

Ohio’s State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG):
Improving Instruction and Learning for Students with
Disabilities and Other At-Risk Learners: A Statewide Capacity
Building Model to Foster the Scalability and Sustainability of
Effective District-wide Practice Supported by the
Ohio Improvement Process
CFDA #: 84.323A

CONTENTS

List of General Requirements
List of Abbreviations

PART III: NARRATIVE

A. Need for Project1
B. Significance.....18
C. Quality of the Project Design.....33
D. Quality of Project Personnel68
E. Adequacy of Resources.....77
F. Quality of the Management Plan80
G. Quality of the Project Evaluation.....90

Other Attachments Form:

Ohio SPDG Appendices Supporting Narrative

- A. Data, Charts/Graphs, & Related Information
- B. Partnership Agreement (District Sites) - Sample
- C. Superintendent Endorsement - Sample
- D. Letters of Support
- E. Key Personnel Vitae
- F. References

LIST OF GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Page #	General Requirements: Projects funded under this notice must
75, 79	Projects funded under this notice must make positive efforts to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities in project activities (See Section 606 of IDEA).
79	Applicant must describe steps to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs (See Section 427, GEPA).
Part II: Budget	Projects funded under these priorities must budget for a three-day Project's Directors' meeting in Washington, DC during each year of the project.
Part II: Budget	The applicant must budget \$4,000 annually for support of the State Personnel Development Grants Program Web site currently administered by the University of Oregon (www.signetwork.org).
NA	If a project receiving assistance under this program authority maintains a Web site, the applicant must describe how they will include relevant information and documents in a form that meets a government or industry-recognized standard for accessibility.
Part II: Budget; Part III: 82	An SEA that receives a grant under this program shall use not less than 90 percent of the funds the SEA receives under the grant for any FY for the PD activities described.

List of Abbreviations (used in Narrative)

APR	Annual Performance Report
BASA	Buckeye Association of School Administrators
BLT	Building Leadership Team
CCIP	Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan
CEIS	Coordinated Early Intervening Services
CoP	Community of Practice
DAC	Data Accountability Center
DF	Decision Framework tool
DLT	District Leadership Team
EBP	Evidence-based Practice
ESC	Educational Service Center
HQPD	High Quality Professional Development
ICS	Integrated Comprehensive Services
IHE	Institution of Higher Education
IMM	Implementation Management/Monitoring tool
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
NASDSE	National Association of State Directors of Special Education
OAA/OGT	Ohio Achievement Assessment and Ohio Graduation Tests
OCECD	Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities
ODE	Ohio Department of Education
OEC	Office for Exceptional Children
OIP	Ohio Improvement Process
OLAC	Ohio Leadership Advisory Council
PTI	Parent Training and Information Center
RTT	Regional Training Team
RtI	Response to Intervention
RttT	Race to the Top
SERRC	Special Education Regional Resource Center
SI	School Improvement
SISEP	State Implementation & Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices
SPoC/SPeC	Single Points of Contact and Special Education Contacts (in SSTs)
SPP	State Performance Plan
SSoS	Statewide System of Support
SST	State Support Team
TBT	Teacher-based Team

PART III: NARRATIVE

A. NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Marc Tucker challenged education policymakers to consider how the U.S. education system would look if it possessed some of the attributes of its most successful competitors, namely: a less-frequent system of standardized testing; a statewide funding-equity model that would prioritize the neediest students, rather than support the local distribution of resources; and a greater emphasis on the professionalization of teaching (National Center on Education and the Economy, 2011). This report followed his earlier and equally urgent call to action, *Tough Choices or Tough Times* (National Center on Education and the Economy, 2007). In both reports, Tucker advocated for federal incentives to help states put in place the kind of comprehensive system of education practices needed for a more *coherent* education system.

The critical role that state education agencies (SEAs) can and should play in developing a **coherent** system - one that would build the capacity of all levels of the system (i.e., state, regional, district, school, and classroom levels) to work together to improve adult instructional practice and student learning – is highlighted in the Ohio Department of Education’s (ODE) development of the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP). The OIP, initiated in 2007 by cross-departmental leadership from ODE’s Center for School Improvement and Office for Exceptional Children, in conjunction with the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council, is a structured process that serves as the foundation for Ohio’s statewide system of support (SSoS), a system that is truly statewide in scope and systemic in nature. OIP is *not* a program and it does *not* tell districts what to do. Rather, it is designed to assist districts in examining their own practice and identifying what they need to do to improve, while providing a mechanism for helping district leadership teams (DLTs), building leadership teams (BLTs), and teacher-based teams (TBTs) gain the collective and strategic focus necessary for district-wide follow through and continuous

improvement. To that end, the four-stage OIP relies on the use of a connected set of web-based tools. These support districts in using relevant data effectively to identify priorities, develop a limited number of focused goals that can be used to leverage system improvement, implement fully agreed-upon strategies/actions to meet the focused goals, monitor the degree of implementation and the effects of such implementation on changes in adult practices and student performance, and evaluate the improvement process. **Appendix A-1** describes the principles underlying the OIP and related information.

The OIP has been used as the basis for supporting regional and statewide delivery of consistent, high-quality professional development and technical assistance (PD/TA), including process facilitation, to districts in improvement status across Ohio's 16 state support team (SST) regions. Consistency in delivery of PD/TA is facilitated through a quadrant structure with four SSTs forming communities of practice within each quadrant, and one or more "quad leads" assigned to each quadrant for providing training and support to regional teams in each SST region (see **Appendix A-2**). *More information about the design, delivery, and deployment of high-quality PD/TA is provided in Section C: Quality of the Project Design.*

The OIP, unlike many previous state initiatives that were piloted in a selected number of schools, has been intentionally scaled across the state by (1) targeting district-wide implementation, (2) embedding OIP as part of the state's accountability system, and (3) designing the process and its embedded major tools (e.g., *Decision Framework* tool) for all districts and their schools, rather than narrowly restricting the applicability and use of OIP to a limited number of failing schools. To date, more than half of Ohio's 614 public school districts,

and approximately 350 ¹community schools (i.e., charter schools, which are considered local education agencies) have used the OIP as their required “intervention” under the state’s federally approved differentiated accountability model. Another 43.6 percent of Ohio districts (i.e., those *not* in improvement status) have elected to use some or all of the OIP because of their increasing understanding of the benefits of the process to their districts’ students and staff. The OIP is used as part of Ohio’s differentiated accountability model under NCLB and as a key strategy in Ohio’s State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Plan (SPP/APR) under IDEA. Moreover, the OIP was developed to fundamentally change decision-making at the district, school, and teacher team levels by requiring individuals with a variety of roles/responsibilities to collaborate, and by providing the structure and tools to help them identify their greatest needs and design focused strategies and actions for addressing them. The process transcends programmatic silos often found in schools and districts by setting the boundaries for different – more strategic and collective – conversations and action to occur on behalf of all children.

Continuing the expansion of OIP as a statewide strategy has been endorsed by ODE leadership and its partners (e.g., Buckeye Association of School Administrators, Ohio Federation of Teachers, Ohio Association of Elementary School Administrators, Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators, etc.), and is aligned with *the Ohio State Board of Education’s vision for all Ohio students to graduate from the PK-12 education system with the knowledge, skills and behaviors necessary to successfully continue their education and/or be workforce ready and successfully participate in the global economy as productive citizens. To enact this vision, the State Board set the following objectives, all geared toward ensuring that all students*

¹ There were 351 community schools open at the end of the 2011-2012 school year; it is anticipated that about 20 additional schools will open during the upcoming school year, while approximately a dozen could be forced to close under Ohio law when final state testing results are available.

are well-prepared for success: (1) teaching 21st century knowledge and skills for real-world success; (2) effectively delivering support for a high quality education; (3) providing sufficient resources which are efficiently managed; and (4) developing a statewide outreach and communication strategy on board policy and the importance of education in the 21st century (source: <http://www.ode.state.oh.us>).

Ensuring higher achievement for all students and **narrowing the significant achievement gaps** that remain in the performance levels among students is a top priority of ODE and the State Board. Particularly relevant to the work of SPDG is Ohio’s focus – through *Race to the Top* (RttT) implementation – on (a) increasing high school graduation rates by .5% per year; (b) reducing graduation rate gaps by 50%; (c) reducing performance gaps by 50%; (d) reducing the gap between Ohio and the best-performing states in the nation by 50%; and (e) more than doubling the increase in college enrollment for 18- and 19-year olds (*Ohio Investing in Student Success*, January 6, 2012).

Analysis of National Data. The commitment to eradicating low expectations on the part of adults for what students with disabilities and other at-risk students can achieve, and supporting *all* students and student groups to achieve at significantly higher levels *is* making a difference in districts that have made a commitment to educating *all* of their students and requiring shared responsibility on the part of *all* adults for the success of every child. However, the gaps between the performance of students with and without disabilities remain unacceptably large. In *Quality Counts 2012*, Ohio received an overall “grade” of C+ (79.5), only slightly higher than the national average of “C” (76.5). Of particular concern is Ohio’s grade of C- in the area of *K-12 Achievement* and *Transitions and Alignment*, with grades of D+ and D- in *change* and *college readiness*, respectively (see **Appendix A-3**).

Similarly, *The Nation's Report Card* (2011) provides additional evidence that Ohio, while scoring higher in 2011 than it did in 1992, had similar overall scores in 2009 and in 2011. For example, in 2009 and 2011, the average score of fourth-grade students in Ohio was 225 and 224, respectively, but was higher than the average score in 1992 (217). In 2011, the gap between students in Ohio at the 75th percentile and students at the 25th percentile was **40** points. This performance gap was not significantly different from that of 1992 (43 points). The percentage of students in Ohio who performed at or above the NAEP *Proficient* level was 34 percent in 2011. Again, this percentage was not significantly different from that in 2009 (36 percent), but was greater than the 1992 results (27 percent). The percentage of students in Ohio who performed at or above the NAEP *basic* level was 71 percent in 2011; this percentage was no different from that in 2009 (71 percent) but, again, was greater than that in 1992 (63 percent) (source: http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_2011/).

Analysis of State Data. State assessment data (see **Appendix A-4**) reveal that the disability gap has increased in both reading and mathematics since 2007, increasing from 29.3 percentage points in 2007 to 31.2 percentage points in 2011 in reading. Similarly, the gap in math increased from 29.8 to 34.5 during that same period (*Ohio ESEA Flexibility Request*, February 28, 2012, page 57). The gap in Ohio's graduation rate for students with disabilities has decreased slightly from 2.5 percentage points in 2005-06, to 1.8 percentage points in 2009-10 (page 64); however, dropout rates for students with disabilities are still too high. Despite Ohio's efforts through a variety of partnerships (e.g., a partnership with the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission in implementing a secondary transition improvement grant) to reduce and eventually eliminate disparities between students with and without disabilities, the gap persists.

Ohio has a high degree of diversity and complexity and is home to 614 regular public school districts, ranging from major urban centers (e.g., Cleveland, Cincinnati, Columbus) to suburban districts to rural Appalachia. The state serves 1.86 million children in about 4,000 schools across the state, and has 315,000 licensed educators. As one of the largest states in the nation in terms of special education student population (i.e., approximately 260,000 children in pre-K through 12th grade), Ohio's analysis of trends in early childhood transition, Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) reading and math proficiency rates, school-age least restrictive environment (LRE) data, and data related to graduation, dropout, and secondary transition provide further insight into the challenges Ohio must overcome if the collective promise of IDEA and NCLB is to be realized for all children. Additionally, the percentage of children identified as students with disabilities that is also counted in one or more other subgroups (e.g., economically disadvantaged, minority) has increased from 55.46% in 2006-07 to almost 65% in 2011-12, reflective of the changing demographics that underscore that Ohio is getting poorer and more ethnically diverse each year. See **Appendix A-5** for Ohio's most recent child count data.

Targets established as part of Ohio's SPP/APR were not met in several key areas related to (1) preparing young children with disabilities to enter kindergarten ready to learn (i.e., the **early childhood transition from Part C to Part B** target of 100% was not met with the actual result being 99.2%); (2) supporting students with disabilities to achieve at high levels (i.e., **AYP Reading and Math Proficiency Rates**, based on 2010-11 data, show Ohio's reading target for students with disabilities was 82.1% or greater as compared to the result of 54.3%, and the math target was 72.7% or greater as compared to the result of 45.7%; **school-age least restrictive environments (LRE)** - greater than 80% and for separate facilities: Ohio's targets were 59.8% or greater as compared with the result of 58.5%, and 3.6% or less for separate facilities as compared

with the result of 4.5%); and (3) preparing youth with disabilities for life, work, and postsecondary education (i.e., targets for graduation, dropout, and secondary transition were 87.5% or greater, 12.4% or less, and 100%, respectively, while the actual results were 84.5%, 15.5%, and 99.6%, respectively (see **Appendix A-6**).

Less than a decade ago, the majority of Ohio's students with disabilities were not included to any degree as part of state assessment and accountability. Enactment of Ohio's state accountability system on August 12, 2003 represented a dramatic shift in state policy, merging requirements of the *No Child Left Behind* Act, components of Ohio's Senate Bill 1 (2001), and new state accountability requirements. For the first time, schools and districts in Ohio were held accountable for the performance of every child and significant consequences were identified for schools and districts that did not show improvement. As with other states, Ohio's practice prior to 2001 was to allow districts to exempt children with disabilities from participation in statewide assessment, encouraging the false belief that "those children could not learn" and reinforcing their removal from anything close to grade-level instruction. While NCLB and Ohio S.B. 1 provided the impetus for a different conversation to occur in many school districts, the requirement to count and publicly report all students' scores was met with indignation and resistance from many district and school leaders. Many smaller districts that had less than the minimum subgroup size for students with disabilities meant these children still were *not counted*, thus contributing to the already-established culture of low expectations and limited opportunities.

Analysis of Secretary's Findings. Feedback to ODE/OEC resulting from a 2009 on-site monitoring visit by USDoe/Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) provided support for Ohio's use of OIP while also revealing continuing concerns with regard to educating children

with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Associated OSEP observations and findings follow:

(1) **Critical Element 4: Improving Educational Results:** OSEP reviewed Ohio’s use of the 16 SSTs to provide PD/TA “that supports LEAs on a range of issues, from how to best implement and provide services under IDEA, to examining school district practices through the Ohio Improvement Process (OIP).” OSEP also noted that “The OIP process is designed for all LEAs, but is more extensive for LEAs that are struggling to make AYP or who are not meeting benchmarks in their State report card. Rather than focusing on individual schools, the OIP is district-driven, with LEA leadership participating and driving the process.” In summary, OSEP found that the “State has procedures and practices that are reasonably designed to improve educational results and functional outcomes for all children with disabilities.” (*Ohio Part B 2009 Verification Visit Letter*, pg. 8-9).

(2) **Critical Element 3: Integrating Data Across Systems to Improve Compliance and Results:** In reviewing ODE/OEC’s use of data to inform and focus its improvement efforts, OSEP noted that “...Ohio’s improvement process, OIP, is an intensive, data driven process that focuses on improving results for children with disabilities. Through this process, ODE examines student achievement data to identify up to two content areas needing the most improvement, gathers data regarding district capacity to serve its students, and identifies root causes for student success and ongoing challenges, all of which impact a district’s ability to improve results for children with disabilities.” In conclusion, “OSEP believes the State compiles and integrates data across systems and uses the data to inform and focus its improvement activities.” (*Ohio Part B 2009 Verification Visit Letter*, pg. 13).

(3) **Critical Element 5: Implementation of Grant Assurances:** With regard to the implementation of selected grant assurances, specifically in relation to LEA use of coordinated early intervening services (CEIS), OSEP noted that “LEAs choosing to use CEIS funds are required to annually submit a plan with their Special Education Application within their Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP), to address how CEIS funds will be utilized.” Since Ohio required LEAs to submit data on CEIS use for the first time in 2009-2010, OSEP encouraged Ohio to ensure that adequate data would be available for required reporting. (*Ohio Part B 2009 Verification Visit Letter*, pg. 10). Data from the Data Accountability Center (DAC) show that the number of Ohio children who received CEIS during the school year (SY) 2009-10 and the number of children who received CEIS any time during SY 2007-08, 2008-09, and 2009-10, *and* received special education and related serviced during SY 2009-10 were: 37,647 and 2,699, respectively (See <https://www.ideadata.org/PartBData.asp>). While more investigation is needed, these figures support the use of early intervening services to provide the kind of needed interventions and support that can change the path of children at-risk of being inappropriately identified as a student with a disability.

(4) **Focused Monitoring Component of the Verification Visit: Least Restrictive Environment:** OSEP selected LRE as an area for focused monitoring in Ohio, citing previous concerns as described in OSEP’s 2004 and 2001 State monitoring reports. In reviewing LRE data, OSEP noted “the State’s APR data showing that the percentage of placements of children in the regular classroom for more than 80% of the day and in separate facilities, while improved, remained below the national mean for four consecutive years.” Further, OSEP states that issues related to LRE are “particularly problematic in Ohio, as

there are at least 160 LEAs whose data from the 2007-2008 school year is below the State APR target of 48.40% for serving children in special education in the regular education setting greater than 80% of the time.” (*Ohio Part B 2009 Verification Visit Letter*, pg. 17-18).

With the USDoE’s approval of Ohio’s waiver request for federal relief, the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) measure will be replaced with more rigorous objectives that are designed to cut the achievement gap in reading and math by half over six years, while requiring higher performance from all students. Beginning with the state’s report card results to be released in August 2013, the current accountability ratings will likely be replaced by an A-F letter grade system in hopes that it will be easier to understand and give a more realistic picture of district and school performance for all groups of students. Of primary significance is the shift to include **gap measures** as part of the new formula, incorporating the degree to which achievement gaps among various student groups, including students with disabilities, are closed.

