

To: State Board of Education

From: Teresa Brown (IDOE), Bob Guffin (SBOE) , Michelle McKeown (SBOE), and Maggie Paino (IDOE)

Date: June 30, 2014

RE: Lead Partner interventions at Broad Ripple Magnet School and John Marshall Community High School

Staff from the State Board of Education (“SBOE”), the Indiana Department of Education (“IDOE”), and Dr. Legrand from Indianapolis Public Schools (“IPS”) all recommend that the Board assign The New Teacher Project (“TNTP”) serve as the Lead Partner for Broad Ripple Magnet School and for John Marshall Community High School. The scope of work that was submitted by TNTP to IDOE, SBOE, and IPS in response to the needs identified by IPS is attached to this memorandum.

The process that has been followed in making this recommendation is consistent with the action that was taken by the SBOE in May, by which IPS would identify needs for these schools and then a Lead Partner would be recommended for assignment by the Board. Scholastic and Voyager were also contacted to provide proposed scopes of work. However, all parties identified above agreed that the scope of work submitted by TNTP most strongly aligned with the needs of the buildings.

TO: Teresa Brown, Assistant Superintendent, Indiana Department of Education

FROM: Ian Scott, TNTP

DATE: June 20, 2014

RE: Proposal to serve as Lead Partner to Broad Ripple Magnet HS and John Marshall Community HS

Introduction

TNTP has been dedicated to helping Indiana realize better opportunities for its K-12 students since we launched the Indianapolis Teaching Fellows, an alternative route to teaching, as a joint initiative with the Indianapolis Public Schools (IPS) nearly eight years ago. Our work in Indiana and across the country continues to reinforce our belief that the key to a successful school is creating a team of great teachers who can thrive under effective school leadership.

Since, 2012, we have served as a lead partner with the Indiana Department of Education supporting the turnaround of struggling schools. TNTP proposes a new partnership to focus on:

1. Improving the instructional practice of classroom teachers; and
2. Strengthening building culture with a focus on clearer expectations and better student behavior management

As we've learned in our teacher and school leader trainings across the country, professional development and coaching are most effective when targeted to actual, real time needs. General and abstract teacher training, particularly for veteran teachers, rarely improves practice. Therefore, we propose a more hands on approach to support two schools with the goals of 1) improving instructional practice of classroom teachers and 2) strengthening school culture.

TNTP proposes to address these needs by building upon our current scope of work at Broad Ripple Magnet High School and beginning a new scope of work at John Marshall Community High School. Our training – through interactive seminars and individualized coaching – will focus on cultivating a school culture that can attract, retain and develop teacher talent. We will prioritize discrete, high-impact skills we've seen capably do this. Specifically we propose to:

- Use data (student achievement, school culture, interviews) to identify priorities for coaching
- Articulate a shared vision of teacher effectiveness for school leaders to work towards
- Train school leaders to create school cultures in coordination with the vision for teacher effectiveness
- Focus on proven classroom management trainings that leverage best practices from educators like Doug Lemov and his *Teach Like a Champion* techniques
- Leverage accurate teacher performance data to improve the quality of feedback and manage talent
- Coach school leaders to ensure they are achieving meaningful change

Conditions for Success

Invested partners are critical to the success of this work. To ensure these efforts produce meaningful changes, we will want to confirm that the principal, his or her direct supervisor, and the IPS leadership team are supportive of this work before signing a formal contract for the 2014-2015 academic year. This will mean establishing a shared understanding of overall goals for the school, clear roles and responsibilities, and concrete accountability mechanisms. We will only

move forward with this work if support for goals and the approach is agreed upon at all levels and aligns with district priorities. **Additional conditions for success are included at the end of this proposal.**

Scope of Work

We will use a three step process to implement our school support:

1. Assess need
2. Develop content and training
3. Provide teacher development and leader coaching

Assess Need

Before we design a plan for the year, we will analyze data and engage staff to find out what the professional development needs actually are. We will then leverage our deep knowledge of effective teaching to design seminars that specifically target the development needs we identify, and then train school leaders on how lead the seminars.

