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**Rhode Island State Personnel Development Grant**  
**CFDA 84.323A**

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## **General and Specific Requirements**

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GEPA Statement

The project funded under this notice must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities in project activities (Section 606 of IDEA)

Pages 57-58

GEPA Statement

Section 427 of GEPA requires applicants to describe steps to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs.

Budget

The projects funded under these priorities must budget for a three-day Project Directors' meeting in Washington, DC during each year of the project.

Budget

Not less than 90 percent of the funds the SEA receives under the grant for any fiscal year will be used to support activities in accordance with the State's Personnel Development Plan

Budget

The projects funded under these priorities must budget \$4,000 annually for support of the State Personnel Development Grants Program Web site.

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Applicants that maintain a Web site must describe how they will include relevant information and documents in a form that meets a government or industry-recognized standard for accessibility.



**Project Narrative**  
**Rhode Island State Personnel Development Grant**  
**CFDA 84.323A**

**Need for Project**

*The extent to which specific gaps or weaknesses in services, infrastructure, or opportunities have been identified and will be addressed by the proposed project, including the nature and magnitude of those gaps or weaknesses.*

Purpose of This Project

Education is in the process of major reform stemming from a growing awareness of the need for greater accountability, high quality and scientifically-based instruction and intervention, and better outcomes. This paradigm shift is impacting every aspect of the educational process including the selection of the common core curriculum as well as the identification, provision and evaluation of services delivered to students. The trend also has far-reaching implications for key stakeholders across all levels including State Education Agencies, Institutions of Higher Education, school districts, administrators, teachers, families and students.

A “Multi-tiered Systems of Support” (MTSS) framework that integrates Response-to-Intervention (RTI) and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) initiatives is one direction for reform and represents the future model of service delivery. To respond appropriately to these mandates, it is critical that personnel preparation programs and professional development opportunities train school personnel with the necessary skills and knowledge to implement reform efforts. **The purpose of this project is to improve outcomes related to academic, social-emotional and behavioral functioning for students with or at-risk for disabilities by enhancing the statewide system for personnel preparation and professional development and by increasing the capacity of school district personnel and pre-service candidates to implement a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) consisting of**

**prevention, high quality instruction, evidence-based intervention and evaluation to improve outcomes for children with or at-risk for disabilities.** This project will build upon and integrate current initiatives to promote a service delivery system aimed at enhancing the academic, behavioral and social-emotional development for students. The project is a collaboration between the Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities (Rhode Island's federally designated University Center for Excellence in Disabilities) at Rhode Island College.

*The Needs of Children with or At-Risk for Disabilities*

Federal and state laws such as No Child Left Behind, the President's Commission on Excellence in Education (2002) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2004) mandate that schools must be accountable for meeting the needs of *all* children. Further, these needs must be met within the least restrictive environment. To successfully support the growing number of students with increasingly complex academic and behavioral needs, Special Education has witnessed tremendous growth over the past few decades. The number of students aged 3 to 21 served under Part B of IDEA increased by 37.6% between 1990-1991 and 2008-2009, with emotional disturbance accounting for approximately 8% of the growth. Students with specific learning disabilities (SLD) currently comprises more than one third of all students receiving special education services (National Center for Research Statistics, 2011). Further, the percentage of students who spend the majority of their day in general education classrooms reached the highest ever in 2009-2010. These trends, also apparent in Rhode Island, highlight the number of students who have serious academic or behavioral problems and the importance of offering professional development opportunities to ensure

educators receive support in providing prevention and early intervention services that successfully meet these growing needs.

### *Needs of Rhode Island Children with or At-Risk for Disabilities*

#### ***Early Intervention***

There are 1880 children and families currently enrolled in Early Intervention in Rhode Island. 77 % of these children are classified as having a developmental delay. 14 % have been diagnosed with a single established condition (e.g., a vision impairment, hearing loss, etc.). 9 % have multiple established conditions. (*RI EI Care Coordination System Census*). 5.74% of children aged birth-to-three receive services from Early Intervention in RI. This is the third highest percentage served in the country. The 2011 “Tipping Point” survey of the Infant Toddler Coordinators Association (ITCA) reported that nationally the average number of planned EI services per month in RI had decreased from 5.8 in 2009 to 4.5 in 2011. These generally decreasing numbers underscore the need for high quality, evidence-based services in order to impact child outcomes.

#### ***Early Childhood***

The RI Child Care Participation Survey (2007) found that 8.9 per 1000 children were expelled from early care and education centers in RI and 6.7 per 100 were expelled from pre-kindergarten – these rates are three times higher than the national average (Gilliam & Shahar, 2006). Programs without on-site behavioral consultation expelled 10.8 children per 1,000; programs with onsite support expelled 5.7 children per 1,000. The Sherlock Center on Disabilities (SCD), a partner in the proposed SPDG project, provided training and on-site technical assistance to 26 early childhood programs representing 239 classrooms and more than 3650 children between 2007-2011 regarding Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports

(PBIS). Programs implementing with fidelity documented a 74% reduction in internal social skills referrals and a 92.3% reduction in referrals to community mental health placements.

***School-Aged***

***Graduation and Dropout Rates for Children with IEPs (SPP Indicators 1&2)***

Based on 2008-09 cohort data, the percentage of RI students with IEPs that graduated in four years was less than 60%, significantly lower than the state average. Similarly, the dropout rate for students with disabilities is more than 1.5 times higher for students without disabilities.

Table 1

*RI Graduation and Dropout Rates for Students With and Without Disabilities*

	RI 4 Year Graduation Rates	RI Dropout Rates
RI Students with IEPs	58.7%	22.8%
All students	75.5%	13.9%

***Performance of Children with IEPs on Statewide Assessments (SPP Indicator 3)***

The state of Rhode Island uses the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) as its statewide assessment system to meet the requirements of NCLB. Summative data from the 2009-10 NECAP evaluation indicated the students with disabilities were much less likely to meet Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) goals than students without disabilities.

Table 2

*2010 NECAP Rhode Island State Report Card*

Level	Student Demographic	Mathematics		English Language Arts	
Elementary		<b>Target Score: 74.5%</b>		<b>Target Score: 84.1%</b>	
		Rhode Island	Target Met?	Rhode Island	Target Met?
	Students with Disabilities	63.9%	<b>NO</b>	70.8%	<b>NO</b>
Middle		<b>Target Score: 64.1%</b>		<b>Target Score: 78.6%</b>	

		Rhode Island	Target Met?	Rhode Island	Target Met?
	Students with Disabilities	60.2%	<i>NO</i>	74.1%	YES†
High School		<b>Target Score: 63.2%</b>		<b>Target Score: 75.0%</b>	
		Rhode Island	Target Met?	Rhode Island	Target Met?
	Students with Disabilities	50.0%	<i>NO</i>	74.5%	YES

† Indicates student group has fallen short of the target but has made sufficient progress.  
Source: Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2011

Most students with low incidence disabilities participate in statewide assessment based on alternative standards (Rhode Island Alternate Assessment (RIAA)). When comparing the RIAA results to the target levels of students assessed by NECAP, students with low incidence disabilities also did not achieve the state’s average target levels of proficiency across grades in Mathematics (37% (RIAA); Target Level = 66% (NECAP), or in English Language Arts (39.7% (RIAA); Target Level = 79% (NECAP)). To address these discrepancies, additional professional development is needed. Educational personnel who support students with disabilities need greater access to the general curriculum, as well as greater knowledge of educational supports and effective instructional strategies. In the 2011 Rhode Island Part B State Performance Plan (2005-2012), RIDE confirmed this as a RI need and identified the Sherlock Center as a key stakeholder to address the needs of RI students.

***Rates of Suspension and Expulsion (SPP Indicator 4)***

RI has 2 districts identified as having a significant discrepancy in the rates of suspension for students suspended greater than 10 days. 1 district was identified as having a significant discrepancy in the rates of students with IEPs suspended more than 10 days compared to students without IEPs suspended more than 10 days (SPP Indicator 4A). Another district was identified

as having a significant discrepancy in students with IEPs suspended greater than 10 day, by race/ethnicity.

In addition to the SPP Indicator 4, RI has significant disproportionality in discipline and 5 of the 54 LEAs (including charter schools and state schools) have been identified as being disproportionate for total removals for students with IEPs by race/ethnicity. An additional 2 LEAs were identified as being disproportionate for Out of School Suspension less than or equal to 10 days for specific racial/ethnic groups. Black and Hispanic students with IEPs are at greater risk for being suspended based on 2010-11 data.

Table 3

*Significant Disproportionality in Discipline by Number of LEAs*

Race/Ethnicity	In School suspension L≤10 or >10 days	Out of school suspension L≤10	Total Removals (ISS & OSS)
White	0	1	0
Asian	0	1	0
Native American	0	0	1
Black	0	0	4
Hispanic	0	0	3
Two or more races	0	0	1
Pacific Islander	0	0	0

***Percentage of Children with IEPs 6-21 (Indicator 5 SPP)***

RI has the *highest rate of disability identification in the United States* with 19% of the student population identified as needing special education services (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). This statistic, which represents almost one-fifth of students enrolled in RI public schools, calls into question the extent to which true incidence of disability exists (Scull & Winkler, 2011) and the need to improve the identification, provision and evaluation of services delivered to students.

*Needs of Rhode Island Children with or At-Risk for Disabilities attending Priority, Focus and Warning Schools*

The newly developed RI Accountability System is designed to identify and provide support to low-achieving schools. The system enables RIDE to focus on achievement gaps, diagnose school performance by identifying specific shortcomings, and provide schools the ability to select interventions to respond to their needs. Multiple criteria are used to measure school performance including proficiency, distinction, participation, gap closing, progress, growth, annual improvement, and graduation rates. RI identified 29 schools that were considered the lowest-achieving and needed intervention, classified as “priority” or “focus” schools. Another 41 were identified as “warning.” These schools are required to participate in a diagnostic screening process to identify specific areas of need and data will be used to develop reform plans. **The selection criteria for the proposed SPDG project will target these low-achieving schools and serve as an intervention the schools may select in their reform plans.**

In summary, RI data clearly suggests that students with disabilities are at greater risk related to (a) 4 year graduation rates, (b) dropping out, (c) meeting proficiency targets on statewide assessments, and (d) being suspended/expelled when compared to students without disabilities. These data, coupled with the fact that RI currently has the highest percentage of students identified as disabled in the US, suggests additional supports, resources, and training are needed. For those schools classified as priority, focus or warning under the new accountability system, the need for training and support is significantly greater.

*The Need for Effective and Efficient Professional Development to Meet the Needs of RI Children with or At-Risk for Disabilities*

In addition to statistics on student performance, data collected by key stakeholders (educators, administrators, novice teachers) further supports the need for professional development on high quality instruction and evidence-based intervention to improve outcomes.

#### Teacher Professional Development Survey

The *SALT Survey*, known nationally as the *High Performance Learning Communities (HiPlaces) Assessment*, is used to provide schools with reliable and systematic information for planning and monitoring school improvement efforts. Results of the most recent survey indicated that almost 1/3 of RI teachers (32%) reported that the lack of training / professional development was a moderate to significant problem in their school. Rankings of topics they most wanted/needed staff development on included:

- Strategies for teaching broad range ability levels in the same classroom
- Inclusion of special education students into regular classes
- Developmentally appropriate instructional methods
- Working with "at risk" students
- Reading skill development

#### Special Education Directors Professional Development Survey

A 2012 on-line survey was sent to all of the Special Education Directors in RI to determine (a) the need for training and technical assistance in their districts and (b) their ranking of the importance of various topics and initiatives. A composite of their responses documented six areas that were both areas of moderate to high need and areas of moderate to high importance.

- Integrating multi-tiered systems of support that encompass RTI and PBIS
- Effective strategies for implementing RTI

- Effective strategies for fostering behavioral development
- Effective strategies for fostering social/emotional development
- Effective practices for including students with disabilities in typical classes
- Strategies for modifying curriculum and examples of curriculum materials that addressed state standards and matched the unique learning styles of students with disabilities

Further, 81% (n=26) of the districts in the state of Rhode Island reported that their school personnel did not currently have the capacity to comply with state legislation instituting Response to Intervention services and requested special permission from the Department of Education to delay implementation of RTI services (RIDE, 2011).

#### *Beginning Teacher / Induction Program Survey*

RIDE partnered with the New Teacher Center (NTC) to develop a teacher induction program that provides support and coaching to beginning educators. A survey of more than 200 novice teachers participating in the program revealed that 62% cited effective classroom management and 49% reported differentiation of instruction as the activities that most impacted their ability to foster student learning. When asked about areas they would like additional support and training, the most frequently cited responses included (1) district standards, (2) understanding of curriculum, and (3) working with students with disabilities. A synthesis of teacher and administrative personnel survey data verify the need for professional development to increase the capacity of RI public schools to support students with or at-risk for disabilities through prevention, high quality instruction, evidence-based intervention, and evaluation.

#### *Summary*

There is a clear need, evidenced by analysis of student performance indicators related to academic and behavioral functioning, to improve the outcomes of RI students with or at-risk for

disabilities. Project goals are listed on pages 18-19. Goal 1 targets this critical need.

Improvements in student outcomes will be accomplished by addressing the documented needs for professional development. Specifically, RI schools have needs for professional development and pre-service training in (a) foundational practices including high quality curricular and instructional methodology, (b) evidence-based classroom management and positive behavioral intervention supports, (c) implementation of a RtI service delivery model for the identification, provision, and evaluation of students, and (d) the integration of parallel systems of support (RtI / PBIS) to promote a sustainable and effective model of prevention and early intervention within academic and behavioral domains. Goal 2 targets these needs for school staff and administrators, Goal 5 targets these needs at a pre-service level and Goal 6 targets the use of the RI teacher evaluation system to identify specific professional development needs. Goals 3 and 4 extend beyond attainment of competencies to target high fidelity implementation and the sustainability of practices over time.

### **Significance**

***In determining the significance of the proposed project, the Secretary considers the likelihood that the proposed project will result in system change or improvement.***

The purpose of this SPDG project is to enhance the statewide system for personnel preparation and professional development by increasing the capacity of school district personnel and pre-service candidates to implement a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) consisting of prevention, high quality instruction, evidence-based intervention and evaluation to improve outcomes for children with or at-risk for disabilities. The overarching goal of the project is to (1) improve outcomes related to academic, social-emotional and behavioral functioning for students with or at-risk for disabilities, which will be achieved through several supporting goals which include: (2) deliver high quality, evidenced-based professional development to increase the

knowledge and skills of administrators, general and special educators and school support staff so they may effectively implement a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) consisting of high quality instruction, intervention and evaluation, (3) provide ongoing technical assistance and coaching to participants receiving SPDG professional development to improve the implementation of evidence-based practices over time, (4) improve the efficiency of ongoing professional development through the use of technology and funds to provide follow-up activities that sustain SPDG supported practices, (5) partner with IHE to increase the percentage of undergraduate and graduate pre-service programs (e.g., Educational Leadership, General Education and Special Education) that incorporate MTSS content into their curricula, and (6) provide professional development targeted to meet the specific needs of teachers identified through the use of an evaluation system that considers student growth.

The significance of the proposed project and likelihood that progress toward goals will result in system change is based upon the (1) application of implementation science principles, (2) use of an evidence-based intervention model to address documented needs, (3) use of evidence-based professional development practices incorporating adult learning principles, (4) use of evidenced-based coaching practices, (5) ability to build upon prior successful experiences and partnerships established via other system change projects, and (6) capacity to leverage available resources and align SPDG supported practices with complementary RIDE initiatives.

#### *Application of Implementation Science Principles*

This project uses state-of-the-art research regarding the successful implementation of system-wide practices, such as MTSS. The National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) has determined 6 critical factors in assessing the success of implementing evidence-based practices (NIRN, 2009). First there has to be a determined *need* in the educational setting for the

innovation. The program or practice needs to *fit within the ecology* of the school or district. Third the school or district needs to have the *resources available* and professional training to implement the practice. The practice needs to have a *strong evidence-base* supporting its efficacy and cost effectiveness within the system. The setting needs to be prepared and *ready to replicate* the practice to other classrooms, schools, or environments. Finally, the system has to have the *capacity*, and buy-in from staff, to implement the program or practice with fidelity. Schools and districts that participate in this project will be provided support and consultation in determining if these factors are in place and to determine if the professional development and technical assistance provided by the project are a “good fit” for the school or district.

