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## Project Narrative

UCLA's Graduate School of Education and Information Science is proposing the English Learner Academy (CIP-EL). Focused on in-service support for school systems, UCLA's *Exc-EL Leadership Academy* will ensure participants effectively identify their own strengths and limitations and develop an individualized training program attuned to their personal and organizational needs while dramatically transforming the educational landscape and outcomes for English learners within their schools. The *Exc-EL Leadership Academy* will enhance the professional growth of teachers as they gain the knowledge and skills needed to become teacher leaders in their own schools.

Project Exc-EL (Excellence for English Learners) is an enhanced, comprehensive design that addresses the unique and urgent needs of schools and districts with EL[1] populations– districts that are struggling to provide a comprehensive, rigorous education for the newest members of their communities. The project employs a data-driven, tiered approach to instruction that builds on community partnerships to create personalized, expanded learning opportunities for students. The core philosophy is one of enriched activities and wrap around supports focused on success, college/career readiness and high school completion. Individualized, personalized learning plans and a tiered system of interventions, based on academic achievement as well as social-emotional, behavioral and cultural needs, will be used to track and adjust student activities. Educators will be provided up to $2500 in tuition support for their participation that can be used towards ESL endorsement at an institute of their choice. Exc-EL

[1] The term English learner, or EL, is used throughout this application to denote a student eligible for English as a Second Language instruction and support.

will build on nationally recognized work currently underway in secondary schools in Westchester County, NY by establishing a K-12 program, beginning in the elementary school, and in a second state (Connecticut).

Exc-EL meets the absolute priority for the competition by providing professional development to improve instruction for English Learners. The ecosystem approach of this project provides comprehensive supports that will enable educators to build their skill and meet high professional standards, resulting in significantly improved student outcomes. Exc-EL also fully meets both competitive preference priorities (evidence and family involvement).

**Competitive Preference Priority 1 – Moderate Evidence of Effectiveness**

Professional learning is the heart of this project. Exc-EL teachers will employ effective, research-based instructional approaches for working with English learners. This expertise will be honed during professional development workshops and peer learning explicitly embedded in professional team meetings. The professional development program, and expected instructional impact in the classroom, is based on vocabulary development programs that have been proven effective through experimental studies with overlapping populations, and thus meets the competitive preference priority requiring *moderate evidence of effectiveness* for core strategies in the program design. You will see these elements clearly laid out in the project design section discussing the core purposes and outcomes for the school-based Exc-EL teams. A full discussion of the studies cited and how they inform the project design is included in Appendix D.

*Studies cited*

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**Competitive Preference Priority 2 – Improving Parent, Family and Community Engagement**

The design (and ultimate success) of Project Exc-EL rests on active collaboration with families and the community. You will see this clearly discussed in the project design section addressing the core purposes and outcomes of the school-based Exc-EL teams, the section discussing wrap around supports provided by community partners, and in the management section describing the structure and membership of the project leadership team. A more complete discussion of competitive preference priority 2 is included in Appendix D.

***Comprehensive approach to success***

The number of English learners in schools in the United States continues to grow, and is

currently estimated at roughly 4.5 million students. 'English learners' do not share common characteristics, they present diverse and intensive challenges for educators. Some students are recent arrivals with limited or interrupted schooling, others were born in the United States but lack the academic language required for school success even after many years of ESL support. Of course some English learners thrive academically with minimal support for learning a second language, but many have complicated, interrelated difficulties with learning and literacy in two (or more) languages.

By any measure, EL students are not achieving on par with their English-speaking peers. According to a 2014 research brief published by Child Trends, the achievement gap between ELs and non-ELs on NAEP testing in the 4th and 8th grade is roughly 40 points. That figure has not changed much since 2000.

Adding to the complexity of this problem, finding teachers qualified to work with English learners, with an ESL (ESOL, TESOL) endorsement remains challenging, and this specialty is listed as a critical shortage area in virtually every state in the nation. There are vast numbers of ELs in our schools today not receiving even minimal language development support because of this shortage.

***The Exc-EL model***

Exc-EL has its origins in a committed group of educators who believed we needed to transform our approach to working with English learners. Even in schools and classrooms where 'best instructional practices' were practiced, positive impacts were small and marginal. We believed there was a better way – and that transformative change would only happen when *every* teacher became a teacher of ELs and had the knowledge and skills to make that a reality.

We first put these ideas into practice with the support of a National Professional

Development grant in 2007. The EXCELL (Excellence for Connecticut's English Language Learners) model focused on building the instructional capacity of teachers in four Connecticut districts (New London, Montville, Norwich and Stratford). EXCELL provided comprehensive, job-embedded coaching and professional development to mainstream teachers. Support was delivered in the context of school-based professional learning teams. EXCELL led to demonstrable improvements in teacher competence as well as student outcomes. In several cases English learners *outperformed their native English counterparts* on state assessments.

The success of this small pilot led to a commitment to model improvement based on the initial experience. Developers sought, and received, *development grant* funding under the Investing in Innovation (i3) program. Project Exc-EL (Excellence for English Learners), funded by the USDOE in 2013, works with secondary schools in Ossining (NY) and Tarrytown (NY). In addition to the core principles of working with mainstream teachers and facilitating the delivery of coaching and embedded professional development, Project Exc-EL added three elements: a systematic way of tiering students based on progress, similar to an RTI approach; ensuring each EL student is part of a small learning community; and partnering with community agencies and establishments to provide a wider array of supports for students and their families. Critically, this improved model is now the subject of a rigorous research study that will establish and quantify the effectiveness and student impact. The research study follows students through the 2016-17 school year, with formative results available on an annual basis.

