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July 13, 2012

WI Department of Public Instruction
Attn: Andrew Fisher
Title I and School Support Team
PO Box 7841
Madison, WI 53707-7841

Dear Mr. Fisher:

EdisonLearning is pleased to submit this proposal to become a DPI-approved Lead Turnaround Partner (LTP). With nearly twenty years of experience working with educators and administrators across the nation to improve instruction and foster student success, we are well prepared to deliver the comprehensive, customized support needed to turn around Wisconsin's Title I Priority schools. We have already withstood rigorous government review to become a state-approved turnaround partner in California, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, South Carolina, Virginia, and Kentucky. Now we hope to work with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction to improve outcomes for students in Wisconsin's struggling schools.

EdisonLearning fosters lasting school improvement through its comprehensive, data-driven turnaround offerings, *EdisonLearning Alliance*™ and School Improvement Solutions (SIS). Both the *Alliance* and SIS models are holistic change management solutions that address the essential elements that drive school success, which we have identified and encapsulated in our unique Five Strand Design, described in detail in the proposal narrative.

Through *Alliance* and SIS, we build a school's capacity to embed and sustain change by the end of the contract. The *Alliance* model offers a more collaborative approach to school turnaround, in which EdisonLearning Advisors work side-by-side with school and district staff to improve education systems, while SIS offers a more intensive approach in which our team is engaged in the management of the school. With both models, however, the goal is not to develop dependency, but rather, to empower our partner schools to lead, manage, and sustain improvement on their own. We accomplish this goal by embedding a relentless cycle of assessment, action, and adjustment in the school culture. We are confident that through this successful model, we can deliver lasting student engagement and achievement.

Finally, EdisonLearning congratulates Wisconsin on its successful ESEA waiver application and hopes to support the State in the implementation of its bold new accountability system. Our solutions are well aligned with the interventions and principles identified the Wisconsin's alternative accountability plan.

Respectfully,

James Buchan, Regional Vice President, Business Development

5. Application Narrative

1. ONSITE DIAGNOSTIC REVIEW: THE COLLABORATIVE QUALITY ANALYSIS

The EdisonLearning Collaborative Quality Analysis ("CQA") is a holistic school needs assessment designed to identify strengths and weaknesses in the school's core instructional program and inform the development of a customized implementation plan aligned to the key priorities in the School Improvement Plan. The principal and his or her administrators are trained in the classroom observation tool and conduct the observations with the CQA team. The entire team then comes to consensus on ratings after discussion and review of evidence for 50 indicators. The results of the CQA will inform the school reform plan which will be developed in conjunction with the school and district leadership. The output of the CQA process is a report that details the findings of the diagnostic review and sets forth recommendations that, if followed, will enable the school to make achievement gains.

a. Onsite Diagnostic Review (CQA) Process

(1) During the 'Information Gathering and Planning' phase, the EdisonLearning Lead Advisor helps school leaders prepare for the onsite diagnostic review. The Lead Advisor will also ensure that a point of contact is identified at each school to help coordinate the visit schedule and collect the school documentation, lesson plans, and work samples that will be reviewed throughout the visit. Sample schedules and planning templates will be provided to each school. The initial planning webinar will be scheduled at least three weeks before the site visit.

(2) The CQA Process Workshop brings together school leaders for a full day to meet EdisonLearning's Advisor Team and learn more about the research behind the CQA process. The purpose of the workshop is to ensure fidelity to the CQA model. At the workshop, school leadership will receive training on the tools and protocols needed to complete the audit activities and will also complete the first part of the school document analysis.

(3) Advisors then conduct two site visits, during which they work closely with school leadership to conduct the actual audit activities and document evidence in the School Development Rubric. They

conduct focus group sessions with students, parents, and teachers, scheduling them around instructional time to avoid interrupting the learning process.

(4) After the site visits, the Advisor Team members reconvene with school and district leaders to further analyze the data collected in order to identify key themes, (revised) short- and long-term goals, and potential "quick wins." During this intensive data review, school leaders are expected to ask clarifying questions, confirm rubric statements and/or offer additional information to ensure that summary statements in the final report are valid. Advisors also begin working with school leadership to develop the Implementation Plan that will be customized based on the school's needs and strengths.

(5) The final step of the CQA process is the completion and delivery of the CQA Report, which contains the Summary of Findings and the Evidence Portfolio, to the principal, who must then confirm the accuracy of the Report or make any factual corrections.

CQA Measures: Criteria for Assessing School Strengths and Weaknesses

In order to provide a rich and accurate picture of the school, our Advisor Teams help school leadership collect evidence for each key question highlighted above through three dimensions of exploration: (1) the developmental stages of the school's culture, systems, and processes; (2) the views of the key stakeholders: students, parents, and teachers; and (3) the impact that each strength or weakness has on students in terms of: academic progress, the quality of teaching and learning, and engagement. These dimensions of exploration allow us to address critical elements of a school's design.

i. Fidelity of implementation and efficacy of the curriculum: Advisor Teams evaluate fidelity of implementation and efficacy of a curriculum primarily through Lesson Plan Reviews, classroom observation, and achievement data. Together, Advisors and selected teachers and administrators review an agreed upon percentage of all teachers' current lesson plans using the CQA Lesson Plan Review Form (Attachment 2) to record key areas of strength that are consistent across all plans, strengths that are present but inconsistent, and clear areas for development. Other documentation reviewed includes the School Improvement Plan, Professional Development Plan, and Master Schedule. Advisors will observe

a representative sample of teachers' classroom lessons using protocols from our Quality Framework for Learning and Teaching, a set of coherent research based materials designed to improve classroom practice by focusing on skills that all teachers must develop. After all observations have been completed, the Advisors will collaborate to determine trends in areas of strength and areas in need of improvement.

ii. Universal screening: The hallmark of our school turnaround solutions has always been data-driven decision-making. For this reason, we place a heavy emphasis on universal screening of students to ensure that all students' achievement levels, risk factors, and learning needs are accurately and quickly identified. The Advisor Team will work with school and district staff to identify existing screening systems and processes and analyze their efficacy.

