academically personalized learning experience for all of its schools. In effect, DPS aims to create centers of excellence in every school for every student in every neighborhood. In pursuit of this goal, the district's Academic Plan and district leadership have promoted a data-driven culture. It is expected that all administrators, principals and teachers actively engage in the review and analysis of data to support decisions, identify instructional strategies, and promote continuous improvement. The DPS believes in and promotes a cycle of continuous improvement that allows schools and the district to examine quantitative data and qualitative feedback to gauge the district's progress against goals and targets. This data includes state-level assessments, benchmark assessments administered at various points through the year, data from instructional software assessments, student and teacher perception data, and self-assessment data on school processes.

DPS as a whole will not succeed without teachers and administrators who are well-prepared in their academic content area and equipped with the skills to deliver personalized learning. In 2012, the district unveiled its new teacher evaluation system that relies on: 1) student growth, 2) classroom observations, 3) professional contributions, and 4) relevant special training to determine a teacher's effectiveness. DPS chose Charlotte Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* as a way to provide teachers and administrators relevant, observable feedback on differentiating learning for each student. A key component to this comprehensive approach to improving Detroit schools is the development of committed and effective school leaders who can identify and implement change. The proposed principal pipeline program, established with the aid of this Turnaround School Leaders Program Grant, will address this need now and in years to come. With this in mind, DPS

has established the necessary policy conditions that can be leveraged to ensure the success and sustainability of a turnaround leadership pipeline beyond the term of the grant.

The MSU Office of K-12 Outreach in the Michigan State University College of Education (hereafter known as MSU) has unmatched experience in developing and implementing customized support systems for schools and districts in Michigan. MSU brings a history of collaboration with Michigan Department of Education, having consistently responded to MDE requests for customized support systems for schools and districts. As an integral part of earlier versions of Michigan's Statewide System of Support (SSoS), MSU designed and implemented the Michigan Principals Fellowship (MPF) and the Michigan Coaches Institute. The MPF developed and used a framework (Figure 3) that allowed it to design customized support for schools that were alike in their Priority status and yet distinct and different in the context and particulars that put them in that status.
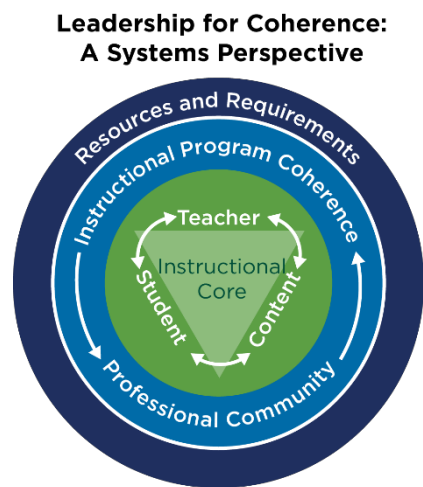

Figure 1

In this earlier iteration of the SSoS, schools, identified their own problems of practice and were guided through a process that built capacity in building principals to improve the instructional core (Elmore, 2008). This early work with nearly 100 principals and their coaches helped MSU understand the importance of leadership teams in schools, as well as the interplay between schools and their contexts within districts. MPF evolved into the Michigan Fellowship of Instructional Leaders (MIFIL) that brought together networks of instructional learning teams to identify and work on their specific school needs. Our presentation of the MIFIL program has continued with selected schools from Detroit through a grant from the Skillman Foundation.

MSU K-12 Outreach has also worked for several years with the Skillman Foundation in Detroit on two different phases of its work with public, private, and charter schools in six of Detroit's "essential" neighborhoods: those that house the most school-aged students in the city. The first phase was its *Good Schools: Making the Grade* initiative, for which Skillman asked MSU to create professional development opportunities for leaders in Detroit schools that earned the "Good Schools" designation from the Foundation. After this initiative ended, Skillman asked MSU to redesign its Good Schools Resource Center to provide customized support for schools in the six essential neighborhoods. This portfolio of support includes MIFIL as an option for schools. Currently 14 Detroit Skillman schools are participating in MIFIL.

The primary focus of all activities undertaken by MSU is to build the capacity of the people and systems responsible for student outcomes in order to increase student achievement. For seven years, the Michigan Principals Fellowship/Michigan Fellowship of Instructional Leaders built capacity in the instructional leadership teams of schools identified statewide by MDE as Priority schools because of their Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) status. MSU also designed and currently implements the SSoS's *Coaching 101* program. Coaching 101 trains and supports educational coaches from across the state, building their capacity to use common language and approaches when working in Title I schools.

For more than a decade, MSU developed and implemented a Summer Institute for superintendents in collaboration with the University of Michigan. Districts and ISDs have sent leadership teams of superintendents, assistant superintendents and other central office administrators to this highly successful residential professional development experience. The institutes typically combine whole-group presentations and discussions with top faculty researchers at Michigan State University and the University of Michigan, as well as dedicated

time for districts and ISDs to work as teams on issues and planning specific to their needs. Working with school, district and ISD teams has been a hallmark of MSU's Office of K–12 Outreach. Currently, MSU runs the SSoS for priority and focus schools under the NCLB waiver.

Project Design

Selection and Placement of School Leaders Using Locally Adopted Competencies

In accordance with the recommendations of the *Cultivating Talent Through a Principal Pipeline* report sponsored by the Wallace Foundation, DPS has selected as its adopted competencies the 2008 Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards. As stated by the Educational Leadership Policy Standards, "These standards represent the broad, high-priority themes that education leaders must address in order to promote the success of every student." These six standards are:

1. Setting a widely shared vision for learning;

2. Developing a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth;

3. Ensuring effective management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment;

4. Collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources;

5. Acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner; and

6. Understanding and influencing the political, social, legal, and cultural contexts.

To recruit and select promising and prospective school leaders, DPS and MSU will develop a tool (in accordance with psychometric principles) based on these standards, as well as the ten competencies outlined in *School Turnaround Leaders: Competencies for Success* (Public Impact,

2008) and elements of Assessing Leadership Talent based on the work of Gallup. Interested individuals will be invited to complete the instrument, and participants that demonstrate the desired competencies will begin entry into the leadership pipeline. In the first cohort, this will be 50 identified prospective leaders in addition to the principals of the 36 SIG schools that will be participating. Given the large traditionally underserved populations of special education and ELL, preference will be given in recruiting individuals from those areas for the pipeline.

Comprehensive and Differentiated Professional Development to Prepare and Support School Leaders:

DPS and MSU propose to begin building the pipeline with all 36 DPS SIG school principals and 50 aspiring leaders identified using the process outlined above. Sitting principals will be included in the program to ensure consistency of message and approach to improving Detroit SIG schools, as well as training current leaders to identify and develop leadership within their schools to ensure a sustainable leadership pipeline. MSU and DPS leaders will co-design and co-conduct professional learning, including job-embedded coach support. This professional development will be based upon a common core of the competencies outlined in the previous section, but will also be tiered and differentiated based on the individual needs of current and aspiring school leaders. The goal will be to institutionalize the program over the three-year grant period so that it will be sustainable and functional far into the future.