Strengthening Personnel Development. While the availability of an adequate supply of qualified intervention specialists (aka special education teachers) and related services personnel remains a high priority, ODE-OEC is addressing this need through other initiatives funded with Part B discretionary monies, as well as through partnerships with other USDoE-funded projects (e.g., University of Dayton Transition to Teaching project, which prepares individuals to be intervention specialists; support for OSU’s preparation program for teachers of children with visual impairments/blindness and orientation and mobility specialists). Similarly, OEC is working collaboratively with ODE’s Office of Early Learning and School Readiness (OELSR) to address the needs of preschool-age (birth to age five) children with disabilities by increasing access to high-quality programs for children from low-income families through the *Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge* grant, awarded to Ohio in 2011, and related efforts.

In addition to the obvious need to attract and retain more teachers credentialed in special education, the fact that most children with disabilities spend the majority of their instructional day in regular education environments being taught by teachers with content expertise points to the need for different personnel preparation models that better prepare *all* educators to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body. To that end, the current SPDG – building on previous SPDG/SIGs – is being used to influence the content of personnel preparation programs in the state through OEC’s development of the *Ohio Consortium to Improve the Teaching of Students with Disabilities*. The Consortium includes seven IHEs, all of which are involved in redesigning programs leading to K-12 licensure in intervention specialist (mild/moderate educational needs) to more effectively incorporate evidence-based practices and prepare candidates, upon graduation, to meet HQT requirements. OEC uses Part B discretionary funds to support IHE efforts. The Consortium expanded upon a previous collaborative effort sponsored by OEC and ODE’s Center for the Teaching Profession to support selected Ohio IHEs in offering alternate route preparation programs specifically designed for already-credentialed teachers who wanted to become fully licensed intervention specialists.

Strengthening Professional Development. In 2006, Ohio’s House Bill 115 mandated a coordinated system of regional PD/TA to provide for a more integrated system of personnel and professional development focused on improving academic achievement for all students. This unification of the special education regional resource centers (SERRCs), which had been funded and directed by OEC since the late 1960’s, with other state-sponsored PD/TA providers (e.g., regional professional development centers or RPDCs), provided the impetus for cross-office/departmental collaboration at the state and regional levels. As noted above, the resulting SST network (established using the previous SERRC boundaries) forms the foundation for

Ohio's SSoS and provides the vehicle for consistent high-quality development and deployment of statewide PD/TA (see **Appendix A-2**). As noted in the ODE Performance Agreement outlining the scope of work for Ohio's 16 SSTs, "the goal of the SSoS is to build the capacity of local and related education agencies to engage in inclusive, continuous improvement in order to meet IDEA SPP/APR indicators, raise student achievement and close achievement gaps. SSTs are integral to implementing this goal." (Source: *Performance Agreement for Ohio's State Support Teams*, 2012, page 1).

In addition to responsibilities related to improving results for students with disabilities, and responsibilities related to early learning and school readiness, the Performance Agreement establishes ongoing PD/TA in the use of the OIP as a priority for SSTs, while providing direction to SSTs on the specific tasks required, which include: (1) providing TA to priority districts, buildings, and community schools to help increase use of the Ohio 5-Step Process; (2) supporting the Ohio 8 (i.e., major urban districts) to assure implementation of the OIP with fidelity (the goal is an accomplished level as per the OIP Implementation Rubric); (3) providing TA on the proper use of OIP major tools (Decision Framework and Implementation Management/Monitoring tools); (4) providing high quality PD based on regional needs; (5) providing OIP overview, initial, and updating DLT/BLT/TBT training to appropriate audiences; (6) providing support to non-fiscal agent, within region ESCs to build the capacity of personnel to provide support and TA to DLTs, BLTs, and TBTs; (7) reinforcing the awareness and utilization of the OLAC training modules (e.g., use of TBTs); (8) monitoring and evaluating OIP implementation progress; (9) organizing and conducting monthly meetings with SST staff and ESC and district OIP practitioners to identify and discuss OIP implementation strategies to meet

the needs of the region; and (10) serving as liaison between ODE and LEAs on matters related to the OIP.

OEC, in collaboration with ODE's Center for School Improvement, also monitors the degree to which districts are using the OIP to improve instructional practice and student learning through the *OIP Implementation Rubric* review process (called OIPIR) – see **Appendix A-7**. Data collected by ODE indicate that the majority of districts using OIP have established team structures at the district, school, and teacher team level. Similarly, school systems have put procedures in place to guide team operation but still need a great deal of assistance to support full implementation, monitoring their degree of implementation, and TBT effectiveness. With regard to OIP stages, the majority of districts and schools has used the Ohio *Decision Framework* (DF) tool (i.e., a state-developed tool designed to assist leadership teams in identifying their biggest problems and make decisions to guide implementation of focused goals and strategies) and, as a result, have developed more data-driven, focused needs assessments to guide planning and implementation. However, it is when teams get to the implementation stage that issues arise. While OIP PD/TA has focused intensively on the need for full implementation of a limited number of focused strategies and actions designed to meet district-established goals, most districts still need a great deal of help and support in establishing systems for district-wide implementation and monitoring of the degree of implementation of identified strategies and actions (Source: ODE, 2012).

Two specific areas of weakness have been identified. First, a survey of school district superintendents with regard to the effective use of data to drive instructional improvement was conducted as part of a *Doing What Works* implementation grant awarded in 2012 to the ESC of Cuyahoga County/State Support Team #3 to develop resources for “Stage 0” of the OIP (i.e.,

orienting superintendents to the use of OIP). Results of this survey indicate that while the majority of responding superintendents stated that they felt knowledgeable in leading instructional improvement efforts across their district, 56.5 % agreed and 43.5 % strongly agreed that additional support (e.g., PD/TA, consultation, facilitation) is needed by superintendents to better equip them to set expectations for district-wide instructional improvement (Superintendent Focus Group survey, May 9, 2012) (see **Appendix A-8**). These results aren't surprising. Anecdotal data from SST facilitators, quad leads, SST single points of contact, and others all support the critical need for superintendents to understand the intended use of OIP for full benefits to the district to be realized.

A second area of need involves the effective use of teacher-based teams (TBTs). OIP development and implementation began in 2007 and started with the establishment of district and school-level leadership teams. Two years ago, the TBT component was initiated. Therefore, it makes sense that this is the least developed component of OIP. A 2011 and 2012 survey of TBT members across all districts using OIP reinforced the need for continued and more targeted support from Ohio SSTs in helping districts form or repurpose teams as TBTs, put procedures in place that would contribute to purposeful meetings, create schedules and routines for TBT meetings, prepare staff to work collaboratively, define roles and responsibilities, and communicate plan indicators and provide data across levels (i.e., DLT, BLT, TBT). **Appendix A-9** provides data on priority items from both years of the survey of TBT members and reveals that while progress was made from 2011 to 2012 in several key areas (e.g., making meetings purposeful), much work needs to be done. About 300 TBT members responded to the survey in 2011, as compared to 3,000 in 2012. A 2012 survey of superintendents, principals, and regional ESC and SST providers (see Appendix A-9) provide further evidence in support of the need for

intensive training in targeted areas. Comments received from survey respondents can be categorized into several areas: (1) continuing work to bring special education and general education together; (2) the need for effective district and school leadership to guide and support effective implementation of TBTs; (3) effective use of data and communication loops across levels of the system (district-school-teacher team); and (4) effective use of TBTs to improve the capacity of the district to deliver effective instruction to all students.

These data suggest that only by working in a focused way within the larger context of what districts and their schools do on behalf of all children can real progress be made in changing the attitudes, beliefs, values, and behaviors that prevent full access to challenging curriculum and instruction from being provided to students with disabilities and other high-need youngsters. This realization is supported by several other pieces of work described below.

What Matters Most. Externally imposed accountability requirements matter and district practice is influenced by federal and state policy and regulations. What matters more in terms of making and sustaining real improvements in student, adult, and organizational learning is the development of authentic or internal accountability (Schmoker, 2007; Elmore, 2006; Reeves, 2006) where adults in/across the system hold each other accountable for a high level of professional practice and student learning. The National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) initiated a project in January of 2011 to identify existence proofs or examples of districts that were successful in improving outcomes for students with disabilities as part of district-wide reform efforts. The initiative – called *Moving Your Numbers* – identified common themes among districts of varying size and demographics that were making a difference in improving professional practice and student learning. These included (1) using data well, (2) identifying and using a limited number of goals related to instruction and achievement to align

and focus work across the district, (3) selecting and implementing shared instructional practices, (4) implementing such practices deeply, (5) monitoring and providing feedback and support, and (6) supporting ongoing inquiry and learning (Telfer, 2011).

In September 2009, the Ohio Department of Education, Center for School Improvement, commissioned a study of districts across the state to identify and learn from districts with consistent and pronounced gains in reading and math for students with disabilities across four years, from 2004-05 to 2007-08. Of the 10 percent or 30 districts that were identified and invited to participate, 27 accepted, providing rich information for consideration by state and regional staff. Four common strategies emerged from the study, which are consistent with the more recent in-depth case studies being conducted through *Moving Your Numbers* (NCEO, 2011, 2012). These strategies included the following: (1) districts consistently identified leadership as an impetus for changing district special education practices; (2) district paradigms shifted away from the “special education vs. regular education” dichotomy in favor of a commitment to universal education for all students through access to core curricula; (3) districts recognized the importance of effective data use to identify and gauge progress in response to their greatest challenges, measure successes, and monitor student learning; and (4) districts developed a variety of forms of strategic collaboration, most commonly among individuals from different role perspectives in the districts, such as administrators, regular education teachers, special education teachers/intervention specialists, and others (Silverman, S.K., Hazelwood, C., & Cronin, P., 2009).

Another state initiative – *Schools of Promise* and *Schools of Distinction* – provide additional evidence that it *is* possible for districts and their schools to positively affect student learning, even when the majority of students served live in extreme poverty and/or have a range of

learning challenges due to disability. In every school recognized, the adults in the building shared the responsibility for teaching every child to high standards, believed they could, and accepted no excuses for their failure to do so. The meaningful and effective use of data to make instructional improvement was an integral part of doing business in these schools.

A March 2012 technical report issued by NCEO – *Characteristics of Low Performing Special Education and Non-special Education Students on Large-Scale Assessments* – found that while low-performing students are often male, come from minority groups, receive free and reduced price lunch, and receive special education services, there are many students with low scores on standards-based assessments that do *not* have disabilities. In fact, the demographic characteristics of students who performed at the lowest levels on state assessment were similar, regardless of whether the student received special education services or not. The authors concluded that results of the study point to “widespread issues with low achieving minority and low-income groups that states must address when assessing students for accountability purposes.” As noted above, about 65% of the students identified as students with disabilities are also counted in at least one other subgroup, highlighting the need for stronger core instruction that meets the needs of all students and suggesting that the instructional needs are more similar than dissimilar across student groups.

The unacceptably large gap that continues to exist between students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers, coupled with the continuing need for strong leadership at all levels of the system to fundamentally change and strengthen the quality of instruction for all students, point to the need for bold action. Targeted and coherent statewide professional development for DLTs, BLTs, TBTs, and others (e.g., principals, families) that is delivered through Ohio’s SSoS is needed to facilitate the full implementation and sustainability of practices learned. This PD

must build on the strong foundation established through the OIP, but be changed to identified gaps in the personnel development system as described below:

1. Despite the innovative work being done through the current SPDG to change district-wide practice in ways that benefit all children, there still exists in many districts a programmatically driven culture where special education operates separately from the general system of curriculum-assessment-instruction used in the district. Central to this gap is the lack of coherent leadership at the district level to make the kind of fundamental shifts in belief and practice needed to significantly change the current system of education;
2. While the OIP requires the establishment of aligned and connected leadership team structures at the district, school, and teacher team levels, the development of needed feedback and communication loops across levels are not established in most districts; and
3. While TBTs have been formed in districts using OIP, the work to date has focused primarily on establishing structures and procedures to support effective team functioning. Much work needs to be done at the district, school, and principal levels to support TBT members to function as learning teams adept at using common classroom data to track student progress and response to instruction, take steps to differentiate that instruction to meet learner needs, and learn from each other in ways that improve collectively the quality of instruction provided across the school and district.

The proposed SPDG is structured to address these gaps through the provision of focused PD/TA designed to significantly improve student learning as part of district-wide improvement.

B. SIGNIFICANCE

Fullan (2007) asserts that “the main reason that change fails to occur in the first place on any scale, and does not get sustained when it does, is that the infrastructure is weak, unhelpful, or

working at cross purposes” (p. 18). Further, for change to be sustained at the classroom level, other levels of the system – the school, district, region, and state – must act to enhance coherence, alignment, connectedness, and capacity for continuous improvement. Ohio recognized the need to develop a systemic approach that could be used on a statewide basis for affecting the core work of all districts and their schools in the state. The decision to approach the work this way, using differentiated accountability as leverage and the current SPDG as an impetus for changing the conversation at all levels, was intentional and believed by state leaders to be necessary for making and scaling needed changes in practice, and increasing the likelihood that any meaningful change in practice would be sustained. Former Iowa State School Chief Ted Stilwill characterized Ohio’s work through OIP, in concert with OLAC’s focus on leadership, as creating a “**comprehensive system of support** by defining the roles of the SEA, the regional providers, and the roles of districts themselves...they've created a network that's almost second to none in the United States...and they've cut across the silos in terms of special education, Title 1, and regular education to redesign a holistic unit of support that's geared towards all kids and all school districts” (OLAC interview, 2009).

We know, however, that the effective use of teacher-based teams (TBTs) to positively affect classroom practice on a broader scale, thereby improving the capacity of all teachers and related service providers across the district to deliver high-quality instruction to all children, can only occur if work at the district and school level is aligned, supportive, and focused on ensuring that TBTs are operating as part of the district’s core work, and constantly monitored and evaluated to allow for ongoing district-wide learning and capacity building. Ohio defines TBTs as “teams comprised of teachers working together to improve instructional practice and student learning through shared work. The use of TBTs is a mechanism for providing teacher-to-teacher

feedback on what is/is not working in terms of instruction. As part of the OIP use of collaborative structures, TBTs are used to support full implementation of focused strategies and actions and provide data/information to BLTs and DLTs for decision-making purposes (Ohio Department of Education, *SST 2012-2013 Performance Agreement*, page 23). Support for the need to ensure that teams operate within functional systems – as opposed to dysfunctional ones – is provided through an extensive review of research conducted by the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (June 2010), which identified characteristics of highly effective learning teams. Of particular note, the report found that highly effective teams do not function within dysfunctional schools. Instead, stable settings and strong leadership support are needed for the full benefit of data teams/teacher-based teams to be realized. Go to NCTAF at <http://nctaf.org/research/research-papers/> for a copy of the report, *Team Up for 21st Century Teaching & Learning*.

For these reasons, the proposed project strengthens and expands upon the solid foundation established through the current SPDG by further developing district capacity in effectively using TBTs as part of Ohio’s statewide improvement process. Project PD/TA will be geared toward addressing gaps in the current process: (1) continuing to develop the **shared leadership capacity** of teachers and school and district administrators to work together to meet the instructional needs of all students through a focus on system-wide inquiry and learning, (2) supporting districts in using the OIP to examine their current service delivery system, **focusing on integrating services** as part of OIP planning and implementation, (3) **refining the skills of DLTs, BLTs, and TBTs** in establishing the feedback and communication loops necessary to provide strong core and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of all students, and (4) fostering shared understanding of each other’s roles, and collaboration between, parent/family members and professionals in

designing integrated services and supporting the use of OIP to affect district-wide practice and student learning.

The use of OIP as an effective statewide strategy for ensuring the viability of Ohio's SSoS to provide consistent, high-quality support (PD/TA) to all districts and their schools requires the continuous development of members of the regional provider network who are tasked with offering ongoing, in-the-field support to districts per the Performance Agreement established by ODE. The project incorporates PD/TA for regional SST consultants and their ESC partners who serve as process coaches to DLTs, BLTs, and TBTs in districts across the state. Investing in the continuous improvement of Ohio's regional infrastructure requires strong commitment, alignment, and focus at the state level.

System-wide Inquiry & Learning Through Shared Instructional Leadership. In *Building a New Structure for School Leadership*, Richard Elmore (2000) noted that “privacy of practice produces isolation; isolation is the enemy of improvement.” In 2007, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), working in partnership with the Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA), established OLAC as a major change effort designed to break longstanding patterns of isolation by redefining leadership for instructional improvement. OLAC's work was grounded in the belief, borrowing from Harvard Graduate School of Education professor Richard Elmore, that the “purpose of leadership is the improvement of instructional practice and student performance, regardless of role.” [see Elmore, Richard F. *School reform from the inside out: Policy, practice, and performance*. (2004). Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press]. The outcome of OLAC's initial phase of work was *Ohio's Leadership Development Framework* (2008), which articulated essential leadership practices for superintendents, DLTs, and BLTs with the goal of improving instruction and student learning on

a district-wide basis. While OLAC articulated the “what,” OIP provided the “how” by offering a mechanism for districts to use in putting essential practices into place in an aligned and focused way.

The OIP offers a structured process that relies on the use of an embedded set of connected major tools, providing the necessary building blocks for replacing isolated practice with collective practice. Shared accountability and leadership are facilitated through aligned leadership team structures and the use of a common framework that incorporates normative and organizational structures (DLTs, BLTs, TBTs), the creation of intentional processes for reproduction of successes, and the creation of structures that promote learning of new practices (Elmore, 2000). The framework also supports effective implementation in accordance with lessons learned in effective implementation science (Blasé, K., Fixsen, D., & Duda, M., 2011; Fixsen, et al., 2005) – see Section C: Quality of the Project Design.

The project will support DLTs and BLTs in acquiring deeper understanding and greater competence in using OIP to develop a district-wide instructional framework that defines and provides a common “vocabulary” for high-quality instructional practice. Such a framework supports more meaningful shared and continuous learning on the part of adults in the system, and efficient decision-making on the part of principals and teachers across district, thereby improving the capacity of teachers and principals across the system to more quickly and effectively anticipate and respond to the instructional needs of all students/student groups (e.g., students receiving special education services).