Exc-EL is the *only comprehensive model* designed to improve outcomes for ELs in a public, integrated school system. Each iteration of the Exc-EL model has created valuable opportunities for learning and shaped our own thinking about replication and sustainability. We have targeted specific areas that will benefit from increased attention and development as we

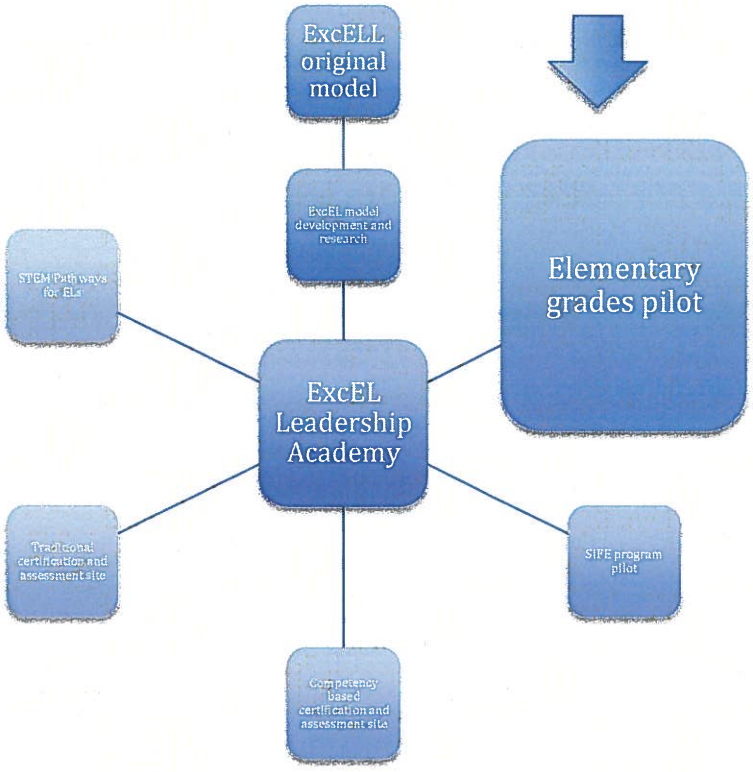
hone in on the 'comprehensive' aspects of the model. We are moving stepwise to establish an Exc-EL leadership academy, a national center where educators can go to learn about and adopt the model in their own schools and classrooms.

The critical next steps in model development include implementation with new populations (elementary grades) and in new policy contexts (Connecticut and New York have very different policy structures). Early adopters of this model agree to host design studios, places where interested schools and districts can come and learn about the model *from their peers*. We are also seeking a pathway to teacher endorsement or certification (ESL, ESOL, TESOL) to recognize and validate the professional learning and growth participants' experience.

This National Professional Development grant competition provides a valuable, time appropriate opportunity to implement the next logical step in the development of this national, replicable model. Funding is specifically sought to establish the *elementary grade level pilot* model component for Project Exc-EL (see the following graphic, indicating the relationships between the elements of projects). The *Exc-EL Leadership Academy* will enhance the professional growth of teachers as they gain the knowledge and skills needed to become teacher leaders in their own schools.

Shelton (CT) has been selected as the LEA partner for this elementary-level pilot project (a signed MOU is included in the proposal attachments as Appendix A). Shelton provides an opportunity to implement the elementary level program in a new state, allowing us to delve into the relationship state policy context has on the model. The Shelton Public Schools recently appointed a new superintendent who has been a key partner in the design and implementation of both early pilots, adding a sense of the history and what's been learned along the way.

**Figure 1. Exc-EL Growth Model**




Building on this successful experience means we shorten the 'learning curve' and buy in for new schools. The districts (and leadership team) has a strong commitment to the success of English learners across their communities.

## A. Quality of the Project Design

Exc-EL is intended to *expand boundaries* for educators, students and their families. Exc-EL is based in an ecosystem approach to reform where all partners are committed to transformative change for English learners.

Exc-EL is a unique, innovative pathway to success with this challenging population. Educators will engage in a multi-year collaborative process of professional learning as they become experts in working with EL students. EL students will be part of a 'small learning community' where instruction is personalized and delivered by a small team of teachers and staff

members (though the teams will be 'mainstream' and include native English speakers). The approach is unique in working with a community-based team to develop and implement interventions that occur outside the usual classroom environment and extend learning opportunities. This community-based team will also provide outreach services to the *families of EL students*.

It is significant that the Project Exc-EL approach seeks to build capacity in the mainstream, content area classroom. New York and Connecticut (the initial demonstration sites) have fairly typical policy structures guiding the placement and education of EL students. Students are tested for language dominance upon school entry, and those that are not fluent in English receive mandatory instruction in English language development (*ESL classes)* in addition to their regular academic schedule. This continues until a child demonstrates proficiency in the English language. While no child is 'typical' many develop this proficiency within five years. The overall goal is that English learners have full access to the mainstream curriculum.

For students who are dually struggling with new concepts AND new language, this context often results in a cycle of lagging achievement, failure and remediation. By the 4$^{th}$ grade you begin to see the students who are struggling and failing to make progress. Students in the upper elementary grades (4 through 6) face the added challenge of learning that moves at rapid pace with less explicit focus on language development.

