

**NARRATIVE: *Nevada Striving Readers***  
**Table of Contents**

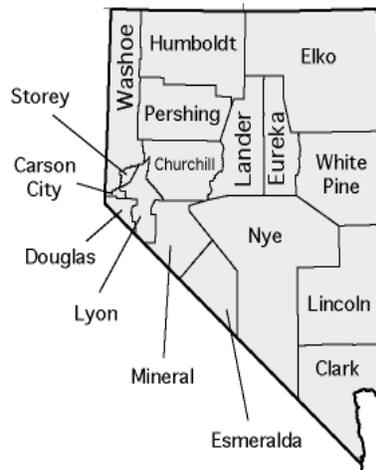
<b>ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1: Improving Learning Outcomes</b>	7
<b>ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 2: Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making</b>	10
<b>COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY: Effective Use of Technology</b>	12
<b>SELECTION CRITERION A: State-level Activities and Additional Requirements</b>	13
(A)(i) Required State-level activities and alignment to Nevada State Literacy Plan	13
(A)(ii) Goals for improving student literacy outcomes and data-based Needs Assessment	20
(A)(iii) Technical assistance and support to subgrantees	24
(A)(iv) Evaluation plan	25
(A)(v) Dissemination of project outcomes	35
<b>SELECTION CRITERION B: State Subgrant Competition</b>	35
(B)(i) Rigorous, high-quality subgrant application process	36
(B)(ii) Priority to LEAs, ECE providers serving high-poverty schools	41
(B)(iii) Priority to projects supported by strongest available evidence	41
(B)(iv) Process to review and judge evidence base and alignment with Nevada standards and CCSS for instructional materials; review available to public	42
<b>SELECTION CRITERION C: Project Management</b>	42
(C)(i) Management plan	42
(C)(ii) Qualifications of key personnel	46
(C)(iii) Extent to which Nevada will ensure diversity of perspectives	47
<b>SELECTION CRITERION D: Adequacy of Resources</b>	48
(D)(i) Extent to which costs are reasonable in relation to the number of objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project	48
(D)(ii) The NDE plan to ensure that SRCL subgrant funds are allocated as required	49
(D)(iii) The Extent to which the NDE will use the grant to leverage other State and Federal funds	50
(D)(iv) The Extent to which the NDE will award SRCL subgrants of sufficient size to support projects that improve instruction for a significant number of students	50

**APPENDICES A - K**

## NEVADA STRIVING READERS: Improving Literacy for a Strong Nevada

**Figure 1. Nevada Counties / Pre-K-12 School Districts or Local Education Agencies (LEAs)**

- Carson City
- Churchill
- Clark
- Douglas
- Elko
- Esmeralda
- Eureka
- Humboldt
- Lander
- Lincoln
- Lyon
- Mineral
- Nye
- Pershing
- Storey
- Washoe
- White Pine



Of the 17 Nevada counties, three are designated "urban"; Carson City (State Capital), Clark (Las Vegas metropolitan area), and Washoe (Reno-Sparks metropolitan area). Three counties are designated "rural" (Douglas, Lyon, Storey), and the remaining 11 are designated as "frontier"<sup>1</sup>. For purposes of this grant application, "rural" and "frontier" will be referenced in combination as "rural". Nevada is composed of 17 county school districts (CSDs), or local education agencies (LEAs), whose boundary lines are co-terminus with the boundary lines of Nevada's 17 counties.

### **2011 Nevada State Literacy Plan, *Improving Literacy for a Strong Nevada: The State Literacy Plan for Nevadans Birth through Grade 12 and Beyond.***

On January 8, 2011, Nevada began initial steps in creating a comprehensive State literacy plan by convening its first Nevada State Literacy Team (APPENDIX H). The Nevada State Literacy Team (NSLT) is comprised of 21 members with expertise at all grade levels and in all aspects of literacy education. Members represent the Office of the Governor, Nevada Department of Education, Nevada System of Higher Education, LEAs, early childhood education, schools,

<sup>1</sup> The U.S. Census Bureau defines "urban" as counties that have at least one population center exceeding 50,000 people; "frontier" as having less than 6 persons per square mile; "rural" is undefined as the number of persons per square mile that falls between the other two.

Nevada state agencies, Nevada Regional Professional Development Programs, and statewide literacy consultants and libraries. Funded by a Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy grant, over a two month period the NSLT created and published the 2011 Nevada State Literacy Plan.

### **Challenges**

Nevada faces unique challenges posed by the distribution and growth of population, geography that can create barriers to education, and unemployment in a time of economic crisis. In 2010, the Nevada population was 2,643,085. The 2010-2011 school year K-12 student population is 437,444 of which 314,023 (71.8%) attend school in Clark County, the fifth largest school district in the nation. In contrast, Esmeralda County has only 66 students. Nye County School District (NCSD) is located in south central Nevada, in the third geographically largest county in the contiguous United States (18,159 square miles). Nye is larger than the combined total area of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Delaware, with 5,738 students in 26 elementary, middle, and high schools. Elko County School District (ECSD) is located in eastern Nevada and geographically is the fourth largest in the contiguous United States with 9,556 students in 32 schools. The county has a total area of 17,203 square miles, with most of the area within the Great Basin. Elko is home to Great Basin College, a community college with a service area of 62,000 square miles, two time zones, and six of Nevada's largest rural counties.

For 10 years until 2006, and again in 2007-2008, Nevada was the state with the fastest growing population and among the four fastest-growing states in each of the last 24 years. As in most states throughout the nation with booming populations, the ability to provide adequate funding for public education in Pre-K through grade 12, institutions of higher education, and charter schools is at risk, resulting in great uncertainty regarding initiation or expansion of innovative and alternative programs to address diverse student needs.

With State education budget cuts from 10% to potentially as much as 14% over the 2011-2013 biennium, Nevada education priorities may have to be reconsidered as programs compete for decreasing State revenue. It is imperative that Nevada supplement State funds with Federal funds and leverage all available resources in order to support education priorities, including the provision of high-quality literacy programs with a focus on socio-economically disadvantaged students, research-based professional development for educators, programs for families and community members, and technology-based literacy assessments with accompanying professional development as a priority in rural and urban LEAs.

### **Nevada children at risk**

Far too many Nevada children and young adults are reading and writing at unacceptably low levels; Nevada ranks near the bottom of state-by-state comparisons of reading achievement. According to 2009 data from National Center for Education Statistics (NAEP) more than 75% of Nevada students in grades four and eight read below the proficient level. This figure represents an unacceptably greater number of non-proficient readers than the national average of 69%.

The Nevada graduation rate of 71.4% as reported in the *Nevada Annual Reports of Accountability 2009-2010* (Nevada Department of Education, 2010) documents the fact that too many high school students are not earning a diploma. According to *Graduation by the Numbers: Putting Data to Work for Student Success* (Education Week, 2010), Nevada ranked lowest in the nation for the past two years in terms of the percentage of students graduating from high school. While Nevada faces considerable challenges, it has a successful track record in endeavors to improve literacy. With this Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) grant, the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) has embarked on a mission to maximize success to continue

systemic transformation momentum with *Nevada Striving Readers*, a cohesive, collaborative, statewide initiative aligned to and guided by the 2011 Nevada State Literacy Plan (NSLP).

### **Foundation of Success**

***Nevada Even Start*** For the past 15 years, the Nevada Even Start program has provided home-based systems designed to assist families to become full partners in the education of their children and to help children and families reach their full potential as learners. The program intends to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty and illiteracy by integrating four education program components: child, adult, parent/family, parent/family and child interaction.

***RPDPs*** The 1999 Nevada Legislature established Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDPs) across the State to provide standards-based professional development for all teachers and administrators. RPDPs have created an effective infrastructure to provide statewide professional development which will be expanded and enhanced through the SRCL initiative.

***Nevada Reading First and TAG*** In 2002, Nevada was awarded a federal Reading First grant to improve literacy instruction in grades K-3. Subsequently, the NDE was also awarded a \$3.57 million Reading First Targeted Assistance Grant (TAG) from the U.S. Department of Education (USED). Nevada was the *only state* that met the rigorous TAG criteria in the Reading First legislation based on the performance of Nevada Reading First schools from 2005 to 2008. In 2006, Clark County School District was awarded an Early Reading First pre-school grant to improve literacy and language development in select preschools.

***RTI*** Nevada was selected by the National Center on Response to Intervention to implement a sustained, multi-year, comprehensive plan to establish multi-layered support for students in Pre-K through grade 12.

**Professional Development** In October, 2010, seven representatives from Nevada attended the *Pre-K-grade 3: Foundation for Educational Success Institute* at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Nevada entities that were represented included the NDE, Washoe and Clark County School Districts (WCSD, CCSD), and Nevada Department of Health and Human Services. The institute focused on four important drivers of early learning foundations: (1) instructional quality and effectiveness; (2) language, literacy, and early math; (3) social-emotional behaviors and climates; and (4) family engagement. The attendees developed a mission and vision plan for Nevada which included increased collaboration, communication, determination of data collection tools and reporting systems, and professional development. This plan is an integral component of the Nevada State Literacy Plan.

**CCSS** In October, 2010, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) were adopted by the Nevada State Board of Education to ensure that Nevada students are college and career ready. These standards will become the foundation for curriculum design, instructional practice, and formative, interim, and summative assessments. The Nevada State Literacy Plan and *Nevada Striving Readers* initiative are in the process of being aligned to CCSS as we transition from Nevada State Standards to CCSS during the next four years (APPENDIX E).

### **Sustainability**

Building on these successful initiatives, Nevada is now poised to implement the next step in an ambitious, challenging, aggressive *Nevada Striving Readers* (NSR) initiative. The SRCL grant will provide the "seed funds" for Nevada to (1) implement and continuously improve the NSLP, (2) provide subgrants to LEAs and nonprofit early childhood education (ECE) providers to serve high-need families and children, including those who are socially and/or economically disadvantaged, and (3) leverage SRCL funds and initiative data documented success to acquire

funding and other resources for long-term sustainability. The NSLP and *Nevada Striving Readers* initiative is a comprehensive literacy advancement framework that incorporates Essential Elements 1-6 in the NSLP (APPENDIX A). By providing LEAs, schools, students, educators, librarians, and families with planning and action guidelines, support, mentoring, recommendations, high-quality instruction, expectations, and communication networking for improving literacy in Nevadans birth through grade 12 and beyond, we will realize systemic transformation to improve literacy for a strong Nevada.

