

**1003(g) SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GRANT
APPLICATION COVER**

County: Roane

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Others may be added as needed by the LEA.

Superintendent Signature _____ **Date** _____

LEA Title I Director Signature _____ **Date** _____

Provide a brief summary of the LEA's proposed Title I school improvement grant program
(not to exceed 1 page).

Geary Elementary Middle School (GEMS) will focus on capacity building among all teachers. Solution Tree's School Improvement program will be secured to bring the staff needed guidance in best practices for improving the instructional program. Technology will be secured to bring all classrooms up to modern standards in terms of instructional presentation as well as to provide students additional access to computers to support both regular and extended school day instruction. Parents and community will be encouraged to participate in meaningful and productive interactions with students and staff in order to support the improvement efforts of the school. Materials such as books and supplies for instruction will be secured to ensure the capability to incorporate new strategies into the classrooms. Additional staff for intervention and work with the improvement process will be secured. The principal will be retained for an additional 20 days of work (she is currently a 220 day contract) in order to allow for time to oversee the improvement process.

LEA APPLICATION

I. SCHOOLS TO BE SERVED: List each Tier I, Tier II and Tier III school the LEA commits to serve and check the applicable box for the intervention model that the LEA will implement in each Tier I and Tier II school.

Tier II Schools:

School Name/ NCES ID#	Principal	Email Address	Intervention			
			Turn-around	Restart	Closure	Transformation
540132001305	Brenda Chadwell	bchadwel@access.k12.wv.us				X

II. DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION: Address the following information in the LEA application for the 1003(g) school improvement grant.

- A.** The needs assessment and capacity index were previously provided in the letter of intent to apply. The letter of intent to apply has been evaluated according to the established criteria and if it was deemed to have met the standard, no further action is required. **If revisions were required attach a copy of the revised needs assessment and/or the capacity index.**

The data analysis will be revisited in the fall of 2010 as a part of the building assessment conducted by the Solution Tree. The school's strategic plan will also be updated to address the contents of this plan.

The LEA will request technical assistance from the SEA to increase the district capacity to facilitate the necessary improvements at Geary Elementary Middle School. Specific assistance in the areas of scheduling and program over site and development will be targeted for improvement through this technical assistance.

- B. Provide a summary of the LEA consultation with relevant stakeholders regarding the LEA's application and implementation of school improvement models in its Tier I and Tier II schools. The summary will include a description of the meeting format, stakeholder groups consulted, key discussion points and the outcomes from the discussion.**

County Leadership Team visited the school on April 15, 2010 and reviewed the Transformation grant with the entire staff. The staff was able to ask specific questions and the group was receptive to the process. News coverage of the proposed grant initiative led to several significant conversations with parents and community members by member of the County Improvement Team as well as members of the Geary Elementary Middle School Staff. The proposed grant initiative was also a topic of discussion at the May meeting of the Roane County Board of Education at which time Dr. Chapman

presented information to the board and the public in attendance about the grant and the improvement efforts planned within its venue.

The LEA will provide technical assistance to the school in the form of visits/trainings from the county Director of Federal Programs, the Director of Special Education as well as the county Literacy Coach on a weekly basis. The county Improvement Team will also meet quarterly with the school's leadership to monitor implementation of the planned activities as well as evaluate data to determine progress.

C1. For each Tier I, Tier II and Tier III school the LEA will serve, develop measurable summative and growth goals that will be used by the LEA to monitor progress of student achievement on the State's assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics. Annual growth goal example: "The percentage of students who exhibit typical growth in grades 6-8 in mathematics will increase annually as measured by the WESTEST 2."

School 1

School Name: Geary Elementary Middle School
Annual Summative Achievement Goal for Reading/Language Arts: <i>The percentage of students in the All Students as well as the Low SES subgroup experiencing growth of achievement in Reading/Language Arts will increase by 5% on the WESTEST 2.</i>
Annual Growth Goal for Reading/Language Arts: <i>The percentage of students who exhibit typical growth in grades 3-8 in Mathematics will increase annually as measured by the WESTEST2.</i>
Annual Summative Achievement Goal for Mathematics: <i>The percentage of students in the All Students as well as the Low SES subgroup experiencing growth of achievement in Mathematics will increase by 5% on the WESTEST 2.</i>
Annual Growth Goal for Mathematics: <i>The percentage of students who exhibit typical growth in grades 3-8 in Mathematics will increase annually as measured by the WESTEST2.</i>

Add charts for additional schools as needed.

C2. Describe below how the summative and growth goals will be utilized by the LEA to evaluate the school's academic progress.

The LEA will monitor student achievement quarterly through a meeting between the county Improvement Team and the school leadership. Data, in the form of Acuity benchmarks, DIBELS data, AIMS Web, etc. will be presented and addressed to determine academic progress of students.

III. TRANSFORMATION MODEL AND TIER III ACTIVITIES: Design interventions and establish timelines for implementation consistent with the final requirements for the selected intervention model(s) as directed below.

Tier I and Tier II schools implementing the Transformation Model shall address all items under Sections A through D. Tier III schools are responsible for Section A, numbers 2 and 4 (develop teacher and school leader effectiveness). In addition, Tier III schools shall address one or more of the items listed in Sections B through D.

TRANSFORMATION MODEL

a. Develop teacher and school leader effectiveness

1a. Replace the principal -This section must be addressed for each Tier I and Tier II school the district elects to serve.

Roane County Schools has selected the following method(s) to address the transformation model requirement addressing the replacement of the principal. The new principal must be placed in this position on or before the first day of administrative employment for the 2010-2011 school year.

School Name	Tier	Method of Replacement (Choose a, b or c. See below.)	Start Date of the Principal
Geary Elementary Middle School	II	a	November 15, 2007

- a. The principal has been replaced within the past two years, (newly defined by ED as the fall of 2007 or more recently), as required of an identified Title I school in years four and beyond placed in restructuring as defined in NCLB §1116(b)(8)(B)(ii). This change in leadership meets the requirement of restructuring the school governance for a fundamental reform. Evaluation of the individual’s performance will be conducted within the guidelines of WV Code §18A-2-12 and WV BOE Policy 5310.
- b. The principal has been or will be replaced through a mutual agreement (i.e., voluntarily applies to transfer to another available position within the district) as outlined in WV Code §18A-2. Evaluation of the individual’s performance will be conducted within the guidelines of WV Code §18A-2-12 and WV BOE Policy 5310.
- c. The principal has been or will be replaced through the performance evaluation of school personnel process as outlined in WV Code §18A-2-12 and WVBOE Policy 5310.