Exc-EL schools form a core professional learning community (the *Exc-EL team)*, comprised of teachers and education support personnel working with English learners. This team meets every other week to discuss individual student needs and progress, and engage in embedded professional learning.

Exc-EL uses a tiering system, based on the Response to Intervention (RTI) model, for EL

students in the elementary school to ensure they receive the instruction and supports needed to succeed. An effective tiering system relies on ongoing progress monitoring of students, with instructional responses and approaches at different levels of intensity provided to match their unique needs. A considerable amount of evidence suggests that approaches involving early intervention, ongoing progress monitoring, and effective classroom instruction consistent with Response to Intervention (RTI) are associated with improved outcomes for developing readers, however far less is known about the effectiveness of these approaches with English language learners.

CIP-EL participants will be trained in the development and use of *dynamic language learning progressions* (DLLPs) to guide progress monitoring and tiering for EL students. The DLLP model envisions learning as a process of progressive sophistication in understanding and skills. Implicit in the definitions is that while learning progressions might trace the development of learning, they are not developmentally inevitable. Rather, progress along a progression is dependent on *experience* and *effective instruction*.

The use of DLLP measures distinguishes the CIP-EL process from a traditional RTI process by incorporating a formative, evidence-based measure of language and content development for each student. The DLLP tool further distinguishes the potential for CIP-EL impact by giving educators a meaningful assessment that can guide instruction and support learning.

***Tier 1*** students receive research-based instruction, sometimes in small groups, sometimes as part of a whole class intervention or instructional approach. All Exc-EL teachers will be trained in the use of the *Academic Language Intervention for All Students (*ALIAS) and *Peer Tutoring and Response*, research-based instructional approaches that have proven effective with elementary students. The programs will be implemented in each impacted classroom, along with

other best instructional practices targeted to support English learners in the classroom. All students will also benefit from the community based supports that enrich and extend the classroom-based learning environment.

Students who do not respond to the first level of group-oriented instruction typically move to the ***Tier 2*** where the level of intensity of the interventions is greater. They may also be more closely targeted to the areas in which the child is having difficulty. Tier 2 students may receive intensive tutoring services aligned with the specific skills or content areas they are struggling with. ***Tier 3*** students have not responded adequately to the intervention(s) in Tier 2, and receive continued and more intensive intervention. Tier 3 students have urgent needs, and responses often involve support for family members when there is a need for greater stability in a child's life.

*Clear, measurable goals, objectives and outcomes*

Exc-EL is proposing a capacity-building system for partner districts and community agencies – a system designed as a short-term scaffold as educators build and apply their own skills and knowledge in a collaborative setting.

Capacity building rests solidly on the creation of student-centered learning teams in each participating school coordinated with an area wide Project Exc-EL (learning) team. These teams may be grade-level, content-focused, or simply built around mutual interests or groups of students. School teams (up to 10 members) will commit to working and learning together over the course of two full school years. Paraprofessionals, school support staff and administrators will actively participate in teams. We envision this intensive support as a two-year process at each school, with changes becoming self-sustaining as teams continue to meet and employ the learned protocols and processes.

Project goals have been carefully thought through to ensure the elementary model is fully implemented with the support of the local community (see Goals 1, 2 and 3). The elementary level model will also be carefully documented and evaluated, aligned with the research study in process as part of the secondary level model (see Goal 4). The final element (see Goal 5) will be the establishment of an online site to promote dissemination and sharing of the model elements, tools, and findings – a virtual leadership academy – enabling replication anyplace in the country.

*Goal 1. Educators and partners will possess the knowledge and skills needed to effectively educate ELs within a framework of tiered interventions.*

- Objective 1.1. Teams will participate in professional development devoted to developing instructional strategies for use with ELs in the content area classroom (ALIAS and Peer Tutoring Response).
- Objective 1.2. Teams will participate in professional development devoted to tiered interventions, including the development and use of DLLPs.
- Objective 1.3. School teams will meet at least monthly during the school year to continuously improve their practice.
- Objective 1.4. School teams will participate in a year-end data fair to highlight and share lessons learned from the school year.

Outcome 1.1. Teachers will demonstrate increased proficiency in the use of scaffolding and intervention techniques in the classroom.

Outcome 1.2. EL students will receive differentiated supports and enrichment activities based on their demonstrated progress and goals.

Outcome 1.3. EL students will demonstrate proficiency on state assessments in core content areas.

Outcome 1.4. EL students engage in ongoing and effective long term planning and access the resources needed to ensure they succeed.

The foundation of Exc-EL rests on developing a cadre of educators and community partners who develop expertise in instructional approaches that engage English learners and build academic confidence and success. This happens through a coordinated program of intensive professional development and on-site support.

Elementary schools in the district will be phased in to the project over the five-year period. This approach will ensure intensive support and the opportunity to adjust and improve the model over the five year funded period. We anticipate each team will receive coaching support for two years, and then will continue with resources available to them as needed. Teams will be drawn from classroom teachers, 'special' teachers (arts, health, technology), support staff (guidance, social work), an ESL teacher or specialist, paraprofessional staff, and an administrator, with each school-based team comprised of 10 to 12 individuals. Teams will participate in a three-day, 21-hour summer institute focused on:

- Developing expertise in using classroom based instructional strategies that make content accessible for ELs and engage culturally and linguistically diverse learners in thought-provoking, standards-based learning (Academic Language Intervention for All Students – ALIAS and Peer Tutoring and Response);
- Developing expertise in using a tiered system of intervention to monitor student progress and create modifications or interventions in the classroom (based on RTI) including guidance for teachers on how they can use the language learning progression for

instructional purposes and assessment purposes to increase students' competence with respect to particular language functions for learning and supporting linguistic features;

- Developing an understanding of potential interventions and modifications for Tier 2 and 3 students with a particular focus on effectively using identified community resources; and
- Developing effective team skills and protocols.

