

**REPORT TO THE
LOUISIANA BOARD OF REGENTS**

**REVIEW OF
K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM (K-16 PSR)
PROPOSALS**

March 2006

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REPORT TO THE LOUISIANA BOARD OF REGENTS

REVIEW OF K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM PROPOSALS

FY 2005-08

INTRODCUTION

The K-16 Partnerships for School Reform (K-16 PSR) review panel consisting of Dr. Nancy Streim, University of Pennsylvania, chair; Dr. Irving Hamer, The Millennium Group education consulting firm; and Dr. Gail Dickinson, University of Texas at Austin, was formed in January, 2006. The review panel met on March 16-17, 2006, in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, for the purpose of evaluating eleven (11) proposals submitted to the Louisiana Board of Regents requesting funds through the K-16 PSR program component of the Board of Regents Support Fund (BoRSF).

The review panel received the following materials prior to the visit: a) eleven (11) K-16 PSR proposals to be evaluated; b) a summary of proposals listing titles, investigators involved, institutions, dollars requested, etc.; c) the FY 2005-06 K-16 PSR Request for Proposals; d) materials describing the Louisiana Department of Education Accountability system; and e) a copy of the 2005 BoRSF Education Enhancement Report.

Prior to the meeting in Baton Rouge, each reviewer independently evaluated and annotated each of the 11 proposals. During the review process, the panel conducted interviews with teams of four to ten members representing each proposal. Teams representing proposals were instructed to include at least one administrator and one educator from both the University and K-12 partner school(s). The interviews consisted of concurrent 20-minute breakaway sessions with a single panel member interviewing one to four representative team members, followed by 30-minute team interviews with the entire review panel. Following the interviews, each proposal was fully discussed by the panel. In each case unanimous agreement was reached, and the reviewers ensured that each proposal received a thorough and fair evaluation based on criteria enumerated in the RFP.

Table I contains a rank-order list of the proposals highly recommended for funding with recommended funding levels. Proposals not recommended for funding are listed in Table II. A detailed review of each proposal follows immediately after the tables. A summary of all proposals submitted (Appendix A) and a copy of the rating forms used in the evaluations (Appendix B) are attached at the end of the report.

For two proposals in Table I, funds exceeding the actual request were recommended. Funding for these proposals is recommended pending a reconfiguration of proposal budgets and work plans based on strict guidelines and stipulations provided by the review panel. Three-year requests totaling \$6,038,357 were submitted to the K-16 PSR review panel. The review panel recommended three-year awards totaling \$2,899,280 of the \$3 million available.

The K-16 PSR Program is a forward-thinking initiative that draws together the K-12 and post-secondary sectors in support of public education in Louisiana. While many states talk about the need to engage higher education in upgrading student outcomes in elementary and secondary schools, the Louisiana Board of Regents has made its commitment concrete. This pilot program sends an important signal to the higher education community that the Regents endorse greater involvement in K-12 education. The number of responses to the RFP indicates that Louisiana's colleges and universities are eager to participate.

Many school systems across the United States are facing difficult challenges in providing high quality education to all students. It is not reasonable to expect that schools can do it alone. Changing the school reform paradigm to incorporate the intellectual strengths that reside in colleges and universities accomplishes several important goals. First, of course, higher education institutions bring expertise in disciplinary and pedagogical knowledge that can be applied to improve student learning. Second, partnerships foster better articulation across the K-16 pipeline by ensuring that K-12 school reform leads students to meet the academic expectations of the higher education system. Third, deeper connections between higher education and K-12 education fostered by these partnerships are an important way to increase academic aspirations for students and produce a more effective feeder system for the State's colleges and universities. Fourth, the partnerships provide an integrated K-16 model for colleges and universities to assume greater responsibility for preparing and then supporting teachers and school leaders throughout their careers. These approaches can only strengthen efforts by the Department of Education to increase the outcomes of teaching and learning in Louisiana's schools. Finally, the K-16 PSR initiative is an important first step toward large scale K-12 reform across the state. The review panel has selected proposals whose features hold promise for expanding into more comprehensive programs. By disseminating lessons learned through these K-16 partnerships, the Board of Regents can stimulate and leverage reforms on a larger scale within school districts and statewide, and in so doing, establish a national model.

General Observations and Recommendations

Overall, the panel found significant strength in some proposals, while others were not as well grounded in a strategic vision. The scoring reflects the panel's assessment of the extent to which the applicants addressed all the criteria, the feasibility of implementation, and the likelihood that the strategies proposed would yield desired results. A number of general observations about the proposals may be useful to grantees who were not funded in this round, but who may choose to apply for funding in the future.

First, in describing project objectives, many proposals did not specify clear targets for change and growth (e.g., percentages of students achieving GLE, increased test scores, teacher retention rates, greater parent participation in workshops, graduation rates, etc.). Some proposals defined targets, but did so only in terms of goods and services to be delivered by the university. For example, purchasing computer equipment should not

be considered a grant activity; rather, implementing technology in the classroom to model complex concepts for students would be a legitimate grant activity.

A number of proposals failed to provide a profile of the partner schools or school districts, making it difficult for the panel to fully understand the priorities of the partnership in light of schools' needs. This information is requested in the RFP and should be provided in every proposal. The school profiles are most effective when they include information beyond test scores, such as descriptions of the teaching staff, parent community, and other elements that communicate the problems and challenges that the project seeks to address.

In some cases, proposals would have been stronger if there had been a clearer relationship defined between the proposed project, the partner schools' improvement plans and other initiatives already underway. For example, some schools are beneficiaries of grants from other organizations and foundations. When applicants discuss how funds will be leveraged, they should include information on the goals, strategies and funding associated with these complementary efforts to illustrate how the proposed partnership project fits with larger improvement plans.

Assessments need to be better developed overall in the proposals. Applicants should describe how the results of their interventions can be measured. For example, the panel does not consider attendance lists for professional development programs to be assessments; however, a pre-post test, completion of a project, survey or follow-up observational study of implementation could be.

Many of the proposals were quite complex and it was not clear who was doing what, and where final decision-making authority resided. An operational plan, organizational chart, communications plan and/or memorandum of understanding among the partners would help clarify roles and their integration.

In preparing the project budgets, applicants should be sure that the guidelines are followed to avoid requesting funds for disallowed expenses. In some cases, the panel was concerned that the amount of faculty release time requested in the budget was not commensurate with the effort required. More often than not, the PI's cited time of effort appeared insufficient to manage the project or provide the proposed services. If the project director plans to provide additional effort beyond the amount of release time proposed, it would be helpful to indicate this in the narrative, or show it as an institutional match.