iii. Processes to identify students in need of interventions: As part of the CQA process, the Advisor Team will determine what strategies are in place for early identification of students at risk of underachievement to inform the design and implement of a support system that meets the educational needs of all learners. This includes analysis of documentation such as the School Improvement Plan, instructional guides and policies, Professional Development Plan, and Master Schedule, as well as the gathering of stakeholder input.

iv. Selected interventions: The Advisor Team works with selected teachers and leaders to review the interventions currently in place and determine their efficacy. Through a combination of classroom observation and review of available documentation such as student learning plans, records, and assessment data, they assess the capacity of educators to identify student needs and assign appropriate interventions in a timely manner. They measure interventions against research-based best practices and take into account diverse student learning styles.

v. Progress monitoring tools and strategies: Consistent with our commitment to data-driven decision-making, the Advisor Team evaluates the effectiveness of a school's existing progress monitoring tools and strategies and the capacity of teachers and administrators to use data to identify student needs and learning styles, tailor instruction, and assign interventions. Specifically, Advisors seek to answer the

following questions: (1) Does the school have a coherent progress monitoring system that teachers and administrators use effectively? (2) Is the system aligned with state standards? (3) Does the system generate frequent, meaningful reports? (4) How predictive of success on state tests is the system? (5) How skilled are teachers and administrators at using data to inform instruction? In addition to examining assessment policies, systems, and reports, Advisors review a representative sample of student work to develop a clear picture of student progress over time and the effectiveness of instructional practice in improving student outcomes.

vi. Staff capacity to implement a system of early intervention services: Our Advisor Teams assess the capacity of teachers and administrators to identify at-risk students and intervene early to ensure that struggling learners have the support they need to master curriculum content. Through both analysis of documentation and observation of teacher collaboration, they will determine how effectively teachers and administrators plan for assessment and intervention.

vii. Process for ongoing collection of parental opinion on school practices and performance: The CQA includes an analysis of the process and capacity for ongoing collection of stakeholder views of school practices and performance. The Advisor Team reviews critical documentation, including policies, procedures, the School Improvement Plan, and the Professional Development Plan to determine what strategies the school is using to give parents a voice in their children's education. Advisors then assess the effectiveness of existing parental engagement and feedback mechanisms. Through focus groups and perception surveys, the Advisor Team gathers data from key school stakeholders in order to better understand perceptions of the school.

b. CQA Report and Recommendations

The final product of the CQA process is the CQA Report, a comprehensive document that contains all of the information and analysis from the CQA process. The CQA report has three components: the Summary of Findings, Recommendations, and the Evidence Portfolio.

Summary of Findings: The Summary of Findings summarizes the process that was followed in the school for conducting the CQA, and lays out the formal findings of that process.

Recommendations: The recommendations outline the steps that the school must take to meet its short- and long-term goals. These recommendations will inform the Implementation Plan and include potential "quick wins"—measurable improvements that can be accomplished early on to build buy-in and momentum—as well as more long-term strategies for sustained progress. See Attachment 3 for an example of our recommendations to a partner school based on our CQA.

School Evidence Portfolio: The Evidence Portfolio is a compilation of data and completed observation templates from the site visits.

2. SCHOOL REFORM EXPERIENCE AND FRAMEWORK

EdisonLearning has nearly twenty years of success in partnering with school districts, government organizations, and charter boards to increase student achievement. Our experience managing and supporting schools covers all grade levels and geographic settings, including urban schools in Chicago, Charleston, Detroit, Gary, Philadelphia, Las Vegas, Richmond, and Northampton (UK), rural schools in Colorado and South Carolina, and a mix of urban and rural schools in Hawaii. The current demographic profile of our students is: 80% eligible for subsidized meals, 64% African-American, 13% Hispanic, and 8% Asian/Pacific Islander. We are a state-approved turnaround partner in California, Colorado, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Virginia, Michigan, South Carolina, Kentucky, and Missouri.

a. Prior Experience and Success

EdisonLearning's school turnaround solutions are performance based and measurable. They have led to significant achievement gains in underperforming schools, including one-, two-, and three-year gains in schools in the most underserved communities. We take great pride in our quick gains and sustained improvement results. Our partner schools have also shown greater percentage gains in test scores than their counterparts in the same district and across the state. The following representative partnerships demonstrate our ability to foster sustainable improvement despite diverse challenges.

Pioneering Whole-school Reform in Indiana: *School Improvement Solutions*

In Perry Township, Indiana, we have managed two charter schools for nearly a decade, and our successful practices have been disseminated to other schools in the district. Achievement gains on the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress tests in these schools have exceeded gains in schools in the district and the state by more than double over the length of the partnership. The result has been a migration of some of the successful practices employed at the two schools.

Large-scale Turnaround Implementation in Hawaii: *Alliance*™

Seven of Hawaii's lowest-performing schools engaged EdisonLearning to be their partner in a multi-year reform effort starting in fall of 2005. At the end of the first year of this *Alliance* partnership, four of the partnership schools made AYP. These were the only four schools out of the 20 schools that partnered with turnaround providers to make AYP. Since the Hawaii *Alliance* partnership began, EdisonLearning has helped schools make AYP 48 times. Year 1 schools, for example, show 21.5-point gains in Math, while Year 6 schools show Math gains of 45.7 points. Because of the continued success, we have been asked to support additional schools each year and now serve 56 schools across five islands.

Rapid Gains in South Carolina

In South Carolina, EdisonLearning had an *Alliance* partnership with four schools that needed turnaround support as determined by the state department of education. Bennettsville Middle School made historic gains in math on the 2011 Palmetto Assessment of State Standards, posting its largest math gains since the inception of NCLB. For the first time, the school met every AYP math objective in every category: all students, African American students, disabled students, and students receiving free or reduced-price lunch. In 2010, Scott's Branch Middle School made AYP and was taken off the NCLB corrective action list. The school continued to make gains in 2011 in both English/Language Arts and Math. All four *Alliance* schools outperformed the comparable turnaround schools by meeting a greater percentage of AYP objectives—81% of AYP objectives were met by *Alliance* schools vs. 63.5% of objectives met by the other turnaround schools.

b. School Reform Framework and Model

EdisonLearning school improvement partnerships are guided by our holistic school improvement framework, the Five Strand Design. This design ensures fidelity to meaningful data and best practices and allows substantial flexibility to ensure responsiveness to each school's particular circumstances. Based on our experience, the Five Strands not only reflect our judgment regarding the critical elements of a successful educational program; they are also supported by the consensus of widely recognized experts. The Five Strand Design provides a coherent means of conceptualizing and addressing the factors that determine school success. The Five Strands are Leadership, Learning Environment, Assessment for Learning, Pedagogy & Curriculum, and Student & Family Support. Because the premise of our model is engagement and capacity building for sustained success, our Advisor Teams provide on-the-ground professional development in every strand. Although we have worked successfully with individual schools in the past, we share Mass Insight's view regarding the proven benefits of the cluster model.[1] Thus, we prefer to partner schools in clusters to establish professional learning communities. As a practical matter, however, none of our partner schools ever operates in isolation, as we draw on the knowledge of an international network of highly skilled employees.