1b. Describe the leadership competencies the district will require for principals placed in the schools implementing the transformation model.

While examining the process of school improvement in Maryland, educators identified five leadership skills which were considered to be vital to the process. These skills include; promoting collaborative problem-solving and open communication, collecting analyzing and using data to identify school needs, using data to identify and plan for needed changes in the instructional program, implementing and monitoring the school improvement plan and finally using systems thinking to establish a clear focus on reaching student achievement goals. Rather than viewing the skills as sequential, the educators identified a cyclic process in which the skills work in tandem to drive successful school improvement efforts (Seremet et al. undated).

Thomas Sergiovanni (1984) has also identified five “forces” which he describes as skill sets or capacities which must be effectively mastered by successful school leaders. They include the technical, human, educational, symbolic and cultural forces. Viewed in terms of metaphors of the traditional leadership roles, the technical force can be described as “management engineering,” the human force as “human engineering,” the educational force as that of “principal teacher,” the symbolic force as the “chief of the tribe,” and the cultural force as a “high priest.” The application of these skills, in proper balance, sets the stage for meaningful change in the school.

The Roane County Schools Improvement Team views the competencies of a successful principal to be the capacity to identify needs within the educational setting, through the analysis of data derived from formative and summative data, to facilitate group problem solving and to manage the school’s efforts to successfully mitigate problems.

The Director of Federal Programs will work in collaboration with the building principal to identify and address leadership strengths and weaknesses as well as to develop and monitor an action plan relating to same. Specific emphasis on communication with stakeholders as well as over site of the instructional strategies utilized by the staff will be targeted for improvement. The principal will attend all relevant staff development with her faculty and will be an active participant. The Director of Federal Programs will be evaluating the principal, thus ensuring that professional goals are tied directly with the school improvement efforts and that those goals are the primary focus of the principal. The Director will meet weekly on campus or via telephone with the principal to monitor progress as well as to provide specific technical support.

2. Describe how each participating school will use rigorous, transparent and equitable evaluation systems that take into account data on student growth. This section must be addressed for each Tier I, Tier II and Tier III school the district elects to serve.

Evaluating staff is a critical component in an effective performance management system and should be connected to other areas of educator support. In particular, a rigorous approach to evaluation should be clearly connected to a district’s system for providing professional development so that growth opportunities are well-aligned with teachers’ and school leaders’ areas of weakness (Milanowski, Heneman, & Kimball, 2009). When professional evaluation systems are tied to

compensation or other high-stakes outcomes, it is especially important that they be accurate, objective, fully transparent, and linked to growth opportunities.

Frequently, evaluation systems fail to adequately differentiate between teachers at different performance levels (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009), or to differentiate among teachers based on specialized roles and specific contexts (Chait, 2009; Toch & Rothman, 2008). To be effective, teacher evaluation systems must be understood by teachers and should result in the identification of actual differences in performance (Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Milanowski, Prince, & Koppich, 2007). Everyone involved in the evaluation process should undergo training in the use of the assessment instruments including the use of classroom observations, portfolio reviews, or other methods employed. In addition, evaluations should be conducted frequently, using multiple measures, in order to gain a comprehensive and accurate picture of a teacher's competencies. Those responsible for conducting classroom observations and evaluation should provide immediate formative feedback to improve a teacher's instructional practices.

School administrators must also be evaluated. Their evaluations should be based on clear standards and objective criteria that are a matter of description and not assumption. Evaluations should be straightforward, helping leaders to identify strengths as well as weaknesses. Administrators should be provided an opportunity to give feedback to the district and to shape the decisions that will improve their effectiveness (Reeves, 2009). For both teachers and school leaders, the evaluation system must be monitored for its perceived usefulness and to guide revisions to the evaluation process.

In order to meet this requirement for the 1003(g) SIG program, **Roane County Schools** will become an "early adopter" of the WVDE revised educator performance evaluation system that takes into account data on student growth. To determine the adequacy of growth in Title I 1003(g) grant recipient schools, WVDE will first identify a suitable normative group to whom students in these schools can be compared. WVDE proposes that this normative group be composed of all students in the state of West Virginia. Furthermore, WVDE proposes that typical growth targets must be differentiated for students based upon their prior academic performance on WESTEST 2. This approach will allow WVDE to set realistic and individualized expectations for growth that are not based on subgroup membership. The process of documenting student growth in Title I 1003(g) grant recipient schools begins with identifying this normative group.

Each year, an LEA having a Title I 1003(g) grant recipient school will receive a school growth report from the WVDE containing: (1) a school-wide median growth percentile value for each assessed content area and (2) a median growth percentile value for each content area disaggregated by grade level. The report will also include the percentage of students who achieved at or above typical levels of growth. This information will be presented for each assessed content area and disaggregated by grade level. This report will be utilized as part of the WVDE revised educator performance evaluation system that takes into account data on student growth and to identify and reward school leaders and teachers who have increased student achievement.

The school growth report will be incorporated in evaluating teacher and school leader effectiveness as described below.

Schools accepting Title I 1003(g) funds will be required to adopt the newly developed framework for a multiple measure professional educator evaluation system. As a result, these schools will be labeled as “early adopters” in the timeline of implementing this framework. LEA representatives will participate in the revision of WV BOE Policy 5310 and the development of a rigorous, transparent, and equitable evaluation system for teachers and principals. This taskforce must include representatives from all stakeholder groups and will be guided by the task force executive committee. The timeline below illustrates the implementation stages for this new framework:

- 2009-2010: State task force was established to study the WV teacher and leader performance evaluation system and review the work that has been completed on the teaching standards.
- 2010-2011: State task force continues to meet and recommends revisions to Policy 5310 and WV teacher and leader performance evaluation system.

Provide professional development to teachers and administrators on the newly revised WV teacher and leader performance evaluation system.

- 2011-2012: Implement revised WV teacher and leader performance evaluation system as an “early adopter”.