The professional development will be delivered through four main components, which are described in subsequent sections. These components are grounded in the research of the Wallace Foundation on building a principal pipeline (2013), and guided by a strong theory of action based on the work of Michael Fullan (2014).

Component 1: Emerging Leaders

This first professional development experience will build upon MSU's current high-quality *Emerging Leaders* program and will be customized to focus on the identified needs of DPS. This program will provide potential school principals an opportunity to explore in detail the knowledge, skillsets, and mindsets required to be a successful leader in today's complex educational environment. This three-day residential experience will connect aspiring leaders with highly successful assistant principals, principals, and superintendents who have worked in the urban context and have dealt with many of the same issues as DPS. Together, they will explore the challenges and responsibilities inherent in the principalship. This component will provide potential school administrators the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to be a successful school principal and, more specifically, prepare them to successfully lead turnaround efforts. Participants will then enter the next component of the program: ten customized leadership modules to strengthen individual capacity.

Component 2: Learning Modules

Each year, the cohort will meet with MSU five times for specific module training, receiving two modules each time. Modules will be face-to-face and interactive, and lead by an MSU Professional Development Specialist. Each module will end with formative assessments to foster and support participant success and differentiate training and coaching based on areas on need. Planned content includes:

Module 1—Leadership Perspectives: Balancing the dual role of the principal as a manager and instructional leader who guides and nurtures teaching and learning.

- **The Shift from Manager to Instructional Leader** – Instructional leadership as a correlation between the principal's influence on teachers and student performance.

- **Impact of Increased Accountability** – Responding to increasing accountability; ensuring that schools have high-quality teachers delivering high-quality instruction, resulting in high levels of student achievement.

- **Expansion of Roles and Requirements** – Responding to new roles by deepening knowledge of teaching, learning, and data-driven instructional decision-making to create schools where teaching and learning is the focus and resources are effectively managed.

- **Leadership for Change** –Managing change and supporting teachers and other employees in the change process. Aligning personnel, resources, and training to adapt to new challenges and directives, and maximizing the talents and skills of staff to support building goals and objectives.

Module 2—The Principal as a K-12 Manager:

- **Program Management** – Ensuring that programs have adequate funding, materials, and training to maximize the effects of teaching and learning**.**

- **Professional Supports and Resources** – Understanding the larger context in which the school exists and the external forces of the outside world that are at work on the school. Includes financial and funding policies, legal requirements, and governmental expectations for education. Allocation of money, time, and people and how the specific needs of the community influence the school.

- **Personnel Management** – Effective management of all school employees to work collectively to fulfill the mission and vision of the school.

- **Establishing a Positive Collaborative Work Environment** – Creating an environment where teachers feel valued; setting high expectations that focus all school efforts towards improved teaching and learning.

Module 3—School Finance: Ensuring that building resources are expended and recorded appropriately to support the school's mission and vision. Topics include:

- **Identifying Priorities** – Ensuring that essential educational elements have appropriate funding to accomplish the school's stated goals.

- **Funding Alignment Strategies** – Basing decisions on educational priorities**.**

- **Fiscal Responsibility** – Behaving in an ethical manner; providing funds for essential programs in a just and equitable manner.

- **Setting Marketing and Revenue Targets** – Positioning the school and its offerings in a manner that is attractive to parents and community stakeholders.

Module 4—School Turnaround: Understanding the urgency and contracted timelines for school turnaround and the "mission critical" elements of the turnaround process; the crucial role of the principal in promoting positive culture; creating a vision for change and motivating staff to embrace change.

- **Rapid School Turnaround** – Exploring the building and district level structures as units of change in the rapid turnaround process.

- **Continuous School Improvement vs Rapid Turnaround** – The purpose and processes inherent in rapid turnaround; how they differ from traditional continuous improvement.

- **District Support for School Turnaround** – Utilizing data to determine specific building support needed from the district to buttress and sustain building-level turnaround efforts.

Module 5—Implementing School Turnaround: Exploring critical principal actions in implementing and sustaining successful school turnaround. Aligning principal actions to district-level changes so as to create a systemic, coherent approach to rapid turnaround.

- **Establish Safe and Orderly Environment** – Recognizing the need for and creating the atmosphere for effective adult and student learning.

- **Managing Change –** Motivating, coaching, and mentoring staff through a significant change process.

- **Identify and Support Teacher Leaders – S**electing and utilizing a core of high-performing teachers to assist the principal in implementing successful rapid turnaround.

- **Improve Teachers' Instruction –** Connecting learning goals and classroom instruction. Providing a tiered system of job-embedded professional development to improve instruction in every classroom.

- **Create Collective Responsibility and Accountability –** Cultivating an ethos of practice using data-based instruction and decision-making for the rapid improvement in student achievement for all students.

Module 6—The Principal as Instructional Leader for Turnaround: How to support the instructional core and guide the innovative delivery of highly effective instruction.

- **Understanding the Instructional Core** – The three critical legs of the instructional core: excellent teaching, solid content, and strong student engagement.

- **Principals as Innovators** – Incorporating best practice research into everyday instruction in new and creative ways that maximizes instructional environments.

- **Instructional Program Coherence and Selecting Priorities** – The alignment between the curriculum, instruction, and student assessment. Analyzing what students know, creating an aligned curriculum, and adopting appropriate teaching strategies.

- **Instructional Rounds** – Instructional rounds as structured, non-evaluative ways for educators to inform teaching practice. Rather than "fixing" individual teachers, rounds

focus on understanding what's happening in classrooms, how the system produces those effects, and how to move closer to producing desired learning outcomes.

Module 7—Using Data and Assessments for Instructional Improvement and Leadership: Using data to drive the instructional process and as the basis for strategic decisions regarding program implementation.

- **Data-Driven Decision Making** – Gathering and utilizing data in a systematic way to inform decision making around curriculum, teaching, and resource allocation to maximize efforts to improve student achievement. Gathering and analyzing process data to target financial resources, measure efficiencies, and examine alternative options.

- **Assessment of Student Performance** –The importance of assessments; requiring teachers to utilize formative and summative assessments to inform instruction. Using formative assessment to monitor student progress and inform instructional adaptations/change to better support student learning.

- **Progress Monitoring and Evaluation** – Utilizing methods of tracking performance goals throughout the school year to ensure targets are being met, and adjusting accordingly. Evaluating the school's educational trajectory.

Module 8—Focusing on Teaching and Learning: The need for collaboration focused on teaching and learning. The value of highly focused and personalized learning for teachers. The teacher evaluation process as a tool to improve teaching and learning.

- **Professional Learning Communities** – Using PLCs to create shared commitment and a common vocabulary around the practice of teaching and learning.

- **Personalized Job-Embedded Professional Development for Teachers** – Using multiple data to align professional development to the educational needs of students.

- **Teacher Evaluation** – Utilizing a comprehensive teacher evaluation system to measure instructional impact on student achievement. Focusing on the critical components of instruction using a mix of data. Participating in the evaluation of teachers.

Module 9—Culture and Climate: Creating a school environment that supports student growth and achievement. Nurturing the intellectual goals of students and creating systems to maximize student success.