### **ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 1: Improving Learning Outcomes**

Nevada cannot wait, procrastinate, or continue to inadequately serve the needs of our children who must become highly skilled and literate to compete and succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Nevada and global education arena and workforce. A real sense of urgency exists to improve literacy growth and achievement in Nevada LEAs, especially in schools that serve socially and/or economically disadvantaged students. Low levels of literacy achievement are more persistent in communities serving poor, nonwhite, and limited English proficient (LEP) students. The NSLT has identified seven of 17 LEAs that serve both the highest numbers and the highest percentages of socially and/or economically disadvantaged students to participate in a competitive subgrant process (APPENDIX C). At this time, we do not have data on the number of eligible nonprofit ECE providers. Using 95% of the SRCL funds, Nevada expects to award three to 12 subgrants ranging from \$1,000,000 to \$9,000,000 per year (Narrative, Table 8, p. 50).

The *Nevada Striving Readers* initiative will focus on truly comprehensive literacy, targeting disadvantaged students. Students who are literate in each subject are more likely to be successful not only in that subject, but to transfer that literacy to comprehension and mastery of other subjects in which literacy is stressed.

**Table 1. 2010-11 Poverty Rate of Students by Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility (FRL)**

Nevada & LEAs	Total Enrollment	FRL	
		#	%
State	436,037	182,778	41.9
<b>Carson City</b>	7,719	<b>3,505</b>	<b>45.4</b>
<b>Churchill</b>	4,169	<b>1,913</b>	<b>45.9</b>
<b>Clark</b>	310,503	<b>151,412</b>	<b>48.8</b>
Douglas	6,282	2,165	34.5
<b>Elko</b>	9,445	<b>3,494</b>	<b>37.0</b>
Esmeralda	66	40	60.6
Eureka	239	64	26.8
Humboldt	3,300	1,239	37.6

Nevada & LEAs	Total Enrollment	FRL	
		#	%
Lander	1,118	288	25.8
Lincoln	845	352	41.7
<b>Lyon</b>	7,921	<b>3,512</b>	<b>44.3</b>
Mineral	374	214	57.2
<b>Nye</b>	5,623	<b>3,187</b>	<b>56.7</b>
Pershing	679	315	46.4
Storey	447*	32	69.6
<b>Washoe</b>	65,019	<b>26,085</b>	<b>40.1</b>
White Pine	1,269	462	36.4

Source: NDE Office of Child Nutrition and School Health. Percents rounded to nearest tenth.

\* Nevada Annual Reports of Accountability, 2009-2010 enrollment data. Data not available for ECE providers. Shading highlights anticipated subgrant eligible LEAs.

Applicants awarded subgrants will be required to design comprehensive programs to collaborate statewide to share best practices, open selected professional development events to educators statewide, and work as a collaborative network with other subgrantees to ensure cohesive, integrated impact and alignment of services to maximize the student/teacher cost-benefit return on investment of grant funds. The number of Pre-K-12 students who directly and indirectly benefit from the initiative is expected to increase from an initial 23,000 to more than 400,000. The *Nevada Striving Readers* initiative is expected to mitigate the host of factors that contribute to poor literacy development, especially where low achievement is schoolwide and persistent. One of the most prominent indicators of persistent low achievement is lack of a comprehensive and coherent literacy program. High numbers of students become "curriculum casualties" (Gickling & Thompson, 1985; Simmons and Kame'enui, 1998) when the design or

the delivery of curricula are flawed. The *Nevada Striving Readers* initiative will focus on the elements of effective literacy and language instruction to include:

1. *Curricula and instruction materials* (including those which incorporate technology and early language development) that (a) align to CCSS and Nevada Pre-K Standards, (b) adhere to principles of effective instruction, and (c) incorporate technology with universal design.
2. *A coherent computer-based assessment system* that includes: (a) valid and reliable screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring measures that are aligned to CCSS; (b) easy access to and use of data; and (c) accommodations for students with special needs.
3. *Job-embedded professional development* provided by implementation specialists/literacy coaches or mentors assigned to each school whose primary duties will be to train and support teachers in (a) implementation of specified curricula and instructional materials with a high degree of fidelity; (b) all of the components of effective literacy instruction; (c) use of specified assessment protocols and resulting data to support instructional decisions; and (d) how to use instructional technology to effect systemic and effective improvement in teaching and learning.
4. *Data-Based Decision-Making (DBDM) Literacy Teams* in each school to: (a) support continuous improvement; (b) monitor program implementation and outcomes at the student, classroom, grade, and school levels; and (c) identify professional development needs.
5. *Multi-leveled, evidence-based intervention and remediation programs* based on student needs that are informed by continual monitoring of data documented student progress.

The remaining 5% of SRCL funds will be used for State-level activities. Members of the NSLT will work collaboratively with LEAs to oversee implementation of the NSLP and support the State-level implementation of the initiative. Seven NDE positions will be funded to ensure

highly qualified, expert personnel (1) work closely with LEAs and schools, (2) provide oversight of State and subgrantee activities, (3) ensure transparency, accountability, and data reliability in all aspects of the initiative; and (4) manage all technology. The NDE personnel will support implementation through close monitoring of progress and establishing systems to remediate schools that fail to make progress. Statewide professional development will also be provided through summer literacy institutes with dissemination of successful literacy practices through national, regional, and State conferences and events; a website; newsletters; webinars; and other media.

### **ABSOLUTE PRIORITY 2: Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making**

In April, 2011, Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval partnered with the Education Reform Blue Ribbon Task Force (APPENDIX I), Legislative Leadership, and Catamount Fund to sponsor a planning session for the Data Quality Campaign to work with Nevada policymakers and interested stakeholders to formulate a comprehensive plan for effective Nevada educational system data use. The planning session explored the current data system and its capacity, possibilities for Nevada's future, examples from leading states on how to best link and share data across agencies, information on state models and data governance structures, data privacy and security, and tools and resources for Nevada education reform efforts. The initiative leaders will use information and recommendations that flow from that meeting to ensure data is reliable, valid, and appropriate to inform progress, modification, and evaluation of the initiative.

The *Nevada Striving Readers* initiative will establish three types of Data-Based Decision-Making (DBDM) Literacy Teams that will collect, analyze, and use high-quality, reliable, valid, and timely data, especially that which is collected on program participants. Training and technical assistance will be provided to subgrantees to ensure they are knowledgeable about data

collection and research outcomes that can inform instructional practices and policies to effect improvement in student outcomes in early childhood education settings and K-12 schools.

**DBDM Literacy Team - Nevada State Literacy Team** The NSLT will coordinate statewide efforts to monitor and support initiative subgrantees and their schools, and statewide implementation of the NSLP. One of the first tasks the NSLT will undertake is to develop a policy statement clearly describing the State vision and values, and the use of technology to assist with DBDM in *Nevada Striving Readers* schools. The NSLT will create a dynamic communication plan to inform stakeholders (e.g., legislators and other policymakers, educators, instructional support staff, LEA leaders, literacy advocacy groups, families) about the technical assistance and training offered through *Nevada Striving Readers* for participating subgrantees and schools throughout the State. After a comprehensive review of current data, the NSLT will set goals for the State, develop a strategic plan to guide implementation, monitor outcome data, and advise the NDE and subgrantees. The NSLT will conduct a review at minimum annually.

**DBDM Literacy Team - LEA** Each team will monitor subgrantee implementation. Key stakeholders will monitor all school data, support school decision-making, provide feedback to subgrantee leaders and school principals to strengthen and improve literacy achievement, and hold subgrantees accountable for implementing the subgrants on time, within budget, and in compliance with SRCL data collection, reporting requirements, and GPRA measures.

**DBDM Literacy Team - School / ECE Provider** Each *Nevada Striving Readers* school will form a DBDM Literacy Team as part of its Comprehensive Literacy Plan that will include the school principal/assistant principal, teachers from across grade levels and content areas, and other stakeholders (e.g., implementation specialists, literacy coaches, special education teachers, ELL teachers, parents/family members). These teams will align their work with a Response to

Intervention (RTI) framework that maintains a purposeful, respectful, and trusting environment in which data can be collected, analyzed, and used to improve literacy achievement.

1. Use the State of Nevada approved screening assessment to identify students at risk for low literacy outcomes.
2. Administer the State approved in-depth diagnostic assessment for identified at-risk students to allow appropriate placement within a multi-level intervention system that ensures all students are served appropriately.
3. Provide research-based curricula and evidence-based interventions that have been selected using the Nevada Instructional Materials Alignment Tool (NIMAT).
4. Continuously monitor student progress over time, evaluate instructional effectiveness, and formulate individualized plans for students who are not achieving expected progress.
5. Adjust interventions (intensity, type) dependent on each student's response to instruction.
6. Identify students with learning disabilities or other disabilities that require further evaluation.
7. Use formative and summative data to inform instructional decisions at the school, grade, and classroom levels.

**COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITY: Effective Use of Technology**

Technology motivates students, boosts student achievement, enhances instruction and teacher effectiveness, improves leadership and supervision, and broadens communication within and between communities. To provide a 21<sup>st</sup> Century education, Nevada will gather a cohort of technology expert educators who can skillfully incorporate cutting-edge information tools and digital content in literacy instruction. The initiative subgrant application will specify that applicants include a proposal for a coordinated and comprehensive technology plan that includes (1) the use of technology for assessment, instruction, intervention, and professional development;

(2) incorporation of the principles of universal design for learning; and (3) a description of professional development that will be implemented, including data-driven decision-making, personalized learning opportunities for teachers and administrators, and family involvement.

The NSLT will develop and maintain a digital information, dissemination, and collaboration network. The NDE will create and host a virtual “community of practice” that will provide a technology-based medium for school administrators and teachers to access best practices information through the initiative "What Works Clearinghouse". Educators will be able to engage in online discussions with and locate contact information for colleagues; link to resources for administrators, teachers, librarians, and school support staff; and share resources that are tested and/or developed in the initiative. This is especially important for teachers and administrators in rural communities who have limited funds and currently have to drive hundreds of miles to participate in face-to-face professional development opportunities.

