We Dream Big.
We Work Hard.
We Keep Our Promises.

Empowering
Effective Teachers in the
Pittsburgh Public Schools

Pittsburgh
Public Schools

EXCELLENCE
FOR ALL

The Pathway to the Promise.™

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CHAPTER I - Executive Summary

Introduction

In Pittsburgh, we dream big, work hard, and know exactly what we must accomplish in our schools. *We commit that with robust, enduring district support and mutual accountability, Pittsburgh's teachers will be empowered as effective leaders to do whatever it takes to foster a culture of striving, resilience, and college-readiness so that over 80 percent of all students complete a post-secondary degree or workforce certification.*

This vision is bold, but realistic because we come to this work from a position of strength:

- With $135M in commitments to *The Pittsburgh Promise*[TM], our community has eliminated money as an obstacle to higher education for at least a generation of students. Our students have embraced this opportunity. In 2008, its first year, 757 graduates or 67% of eligible students earned *Promise* scholarships.[1] We utilize *The Promise* to infuse college-readiness in all that we do. It strengthens community and family partnerships and offers an unprecedented opportunity to understand and measure post-secondary success.

- Through a collaborative, trust-based relationship with the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers (PFT), the district has addressed issues such as curriculum design, innovative staffing for new schools, and teacher evaluation. We have now built the mutual respect necessary to tackle difficult issues, such as differentiated compensation, our learning environment, and tenure reform. Our ability to agree on systemic change within a collective bargaining context lends credibility to American Federation of Teachers (AFT) member's belief that constructive change will come from working with teachers, not "doing to" teachers.

- For the past three years, the district has improved student achievement through the deliberate sequencing of strategies outlined in the *Excellence for All* reform agenda, including designing and implementing a rigorous new PreK-12 core curriculum, expanding and improving professional development, strengthening early childhood offerings, and using data to improve student learning. A deliberate first step was to focus on improving school leadership. With support from the Broad Foundation and the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF), we developed and implemented a comprehensive accountability system to recruit, train, support, evaluate, improve, and compensate principals through performance-based pay.

- We are addressing the disproportionately low achievement levels among our African American students. We settled a 15 year-old lawsuit brought by the Advocates for African American Students, established an Equity Advisory panel that represents the community's voice, created Accelerated Learning Academies (ALAs), implemented a high-level course in African American history, and are ensuring a culturally inclusive curriculum.

- District governance and management have worked hard and made tough decisions. We closed 25% of the district's schools in 2006, which resulted in annual savings of $14.7M and restored the confidence of state and community leaders. All told, the Board has supported $48M in budget reductions over three years. Our fiscal discipline allows us to use our $30M

in federal stimulus funding for several targeted programs to improve middle grades literacy skills, rather than plugging financial holes.

Many individual urban schools in Pittsburgh and across the nation succeed in educating a vast majority of their students to a high level, but no school system has been able to do so. It is extraordinarily challenging to bring all the necessary pieces together to meet the needs of an urban student population where children come from disparate and often difficult environments. For students are impacted by so many factors: their teachers, principals, their learning environment, curriculum, the degree to which they develop positive study habits (e.g. homework), as well as their personal hopes, dreams and aspirations.

Although we have accomplished a great deal, we realize that we do not have all the pieces in place that contribute to student success. Research shows that of the school-based factors, the quality of teaching has the most significant impact on student growth. Support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) on maximizing teacher effectiveness will enable us to bring that most profound influencer to bear on behalf of our students, and, coupled with the critical work we have already accomplished, bring the necessary pieces together in a manner that has not been seen in an urban setting.

In sum, we believe that the core academic elements we have in place, our management capacity, manageable size, fiscal and governance stability, local and national union support, as well as track record of funding success and stakeholder support—together with *The Pittsburgh Promise*— offer a unique opportunity for the BMGF to prove that with the right conditions of support, effective teachers can move a vast majority of urban students to achievement levels that lead to college success or workforce certification.

This proposal outlines the next steps that will ensure high achievement for all of our students. While implementing these initiatives will be challenging, they are essential for student success, and, with support from BMGF, our community, families, teachers, and principals, we are confident in our ability to realize these changes.

The Pittsburgh Public Schools' (PPS) Strategic Vision

We will focus our ongoing district reform efforts on our vision for teacher effectiveness: *Pittsburgh's teachers will be empowered as effective leaders to do whatever it takes to foster a culture of striving, resilience, and college-readiness so that over 80 percent of all students complete a post-secondary degree or workforce certification.*

Working with the PFT, we have identified three strategic priorities, supported by a combination of initiatives, that will improve student outcomes from 29% college-ready today to 50% college-ready in five years, and 80% in 11 years.[2] The three strategic priorities are: 1) increase the number of highly effective teachers; 2) increase the exposure of high-need students to highly effective teachers; 3) and ensure all teachers work in learning environments that support their ability to be highly effective.

1 *Increase the number of highly effective teachers.*[3] We will enhance, recognize and reward the effective teachers in our classrooms, improve the effectiveness of the teachers we hire, and systematically exit those teachers who do not materially improve student learning.

A *Enhance, recognize, and reward the effectiveness of teachers already at PPS.* Building teachers' effectiveness requires identifying how teachers are performing and linking that to professional development. Until now, a binary evaluation tool and weak evaluation process limited our ability to tailor professional development to teachers' individual needs. In December 2008, we began to address these concerns, working collaboratively with the PFT to co-construct the Research-Based Inclusive System of Evaluation (RISE). RISE defines effective teaching and prescribes an evaluation process. We will pilot RISE in half of our schools this fall. A second initiative to build the effectiveness of current teachers is the PPS/PFT Promise Academy (the Academy).

The district and the PFT have addressed performance pay and agreed that it would be salutary to have a teacher compensation plan that rewards teachers who effect growth in student achievement. To that end, the district and the PFT have agreed to work collaboratively, involving the AFT in the effort, to develop a Value-Added Measure (VAM) to anchor such a plan. Simultaneous with the development of a VAM, the parties commit themselves to developing a valid and equitable compensation plan structure and achieving its implementation through the collective bargaining process.

B *Improve the effectiveness of the teachers we hire.* Through *Teach For Pittsburgh*, we will infuse our beliefs about the skills, mindsets and values necessary to teach in Pittsburgh. This will be reflected in the hiring practices we use to select the very best candidates—including our willingness to hire high-capacity non-certified candidates in Mathematics, Science, and Special Education—and the practices we employ in our 13-month residency-based induction process at the Academy. Additionally, we will place a particular emphasis on ensuring that the award of tenure is a milestone in a teacher's career and represents proven effectiveness, including evidence of moving student achievement.

C *Exit teachers who do not materially improve students' learning.* Today, we do not systematically identify and exit ineffective teachers. We are prepared to address this need.

2 *Increase the exposure of high-need students to highly effective teachers.* We will offer highly effective teachers new, high-impact roles that recognize and reward the importance of teaching high-need students.

Through RISE and the development of a VAM, we will learn which teachers are highly effective. We will target these teachers for high-impact roles linked to increased compensation. One example of these roles is a 9th and 10th grade Excellence Corps, a group of highly effective teachers collectively responsible for student growth over the course of two years. Our teachers will follow students from 9th to 10th grade and receive rewards and recognition linked to student outcomes, thus building ownership for shepherding students through to high school graduation and access to *The Pittsburgh Promise*.

3 *Ensure all teachers work in learning environments that support their ability to be highly effective.* To ensure our students' access to *The Pittsburgh Promise*, we will set and reinforce high standards for behavior and aspirations, build students' ability to meet those standards, and provide wrap-around supports to address escalated needs (e.g., social services, "Be a 6th Grade Mentor" project, assistance for children with special needs). Recognizing that self-discipline and work habits are necessary for post-secondary success, we need system-wide supports to establish and maintain a strong learning environment in every school.

Implementation and Results

Over the next five years, we will sequence the strategic initiatives outlined above to ensure that the district has the capacity to manage these changes.

Phase I (2009-10): Lay the foundation. We will pilot RISE, as well as build capacity in both central office and schools, define metrics and develop phased implementation plans for initiatives that launch in Phases II and III. Collaborative development of a VAM begins. Performance pay system is constructed and presented to PFT membership for ratification.

Phase II (2010-12): Build momentum. We will expand RISE to all schools, launch career ladder roles, and welcome the Academy's first two classes. We will also build the awareness of, and support for, our teacher effectiveness strategies and the impact they have on student achievement.

Phase III (2012-14): Based on data collected in prior years, we will refine our initiatives. We will also bring all of the Phase II initiatives with demonstrated impact to scale.

Since they still struggle, we will prioritize high schools in our sequencing, especially 9th and 10th grades, in order to make the dramatic changes that will foster *Promise-Readiness*, build positive learning environments, and ensure the personalized approach necessary for student success.

Expected teacher and student gains	Baseline	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
Highly effective teachers	28%	30%	36%	41%
Students achieving college-readiness	29%	34%	41%	50%
Grades K-5	34%	38%	45%	53%
Grades 6-8	30%	33%	40%	49%
Grades 9-12	22%	28%	36%	46%
PPS high school graduation rate	65%	68%	71%	76%

Organizational Capacity and Partnerships

To implement the initiatives outlined above, we must enhance our internal capabilities. Most critical to our success are the following three functions:

- ***Human Resources.*** We will transform our Human Resources department into a strategic asset. To build capacity, we will partner with Dr. Betsy Arons and The New Teacher Project (TNTP).

- ***Information Technology.*** We must build IT systems to support the use of real-time data to inform day-to-day management, as well as periodic evaluation of this work.

- ***Research & Evaluation.*** To deliver the rigorous evaluation we believe this work demands, we plan to partner with Mathematica Policy Research (MPR) and the AFT.

Capturing Lessons Learned and Evaluation

Selection as an intensive partnership site carries a responsibility to pursue rigorous evaluation. We are committed to advancing the state of research in education, as well as our own understanding of what drives impact. This demands the selection and use of performance metrics. We have already begun this work.

Project Budget

The cost of our initiatives is $85M over five years. We request $50M from BMGF, which will greatly accelerate our teacher effectiveness work. To cover the difference between the total cost of these initiatives and what we are requesting from BMGF, we plan to:

- ***Seek external funding.*** We will seek more than $35M from Race to the Top, the Teacher Incentive Fund, the What Works Innovation Fund (WWIF), and our local Fund for Excellence to help fund career ladders, the Academy, and learning environment initiatives, IT investments, and impact evaluation.

- ***Reallocate internal costs.*** By 2014, we will have identified as much as $19-33M a year to sustain our teacher effectiveness strategies. These savings will come from closing underutilized facilities, changing our teacher distribution, and improving operating efficiencies.

Challenges and Risks

We recognize that we must overcome several risks and challenges, including:

- ***Failure to ratify initiatives related to collective bargaining measures.*** Although PPS and PFT leadership support the initiatives contained in this proposal, the PFT membership will be the final voice on collective bargaining issues. We understand the importance of a comprehensive and well executed plan; therefore, we have budgeted a PPS/PFT resource for communications and implementation related to these topics.

- *Change-management and execution risk.* We will manage the execution risk involved in a project of this scale through the thoughtful and deliberate sequencing of initiatives and over-sight from the proposed Office of Teacher Effectiveness (OTE).

- *Human Resources (HR) and Information Technology (IT) capacity.* Delays in transforming these departments could impact other aspects of this proposal. The OTE will work to ensure fidelity of implementation.

- *Funding in light of poor economy.* We may be forced to spend portions of the internal cost savings to cover budgetary gaps. We will manage this risk by carefully examining district budgets to protect cost savings, including postponing other projects, and will seek additional funding for the initiatives described here.

Sustainability

The strategies outlined above have been sequenced so that up-front investments will be complete by 2014. Since the district also plans to undertake a series of cost-effectiveness measures, we are confident that we can build any ongoing costs into our existing budget projections after 2014.

Conclusion

Pittsburgh was not built by small thinkers—it was built by people who dreamed big and worked hard. As we educate a workforce that can compete in an economy driven by computers rather than steel mills, we are aware that many believe we are swimming against a powerful tide— they argue that a public school district cannot be reformed from within, and that a teachers' union will never embrace changes that create the right environment for dramatic growth in student learning.
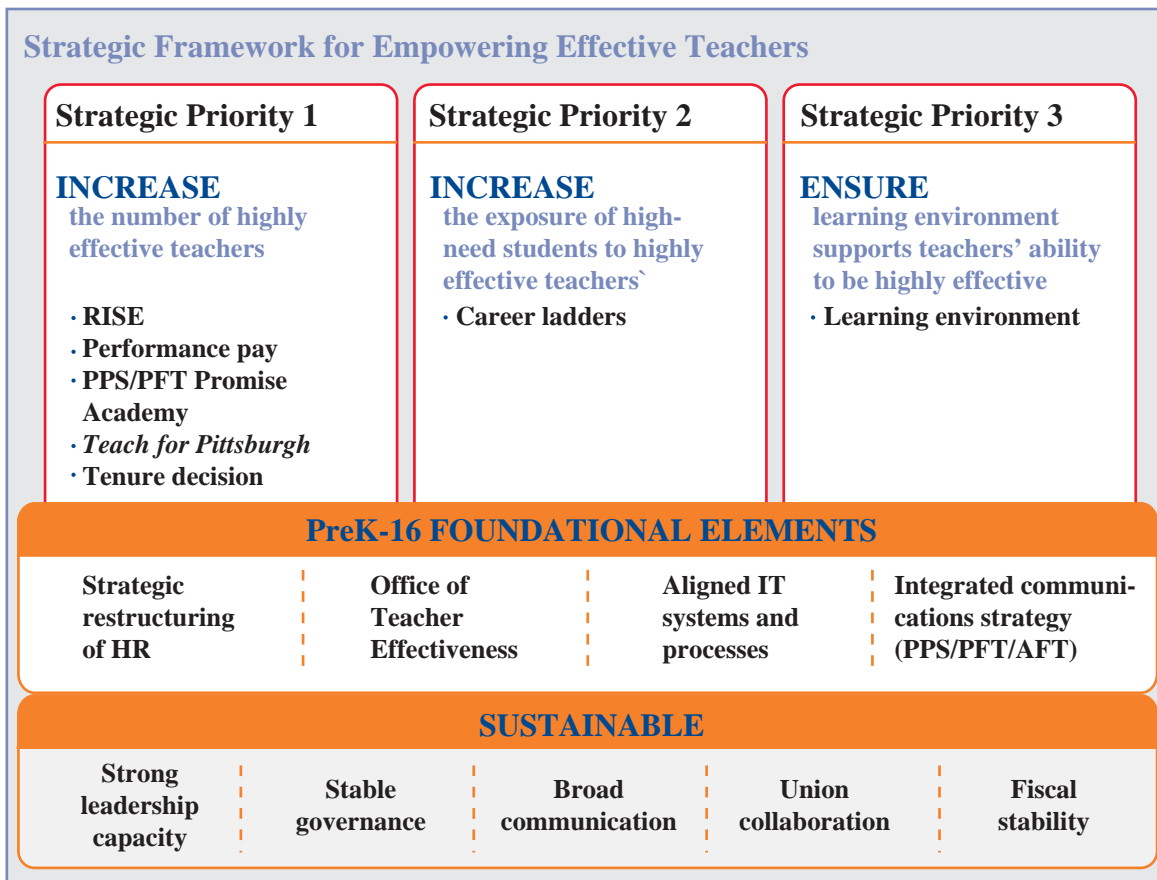
We will prove them wrong.

When we announced *The Pittsburgh Promise* there were more skeptics than believers—we had no money in the bank and no commitments. The first contribution to *The Pittsburgh Promise* came from our partners at the PFT. Although modest, the commitment and its significance were clear. Two years later, in the most difficult fundraising climate in a generation, *The Promise* is a reality, as a $100M challenge grant from the region's largest employer, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC), has been matched by $35M in gifts from area foundations and businesses— several are among the largest grants in these foundations' histories.

Our community has bet on our ability to dramatically increase the number of our students who are *Promise-Ready*. We embrace the challenge and pledge to the students and families we are privileged to serve, the Pittsburgh community, and BMGF that we will do whatever it takes to achieve our vision that 80% of our students complete a post-secondary degree or workforce certification.

CHAPTER II - Project Description
Part 1: Vision of Success

Strategic Framework for Empowering Effective Teachers

Strategic Priority 1	Strategic Priority 2	Strategic Priority 3
INCREASE the number of highly effective teachers	**INCREASE** the exposure of high-need students to highly effective teachers`	**ENSURE** learning environment supports teachers' ability to be highly effective
· RISE · Performance pay · PPS/PFT Promise Academy · *Teach for Pittsburgh* · Tenure decision	· Career ladders	· Learning environment

PreK-16 FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS

Strategic restructuring of HR	Office of Teacher Effectiveness	Aligned IT systems and processes	Integrated communications strategy (PPS/PFT/AFT)

SUSTAINABLE

Strong leadership capacity	Stable governance	Broad communication	Union collaboration	Fiscal stability

With 26,649 students across 66 schools, PPS is a medium-sized district serving an urban community that faces many of the same challenges as larger cities across the country—poverty, low educational attainment, and socioeconomic gaps often tied to race. However, as a community, we have united around the goal of improving our schools and have committed to *Dream Big and Work Hard* to ensure that our students attain the necessary skills to succeed. As an old industrial giant redefining itself as a medical and education center, Pittsburgh has a gut understanding of what it means to be left behind in a fast-changing economy. While we understand that a goal of having 80% of our students complete a post-secondary degree or workforce certification is audacious, it is essential to our city's renewed vitality. Galvanized by the tremendous opportunity of *The Pittsburgh Promise*, and catalyzed by investments in a rigorous PreK-12 curriculum and effective school leadership, we have made substantial progress in both raising student achievement at every level and laying the foundation for continued growth as a model of a PreK-16 educational system. We recognize, however, that we will not succeed unless we not only ensure that all students are taught by highly effective teachers every day, but also change our definition of highly effective teaching to encompass

both content knowledge and the self-discipline and aspirational mindsets that students need to be successful in pursuing *The Pittsburgh Promise*.

Reaching our goal will require substantial change. First and foremost, we must build the effectiveness of our teaching force. Based on a proxy created using the Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS) data, we believe that 28% of our teachers are highly effective, in that they produce student gains that are significantly above the state average.[4] We aspire to raise that percentage to 41% in five years. We will do this by improving the effectiveness of teachers we hire, increasing the effectiveness of teachers already in our classrooms, and systematically exiting teachers who do not materially improve students' learning. In addition, we recognize that we must use our most effective teachers in ways that maximize their talents and increase their exposure to the students who need them most. Finally, we will invest the time and resources to improve the quality of the learning environment in which our teachers work, recognizing that a strong learning environment is an essential enabler of teacher effectiveness and student readiness for college success.