This component of project PD/TA recognizes the important role of superintendents and principals in setting the stage for shared leadership practices at all levels of the system. In particular, the critical role of the district in supporting instructional leadership was highlighted in

a major Wallace Foundation-commissioned study conducted by Karen Seashore Louis, Kenneth Leithwood, Kyla Wahlstrom, Stephen Anderson, and colleagues in 2010 who found that “district policies and practices focused on instruction are sufficiently powerful that they can be *felt* by teachers as an animating force behind strong, focused leadership by principals” (p. 203). “Simply increasing pressure on principals is unlikely to bring about real improvements...” (p. 52). Instead, the report suggests that a better strategy would be to develop the capacity for instructional leadership through the development of instructional teams, lending further support for a collective, collaborative approach to improving professional practice. A summary of findings as well as the full report, *Learning from Leadership: Investigating the Links to Improved Student Learning*, can be downloaded from The Wallace Foundation at www.wallacefoundation.org.

Dr. Lawrence Wexler, now Director of OSEP’s Division of Research to Practice, during an October 2005 on-site review of Ohio’s SIG/SPDG, commended OEC for its emphasis on system improvement and its collaboration with general education. In particular, Dr. Wexler noted as strengths: (1) OEC’s commitment to ensure that Ohio’s lowest performing schools, as well as schools in higher performing districts, receive consistent, coordinated, and non-duplicative support in the effort to improve student performance through collaboration with ODE’s Center for School Improvement, building on Ohio’s attitude that children’s educational needs cut across disability, race, ethnicity, and poverty and, as such, solutions cannot be compartmentalized; and (2) Ohio’s commitment to use administrative leadership as a critical foundational component for statewide school reform through collaboration with key administrative organizations in the state (e.g., BASA).

Of primary importance for districts using the OIP to support full implementation of effective agreed-upon practices is establishing the appropriate communication and feedback loops needed for productive decision making over time. Identifying the data and information needed to ensure that the DLT, BLTs, and TBTs are working together, determining how those data and information are shared and used between and among teams, and taking necessary action to address performance problems and replicate successes are critical steps in supporting system learning. As noted in Section A: Need for the Project, many Ohio districts have established team structures and put procedures in place using the OIP; however, the majority has not established the necessary feedback/communication loops between and among teams at each level (see **Appendix A-10**). Project PD/TA will support districts in defining what and how often adult implementation and student performance data will be collected from and provided to teams, specifying what the BLT needs to provide to and receive from TBTs, and what the DLT needs to provide to and receive from BLTs. This two-way communication facilitates what McNulty and Besser (2011) describe as top-down and bottom-up learning. While there are many school improvement approaches, the most effective model involves collectively learning to use more effective research-based instructional strategies *and* simultaneously learning to be an effective data-based team member (McNulty & Besser, 2011, p. 24).

Integrating Services as Part of OIP Planning & Implementation. While much progress has been made since the inception of OIP-OLAC in 2007, the use of effective TBTs to support adult and student learning is still in its infancy. Intensive support is needed to develop the TBT component as an integral part of the process, further encouraging districts to move toward a unified system of education – away from “siloed” programs – to developing the leadership

capacity of teachers and school and district administrators to work together to meet the instructional needs of all students (Frattura and Capper, 2007).

In his book, *All Systems Go*, Michael Fullan (2010) proposed the “big ideas” necessary for whole system reform. One such idea is **collective capacity**, which Fullan calls the “hidden resource we fail to understand and cultivate,” (p. 4). He notes that with “focused collective capacity building, accountability to a large extent gets internalized in the group and in its individuals,” (p. 44). Fullan (2011) further outlines crucial elements for whole system reform, suggesting they be used as criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of a driver or set of drivers. Drivers are defined by Fullan as “policy and strategy levers that have the least and best chance of driving successful reform.” These necessary elements for whole system reform, which are similar to the implementation drivers identified by Blasé, Fixsen, and Duda (2011), include: (1) fostering intrinsic motivation of teachers and students; (2) engaging educators and students in continuous improvement of instruction and learning; (3) inspiring collective or team work; and (4) affecting *all* teachers and students (“allness”).

The project’s theory of action, which mirrors the tenets of the OIP (see **Appendix A-1**), supports the notion that student learning improves when adults learn, and adult learning is most effectively fostered through peer-to-peer feedback and support that is provided through collaborative learning teams. The project’s theory of action is anchored on the belief that the sense of *allness* described by Fullan can only be cultivated when *all* adults – include general and special education teachers, administrators (central office personnel such as directors of student services, principals, assistant principals), related services personnel, parent/family members, and others – believe that their responsibility, regardless of role or position, is to work together to build each other’s capacity to ensure the success of all students.

Districts and their schools that embrace the sense of “allness” described by Fullan (2011) understand that their work is about improving instruction and learning for all students. Frattura and Capper (2007) urge districts and schools to rethink their longstanding focus on roles and programs and, instead, develop the leadership capacity of teachers and school and district administrators to work together to meet the instructional needs of all students.

The project will incorporate PD/TA on rethinking service delivery using Frattura and Capper’s work on Integrated Comprehensive Systems (ICS), specifically designed to urge teams at all levels to work toward a unified approach to educating all students using the OIP. According to Frattura (personal communication, 2012), ICS is about taking the best of what we know of good practice from special education, gifted education, and other areas and making it available to all children as part of the core instructional program. It *is* about proactively rebuilding the entire system and getting instruction right the first time for all children. It is *not* about moving special education back into the confines of regular education, nor is it about moving children back into an unchanged core. The focus of ICS is on building collaborative teaching and promoting the sharing of expertise among all adults in the system, rather than reinforcing a programmatically driven system that tends to separate/seclude adults and children by departmental functions (see **Appendix A-11**).

Refining Aligned DLT-BLT-TBT Functioning Using the OIP. Ohio TBT planning starts with *all* students and is designed to ensure that each child masters essential standards-based skills and concepts as defined by the district’s core instructional program. A commitment to ensuring each child’s success means that team members must establish and follow through on shared expectations in addressing the learning needs of all children through the delivery of strong core instruction to children who are above proficiency, at or close to proficiency, and below or far

from proficiency, including those students who need additional and, at times, intensive supports to acquire essential skills/concepts. Integral to developing shared expectations and following through on shared work, TBT members, who include intervention specialists assigned to support the delivery of instruction to students with disabilities as regular members of the team, must: (1) establish clear learning objectives, aligned with the district instructional program, for what they want students to learn and be able to do; (2) identify how they'll know when each student has learned/acquired the skills being taught; and (3) determine how they'll respond when a student experiences difficulty.

Ohio teams at the district, building, and TBT levels work together as part of a learning organization to support all students in learning at higher levels. At the teacher team (i.e., TBT) level – arguably the most important component of the process since it directly and more immediately affects classroom practice – Ohio's process requires teams to set common instructional targets, use collaboratively developed common classroom formative assessment, make decisions about and adapt instruction based on what is/is not working, and report progress to BLTs. BLTs monitor TBT implementation and report building data to the DLT; the DLT monitors implementation across all schools within the district and determines the level of district-wide and/or building-level supports needed to ensure that goals are being met. Rather than using a response to intervention (RtI) approach as a stand-alone process driven by and through special education, the Ohio TBT process incorporates RtI as an integral part of the team's routine practice. And, whereas school buildings are the unit of change in RtI with district-level supports intended to reinforce building-level implementation, the OIP uses a district-wide process that aligns core work related to instruction and achievement across the district (i.e.,

in/across all classrooms within all schools within the district), thus embedding the systemic and systematic use of RtI practices as part of the OIP at the TBT level.

In *Response to Intervention Joins Data Teams* (see *Data Teams: The Big Picture – Looking at Data Teams Through a Collaborative Lens*, Lead and Learn Press, 2010), Linda Gregg described the relationship between RtI and processes used by data teams. Characterizing RtI as a “dynamic complement to Data Teams,” she noted that RtI and data teams should *not* be used as independent initiatives, but rather as “interdependent processes.” As part of the data team (i.e., TBT) process, team members “should consider the importance of a strong Tier 1 program of high-quality, research-based instruction and differentiation to meet the needs of all students. Students who do not respond as expected to Tier 1 intervention strategies may require targeted interventions at Tier 2, and students who do not respond as expected in Tier 2 may require intensive interventions at Tier 3” (p. 62). See **Appendix A-12** for a graphic of a multi-tiered model of service delivery.

Addressing the Role of Parents and Family Members. It is commonly understood that strong parent-professional partnerships, based on mutual respect and shared goals, have a positive effect of student learning. For students with disabilities, engaging families in their child’s education at school and at home supports the successful inclusion of students with disabilities (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). However, most programs designed to improve relationships between schools and families do not provide for interaction among family members and educators with the result that “neither parents nor professionals typically experience collaborative interactions with each other until they are faced with a situation that requires them to do so (Murray, Ackerman-Spain, Williams, & Ryley, 2011, p. 21). The *Parent Teacher Partnership Model* proposed by Murray and MereoIU (2012), is intended to lead to changes in

parent and teacher knowledge, attitudes, and dispositions necessary to establish and maintain effective parent/teacher relationships for the purpose of improving student outcomes. The model is built around two sets of practices that are taught to an equal number of parents and teachers who participate together in the PD: (1) relational practices (e.g., active listening, cultural sensitivity, respect) and (2) participatory practices (i.e., a set of practices that facilitate informed decision making, active participation in setting and implementing goals). In a recent study using the model, Murray and Mereoiu (in press), the attitudes and dispositions of parents changed toward professionals, and the attitudes and dispositions of teachers changed toward the parents with both groups citing similar issues. Strong partnerships are more likely to occur and be successful if educators value partnership and are confident in their partnering skills (Murray, Curran, & Zellers, 2008, p. 106).

Developing Competence in Process Coaching. Knowles (1989) asserts that the key to adult learning involves establishing a reason for their investment in the process, treating adults as individuals capable of self-direction, acknowledging the accumulated experiences of adults, establishing why they need to learn whatever is being taught/reinforced through coaching, and ensuring that whatever is taught is applicable/useful in solving a problem. Research on effective coaching validates the need for individuals or – in the case of the OH-SPDG Capacity Building model – DLT/BLT/TBT members to have time to practice what they’re learning and reflect on newly acquired knowledge and skills. The benefits of job-embedded PD – or PD that occurs as educators engage in their daily work activities – rather than the more traditional “sit and get” training approach has been long established. In this way, participation on a TBT is the most effective form of PD because it is job embedded, focusing on the daily work of teachers, ongoing, providing opportunities for practice, reflection, and feedback.

In a study of the effectiveness of adult learning methods conducted by Trivette, Dunst, Hamby, and O’Herin, the methods that actively involve learners in acquiring, using, and evaluating new knowledge and practices had the most positive consequences (2009). Further, the authors found that training opportunities are most effective if they include multiple learning opportunities, large doses of self-learner assessment, and instructor facilitated learner assessment of his/her own learning against a set of standards or criteria (p. 11). The incorporation of process coaching for regional providers and TBTs will focus on how to effectively provide feedback to adults.

Leveraging Resources, Aligning the Work, and Providing a Foundation for Expansion.

SPDG has been used to restructure and focus the work scope of the SST network and provide a foundation for shared work among ODE offices related to improving outcomes for all children. Not only has SIG/SPDG been used to restructure OEC-funded grants to districts, but it has also been used by the office as the lens through which other requests for funds are evaluated, reducing fragmentation and ensuring that all efforts are focused on eliminating the achievement and implementation gap. Beginning in 2002, SIG/SPDG was used as the basis for OEC in awarding school-level “access” grants that supported common planning time for aligning instruction for students with disabilities to newly released academic content standards. In 2005, OEC transitioned from access grants to *Ohio Integrated Systems Model (OISM)* grants that provided structured and ongoing support for implementation of tiered intervention models for addressing the academic and behavioral needs of all children as part of school-wide reform and improvement.

An array of products has been developed in conjunction with OEC’s work through SPDG implementation (e.g., 18 on-line learning modules developed through OLAC, which embed OIP structures and tools and are available at no cost to all districts in Ohio; on-line performance

assessment through OLAC that is aligned with *Ohio's Leadership Development Framework* and that provides a way for superintendents and leadership teams to benchmark their own performance; a web-based data tool called *How Does Your School Measure Up*; and PD collaboratively designed and developed with Ohio's elementary and secondary principals associations to support principals in understanding and leading instructional improvement efforts). Go to www.OhioLeadership.org for additional information.

The current SPDG served as the vehicle for fundamentally changing the role of regional providers (specifically SST consultants) – away from being a broker of regional PD to serving as “in-district/building” coaches, facilitators, and consultants, working with district, building, and teacher teams to provide ongoing, job-embedded technical assistance, and verifying, through the use of state-developed implementation checklists, the accurate implementation of skills and competencies learned during PD. In using SPDG to spur the development of a true SSoS, Ohio restructured roles so that everyone's work was designed primarily to improve the capacity and performance of someone else; systematized and focused the work on supporting districts in fully implementing and following through on district-identified strategies/actions based on district-identified needs, rather than supporting a host of discrete projects/initiatives that may or may not relate to district needs.

In outlining the responsibilities of the SSTs, the *2012-2013 SST Performance Agreement* provides the following parameters to guide Ohio's SSoS improvement efforts: (1) Ohio is committed to a unified system of support that meaningfully connects early intervening and prevention, early learning and school readiness, and special education functions with the work of improving instructional practice and student performance on an ongoing basis; (2) a unified system involves collaboration among all components so that as issues are identified, the system

is able to respond in an effective, coherent, and timely manner; (3) building regional capacity for OIP implementation at a high level is the critical work of the SSTs and recognizes the critical role ESCs play as fundamental components of the SSoS; (4) the OIP serves as the cornerstone for the development and implementation of improvement plans of schools and districts receiving school improvement grants (SIGs) and for participation in Race to the Top (RttT); and (5) coordination of support and technical assistance provided related to OIP, SIG, and RttT districts is critical so as not to duplicate services provided under other funding sources (ODE, 2012).

Among the lessons learned over the past five years is the realization that closing the achievement gap for subgroups of children is largely dependent on closing the implementation gap in adult professional practice, and that doing so requires shared responsibility and accountability across program areas for the success of all children. We know a lot about what constitutes the “right” work and have learned that supporting people in working together to do it over time remains a challenge. Additionally, we’ve learned that intervention needs to be considered part of – rather than separate from – the instructional process, and that the best intervention for all children is effective instruction. Finally, we’ve paid a great deal of attention to the challenges of scale and sustainability and will develop further Ohio’s strategies in this area by incorporating lessons from implementation science into the work (Blasé, Fixsen, & Duda, 2011).

Despite the substantial progress made in aligning and focusing the work across the state, there is much more to do to support the full implementation of effective practice in every classroom in every school within every district in Ohio using the OIP. The proposed project will lead to increased understanding in how to support, on a statewide basis, the effective use of collaborative learning teams (i.e., TBTs), and will affect district-wide practice not only in the

partner districts that will form SPDG cohorts, but also in every district (and all schools within these districts) that use OIP as their improvement strategy.

C. QUALITY OF THE PROJECT DESIGN

Districts and their schools that demonstrate sustained improvement in instructional practice and achievement for all students establish structures and provide the supports necessary to foster shared leadership and internal or authentic accountability (Elmore, 2006; Reeves, 2006; Schmoker, 2007). They facilitate professional collaboration and the effective use of relevant data at all levels of the system. An increasing number of authors and researchers (e.g., DuFour & Marzano, 2011; McNulty & Besser, 2011; Darling-Hammond, L., 2010; Wahlstrom, K. & Louis, K., 2008; Schmoker, M., 2006; David, 2008-09; Gallimore, et al., 2009; Seashore Louis, et al., 2010) advocate for the use of team structures to facilitate shared learning for instructional improvement. They note that no single person has all the necessary knowledge, skills, and talents to meet the needs of all children. This finding is reflective of the growing body of evidence in support of teachers working together to inform each other's instructional practice, as well as the importance of stable school-based settings and distributed leadership, using explicit protocols, and having coherent and aligned district policies and practices (Gallimore, et al., 2009).

It is also reflected in the *Core Messages/Non-Negotiables* used by OLAC to ground its work (2008). These non-negotiables, which form the base assumptions of the state's improvement strategy, include the following: (1) **Leadership is a shared responsibility** and needs to be viewed, not as a role, but as a set of essential practices directed toward the improvement of instruction with the ultimate aim of increasing students' learning; (2) **Leadership is a process distributed across an entire school system** – its central office and all of its buildings – involving shared responsibility for and concerted action on behalf of improved instructional

practice and school performance; (3) **Accountability for school improvement requires leadership structures** (that is, district leadership teams, building leadership teams, and teacher-based teams) through which personnel take responsibility and hold one another accountable for organizing, implementing, monitoring, and learning from improvement processes; (4) **A collective focus on full and sustained implementation** – and monitoring of the degree of implementation – of a few potent yet flexible strategies provides the conditions necessary for school improvement; (5) **The Ohio Improvement Process (OIP)** – a structured process based on the use of a connected set of tools for reviewing, analyzing, and basing decisions on relevant data – provides a vehicle for initiating Ohio’s Leadership Development Framework in ways that are responsive to stakeholders; insights about local commitments, needs, and assets; and (6) **All learning, including teachers’ learning of instructional practices, depends on changes in behavior** that respond to precise and relevant feedback. Procedures (e.g., routine classroom monitoring) that provide teachers with feedback and support constitute the most powerful way to enable teachers to improve their instructional performance. For professional learning to occur teachers must be deeply engaged in understanding and responding to such feedback and support – not simply trying to comply with external requirements.

The project design builds on existing work supported through the current SPDG. It recognizes that sustainable changes in practice to support higher levels of student learning for all students requires adults learning, which is most effectively fostered through peer-to-peer feedback and support. The project design furthers the development and expansion of the TBT component of the OIP as a critical part of supporting districts to become learning organizations, able to efficiently anticipate and respond to the needs of all learners and groups of learners (e.g., students with disabilities, students who are English Language Learners). Simultaneously, it

reinforces the role of leadership in using the OIP at the district and school levels, incorporates principles of ICS as part of OIP planning and implementation, recognizes that parent/family members play a critical role in the instructional process, and strengthens the capacity of the regional provider network to effectively support DLTs, BLTs, and TBTs in using the OIP to fully implement agreed-on practices.