#### *Use of an Evidenced-Based Intervention Model*

Educational policy has explicitly recommended the need for models that promote early identification and intervention, employ progress monitoring, and use data to assess student progress (President’s Commission on Excellence in Special Education (PCESE), 2002). In 1997, IDEA specifically mentioned the use of “positive behavioral interventions, strategies, and supports” to address problem behaviors that interfere with learning. In addition, the 2004 revisions to IDEA allowed local education agencies (LEAs) to consider a “child’s response to scientific, research-based intervention.” These mandates have served as a catalyst for educational reform, resulting in the emergence of school-wide problem-solving frameworks such as Response to Intervention (RtI) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). However, these approaches have often been delivered in “silos” in which one system was devoted to academic difficulties and yet another to behavioral concerns. This “silo” approach has been evident within the state of RI, as training for academic RTI has been delivered by RIDE and the behavioral system via the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities (SCD). Given the strong

alignment of several key features of RtI and PBIS (Sugai, 2009), increasing attention has been placed on the need for an integrated model that braids initiatives for academic, behavioral and social-emotional needs into a single Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) (McIntosh, Goodman, & Bohanon, 2010; Stewart, Benner, Martella, & Marchand Martella, 2007; Stollar, Poth, Curtis, & Cohen, 2006).

There is a strong literature base that supports MTSS as a model to meet the needs of students with or at-risk for disabilities. The rationale for an integrated approach is based on research findings that have shown (a) academic and behavioral difficulties are often interconnected (Nelson, Benner, Lane, & Smith, 2004), (b) both models emphasize prevention and share several core features such as progress monitoring, a continuum of evidence-based interventions, data-based decision-making, problem solving and an emphasis on fidelity (Sugai, 2009), (c) implementing two parallel systems-change initiatives may hinder sustainability (McIntosh et al., 2010), and (d) integrated approaches are associated with greater improvements in both academic and behavioral outcomes (Ialongo, Poduska, Werthamer, & Kellam, 2001; Lane & Menzies, 2003; McIntosh, Chard, Boland, & Horner, 2006; Stewart et al., 2007).

#### *Use of an Evidence-based Approach to Professional Development*

“No intervention practice, no matter what its evidence base, is likely to be learned and adopted if the methods and strategies used to teach or train students, practitioners, parents, or others are not themselves effective” (Dunst & Trivette, 2009, p 164). Thus, the likelihood of the proposed SPDG project resulting in system change is, in part, dependent upon the training methods used to promote the adoption of MTSS practices. This project uses an evidence-based approach to professional development referred to as Participatory Adult Learning Strategy (PALS: Dunst & Trivette, 2009), which incorporates adult learning principles that encourage

active engagement in acquiring, using and evaluating intervention practices. Central to the approach is learner participation in four phases: *introduction, application, informed understanding, and repeated learning opportunities* (Raab, Dunst, & Trivette, 2010). Within these phases, there are six key characteristics (see below) that have been associated with positive learning outcomes. Research indicates the impact on learning is maximized when the majority of the characteristics are used, they are implemented with a small number of participants, and the training experiences are implemented for more than 10 hours over multiple occasions (Trivette, Dunst, Hamby, & O’Herin, 2009).

- Introduce: engage the learning in a preview of the material
- Illustrate: demonstrate the applicability of the material, knowledge or practice
- Practice: Engage the learner in the use of the material, knowledge or practice
- Evaluate: the learner evaluate the outcomes of the material, knowledge or practice
- Reflection: learner self-assesses his/her acquisition of knowledge and skills
- Mastery: learner assesses his/her experience in the context of the conceptual framework

#### Use of Evidence-based Coaching Practices

This project will promote the use of evidence-based coaching strategies to provide SPDG participants ongoing training and technical assistance to enhance implementation of MTSS intervention practices over time. According to Joyce and Showers (2002), professional development models that incorporate coaching are associated with an increase in the number of educational personnel who successfully implement the new practice. Research suggests that coaching facilitates the transfer of training because coached teachers are more likely to (1) practice new strategies with greater skill on a more frequent basis, (2) adapt the strategies to their own goals, (3) improve and retain their skill over time, (4) effectively communicate the new

practices to others, ensuring their students understand the purpose and expected behaviors, and (5) demonstrate a clear understanding of the purpose and use of the new practices.

To effectively facilitate the transfer of training, the literature supports the need for coaches to demonstrate content-specific expertise as well as strong interpersonal and communication skills (Killion & Harrison, 2005). The proposed project will support the development of these skills via a training sequence specific to administrators and coaches. The Coaching Evaluation Survey, developed as part of the Florida SPDG, will be used to evaluate the extent to which coaches possess MTSS content knowledge and coaching skills.

#### *Successful Experiences and Partnerships with System Initiatives*

The significance of the current application will build upon the infrastructure, experiences, and the strong history of partnerships between RIDE, the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities, institutions of higher education (IHE) and RI schools that have been established through the implementation of multiple systemic improvement projects.

*Experience in Implementing Systemic Improvement Grants.* The Rhode Island Department of Education and the Paul V. Sherlock Center at Rhode Island College have a lengthy history of statewide initiatives that were jointly developed and implemented. These include: (a) the Rhode Island Supported Employment Project (1994-1999), an OSERS systems change grant that developed policies and practices that promoted supported employment in both public and private agencies; (b) the Rhode Island Transition to Independence and Employment project (1997-2002), another OSERS systems change grant that developed a statewide transition network; (c) a General Supervision Enhancement grant (2005-2006) that laid the foundation for a statewide education data hub; (d) the Rhode Island State Improvement Grant (2002-2007) which provide professional development and technical assistance to low performing schools which

resulted in increases in several performance indicators in those schools; and (e) the Rhode Island State Personnel Development Grant (2007-2012) that focused on redefining secondary special education, developing a professional development system for early childhood learning standards, and addressing the shortage of special education administrators. In all of these initiatives, the Sherlock Center took the lead in project implementation. RIDE and the Sherlock Center have collaborated on other statewide systems change initiatives including the development of a statewide system for providing vision instruction and orientation and mobility training to students with visual impairments (the number of students supported has increased in Part B and Part C programs from 35 in 1994 to more than 300 in 2012) and the implementation of a statewide system of educational advocacy (i.e., surrogate parents) for the 1100 children in state custody who have a disability. Thus, the joint activity of RIDE and the Sherlock Center has played a significant role in the development of several statewide systems in Rhode Island.

*Rhode Island Department of Education & Institution of Higher Education Response to Intervention Collaborative.* The RIDE/IHE RtI Collaborative is a group that consists of RIDE personnel, educational consultants, and faculty across three RI institutions of Higher Education (i.e., Rhode Island College, University of Rhode Island and Providence College). This group has been jointly developing training materials, offering professional development, and providing on-site technical assistance to schools as part of the statewide rollout of Response to Intervention (RTI) as a model for the identification of Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD). Through this collaboration, more than 20 RI districts have received support in the implementation of RtI procedures. The members attend quarterly Systems of Support/Advisory meetings sponsored by RIDE to review progress related to the implementation of RtI practices and discuss strategies to promote alignment with professional development opportunities offered via Race to the Top. As

part of the collaboration, Dr. Gary Stoner (University of Rhode Island) led the group in the development of a Blueprint for Professional Development that clearly identifies essential components of professional development within an integrated Response to Intervention framework (See **Appendix G**). The Blueprint will serve as a model for training content and sequencing for the proposed SPDG.

*Rhode Island Positive Behavior Supports (RIPBIS).* The Sherlock Center has led the state in providing professional development and coaching related to PBIS. Since 2005, more than 125 schools and 26 early care educational programs have received training, which represents almost 35% of RI schools. The Sherlock Center has adopted a train-the-trainer model, providing in-district support, technical assistance, and materials to ensure that schools can succeed with this systems change approach. As part of this approach, districts identify a District Trainer and District Coach that work hand in hand with the Sherlock Center. The commitment to a philosophy change, behavior support infrastructure, and capacity building are central elements associated with the success of the project. RIPBIS has resulted in a positive impact on social and academic outcomes for RI students. Schools implementing PBIS with fidelity demonstrated a significantly lower number of students referred for problem behaviors, and fewer students (2% vs. 10%) who need intensive, individualized, multi-agency support. Further, high fidelity schools were twice as likely to meet AYP, demonstrated a 29% decrease in the number of out of school suspensions and 50% increase in reading and math scores on the statewide assessment.

*Capacity to Leverage Resources and Align SGPD Supported Practices with RIDE Initiatives*

The proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort of the state of Rhode Island to improve instructional methodology and enhance academic and behavioral outcomes for students. Several initiatives are presently underway to promote teacher improvement and accountability

within the state. These include (a) adopting the National Common Core Standards for all districts, (b) launching a system (Educator Performance and Support System) that makes evaluation tools, guidance, and data accessible in one location, (c) developing virtual-learning instruction in mathematics to help struggling students, (d) providing support to help turn around low-achieving schools, and (e) starting an induction program for all new teachers. See Table on pages 58-60 which aligns SPDG goals with the state strategic plan and core RIDE initiatives.

### **Quality of the Project Design**

*The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.*

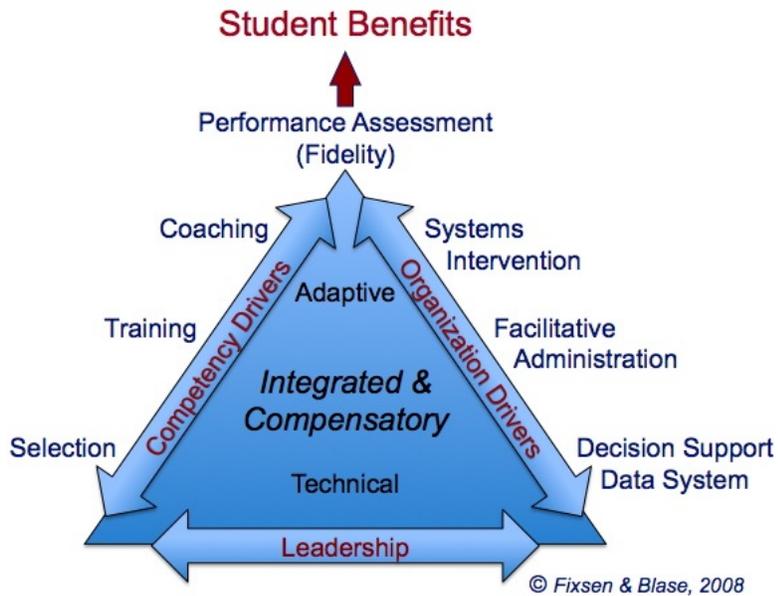
The overall purpose of the project is met through the attainment of 6 operationally defined and measurable goals. Not only do these goals address the need of RI, but also are consistent with the goals established within federal legislation found in IDEA and ESEA.

<b>Goal 1</b>	<b>Improve outcomes related to academic, social-emotional and behavioral functioning for students with or at-risk for disabilities</b>
<b>Goal 2</b>	<b>Deliver high quality, evidenced-based professional development to increase the knowledge and skills of administrators, general and special educators and school support staff so they may effectively implement a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) consisting of high quality instruction, intervention and evaluation</b>
<b>Goal 3</b>	<b>Provide ongoing technical assistance and coaching to participants receiving SPDG professional development to improve the implementation of evidence-based practices over time</b>
<b>Goal 4</b>	<b>Improve the efficiency of ongoing professional development</b>

	<b>through the use of technology and funds to provide follow-up activities that sustain SPDG supported practices</b>
<b>Goal 5</b>	<b>Partner with IHE to increase the percentage of undergraduate and graduate pre-service programs (e.g., Educational Leadership, General Education and Special Education) that incorporate MTSS content into their curricula</b>
<b>Goal 6</b>	<b>Provide professional development targeted to meet the specific needs of teachers identified through the use of an evaluation system that considers student growth.</b>

A table outlining the specific goals, clearly defined activities related to each goal, responsible parties for each activity, and timelines for each activities duration is located in the Management Plan (**Appendix A2**). Additionally the table clearly links each activity planned for the project to specific aspects of implementation science (Fixsen & Blase, 2008) and implementation drivers for teachers’ professional development (e.g., Selection, Training, Consultation and Coaching, and Staff Evaluation) and school/district/state change (e.g., Program Evaluation, Facilitated Administrative Support, and Systems Interventions). Detailed descriptions of the measures and evaluation of outcomes related to project objectives and activities are located in the Project Evaluation section of the narrative.

Figure - Implementation Drivers (Fixsen & Blase, 2008)



*The extent to which the design of the proposed project is appropriate to, and will successfully address, the needs of the target population or other identified needs.*

### Use of Implementation Science

“Implementation science is the scientific study of variables and conditions that impact changes at practice, organization, and systems levels; changes that are required to promote the systematic uptake, sustainability and effective use of evidence-based programs and practices in typical service and social settings. (Blase and Fixsen, 2010 National Implementation Research Network)” Consistent with the implementation science research (Fixsen & Blase, 2009), this project will establish specific implementation “drivers” for both (I) Teacher Professional Development & (II) School/District/State change. The implementation drivers for Teacher Professional Development consist of Selection, Training, Consultation and Coaching, and Staff Evaluation (i.e., Performance Assessment). School/District/State Change drivers include Program Evaluation (e.g., Decision Support and Data system), Facilitated Administrative Support, and Systems Interventions. A detailed alignment of project activities to Competency and Organizational Drivers is located in **Appendix A1**.

## Selection of Schools/Districts

The system of accountability, support, and intervention developed by RIDE uses multiple criteria to measure school performance. Using these measures, RIDE placed each school into one of six classifications: Commended, Leading, Typical, Warning, Focus, or Priority. RIDE based the 2012 school classifications on:

- Proficiency: How many students have attained proficiency or better?
- Distinction: How many students have attained distinction?
- Participation: How many students take the state assessments?
- Gap-closing: Are all students being served? (Disabilities, ELL)?
- Progress: Is the school approaching its 2017 targets?
- Growth (K-8): Are all students making progress?
- Improvement (high schools): Is the school improving annually?
- Graduation (high schools): Is the school reaching its graduation-rate goals?

In 2012, 11 schools were classified by RIDE as Focus Schools (4 percent of classified schools) and 18 schools as Priority Schools (6 percent of classified schools). Forty-one schools were identified as Warning Schools. Plans for Priority Schools will cover a span of 3-5 years; plans for Focus Schools will cover a span of 2-3 years. RIDE will closely monitor the implementation of these plans. Warning Schools identified by RIDE will also develop and implement plans for improvement, but on a lesser scale and without intensive RIDE oversight.

Priority for participation in this project will be provided for schools categorized by RIDE as “Priority,” “Focus,” or “Warning” schools. This will enable the project to support schools that may be currently going through a transformative process. It will also assist schools that have demonstrated low levels of accountability in student achievement (as determined by statewide

assessments) and student growth (as measured by the state growth model). **Appendix D** demonstrates how the proposed project will enable schools to meet the some of the requirements mandated by RIDE for schools identified as Focus or Priority. Schools listed as Priority need to select one Reform Plan Intervention Strategy Level III strategy from each area: Leadership, Support, Infrastructure, and Content. Priority and Focus schools need to select at least two strategies from an area of their choice in Level II strategies. Most of the requirements of this intervention model are met by project activities.

This project will address the needs of key stakeholders, namely, students, administrators, coaches/trainers, school staff, parents. Part C staff, IHEs, and the Office of Rehabilitation Services. Throughout the course of the proposed project, supports will be provided to these members via a developmental sequence of trainings and technical assistance.

The main objective of this project is to enhance the academic and behavioral outcomes of *students*, thus improving academic achievement as measured via statewide testing, student achievement growth, and student classroom performance as measured by screening and progress monitoring data. Additionally, the project seeks to decrease suspension rates, office referrals, and drop-out rates. In order to achieve this, the project provides a systemic prevention based framework of services to students. It also establishes a process for early identification of academic and behavioral learning needs. Students will also have access to differentiated and individualized instruction, as well as a comprehensive continuum of academic and behavioral supports to address more complex needs.

*Administrators* will benefit in many ways. The professional development offered through the project will enable a school to adhere to statewide mandates for using RTI in determination of special education eligibility. This need was demonstrated during the recent survey of Special

Education Directors conducted by the Sherlock Center and referred to in the Needs section of this proposal. As part of the Leadership Training Sequence, school leaders will gain a greater knowledge-based and competencies in RtI implementation. There will also be technical assistance provided to ensure maintenance and sustainability of RtI procedures and data-based decision making. Additionally, administrators will be part of the feedback loop relaying information and needs from practice (schools) to policy (State Leadership Team).

Persistently low achieving (PLA) schools (i.e., Priority, Focus, and Warning) are required to participate in professional development to build capacity and implement elements of their school reform plans. As part of these efforts, administrators and school leaders will undergo a four-week training offered by the Academy of Transformative Leadership designed to create a high-performance school culture. The proposed SPDG will collaborate with the Academy to develop a hybrid version of training geared toward administrators participating in both professional development opportunities to ensure content is streamlined between initiatives.

The Leadership Training Sequence will also promote development of internal *district coaches*. These coaches will be provided professional development in aspects of an integrated RtI framework and in evidence-based coaching and training practices. Face-to-face and online technical assistance will also be provided by project staff to district coaches to assist in establishing fidelity of implementation and sustainability.