The summer institute will be structured and facilitated by the staff of Exc-EL, building on and including the expertise of partners in this work.

School-based teams will implement new approaches when they return to school, and continue to meet as a team every two to four weeks. Ongoing, embedded professional development and support for teams will be provided by Exc-EL assigned coaches for each site. At the team meeting, protocols will be employed that allow each participant to share their student data and portfolio evidence, tier students and receive feedback designed to improve or redirect their instruction. Plans for targeted interventions and supports will be developed. Team meetings will be structured to allow 30 minutes for professional development and learning, 30 minutes for student focused tiering and discussion, and 30 minutes for planning, discussing next steps and administrative functions.

*Goal 2. Structural elements of each school will ensure EL students are part of a smaller learning community with a common team of teachers and personalization supports.*

- Objective 2.1. Teachers will be teamed.
- Objective 2.2. Schools will implement appropriate personalization supports to meet their specific needs including the development of personalized learning plans and student led conferences.

- Outcome 2.1. EL students will be known well by a team of teachers who meet regularly to explore their strengths and challenges and adjust their instructional approaches.
- Outcome 2.2 EL students engage in ongoing and effective long term planning and access the resources needed to ensure they succeed.

A supportive, aligned school and district context is critical to the success of these teams, and ultimately to the success of the students in their care. The benefits of small learning communities and personalized, guided planning for students are well documented. However, even in schools where students routinely engage in academic planning and goal setting activities, EL students may be marginalized because they (and/or their families) lack the language ability to understand and engage in the activities. The teamed approach described in Goal 1 complements the goal of matching students to a common set of educators as a way of ensuring every child is known well and their progress is understood in a holistic way. We do *not* suggest that EL students be placed on an isolated team, but instead are integrated into mainstream teams and classrooms – even in low incidence population schools EL students are likely to be found on more than one student team. That implies that multiple teacher teams should be engaged in the process and be supported to meet the differentiated needs of this unique group of students.

Project Exc-EL schools will work with a school change coach from the Center for Secondary School Redesign (CSSR), the acknowledged national experts in transforming traditional school structures into small, personalized communities. School change coaches will build on the existing strengths of the school community and help them identify transformational pathways to improved student success.

Minimally, participating team members commit to introducing a *personal learning plan* (PLP) and *student led conferencing* (SLC) process for EL students. Personal learning plans are

developed by students in collaboration with their teachers, counselors and family, and help them set and achieve academic, social and career goals. SLCs ensure students and teachers meet with families twice each year, and students discuss how they are doing, what their goals are, and what kind of learners they are becoming.

Together, these mechanisms represent best practice for secondary schools and are established mechanisms for increasing student agency and achievement. However they have *not* been systematically applied or studied with an English learner population in the elementary school, this project will provide a very valuable learning opportunity and important contribution to the field. The experiences of Project Exc-EL and CSSR staff in the middle schools clearly indicate a need to begin these processes well before students enter the 6th grade as large numbers of ELs are already 'off track' or in need or serious intervention by the time they move to the secondary level.

School change coaches with particular expertise in improving outcomes for EL students will be assigned to each school. They will work with Exc-EL teams on a monthly basis to ensure policies, procedures and structures ensure every EL student successfully participates in:

- A formalized personal learning plan process that is meaningful to the student; and
- Semi-annual student led conferences; and

School coaching will begin immediately and continue throughout the life of the grant with coaches meeting monthly with Exc-EL team members and providing training and support as needed.

*Goal 3. An interagency, inter-district team will be formed to leverage and share resources and provide support for at-risk EL students and their families.*

- Objective 3.1. Community partners provide wrap around supports and services.

Outcome 3.1. EL students with critical needs (Tiers 2 and 3) will receive needed intervention and support through collaborative community-wide efforts.

The active involvement of the community in a system of supports for students is essential for success. The Exc-EL demonstration sites will establish an interagency, inter-district team with representatives from each school and the district, … sentence or two about each partner and what they will contribute.

English learners, and their families, are often dealing with life issues beyond the influence of the traditional school day, and we recognize that academic success is possible only when multiple supports are available for the whole family. As a way of broadening the impact of this team and Exc-EL, each team meeting will also incorporate an afternoon or evening open community event focused on a topic of interest to families. These forums may focus on community resources, immigration law, or other topics of interest. This approach will ensure the families of EL students are involved and engaged while intentionally creating bridges to families who may be reluctant to interact with the school. The interagency team is committed to enhancing student success in school by assisting students as they managing challenging issues that inhibit success. They will offer extended learning opportunities, mentoring connections, tutoring, and comprehensive family services.

This team will be convened quarterly, with the initial meeting (PY1) designed to establish protocols and defined outcomes. Exc-EL staff, who will serve as resources for both the content and process, will facilitate team meetings. Each team meeting will specifically address Tier 2 and 3 student referrals, explore ways to make enrichment activities available to all, and create mechanisms to share and leverage resources across schools and agencies. The key to the success of the Exc-EL team will be the active participation of partners seeking success for *actual*

*students* – laying the groundwork for a comprehensive discussion and development of approaches to support that extend well into the community.