We commit that with robust, enduring district support and mutual accountability, Pittsburgh's teachers will be empowered as effective leaders to do whatever it takes to foster a culture of striving, resilience, and college-readiness so that over 80 percent of all students complete a post-secondary degree or workforce certification.
— Pittsburgh Public Schools

None of these strategic priorities will be easy to achieve, as they require us to shed many familiar ways of operating and require us to have new kinds of conversations. While we see the risks involved in navigating this transformation, we also see the much larger risks to our students of failing to act.

Fortunately, we approach our teacher effectiveness strategy from a position of strength. We are several years into our *Excellence for All* reform agenda and have made steady progress in laying the foundation for change and in building the belief across Pittsburgh that significant improvement is possible. We are poised to make even greater progress, with support from the PFT, teachers and principals, and the broader Pittsburgh community. A partnership with BMGF would catapult our ability to impact student outcomes in ways that could be replicated across urban districts nationwide. We will do whatever it takes to meet our vision for student success and commit to the following milestones on our path to achieving that vision.

Student achievement and attainment. At this time, our best way to measure college-readiness—defined as an ability to enter college without the need to take remedial courses—is through Mathematics Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) scores.[5] We will work to increase the proportion of our students achieving *advanced* on the Mathematics PSSA, across all grades, from 29% today to 51% in five years and to over 80% in 11 years. For high schools specifically, we will increase the proportion of students achieving *advanced* status on Mathematics from 22% today to over 80% in 12 years. Based on this proxy, the table below shows the current and targeted college-ready proportion of students in the district.

	Baseline	5-year target
Elementary schools	34%	54%
Middle schools	30%	50%
High schools	22%	47%
District-wide	29%	51%

Note: Percentage of students achieving college-readiness is calculated based on (a) the proportion of highly effective teachers in PPS and (b) an estimation of the gains that these teachers produce in students that are on different performance trajectories.

In 2008, while 22% of our students achieved an *advanced* score in 11th grade PSSA Mathematics, only 9% of our African American students did so. We believe we can increase this proportion to over 40% in five years. To do so, we will focus specifically on monitoring the growth in achievement of our African American students relative to this goal.

We will also ensure that students show high attainment rates as measured by:

- The percentage of students who graduate high school;
- The percentage who are eligible for *The Promise* scholarship;
- The percentage of students who pursue post-secondary education;
- Post-secondary completion levels.

While we have established that the 11th grade Mathematics PSSA, our achievement proxy, is correlated with all of these student attainment goals, we plan to refine this proxy. Through *The Pittsburgh Promise*, we have a unique opportunity to examine PreK-16 longitudinal data for our students. *The Promise* collects annual grades for the students for whom it provides scholarships, thereby offering insight into how students perform in college (i.e., courses, grades). Since both PPS and *The Promise* data share a common student identifier, we can determine the PreK-12 attributes (e.g., PSSA scores, GPA) that are most indicative of college-readiness.

Teacher effectiveness. To achieve these gains in student performance, we will increase the number of highly effective teachers as a percentage of our teaching workforce. As noted earlier, we will increase the percentage of our classroom teachers producing student gains that are significantly above the state average from 28% to 41% in five years.[6]

Learning environment. We are committed to ensuring positive learning environments in a systemic way across all schools and will develop a learning environment rubric to establish consistent, high expectations and to gauge improvements related to personalization, positive student behaviors and college-going cultures. This rubric will be part of an evaluation toolset that will apply to all schools in the district, beginning with high schools. Additionally, through the use of teacher, student and parent surveys, we will build and maintain awareness of the issues and perceptions impacting the learning environments in our schools. Finally, we will continue to monitor on a regular basis the number and intensity of behavioral incidents in all schools.

The balance of this proposal details the district's plan for realizing our vision of 80% of students attaining a post-secondary degree or workforce certification. We want to convey the commitment felt by not only PPS but the PFT, the Board of Education, teachers, principals, and our community. The proposal development process has been an important collaboration. Through many hours of teamwork, the district and the PFT have fostered a strong commitment to seeing our initiatives through to implementation. While the BMGF grant represents an important opportunity for Pittsburgh—the funding and the access to expert resources would greatly accelerate our work— the initiatives described below are unquestionably the work we will undertake.

Part 2: Context

To understand fully the scope of our ambition, it is important to understand our starting point.

Student achievement and attainment

Our 66 schools include 18 elementary schools (grades K-5), 14 K-8 schools, seven middle schools (grades 6-8), ten high schools (grades 9-12), one 6-12 school, eight Accelerated Learning Academies (ALAs), four special-use schools, and two alternative centers. Fifty-seven percent of our students are African American; 35 percent are white; 5 percent are multi-racial; 2 percent are Asian/ Pacific Islander; and less than 2 percent are Hispanic or Native American. Two percent are English Language Learners, of primarily Mexican and Somali Bantu origin. Seventy percent of our students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, and 95 percent of schools qualify for Title I funding.

As in most districts in the United States, student achievement in PPS has historically followed racial and economic lines. Unfortunately, that achievement disparity persists. In 2009, across all grades, African American students remain less likely to be *proficient* or *advanced* than white students (Exhibit 1).

Since the district seeks to bring African American students to high levels of proficiency—not simply reduce the achievement disparity—we are pleased that the achievement disparity shrank between 2005-06 and 2008-09 while proficiency levels for both African American and white students grew (Exhibit 2).
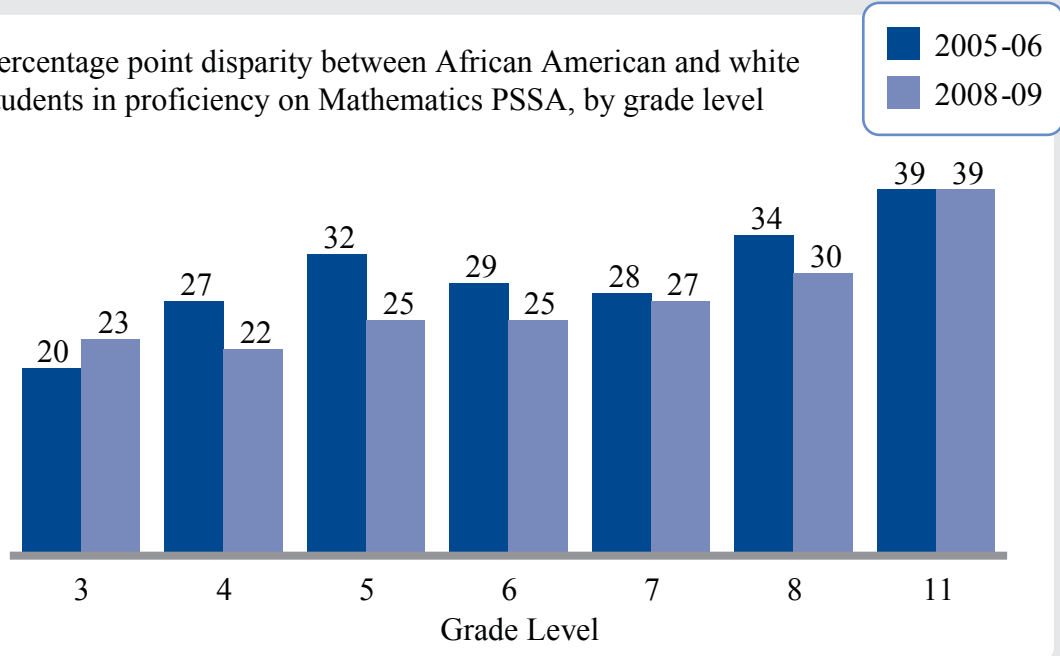
However, the progress we have seen at the elementary and middle school levels has been slower to materialize in our high schools. At present, only one of the district's high schools has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), while three schools are in School Improvement II, two schools are in Corrective Action I, and four schools are in Corrective Action II. Of the students who arrive in a PPS high school in 9th grade, approximately 65% graduate from high school.[7] Less than half of 9th graders will graduate from high school and pursue a post-secondary degree.[8]

In addition to these data in regard to AYP, the Reading and Mathematics proficiency of our high school students is concerning. While Mathematics results on the PSSA has shown some growth in the time period shown, Reading achievement has been flat over the last four years.

In reviewing where we are as a district, we are compelled to focus on our high schools—the traction that we are gaining in the earlier grades simply is not translating to our high schools.

EXHIBIT 1

While it still exists, the achievement disparity between African American and white students has been reduced over the last three years
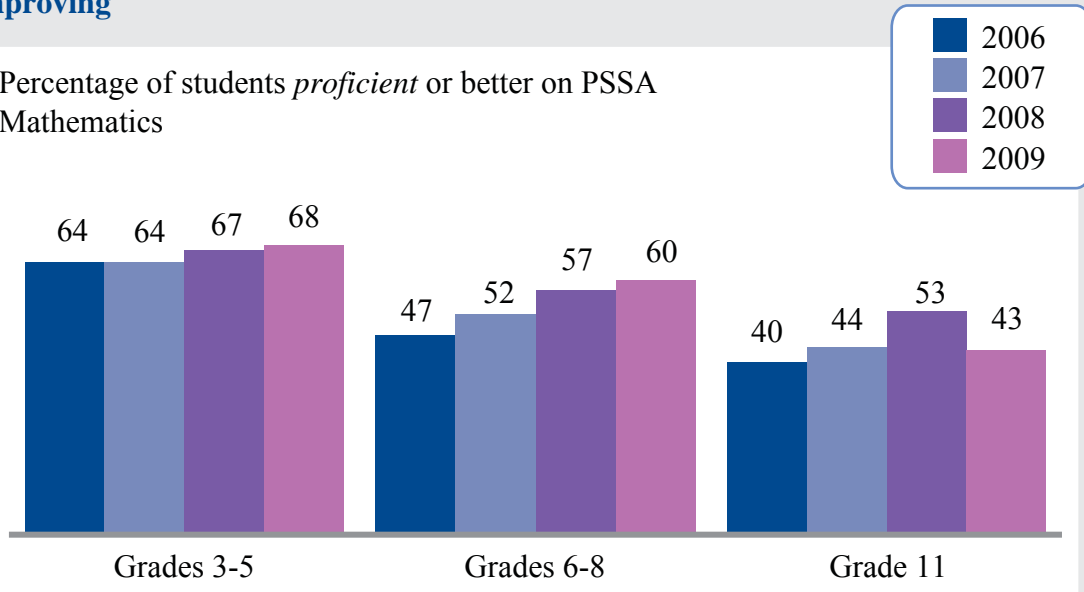
Percentage point disparity between African American and white students in proficiency on Mathematics PSSA, by grade level

Legend: 2005-06, 2008-09

Grade Level	2005-06	2008-09
3	20	23
4	27	22
5	32	25
6	29	25
7	28	27
8	34	30
11	39	39

Grade Level

SOURCE: Pittsburgh Public Schools, Office of Information Technology's RTI System

EXHIBIT 2

Across elementary and middle school students, PSSA Mathematics scores are improving

Percentage of students *proficient* or better on PSSA Mathematics

Legend: 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009

	2006	2007	2008	2009
Grades 3-5	64	64	67	68
Grades 6-8	47	52	57	60
Grade 11	40	44	53	43

SOURCE: Pittsburgh Public Schools, Office of Information Technology's RTI System

Thus, our teacher effectiveness strategy has a strong focus on what we must do differently in our high schools, both to ensure that we put our most effective teachers in our highest leverage areas (e.g., 9th and 10th grades) and that we change the context in which teaching occurs to emphasize strong teacher-student relationships and wrap-around support.

District context

The last contextual aspect needed to understand our starting place is our district history.

Manageable size. First, decreases in our city's population have caused our enrollment to decline to 26,000. PPS now has only 66 schools, and is small enough for change to be created that will be felt district-wide. For example, in January 2009 all teachers and administrators came together to reflect on the progress of the reform efforts. Surrounded by posters depicting the meaning of *Promise-Ready* as interpreted by each of our schools, PPS and PFT staff jointly committed to accelerating student achievement and instilling a college-going culture. For many, that session exemplified the opportunity that exists to form a district-wide community committed to a common goal.

Strong relationships. Secondly, PPS benefits from the strong relationships it has cultivated with its stakeholders, including the PFT, the School Board and the greater community. PPS leaders, both centrally and at the school level, attest to the unwavering support of the business and nonprofit communities. These advantages have enabled PPS to undertake ambitious projects and see them to fruition. In 2006, PPS launched *Excellence for All*, a reform agenda dedicated to ensuring that all PPS students learn at a high level, regardless of race or poverty. *Excellence for All* has driven several successful initiatives: the consolidation of underutilized schools, paired with several new school models, including ALAs, geared at the specific needs of low-income and African American students; a rigorous new PreK-12 curriculum; and a revamped school leadership approach. In each of these, our ability to work with diverse stakeholders to accomplish change has been invaluable.

The Pittsburgh Promise™. Recognizing the implications of poverty in our district and the cost challenges of higher education for low and middle class families, we launched *The Pittsburgh Promise* in 2007, a district and community-wide commitment to help PPS students and families plan, prepare and pay for education after high school. By awarding scholarships to eligible PPS students of up to $5,000 annually for four years, which will increase to $10,000 annually in 2012—regardless of family income—*The Pittsburgh Promise* aims to reduce declining enrollment, raise the district's collective post-secondary aspirations for students, provide a model PreK-16 educational system, and revitalize the City of Pittsburgh. Just in time for the Class of 2008, *The Promise* was funded by a $100M challenge grant from the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) and has subsequently received over $35M in commitments from Pittsburgh's foundations, businesses and families.[9] Our students have embraced this opportunity—in its first year, 67% of eligible students in the class of 2008 earned scholarships through *The Pittsburgh Promise*, which totaled $2.5M. *The Promise* gives us unique insight into what the district can do to ensure college completion, as it collects information (e.g., grades, course selection, college graduation date) about scholarship recipients. By linking *The Promise* database to PPS data systems, we can identify indicators of success for those students pursuing post-secondary degrees, then focus our efforts on ensuring more students have those indicators before they leave our system.

To ensure access for all students, PPS has developed *Pathways to the Promise*™, a sequence of scaffolded supports and checkpoints to ensure that students and families are *Promise-Ready*. The initial focus is on providing supports and monitoring readiness at key transitions such as Kindergarten, 3rd grade (literacy), 6th grade (mentoring), 9th grade (GPA and attendance monitoring) and 12th grade (counseling). We recognize the power of *The Pittsburgh Promise* and have moved quickly to build awareness and understanding of its benefit. For example, in 2008 the district launched a targeted communications campaign to PreK-12 families. From March of 2008 to March of 2009, awareness among district families increased from 75% to 87%. Agreement that PPS communicates about post-high school opportunities is up from 43% in 2007 to 63% in 2009. This fall, the district is launching a comprehensive *Pathways to the Promise* campaign with the generous support of a $250K grant from the Heinz Endowments.

School closings and launch of new school formats. In response to our declining enrollment, in 2006 we closed 22 schools and developed new school models (e.g., ALAs) more closely aligned to the needs of the district. We made this difficult decision with great care and substantial community feedback. While closing schools is not unusual, we believe our approach, which utilized student achievement criteria rather than just building conditions and geography, was innovative. By creating a School Performance Index, we could assure families that students from closed schools would be moved to either higher performing schools or schools with greatly enhanced academic programs (e.g., ALAs). Many of the schools we closed—all elementary and middle schools—had poor academic performance and under-enrollment. The resolve to do this hard work saved the district $14.7M in operating costs per year (3% of our annual budget).

Since then, PPS has turned its attention to developing innovative school models. In 2006 we established eight Accelerated Learning Academies (ALAs), with a more rigorous curriculum, longer school day and year, and more highly-paid teachers with additional professional development. For 2008-09, ALAs posted increases at the *advanced* level in Reading PSSA scores that were 1.4 times greater than the remainder of the district, while matching the district's increased percentage of students achieving *proficiency*. In Mathematics, ALAs performed even better—students achieved *advanced* status at 3.5 times the remainder of the district and growth in proficiency at 2.3 times the remainder of the district. In 2008, we opened the region's first university partnership school, a collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh. This fall we will open a grade 6-12 school in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics as well as consolidate and expand our Creative and Performing Arts and our International Baccalaureate (IB) programs to form two new 6-12 school configurations. Our IB program is the first non-charter urban, full IB 6-12 school in the United States.

PreK-12 managed curriculum. An independent audit in 2006 revealed that students did not receive comparable educational programs across schools. In response, the district launched a new, standardized core curriculum for PreK-12. While the district initially contracted with a third party to write the curriculum, feedback from teachers and principals made clear that the curriculum was not of the relevance and rigor Pittsburgh demanded. Teachers asked to play a major role in the curriculum development and, accordingly, the district changed course and engaged teachers to develop the curriculum. The curricula now span over 30 courses, and attends carefully to the issues of differentiated instruction and cultural relevance.

Strengthened school leadership. Recognizing the critical role of school leadership, PPS has invested in our school leadership practices. Pittsburgh Urban Leadership System of Excellence (PULSE), a program designed to ensure that effective school leaders are in every school in Pittsburgh, was launched in 2007. The program includes six core components: (1) the Pittsburgh Emerging Leadership Academy (PELA), a leadership pipeline funded by a $1.75M Broad Foundation grant; (2) Pittsburgh's Administrators Induction Academy, which provides support for new principals, (3) the Principal Leadership Academy, a source of ongoing professional development; (4) individual assistant superintendent mentoring and training; (5) principal evaluation; and (6) principal performance-based compensation. PULSE demonstrates the district's success in developing a talent management program. This highlights PPS' ability to unify stakeholders around such a goal, as well as our resourcefulness in finding ways to support this work. Funds from a $7.4M TIF grant supports our school leaders' pay for performance program.

PPS enjoys the momentum of several successful initiatives that are improving students' learning and provide the foundation on which to take the critical next step of implementing a concerted plan to support and empower effective teachers. With our demonstrated capacity to execute change, and a shared vision for teacher effectiveness, Pittsburgh is poised to make great strides in advancing its vision of 80% of all students completing a post-secondary degree or workforce certification.

Part 3: Strategic Initiatives (grouped by our three strategic priorities)

Working with the PFT, we have identified three strategic priorities, supported by a combination of initiatives that will improve student achievement from 29% college-ready today to 50% college-ready in five years, and 80% in 11 years.[10] We chose to address teacher effectiveness practices that will have the greatest impact on lifting our average teacher effectiveness levels.

High schools are prioritized in our sequencing since we have not seen material improvements over three years in our 11th grade PSSA scores. In addition, a number of initiatives target high schools—especially 9th and 10th grades—in order to make the dramatic changes that will foster a college-going culture, build positive learning environments, and ensure the personalized approach necessary for student success. The district is committed to continuing these initiatives long after an intensive partnership with BMGF may have ended.[11]

1 *Increase the number of highly effective teachers.*[12]
We will enhance, recognize and reward the effectiveness of teachers in our classrooms, improve the effectiveness of the teachers we hire, and systematically exit those teachers who do not materially improve students' learning.