#### **SELECTION CRITERIA (SC) and ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS (AR)**

##### **SELECTION CRITERION A: Quality of State-level Activities and Alignment to NSLP**

*SC(A)(i) AR(a) Continuous Improvement of the NSLP* In planning for continuous improvement of the NSLP, the NSLT will meet at least three times per year. Two of the yearly meetings will be two-day, face-to-face retreats. The meetings will be structured using a variation of Deming’s Cycle of planning, doing, checking, and acting (Tague, 2004).

**Planning** The primary focus will be on data review, recommendations for modification of the NSLP, and creation of an action plan for State-level implementation. Early planning stage work will include consideration of initial findings and review of the data-based recommendations of the External Evaluator (EE). Planning for each new year of the grant period will occur.

**Doing** The NDE Project Director (PD) and two Literacy Coordinators (LCs) will annually produce a detailed plan to manage and oversee implementation of the initiative at subgrant sites. While this work will concentrate on subgrant schools, it will serve as a model of high-quality literacy practice in all Nevada schools at all levels. The plan will be modified and revised as needed.

**Checking** Key personnel and the DBDM Literacy Teams will review data as the school year progresses. This review will take place not only at the annual face-to-face meeting, but also at additional bi-annual video-conference meetings. Checking includes analysis of student assessment data to determine the effectiveness of the initiative work, and reliably propose what factors are the major influences and barriers in literacy development of students. Half-day video-conference meetings will be scheduled bi-annually in October and May and include members of the NSLT. The focus of the video-conferences will be to provide a status check related to grant administration, compliance, and implementation. The intent is to review accomplishments, mitigate issues or challenges, and ensure that the initiative is progressing on time, according to goals and measurable objectives, and within budget. The meetings will provide a platform to analyze "what works" and to disseminate best practices. Thematic goals, such as student engagement or sharing of innovative instruction for English Language Learners (ELL), will be established as a focus for implementation.

**Acting** Documented successful best practices implemented under the auspices of the SRCL grant will be shared statewide beginning Year 3 and nationwide in Year 4. Implementation of best practices will expand services to non-subgrant schools and ECE programs that have not yet or marginally participated in initiative activities or received direct services.

***SC(A)(i) AR(b) Alignment of Federal and State Funds and Programs*** In the ongoing challenge to integrate State and Federal funding streams to fund targeted programs, ". . . coordination and cooperation at the State level can blur the lines between independent “funding silos”" (Welfare Peer Alliance Network, 2002). To ensure alignment and integration of initiative priorities and funding streams, in selected meetings the NSLT will include representatives from NDE, LEA, and nonprofit ECE provider fiscal offices as ad hoc members. Fiscal representatives will participate in all aspects of planning and serve as key liaisons to NDE and subgrantee personnel. The initiative Project Director and Literacy Coordinators will meet quarterly with NDE fiscal personnel and twice annually with subgrantee fiscal personnel.

***SC(A)(i) AR(c) Subgrant Review Process*** The review process for awarding SRCL subgrants will be rigorous (APPENDIX C). Subgrants will be reviewed by a panel of seven peer reviewers: four from the NSLT, and one each representing RPDPs, Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE), business/industry, and families. The Project Director and Literacy Coordinators will provide reviewer training and the PD will act as the facilitator for the review panel. Subgrants will be scored using a rubric of selection criteria modeled on the SRCL selection criteria and based on priorities described in the subgrant application. Three required Absolute Priorities (100 points) and one optional Competitive Preference Priority: Family Literacy Programs (up to 5 points) total a possible 105 points. One optional Invitational Priority: Inclusion of Schools That Do Not Receive Title I Funds will not have a point value, but will be used in the event of a tie score. Applications will be rank ordered high to low by (1) number and percent of low-income students served and (2) technical review score. Subgrants will be awarded in order based on available funds.

**NSR Absolute Priority 1: Improving Learning Outcomes** An applicant must propose a project that is designed to improve school readiness and success birth through grade 12 in the area of language and literacy development for disadvantaged students (SRCL NIA, p. 9).

**NSR Absolute Priority 2: Enabling More Data-Based Decision Making** An applicant must propose a project that is designed to collect, analyze, and use high-quality and timely data, especially on program participant outcome and in accordance with privacy requirements (e.g., FERPA) in order to improve instructional practices, policies, and student outcomes in early learning settings and in elementary and secondary schools (SRCL NIA, pp. 9-10).

**NSR Absolute Priority 3: Effective Use of Technology** An applicant must (1) propose to use technology, which may include technology to support principles of universal design for learning to address student learning challenges; and (2) provide an evidence-based rationale that the proposed technology program, practice, or strategy will increase student engagement and achievement or increase teacher effectiveness (SRCL NIA, p. 10).

ECE programs must use Nevada approved Pre-K standards that are aligned with the K-12 standards and focus on all domains of learning, including language and literacy, math and science, social-emotional, physical development, and approaches to learning.

Subgrantees must adhere to evidence-based standards for materials, including any research-based materials already in use at subgrant applicant sites. These materials are scientifically based, have strong internal and external validity, and support direct attribution of the desired outcomes of the initiative. In order to ensure alignment of materials to standards, the NSLT will select a task force of members to create a curriculum alignment tool.

LEAs may design early childhood education (ECE) projects or may subgrant to nonprofit providers of ECE that partner with a public or private nonprofit organization or agency with a

demonstrated record of effectiveness in (a) improving the early literacy development of children from birth through entry into kindergarten, (b) providing professional development in ECE, and (c) assigning priority to such agencies or other entities serving greater numbers or percentages of socially and/or economically disadvantaged children. Subgrant applications will be prioritized based on those that include Pre-K-grade 3 alignment strategies and plans, and directly link with the programs that feed into the respective schools. Pre-K-grade 3 is defined as a continuum of learning that spans the traditional boundaries of pre-school (developmentally appropriate learning-based programs children experience before they enter school) and the early grades (K-3). The priority areas for these strategies include 1) instructional quality in early literacy and math, 2) social-emotional development, and 3) family engagement. Pre-K-grade 3 strategies include analysis of the alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment; school organization; highly-qualified teachers; classrooms as learning environments; and accountability to families and communities. Non-negotiable components of strong Pre-K-grade 3 efforts include high-quality learning opportunities before children enter the formal K-12 system, high-quality full day kindergarten, and high-quality instruction and interactions during grades 1-3.

Subgrant reviews will be made public using the USED model of Race to the Top and Investing in Innovation programs. Reviewer names will be published; however, the specific applications they review and the technical reviews will not be identified by reviewer name. Reviewers will meet face-to-face after three weeks to individually score each application. They will discuss their scoring of submitted subgrant applications and attempt to come to consensus on scores so that there is no more than a 10 point discrepancy between any one application. Scores will be used to rank subgrants from highest to lowest score. Nevada anticipates funding three to 12 subgrants. Once the recipients of the subgrants have been selected, Superintendent of Public

Instruction, Dr. Keith Rheault, will contact subgrantee administrators and the results will be made public by posting them on the NDE website, through a press release, and in a publicly televised presentation ceremony to include at minimum Dr. Rheault, Governor Brian Sandoval, Nevada Congressional Senators Dean Heller and Harry Reid, Nevada Legislature Education Committee Chairs Mo Denis (Senate) and Dave Bobzien (Assembly), the subgrant recipient superintendents, Nevada State Board of Education members, Education Reform Blue Ribbon Task Force (ERBRTF) members, NSLT, representatives of the Nevada Library and Archives, and other guests, such as representatives of all LEAs and ECE providers, parent/family representatives of PTA and PTO organizations, teacher organizations, and business/industry.

***SC(A)(i) AR(d) Comprehensive and coherent literacy program serving students from birth through grade 12***

The *Nevada Striving Readers* subgrant application rigor will ensure that all elements of the NSLP are addressed and that funds are used to implement comprehensive and coherent literacy programs as determined by a comprehensive Needs Assessment. The 2010 *Nevada Comprehensive Curriculum Audit Tool for Schools* (NCCAT-S) is an existing Needs Assessment that will be utilized to accomplish this task (APPENDIX F).

***SC(A)(i) AR(d)(1)*** Job-embedded professional development will be available to teachers of ECE, K-12 reading and English, English Language Learners (ELL), special education, STEM and other content areas, and librarians. Using “lessons learned” from the Nevada Reading First grant, strategic, systematic professional development prepares teachers in all of the components of effective literacy instruction, enhances teacher ability to implement intervention programs, and facilitates the use of assessment to inform instruction to meet the needs of all learners.

***SC(A)(i) AR(d)(2)*** Effective instructional materials will be selected using the findings of the task force to develop a tool that determines to what degree instructional materials align with the

CCSS. The instructional materials must be designed to deliver effective literacy and content instruction to all students, including LEP and those with disabilities. Instruction delivered via technology must provide flexibility and reduce educational barriers.

**SC(A)(i) AR(d)(3)** The initiative will use a coherent assessment system aligned with CCSS. The assessments will include valid and reliable screening measures, valid and reliable diagnostic and progress monitoring measures, use of assessment data to inform instruction, intervention, professional development, continuous program improvement, and use of appropriate accommodations for special needs students to ensure accurate and reliable assessment.

**SC(A)(i) AR(d)(4)** Subgrants will fund interventions that ensure that the literacy needs of all students are served appropriately. Intervention may include grouping of students who are at proficiency level, slightly below proficiency level, or substantially below proficiency level. Additional provisions will be made to address the needs of students who have mastered the content ahead of their peers and are performing well above proficiency levels. This supports NSLP Essential Element 2, Effective Instruction.