This multiple measure approach will examine three areas of teacher and leader effectiveness. The first measure will be based upon observation and traditional teacher evaluation. This component will encompass peer review, content knowledge, pedagogy, and professionalism, among other areas. The second measure will examine established collaborative team goals based upon growth data and observation-based assessment measures. These team goals and action steps will be representative of and based upon a needs assessment, student growth and summative assessment data. Examples of assessment data collection may include Writing Roadmap, Acuity, TechSteps, etc. The third component, to be implemented at a later date, will encompass classroom and individual student growth. These data sets will include WESTEST 2, the eventual common core assessment standards and benchmarks, student grades, student portfolios, and classroom rubrics. The expectation for this developing evaluation system is that it will take into account student growth as a “significant factor” in the teacher and leader evaluation process.



- 3. Describe how the district will identify and reward school leaders, teachers and other staff who have increased student achievement and the graduation rate. This section must be addressed for all Tier I and Tier II schools. Participation is optional for the Tier III schools.**

Nationally, reward-based compensation is becoming increasingly common as a school reform strategy because of the increased emphasis on teacher effectiveness and increased student achievement. The goal of this type of compensation structure is to significantly motivate employees to perform well and encourage the retention of highly effective teachers in low achieving schools. According to NCLB Section 1117, each state may financially reward schools that improve student achievement and help the school meet its goals for improvement. The rewards program may also recognize and provide financial rewards to teachers teaching in a Title I school identified for improvement that consistently makes significant gains in academic achievement in the areas in which the teacher provides instruction or to teachers or principals designated as distinguished.

While WV Code §18A-4-4 and §18A-4-5a limits the options for rewarding teachers, **Roane County Schools** will implement the following procedures for meeting this criteria. The rewards will be based on student achievement results and implementation of individual action steps to achieve the school goals. The information contained in the school growth report provided by the WVDE will be utilized to determine reward-based compensation.

All professional staff members will be part of a collaborative team (professional learning community) and participate in regularly scheduled team activities. As part of the team activities, each staff member will be asked to identify specific individual action steps. The teacher will commit to completing the identified tasks as part of the overall strategies to achieve the school’s summative and growth goals for reading/language arts and mathematics. The completion of these individual action steps will be monitored quarterly by the building administrator.

Each year, an LEA having a Title I 1003(g) grant recipient school will receive a school growth report from the WVDE. After reviewing the school growth report, the LEA will determine if the school met its summative and overall school growth goals for reading/language arts and mathematics. Additionally, the building administrator will determine if the teachers completed their individual action steps. The administrator’s supervisor will in turn determine if the principal completed his/her individual action steps.

If it is determined that the school met the summative and overall school growth goals for reading/language arts and mathematics and each professional completed their individual action steps, then the professional staff members (principal and teachers) will be rewarded. Current WV Code does not permit a bonus to be paid to individuals, thus the following options are being suggested as appropriate rewards.

Check the option(s) the county will use to provide rewards:

Reward Options	Amount per Staff Member
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Materials or supplies for teachers’ classrooms	\$500.000
<input type="checkbox"/> Attend an out of state conference	
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilize the funds towards tuition for advanced coursework and LEA HQ teacher plan	
<input type="checkbox"/> Enrichment camps for students	

<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify)	
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4. Describe how high quality, job-embedded professional development will be provided. This section must be addressed for each Tier I, Tier II and Tier III school the district elects to serve.

One of the biggest obstacles in instituting school reform is the culture of the school. In a school with a negative culture and climate, students and teachers have low expectations for themselves and others which negatively impacts student achievement. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) must be implemented to change the culture from one that is protecting the “status quo” to one that embraces change. Research supports the use of PLCs in reform efforts. Schools that have embraced PLCs have increased teacher expectations of student achievement, teachers working together to achieve goals, increased utilization of effective instructional practices and raised student achievement (Louis and Marks, 2005). These positive effects occur due to the collaboration and mutual accountability that occurs in PLCs (Reeves, 2005). Other benefits for schools include a decrease in the number of dropouts, increase in school and class attendance rates, and a lessening of the achievement gap between subgroups (Hord, 1997).

- a. All schools that receive a Title I 1003(g) school improvement grant will be required to have PLCs as a means for providing job-embedded, sustainable professional development that will lead to lasting change. Describe the format for the professional learning communities in the district and further delineate where the individual schools differ, if applicable. The description must address the following items:**
- **Structure – grade level, content area, facilitators, etc.**
 - **Frequency of meetings**
 - **Major areas of focus**

Geary Elementary Middle School has held book studies throughout the school year based upon Literacy and Reading Comprehension and this process must continue. Geary Elementary Middle School has also focused on CSO driven instructional practices and RTI. This is still an area of major concern and will be addressed through the PLCs at each grade level, facilitated by the school’s Transformation specialist. Efforts are in place to continue refining capacity within the school to address issues they are faced with by use of the team instructional planning model. To date, the school’s teams meet and interact according to need. The school’s grade level teams will meet to analyze data and adjust instruction accordingly to meet student needs. The school schedule is being modified to provide time for these groups to meet weekly.

- b. Provide an overall description of the professional development plan for each school that describes the focus of the PD and how it will fundamentally change teaching and learning in the school.**

The professional development plan for the Geary Elementary Middle School improvement efforts will take into account the direction provided by our external lead partner. The Solution Tree

organization has worked in conjunction with Roane County Schools to develop a plan to enhance teaching and learning at GEMS. First, the professional development plan will focus upon the Professional Learning Community model. Following a series of initial conversations and data analysis to determine the current status of the school in regards to the reform effort by means of an assessment tool designed and administered by Solution Tree. This will serve as a means of benchmarking progress and determining and celebrating growth throughout the year.

An onsite orientation will follow, in which the Solution Tree will work with the staff of GEMS to establish common language and to create a collaborative culture that supports focus on learning and drives a results orientation. The orientation will focus upon a common system involving assessments, effective teaching and identification of learning needs specific to the school's population. Our planning group has already determined that the staff will participate in a book study of DuFour's *Revisiting Professional Learning Communities at Work* to help set the stage for success with PLCs at GEMS. The school leadership team will receive intensive training throughout the school year to build capacity for school improvement.