A **Enhance, recognize and reward the effectiveness of teachers already at PPS.**
Today, 2,045 classroom teachers educate our students. These teachers offer a tremendous source of power that can fuel the dramatic acceleration of student success we owe to our students and our community. To harness this power, we must improve our ability to recognize and reward those teachers who currently exemplify our definition of teacher excellence—an ability to promote one or more years of academic growth in a year, evidence of reducing racial disparities

and a willingness to shape students' mindsets, behaviors and aspirations—as well as support the teachers who require assistance in building these skills.

RISE. Research indicates that the most influential factor in growing student learning is the quality of teaching. However, many school districts—Pittsburgh included—do not have the systems and processes to measure teaching quality, much less improve it. "Comprehensive evaluation systems send the message that teachers are professionals doing important work."[13] This was where our work on teacher effectiveness began.

Until now, our evaluation tool rated teachers on four domains but did not allow more detailed teacher ratings within each domain. Domains were aggregated to reach a summative satisfactory or unsatisfactory rating. While unsatisfactory ratings had to contain an explanation, satisfactory ratings could not contain any negative comments—feedback was limited to a rating conference between the teacher and the administrator. Since that process resulted in over 99% of tenured teachers being rated satisfactory each year, the vast majority of teachers received little to no developmental feedback and, as a result, there was little formal dialogue about what a great teacher knows and does. In rare instances when teachers were found "unsatisfactory," they received targeted support with a time-bounded improvement plan.

That situation was unsatisfying for PPS, the PFT and the district's teachers.[14] In December 2008, we decided collectively that it was time for change. Superintendent Mark Roosevelt and Mr. John Tarka, the President of the PFT, agreed to collaborate on the development of a new approach to teacher evaluation. This decision grew into our Research-based Inclusive System of Evaluation (RISE).

Key elements of the collaboration include:

- ***Ongoing communications.*** Communications with all stakeholders was an emphasis from the very start of this process. Superintendent Roosevelt and Mr. Tarka created a collaborative video in which they described their commitment to co-design RISE, and voiced their promise to be transparent throughout the development and implementation of the program. This video was played at faculty meetings in every school in April 2009.

- ***Research-based approach.*** After studying the research on performance assessment,[15] five critical attributes were identified to guide the development work:

  – "Clear and straightforward performance standards focused on student achievement outcomes."[16] We used Charlotte Danielson's "Framework for Teaching" as our guide, and enhanced it by incorporating Effort-Based Learning Theory, student achievement measures over time, and metrics on cultural competence and equity.

  – A *differentiated system* of assessment that is responsive to the developmental levels of novices, experienced teachers and teachers in need of intensive support across four performance levels ("multiple, distinct rating options"[17]).

- An *evidence-based* process in which multiple measures over multiple instances are used to collect the facts about a teacher's practice.

- A *growth-oriented* model that fosters teacher learning and changes in practice.

- *Transparency* throughout the process of development, pilot implementation and full-scale implementation, by communicating with all stakeholders at regular intervals.

- *Inclusive process.* 132 teacher leaders, PFT leaders, PPS administrators and principals met for four days in May 2009 to use the critical attributes of performance assessment to design the RISE system. Since then, seven PPS and PFT joint subcommittees have managed the refinement of what was created in May.

- *Pilot program.* Scheduled for September 2009, a pilot program will systematically implement the RISE program, collect data and evaluate program effectiveness. Invitations to participate in the pilot were extended to all schools. Half of the district (i.e., 30 schools)—dramatically more than the 7 to 10 that were expected —volunteered to participate.

At this point, we have completed both the rubric and the evaluation process redesign. The number and quality of data points that factor into a summative evaluation have been increased as have the number and type of individuals (e.g., teacher leaders) whose feedback factors into an evaluation. This requires a concerted focus on building the capacity of those conducting evaluations. In addition, we have determined a required amount of administrative observations prior to submitting a rating. Tenured teachers must receive four or more evaluations per year; whereas, non-tenured teachers receive eight or more observations per year.[18]

While principals will continue to be the primary evaluators, they may utilize the assistance of subject area experts to enhance the observation and conferencing process. At the high school level, there will be a particular focus on ensuring that at least some evaluations come from trained experts who have deep expertise in the teacher's content area. In either instance, evaluators must be able to identify practices that are more likely to result in greater student learning, and cite evidence of student learning from student oral responses, student written work, student performances, as well as test results. Having more than one evaluator increases the likelihood that evaluations are fair, and perceived to be fair.

The changes in the evaluation process impact both tenured and non-tenured teachers. The change for non-tenured teachers will be particularly important, as the process of developing the BMGF proposal has allowed PPS to understand the degree of control it currently has over the tenure decision (*discussed below*).

Successful implementation of RISE will require a strong focus on preparing and supporting the school leaders[19] and teachers participating in the RISE pilot this fall. We will deliver five days of initial evaluation training for leadership teams in August—plus a minimum of six additional days throughout the year, on-site support and training (monthly visits) to participating schools by project coordinators, up to six focused trainings for administrators on effective observing and conferring

skills, feedback to evaluators regarding the processes of evidence collection and conferencing with teachers and ongoing training for teachers in the RISE teaching standards and processes, as well as the skills of self-assessment and reflection.

We will use data from the pilot implementation, including participant surveys, collected evidence, observations of evaluators, analysis of teaching growth, and comparison of student growth measures, to adjust the pilot and to prepare for full implementation in the 2010-2011 school year.

Information related to the evaluation process will be captured in an electronic teacher performance dashboard. A teacher dashboard provides two distinct benefits. First, from a central office perspective, it will enable us to understand strengths and skill gaps across our teacher corps, thereby allowing us to develop targeted professional development options. Second, by creating an internet-based interface that teachers can access, we can provide teachers with regularly updated information that is specific to them. This will include information such as their own performance evaluation, and how their personal strengths or growth opportunities link to career ladder roles and professional development offerings.

To ensure that the evaluation process for both tenured and non-tenured teachers is well-supported and consistent across all schools, we plan to establish two Evaluation Specialist positions. Part of the HR department, these positions will be responsible both for managing the evaluation process and for providing technical assistance to our principals on how to conduct effective observations, hold meaningful evaluation conversations, create effective improvement plans, and provide support for teachers on improvement plans. To be hired at the start of the 2009-2010 school year, these positions will work in all schools in the coming school year, as needed.

Performance Pay. With the goal of improving the academic achievement of all students, and recognizing the importance of rewarding teachers for their efforts to achieve that goal, the district and the PFT commit to developing a valid and equitable performance pay plan that encourages teachers to achieve consistently strong student achievement results. The plan will correlate teacher compensation with demonstrated growth in student achievement. The district and the PFT, together with the AFT, will develop a performance pay system based upon a transparent VAM and other measures, including RISE.

A compensation plan structure and components of pay are subjects of collective bargaining, and so best done following the submission of the proposal. PPS and the PFT have committed, however, to work diligently to reach agreement and implement a compensation plan that recognizes and rewards teachers for growth in the achievement of the students they teach.

This is an important step for Pittsburgh, as nearly all of PPS' teacher compensation (97% in 2008) is driven by the salary schedule, which is based on factors that research demonstrates are not linked to student achievement: teachers' educational attainment and years of service.[20] Today, our salary schedule prescribes gradual step increments for the first 9 years of service, followed by a 52% increase in teachers' pay during the 10th year of service. Today, 63% of PPS teachers

are in the last salary step within their grade, indicating that, for most teachers in the system, there is little room for pay advancement.

Academy: professional development for experienced teachers. An important aspect of building the effectiveness of our teachers comes in the form of the PPS/PFT Promise Academy, where both experienced and novice teachers will come to build their instructional practices and deepen their ability to connect with students. Reflecting our commitment to improving high-need students' access to quality instruction, the Academy will be housed in schools that are currently low-performing—one high school (grades 6-12) and two satellite elementary schools (grades K-5).[21]

The Academy will provide rich experiential learning regarding:

- Instructional practices that maximize student learning and *Promise-Readiness*;
- PPS core curricula and programs that prepare students for college;
- Data-informed decision-making, including summative, formative, interim, and diagnostic assessments to monitor and adapt instruction;
- Race, race relations, and its implications for teaching;
- Cultural competence and culturally relevant pedagogy;
- Classroom management and student relationship building strategies;
- Student motivations and aspirations for college-readiness and completion; and
- Access to latest research from PPS' partners: the PFT's Educational Research and Dissemination (ER&D); the University of Pittsburgh's IFL and Learning Research Development Center.

For experienced teachers, the Academy will provide two types of professional development. First, all current PPS teachers in core subject areas (e.g., Mathematics, English Language Arts, Special Education) will cycle through the Academy in intensive, five to six week-long immersions during the second semester or the summer. During these immersions, teachers will improve and reflect on their teaching practices through a combination of intense observation, coaching, and content videos. In addition, all PPS teachers can voluntarily participate in additional training (e.g., seminars, observations) either in-person or over video-conference.

PPS spends more than $11.6M each year on professional development (2% of total budget), the bulk of which (73% in 2008) is focused on in-school coaching. This investment reflects a strong belief that professional development must take place close to the classroom. By incorporating a focus on experienced teachers into the Academy, we will stay true to our philosophy on professional development, while heightening its impact.

First, by utilizing an immersion approach, our experienced teachers will be able to focus on applying new skills. We know that teachers must model behavior, then receive immediate feedback on their actions in order to both ensure fidelity of implementation and that training translates into classroom practice.[22] The Academy also allows us more control over the quality of coaching our teachers receive.

B **Improve the effectiveness of the teachers we hire through** *Teach for Pittsburgh.*

Teach For Pittsburgh is our plan to infuse the district's beliefs about the skills, mindsets and values necessary to teach PPS students. It serves as a framework for how we select and induct new teacher candidates, including highly skilled candidates not yet certified in Mathematics, Science and Special Education.

Recruiting. There is an opportunity to see material impact from adopting a new recruiting process that attracts the most effective external teacher candidates—whether novices with teacher certification, experienced teachers transferring from other districts, or alternative certification candidates in priority content areas—and places them in classrooms that match their strengths and aspirations, as well as the district's needs.

While the focus of this initiative is on external teacher hires, the interview process described below can be applied to both external hires and teachers seeking a voluntary transfer within PPS.

To improve our new hire teacher selection practices we will address five fundamental elements across each phase in the recruiting process (sourcing, screening, interviewing, offer / placement).

- *Competencies based job analysis.* Teacher recruiting—regardless of the point in the process—must reflect the needs and responsibilities of the role. Through the RISE process, we have arrived at a performance rubric that will anchor the selection process. The RISE rubric, coupled with research on the selection practices of TNTP, Gallup, and Teach for America, will support our efforts to establish consistent selection competencies, as well as the processes to execute, improve and measure performance against them over time.

- *Early hiring.* We will make competitive external offers in April and May (similar to surrounding districts), rather than in our current July and August timeframe. To do this, we will encourage teachers to announce retirement by December 1 and streamline the budgeting, evaluation and HR systems necessary for identifying vacancies sooner.

- *Data-driven decision-making.* HR will improve its use of data to target and refine efforts. The district will improve business processes to track and use quantitative and qualitative data more consistently and to greater impact.

- *Additional support for hard-to-staff positions and schools.* HR will use a rigorous screening process (see below) to identify candidates who are highly qualified to fill critical needs. PPS will provide these candidates with priority consideration for job offers, and increase the levels of support available to the principals of high-need schools.

- *Customer service.* We will focus on quality and timely response to requests. We are developing a scorecard, which will be monitored through a department-wide survey, with plans to integrate customer feedback as a core part of departmental and recruiter evaluation.

Our Recruiting and Staffing process includes: sourcing, screening, interviewing, and placement. Using an in-depth diagnostic, we will improve at each step of the recruiting process.

Sourcing. PPS' goal is to maximize our recruiting yield from the best sources, as well as expand our reach to new sources that will also yield candidates who are likely to be highly effective teachers. To act on these goals, we plan to:

- Analyze how new hires perform once in PPS (e.g., RISE results, student achievement data) by preparation program and specific position (e.g., Mathematics teachers) through the use of an applicant tracking system. This information will be used to target future recruiting and provide preparation programs with feedback on how they can improve the effectiveness of their teachers.

- By opening our doors to alternative and non-certified candidates in core content areas such as Mathematics, Science and Special Education, we believe we can increase the pool of talented candidates, particularly when it comes to minority and male candidates.[23] To support this effort, our Academy will be able to certify Mathematics, Science, and Special Education teachers, based upon us seeking and obtaining the necessary approval from the PA Department of Education.[24]

Screening. As specified in PA School Code 21-2110, we must maintain eligibility lists by certification area that rank-order the pool of external applicants. We can shape the criteria and weightings used to rank order these lists with approval from our Board of Education to better reflect factors that correlate with teacher quality.

While our HR department currently provides principals with a list of potential external candidates, it does not actively support the screening process (e.g., conduct meaningful pre-screen, maintain up-to-date lists). This has led to principals spending valuable time screening and interviewing candidates who they are unlikely to hire. We are working to make improvements.

Starting in July 2009, HR began additional efforts to screen the eligibility list to ensure it is up-to-date, reflecting interested candidates and providing their current contact information. To ensure that principals can access up-to-the-minute information, HR put the eligibility list online. In addition, HR has also uploaded additional information such as certification type, prior experience in PPS (e.g., student teaching, substitutes), and actual availability. These changes have not required significant additional costs or Board approval.

And, in September 2009, the Board of Education will vote on improvements to the screening process, including:

- Revised eligibility list criteria that assesses candidates across competency areas tied to what research shows makes a highly effective teacher and to the RISE evaluation process they will follow once employed, including an annual opt-in by candidates to remain on the eligibility list.
- Use of a research-based prescreening interview tool that does not contain bias for age, gender, race or experience and can be administered online, eliminating the manual processing required.

Over the next three years, PPS will evaluate the impact of changing our screening approach. If the new screening criteria do not yield consistently better candidates, PPS will explore working with the PFT/AFT to appeal to Pennsylvania to eliminate the eligibility list.

Interviewing. Our interview process will be revised to reflect the updated job competencies. This will require PPS to:

- Create an interview rubric to assess candidates on PPS screening criteria and suggested guiding questions. Coupled with training on how to use the rubric, we believe this will reduce the variability in the level of rigor that schools apply to candidate interviews (e.g., only 25% of schools utilize an interview rubric today).

- Provide effective interview training to ensure consistency.

- Employ best practice interview techniques (e.g., article discussion, interpret data, etc.).

Placement. PPS does not systematically differentiate the processes or incentives used to place candidates in high-need schools or positions. In the fall 2009, we will recommend to the Board that we use three types of incentives to target candidates for high-need schools and positions:

- Offer experienced new hires accepting positions in high-need schools or content areas a one-time or incremental bonus in addition to higher placement on the salary schedule.

- Offer novice new hires in priority content areas (e.g., Mathematics, Science, Special Education) a one-time bonus, paid out in two distributions: first, when positions are accepted, and second when new hires complete their first year in their full-time classroom with satisfactory performance.

- Expand on the practice of anticipating hiring needs in high-need areas and extending early offers to those candidates we cannot afford to lose.

These enhancements will allow us to improve the average effectiveness of our new hires. Combined with improvements to induction, we will see a noticeable improvement in the effectiveness of our new teacher hires.
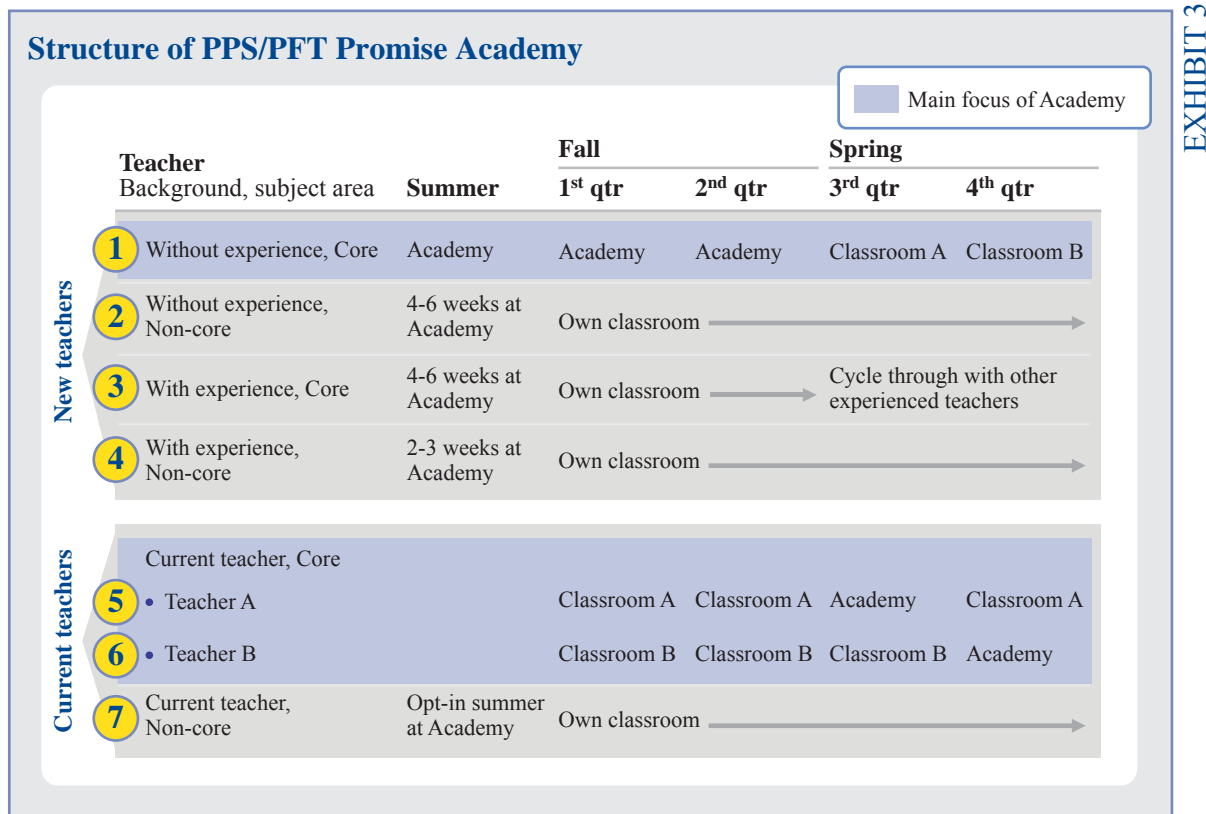
Academy: induction for novice teachers. The Academy, a cornerstone of *Teach for Pittsburgh*, will offer an in-depth residency-based induction program for certified and/or non-certified candidates at one 6-12 high school and two satellite K-5 elementary schools for novice new hires in core content areas (e.g., Mathematics, Science, English Language Arts, Special Education).[25]

The teaching profession can only be "mastered" through practice. Research supports this—few preparation programs prepare teachers with the classroom management and instructional skills and specific focus on teaching African American students so critical for an urban district such as PPS.[26] To ensure a systematic emphasis on instructional practice and college-going culture, PPS will require that novice teachers in core content areas complete an induction/residency program at the Academy. Teachers new to PPS who do not teach in core content areas will be inducted through a two to six week *Teach for Pittsburgh* summer immersion program, as well as ongoing seminars throughout the first three years of teaching.