**SC(A)(i) AR(d)(5)** Subgrant funds will provide language and text rich environments in all K-12 classrooms, ECE programs, and school and public libraries. In classrooms and programs that serve children from birth through age five, literacy rich environments are those that support both receptive and expressive language skills, rich vocabulary development, phonological awareness, comprehension, alphabet knowledge, print awareness, book knowledge, emergent writing, and positive attitudes toward language and literacy related activities. Subgrantee projects will include cross-discipline technology integrated programs for adolescents stressing comprehension, vocabulary, motivation, and structural analysis, particularly for students identified as in danger of dropping out of high school. The NDE is particularly interested in

grades 6-12 comprehensive literacy projects in science, technology, pre-engineering, and math.

Subgrantees will collaborate with public libraries to support summer K-12 enrichment programs.

**SC(A)(i) AR(d)(6)** Subgrant applicants will include plans for continuous improvement by monitoring initiative program implementation and outcomes. Professional development events will be monitored for effectiveness through participant evaluations. Implementation and outcomes will be tracked at the LEA, school, classroom, and student levels and as described in "Enabling More Data-Based Decision-Making" (Narrative, pp. 9-11). All reporting will be done in compliance with Federal, State, and local student privacy regulations (e.g., FERPA).

**SC(A)(ii) Goals for Improving Literacy Outcomes**

**Table 2: Goals, Objectives, and Data Collection for Improving Literacy Outcomes**

<p><b>Goal 1 Through high-quality, job-embedded professional development, teachers will understand and apply elements of effective literacy instruction and intentional use of instructional materials that are aligned to the CCSS so that every student knows how to use reading, writing, listening, viewing, speaking, presenting, and critical thinking skills from birth through grade 12.</b></p>	
<p><b>Objective 1</b> Pre-K students will demonstrate literacy achievement, including oral language development that will indicate data documented growth in all subpopulations.</p> <p><b>Objective 2</b> Students in grades K-5 will demonstrate improved literacy achievement that will indicate growth in all subpopulations.</p> <p><b>Objective 3</b> Students in grades 6-12 will demonstrate improved literacy achievement leading to an increase in graduation rate of a minimum 5% over 5 years compared to 2010-11 baseline data.</p>	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
a. State Criterion Reference Tests (CRTs) in grades 3-8 and High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE).	a. Mandated by NRS, annually in spring.
b. State writing proficiency exams in grades 5, 8, 9-12	b. Mandated by NRS, annually in spring.

<p>c. State selected norm-referenced tests, ITBS and ITED.</p> <p>d. State selected progress monitoring assessment in all grades.</p> <p>e. High school completion indicators and dropout rate.</p> <p>f. Credit deficiency indicators.</p>	<p>c. Annually in spring.</p> <p>d. Minimum 4 times annually or as directed in the technical requirements of the assessment.</p> <p>e. Annually as described in the Nevada Accountability Report.</p> <p>f. Annually by the most current five graduating classes.</p>
<p><b>Objective 4</b> Teachers will annually participate in a minimum of 3 professional development events to become skilled in the use of instructional curriculum and materials aligned to CCSS and incorporate the components of effective literacy instruction to support the needs of all students, including students who are socially and/or economically disadvantaged.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Data Collection</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Frequency</b></p>
<p>a. Classroom observation checklists and rubrics.</p> <p>b. Surveys and interviews.</p>	<p>a. Weekly by building administrators and coaches, and monthly by <i>Nevada Striving Readers</i> personnel.</p> <p>b. Annually by external evaluator.</p>
<p><b>Goal 2 Implement interventions to ensure that all students (including students who are experiencing difficulties and students who are progressing ahead of their peers) are identified and served appropriately.</b></p>	
<p><b>Objective 1</b> Teachers will use valid and reliable assessments to identify (screen) and monitor progress of students in need of intervention or advanced enrichment.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Data Collection</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Frequency</b></p>
<p>a. Create and use evaluation tool for selecting valid and reliable screening and diagnostic assessments that are aligned to CCSS.</p> <p>b. Professional development training attendance, evaluations, surveys, interviews.</p> <p>c. Implementation checklists and rubrics.</p> <p>d. Screening and progress monitoring data.</p>	<p>a. Year 1; update tool as necessary.</p> <p>b. At the time of training and annual follow-up surveys and interviews.</p> <p>c. Annually.</p> <p>d. Minimum of 4 times annually or as prescribed by assessment technical requirements.</p>

<p><b>Objective 2</b> LEAs and schools will implement programs of intervention and enrichment that will increase by a minimum 10 % over 5 years the number of students performing at, or above, grade level compared to 2010-11 baseline data.</p>	
<p><b>Data Collection</b></p>	<p><b>Frequency</b></p>
<p>a. Training attendance, evaluations, surveys, and interviews.</p> <p>b. Implementation checklists, fidelity rubrics.</p> <p>c. Screening, progress monitoring, and outcome data.</p>	<p>a. At the time of training and annual follow-up surveys and interviews.</p> <p>b. Weekly observations by administrators, monthly site visits by the <i>Nevada Striving Readers</i> personnel, weekly coaching by implementation specialists/literacy coaches and/or lead teachers in middle and high schools.</p> <p>c. Annually to monitor growth as students move from grade to grade over the duration of the project.</p>
<p><b>Goal 3</b> Establish data-driven decision-making (DBDM) Literacy Teams at schools that are aligned with a Response to Intervention (RTI) framework and maintain a purposeful, respectful environment in which data can be collected, analyzed, and used to continually improve literacy achievement.</p>	
<p><b>Objective 1</b> Collaborate with the National Center on Response to Intervention and LEAs to design, produce, and implement a plan to support school DBDM.</p>	
<p><b>Data Collection</b></p>	<p><b>Frequency</b></p>
<p>a. Multi-year technical assistance agreement.</p> <p>b. Professional development training attendance, evaluations, surveys, interviews.</p>	<p>a. Year 1 and modified as often as required.</p> <p>b. Ongoing throughout the initiative.</p>
<p><b>Objective 2</b> Establish Data-Based Decision-Making teams that use formative and summative assessment data to measure student progress, determine content mastery, and make instructional decisions.</p>	
<p><b>Data Collection</b></p>	<p><b>Frequency</b></p>
<p>a. School Improvement Plans (SIPs)</p> <p>b. Attendance, agendas, action plans, site visits, surveys, interviews.</p>	<p>a. Annually.</p> <p>b. Ongoing throughout the year, TBD.</p>

<b>Objective 3</b> Use data to monitor progress and improve instruction.	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
a. Action plans and systematic monitoring plans.	a. Beginning of each year and modified as needed throughout the year.
b. Improved assessment indicators as described in Goal 1, Objective 1.	b. As described in Goal 1, Objective 1.
<b>Goal 4 Strengthen existing and create new partnerships among early literacy programs, schools, libraries, family literacy programs, and community organizations to improve literacy for all children Pre-K through grade 12.</b>	
<b>Objective 1</b> Promote and support school and public libraries.	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
a. Document the number and categories of books available to students in school and classroom libraries.	a. Bi-annually, beginning and end of each year
b. Document school library circulation records.	b. Bi-annually, beginning and end of each year
c. Document the number and increase in number over 5 years of public library cards.	c. Bi-annually, beginning and end of each year
<b>Objective 2</b> Provide information, support, and communication networks for families about how to help students with homework and other literacy-related activities.	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
a. Publications	a. Bi-annually, beginning and end of each year
b. Materials and agendas from workshops	b. Bi-annually, beginning and end of each year
c. Data from home visits	c. Bi-annually, beginning and end of each year
<b>Objective 3</b> Identify and integrate resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs.	
<b>Data Collection</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
a. Event descriptions with frequency data and participant attendance	a. End of year summary data
b. Parent/family surveys	b. Bi-annually, beginning and end of each year

*SC(A)(iii) Technical Assistance to Support Subgrantees* To achieve the initiative goals, the NDE will create an infrastructure to support subgrantees and enable them to implement high-quality comprehensive literacy programs and to improve literacy achievement. NDE will hire three full-time project personnel whose sole responsibility will be to implement the initiative. Current NDE literacy specialist Darrin Hardman will serve as the full-time Interim Project Director. Technical assistance will include, but not be limited to, NDE sponsored summer institutes, ongoing site visits, webinars, video-conferences, and a "What Works Clearinghouse".

**Table 3. Roles and Responsibilities of Key NDE Personnel**

<b>Project Director (1.00 FTE, 100%) To Be Hired</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate statewide efforts</li> <li>• Report to the NDE Superintendent of Public Instruction and Assistant Director in the Office of Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum</li> <li>• Serve as a liaison with SRCL staff, national technical assistance providers, Nevada stakeholders</li> <li>• Establish task forces and facilitate meetings and action plan implementation</li> <li>• Coordinate subgrant application review process and awards</li> <li>• Coordinate NSLT meetings</li> <li>• Coordinate statewide professional development and summer institutes</li> <li>• Coordinate external evaluation</li> <li>• Coordinate reporting and accountability (annual performance reports, final performance report, and required financial reports)</li> <li>• Monitor and oversee subgrant awards to ensure fiscal accountability, diligence, and integrity</li> </ul>
<b>Literacy Coordinators (2 @ 1.00 FTE, 100% each) To Be Hired</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with NSLT members, facilitate NSLT meetings and Summer Institutes</li> <li>• Support school DBDM Literacy Teams</li> <li>• Monitor implementation at subgrant project sites through week-long visits at each site</li> <li>• Provide feedback to LEAs, ECE providers, and schools</li> <li>• Collaborate with the Project Director to report progress to NSLT</li> <li>• Provide statewide professional development at summer institutes</li> </ul>
<b>APPENDIX J - Job Qualifications of NDE Personnel To Be Hired</b>
<b>Grants &amp; Projects Analyst II (0.50 FTE, 50%)   ·   IT Professional III (0.50 FTE, 50%)</b> <b>Auditor III (1.00 FTE, 100%)   ·   Administrative Assistant II (0.50 FTE, 50%)</b>

Essential to the technical assistance and support for subgrantees is the NSLT. Its roles and responsibilities are to (1) continually revisit and refine the mission, goals, and objectives of

the NSLT and (2) provide direct support for subgrantees and school personnel. Assistance will include setting goals, reviewing data, and creating action plans for each year of the initiative. Other assistance to support implementation of the initiative will be made available through summer institutes and as determined by ongoing Needs Assessments and strategic planning.