*Goal 4. An objective evaluation process will be integrated into project activities to document and improve process and outcomes.*

- Objective 4.1. Process and Impact evaluations conducted.
- Objective 4.2. Evaluation findings will be widely disseminated across all project partners and stakeholders.

Outcome 4.1. Project activities and progress will be strengthened through the use of continuous improvement mechanisms.

A core project management team will be assembled to oversee and direct all project activities. This team, with representation from all partners, will meet quarterly to review and discuss developing evaluation findings and plan for dissemination activities.

Evaluation activities will span PY 1-5, and will be conducted by *Plus Alpha Research and Consulting* (see Section D for an in-depth discussion of the evaluation plan and activities). Evaluators will collect and analyze data, with reports and findings shared with core management team and project sites on a frequent basis and used for project improvement as well as documentation. Evaluators will package developing findings for appropriate audiences and dissemination vehicles throughout the project period. The evaluation plan will be coordinated with the ongoing research study of the secondary level model, extending the opportunities for study and analysis.

A year-end data fair will be convened in June to bring all the cohort participants together in an event structured to promote reflection, sharing and consolidation of lessons learned. These presentations will form the basis for an online resource bank of instructional strategies and

interventions available for wider use. Formative and summative evaluation findings will be made publicly available through the *Exc-EL Leadership Academy* website developed as part of the work under Goal 5.

*Goal 5. Create a virtual (online) Exc-EL Leadership Academy to promulgate wide dissemination and replication of successful practices.*

- Objective 5.1. Online site is developed, tested and widely used.
- Objective 5.2. A communication and dissemination plan is created and implemented to include publications and presentations for a wide variety of audiences.

Outcome 5.1. A comprehensive set of tools for replication and sustainability is available to districts and schools nationwide.

Exc-EL is the only tested, comprehensive model of support for English Learners K-12. By design, the program is intended to be replicable in any district or school across the nation. Through this funding, we will create a 'one stop shopping' site where interested stakeholders can explore the model and find the tools and resources needed to extend, adopt or adapt for the their own systems.

Thoughtful dissemination, leading to professional learning, is an important core concept of this project. The project director will develop a communications and dissemination plan that includes required reporting and evaluation as well as a series of annual presentations and publications for peer-reviewed journals. The Exc-EL dissemination effort will also intentionally reach out to interested audiences through the use of professional networks (such as TESOL and NABE) and build on the networking and educational outreach of the USDOE's Office of Innovation. The Exc-EL elementary focused pilot will become a regular feature on the existing blog and social media accounts, reaching hundreds of interested educators. The Exc-EL blog

was established in 2014 and runs monthly features highlighting student success, teaching practices and community events. Project Exc-EL's twitter feed currently has 300 followers (and growing).

All dissemination products, plus implementation plans and tools, will be brought together on one publicly accessible website designed to encourage wide uptake of the Exc-EL model.

*GPRA measures*

In addition to the program measures cited above, the project director and evaluation partner will track and report on each NPD required GPRA measure. Measure 1 is not applicable to this project as there will be no pre-service component.

Measure 2, the number and percentage of program participants who complete the in-service program, will be provided annually. Completion of the in-service program is defined by Exc-EL team membership spanning two school years, with attendance at 75% of the team meetings. This will be verified through required team minutes and attendance at each project site. We expect 100 completers by the end of the five-year project period. Measure 3, the number and percentage of completers who are certified, licensed or endorsed in EL instruction, will reflect the number of completers (defined above) who receive ESL endorsement during the project period. Project Exc-EL is providing partial tuition support as an incentive to teachers to pursue this certification, and we expect to have 20 completers receive their endorsement.

Measures 4, 5, and 6 all deal with ratings of the program effectiveness. Program participants, school leaders, and other relevant stakeholders will be surveyed annually to ensure we track and accurately report this information. Baseline measures for the effectiveness of the program will be zero in all three cases, and we expect to achieve an 85% satisfaction rate on all three measures by the end of the project period.

*Information for Replication Based on Evidence of Effectiveness*

Project Exc-EL work is distinguished by careful, thoughtful attention to dissemination based on evidence of effectiveness. Figure 1 visually depicts how we intend to assemble the foundational pieces necessary for effective replication. We believe this is of particular importance in promoting the acceptance and adoption of the Exc-EL model and approach. We have mapped out a long-term, stepped process designed to intentionally communicate information on the model and its effectiveness from inception to replication. This is most clearly evident in Goal 5 and the establishment of an online repository for information as a key outcome of the work.