Training will then be provided for administrators and the central office focused on creating a foundation of knowledge of how to lead a PLC through the creation of a collaborative structure of support for all educators in the building. Emphasis will be placed on aligned curriculum, effective instruction and a building-wide plan for assessment. The skills necessary for collaborative leadership will be of primary importance in this reform effort. The goal will be to change the culture of the school into one focused more on learning.

Subsequently, training will be delivered to teachers regarding serving as a leader in a collaborative environment. The participants will be trained on and practice the tasks that high performing collaborative teams do in order to see results and participate in strategies that will assist them with developing key leadership skills. Not only will they be able to identify and utilize the tasks that are necessary to conceptualize increased student achievement and success, but they will also gain understanding of the process necessary to create and sustain productive PLCs.

The final plans for years 2 and 3 will be determined after a review of the end-of-year building level needs assessment and thorough review of progress monitoring of year 1. That being the case, during year 2 we plan to have the Solution Tree partners provide specific staff development and collaboration during 7 onsite training days focusing on continued improvement of the PLC process as well as effective instruction and collaborative leadership. Year 3 will focus primarily on supporting the changes already made as well as formative assessment and standards based instructional strategies.

Discussions with Solution Tree have led to the scheduling of a needs assessment for the school and this plan will be revisited in order to address specific areas of need as well as progress monitoring and other timelines to ensure progress throughout the course of the 3 year grant plan.

- c. In addition, provide a specific description of professional development activities by year in the chart below. Please note that all professional development must be both research-based and sustainable.**

Detailed description of Geary Elementary Middle School's professional development plan

Year One: July 2010 - August 2011

YEAR 1			Consultant
Planning and Strategizing Meeting Building Level Needs Assessment	August 2, 2010	1 day	Ginny Mahlke
On-site Orientation for Faculty and Staff Resource: <i>Learning by Doing</i>	August 3, 2010	1 day	Ginny Mahlke
Transformation Specialist Training	August 16-18, 2010	3 days	WVDE
Roane County Schools Opening Trainings (Provided by WVDE)	August 16-17, 2010	2 days	WVDE
Administrative Leadership Training (1.5 days) Resource: <i>The Collaborative Administrator</i> Teacher-Leader Training (1.5 days) Resource: <i>Revisiting PLC's at Work</i> Resource: <i>The Collaborative Teacher</i>	September 13-14, 2010	2 days	Ginny Mahlke
School Culture / Discipline Model Resource: <i>Teaching Empathy</i>	September 23-24, 2010	2 days	David Levine
School Leadership Team Training	October 18-20, 2010	3 days	WVDE
Continuous On-site Data Analysis and Progress Monitoring Support	November 15, 2010 & April 11, 2011	2 days	Ginny Mahlke
Administrator Consultative Support Resource: Pyramid Response to	November 15, 2010 & April 11,	2 days	Ginny Mahlke

Intervention	2011		
PLC Progress Checks- Reporting Out from PLCs to the Faculty Senate	ISE Days: October 14, 2010, December 23, 2010, March 18, 2011, April 13, 2011, June 1, 2011	5 Faculty Senate Meetings	Transformation Specialist & PLCs
School Leadership Team Training	February 16-18, 2011	3 days	WVDE
School Leadership Team Training	April 21-22, 2011	2 days	WVDE

Year Two: September 2011 - August 2012

YEAR 2		
Development of Observational Protocol of selected instructional strategies	Summer 2011	No on-site days
Instructional Practices: Implementing Instructional Practices That Work On-Site Training <i>The Art and Science of Teaching</i>	August/September 2011	1 day
PLC Work with Individual Teams and Monitoring Product	September 2011	1 day
Instructional Practices: Modeling and Monitoring Implementation / Using Instructional Rounds	October 2011	1 day
Instructional Practices: Continued Modeling and Monitoring	February 2012	1 day
PLC Working with Individual Teams and Monitoring Products	March 2012	1 day
Instructional Practices: Continued Modeling and Monitoring	April 2010	1 day
PLC Working with Individual Teams and Monitoring Products / Determining Next Steps	May 2012	1 day

Year Three: September 2012 - August 2013

YEAR 3		
Administrative Training for Formative Assessment and Standards-Based Grading Resource: Formative Assessment and Standards-Based Grading	Summer 2012	1 days
Formative Assessment and Standards-Based Grading: Full Staff Orientation	August 2012	2 days
Working with Individual Teams and Monitoring Implementation of Effective Grading Practices	September 2012	1 day
Instructional Practices: Designing and Refining Good Classroom Assessments	October 2012	1 day
Instructional Practices: Understanding and Using Effective Grading Practices	November 2012	1 day
PLC Working with Individual Teams and Teacher Leaders: Transitioning to Independence	January 2013	1 day
Working with Individual Teams and Monitoring Implementation of Designing Good Assessments and Effective Grading Practices	March 2013	1 day
Working with Individual Teams and Monitoring Implementation of Designing Good Assessments and Effective Grading Practices	April 2013	1 day

5. Describe the strategies the district will utilize to recruit, place and retain staff in the schools served by the 1003(g) grants.

Schools in rural areas continually face difficulties in attracting and retaining staff, particularly in high demand disciplines such as mathematics, science and special education. According to the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (2007), districts must focus upon their strengths when attempting to attract candidates. We therefore will follow the suggestions made by the NCCTQ which lend themselves to our personnel laws and current economic status, they include:

- Identify the characteristics of the district and its schools that are attractive to teachers and seek to both market and build upon them to recruit new staff.
- Establish recruitment goals in terms of teacher quality and quantity for the district as a whole.
- Develop and sustain partnerships with universities and colleges that deliver teacher preparation, particularly for the recruitment of teachers in high-needs areas, such as teachers of students with disabilities, reading/language arts, mathematics and science teacher.

Roane County Schools will continue to provide quality staff development and mentoring to support new teachers as well as to reinforce existing staff. Tuition support is offered to encourage teachers to expand their licensure in underserved academic areas. We have built communication with local universities to encourage placement of trainee teachers in our classrooms and will continue this program as it fosters awareness of our district in the minds of new perspective teachers.