Governance: Consistent with our Leadership strand, at the core of our governance model is a distributed model of instructional leadership in which the principal is supported by a highly effective leadership team. In addition to distributed leadership, our Advisor Teams provide support for: (1) establishing shared vision and values; (2) building effective change management skills and processes; (3) creating a high-reliability organization with consistent, high-quality systems focused on learning, progress, and achievement; (4) continuously focusing on team building and developing strategic time management skills; (5) developing robust planning and a self evaluation system; (6) developing and supporting communication systems to ensure the timely flow of information and clarity of priorities; and

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[1] See also Calkins, A., Guenther, W., Belfiore, B., and Lash, D. (2007) *The Turnaround Challenge: Why American's best opportunity to dramatically improve student achievement lies in our worst-performing schools.*

(7) sharing and implementing best practices for school organization and scheduling that foster collaboration among teachers and ensure that students receive needed support.

Instructional Design: Research consistently demonstrates that the most important factor that impacts student achievement is the quality of classroom instruction. EdisonLearning applies proven practices in planning, delivering, and monitoring high-quality, rigorous instruction that improve core instruction and increase teacher capacity to promote student success through: (1) models for curriculum organization, planning, and evaluation; (2) supplemental resources to develop lifelong learning and thinking skills across subjects; (3) targeted, ongoing professional development; (4) resources and strategies for cross-content literacy; (5) a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by discussions at the team and school levels; and (6) resources for unpacking accountability standards (*i.e.*, Companion Guides, described below).

Staffing: Our geographic reach and extensive school reform heritage afford us an unparalleled ability to identify and recruit highly-talented educators who will have the ability to drive achievement gains in the schools they serve. In addition, once hired, our staff of school improvement specialists go through a rigorous training program based on our Five Strand design that includes training in effective change management. Our staffing practices are discussed in greater detail in Section 6.

Professional Development: EdisonLearning Advisor Teams support individual school needs with intensive professional development that incorporates the Five Strand Design. While we hold teachers and leaders to high standards, we work side-by-side with them to ensure that they learn the skills and strategies they need to surpass those standards. Our professional development services, described in greater detail in Section 6.b., are designed to empower teachers and leaders to manage change. At their core are (1) the concept of partnership and full engagement, (2) fidelity to standards and data, (3) job-embedded support, and (4) collaboration through professional learning communities.

Student Supports: Our Advisor Teams address student support systems through the Assessment for Learning and the Student & Family Supports strands. The Assessment for Learning strand is focused

on fostering effective use of data in schools to better inform classroom instruction, intervention, and decision-making. We use data-driven decision making structures to inform teaching and learning, set goals for individual and school achievement, and promote students' ownership of their learning through: (1) ongoing opportunities for self and peer assessment; (2) routine collection and analysis of formal and informal student assessments and other data; (3) monthly administration and analysis of formative assessments (*EdisonLearning eValuate*™); (4) individual and collaborative data analysis protocols, including routine goal setting and data-driven action planning and instruction; (5) expectations and best practices for timely, meaningful feedback; (6) collaborative planning among teachers to maximize student progress; and (7) school-level data dashboards that ensure optimal data flow and focused planning.

The Student & Family Support strand focuses on engaging students and their families in the learning process and ensuring individualized support and communication protocols among the school, students, and their families to guide all students to reach their learning goals and post-secondary aspirations by: (1) developing the school system and organization of support for meeting all student needs; (2) monitoring of student progress and flexible targeting of support for at-risk students; (3) teaching staff how to partner with families and foster community engagement; (4) regular student-led review of learning needs and goals with teachers and parents or guardians; and (5) integrating support systems to provide a comprehensive approach for students and families.

c. Evolution of Activities

The objective of every EdisonLearning school turnaround partnership is to empower school teachers and administrators to lead, manage, and sustain improvement. Thus, as teachers and leaders progress along the continuum of proficiency in each of the Five Strands, school needs change. Embedded in our *Alliance* and School Improvement Solutions (SIS) models is a cycle of assessment, action, and adjustment that ensures that teacher and student needs are identified and addressed as quickly as possible. As such, the intensity of support delivered through the *Alliance* and SIS models decreases as teachers and

leaders improve their practice and students realize achievement gains. Although each school is different, the evolution of activities in the typical Priority school is typically:

Year 1: Startup - Implementation of the CQA diagnostic process. Collaboration with the school based leadership to jointly develop an Implementation Plan based on analysis of the CQA findings.

Year 2: Foundation - Clarify goals and objectives and background knowledge at the school. Educate on theory and strategies around change management. Introduce core change management structures (distributed leadership, core values, shared vision, *eValuate*, PD calendar).

Year 3: Transformation - Identify foundation year successes and areas for improvement. Move from theory to practice. Provide ample opportunities for modeling and demonstration with frequent occasions for staff to practice in context.