TABLE I
PROPOSALS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED FOR FUNDING

RANK	RATING	PROPOSAL NO.	INSTITUTION	THREE YEAR FUNDS REQUESTED	THREE YEAR FUNDS RECOMMENDED	TYPE
1	87	003PSR-06	Louisiana Tech University	\$599,274	\$599,274	Selective
2	82	011PSR-06	University of New Orleans	\$900,000	\$900,000	Systemic
3	79	002PSR-06	Louisiana State University-Baton Rouge*	\$808,413	\$1,000,000	Systemic
4	73	010PSR-06	University of Louisiana Lafayette*	\$360,114	\$400,000	Selective
TOTALS:				\$2,667,801	\$2,899,274	

*Funds recommended exceed original request pending a careful revision of proposal's work plan and budget according to consultant's stipulations noted in report

TABLE II
PROPOSALS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR FUNDING

RANK	RATING	PROPOSAL NO.	INSTITUTION	THREE YEAR FUNDS REQUESTED	THREE YEAR FUNDS RECOMMENDED	TYPE
5	66	001PSR-06	Louisiana State University-Alexandria	\$532,340	\$0	Selective
5	66	005PSR-06	Northwestern State University	\$193,747	\$0	Selective
5	66	006PSR-06	Southeastern Louisiana University	\$600,000	\$0	Selective
8	57	004PSR-06	Nicholls State University	\$270,659	\$0	Selective
8	57	007PSR-06	Southern University Baton Rouge	\$599,294	\$0	Selective
10	47	008PSR-06	Southern University Baton Rouge	\$600,000	\$0	Selective
11	23	009PSR-06	Tulane University	\$574,516	\$0	Selective
TOTALS:				\$3,370,556	\$0	

**RATING FORM FOR
K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM (K-15 PSR)
SELECTIVE PROPOSAL**

PROPOSAL NUMBER: 001PSR-06

INSTITUTION: Louisiana State University and A&M College-Alexandria

TITLE OF PROPOSAL: LSUA and Rapides Parish School System: A PK-16 Partnership
For School Improvement

A. Student Learning and Achievement 30 (of 45 points)

- Assessing Student Needs
- Aligning Curriculum/Reforms with Student Needs
- Enhancing Content-Based Teaching and Professional Development

B. Strengthening School/District Leadership 10 (of 15 points)

C. Leveraging Resources: Federal, State, Local 10 (of 15 points)

D. Quality and Strength of Partnerships 8 (of 10 points)

E. Nourishing Cultural Change 3 (of 5 points)

- Enhancing Student Behavior and Attendance
- Elevating Parental Engagement and Support
- Enriching Community Collaboration

F. Evaluation and Sustainability 5 (of 10 points)

- Identifying Achievements and Challenges
- Making Mid-Course Corrections
- Sustaining Reforms Beyond the Life of the Grant

G. Total Score:

66

 (of 100 points)

(Note: Proposals with a total score below 70 will not be recommended for funding.)

SPECIFIC BUDGETARY

RECOMMENDATIONS: **Requested Amount:** \$532,340

Recommended Amount: \$0

COMMENTS: (Discuss proposal strengths and weaknesses, particularly in those sections where significant point deductions have been made. Include suggestions for resubmission. For proposals recommended for funding, include all applicable stipulations in budgets and scopes of work.)

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

Proposal Number: 001PSR-06

Institution: Louisiana State University and A&M College-Alexandria

Principal Investigator: Fred Litton

Title: LSUA and Rapides Parish School System: A PK-16 Partnership for School Improvement
Selective Reform Proposal

COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

The goal of the proposal is to increase math and reading scores at Alma Redwine Elementary by promoting differentiated instruction and cultural change in the school. Unfortunately, the strategies don't appear to be cohesive, but rather a laundry list of disconnected activities. A significant strategy involves sending teachers for summer training in differentiated instruction, but no clear plan for ongoing support for implementation is provided for the academic year. The panel understands that the district has identified differentiated instruction as a goal for all schools, which is good. While it is promising to include pre-service teachers in learning to develop and implement differentiated lessons, it seems ill-timed unless there is a structure to support and give feedback to the teachers and student interns as they learn strategies together.

Collaboration is evident in the proposal but the letters of support are weak. A chronology of meetings is not a demonstration of quality partnership. Letters from the principal of the elementary school and the district superintendent state they have attended meetings but not their specific commitment to the proposal (e.g., what will they contribute? staff comp time? etc).

The evaluation plan is very weak. Most of the workshops are "evaluated" by collecting attendance lists. Outcome measures and benchmarks are essential. For example, the team should be asking: Are the principles taught in the workshop being applied in the classroom? How are the changes resulting from the workshops impacting the school?

Funding is not recommended for this proposal.

**RATING FORM FOR
K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM (K-15 PSR)
SYSTEMIC PROPOSAL**

PROPOSAL NUMBER: 002PSR-06

INSTITUTION: Louisiana State University and A&M College-Baton Rouge

TITLE OF PROPOSAL: EBRPSS/LSU Partnership: Glen Oaks Middle School

A. Strengthening School/District Leadership 13 (of 15 points)

B. Quality and Strength of Partnerships 13 (of 15 Points)

C. Nourishing Cultural Change 8 (of 15 Points)

- Enhancing Student Behavior and Attendance
- Elevating Parental Engagement and Support
- Enriching Community Collaboration

D. Leveraging Resources: Federal, State, and Local 13 (of 15 points)

E. Student Learning and Achievement 22 (of 25 Points)

- Assessing Student Needs
- Aligning Curriculum/Reforms with Student Needs
- Enhancing Content-Based Teaching and Professional Development

F. Evaluation and Sustainability 10 (of 15 Points)

- Identifying Achievements and Challenges
- Making Mid-Course Corrections
- Sustaining Reforms Beyond the Life of the Grant

G. Total Score:

79

 (of 100 points)

(Note: Proposals with a total score below 70 will not be recommended for funding.)

SPECIFIC BUDGETARY

RECOMMENDATIONS: Requested Amount: \$808,413

Recommended Amount: \$1,000,000

COMMENTS: (Discuss proposal strengths and weaknesses, particularly in those sections where significant point deductions have been made. Include suggestions for resubmission. For proposals recommended for funding, include all applicable stipulations in budgets and scopes of work.)

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

Proposal Number: 002PSR-06

Institution: Louisiana State University and A&M College-Baton Rouge

Principal Investigator: Frank Neubrandner

Title: EBRPSS/LSU Partnership: Glen Oaks Middle School

Systemic Reform Proposal

COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

This is a strong proposal that builds upon LSU's array of existing initiatives and partnerships, including the Cain Center, the National Writing Project, the secondary education program now housed in the disciplinary departments, and Southern University-Baton Rouge. Another strength is the commitment to "deliver actionable data" to the schools for purposeful decision-making and to monitor progress. Taken together, these components have the potential to add significant value to the reconstitution efforts at Glen Oaks Middle School and the network of feeder elementary schools.

Nonetheless, there are a number of revisions and clarifications that the review panel requests in order to recommend funding for this project. The PI is asked to respond to the following questions and concerns:

1. Please clarify initiatives and strategies that are aimed at vertical articulation of the curriculum.
2. There are a lot of partners, and the project PIs have multiple responsibilities. To accomplish the goals of the project will require significant communication among the constituents. Describe the communication plan to demonstrate that all constituents (university, school, community) are knowledgeable and informed.
3. Describe in more detail the activities planned for the feeder schools, including strategies to align academic and cultural expectations between the elementary schools and Glen Oaks Middle School. How will the project foster sharing across all the schools in the partnership?
4. The focus on student writing is a promising strategy to increase student achievement across the content areas. It will be important to establish protocols for analyzing student writing to ensure consistency of teachers' expectations across grades and schools. Please describe how you will address this aspect of the project. Have you considered a portfolio system where students' writing would be available from year to year and teacher to teacher?
5. Allowing department chairs one-half day release time to monitor instruction is a strength, though in many schools this time is quickly taken up by other administrative tasks. How will you avoid this pitfall and keep the focus on instructional improvements? Are the department chairs meeting with their feeder elementary counterparts as well?
6. Evaluation plans need to be more specific. It is understood that the university is playing an advisory role to the school district with respect to student outcomes. Nonetheless, it is necessary to specify targets and benchmarks for student academic gains. What measures will you use? Be sure to include measurable goals and targets for student writing.