- **Student Engagement and Personalization** – Promoting a climate and culture that values students and their interests, increases a sense of belonging, and adapts instruction in multiple ways to meet individual student needs.

- **Student Support Network** – Creating a system to support the academic and non-academic needs of students so that students are supported in all facets of their learning.

Module 10—Schools as "Communities within Communities": Principal behaviors, attitudes, and assumptions that build productive school, parent, and community relationships.

- **School/Community Relationships** – Understanding the complex factors outside of school that impact students; building larger networks of community support.

- **Engaging Outside Groups** – Identifying factors affecting students and their learning; key stakeholders (human service agencies, parent groups, elected officials, neighborhood groups, churches, non-profit/philanthropic organizations, etc.); new roles for the principal in these relationships; strategies for collaborative work with community partners.

- **Building Networks of Student Support** – Identifying systems that need to be in place to best help and sustain student needs to make education the student's main priority.

Component Three: DPS Leadership Fellows

Once aspiring leaders have begun the training modules, they will be considered Leadership Fellows and part of the pipeline. These Fellows will then begin the third component of this program in tandem with the modules. The Fellows will meet six times over the course of the year and will directly support problems of practice currently taking place in DPS schools. During the summer, there will also be a three-day institute to continue the leadership turnaround work and focus on planning for the next year of work.

In order to broaden and transform leadership within schools while directly addressing each school's challenges, school leadership teams, comprised of the principal and Leadership Fellows, will meet regularly with MSU in Detroit to learn practical strategies and approaches for 1) leading turnaround in their schools with the goal of improving student achievement, 2) fostering excellence and leadership in their own teaching staffs, and 3) identifying individuals for future cohorts of the principal pipeline. As recommended in the Wallace report (2013), this clinical experience will work to develop leaders with real and current issues that DPS is facing. During these events and back in the building, these schools will receive real-time coaching and mentoring to facilitate turnaround and leadership. One coach will also provide central office support to allow for coherence of systems to support and sustain the pipeline initiative. MSU will also set up cross-visits of subsets of leaders, arranged to share practices that are getting results, and work to set up leadership internships. As these clinical experiences unfold, the Fellows will debrief their experiences with the group to maximize the understanding and content of turnaround and leadership in DPS; building capacity in leaders will feature heavily in this.

Working from Fullan's strong theory, MSU will begin the Leadership Fellows experience by clarifying what it means to build capacity in underperforming schools and districts, capacity

both within individuals and within the organizations in which they work, so that significant change takes place that results in student improvement, and so that the knowledge, dispositions and routines that support improvement become institutionalized. MSU will next introduce the term *Mission Critical,* adapted from MSU's ongoing work with Educational Resource Strategies (ERS), to describe the operating principles behind school turnaround. Next, MSU will introduce a central component of this proposal: an embedded evaluation system and process that will build the capacity of SIG school leaders to institute a continuous learning loop as an integral part of the reform effort (Bernhardt, 2013). This evaluation process will produce the data and analyses and streamline the implementation and continuous improvement of the support provided to schools and districts (Murnane et al, 2011).

Component Four—Instructional Leaders Network

Finally, the fourth element will include the development and implementation of a system to retain and sustain these trained effective leaders. In addition to DPS providing performance-based, multi-year contracts to retain and incentivize leaders, MSU, in collaboration with DPS, will provide ongoing support via online and face-to-face opportunities to connect, engage, and exchange ideas, knowledge, and practice through an *Instructional Leaders Network.* The turnaround leaders will meet monthly to identify, reflect on, and accelerate critical leadership skills. Guided by a trained facilitator, school leaders will use a researched-based learning approach that focuses on student achievement, and share best practices, challenges, and issues that foster or inhibit their individual leadership efforts. The network will use an inquiry-based, collaborative coaching model to discuss and solve challenges from individual schools. There will also be online resources available to the members, and opportunities to network with colleagues. By creating a sense of community, increasing capacity, and implementing action, principal

networks can show strong trends of changing school cultures and improving student achievement (Intrator & Scribner, 2008). These leaders will then be able to work with later cohorts in a sustainable "train-the-trainer" approach in conjunction with MSU beyond the term of the grant.

Additional Professional Development: Leadership Matters

The quality of instructional leadership is a leading indicator of the quality of teaching and learning in a school. Research on teacher performance indicates that teachers are rarely more effective than their leaders and do not continue to grow professionally in the absence of good leadership. Although school leaders do not teach students directly, they are nevertheless held accountable for learning in their schools because of the strong influence they have on the quality of instruction. This is amplified as schools across the nation are implementing new college and career readiness standards. As districts align curriculum and textbooks to the standards, educators report needing professional development in pedagogy aimed at achieving the levels of rigor that students must demonstrate on the new PARCC and Smarter Balanced assessments.

Multiple states have already shown substantial drops in student scores with assessments aligned to college and career readiness standards. Learning Sciences International's Marzano Center (Marzano & Toth, 2014) recently reported that less than 6% of observed classroom lessons are devoted to higher-order thinking skills and cognitively complex learning, such as analysis, hypothesis generation and testing, reasoning, decision-making—those skills that are the foundation of rigorous standards such as Common Core. This shift to rigor means that DPS principals and school administrators must have the knowledge and skill to help teachers make these critical pedagogical shifts. To this end, in addition to using MSU for professional development, DPS will be contracting with Learning Science International for Common Core Training.

Strong Theory and Rationale

What is capacity building and what does it mean to school improvement and student success? School reform efforts based on capacity building posit that teachers, administrators or educational organizations lack the knowledge, skills, structures, routines or dispositions necessary to help their students succeed, or that these assets are ineffectively allocated (Spillane, 1996; Newman et al, 2001; Fullan, 2010). The approach to capacity building utilized in this project is anchored in a significant body of research on the key characteristics of successful efforts to turn around schools (Fullan, 2010; Parrett & Budge, 2012; Zavadsky, 2012) and close achievement gaps (Ferguson et al, 2010; Murphy, 2010; Sharrat & Fullan, 2012). This approach to capacity building emphasizes a customized intervention based on the use of multiple sources of data to accurately identify the specific needs of the school and district (Bernhardt, 2013).

Building upon this foundational research, DPS and MSU propose to use Michael Fullan's framework around new role of the principal (2014) as the strong theory to guide the development of the leadership pipeline. Fullan argues that the role of the principal and his or her responsibilities have dramatically increased over the last two decades. However, to maximize their impact on learning, the role of the principal must be reconceptualized. The principal's role is complex and can be even more in large urban areas. Fullan argues, "There has never been a time when the circumstances for the role of principal have been more volatile. Facing the unpredictable, principals must be able to handle a good deal of ambiguity while displaying strong lead learner qualities" (Fullan, 2014, p. 145). DPS and MSU will use this framework to guide aspiring and emerging leaders, develop their individual skills, develop the collective capacity of leaders and their teams, and work towards sustainability.