One of the greatest needs addressed by this project will be the development of specific competencies within *school staff* in implementing core RtI components. School staff will receive professional development in foundational processes related to core curriculum, behavioral expectations, high quality instructional strategies, universal screening, data-based decision making, evidence-based interventions, and team-based problem solving. Further, general

education and special education teachers will enhance their classroom management skills and ability to provide differentiated instruction. These skills have been identified as specific needs for new teachers, as evident from a survey of teacher induction coaches. Along with in-service professional development for current teachers, pre-service school staff will also gain new competencies in the area of MTSS services resulting from additional course content implanted in general education and special education programs/classes in three of the prominent teacher education institutions within the state (e.g., RI College, URI, and Providence College).

Parents will also benefit from the proposed project. Specific skills enhanced via participating in the project include (a) understanding how to partner with schools, (b) knowledge about the RtI process and data-based educational planning, (c) the role of parents within the RtI process, (d) helping parents identify questions to ask school-based teams, and (e) helping caregivers understand what the screening and progress monitoring data means in relation to their children's academic and behavioral development. The Rhode Island Parent Information Network (the Parent Training and Information Center) will receive a subcontract to provide technical assistance to local special education advisory committees and support to families in the target schools. RIPIN will develop a technical assistance plan unique to each participating LEA. Appendix B contains a letter from RIPIN supporting the project and committing to these tasks.

In addition to the stakeholder groups identified above, other stakeholders will be impacted by project activities. All Part C Early Intervention staff are required to participate in an introductory Early Intervention course and ongoing professional seminars. The Sherlock Center is the home of the RI Early Intervention Training and Technical Assistance Center and coordinates these professional development opportunities. The core concepts and strategies described in the project narrative will be embedded into the required Part C professional

development. This will increase the understanding of staff as they facilitate the transition of children and families from Part C to Part B. Similarly, the RI Department of Children, Youth and Families collaborates with the Sherlock Center to provide professional development to the staff of the two statewide Networks of Care and the RI Children’s Behavioral Health Network. DCYF and the Sherlock Center will facilitate the cross training of school staff and RI Network of Care Coordinators to insure collaboration of the two systems. Finally, the RI Office of Rehabilitation Services, in collaboration with project staff, will provide information to Rehabilitation Counselors to insure that they also understand the core concepts of the project. Thus, all other state agency partners involved in supporting children and youth with disabilities will understand the Multi-Tiered System of Support. Letters of support from these three state agency partners are included in Appendix B. These letters describe the functions and activities of each partner.

***The extent to which the proposed activities constitute a coherent, sustained program of training in the field.***

In order to change the behaviors of children or to improve student outcomes, the behaviors of adults must be changed. This phenomenon is often referred to as a “paradox” within the field of school consultation (Gutkin & Conoley, 1990), as training and technical assistance efforts are primarily focused on improving the professional expertise of adults as a means to effectively serve children. This paradox demonstrates the importance of delivering evidence-based professional development and providing supports that the changes are maintained over time. It also underscores the point that making significant system-wide, or organizational, change is dependent upon the individuals that make up the organization and the systems surrounding it.

Competency-based training model

Following the RIPBIS training model described in the Significance section, the proposed professional development trainings for school staff, external coaches, and school administration are founded on the development and exhibition of specific competencies related to effective implementation of MTSS. As indicated in the Project Evaluation section of this proposal, both knowledge-based and skills-based assessments will be used to demonstrate the effectiveness of the competency-based training model.

### Professional Development Curriculum

The proposed professional development curriculum is consistent with current research supported models for Integrated RTI practices (Horner, 2012; Stoner, 2011).

Dr. Robert Horner at the University of Oregon has identified 14 critical components of RTI that are similar for both BPIS models and academic RTI models. Horner's (2012) Practices/Functions of Response to Intervention/Instruction lists 5 broad components and 14 specific practices/function. (I) Effective and efficient "Foundation Practices:" (1) Evidence-based curriculum, (2) Unambiguous Instruction/ Precision Teaching, (3) Adequate Intensity, (4) System for positive feedback, (5) System for timely error correction. (II) Universal screening: (6) Collect information 2-4 times per year, (7) Use of data for decision-making. (III) Evidence-based continuum of supports: (8) Targeted supports for "at risk" students, (9) Tertiary/ Intensive, individualized supports for students with significant needs, (10) Early Intervention Protocol. (IV) Progress monitoring: (11) Collection of outcome data, (12) Use of data for decision-making. (V) Fidelity monitoring: (13) Collection of outcome data, (14) Use of data for decision-making.

In 2011, RIDE commissioned Dr. Gary Stoner of the University of Rhode Island to develop a Blueprint of Essential Components for Response to Intervention Based Educational Services. This Blueprint identified 9 essential components of Response to Intervention: (1)

Problem-solving RtI Model / Prevention; (2) Shared Responsibility for prevention and problem solving; (3) Effective instruction, intervention, preventative student supports; (4) Assessment and data-based decision making; (5) RtI approach to SLD diagnosis/eligibility for special education; (6) Effective team-based problem solving; (7) Consider/incorporate contextual factors in prevention and problem solving; (8) Leadership, staff development; (9) Periodic assessment of student well being.

Many of the components identified by Drs. Horner and Stoner are similar and were used in the development of this project's professional development curriculum. A crosswalk of how the proposed project curriculum aligns with Drs. Horner and Stoner's foundation for a competency-based professional development related to the implementation of MTSS is provided in Table 4. As exhibited in the table, all 14 core components of RTI as indicated by Dr. Horner are presented in the project curriculum provided to school staff. Further all 9 elements of Dr. Stoner's essential components of RTI are also existent between both the School Staff PD sequence and the Administrator and Coach training sequence.

#### Description of Training Competencies

Competency-based professional development training materials related to the behavioral domains within a MTSS model have been developed through a SAMHSA System of Care project (in collaboration with the RI Department for Children, Youth, Families), a prior SPDG grant, and other projects implemented by the Sherlock Center. Additional training modules related to the area of English language arts will need to be adapted from previous professional development trainings developed and conducted by the IHE/RIDE RTI Group. The following table identifies the sequence of training modules that will be presented to school teams and crosswalks those modules with the Horner and Stoner components described earlier. The training

materials for each module will include (a) set of core competencies, (b) powerpoint presentation or an e-learning module, (c) supplemental readings/materials, (d) key tasks and activities, and (e) an implementation checklist. The core content of each module is included in **Appendix E**.

#### Description of Cultural & Linguistic Responsiveness

The majority of the schools identified in the RIDE system of accountability as Priority and Focus schools are in the urban school districts and represent the majority of the English Language Learners in the state. As a result, materials and training units will explicitly address the cultural and linguistic needs of the student population.

#### Description of Cohort Model

Similar to the previous Rhode Island Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (RIPBIS) training sequence, cohorts of schools will be provided professional development together to increase the efficiency of service delivery, but yet maintain individualized support. This project will support 3 cohorts of schools, with approximately 20 schools in each cohort. As indicated in Table 5, the cohorts will be staggered throughout the longevity of the project. Thus, the first cohort will receive their initial professional development sequence in year 1. The second cohort will begin trainings in year 2, and cohort 3 in the third year. The complete sequence of trainings will span from 3-5 years, consistent with current research on the implementation of system wide change. There are competencies training in the first 3 years of the training sequence. Per implementation science, project staff will provide *ongoing* on-site coaching to school teams to facilitate implementation of MTSS strategies. Years 4 and 5 will consist of ongoing Technical Assistance providing both face-to-face and online to assist schools and districts in maintaining implementation fidelity and establishing sustainability. Cohort 3 will receive the same Technical

Assistance as cohorts 1 and 2 even though the period of project funding will have been concluded.

### Leadership Cohort Description

Along with staff professional development, this project also provides competency-based training for district external coaches (e.g., trainers) and school leadership. The goal of these trainings is to assist schools and districts in establishing MTSS implementation with fidelity, troubleshoot any challenges, and prepare for sustainability of MTSS training after the federal funds for the project are exhausted. Consistent with the train the trainer model, these district external coaches will be trained in evidence-based coaching and will be provided technical assistance in training other schools in their district in effective MTSS practices. An outline of training competencies for Administrators and Coaches is outlined in Table 6.

Tables 4, 5, and 6 (included on the next several pages) outline the heart of the professional development plan. Specifically, Table 4 outlines the three year curriculum that will be provided to school teams. The core content is an integration of PBIS training modules that were developed, refined and implemented with nine cohorts of schools and early childhood sites and RTI training modules that have been implemented in several school districts. These modules are crosswalked with the core components of PBIS/RTI (Horner, 2012; Stoner, 2011).

**Appendix E** provides a description of the core content embedded in each module. Table 5 illustrates the sequence of training for each of the three cohorts. Table 6 provides the same detail for the training and coaching sequences for district administrators and leadership team.

**Table 4 - Professional Development Curriculum Crosswalk**

	<b>Professional Development Content</b>	<b>PBIS/RTI 14 Components (Horner, 2012)</b>	<b>RIDE-RTI Blueprint 9 Components (Stoner et al., 2011)</b>	<b>RIPBIS Trainings</b>	<b>RIDE/RTI Trainings</b>
<b>Year 1</b>					
	<b>Effective and efficient “Foundation Practices”</b>				
Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge Pretest</li> <li>• Introduction: Problem Solving Model of Prevention</li> <li>• Overview: Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ PBIS Basics</li> <li>○ RtI Basics</li> <li>○ Similarities / Differences / Integration</li> <li>○ Understanding the Functional Perspective</li> <li>○ Cultural &amp; Linguistic responsiveness</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1. Evidence-based curriculum	1. Problem-solving RtI Model; Prevention  2. Shared Responsibility for prevention and problem solving  6. Effective team-based problem solving  7. Consider/	U1. Overview of SWPBIS  U2. Understanding the Functional Perspective  U3. Establishing Universal Teams and Self Assessment	Content adapted from prior RIDE materials

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared Responsibility</li> <li>• Team-based Approach</li> <li>• Team-based Action Planning</li> </ul>		incorporate contextual factors in prevention and problem solving		
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence-based curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Academic Curriculum / Common Core</li> <li>○ Core Behavioral Expectations</li> </ul> </li> <li>• High Quality Instruction &amp; Intervention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Unambiguous Instruction / Precision Teaching</li> <li>○ Adequate Intensity / Designing &amp; Delivering Effective Differentiated Instruction</li> <li>○ Preventing / Managing Challenging Behavior</li> <li>○ Feedback / Strategies to Motivate Students</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	2. Unambiguous Instruction/ Precision Teaching  3. Adequate Intensity  4. System for positive feedback  5. System for timely error correction	3. Effective instruction, intervention, preventative student supports  4. Assessment and data-based decision making	U4. Defining Expectations  U5. Teaching School-wide Expectations  U6. Acknowledging Expectations  U9. Developing a System for Responding to Challenging Behavior and Preview of SWIS	Module adapted from prior RIDE materials

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Timely Error Correction</li> </ul>				
	<b>Universal Screening –Behavior &amp; Reading</b>				
Day 3	<u>PBIS Day</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data-based Decision Making with a Focus on Outcomes</li> <li>• Collecting screening data 2-4 times annually</li> <li>• Using data to set goals</li> <li>• Using data to make decisions</li> <li>• Using data to document fidelity</li> <li>• Screening Tools for Behavior: School-Wide Inform. System</li> <li>• Team-based Action Planning</li> </ul>	6. Collect information 2-4 times per year  7. Use of data for decision-making	6. Effective team-based problem solving  9. Periodic assessment of student well being	U12. Data-based Decision Making and School-Wide Information System (SWIS)  U14. Transitioning into Secondary System Interventions	
Day 4	<u>RTI-Reading Day</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Data-based Decision Making Focusing on Outcomes             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Collecting screening data 2-4 times annually</li> <li>○ Using screening data to set goals &amp; SLOs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	6. Collect information 2-4 times per year  7. Use of data for decision-making	6. Effective team-based problem solving  9. Periodic assessment of student well being		Module adapted from prior RIDE materials

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Using screening data to make decisions</li> <li>● Screening Tools for Reading (Ex. DIBELS or AIMSWeb)</li> <li>● Team-based Action Planning</li> </ul>				
<b>Year 2</b>					
	<b>Evidence-based Continuum of Supports - Behavior</b>				
Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Knowledge Pretest</li> <li>● Team-Based Approach: Establishing Targeted Teams</li> <li>● Establishing a Referral Process for Secondary Systems</li> <li>● Designing and Delivering Targeted Supports for “at-risk” Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ FBA</li> <li>○ Check-in/Check-Out</li> <li>○ On-line modules by functional hypothesis to supplement Tier-2 evidence-based</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	8. Targeted supports for “at risk” students	3. Effective instruction, intervention, preventative student supports  4. Assessment and data-based decision making  6. Effective team-based problem solving	S1. Overview to Secondary Intervention Systems  S2. Establishing Your Targeted Team S3. Establishing Referral Process for Secondary Systems S4. Functional Behavioral Assessment S5. Developing and Monitoring	

	<p>interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Attention</li> <li>▪ Escape</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team-based Action Planning</li> </ul>			Secondary Level Interventions	
	<b>Progress Monitoring / Fidelity Monitoring - Behavior</b>				
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data-based Decision Making Focusing on Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Collecting and interpreting progress monitoring data</li> <li>○ Progress monitoring data to set goals</li> <li>○ Progress monitoring data to make decisions</li> <li>○ Progress monitoring data document fidelity</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Team-based Action Planning</li> </ul>	<p>11/13. Collection of outcome data</p> <p>12/14. Use of data for decision-making</p>	4. Assessment and Data-based Decision Making		
	<b>Evidence-based Continuum of Supports - Reading</b>				
Day 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designing and Delivering Targeted Supports for “at-risk”</li> </ul>	8. Targeted supports for “at risk” students	3. Effective instruction,		Module adapted

	<p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Functional Assessment for Academic Behaviors</li> <li>○ Evidence-based IVs</li> <li>○ On-line modules by functional hypothesis to supplement Tier-2 evidence-based academic interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Low Motivation</li> <li>▪ Insufficient Practice</li> <li>▪ Insufficient Help / Feedback</li> <li>▪ Insufficient Skill</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Team-based Action Planning</li> </ul>		<p>intervention, preventative student supports</p> <p>4. Assessment and data-based decision making</p> <p>6. Effective team-based problem solving</p>		<p>from prior RIDE materials</p>
	<p><b>Progress Monitoring / Fidelity Monitoring - Reading</b></p>				
Day 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Data-based Decision Making with a Focus on Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Collecting and interpreting progress</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>11/13. Collection of outcome data</p> <p>12/14. Use of data for</p>	<p>4. Assessment and data-based decision making</p>		<p>Module adapted from prior RIDE</p>

	<p>monitoring data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Progress monitoring data to set goals &amp; SLOs</li> <li>○ Progress monitoring data to make decisions</li> <li>○ Progress monitoring data document fidelity</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Team-based Action Planning</li> </ul>	decision-making			materials
	<b>Universal Screening - Math</b>				
Day 5	<p><u>Math Day</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review Data-based Decision Making with a Focus on Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Collecting screening data 2-4 times annually</li> <li>○ Using screening data to set goals &amp; SLOs</li> <li>○ Using screening data to make decisions</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Screening Tools for Math</li> <li>● Team-based Action Planning</li> </ul>	<p>6. Collect information 2-4 times per year</p> <p>7. Use of data for decision-making</p>	<p>6. Effective team-based problem solving</p> <p>9. Periodic assessment of student well being</p>		Module adapted from prior RIDE materials
<b>Year 3</b>					

	<b>Effective Team-based Problem Solving</b>				
Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge Pretest</li> <li>• Conducting efficient meetings</li> <li>• Problem Solving Process</li> <li>• Procedural Integrity</li> <li>• Intervention Fidelity</li> <li>• Process Skills / Group Dynam.</li> <li>• Family/Community Involvmt.</li> <li>• Team-based Action Planning</li> </ul>	9. Tertiary/ Intensive, individualized supports for students with significant needs	5. RtI approach to SLD diagnosis/eligibility for special education	T1. Family Involvement	
	<b>Tertiary Level Supports: Behavior</b>				
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competing Pathways</li> <li>• Behavior Support Plans</li> <li>• Conjoint Behavioral Consultation</li> <li>• Wraparound</li> <li>• Team-based Action Planning</li> </ul>	9. Tertiary/ Intensive, individualized supports for students with significant needs		T2. Function Based Interventions T3. CBC PBIS Part I T4. CBC PBIS Part 2 T5. Wraparound	
	<b>RtI Approach to Diagnosing Specific Learning Disabilities in the area of Reading</b>				