We will analyze teacher performance data and gather teacher and school leader perspectives to identify the specific knowledge, skills, and instructional expectations that are missing. The school leader perspective will be collected with expertly-designed surveys that drive the school leaders to critically reflect on their classroom observations and, with our leading questions, pinpoint what specific teacher skills gaps are. For the novice teachers, we will use the robust performance information from our Teaching Fellows Pre-Service Training program.

We will use this data to make strategic decisions about which teachers should train together, in what sessions, and in what sequence. During any given seminar, participants may train in several different groups. But groups are far from random—each group and group transition will be strategic and data-driven, and is part of the professional development plan that we create for each individual teacher.

We propose doing this need assessment near the start of the fall 2014 semester (or sooner if possible). As we do it, we will invite school and district leaders to join us, so they can leverage these practices for future analyses when our engagement is over (or even during the upcoming academic year at other IPS schools).

Develop Content to the Needs Identified

Once we have identified what skills teachers need, TNTP will create professional development seminars for school leaders to lead. We will develop the seminar content, materials, objectives, and scripts for each session. These seminars will be interactive and will be precisely paced to the minute. The majority of it will follow a practice and feedback cycle in which participants constantly rise to their feet to practice, are given feedback from peers or seminar leaders, and are asked to practice once more to incorporate the feedback they received. As we design the content, we will incorporate any key objectives and/or techniques that the district and schools leaders want to see in the seminars. Sessions will be differentiated and teachers will be identified based on real time needs – each session will vary in length and may be split so that there are multiple running simultaneously. Topics may include the following:

- Creating a Culture of High Expectations
- Developing Effective Classroom Procedures
- Maximizing Instructional Time

We will use proven adult learning strategies, resources, and modeling so that each teacher training is effective, productive, practice-based, and is building on the foundational knowledge of each school's best instructional experts—its school leaders and coaches. Our goal is to show each school leader or coach how to model the techniques to address each development need, and how to efficiently and effectively launch frequent, accurate, actionable and differentiated feedback and practice cycles thereafter.



Coming out of these sessions, we will meet with the leadership teams to reassess teacher performance needs and help to identify the objectives that best position teachers to effectively improve student outcomes.

Sustainable Teacher Development and Leadership Coaching

Through our current work at Broad Ripple, we've seen a need to improve the quality of feedback and development all teachers receive. For example, on the January 2014 *Insight* survey only 29% of Broad Ripple's teachers "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the statement: "Professional development opportunities at my school are well planned and facilitated". And just over half agreed that the school is "committed to improving my instructional practice"—more than twenty points lower than the average response of all teachers across sixty other IPS campuses.

We believe school leaders at Broad Ripple and across IPS are poised to improve these numbers – through TNTP's work at Broad Ripple over the past year, we focused heavily on ensuring that all evaluators could rate teachers accurately, collect clear evidence of performance, and utilize existing mechanisms to manage teacher talent. Despite multiple transitions within the leadership team, all evaluators were able to meet expectations for rating accuracy and evidence quality by the end of the year. The school identified 9 of its teachers for development plans – the most at any point in the past several years – this was reflective of TNTP's work with other principals across the district where we saw nearly 200 teachers identified for development (as opposed to 7 in all of IPS the year prior).

Now it's time to ensure that Broad Ripple and John Marshall can take the next step and ensure that accurate evaluations fully deliver on their true potential – providing the quality feedback that all teachers need to improve student outcomes. As TNTP's work was confined to working only with school leaders in the past, we were not able to help schools translate this data into more effective development for teachers. With our proposed scope of work for 2014-2015, we can help both schools accomplish just that.

The issue of ineffective feedback and professional development is a challenge we regularly encounter in our work--teacher support sessions often cover too many topics in shallow detail, are disconnected from teachers' day-to-day classroom experience, are not differentiated according to true professional development needs, and fail to cultivate in their participants the essential skills that have been proven to improve instruction in spite of classroom challenges.