The residency program will last 13 months—running from June through June of the following year. During the summer and first semester, novice teachers will experience a highly structured course of

study where they have time to plan, teach, and reflect on lessons with other novice teachers under the supervision of a clinical resident instructor (CRI). To maximize individualized impact, each CRI will be responsible for only two novice teachers. We will deploy 12 CRIs to the two satellite elementary buildings (two per grades K-5), 12 CRIs in grades 6-8 (four core subject CRIs per grades 6-8), and 16 CRIs in grades 9-12 (four core subject CRIs per grades 9-12). We will also select eight Special Education CRIs to distribute across the three Academy locations. At a 2 to 1 ratio, these 48 CRIs will give us capacity to induct approximately 100 new teachers each year.

After the first eight months in the Academy, residents will be placed in classrooms in other district buildings to complete a field placement—either to apprentice with a carefully selected mentor teacher, or if found ready, to take over a classroom for a quarter while that teacher participates in a five to six-week immersion program at the Academy. As illustrated in Exhibit 3, the field placement will coordinate with the experienced teachers' cycle through the Academy in the second semester.

Structure of PPS/PFT Promise Academy

	Teacher Background, subject area	Summer	Fall		Spring	
			1st qtr	2nd qtr	3rd qtr	4th qtr
New teachers						
1	Without experience, Core	Academy	Academy	Academy	Classroom A	Classroom B
2	Without experience, Non-core	4-6 weeks at Academy	Own classroom			→
3	With experience, Core	4-6 weeks at Academy	Own classroom	→	Cycle through with other experienced teachers	
4	With experience, Non-core	2-3 weeks at Academy	Own classroom			→
Current teachers	Current teacher, Core					
5	• Teacher A		Classroom A	Classroom A	Academy	Classroom A
6	• Teacher B		Classroom B	Classroom B	Classroom B	Academy
7	Current teacher, Non-core	Opt-in summer at Academy	Own classroom			→

Main focus of Academy

This high degree of support for 13 months will be coupled with rigorous evaluation linked to student achievement measures—Academy administrators and content specialists will conduct multiple evaluations of novice teachers. Those who do not meet performance standards at the end of the first eight months will, prior to the field placement, receive appropriate support to find other employment. During the field placement, new teachers will receive support from their CRI, and will participate in on-going seminars and planning sessions with their CRI.

An additional trademark of the Academy is its impact on the tenure clock. Tenure is a meaningful award, and teachers should have ample classroom time to demonstrate their impact on student learning. Accordingly, novice teachers who attend the Academy will not begin their three-year tenure clock until they assume a regular teaching position for one semester or more. For most teachers, this first full teaching position will occur after the 13-month Academy residency; some high-performing Academy residents may have the opportunity to begin regular teaching positions in the second semester of their Academy experience. In both cases, the Academy will provide a preparatory experience that propels the teacher to a greater chance of success once the tenure clock begins.

The PA Department of Education has offered its support for PPS to offer Mathematics, Science, and Special Education teacher certification, enabling *Teach for Pittsburgh* to cast a wide recruiting net on the diverse pool of talent, including males and African Americans, that we wish to attract, particularly in our critical subjects. Non-certified teachers will participate in the same residency as certified Academy new hires but will have a longer path to tenure. Initially, the district will work with the TNTP to provide certification for un-credentialed teachers in Science, Mathematics and Special Education. This role will transition to the district over time. Given their instructional inexperience, we will recommend to the state that non-certified candidates must complete four semesters in the district before their three-year tenure clock commences, becoming eligible for the granting of tenure a total of five years from the start of the Academy residency.

The Academy represents an important advancement in the way that we approach induction as a district. While we meet the induction requirements mandated under Pennsylvania Code (i.e., first year teachers must have an experienced teacher mentor[27]), we know that we can do more to support teachers as they enter our school system.

We believe that the Academy, with its emphasis on hands-on, applied learning will make a dramatic difference in the way in which we bring new teachers into the system. Given teachers' steep learning curve during their first year, we believe the residency program will build the practice of novice teachers in ways that are beneficial for both students and teachers. By the time novice teachers in core content areas assume ownership for a classroom, they should be functioning at high 2nd year levels as they will have received in-depth training and met high evaluation criteria. Beyond the pure academic benefit, the Academy provides an opportunity to build a distinct PPS culture—one where teachers take ownership over students' learning and post-high school ambitions. By immersing our new teachers in this setting, we can amplify a college-going culture that will enable students to take advantage of *The Pittsburgh Promise*.

Tenure decision. Today, PPS teachers earn tenure after three years of satisfactory semi-annual performance evaluations. That decision goes relatively unnoticed— teachers who receive tenure are not recognized, either financially or socially, and neither the central office nor principals are systematically made aware that this milestone is approaching. Starting now, that will change. The tenure decision will be an opportunity for the district to celebrate a teacher's accomplished instructional practice and demonstrated ability to drive student achievement over time.

Through RISE, PPS will observe and evaluate novice teachers more frequently, ensuring they receive a minimum of eight observations each year. This is a fundamental change from today, where principals must complete a semi-annual evaluation for each novice but are not required to conduct a minimum number of observations per classroom each year. However, our strategy is not simply about greater accountability—accountability carries an obligation to provide support. While the new policy places a greater burden on non-tenured teachers to demonstrate accomplishment, it is also meant to provide novice teachers with greater direction on what they must do to improve their practice. In addition, the new evaluation process will be augmented with improved supports for novice teachers, including participation in *Teach for Pittsburgh*, which incorporates both a residency model and an induction model, depending on a teacher's content area.

To make tenure meaningful, we will establish new processes and add responsibilities to various roles. Principals will feel greater accountability for awarding tenure. While "teacher evaluation" has been a component of the principal evaluation rubric since 2007, it has not received the heightened focus it deserves. Going forward, assistant superintendents will consider tenure recommendations as important evidence of a principal's proficiency in this component. To enhance accountability, we plan to record which principal granted tenure to each teacher, capturing that information in both the teacher's and principal's employment file. Central office will provide support by developing a systematic way to remind principals of which teachers are up for tenure consideration. In addition, HR will host a tenure-granting ceremony and find other ways to make tenure a true "milestone."

To operationalize these changes efficiently, we will improve the data systems that track teachers' employment information. For example, today there is no easy way to query which teachers are up for tenure in a given year, nor who granted that decision. In addition, while we know anecdotally that some non-tenured teachers are found "unsatisfactory," this information is not captured in our current HR data systems. This limits our insight into the frequency or patterns of these occurrences, making it difficult to address gaps in the district's hiring, evaluation or professional development processes.

An important change in our approach to tenure is in the length of time until the tenure decision. Rather than beginning on date of employment, the three-year tenure clock will start when a new hire spends a semester or more in a classroom. In most cases, this clock will occur when new hires are placed in their full-time classrooms after the 13-month Academy residency. However, high performing Academy residents may assume responsibility for a classroom in the second semester of their residency year, and would therefore begin the tenure clock at that time. Non-certified candidates—a new talent pipeline that will be targeted by the Academy—will spend four semesters in the district before their three-year tenure clock begins, making the tenure decision a five year process. Under state code, experienced hires who earned tenure elsewhere in Pennsylvania retain tenure when they transfer districts.

2 Increase the exposure of high-need students to highly effective teachers.

We will offer our most effective teachers new, high-impact roles (e.g., 9th grade Excellence Corps) that recognize—financially and socially—the importance of teaching high-need students. The evidence is clear on the dramatic impact our most effective teachers can have on our highest need students. Consistent contact over many years with the most effective teachers is the best way to ensure that these students are well-positioned for *Promise-Readiness*s and personal success. We have made it a priority to encourage our most effective teachers to take on these assignments—which can often be highly challenging—by creating the rewards and recognition that these roles so richly warrant.

We have a fairly even distribution of highly effective teachers in our schools[28] —and have worked hard to encourage strong teachers to work in our ALAs. Career ladders offer a more highly-focused effort to reward and recognize our most effective teachers.

Career ladder. To increase dramatically the exposure of our neediest students' exposure to highly effective teachers, the district will create six new, high-impact roles linked to differentiated compensation. We believe this will encourage teachers to view working in challenging schools or with high-need students as a badge of distinction.

Career ladder roles will be selective. While the final selection criteria will be collaboratively developed with our partners at the PFT, they are likely to include RISE ratings, classroom observations, in-person interviews, student work, a scenario-based activity, and evidence of impact on student achievement. Teachers demonstrating strong performance against these multi-faceted criteria will be selected for these new roles. While the commitment length will be dictated by the nature of each career ladder role—at least two years for the Excellence Corps, for example—teachers will be evaluated annually against a prescribed set of performance criteria, including student outcomes.

Teachers selected for a distinct career ladder role will receive additional compensation that reflects their contributions to growth in student achievement and their ability to create positive student outcomes once in the career ladder role. While highly effective teachers will be encouraged to remain in these high-impact roles, they will have options both to leave the role or to pursue other career paths, should they qualify for them.

In accordance with our priority of dramatically turning around high schools and ensuring college readiness in large numbers of students, the signature career pathway will be the 9th and 10th grade Teacher Excellence Corps. In addition, we will implement five other career pathways within the next five years, all of which are described on the next page (Exhibit 4). Depending on the student impact of these first six career ladder roles, we may later transition some of these career ladder roles into others better aligned with future needs.

EXHIBIT 4

Overview of career ladder pathways

		Description	Eligible applicants	Launch year
1	**9th and 10th grade Teacher Excellence Corps**	• Cohort of ~8 highly effective and motivated teachers linked with ~150 9th and 10th grade HS students • Provide intensive, hand-on academic and personal support in 9th grade, then follow students to 10th grade	• All teachers certified for 9th and 10th grade • Not exclusive to tenured teachers • For full launch, not exclusive to current PPS teachers	• 2010-11: Launch structure with current teachers • 2011-12: Fully launch 9th grade Teacher Excellence Corps • 2012-13: 9th moves to 10th; Teacher Excellence Corps in place in both grades

2	**HS Instructional Teacher Leader (HS ITL)**	• Redesign of HS ITL/Coach roles:
		  – Highly effective, content-expert teachers who formatively evaluate content peers in their HS, and design and deliver customized PD based on formative evaluations
		  – Summatively evaluate content peers in other schools
		  – Also teach 2 periods per day
			• Only PPS tenured teachers	• 2010-11

3	**K-8 Instructional Teacher Leader (K-8 ITL)**	• Redesign of K-8 ITL/Coach roles: – Highly effective teachers, whose new roles will include interventions, formative, and summative evaluations	• Only PPS tenured teachers	• 2011-12
4	**K-8 Turn-around Teachers**	• Teachers, highly effective in both content delivery and student engagement, deployed to be cultural change agents in low-performing classrooms for ~3 year assignments	• All teachers certified for K-8 • Not exclusive to current PPS teachers	• 2010-11: First half rolled out • 2011-12: Remaining half rolled out
5	**Clinical Resident Instructor (CRI)**	• Highly effective teachers chosen to be faculty at PPS/PFT Promise Academy • Will serve as mentors and instructional coaches to novice and experienced teachers	• Tenured teachers certified in priority content areas • Only PPS tenured teachers	• 2010-11
6	**Behavioral Specialist**	• Teachers with outstanding classroom management skills, demonstrated interpersonal skills and respect of peers and administrators • Receive specialized training in student behavior management to, in turn, coach peers	• Teachers distinguished in domain 2 (i.e., Classroom Environment) of RISE	• 2010-11

9th and 10th grade Teacher Excellence Corps. In our eight high-need high schools, we will create tightly-knit teams of six to eight highly effective teachers, including 1-2 English Language Art teachers, 1-2 Mathematics teachers, a Science teacher, a Social Studies teacher, a Special Education teacher, and a counselor/social worker. These teachers—all strong at both content delivery and student engagement—will begin teaching 9th grade students, then transition with them to the 10th grade. By looping with students, Excellence Corps teachers will better track their students' social and academic development, informing more effective instruction based on students' learning styles. We want to provide the strongest safety nets to ensure that every student has access to *The Pittsburgh Promise*.

In recognition of the positive influence adult relationships have on a student's path toward post-secondary education, members of the Excellence Corps will also play an advisory role. To support this new role, Corps members will add to their day an additional period—44 minutes—to be able to meet and discuss the progress of their students daily. Regular reports of students' achievement history, attendance trends, behavioral record, and past actions or interventions will enable targeted discussions of the support each student needs. On a rotating basis, the school principal and social worker will attend this meeting to assist with deeper or more targeted interventions that students may require.

Because these 9th and 10th grade teams will accept accountability for the social and academic development of their students, rewarding them for the success of their collective effort is appro-

priate. The district and the PFT have agreed that a monetary bonus shall be shared among eligible team members once every two years, based on the success of the student group as it heads to 11th grade. We will develop the measures to determine the bonus amount and the system for distributing the bonus through collective bargaining, using resources such as MPR and the AFT as necessary and appropriate, with the goal of creating a valid and transparent Excellence Corps bonus program. Careful consideration will be given to whether teachers beyond the Excellence Corps who contribute to and accept responsibility for the social and academic development of 9th and 10th graders should be included and, if so, to what degree.

Given our focus on turning around high schools, there is an urgency to implement this career pathway. However, we will not let our desire to act quickly overcome our belief as to what it will take to implement the Excellence Corps successfully. In 2009-10, we will commission the instructional cabinets—leadership teams of teachers and administrators at each school—in our eight low-performing high schools to design the structure for the Excellence Corps in their school based upon district-wide standards, as well as determine how the existing faculty will be redeployed to strengthen the 9th and 10th grades. Designing this initiative collaboratively with the instructional cabinets in a facilitated setting with technical assistance will create ownership that will be critical to the Excellence Corps' credibility and long-term sustainability, as well as support our belief in distributed leadership and execution management.

High School Instructional Teacher Leaders (HS ITLs). Today, all schools have Instructional Teacher Leaders. ITLs support colleagues who have identified needs (e.g., classroom management) and those with employee improvement plans. The number of ITLs per school varies based on size and subject offerings; generally high schools have one ITL per subject. High school ITLs work a longer day to fulfill their ITL responsibilities, in return for which they receive a stipend ranging from $500-2,000. This is an elected role, with teachers self-nominating, their peers narrowing the field, and principals making the final selection. Elections take place every three years. Given that there are few parameters on the selection process (e.g., no eligibility criteria, nor a rigorous application process), ITL quality varies across schools. In addition, there is little ability to ensure consistency of quality or approach employed across the ITLs.

Given our belief in the importance of in-school professional development, and research by Richard Elmore suggesting that the most effective professional development happens closest to the classroom, we plan to redesign and expand the existing ITL role to support each content area in each secondary school (grades 6-12 and 9-12) in 2010-11. ITLs will serve as content experts who ensure instructional quality and teacher effectiveness, ensuring alignment between evaluation and appropriate teacher support/professional development. In addition to teaching two periods per day, ITLs will be responsible for formatively evaluating their content peers in their own school, designing and delivering customized/differentiated professional development based on those formative evaluations, participating in curriculum audits and writing, and summatively evaluating teachers in their content area in other schools. While the rating principal will be the ultimate decision-maker in the RISE evaluation process, summative evaluations developed by HS ITLs will be a portion of a teacher's final RISE evaluation rating.

When the ITL role is introduced, ITLs in the existing role will have an opportunity to apply for the new position. However, the position will also be open to other high-performing, tenured teachers and selection will be competitive. Current ITLs not selected for the new role will be compensated for the remainder of their cycle.

K-8 Instructional Teacher Leaders (K-8 ITL). The ITL role will expand to K-8 schools in 2011-12.

K-8 Turn-around Teachers. Across low-performing schools, there is a strong need for excellent teachers who excel at content knowledge, instructional delivery, classroom management, student engagement, and the ability to effectively teach African American students. These distinguished teachers, chosen also for their strong ability to be cultural change agents, will agree to be placed in low-performing schools for "turn-around" assignments of up to three years.

Clinical Resident Instructors (CRIs). The Academy, a high school (grades 6-12) and two Satellite Urban Residency sites (grades K-5), will employ approximately 48 highly effective teachers to serve as CRIs, the primary mentors and instructional coaches to novice and experienced teachers. In addition, similar to the new ITLs, CRIs will formatively evaluate their mentees and summatively work with other CRIs to evaluate other novice teachers as part of an aggressive tenure process. During their non-teaching time, CRIs will provide teacher residents with an intensive pre-lesson, lesson, and post-lesson observation cycle. In addition, the CRIs will provide a variety of professional development seminars at the Academy. CRIs also will deliver follow-up support, including building visits and distance-learning communication, to teachers upon their transition to their own school buildings. Finally, as Academy teachers, the CRIs also provide the added benefit of working with a large number of high-need students. The CRIs will carry a lighter course load (one or two classes less), but will teach larger class sizes in order to teach the number of students equivalent to a typical teaching load. Given the presence of mentees in the classroom, enhanced class size will be well supported.

Behavioral Specialists. We will support our mandate to improve the learning environments by creating behavioral specialist teams in our high-needs schools. Each team will be led by a Behavioral Specialist, a teacher distinguished in classroom management, with specialized training in student behavior management, demonstrated interpersonal skills, and the respect of peers and administrators. To apply for this role, we will require teachers to demonstrate distinguished performance in Domain 2, The Classroom Environment, on the RISE rubric. Selection will be based on this measure and other factors comprising a multi-faceted review.

The adoption of career ladder roles is an important evolution for the district. It represents a critical step towards advancing one of the district's core beliefs regarding the need for distributed leadership, and the importance of empowering our teachers as leaders in charting the course for student success. Historically, we have not had a concerted focus on which teachers taught in which schools or classrooms, nor have we found systematic ways to leverage our most effective teachers while providing them with the types of recognition and rewards that highlight the tremendous impact they have on students' lives.[29] This plan will change that.