Day 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special Education Law pertaining to SLD</li> <li>• Dual Discrepancy approach</li> <li>• RIOT Model of Assessment</li> </ul>	9. Tertiary/ Intensive, individualized supports for students with significant needs	5. RtI approach to SLD diagnosis/eligibility for special education		Module adapted from prior RIDE materials
	<b>Evidence-based Continuum of Supports - Math</b>				
Day 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designing and Delivering Targeted Supports for “at-risk” Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Functional Assessment for Academic Behaviors</li> <li>○ On-line modules by functional hypothesis to supplement Tier-2 evidence-based academic interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Low Motivation</li> <li>▪ Insufficient Practice</li> <li>▪ Insufficient Help / Feedback</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	8. Targeted supports for “at risk” students	3. Effective instruction, intervention, preventative student supports  4. Assessment and data-based decision making  6. Effective team-based problem solving		Module adapted from prior RIDE materials

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Insufficient Skill</li> <li>• Team-based Action Planning</li> </ul>				
<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Technical Assistance</b>				
	Technical Assistance				

Note: For RIPBIS Trainings U = Universal; S = Secondary; T = Tertiary

**Table 5 - Cohort Training Sequence**

<b>Training Component</b>	<b>Cohort 1</b>					<b>Cohort 2</b>					<b>Cohort 3</b>				
	Project Year					Project Year					Project Year				
Effective Foundations and Practices Part I	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Effective Foundations and Practices Part II	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Universal Screening – Behavior	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Universal Screening - Reading	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Progress Monitoring/ Fidelity Monitoring - Behavior	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Progress Monitoring/ Fidelity Monitoring - Reading	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Targeted Interventions - Behavior	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Targeted Interventions - Reading	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Universal Screening - Math	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Family-School-Community Connections	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Team-based Problem Solving	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Intensive Supports - Behavior	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Intensive Supports - Reading	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Targeted Interventions - Math	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Sustainability	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Technical Assistance	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

**Table 6 - Administrator/Coaching Training Sequence**

	<b>Professional Development Content</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	
Day 1	<p><u>Big Ideas: Leadership</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Big Ideas: Problem Solving and Prevention</li> <li>• Big Ideas: Shared Responsibility</li> <li>• Big Ideas: RtI/PBIS (MTSS)</li> <li>• Understanding language &amp; cultural effects on RtI implementation</li> <li>• Big Ideas of Implementation Science</li> </ul>
Day 2	<p><u>Day-to-Day Leadership</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivating/managing and supervising staff</li> <li>• Roles and facilitating change</li> <li>• Budgeting</li> <li>• Conducting effective/efficient meetings</li> <li>• Self Assessment (SAS; SAPSI)</li> </ul>
Day 3	<p><u>Consideration of Contextual Factors</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contextual Factors: curricula, scheduling, cultural variables, ELL, resources, funding, contractual / union related factors, level of schooling and coordination with complementary initiatives</li> <li>• Review Self-Assessment Results (e.g., SAS; SAPSI)</li> </ul>
<b>Year 2</b>	
Day 1	<p><u>Coaching Practices</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best Practices in Coaching Strategies</li> <li>• Troubleshooting / Coaching Support</li> </ul>
Day 2	<p>MTSS Intervention Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced MTSS Content: Data-based Decision Making</li> <li>• Troubleshooting / Coaching Support</li> </ul>
Day 3	<p>MTSS Intervention Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced MTSS Content: Data-based Decision Making</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Troubleshooting / Coaching Support</li> </ul>
<b>Year 3</b>	
Day 1	<u>Coaching Practices</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best Practices in Coaching Strategies</li> <li>• Troubleshooting / Coaching Support</li> </ul>
Day 2	MTSS Intervention Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced MTSS Content: Data-based Decision Making</li> <li>• Troubleshooting / Coaching Support</li> </ul>
Day 3	MTSS Intervention Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced MTSS Content: Data-based Decision Making</li> <li>• Troubleshooting / Coaching Support</li> </ul>
<b>Year 4</b>	Technical Assistance
<b>Year 5</b>	Technical Assistance

Developmental Process of Implementation and Sustainability

The goal of this project is to establish sustainable MTSS and data-based decision making practices within schools to help all students succeed. Thus, the implementation of the integrated RtI framework will be conducted via the use of evidence-based practices and implementation science (Fixsen & Blase, 1993). Schools and districts will be supported through a developmental process of implementation. Stages of implementation include (a) exploration, (b) installation, (c) initial implementation, and (d) full implementation. The project will use information and evidence-based research from the State Implementation & Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices Center (SISEP) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN).

The sustainability of integrated MTSS practices is a key outcome of this project. Most research on system level MTSS implementation and sustainability has been conducted within the

behavioral domain via PBIS. This literature has indicated the following components of MTSS are highly connected to the establishment of sustainability: (a) setting the initiative as a district/school priority, (b) effective external leadership, (c) use of data to make decisions, and (d) building capacity within school staff (McIntosh et al., in press). This project will collaborate with schools and districts to ensure that these components are addressed in efforts to promote sustainable practices. Further, technical assistance will be provided to schools to provide additional support after training.

### Training

To assist in the establishment of sustainability of integrate MTSS practices in schools and districts, the project will employ a train the trainer format. This will eventually leave districts with the capacity to train the components of the MTSS framework and practices to their own school staff. The approach used during professional development training is equally important. The literature indicates that best practice training methods must be (1) timely, (2) grounded in theory; (3) skills based, (4) utilize a feedback loop to inform selection and coaching, and be (5) data-based (Blase, VanDyke, & Fixsen, 2010). The project will accomplish this by providing timely training to coaches, ensuring they have the necessary skills prior to being expected to provide services. Also, the training modules will be based on adult learning principles that follow four phases: introduction, application, informed understanding, and repeated learning opportunities (Raab, Dunst, & Trivette, 2010). The application phase of the module will be skill based, providing the learner with an opportunity to practice the skill via behavioral rehearsals and role plays and receive performance feedback to improve understanding of MTSS intervention practices. Training modules will also be data-based, incorporating pre-post knowledge assessments at the beginning of training sessions to establish baseline levels of

knowledge and re-administered at the conclusion of training to evaluate gains. Training data will be shared with individuals in charge of recruitment/selection as well as supervising coaches.

### Coaching

It is unlikely that a "one-time" in-service will be sufficient to provide the necessary skill acquisition. Rather, on-site training that encourages guided practice and feedback is preferred (Kovaleski, 2002). Further, on-site training will help establish an infrastructure for continued teamwork and build capacity of team members, thereby increasing the likelihood that the knowledge and skills acquired during training will be maintained. This project will focus on the use of district coaches who will be trained to deliver professional development content to their own districts, ensuring sustainability and eliminating the need of continued staff training support via federal funds. To accomplish this, the project will devote adequate funding and time for developing a cadre of competent coaches and ensure an accountability structure is in place to provide evaluative feedback to coaches. The project will employ a lead coach, who will be responsible for developing a Coaching Service Delivery Plan used to support coaches in the delivery of technical assistance to teachers. Using modules based on adult learning principles, coaches will be trained on both MTSS intervention practices as well as best practice coaching strategies. The primary function of the coach will be to support ongoing training and technical assistance to enhance implementation of MTSS intervention practices over time. Coaches will be evaluated on their knowledge of intervention practices and coaching skills via observations and satisfaction surveys described in the Quality of Project Evaluation section of the application.

### Focus on Teams not Individuals

The core aspects of school change are extremely important. Thus, it is critical that components of that change are related as teams, not individual persons. To reduce the impact of

attrition or a critical member of the MTSS framework leaving a school, teams will be the focus of the implementation. Roles will be dispersed among a team members to minimize disruption in implementation or sustainability if a particular individual leaves a school or district.

### Institutes of Higher Education Pre-service Training

Consistent with the focus on sustainability after federal funding has been exhausted for this project, the goal is to develop competencies in integrated MTSS frameworks within current pre-service teacher training programs. Three major institutes of higher education (RI College, University of RI, and Providence College) in the state have committed to increasing the content within general education and special education teacher preparatory programs. To support this goal, the project will collaborate with IHE faculty to conduct reviews of pre-service course syllabi using the Institutes of Higher Education Checklist developed as part of the Illinois SPDG. Higher Education faculty affiliated with the SPDG project (see Adequacy of Project Personnel) will provide consultation and technical assistance via an online community of practice to increase the percentage of pre-service content that includes MTSS intervention practices. Pre-service programs in the following disciplines will be targeted for review (a) general education, (b) special education, (c) educational leadership, (d) school psychology, (e) school counseling, and (f) social work and potential courses are identified in **Appendix F**.

The project also aims to support the development of future leaders in educational reform efforts. To this end, graduate level students from varying academic disciplines (i.e., education, school psychology, educational leadership) will have the opportunity to participate in project activities. Under the supervision of an IHE faculty member, advanced graduate candidates may attend professional development training sessions, participate in the review of pre-service syllabi, support development of on-line training modules, and attend Advisory Board meetings.

### Teachers' Professional Development Needs Based on Student Growth

The Rhode Island Educator Evaluation Model developed via Race to the Top considers three central components to determine educator effectiveness: Professional Practice, Professional Responsibilities, and Student Learning. Professional practice is a measure of effective instruction and classroom environment. Professional foundations refer to instructional planning and the contributions teachers make as members of their learning community. Student learning is a measure of a teacher's impact on student learning through *demonstrated progress toward academic goals* measured via Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). For the purposes of this application, the focus will be on professional development related to the third criteria of student growth via SLOs. A SLO is a long-term (typically one semester or one school year) academic goal that teachers and administrators set for groups of students. It must be specific and measureable, based on available prior student learning data, and aligned to state standards. Student Learning Objectives based on **progress** require students to make a certain amount of progress from a baseline measure toward a clear benchmark of performance.

**To address the Competitive Priority: Targeting Teachers' Professional Development Needs Based on Student Growth**, the current SPDG application proposes a plan to promote professional development for educational personnel in the development and evaluation of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). Specifically, educators who may be low in their teacher evaluation due to limited student growth rate will be provided a framework for using data for decision-making and to implement evidence-based strategies for improving student outcomes. Teachers will learn to use curriculum based measurement screening data to establish SLOs for groups of students at-risk in the areas of reading and mathematics. The plan embeds professional development specific to establishing SLOs and monitoring student growth during two sessions.

During the professional development training sequence (Year 1 Day 4, Year 2 Day 4) material will target the use of curriculum based measurement as a universal screening and progress monitoring tool. As part of these sessions, training will target the administration of CBM measures, comparison of scores to established benchmarks, and using data to establish semester or year-end goals for student learning that are aligned to the Common Core. The session will also focus on key components of goal setting for SLOs including the (a) time frame, (b) actual behavior (e.g., 25 CRW/minute), and (c) condition in which the behavior will occur (as measured by CBM probe). Finally, the session will provide information on how to rate student progress toward SLOs (i.e., Did Not Meet, Met, or Exceeded) and the data to inform decisions related to modifying instructional methodology or evidence-based interventions to improve outcomes.

#### Family/School/Community Partnerships

An essential component to this project is the establishment of family-school-community partnerships. Research indicates that partnerships between schools, families, and communities benefit all parties. Specific benefits for *students* include gains in academic achievement (e.g., higher grades, higher standardized test scores) and better access to mental health and health services. *Families* experience greater parental involvement with schools and improved family functioning. *Schools* partnering with communities witnessed an increase in student attendance, decreased numbers of suspensions, increased teacher satisfaction, as well as reductions in the rates of substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and disruptive behavior. *Communities* benefited through increases in neighborhood safety and decreases in community violence. One substantial, overall product of school-community partnerships is increased access to available resources for all participants (National PTA, 2000).

The proposed project will evaluate the degree to which schools, which participate in the professional development training, engage in practices that partner with parents. Individuals within the RIPBIS leadership group have currently developed and used the only quantitative evaluation tool to assess the degree in which schools implement families in the implementation of SWPBIS. This instrument is the School-wide Evaluation Tool-Family (SET-F; Eagle, Dowd-Eagle, Nkomo, 2010). The SET-F assesses ways that schools communicate and partner with families throughout an MTSS system for supporting behavior. This assessment is evident of the importance the project places upon family and community involvement.

The Rhode Island Parent Information Network (RIPIN), Rhode Island's Parent Training and Information Center, also provides trainings that enhance parent-school partnerships. These trainings are designed to build capacity for families and schools in areas of Family Engagement, Parent Leadership, and Pre-service Professional Development. Over the past 7 years a project for Pre-service Learning and Family Engagement has provided an opportunity for pre-service teachers from 3 IHEs to hear from a Parent Panel of children with disabilities. A second project for Statewide Parent Leadership provides parent leadership training and education in RIPIN's Statewide Education Advisory Leadership. The project will use data from the quantitative evaluation tools combined with information from the State Performance Plan Parent Involvement (Indicator 8) to examine the efficacy in developing family engagement in participating schools.

***The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.***

#### Evidence-based content from national centers

Content for PD was (and will continue to be) based on research disseminated by National Centers on evidence-based programs and practices. Such institutes include: National Technical Assistance Center on PBIS (Oregon & UCONN), National Center on RTI (Vanderbilt & KU),

National Research Center on Learning Disabilities (KU & Vanderbilt), Beach Center on Families and Disability (KU), What Works Clearing House (USDOE), and State Implementation & Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices Center (SISEP). **Appendix A3** outlines the specific areas of research from which the project content was drawn.

### Evidence-based Core Curriculum

Rhode Island is one of 45 states and 3 territories that have adopted the Common Core Standards National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). These standards provide an evidence-based core instruction in the area of English Language Arts and Mathematics. The Rhode Island Board of Regents adopted the Common Core State Standards on July 1, 2010. This adoption underscores Rhode Island's commitment to maintaining high standards. RIDE is confident that the Common Core maintains the rigor and high expectations that have been set for our students through the NECAP GLE/GSEs (RIDE website). Rhode Island has committed to ensuring that every district is aligned with the Common Core Standards, with full implementation by the 2013-2014 academic year. The standards were developed with input from teachers, parents, educational experts, school administrators, and community leaders and provide the evidence-based foundation for instruction at the universal level within an MTSS framework.

### Evidence-based continuum of services (MTSS/RtI)

In addition to the utilizing information from the national centers, this project is founded upon state-of-the-art research from national experts in the systemic implementation of RTI, effective universal screening measures, curriculum-based measurement, data-based decision making, evidence-based interventions, and family-school-community partnerships. Such researchers include: Rob Horner of the University of Oregon, George Sugai of the University of

Connecticut, Doug Fuchs of Vanderbilt University, Lynn Fuchs of Vanderbilt University, Daryl Mellard of the University of Kansas, Edward Shapiro of Lehigh University, Mathew Burns of the University of Minnesota, Dan Reschly of Vanderbilt University, Susan Sheridan of the University of Nebraska, Ann Turnbull of the University of Kansas, George Batsche of the University of South Florida, and Kent McIntosh of the University of British Columbia.

Group and individual level supports provided via this project will include evidence-based interventions across behavior, reading, and mathematics. Targeted interventions for behavior include: (a) Check-in/check-out (Hawken & Horner, 2003; Hawken, MacLeod, & Rawlings, 2007); (b) Check and Connect (Christenson & Carroll, 1999; Sinclair, Christenson, Evelo, & Hurley, 1998; Sinclair, Christenson, & Thurlow, 2005); (c) Function-based Behavioral Support Plans (Newcomer & Lewis, 2004; Preciado, Horner, & Baker, 2009; Scott, Liaupsin, Nelson, & McIntyre, 2005). Evidence-based interventions for reading and math will include (but are not limited to) Peer Assisted Learning Strategies for Reading (PALS Reading; Allor, Fuchs, & Mathes, 2001; Dion, Morgan, Fuchs, & Fuchs, 2004), Peer Assisted Learning Strategies for Math (PALS Math; Fuchs, Fuchs, Hamlett, Phillips, & Bentz, 1994; Fuchs, Fuchs, Hamlett, Phillips, & Karns, 1995), and Function-based Academic Plans (Witt, Daly, & Noell, 2000).

#### Evidence-based Coaching Practices

This project also utilizes evidence-based coaching practices as provided by the New Teacher Center (NTC). NTC works with school districts and other local education agencies to design and implement such programs and build district capacity by providing: (a) support to program leaders around a systemic approach to teacher development, (b) professional development for instructional mentors, (c) capacity building for principals and site leaders, (d) assessment tools to guide mentoring and new teacher growth, and (e) program evaluation of both

implementation and impact (NTC, 2012). Additionally, induction programs based on the NTC format (a) Enhance student achievement, (b) accelerate teacher effectiveness, (c) improve teacher retention, (d) strengthen school leadership, and (E) address educational inequities. Each of the 19 state finalists in Phase Two of the U.S. Department of Education’s Race to the Top (RTTT) competition included a specific focus on new teacher induction. Rhode Island was one of the eleven states that contracted with NTC to provide technical assistance to support the RI Teacher Induction Program. Components of the coaching curriculum will also be based on the research of Instructional Coaching (Knight, 2007, Joyce & Showers, 2002).