Year 4: Revision for Excellence and Transition to Independence - Celebrate successes of change processes. Plan for long-term commitment to anchor successful initiatives. Identify additional areas for continuous growth.

d. School Reform Theory of Action

Simply stated our theory of action is that *sustainable change occurs only when individuals are engaged in their own transformation rather than simply having change thrust upon them.* Accordingly, the keystone of our approach is the combination of intensive, on-the-ground support and high-quality, job-embedded professional development to build the capacity to effect and manage positive change. The following principles are the foundation of our turnaround models: (1) the application of research to inform educational strategy, operational design, and change management; (2) the facilitation of scalability through the application of consistent and replicable models and processes; and (3) the use of collaborative working practices based on shared goals and supported by high-caliber professionals.

e. Experience Implementing the Required Turnaround Strategies

Since the first EdisonLearning schools opened in 1995, our experts have applied best practices in improving instruction and increasing achievement. We developed the Edison Design, a precursor to our

Five Strand Design, based on our study of the characteristics of high-performing schools—including schools with large percentages of minority and disadvantaged students. We have more than seven years of experience implementing the turnaround strategies identified in Wisconsin's RFP and ESEA waiver.

Response to Intervention (RtI): We have helped schools implement RtI successfully in both our *Alliance* and SIS models. In Hawaii, where we have worked for seven years, some of our partner schools have become so successful in their implementation of RtI and other turnaround strategies that we have reduced the intensity of our support for those schools. More recently, in one of our Duluth Edison Charter Schools, which opened in 1997, we piloted an RtI framework focused heavily on reading in grades K through 5. In less than one year, 92% of the school's Title 1 students showed improvement on their state assessment from fall to spring.

Extended learning time: EdisonLearning has over a decade of experience helping districts and schools restructure the school day to allow more learning time for both students and teachers. Our Advisor Teams do not just extend the school day; they work with teachers and leaders to ensure that regular in-school time and extra learning time are used efficiently and translate into improved student outcomes. For an example of a successful extended learning initiative, see Attachment 4.

Highly skilled educators and leaders and positive and safe learning environments: The development of highly skilled educators and leaders is at the heart of all of our solutions. From our beginning in 1992 as a research organization called the Edison Project, our primary objective has been to build the capacity of teachers and leaders to identify and implement educational best practices, always guided by meaningful data. We have been delivering high-quality professional development since 1995. Our Advisor Teams have worked with large and small districts and schools—located in major cities, rural areas, and everywhere in between. Although our technologies have changed, our focus on preparing educators to meet the needs of all students has never wavered.

A critical part of our professional development addresses the learning environment. Scott's Branch Middle School in South Carolina, exemplifies the skill and commitment of our Advisors in empowering

educators to take control of the school climate. When Advisors arrived, they found a low-performing school in which nearly all of the students were African-Americans eligible for subsidized meals, with 65 percent of the children being raised by single parents or non-parent caregivers. Advisors worked closely with the principal to identify the root causes and prioritized seven areas for change: (1) Instructional leadership and capacity building, (2) School culture, (3) Instructors' policies, procedures and practices, (4) Systematic instructional interventions, (5) Curriculum articulation and calibration, (6) Assessment, and (7) Data ownership and use by all teachers and principals, down to the classroom level. The Advisors then worked with the principal to shift the teachers' focus from adult issues to student achievement. As teachers began to focus more on student outcomes, those outcomes improved dramatically, as described in Section 2.a.

Family engagement: EdisonLearning believes that families should be active partners in their children's education. Advisor Teams address family engagement through the Student and Family Support strand, which includes professional development for teachers and leaders on creating meaningful opportunities for family engagement, as well as training for parents and families to empower them to be involved in the reform process—both in and out of school. Section 8 below details our family engagement strategies.

3. APPROACH TO WORKING WITH SCHOOL DISTRICT AND STAFF

Our approach to school turnaround is founded on the concept of partnership. The best results are achieved when the school and district are invested in the outcome, part of the solution, and partners in the successes. As such, all parties must work closely prior to the start of the turnaround implementation to articulate and agree to each party's areas of accountability. In our experience, schools can and will support tough measures if they are worked out in partnership. Because of our commitment to capacity building, collaboration and clear accountability are at the heart of everything we do.

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a. Negotiating with district offices to ensure needed autonomy

Mass Insight counsels that turnaround clusters "must have the autonomy to overcome traditional district structures . . . ."[2] Thus, EdisonLearning has developed protocols for negotiating with the district for autonomy over governance, budgeting, instructional design, staffing, professional development, and student supports. Our vision of autonomy, however, includes consultation with the district and school regarding major decisions and continuous communication of activities and progress. We approach negotiation with the end result—increased student achievement—in mind and the belief that the district and school are indispensable partners, rather than adversaries. The best example of our ability to negotiate is our relationship with Hawaii's statewide, state-run district, where we have bargained for the autonomy to employ innovative turnaround strategies in 56 schools.

b. Working with district leadership and central office staff to improve policies and practices

EdisonLearning works closely with district leadership and central office staff to establish a culture and structure that are conducive to sustained improvement. We build leadership capacity through workshops, national conferences, and onsite coaching and support. Our Advisor Teams work tirelessly to guide district leaders and staff to develop and communicate a clear vision and ambitious but realistic expectations, define accountabilities, adopt policies that prioritize achievement and facilitate innovation, and afford schools the appropriate degree of autonomy throughout the turnaround process.

c. Building capacity in the school and ultimately turning power and responsibility back over

The *Alliance* and SIS models engage teachers and leaders in the change management process from the beginning of the partnership and support them continuously to ensure that they learn how to implement coherent turnaround strategies. Even in the SIS context, we work with school and district staff to build their capacity to sustain improvement once the partnership ends. Please see Section 6.b. of this narrative for a detailed description of the support that we provide.

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[2] Partnership Zones: Using school turnaround as the entry point for real reform–and reinventing the district model in the process. Mass Insight 2009

Prior Success Working with School Districts and Staff: Evidence of our success working with

school districts and staff can be found in Sections 2.a. and 2.e of this narrative.