Competitive Preference Priority. The project responds to the competitive preference priority of targeting teachers' and principals' professional development needs based on student growth by incorporating the results of teacher and principal evaluation aligned with the *Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES)* and the *Ohio Principal Evaluation System (OPES)*. Value added growth data are considered by DLTs in identifying PD needs related to implementation of agreed-upon strategies and actions and are already incorporated into stage 1 of the OIP through use of the DF tool, which pre-populates selected state assessment data (e.g., value added growth data, Ohio Achievement Assessments, Ohio Graduation Tests data). The use of TBTs as an integral component of OIP responds directly to *Ohio's Standards for the Teaching Profession* around which OTES is built. These include: (1) Teachers understand student learning and development and respect the diversity of the students they teach; (2) Teachers know and understand the content area for which they have instructional responsibility; (3) Teachers understand and use varied assessments to inform instruction, evaluate, and ensure student learning; (4) Teachers plan and deliver effective instruction that advances the learning of each individual student; (5) Teachers create learning environments that promote high levels of learning and achievement for all students; (6) Teachers collaborate and communicate with students, parents, other educators, administrators, and the community to support student learning; and (7) Teachers assume responsibility for professional growth, performance, and involvement

relevance is the emphasis placed by the standards on differentiating instruction to meet individual learner needs, teachers collaborating with each other to support higher levels of student learning, teacher use of formative instructional practices, and teachers engaging in continuous, purposeful PD – *all priority actions supported through participation as a DLT, BLT, and especially TBT member*. The use of OTEs, required for all districts beginning with the 2013-14 school year, provides flexibility at the district level for the identification of LEA measures/student learning objectives, which are more effectively developed and acted on if teacher teams have direct involvement in the process. The SPDG PD/TA/coaching will incorporate a teacher evaluation component and provide examples of how the OIP can provide the framework for districts to meet OTEs requirements (see Appendix 13). OPEs has not yet been finalized for use. Such data will also be incorporated into project evaluation by the beginning of project year three. Improving the effectiveness of all adults involved in the instructional process, especially teachers and principals, is at the core of the OIP.

This project will expand development of a replicable five-step teacher-based team (TBT) process in 16 districts per cohort (one district per each SST region, or four districts per quadrant of the state) for each of the initial three years of the grant. Aligned and district-wide use of the TBT five-step process will be achieved through a combination of centralized and quadrant-level face-to-face PD/TA for DLTs, BLTs, and principals; intensive follow-along process coaching with opportunities for feedback and correction; and development of TBT members as peer coaches to build the capacity of teams to continue to learn. Four levels (i.e., centralized, quadrant-based, regional, and district) of PD/TA will be delivered around the *three primary areas of focus* described above as part of an *OH-SPDG Comprehensive Capacity Building*

model. These areas target PD/TA at the district, school, TBT, regional training team (RTT), and parent/family levels on:

1. Using data in a problem-solving cycle to make instructional decisions at all levels of the system, and providing timely intervention and support for teams *and individuals* that have not attained 90 percent implementation with fidelity (i.e., *System-wide Inquiry and Learning through Shared Instructional Leadership*);
2. Defining their current service delivery system and using data to redesign and implement effective core instruction delivered to all students (i.e., *Integrated Services as Part of OIP Planning/Implementation*); and
3. Refining the skills of TBTs, BLTs, and DLTs during the 5-step process to improve core instruction for all students using principles of differentiation (i.e., *OIP Implementation*).

Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes to be Achieved by the Project. The purpose of Ohio's SPDG is to reform and improve the state's system of personnel development to better support all Ohio districts and their schools in significantly improving the quality and consistency of instruction and services provided to students receiving special education services, and other struggling learners at risk of being identified as disabled, as part of district-wide continuous improvement. Four implementation goals and associated implementation objectives are shown in **Figure 1** below. **Table 1** outlines outcomes and measures for each implementation objective.

Project Addresses Needs of Target Population. The primary target population of the proposed SPDG is Ohio's preschool and school-age students with disabilities and students at risk of being inappropriately identified as disabled. Like all other students, these are students who will benefit from having highly qualified and effective personnel prepared to work with them to work toward ensuring student success in grade-level content aligned with common core and state

academic content standards. SPDG will collaborate with OLAC (BASA) to offer on-line PD that would be universally accessible to all districts and schools in Ohio. The immediate targets of SPDG PD/TA are district and school personnel in high- and moderate-risk districts, as identified through Ohio’s approved differentiated accountability plan (see **Figure 2**). The vast majority of these districts and schools failed to make AYP because their population of students with disabilities did not meet proficiency in reading and/or math.

Figure 1: Project Goals & Implementation Objectives

Project Goals	Implementation Objectives
Expand and refine statewide PD supported through the current SPDG to develop a comprehensive PD/TA/coaching model applicable for use by all Ohio districts and their schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop regional provider, DLT, BLT, TBT, and family engagement PD/TA and process and peer coaching components (including the development and/or refinement of content, protocols, implementation checklists, delivery format, and on-line modules with video examples).
Support the effective and efficient delivery of expanded/refined PD/TA/coaching through the established regional infrastructure to regional providers in each of Ohio’s 16 SST regions, and to three cohorts of districts (and all schools within these districts) with 16 per cohort, over the life of the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deliver a combination of centralized/quadrant/ in-district PD/TA/coaching to a cadre of regional providers in each of the 16 SST regions, and to each cohort partner district using established protocols to ensure consistency and quality in delivery.

<p>Provide for high quality, consistent support on an ongoing basis to all Ohio districts and their schools in implementing/monitoring their degree of implementation of, evidence-based practices for improving adult and student learning by embedding the comprehensive model developed through the grant into the ongoing work of the regional system, and developing universally accessible, web-supported tools and products.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support full implementation of effective practices learned through the project PD, through the development of products for universal access, the dissemination of project-related information through a variety of strategies, and the provision of assistance in monitoring the degree of implementation using a variety of web-based tools.
<p>Aggressively foster statewide scalability and sustainability of evidence-based practices (EBP) targeted through the grant through a variety of strategies, including the development of meaningful relationships with key partners (e.g., ESCs, SSTs, institutions of higher education, professional associations, parent organizations, and others).</p>	<p>a. Ensure diverse stakeholder involvement through the establishment of partner roles/responsibilities in relation to project development/ implem., eval., and sustainability of EBP; (b) establish/employ aligned structures to coordinate the development, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability of project activities; (c) maximize the capacity for scaling/sustaining effective practice by using the quad-regional infrastructure to foster OIP CoPs; and (d) evaluate the effectiveness of the project in improving SEA capacity to achieve outcomes.</p>

Table 1: Measures/Outcomes & Measure Type (PROJ or PROG/GPRA) by Implementation Objective

Measures/Outcomes & Measure Type (PROJ or PROG/GPRA)	
<i>Objective #1: Ensure diverse stakeholder involvement through the establishment of partner roles and responsibilities in relation to the development, implementation, evaluation, and ongoing sustainability of evidence-based practices targeted through the grant.</i>	
1.1	Each project year, 90 percent of SAPEC and OLAC members indicate that project staff kept them informed and effectively involved in addressing SPDG-identified issues, as measured by an average score of 3.0 on a 4.0 on a Likert-type meeting evaluation scale (PROJ).
1.2	By the end of the first project year, a sustainability plan outlining strategies for ways in which key partners will assist in sustaining the work of the project – throughout the life of and after the end of the grant – will be developed (PROJ).
1.3	Prior to their first year of involvement, individual meetings with cohort partner district superintendents will be held to ensure district leadership understanding of and commitment to the project, and to confirm contact person (PROJ).
1.4	During the first project year, agreements with cohort 1 partner districts (and cohort 2 and 3 districts in subsequent years), regional providers, institutions of higher education (IHEs), parent/family organizations, professional associations, and others that participate in the project are finalized and strategies for aligning the work of the project with each partner’s core work are identified and included in agreements (PROJ).
<i>Objective #2: Establish and employ aligned structures to coordinate the development, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability of project activities.</i>	

2.1 During the first project year, structures (e.g., project management team, SPDG Core Planning Team, PD Development Team) are established for implementing project activities in a timely fashion (PROJ).
2.2 Project staff meets frequently enough to ensure timely implementation of project objectives, as evidenced by documentation of biweekly project team meetings (PROJ).
2.3 The SPDG Core Planning Team meets frequently enough to ensure timely implementation of project objectives, as evidenced by documentation of monthly core team meetings (PROJ).
2.4 The PD Development Team meets frequently enough to inform timely implementation of project objectives, as evidenced by documentation of planning team meetings occurring about every 6 weeks (PROJ).
2.5 At the end of the first project year, 90 percent of key partners (e.g., SPoCs, SPeCs, PD Development Team members) indicated they were provided opportunities to provide feedback on components of project PD/TA/coaching as they were designed (PROJ).
<i>Objective #3: Develop regional provider, district/district leadership team (DLT), building/building leadership team (BLT), teacher-based team (TBT), and parent-professional partnership PD/TA and process and peer coaching components (including the development and refinement of content, protocols, implementation checklists, delivery format, and on-line modules with video exs).</i>
3.1 Within the first six months of the project, content for each component of the <i>OH-SPDG Comprehensive Capacity Building</i> model is developed, and evidence-based practices (EBP) clearly identified for each component (PROJ and PROG).
3.2 Within the first eight months of the project, feedback from key partners (e.g., PD Development Team members) is reviewed and

necessary revisions made to the content and delivery format for PD/TA/ coaching of DLTs, BLTs, and TBTs (PROJ).
3.3 By the end of the first project year, procedures and schedules for on-site and virtual coaching of DLTs, BLTs, and TBTs will be developed (PROJ).
3.4 By the end of the first project year, procedures to facilitate the development of peer coaches within cohort districts are developed and reviewed by the PD Development Team (PROJ).
3.5 By the end of the first project year, content and procedures to facilitate shared understanding and collaboration between families and educators within cohort districts are developed and reviewed by the PD Development Team (PROJ).
Objective #4: <i>Deliver a combination of centralized, quadrant-level, and in-district and virtual PD/TA/coaching to a cadre of regional providers in each of the 16 SST regions, and to each cohort district using established protocols to ensure consistency and quality in delivery.</i>
4.1 Prior to their first year of involvement, cohort district superintendents and their DLT members will have completed a district self-assessment using the <i>Moving Your Numbers</i> district self-assessment guide, and SISEP implementation surveys and discussion guides, and reviewed resources available through the OH-DWW toolkit (PROJ).
4.2 By the end of their first year of involvement, district cohort participants from each level (DLT, BLT, TBTs, parent-professional partnerships) will have completed comprehensive capacity building SPDG PD per the established schedule (PROJ).
4.3 By the end of their second year of involvement, district cohort participants from each level (DLTs, BLTs, TBTs, parent/family

engagement) will have completed comprehensive capacity building SPDG PD per the established schedule (PROJ).
4.4 Participants in SPDG PD demonstrate improvement in implementation of SPDG-supported practices over time as measured by increases in implementation fidelity as documented on project evaluation instruments (PROG).
4.5 SPDG development funds are used to provide follow-up activities designed to sustain the use of SPDG-supported practices, as evidenced by adherence to the monthly in-district TA/coaching session schedule and quarterly virtual coaching schedule (PROG).
<i>Objective #5: Support full implementation of effective practices learned through PD, through the development of products for universal access, the dissemination of project-related information through a variety of strategies, and the provision of assistance in monitoring the degree of implementation using a variety of web-based tools.</i>
5.1 Project information is disseminated laterally and regionally, as evidenced by (a) communication within and across partner districts; (b) expansion of the districts benefitting from the project to additional districts in each quadrant; and (c) dissemination of project-related information through regional (ESC and SST), professional association, OLAC, and related print and web dissemination mechanisms (PROJ).
5.2 Project information is disseminated statewide and nationally, as evidenced by dissemination of project-related information through state mechanisms and through presentations (including on-line webinars) accessible to all districts and schools, and regional providers statewide (PROJ).
5.3 By the end of project year one, a series of on-line PD module(s) specifically related to OIP use to fully implement agreed-on EBPs

will be available at no cost to all districts and schools, and regional providers (PROJ).
5.4 By the end of project year one, a series of on-line webinars directly aligned with OIP use to fully implement agreed-on /EBPs will be available at no cost to all districts and schools, and regional providers in Ohio (PROJ).
Objective #6: <i>Maximize the capacity for scaling and sustaining effective practice by using the established quadrant/regional infrastructure to foster communities of practice (CoP) around implementation of EBPs using OIP.</i>
6.1 By the end of project year one, four community of practice (CoP) groups will be established on a quadrant and regional basis to foster networking and shared learning with regard to OIP use in fully implementing EBPs. Such CoPs include: a CoP for IHE representatives, a CoP for regional providers, a CoP for key SEA personnel and others (e.g., BASA, OFT, others); and a CoP for district superintendents, as evidenced by a CoP schedule and topical outline (PROJ).
6.2 Beginning in project year two, quarterly CoP sessions will be held for each CoP in each quadrant, as evidenced by CoP meeting agendas, and summaries of identified issues, challenges, and potential solutions shared (PROJ).
6.3 By the end of year one, protocols for regional provider and district use in gauging district site implementation of SPDG content will be developed and/or refined (PROJ).
6.4 By the end of year one, a web-based data collection tool will be developed for use in collecting regional provider and district data using protocols developed (PROJ).
Objective #7: <i>Evaluate the effectiveness of project activities in improving SEA capacity to achieve desired outcomes.</i>
7.1 An evaluation scope of work will be finalized by the second quarter of project year one (PROJ).
7.2 All evaluation protocols are developed prior to the end of project year one (PROJ).
7.3 Across all project years, the relevance and timeliness of project implementation is rated as on target, as evidenced by an average

score of 3.0 on a 4.0 Likert-type scale (PROJ).

7.4 Evaluation of all project implementation activities is conducted in a timely manner, as evidenced by regular and ongoing receipt by project personnel of quarterly, mid-year evaluation and annual reports (PROJ).

District selection and required PD/TA. In addition to being in high- or moderate-risk status, districts selected for participation as a cohort partner district must have an already functioning DLT. DLT membership is typically comprised of instructional personnel representing all grade levels (Pre-K-12 general education teachers, early childhood and special education intervention specialists, reading specialists, etc.) and teacher union/association

Figure 2: District Status and Risk

District Type	High	Low	Medium	None	Total
Alert (28 Districts, 35 Schools)	14	10	8	3	35
Focus (64 Districts, 246 Schools)	159	34	26	27	246
Priority (24 districts, 168 schools)	92	3	19	54	168

District selection and required PD/TA. In addition to being in high- or moderate-risk status, districts selected for participation as a cohort partner district must have an already functioning DLT. DLT membership is typically comprised of Instructional personnel representing all grade levels (Pre-K-12 general education teachers, early childhood and special education intervention specialists, reading specialists, etc.) and teacher union/association representation, the superintendent, special education director, curriculum/instruction director, building principals representing all levels, and additional members such as instructional coaches, parent/community members, and/or school board members. At least 50 percent of the typical DLT membership is comprised of instructional personnel. For partner cohort districts participating in SPDG PD/TA, DLT training teams must include: the superintendent, central office representation (i.e., the person responsible for curriculum and instruction), principals representing each level (i.e., elementary, middle, high), and teachers/teacher leaders representing each level as well as a mix of general education, special education, and at-risk populations (e.g.,

English Language Learners), and other members (e.g., school board, parent/family, community representatives). The director of special education/pupil personnel services *must* be a member of the DLT for the district to be considered for SPDG participation.

In addition to having the DLT in place, cohort districts must also have functioning BLTs in each school that include intervention specialists on each team. Each district must commit to two years of supported participation with the option to continue to stay involved without SPDG support over the life of the grant, must participate in all PD/TA activities, submit all required project evaluation data/information, and agree to participate in project CoP activities to support dissemination and expansion of project activities across regions, quadrants, and the state. Each district selected must have already established TBTs at each level, or agree to establish TBTs at each level and articulate the time commitment (i.e., TBT meeting time and frequency) the district has made to support effective TBT operation as part of OIP use. Cohort districts serve as partner districts, working with and providing feedback to state and regional personnel as the next pieces of the OIP are developed and implemented. They are not pilot sites, per se; but rather commit to participation with the knowledge that they will be serving an invaluable role in developing and refining the state's process for personnel development, which will be used for all districts and their schools across the state. See **Appendix B** for the sample partnership agreement.

Three cohorts of 16 districts per cohort – for a total of 48 districts – and their schools will be trained through the proposed SPDG and at least 90 percent of grant funds will be dedicated to PD/TA/coaching per the *OH-SPDG Comprehensive Capacity Building* plan described below (see Part II). Cohort 1 districts will participate in SPDG PD/TA over project years two and three, beginning late in project year one (summer 2013); cohort 2 districts will participate in SPDG PD/TA during project years three and four, beginning late in year 2 (summer 2014), and cohort 3

districts will participate in SPDG PD/TA during project years four and five, beginning late in project year 3. Required PD/TA, as outlined in **Appendix A-14**, includes centralized training to **SPDG district teams** in the area of integrated services as part of OIP planning and implementation (year 1) and implementation/monitoring of the district plan with fidelity (year 2), followed by quadrant and regional-level training in all segments of system-wide inquiry and learning through shared instructional leadership, and extending OIP implementation to improve core instruction for all students using the principles of differentiation. Regional providers (i.e., SST and ESC personnel) will participate in targeted PD as **regional training teams** (RTT) and will receive centralized training in implementation/monitoring with fidelity (year 1) and quad-level training in all other areas of focus. Additionally, OEC will use Part B discretionary dollars to “front-load” PD in integrated services as part of OIP planning and implementation for RTTs from each of the 16 regions in October of 2012 to ensure that this component is fully integrated into the regional support network prior to providing PD/TA/coaching to partner cohort districts later in the year. PD/TA/coaching at the **school and TBT** level will be provided on a regional and district level specifically geared towards process coaching, implementation/monitoring of district plan with fidelity, communication of learning and feedback loops between DLT/BLT/TBT, and focusing on step 3 of the TBT 5-Step Process (i.e., “up front” planning for differentiation). The Ohio 5-Step Process, developed under the current SPDG, is a problem-solving process involving the analysis of student and adult implementation data, establishing common learning objectives and planning instruction to meet learner needs in meeting such objectives, implementing instructional strategies and evaluating the degree to which instruction delivered was effective in meeting learner needs, and refining/revising instructional strategies based on results. In addition to support in these areas, BLTs will also receive PD in how to

effectively use the 5-Step Process at the DLT/BLT levels for monitoring, implementation, identifying instructional practices, defining PD, monitoring student outcomes with the goal of becoming a learning community; and how and when to effectively intervene and provide support at the DLT/BLT/TBT levels. **Family members** will participate in SPDG PD on how to be partners in the design of integrated services. The specific level of training by area is detailed in **Appendix A-14**.