***The extent to which the proposed project will establish linkages with other appropriate agencies and organizations providing services to the target population.***

In delivering a comprehensive system of supports for children, this project will establish linkages with several agencies and personnel, both at the state and at the regional level. The project will build upon, and enhance, existing relationships within RIDE and the Sherlock Center on Disabilities at RI College. These key stakeholders include parents, general and special education teachers, school administrators and superintendents, and related service providers (e.g., school psychologists, social workers, and school counselors).

RIDE has several initiatives underway with the Regional Educational Collaboratives (Intermediary Units) on a multitude of projects. The Collaboratives are established under RI General Law to serve the capacity needs of the school districts in each region of the state (4 regions). This project will coordinate with the Regional Education Collaboratives with outreach and capacity building.

The Sherlock Center provides 100% of the Technical Assistance for Part C Staff. Content related to an integrated RtI/PBIS model will be discussed in a 2-day “Introduction of Early Intervention” training offered free of charge to newly hired EI personnel. By building capacity,

EI personnel will be able to provide education and support to families via (a) increasing parents knowledge of multi-tiered systems of support, (b) enhancing their understanding of data collected via the process, and (c) helping identify questions to ask during transition.

RIDE and the Sherlock Center have a partnership with the Rhode Island Parent Information Network (RIPIN) that provides information, support, and training to families of children with disabilities and helps link them to appropriate services to become effective advocates at school, healthcare, , and all other areas of life. RIPIN is RI's federally designated Parent Training and Information Center, under IDEA since 1991. RIPIN's role in the proposed project is to (a) provide pre-service learning and family engagement via parent panels that attend classes preparing teachers to work with students with disabilities and their families, (b) share information to parents through training and on-line tools about using student RtI data in a multi-tiered system of supports, and (c) support family engagement in problem-solving.

The Rhode Island Technical Assistance Project (RITAP) is a statewide resource center for technical assistance and support, professional development and training, and policy analysis and interpretation. The resources of RITAP are organized to assist state and local agencies, institutions of higher learning and families in the delivery of quality education and support services for all children including those with disabilities. RITAP provides practitioners, parents, and policymakers the knowledge and resources necessary to increase their capacity to provide comprehensive and coordinated services to all children including those with disabilities that result in improved educational performance and enhanced life-long outcomes. Ms. Barrie Grossi is the RITAP Project Coordinator. She will participate in the Management Team (described later) to insure the integration of this project with other RIDE initiatives.

Institutes of higher education, and their faculty, will also be established partners in providing both in-service professional development and per-service training in competencies related to RtI. IHE partners will include schools of education at RI College, University of RI, and Providence College. Special education, general education, school psychology, school counseling, and social work programs at these institutions will provide training in Response to Intervention frameworks and assist in the sustainability of the project. IHEs will assist in providing in-service onsite professional development for current school staff and MTSS content in pre-service training courses for future staff.

Understanding the importance of providing preventative services, this project will partner with early childhood centers across the state. The Sherlock Center currently has well established partnerships with 21 early childhood and Head Start centers that are participating in trainings for PBIS. Since 2007 these centers have constituted 4 cohorts that have participated in a 3-year scaling-up training in positive behavioral supports. Technical assistance in implementation and sustainability have also been provided by the Sherlock Center. Engagement of the RIDE IDEA 619 Coordinator on the State Management Team will enhance the projects connection in the Part C to Part B transition.

The project will also include transition to adulthood services provided by statewide vocational centers and the Office of Rehabilitation Services (ORS). ORS has a long-standing relationship with the Sherlock Center and provides programs in the areas of vocational rehabilitation, services for the blind and visually impaired, and disability determination.

***The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.***

The proposed project is part of the current comprehensive effort of the state of Rhode Island to improve teaching and enhance the academic and behavioral development of students

(see Table X). Several initiatives, over the first 2 years of the Race to the Top Grant, are presently underway to promote teacher improvement and accountability within the state. These include (a) adopting the National Common Core Standards for all districts, (b) launching a system (Educator Performance and Support System) that makes evaluation tools, guidance, and data accessible in one location, (c) developing virtual-learning instruction in mathematics to help struggling students, (d) providing support to help turn around low-achieving schools, and (e) starting an induction program for all new teachers. As evident by these initiatives, the state of Rhode Island has taken a significant proactive stance in improving the outcomes for children (RIDE, 2012). Table 7 outlines the strategic plan of the RIDE and other initiatives intended to improve teaching and learning and how this project aligns with those initiatives.

New initiatives for Year Three of Race to the Top include opening the Academy for Transformative Leadership, which will prepare aspiring principals to take on leadership roles in our lowest-achieving schools, and launching an online system for educators (the Instructional Management System) that will bring together data on students, curriculum, assessments, and professional development (RIDE, 2012).

This project will also support the current initiative of the state of Rhode Island for utilizing Response to Intervention frameworks to evaluate students for eligibility for special education services in the area of specific learning disability (SLD). All districts are mandated to use RtI as the evaluation criteria for SLD. As indicated in the Needs section of this proposal, 81% of Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) applied for a waiver to delay the requirement to use a student's response to intervention to determine eligibility for special education as a student with a specific learning disability for up to one year.

**Table 7 - Alignment of RI SPDG Goals to RIDE Statewide Initiatives**

<b>RIDE Strategic Plan</b>	<b>RI SPDG Goal</b>
<b>Ensure Educator Excellence</b>	
EE1 Improve Rigor of Preparation Programs	5
EE2 Support Districts on Effective Human Resources	2,3
EE3 Align Growth and Advancement to Student Achievement	6
<b>Accelerate All Schools Toward Greatness</b>	
AS1 Accelerate Achievement, systems of support, close gaps	1
<b>Establish World-Class Standards and Assessments</b>	
WCS1 Adopt World-Class Standards	
WCS2 Implement High-Quality State Assessments	
WCS3 Monitor Local assessments and formative assessments	2,3
<b>Develop User-Friendly Data Systems</b>	
DS1 Improve Data Accessibility	
DS2 Design Infrastructure Supports	
DS3 Strengthen Informed Decision-Making	2,3
DS4 Redesign Accountability Systems	6
<b>Invest Our Resources Wisely</b>	
IRW1 Promote Adequate, Equitable Funding	
IRW2 Appropriate Investments	
IRW3 Responsive School Budgets	
<b>Race To The Top Initiative</b>	
<b>Standards and Curriculum</b>	
Study of the Common Core State Standards	2,3
Intensive Curriculum Alignment	2,3
Formative Assessment	2,3

Interim Assessment	2,3
Multiple Pathways Through Virtual Learning	
<b>Instructional Improvement System</b>	
Instructional Management System	4
Using Data	2,3
Early Warning System	2,3
<b>Educator Evaluation</b>	
Certification Redesign	
Educator Evaluation System	6
<b>Human Capital Investment</b>	
Alternative Certification Pathways	
New Teacher Induction Coaches	3
<b>School and Innovation</b>	
Identification of Priority and Focus Schools	
Comprehensive Systems of Support for Struggling Schools	2,3
<b>RI Board of Regents Basic Education Program</b>	
<b>Local Education Authority (LEA) Functions</b>	
Lead the Focus on Learning and Achievement	2,3
Recruit, Support and Retain Highly Effective Staff	
Guide the Implementation of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment	2,3
Use Information for Planning and Accountability	2,3
Engage Families and the Community	2,3
Foster Safe and Supportive Environments for Students and Staff	2,3
Ensure Equity and Adequacy of Fiscal and Human Resources	
<b>RI Board of Regents Basic Education Program</b>	
<b>State Education Authority (SEA) Functions</b>	

Establish Clear Expectations for Systems, Educators and Students	2,3
Provide Systems with Capacity and Resources to Enable LEAs to meet State Expectations	2,3
Ensure Quality Assurance and Quality Control of LEA Efforts Using Effective Indicators, Data Collection, Analysis and Public Reporting	2,3
Leverage Innovative Partnerships to Ensure Fidelity of Implementation and Improvement	2,3

### **Quality of Project Personnel**

***The extent to which the applicant encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.***

Both RIDE and the Sherlock Center at Rhode Island College are proactive in seeking to recruit project participants from minority races and cultures and individuals with disabilities. Both are state agencies and adhere to the Affirmative Action Plan for the state of Rhode Island.

The Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) is an affirmative action agency. As of our last report, the agency workforce was comprised of 17% minority. RIDE is committed to providing an equal employment opportunity in all terms, including identifying classifications with an underrepresentation of minorities, females, and the disabled; and setting goals and timetables for increasing the employment of underrepresented groups; in our affirmative action plan for implementation those reasonable goals through outreach, recruitment, training, and other special activities and commitments. (RIDE Affirmative Action Plan)

Rhode Island College is committed to recruiting and providing opportunities for students, faculty and staff who are from traditionally underrepresented groups. In Fall, 1997 the minority enrollment at Rhode Island College was 10.9%. By Fall, 2004 the minority enrollment had risen to 15%. The Fall, 2010 minority enrollment was 22.4%. The minority population of Rhode Island is estimated at 24.5%; thus, RI College has actively recruited students from minority races and cultures. There is a standing Faculty/Staff Committee that is charged with minority recruitment. This committee last year conducted personal recruitment in every urban high school in Rhode Island. The RI College Affirmative Action Plan requires that at least one qualified candidate from an underrepresented group must be interviewed. All RI College faculty and staff searches are public and include active outreach to an extensive network of multicultural organizations.

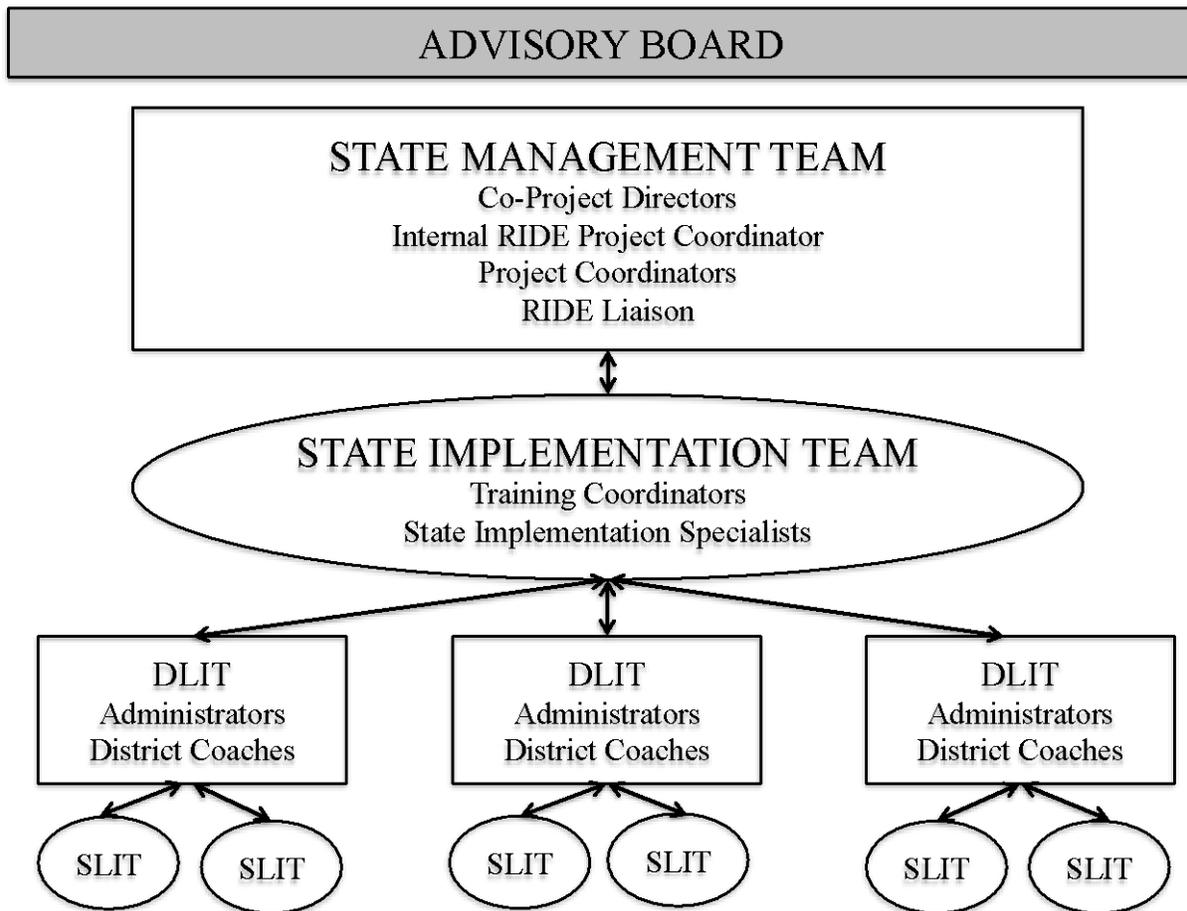
Since 2003 the Sherlock Center has employed a “Recruitment Coordinator” who is committed to contracting and recruiting high school students with disabilities; and students from minority populations in urban high schools. To date, the recruitment coordinator has recruited 459 prospects (Sherlock Center Annual Report, 2011). Of these prospects, 93 are from minority races and cultures and 39 are individuals with disabilities. RI College and the Sherlock Center are collaborating with the National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Competence to conduct a self-assessment and increase cultural competence.

***The Qualifications, Including Relevant Training and Experience, of Key Project Personnel.***

Following an organization structure endorsed by implementation science (Fixsen & Blase, 2004), a multi-tiered management system of the grant will be established. The multiple tiers allow for management, implementation, and evaluation procedures to be implemented with the coordination of state and district levels. It also allows for communication, input, and decision

making to be present from a top down (e.g., policy to practice) **and** bottom-up (e.g., practice to policy) structure. Effective implementation, organizational change, and system transformation strategies require administrative decision making and support at the state and district level (Fixsen & Blase, 2004).

**Figure 2 - Organizational Structure of RI SPDG**



State Management Team

The State Management Team consists of project directors, administrators at the state education agency level, and project coordinators. To promote the development of competencies across the state, the role of the State Management Team works collectively as a unit and together

with key stakeholders to accomplish these main objectives (Fixsen & Blase, 2004): (1) To communicate the plan and vision for education in the state; (2) To design and implement a system for reviewing state initiatives that are related to core instructional and implementation outcomes from evidence-based programs; and (3) To make sure that there is effective communication between all levels (e.g., state, district, school) regarding the mission that pertains to the development of the capacity for implementation and the use of evidence-based programs. Project Coordinators will work closely with the State Implementation Team to align efforts related to the implementation, scaling-up, and sustainability of evidence-based practices (Fixsen & Blase, 2004)

#### *State Implementation Team*

The State Implementation Team facilitates the communication, related to implementation challenges, between the district teams and the State Management Team. The team is also involved in Promoting meaningful family, stakeholder, and community involvement. They are made up of several State Implementation Specialists who are knowledgeable about (Fixsen & Blase, 2004): (1) Implementation and content knowledge related to the selection of evidence-based practices; (2) Implementation science; (3) Improvement cycle processes; and (4) Organization change strategies and system transformation approaches.

#### *District Leadership and Implementation Team*

District Leadership and Implementation Teams are made up of district administrators and district coaches. The purpose of the DLIT is to support capacity building for the implementation and sustainability for evidence-based practices within School Leadership and Implementation Teams (SLIT) and building staff through (Fixsen & Blase, 2004): (1) Ensuring implementation capacity is developed at the school level; (2) Ensuring the infrastructure is built for high fidelity

implementation and sustainability; and (3) Assisting schools in developing their Building Leadership and Implementation Teams.

Project Personnel

A listing of individuals, roles, and affiliations for each project team is provided in the table below. Vita for all key personnel are located in **Appendix C**.