- 6. Describe other permissible activities, as defined in the regulations, the district chooses to implement in each school to develop teacher and school leader effectiveness.**

B. Comprehensive instructional reform programs

- 1. Describe how each school will use data to identify and implement an instructional program that is research-based and vertically aligned from one grade to the next as well as aligned with State academic standards.**

Data is gathered from a variety of assessments, including summative tests such as the annual WESTEST 2 achievement tests as well as the more frequent formative indicators such as the DIBELS and Quick Phonics Screeners (QPS) in order to identify specific weaknesses in the students' academic preparation. Tiered interventions are then planned and executed for each student. The school works with an RTI specialist from the local RESA to schedule and analyze assessments in order to target instruction to student individual needs. These needs are to be identified and monitored through the use of data gathered from Acuity, DIBELS, AIMS Web, etc. The school leadership team will work in conjunction with their Solution Tree partners to set up a school-wide assessment calendar to schedule the regular application of diagnostic assessments and to have teachers meet to address the data from these assessments in order to direct instruction toward student academic needs. The calendar should show assessments at least monthly and meetings of relevant staff members to address the outcomes of the assessment data.

In the case of aligning instruction, both vertically and to standards, we examined the work of the *Center on Instruction (COI)* and adopted the following action steps for improvement in this area:

District Action Steps:

1. Provide support (technical, expertise, and resources) for an alignment process that considers resources, local context, and intended outcome (Bhola, Impara, & Buchendahl, 2003; Porter, Smithson, Blank, & Ziedner, 2007).
2. Support capacity-building for school staff and faculty members to help them understand the analysis and make strategic plans to implement action steps to address instructional adjustments and needed resources (Bhola, Impara, & Buchendahl, 2003; LaMarca, Redfield, & Winter, 2000; Porter, Smithson, Blank, & Ziedner, 2007).

School Action Steps:

1. Conduct investigation to align school/teacher enacted curriculum, state standards, and local curricula, including articulation across grade levels and content areas (Bhola, Impara, & Buchendahl, 2003; Blank, Porter, & Smithson, 2001; English, 1980; Glatthorn, 1999; Kurz, Elliot, Wehby, & Smithson, 2009; McGehee & Griffith, 2001; Porter, Smithson, Blank, & Ziedner, 2007).

2. Provide resources (e.g., time, expertise, planning support, professional development) to enable teachers to incorporate changes required to align instruction with standards (Blank, Porter, & Smithson, 2001; English, 1980; Koppang, 2004).
3. Build capacity to monitor and maintain alignment between curriculum standards and classroom instruction, including use of formative data (Blank, Porter, & Smithson, 2001).

2. Describe how each school will promote the continuous use of student data to inform and differentiate instruction.

Geary Elementary Middle School (GEMS) will make student assessment data the driving force behind changes in instruction, scheduling, and will be the focus of most of the work of the school's Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). As outlined by the Center on Instruction and the National High School Center, student performance data is crucial to both school reform and improved student learning. While data from the entire group of students can be utilized to identify and support the implementation of research-based instructional programs, individual student or class data brings into focus the progress of instructional changes that are incorporated to address the learning needs of individual students. The assessment calendar described in the preceding responses will drive the timelines for assessment, analysis of data and the modification of strategies to meet the individual students' instructional needs.

Using the specific curriculum and instructional strategies of Response to Intervention (RTI) and Differentiated Instruction (DI), GEMS will utilize data as follows; *Response to Intervention*, which is a multi-level instructional framework, includes the use of universal screening for all students as well as core instruction. Data collected during the universal screening process is used to identify which students are on target academically and which ones need extra help to reach achievement level goals. Students demonstrating a need for support receive increasingly intensive interventions and ongoing progress monitoring. *Differentiated instruction*, an instructional approach in which a teacher incorporates an array of research-based instructional and organizational practices as a means to accommodate student differences in learning. Data collected from benchmarks and observations will be used, along with other extant sources of data in order to identify and accommodate the individual students' learning styles.

3. Describe other permissible activities, as defined in the regulations that the schools will implement as comprehensive instructional reform programs.

C. Increasing learning time and creating community-oriented schools

1. Describe how each school will establish schedules and strategies that provide increased learning time and create community-oriented schools. An additional 300 hours per year is recommended by ED.

According to the National Center on Time and Learning, a correlation exists between learning time and gains in middle and high school achievement. Though the researchers acknowledge that the data is emerging in this area (Gewertz, 2009), other research supports the academic gains garnered by well-designed programs which expand a learning time of a minimum of three hundred hours per school year (Frazier and Morrison, 1998). It should be noted however, that increased learning time before and after school hours can be difficult to arrange in a rural, low-

income setting such as Geary Elementary Middle School. Issues with transportation particularly, e.g. low bus rides, make it unlikely that a large percentage of the student population will participate in such activities.

It should also be noted that simply increasing the amount of instructional time will not necessarily lead to increased student achievement. Instruction provided during any instructional time must be delivered at the appropriate level and in such a way as to be effective, efficient, meaningful and motivating. Therefore, the final outcome created by altering or expanding the school day will depend largely on how well the teachers are trained to use the extra time (Center on Instruction, undated).

The leadership team at Geary Elementary Middle School has been evaluating their daily schedule to increase allocated instructional time by eliminating unnecessary transition times and providing time for collaborative meetings of grade level PLCs as well as dedicated intervention period throughout the school day. During these times of intervention, the students receive instruction from both the general education staff and interventionists.

Before and after school times are planned for students to receive additional intervention during the regular school term. RTI data will be accessed to determine instructional needs of each student participating in the before and after school programs and directed instruction will be provided to students based upon these identified needs. Interventionists will work closely with general education teacher to make sure that student work is meaningful, relevant and shared with the appropriate teachers to create a more holistic support system for each child. Parent activities are planned to coincide with several to the after school interventions to bring parents into a more substantive role in the program to increase their child's academic achievement. By familiarizing parents with materials including text resources and technology we plan to increase the support provided to students.

2. Describe how each school will provide ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement. Please provide more detail.