7. The project team has identified cultural change as a challenge at the school, although there is little emphasis on the ways in which university-based initiatives will be targeted to bring about cultural transformation. The proposal indicates that LSU will write white papers, and be a “mirror” for the school district to evaluate policies and practices. The panel wants to see more concrete responsibilities for LSU to assist the district in enacting any changes recommended in these white papers. For example, it appears that the expectation is that cultural change will be accomplished through the hiring of new staff. Please say more about the university’s role in selecting new staff. How do you expect to produce “highly qualified” math and science teachers by 2007? What other strategies are planned for nourishing cultural change?
8. The budget should show the other sources of funding for each initiative. (Note that the \$150,000 and \$200,000 incentives for doing well should be included in the budget as matching funds.) Remember that the funding program allows for you to request up to \$1 million over three years. However, if the project team decides to increase the funding request, the panel expects to see commitment to outcomes.
9. Dr. Madden requests to receive 75% release time support to participate in this project. The funding program allows a maximum of 25% grant support for faculty salaries. Details regarding the framework for Dr. Madden’s efforts are needed, along with justification for exceeding release time limits. The narrative indicates that the summer camp is to be organized by Dr. Meynsse and another SUBR faculty member. However, the budget does not appear to include funds for the summer camp. Please describe the source of funding.
10. Now that the reconstitution plan has been developed, please resubmit the proposed budget and show how it is tied to the plan for Glen Oaks Middle School. Is there an MOU between LSU and the school district? If not, there should be, in order to define accountability and roles.

**RATING FORM FOR
K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM (K-15 PSR)
SELECTIVE PROPOSAL**

PROPOSAL NUMBER: 003PSR-06

INSTITUTION: Louisiana Tech University

TITLE OF PROPOSAL: Louisiana Tech University/Monroe City Partnership for
School Reform

A. Student Learning and Achievement 40 (of 45 points)

- Assessing Student Needs
- Aligning Curriculum/Reforms with Student Needs
- Enhancing Content-Based Teaching and Professional Development

B. Strengthening School/District Leadership 13 (of 15 points)

C. Leveraging Resources: Federal, State, Local 13 (of 15 points)

D. Quality and Strength of Partnerships 8 (of 10 points)

E. Nourishing Cultural Change 5 (of 5 points)

- Enhancing Student Behavior and Attendance
- Elevating Parental Engagement and Support
- Enriching Community Collaboration

F. Evaluation and Sustainability 8 (of 10 points)

- Identifying Achievements and Challenges
- Making Mid-Course Corrections
- Sustaining Reforms Beyond the Life of the Grant

G. Total Score:

87

 (of 100 points)

(Note: Proposals with a total score below 70 will not be recommended for funding.)

SPECIFIC BUDGETARY

RECOMMENDATIONS: Requested Amount: \$599,274

Recommended Amount: \$599,274

COMMENTS: (Discuss proposal strengths and weaknesses, particularly in those sections where significant point deductions have been made. Include suggestions for resubmission. For proposals recommended for funding, include all applicable stipulations in budgets and scopes of work.)

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

Proposal Number: 003PSR-06
Institution: Louisiana Tech University
Principal Investigator: Jo Ann Dauzat
Title: Louisiana Tech University/Monroe City Partnership for School Reform
Selective Reform Proposal

COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

This is, overall, an excellent proposal. The project team has effectively focused on integrating initiatives that address improved academic achievement, student engagement and aspirations, and school-level leadership. The project is rather complex, proposing three strands, each of which includes multiple objectives. However, the university's track record and partnerships suggest that the project is feasible. There appears to be a strong management plan, including commitment to have an executive committee representing all the partners. The fact that a needs assessment has been completed is a good indicator that the project team knows the schools and has consulted with staff, and the MOU with Monroe City school district is a strong sign of commitment and shared responsibility between the partners. The specificity of academic goals and benchmarks based on analysis of student performance and academic standards adds strength to the proposal as well.

There are a number of questions that the panel would like the project team to address in order to assure the panel that the project can be carried out as planned, and that the goals can be both measured and achieved.

1. For outside partners like universities to work effectively with schools usually requires that the school staff supports the project and that teachers are willing to participate in the extensive professional development (PD) that is at the core of the effort. What is the profile of the teaching staff at Carroll and Wossman High Schools? What are their PD needs, in the view of the project team? What evidence is there that the school staff has embraced this project? How will buy-in be assured? The proposed level of professional development is sustainable with high teacher retention rates. What can you say about current and projected teacher retention at Carroll and Wossman?
2. The proposal indicates that faculty and staff from the university will monitor the implementation of research-based practices in the classroom. However, making the transition from knowledge gained through PD to daily classroom practice is a process that often requires extensive on-site support for teachers over an extended period of time. How much "at the elbow" assistance will be available to the teachers? Who will provide it? It seems that one half-time coordinator in each school may not be adequate for leveraging the desired changes in instructional practices throughout the building.
3. A major focus of Project 100 is improving student performance in math. What are the needs of the teachers with respect to increasing their content knowledge in

- math? Does the project team have enough strength in math content, and how could the team be expanded to include colleagues in the arts and sciences?
4. Project 200 is a promising initiative to increase students' sense of self-efficacy and raise educational aspirations. Would the project team consider involving rising 9th graders in a summer orientation/camp experience or in some other transitional activity? The panel also encourages the team to develop a plan for sustaining the summer camp program. Could Idea Place be extended to other groups of students beyond the summer camp?
 5. As you inspire students to prepare for college, would you consider a dual enrollment provision for upper-grade students, and if so, what might it look like?
 6. Student support is heavily focused on remediation. What opportunities are there for enrichment activities?
 7. The evaluation plan is rather vague. The project seems to limit data collection primarily to student achievement, attendance and retention. While these are clearly important indicators, what strategies will the project leadership use to monitor the success, impact and progress of all the initiatives? What are the targets and benchmarks for the Nourishing Cultural Change and Leadership strands? Please indicate these with as much specificity and with as many quantifiable outcomes as possible so there is a basis for evaluating what works, and what mid-course corrections are needed.
 8. What standards and measures are in place for delivery and evaluation of PD activities? Beyond participation rates, how will you evaluate impact? Please consider using national board certification as a standard in designing professional development.
 9. Integration of efforts is a central value expressed in the proposal. How will you deal with the fact that the schools are in two different locations? The academic data suggest that the two schools have different profiles of student achievement. How will the integrated strategies bring both the lower achieving and higher achieving schools to the same level of academic performance in the same time period?