Table 8

*Project Personnel by Team*

Project Role/Title	Person	Affiliation
<b>State Management Team</b>		
Co-Project Director	J. David Sienko	RIDE
Co-Project Director	Anthony Antosh	Sherlock Center
RIDE Liaison (Systems of Support)	Emily Klein	RIDE
Internal RIDE Project Coordinator	Barrie Grossi	RIDE
RIDE Liaison (Early Childhood)	Ruth Gallucci	RIDE
Program Coordinator	Shannon Dowd-Eagle	RI College
Program Coordinator	John Eagle	RI College
<b>State Implementation Team</b>		
Training Coordinator / Implementation Specialist	Lavonne Nkomo	Sherlock Center
Training Coordinator / Implementation Specialist	Michelle Walden- Doppke	RIDE
Implementation Specialist	Deborah Arenberg	Sherlock Center
Implementation Specialist	Nicole Buka	RIDE

Implementation Specialist	Lynn DeMerchant	Sherlock Center
Implementation Specialist	Cara McDermott-Fasy	RI College
Implementation Specialist	Laura Boynton Hauerwas	Providence College
Implementation Specialist	Gary Stoner	University of RI
Implementation Specialist	To be hired	Northern RI Collaborative
<b>Outside Consultants</b>		
Project Consultant	Robert Horner	Univ. of Oregon
Project Consultant	George Sugai	Univ. of Connecticut
Project Consultant	Kent McIntosh	Univ. of Oregon

*State Management Team Personnel*

*Co-Project Director* – **Dr. J. David Sienko** is currently the Director of the Office of Student, Community & Academic Supports at the Rhode Island Department of Elementary & Secondary Education. The Office of Student, Community & Academic Supports is responsible for state implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Title I and Title III of the Elementary & Secondary Education Act, State School Health Regulations and the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Community Grant program. Prior to becoming the Director, David was the Secondary Transition Coordinator for the RI Department of Education, Office for Diverse Learners. In this position, David administers several state transition projects and serves on the RI Department of Education High School reform team. Prior to joining the Rhode Island Department of Education, David administered several state and federal grants at the Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College including the Rhode Island Transition-

Independence-Employment, (RITIE) federal systems change grant for transition from 1997-2001. Before moving to Rhode Island College, David was the Program Director for the Blackstone Valley Arc and developed transition service programs for youth with developmental disabilities in Pawtucket, Central Falls and East Providence schools from the early 1980's through 1994. David has an MA in Special Education from Rhode Island College and is a former adjunct faculty member at Rhode Island College and Providence College. David is the past chairperson of the Rhode Island Transition Council an interagency council designed to address service needs of youth in transition. David was the recipient of the George F. Moore Award from the Rhode Island Rehabilitation Association in 2002 for advocacy for the employment of people with disabilities and is the past chair of the RI Rehabilitation Council.

*Co-Project Director* – **Dr. Anthony Antosh** is the founding Director of the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities and Professor of Special Education at Rhode Island College. Dr. Antosh has been on the faculty of Rhode Island College for more than 35 years. During that time he served as coordinator of the undergraduate and graduate programs that prepare personnel to support students with disabilities, as department chair, and as the Mary Tucker Thorp Professor for Distinguished Teaching. Dr. Antosh completed his undergraduate studies in Secondary Education at Ohio University, his master's degree in Special Education at Rhode Island College and doctorate at the University of Massachusetts with a focus on application of linguistics to augmentative communication systems. He has written and presented on a variety of program areas including universal design, inclusive education, family supports, transition, and positive behavioral supports. Dr. Antosh has served on several legislative commissions and on the board of directors of several community, state, and national organizations and is currently President of the Association of University Centers on Disabilities (AUCD).

As Co-Project Directors, David Sienko and Tony Antosh will provide overall project administration including personnel, budget, and evaluation of project outcomes.

*Internal RIDE Project Coordinator* – **Barrie Grossi** has provided technical assistance and support services to Local Education Agencies, school personnel, administrators, institutions of higher education, community service providers and families on emerging educational reform initiatives for 20 years. Ms Grossi is currently Program Coordinator for the RI Technical Assistance Project at Rhode Island College. Her primary role is personnel development, a systems and policy approach to ensuring that all school personnel have the knowledge and skills to work with students with disabilities. In that role, Ms. Grossi is an integral member of the RIDE Educator Quality team responsible for the redesign of educator certification for RI. She represents the special education perspective in the development of policy for RIDE’s Educator Evaluation System and most specifically the Student Learning Objectives component. In addition, she serves as co leader of Rhode Island’s statewide IEP initiatives. Ms. Grossi holds a M.Ed. in Early Childhood Special Education from Rhode Island College. Ms. Grossi’s role on the project includes (1) participating in management activities via her position on the State Management Team, (2) collaborating with complementary RIDE initiatives, (3) supporting the development of on-line training modules, and (4) engaging in data collection and evaluation activities.

*RIDE Liaison* – **Emily Klein** is currently an Education Specialist in the Office for Student, Community, Academic, Supports at the RI Department of Education. Her primary role focuses on RTI, disproportionality in special education, and State education liaison to urban districts regarding education of students with disabilities and English language learners. In addition, she is a member of the RIDE ELL team to support statewide professional development

and federal funding activities. Mrs. Klein holds a M.Ed. in Special Education from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania and an ESL teaching endorsement.

*RIDE Liaison* – **Ruth Gallucci** has a master’s degree in education, with a major in special education. She served as a special education teacher for 15 years and a special education administrator and early childhood coordinator for 6 years. Ms. Gallucci presently serves as an Education Specialist in the area of Early Childhood Special Education at the Rhode Island Department of Education. She coordinates IDEA preschool initiatives such as those related to early childhood outcomes, early childhood environments, transition from Early Intervention and Child Outreach screenings. Ms. Gallucci also facilitates state level work that focus on early childhood ELL assessment, Tier III evidence based practice and inclusive education. She represents early childhood special education on a variety of state level committees including the Early Learning Council Workgroup and the Interagency Coordinating Council. Ms. Gallucci is currently involved in multiple projects associated with the Race to the Top: Early Learning Challenge including work associated with the construction of the early learning and development standards, creation of a comprehensive early childhood assessment system and the development of early childhood special education teacher core competencies.

*Project Coordinator* – **Dr. John W. Eagle** is an Associate Professor and Program Director of the School Psychology Program at Rhode Island College. He has published and presented extensively in the areas of Conjoint Behavioral Consultation, positive behavioral supports, home-school-community partnerships, ecological-behavioral treatments for children, parent involvement in education, and school-based consultation. He has degrees in School Psychology from the University of Nebraska and Clinical Social Work from the University of Michigan. He completed his Pre-doctoral Internship at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

where he was a LEND Fellow, and is an AERA/Spencer Foundation Fellow. In 2006, he was selected as an Early Career Scholar by the Society for the Study of School Psychology. Dr. Eagle serves as the Discipline Coordinator for Psychology at the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College University Center on Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) and a member of the Rhode Island Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports Leadership Team. Dr. Eagle's role in the project is to oversee operations of the STT (1) ensuring fidelity of implementation of training timelines and content and (2) appropriate data collection and evaluation and (3) to be a liaison between the SMT and STT providing feedback related to training and implementation facilitators and challenges.

*Project Coordinator* – **Dr. Shannon Dowd-Eagle** received her Ph.D. in School Psychology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and is an Assistant Professor in the School Psychology Program at Rhode Island College. She has published in the areas consultation and family involvement and has served as an ad hoc reviewer for the *Journal of School Psychology*, *School Psychology Review*, and *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*. She has served as the Project Director for two large scale grants related to school-based consultation and currently teaches courses on Consultation and and Response to Intervention. In addition, Dr. Dowd-Eagle has served as a consultant with the RI RTI initiative, the RI SWPBIS Leadership Team. Dr. Dowd-Eagle's role in the project is to oversee operations of the STT including (1) ensuring fidelity of implementation of training timelines and content (2) developing and training content (3) collecting and analyzing data and (4) serving as a liaison between the SMT and STT.

*State Implementation Team Personnel*

*Training Coordinator* – **Lavonne Nkomo** received a Masters Degree in Management with a concentration in child, youth and family policy in 2001 from Brandeis University. She is a

member of a minority group and is the parent of a child with a learning disability. Ms. Nkomo currently serves as the Positive Behavioral Supports and Interventions (PBIS) Coordinator with the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College and is responsible for managing the implementation of PBIS in the State of RI. Since 2007, she has facilitated training and technical assistance efforts in 125 schools and 29 early childhood centers. She is a National School Wide Information System (SWIS) trainer, who trains school personnel in the web database used to track frequency and type of behavior incidences. She is also the liaison to the RI Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). Ms. Nkomo's role is to supervise the development of MTSS training modules, coordinate and provide district and school level training, and support data collection and evaluation activities.

*Training Coordinator* – **Michele Walden-Doppke** received her CAGS degree in School Psychology from Tufts University in 2006 and currently serves as the RI RTI Training Director. She has provided extensive training and technical assistance to 10 large regional public school districts on the topic of best practices in RTI procedures. Since 2009, she has facilitated over 150 trainings on various topics including understanding RTI academic systems of support, screening and advanced progress monitoring, evidence-based interventions, the RTI process for students who are English Language Learners (ELL), and decision-making procedures for Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) under the RTI framework. Ms. Walden-Doppke's role is to supervise the development of training modules, coordinate and provide district and school level training, and support data collection and evaluation efforts.

*State Implementation Specialist* – **Deborah Arenberg** has a master's degree in special education from Rhode Island College. She has twenty years of experience as a teacher and practitioner. She is currently a technical assistance specialist with the Sherlock Center and

provides professional development, technical assistance, and on-site coaching to schools implementing PBIS. Ms. Arenberg's role will be to assist in the development of training materials, provide training to districts, and support project data collection and evaluation efforts.

*State Implementation Specialist – Lynn DeMerchant* has an undergraduate degree from SUNY Plattsburgh and a master's degree from Central Connecticut State College. She has more than thirty years experience in early childhood and early childhood special education. She is currently a technical assistance specialist with the Sherlock Center and provides professional development, technical assistance, and on-site coaching to early childhood centers implementing PBIS. Ms. DeMerchant also provides professional development re: PBIS to both Part C providers and DCYF. Ms. DeMerchant's role will be to assist in the development of training materials, provide training to districts, and support data collection and evaluation efforts.

*State Implementation Specialist - Nicole Bucka M.Ed.* is an educational consultant providing RtI technical assistance to secondary schools throughout Rhode Island. She is dual certified in English and Mild/Moderate Special Education with additional certification in English Language Learners. Ms. Bucka has taught in a variety of classroom settings for over ten years, during which time she held a variety of leadership positions. To support schools expand RtI implementation, Nicole created a community of practice that involved three cohorts of 21 secondary schools. Nicole maintains a website for schools participating in the community practice and has coordinated annual sessions for statewide organizations including the RI Middle Level Educators, RI Association of School Counselors, and RI Association of Principals. Nicole is a parent of a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder and currently serves on Rhode Island's Inter Agency Coordinating Council (advising IDEA part C) to promote family-centered

services. Ms. Bucka's role in the project is to assist in the development of training materials, provide trainings to districts/schools, and support data collection and evaluation efforts.

*State Implementation Specialist* – **Dr. Cara McDermott-Fasy** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Special Education at Rhode Island College. Her primary teaching responsibilities include the following courses: *Assessment of Children and Youth with Mild/Moderate Disabilities* and *Assessment, Curriculum, and Methodology of Children and Youth with Mild/Moderate Disabilities*. Both courses heavily emphasize the Response to Intervention (RTI) framework. In addition to her teaching responsibilities, Cara serves as the undergraduate program coordinator and provides professional development/technical assistance on various aspects of RTI across the state of Rhode Island. She is also a National Board Certified Teacher in the area of Early Childhood through Young Adulthood/Exceptional Needs who holds the following certifications: Rhode Island Professional Teacher of Elementary Grades (01-06), Rhode Island Professional Special Educator, Mild to Moderate, Elem/Mid Level, and Rhode Island Professional Curriculum and Instruction Administrator (PreK-12). Dr. McDermott-Fasy will assist in the development of training materials, provide trainings to districts/schools, review pre-service course syllabi, and support project evaluation efforts.

*State Implementation Specialist* – **Dr. Laura Boynton-Hauerwas** is an associate professor of education and chair of the Elementary-Special Education at Providence College. She received her doctoral degree from Northwestern University in Communication Science and Disorders, Learning Disabilities Program. She teaches courses in assessment, instruction for at-risk students and language development and disorders. Her research has focused on two areas: implementation of Response to Intervention and role of language in learning. She has been involved at both the state and national level with RTI implementation and

training for 10 years. She has served on RI SLD committees, developed state-wide guidance and consulted with RIDE as part of the RTI pilot project and the Systems of Support grant. Of particular note is her work examining status of state policies and guidance on LD identification post IDEA 2004 and the integration of an RTI framework in pre-service education courses. Recently she has combined her research interests and has been investigating best-practices regarding RTI, SLD and culturally and linguistically diverse students. Dr. Hauerwas will assist in the development of training materials, provide trainings to districts/schools in MTSS in the area of reading and math, review pre-service training curriculum and support project evaluation efforts.

*State Implementation Specialist* – **Dr. Gary Stoner** is a Professor and Director of the School Psychology Program at the University of Rhode Island. His research interests include prevention and intervention with achievement and behavior problems, early school success, parent and teacher support, and professional issues in school psychology. Dr. Stoner has published comprehensively in the areas of behavioral and academic achievement difficulties, and has numerous publications in peer reviewed journals and book chapters. He has authored/co-authored four books related to improving academic and behavioral outcomes for students in school settings. Dr. Stoner is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association, Division of School Psychology. He has served as Chair for the American Psychological Association Interdivisional Coalition for Psychology in Schools and Education President and President of Division 16 (School Psychology) of the American Psychological Association. Dr. Stoner has extensive experience providing organization change support to schools and districts through Response to Intervention (RtI) strategies. His role on the project will be to assist in the

development of training materials, provide training to districts, review pre-service training curriculum, and support project evaluation efforts.

*State Implementation Specialist – Full-Time Lead Coach/Trainer Hire.* The project will hire an additional full time trainer and lead coach to promote statewide capacity for the implementation and sustainability of MTSS practices. Qualifications will include a master’s degree in education or school psychology, 10 years of experience in the field, and effective organizational and communication skills. Applicants must have strong foundational knowledge of RtI/PBIS theory and experience implementing school wide problem solving for academics or behavior within a multi-tiered system of support. Interview questions will be structured in a behavior rehearsal format drawing on the applicant’s practical experience

#### *Pre-Service Leadership*

The project aims to support the development of pre-service candidates from varying academic disciplines as future leaders in MTSS intervention practices. Under the supervision of IHE faculty, graduate level pre-service candidates will attend professional development training sessions, participate in the review of pre-service syllabi, support development of on-line training modules, and attend Advisory Board meetings.

#### *District Leadership and Implementation Team Personnel*

DLITs will be comprised of district Superintendents, Special Education Directors, and school Principals. After the selection process to determine which districts will participate in the project, membership of DLITs will be established for each representative district.

*District Coaches.* District Coaches will be school staff within a district participating in the project. They will serve as the eventual trainers for schools within their district, establishing sustainability. District Coaches will be selected based upon their commitment to support

professional development training, interest in innovative practices serving students with disabilities, application of evidence-based practices in high-need settings, and positive ratings of coaching skill or potential.

National Expert Consultants

*Consultant –* **Dr. Robert Horner** is the Alumni-Knight endowed professor of special education at the University of Oregon where he directs the Educational and Community Supports research unit. He took his undergraduate degree in Psychology from Stanford University, his Master's in Experimental Psychology from Washington State University, and received his Ph.D. in Special Education from the University of Oregon. His research has focused on behavior analysis, instructional strategies for learners with severe disabilities, and systems change. He has worked for the past 15 years with Dr. Sugai in development and implementation of school-wide positive behavior support (SWPBS). Over 16,000 schools are implementing SWPBIS nationally.

*Consultant -* **Dr. George Sugai** received his M.Ed. in 1974 and Ph.D. in 1980 at the University of Washington. Currently at the University of Connecticut, Dr. Sugai is Neag Endowed Chair in Behavior Disorders and professor with tenure. He also is Director of the Center for Behavioral Education and Research in the Neag School of Education, which focuses on research and outreach activities, related to promoting effective academic and social behavior supports. As Project Director or Co-Director of major training or research grants totaling over \$25 million, Dr. Sugai has ample experience in the implementation, operation, and supervision of grant-related projects. Dr. Sugai has a noteworthy publication record in refereed journals. He has published over 100 articles on effective teaching practices and applied behavior analysis. Dr. Sugai's research has emphasized effective applications of applied behavior analysis principles and PBS procedures to problems found in educational contexts. The subject populations for these

research areas includes students with severe challenging behavior, students with at-risk behaviors, and students described as having severely challenging behaviors.

Dr. Sugai is currently co-director (with Rob Horner at the University of Oregon) of the national Center on Positive behavioral Interventions and Supports. The Center has been established by the Office of Special Education Programs, US Department of Education to give schools capacity-building information and technical assistance for identifying, adapting, and sustaining effective school-wide disciplinary practices. Drs. Horner and Sugai will provide advisory information related to the professional development training in MTSS. He will also be accessible for technical assistance questions from districts and trainers via the STT.