*Supported by strong theory*

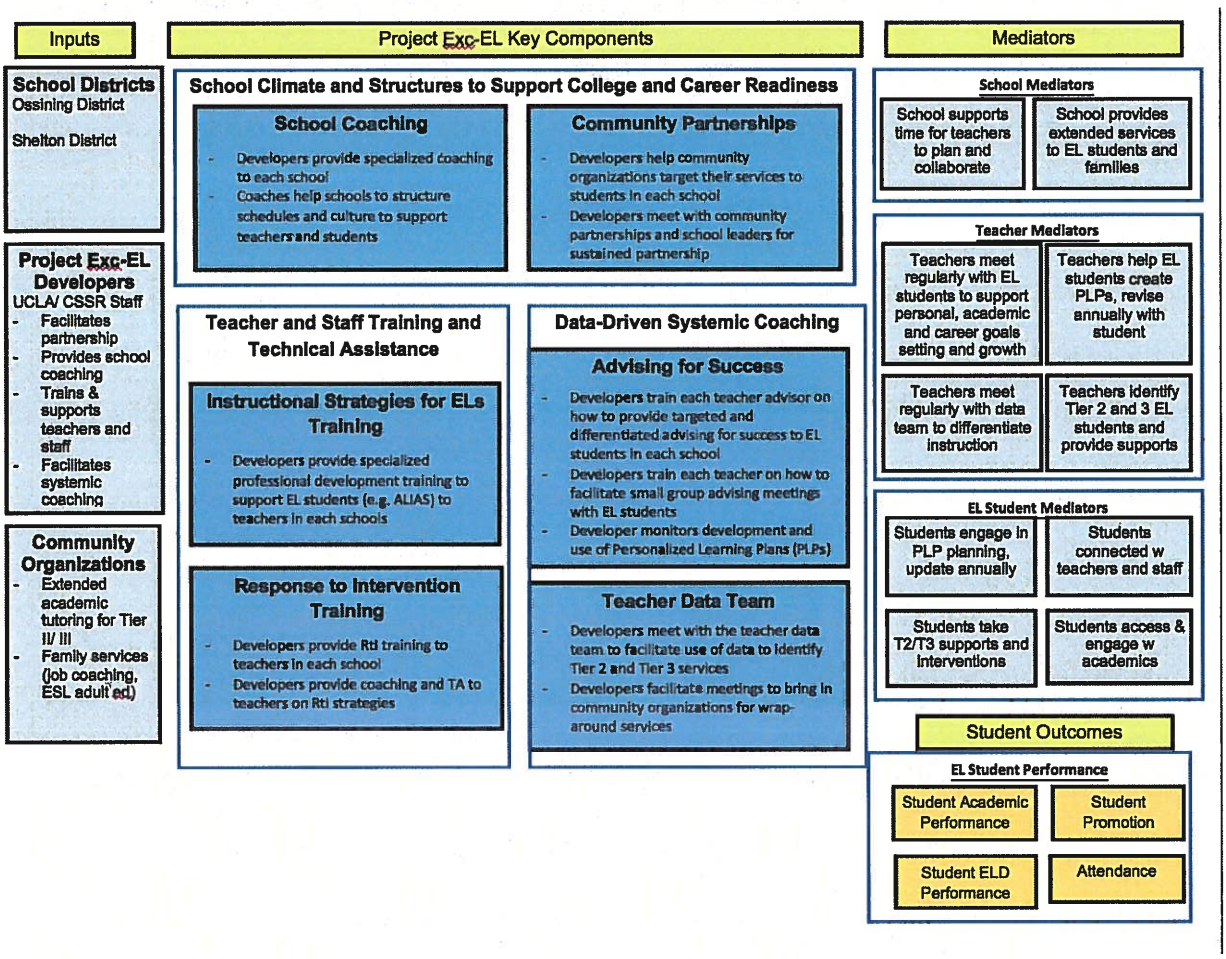
The logic model (Figure 2) clearly displays the conceptual framework underlying this work. The Exc-EL theory of change is rooted in Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) framework. Ecological models, such as Exc-EL, assume a comprehensive approach, acknowledging the many factors inside and outside the classroom that shape the experience of English learners. In essence, it embodies the concept that *it takes a village to raise a child.*

The mechanisms of action for this model are firmly rooted in theory and evidence of effective adult learning, and all professional development is designed to be job-embedded and delivered as needed.

**B. Quality of Project Personnel**

Exc-EL brings together a team of highly qualified, experienced personnel who will be successful in carrying out the work. Each team member brings a unique perspective and expertise to the collaborative.

**Figure 2. Project Exc-EL Elementary Pilot Logic Model**




Dr. Alison Bailey will serve as the Principal Investigator. Bailey is an education faculty member at UCLA's Graduate School of Education and Information Science as well as a Faculty Research Partner and former Project Director for Assessing English Language Proficiency at the Center for The Study of Evaluation & National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST). Bailey's teaching and research interests include language acquisition and academic language pedagogy. Dr. Bailey received her Ed.D. in Human Development and Psychology and her Ed.M. in the Acquisition of Language and Culture from

Harvard University.

Project Director *Jason Cervone* will lead and manage all efforts. Cervone has successfully served as a school site coach on both earlier iterations of Project Exc-EL: the NPD funded initial effort based in Connecticut and an ongoing i3 funded development project based in New York (see Figure 1 for the relationship of these projects). The direct experience developed through this ten-year process cannot be duplicated, and Cervone has been a key player in shaping the growth and development of the project as a whole. Cervone will devote .25 FTE time to this project.

Cervone is a public education specialist with UCLA's Center X Northeast Regional Office, and in that position has actively engaged with educators and schools through a portfolio of technical assistance and coaching work. In 2013 he co-designed and co-authored the Exc-EL project based in Westchester County (NY), and was successful in securing $3 million in funding from the USDOE. Cervone recently co-authored an article entitled *Shifting the Focus to the Student: The Exc-EL Attitude* (TESOL Journal, in press) capturing the history and success of the model as it has developed. Cervone is a Ph.D. student at UMass Dartmouth, holds an M.Ed. from Northeastern University with a specialization in English Language Learners, and a B.S. in Geography from Lock Haven University. He is a certified SIOP trainer and coach with more than ten years direct experience serving teachers and administrators focused on success for language minority populations.