**RATING FORM FOR
K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM (K-15 PSR)
SELECTIVE PROPOSAL**

PROPOSAL NUMBER: 004PSR-06

INSTITUTION: Nicholls State University

TITLE OF PROPOSAL: The Nicholls State University - Lafourche Parish PK-16 Partnership

A. Student Learning and Achievement 25 (of 45 points)

- Assessing Student Needs
- Aligning Curriculum/Reforms with Student Needs
- Enhancing Content-Based Teaching and Professional Development

B. Strengthening School/District Leadership 9 (of 15 points)

C. Leveraging Resources: Federal, State, Local 10 (of 15 points)

D. Quality and Strength of Partnerships 5 (of 10 points)

E. Nourishing Cultural Change 3 (of 5 points)

- Enhancing Student Behavior and Attendance
- Elevating Parental Engagement and Support
- Enriching Community Collaboration

F. Evaluation and Sustainability 5 (of 10 points)

- Identifying Achievements and Challenges
- Making Mid-Course Corrections
- Sustaining Reforms Beyond the Life of the Grant

G. Total Score:

57

 (of 100 points)

(Note: Proposals with a total score below 70 will not be recommended for funding.)

SPECIFIC BUDGETARY

RECOMMENDATIONS: Requested Amount: \$270,659

RECOMMENDED AMOUNT: \$0

COMMENTS: (Discuss proposal strengths and weaknesses, particularly in those sections where significant point deductions have been made. Include suggestions for resubmission. For proposals recommended for funding, include all applicable stipulations in budgets and scopes of work.)

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

Proposal Number: 004PSR-06
Institution: Nicholls State University
Principal Investigator: Obie Hill
Title: The Nicholls State University – Lafourche Parish PK-16 Partnership
Selective Reform Proposal

COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

The project intends to improve the math and ELA scores and change the cultures of Raceland Middle School and South Thibodeaux Elementary School. The panel likes the cooperation of multiple departments at Nicholls State. Unfortunately, the strategies don't seem well connected and it is not clear how the pieces will be aligned into a comprehensive and coherent reform plan. Given the tremendous needs at the schools, the amount of faculty effort proposed does not seem adequate for the scope of the proposed project. Perhaps it was anticipated that Blackboard would help facilitate interaction, but the plan is too vague. Blackboard would make more sense as part of a well constructed partnership among Nicholls faculty and a particular group of teachers for a particular project (e.g., a study group or undertaking lesson design together).

As stated in the proposal and interview, the first step must be a needs assessment, which wasn't done prior to submitting the proposal. While it will be useful to administer a school climate survey, the key will be swift and effective response to issues in order to improve stakeholders' perceptions of the leadership and the school. Strategies and a timeline for identifying priorities and assignment of responsibilities need attention.

The evaluation plan needs to be more than survey data. It should include specific and targeted goals. Also, "connective tissue" among initiatives to support comprehensive cultural change needs to be better described. Having school psychology interns visit the school to better understand the clients they serve helps the interns rather than the schools. The same is true for the extensive placement of university students planned for the schools. It will be important to carefully structure their roles so they can contribute to the overall goals of the project. It is too easy for students to get swallowed up in supporting the status quo.

Plans for leadership development for principals and support for new teachers are weak and not specific. This is especially important given the turnover in the school staff. The panel is also concerned that high teacher turnover and absenteeism fundamentally compromise the proposal. Nicholls has not had success in getting teacher support for past efforts, so how will this be different?

Although the proposal is not fundable at this time, we applaud the university's interest in partnering with the schools, and we recommend that the PI seek a one-year planning grant to conduct a needs assessment, build teacher support, and pilot one or more projects. Survey data and an initial track record of success with these schools would make a subsequent proposal stronger. Also, including attention to feeder schools would further strengthen the proposal.

Funding is not recommended for this proposal.

**RATING FORM FOR
K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM (K-15 PSR)
SELECTIVE PROPOSAL**

PROPOSAL NUMBER: 005PSR-06

INSTITUTION: Northwestern State University

TITLE OF PROPOSAL: A Reciprocal Partnership Promoting Student Achievement and
Teacher Leadership

A. Student Learning and Achievement 32 (of 45 points)

- Assessing Student Needs
- Aligning Curriculum/Reforms with Student Needs
- Enhancing Content-Based Teaching and Professional Development

B. Strengthening School/District Leadership 10 (of 15 points)

C. Leveraging Resources: Federal, State, Local 8 (of 15 points)

D. Quality and Strength of Partnerships 7 (of 10 points)

E. Nourishing Cultural Change 2 (of 5 points)

- Enhancing Student Behavior and Attendance
- Elevating Parental Engagement and Support
- Enriching Community Collaboration

F. Evaluation and Sustainability 7 (of 10 points)

- Identifying Achievements and Challenges
- Making Mid-Course Corrections
- Sustaining Reforms Beyond the Life of the Grant

G. Total Score:

66

 (of 100 points)

(Note: Proposals with a total score below 70 will not be recommended for funding.)

SPECIFIC BUDGETARY

RECOMMENDATIONS: Requested Amount: \$193,747

RECOMMENDED AMOUNT: \$0

COMMENTS: (Discuss proposal strengths and weaknesses, particularly in those sections where significant point deductions have been made. Include suggestions for resubmission. For proposals recommended for funding, include all applicable stipulations in budgets and scopes of work.)

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

Proposal Number: 005PSR-06

Institution: Northwestern State University

Principal Investigator: Vickie Gentry

Title: A Reciprocal Partnership Promoting Student Achievement and Teacher Leadership
Selective Reform Proposal

COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

This project aims to improve 3rd grade achievement at Natchitoches Parish School and student performance on the statewide assessments. Intensive interventions are planned at the 3rd grade level. A noteworthy feature of the proposal is that scholarships will be provided for up to 10 teachers who can earn 6-15 graduate credits that can be applied to a redesigned M.Ed. There is significant on-site professional development as well. The principal has a plan for team meetings that will use student work to plan instruction.

While the proposed project reflects good ideas and strategies, there are several concerns that prohibit the panel from recommending funding at this time. The panel is concerned about the narrow scope of this project, given that the goal of the K-16 partnerships is to transform whole schools. Starting work with 2nd grade students and then supporting the children and teachers through 5th grade would have a greater impact. The panel understands that the university has limited capacity, which calls into question whether a comprehensive intervention is possible.

The case for technology is weak, especially as technology integration and management (including access to the district server) are cited as major challenges. The extensive professional development is a positive response, though limited in its focus on 3rd grade. Yet, there is not a sufficient rationale for the \$51,000 in technology expenditures. No research is cited supporting the use of the CPS system, smart boards, or projected presentations. If the proposal were to be resubmitted, it would need to include a stronger connection between the intensive professional development and increased use of technology with student achievement. It is also unclear that the courses available to the teachers at Northwestern are the right ones to support implementation of the school's improvement goals. For example, none of the graduate courses focuses on effective use of technology to achieve educational goals.

No funding is recommended for this proposal.