Project Activities Constitute a Coherent, Sustained Program of Training. Anecdotal data collected from cohorts involved in the current SPDG indicate that doing the hard work of getting focused around a common, collective set of priorities is not only helpful in impacting outcomes for students with disabilities and other children with learning challenges, but it is necessary (Ohio Department of Education, 2010). It is only when adults share the responsibility and hold each other accountable for the success of all students that the quality and consistency of instruction provided to each child improve. Bamburg (1994) called for an atmosphere of collegiality, rather than congeniality, noting that changing expectations about what students can do “requires teachers to talk about their beliefs, assumptions, and practices, yet such discussions can be difficult because teachers are not used to discussing these topics or to opening their practice to scrutiny by their peers.” Collegiality, according to Bamburg is characterized by four teacher behaviors: (1) talking about practice, (2) observing one another while teaching, (3) working together on curriculum by planning, designing, researching, and evaluating it; and (4) teaching one another what they know about teaching, leading, and learning.” (*Raising expectations to improve student learning*. In *Changing schools: Re-imagine high performance*, McREL, Vol. 64/Fall 2011, p. 3).

The primary areas of focus for SPDG PD/TA/coaching – all delivered to teams at the regional, district, school, and teacher-team level to promote collective, collegial discussion and action – have been intentionally identified based on current level of functioning of teams involved under the current SPDG and, as such, are designed to extend and address gaps in the current process. These areas include: (1) system-wide inquiry and learning through shared instructional leadership; (2) integrated services as part of OIP planning and implementation; and (3) OIP implementation, focusing on improving core instruction for all students using the principles of differentiation. All design and delivery of PD/TA associated with the *OH-SPDG Comprehensive Capacity Building* model will intentionally consider research findings from Trivette, Dunst, Hamby, and O’Herin (2009) and incorporate adult learning methods involving accelerated learning, coaching, guided design, and just-in-time training (*Characteristics and consequences of adult learning methods and strategies*, Winterberry Research Syntheses Vol. 2, No. 2). Further, technology-based training delivery techniques, such as the use of on-line learning modules (via OLAC), Skype, podcasts, iPads, web-based trainings/meetings, and virtual “learning labs” (i.e., quarterly coaching) will be used to supplement/support face-to-face PD/TA.

Each cohort district team will receive two full days of centralized training per year, followed by ongoing PD/TA at a quadrant, regional, and in-district basis over their two-year period of participation. PD will be provided by external advisors [Brian McNulty (Shared Instructional Leadership focus), Elise Frattura (Integrated Comprehensive Services focus), and Allison Metz (Implementation Science focus)] on a centralized basis, by quadrant lead personnel on a quadrant basis, and by RTTs on a regional and in-district basis. External advisors will be involved in quarterly coaching sessions provided on a quadrant and virtual basis with quad leads, RTTs, and district teams; and monthly sessions will be conducted with each site by RTT

members functioning as OIP process coaches, delivering coaching and facilitation to TBT members. Additionally, Ohio school district administrators and teachers will be involved in PD to provide examples/exemplars of practices targeted through the project PD (e.g., district-wide feedback loop/communication system for effective data sharing and decision making). The emphasis under the proposed SPDG on effective use of feedback among/across levels is supported by Hattie (2009) who synthesized over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement and finding that “feedback was among the most powerful influences on achievement,” with a high effect size of .73 (p. 173).

Joellen Killion, co-author of *Taking the Lead: New Roles for Teachers and School-based Coaches* (2006), will serve as an external advisor, working with quad leads and RTTs in designing PD for district, school, and TBT members on process coaching within the context of the OIP. PD for family members and district representatives will be provided by Mary Murray in conjunction with SST family engagement specialists and the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities (i.e., Ohio’s parent training and information center/PTI). Family members may also be a part of district SPDG training teams involved in centralized, quadrant, and regional PD/TA.

Area 1: System-wide inquiry and learning through shared instructional leadership.

The OIP provides the framework for a coherent program of PD/TA. This component reinforces the need for shared leadership and communication and feedback between and among levels (district, school, teacher team) supported through the OIP (see **Appendix A-15**). In particular, intensive training will be provided at the district and school level on how to effectively use the 5-Step Process at the DLT/BLT levels for monitoring, implementation, identifying instructional practices, defining PD, monitoring student outcomes with the goal of becoming a learning

community; how and when to effectively intervene and/or provide support at the DLT/BLT/TBT level; and implementation and monitoring of the district plan with fidelity. These areas of emphasis in this component build on previous PD delivered through the current SPDG and will provide structures (templates, tools, examples/exemplars), opportunities for cross-district dialogue and discussion, and ongoing support in how to use more deeply the OIP to effectively and efficiently make instructional decisions at all levels of the system. Thus, districts will be supported in learning how to replicate successes and intervene in addressing problem areas. In-district PD and ongoing TA and coaching, coupled with virtual coaching offered on an at-least quarterly basis, will be targeted at the district, school, and teacher team level throughout the course of each cohort district's involvement as a SPDG partner district.

The RTT members from each of Ohio's 16 SSTs will also receive PD/TA in areas of focus addressed through the proposed SPDG. In particular, an emphasis on process coaching – borrowing from the work of Jim Knight's instructional coaching model – will be incorporated in year one of the grant. Process coaching is both an area of PD and a method of delivering/supporting all other areas of SPDG PD/TA across all levels of delivery (centralized, quadrant, regional, district). Grounded in a partnership approach, OIP process coaches (i.e., RTT members; selected DLT, BLT, and TBT members) use a deliberate process for facilitating deeper and coherent conversations [*The Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) Guide: Facilitating Districtwide Improvement in Instructional Practices and Student Performance*, 2012], using the seven principles espoused by Knight: (1) equality (believing people we collaborate with are no less important than us or anyone else, and that consequently their ideas, thoughts, and opinions are no less important than our own; (2) choice (believing that choice lies at the heart of professional practice, and that when we take away others' choices, we treat them as if they are

not professionals); (3) voice (believing that a part of learning is helping people find the words they need to say what matters to them and making it possible for others to openly communicate what they think); (4) dialogue (believing in the importance of conversations that enable people to think together); (5) reflection (believing that learning can be enhanced when we have numerous opportunities to consider how what we're learning might impact what we have done in the past, what we are doing now, and what we will be doing in the future); (6) praxis (believing that learning is most meaningful when we reflect and recreate knowledge so that we can use it in our personal or professional lives); (7) reciprocity (believing that every learning experience we create provides as much of a chance for us to learn as it does for our learning partners) (*Instructional coaching: A partnership approach to improving instruction*, 2009, pgs. 53-54).

Ohio superintendents have reinforced the value of the external coach/facilitators provided through the SST/ESC network in supporting fundamental changes in district and building practice, leading to sustainable improvements in the quality of instruction delivered to all children. **Appendix C** offers an example of such an endorsement from Don Thompson, Superintendent of Lisbon Exempted Village School District in northeast Ohio. Superintendent Thompson notes that while the district is no longer in improvement status and therefore not required to use the OIP, that the “OIP process has become an integral component in our district and will continue in the future,” and that “the OIP has been the single largest catalyst for us” in changing adult behavior (see Appendix C).

Area 2: Integrated services as part of OIP planning and implementation. Continuing issues with LRE in Ohio led SEA and regional personnel to identify the need for a component that would support DLTs/BLTs/TBTs in rethinking service delivery models in their districts. ICS will be used – not as a separate program or initiative – but rather as a platform for supporting

needed dialogue around the degree to which the instructional needs of students with disabilities and other marginalized groups are being met effectively through core instruction. Elise Frattura will serve as external advisor for this component, bringing a wealth of experience and expertise to bear on helping teams, including RTTs, identify and act on needed changes to ensure that every child is fully included and benefitting from practices implementing using the OIP. Incorporation of ICS strategies will involve teams in conducting an equity audit (see **Appendix A-11**) at stage 1 (Identifying Critical Needs) of the OIP and the DF tool will be revised to incorporate a series of equity questions that teams must address in identifying their greatest needs, as well as re-visiting their vision, mission, and non-negotiables guiding practice, and identifying specific actions (e.g., staff assignments) for moving from their current model to an integrated service delivery model. At stage 4 (Evaluating the Improvement Process), teams will review their data, including LRE data and data related to achievement gaps, and plan strategies related to fidelity of implementation. ICS can be characterized using four cornerstones, which include focusing on equity, access to high-quality teaching and learning (focusing on curriculum and instruction, and building teacher capacity), equitable structures (addressing location and arrangement of educational services), and implementing change (focusing on funding and policy issues) (Frattura and Capper, 2007). According to Capper and Frattura (2009), district and school leaders who support social justice engage in seven key strategies: (1) serve as a radar for inequities and view problems as problems of inequity; (2) co-create and sustain a non-negotiable inclusive, social justice/equity vision; (3) hold themselves responsible for changing inequities; (4) imagine a different way of meeting student needs, where students are not segregated; (5) identify and prioritize equity goals; (6) take action to eliminate inequities; and (7) respond to resistance. *Moving Your Numbers* (NCEO, 2011, 2012), as referenced in Section A: Need for

the Project, described the work of districts that have improved outcomes for students with disabilities as part of district-wide reform efforts. Stoughton Area School District (SASD), one of five districts studied during MYN's Year 2 work, used ICS as the framework for bringing adults together to better meet the needs of all children. Over a five-year period from 2004-05 to 2009-10, SASD reduced its special education identification rate from 19 to 10.8 percent, while significantly improving its graduation rate for all students from 85 to 97 percent, and from 68.6 to 97 percent for students with disabilities (Telfer, 2012). See **Appendix A-11** for a comparison of the differences between segregated programs and ICS.

The parent-professional partnership component of the proposed SPDG will focus on developing shared understanding and respect and meaningfully involving and learning from parents in the design of integrated services as part of the OIP. Content for PD related to this component will be based on the Parent Teacher Partnership Model (Murray & Mereoiu, 2012), and will be adapted for use with RTTs during year 1. In year 2, one cohort district per quad will be invited to pilot this PD component, which will be delivered by Mary Murray and her colleagues, RTT personnel and SST family engagement specialists, and OCECD personnel. This component will be offered to other cohort districts in subsequent years of the project, and content will be infused into PD related to the design of integrated service delivery models. At the same time, OEC will issue a request for application (RFA) to all Ohio IHEs with intervention specialist preparation programs with the intention to fund four IHEs – one per quad – to offer the course designed by Murray and Mereoiu. IHEs, as a condition of funding, will be required to join the Consortium described on page 11 of this proposal. Representatives from funded IHEs will be invited to participate in the regional provider CoP; whereas, all Ohio IHEs will be invited to participate in the IHE CoP. See implementation objective #6 for a description of project CoPs.

Area 3: OIP implementation. As noted above, the majority of TBTs developed over the last two years under the current SPDG are operating at the procedural level, but team members lack in-depth knowledge in how to effectively support each other in how to plan for and address the instructional needs of all learners as a team. This component of SPDG PD/TA involves targeted training on using the TBT 5-Step Process, with specific attention paid to up-front planning for differentiation of lessons to meet student needs, combined with PD on process coaching for selected TBT members/teacher leaders. Content for this PD component will be based on existing TBT coaching prompts and protocols (see **Appendix A-16**) adapted to meet individual district/school needs, plus training in the principles of universal design for learning (UDL) to support teams in planning and allowing for multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement (Center for Applied Special Technology, <http://www.udlcenter.org>).

Ohio TBT Coaching Prompts

Step 1: Give Common Assessment

- a. How are we using the revised standards and common core to determine what we assess?
- b. What common skills or process standards are we assessing that cross multiple content areas?
- c. Does the rigor of our assessment questions align with the intended rigor of the standards?
- d. How did/do we determine our cut score for proficiency?

Step 2: Analyze Assessment Results

- a. What does our data tell us about _____ subgroup?
- b. What else does our data tell us?
- c. Does our assessment provide us with the information we need to differentiate instruction for Steps 3 and 4? Are we asking the right questions?
- d. What misconceptions do our students seem to have based on their responses?

- e. Have we asked students to explain how/why answered questions in a certain way?
- f. How can we use this data to do “preventative” instruction during the core?
- g. How did/do we determine mastery? Do we have exemplars? Do we use exemplars with our students?

Step 3: Plan Instruction

- a. Has anyone taught this (concept/skill/process) and been successful? Can you talk about the specific practices that you used, along with any activities, materials that you used in this lesson?
- b. What is the most powerful way to teach this?
- c. How could we differentiate instruction to meet the needs of our classroom?
- d. How can we plan instruction for a variety of student needs?
- e. Did we determine what implementing this strategy with fidelity looks like?
- f. How many minutes/day and days/week will we use the strategy?
- g. How will we assess for Step 5?
- h. What additional professional development in specific content areas or strategies?
- i. What strategies from our Instructional Framework will best meet the needs of our students based on our current data?
- j. What strategies have we found that families can use at home to support their child’s learning outside of school?

Step 4: Implement with Fidelity

- a. How will we know if we are all implementing the instructional strategies with fidelity?
- b. As an observer/learning coming to your classroom, what should I look for?
- c. What kind of feedback do you (or the team) want from classroom observations?

d. What support are we providing our families/community to implement the home learning?

Step 5: Post Assessment/Evaluate Effectiveness

a. Did the instructional strategy we implemented close the achievement gap for our students?

How do we know?

b. Did we implement the strategy with fidelity? How do we know?

c. What did we learn from this round?

d. What do we need to do differently next time?

e. What successful strategies do we need to share with our building and district?

f. What did the adults do that made a difference in student achievement?

g. If we have growth in our SWD population, what made the difference that can be related to our instruction? If we didn't, why?

h. How will we gather feedback from our families/community surrounding the implementation of home learning strategies?

Project Reflects Up-to-Date Knowledge from Research and Effective Practice. This proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice in the areas of shared leadership, educational systems change, implementation science, effective PD/TA including coaching, and the incorporation of UDL and RtI practices as part of the Ohio TBT process. It acknowledges overwhelming evidence, which suggests that it is very difficult, and often unusual for individuals to be able to change without support. We have only to look to organizations such as *Weight Watchers* and *AA* for good examples of programs that rely on group processes to hold people accountable (McNulty, B., August 20, 2012, personal communication). In *Professional Capital: Transforming Teaching in Every School*, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012), call for collective responsibility and openness to feedback among educators

that characterize system quality and commitment, asserting that “efforts to turn around individual schools by finding the right individual leaders, or by replacing all the bad individual teachers with good ones, or by parachuting in an outside intervention team are doomed to achieve temporary gains at best” (pgs. 4-5). Having *colleagues around them who will keep them performing at their peak* is necessary for people to “teach like pros.”

It is widely believed that effective district and school leaders are essential to meaningful and sustained school improvement. Fullan (2008) states that principals working directly with teachers in using data is more than twice as powerful as any other leadership dimension, and Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) found that the reliability for assessing student learning and district decision making was one critical characteristic of effective districts. Similarly, in *New Opportunities for Principal Leadership: Shaping School Climates for Enhanced Teacher Development* (2012), Eleanor Drago-Severson notes that among the adaptive challenges principals must face, “understanding how to build climates that support teacher learning is especially important” (p. 4). She sites Leithwood’s (1992) guidelines for principals in fostering learning-oriented environments, which include establishing a school culture based on norms of technical collaboration and professional inquiry, and recasting routine administrative activities into powerful teacher development strategies (p. 7).

Among the most powerful strategy is providing for teacher collaboration and teacher-to-teacher feedback. David (December 2008/January 2009, p. 87) states that “when teachers collaborate to pose and answer questions informed by data from their own students, their knowledge grows and their practice changes.” A five-year investigation demonstrated that grade-level teams that used an inquiry-focused protocol to address instructional problems significantly increased student achievement and began to attribute increased student performance to their

teaching rather than to external causes (Gallimore, R., et al., 2009). Sustaining teacher teams, according to Gallimore, et al., is dependent on having (1) stable school-based settings, distributed leadership, and explicit protocols; and (2) coherent and aligned district policies and practices. McNulty and Besser (2011) emphasized the importance of developing leadership capacity at every level through “shared inquiry grounded in data” (p. 65). Their work on data teams (e.g., TBTs) encourages districts to establish collaborative teams that use a structured process coupled with data to support continuous learning and improvement. According to Reeves (2009), “data teams are the single best way to help educators and administrators move from drowning in data to using information to make better instructional decisions. What makes the *Data Teams* process distinctive is that we are not just looking at student scores, but at the combination of student results, teaching strategies, and leadership support.” The project’s emphasis on supporting district-wide implementation of a limited number of focused strategies and actions designed to improve the learning of all students is supported in the research. Patterson, et al. (2008) notes, “a few behaviors can drive a lot of change...Enormous influence comes from focusing on just a few vital behaviors.” Leithwood and Jantzi (2008) recommend focusing the goals on student learning through the use of specific forms of instruction and implementing them consistently. Hattie’s synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses provides support for strategies incorporated into the OIP and proposed project, such as the power of effective feedback.