As previously described, Geary Elementary Middle School plans to bring parents into the before and after school intervention sessions which will involve family and community in the educational process of students. Additionally, by holding parent/family involvement nights, which will include informational programs, parent resources, educational supplies and high interest events for students and families as an integral part of our Title I Part A program, the school will build more capacity in their home/school communication network. Particular emphasis will be given to training parents in instructional strategies to support reading language arts and mathematics. The use of such materials as flash cards, mathematics flashcards, number cubes, calculators, Dolch sight word lists, make and take learning centers, and tips for successful home work completion will be provided. The planning team also intends to use these activities to better inform parents as to their child's needs and strengths as well as to increase the parents' ability to interact with staff in a productive manner.

Community members have and will continue to play a large role in the success of the school's programming, as they provide resources and insights from a variety of diverse viewpoints. Community volunteers currently assist with school and class projects and programs. Parent and community groups at Geary Elementary Middle School have always been very active and supportive of their school. Concerned parents and community members have consistently raised funds and lobbied for state and private support of school needs, such as but not limited to, the recently approved classroom and gymnasium funded by the West Virginia School Building Authority. These parent and community members have already attended meetings and have sought

out the planning committee members and school leadership team in order to find out both what the proposed school improvement grant can do for their school and what they can do to support the process. One vital component of the mission of the school's grade level PLCs will be to communicate effectively with parents and community stakeholders as to the progress/needs of all students.

3. Describe other permissible activities, as defined in the regulations that each school will implement to increase learning time and create community-oriented schools.

The school will secure the services of additional interventionists to support student learning in the areas of reading language arts and mathematics. The school will also secure the services of retired teacher to assist in parent involvement, extended learning time, and the delivery of assessments of student learning.

D. Provide operating flexibility and sustained support

1. Describe the operational flexibility (e.g., staffing, calendar, time, budget) that schools will be given in order to fully implement a comprehensive approach to substantially improve student achievement outcomes and increase high school graduation rates.

Due to the current personnel laws in West Virginia complete autonomy cannot be granted to an individual school in terms of staffing, it is hoped however, that this situation can be mitigated by the addition of additional staff as described above. Furthermore, the additional learning time provided before and after school and during the summer will allow the school more options for learning than is provided by the traditional calendar and daily schedule. Funding will also be provided to support staff travel and additional staff development not supported by the existing school budget. This funding will further provide much needed flexibility for the leadership team to schedule and carry-out extensive, job-embedded professional development on site, either by paying teacher stipend to attend after school trainings or secure substitutes so as to provide training during the instructional day. It is further planned that the principal of the building will be hired for 20 additional days of work at her daily salary in order to plan and work with the improvement initiatives in the building.

The LEA will provide support in evaluating the school schedule, and the SEA will be contacted to elicit technical assistance in the process. The PLCs will reevaluate policies and procedures to address barriers of time and resources relating to instruction.

2. Describe the ongoing, intensive technical assistance and related support from the SEA and LEA.

a. SEA Technical Assistance

The SEA will provide technical assistance to the LEA and the schools as described below. The West Virginia Department of Education Title I school improvement coordinators will regularly monitor to ensure that each LEA receiving a grant is implementing a school intervention model fully and effectively in Tier I and Tier II schools.

As indicated on the WVDE State System of Support (SSOS) School Improvement Model, the grant effectiveness of Tier I and Tier II schools will be monitored by the Title I office as part of the SSOS process in conjunction with the Office of Organizational Effectiveness and Leadership. In addition, Tier I and Tier II schools will be assigned a SEA Title I school improvement coordinator who will be responsible for continuous monitoring of each school's grant implementation. The coordinators will report the school's progress to the SSOS team on a monthly basis for Tier I and Tier II schools and semi-annually for Tier III schools.

In addition, each school receiving a school improvement 1003(g) grant will be provided with statewide training and support to include:

- **Transformation Specialist (Leadership Coach or School Improvement Specialist)** (Tentative date: August, 2010). This training will focus on performance standards and indicators for the transformation specialist, leadership coach or school improvement specialist. In addition, the training will focus on the evaluation of professional development and action steps of improvement planning. This specialist will also attend all other SEA provided training in October 2010, February 2011 and April 2011.
- **School Leadership Team Workshops** (Tentative dates: October, 2010 and February & April, 2011). Each school must send an 8 person collaborative team consisting of the principal, five representative teachers, the county Title I director and another district or RESA representative. These sessions will focus on the following curriculum and instruction areas:

October 18, 19 and 20, 2010: Data usage, culture, vision, core beliefs, depth of knowledge, prioritized focus from data, and action steps of the improvement plan. The transformation specialist will also receive IPI training.

February 16, 17 and 18, 2011: Shared leadership, the change process, collaboration, teaming and IPI data review.

April 21 and 22, 2011: Strategic planning, evaluation of professional development and the budgeting process.

Additional follow-up training to be announced for years 2 and 3.

b. LEA Technical Assistance: Provide a description of the ongoing, intensive technical assistance and related support the LEA will provide to each school.

The Roane County Schools Improvement Team, composed of county level and school leaders, will continue to examine instructional practices at Geary Elementary Middle School and will provide resources and guidance for meeting achievement goals. This group has already brought about an Instructional Practices Inventory review by the representatives of RESA V, and will work with the school throughout the improvement process to identify and address issues brought to light by the inventory.

The Federal Programs Director will be given oversight of the school by the Superintendent and will be in regular contact with the school leadership in the form of telephone or email communication as well as to make regular visits not less than twice per month to review progress in all components of the school improvement process and provide direct technical assistance to the principal in the areas of scheduling, resource management, leadership and other aspects of the principalship. The entire school improvement team will meet not less than monthly to review and provide technical assistance in the improvement process with the building principal.

3. Describe the intensive technical assistance and related support for each school that will be provided by a designated external lead partnership organization, if applicable.

Initial communication with our chosen external partner, The Solution Tree, has been initiated. Information relating to the root cause analysis conducted for this grant proposal has been shared with the planning team from the external partner. Though a provisional training program has been outlined, it is understood that this plan will be reassessed and modified as needed in order to meet the identified needs of the school, as documented by the ongoing needs assessments conducted by the Solution Tree.

The Solution Tree is recognized as a leader in providing directed improvement support to schools. They feature the work of many of the leading authorities on improvement such as the DuFours and Robert Marzano.