**RATING FORM FOR
K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM (K-15 PSR)
SELECTIVE PROPOSAL**

PROPOSAL NUMBER: 006PSR-06

INSTITUTION: Southeastern Louisiana University

TITLE OF PROPOSAL: New Learnings-New Successes

A. Student Learning and Achievement 30 (of 45 points)

- Assessing Student Needs
- Aligning Curriculum/Reforms with Student Needs
- Enhancing Content-Based Teaching and Professional Development

B. Strengthening School/District Leadership 10 (of 15 points)

C. Leveraging Resources: Federal, State, Local 10 (of 15 points)

D. Quality and Strength of Partnerships 7 (of 10 points)

E. Nourishing Cultural Change 3 (of 5 points)

- Enhancing Student Behavior and Attendance
- Elevating Parental Engagement and Support
- Enriching Community Collaboration

F. Evaluation and Sustainability 6 (of 10 points)

- Identifying Achievements and Challenges
- Making Mid-Course Corrections
- Sustaining Reforms Beyond the Life of the Grant

G. Total Score:

66

 (of 100 points)

(Note: Proposals with a total score below 70 will not be recommended for funding.)

SPECIFIC BUDGETARY

RECOMMENDATIONS: Requested Amount: \$600,000

RECOMMENDED AMOUNT: \$0

COMMENTS: (Discuss proposal strengths and weaknesses, particularly in those sections where significant point deductions have been made. Include suggestions for resubmission. For proposals recommended for funding, include all applicable stipulations in budgets and scopes of work.)

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

Proposal Number: 006PSR-06
Institution: Southeastern Louisiana University
Principal Investigator: Gerald Keller
Title: New Learning-New Successes
Selective Reform Proposal

COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

The proposed project has three goals: improve instructional leadership, create a safe and orderly learning environment, and improve math and science scores. The program will implement several math curricula, including Every Day Counts Calendar Math and Connected Mathematics. There is also a plan to introduce Lesson Study as a professional development strategy. A strength of the proposal is inclusion of faculty in the physical sciences. The project also complements a leadership grant from the Wallace Foundation.

While the proposed project has many merits, it does not present a compelling case that it is workable. In the curriculum area, for example, 4 days of training is not sufficient for transitioning traditional teachers to the Connected Mathematics and Investigations curriculum. There needs to be significant and ongoing support, including alignment of the curriculum with standards and across grades, as CMP has gaps in content. Similarly, introducing lesson study is a significant undertaking requiring collaboration among teachers, and the school has a history of staff resistance to PD. Given the school's needs, why does the project rely on the professional development developed by the school district rather than augment it with a year-long plan that is coordinated to this school's leadership needs?

The technology component needs to be better justified. For example, the technology component for year 1 is not correlated with grant activities. Buying equipment is not a grant activity so documentation of invoices should not be a measure of grant success (p. 24). The activity associated with technology should be implementing the curriculum and the measure should be observed lessons utilizing the curriculum, lesson plans, etc. In other respects, the evaluation plan is strong.

The discussion of leadership development strategies is not well developed, perhaps because it is being addressed by the Wallace grant. The proposal should make clear how the projects support each other and fit into a whole school reform strategy. What is clear is that the leadership of this school is especially challenged. Dealing with teacher resistance appears to be a major issue. Though the principal is implementing strategies to engage parents (such as open houses, homeroom clubs, school volunteers, grandparents' days and parents on the leadership team), the university's support for her leadership efforts seem to be limited.

Overall, efforts appear disconnected. If this proposal is resubmitted in the future, it will be important to demonstrate that there is a coherent program, and a management structure that clearly illustrates how the efforts are to be coordinated.

Funding is not recommended for this proposal.

**RATING FORM FOR
K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM (K-15 PSR)
SELECTIVE PROPOSAL**

PROPOSAL NUMBER: 007PSR-06

INSTITUTION: Southern University and A&M College at Baton Rouge

TITLE OF PROPOSAL: The Patriotic, Selective Reform Project at Prescott (PSRP)

A. Student Learning and Achievement 28 (of 45 points)

- Assessing Student Needs
- Aligning Curriculum/Reforms with Student Needs
- Enhancing Content-Based Teaching and Professional Development

B. Strengthening School/District Leadership 5 (of 15 points)

C. Leveraging Resources: Federal, State, Local 10 (of 15 points)

D. Quality and Strength of Partnerships 7 (of 10 points)

E. Nourishing Cultural Change 2 (of 5 points)

- Enhancing Student Behavior and Attendance
- Elevating Parental Engagement and Support
- Enriching Community Collaboration

F. Evaluation and Sustainability 5 (of 10 points)

- Identifying Achievements and Challenges
- Making Mid-Course Corrections
- Sustaining Reforms Beyond the Life of the Grant

G. Total Score:

57

 (of 100 points)

(Note: Proposals with a total score below 70 will not be recommended for funding.)

SPECIFIC BUDGETARY

RECOMMENDATIONS: **Requested Amount:** \$599,294

Recommended Amount: \$0

COMMENTS: (Discuss proposal strengths and weaknesses, particularly in those sections where significant point deductions have been made. Include suggestions for resubmission. For proposals recommended for funding, include all applicable stipulations in budgets and scopes of work.)

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

Proposal Number:007PSR-06
Institution: Southern University and A&M College-Baton Rouge
Principal Investigator: Diola Bagayoko
Title: The Patriotic, Selective Reform Project at Prescott
Selective Reform Proposal

COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

The proposed project seeks to support the reconstitution plan for Prescott Middle School. The PI has been working closely with the school district in developing the reconstitution plan. The core strategies are aimed at increasing students' time on learning through higher attendance, greater parental involvement, completion of homework and new curriculum materials. The university's relationship with the school district, commitment of faculty and students, and the track record of the Timbuktu Academy are all strengths of the proposal.

Nonetheless, it is not clear how the proposed program adds value beyond the significant investments that the school district is making in the school. The proposal states that \$880,000 will be spent by the district on reconstitution, but there is no description of how this money ties in with the proposed activities of this proposal. Although the panel understands that the proposal was submitted as the reconstitution plan was still being formulated, the proposed program appears long on rhetoric and short on specific actions. SUBR will focus on improving teachers' content knowledge, but is this limited to summer institutes? The district will purchase nationally recognized curricula but it is not clear how SUBR will support the teachers in using the curricula. There is no specific discussion of how the new principal will be supported by the university. The Timbuktu Academy appears to be a valuable resource, but the proposal does not indicate the role of the Academy at the school. Will these be the parent workshops provided by SUBR?

While the evaluation is not designed yet, there is no indication whether or not the teachers' implementation of the intended curriculum will be measured. It is hard to tell if this project is sustainable because it is not clearly defined. The proposal would also be strengthened by addressing feeder schools.

The Timbuktu Academy is the strongest aspect of the proposal. If the PI chooses to apply again in the future, we would encourage him to make the Timbuktu Academy the centerpiece of the initiative, and propose scaling up to multiple schools.

Funding is not recommended for this proposal.