Meredith Honig and Michael Copland (2010, 2008), in their work on how central office can directly support district-wide teaching and learning, assert that district-wide improvements in teaching and learning do not happen without substantial engagement by the central office in helping all schools build their capacity for improvement. Their findings are consistent with ICS

principles calling for a fundamental reorganization of roles and responsibilities around the design and delivery of services to support all children. Honig and Copland offer the following key questions for district central office leadership to consider if their goal is to more meaningfully support learning improvements across the district: (1) *Are we adequately investing in our people within the central office to forge the kinds of new school-partnership relationships that seem fundamental to district-wide learning improvements?* (2) *Are we reinforcing those partnership relationships with new work structures and accountability systems that promise to seed and grow learning improvements?* (3) *Are we providing our central office administrators with the resources and freedom to invent new ways of participating in learning support?* (4) *Are we engaged in strategic partnerships with external organizations not only to provide knowledge and other resources to schools but also to bolster the work of central office reinvention?* (Honig & Copland, September 2008, p. 8).

In the report *Central Office Transformation for District-wide Teaching & Learning Improvement* (Honig, et al., April 2010), provide examples of urban districts that have changed the role of central office personnel to better support teaching and learning. Commissioned by The Wallace Foundation, the report lends additional support for the reorganization or reculturing of central office functions. Facilitating interactions among networks of principals, coaches, or central office staff engaged in similar work; creating one-stop shopping systems for school principals to get the help they need with management issues; and giving visible support to staff occupying new and unfamiliar positions are among the strategies highlighted.

Realigning central office work (i.e., the work of individuals responsible for special education; curriculum, instruction, and assessment; federal programs; and other areas) to support instructional improvement, with effective implementation of TBTs as a top priority, is an

important part of supporting continuous learning and improvement and provide further justification for the project's focus on districts and their schools, rather than only schools, as the target audience. Implementation task lists (see **Appendix A-16**) are helpful at the district level, just as they are at the school and TBT levels, for assessing district actions and their effects over time. Districts demonstrate through the actions of central office personnel, the priorities they set, and the ways in which resources are used to support principals, BLTs, and TBTs.

MacIver and Farley-Ripple (2008) found that “central office administrators are crucial in the school improvement process” (p. 8). If central office personnel are working in isolation, providing conflicting directives and/or reinforcing competing priorities to schools, the progress of the entire district is negatively affected. The use of an aligned leadership team model to prioritize and focus the work across the district, and to monitor implementation and evaluate its effects, offers an effective way for districts to maintain a strong and unified focus on improving instruction.

Anecdotal reports from Ohio districts using the OIP consistently cite the external facilitation and coaching provided by SST and ESC personnel as one of the primary factors contributing to the district's growth and improvement. In a December 2010 report for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Davis, Krasnoff, Ishimaru, and Sage investigated characteristics, roles, and functions of school support teams in four states in the northwest region of the country. The effectiveness of the support team members was not studied. But, the authors raised questions about the degree of match between support team members and the needs of underachieving student populations, and the degree to which SEAs planned for support team cadre sustainability and transfer of role-specific knowledge. Ohio's SSoS was intentionally designed to ensure coherence, alignment, and focus across levels of the system (state, regional,

district, school, classroom) (see **Appendix A-17**). Comprehensive PD/TA for regional SST and ESC facilitators/coaches is provided under the current SPDG. It will continue as part of the proposed SPDG, intending to support the ongoing development of RTT knowledge and skills, and increased competence of RTT members as OIP process coaches. Support is built into the proposed model through the quadrant structure for targeted training and follow-up TA to be provided to RTTs regularly throughout the life of the grant, increasing the collective competence of the regional network to deliver consistent and high-quality support to all districts and their schools.

The work of Dean Fixsen, Karen Blasé, and others working as part of the State Implementation & Scaling-up of Evidence-based Practices (SISEP) Center support the proposed project's focus on full implementation of clearly identified practices using the OIP. Strategies for implementation are found at all critical levels, reflecting measurable, coordinated change processes and outcomes (Blasé, Fixsen, & Duda, 2011). Drivers identified by the (SISEP) center that support sustainable practice are addressed through the use of the OIP and the PD/TA proposed through the project. Such drivers are defined by SISEP as key elements and infrastructure that influence a program's success, and include competency drivers (i.e., selection, coaching, training), organization drivers (i.e., decision support data system, facilitative administration, systems intervention), and leadership drivers (technical and adaptive). The proposed SPDG addresses all three driver areas through a focus on essential leadership practices (e.g., effective use of data at all levels), aligned district/system-wide intervention and improvement, and targeted and aligned PD/TA at each level of the system including the ongoing development of all regional facilitator/coaches. The SPDG Core Planning Team (as described below) will use the SISEP Implementation Drivers Best Practices Analysis and Discussion Tool

early in project year one to review all aspects of the proposed activities, identify gaps, and make modifications based on results of the drivers analysis. Further, the core planning team will review existing OIP DLT/BLT/TBT protocols and implementation checklists in light of the stages and associated measures of implementation described by SISEP (i.e., exploration, initial, installation, full implementation). Such stages are aligned with the DLT/BLT/TBT continuum described above and found in **Appendix A-15** in that the goal of SPDG PD/TA is to support districts in moving from a procedural level (initial implementation) to continuous inquiry and learning at all levels of the system (full implementation).

Project Establishes Linkages with Other Agencies and Organizations. **Figure 3** provides an organizational chart for the project, detailing the collaborative relationships involved in implementing project activities. Management of the project is described in the management plan, beginning on page 80. The State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children (SAPEC), as the official body established through IDEA, is responsible for serving in an **advisory** capacity, making recommendations to OEC and Ohio’s state superintendent of public instruction regarding the education of children and youth with disabilities. Simultaneously, the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council (OLAC) also advises the state superintendent on the development of PD/TA and resources addressing the ongoing development of essential leadership practices for all districts and their schools. Organizations/entities represented on both SAPEC and OLAC are provided in **Table 2**. SAPEC includes representatives from key state agencies in Ohio concerned with the education of all children, including children with disabilities (e.g., Ohio Department of Health-Part C Lead Agency).

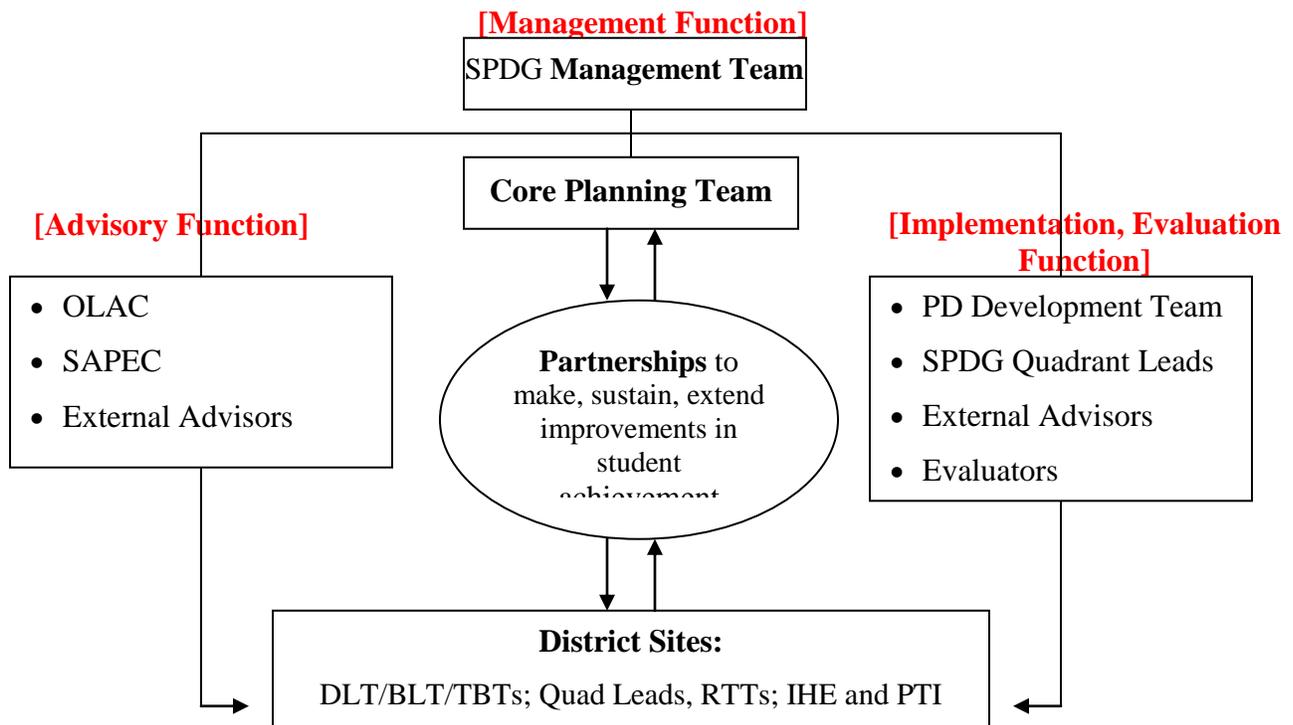
In addition to SAPEC and OLAC, which serve in an advisory capacity, a ***SPDG Core Planning Team*** will be formed and meet monthly to ensure effective **management** and regular

communication among project management staff (i.e., OEC director, SPDG project coordinator) and SPDG external advisors, evaluators, quadrant lead personnel, and other individuals key to implementation of project activities (e.g., OLAC Director). In addition to regular monthly meetings, this core group, which will be facilitated by the SPDG Coordinator, will meet three to five days in the fall of year one, and two days in the spring of year one to review and refine all aspects of the *OH-SPDG Comprehensive Capacity Building* model, identify expertise needed, establish a meeting and PD development calendar. It will also hold regular phone conferences (estimated at six per project year). District partnership sites will be formed in each of the 16 SST regions with one or more quadrant lead(s), the applicable RTT, and a representative from an area IHE being assigned to work with the district. Higher education participation in the implementation of the project at the local level will promote the infusion of effective practices at the pre- and in-service levels. The SPDG also provides opportunities for networking among IHEs and a vehicle for examining within and across institutions the adequacy of current higher education practices in preparing graduates who can use data to make instructional decisions, provide/accept effective feedback to/from peers, differentiate instruction to meet the academic and behavioral needs of students, monitor student progress, and work effectively as part of a collaborative team.

Partnering with the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities (OCECD), Ohio's sole PTI, will ensure that the perspectives and insights of parents are brought to bear on the planning, implementation, and evaluation of project activities. Personnel from OCECD's regional offices will work as part of each quadrant to reinforce the message of high expectations and high-quality instruction for all children.

To ensure timely and accurate **implementation** of project activities, and to extend the work of the SPDG through the use of discretionary funds, OEC will convene a ***PD Development Team*** with representation from each SST, who will work with the SPDG Core Planning Team to plan and deliver PD/TA, and ensure that SPDG-developed PD/TA/coaching is efficiently infused into the ongoing work of each SST and how its personnel works with and supports districts in their regions. In addition to regional staff, SEA personnel (e.g., individual in charge of formative instructional practices), the UDL specialist from the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence, and selected others will be a part of the team. The PD Development Team will meet every six weeks, with meetings planned to occur in concert with the SPDG Core Planning Team, and will be facilitated by the SPDG Coordinator.

Figure 3: Project Organizational Chart



Representatives from the SPDG Core Planning Team and the SPDG Coordinator will provide updates on SPDG implementation to all SST single points of contact (SPoC) and special

education contacts (SPeC) at the regular monthly SPoC/SPeC meetings. Further, a portion of each monthly meeting will be devoted to quadrant-level discussions through which SST leadership can learn from each other in discussing challenges and strategies for addressing them.

Project is Part of a Comprehensive Effort to Improve Teaching & Learning. The *OH-SPDG Capacity Building* model represents a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning aligned with rigorous academic standards for all students by addressing and promoting shared leadership for instructional improvement and accountability at all levels of the district, coupled with structured processes, embedded tools, and skilled coaches for supporting adults in working together to make and sustain improvements in instructional practice and student achievement. Components of the proposed project target and support effective use of data to identify needs, monitor the degree of implementation and progress, and evaluate results; full implementation of aligned and focused actions by leadership teams at each level of the school system; and ongoing inquiry, learning, and capacity building. It will target DLTs, BLTs, TBTs, and regional providers from each of the state’s 16 regions and provide comprehensive, coherent, and focused PD/TA designed to address gaps in the current system. Ohio’s SPDG is the vehicle for continuous development and improvement at multiple levels. Letters of support from partners and stakeholders can be found in **Appendix D**.

Table 2: SAPEC and OLAC Stakeholder Advisory Committee Representation

Member Type	SAPEC Representation	OLAC Representation
<i>State Board of Education</i>	✓	✓
<i>State Agency Personnel</i>	✓ (ODE, Ohio Departments of: Job and Family Services, Health, Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, Rehabilitation Services Commission, Rehabilitation and	✓ (ODE)

Member Type	SAPEC Representation	OLAC Representation
	Corrections, Youth Services)	
<i>Regional Providers</i>	✓ (SST, ESC)	✓ (SST, ESC)
<i>Advocacy Organizations</i>	✓ (Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities, multiple organizations)	✓
<i>Parents/Families</i>	✓ (<i>majority of members are parents of children with disabilities</i>)	✓
<i>Professional Associations</i>	✓ [Buckeye Association of School Administrators (BASA), Ohio Education Association (OEA), Ohio Federation of Teachers (OFT)]	✓ [BASA, OEA, OFT, OH Educational Service Center Assoc., OH School Boards Association, OH Assoc. of Elementary School Admin., OH Assoc. of Secondary School Admin., Council for Academic Excellence]; others
<i>Higher Education</i>	✓ (multiple)	✓ (multiple)
<i>Local School Districts</i>	✓ (director of special education)	✓ (superintendents, principals, directors of special education)
<i>Private/Charter Schools</i>	✓	

D. QUALITY OF PROJECT PERSONNEL

It is the Policy of ODE to maintain an affirmative action plan in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws, rules, regulations and guidelines. Discrimination against any employees, applicants, contractors, and individuals receiving services due to race, color, religion, sex (including sexual harassment and sexual orientation), national, origin, disability (ADA), age (40 years or more) or veteran status (Vietnam Era, Desert Storm/Shield, or disabled) is prohibited. ODE encourages applications for employment from persons who are members of

groups that have traditionally been underrepresented. With the aforementioned underlying commitment of ODE to affirmative employment practices, the following are the proposed key project staff (vitae for key personnel can be found in **Appendix E**):

A. Sue Zake, Ph.D., Project Director. Prior to her appointment as Ohio's state director of special education, Sue Zake served as the single point of contact and executive director of SST #1 in northwest Ohio. Dr. Zake was a long-time coordinator, associate director and director for the Northwest Ohio Special Education Regional Resource Center (NWOSERRC), one of Ohio's largest regional centers serving Toledo Public Schools, and numerous suburban and rural districts, and community/charter schools. Dr. Zake earned her Ph.D. in child and adolescent development and administration from the University of Toledo, and served as a local director of special education in Northwest Ohio. She has extensive experience in working with children with autism and behavioral challenges, and expertise in supporting the academic and behavioral instruction for students with disabilities.

B. Earl Focht, Project Coordinator. Earl Focht will be responsible for the management of the SPDG. He is a consultant with OEC's Resource Management section with responsibility for the administration of federal and state funds, data management, and the coordination of regional (SST) services in the area of special education. Prior to joining OEC several years ago, he was one of four ODE regional field managers supporting statewide improvement across all regions. His considerable expertise as a secondary principal and teacher, coupled with his ability to foster collaborative relationships and partnerships, makes him especially critical in SPDG implementation.

C. Margaret M. Burley, Executive Director, PTI. Margaret Burley has been the executive director for the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities

(OCECD) for over 25 years. Burley serves as a consultant to many agencies and universities across the US. During 1984-1988, Burley developed and managed a parent assistance grant from the USDoE Secretary's Discretionary Fund. Burley represented the PTI in implementing Ohio's current SIG and continues to be a vital and integral member of the coordinating council committed to building on Ohio's success through implementation of the proposed SPDG.

D. Quadrant Regional Leads. The quadrant leads are regional providers with extensive expertise in the SPDG training content and demonstrated ability to work with districts and other regional providers. They will work with the PD Development Team and as integral members of the SPDG Core Planning Team to develop all SPDG PD/TA content and delivery formats, provide PD/TA to all RTT members, serve as the coordinating group to ensure consistency in delivery of all SPDG content through monitoring and evaluation using established TBT protocols. Additionally, each quad lead will serve as a process coach with at least one district in his/her home region to ensure direct contact with a district using the OIP and test out refinements to the process based on feedback from DLT/BLT/TBT members. ***Candi Hazelwood*** (NW Quad Lead) has more than 40 years of experience in public education. Prior to assuming the role of quadrant lead in 2009, she worked as special education teacher in a large urban district, chairperson of the special education department, and vocational special education coordinator. She also served as a secondary principal in a variety of settings in northeastern Ohio, and as Quality Initiatives Coordinator for the Educational Service Center of Cuyahoga County. Ms. Hazelwood co-authored *Universal Education: Principles and Practices for Advancing Achievement of Students with Disabilities Education* in 2009. Since 2007, she has worked to support district-wide improvement efforts using the OIP. She holds a master's degree in Culturally Disadvantaged and Reading, and superintendent and principal licensure. ***Rebecca***

Rees (SW Quad Lead) became the SW quad lead in 2008. Prior to becoming an OIP Quad Lead, Ms. Rees was the Director of Professional Development and Title Programming for the Lima City School District, Reading/Writing Curriculum Team Leader during which she created and implemented the Reading Renovation framework for supporting high quality reading instruction and trained literacy leaders to model effective literacy instruction; a 6th grade teacher, and Program Coordinator for The Ohio State University at Lima. She has in-depth knowledge of school reform and accountability measures, is skilled in data-based decision making, and is known statewide as one of Ohio's top professional developers and facilitators. She holds a master's degree in elementary education. **Helen Flowers** (SE Quad Lead) became a quad lead in 2008 and has been instrumental in training regional consultants at the state, quadrant, and regional levels, and contributing to the development of the state's OIP Facilitator's Guide. Ms. Flowers is a master teacher, having begun her career in 1971 as an elementary and middle school teacher, before serving as coordinator of the former Pilasco-Ross SERRC, director of the South Region Professional Development Center, and adjunct professor for the Ohio University Southern Campus. She holds a master's degree in K-12 Reading Supervision. **Peg Deibel** (NE Quad Lead) joined the SPDG team in 2010 and has worked diligently with fellow quad leads to develop on-line OIP training modules for statewide and regional use, and train and support the development of RTT members in northeast Ohio. Ms. Deibel also served as external facilitator for multiple districts, including Wooster City Schools, one of five districts featured in *Moving Your Numbers: Five Districts Share How They Used Assessment and Accountability to Increase Performance for Students with Disabilities as Part of District-wide Improvement* (Telfer, 2011). Prior to working as an OIP quad lead, Ms. Deibel was a high school English/Language Arts teacher, school librarian, secondary-level administrator, curriculum and instruction supervisor,

and ESC consultant. She holds a master's degree in K-12 Reading Supervision, and licensure as a superintendent and secondary principal.