The Project Director and Literacy Coordinators will provide statewide subgrant orientation meetings for subgrantees at the beginning of the grant period and at the end and beginning of each school year of the grant period. Meeting agendas will include an overview of the subgrant and modifications of the action plan, focus on priorities, strategic planning and expected outcomes of NDE sponsored summer institutes; and statewide support for technical reporting, assessments, and materials selection. Five year support for subgrantees will include quarterly meetings (face-to-face, video-conference, webinar) with implementation specialists and school administrators. Monthly school site visits by the PD and LCs will include support for subgrant site literacy teams, observation in classrooms, assistance in data discussions, progress monitoring of overall implementation, and feedback to subgrantees and schools. They will provide technical assistance within PD and LC duties listed in the Management Plan (pp. 42-46)

#### ***SC(A)(iv) Evaluation Plan***

Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998) emphasize that the development of a comprehensive assessment system is a long-term project and that a crucial piece of such a system is criteria for judging performance across a developmental span. Evaluation is a central component of the *Nevada Striving Readers* implementation plan and has been a key consideration throughout the development of this proposal. The NSLT is committed to the implementation of an evaluation program that is comprehensive with a focus on the efficacy of the purpose, goals, and objectives of the project. Evaluation will be used as a critical tool to inform the ongoing work with schools

to advance literacy skills, including pre-literacy skills, reading, and writing for all students from birth through grade 12, including LEP and high-poverty students, and students with disabilities.

The formal evaluation of the *Nevada Striving Readers* initiative will be designed, implemented, and reported by an External Evaluator (EE). The NDE will contract with an EE who will work with the NSLT and NDE personnel to ensure the evaluation protocol, tools, and data are appropriate to document efficacy of the initiative. The EE will not be involved programmatically and the PD will ensure there is no conflict of interest. The EE will be tasked with ensuring data collected includes performance measures specified in the required GPRA Measures section of the SRCL Notice Inviting Applications (NIA), page 12, so that the NDE and subgrantees can set targets for performance, measure progress toward targets, report if targets have been met, and describe future strategies to meet targets. The planned evaluation will objectively assess implementation and outcomes using both quantitative and qualitative instruments. Sufficient data will be generated and analyzed at key points to facilitate periodic assessment of progress and provide opportunities for refinement. Well-defined, measurable objectives findings generated through evaluation will be used to guide program replication and/or expansion, and measure success.

The NDE will work closely with the State of Nevada Purchasing Department, Procurement Office to create a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) in search of the most qualified and cost effective individual or firm to evaluate this project (APPENDIX B). The competitive RFP will include a rigorous and thorough system for scoring that includes (1) demonstrated compliance with the RFP, (2) experience in performing similar evaluations, (3) conformance with all terms of the RFP, (4) expertise and availability of key personnel, and (5) realistic and feasible cost.

Due to the size, scope, and budget of the evaluation, the process will primarily occur through the use of web-based program profiles, surveys (web-based or other as designed), and use of secondary data (State and school-based performance data). The EE will conduct annual site visits to monitor implementation and ensure the integrity and reliability of data collection processes. Interviews (group and individual) with initiative subgrantees and school staff will be conducted, allowing data collection for the purpose of compliance and analysis. The EE will produce and submit all reports in compliance with SRCL, State of Nevada, and initiative timelines. Specific evaluation questions to be addressed at the school and subgrantee administrative levels will include, but not be limited to,

1. To what extent have *Nevada Striving Readers* instructional activities and materials improved literacy outcomes (including language and literacy development, school readiness, graduation rates) in schools, LEAs, and ECE provider programs?
2. How have levels of teacher and administrator knowledge regarding effective literacy instruction improved through professional development provided through *Nevada Striving Readers* activities?
3. To what extent has each *Nevada Striving Readers* subgrantee implemented all components of their proposed project on time, within budget, and in compliance with initiative requirements for transparency and accountability, and SRCL and State regulations?

At the end of each subsequent year, the EE will produce annual evaluation reports that will focus on both process (implementation) and outcomes. The process evaluation will include an examination of anticipated outcomes prior to the project implementation. Benchmarks and outcome goals will be established at the State, LEA, school, and ECE provider levels for student achievement, educator professional growth, and full implementation of the initiative.

Evaluation of the *Nevada Striving Readers* initiative will document growth in teacher knowledge and changes in classroom practices. Information on growth in teacher knowledge will be collected through survey data, professional development evaluation summaries, and implementation of best practices in curricula design and instructional delivery. Through measures indicating the levels of utilization of professional development content and stages of concern, NDE and subgrantees will determine areas of strong or failed implementation of instructional activities and areas where planned implementation is in jeopardy.

### **Summative Assessments**

Multiple, ongoing assessment tools are fundamental and supportive of instruction and will allow accumulation and use of better information about student achievement in the context of improved instruction. Nevada Reading Criterion Referenced Tests (grades 3-8), Nevada High School Proficiency Exams (HSPE), and Nevada Writing Proficiency Exams (grades 5, 8, 9-12) are the cornerstones of the Nevada state accountability system.

Assisted by contractors WestEd and Measured Progress, Nevada has developed criterion referenced tests (Nevada Reading CRT and HSPE) that are aligned to the Nevada State Content Standards. Reading results by school, LEA, and State levels can be compared by cohorts from year to year for *Nevada Striving Readers* and disaggregated by ethnicity and socio-economic descriptors. Data is reported in Nevada annual progress reports as required under section 111(b)(3) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The Nevada Writing Proficiency Exam (WPE) is a performance based writing assessment that is aligned with the Nevada State Content Standards through a rigorous scoring rubric. Designed and administered by the NDE, results by school, LEA, and State levels can be

compared by cohorts from year to year for *Nevada Striving Readers* and disaggregated by ethnicity and socio-economic descriptors and reported in Nevada annual progress reports.

Nevada adopted the CCSS in October, 2010, and has joined the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) in 2009 as a Governing State (APPENDIX D). SBAC is a collection of more than 30 states working collaboratively to develop a student assessment system aligned to the CCSS to be fully implemented in the 2013-2014 school year. SBAC will create state-of-the-art adaptive online exams, using “open source” technology. The online system will also provide accurate assessment information for teachers and others on the progress of all students, including low-performing and high-performing students, those with disabilities, English language learners (ELLs), and students who are socially and/or economically disadvantaged. The system will include (1) summative exams (offered twice each school year); (2) optional formative, or benchmark, exams; and (3) a variety of tools, processes, and practices for teachers to use in planning and implementing informal, ongoing assessment protocols (this will assist teachers in understanding what students are and are not learning on a daily basis to adjust instruction).

The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, Fourth Edition (PPVT-4) is a measure of expressive vocabulary and is well-suited to measure gains in oral language skills for children 4 years old and kindergarten students. It is currently in use in many Nevada ECE programs and was an essential element of the Clark County School District Early Reading First program. The PPVT-4 provides reliable scores, with all reliability and validity coefficients in the .90s range.

In order to provide a longitudinal assessment of student progress, Nevada will administer the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) in grades 1-12 and Iowa Test of Educational Development (ITED) in grades 9-12. Administered at the end of each school year, these achievement tests will

provide norm-referenced interpretations of student achievement, making it possible to use the scores to determine skill areas of relative strength and weakness for individual students or class groups, and to estimate year-to-year growth. Such comparisons provide educators with the opportunity to analyze the achievement levels of students in relation to nationally representative student groups. Educators and the community have an "external" look at the performance of students; one that is independent of the school's own assessments of student learning.

**Table 4. Summative Assessments by Grade Levels**

	Pre-K	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	HS
Nevada Reading CRT					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Nevada HSPE											✓
Nevada WPE							✓			✓	✓
PPVT-4	✓	✓									
SBAC (ELA)*					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
ITBS**			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
ITED**											✓
* Beginning 2014-2015 school year, all students grades 3 through 8 will participate in the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) testing for English language arts (ELA) and the use of the Nevada Reading CRT will be phased out. ** In order to maintain a cohesive and coherent assessment system throughout the project, the ITBS and ITED will be administered providing a continuous measure of improvement throughout the project.											

**Valid and Reliable Screening, Diagnostic, and Progress Monitoring Assessments**

The progress monitoring assessment will consist of valid and reliable, standards-linked assessments selected through collaboration of statewide stakeholders and NDE personnel. To facilitate this process, the NDE personnel will establish an Assessment Task Force of 10 to 12 experts to develop a process to review possible assessments. These experts will include NDE curriculum and instruction experts, NSHE professors, literacy experts from RPDPs, and one or more subgrantees. The review process will include analyses of the evidence base and data quality provided by screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring assessments. The panel will

select assessments that best align to CCSS. Once the panel has reviewed the assessments available, they will select the most appropriate tool and inform subgrantees of the decision.

To facilitate this process, NDE initiative personnel and representatives from the NSLT will collaboratively draft a selection criteria scoring system that will determine how effectively each assessment under consideration:

- Aligns to the CCSS;
- Uses technology to administer assessment with appropriate adaptations for students with special needs, including students with specialized learning needs and disabilities;
- Specifies the quality and type of on-demand (timely) data in a variety of meaningful formats to enable thoughtful and well-informed instructional decisions (e.g., disaggregation of data and presentation of data in the form of easy to read tables, graphs, charts);
- Is evidence based (unbiased review of one or more evaluation studies, has strong internal and external validity, and supports the direct attribution of one or more outcomes to the program, practice, or policy);
- Adheres to principles of scientific research (as defined by section 200 (18) of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended);
- Meets the level of quality and type of professional development required;
- Has ease of administration; and
- Provides full descriptions of when to administer (e.g., at beginning of school year for screening, at beginning of intervention for diagnostic, multiple times throughout the year for progress monitoring).

All measures must be sufficiently reliable to provide a valid indication of progress toward acquisition of grade level reading skills and have multiple forms to facilitate repeated

measurement during the school year. Through ongoing professional development, training will be provided on the selected assessment tools by the Project Director and Literacy Coordinators in collaboration with NDE assessment experts and subgrantees. This will include initial training on administration, follow-up professional development on use and inter-reliability of data, and periodic monitoring to determine fidelity to administration protocols and timeliness of administration.