The heart of this framework, "is to reposition the role of the principal as overall

instructional leader so that it maximizes the learning of all teachers and in turn all students"

(Fullan, 2014, p. 6). This framework has three particular elements that are based on the evolving

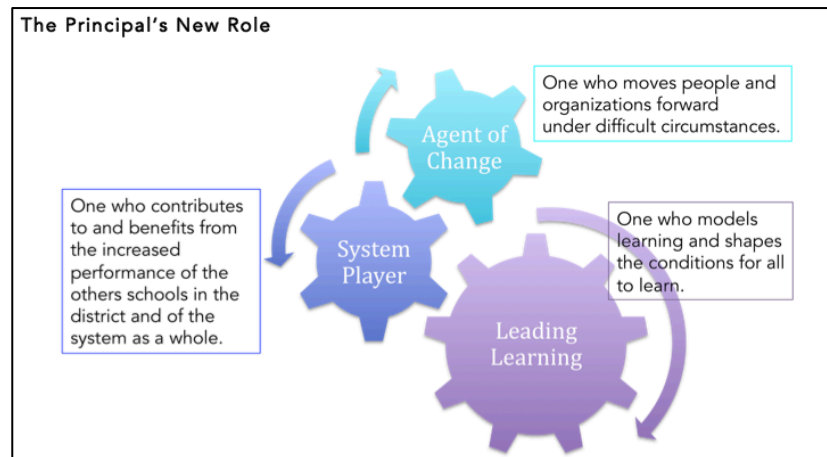role of the principal. This concept is displayed in figure 2.

Figure 2 - Theory of Action based on Fullan (2014)

The first element of the principal's new role is as change agent, someone who moves

people and organization forward under difficult circumstances. This difficulty is magnified in the

current issues that DPS faces. The second element is as a system player, one who contributes to

and benefits from the increased performance of other schools in the district and the system as a

whole. The final element is as someone "who models learning, but also shapes the conditions for

all to learn on a continuous basis" (Fullan, 2014, p 9). When these elements come together,

principals can build capacity in themselves, staff, and students.

Research into successful school turnarounds (McKinsey, 2010) strongly suggests that

some district interventions are more effective, and so more important, than others – hence, the

term, *Mission Critical*. This research suggests that once these Mission Critical components are in

place, other interventions will be more effective; just as important, without Mission Critical

interventions in place (as is too often the case in school turnaround efforts), few interventions

can succeed and be sustained. The senior staff members of the Office of K-12 Outreach have received intensive training from ERS in its Mission Critical approach to rapid school turnaround and will incorporate this approach into the overall theory of action to support school leaders as they analyze and address Mission Critical issues in SIG schools.

Figure 3 outlines the logic model of the pipeline. The pipeline begins with the partnership of DPS and MSU. Together, these two entities will work to update and develop policies that support the development and sustainability of a leadership pipeline. These policies, coupled with Fullan's framework (2014) as the strong theory of action and the program components outlined above, will create a strong, self-sustaining program that will: 1) ensure proper candidate selection and training; 2) provide comprehensive and differentiated professional development, evaluation, and ongoing support of current and aspiring leaders; 3) guide the hands-on work of leaders within SIG schools to increase leader effectiveness and impact in their schools; 4) teach leaders to foster leadership within their schools, ensuring new participants for future cohorts of the principal pipeline, supporting its sustainability and institutionalizing it beyond the term of the grant. Ultimately, the sustained development and support of effective leaders who can inspire, create, and manage the turnaround process will impact student in Detroit's neediest schools.
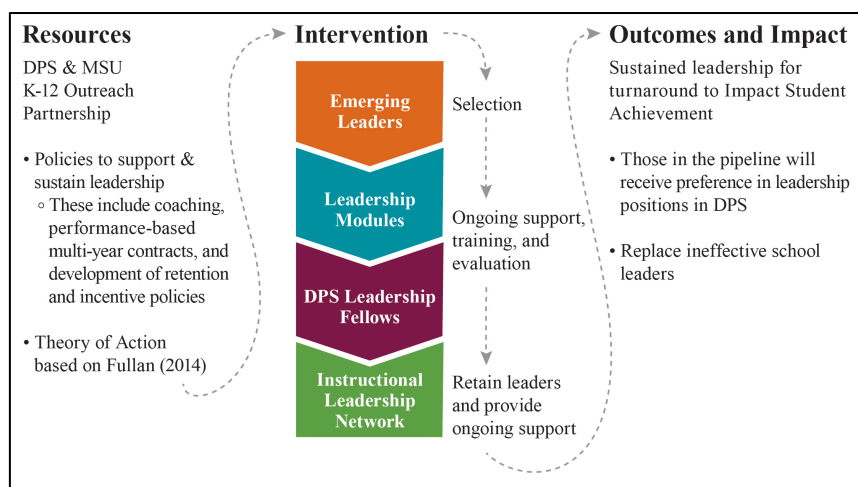

Figure 3 – DPS-MSU Program Logic Model

Traditionally Underserved Populations

DPS currently provides services to approximately 8,000 students with disabilities and 6,300 English learners. Due to the fact that these populations make up a large percentage of the student population, DPS will recruit and incentivize candidates for the pipelines whose career has been dedicated to educating these underserved populations. This will include, but not be limited to, increases in compensation, multi-year performance based contracts, and allocation to attend professional development and support of their choosing.

MSU's Office of K-12 Outreach has extensive capacity to adapt its work to ensure relevance to special student populations, as well as in response to emerging MDE priorities. Support for schools in the Detroit-based Skillman Foundation's *Making the Grade* initiative focused on students of poverty. In its work on MI Excel (Michigan Statewide System of Support) this year, MSU added four achievement gap specialists with expertise in supporting academic success in English language learners (ELLs), students with disabilities, African American males, and children of poverty.

These specialists bring significant experience and expertise to their roles, and they are supervised by a former superintendent who was one of the first district leaders to address achievement gap issues. The ELL specialist is a bilingual tenure-stream faculty member in the MSU College of Education whose research area of expertise is the effects of education reform policies on ELL students. MSU's students with disabilities specialist is the former director of special education for the State of Michigan and has served on national commissions on special education. The specialist on African American males wrote his published PhD dissertation on the educational trajectories of African American males; he is currently working closely with MDE

on several other projects to support these students. MSU's specialist focused on children of poverty, a University of Michigan and Harvard graduate currently pursuing his PhD in education policy, brings to this work both first-hand experience as a Detroit child of poverty and valuable experience working in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in Washington, D.C., and Detroit. In addition, all data collection throughout the evaluation processes will be disaggregated by critical student populations to allow these substantial resources to be deployed where they can have the greatest impact.

Included in this support for special student populations will be customized support for schools and districts through direct service as well as with the provision of online information and resources. In addition, this year our gap specialists are designing seminars and statewide conferences for school teams that can be easily adapted for pipeline Fellows.

Use of Data to Inform Professional Development, Retention, and Incentives

Using Data to Inform Professional Development: Formative assessments will be conducted after each of the Learning Modules to determine where individuals need additional professional development. The mentoring and coaching component throughout the project will also provide first-hand observational data, as well as participant feedback (self-reported data), that will inform the need for additional training and support.