3 *Ensure all teachers work in learning environments that support their ability to be highly effective.*

In order to ensure our students' access to *The Pittsburgh Promise*, we will set and reinforce high standards for behavior and aspirations, build students' ability to meet those standards, and provide wraparound supports to address escalated needs (e.g., social services, "Be a 6th Grade Mentor" project). PPS and the PFT envision our school district having learning environments where all students have an opportunity to achieve to a high level, access *The Pittsburgh Promise*, and succeed in post-secondary education. We will make this vision a reality by: 1) systematically fostering the social and behavioral norms that promote learning and college-readiness; and 2) increasing the effectiveness of teachers by improving the learning environment in all classrooms in our schools. Highly effective teaching is dependent upon a positive learning environment, and highly effective teachers are essential to ensuring that our schools are safe and orderly.

Feedback from our students, teachers, and parents highlight the opportunity we have to improve the quality and consistency of the learning environments in our schools. In a 2008 student survey, 25-50% of our 9th grade students described their school as ineffective or marginally effective in creating an atmosphere that meets their needs.

We also know that we need to build capacity in shaping environments that are attuned to cultural awareness, trust, and personalization. "Moreover, research suggests that the performance of African American males, more than other students, is influenced to a large degree by the social support and encouragement they receive by teachers."[30] In a RAND evaluation of our second year implementation of *Excellence for All*, African American students reported lower agreement than white students on statements such as "l have the support I need," "Teachers listen to what I have to say," and "I have at least one adult in my school who cares about me." We can, and must, change this.

Through this initiative, we commit to providing full, consistent support for teachers to assume leadership roles in building learning environments that enable students to be successful, through both their behaviors and their mindsets. With this understanding, we will refine and enhance our current approach, concentrating on the following four areas:

• Establishing behavior expectations of students that promote learning and college-readiness;
• Empowering teachers as leaders in maintaining a positive learning environment;
• Providing wrap-around support to assist with behavior-related interventions; and
• Continually assessing improvements in the learning environment.

To ensure that teachers are empowered to take leadership roles in this effort, the district will focus on simultaneously driving all four initiatives listed above. We will create a working group of administrators, teachers, principals and behavior specialists to develop and implement a plan that addresses this need. Beginning in late 2009, the group's first action will be to take stock of all behavior and learning environment related initiatives currently in the district. The district and the PFT will collaborate to establish the district-level accountability and supports that all schools need to ensure that learning environments are never allowed to deteriorate to the point where students' preparation for success is impeded.

Establishing behavior expectations that promote learning and college-readiness
To establish district-wide positive behavior expectations, PPS will: 1) create norms that are easy to follow; 2) establish rituals and routines that set the right expectations for college-readiness; and 3) extensively communicate the new expectations for learning environment.

We will distill from our lengthy and detailed code of student conduct a one page student-friendly document. The new shorter document will include positive behavioral expectations as well as the necessary responses to misconduct, and should serve as the core student behavior document for students, parents, teachers, and administrators.

Beginning in the 2009-10 school year, the central working group will provide non-negotiable implementation guidelines to every school. The guidelines could be based on the district's existing Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS) program's seven core components. Schools will work through their discipline committees to establish school-based implementation strategies, e.g., behavioral matrices that detail the algorithm of interventions and responses that the school will follow. To align schools towards the common vision of 80 percent of all students completing a post-secondary degree or workforce certification, every school will author a mission statement that highlights the explicit goal of preparing students to be college-ready—academically, behaviorally and socially. The ongoing assessment of the learning environment (mentioned later in this section) will examine the extent to which every school is making progress towards shaping a learning environment that promotes its mission of college readiness.

The district will launch a media campaign starting in the spring of 2010 and continue communications throughout the 2010-11 school year. Highlights will include a kick-off event for staff, possibly in collaboration with *The Pittsburgh Promise*. Our 2010 "Welcome Back to School" materials mailed to homes will highlight the new focus on positive learning environments.

Empower teachers as leaders in maintaining a positive learning environment
The district is committed to, and will invest in, building teachers' capacity for shaping the learning environment. In the fall 2010, as part of *Teach for Pittsburgh*, all novice teachers at the Academy or participating in the summer induction program, will receive training in classroom management in a course jointly developed by the PFT and district behavioral specialists. Training in classroom management will be provided for experienced teachers requiring support in this area (as measured on the RISE rubric). All teachers will participate in school-based professional development that provides training on cultural competence, fostering positive social norms in students, and shaping college-going cultures. We will build upon the district's PBIS program and the PFT's ER&D courses in creating the school-based professional development.

At the start of each school year, all novice teachers with classroom responsibilities will work with a teacher distinguished in classroom management to develop classroom management strategies.

Providing wrap-around support to assist with behavior-related interventions
Schools will employ a teacher-driven set of layered interventions (defined in the school's disci-

pline matrix) that appropriately respond to student misconduct, are aligned with the components of PBIS, and are consistent with the code of student conduct. In 2009-10, the PBIS model will provide an expert from the Watson Institute in all schools to train teachers and staff to better address disruptive behaviors.

In 2010-11, a career ladder position of Behavioral Specialist will be created at all high-needs schools. The position is open to teachers who are rated "distinguished" in Domain 2, The Classroom Environment, on the RISE rubric. The school-based Behavioral Specialist will lead the behavior specialist team (teachers, the social worker, and others) and will work with the district's PBIS behavioral expert to keep the school connected to the district-wide initiative and skill growth. The behavioral specialist teams will implement the plan guided by the district initiative and created by the school's discipline committee; do intake, diagnostic, wrap-around, and respond to student misconduct referrals.

The strength and skills of the behavioral specialist teams will focus on upholding a learning environment that advances students' access to *The Pittsburgh Promise*.

Continually assessing improvements in the learning environment
In preparation for the 2010-11 school year, we will define a rubric to gauge improvements in school learning environment. The rubric will assess schools on aspects of behavior and college-readiness and measure attributes such as the quality of relationships, quality of communications, the physical environment, and behavior trends. The student and parent/guardian surveys will measure the perceptions of school environment and its impact on motivation and preparation for college. Teacher surveys will evaluate improvements in the school environment and provide feedback on the effectiveness of classroom management professional development. Administrative learning walks will evaluate the whole-school learning environment that sets high standards and promotes a college-going culture. Based on the rubric and surveys, the district will assess, compare, and annually track the learning environment of all schools in order to facilitate goal-setting and "course corrections."

A college-going culture in all classrooms will be specifically measured by the RISE teacher evaluation rubric. This and other aspects of the evaluation rubric should be used to provide targeted feedback and professional development to teachers to strengthen their classroom management skills, reinforce teachers' leadership of the learning environment in their schools, and improve and sustain teacher effectiveness in every school.

Part 4: Internal Risks & Challenges

Pursuing a strong teacher effectiveness strategy entails overcoming several internal risks and challenges, which fall into three categories: 1) changing mindsets; 2) managing tactical implementation; and 3) engaging partners.

Changing mindsets
* ***Creating a consistent district culture and ensuring school learning environments meet basic standards.*** Systemizing culture is difficult, and Pittsburgh has yet to undertake this challenge at

a district level. We must ensure that every school evidences the desired district culture, develops a strong learning environment, and features trust among educators, students, and parents. Achieving these goals requires expanding educators' responsibility for students' college readiness, thus allowing PPS graduates to take advantage of *The Pittsburgh Promise* scholarships. We recognize that this will be a change for some educators and so we plan to develop a strategic communications and engagement plan, in concert with a targeted professional development plan, in order to build the understanding and support that will ultimately change behavior.

- *Building confidence in the rigor and fairness of RISE.* PPS must build teachers' trust in the new evaluation process, demonstrating that its tools are objective and assess meaningful behaviors. The decision to pilot RISE this school year and conduct feedback sessions with participating and non-participating teachers in the spring will help teachers to feel ownership over the process. In addition, the extensive training for both evaluators and teachers described earlier will also build buy-in by creating opportunities for input and refinement prior to full rollout.

- *Overcoming the belief that teaching is done in private.* For years, a teacher could go into his or her classroom and shut the door. That is no longer true. For teachers to become accustomed to this change, we will make classroom visits an ordinary thing, create dialogue around the practice of teaching, and demonstrate the value of frequent classroom observations. This will require that we invest in our school leaders by preparing them to talk about teaching and ensuring they spend time in classrooms.

Managing tactical implementation

- *Making HR a strategic function.* Executing our teacher effectiveness initiatives will require a dramatically different HR function. We must build capacity within this department, particularly in terms of talent and technology. Likewise, we must create systems (e.g., a teacher dashboard) and processes that provide information on all aspects of professional support, growth and effectiveness. Given the magnitude of this shift, we will enlist several expert service providers that can accelerate this transformation.

- *Realizing the internal cost savings necessary to support district priorities.* We have begun to identify spend that can be reallocated towards teacher effectiveness. However, moving from this phase to execution will require additional work and may require unpopular decisions. We will dedicate time and resources to identify the opportunities and the implications of reallocation decisions and to develop a communications strategy that will make our decision-making transparent.

- *Implementing data systems in a timely and effective manner.* Successful implementation of this work hinges on our ability to use data effectively. That will become dramatically easier once we implement upgrades to our data systems. Given the complexity of this work, we will use Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to create a detailed scope for each system based on an identification of business and functional requirements. We will need to rigorously undertake system architecture design and verify compatibility of new systems with existing systems to ensure technology investment risks are mitigated. Further, since inadequate project management can lead to cost and time overruns, as well as development errors, we will have an IT project lead that will be part of the Office of Teacher Effectiveness. The project lead will work with

third parties, SMEs and the technology department to ensure system implementation, pilot and rollout take place on schedule. Finally, we will allocate resources for overall data governance to ensure the integrity of data is preserved through the system integration, system enhancement, and data migration processes.

- *Identifying the teachers who will be capable of excelling in new roles.* In our effort to utilize highly effective teachers in new and high-impact ways, it will be necessary to determine the factors that best indicate whether a teacher is able to step into a new role successfully. We plan to create a selection rubric for different career ladder roles by assessing the performance of each teacher selected for a new role, identifying commonalities (e.g., areas of distinction on RISE domains) and the correlation of those factors with student outcomes.

Engaging external partners

- *Keeping multiple external partners effectively engaged in implementation.* The holistic nature of the change we seek necessarily requires that there will be multiple moving parts. Where a high degree of linkages between partners has already been identified, we will convene regular meetings to share information and jointly address areas of intersection among the partners. Given such complexity, it could be easy to overlook some of the external partners who must be engaged in this work or to under-communicate to them. In partnership with the PFT, we plan to engage an outside communications firm to develop a comprehensive communications plan and to provide ongoing strategic counsel and support for the first 12 to 18 months.

CHAPTER III - Implementation & Results

We will ensure success by building capacity to manage implementation, and by carefully planning the sequence of initiatives to enable the learning needed to take bold ideas to scale without jeopardizing all that we have achieved to date in improving student learning and college readiness. This chapter describes our steps to build program management capacity and our in-going plans and rationale for sequencing.

Establish an Office of Teacher Effectiveness (OTE)
To have the capacity to focus on, and learn from, our initial implementation efforts, we will create a leadership team of change agents. This will be accomplished by creating the OTE.
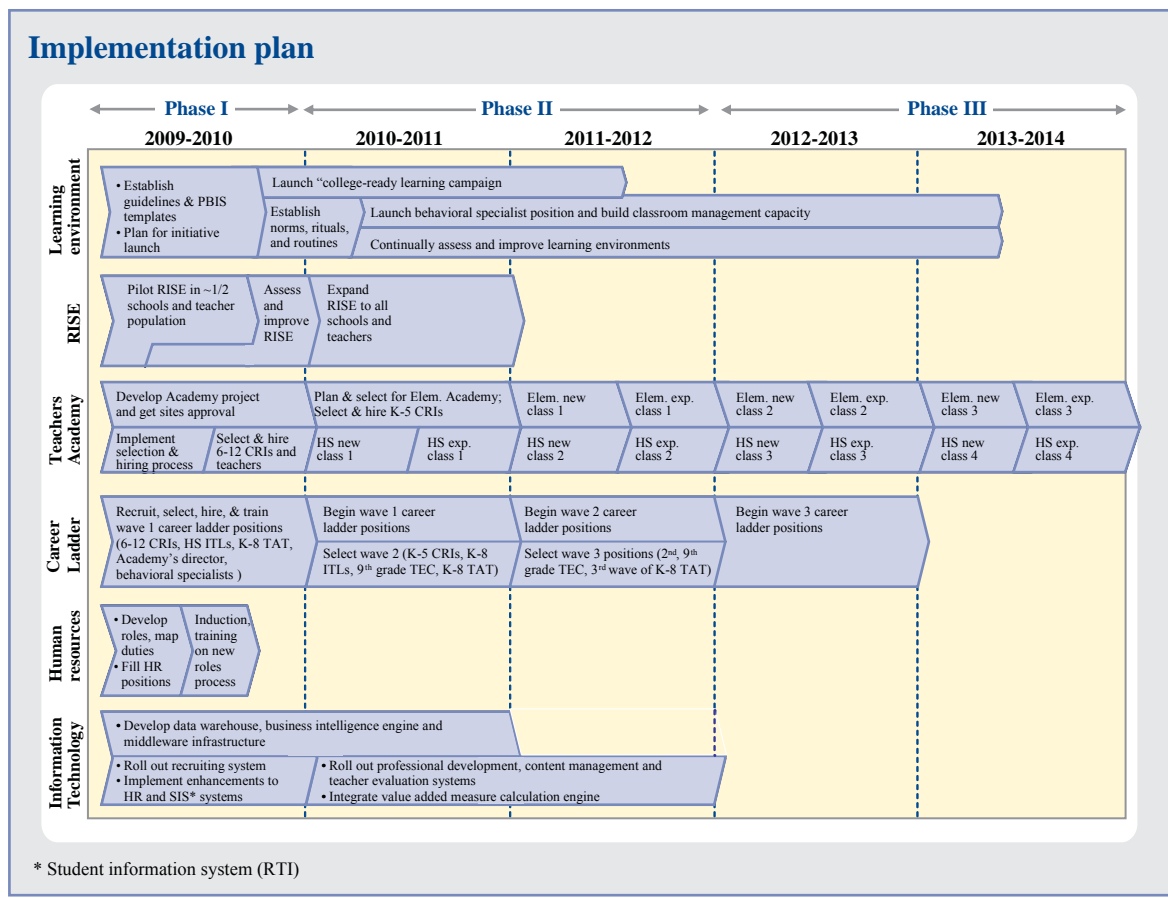
The OTE will support the seven strategic priorities (RISE, Performance Pay, Career Ladders, the Academy, learning environment, HR, and IT) described in this proposal and provide the project management support required to implement them. The OTE will work closely with the district leads responsible for each of the seven initiatives, including the Chief of Performance Management, the Chief Academic Officer, and the Deputy Superintendent, on design and execution. The OTE will include an executive director and six project managers. Staffing will combine internal district talent, as well as externally hired talent (e.g., Broad fellows). OTE will be responsible for:

- Driving the strategic initiatives under the district lead's direction, working across multiple departments to develop the strategies, milestones, budget, and implementation timeline.
- Developing project management plans for other offices (e.g., IT) and monitoring progress to ensure all initiatives stay on timeline.
- Coaching and supporting the staff responsible for the initial implementation of the initiative, so as to ensure effective execution.
- Tracking and reporting progress to the Superintendent (weekly report) and the Superintendent's Cabinet.
- Facilitating seamless communication and work flow products across all involved departments.

We will model OTE on our Office of Strategic Initiatives (OSI), which is responsible for managing the development of the district's cross-functional initiatives during their nascent phase. OSI has been very successful at managing the new Pittsburgh Science and Technology Academy, *The Pittsburgh Promise*, and the Right-Sizing plan, which resulted in closing 22 schools. A similar departmental structure will be equally effective at managing our teacher effectiveness strategies.

Implementation plan
Our teacher effectiveness plan has been designed to enable learning prior to scaling up initiatives, to respect policy constraints and agreements (e.g., the collective bargaining agreement or "CBA") and to anticipate the impact of integrating this work with important ongoing improvements currently in progress. Our plan will unfold in three phases, as illustrated on the following page (Exhibit 5).

EXHIBIT 5

Implementation plan

	Phase I	Phase II		Phase III	
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014

Learning environment
- Establish guidelines & PBIS templates
- Plan for initiative launch

Launch "college-ready learning campaign

Establish norms, rituals, and routines

Launch behavioral specialist position and build classroom management capacity

Continually assess and improve learning environments

RISE

Pilot RISE in ~1/2 schools and teacher population | Assess and improve RISE | Expand RISE to all schools and teachers

Teachers Academy

Develop Academy project and get sites approval	Plan & select for Elem. Academy; Select & hire K-5 CRIs	Elem. new class 1	Elem. exp. class 1	Elem. new class 2	Elem. exp. class 2	Elem. new class 3	Elem. exp. class 3
Implement selection & hiring process	Select & hire 6-12 CRIs and teachers	HS new class 1	HS exp. class 1	HS new class 2	HS exp. class 2	HS new class 3	HS exp. class 3	HS new class 4	HS exp. class 4

Career Ladder

Recruit, select, hire, & train wave 1 career ladder positions (6-12 CRIs, HS ITLs, K-8 TAT, Academy's director, behavioral specialists)

Begin wave 1 career ladder positions

Select wave 2 (K-5 CRIs, K-8 ITLs, 9th grade TEC, K-8 TAT)

Begin wave 2 career ladder positions

Select wave 3 positions (2nd, 9th grade TEC, 3rd wave of K-8 TAT)

Begin wave 3 career ladder positions

Human resources
- Develop roles, map duties
- Fill HR positions

Induction, training on new roles process

Information Technology
- Develop data warehouse, business intelligence engine and middleware infrastructure
- Roll out recruiting system
- Implement enhancements to HR and SIS* systems
- Roll out professional development, content management and teacher evaluation systems
- Integrate value added measure calculation engine

* Student information system (RTI)

Phase I: Build the foundation (2009-2010). This phase lays the groundwork

Execution milestones:

- *Implement the RISE pilot.* The RISE pilot will shape the fundamental underpinnings of our teacher effectiveness strategy—our evaluation rubric and the supporting evaluation process. Since we will pilot RISE in half of our schools, we will be able to collect detailed information on our teachers, ultimately enabling us to link that information to our professional development, our career ladder, and our hiring practices and forecasts through the teacher dashboard. During the summer of 2010, we will assess the implementation of RISE, identify any necessary changes, and incorporate those learnings into the RISE expansion plans.

- *Develop implementation plans.* Through OTE, we will collaboratively develop detailed implementation plans for core initiatives (e.g., career ladder roles, the Academy, learning environment). OTE will be responsible for tracking and reporting progress of this effort.

- *Reconstitute HR.* Re-envisioning how HR operates is so essential that we have already undertaken this work. However, much work remains. During the first year, we will restructure the department and redefine roles, enlist the services of several expert partners, implement new data systems, and develop departmental performance indicators for both the performance management and talent management groups. We will also supply information to support a more rigorous tenure process and create support for performance evaluation,

including supporting the marginal teacher / administrator process.