### **Program Effectiveness**

An examination of anticipated outcomes before, during, and at the end of schoolwide program implementation will occur to determine if the improvement programs resulted in the achievement of desired goals and objectives. Data will include, but not be limited to, measures of student academic achievement; observations of teaching performance; records of interviews with school staff, students and parents; and survey data regarding perceptions of schoolwide programming. The comprehensive evaluation report will consist of summary reports to include:

- *Achievement gains* Specific identification of achievement data on all initiative schools, including schools and LEAs within the State that report the largest gains in reading achievement in each grant year. Data will be disaggregated by student Free and/or Reduced Lunch (FRL) eligibility, Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), major racial/ethnic subgroups, and LEP subpopulations.
- *Implementation evidence* Documentation that the initiative has met all SRCL program requirements and obligations related to implementation and administration.
- *Program effectiveness* Evidence of levels of progress the NDE and LEAs have made through the initiative in reducing the number of students who are reading below grade level.

- *Reducing the statewide number of students reading below grade level* Increase in the number of students reading at grade level or above, including increase in the percentages of students in all subpopulations reading at grade level or above.
- *Increasing the number of pre-school children with pre-literacy skills* Increase in percentages of children 4 years old who have developed pre-literacy and oral language skills.

Observable results will be reported to the initiative in two ways. First, a detailed technical report will be submitted to the NSLT and NDE initiative personnel describing progress and achievement in order to inform the ongoing process to determine “what works”. Data from ongoing student assessments, professional development evaluations, observations, surveys, and school/student progress reports will inform this process and will be reviewed regularly and reported to the SRCL program as required. Program impact will be evaluated by analyses of teacher perceptions of literacy development and learning techniques subsequent to the employment of the specified schoolwide improvement programs. Field observations of teaching performance and student learning, surveys, and interviews of teachers and administrators will generate data to determine the impact on literacy instruction.

Second, a series of shorter reports will be submitted for initiative ECE providers, and LEA elementary and secondary schools. Written in family and community friendly language, these reports will (1) provide specific guidance regarding what parents can do at home to help support their children’s literacy development; and (2) provide relevant literacy information and recommendations for parents and families. These reports will be made available on the *Nevada Striving Readers* website and distributed to all families of students in initiative schools and other stakeholders. Reports will (1) explain benefits for children in an initiative setting (e.g., funding for literacy materials, technology, intervention specialists); (2) document statewide and school

achievement levels for school readiness and English language arts performance, including specific strengths and areas where the State, LEAs, schools, and ECE providers need to improve.

### **Accountability**

The evaluation process will determine the accountability of the program to the project plan. The implementation of program activities that were designed to lead to the achievement of each goal will be documented using both qualitative and quantitative methods to produce a coherent, precise record of each activity. Data that may be recorded include the numbers and schedules of course workshops, the documented content of those courses as evidenced by agendas, multiple measurement models of all available student achievement information, extent of the use of materials and programs, and progression on State, subgrantee, and school goals.

The data elements described above will be collected by the external evaluators from all project schools and also from samples of those schools obtained through surveys, interviews and site visits. Dissemination of findings will take the form of written reports, monologues, case studies, position papers, and oral/video presentations. ECE providers and individual schools, with assistance from their LEA, will set annual goals based on current student achievement data and percentage targets to indicate adequate growth. Providers and/or schools that do not meet their projected goals at the end of any single year of the initiative will be identified. A technical assistance plan will be co-designed by a site-based Literacy Team, LEA / ECE provider leadership, the Project Director, and Literacy Coordinators. If the provider and/or school do not meet achievement goal targets for reading at or above grade level by the end of Years 1 and 2 of their subgrant, the provider and/or school LEA will be asked to discontinue the site as part of *Nevada Striving Readers* initiative. Subgrantees must report rulings and rationales to the NDE; failure to make well-considered and justified decisions will place their subgrant in jeopardy.

***(A)(v) Dissemination of Project Outcomes***

The External Evaluator will annually produce two reports. The first will be a technical report for the NDE, subgrantee, and State leaders. A second report will be produced for families and other stakeholders that is less technical. Both reports will include school-level achievement data disaggregated by major student subpopulations and implementation achievements. The first report will be more in-depth. These and any other reports will be available to the public and posted on the initiative website, accessible for downloading. CD/DVDs or hard copies of the reports will be sent to anyone who submits a request. The PD will disseminate initiative progress and outcome summaries at national, State, and local professional development events and conferences. Public and professional venues will be utilized, including multiple media webinars, video-conferences, public radio and TV, printed news media, and presentations at the Nevada Legislature, business and industry organization meetings, and PTA/PTO meetings.

**SELECTION CRITERION (B): State Subgrant Competition**

***(B)(i) Rigorous, high-quality subgrant application process***

The NDE will conduct a rigorous, competitive subgrant competition open to eligible applicants with the largest number and largest percent of high-poverty children and students (more than 40% FRL). An estimated three to 12 subgrants will be awarded totaling 95% of the SRCL funds (APPENDIX C), to LEAs and/or nonprofit providers of ECE through a competitive review process. The rigorous review will award funds to applicants who propose high-quality comprehensive literacy programs that address NDE Absolute Priorities 1, 2, and 3. There is one Competitive Preference Priority and one Invitational Priority. All priorities are aligned to the 2011 SRCL grant program Priorities, Selection Criteria, and Additional Requirements, as defined

and described in the Notice Inviting Applications (NIA). Applicants must address all three Absolute Priorities or applications will not be reviewed.

There is no cut score for funding; applications will be rank ordered by score and funded in order as long as the funding lasts. The Invitational Priority is the inclusion of a minimum of two schools that do not receive Title I funds and that have a high percentage of socially and/or economically disadvantaged students as defined by the SRCL program (NIA, p. 53). This priority has no point value. However, in the event two or more applications receive the same rank order for limited funds, preference will be given to applications in which this priority is clearly and specifically described in the project design.

***(B)(i)(a) The LEA and/or ECE Provider capacity to successfully implement its proposal***

While a full and thoughtful response to all items is essential, the Subgrant Review Panel will concentrate on the applicant's project design to determine alignment and compliance with the SRCL grant program and the *Nevada Striving Readers* initiative, coherent and realistic plans to ensure appropriate expenditure of and accountability for funds, data collection and management, project evaluation plan, statewide collaboration plans, and sustainability.

Capacity to successfully implement the project will be judged by several criteria, including the applicant's current and/or past experience with other large-scale initiatives (e.g., Reading Excellence Act, Reading First, Reading First Targeted Assistance, Nevada Early Literacy Intervention Program, Response to Intervention, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Partnership, Nevada State Pre-K-grade 3 Initiative). The applicant's current and proposed infrastructure design will indicate the feasibility of short-term and long-term capacity and sustainability to invest in systemic transformation. Infrastructure design includes, but is not limited to, 1) realistic time and cost investment of highly qualified personnel; 2) investment in ongoing, innovative educator

professional development and coaching/mentoring; 3) implementation of multiple programs to address the needs of socially and/or economically disadvantaged students; and 4) the means to facilitate the involvement and promote the collaboration of families, community organizations, and business/industry.

***(B)(i)(b) Extent to which each subgrant has proposed a comprehensive, high-quality literacy program that meets all of the Additional Requirements section***

LEAs and/or nonprofit providers of ECE receiving subgrants must use the funds for ". . . services and activities that have certain characteristics of effective literacy instruction, professional development, screening and assessment, targeted interventions for students reading below grade level and other research-based methods of improving classroom instruction and practice" (SRCL NIA, p. 3). Subgrants awarded on a competitive basis must fund projects that provide detailed, specific, sustainable designs that maximize the cost-benefit of expended funds and minimize the student/teacher cost. According to SRCL requirements, projects must include (1) improving learning outcomes, school readiness, and success from birth through grade 12 in the area of language and literacy, including socially and/or economically disadvantaged students; (2) enabling more DBDM by collecting, analyzing, and using high-quality and timely data to improve participant outcomes in early learning settings and in elementary and secondary schools; and (3) including effective use of technology that includes universal design.

Subgrant applicants must sign Assurances guaranteeing that they will comply with all SRCL and NDE program criteria and requirements. The subgrant applicant will assure that all members of their proposed project team have expertise and experience spanning all age/grade levels of literacy development and education for children from birth through grade 12. Applications must include a clear, coherent, specific description of the qualitative and

quantitative data used to document a pre-application Needs Assessment. The applicant must describe how the design and implementation of the subgrant project will be guided by the Needs Assessment results and the project is realistic, feasible, within budget guidelines, aligned to the NSLP, and will be aligned to the CCSS by the end of the grant project. Subgrantees will be audited throughout each year of the initiative to ensure that funds are expended appropriately as dictated by the requirements and regulations of the SRCL grant program and the NDE for the purpose of implementing the NSLP. In the interest of transparency, fiscal accountability, and in compliance with SRCL requirements, budgets and fiscal reports will be made public through publication on the *Nevada Striving Readers* website.

**Table 5. Required LEA Subgrant Allocations by Grade Level/Age Group**

<b>Grade Level / Age Group</b>	<b>% Subgrant Required Allocation</b>
Birth through age 5	15
Kindergarten through Grade 5	40
Grades 6 through 8	20
Grades 9 through 12	20

Subgrant applications will include assurances and detailed descriptions of how other agencies, nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, and families are included in activities that promote the implementation of effective literacy instruction for socially and/or economically disadvantaged students.

***(B)(i)(b)(1) How the comprehensive literacy program addresses the needs of disadvantaged students and proposes to implement activities in schools and early childhood learning programs with the highest levels of need and capacity for improvement***

Subgrantees must implement a cohesive, comprehensive literacy program that maximizes existing State, Federal, and local funds, materials, resources, and personnel through integration of SRCL project activities and strategies with existing best practices. Disadvantaged students

identified in the Needs Assessment and throughout the school year must receive instruction and support through projects that (1) utilize mechanisms, instructional tools, and practices to sustain aligned work that is designed to remove barriers for disadvantaged students; (2) improve administrator and leadership quality in communication with families and external support organizations; (3) provide teachers, librarians, and other educators with professional development supported by coaches or mentors for implementation of strategies and use of materials specific to specialized needs of each disadvantaged student; (4) engage families; and (5) create transitions and pathways that provide seamless progression of literacy development without barriers of geography, poverty, language, disability, lack of family support, or other circumstances.