Because of the critical role that QLs play in ensuring consistency and quality of PD content, another QL per quadrant will be added early in year one. These individuals (TBN) must: understand the OIP, including all tools/resources; have effectively supported at least one district in implementing all components of the process (DLT, BLT, TBT); be able to work effectively as a team member; have experience in delivery PD/TA/coaching to adults; be adaptable, willing to make frequent changes/revisions to both the content and delivery method as feedback is received from participants, project personnel, and evaluators; willing to travel frequently and work extended hours as needed. Every effort will be made to recruit qualified individuals with disabilities and preference will be given to individuals with disabilities who meet these criteria.

E. Project Evaluators. Dr. Julie Morrison will serve as lead evaluator for the project. She is an Assistant Professor in the School Psychology Program at the University of Cincinnati, College of Education, Criminal Justice, and Human Services. She has nearly 20 years of experience in research and program evaluation in education and the social sciences. Dr. Morrison served as the co-Lead Evaluator for Ohio's SPDG (2007-2012) and presently serves as the External Evaluator for Michigan's SPDG. She is an active contributor among the network of SPDG Evaluators and has been invited to OSEP Project Officers to present or co-present on three national webinars. She has also presented on three occasions at the annual meeting of the OSEP Project Director's Conference and was asked by Dr. Jennifer Coffey of OSEP to participate on the SPDG Performance Measures Committee. ***Dr. Aimee Howley*** is Senior Associate Dean for Research in the Gladys W. and David H. Patton College of Education College of Education at Ohio University where she fosters a culture of research that emphasizes

increased productivity through expanded support, provision of experiences enabling students to participate in various types of scholarship, and celebration of accomplishments. She is an experienced and accomplished researcher having completed numerous evaluation projects with federal, state, regional, and local district partners. In particular, Dr. Howley has experience in issues involving rural and Appalachian schools. She has also been instrumental in developing higher education companion guides and related documents for the OLAC and MYN initiatives.

F. Dr. Larry Magliocca, Systems Evaluation Advisor holds a Ph.D. in Education and Management Science from The Ohio State University (OSU), and is past Executive Director, Center for Special Needs Populations (CSNP), and Associate Professor Emeritus in the Department of Education Services and Research, OSU. CSNP, as an OSU interdisciplinary research center, offers professional support for national, regional, state, and local projects. He has experience with systems change and is committed to research and practice in systems design and facilitation of complex systems challenges within private and public agencies.

G-K. External Advisors: Dr. Brian McNulty has a Ph.D. in Special Education Administration and Public Administration. He is currently Vice-President for Leadership Development at Leadership and Learning Center. In this capacity his responsibilities range from presentations to long-term involvement with educators in their school improvement efforts. This includes in depth professional development and research with schools, districts, and state departments of education. Before coming to the Center, Dr. McNulty was the Vice-President of Field Services at McREL (Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning.) In that position he was responsible for coordinating McREL's consulting, training, technical assistance and development of new programs and services based on McREL's applied research and development. Prior to joining McREL, Dr. McNulty served as the Assistant Superintendent for

Educational Services, Adams County School District 14, Commerce City, Colorado. He is a former Assistant Commissioner of Education at the Colorado Department of Education. Dr. McNulty has over 30 years experience in education, his areas of expertise include leadership development, school effectiveness and improvement, early childhood education, and special education. He has published over 40 professional articles and chapters, and lectured extensively in these areas. He co-authored *School Leadership That Works (2005)* with Robert J. Marzano, and Timothy Waters, an ASCD best seller; and *Leaders Make it Happen: An Administrators Guide to Data Teams (2011)* with Laura Besser, an AASA member book.

Dr. Elisa Frattura is Department Chair and Associate Professor in the Department of Exceptional Education at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She worked as a public high school teacher and district student services/special education administrator before earning her Ph.D. in Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She researches and publishes in the area of nondiscrimination law, ICS for all learners, and the theoretical underpinnings of educational segregation. Additionally, Dr. Frattura works with school districts and regional service providers across the country to assist in the movement from programs to services for all learners. She co-authored with Dr. Colleen Capper *Meeting the Needs of All Learners: How Leaders Go Beyond Inclusion (2nd edition, 2009)* and *Leading for Social Justice: Transforming Schools for All Learners (2007)*.

Dr. Allison Metz is a developmental psychologist and associate director of the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She holds a Ph.D. in human development and psychology from the Catholic University of America, and has extensive experience and expertise in the areas of implementation sciences, program replication, organizational and systems change, scale-up, program fidelity, research

design, and implementation support, coaching, and capacity building. She is a co-author, along with SISEP personnel, of *Fidelity through an Implementation Lens*, currently in press.

Dr. Joellen Killion is senior advisor for *Learning Forward* and formerly its deputy executive director. Her work focuses on increasing student achievement through effective professional learning for all educators. She is a frequent contributor to education publications and author of 10 books on the design, implementation, and evaluation of professional learning. She has over 30 years of experience as a facilitator, coordinator, and supervisor of professional development, and has a particular interest in collaborative learning teams, coaching, policy to support professional development, and comprehensive planning and implementation of high-quality, standards-based, results-focused professional learning. She will work with members of the Core Planning Team, PD Development Team, and RTT members to strengthen already-developed facilitation skills. In addition to working with regional staff, which is the priority. Dr. Killion will also provide PD to cohort district internal facilitators.

Dr. Mary Murray is associate dean, College of Education and Human Development, and associate professor at Bowling Green State University in the School of Intervention Services. Her research interests include school/community collaboration, autism spectrum disorders, and preparing pre-service students to implement family-centered practices. Prior to transitioning to higher education, Dr. Murray was a direct service provider and an administrator for a community agency serving individuals with disabilities.

Person Loading Chart – Time in Day(s) by Person

ACTIVITY	Time in Day(s) by Person										
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
<i>Goal 1:</i> Ensure diverse stakeholder involvement...	4	10									

ACTIVITY	Time in Day(s) by Person										
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
<i>Goal 2:</i> Establish and employ aligned structures to coordinate project development, implementation, and evaluation...	8	25	2	8	6	2	4	4	2	2	2
<i>Goal 3:</i> Develop regional provider, DLT, BLT, TBT, and family engagement PD/TA and coaching components	6	15		50			4	4	2	2	2
<i>Goal 4:</i> Deliver a combination of centralized, quad-level, and in-district PD/TA/coaching to RTTs and districts...	4	8	8	25			12	15	8	8	8
<i>Goal 5:</i> Support full implementation of effective practices learned...	3	10		12							
<i>Goal 6:</i> Maximize the capacity for scaling and sustaining effective practice...	6	12		12							
<i>Goal 7:</i> Evaluate effectiveness of project activities...	3	6		3	80	4					

Key: (All figures represent total days one calendar year)

Person A: Project director/Zake	Person G: External advisor/McNulty
Person B: Project coordinator/Focht	Person H: External advisor/Frattura
Person C: PTI/Burley-PTI staff	Person I: External advisor/Metz
Person D: Quad Leads (Deibel, Flowers, Hazelwood, Rees, four TBN)	Person J: External advisor/Killion
Person E: Project evaluation consultants (Morrison, Howley)	Person K: External advisor/Murray
Person F: Systems Evaluation Advisor (Magliocca)	

E. ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

ODE's policy is to maintain an affirmative action plan in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws, rules, regulations and guidelines. Ohio's schools are guided in the delivery of services to children and youth with disabilities through standards established by the Ohio General Assembly and promulgated by the State Board of Education. OEC works diligently to eliminate barriers to the full inclusion of children and adults with disabilities and other marginalized and underserved groups (e.g., economically disadvantaged). Partnership efforts with and through SAPEC, the Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities, the Governor's Council for People with Disabilities, and numerous disability organizations throughout the state provide forums through which OEC priorities are regularly shared and used as a framework for promoting full access to high-quality instruction aligned with rigorous content standards, and full inclusion in the state's assessment and accountability system, to ensure that each child is college and career ready. OEC partners with other state agencies (e.g., Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission) to prepare all children and youth with disabilities for successful postsecondary experiences so they can live and work as full members of the community. Office for Exceptional Children (OEC) has the responsibility to ensure that resources are utilized in compliance with the requirements set forth by the state standards. OEC currently manages state and federal resources to serve approximately 260,000 Ohio children and youth with disabilities and has sufficient staff to implement the required components of IDEA and Ohio's standards. The Office has the capacity, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources to fully support the accomplishment of the objectives and goals of the project. One essential component of the Office involves the funding and support of Ohio's state support team regional personnel who function as the PD/TA arm of ODE in each of Ohio's 16 regions of

the state. The effectiveness of SST personnel, who already have longstanding and effective relationships with school officials and families across the state, will be enhanced through the meaningful integration and coordination of SPDG PD/TA/coaching to improve results for students with disabilities as part of Ohio's SSoS.

OEC also has established strong linkages with ODE's Center for School Improvement, Center for the Teaching Profession, Center for Curriculum and Assessment, as well as with the Office of Early Learning and School Readiness, which have contributed to the reduction of duplication of services and a better coordination of initiatives offered through or supported by the state. Further, by focusing on leadership as a vehicle for improving instructional practice – regardless of role – the SPDG provides a vehicle for working across offices and initiatives to improve achievement and outcomes for all children.

OEC's strong working relationship with the Ohio Center for Autism and Low Incidence and the OSU Center for Special Needs Populations (CSNP) benefit Ohio in many ways. CSNP, through staff expertise as well as collaborative relationships with OSU Videoconferencing Services and the Ohio eTech network, offers access to webcast; satellite videoconferencing and audio conferencing services; web-based video seminars (webinars); multimedia production services; technical assistance in the development of websites, databases, and content management systems; and listserv, message board, and chat room capability.

The demonstration of the commitment of other key partners (e.g., Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities – Ohio's sole PTI – in the implementation of the current SPDG, as well as their continued support and willingness to be active partners in implementing the proposed SPDG, reflects the strength of Ohio's human resources and how those resources are maximized through the use of partnership as a strategy for improving student performance.

Further complementing ongoing relationships is the commitment of institutions of higher education to participate in proposed project activities, as well as the commitment of the State University Education Deans (SUED) and other higher education organizations (Ohio Council of Professors of Educational Administration) to build on current efforts through SPDG to influence course content at the preservice level.

Dr. Brian McNulty, as an external advisor in the area of leadership development for improved student performance, will continue to bring extensive knowledge and expertise, as well as a unifying perspective, to Ohio's SPDG and enhance the capacity of the SPDG to be used as a foundation for Ohio's leadership development efforts. The fact that Dr. McNulty was state director of special education for Colorado for many years attests to his commitment to improving results and outcomes for students with disabilities. The addition of Dr. Elise Frattura will assist teams at each level to go deeper into considering core values and beliefs regarding all children, and will provide a framework for use by teams in considering equity issues, staff assignments, and changes that need to be made to improve access and progress for students with disabilities. Other advisors (Metz, Killion, Murray) will have specific roles around selected components of the proposed SPDG and will bring considerable expertise and an objective external view that will prove helpful in targeting focused work.

OEC's strong working relationships with national organizations, such as the National Center on Educational Outcomes (NCEO) and the Data Accountability Center (DAC), and with state organizations (e.g., Buckeye Association of School Administrators, Ohio Association for Elementary School Administrators, Ohio Association for Secondary School Administrators, Ohio Coalition for the Education of Children with Disabilities) will benefit the state and project participants in the integration of practices to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

Since 1999, Ohio has successfully administered the SIG/SPDG and, based upon yearly performance reports submitted by the state to the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs, has received full funding each year. In implementing the new SPDG, if it is funded, Ohio will use not less than 90% of the funds that it receives under the grant for any fiscal year on high quality professional development and training of education personnel, including special education personnel, through the establishment of district and building leadership teams that include the representation of parent/families. Further, Ohio will continue to complement the use of SPDG funds with Part B discretionary dollars (e.g., Fall 2012 PD for all RTT members on ICS) to send a consistent and focused message of school and student improvement and promote successful scale up and sustainability beyond the life of the grant.

F. QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

This proposed management plan identifies organizational structures and key personnel necessary to accomplish the management goals outlined below. The director of OEC will serve as SPDG Project Director. The SPDG Project Coordinator will provide overall administrative coordination of the implementation of project initiatives. The work breakdown structure provided below will ensure timely and adequate progress in achieving project implementation objectives.

Objective #1: Ensure diverse stakeholder involvement through the establishment of partner roles and responsibilities in relation to the development, implementation, evaluation, and ongoing sustainability of evidence-based practices targeted through the grant. The SPDG Project Coordinator will serve on both the State Advisory Panel for Exceptional Children (SAPEC) and the Ohio Leadership Advisory Council (OLAC) core team, ensuring coordination and alignment across both groups. The Panel meets six times per year to

advise Ohio’s superintendent of public instruction on issues related to the education of children with disabilities; whereas, OLAC meets monthly as an Executive Core Team, twice per year as a full Council, and at additional specified times each year for statewide events (e.g., December Action Seminar; June Statewide Summit). In addition to receiving status reports, both stakeholder groups will be involved in planning to make improvements in project implementation and identifying strategies for public engagement. Some Panel members serve on related committees (Part B-Part C transition) promoting integration and crossover among key groups and helping to spread the word among Ohio’s education community. The SPDG Director and/or Coordinator will meet with each partner district prior to the start of their involvement to review the site agreement and ensure understanding of project requirements, and to identify the district contact person. Similarly, agreements with all key partners will be finalized prior to the end of the first quarter of project year one, and a sustainability plan prior to the end of year 1 to formalize the ways in which such partners will contribute to furthering the work of the project.

Responsible Persons	Objective #1 Activities/Milestones	Timeline by Yr				
		1	2	3	4	5
Project director; coord. (i.e., project staff)	Inform and engage members of OLAC and SAPEC throughout the life of the grant, providing status reports and eliciting member input and feedback on project implementation.	—————→				
Project staff	Engage key partners in the development and execution of strategies for furthering and sustaining project work	X	—————→			
Project staff	Hold meetings with each cohort district superintendent to review site agreement	—————→				
Project staff	Finalize agreements with all key personnel and partners.	X				

Objective #2: Establish and employ aligned structures to coordinate the development, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability of project activities. The project management

team, which will be comprised of Sue Zake and Earl Focht who will serve (contributed time) as Project Director and Coordinator, respectively, and other OEC leadership and staff as needed, will meet on a biweekly basis to ensure that project implementation is on track, and to finalize early in project year one all meeting schedules for the SPDG Core Planning Team and the PD Development Team. The SPDG Director will also meet with the ODE and OEC leadership team on a regular basis to ensure alignment with critical Department and Office functions such as formative instructional practices (FIP), RttT implementation, and school improvement grant (SIG) work deployed through ODE. In addition to the project management team, a SPDG Core Planning Team will meet monthly using phone and web conferencing technology, when appropriate, to save time and money by reducing the need for travel to Columbus, and will include the SPDG Director and Coordinator; evaluation consultants; quadrant leads; and external advisors and PTI representatives, on an as-needed basis. A feedback process will be developed and used with each group to evaluate the extent to which members feel they've been afforded opportunities for meaningful engagement in the development, implementation, and evaluation of all project activities, as well as to gather feedback received so that commonly identified priority items can be effectively addressed through project PD/TA.

Responsible Persons	Objective #2 Activities/Milestones	Timeline by Yr				
		1	2	3	4	5
Project staff; others as needed	Establish and meet as a project management team on a biweekly basis.	→				
Project staff	Finalize all meeting schedules and roles/responsibilities of Core Planning and PD Development team members.	X				
Project staff, evaluators, quad leads (QLs), external advisors	Hold monthly meetings of SPDG Core Planning Team as the primary development and design team for all SPDG PD/TA/Coaching content and delivery methods.	————→				

Project staff, QLS, external advisors (as needed)	Hold regular (every 6 weeks) of the PD Development Team to assist in development of content and ensure common consistent delivery of PD/TA.	→
Project staff, evaluators	Develop and use feedback process for gauging degree to which members feel meaningfully involved, and to gather, synthesize, and take action on feedback received	→

Objective #3: Develop regional provider, district/district leadership team (DLT), building/building leadership team (BLT), teacher-based team (TBT), and family engagement PD/TA, and process and peer coaching components (including the development and refinement of content, protocols, implementation checklists, delivery format, and on-line modules with video examples). Content for all components of project PD/TA/coaching will be developed or refined during year one and EBPs identified for each component. Procedures and schedules for on-site and virtual coaching; procedures for facilitating the development of TBT peer coaches; and development of the parent-professional partnership component will be developed by the SPDG Core Planning Team, with input and review by the PD Development Team and the involvement of applicable external advisors. Each cohort district’s OIP internal facilitator (i.e., the person designated to support OIP implementation district-wide) will serve as the primary contact person for SPDG project staff and will be involved in the meeting with the superintendent and SPDG director/coordinator to review the site agreement, expectations for involvement, and related issues.