4. APPROACH TO REQUIRED RESPONSIBILITIES

As indicated above, we begin each partnership with the CQA, which allows us to develop a

meaningful improvement plan. Throughout the CQA process, we build close relationships with school

and district staff. Our experience, geographic reach, and network of highly effective Advisors who have

served as educators or administrators in the past give us an unparalleled ability to identify and recruit top

talent, begin implementation immediately, and achieve early, visible, and meaningful improvement.

a. Specific Activities and Timeline

i. Recruit and hire/rehire staff - February through March - 4 to 5 EdisonLearning Advisor Team

members (depending on the size of the school) in conjunction with principal and administrators: The

Advisor Team will work with the principal and his or her administrators to ensure completion of the

following tasks in a timely manner: (1) communication regarding the staffing process through meetings

with school staff; (2) creation of applicant tracking system; (3) placement of recruitment ads, participation

in job fairs, and leveraging of partnerships including Teach for America and New Leaders for New

Schools; (4) assessment of internal candidates, including administration of the Haberman Star Teacher

Pre-Screener[3]; (5) interviews of internal and external candidates; (6) reference and background checks;

and (7) communication of hiring decisions and initiation of on-boarding procedures and initial training.

ii. Establish a consistent, intense relationship with each school and key district offices - February

through March - CQA Team, Senior Director of Achievement (SDA), and SVP for Operations:

EdisonLearning's SDA and the SVP for Operations will have the primary responsibilities of relationship

building with each school as well as the district leaders. The CQA fosters close relationships through: (1)

training of principal and administrators in the classroom observation tool; (2) creation of a calendar of bi-

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[3] The Haberman screener aims to identify candidates with the skills and attributes to be successful
working with minority and diverse student populations (see National Center for Alternative Teacher
Certification Information at www.habermanfoundation.org).

weekly meetings from January through May to ensure involvement of all stakeholders and transparency of decision-making; (3) participation of principal and administrators in observations with the EdisonLearning CQA team; (4) participation of principal and administrators in review and meaningful dialogue regarding evidence gathered; (5) reach consensus on ratings; and (6) development of school reform plan in conjunction with school leadership.

iii. Launch community engagement efforts - February through March - 4 to 5 EdisonLearning Advisor Team members (depending on the size of the school) in conjunction with principal and administrators: EdisonLearning begins its community engagement efforts early on to ensure stakeholder buy-in and ensure transparency in the turnaround process. These efforts include: development of community engagement plan and calendar; communication of community engagement plan to all stakeholders; and initiation of focus groups and administration of surveys.

iv. Work with facilities department to ensure physical improvements - March through May - 4 to 5 EdisonLearning Advisor Team members (depending on the size of the school) in conjunction with principal and administrators: EdisonLearning will work with the facilities department to ensure that the physical environment is optimized for learning. Our activities in this area include inspection of each school building to identify conditions that are unsafe or otherwise non-conducive to the teaching and learning processes; submission of written recommendations to district leaders; and holding school and/or district staff accountable for securing necessary repairs and enhancements.

v. Focus on culture and stabilization in building - January through May - 4 to 5 EdisonLearning Advisor Team members (depending on the size of the school) in conjunction with principal and administrators: Based on the outcomes on the following indicators in the Learning Environment Strand, improvement plans will be developed with the school leadership team to identify areas for immediate focus to ensure early success. Once the plans are developed, reports will be generated each month detailing progress toward improvement targets including (1) a set of clearly articulated shared values that enable the school to function well for everyone; (2) a school-wide community code that underpins

positive language, attitudes, and behavior; (3) a culture of high expectations evident throughout the school that includes college readiness and career preparedness; (4) learning spaces conducive to a variety of learning needs and pedagogical approaches; (5) a print environment demonstrative of learning, progress and achievement and includes meaningful resources to support learning and positive behavior; (6) value placed on learner voice evident through a range of intentional practices that provide opportunities for students to demonstrate high levels of engagement and to take ownership of their learning; (7) regular meetings between students and a key mentor to review their learning and ensure achievement of personal goals; and (8) a defined menu of experiential learning opportunities for all students that are designed to broaden learners' horizons and aspirations, provide enrichment, extend curriculum beyond the classroom, and enrich students' understanding of themselves, their local community, and the world.

vi. Monitor non-academic (leading) indicators - January through May - 4 to 5 EdisonLearning Advisor Team members (depending on the size of the school) in conjunction with principal and administrators: From January to May, the Advisor Team, working in conjunction with each school's leadership team, will review the data on the following performance indicators against monthly targets and provide guidance on actions if monthly targets are not being met: (1) attendance/truancy rate; (2) number of disciplinary incidents including suspensions and expulsions; (3) student mobility; (4) number enrolled in AP/IB courses and percent taking AP/IB tests; (5) staff and faculty attendance rate; and (6) informal and formal evaluations and immediate feedback.

vii. Enhance rigorous and aligned curriculum - January through May - 4 to 5 EdisonLearning Advisor Team members (depending on the size of the school) in conjunction with principal and administrators: During this timeframe, teachers will drive student motivation by developing students' learning and life skills, including the social and emotional aspects of learning. They will implement our proprietary Core Learning Skills Curriculum, comprised of the following units: thinking skills, communications, speaking and listening, personal and social competencies, learning with others, developing independence and responsibility, improving individual learning and performance, and

developing a sense of self worth and understanding of self and others, creative thinking and problem solving, and researching, reasoning and inquiry. Advisor Teams will provide onsite professional development and support for teachers.

viii. Other appropriate, visible, and meaningful improvement measures that are supported by research of successful school turnaround: EdisonLearning's technology team will set up the *eValuate*™ formative assessment system for the school and integrate it with the school's student information system. *eValuate* provides online monthly assessments in reading and math that are designed to provide a reliable picture of student progress against the state's end-of-year standards. The versatile reporting features allow teachers and leaders to determine absolute performance and track performance over time for individual students, classes, grades, and the entire school. Professional development and support for *eValuate* implementation, assessment data analysis, using assessment data to inform ensuing instruction, and planning/implementing targeted interventions will be delivered throughout the turnaround process by the Advisor Team.

b. Examples of Prior Success

The best example of our success in implementing a comprehensive turnaround initiative is our work in Hawaii, where are Advisor Teams work onsite on an almost-daily basis to diagnose the causes of low performance and provide professional development, tools, and strategies to our partner schools. As the number of partner schools grows, those who have worked with us the longest show increasing achievement gains and grow more and more capable of managing change on their own.

5. INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES *(RTI, CCSS, AND EXTENDED LEARNING TIME)*

a. Curriculum and Assessment Program

EdisonLearning does not impose its own curriculum on its partner schools; rather, our Advisor Teams carefully review the existing curriculum to determine whether it meets the needs of all learners relative to applicable standards. After thorough analysis, we work side-by-side with educators to refine the curriculum and modify instructional practice to increase student achievement rapidly.

i. Clear expectations for student learning: Advisor Teams work with district and school staff to establish a culture of high expectations for student learning. These expectations are developed based on state standards; evidence gathered during the CQA process and through ongoing assessment; and feedback from administrators, teachers, students, and families while remaining faithful to state standards. Taking into account such a range of information ensures that expectations are ambitious but realistic.

ii. Alignment with common core standards: Given the transition to the CCSS over the next two to three years[4] and the reality of the current environment in which both CCSS and Model Academic Standards are relevant, our Advisor Teams will provide the necessary support and resources to teachers based on the specific standards that they are teaching in the classroom, while ensuring that *all teachers* develop the necessary skills to use and teach the CCSS. The Advisor Team will work with administrators and teachers to unwrap the Common Core standards, ensure alignment of curriculum and instruction to those standards, and build capacity for effective assessment of the CCSS.

EdisonLearning provides partner schools with resources aligned to the CCSS and the Model Academic Standards and walks teachers through the process of aligning instruction to the standards. Our proprietary curriculum Companion Guides, for example, link school curricula in English and Math with the CCSS and Model Academic Standards. Companion Guides embed curriculum resources and assessment evidence to assist a school staff in analyzing the essential knowledge and skills by grade and content area. They facilitate collaboration, promotion, and articulation of the curriculum across schools and grade levels at the school leadership and classroom teacher levels.

iii. Implementation of the RtI System: Students who are at risk for academic, emotional, social, or behavioral problems are offered intensive and personalized support. The RtI model creates solutions for students through school-based interventions, parent/ guardian involvement, and services available in the community.

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[4] We understand that Wisconsin is also committed to developing new common standards for science and social studies. While we will focus on improving core instruction in reading and mathematics, our Advisor Teams will also address these new standards if and when they are adopted.

Academic interventions are provided in a standards-based learning environment to maximize learning for all students. Tier I support consists of universal interventions such as high-quality instruction in a research-based core curriculum. Tier I support is provided in a standards-based classroom and consists of flexible grouping for differentiation and frequent progress monitoring (*e.g.*, benchmark assessments). Interventions provided for students in Tier II include supplemental instruction and targeted group interventions designed to meet academic and behavioral needs. Tier II supports are based on the needs of students and include a formal process for intervention and more frequent progress monitoring. Individualized interventions delivered by specialized teachers and staff is available for students who don't respond adequately to Tier I and Tier II supports and/or for students who demonstrate significant discrepancies from the typical student in their classroom on performance standards. This type of Tier III, support is driven by a multidisciplinary team and includes individualized assessments and interventions.

The Student and Family Support System (SAFS) is a structure within the Five Strand Design that facilitates the delivery of tiered interventions in school settings. As part of the SAFS model, grade-level teams analyze screening and progress monitoring data and design core and supplemental interventions. Furthermore, student learning conferences occur around the same time so that current data can be shared with parents and used for setting learning goals. The school-based SAFS Team is available to assist students who are not responding favorably to the supports put in place by the grade-level teams.

iv. Design of curriculum across grade spans: In many cases, students underperform in school because they either are not taught what they need to be taught to succeed or have not been taught content to the appropriate level of proficiency. In working with school staff to align the curriculum to state standards, Advisor Teams engage teachers and leaders in the process of ensuring consistency and logical progression across grade levels. Through *eValuate*, teachers can quickly determine when students are ready to progress and if not, why.

v. Ensuring equity and access for all students: Advisor Teams provide professional development and support for teachers and administrators in: (1) identifying students with special needs, including those

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with disabilities, limited English proficiency, and behavioral or emotional issues; (2) developing individual learning plans for at-risk students; (3) tailoring instruction to meet the needs of all students; (4) empowering students to take ownership of their learning; (5) determining and addressing the causes of risk behaviors such as truancy; and (6) identifying services for students coping with poverty, family issues, or pregnancy.

b. Strategies to Implement Flexible Scheduling and Extended Learning Time

An indispensable feature of the *Alliance* and SIS models is the use of flexible scheduling practices to ensure increased learning time for both students and teachers. Our Advisor Teams work with district and school staff to structure an extended school day, ideally set at eight hours. In Wisconsin, this translates into an additional 303 hours for grades 7 through 12 and an additional 390 hours for grades 1 through 6, resulting in a total of 1,440 hours per school year. In addition to providing more time for academic instruction and intervention, this structure gives teachers two instruction-free periods a day, one to meet as a professional learning community called an Achievement Team, and one for individual planning time. Teachers use their Achievement Team time to review student performance data to inform subsequent instruction and plan student interventions, as well as to support each other's professional development and collaborate on behalf of students.

c. Integration of Services Across Grade Levels and Support for Postsecondary Opportunity

Advisor Teams work to ensure consistency of services and instructional practice across grade levels by facilitating collaboration among teachers of different grade levels, raising awareness of issues that students face when transitioning between grades, and providing professional development on how to recognize and support struggling students early and intervene meaningfully, as well as on implementing college- and career-ready standards. Our *College NEXT!* program is designed to prepare students for the transition to postsecondary education, including the admissions process.

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6. STAFFING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

a. Design and implementation of a rigorous, transparent, and equitable performance evaluation system for teachers and principals

Please see Section 6.e. for our plans to establish a rigorous, transparent, and equitable performance evaluation system for teachers and principals.

b. Assessment of training and professional development needs of a school's staff and delivery of targeted professional development.

The CQA serves as the initial assessment of staff training and professional development needs.. Thorough analysis of this evidence informs the development of a coherent professional development plan that targets identified areas of weakness and builds on identified strengths. As a component of the Implementation Plan, the professional development outcomes are regularly reviewed and adjusted based on completion of quarterly milestones. Our professional development program may include the following elements:

National Leadership Conferences: EdisonLearning fosters professional development and collaboration among school leaders at its semi-annual national conferences, the EdisonLearning Leadership Development Academies (ELDA). Each ELDA has a theme that is aligned with our Five Strand Design, and our most talented experts lead workshops and highly interactive discussions designed to engage participants in knowledge sharing, problem solving, and other modes of professional learning. The in-depth training prepares leaders for managing all aspects of the learning environment (including school culture, student behavior, teacher collaboration), analyzing and using data to inform decision-making, adopting or tailoring a standards-based curriculum, managing school resources, and instructional leadership to meet the needs of all learners.