Using Data to Inform Retention and Incentive Decisions: DPS and MSU will develop an embedded evaluation process that will collect data on district progress on the leadership pipeline, its implementation, and impact. By embedded, we mean that the data collected will both help guide the work of DPS within the district and the work of MSU in designing and providing customized support. For example, using a tool to measure and report Rapid Turnaround Mission Critical Status, a principal will report the extent to which their particular

SIG school is implementing a specific Mission Critical intervention. Findings from these analyses will flow back to DPS, who can use the data to inform retention and incentive decisions (including replacing ineffective school leaders), and to MSU to guide them in providing customized support, as well in evaluating the overall impact of the pipeline on leader practice and school improvement. Data will also be gathered concerning leader growth (movement into leadership roles) and retention in the Detroit public school system.

Currently, DPS does not have any policies in place about retention and incentives, which has contributed to the leadership issues facing Detroit. This grant will provide the necessary mechanisms for the development of policies to retain leaders capable of successful school turnaround and building human capital within the DPS staff. As these policies are developed, DPS will include performance-based bonuses related to successful school turnaround, performance-based multi-year contracts, professional memberships, professional development opportunities the Fellows feel will best serve them, and participation and membership in the Instructional Leaders Network. Being part of this network will allow current and future leaders to remain connected to the latest research and successful turnaround practices, as well as be part of a community of leaders in the DPS pipeline to build capacity and sustain turnaround. As Fellows emerge proficient from the pipeline who are not already principals, preference will be given to them in the hiring of principals in SIG schools to maintain continuity of the pipeline.

Identify and Use Data to Inform Continuous Improvement of Pipeline

As part of a research-intensive university, an integral component of all MSU work is self-evaluation, making MSU well positioned to identify, collect and analyze the data that will enable MSU and DPS to continuously monitor and improve the proposed leadership pipeline. The DPS-MSU collaborative will use multiple procedures to ensure feedback and continuous improvement

of the leadership pipeline. Progress on stated goals and objectives will be reviewed during weekly and monthly staff meetings. Data collection procedures will be implemented to strengthen the project and to manage the process of utilizing data to improve every component of the pipeline.

Training Evaluation Data: MSU collects planned and purposeful evaluation data for every event, workshop, and conference design and implement and will do so for every professional development session conducted in the principal pipeline program. MSU will also collect feedback during real-time coaching in the buildings with the Leadership Fellows. These data will be analyzed both in aggregate and by individual response for actionable information that results in improved processes and content. In addition, work products from training events will be analyzed to determine trends/patterns and to guide further development of the pipeline.

Pipeline Impact Data: MSU will help schools and DPS build their capacity to identify relevant achievement, demographic and other data on student needs, collect and analyze it, and use it to decide on a course of action based on that data analysis. As DPS Fellows implement their action plans, schools will then identify, collect, and analyze data on the implementation and impact of their action plans to guide decisions on next action steps. The data collected and reported by DPS and MSU on these activities undertaken by Fellows leading to systemic change will be analyzed by the MSU evaluation team on an ongoing basis. These analyses will inform the development of professional supports to build on and continually improve the leadership pipeline. Data used in MSU debriefing sessions will also be used to inform future professional development and programmatic planning.

Significance of the Project:

This project will have a major impact on the quality and sustainability of school leaders in DPS, as well as directly on the schools in which these leaders work. What sets this model apart is a rigorous problem-based learning component that specifically focuses on the real-world situations of DPS schools. The model builds individual competency by working with leaders to address actual school needs rather than remaining, as many leadership programs do, at a theoretical level. The model not only teaches appropriate leadership strategies, but offers continuous mentoring, coaching and professional development as these leaders work to implement change directly in their schools.

Another unique aspect of the model is that it will specifically and intentionally build leaders' knowledge and capacity for school turnaround and sustainability. Throughout the program, leaders will focus on the "Mission Critical" elements of school turnaround, have access to experts from MSU and its work with ERS around these elements, and receive extensive support as they work to implement these elements.

It is well documented that the training received by principals from university programs and their school districts is inadequate to prepare them for the demands and challenges encountered in high-need schools. This is especially true in DPS, which is located in one of America's most economically impoverished areas and has a sustained record of poor student achievement. The district currently does not have the capacity to recruit, train, and retain the number of highly qualified school leaders required to make a significant impact on school culture and associated student achievement. The proposed leadership development model is specifically designed to address the problems associated with the recruitment, skill development and retention of effective school leaders who can create, manage and monitor the urgent and comprehensive changes needed for school turnaround. The result will be self-sustaining cadre of

highly-effective school leaders, improved schools, and higher student achievement that can provide a significant foundation for a Detroit renaissance.

Capacity to Implement the Proposed Project

System of Teacher and Leader Effectiveness:

Determining Teacher Effectiveness: Teacher evaluation is a year-long opportunity for teachers to develop, refine, rejuvenate and reflect upon their teaching practice in: pedagogical skills, student growth, classroom management, relevant special training, and educator responsibilities. The following information outlines how the evaluator and the teacher successfully implement the Teacher Evaluation process in DPS. The evaluation process is based on a professional growth model with five core elements: 1) Demonstrated Pedagogical Skills; 2) Student Growth as Predominant Factor; 3) Classroom Management; 4) Relevant Special Training; 5) Educator Responsibilities.

Principals in-service their teachers on the evaluation process, which includes a breakdown of the *Detroit Educator Evaluation Process Manual*. Each teacher is requested to complete a Professional Learning Plan (PLP) or input documentation into "My Portfolio" utilizing PD360. Teachers are able to access the teacher evaluation rubric, manual, and all forms via Learning Village. Between September and November, all teachers receive an initial observation conducted by the principal or their designee. All administrators participate in inter-rater reliability training and coaching. The observer can use an electronic template that will allow them to send their feedback via email and PD360 through the focus tab. Observers conduct an initial meeting (post-observation) with the teacher to:

- Review the observation with the teacher;

- Review the teacher's PLP and make recommendations (administrator and/or designee and the teacher sign the PLP);

- Provide the teacher access to the evaluation materials: rubric, observation form, etc.

- Help review the list of possible assessments to use as measures of tracking student growth (teachers select a minimum of two data sources).

During the months of November through April, teachers are provided with support and assistance. Administrators and teachers can recommend struggling teachers for additional support by submitting the *Request for Assistance and Support* form to their Assistant Superintendent. Administrators can also recommend PD360 videos to support professional growth, and conduct additional walkthroughs and/or observations as needed/desired. A formal mid-year observation must be conducted for struggling teachers and new teachers. All teachers are encouraged to continue implementing their PLPs, collecting artifacts and documentation to support each core element.

Beginning in April, observers begin conducting their end-of-year observations, utilizing the *End of Year Teacher Evaluation* form. Each administrator must conduct a conference with their teachers to determine an element summary score based on the artifacts, data, and documentation collected or provided by the teacher as evidence for each core element. The administrator then completes the annual rating form to determine and record effectiveness, record attendance and discipline information, and list contributions and accomplishments for each teacher. Throughout the year, teachers should continue to collect artifacts and documentation of their professional growth and fine-tune their professional learning plans.

Currently (for the 2013-2014 school year), 30% of the teacher evaluation is based on student growth (student growth is measured through a process of triangulation using external

data, schoolwide/benchmark data, and classroom data). The percentage is set to increase by an

additional 10% by the 2014-2015 school year. This increase is set to directly align with the State

of Michigan's 40% student growth mandate. All teachers are assigned an official score based on

a 100-point scale. Individuals who receive a score of 69% or less are identified as ineffective

teachers, who are then subject to review and further action.