- *Implement data collection tools,* including the development of a robust VAM. In addition, we will use key performance metrics, linked to each strategic initiative, to develop and act upon a prioritized data collection plan.

- *Identify cost savings.* We will identify cost-saving opportunities from within our current budget.

- *Engage stakeholders.* With the PFT (which will act in partnership with the AFT), we will work with an external strategic communications firm to develop a communications strategy and immediately begin embedding messaging that supports our teacher effectiveness work into existing PPS and PFT communications, some jointly and some separately.

Grant outcomes and impact on student achievement and attainment:

Expected teacher and student gains	Baseline	Phase I
Highly effective teachers	28%	30%
Students achieving college-readiness	29%	34%
Grades K-5	34%	38%
Grades 6-8	30%	33%
Grades 9-12	22%	28%
PPS high school graduation rate	65%	68%

- The number of highly effective teachers will increase modestly in all RISE pilot schools as a result of the increased dialogue around effective practice.

- High-need students' access to highly effective teachers will not change.

- Student achievement, as measured by Mathematics PSSA, will increase marginally in all grades.

Phase II: Create momentum (2010-2012). We will extend RISE to all schools, as well as launch the strategic initiatives we developed in Phase I.

Execution milestones:
- *Expand RISE.* In the 2010-2011 school year, we will expand RISE to encompass all schools.

- *Implement the career ladder.*

  – As addressed in Chapter II, in the fall of school year 2010-11 we will launch the structure of our Excellence Corps in our eight priority high schools. In 2011-12, when the current 9th grade teachers move to 10th grade with students, we will launch the Excellence Corps with 9th grade teachers selected through a rigorous evaluation process and given additional compensation.

  – In 2010-11, HS ITL job descriptions will change to reflect new responsibilities. Current ITLs will reapply for their role, if they wish to continue in the redesigned position.

- The first wave of K-8 Turn-around teachers will begin in 2010-11. These teachers will be deployed across the district to approximately 12 struggling K-8 classrooms on assignments of up to three years. Chronically poor performing classrooms (e.g., 3rd grade at X elementary, 7th grade Math at Y Middle School) will be identified using multi-year student achievement analysis that measures the impact of each classroom on a child's progression over time. By 2011-12, we will deploy all 25 K-8 Turn-around teachers to the district's most struggling classrooms.

- In 2011-12, the K-8 ITL role will change to reflect new responsibilities, as outlined in Chapter II. Similar to the HS ITL role, all current K-8 ITLs who wish to remain in the role must reapply. Current K-8 ITLs who are not selected for the new role will be compensated for the duration of the pre-existing ITL cycle.

- In 2010-11, Behavioral Specialists will be in place in all high-need schools. This new role will be a centerpiece for the needed learning environment transformation in these schools.

- In 2010-11, we will select and hire K-5 CRIs for the Academy's two elementary school sites.

- *Launch the Academy.*

  - The Academy will open in June of 2010, supporting its first class of new hires from summer of 2010 through the 2010-11 school year. They will spend June through January of 2011 at the Academy, then be placed in another school from February through June of 2011. At that time, the Academy will take in its first wave of experienced, high-priority content teachers for five to six week immersions.

  - In the fall of 2011-12, the Academy's first class will be placed in their own full-time classrooms. During this second year, new teachers will receive continuous remote support from their CRIs at the Academy, facilitated by video and web conferencing. We will expand the Academy to include the K-5 sites.

- *Capture cost savings.* While much of the work to identify savings will occur in 2010, there will be a number of cost levers that we will not be able to impact until later (See Chapter VI). We do not expect to see full savings levels until 2012-13.

- *Reconstitute HR.* During school years 2010-12, HR will improve core performance measures, build a teacher dashboard, and transition capacity provided by partner organizations inhouse. We will continue to support a more rigorous tenure process and a program of supports for marginal performers.

- *Engage stakeholders.* In collaboration with the AFT, PPS and the PFT will work with an external communications firm during the 2010-11 school year. After this period, both organizations anticipate folding communication about the teacher effectiveness initiatives into day-to-day communications.

Grant outcomes and impact on student achievement and attainment:

Expected teacher and student gains	Baseline	Phase I	Phase II
Highly effective teachers	28%	30%	36%
Students achieving college-readiness	29%	34%	41%
Grades K-5	34%	38%	45%
Grades 6-8	30%	33%	40%
Grades 9-12	22%	28%	36%
PPS high school graduation rate	65%	68%	71%

- The number of highly effective teachers will increase to 36% (~700 teachers) as a result of the increased dialogue around effective practice driven by RISE, the influx of talented teachers through better recruiting and selection processes, and the professional development offerings at both the Academy and in schools (e.g., through the redesigned ITL role).

- High-need students' access to highly effective teachers will expand through the overall increase in the number of highly effective teachers, as well as the new career ladder positions (e.g., Excellence Corps, K-8 Turn-around Teachers), and the increased recruiting emphasis on placing highly effective teachers in high-need schools.

- College-readiness levels, as measured by PSSA Mathematics results, will increase to 41% by the end of 2011-12. High schools will show an improvement from 22% today to 36% of students in 2011-12 scoring *advanced* in PSSA Mathematics. In addition, student graduation rates will increase to 71%.

Phase III: Refine and scale (2012-2014). In Phase III, PPS will maintain, evaluate and refine the work put in place in Phases I and II.

Execution milestones:
- *Career ladder.* In 2012-13, we will operate the Excellence Corps at full scale in all eight of our priority high schools: our previous year's 9th grade Excellence Corps members will move to 10th grade, and we will select a new team of teachers to join the Excellence Corps at the 9th grade level. We will actively monitor the impact the Excellence Corps is having on student achievement and attainment measures, and will continuously reevaluate and adjust the Corps model accordingly.

- *Academy.* In Phase III and beyond, the Academy will continue the cycle of new hire inductions and experienced teacher immersions, as outlined in Phase II. Pending analysis of the first several years of the Academy, we will adjust aspects of the Academy that are particularly

effective or ineffective in order to maximize impact in a cost-effective manner.

- *Capture cost savings.* By 2012-13, we will free up as much as $19-33M on an annual basis. However, for reasons outlined in Chapter VI, it may not be possible to reallocate funds to our teacher effectiveness strategies until 2014.

- *Reconstitute HR.* In Phase III and beyond, the Offices of Performance Management and Talent Management will sustain, and continue to improve, service levels and performance indicators attained in Phase II, while evolving in the role of strategic partner to the district. HR will be fully free-standing, having transitioned from needing external support. The office will also embed district-wide use of the teacher dashboard.

- *Engage stakeholders.* In Phase III, we will conduct a series of interviews to assess stakeholders' views on the impact of the teacher effectiveness initiatives.

Grant outcomes and impact on student achievement and attainment:

Expected teacher and student gains	Baseline	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
Highly effective teachers	28%	30%	36%	41%
Students achieving college-readiness	29%	34%	41%	50%
Grades K-5	34%	38%	45%	53%
Grades 6-8	30%	33%	40%	49%
Grades 9-12	22%	28%	36%	46%
PPS high school graduation rate	65%	68%	71%	76%

- The number of highly effective teachers will continue to increase across the system. By Phase III, PPS will reach full scale in: 1) improving the effectiveness of the teachers we hire; 2) building the effectiveness of those teachers already in our classrooms; and 3) systematically exiting those teachers who do not materially improve students' learning. By year 2013-14, 41% of our teachers will be highly effective.

- High-need students' access to highly effective teachers will expand as the Excellence Corps reaches full scale and HR aggressively places highly effective teachers in high-need schools.

- By the end of Phase III, based on their results in PSSA Mathematics, 50% of all students will be on a college-ready trajectory. We expect that 46% of our high school students will achieve at a level commensurate with college-readiness, and that we will have a 76% graduation rate. As we consolidate these gains, the trend of student improvement will accelerate, such that over 80% of our students will achieve at a college-ready level by the 11th year of implementation (12th year of implementation for high school students achieving the 80% mark).

CHAPTER IV - Organizational Capacity & Partnerships

Education systems have been the object of reform for more than 30 years. The reforms have rarely "stuck," let alone brought positive student outcomes. We believe reform failure has three basic causes: 1) systems have focused on the wrong reforms; 2) failed to manage the change effort effectively (i.e., poor implementation); and/or 3) under-invested in building support for change.[31] We believe we have selected the right strategic priorities, so we are now intent on managing the second and third concerns. Managing these concerns will require building organizational capacity.

Human Resources (HR)

Our vision is for HR to play a strategic role in our transformation. This role demands that the department has the skills, inclinations, knowledge and structural components to not only meet the basic needs to support district reform, but to anticipate future needs and build capacity in advance. HR should manifestly enhance district initiatives, rather than simply support them.

PPS has begun to transform HR by addressing five major areas:

- Realigning the leadership and reporting relationship of HR;
- Restructuring HR into two areas;
- Creating a culture of accountability and customer service;
- Focusing resources on high priority teacher effectiveness initiatives; and
- Providing vendor support and technical assistance.

Leadership and Reporting

We have taken steps in the past four months to raise the importance and clarify the line of sight of HR performance. These include:

- ***Changing leadership.*** In March, the Superintendent placed HR under the supervision of the Deputy Superintendent, who has an extensive HR background.

- ***Strengthening internal support.*** A Broad Foundation intern is working closely with the Deputy to plan how best to improve the department.

- ***Providing external coaching and support.*** Dr. Jan Leight, a consultant from Focus on Results, has conducted workshops with the HR Department on goal setting, team building, and departmental planning.

- ***Communicating the urgency of improved performance.*** In March, district leadership clearly communicated that the Department is on an improvement plan and that the status quo—a reactive personnel department—is unacceptable. While staff will have support to improve, every individual is accountable for embracing the required change.

Restructuring

HR must be redesigned in order to support the initiatives set forth in this proposal and to provide a high level of service to schools. To accomplish these goals, we will create a new department

structure that consolidates effort on Performance Management and Talent Management. In support of these changes, we will modify the design and scope of roles. These changes include:

- *Building a Performance Management department.* We will absorb Employee Relations, a high functioning and well perceived department, under a broader focus on Performance Management. In addition to Employee Relations, this new team will support RISE, oversee supports for marginal teachers, manage the tenure earning process and career ladders, and provide project management for the teacher dashboard project.

- *Elevating the role of Recruiting & Staffing.* HR is currently designed around functional areas, an approach that is not ideal for delivering service to groups of schools. We will approach schools with an understanding of their needs, as well as the specialized knowledge that is required to serve them. To emphasize that Recruiting & Staffing's job is not to simply fill vacancies, but to find schools the best talent, the team will be renamed "Talent Management."

- *Expanding Talent Management.* The current Recruiting & Staffing department is too small (i.e., two staffing officers). In the future, the team will have eight members, including a Chief of Talent Management, four Recruiting & Staffing officers, and three clerical and support staff. The Chief of Talent Management will be responsible for administrative staffing and work directly with the four assistant superintendents. Each of the four Recruiting & Staffing officers will report to an assistant superintendent, based on their assignment. Three will be assigned to fill teaching positions PreK to 12 (both regular and Special Education), with the fourth assigned to paraprofessional positions. The Talent Management team will recruit, hire, onboard, deploy, transfer, and provide customer service to the schools.

- *Housing a shared services group in Recruiting & Staffing* to provide cross-departmental services (e.g., technology) and flexibly use existing capacity to deliver services in the most cost-effective manner.

- *Realigning some jobs.* As jobs are redesigned, we will advertise those that require a substantial change in duties. There will be a greater emphasis on the use of technology, as—where appropriate—manual processes will be eliminated. Staff will be trained on the skills necessary to succeed in their new roles.

Creating a Culture of Accountability and Customer Service
The re-designed HR department will employ a number of measures to reinforce the need for accountability and customer service. These include:

- *Implementing departmental metrics.* We will continue to formalize departmental goals and key performance indicators, culminating in an annual progress report.

- *Creating individual accountability for performance.* Staff will receive "360°-feedback" on performance, highlighting both strengths and development opportunities, through a performance rubric based on a design by EchoSpan.

- *Institutionalizing customer feedback.* Principals, a sample of teachers, and members of the Academic Team and the PFT leadership will complete an annual survey regarding service

quality. Survey results will be part of an HR Annual Report that will also include our service goals. Feedback from our newly instituted Principal Advisory Group will be used to identify priority areas for improvement and the impact of new initiatives.

- *Internal communication and recognition.* Regular meetings and a departmental calendar will help ensure that the group functions as a team. We will also develop improved recognition for team and individual performance.

Focusing resources on high-priority teacher effectiveness initiatives

Several high-priority areas of work for HR are part of our teacher effectiveness work:

- *Developing, executing, and evaluating a process for teacher recruiting and selection.* Through our partnership with TNTP, we will build the fundamentals for recruiting and selecting strong teacher candidates, particularly for our high-need schools.

- *Leading the teacher and principal evaluation processes (including RISE).* We will provide additional structural supports to address marginal performance, and ensure only effective teachers become tenured. In addition, we will manage the evaluation process for career ladder positions.

- *Creating and managing the teacher dashboard.*

Vendor Support and Technical Assistance

PPS will seek external assistance to assist in individual performance evaluation and inform the development of metrics for HR performance. This includes:

- *Engaging Dr. Elizabeth Arons as a project advisor.* Dr. Arons has deep expertise in transforming HR practices within urban public schools. She has visited PPS twice over the last three months, becoming familiar with our project and the HR office. In partnering with PPS, Dr. Arons would serve as a "critical friend," visiting PPS on a regular basis to conduct progress reviews and provide written feedback.[32] We expect this will be a 2-year engagement. If a need exists, we will seek an extension.

- *Partnering with TNTP to develop and execute our recruiting strategy.* We plan to engage TNTP at the onset of this work for an initial period of two to three years. TNTP consultants will work on-site five days a week to develop a new recruiting process aligned to teacher quality, as well as develop and execute a multi-channel marketing strategy to attract more diverse talent from both traditional and alternative certification programs. In addition, TNTP will increase our staff's capacity to hire new teachers to fill the Academy and any high-needs positions. TNTP will support Talent Management staff to transition work back to the district after two-three years. At that point, we anticipate having the internal capacity to carry forward. The cost of this partnership is preliminarily budgeted at $2.3M, which includes support for both Recruiting and the Academy. Since we are in early discussions with TNTP, we anticipate this cost will be lower as we refine the scope of our partnership.

- *Incorporating results from an electronic teacher screener* developed by Gallup, Inc. into the eligibility list to emphasize successful urban teacher mindsets in the applicant screening

process. Gallup developed their selection tool by studying the thoughts, actions, and beliefs of high-performing teachers. There is evidence that Gallup's selection instruments correlate with on-the-job effectiveness. The deliverables for the partnership will be screening interviews for teacher candidates and data on interview performance. The initial contract, which will begin upon board approval, will be for a period of two years at a cost of $44,000 in the first year and $35,000 in the second year. If satisfied with results, we will renew the contract after the initial two years.

- *Seeking vendor support for PeopleSoft training.* As we have not provided training for several years, some of our current staff require training. We have a quote to deliver this training, depending on the number of days needed.

It is of critical importance that the HR department possess the capabilities and capacity to execute the teacher effectiveness initiatives. By aligning leadership, structure, accountability, and supports (both internal and through strategic partnership), we believe that HR can be reconfigured as a strategic partner.

Office of Research, Assessment and Accountability (RAA)

RAA works with external funders on all matters relating to assessment, research, and accountability. Given capacity constraints, MPR, a public-policy research organization, would play a lead role in assessing the impact of the initiatives described in this proposal. This partnership will draw upon MPR's strengths in two ways. First, MPR will provide assistance in developing an analytic system, built around state-of-the-art value-added statistical models, which will enable PPS to better identify highly effective and ineffective teachers. Second, we will benefit from MPR's help in capturing lessons learned throughout the grant period, with a particular focus on formative feedback that PPS can use to course-correct. A preliminary MPR proposal puts the cost at $1.9M, of which we request BMGF support for $1.2M. The $1.2M includes the cost of developing and supporting the creation of a teacher-level VAM and assisting PPS, the PFT, and the AFT in the development of a performance pay plan methodology that will be subject to the ratification of the PFT membership.

MPR is uniquely suited to work with PPS in this important capacity, given its reputation for the highest standards of quality, objectivity, and excellence in analysis and data collection. MPR has abundant experience in measuring teacher performance, using value-added models, experiments, and classroom observations. In addition, MPR staff have worked closely with PPS decision makers in the past, including work on the performance pay aspect of PULSE and the creation of the school-level value-added measures that informed our plan to close 22 schools.

Office of Information & Technology (IT)

A critical aspect of our IT capacity assessment focused on how our data systems capabilities would support our teacher effectiveness initiatives. We examined data systems capabilities along five dimensions: 1) data-informed culture; 2) applications; 3) data capabilities; 4) data operations and governance; and 5) technical infrastructure.

Review of current data systems

Overall, our diagnostic indicates that we have good capabilities in the areas of data-informed culture, applications, data capabilities, and technical infrastructure, whereas data operations and governance requires improvement. Summary findings are displayed in the exhibit on the next page (Exhibit 6). For further detail, please refer to our diagnostic document.

- *Data-informed culture.* We have a sound data-informed culture with demonstrated interest in using data at the school level. However, we need improved training and support to further encourage the use of data. Currently, training is handled by two offices: Instructional Technology handles training on IT applications and RAA manages training on data-driven decision-making.

- *Applications.* Core applications are in place for base reporting of school and district data, including several modules that enable reporting and analytics on assessments. We will, however, need new applications such as the professional development and teacher evaluation system and ad-hoc reporting and querying capabilities in some of our core systems. We will also be replacing our current scheduling system, which will reach the end of its life next year, and the grade book application.

- *Data capabilities.* We believe we need two categories of data capabilities: 1) base data for teacher effectiveness measurement; and 2) supplemental data to enable teacher effectiveness strategies. Within the first category, good coverage, history, and quality of basic student data and assessments and course/section information are in place with some minor gaps (e.g., college readiness). Available teacher data is less comprehensive. Within the second category, new data sets should be collected. For example, today there is limited usable data on professional development, teacher performance, and recruiting.

- *Data operations and governance.* Further capabilities in this area must be developed. Currently, there is no central ownership of student and teacher data. Data quality checks are performed ad-hoc by part-time resources, or are based on user input. Some systems level data validations are in place, but should be expanded. Other initiatives include the creation of detailed design specifications, database architecture, and design diagrams.

- *Technical infrastructure.* The current application architecture uses a mix of a home-grown middleware as well as a number of point-to-point interfaces. There is an opportunity to enhance this architecture with off-the-shelf software to allow for faster and easier integration of systems. Storage is adequate for our current needs. Data security is an area that requires increased focus (e.g., teacher IDs use their social security number).