Regional Leadership Conferences: EdisonLearning holds two regional conferences and two principal workshops each year, giving leaders an opportunity to learn not only from our experts, but also from each other.

Onsite Training and Support: Our Advisor Teams provide customized, onsite, needs-based training that for teachers. This intensive support includes coaching, consultation, observation, collaboration and modeling of lessons around such topics as differentiating instruction to address varying student skill levels, classroom management, unwrapping standards in order to align and embed instruction, and using curriculum management tools such as the Curriculum Companion Guides. Our Advisor Teams collaborate with district and school administration to analyze skills and knowledge by content area and grade-level, and they work tirelessly to support each school in its turnaround. Onsite support typically includes: (1) weekly and monthly training and support through curriculum and leadership team meetings; (2) support for school administrators on conducting meaningful walk-throughs and classroom observations; (3) training on the use of student assessments, such as the *eValuate*™ Assessment System or other similar tools being used by schools, and the data provided by such assessments to improve the quality of instruction within the classroom; (4) coaching and mentoring for all teachers and additional individual support to selected teachers; (5) training and support for Special Education and English Language Learner teachers; (6) content area training and support for Reading and Math teachers; and (7) curriculum alignment support.

Research-based Tools and Strategies: We provide our partner schools with a wealth of research-based tools and strategies to support their development. Advisor Teams help teachers and leaders use our library of rubrics, Curriculum Companion Guides, and professional development modules effectively. All of our professional development is aligned with our Five Strand Design and focuses on equipping leaders and teachers with the skills and tools they will need for effective implementation of the school reform plan and continuous progress monitoring—even after the end of the partnership.

c. Evaluation of fidelity of implementation and quality, relevance, and utility of P.D.

The *Alliance* and SIS models depend on reliable, timely data to guide schools through the reform process. Because Advisor Teams are embedded in the school, they are able to evaluate the fidelity of implementation and the efficacy of professional development on a regular basis. Using a combination of

observation, perception surveys, and achievement data, as well holding frequent meetings with staff guided by the SDR, they ensure fidelity to best practice.

d. Evaluating the effectiveness of the existing school leadership team

The Advisor Team will ascertain the effectiveness of the school leadership team in carrying out the selected intervention model through the CQA described in Section 1. Based on our extensive experience implementing all of the Corrective Action interventions and the seven principles identified in Wisconsin's ESEA waiver application, we understand what it takes to execute each model. Thus, we have developed protocols for evaluating a principal's ability (i) to act as an instructional leader, (ii) to distribute leadership across all school staff, and (iii) to build capacity across the leadership team. We evaluate principals against the Features of an Outstanding School identified in the Leadership strand using our School Development Rubric, as well as against best practices for instructional leadership, taking into account information gathered in the CQA process, including student achievement data, site observation, and perception survey results. For example, one of our Features of an Outstanding School is that "[d]istributed leadership is evident throughout the school with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, effective delegation, efficient solution-planning, independent action-taking and review by school teams."

e. Recruiting, hiring, and developing leaders for Priority Schools

EdisonLearning's long history and broad geographic reach enable us to recruit, hire, retain, and develop highly effective teachers, principals, and other administrators to support all aspects of school operation and improvement. As an international organization with more than 1,600 employees, we have access to and experience recruiting and retaining the most qualified candidates for school turnaround work. Analysis of existing staffing practices is part of the CQA, therefore, our Advisor Teams will be able to identify and leverage the human resources systems and processes that are already effective to support the staffing process. Consistent with our commitment to partnership, our Advisor Teams will work with district human resources staff to address school staffing issues.

In the hiring process, we consider only proven leaders with experience turning around low-performing schools that have a student population similar to that of the current partner school. In conjunction with the district, EdisonLearning will begin to assess and make decisions regarding the current principal's ability to lead the transformation in December 2012. These decisions will be based on the criteria outlined in section 6.d. above (developed with the district) as well as on the outcome of the CQA. We can also work with the district to source and recruit qualified candidates for vacancies.

When searching for a school leader or teacher, we use a multi-pronged approach to reach the broadest population of potential candidates (<u>Attachment 5</u>). Our Advisor Team will conduct an extensive screening, interviewing, credential verification, and reference checking process as described in Section 4.a.i. to select the most qualified candidates.

Development of Leaders: In addition to providing the professional development described in Section 2.b., the Advisor Team will foster leader and teacher development through a comprehensive performance management system that takes into account student outcomes.

Principal Performance Management: Principals are supported and evaluated using a Performance Management System (PMS) (<u>Attachment 6</u>). The PMS addresses the five leadership roles of Instructional Leader, Organizational Leader, Culture Builder, Site Manager and School Executive. The process begins before the start of each school year with a review of the previous year's performance results, including the extent to which achievement and professional goals were reached, self-reflection, the results from our assessment using a Leadership Rubric, and the results from a research-based 360-degree tool that measures the effectiveness of observed principal behaviors. Every other month, the principal meets with the educational leader to review progress being made towards goal achievement. Both the principal and Lead Advisor complete the Bi-monthly Leadership Review form and discuss their results. If necessary the goals are adjusted. Towards the end of the academic year, a summative review takes place. This formal review, completed by the educational leader, indicates the extent to which the principal has accomplished the goals that were laid out and becomes the basis for the next year's goal setting. <u>Attachment 7</u> contains

samples from the Leader Quality Suite, a collection of tools that are designed to support the hiring, development and evaluation of high-quality school leaders.

Teacher Performance Management: The teacher performance evaluation process in EdisonLearning partner schools is designed to ensure that all teachers have identified specific performance goals for the school year and to promote greater accountability in education. The teacher evaluation process consists of: (1) annual goal setting driven by required student outcomes; (2) formal & informal classroom observations; (3) informal observations of non-classroom teacher activity; (4) a self-evaluation; and (5) a summative assessment by the principal that takes into account student performance. Attachment 8 contains sample tools from the Teacher Quality Suite, a collection of tools and processes that are designed to support the hiring, development, and evaluation of high quality.

f. Working with the district, the teachers' union, and other organizations to design and implement a method to evaluate staff members' ability to participate in the reform plan.