***(B)(i)(b)(2) How the comprehensive literacy program is informed by a Needs Assessment described in the application and is designed to support effective coaching and to improve student achievement of struggling readers.***

Subgrant applicants must conduct a data documented Needs Assessment that forms the basis of their subgrant project as required by the SRCL grant program (SRCL NIA, p. 11). The Needs Assessment must be designed to incorporate the NSLP Essential Elements 1-6 (APPENDIX A). The Needs Assessment must be conducted annually to ensure data supports ongoing modifications, strategies, and activities designed to precisely meet the needs of educators, families, and students across all age and grade levels.

***(B)(i)(b)(3) How the comprehensive literacy program involves other agencies, nonprofit and community-based organizations, and families in activities that promote the implementation of effective literacy instruction for disadvantaged students***

NSLP Essential Element 4, Family and Community Partnerships (APPENDIX A), are strategies and activities that literacy leaders recognize as keys to a shared interest and responsibility for student literacy development and expansion of opportunities for children, adolescents, and families. When schools, families, and communities work together, parents become empowered, teachers are more effective, schools improve, and the workforce grows strong. Subgrant applicants are expected to design their projects to align to this element. Applicants who address the Competitive Preference Priority of Family Literacy Programs will be expected to incorporate strategies and activities that address all students with a focus on the needs of disadvantaged students.

***(B)(i)(c) Extent to which subgrant applicant demonstrates willingness to implement coherent strategy to improve literacy instruction that aligns Federal, State, and local funds***

As outlined in APPENDIX C, subgrant applicants must fully describe how they will implement a coherent strategy to improve literacy instruction aligned with other programs supported by Federal funds, including Title I, Title II-A, and Title III of the ESEA, and (as appropriate) the Head Start Act, the IDEA Act of 2006, and State and local funds, with a focus on high-poverty schools and high-poverty populations (as defined as the schools with the highest numbers and percentages of FRL students or families identified as living in poverty). In the subgrant application, specific information must be provided by the applicant that details how the subgrant project will align resources, materials, and personnel supported by various funding streams to (1) maximize the benefit of programs for teachers and students; (2) ensure programs are non-competitive with each other; (3) maximize the return on investment and minimize the cost per student and teacher; (4) integrate program activities to avoid repetition; (5) maximize the number of teachers and students served; and (6) correlate data to ensure inter-rater reliability.

***(B)(ii) Extent to which the NDE will give priority to LEAs or providers of ECE that propose to serve high-poverty schools or a high-poverty population, based on a definition of poverty and process for applying the priority provided by Nevada***

Of Nevada LEAs that serve low-income student populations, 13 of 17 LEAs exceed 40% low-income based on Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) eligibility; of those, seven have the largest number and largest percentage. Priority for subgrant applications will be given to LEAs and nonprofit providers of ECE that serve disadvantaged students with a focus on high-poverty (either more than 40% FRL or meet other eligibility criteria as defined by the SRCL program).

***(B)(iii) Extent to which the NDE will give priority to LEAs or providers of ECE whose applications are supported by the strongest available evidence***

Subgrantees are required to conduct a qualitative and quantitative data documented Needs Assessment to guide the design and implementation of the subgrant project. One of the selection criteria in the subgrant review process requires applicants to precisely describe the evidence used to document how the subgrantee will serve high-poverty schools and populations. Data to support and provide a rationale or justification for subgrant project activities include U.S. Census Bureau and State of Nevada data that highlight at-risk student populations in need of intervention, such as 1) number and percent of students FRL eligible; 2) number and percent of high-poverty students; 3) communities and families in dire economic circumstances; 4) sub-populations of students in greatest need for literacy instruction and intervention (e.g., LEP); and 5) number and percent of English/Language Arts teachers and certified ECE personnel qualified to ensure achievement of project goals and objectives. At stake is the future of Nevada children and the State economic viability. As such, the NDE intends to conduct a rigorous review process

that will challenge subgrant applicants to engage in long-term strategic planning for innovative systemic transformation supported by valid and reliable empirical data.

***(B)(iv) Extent to which the NDE will develop or update a process, or use an existing process, to review and judge the evidence base and alignment with Nevada standards and Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for the curricula and materials that LEAs propose to use in implementing subgrants, and how the NDE will make the process and results of any review publicly available***

In the interest of a Transparent Nevada, the NDE and subgrantees will make the subgrant process and applications accessible to the public through the NDE *Nevada Striving Readers* and subgrantee websites and presentations to the Nevada Legislature, State Board of Education, and through other venues. Using the USED grant programs Race to the Top and Investing in Innovation as models, information that would breach privacy laws will be redacted. Publicized information will include (1) the subgrant review process, subgrant applications, and technical reviews; (2) Nevada standards and CCSS alignment process and progress of collaboration by NDE, subgrantees, and other stakeholders; (3) NDE and subgrantee review, selection process, and decisions related to materials, resources, and professional development activities for alignment to CCSS; and (4) opportunities selected by the subgrantees for public comment regarding alignment to CCSS of subgrant project materials, resources, and professional development activities.

### **SELECTION CRITERION C: Project Management**

#### ***(C)(i) Management Plan***

#### **Year 1: September 2011 - August 2012 Pre-Implementation Planning**

**Milestones** Grant award approved by Nevada Interim Finance Committee • Hire initiative NDE personnel • Begin initiative implementation • NSLT refines Mission Statement,

Goals, Objectives   ▪ Design and finalize a communication plan for subgrantees, NSLT, and NDE initiative personnel   ▪ Initiate subgrant application process   ▪ Create Materials

Alignment Tool   ▪ Adopt screening, diagnostic, and progress monitoring assessments

**Table 6. Timeline of Activities**

<p><b>Yr. 1 2011 September - December</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Submit grant award to State of Nevada for approval process</li> <li>• Public Grant Award Ceremony</li> <li>• Begin and complete process to hire NDE Project Director and Literacy Coordinators</li> <li>• NSLT retreat to begin implementation of NSLP and <i>Nevada Striving Readers</i></li> <li>• Draft communication plan</li> <li>• Establish Materials Task Force                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• workgroups for Pre-K, elementary, middle, high schools</li> <li>• draft and finalize CCSS alignment tool</li> <li>• send alignment tool to all LEAs statewide</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Establish Assessments Task Force                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• workgroups for Pre-K, elementary, middle, high schools</li> <li>• write evaluation tool</li> <li>• begin reviewing assessments (screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Finalize assessment selection and distribute to all LEAs statewide</li> <li>• Prepare and make public the RFP for hiring external evaluator contractor</li> <li>• Coordinate with National Center on Response to Intervention for assistance plan</li> <li>• Project Director / LCs meet quarterly w/ NDE fiscal staff, annually subgrantee fiscal staff</li> <li>• Attend SRCL program annual meeting for grantees</li> </ul>
<p><b>2012 January - August</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announce subgrant application and technical assistance availability</li> <li>• Approve communication plan with NSLT, NDE, RPDPs, LEAs, ECE providers</li> <li>• Create subgrantee and families/communities information dissemination plans</li> <li>• Select and train peer reviewers for Subgrant Review</li> <li>• Conduct Subgrant Review</li> <li>• Award subgrants and provide technical assistance so subgrantees can immediately:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• buy instructional materials and assessments</li> <li>• begin training on how to use instructional materials and assessments</li> <li>• plan to collect baseline data (ITBS) in spring 2012</li> </ul> </li> <li>• NSLT status meeting</li> <li>• Review RFPs for External Evaluator and select contractor</li> <li>• Work with External Evaluator to create and finalize evaluation plan</li> <li>• With External Evaluator, create online data collection system</li> <li>• Conduct statewide orientation meeting for all subgrantees and subgrant project schools</li> <li>• RPDPs create professional development strategic plans</li> <li>• NDE audit of subgrantees</li> <li>• Subgrantees submit required reports to NDE as required</li> <li>• Conduct Summer Institutes for training, technical assistance, networking</li> <li>• NSLT Retreat to plan for Year 2</li> </ul>

**Year 2: September 2012 - August 2013 Implementation**

**Milestones** Implement comprehensive literacy subgrant projects · Implement multi-level interventions · Implement training for creation of DBDM Literacy Teams in subgrantee schools

<b>Yr. 2 2012 September - December</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly observations by administrators, monthly site visits by the <i>Nevada Striving Readers</i> personnel, weekly coaching by implementation specialists/literacy coaches and/or lead teachers in middle and high schools.</li> <li>• Ongoing training, site visits, technical assistance, monitoring, data collection</li> <li>• Weekly observations by administrators, monthly site visits by the <i>Nevada Striving Readers</i> personnel, weekly coaching by implementation specialists/literacy coaches and/or lead teachers in middle and high schools.</li> <li>• Conduct site visits to ensure implementation and data reliability and integrity</li> <li>• NSLT Status Meeting &amp; attend SRCL program annual meeting for grantees</li> <li>• Establish RTI protocol</li> <li>• Review and refine communication plan</li> <li>• DBDM Literacy Teams video-conference</li> <li>• Conduct observations, surveys, interviews to collect qualitative data per evaluation plan</li> </ul>
<b>2013 January - February</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct site visits to ensure implementation and data reliability and integrity</li> <li>• Implement RTI protocol</li> <li>• Conduct observations, surveys, interviews to collect qualitative data per evaluation plan</li> </ul>
<b>March - May</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSLT Status Meeting; DBDM Literacy Teams video-conference</li> <li>• Conduct site visits to monitor, oversee, ensure integrity of implementation</li> <li>• Implement data collection protocol</li> </ul>
<b>June - August</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NDE audit of subgrantees</li> <li>• Subgrantees submit required reports to NDE &amp; SRCL as required</li> <li>• Submit required reports to SRCL program as required</li> <li>• Conduct Summer Institutes for training, technical assistance, networking</li> <li>• NSLT Annual Retreat to Plan for Year 3</li> </ul>