At TNTP, we take a different approach that eradicates these challenges. We train teachers based on the data we analyze about them. We pour over teacher performance data from new angles to pinpoint where each teacher struggles. We then group teachers according to their development needs and customize trainings laser focused on each group's development needs. And these tailored supports focus on the practice—not the theory—of gaining fluency and automaticity in the skills and techniques each group of teachers should possess.

To ensure the accurate ratings collected by school leaders translate to better supports for teachers and increased student outcomes, TNTP proposes to expand its prior scope to work around talent management to now directly involve instructional leaders and build their capacity to sustain this approach. These supports will include the following:

- **Data Analysis.** We will train instructional leaders ("ILs") at Broad Ripple and John Marshall to use sophisticated and novel data analysis methods specifically to identify where teachers are struggling. ILs will learn how to organize teachers into groups based on what the data says about their skill gaps.
- **Content Design.** We will co-develop school-based development session content that will target the skill gaps identified. The content will be based on the content we use in our teacher training programs across the country, but we will work shoulder-to-shoulder with ILs to customize them to the local context at each school.

- **Executing Development Sessions.** We will train the ILs in the proven adult facilitation strategies to lead sessions that are high-energy, interactive, and precisely-paced to the minute. We will train them to repeatedly model critical techniques to deploy in the typical but varied classroom challenges that tend to trigger the skill gap of the group they're facilitating. They'll learn how to incorporate teacher participation and practice into these sessions, so that they're training the teachers much like pro athletes--after each instance of practice, they receive targeted feedback, and then practice again for immediate progress.
- **School Leader Coaching.** We will hold coaching sessions each week with the schools' evaluators that are focused on generating accurate teacher performance ratings and high quality, actionable feedback. This will include on-site support each week, and school leaders will be prioritized based on current needs. Areas of focus may include: increasing time in classrooms, connecting observed evidence to the correct competencies, identifying concrete, actionable next steps for teachers and leading effective feedback conversations.

This approach will allow school leaders and other instructional leaders to leverage their own knowledge of instruction, and employ a number of coaching strategies and best practices for adult learning. Our collaborative efforts can do the following:

- Ensure teachers receive feedback that is frequent, honest, accurate, actionable and differentiated
- Create a system for using teacher performance data to make professional development decisions
- Create common school-wide expectations for instructional practice and classroom management
- Develop a culture of practice

Additional Conditions for Success

Alignment and collaboration with Indianapolis Public Schools are essential in order for this engagement is to be successful. We also need clear communication structures with both IPS and the IDOE, access to historical data, and responsiveness from all parties involved when challenges arise. Specific conditions include:

- Agreement with IPS and IDOE on project goals that are aligned to broader district and state priorities
- Commitment to collaboration, transparency, and a clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each party involved
- Commitment from IPS to make changes to district policy and practice, when possible, that support the schools' ability to improve student outcomes (e.g. rigorous bar for teacher performance, ability to hire/retain top talent, etc.)
- Responsiveness of school leaders, including regular availability to meet with TNTP project staff
- A commitment to make personnel changes if/when they are deemed necessary to meet goals
- A desire to share findings and best practices with other schools across IPS and throughout Indiana

Project Budget and Staff

The total cost of the services described above is **\$299,972** as detailed below for the period September 1, 2014 – September 1, 2015.

Project staff will include a Partner who will work directly with the principals and assistant principals on talent management best practices, one Site Manager who will be fully dedicated to the two schools and lead professional development and coaching work, support from TNTP data analysis team, and additional capacity from experienced trainers/facilitators who will support content development and on-site facilitation of sessions.

Next Steps

We appreciate your consideration of this proposal and look forward to further discussion. If there are questions for TNTP, please contact Ian Scott at ian.scott@tntp.org or (440) 570 – 3981.