Experienced Exc-EL coaches Laureen Avery, Lisa DiMartino and Juan Lopez will deliver school site coaching. Avery, DiMartino and Lopez are experienced Exc-EL coaches, and have been working intensively with Exc-EL sites in New York since 2013 in their roles as Public Education Specialists with Center X.

Joe DiMartino, founder and president of the Center for Secondary School Redesign (CSSR), will manage the site coaching aspects for the work. CSSR has been a valued partner in the project

development work in New York State. CSSR is a leading provider of ground breaking technical assistance to support both policy change and change leadership at the district and school level – leading to a richer school experience for all youth. CSSR will provide expert site coaches to facilitate the work of school-based teams and serve as professional development resources to each.

Dr. Ryoko Yamaguchi, Founder and President of Plus Alpha Research & Consulting, will lead the evaluation efforts for the work. Dr. Yamaguchi has over 25 years of experience in K-12 education serving disadvantaged students as a practitioner, researcher, parent leader, and advocate. Her unique expertise is in utilizing, explaining, and communicating research, data, and the junction of policy, practice, and research to a wide audience. Dr. Yamaguchi is trained as a quantitative social scientist, where she has spent the past 19 years studying schools and programs as protective factors for at-risk youth. Ryoko designed and leads the evaluation effort for the Exc-EL development project in New York State.

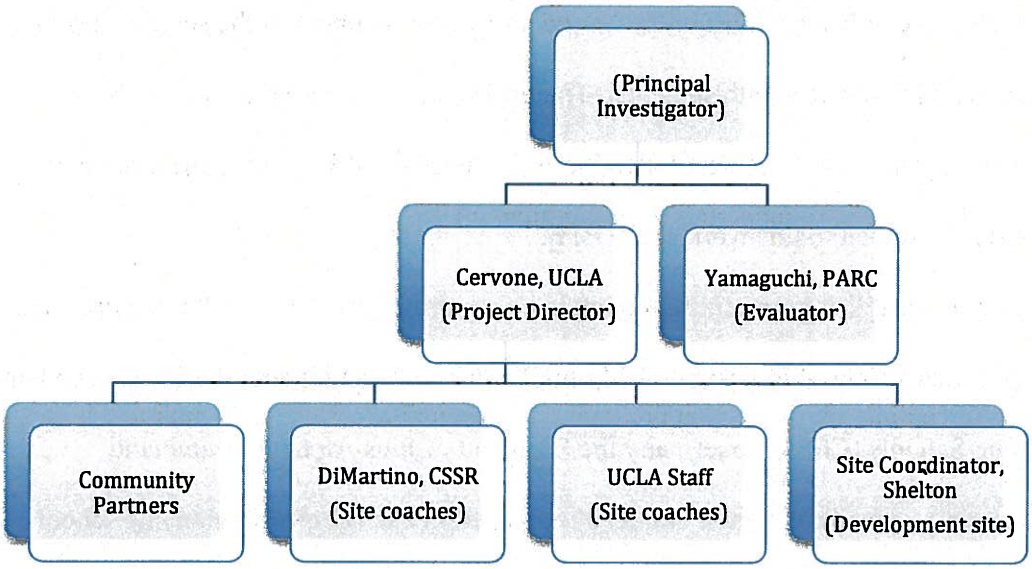
The project management team will include a representative from each collaborative partner. These include …, Community Partner, …

Position descriptions for the project director and school site change coaches are included in the other attachments section as Appendix B.

The following chart graphically depicts key personnel and their relationships to the project.

A commitment to diversity and inclusion is exemplified in every element and aspect of Project Exc-EL. UCLA, the project applicant, will undertake specific actions to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, this program for it's for employees, subcontractors, constituents, students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. We will encourage the same high expectations for equity to our partnerships explicitly through MOUs and subsequent agreements. UCLA's equitable employment practices are more fully described in the included GEPA statement.

**Figure 3. Management Chart**

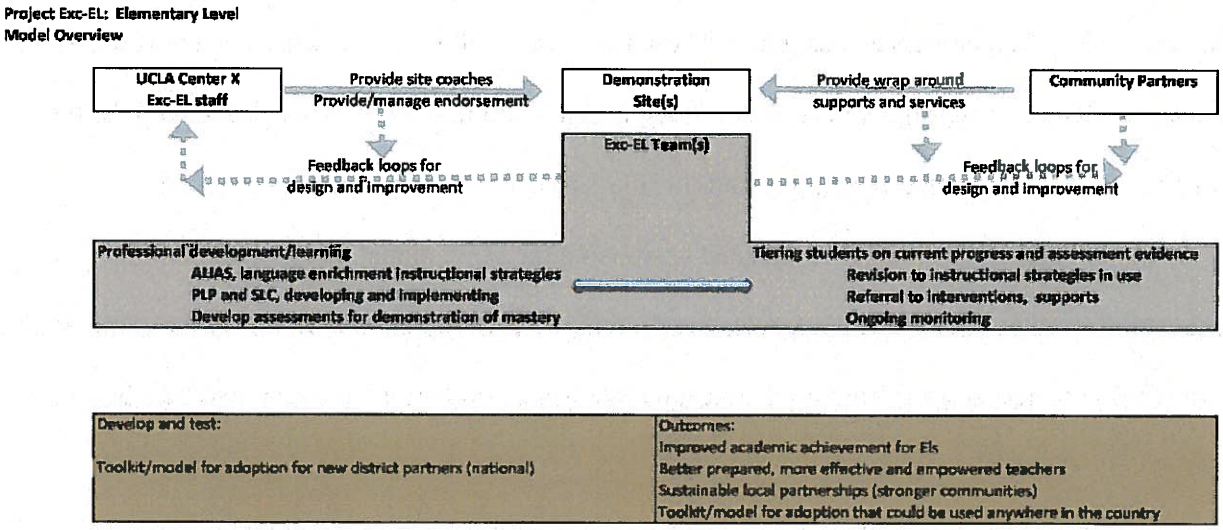



## C. Quality of Management Plan

***Timelines and milestones***

UCLA has carefully thought through the requirements to conduct this work in a way that will achieve positive and lasting results. UCLA will be responsible for all fiscal matters and day-to-day operations with a core management team assisting with overall management of the grant.