**RATING FORM FOR
K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM (K-15 PSR)
SELECTIVE PROPOSAL**

PROPOSAL NUMBER: 008PSR-06

INSTITUTION: Southern University and A&M College at Baton Rouge

TITLE OF PROPOSAL: A Parent-Based, Digitally Infused Credit Recovery
Extended-Day School

A. Student Learning and Achievement 25 (of 45 points)

- Assessing Student Needs
- Aligning Curriculum/Reforms with Student Needs
- Enhancing Content-Based Teaching and Professional Development

B. Strengthening School/District Leadership 5 (of 15 points)

C. Leveraging Resources: Federal, State, Local 5 (of 15 points)

D. Quality and Strength of Partnerships 6 (of 10 points)

E. Nourishing Cultural Change 2 (of 5 points)

- Enhancing Student Behavior and Attendance
- Elevating Parental Engagement and Support
- Enriching Community Collaboration

F. Evaluation and Sustainability 4 (of 10 points)

- Identifying Achievements and Challenges
- Making Mid-Course Corrections
- Sustaining Reforms Beyond the Life of the Grant

G. Total Score:

47

 (of 100 points)

(Note: Proposals with a total score below 70 will not be recommended for funding.)

SPECIFIC BUDGETARY

RECOMMENDATIONS:	Requested Amount:	<u>\$600,000</u>
<div style="background-color: gray; width: 200px; height: 15px;"></div>	Recommended Amount:	<u>\$0</u>

COMMENTS: (Discuss proposal strengths and weaknesses, particularly in those sections where significant point deductions have been made. Include suggestions for resubmission. For proposals recommended for funding, include all applicable stipulations in budgets and scopes of work.)

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

Proposal Number: 008PSR-06
Institution: Southern University and A&M College-Baton Rouge
Principal Investigator: Ivory Toldson
Title: A Parent-Based, Digitally Infused Credit Recovery Extended-Day School
Selective Reform Proposal

COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

The goal of the proposed project is to increase student achievement through the implementation of recovery courses for failing students. PLATO will be used to provide remedial instruction. The project will involve parents, professors and university students in personalization teams for students enrolled in course recovery. A grant from the Wallace Foundation will provide training for leaders in this project.

We applaud the school district and principals' commitment to increase graduation rates, and to foster higher participation in post-secondary education. However, the proposed project is based on many assumptions that do not seem warranted and strategies that do not seem promising. It is not clear that an extended-day credit recovery program is a distinctive or sufficient solution to the problem that this project seeks to address. Proposed strategies for motivating students to attend credit recovery are not convincing. The program does not address the social challenges and competing responsibilities facing these students in their after-school hours. There are no details of how the three-person personalization teams will work. Also, there is no plan for providing teachers with PD in the use of PLATO.

Management of the technology is an issue to be addressed. An MOU with the school district detailing support of equipment, licenses, ownership, etc. would be helpful. The relationship of this project to the Gates Foundation grant needs to be described as well. A matrix showing the overall school reform effort and the role of this project in it would be useful. Description of key personnel is vague and does not indicate who has responsibility for what activities.

The evaluation plan addresses the implementation but not the outcomes. Some discussion of sustainability is also needed. It is not convincing that changes in 8th grade accountability will produce better-prepared students for high school, eliminating the need for this program within three years.

Funding is not recommended for this proposal.

**RATING FORM FOR
K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM (K-15 PSR)
SELECTIVE PROPOSAL**

PROPOSAL NUMBER: 009PSR-06

INSTITUTION: Tulane University

TITLE OF PROPOSAL: Encouraging Student Scholarship and Excellence through
Native-Centered Education (ESSENCE)

A. Student Learning and Achievement 12 (of 45 points)

- Assessing Student Needs
- Aligning Curriculum/Reforms with Student Needs
- Enhancing Content-Based Teaching and Professional Development

B. Strengthening School/District Leadership 0 (of 15 points)

C. Leveraging Resources: Federal, State, Local 3 (of 15 points)

D. Quality and Strength of Partnerships 5 (of 10 points)

E. Nourishing Cultural Change 2 (of 5 points)

- Enhancing Student Behavior and Attendance
- Elevating Parental Engagement and Support
- Enriching Community Collaboration

F. Evaluation and Sustainability 1 (of 10 points)

- Identifying Achievements and Challenges
- Making Mid-Course Corrections
- Sustaining Reforms Beyond the Life of the Grant

G. Total Score:

23

 (of 100 points)

(Note: Proposals with a total score below 70 will not be recommended for funding.)

SPECIFIC BUDGETARY

RECOMMENDATIONS: Requested Amount: \$574,516

RECOMMENDED AMOUNT: \$0

COMMENTS: (Discuss proposal strengths and weaknesses, particularly in those sections where significant point deductions have been made. Include suggestions for resubmission. For proposals recommended for funding, include all applicable stipulations in budgets and scopes of work.)

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

Proposal Number: 009PSR-06

Institution: Tulane University, Louisiana State University and A&M College-Baton Rouge

Principal Investigator: Nghana Lewis

Title: Encouraging Student Scholarship and Excellence through Native-Centered Education
Selective Reform Proposal

COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

This proposal is a continuation of one submitted to the Board of Regents Support Fund Education Enhancement subprogram last year. The goal of this current project is to extend last year's project to additional schools, to increase student scores in ELA and to address barriers to student success such as low student and parent engagement with the school. There are three proposed sub-projects: History and Culture of Old South Baton Rouge, From Scotlandville to North Baton Rouge, and Defining Community after Hurricane Katrina.

While this is a laudable effort and an interesting program, the panel does not feel it is a good fit for K-16 PSR based on the current RFP. The rationale presented by the PI and school partners speaks to the need for enrichment activities and authentic learning opportunities. The panel agrees, but it is not appropriate for this particular funding program. Since it is an auxiliary activity, uneven teacher buy-in is an issue with respect to integration into the curriculum, even though principals indicated that they have identified one teacher per grade to participate. It might be better to identify a grade for which all teachers in all the schools would collaborate to implement the program.

The evaluation plan needs to be tightened and address ways to measure impact. The link between student interest and actual academic performance is weak. There is no indication that last year's project produced any student achievement gains at the schools that partnered with the PI, which the PI acknowledges is a complex issue to address. The 3% annual gain on ELA scores, as predicted by the PI, is not significant. Creative approaches to link this effort with other aspects of curricular reform by having the PI consult regularly with the teachers might strengthen the potential impact and integration.

As for the budget, the intent of the 2005 Education Enhancement panel's recommendation to produce a website with video of the speakers was, in part, to circumvent the need for additional funding to bring these speakers back for future presentations.

The panel recommends that the proposal be submitted to funding agencies that support the arts and community development. If the PI wants to submit to a Board of Regents Support Fund education program again, it would help to tie the lesson plans to the GLEs and comprehensive curriculum in more detail, and in a more coordinated way than shown in the proposal.

Funding is not recommended for this proposal.