**Year 3: September 2013 - August 2014 Refine**

**Milestones** Refine and share statewide subgrantee program data documented best practices · Refine multi-tiered efforts to acquire Federal, State, and local funding and other resources · Refine duties of DBDM Literacy Teams in all subgrantee schools · Refine, initiate, and complete action plans

<b>Yr. 3 2013 September - December</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSLT Status Meeting &amp; attend SRCL program annual meeting for grantees</li> <li>• Review and refine RTI protocol</li> <li>• Weekly observations by administrators, monthly site visits by the <i>Nevada Striving Readers</i> personnel, weekly coaching by implementation specialists/literacy coaches and/or lead teachers in middle and high schools.</li> <li>• Share data documented "what works" best practices statewide</li> <li>• Establish criteria for sustainability</li> <li>• Review and refine communication plan</li> <li>• DBDM Literacy Teams video-conference</li> <li>• Conduct site visits to ensure implementation</li> </ul>
<b>2014 January - May</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct site visits to ensure implementation</li> <li>• NSLT Status Meeting; DBDM Literacy Teams video-conference</li> </ul>
<b>June - August</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NDE audit of subgrantees</li> <li>• Subgrantees submit required reports to NDE &amp; SRCL as required</li> <li>• Conduct Summer Institutes for training, technical assistance, networking</li> <li>• NSLT Retreat to plan for Year 4</li> </ul>

**Year 4: September 2014 - August 2015 and Year 5: September 2015 - August 2016.**

**Timelines of Activities to be detailed in Year 1 and modified as required Years 2 and 3**

**Sustainability and Scale-up**

**Milestones** Leverage new and existing funding streams to scale-up and sustain projects statewide

- Create a long-term sustainability plan for comprehensive literacy programs
- Create a plan for sustaining multi-level interventions
- Leverage funding streams to place DBDM Literacy Teams in all schools and subgrantee ECE providers

<b>Years 4 - 5 2014 - 2016</b>
<p><b>Timeline of Activities for Year 4 to be developed in full in Year 3, and for Year 5 to be developed in Year 4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NSLT Status Meeting</li> <li>• Review and refine RTI protocol</li> <li>• Conduct site visits to ensure implementation</li> <li>• Review and refine communication plan</li> <li>• DBDM Literacy Teams video-conference</li> <li>• NDE audit of subgrantees</li> <li>• Subgrantees submit required reports to NDE as required</li> </ul>

- Submit required reports for to SRCL program as required
  - Conduct Summer Institutes for training, technical assistance, networking
  - NSLT Retreat with all subgrantees at end of Year 5 to reflect, synthesize, theorize, study "what works", and plan for sustainability and scale-up
- NSLT Annual Retreat at end of Year 4 to plan for Year 5

**(C)(ii) Qualifications of key personnel** (APPENDIX J: Résumés and Job Qualifications)

**Dr. Keith Rheault, Nevada Superintendent of Public Instruction**

Dr. Keith W. Rheault was appointed as Nevada Superintendent of Public Instruction in March, 2004, and continues to serve the State in that capacity. Prior to his appointment as Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. Rheault had been employed with the NDE since 1986. During his tenure with the NDE, he has served as the Agriculture Education Consultant and State FFA Advisor for five years, Assistant Director and Director of the Office of Occupational and Continuing Education for four years, and as Deputy Superintendent for Instructional, Research, and Evaluative Services for nine years. Dr. Rheault will act as the liaison between the NDE and the Nevada Governor, Nevada legislators, and the ERBRTF. With assistance from Mr. Greg Weyland, NDE Deputy Superintendent, Fiscal/Administrative Services, Dr. Rheault will ensure the initiative is implemented with fidelity to and in compliance with SRCL grant requirements.

**Cindy Sharp, Assistant Director, Office of Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum**

Cindy Sharp's primary responsibility is to oversee the development, administration, scoring, and reporting of Nevada large-scale assessments. In her career in education she has taught at various levels from grades 5-12, with her primary experience in social studies and reading. The highlight of her career has been involvement with the Northern Nevada Writing Project, a National Writing Project site that encourages teacher professional development. Ms. Sharp was a member of Nevada Governor Guinn's "Leading Literacy" effort through the Education Council of the States. She has worked with the continued planning and

implementation of the Nevada Reading Excellence Act and Nevada Reading First grant. In addition to her full-time duties with the NDE, she is currently instructing pre-service teachers in literacy at University of Nevada, Reno.

**Darrin T. Hardman, Education Programs Professional, K-6 English Language Arts**

Darrin Hardman will act as Interim Project Director for the *Nevada Striving Readers* initiative. He is currently responsible for the implementation of the K-6 ELA CCSS in Nevada and serves as the content expert for the Nevada Reading CRTs, WPEs, and Nevada Alternate Assessment. As former Project Director for the Nevada Reading First grant, he coordinated the statewide management team responsible for implementation and management of the Nevada Reading First grant. Mr. Hardman also served as a Literacy Coordinator for the Nevada Reading Excellence Act where he coordinated the tutorial subgrants for the southern portion of Nevada and provided technical assistance for schools beginning local reading improvement projects. Mr. Hardman was also affiliate faculty member at University of Nevada, Las Vegas, where he taught pre-service and graduate reading/language arts methods courses and supervised tutoring in the Literacy Development Center. Mr. Hardman was also a professional developer for Clark County School District coordinating districtwide courses in early literacy development for primary grade teachers. He has taught grades 1-3 and has been a school-based reading specialist.

***(C)(iii) The extent to which Nevada will ensure diversity of perspectives***

To promote the literacy development of Nevada children and young adults, the NSLT formed a strong partnership with leaders and literacy experts in government offices, education institutions, community organizations, and families throughout Nevada. Working closely with the NDE, members collaborated to write and produce the NSLT and ensure diversity of perspectives in the design and implementation of the *Nevada Striving Readers* initiative. A

driving force of the initiative is to ensure at all stages the involvement of Nevadans from diverse education, workforce, cultural, economic, and geographic backgrounds. Small, rural LEAs and the two large urban LEAs, nonprofit ECE providers, NSHE, families, legislators, business/industry representatives, and community organizations are and will be equally represented in all stages of implementation, planning, and decision-making, as they were in the creation of the NSLP. Only with the collaboration and partnership of diverse, statewide perspectives will the *Nevada Striving Readers* initiative succeed for *all* Nevadans birth through grade 12 and beyond.

**SELECTION CRITERION (D): Adequacy of Resources**

***(D)(i) Extent to which costs are reasonable in relation to the number of objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project***

Without this significant, critical SRCL grant funding, the NDE will not have adequate State, local, or other grant funds required to support this large-scale, essential statewide *Nevada Striving Readers* initiative. We take very seriously the responsibility for ethical accountability and fiscal integrity of taxpayer funds entrusted to us by USED. As such, the initiative budget has been constructed to maximize the cost-benefit return on investment of grant funds by increasing the number of educators, students, and families served over the five year grant period. Grant funds will create numerous new jobs and provide income for Nevada and nationwide consultants and vendors. As in most projects, the cost per participant or recipient of services is high at initiation, scaling down to reasonable and highly cost-effective by the end of the grant period. Nevada enrollment in K-12, including State sponsored charter schools, is currently 437,444 students and 22,689 Pre-K-12 teachers.

**Table 7. Estimated Cost Per Student and Teacher Over 5 Years**

Initiative Year	Estimated Number of Pre-K-12 Students Receiving Direct Services #	Estimated Number of Pre-K-12 Teachers Receiving Direct Services #	Budget Request \$	Estimated Cost Per Student and Teacher \$
1	23,000	2,000	14,999,990	600
2	30,000	5,000	14,999,975	430
3	50,000	8,000	14,999,987	260
4	150,000	15,000	14,999,975	90
5	430,000	22,000	14,999,987	33

The cost per student and teacher will dramatically decrease over five years due to multiple factors, including cohorts of educators who share best practices; peer mentors; creative means to maximize investments in technology resources; new funding streams to support program expansion; and decreased travel costs by using technology and social networking.

One can theorize that Nevada children cannot perform more poorly than they do now. Therefore, we are in a unique position to move forward with systemic transformation that is innovative and ambitious. Using cutting-edge technology and an enhanced and expanded statewide longitudinal data system, we are determined to keep our pledge to Nevada children and families to move into the company of the top ranked education systems in the nation.

***(D)(ii) Quality of the NDE plan to ensure that SRCL subgrant funds are allocated as required***

The NDE will audit subgrantees to ensure the initiative is implemented with fidelity to and in compliance with SRCL grant requirements. Training and technical assistance in fiscal planning, oversight, and reporting will be conducted by the PD and LCs. At minimum annually, subgrantees will be required to submit financial reports to the NDE. A subgrantee audited as out of compliance will be immediately required to work with the NDE to mitigate the issue(s) and set a date for resolution. In the event the subgrantee does not comply, a recommendation will be made to Dr. Rheault that the subgrant be rescinded.

***(D)(iii) The extent to which the NDE will use the grant to leverage State and Federal funds***

The NDE will request assistance from the Governor and the diverse and expert members of the ERBRTF with their fundraising expertise and connections. The ERBRTF will be asked to assist with the development of a strategic action plan to solicit funding and resources to support the initiative and for long-term sustainability. The NDE Grant Writer will allocate time and resources to conduct a search for funds and other resources to support the initiative.

***(D)(iv) The extent to which the NDE will award SRCL subgrants of sufficient size to support projects that improve instruction for a significant number of students***

The NDE estimated number of awards is three to 12 subgrants to LEAs and nonprofit ECE providers. The subgrants are deemed to be of sufficient size based on a five year estimate of decreasing costs per student and teacher (Narrative, Table 7, p. 49).

**Table 8. Subgrant Estimated Size of Awards and Estimated Number of Eligible Applicants**

Students Served #	Minimum estimated subgrant/year \$	Maximum estimated subgrant/year \$	Estimated Eligible LEAs & Nonprofit ECE Providers #	Estimated Number Pre-K-12 Students & Teachers Served Over 5 Years
≥ 100,000	3,000,000	9,000,000	1	350,000
50,001 - 99,999	1,500,000	2,250,000	1	72,000
≤ 50,000	1,000,000	3,000,000	10	30,000