**Figure 4. Model Overview**



As the model above indicates, most of the 'work' of Exc-EL happens at the school sites in support of the team working directly with students. The project director, based at UCLA, is responsible for managing and coordinating all activities of Project Exc-EL. The project director, Jason Cervone, will be assigned to this work at .25 FTE.

The director will establish a core management team comprised of: the PI ..??; the President of the Center for Secondary School Redesign (DiMartino); Community Partners; the Superintendent of the Shelton Public Schools (Chris Clouet); and the President of Plus Alpha Research and Consulting (Yamaguchi). An administrator and lead teacher from each demonstration site school will be added to the team.

The core management team will meet within four weeks of grant approval notification, and quarterly throughout the life of the grant. The project director will develop annual management plans with guidance from the core management team, and report to the team on progress made. The core management team will also receive quarterly updates from the evaluators and use this information to guide and improve the work.

Project Exc-EL will result in a piloted, replicable model. Initially, each district will identify one team (10 to 12 members at each site). These two teams will receive intensive support for two years, and then ongoing support at a reduced rate for an additional two years as leadership for the work becomes embedded in the culture and 'business as usual' of the district and school.

Additional teams will be added each year, using the same model of two years of intensive support followed by 'light touch' supports for the remainder of the grant period. By the completion of the five-year period we intend to have worked intensively with 50 to 60 team members in each district.

***Commitment from Partners***

The commitment from district and community based partners is discussed throughout this proposal, and reflects this grass-roots effort that has been developed and planned by all the parties involved. MOUs and letters of commitment from each partner are included in the other attachments section as Appendix A.

The charts on the following pages summarize the specific action steps needed to accomplish the work on time and within budget, including milestones for project development.

EXCEL
EXCELLENCE FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS

| **Goal 1. Educators and partners will possess the knowledge and skills needed to effectively educate ELs within a framework of tiered intervention.** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Supporting Action Step** | **By Who?** | **By When?** | **Milestones** |
| Implement professional development series for teachers.<br>Implement on-site coaching sessions at each school. | Project director in consultation with core management group.<br><br>Site coaches in consultation with school teams. | Summer workshop completed in August each year.<br>Onsite coaching between October and April each year.<br>Year-end data fair conducted in June each year. | School teams participate in professional development, on-site coaching, and the year-end data fair.<br>Increased proficiency on state assessments for ELs. |

| **Goal 2. Structural elements of each school will ensure EL students are part of a smaller learning community with a common team of teachers and personalization supports.** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Supporting Action Step** | **By Who?** | **By When?** | **Milestones** |
| Personalization supports including personal learning plans and student led | CSSR coaches in consultation with project director. | Monthly coaching delivered between October and April each year. | EL students indicate they are known well by teachers in their school. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| conferences are implemented. Each school will adopt an approach that meets their specific needs. | | | EL students have an individualized plan for academic success and participate in student led conferencing. |

| **Goal 3. An interagency, inter-district team will be formed to leverage and share resources and provide support for at-risk EL students and their families.** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Supporting Action Step** | **By Who?** | **By When?** | **Milestones** |
| Interagency partners will coordinate and deliver intervention/enrichment services to ELs. Interagency partners will host community meetings to engage families (topics may include: | The core project management team (made up of representation of all partners) will oversee this work. | Community meetings will be held once each quarter. Each community partner will host at least 2 community meetings over the grant period. | EL students receive needed supports. Community members are aware of the project and receive additional support to assist their children. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| immigration law, assistance with social and community programs, etc.) | | | |

| **Goal 4. An objective evaluation process will be integrated into project activities to document and improve process and outcome.** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Supporting Action Step** | **By Who?** | **By When?** | **Milestones** |
| An outside, objective evaluator is engaged in partnership with program staff, providing on-going data collection and feedback. | Outside evaluator will share findings with the core management team. Core management team will be charged with further disseminating information to entire project members and outside organizations. | Annual reports on process indicators and progress towards outcomes in December of each project year. | Adjustments to the program to increase effectiveness will be made based on data collected during the preceding year. |

| **Goal 5. An online site will be established, providing access to all project related materials.** |
|---|

| Supporting Action Step | By Who? | By When? | Milestones |
|---|---|---|---|
| A website (the 'Leadership Academy') is piloted and established, making evaluation reports, implementation tools and procedures, case studies, presentations, articles, and other resources publicly available. | Project director with core management team and website designer. | Online materials are launched at the beginning of PY3. | Exc-EL model reaches national awareness and is adopted by school districts in additional states and regions. |
| A comprehensive dissemination and communication plan will be developed ensuring information is publicly accessible and shared widely | Dissemination specialist with the core management team. | Dissemination plan is developed during PY3 and implemented during project years 3 to 5. | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| with interested stakeholders. | | | |

## D. Project Evaluation