**RATING FORM FOR
K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM (K-15 PSR)
SELECTIVE PROPOSAL**

PROPOSAL NUMBER: 010PSR-06

INSTITUTION: University of Louisiana-Lafayette

TITLE OF PROPOSAL: Empowering Teachers to Create Change for Student Achievement

A. Student Learning and Achievement 35 (of 45 points)

- Assessing Student Needs
- Aligning Curriculum/Reforms with Student Needs
- Enhancing Content-Based Teaching and Professional Development

B. Strengthening School/District Leadership 10 (of 15 points)

C. Leveraging Resources: Federal, State, Local 10 (of 15 points)

D. Quality and Strength of Partnerships 7 (of 10 points)

E. Nourishing Cultural Change 3 (of 5 points)

- Enhancing Student Behavior and Attendance
- Elevating Parental Engagement and Support
- Enriching Community Collaboration

F. Evaluation and Sustainability 8 (of 10 points)

- Identifying Achievements and Challenges
- Making Mid-Course Corrections
- Sustaining Reforms Beyond the Life of the Grant

G. Total Score:

73

 (of 100 points)

(Note: Proposals with a total score below 70 will not be recommended for funding.)

SPECIFIC BUDGETARY

RECOMMENDATIONS: Requested Amount: \$360,114

Recommended Amount: \$400,000

COMMENTS: (Discuss proposal strengths and weaknesses, particularly in those sections where significant point deductions have been made. Include suggestions for resubmission. For proposals recommended for funding, include all applicable stipulations in budgets and scopes of work.)

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

Proposal Number: 010PSR-06
Institution: University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Principal Investigator: Toby Daspit
Title: Empowering Teachers to Create Change for Student Achievement
Selective Reform Proposal

COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

The proposal has many strengths and merits. The proposed program seeks to improve academic achievement at three underperforming middle schools through technology integration, differentiated instruction and positive student behavior. The project team expresses a clear vision of what is required to produce the desired academic and cultural outcomes in the three partner schools. The emphasis on technology as a stimulus for students and teachers to engage in project-based inquiry learning is intriguing, and the commitment to support teachers on an ongoing basis is promising. The plan to have teachers and administrators go into the field to reach parents is admirable.

While the theoretical framework for the proposed approaches sounds strong, it is not clear that the project team has experience in fostering school change at this scale. The scope of the project is rather complex, and it is not clear that the project plan provides adequate time and resources to meet project goals. Issues that are not addressed include how to get teacher buy-in, how to carry out continuous professional development in reading, math and differentiated instruction, and how to overcome obstacles to greater parent engagement. There appears to be an assumption that “if we build it, they will come.”

The panel recommends funding this project if the project team can provide satisfactory answers to the following questions and agree to meet the following stipulations as a condition of funding:

1. The panel wants to see the scope of the project reduced to several key areas where the team has demonstrated strengths and the payoff promises to be greatest. These include: professional development (PD) in differentiated instruction in ELA and math, the Positive Behavior Support program, and integration of technology into the curriculum. The panel does not, however, wish to see the project team use grant funds to undertake the proposed home technology strand. We encourage the PIs to seek private funding for this aspect of the proposed initiative.
2. While the program focuses on the needs in each of the three middle schools, there should be better connections among them, to build capacity and leadership as a network of schools affiliated with UL-L. Also, please indicate how you can reach down into the feeder elementary schools. For example, could there be a common transitional experience for students between grades five and six?

3. For university partners to work effectively with schools usually requires that the school staff buy into the project and that teachers be willing to participate in the extensive PD that is at the core of this effort. It appears that the project team will work with a sub-group of teachers in each school, and expects these teachers will serve as role models and turn-around-trainers for their colleagues. What is the profile of the teaching staff at the three schools? What are their specific PD needs, in the view of the project team? What evidence is there that the school staff has embraced this project? How will buy-in be assured? What are the expectations for the teachers to work with their colleagues?
4. The project team espouses the view, which is supported in the literature, that the most important influence on student achievement is the commitment and skills of the teachers. Therefore, the main strategy is continuous job-embedded professional development for teachers, including on-site support for implementation. However, the proposal lacks specifics about the content and process of professional development. What are the specific topics of the summer workshops in each of the domains proposed? How have they been selected? If content knowledge in math has already been identified as a weakness, then what is the plan to increase teacher knowledge over the three years of the grant? You might consider using national board standards in designing PD.
5. What is the role and responsibility of each member of the project team from UL-L in working with the teachers on continuous professional development? Relying on graduate students to be the on-site support is likely to be ineffective, unless they are experienced teachers themselves. Which project faculty will provide on-site support during the school year in each domain? How often at each school? How will the work of the graduate assistants be supported, guided and monitored?
6. The involvement of school counselors and counseling interns is a good idea, but the implementation plans are not convincing. Since the counseling interns will likely need a significant amount of guidance from the counselor, how does their presence free him/her to work more with students? It sounds like this aspect of the program benefits the counseling interns more than the counselors. Which faculty member is responsible for managing this aspect of the project and what will be his/her role?
7. What is the management plan for the overall project? Who is in charge of what and how does the PI, as well as the rest of the project team, keep abreast of progress and challenges? The PIs have committed to providing three hours/week to this project, which does not seem sufficient to give it adequate attention and oversight. How will the UL-L team ensure that there is adequate support for the proposed initiatives to be successful?
8. Home visits can be a powerful way to improve family involvement. However, making home visits just to show that the school cares does not seem strategically sound. How can the visits with parents be targeted in ways that encourage

follow-through and further interactions between home and school? What realistic strategies do you plan to use to bring parents into closer connection with the school? Who will assume responsibility for this aspect of the project?

9. The evaluation plan is somewhat vague. The panel would like to see measurable targets and annual benchmarks for each area of the project. These should be tied to the “measurable objectives” described on page 18.
10. Some budget items need to be adjusted. The budget includes a great deal of travel funds for the PIs. The panel would like to see this portion of the budget reduced, and see the calculations used to arrive at travel costs. The budget also includes \$9,000 for items to stock the school “incentive” store. This is not an appropriate use of State funds. It will be necessary to find another source for this line item (perhaps seeking donations from local businesses).

**RATING FORM FOR
K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM (K-15 PSR)
SYSTEMIC PROPOSAL**

PROPOSAL NUMBER: 011PSR-06

INSTITUTION: University of New Orleans

TITLE OF PROPOSAL: UNO Charter School

A. Strengthening School/District Leadership 12 (of 15 points)

B. Quality and Strength of Partnerships 12 (of 15 Points)

C. Nourishing Cultural Change 12 (of 15 Points)

- Enhancing Student Behavior and Attendance
- Elevating Parental Engagement and Support
- Enriching Community Collaboration

D. Leveraging Resources: Federal, State, and Local 13 (of 15 points)

E. Student Learning and Achievement 21 (of 25 Points)

- Assessing Student Needs
- Aligning Curriculum/Reforms with Student Needs
- Enhancing Content-Based Teaching and Professional Development

F. Evaluation and Sustainability 12 (of 15 Points)

- Identifying Achievements and Challenges
- Making Mid-Course Corrections
- Sustaining Reforms Beyond the Life of the Grant

G. Total Score:

82

 (of 100 points)

(Note: Proposals with a total score below 70 will not be recommended for funding.)

SPECIFIC BUDGETARY

RECOMMENDATIONS: **Requested Amount:** \$900,000

Recommended Amount: \$900,000

COMMENTS: (Discuss proposal strengths and weaknesses, particularly in those sections where significant point deductions have been made. Include suggestions for resubmission. For proposals recommended for funding, include all applicable stipulations in budgets and scopes of work.)