Proposed data systems initiatives

To support our goals of increasing teacher effectiveness, we propose seven IT initiatives. Collectively, these initiatives aim to build baseline enablers of the teacher effectiveness measurement, provide tools to directly support our teacher effectiveness strategies, and provide the training and governance structures to achieve both baseline and strategy-specific goals.

EXHIBIT 6

Summary baselining of PPS data system capabilities

Current capabilities:
- ☐ Low
- ◨ Medium
- ◼ High

Capability		Strengths	Opportunities
1	**Data informed culture**	**Demonstrated interest in using data** • Regular usage of PSSA data • Parent web portal under development	**Improved training and support on** • Use of data to track student performance • Interpreting reports to inform instruction
2	**Applications**	**Good coverage of base reporting capabilities for student data** • Student information system (RTI) in place for access to student data • Assessments reporting and analytics applications in place	**New talent management applications and sophisticated analytical capabilities** • No teacher PD applications • Limited analytic ability for customized reporting • No single portal for access to all reports
3	**Data capabilities**	**Good availability of most student data and basic teacher data** • Availability of demographics, age, programs, grades, etc. for students • Ability to match teachers and students	**Tracking of teacher information and special-case student-teacher attribution** • Inconsistent Teacher IDs • Limited teacher information (e.g., recruiting) • Missing special situation student-teacher linkages (e.g., team teaching)
4	**Data governance and operations**	**Some data governance only for student data** • Some data validations at time of data entry • Part-time resources for one-off audits • Key elements of student-data tracked and controlled for quality	**Improved data governance** • Overall data ownership and accountability not well-defined and centralized • No proactive and comprehensive audits • Incentives for conversion of information from paper to electronic form not in place
5	**Technical infrastructure**	**Scalable three-tiered architecture** • Application / web servers with load balancing appliances • Expandable storage	**Enhanced future performance and maintainability** • Production and analytics systems not decoupled – potential performance issues

The district and the PFT both understand the sensitive nature of collecting data tied to individuals, whether students, teachers or administrators. For that reason, the district will maintain stringent confidentiality standards and ensure that access to that information is limited appropriately. Both PPS and the PFT acknowledge, however, the importance of collecting and using data to inform our support of ongoing student learning and professional development of teachers. To ensure that data is used accurately and appropriately, the district and the PFT will develop confidentiality rules.

- *Implement an academic data warehouse and business intelligence (BI) engine.* This initiative will support all three of our strategic priorities by providing us with the backbone for making any type of data informed decisions on instruction, planning, evaluation, recruiting, learning, and development. It will enable the sophisticated data analyses and reporting required by many of our strategic initiatives including linking strengths in particular RISE domains to career ladder roles, and identifying the impact of professional development on RISE evaluation results. Further, the data warehouse will provide the ability to store and track all student- and teacher-related data in a single accessible location while the BI engine will support the ad-hoc report creation process—mostly for power users. Finally, the addition of an operational data store will enable highly granular data to be retained for shorter time periods for detailed real-time reporting.

- *Improve technical infrastructure flexibility and architecture.* This initiative supports all strategic priorities through the introduction of a commercial off-the-shelf middleware that will enable implementing new data systems rapidly and cost-effectively. An application server will be added to support load balancing and a feature-rich user environment, while requiring only thin interfaces (e.g., web browsers used for the school web portal).

- *Implement enhancements for calculation of a VAM.* A VAM will require tracking additional information about teachers and students. Sample student data to be tracked includes progress towards graduation, and dosage for special situations and supplemental and instructional support. For teachers, we will track additional information such as educational background and years of experience.

- *Add new systems.* Several new systems are required to support our teacher effectiveness strategies. The first four of these systems will jointly contribute towards our electronic teacher performance dashboard and consist of applications providing us with the ability to provide greater communication through a school web portal, a learning management / professional development environment, a teacher evaluation system, and content/document management platform.

  - *School web portal with the teacher performance dashboard.* This system will support our strategy of identifying highly effective teachers and provides entry via a unified platform to the learning management, evaluation, and content management systems. It will provide appropriate users with secure, yet easy access to information on performance evaluations and linkage of strengths and growth opportunities to career ladder roles and professional development offerings. In addition, the portal will contribute to the creation a professional work environment characterized by collaboration and support by enabling greater communication, data-driven analysis, and best practice knowledge sharing between teachers, teaching and learning teams, and support services. It will come in different "flavors" for the different user types such as principals, teachers, and administrators.

  - *Learning management and professional development.* This system will support multiple strategic priorities such as RISE, the Academy, and the learning environment, by linking teachers with professional development resources based on their individual needs. Additionally, by cataloging and tracking professional development opportunities for teachers, this system will help evaluate the quality of development opportunities, as well as automate the process of tracking certification requirements.

  - *Teacher evaluation.* The teacher evaluation system will communicate and track performance along RISE-determined rubric domains of planning and preparation, classroom environment, teaching and learning, and professional responsibilities.

  - *Content and document management.* This system will enable the collection, storage, organization, search and retrieval of documents required by all strategic initiatives. For example, this system will store free-form comments (e.g., classroom observation notes). It will also enable the documentation of student behavioral information to contribute to a case file or e-portfolio, and the storage of multi-media for delivery through our pre-exist-

ing video delivery system. The system will include robust and integrated security features to enable users to manage private content, as well as to share content by role.

- – *Recruiting.* Our strategy to revamp the district's recruiting approach requires a comprehensive applicant tracking system that facilitates a metrics-driven recruiting process. The recruiting system will enable us to collect additional data to aid in recruiting: 1) candidate background information; 2) scheduling of interviews and feedback submission; and 3) assessment of yield by source. We have already viewed demos of potential systems, including that of our planned partner, Gallup.

- *Implement strategy-specific application enhancements.* To collect data for a VAM, our strategic priorities require data collection and linkages for students (e.g., college application data, test scores) and teachers (e.g., work experience, recommendations, development needs, feedback). Enhancements to the student and HR systems will permit collection and analysis of this data. The HR system will additionally need to be enhanced to support the automation of performance-based pay should this plan be agreed to. Finally, two strategic areas require additional data capture:

  - – *College-readiness indicators.* We will need to track additional data to serve as college readiness indicators (e.g., SAT results).

  - – *PreK-16 longitudinal data.* PPS has an unprecedented opportunity to leverage data from *The Pittsburgh Promise* program to better understand predictors of college-readiness and how our students are performing after high school.

- *Establish clear data ownership and data governance.* To ensure the quality and integrity of data required for our strategies, we plan to establish an Information Governance Board, which includes PFT membership. This entity will have ongoing responsibility to oversee all aspects of data quality, integrity, and processes. The structure will also create alignment around data management and access and will build on processes already in place to ensure data quality through an expanded audit process (e.g., by creating a new data audit group).

- *Develop a data systems training curriculum and taskforce.* To ensure a full return on our investments in technology, we plan to use three training approaches to support users through the pilot and roll-out of our new data systems: 1) train the trainer; 2) vendor-led training; and 3) computer-based training. We will use the train-the-trainer technique for those systems where scale is needed. This technique will be used for one-time training (e.g., after launching the school portal) or periodic training (e.g., as annual workshop offered at the Academy). Vendor-led training will be used for IT administrators and selected power users of systems. Finally, we will use computer-based training for select systems. This model will allow us to accommodate tight end-user schedules without requiring additional trainers. Additionally in some instances, IT training may be combined with training on broader process changes.

Division of Marketing and Communications
The district and the PFT recognize the critical importance of communications given the importance of PFT/district collaboration in advancing the new, bold reforms outlined in the proposal while honoring the collective bargaining environment. This has been a hallmark of our work to

date, with Superintendent Roosevelt and Mr. Tarka introducing the RISE work in a joint video message. To foster understanding and conviction among the stakeholders in our teacher effectiveness work, it is a priority for both PPS and the PFT to increase communications capacity in the near term via support from an external partner.

PPS has a small team of communications and engagement specialists that provide day-to-day support and manage a variety of external communications firms and vendors. The PFT leadership communicates regularly with members through general and worksite meetings, periodic mailings, and the PFT website. However, while both entities have been highly effective in recent years in reaching their constituents, neither PPS nor the PFT has the capacity to manage and support a significant new campaign to build momentum for the proposed teacher effectiveness measures. To support the teacher effectiveness work proposed, we are planning a communications collaboration between PPS, the PFT, and the AFT national office with two objectives:

- Ensuring that Pittsburgh teachers are informed about and have a voice in the important issues and potential changes to evaluation, pay, placement, training, and development, embedded in the plan.

- Reinforcing for all stakeholders the critical change themes that are at the center of the plan (e.g., college readiness as an aspiration, learning environment mindsets and behaviors, accountability for student success, and new ways of operating).

We will issue an RFP for 18 months of strategic communications planning and support, as well as PPS and PFT leadership communications capability building. We seek an independent and experienced provider to work with all three entities in partnership to design a communications strategy, provide appropriate training and communications support to the leadership and key staff of PPS and the PFT, and help with the execution of our internal and external communications to build awareness, understanding, and support for our teacher effectiveness plans. Communications with principals and the Pittsburgh Administrators Association is also important.

We expect a concentrated six month period of planning and early execution, followed by 12 months of strategic communications counseling and support, and have budgeted for communications materials, promotions, and engagement forums.

Office of Budget Development, Management and Operations
The Office of Budget Development, Management, and Operations is well-prepared for the financial management of grant funds. The office bears responsibility for $182.2M across 116 Supplemental Fund budgets. The office prepares budgets and financial reports for each of these. Likewise, it supports Supplemental Fund Program Managers as they submit funding applications to granting agencies and develop budgets that adhere to the Pennsylvania School Code, the Manual of Accounting and Related Financial Procedures for Pennsylvania School Systems, district policies, and the specialized requirements unique to various granting agencies.

The office analyzes all guidelines provided by, and contracts entered into, the State, Federal and Local governments, along with other granting agencies. This provides the office with a comprehensive understanding of all financial compliance requirements of particular programs and allows them to ensure that program managers are cognizant of compliance requirements. Through its onsite compliance due diligence, BMGF was provided the numerous awards the office has earned for the strength of its financial practices.

Office of Chief Academic Officer
Given the emphasis on increasing the number of highly effective teachers, the CAO's office will need external support in the initial years of this work. We have asked IFL to be involved in our ongoing efforts to build teacher effectiveness and to empower teachers as instructional leaders.

This collaboration will be intense in the first three years. However, by the end of that period, we will have both the internal capacity and the tools and routines in place to sustain these changes. In the final two years of our partnership, IFL will offer ongoing feedback on the continuing refinement of tools, curriculum, and the way both are implemented.

This effort will build on the strength of our already successful three year partnership, where IFL has supported the district's efforts to lay the foundation for high quality teaching and high achievement for all students. In addition to supporting our development of new managed curriculum, IFL has assisted with the creation and implementation of the foundational instructional routines and practices in each content discipline. This collaboration has had an impact—over the course of our three year partnership, we have seen gains of 13.1 percentage points in 8th grade PSSA Reading scores from 2005-06 to 2008-09, with over 70% of our students achieving *proficiency* and 45.2% scoring at *advanced* levels. In tandem with our teacher effectiveness plan, we expect to see similar results at the high school level now that we have stronger school leadership who will support curriculum fidelity.

CHAPTER V - Capturing Lessons Learned & Evaluation

Today, PPS lacks an objective measure to inform the extent to which a teacher's practice impacts student achievement. To address this, an integral component of our plan is to create a VAM, offering better information about the performance of individual teachers to inform individualized evaluation, professional development, tenure, and career ladder decisions.

We plan to co-develop a VAM with the PFT (with involvement from the AFT) and MPR, who will bring knowledge of the underlying statistical methodology. Throughout this process, we will keep in close communication with the BMGF research team, recognizing that they are simultaneously pursuing research on the characteristics of robust VAMs. Since BMGF is conducting extensive research into the indicators of teacher effectiveness, we will incorporate BMGF findings into the preliminary PPS-PFT VAM as it becomes available.

A VAM will be one of multiple measures that informs a teacher's evaluation under RISE. We will pilot RISE in half of our schools in 2009-10. At the same time, we will work with MPR and the PFT to develop a functional VAM for Pittsburgh. The RISE working team has determined that student achievement measures will be part of the RISE rubric. To that end, VAM will provide a more reliable means of measuring student growth than will raw student achievement data.

Initially, we will apply the best-available VAMs to existing data related to our Mathematics and Reading teachers in grades 4-8, where longitudinal student-level data on successive state assessments (e.g., PSSA) are already available. Since not all grades and subjects are tested by the PSSA, we will work with the PFT to determine the additional measures that can be used in a VAM as they become available.

Given our focus on high schools, we will place added emphasis on implementing measures for the 9th and 10th grades, which are not currently tested by PSSA. We will work closely with the BMGF R&D team, knowing that RAND is identifying supplemental assessments for measuring student academic progress in Algebra 1, Biology, and 9th grade English Language Arts.

A VAM will help to shape our initiatives over time and enable "course corrections." A VAM will help us to understand attributes of teachers that are known to correlate to high student achievement, and evaluate the success of our initiatives as we move forward. For example, we will examine the effectiveness of professional development programs by mapping changes in VAM results for teachers who participated in the programs. The VAM will serve to inform teacher recruiting and selection processes as well, as we develop a better understanding of the critical attributes of highly effective teachers.

We will examine the extent to which teachers in career ladders such as the Excellence Corps have strong results on a VAM. This will be particularly important in assessing whether the new career ladder opportunities are being filled by highly effective teachers who can reach more of

the students who need them most. A VAM will also inform the manner in which candidates for the *Teach for Pittsburgh* program are selecting and supported.

Throughout the duration of the grant period, we will work closely with the BMGF research team In years three through five, as research findings become available, we will incorporate "lessons learned" on state-of-the-art VAM methodology to refine our own VAM. The BMGF research, combined with our own work, can help us think about how tools other than test scores may substitute for VAM results in grades and subjects for which value-added cannot be calculated.

The district and the PFT agree that the BMGF research efforts will be fully independent of Pittsburgh teachers' evaluation rating.

PPS is committed to capturing lessons learned and using them to inform our ongoing strategies related to teacher effectiveness. Understanding the impact of our teacher effectiveness initiatives is critical to our ability to make "course corrections." We have identified several areas of inquiry:

- By the conclusion of the grant period, how much have student outcomes improved as measured by PSSA scores, attendance, graduation rate, college entry rate, completion of Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and other advanced courses? How do the outcomes differ by student group (grade level, ethnicity, gender, economic disadvantage, special needs)?

- How many highly effective teachers work in PPS? How is this changing over time?

- How have HR processes changed to enable improvements in the quality of hired teachers? How do the qualifications and numbers of the applicant pool change, and how do the qualifications of those hired change? Do novice teachers show improved value-added results subsequent to a more rigorous hiring process and an induction program?

- Are professional development offerings, including the Academy, successful at improving teacher effectiveness as evidenced through RISE ratings and VAM results? What do teachers who attend the Academy view as its strengths and weaknesses?

- To what extent do student academic and behavioral outcomes improve in high schools that are implementing the Excellence Corps in grades 9 and 10? To what extent is the Excellence Corps implemented as intended, with identification of student needs, participation of high-performing teachers and looping of teachers with students from 9th to 10th grade?

- How is Pittsburgh utilizing measures of teacher effectiveness to inform tenure granting and promotion practices?

- To what degree has the distribution of highly effective teachers been altered by encouraging more of the most effective teachers to work in high-need schools?

- To what degree has the district built the infrastructure to support strategic human capital metrics and make management decisions using the metrics?

Plan and process for answering research question. Due to capacity constraints within RAA, PPS will utilize assistance from our close partner, MPR. RAA will serve as the primary contact to coordinate work with MPR.

Plan and process for using interim findings to "course correct." Making "course corrections" will require both ongoing review of performance metrics, as well as periodically evaluating the long-term impact of broader initiatives. In Chapter IV, we discussed restructuring HR into Performance Management and Talent Management functions. This reflects our intent for HR to become a strategic function that uses metrics to inform day-to-day decisions. The IT systems that we have proposed will enable us to make data-driven decisions effectively.

Evaluating the long-term impact of broader initiatives (e.g., the impact the Excellence Corps has on the achievement of 9th and 10th grade students) will also take place periodically, allowing us to make larger changes to our portfolio of initiatives (e.g., change, eliminate, or scale initiatives).

Course corrections will be implemented through the OTE.

Plan and process for sharing interim and final findings. As appropriate, we will share findings with project stakeholders, including BMGF staff and the PFT, through reports and briefings. We will establish a schedule for sharing these findings based on the key project milestones.

Working with BMGF R&D team. RAA will serve as the primary contact for the BMGF R&D team, coordinating access to schools and classrooms, compiling data sets, and facilitating regular communications.

CHAPTER VI – Project Budget

Over five years, the total cost of the new initiatives described here is $85M. Of this cost, we seek $50M in funding from BMGF. This money would serve as a start-up investment and dramatically accelerate the implementation of the initiatives described in this proposal. After the five year grant period, we are confident in our ability to sustain the cost of these initiatives.

Plan Costs. In the first two years, costs will be driven by up-front investment in IT systems, project management, and external partnership to build or supplement internal capacity. Beginning in years two and three, the focus shifts towards the recognition and reward of teachers for the work they do (e.g., differentiated roles, performance incentives).

Budget Timeline. In Exhibit 7, we lay out when costs will be incurred.

Sustainability. We recognize that the district's overall financial health will impact the feasibility of our plan. If we continue to employ the fiscal prudence of recent years (e.g., linking enrollment decline to cost reductions), we will be well positioned to maintain a balanced budget. That will enable us to apply additional cost savings (described below) towards our teacher effectiveness initiatives. Starting in 2014, we intend to be well-positioned to self-fund this work.

External funding. Both private and public external funding sources will fund our initiatives. Beginning in 2010, we expect to receive $10M over five years from a consortium of Pittsburgh foundations known as the Fund For Excellence. We plan to use half for our teacher effectiveness efforts. In addition, we will aggressively apply for federal grants. We anticipate a $3.5M per year TIF grant—equivalent to last year's average TIF award—beginning in 2010-11 and continuing for five years. As one of two PA districts to have received a TIF, that money ($1.5 M per year for five years) funds performance pay for our principals. Given the scale of our work with teachers, we expect a larger award. From WWIF, we hope to receive $2.5M per year for five years, also starting in 2010-11. This would be comparable to other large federal grants we have won in the past (e.g., our Reading First award was $2.7M per year for six years).

Reallocation of internal spend. Since 2006, we have identified and captured $49.8M of operational savings, enabling us to simultaneously reduce our structural deficit and invest in *Excellence for All* initiatives. By 2012-13, we are committed to capturing additional savings of as much as $19-33M per year by closing underutilized facilities, changing our teacher distribution, and improving operating efficiencies. While we anticipate savings may need to be applied to other operating costs in the short-term, we expect that, as necessary, this spend will be applied to our teacher effectiveness efforts by 2014.