*Consultant* – **Dr. Kent McIntosh** is an Associate Professor in the College of Education at the University of Oregon. His current research focuses on implementation and sustainability of school-based interventions, particularly integrated academic and behavior RTI systems. He is the lead author of over 25 peer-reviewed scientific journal articles, with multiple articles cited over 20 times. He is the lead developer of a research validated sustainability measure, the *SUBSIST (School-wide Universal Behavior Sustainability Index: School Teams)*. He has disseminated his research results through peer-reviewed scientific journals, free webinars, workshops, and numerous keynote addresses in the relation between academic skills and problem behavior, technical adequacy of FBA, effects of school-wide positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) on academic achievement, and validity of office discipline referrals. This work has been funded by federal agencies in the US and Canada, including a current IES Goal 1 grant examining factors related to implementation and sustainability of PBIS. In addition to his active research, he serves as a national trainer, consultant, and evaluator of PBIS, which allows him to continue long-term and ongoing relationships with school, district, and state teams. He has also

worked as a school psychologist, teacher trainer, and teacher in both general and special education classrooms. Dr. McIntosh's role will be to assist the project in establishing sustainable practices within the schools and districts that participate in the trainings. He will be available for technical assistance to schools and districts via the STT and will provide training to the Leadership/Coaches Training Group.

The Personnel Loading Chart following this page summarizes the time commitments and core functions of the project staff who were described on the previous pages.

**Table 9 - Person Loading Chart – Time in Days by Person**

Activity	Time in Day(s) by Person																	
	Sienko	Antosh	Eagle	Dowd-Eagle	Walden-Doppke	Nkomo	Grossi	Klein	Gallucci	Bucka	Arenberg	DeMerchant	Stoner	Hauerwas	McDermott-Fasy	Advisory Board	Trainer/Coach	Office Staff
Manage Project	15	15	40	15			15	5	5									
Hire Staff	5	5																
RIDE Liaison							40	5	5									
Prepare Materials			10	10	10	65	10			5	30	30	5	5	10			
Manage Training					20	40	20											

Activity	Time in Day(s) by Person																	
	Sienko	Antosh	Eagle	Dowd-Eagle	Walden-Doppke	Nkomo	Grossi	Klein	Gallucci	Bucka	Arenberg	DeMerchant	Stoner	Hauerwas	McDermott-Fasy	Advisory Board	Trainer/Coach	Office Staff
Provide Training Coaching			20	15	20	65				15	50	50	10	10	10		250	
Data Collection			15	10	10	50	20				30	30						
Project Evaluation	5	5	30	12	2	30	20	3	3	5	15	15	5	5	5	4		
Office Support																		250
<b>Total Days</b>	25	25	125	62	62	250	125	13	13	25	125	125	20	20	25	4	250	250
<b>FTE Equivalent</b>	.10	.10	.50	.25	.25	1.0	.50	.05	.05	.10	.50	.50	.075	.075	.10		1.0	1.0

Key: All Figures represent FTE for the grant year

## Adequacy of Resources

*The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization.*

*The Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education*

The Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is the state agency responsible for Pre-K – 12 education and brings with it the resources of state government. Within RIDE the Office of Student Community and Academic Support (OSCAS) has primary responsibility for (1) implementing the R I Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education Regulations Governing the Education of Children with Disabilities, July 1, 2010, (2) monitoring local school districts and charter schools as well as non- public education programs for children with disabilities, and (3) providing training and technical assistance to personnel throughout the state on current and emerging educational issues related to children with disabilities. The professional staff within OSCAS are committed to providing in kind support to the SPDG outcomes and ensuring alignment of RIDE projects and initiatives with the State Personnel Development Grant activities. The initiatives of RIDE have been referenced throughout this narrative.

*The Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College*

The Sherlock Center was founded in 1993 through a competitive peer review process. The Sherlock Center is part of a national network of 67 **University Centers for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD)**. This network is administered through the United States Department of Health and Human Services. Each UCEDD is charged with five core functions – training, technical assistance, service, research, and information sharing. According to the National Information Reporting System (NIRS), 141,660 persons participated in Sherlock Center activities during 2007-2012. During the 2012 fiscal year, 20,537 persons participated in 145

community based training and 378 technical assistance activities; 68 products or publications were disseminated to 12,764 recipients; 3,153 persons received direct service or consultation; and 614 persons participated in research activities. 11% of all participants in Sherlock Center activities were individuals with disabilities and 13% were family members. 65% of participants were professionals or paraprofessionals working in a disability related field. The mission of the Sherlock Center is to “promote membership in school, work, and community”.

The Sherlock Center currently has more than 55 employees. 28% of Sherlock Center staff are either individuals who have a disability or are from minority races or cultures. 64% of Sherlock staff are family members of people with disabilities. The Sherlock Center has collaborative activities with seven Rhode Island colleges and universities, eight departments of state government, and several private organizations. During the 2012 fiscal year, 100% of the early intervention providers and more than 80% of the school districts and human service organizations in Rhode Island received technical assistance and/or training from the Sherlock Center. The Sherlock Center is primarily supported through grants and contracts from federal, state, and private sources. The Sherlock Center currently administers eight federal grants, cooperative agreements with five state agencies, and other grants and contracts from foundations and private organizations. The Sherlock Center, as has been described throughout this narrative, has extensive experience managing statewide grants and training initiatives.

#### Technological Resources / Technology Infrastructure

##### *Technology supports for data-based decision making in Rtl*

Using Race to the Top funds, RIDE has developed a statewide instructional improvement system. This system will support LEAs’ efforts to improve student academic achievement by giving them the data and tools necessary to track students’ progress relative to the standards and

to use this information to inform instruction. This system can be used by and benefit multiple stakeholder groups.

RIDE contracted with Spectrum K12 to use the web-based application (EXCEED RTI) to automate and support a district's RtI process. This system has been developed to *integrate* academic and behavioral components of RtI. The instructional improvement system will enable educators to access and analyze data showing how their students are performing against state standards and to use this knowledge to provide students with appropriate instructional supports. The system will also enable school leaders to access, analyze, and act on the differentiated strengths and needs of their teachers and to provide teachers with appropriate professional development, resources and assistance.

To provide teachers and principals ongoing support in using these tools effectively, RIDE is in the process of developing a series of easily accessible, web-based toolkits that will support educators in accessing and using data and identifying intervention strategies. To date, RIDE has developed a series of online training modules for comprehensive assessment and tools for developing student learning objectives as part of the educator evaluation system. RIDE intends to draw direct connections between the training and capacity building of this project and the implementation and use of the Race to the Top statewide instructional systems. Resources will include recorded webinars and online training guides and manuals, as well as toolkits designed to fit the needs of each user group (teachers, administrators, students, parents, and the public).

#### *Technology-based professional development and trainings*

RIDE is committed to providing efficient, high-quality, targeted professional development on data-driven instruction to drive student achievement. Technology-based training experience is a critical component and is used to provide efficient professional development to

school staff. These technology-based services include online training modules, webinars, and computer-assisted training. Through these multiple delivery mechanisms, RIDE provides personalized training to account for differences in how adults learn. Web-based trainings are being developed to support specific competencies related to an integrated RtI service delivery model (including universal screening procedures, using data to progress monitor student achievement, data-based decision making procedures, and team-based problem solving).

#### *Sherlock Center website*

The SCD website is a primary resource for disseminating information. The website averages 2000 unique visitors per month, with 27% staying on the site for 20 minutes or longer. Adapted Literature holdings (stories translated to symbols and accompanied by narration and/or animation) are the top item downloaded from the site with an average of 1700 downloads per month during the school year. The website is a primary means of promoting events, conferences, and publications pertaining to the SCD and partner organizations. Visitors to the website can translate content to their language of choice using Google Translate. The SCD takes great effort to insure the site is accessible to visitors using screen readers and other assistive technology. The Sherlock Center website is World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) approved. W3C is an international community that develops standards to ensure the long-term growth of the Web and access to the Web by all people. W3C guidelines help make Web content accessible to a wider range of people with disabilities, including blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, learning disabilities, cognitive limitations, limited movement, speech disabilities, photosensitivity and combinations of these. The Sherlock Center utilized these guidelines in the development of the site design and content. A text only version of the site is available as an alternative to the graphic site. A language conversion tool is also provided.

***The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.***

Partnerships between several IHEs, state agencies, and LEAs will be fostered through this project. Letters of commitment and support are located in **Appendix B**. Table 10 provides a description of partners that are committed to specific project goals.

**Required IHE Partners**

Satisfying the required partnership with at least one IHE, this project will partner with the following IHEs within the state: RI College, University of RI, and Providence College. These IHEs will not only assist in in-service training of school staff and leadership, but also provide pre-service assistance in adding components of RtI into teacher and support staff preparation programs. Support from administration has been obtained from each institution, as well as commitments from various faculty members within the schools of education from each.

*Rhode Island College.* RI College, located in the city of Providence, serves a student population of 9,000 students in undergraduate and graduate programs. Established in 1854, it is the state's oldest public higher education institution and its primary mission was teacher preparation. Along with general education and special education programs, RI College also provides graduate pre-service training in programs in school psychology, educational leadership, school counseling, nursing, and social work. The School of Education is also the administrative home of the Paul V. Sherlock Center. The primary contact at RI College will be Dr. Alexander Sidorkin (Dean of the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development) and faculty support will be provided from Drs. Shannon Dowd-Eagle, John Eagle, and Cara McDermott-Fasy.

*University of Rhode Island.* The University of RI enrolls 13,000 undergraduate and 3,000 graduate students. The university has several satellite campuses located across the state,

including one in Providence. There are 26 offered programs at the undergraduate, masters and doctoral levels in the School of Education. The primary contact at URI will be Dr. David Byrd (Director, School of Education) and faculty support will be provided by Dr. Gary Stoner.

*Providence College.* Providence College is a private institution located in the state's capital. It has a student body of 4,400 within undergraduate and graduate level programs. The college provides training in the areas of elementary education, special education, school counseling, and social work. The primary liaison to the project will be Dr. Brian M. McCadden (Dean, School of Professional Studies) and faculty support will be provided by Dr. Laura Boynton Hauerwas.

#### State Agencies

Part C Early Intervention (housed within the RI Department of Human Services); the RI Department of Children, Youth and Families; and the RI Office of Rehabilitation Services will also participate in the project. Their roles including serving on the Project Advisory Committee and facilitating cross-training of their staff by project personnel – these functions were described earlier in the narrative. **Appendix B** includes letters of support from these three agencies.

#### Other Partners

*Rhode Island Technical Assistance Project (RITAP).* RITAP is a statewide resource center for technical assistance and support, professional development and training, and policy analysis and interpretation. The resources of RITAP are organized to assist state and local agencies, institutions of higher learning and families in the delivery of quality education and support services for all children including those with disabilities. RITAP currently serves as a vehicle for RIDE to present online information and professional development to school staff and

families on the RtI process. For this project, RITAP will support technical assistance on effective and sustainable integrated RtI services. The RITAP project liaison will be Barrie Grossi.

*RI PBIS Leadership Team.* The RIPBIS Leadership Team includes individuals from the Sherlock Center, RI College, and local school district PBIS coaches. The team is responsible for developing, and revising, the PBIS professional development curriculum. The RIPBIS Leadership Team will be responsible for providing training content from the area of RtI from a behavioral perspective. The Leadership Team meets quarterly and provides an opportunity to receive feedback related to the satisfaction and effectiveness of the training from LEAs. The project liaison will be Lavonne Nkomo.

*IHE/RIDE RtI Group.* In 2010, a group was formed to develop, and revise, professional development for RtI in the areas of reading and mathematics. The group consists of experts in literacy, mathematics, and system-wide implementation of RtI. Part of the membership comes from RIDE, and the remainder comes from IHE partners (RI College, University of RI, and Providence College). The IHE/RIDE RtI Group will be responsible for developing professional development training modules for RtI in the content areas of reading and mathematics. The primary contact for this group will be Michelle Walden-Doppke.

*Rhode Island Parent Information Network (RIPIN).* RIPIN provides information, support, and training to families of children with disabilities and help link them to appropriate services and become effective advocates at school, healthcare, and socio-economic areas of life. RIPIN works directly with organizations, institutions, and communities to address gaps and deficiencies so that, individuals, parents and families are better served and viewed as equal partners. RIPIN's role in this project is to assist the project's ability for training, communication, and support related to parents and families. RIPIN will also be represented on the advisory board ensuring that

project feedback related to satisfaction with and effectiveness of services is obtained from parents of student's with disabilities. RIPIN's primary contact with the project will be Sue Donovan. A letter from Ms. Donovan is included in the **Appendix B**.

**Table 10 - Partners for each objective**

*Goal 1: Improve outcomes related to academic, social-emotional and behavioral functioning for students with or at-risk for disabilities*

**RIPBIS Leadership Team, IHE/RIDE RtI Group, IHEs, RIPIN, RITAP**

*Goal 2: Deliver high quality, evidenced-based professional development to increase the knowledge and skills of administrators, general and special educators and school support staff so they may effectively implement a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) consisting of high quality instruction, intervention and evaluation*

**RIPBIS Leadership Team, IHE/RIDE RtI Group, IHEs, RIPIN, RITAP**

*Goal 3: Provide ongoing technical assistance and coaching to participants receiving SPDG professional development to improve the implementation of evidence-based practices over time.*

**RIPBIS Leadership Team, IHE/RIDE RtI Group, RITAP**

*Goal 4: Improve the efficiency of ongoing professional development through the use of technology and funds to provide follow-up activities that sustain SPDG supported practices*

**RITAP, RIPBIS Leadership Team, IHE/RIDE RtI Group**

*Goal 5: Partner with IHE to increase the percentage of undergraduate and graduate pre-service programs (e.g., Educational Leadership, General Education and Special Education) that incorporate MTSS content into their curricula*

**RI College, University of RI, Providence College**

*Goal 6: Provide professional development targeted to meet the specific needs of teachers identified through the use of an evaluation system that considers student growth.*

**RIPBIS Leadership Team. IHE/RIDE RtI Group, RITAP**

*The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.*

*The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.*

The Budget Narrative provides the detail re: project expenditures. 90% of the direct costs support personnel (biweekly salaries and benefits). It should be noted that the time commitments of the Project Co-Directors are supported through state of Rhode Island general funds.

Additionally, the time commitments of five other staff are supported through other sources (e.g., IDEA Part B and others) – this further demonstrates the interconnection of this project with other statewide initiatives. The project relies heavily upon personnel for training, on-site coaching and technical assistance, and data collection as defined in the evaluation plan. Approximately 80% of the total personnel time commitments are allocated to these three functions. The Project Design, Project Personnel, and Management Plan sections of the narrative describe the specific responsibilities of each project staff. We anticipate that the personnel requirements for the project will remain the same throughout the five years. Specific responsibilities will change (e.g., from an emphasis on training in the first three years to an increased emphasis on technical assistance and on-site coaching during the last two years) as is described in the narrative. Thus, the budget categories will remain the same throughout the five year period.

The project also provides funding to support travel to the three day Project Directors meeting, a minimum amount of additional travel to disseminate anticipated project results, printing costs, supplies and meeting expenses, and indirect.

Most of the project funds are committed to a contract with the Sherlock Center at Rhode Island College and to a contract with the Northern Rhode Island Educational Collaborative. The Sherlock Center has led several statewide initiatives for RIDE, as has been described throughout the narrative. Public IHEs in Rhode Island have greater flexibility in hiring. The RI College/Sherlock Center contract also includes funds for a subcontract to the RI Parent Information Center and to support faculty trainers from the University of Rhode Island and Providence College. The Northern RI Educational Collaboration (which is a collective of ten LEAs) already has a contract from RIDE to implement RTI training. The subcontract to the Collaborative increases the training and coaching capacity and connects the Collaborative directly to this project.

We also recognize that project funding may be level throughout the five year period; however, for realistic planning, we project that personnel costs (salary and fringe benefits) are likely to increase by at least 3% each year, so we have included those increases in our five year projections. All other costs are projected to remain level.

***The potential for continued support of the project after Federal funding ends, including, as appropriate, the demonstrated commitment of appropriate entities to this type of support.***

The goal of this project is to develop effective, efficient, and sustainable practices that will exist after federal funds have been exhausted. To accomplish this, the project has been developed within an implementation science framework, utilizes a training model consistent with evidence-based practices to support sustainability, uses district personnel as MTSS trainers/coaches, has partnered with IHEs to embed MTSS components in to pre-service

coursework, and utilizes technology to provide technical assistance to ensure implementation fidelity and sustainability. In addition, RIDE is committed to connect the continued implementation of the RIDE Strategic Plan and developments of the Race to the Top initiative to the efforts of this project. In doing so, the tools and resources in development will have sustaining use beyond the grant period.

### **Quality of the Management Plan**

*The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones or accomplishing project tasks*

The project time frame is 60 months. The goals of the project are to (1) improve outcomes related to academic, social-emotional and behavioral functioning for students with or at-risk for disabilities, (2) deliver high quality, evidenced-based professional development to increase the knowledge and skills of administrators, general and special educators and school support staff so they may effectively implement a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) consisting of high quality instruction, intervention and evaluation, (3) provide ongoing technical assistance and coaching to participants receiving SPDG professional development to improve the implementation of evidence-based practices over time, (4) improve the efficiency of ongoing professional development through the use of technology and funds to provide follow-up activities that sustain SPDG supported practices, (5) partner with IHE to increase the percentage of undergraduate and graduate pre-service programs (e.g., Educational Leadership, General Education and Special Education) that incorporate MTSS content into their curricula, and (6) provide professional development targeted to meet the specific needs of teachers identified through the use of an evaluation system that considers student growth.