Determining Leader Effectiveness: Principal effectiveness is determined using the *Detroit*

Public Schools Principal Evaluation Framework. This framework was recently updated to reflect

recommendations from Michigan Council for Educational Effectiveness and assesses the

principal's performance in relationship to the research-based strategies that have proven to be

effective. The framework is a professional growth model patterned in the same fashion as the

Teacher Evaluation System and provides:

- A focus on the goals and objectives of DPS and those outlined in the School's
  Reform/Redesign plan that were submitted to the state;

- A guide for principals as they reflect upon and improve their effectiveness as school
  leaders;

- A consistent and fair support mechanism for professional practice;

- Guidance for needed professional development;

- Coaching and mentoring programs for principals; and

- Information to higher education programs in developing the content and requirements of
  degree programs that prepare future principals.

Principals receive a performance level indicator of *highly effective*, *effective*, *minimally effective*,

or *ineffective,* based on the results of their evaluation. The State of Michigan requires the

following components exist within a Principal Evaluation System: proficiency of teacher

evaluations; student growth as a predominant factor; progress on school improvement plans; pupil attendance; and student/parent/teacher feedback.

Steps in the DPS Principal Evaluation Framework are: 1) Individual Goal Setting; 2) Goal Setting Conference with their Assistant Superintendent; 3) Mid-Year Review; and 4) Final Evaluation Meeting. The principal begins the evaluation process through the use of self-assessment, reflection, data review, and input gathered from the various stakeholders who have an interest in the leadership in the school. These data allow the principal to begin the goal-setting process and work to monitor and review their leadership throughout the year. Principals are encouraged to collect and review data on how their teachers are performing, student achievement scores, progress on their school improvement plan goals, student attendance, and surveys collected from students/parents/ and teachers about their performance. This information is then reviewed during the Mid-Year Review. Verbal and written feedback is provided to the principals, including recommendations for any areas of concern. The final summative evaluation consists of the following measures:

1) **Continuous Improvement Practices** – The extent to which the leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.

2) **Instructional Leadership** – The extent to which the leader promotes the success of every student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

3) **Managerial Leadership** – The extent to which the leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

4) **Organizational Leadership** – The extent to which the leader promotes the success of every student by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interest and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

5) **Professional Ethics** – The extent to which the education leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

Decision-Making Autonomy:

DPS, in collaboration with the Detroit Federation of Teachers, negotiated new contractual language allowing for operational flexibility that will support school transformation/turnaround efforts. This operational flexibility includes flexibility with staffing, school calendars, school times, budgeting, and other operational duties that will support a comprehensive approach increasing student achievement and graduation rates.

As a result of these contract changes, the school's leadership team now has the autonomy to create a school calendar in conjunction with the district's calendar. This allows key stakeholders (students, parents, sponsors, and site-based staff) to set dates for school-based events that align with their "Big Ideas," mission, and overarching vision.

There is also site-based autonomy with planning and scheduling of student courses and classes. A site-based committee creates a master schedule to outline courses and classes assignments for every student in their building. There is autonomy to facilitate the use of time within that specific frame. Principals have autonomy to use allocated Title I as needed to increase student achievement.

Committed Partners as Evidenced by Memoranda of Understanding:

In Part 6, there are two documents that reflects the terms and contributions each partner will make to support full and effective implementation of the leadership pipeline for SIG

schools. DPS agrees to partner with MSU to provide technical and professional support in establishing and maintaining the leadership pipeline as evidenced by their letter of commitment from the emergency manager. The MSU Office of K-12 Outreach, consistent with the policies and procedures of MSU's Office of Sponsored Programs, agrees to be the subrecipient. As noted in the MSU Commitment Form, the appropriate programmatic and administrative personnel involved in this application are aware of the sponsor polices in regard to subawards and are prepared to establish the necessary inter-institutional agreements consistent with those policies when the grant it awarded.

Opportunity for the Public Feedback on Proposed Leadership Pipeline:

DPS values its stakeholders and frequently engages them as the district evolves through its continuous improvement process. In the 2013-14 school year, the district held a series of community forums to determine the needs and areas of improvement. From these settings, the District Strategic Plan was developed. One of the areas was autonomy and leadership for school leaders. This Leadership Pipeline is a solution to the gap identified by the community and embraced by the District.

The Department of State and Federal Programs, the Office of Development hosted a School Improvement Grant meeting for priority schools implementing a transformation or turnaround reform model on Monday, May 19, 2014 (agenda and sign in sheets found in Part 6). In attendance at this meeting were stakeholders (i.e. school leaders, teachers, the Office of School Turnaround, and school partners) involved in implementing and designing the school reform model. As part of the meeting, the principal pipeline was shared in connection with the requirement of replacing the principal, building capacity of school leaders, and ensuring school

leadership evaluation is connected to student achievement. Participants were excited about the work completed during the session and left with a sense of renewed confidence.

Sustainability of the Proposed Project after the Award Period

Plan to Sustain the Leadership Pipeline

This principal pipeline project is being designed with sustainability in mind, and the systems, policies, and framework have been engineered to promote the institutionalization of the pipeline as the ongoing method for identifying, developing, placing, and retaining strong, effective leaders within Detroit Public Schools. These systems include using constant feedback mechanisms and reviews of the professional development offerings to ensure that it remains current and relevant to the needs of DPS. The tiered cohort nature of the program will create an ongoing conduit of leadership candidates who can not only lead change in the future as principals, but can help effect change within their current schools as teacher leaders. As participants learn strategies for identifying and developing other potential leaders within their schools, new candidates will be identified, assessed and enrolled in the program each year. By the end of the grant period, the process will be institutionalized and sustainable.

Beyond the structural aspects of the program, there is a strong commitment on the part of the project partners to the long-term sustainability of the principal pipeline. The project is being led in DPS by the assistant superintendent, Office of School Turnaround. This leading school administrator is a graduate of DPS and a lifelong resident, is deeply invested in saving DPS, and is committed to developing a strong central office component that will lead to institutionalization of the pipeline for years to come.

In addition, DPS and MSU have a strong mutual commitment and working relationship, especially through the College of Education, as evidenced by MSU's urban cohort teacher

education program and DPS' long-standing relationship with the Office of K-12 Outreach. The Office of K-12 Outreach has offices that are located less than a block from the DPS central administration building and a network of highly trained specialists who already have a strong relationship with DPS. In addition to the work that Office of K-12 Outreach does with DPS, the Michigan State University as has over 320 programs and partnership in Detroit and is deeply invested in Detroit's turnaround and future success.