Responsible Persons	Objective #3 Activities/Milestones	Timeline by Yr				
		1	2	3	4	5
SPDG Core Planning Team and PD Development	Develop/refine all content and delivery formats for all components of the <i>OH-SPDG Comprehensive Capacity Building</i> model, identifying EBPs for each component,	X				

Team	by the third quarter of year 1 (and refine on ongoing basis).	
SPDG Core Planning Team	Take into account feedback from partners and stakeholders, particularly PD Planning Team recommendations in designing and refining content and delivery formats on an ongoing basis.	→
Project staff, QLS, (McNulty, Frattura)	Finalize procedures and schedules for onsite and virtual coaching for DLTs, BLTs, TBTs, and RTTs across each PD/TA component by the end of year 1.	X
Project staff, QLS, RTTs, Killion, PD Development Team	Finalize procedures for facilitating the development of TBT peer coaches for review by the PD Development Team by the end of year one.	X
Project staff, QLS, RTTs, SST family eng. staff, Murray	Develop content and procedures for the parent-professional partnership component for review by the PD Development Team by the end of year one.	X

Objective #4: Deliver a combination of centralized, quadrant-level, and in-district and virtual PD/TA/coaching to a cadre of regional providers in each of the 16 SST regions, and to each cohort district using established protocols to ensure consistency and quality in delivery. Sixteen (16) district sites – or four per quadrant – will participate over the course of two years – in all components of the project PD/TA/coaching. A total of three cohorts of 16 districts per cohort for a total of 48 districts will participate. Cohort districts will use SISEP surveys and discussion guides, and the MYN district-self assessment guide, in reviewing their degree of implementation and identify associated needs related to use of the OIP. Cohort 1 will complete needs assessment in preparation for PD/TA during project years 2 and 3 (with the option to continue to participate during year 4); cohort 2 will complete needs assessment during year 2 and participate in PD/TA during years 3 and 4 (with the option to continue in year 5); and

cohort 3 will complete needs assessment during year 3 and participate in PD/TA during years 4 and 5. As partner cohort districts implement what is learned through PD and provide feedback to the SEA, the statewide PD provided through Ohio’s SSoS will be adapted accordingly. Further, on-line learning modules that support effective use of OIP will be available and accessible at no charge to all RTTs and districts in Ohio, and a series of webinars will be offered through OLAC on key aspects of the work (e.g., stages of implementation, effective monitoring of implementation, shared leadership, etc.). SPoCs from each SST, some of whom will serve as PD Development Team members, will ensure that all regional staff employed as SST personnel are well-versed in the use of project-developed protocols for supporting the full implementation of EBPs by districts and their schools, and that RTTs in each region provide consistent follow-up TA and support using the procedures developed by the SPDG Core Planning Team, not only to SPDG cohort districts, but to all districts receiving support from the SST.

Responsible Persons	Objective #4 Activities/Milestones	Timeline by Yr				
		1	2	3	4	5
QLs, RTTs, Metz, McNulty, Frattura	Support cohort districts in conducting an implementation self-assessment using the MYN District Self-Assessment and SISEP Implementation Discussion surveys and guides	X	X	X		
SPDG Core Planning Team, RTTs, external advisors (as applicable)	Provide PD/TA/coaching per the established schedule to all cohort districts, ensuring that each district completes required activities for its <i>first year</i> of participation.	—————→				
SPDG Core Planning Team, RTTs, external advisors (as	Provide PD/TA/coaching per the established schedule to all cohort districts, ensuring that each district completes required activities for its <i>second year</i> of participation.	—————→				

applicable)		
QLs, RTTs, evaluators	Rigorously and frequently evaluate the degree to which recipients of SPDG PD/TA/coaching are showing improvement in the implementation of EBPs identified for each component.	→
QLs, RTTs, external advisors	Provide ongoing follow up TA and support to all partner cohort districts through a variety of approaches per established procedures and schedules.	→

Objective #5: Support full implementation of effective practices learned through PD, through the development of products for universal access, the dissemination of project-related information through a variety of strategies, and the provision of assistance in monitoring the degree of implementation using a variety of web-based tools.

The capacity of the regional system is improved by developing the skills of RTT teams around a common core of knowledge that includes skills in facilitating and coaching teams at all levels, effective use of data, focusing goals, selecting and implementing shared instructional practices, providing academic and behavioral instruction using a tiered model, and monitoring the degree of implementation, and related competencies. SPDG content is embedded in the regional provider system, rather than delivered as a separate special education initiative that sits outside the larger system. Dissemination efforts will rely on partnerships with key groups and will target multiple levels: statewide, regional, local, and to some degree, national. Technology will be used to support information sharing around key components of SPDG PD and to support follow-up with interested parties. Webinars offered in conjunction with OLAC further embeds the SPDG PD/TA and its focus on eliminating achievement and implementation gaps within the pursue of leadership (i.e., through BASA) and provides additional leverage to reach superintendents and other district and school leaders. On-line modules that embed common protocols related to

SPDG content can be accessed and used by teams, superintendents, principals, teachers, and others when it is most convenient for them; used to supplement face-to-face SPDG PD/TA; and used by regional providers in working with assigned districts on an individual basis.

Responsible Persons	Objective #5 Activities/Milestones	Timeline by Yr				
		1	2	3	4	5
Project staff, SPoCs, partners	Disseminate project information laterally and regionally through varied mechanisms (e.g., regional SST and ESC newsletters and events, partner web sites and newsletters, the OLAC web site, the OEC electronic newsletter, and other print/web forms).	—————→				
Project staff, SPoCs, partners	Disseminate project information on a statewide and national basis through presentations, webinars, national TA&D partners, and conferences/events.	—————→				
QLs, OLAC	Collaborate with OLAC to make available by the end of year 1 a series of on-line modules directly aligned with OIP use to support full implementation of EBPs.	—————→				
Project staff, QLs, external advisors, OLAC	Collaborate with OLAC to make available by the end of year 1 a series of on-line webinars directly aligned with the core components of OIP to support district implementation of EBPs.	—————→				

Objective #6: Maximize the capacity for scaling and sustaining effective practice by using the established quadrant/regional infrastructure to foster communities of practice (CoP) around OIP implementation. Expanding the use of OIP as a vehicle for district-wide improvement, and as the state’s strategy for continuing to strengthen the SSoS is supported through the use of CoPs for targeted audiences, namely IHE personnel, district superintendents and district internal facilitators, SEA personnel responsible for various statewide initiatives, and regional ESC and SST providers. Protocols for use by regional providers in gauging district

implementation will be adapted from existing tools (e.g., OIPIR rubric, DLT-BLT-TBT protocols and implementation checklists) and a web-based data collection tool created to aid in transmission of data across regions. Such data will be used to identify issues on a quad, regional, and/or statewide basis, and to be considered during conversations around the scale and sustainability of EBPs supported through SPDG.

Responsible Persons	Objective #6 Activities/Milestones	Timeline by Yr				
		1	2	3	4	5
SPDG Core Planning Team	Establish schedules and structures by the end of year 1 to facilitate four CoPs (IHEs; superintendents and district internal facilitators; SEA personnel and professional/parent organization partners; and regional ESC and SST providers) to serve as forums for increasing shared learning and implementation of SPDG-supported work.	X				
SPDG Core Planning Team, RTTs, SPoCs, Other partners	Beginning in year 2, hold quarterly CoP sessions for each CoP per quadrant					→
SPDG Core Planning Team, QLs, external advisors	Develop and refine protocols for regional provider use in gauging district site implementation of SPDG-supported practices.					→
SPDG Core Planning Team, evaluators	Develop for use beginning in year two a web-based data collection tool that can be used by regional providers and districts to submit information on the degree of implementation of SPDG-supported practices by partner districts.					→

Objective #7: Evaluate the effectiveness of project activities in improving SEA capacity to achieve desired outcomes. The project evaluation design relies on an inquiry approach to evaluation and is structured to answer several key questions: (1) Did the cohort district complete the activities specified in the partnership (district site) agreement designed to improve instructional practices and student achievement? (2) To what degree were EBPs implemented that affected practice at the regional, district, school, and classroom level? (3) To what degree were district representatives (administrators, teachers, other staff), stakeholders, parents, and students involved, engaged, and benefitting from the activities? (4) What were the student behavioral and academic outcomes? (5) What were the changes in district policy, process, and practice that might help sustain effective district-wide practice? (6) To what degree has Ohio developed capacity to improve technical and training support to districts desiring to improve services to students with disabilities and other at risk students through the SPDG? An systems evaluation advisor, who serves as an evaluator under the current SPDG, will act in an advisory capacity around system change issues. Two evaluation consultants – one from the University of Cincinnati and another from Ohio University – will evaluate all aspects of the project. Regular evaluation reports will be provided to project staff, which will be used by the SPDG Core Planning Team to make mid-course corrections and any needed adjustments to the PD/TA/coaching provided, and to evaluate the overall impact of the *OH-SPDG Comprehensive Capacity Building* model in supporting the SEA to achieve desired outcomes.

Responsible Persons	Objective #7 Activities/Milestones	Timeline by Yr				
		1	2	3	4	5
Project staff, evaluators	Finalize the evaluation scope of work by the second quarter in year 1.	X				
Project staff, evaluators, QLS	Finalize evaluation protocols by the end of year 1, and continually refine them over the life of the grant.	X	—————→			

Evaluators	Evaluate, across each project year, the degree of implementation of all project activities and provide regular reports per the established schedule.	→
Evaluators	Evaluate for each cohort the degree of improvement of EBC implementation using the OIP.	→
Project staff; third-party evaluator	Conduct an external evaluation of the project's effectiveness in supporting the SEA to meet desired outcomes.	X

G. QUALITY OF THE PROJECT EVALUATION

The goals, objectives and expected outcomes of the project are presented in the *Quality of Project Design* section of this proposal. The methods of formative and summative evaluation are thorough, feasible and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project. Knowledge gained from the evaluation of the current project will drive the evaluation and inform all related activities of the proposed SPDG. The project's *logic model* illustrates the relationships among project activities, outputs, and shorter-, intermediate, and longer-term intended outcomes (see **Appendix A-18**).

Evaluation structure: The evaluation will provide thorough, appropriate formative and summative assessments of service quantity and quality (consistent with the performance measures required by the SPDG) and the impact of these services on the intended audiences for this professional development and, ultimately, meeting the needs of students with disabilities.

Formative evaluation: The formative evaluation process will seek ongoing performance and input data from a number of key partners including the SAPEC and OLAC, regional service providers and RTTs, Ohio's PTI, partner districts, PD Development Team members, SPoCs and SPeCs, and others (e.g., IHE representatives). The gathering and coordination of formative evaluation data will coincide with the quarterly SPDG Core Planning team meetings. The

formative evaluation process will target continuous improvement issues critical to the decision-making and include: (1) the number, nature, and quality of project activities actually implemented to date? (2) the current project activities need additional input, improvement, and or revision? (3) what approaches are working well that warrant sustaining and scaling-up; (4) problems anticipated in implementing the next phase of project work, and how they might be addressed. The formative evaluation process is designed to create an ongoing and timely feedback loop among various advisory groups and stakeholders of the SPDG with the SPDG Core Planning Team. Team members will be provided with formal and informal collected data on goals, objectives, and outcomes for discussion at periodic meetings for the purposes of developing recommendations for improvement that can be implemented in a timely fashion.

Summative evaluation: The summative evaluation process will establish the degree to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes have been achieved, including the quality of process and products, and continued significance of the Project's work after the award period. The summative evaluation will be conducted on an annual basis. Annual reports of the summative evaluation data will be formally provided at a specific annual strategic planning sessions of the SPDG Core Planning Team, and will focus on evaluation questions to determine the worth of the project, such as to what degree did participating school districts: (1) improve their performance designations in Ohio's Accountability System? (2) increase the percentage of students at/above the proficient level on the standardized OAA/OGT? (3) reduce the achievement gap on the OAA/OGT among students with and without disabilities? (4) reduce the achievement gap on the OAA/OGT among students with and without economic disadvantage? (5) increase the percentage of students at or above the benchmark on benchmark assessment administered by the district in the area of reading and mathematics; (6) reduce the rate of disciplinary actions per 100

students? (7) implement EBPs across the district; (8) incorporate results of teacher and principal evaluation data into district-wide professional development; and (9) make fundamental changes in policy and practice consistent with goals of SPDG (e.g., change school day to incorporate collaborative teacher team time)? The degree to which lessons learned through SPDG been incorporated into the SSTs' work with other (non-SPDG) districts will also be evaluated.

Evaluation management. The formative and summative evaluation process will be managed by the project evaluators to meet the needs of OEC and the Core Planning Team. Drs. and Julie Morrison (UC) and Aimee Howley (OU) will collaboratively design and implement the formative and summative evaluation processes, and will be assisted by Larry Magliocca who will serve in an advisory capacity to ensure that system aspects/connections are incorporated into all evaluation processes. The formative evaluation process will complement the summative evaluation process, particularly on the key foci: improvement of instruction and performance of students with disabilities and the enhancement of school district and school building leadership to focus the efforts. Specific attention will be given to continuous use of performance data to plan and manage the ongoing implementation of the SPDG project. The MYN District Self-Assessment will provide periodic updates of district implementation and scale of EPBs. The need for continuous, accurate data on project performance will be expedited through web-based interactions as the means to collect ongoing performance data.

Frameworks guiding project evaluation. Two frameworks provide the overall structure of the comprehensive evaluation of the proposed project. The evaluation will be based on Guskey's (2000) five critical levels for evaluating the professional development in education. The five critical levels are:

1. Participant's reaction

2. Participant's learning
3. Organization support and change
4. Participant's use of new knowledge and skills
5. Student learning outcomes

Guskey's (2000) five levels build on each other so that information gathered at an earlier level will be used formatively to guide decision making and on-going project improvement efforts. The five levels in Guskey's model will be applied at the district and school-building levels.

The *Implementation Drivers Framework* (Blase, Van Dyke, & Fixsen, 2010; Fixsen, Naoom, Blase, Friedman, & Wallace, 2005) is the second framework that guides the evaluation of the effectiveness of the project's implementation strategies. The implementation drivers include: (a) recruitment and selection, (b) preservice and inservice training, (c) supervision and coaching, (d) performance assessment/fidelity, (e) decision support data systems, (f) facilitative administrative supports, and (g) systems intervention at the organizational level. It is understood that the implementation drivers are integrated, compensatory, and key to the formative evaluation of the project.

The *Quality of the Evaluation* section is comprised of four sections: (a) methods for evaluating outcomes in relation to the goals and implementation objectives, (b) methods for evaluating the effectiveness of project implementation strategies, (c) methods for evaluating outcomes in relation to objective performance measures, and (d) evaluation methods designed to provide performance feedback and periodic assessment of progress.

Methods for Evaluating Outcomes in Relation to the Goals and Objectives. The purpose of the evaluation is to determine the degree to which the proposed project achieved its goals in providing systemic, statewide professional development support (i.e., comprehensive

professional development, technical assistance, and a coaching model) using the OIP through the established regional infrastructure and universally-accessible web-supported tools and products to foster district-wide use of EBPs in addressing the academic and behavioral needs of students with disabilities and students at risk of being inappropriately identified as disabled. The evaluation is designed to be formative and summative in nature. Formative evaluation aspects focus on targets for continuous improvement across the project years and are included by implementation objective in **Appendix A-19**. Summative evaluation aspects were designed to determine the merit and worth of project activities on system-wide outcomes at all levels (e.g., state, regional, district, school, teacher team), including district-level student learning and behavioral outcomes.

A multi-method, multi-informant approach is used in the evaluation plan to gather qualitative and quantitative data with regard to the overall project goals and seven implementation objectives (see **Appendix A-19**). For each implementation objective, the data collection method, measurement tool, measurement schedule, and target are provided. The relevant SPDG performance measurement(s) and GEPA indicator(s) are also presented for each project goal. Formative aspects of the project, while integrated in the overall Evaluation Plan, are also provided separately for each implementation objective. A *SPDG Procedural Checklist*, used to regularly gauge the degree to which the project is on track in implementing activities/tasks is also provided in **Appendix A-19**.

Methods for Evaluating the Effectiveness of Project Implementation Strategies. Multiple methods and sources of data will be collected to provide ongoing formative evaluation of the effectiveness of project implementation strategies at the district and school building level. The degree to which school districts participate in systemic, statewide PD support (i.e.,

comprehensive professional development, technical assistance, and a coaching model) through the established regional infrastructure and access web-supported tools and products to increase the use of evidence-based instructional practices will be measured directly and indirectly. Direct measures of fidelity of implementation will involve site visits (i.e., observation, interviews, permanent product review) at 20% of the participating school districts and their school buildings each year. The site visit protocol, *Implementation Drivers for the OIP Evaluation*, will be developed and validated in first year of the project. Indirect measures of fidelity of implementation will involve an annual on-line survey (Teacher-Based Team Principal Survey). Together, the direct and indirect measures of implementation fidelity will assess the system structures and processes of the OIP and examine the use of evidence-based instructional practices promoted by the SPDG project.

Methods for Evaluating Outcomes in Relation to Objective Performance Measures.

SPDG performance measurements 1, 2, and 3 are critical to the evaluation of outcomes in the proposed project. Performance measurement 1 – that projects use evidence-based professional development practices to support the attainment of identified competencies – is an objective performance measure is addressed for the appropriate goals. Likewise, performance measurement 2 – that participants in SPDG PD will demonstrate improvement in implementation of SPDG-supported practices over time – is an objective performance measure incorporated into the evaluation. Performance measurement 3 – that participants use SPDG professional development funds to provide follow-up activities designed to sustain the use of SPDG-supported practices – is an objective performance measure also used to evaluate specific goal areas. The data collection method, measurement tool, measurement schedule, and target are

provided for each of the implementation objectives and corresponding SPDG performance measurements in **Appendix A-19**.

Evaluation Methods Designed to Provide Performance Feedback and Periodic Assessment of Progress. Throughout the comprehensive evaluation of this professional development initiative, formative evaluation aspects were incorporated to guide decision-making on the part of the Project Management and Core Planning teams and inform continuous improvement across each of the project years. The majority of the implementation objectives involve periodic assessment of progress on a quarterly basis (e.g., 1.1, 2.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4), one objective requires assessment twice annually (3.1), and only two objectives are restricted to annual assessment.

Regular and ongoing assessment of progress provides the Project Director, Project Coordinator, the SPDG Core Planning Team, the PD Development Team and other key partners (e.g., OLAC and SAPEC members) the opportunity for frequent performance feedback on the degree to which the project is on target to meet its stated goals and implementation objectives, and contributes to strengthening Ohio's SSoS (see **Appendix A-17**).