The professional development plan designed for the Geary Elementary Middle School improvement efforts by the Solution Tree takes into account the direction provided by our external lead partner. The Solution Tree organization has worked in conjunction with Roane County Schools to develop a plan to enhance teaching and learning at GEMS. First, the professional development plan will focus upon the Professional Learning Community model. Following a series of initial conversations and data analysis to determine the current status of the school in regards to the reform effort by means of an assessment tool designed and administered by Solution Tree. This will serve as a means of benchmarking progress and determining and celebrating growth throughout the year.

An onsite orientation will follow, in which the Solution Tree will work with the staff of GEMS to establish common language and to create a collaborative culture that supports focus on learning and drives a results orientation. The orientation will focus upon a common system involving assessments, effective teaching and identification of learning needs specific to the school's population.

Training will then be provided for administrators and the central office focused on creating a foundation of knowledge of how to lead a PLC through the creation of a collaborative structure of support for all educators in the building. Emphasis will be placed on aligned curriculum, effective instruction and a building-wide plan for assessment. The skills necessary for collaborative leadership will be of primary importance in this reform effort. The goal will be to change the culture of the school into one focused more on learning.

Subsequently, training will be delivered to teachers regarding serving as a leader in a collaborative environment. The participants will be trained on and practice the tasks that high performing collaborative teams do in order to see results and participate in strategies that will assist them with developing key leadership skills. Not only will they be able to identify and utilize the tasks that are necessary to conceptualize increased student achievement and success, but they will also gain understanding of the process necessary to create and sustain productive PLCs.

The final plans for years 2 and 3 will be determined after a review of the end-of-year building level needs assessment and thorough review of progress monitoring of year 1. That being the case, during year 2 we plan to have the Solution Tree partners provide specific staff development and collaboration during 7 onsite training days focusing on continued improvement of the PLC process as well as effective instruction and collaborative leadership. Year 3 will focus primarily on supporting the changes already made as well as formative assessment and standards based instructional strategies.

By focusing the school's efforts on instruction based upon student data and supported by fully trained and embedded Professional Learning Communities, the training and support provided by our external partners, the Solution Tree will be able to carry on in the school for many years to come.

4. Describe other permissible activities that each school will implement to provide operating flexibility and sustained support (e.g., staffing, scheduling, budgeting).

The LEA will hire a Transformation Specialist to work with the improvement efforts at GEMS. This individual will be both a successful classroom teacher and hold licensure as an administrator. In addition, the County Improvement team will work with the school leadership in order to provide supports from discretionary funds they oversee including, but not limited to Title I Part A, Title II, Rural and Low Income, Special Education and county funds in order to support improvement efforts at the school.

IV. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: This section must be addressed for each Tier I, Tier II and Tier III school the district elects to serve.

A. Recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable, to ensure their quality.

- **Describe the procedures the LEA will use to recruit, screen, and select external providers. The process shall include input from a variety of stakeholders. A specific timeline to complete these activities must be included.**

The grant team, including the county superintendent, assistant superintendent, director of federal programs, the principal, the county literacy coach and another principal met for 2 days in April, 2010. During this time they determined the outline of the Geary School's improvement needs. Following this training, the group met in Roane County with the county director of special education and the chief financial officer to assist in the planning process. It was determined that the grant effort would focus upon securing the services of one external supporting partner to provide intensive staff development and technical support of the school. Following a review of available information, including services and references, the Solution Tree group was selected for this project. The Solution Tree group took information provided in our needs assessment and developed a model for training and support which we outlined in the preceding questions.

- **Provide a written explanation outlining the following:**
 - **how the external provider selected meets the identified needs of the school**

- **the projected work to be completed annually by the external provider**
- **a description of how the LEA will evaluate the effectiveness of the external provider**

The improvement team recognized that the school was in need of targeted assistance to meet their achievement goals for teachers and students. Following a review of the Root Cause Analysis for this grant, the team decided that the most pressing needs of the school were to align instruction to the needs of the students and to form structures within the school which would lend themselves to continuous improvement driven by the staff, students, parents and community of the school. To that end, we reviewed information provided by several groups providing such services.

After examining several of the available external partners who provided information to the planning team, it was determined that the Solution Tree provided services and training which met the needs of the school. Not only is the company already working with several districts in the state, they readily expressed an interest in assisting the school improvement team in developing and scheduling training relating to the identified needs of the school.

Effectiveness of the Solution Tree trainings and supports will be evaluated by use of surveys of training participants as well as analysis of yearly assessment outcomes on the WESTEST 2. Addition insights into the effect of the training will be sought through the analysis of student formative assessment data. The continued use of the Instructional Practices Inventory (IPI) will also lend itself to the analysis of the effects on the faculty's instructional practices generated by the school improvement efforts. The school's climate will be continuously monitored via administrative walk-throughs designed to review the components highlighted by the IPI and the recent OEPA review. A preliminary administration of the Cultural Topography Survey was administered to the staff of the school by staff members from RESA V. Results of this review as well as recommendations for improvement of the climate are to be shared with the school staff before the end of the 2009-2010 school year.

B. Describe how the LEA/schools will modify practices or policies to enable its schools to implement the interventions fully and effectively. Identify barriers and discuss the willingness of the district to modify procedures as necessary.

The school leadership team will work with the LEA and the entire staff to determine which, if any, current procedures and/or policies would hinder the improvement efforts outlined in this grant proposal. These policies/procedures will then be reviews and updated to work more harmoniously with the improvement efforts of the school.

C. Describe how the LEA and schools will sustain the reform efforts after the funding period ends. Address funding, staffing and other resources that will be needed to sustain improvement efforts.

The reform efforts at Geary Elementary Middle School will become part of the culture of the building and the county. With the newly proposed evaluation process for teachers, as well as the skills that those teachers will gain in this process, the LEA foresees a seminal change in the operation of the school. The PLC training and skills gained by the teachers at the school will be shared with other schools in the county through the use of county level staff development. As funding for the Transformation specialist and other supports provided by this grant runs its course, capacity will be

built to sustain the reforms beyond the life of the grant. Additional funding will be sought, from such sources as private grants, federal programs or special education funds, etc. to provide continued support of the change initiative. Every effort will be made to ensure that gains made from this process are not lost following the completion of the grant funding. Several members of the staff have already committed to seeking additional funds to support the continuation of this effort.

V. BUDGET: An LEA must include a budget that indicates the amount of school improvement funds the LEA will use each year in each Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III School it commits to serve.