How Applicant Will Identify and Align Resources to Sustain after the Grant award Ends

As stated previously, DPS does not currently have policies in place directly addressing retention and incentives for the principal pipeline, but will develop them in accordance with this grant. Through the period of the grant, DPS will offer financial incentives and will continue to do so after the grant as funds are available. Once in place, performance-based multi-year contracts and professional development opportunities will continue to be key incentives to maintain those in the pipeline. The Instructional Leaders Network will provide continued access and support for graduates of the principal pipeline program. After the grant ends, MSU will continue to offer pipeline programming on a contracted basis with DPS. In addition, DPS will work with MSU in a train-the-trainer model to build lasting sustainability, capacity, and change in DPS. This will be embedded as part of the experiences of those who have successfully completed the program and have become part of the *Instructional Leadership Network* (as further described in Component Four of the section on differentiated professional development). The scaffolding of this approach will begin in the first year of the grant and throughout the training process, DPS will be an integral partner in co-developing and leading components of the pipeline professional development. This will help to establish the leadership pipeline as part of the culture of the DPS and ensure that it is part of an ongoing initiative for turnaround in the district.

Stakeholder Support of the Project

As referenced in the abstract for Competitive Preferences Priority 1, the emergency manager of DPS, who has sole authority for the school district under the laws of the State of Michigan, has agreed to commit to this grant as a capacity building and sustaining initiative for leadership (see Part 6 for letter). This will include support to sustain the pipeline as demonstrated in their budget.

Stakeholder engagement has been part of DPS's continuous improvement process. The stakeholders are in support of the turnaround process and a leadership pipeline to offer sustainability to the DPS system as evidenced at a meeting for priority schools implementing a transformation or turnaround reform model on Monday, May 19, 2014. In attendance at this meeting were stakeholders (i.e. school leaders, teachers, the Office of School Turnaround, and school partners) involved in implementing and designing the school reform model. As part of the meeting, the principal pipeline was shared in connection with the requirement of replacing the principal, building capacity of school leaders, and ensuring school leadership evaluation is connected to student achievement. Participants were excited about the work completed during the session and left with a sense of renewed confidence. Through DPS's continuous improvement process, DPS will continue to engage stakeholders through a series of community forums and provide opportunities to interact with members of the leadership pipeline.

Quality of Management Plan

Achieving the Objectives on Time and Within Budget:

The DPS-MSU leadership pipeline will utilize the Turnaround School Leaders Program Grant to underwrite the first three years of project. During this time, the pipeline will become institutionalized, enabling it to continue indefinitely after the period of the grant. The major goal

of the pipeline is to create a strong principal preparation pathway that: 1) identifies high-quality

candidates to become principals and other instructional leaders; 2) cultivates and strengthens

their talents across the system with continuous professional development; 3) establishes a set of

leadership standards that align all components of the principal pipeline; 4) collaboratively

systemizes the process in DPS for hiring, placing, and retaining principals; 5) develops

evaluation standards, instruments, and systems to identify and strengthen gaps in principal skills,

knowledge, and behaviors. The product will be instructional leaders who are committed to

building capacity for DPS and raising student achievement in a systematic way. Once

established, DPS will have a system in place and the skills and resources necessary to sustain the

leadership pipeline after the term of the grant.

The design of the pipeline has been carefully planned to ensure that appropriate staff and

resources are provided in order to meet the goals and objects of the grant. MSU brings vast

experience with demonstrated outcomes in planning and implementing major school

improvement initiatives, and will work closely with DPS to clearly identify roles and

responsibilities, articulate timelines and measurable milestones, and create a system to monitor

progress on these elements of the project.

A quality project management team has been assembled to achieve the outcomes listed

in the Figure 4 – Proposed Timeline for Principal Leadership Pipeline. It outlines each

component of the professional development and projected times when this training would occur

in Detroit. Real-time coaching is not included on the timeline because this will be occurring on a
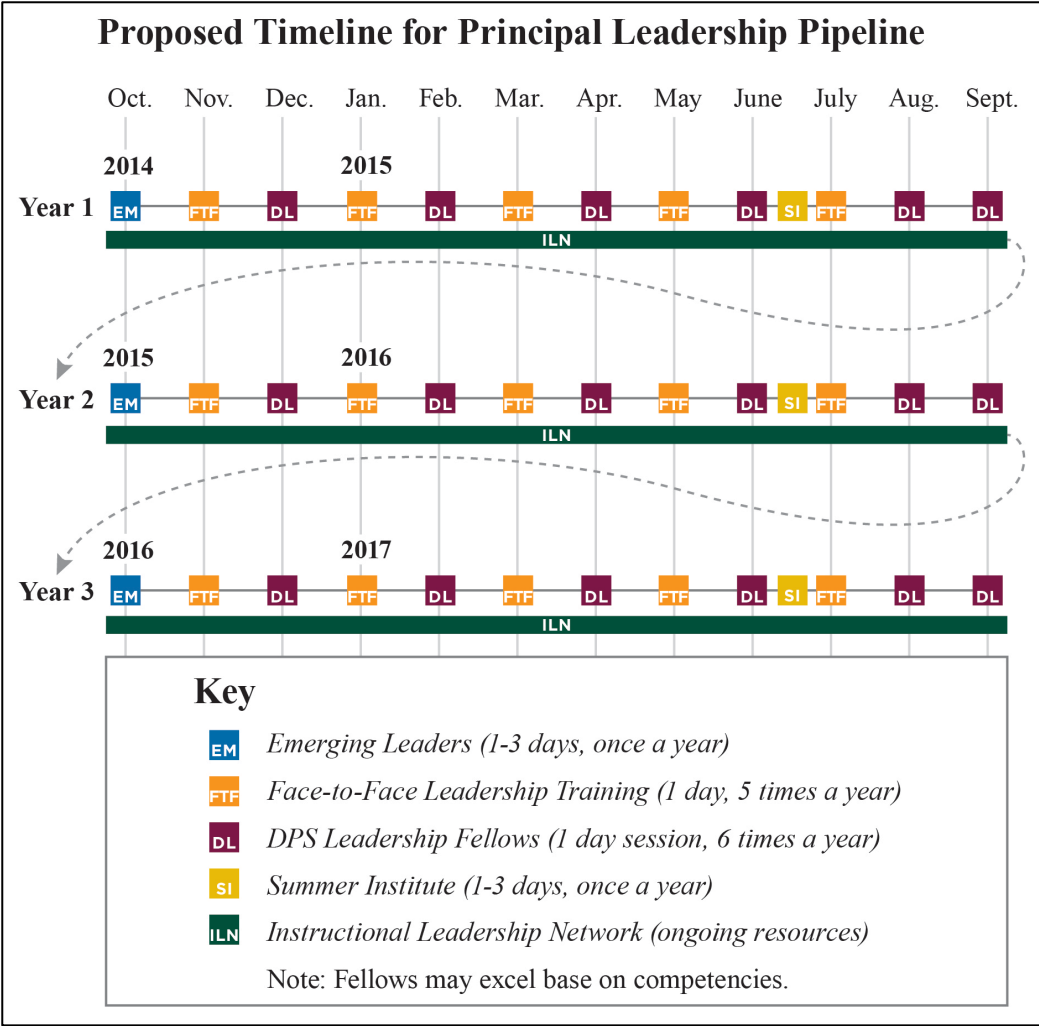
daily and weekly bases.