- *Facilities.* A facilities optimization study will be completed this fall. Based on its findings, we will devise a plan that addresses, among other items, building consolidation and teacher distribution. Due to projected enrollment decline, we anticipate having to close buildings. While we do not yet know the number, historical district consolidations and current enrollment trends suggest an estimated annual savings of $6-11M, beginning in 2012-13.

- *Teacher distribution.* Today, we operate at an approximately 14 to 1 student to teacher ratio, significantly lower than the average U.S. urban school, which operates at a 17 to 1 ratio.[33] Through initiatives premised upon placing the best teachers in front of more students—including, for example, larger class sizes at the Academy, where there will be a higher adult-student ratio (e.g., a CRI plus 2-3 student teachers in each room), we could increase student-teacher ratios to an average of 15 to 1 or 16 to 1, generating $5-10M in annual savings.

- *Operating efficiencies.* Beginning in 2012-13, we can capture savings of $8-12M per year, or 10-15% of spend from other categories, including but not limited to transportation, supplies, and property services.

	Total incremental cost	BMGF request	PPS funds

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	Total
9-10th Teacher Excellence Corps (TEC)	$ –	$ –	$ 1.4	$ 2.9	$ 3.0	
HS Instructional Teacher Leaders (ITL)	$ –	$ 0.7	$ 0.8	$ 0.8	$ 0.8	
K-8 Turnaround Teachers	$ –	$ 0.2	$ 0.4	$ 0.4	$ 0.4	
K-8 Instructional Teacher Leaders (ITL)	$ –	$ –	$ 1.3	$ 1.3	$ 1.3	
PPS-PFT Teacher Academy class (TA)	$ 0.2	$ 6.4	$ 6.6	$ 6.8	$ 7.0	
Behavior specialist role (BSp)	$ –	$ 0.4	$ 0.4	$ 0.4	$ 0.4	
Intermediate total (TA, ITL, TEC, Turnaround)	**$ 0.2**	**$ 7.8**	**$ 10.9**	**$ 12.7**	**$ 13.0**	**$ 44.6**
Office of Teacher Effectiveness (internal PPS team)	$ 0.9	$ 0.9	$ 0.9	$ 0.4	$ 0.4	
Technical assistance for OTE	$ 1.3	$ 0.7	$ –	$ –	$ –	
Intermediate total (Office of Teacher Effectiveness)	**$ 2.2**	**$ 1.6**	**$ 0.9**	**$ 0.4**	**$ 0.4**	**$ 5.6**
Institute for Learning contract	$ 0.5	$ 1.0	$ 1.0	$ 0.5	$ 0.5	
Mathematica contract for VAM	$ 0.2	$ 0.2	$ 0.2	$ 0.2	$ 0.1	
Mathematica contract for evaluation	$ 0.1	$ 0.1	$ 0.1	$ 0.2	$ 0.3	
Mathematica contract for Variable Compensation	$ 0.1	$ 0.1	$ –	$ –	$ –	
New Teacher Project contract	$ 0.6	$ 0.9	$ 0.9	$ –	$ –	
Partner contract for performance management	$ 0.3	$ 0.4	$ 0.5	$ 0.2	$ 0.0	
Intermediate total (External partnerships)	**$ 1.9**	**$ 2.6**	**$ 2.7**	**$ 1.1**	**$ 0.9**	**$ 9.3**
HR additional full-time headcount	$ 0.4	$ 0.4	$ 0.4	$ 0.4	$ 0.4	
Technical assistance for HR	$ 0.3	$ 0.3	$ –	$ –	$ –	
Intermediate total (HR effectiveness)	**$ 0.7**	**$ 0.7**	**$ 0.4**	**$ 0.4**	**$ 0.4**	**$ 2.6**
Data warehouse, BI and middleware	$ 0.8	$ 2.1	$ 0.6	$ 0.6	$ 0.6	
Enhancements to existing systems	$ 0.3	$ –	$ –	$ –	$ –	
New systems	$ 0.9	$ 1.0	$ 0.4	$ 0.2	$ 0.2	
IT consulting	$ 0.9	$ 0.2	$ 0.2	$ 0.2	$ 0.2	
IT personnel	$ 0.2	$ 0.5	$ 0.5	$ 0.5	$ 0.5	
Intermediate total (IT systems and investments)	**$ 3.1**	**$ 3.7**	**$ 1.6**	**$ 1.5**	**$ 1.5**	**$ 11.4**
Intermediate total (Variable compensation)	**$ –**	**$ –**	**$ 1.1**	**$ 4.8**	**$ 4.9**	**$ 10.8**
Intermediate total (Communications support)	**$ 0.5**	**$ 0.4**	**$ –**	**$ –**	**$ –**	**$ 0.9**
Total for all initiatives	**$ 8.6**	**$ 16.8**	**$ 17.7**	**$ 21.0**	**$ 21.2**	**$ 85.2**
Total BMGF request	**$ 8.1**	**$ 15.0**	**$ 16.2**	**$ 10.1**	**$ 0.6**	**$ 50.0**

EXHIBIT 7

Fiscal agent. Established in 1945, The Pittsburgh Foundation is a tax-exempt public charity with the qualifications and experience to serve as our fiscal agent. The Foundation's combined assets, including its supporting organizations, stood at $577 million last year, and its number of individual funds grew to 1,248. The Foundation and the district have multiple relationships. Working with the Superintendent, Mayor, and UPMC, the Foundation established *The Pittsburgh Promise* as one of its supporting organizations. The Foundation also houses the Fund for Excellence, a pooled fund developed by six local foundations to provide ready support for the district's reform initiatives. The Foundation will provide the requisite oversight and release of BMGF funds over the course of PPS implementation.

CHAPTER VII – Challenges & Risks

In addition to the internal risks and challenges described above, there are a number of external risks that we have identified and are actively working to manage. These challenges include:

- ***Failure to have the initiatives related to collective bargaining measures laid out in this proposal ratified by the PFT membership.*** The initiatives described in this proposal represent a significant departure from the way our district has historically operated. This is particularly salient since the district and the PFT have agreed to move forward with the development of a performance-based pay system. The elements of the plan, particularly the financial components, must be agreed upon in a process that fulfills the collective bargaining requirements. The bargaining process might not yield an agreement. While it would be naïve not to recognize this risk, PPS and the PFT feel confident of success because of their common goal to elevate teacher compensation so it recognizes and rewards teachers who contribute to student growth. However, while PPS and the PFT leadership support the initiatives related to collective bargaining measures contained here, the PFT membership will be the final voice on these initiatives.

  To ensure that the broad membership is well informed of these initiatives, why they were developed and the benefits they carry, this proposal budgets a joint PPS/PFT resource for communications and implementation.

- ***Continued decline in our student population.*** Enrollment decline has a direct impact on our revenue base. We are actively managing this risk by leveraging *The Pittsburgh Promise*, aggressively promoting registration for PreK, Kindergarten and magnet programs, introducing theme-based schools (i.e., Science and Technology, IB), increasing customer service levels, and demonstrating substantial progress in student achievement growth.

- ***Financial constraints driven by a continued economic downturn.*** The economic downturn, which has impacted both state and local financial conditions, could result in funding reductions. This would force us to spend a portion of the money that we reallocate from internal costs to cover resulting budgetary gaps. We will manage this risk by examining district budgets to protect cost savings, including postponing other projects. We will seek additional funding—public and private—as it becomes available.

- ***Communicating with the public about the changes taking place in the system.*** The public will receive different messages about the changes occurring in the district. Early in this work, we anticipate periods when individuals feel unclear about whether these are the "right" changes. Communicating why we should stay the course may be challenging. However, we will create a long-term communications plan, featuring multiple media types and consistent messaging.

- ***Selecting partners for discreet portions of this work.*** For several aspects of this work, we will work with strategic partners. In some instances, that will mean not partnering with organizations that we have partnered with in the past. We will maintain relationships with our existing partners in other ways as new opportunities present themselves.

- ***Major steps to address continued underperformance of several PPS high schools.*** As noted earlier, nine high schools are in corrective action, posing the risk that Pennsylvania will force us to close or reconstitute them. As we create school plans for these high schools (as required by the Commonwealth), we will include teacher effectiveness strategies in our "Getting Results" plans, but also school-specific strategies to address the learning needs of children. As a response to our enrollment decline, we will consider strategic school closings to address continued underperformance.

CHAPTER VIII - Sustainability

The initiatives described in this proposal are ones that we believe are right for the Pittsburgh—for our students, for our teachers, and for our community. We have reached this conclusion after reflecting on our student achievement and attainment levels and the policies and practices that drive them. The PFT and numerous members of our community have been part of these deliberations. We are committed to ensuring sustainability, requiring that we focus on both finances and culture.

Financial sustainability. As detailed in Chapter VI, we are confident we can sustain BMGF's investment in Pittsburgh's teacher effectiveness levels. By 2014, we will be in a position to dedicate the bulk of our $19-33M annual cost savings to teacher effectiveness.

Cultural sustainability. The success of the initiatives described here hinges on changing mindsets and behaviors. Students, teachers, administrators, parents, and the community at large—all must have new expectations and be willing to act on them.

This demands action on four fronts to deliberately manage the required shift in mindsets and behaviors. While many of the initiatives below are detailed elsewhere in this plan, they are summarized here to underscore their interrelatedness.

- *Communication to foster understanding and conviction.* Formal communications and engagement campaigns will support teachers' understanding of the implications of the changes to the system and drive home a new expectation about college-readiness and workforce preparedness. PPS and the PFT will jointly seek external strategic communications support, as well as build internal capacity to plan and manage these communications thereafter for 18 months.

- *Reinforcing the new culture with formal processes and structures.* Several of our initiatives (e.g., Excellence Corps, the RISE rubric and evaluation process) will reinforce new mindsets and behaviors for key constituent groups by making concrete and observable differences designed to reinforce new student aspirations, as well as changed teacher mindsets and roles.

  In addition, the proposal development process has surfaced many changes that have implications for the CBA and for Board policies. For issues related to the CBA, while PPS and the PFT have made it clear that they must respect the legal obligations that exist relative to collective bargaining, this process has been an appropriate vehicle to develop mutual goals and objectives. Placing agreements into the CBA ensures their continuation and protects the parties from future strife, which can occur in the course of traditional contract negotiations. Separately, the district is in the final phase of a comprehensive Board policy review. All district policies have been—or soon will be—reviewed for relevancy and accuracy. Accordingly, there will be a solid foundation on which to make any changes in policy required by implementation of the initiatives contained in this proposal.

- *Capability building.* Existing and new teachers will receive extensive training through the Academy and through new coaching and feedback conventions. Additionally, new teachers will be screened pre-hire for attitudes compatible with the mindsets and behaviors necessary for success.

- *Role modeling.* We cannot ask students to hold high aspirations if they do not see us model those same beliefs. We will use multiple approaches to recognize and reward those who exemplify achievement in and out of the classroom. Finally, we will set the expectation of "role modeling" in our schools and in our community.

By focusing on these four levers to change mindsets and behaviors, PPS will sustain change. Our deep conviction in our ability to sustain change is evidenced by our financial strength, a strongly aligned management team, and the joint ownership that the district and PFT leadership have in this plan. For example, PPS and the PFT have committed to work diligently in Phase I of implementation to reach agreement on a compensation plan that recognizes and rewards teachers for growth in the achievement of the students they teach. As such, the sustainability of our plan is anchored by the collective bargaining agreement, which as it evolves provides the staying power that can serve as a model for change in collective bargaining districts across the country.

CHAPTER IX - Conclusion

Maximizing teacher effectiveness is the logical next step in the reform and improvement of the Pittsburgh Public Schools. We also believe that it is the most important work that we have ever undertaken. Perhaps the need for a comprehensive examination of teacher effectiveness should have been apparent, and perhaps at some level it was, but the process catalyzed by the BMGF invitation dramatically accelerated both our understanding of the need for action and our thinking on what that action should encompass.

This process also accelerated the evolution in the relationship of the current PPS management and union leadership. We had a positive relationship before this process, but we had not spent the requisite time collectively grappling with these issues to move from negotiating—which is the model we were familiar with—to truly collaborative problem-solving.

During this process both union and management have learned from each other and embraced positions that would not have been possible in different circumstances. We are proud of the work we have done and of the spirit in which it was conducted. We are committed to ensuring that spirit guides our work moving forward with the initiatives described in this proposal.

We know that many of the changes described in this proposal will not be easy to implement, but also know that they are right for Pittsburgh. We will not lose sight of that fact. We commit to our students and their families, to the Pittsburgh community, and to BMGF that we will do whatever it takes to ensure that 80% of all our students complete a post-secondary degree or workforce certification. We know that the conditions are in place to make that happen in Pittsburgh. And that once it has been done in one place, it can spread further and faster than anyone might have thought possible.

End Notes

1   *The Pittsburgh Promise* was launched in 2007. Starting with the class of 2008, regardless of family income, eligible PPS graduates are awarded scholarships of up to $5,000 per student per year. This will increase to $10,000 annually in 2012. *The Promise* was funded by a $100 million challenge grant from the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) and $35 million in grants from Pittsburgh's foundations. Sixty percent of the class of 2008 were eligible for a Promise scholarship.

2   College-readiness is proxied by the percent of students scoring *advanced* on the Mathematics PSSA. In time, we plan to move to a more nuanced measure.

3   References to highly effective teachers are based on an analysis conducted in partnership with the SAS Institute. Effectiveness is proxied through a value-added analysis of a subset of the district's 3rd-8th grade Reading and Math teachers' PSSA scores. This analysis indicates that 28% of the district's teachers produce student gains that are significantly above the state average (i.e., more than 2 standard errors above PA's state mean). We have extrapolated those findings to apply to the entire PPS teacher population of 2,045 classroom teachers (May 2009 estimate). This was the first time the district had seen teacher level—although aggregated—value-add results. The district does not currently have the capability to repeat that analysis itself in the future, nor to extend that analysis to grades or subject areas beyond 3rd – 8th grade Mathematics and Reading. We believe that this definition of effectiveness—based on a single test —does not incorporate all of the factors it should. We will move to a more robust measure as quickly as possible.

4   See endnote 3.

5   Data from *The Pittsburgh Promise* indicates that high school GPA and SAT scores are good indicators of college GPA and the need for remedial college courses. Both metrics can be well approximated by PSSA scores, as seen in the HumRRO report for PA Dept of Education (April 2004) which established relationships between the PSSA, the SAT and self-reported high school grades for the classes of 2002 and 2003; "Correlations are very high between PSSA and SAT… top 60% of those students taking the SAT are performing at the Proficient or Advanced level on the 11th grade PSSA Math assessment."

6   See endnote 3.

7   In 2005, we sought an external review of the district's graduation rate, recognizing the limitations of our current graduation measure. RAND helped us with this analysis, resulting in a 65% high school graduation rate that we believe is reflective of what happens in our schools between the time a 9th grade class enters our high schools and the time those students exit our system.

8   This is based on a triangulation of the number of students in entry cohort 2003-04 and the number of graduates in 2007, entry cohort in 2004-05 and the number of graduates in 2008, and the RAND analysis from 2005 showing a 65% high school graduation rate. A triangulation of 2007 PPS "Post High School Activity" senior survey data from Pennsylvania Department of Education and 2008 Promise Outreach showed 70% of PPS' high-school graduates pursue some form of higher education; National Clearinghouse Student Tracker analysis of PPS graduating class of 2002 show ~15% of those enrolled in college having obtained a degree by 2007.

9   See endnote 1.

10   College-readiness is proxied by the percent of *advanced* students on the Mathematics PSSA. Percentage of students achieving college-readiness is calculated based on (a) the proportion of highly effective teachers in PPS and (b) an estimation of the gains that these teachers produce in students that are on different performance trajectories.

11   The proposal development process has helped us identify areas of work we must do to complement and support these initiatives. Teacher absenteeism has negative impacts for both students and teachers and we intend to address it with specific strategies to mitigate its efforts (i.e., alternatives to the day-to-day substitute model now used) and to reduce it overall (i.e. meaningful rewards for excellent attendance).

12   See endnote 3.

13   T. Toch &R. Rothman, Rush to Judgment: Teacher Evaluation in Public Education, Education Sector Reports, Washington, D.C. January, 2008 (article).

14 An April 2009 survey administered by PPS showed that less than 15% of teachers strong agreed that, "Teacher evaluation in MY BUILDING is rigorous and reveals what is true about teachers' practice."

15 T. McGreal and C. Danielson, "Teacher Evaluation to Enhance Professional Practice. A Summary of Best Practices in Teacher Evaluation," (2000).

16 The Widget Effect, Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act On Differences in Teacher Effectiveness: Daniel Weisberg, Susan Sexton, Jennifer Mulhern, David Keeling, The New Teacher Project 2009.

17 The Widget Effect

18 The Widget Effect

19 The Widget Effect

20 Eric Hanushek et. al have repeatedly found, "[A] master's degree has no systematic relationship to teacher quality as measured by student outcomes." Hanushek and Rivkin, "How to Improve the Supply of High Quality Teachers".

21 There are important decisions to be made related to the facilities that should become part of the Academy. While the Academy will cover kindergarten through 12th grades, there have not been decisions made about the specific grade configurations. The decision to represent the Academy as one high school (grades 6-12) and two elementary schools (grades K-5) is purely illustrative, as the final decision will require greater discussion and analysis.

22 James W. Stigler & James Hiebert, "The Teaching Gap," The Free Press (1999).

23 "Creating and Sustaining Urban Residencies," The Aspen Institute & Center for Teaching Quality (2008).

24 Initially, the district will work with TNTP to provide certification for uncredentialed teachers in Science, Mathematics and Special Education. This role will transition to the district over time.

25 Experienced new hires will be placed directly in a classroom. If they teach a core content area, they will have an opportunity to attend with other experienced teachers.

26 "The meta-analyses relating to teacher education show that the effect size of teacher education on subsequent student outcomes is negligible (about 0.10)…" John Hattie, "Visible Learning," Routledge (2009), p111..

27 22 Pa. Code Section 49.16. The induction program is best described as a mentoring program in which new teachers are provided with support from more experienced professionals to further develop their teaching skills.

28 See endnote 3.

29 While pay-for-performance (nor any form of differentiated compensation) does not exist at the teacher level, it is in place for principals and some central office positions.

30 Pedro Norguera, The Trouble with Black Boys, Urban Education, vol. 38, No. 4, July 2003, p. 449.

31 Ben Levin, "How to Change 5000 Schools: A Practical and Positive Approach for Leading Change at Every Level," Harvard Education Press (December 16, 2008).

32 We anticipate that these progress reviews would occur monthly during the first year, and quarterly during the second year.

33 U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), "State Nonfiscal Survey of Public Elementary/Secondary Education," 2000-01 through 2006-07. (This table was prepared October 2008.)