Our Advisor Teams work closely with districts, teachers' unions, and school-based staff to develop and implement fair, consistent, data-dependent methods of evaluating and managing staff members' participation in the school improvement plan. Where feasible, the Advisors have engaged other organizations or community stakeholders in the design of evaluation plans. The Advisor Team consults with teachers' union representatives during the development of the evaluation process to secure teacher support. Upon completion of the CQA data gathering and review process, the Advisor Team presents to district and school leaders a set of recommendations for the design of an evaluation system and then works with the district and school leaders in an open dialogue to develop a system that, consistent with the Wisconsin Framework for Educator Effectiveness, prioritizes student achievement. The agreed-upon plan will then be presented to a union representative and subject to comment from individual teachers. In revising the plan, feedback from district and school leaders, teachers, teachers' unions, and other stakeholders will be taken into account, but the adopted plan will comply with the requirements set forth in Wisconsin's approved ESEA waiver.

7. POSITIVE AND SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

EdisonLearning supports attainment of a school culture and climate conducive to student learning through the Student and Family Support System strand. As part of our tiered approach to managing the learning environment, we ensure the implementation of a school-wide Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) system consistent with the reform plan. Our model incorporates PBIS best practices and research into a holistic model that includes: (1) school-wide screening for behavior problems; (2) school-wide, targeted, and individual levels of behavior support; and (3) comprehensive professional development (including training modules, rubrics, strategies, and planning templates) to enable teachers to develop effective classroom management plans. We also provide strategies and tools for measuring the effectiveness of the PBIS system, including school climate walk-throughs, student and teacher surveys, and our School Development Rubric. <u>Attachment 1</u> is an excerpt from a code of conduct containing PBIS, which we developed for a partner school.

8. FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

a. Meaningful partnerships with parents and integration of stakeholders into the reform process

Our Advisor Teams develop and maintain meaningful partnerships with parents and integrate other stakeholders in the reform process through a combination of feedback and engagement mechanisms. Parent surveys and focus groups give parents a voice in the turnaround process, making them partners, rather than spectators. Survey and focus group results are reviewed during the CQA and inform the Advisor Team's recommendations for turnaround process (<u>Attachment 3, page viii</u>). They are also taken into account throughout implementation and revision of the turnaround strategies. Regular Student Learning Conferences are the most important way in which we integrate parents into the reform process.

b. Engaging parents to establish and support a culture of high expectations

We will engage parents to establish and support a culture of high expectations through the Student and Family Support strand, which focuses on ensuring individualized support and communication protocols among the school, students, and their families to guide all students to reach their learning goals

and post-secondary aspirations through: (1) developing the school system and organization of support for meeting all student needs; (2) monitoring of student progress and flexible targeting of support for at-risk students; (3) increasing the school's capacity to partner with families and develop community engagement; (4) regular student-led reviews of learning needs and goals with teachers and parents or guardians; and (5) integration of support systems to provide a comprehensive approach for students and families. Because of the importance of family engagement in student learning, we have created professional development modules devoted to building teacher and leader capacity in this area. Strategies that we have suggested to some of our partner schools include: identification of a Community Liaison, creation of a parent advisory council, creation of a parent newsletter and school website, home visits, parent workshops, and creation of a board of friends to act as a school's community advocate.

c. System-wide strategies to listen and communicate with parents about expectations and goals

Advisor Teams employ system-wide strategies to communicate expectations for student learning and goals for improvement with parents, including newsletters, Student Learning Conferences (SLCs), universal parent perception surveys, and opportunities for direct involvement in the school.

d. Alignment of family engagement plans with the research of Dr. Joyce Epstein

Dr. Joyce Epstein provides a framework for describing the key aspects of successful school, family, and community partnerships by suggesting six types of involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision making, and collaborating with the community. Our Five Strand Design integrates aspects of each type of involvement within the scope of school turnaround work. For example, we promote learning at home by suggesting home conditions that support learning at each grade level. In addition, our Advisor Team members organize community meetings to help families understand schools and to help schools understand families. At Roosevelt High School in Gary, for example, our turnaround team held public meetings to solicit family and community feedback. Attendance at these meetings increased throughout the process. Another component of our model is collaboration with the local community to provide additional student and family supports. At Wyatt-Edison Charter School in

Denver, for instance, we partnered with a community-based organization to provide food packs to disadvantaged students on weekends. By collaborating with the community to provide student and family support, we reduce non-academic barriers to learning. Furthermore, consistent with Epstein's research on collaboration and communication, our Advisor Teams implement SLCs to engage students, parents, and teachers in every student's learning. SLCs provide regular opportunities for students, with the support of their teachers and parents, to reflect on their progress, to celebrate success, to identify areas in need of improvement, and to continue the achievement planning process.

9. TURNAROUND PARTNER STAFFING AND QUALIFICATIONS

a. Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions that the organization will provide

In addition to personnel that will be enlisted specifically for the CQA, and recruitment, EdisonLearning will provide the following FTE positions to support each school:

1 FTE—Senior Director of Achievement: (1) acts as the relationship manager with district and principal; (2) accountable for faithful implementation of strategies related to Leadership and the Learning Environment; (3) regularly assesses school's progress towards goals and works closely with principal in reviewing data; (4) conducts onsite professional development to assist school with improving and maintaining a positive school climate and culture. **2 FTEs—Directors of Achievement in the first year of the contract – expanded to 3 FTEs in subsequent years of the contract:** (1) responsible for implementation of all strategies related to Curriculum & Pedagogy, Assessment for Learning, and the Student and Family Support Services; (2) work with school staff to improve school-wide reading and writing instruction and conduct onsite professional development; (3) work with all teachers to analyze and respond to formative and summative assessment results; and (4) conduct onsite professional development to assist school with Response to Intervention structures.

b. Qualifications of organization personnel who will support the school

See Attachments 9 and 10 for job descriptions that set forth the qualifications of our site-based staff.