Proposed Timeline for Principal Leadership Pipeline

Key

- **EM** *Emerging Leaders (1-3 days, once a year)*
- **FTF** *Face-to-Face Leadership Training (1 day, 5 times a year)*
- **DL** *DPS Leadership Fellows (1 day session, 6 times a year)*
- **SI** *Summer Institute (1-3 days, once a year)*
- **ILN** *Instructional Leadership Network (ongoing resources)*

Note: Fellows may excel base on competencies.

Figure 4

Personnel Responsibilities and Qualification:

Summarized in Figure 5 is a description of key project personnel and their resumes are included in Part 6. MSU and DPS project staff will conduct weekly staff meeting electronically, and will meet face-to-face monthly to assess the leadership pipeline's progress, sustainability, and recommendations for program improvement.

Position	Roles and Responsibilities	Time Commitment
DPS Assistant Superintendent, Office of School Turnaround	Program oversight, ensure policy and practice changes for program implementation and sustainability, and monitor school-level reform outcomes	.20 FTE
DPS Program Supervisor	Program oversight	1.0 FTE
DPS Grant Compliance	Oversight of financial and reporting aspects of the grant requirements	.10 FTE
MSU Project Manager	Program oversight	.02 FTE .08 FTE voluntary _____ cost share .10 FTE Total
MSU Outreach Specialists (4)	Use extensive leadership experience for real-time coaching and mentoring onsite in DPS schools	.25 FTE
MSU Professional Development Specialists (2)	Design and deliver School Executive Leadership Modules and support Instructional Leadership Network	.15 FTE
MSU Doctoral Students (2)	Assist in development, refinement, delivery of training modules, data analysis and evaluation	.50 FTE

Figure 5

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DPS Assistant Superintendent, Office of School Turnaround: Bilal Tawwab (.20 FTE)—
The assistant superintendent will oversee the process of policy and practice changes, and program implementation. This process will include work to develop district sustainability policies and monitor school-level reform outcomes related to turnaround, including central office support, which is key to developing lasting system changes that flow throughout the district.

DPS Program Supervisor: TBD (1.0 FTE)—The Turnaround School Leader Program Supervisor, in collaboration with the Assistant Superintendent, and contractual partners is responsible for training and support of school leaders and potential school leaders placed in SIG schools. This position will monitor and track school leader development through the Leadership Pipeline and school leader results as related to student achievement.

Experience: Minimum of five to seven years of successful experience providing coaching or mentoring school leaders, providing instruction and assessment, analyzing assessment data and recommending programs and research-based instructional practices to positively impact student achievement. Excellent oral, written, presentation, and interpersonal communications required. Prior experience as a school administrator preferably in a successful turnaround environment is preferred.

Core Responsibilities:

- Support the design and implementation of school turnaround models with school leaders, implement research based operational systems with laser-like focus on the alignment of curriculum, instruction and assessment, and provide structure and framework necessary to implement effective school turnaround practices focused on teaching and learning.

- Ensure that all participants of the leadership pipeline are participating in accordance with program requirements.

- Ensure that all participants of the leadership pipeline are performing as effectively and efficiently as possible and ensure to the best of their abilities, that the school is adequately resourced to successfully implement its turnaround initiative.

- Keep abreast of national strategy and developments impacting education turnaround and ensure information is communicated to program participants.

- Play a key role in the selection of participants in the program and into schools upon completion.

- Play a key role in mentoring arrangements of newly qualified and recently placed turnaround leaders.

- Serve as the liaison between program partners (MSU and LSI) and the District

- Attend all program partner meetings

DPS Grant Compliance: TBD (.10 FTE)—The grant compliance manager will have oversight of financial and reports aspects of the grant. This will include the annual performance report and final performance report of the grant.

MSU Project Director: Dr. Barbara Markle, Assistant Dean, Office of K-12 Outreach (.02 FTE)—The project manager will be responsible for the management and integrity of the project, design, conduct, and reporting of project outcomes, and for managing, monitoring, and ensuring the collaborative relations between DPS and MSU. The project director will also be responsible for the direction and oversight of issues pertaining to financial, personnel, and related aspects of the leadership pipeline development related to MSU's project team.

MSU Outreach Specialists (4): Potential Resumes in Part 6 (.25 FTE)—The MSU Outreach Specialists have extensive leadership experience in the greater Detroit area and will use that expertise to provide day-to-day support for prospective and current leaders in the pipeline. This

will include the use of real-time coaching through the inevitable leadership challenges and issues that will arise as pipeline Fellows work to identify and implement turnaround in their schools. One coach will also provide central office support to foster systems coherence to support and sustain the pipeline initiative. Each specialist has an advanced degree in educational leadership and has the relevant experience and knowledge to effectively mentor those in the pipeline. These specialists will work closely with stakeholders from across DPS to develop consensus around the leadership pipeline and its implementation. A primary object of MSU's work is to build capacity in DPS to ensure sustainability of the pipeline, but also to leverage the skills and expertise of DPS's own talent for turnaround.

MSU Professional Development Specialists (2): TBD (.15%)—The Professional Development Specialists will develop and refine all content used in leadership pipeline professional development. This will include the development and delivery of the ten School Executive Leadership Modules and the ongoing support through the Instructional Leadership Network. This team will also work in tandem with the MSU Outreach Specialists to build capacity in DPS leadership to take over the pipeline through a train-the-trainer model. The Professional Development Specialists will work directly with pipeline participants at the scheduled events.

MSU Doctoral Students (2): TBD (.5 FTE)—The MSU Doctoral Students will support the MSU project team in meeting the goals and objectives of establishing the Leadership Pipeline. The two MSU Doctoral Students will have backgrounds and experience in urban education and urban settings as well as professional development training experience. They will assist in the development, refining, and delivery of training modules, assist with collection of project data and analysis. All evaluation material will be conducted by the MSU evaluation team using the embedded processes described in previous sections of the grant.

Commitment and Qualifications of Collaborators:

The MSU Office of K-12 Outreach in the College of Education was selected as a collaborator on this project based on their proven record effectively building capacity for sustained change, especially around leadership and leadership development. MSU has more than two decades of experience in program management and staffing such support programs, especially in urban and high-poverty areas, and is supported by the extensive human relations and contract management systems and the institutional resources of the university.

Designing, staffing and managing MI Excel, a statewide system of support involving scores of skilled specialists working with hundreds of schools and districts from the Upper Peninsula to the Ohio and Indiana borders, requires experience, expertise and infrastructure. Dr. Barbara Markle, Assistant Dean for K–12 Outreach, serves as MSU's designated official responsible for providing administration, executive leadership, and direction for this ambitious project. She brings decades of experience and a national reputation to this important task. In addition to serving as the primary point of contact, Dr. Markle is responsible for designing, building, and supporting a program implementation plan that meets the goals and obligations described in the RFP. She is assisted by Daniel Schultz as senior program advisor, who brings to the job decades of management experience at Michigan Department of Education and Michigan Virtual University, and a team of program directors who have been district superintendents, professional development experts, and content specialists. Under Dr. Markle's leadership, the Office of K–12 Outreach has created a unique field-oriented service organization within the university and built a highly qualified team to support Michigan's school reform agenda and leadership development, from a certified meeting planner to technology experts to achievement gap specialists with the knowledge and credibility to work directly with district and school leaders.

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