Align other resources with the intervention as detailed in the budget and the budget narrative for each school.

- The detailed budget narrative will provide evidence of how other sources (regular school Title I, Title I 1003(a), Title II, Part A, Title III, Part A, state/local commitment and community resources) are aligned with the selected interventions.
- The LEA will provide a narrative description of how other resources (e.g., personnel, materials and services) will be used to support the selected intervention model in the grant application.

An LEA's proposed budget should cover a three-year period, (SY 10-11; SY 11-12; SY 12-13) as the SEA has applied for a waiver to extend the period of availability of funds. The overall LEA budget must indicate how it will allocate school improvement funds, over a three-year period, among the Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools it commits to serve.

Submit budget spreadsheets and narrative as specified below:

1. LEA Budget Detail

- a. Budget Spreadsheet: Complete the LEA budget spreadsheet and detail how the requested funds will be used at the LEA level to support the school improvement models (Tier I and Tier II schools) and activities (Tier III schools).
- b. Budget Narrative will include:
 - an overview of the projects included in the budget
 - a description of how other federal, state, and local funds will be leveraged to further support school improvement plans
 - a description of any broad items in the budget, e.g., personnel, contracted services, professional development, equipment and travel expenses.

The LEA believes that it is vital to direct all available SIG funding into the school to effect immediate and wide-reaching changes. Personnel from the school will be able to participate in all relevant professional development opportunities provided by the LEA, including Summer Teacher Academies, etc. The LEA intends to utilize this grant to secure a position of Turnaround Specialist so as to provide directed assistance directly to the targeted school.

2. School-Level Detail

- a. Budget Spreadsheet: The LEA will complete a separate budget spreadsheet for each eligible school receiving school improvement funds.

- b. Budget Narrative will include:
- an overview of the projects included in the budget
 - a description of how other federal, state, and local funds will be leveraged to further support school improvement plans
 - a description of any broad items in the budget, e.g., personnel, contracted services, professional development, equipment and travel expenses.

The School Improvement Grant (Title I 1003(g) SIG) at Geary Elementary Middle School will be used to secure the following resources for the school's staff and students:

1. Hire a Transformation specialist to monitor and coordinate improvement efforts school-wide and secure the services of additional personnel (in the form of contracted retired teacher(s) working for 100 days) to assist with student achievement efforts.
 - i. SY10-11- \$140,000
 - ii. SY11-12- \$140,000
 - iii. SY12-13- \$140,000
2. Secure the services of the Solution Tree group to provide site-based staff development.
 - i. SY10-11- \$60,000
 - ii. SY11-12- \$60,000
 - iii. SY12-13- \$60,000
3. Provide funds for supplies and books to support the turnaround initiative.
 - i. SY10-11- up to \$10,000.00
 - ii. SY11-12- up to \$10,000.00
 - iii. SY12-13- up to \$10,000.00
4. Support travel for professional development activities, stipends and substitute costs associated with same.
 - i. SY10-11- \$30,000.00
 - ii. SY11-12- \$30,000.00
 - iii. SY12-13- \$30,000.00
5. Teacher rewards and Incentives (\$500.00 per teacher).
 - i. SY10-11- \$10,000.00
 - ii. SY11-12- \$10,000.00
 - iii. SY12-13- \$10,000.00
6. Indirect costs.
 - i. SY10-11- \$9906.00
 - ii. SY 11-12-\$12090.00
 - iii. SY 12-13- \$14326.00

Total amount requested for the SIG grant:

- i. SY10-11-\$260,000.00
- ii. SY11-12-\$260,000.00
- iii. SY12-13-\$260,000.00
- iv. Grand Total SY10-13- \$780,000.00

VI. ASSURANCES: The LEA must include the following assurances in its application for a school improvement grant. Please check the applicable boxes.

The LEA assures that it will:

- √ Replace the principal in each Tier I or Tier II School it commits to serve as per the regulations of the Title I 1003(g) grant program.
- √ Establish annual goals (summative and growth) for student achievement on the State's assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics and measure progress on the leading indicators in Section III of the final requirements in order to monitor each Tier I, Tier II and Tier III school it serves with school improvement funds.
- √ Use its school improvement grant to fully and effectively implement an intervention in each Tier I and Tier II school that the LEA commits to serve consistent with the final requirements.
- √ Participate in and/or provide input to the Teacher Evaluation Task Force to develop recommendations to the WV BOE and WV Legislature for revisions in W.Va. Code and WVBE Policy regarding a teacher evaluation model that takes into account data on student growth as part of a multiple observation-based assessment measure.
- √ Become an "early adopter" of a rigorous, transparent and equitable evaluation system that takes into account data on student growth as a significant part to educator performance evaluations.
- √ Organize the school staff into PLCs and provide high quality job-embedded professional development.
- √ Participate in the SEA on-site monitoring and technical assistance trainings.
- NA Include in the contract or agreement a provision that the education management organization will be held accountable for complying with the final requirements if implementing a restart model in a Tier I or Tier II school (if applicable).
- √ Comply with all state statutes and federal laws related to the Title I Part A, 1003(g) program. Appropriate records will be provided to the State Educational Agency (SEA) as needed for fiscal audit and program evaluation.
- √ Assure that funds made available through this statute will be used to supplement and not supplant funds from non-federal sources.
- √ Maintain accurate program records which document progress in implementing the plans approved in this application.
- √ Report to the SEA the school-level data required under Section III of the final requirements upon request.

VII. WAIVERS: The SEA has obtained waivers of requirements applicable to the LEA's School Improvement Grant. The LEA must indicate which of those waivers it intends to implement.

The LEA must check each waiver that the LEA will implement. If the LEA does not intend to implement the waiver with respect to each applicable school, the LEA must indicate for which schools it will implement the waiver.

√ Extending the period of availability of school improvement funds.

“Starting over” in the school improvement timeline for Tier I or Tier II schools implementing a turnaround or restart model.

The LEA that chooses to implement one or more of these waivers will comply with section I.A.7 of the final requirements.

The LEA assures that it will implement the waiver(s) only if the LEA receives a school improvement grant and requests to implement the waiver(s) in its application. As such, the LEA will only implement the waivers(s) in Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III schools, as applicable, included in this application.