Management of this project will be the primary responsibility of the project directors with

the support of the State Management Team. They will ensure that the overall training plan is acceptable to partner agencies. They will also be ultimately responsible for recruitment and selection efforts, communication of the mission of the project at the state, district and school level, evaluation of project goals and management of the budget (See **Appendix A2 – Management Plan**). The Management Plan provides a detailed table of core activities, timeline for completion, persons responsible, and measurable milestones. Also, please refer to Tables 4, 5 and 6 earlier in this narrative which provides a detailed outline (by project year) of the training sequence and technical assistance for three cohorts of schools and district leadership.

***How the applicant will ensure that a diversity of perspectives are brought to bear in the operation of the proposed project, including those of parents, teachers, the business community, a variety of disciplinary and professional fields, recipients or beneficiaries of services, or others as appropriate.***

#### Advisory Board

An advisory board comprised of national experts in the field, local professionals, partners, and consumers of SPDG services will be convened for the purposes of providing guidance and direction to the project as well as feedback on how well the project is meeting its intended goals. This advisory board will be made up of a parent of a child with a disability, a recent high-school graduate, Local Education Agency (LEAs) from Priority, Focus, and Warning schools, Institution of Higher Education (IHE) faculty, pre-service candidates, representatives from Part C , the Rhode Island Parent Information Network, the state 619 Coordinator, a vocational rehabilitation center and nationally recognized experts in the field of Response to Intervention (RtI) and Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBIS) that are serving as consultants to the project (Dr. Horner, Dr. Sugai, Dr. McIntosh). All of the individuals who will serve on the advisory board have provided a letter of support for the project and have committed to serving on the board.

The Advisory Board will meet quarterly with the Co-PIs and State Management Team to provide guidance and feedback on the project. The content of the discussions will be used to evaluate and improve the performance of SPDG participants, our project as a whole, and to ensure that students with or at-risk for disabilities.

Drs. Horner, Sugai and McIntosh conduct research that is directly relevant to the project and will evaluate integration and sustainability of MTSS practices. The local educators and administrators will ensure that our services support goals identified on their school improvement plans and empower them to improve services to meet the needs of their students. IHE faculty and pre-service candidates will provide valuable insight on how to effectively infuse content into preparation programs. Representatives from Part C and vocational rehabilitation centers will evaluate contributions based the effectiveness of the training during critical transitions. A parent of a child with a disability and a recent high school graduate will be integral members of our Advisory Board. Their inclusion will help all board members to be aware of children and families that are affected by our services.

### **Quality of Project Evaluation**

Evaluation of the project will incorporate a multi-informant, multi-method assessment system using objective measures to produce quantitative and qualitative data documenting that the project is meeting the intended outcomes. Specifically, formative and summative procedures will be used to assess outcomes related to (a) performance of students with or at-risk for disabilities (b) quality of the professional development training program, (c) attainment of personnel knowledge and skill, (d) implementation fidelity and (e) efficiency of professional development. Formative assessment will be used to answer questions related to implementation fidelity and progress toward goals. Summative procedures will evaluate outcomes of the

proposed project. Evaluation methods are described in the narrative and the measurement schedule is summarized **Appendix A5**. A project Logic Model is presented in **Appendix A4**.

***The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project***

### *Student Outcomes*

To ensure a comprehensive understanding of the effect of services on children with or at-risk for disabilities, evaluation of student outcomes will be based on a triangulation of data collected from (a) proficiency on statewide assessments, (b) student growth on state assessments, and (c) direct assessment of student performance via screening/progress monitoring data.

*Statewide Assessment.* Proficiency on statewide assessments will serve as one method to evaluate student performance. Currently, the state of RI uses the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP), which is a series of reading, writing, mathematics and science achievement tests administered annually. The test measures students' academic knowledge and skills relative to Grade Expectations and are reported at four levels of achievement; Proficient with Distinction, Proficient, Partially Proficient and Substantially Below Proficient. Reading and math are administered annually in October for grades 3–8 and 11. Results are analyzed via the NECAP Analysis and Reporting System (NARS), a Web-based reporting system which supports the interactive disaggregation of data into subgroups of students and/or items and provides tabular and graphic displays of results. Reports of student performance are shared with districts in the spring of each year. Beginning in 2014, RI will fully transition to the Common Core State Standards Initiative. At that time, the NECAP will be replaced by the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) as the statewide assessment.

*Student Growth Percentiles (SGP).* The Rhode Island Growth Model (RIGM), one of the 6 criteria used to score schools under the ESEA waiver, is a statistical model that measures a

student's academic growth based on state assessment results. Student growth is expressed in a percentile (i.e., SGP) and based on a student's achievement relative to his/her academic peers who scored similarly on a previous state assessment. The median SGP is the number at which half of the students in the group have a higher growth percentile and half have a lower percentile. Evaluation of student performance for the SPDG grant will be based on if the SGP is higher than the median for the target population. Benefits of using SGP include (a) ability to investigate any group of interest (i.e., classroom, school, program, demographic group such as students with disabilities), (b) increased stakeholder interpretation, (c) scores are norm and criterion referenced allowing for a more comprehensive view of the student and (d) many states are using the metric allowing for resource and knowledge sharing. Data are compiled by the RI Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum (IAC) and shared annually via the RIGM online visualization tool.

*Screening / Progress Monitoring.* Direct assessments of student's performance in the classroom and/or the curriculum will be measured via screening and progress monitoring data. Curriculum-Based Measurement (CBM), either Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) or AIMSweb, will be used to screen and monitor progress of academic skills. CBM probes are brief, change sensitive measures used to assess the effectiveness of core instructional practices and evaluate a student's response to an evidence-based intervention. Universal screening will be administered to all students three times annually (i.e., fall, winter, spring), compared to pre-established benchmarks, and submitted via online software programs (ex. DIBELS, AIMSweb). A student whose performance is below benchmark will receive supplemental evidence-based intervention. Progress will be monitored regularly (e.g., monthly, weekly) via CBM probes and submitted online.

The School-Wide Information System (SWIS) is a web-based system used to screen and monitor the progress of students' behavioral functioning. SWIS collects data on office discipline referrals (ODRs) and these data are summarized to provide information about individual students, groups of students, or the entire student body over a specified period of time. Multiple reports can be generated that support school personnel in shaping school-wide environments and facilitating the decision-making process. The "Big 5" reports consist of the following: (a) the number of ODRs per month, (b) the type of problem behavior leading to office referrals, (c) the location of problem events, (d) the problem behavior events by time of day, and (e) the students contributing to ODRs. Data are entered daily into the SWIS system and the Big 5 reports are shared with staff on a monthly basis. The Leadership / Data team uses SWIS to regularly monitor (e.g., weekly) student response to interventions.

#### *Quality of Professional Development Training Program*

*Consumer Satisfaction with Training Content.* To evaluate SPDG participants' perceptions of the quality and delivery of the professional development content, an evaluation form using a 5 point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree) will be administered upon completion of each training session. The Trainer Evaluation Survey covers several themes including the clarity of training goals, the organization and pacing of content material, trainer's ability to effectively present content, and the use of adult learning principles in training. Results will help the State Implementation Team (SIT) and trainers gauge their success in these areas and identify any areas of need that should be addressed in future training sessions.

*Consumer Satisfaction with Coaching.* The Coaching Evaluation Survey, developed by the Florida PS/RtI Statewide Project, will be used to assess educators' perceptions of the coaching they receive. The measure is intended to evaluate the extent to which coaches possess

the skills identified in the coaching literature. The scale contains 27 items rated on a 5 point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree) and consists of three factors (1) role, function and activities of coaches, (2) modeling the problem solving process, and (3) interpersonal/communication skills. The scale serves multiple purposes including providing a summative evaluation of coaching as perceived by consumers, offering formative feedback to coaches on their activities, and informing professional development content delivered to coaches.

*SPDG Evidence-based Professional Development Components Rubric.* To ensure the project uses evidence-based methods and strategies to teach personnel and support the attainment of identified competencies, the MTSS professional development training program will be evaluated using the SPDG rubric. The project will complete a worksheet with descriptions of the components of the MTSS professional development system (aligned to implementation science and a required performance measure) and those descriptions will be measured against the rubric of professional development components and given a score on a four point Likert scale (1 = Inadequate, 2=Barely Adequate, 3=Good, 4=Exemplary). Benchmarks for the project will be identified (see Table XX) and progress will be reported on the grant annual performance report.

#### *Attainment of Personnel Knowledge and Skill*

*SPDG Participants' Knowledge of MTSS Intervention.* Pre-post knowledge assessments will be used to evaluate changes in SPDG participants' knowledge of MTSS intervention practices. Assessments will be administered at the beginning of training sessions to establish baseline levels of knowledge and re-administered at the conclusion of training to evaluate gains. Changes in behavior, operationalized as implementing key features of multi-tiered school-wide supports, will be measured via fidelity tools described under the section entitled "*Fidelity of School-Based Implementation of MTSS Practices.*"

*Coaches' Knowledge and Skill of MTSS Intervention and Coaching Practices.* Pre-post knowledge assessments will be used to assess changes in coaches' knowledge of MTSS intervention practices. Assessments will be administered at the beginning of training sessions to establish baseline levels of knowledge and re-administered at the conclusion of training to evaluate gains. In addition, coaches will be assessed on their use of evidence-based coaching strategies. Evaluation will be based on observation during training sessions as well as results of the Coaching Evaluation Form previously described.

*Increased Pre-Service Training on MTSS Intervention Practices.* Evaluation of pre-service training on knowledge and skills required to implement MTSS intervention practices will be evaluated via The Institutes of Higher Education Checklist, developed by the Illinois SPDG project. The IHE Checklist assesses the amount of professional development content in pre-service curricula and consists of 17 items rated on a 3 point Likert scale (0=no evidence; 1=component mentioned in course, 2=component is mentioned and applied via assigned readings / projects). Higher Education faculty affiliated with the SPDG project (see adequacy of project personnel) will provide consultation and technical assistance via an online community of practice to increase the percentage of pre-service content that includes MTSS intervention practices. The number of hours of consultation and TA will also be calculated for evaluation purposes.

***The extent to which the methods of evaluation provide for examining the effectiveness of the project implementation strategies***

***Fidelity of Professional Development Training Program***

*Adherence to Management Plan Timeline.* Adherence to the management plan described earlier will be used to assess the degree to which the project and professional development training program was implemented as intended. Within the management plan, project goals, objectives and tasks are broken down, allowing for continuous and systematic monitoring of

project timelines. The status of tasks and task completion will be monitored via quarterly meetings with key stakeholders including members of the State Education Agency (SEA), State Implementation Team (STT), The Paul V. Sherlock Center on Development Disabilities (SC) and Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) and resulting data will be used as a basis for making responsive modifications.

#### *Fidelity of School-Based Implementation of MTSS Practices*

*PBIS Self-Assessment Survey (SAS).* The SAS is a “systems process” tool that allows individual school teams an opportunity to assess staff perceptions of how well the school is implementing core features of SWPBIS. The SAS is a self-report survey intended to be completed by the whole staff. The survey examines that status and need across four behavior systems: 1) school-wide discipline systems, 2) non-classroom management systems, 3) classroom management systems, and 4) individual student systems. The SAS is completed annually and results can be used to validate progress and inform action planning.

*MTSS Implementation Fidelity.* The School-Wide Evaluation Tool (SET) is administered annually to assess and evaluate the critical features of school-wide behavior support. The SET is administered in all participating schools to assess the degree of implementation fidelity and the number of schools determined to be implementing evidence-based practices at the benchmark level will be reported. The SET involves interviews, collecting products and observations. Individual school level results will be summarized in a written report and shared with administrators, coaches and teams to strengthen school-based practices. Additionally, results from the SET will be reviewed at quarterly “System of Support” meetings which include key stakeholders for SEA, STT, RTT, SC and IHE. The team will compare implementation and student outcome data and use the information to guide project improvement.

*Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ).* The BoQ is completed annually by the school leadership team to evaluate the status of Schoolwide PBIS supports and identify areas of strength and need for establishing future action plans for sustained implementation. The BoQ is completed at a team meeting with all members reaching consensus on the appropriate score for each item.

*RtI Fidelity of Implementation Rubric.* The RtI Fidelity of Implementation Rubrics developed by the Colorado Department of Education are designed as fidelity tools to improve outcomes and support scaling up of effective practices. Each rubric describes what RtI looks like at 4 growth stages (i.e., emerging, developing, operationalizing, optimizing) across the following 6 components of RtI: problem solving, curriculum & instruction, assessment, leadership, family & community partnering, and positive school climate. The tools will be used to assist districts as well as statewide to provide ongoing support for improvements.

*Self-Assessment of Problem Solving Implementation (SAPSI).* The SAPSI checklist assesses the implementation of the problem solving process at the building level and monitors efforts to establish permanent procedures, tools and products. Evaluation of products includes (1) instructional planning forms, (2) screening data (e.g, CBM, SWIS), (3) evidence of progress monitoring, (4) case management, (5) training, and (6) school improvement plans.

*Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS).* A Goal Attainment Scale (GAS; Kiresuk, Smith, and Cardillo, 1994) will be used to assess goal attainment related to the level of organizational support for MTSS practices. Ratings will be completed by staff annually and ranked on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from -2 (support is significantly worse) to +2 (support is significantly better). The GAS has been determined to be a psychometrically sound instrument; reviews are available for the reliability (Cardillo & Smith, 1994) and validity (Smith & Cardillo, 1994) of the measure.

*Retention of SPDG Supported Special Educators.* A follow-up questionnaire will be administered two years after initial participation in the MTSS project to assess retention rates of special education teachers who received SPDG supported professional development. The percentage will be calculated by dividing the number of teachers who remain in a teaching position by all the teachers who received SPDG assistance.

*Efficiency and Sustainability of SPDG Supported Activities.*

*Use of Technology and Follow-up Activities.* Follow up activities including (1) coaching, (2) implementation fidelity measurement, (3) IHE communities of practice and (4) online training modules will be used to promote efficiency and sustainability of SPDG supported practices. Evaluation methods related to the first three activities were previously described. The number of online training modules developed and the percentage of the overall budget used for follow up activities will also be calculated.

***The extent to which the methods of evaluation include the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data to the extent possible.***

The overarching goal of the project is to enhance the statewide system for personnel preparation and professional development by increasing the capacity of pre-service candidates and school district personnel to implement a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS). This goal will be accomplished via five objectives. **Appendix A6**, based on the annual performance report (APR), highlights the linkages between project objectives, performance measures and anticipated outcomes.

***The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes***

*Ensuring Performance Feedback and Periodic Assessment*

To ensure that our professional development training model is effective, it is essential to collect data that document progress and outcomes and respond to those data to systematically improve the quality of the project. Our project is focused on building the capacity of pre-service candidates and school district personnel to implement a Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) consisting of prevention, high quality instruction, evidence-based intervention and evaluation to improve outcomes for children with or at-risk for disabilities. Given this, the project will carefully monitor and regularly share data with key stakeholders at multiple levels regarding (a) quality of the professional development training program, (b) attainment of personnel knowledge and skill, (c) implementation fidelity (d) efficiency of professional development and (e) the effect of professional development activities on student performance.

*Quarterly review meetings.* Quarterly meetings will be held with the State Management Team which includes members from the State Education Agency (SEA), The Paul V. Sherlock Center on Development Disabilities (SCD) and Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the project and sustain continuous improvement. Adherence to training timelines will be used to evaluate how well the project is meeting its intended goals and benchmarks. Ongoing decision making related to the quality of training and coaching practices will be based on consumer satisfaction ratings, pre-post knowledge assessments, scores on the SPDG Evidence-based Professional Development Rubric, and ratings on the Coaching Evaluation Survey. In making general decisions based on the data that is collected, members of the Advisory Board and other stakeholders in the project will be consulted. In that way, fairness, accountability, and responsiveness to outcomes are likely to be maximized.

*Annual summary of outcomes.* In addition to quarterly reviews that evaluate the quality of the professional development program and project timelines, implementation fidelity and student

outcome data will be collected, compared, and shared with local educational agencies and individual schools. Written reports will summarize the results of school-based measures such as the Schoolwide Evaluation Tool (SET), Benchmarks of Quality (BoQ), Team Implementation Checklist (TIC), Fidelity of Implementation Rubric as well as data related to student performance on statewide assessments, student growth percentiles and direct assessment of skills in classroom settings using screening/progress monitoring measures. Data summaries will be prepared annually and shared with administrators, coaches, and team members to support data-based decision-making, understand linkages between fidelity and outcomes, and strengthen school-based practices.