SEE NEXT PAGE FOR COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

Proposal Number: 011PSR-06
Institution: University of New Orleans
Principal Investigator: James Meza
Title: UNO Charter School
Systemic Reform Proposal

COMMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

The proposed program seeks to build upon the initial successes at the Capdau Charter School by establishing the University of New Orleans charter school as a K-8 school serving displaced children in post-Katrina New Orleans. The key foci include development of an inquiry-based curriculum that incorporates differentiated instruction, a distributed leadership framework for school governance, and a positive school culture established through family engagement and a positive behavior support program.

The proposal has many strengths and merits. Among them are the extraordinary commitment by UNO to build and sustain a high-performing school as part of its university mission, outstanding leadership at the university and school, and a track record in turning around failing schools. On the other hand, while most of the areas required by the RFP were adequately addressed, there are some that were only discussed in very general terms, such as professional development (PD).

The panel understands that full specification of this project was challenging because of the circumstances surrounding the submission of the proposal. However, more details will need to be provided to assure that the program can be implemented. With that in mind, the panel recommends funding the UNO charter school contingent upon satisfactory responses to several questions, and agreement to several stipulations as described below:

1. The K-16 PSR funding should be used for the particular initiatives described in the proposal, and not for the core operations of the school. In keeping with the priorities expressed by Dr. Meza during the panel interview, the major purpose of this funding should be to improve fidelity of implementation of the model that was first established for Capdau and Nelson schools. These are understood to be development of teacher and family leadership, and full implementation of an inquiry model of teaching and learning. Please confirm whether or not the panel's understandings are correct.
2. While the panel understands that the academic profile of the student body is not known yet, we would like for the project team to provide some targets for student achievement and behavior over the three years of the grant. The evaluation plan included in the proposal does name several types of data that will be collected, but the panel would like to see the data plan connected to expected outcomes of the project. You might want to use the Capdau student profile from spring 2005 as baseline.

3. The proposal assumes that the school will open with 350 students in fall 2006. However, given the uncertainties in New Orleans, we are concerned that the school might not be able to implement its full program if the student body is significantly smaller (because it would not have projected levels of funding). If it is, in fact, your expectation to start on a smaller scale, please present a projected growth plan for the school, including number of students, grades and staffing needs over the next three years. At the same time, the panel recommends that the Board of Regents reserve the right to ask for a revised budget, and to reduce the grant award if the school is substantially under-enrolled.
4. The proposal lacks specifics about the content and process of PD. The panel understands that you do not know the teachers' needs until they are hired. However, we wonder what role you foresee for UNO faculty in the arts and sciences disciplines to help support teachers' acquisition of content knowledge.
5. The purpose of this funding program is to serve underachieving schools and students. Since the demographics of the student population for the new UNO charter school remain unknown at this point, what is the evidence that the school won't become a magnet for UNO-affiliated families and end up serving already high-achieving students? Can you commit to enrolling a student body in which at least 50% of the students would enter the school below grade level?
6. The budget includes \$10,500 for items to stock the school "incentive" store. This is not an appropriate use of State funds. It will be necessary to find another source of funding for this line item.

APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS SUBMITTED

APPENDIX B

RATING FORMS FOR

K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM

SYSTEMIC AND SELECTIVE PROPOSALS

**BOARD OF REGENTS SUPPORT FUND
ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM, FISCAL YEAR 2005-6
RATING FORM FOR K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM (K-16
PSR) *SYSTEMIC PROPOSALS***

PROPOSAL NUMBER: _____

Institution: _____

Principal Investigator: _____

Title of Proposal: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: The completed evaluation form should represent the consensus of the expert members of the review panel and, as such, must reflect the final decisions of that panel. Review this form and the program guidelines prior to reading the proposal. The criteria are designed to award the projects that are not only clearly conceived and presented, but are most likely to be effective and promote palpable transformation. The higher the score, the more clearly the proposal satisfies the criterion under consideration. Use the space provided for comments to explain the panel's ratings, especially on items given low scores. Attach additional pages as necessary.

The proposal should indicate clearly how each of the goals will be maintained and/or attained over a three-year period.

___ 15 points 1. Strengthening School/District Leadership

COMMENTS:

___ 15 points 2. Quality and Strength of Partnerships

COMMENTS:

___ 15 points 3. Nourishing Cultural Change

- Enhancing Student Behavior and Attendance
- Elevating Parental Engagement and Support
- Enriching Community Collaboration

COMMENTS:

___ 15 points 4. Leveraging Resources: Federal, State, Local

COMMENTS:

____ 25 points

5. Student Learning and Achievement

- Assessing Student Needs
- Aligning Curriculum/Reforms with Student Needs
- Enhancing Content-Based Teaching and Professional Development

COMMENTS:

____ 15 points

6. Evaluation and Sustainability

- Identifying Achievements and Challenges
- Making Mid-Course Corrections
- Sustaining Reforms Beyond the Life of the Grant

COMMENTS:

TOTAL SCORE (NOTE: Proposals with a total score below 70 will not be recommended for funding.)

_____ of 100 points

SPECIFIC BUDGETARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Requested Amount: \$ _____

Recommended Amount: \$ _____

COMMENTS:

**BOARD OF REGENTS SUPPORT FUND
ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM, FISCAL YEAR 2005-6
RATING FORM FOR K-16 PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCHOOL REFORM (K-16
PSR) *SELECTIVE PROPOSALS***

PROPOSAL NUMBER: _____

Institution: _____

Principal Investigator: _____

Title of Proposal: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: The completed evaluation form should represent the consensus of the expert members of the review panel and, as such, must reflect the final decisions of that panel. Review this form and the program guidelines prior to reading the proposal. The criteria are designed to award the projects that are not only clearly conceived and presented, but are most likely to be effective and promote palpable transformation. The higher the score, the more clearly the proposal satisfies the criterion under consideration. Use the space provided for comments to explain the panel's ratings, especially on items given low scores. Attach additional pages as necessary.

The proposal should indicate clearly how each of the goals will be maintained and/or attained over a three-year period.

____ 45 points

1. Student Learning and Achievement

- Assessing Student Needs
- Aligning Curriculum/Reforms with Student Needs
- Enhancing Content-Based Teaching and Professional Development

COMMENTS:

____ 15 points

2. Strengthening School/District Leadership

COMMENTS:

____ 15 points

3. Leveraging Resources: Federal, State, Local

COMMENTS:

____ 10 points

4. Quality and Strength of Partnerships

COMMENTS:

____ 5 points

5. Nourishing Cultural Change

- Enhancing Student Behavior and Attendance
- Elevating Parental Engagement and Support
- Enriching Community Collaboration

COMMENTS:

____ 10 points

6. Evaluation and Sustainability

- Identifying Achievements and Challenges
- Making Mid-Course Corrections
- Sustaining Reforms Beyond the Life of the Grant

COMMENTS:

TOTAL SCORE (NOTE: Proposals with a total score below 70 will not be recommended for funding.)

_____ of 100 points

SPECIFIC BUDGETARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Requested Amount: \$ _____

Recommended Amount: \$ _____

COMMENTS: