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Abstract

National Louis University (NLU), in partnership with the Illinois Resource Center, three Niles Township school districts, and the Niles Township ELL Parent Center, respectfully requests $1,769,423 over five years in order to implement **STEM Success in Multilingual School Networks** (hereafter referred to as *Multilingual STEM Success*). The aim of *Multilingual STEM Success* is to provide professional development activities intended to improve instruction for students with limited English proficiency and assist education personnel with such children to meet high professional standards with an emphasis on science, technology, engineering and mathematics content areas.

The aim of the *Multilingual STEM Success* project will be accomplished by increasing the number of ESL teachers and paraprofessionals who speak less common languages, increasing the involvement of parents of ELLs in their students' learning, and involving administrators of multilingual districts in creating climates of success for all students. We define multilingual school districts as settings where at least two languages other than English are represented in the school population, and English as a second language (ESL) and/or bilingual programs are mandated, based on the student population. *Multilingual STEM Success* aligns with Competitive Preference #2, *Enabling More Data-Based Decision Making;* Competitive Preference #3 *STEM Education;* and Invitational Priority #2 *Improving Preparation of All Teachers to Better Serve English Learners.*

Multilingual school districts face unique challenges that will be addressed meeting the following goals: 1) To improve the preparation and training of pre-service

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and in-service teachers, paraprofessionals, and teacher preparation faculty, in order to provide instruction STEM subjects for ELLs; 2) To increase the number of pre-service teachers who have the ESL endorsement (called "ESL approval" in Illinois); 3) To facilitate data-based decision making regarding classroom instruction and parental support for ELLs; and 4) To improve networking and support among districts, teacher preparation faculty, parents, and paraprofessionals in multilingual school districts.

Project Narrative

Project Narrative

Attachment 1:
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National Louis University STEM Success in Multilingual School Networks

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A. Introduction

National Louis University (NLU), in partnership with the Illinois Resource Center, three Niles Township school districts, and the Niles Township ELL Parent Center, respectfully requests $1,764,077 over five years from the US Department of Education in order to implement **STEM Success in Multilingual School Networks** (hereafter referred to as *Multilingual STEM Success*). The aim of *Multilingual STEM Success* is to provide professional development activities intended to improve instruction for students with limited English proficiency and assist education personnel with such children to meet high professional standards with an emphasis on science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) content areas. National Louis University has the capacity to successfully implement this project as demonstrated by the institution's success through a previous US Department of Education Office of English Language Acquisition grant (2004-2009) entitled *Building Community for English Language Acquisition.*

The aim of the *Multilingual STEM Success* project will be accomplished by increasing the number of ESL teachers, increasing the number of State-certified paraprofessionals who speak less common languages, increasing the involvement of parents of ELLs in their students' learning, and involving administrators of multilingual districts in creating climates of success for all students. NLU defines multilingual school districts as settings where at least two languages other than English are represented in the school population, and English as a second language (ESL) and/or bilingual programs are mandated, based on the student population. *Multilingual STEM Success* aligns with Competitive Preference #2, *Enabling More Data-Based Decision Making;*

Competitive Preference #3 *STEM Education;* and Invitational Priority #2 *Improving Preparation of All Teachers to Better Serve English Learners.*

Multilingual school districts face unique challenges that will be addressed meeting the following goals to: 1) Improve the preparation and training of pre-service and in-service teachers, paraprofessionals, and teacher preparation faculty, in order to provide instruction STEM subjects for ELLs; 2) Increase the number of pre-service teachers who have the ESL endorsement (called "ESL approval" in Illinois); 3) Facilitate data-based decision making regarding classroom instruction and parental support for ELLs; and 4) Improve networking and support among districts, teacher preparation faculty, parents, and paraprofessionals in multilingual school districts.

1. The Multilingual Schools Network

The four project goals are anchored in the Multilingual Schools Network partnership formed by NLU and Skokie School District 73 ½ in 2008. The Multilingual Schools Network combines the many resources of NLU with the District's school and community resources, while profoundly probing issues related to multilingual school districts, in order to improve student achievement. The partnership can provide a framework for looking deeply at teaching and learning, while connecting the work across college departments, content areas, grade levels, neighboring school districts, and community organizations.

Multilingual STEM Success will enable the Multilingual Schools Network to expand by including Niles Township school districts 68, 73 ½, 219, the Niles Township ELL Parent Center, and the Illinois Resource Center. Additionally, more multilingual school districts and community-based organizations will be invited to join the network as

NLU deepens our work together through *Multilingual STEM Success*. *Multilingual STEM Success* will enable the network to build STEM capacity across stakeholders in the Multilingual Schools Network including paraprofessionals, pre-service and in-service teachers, school and district administrators, and university faculty. Additionally, the *Multilingual STEM Success* will foster an expanding network to disseminate what is working in established multilingual school districts to the increasing number of emergent multilingual school districts in northern Illinois.

2. Background on the Partners

Multilingual STEM Success will achieve its goals in consortium with its partners, three school districts in Niles Township (68, 73 ½, and 219), the Niles Township ELL Parent Center, and the Illinois Resource Center.

Niles Township Schools: During the last decade, Niles Township has become home to the largest growing population of immigrants and refugees in the Chicagoland area. (ELL Parent Center, 2011). In Skokie, the village in which both the District 219 High Schools and District 73.5 are located, the number of households (2006 figures) in which a language other than English is spoken was 45.2%, and households headed by foreign persons was 37%; however, those of Hispanic origin constituted only 5.7%. In Niles, the numbers are similar: 44% of households speak a language other than English and only 5% of those are of Hispanic origin (2006 Statistics, State and County Quick Facts, 2011). With the arrival of families speaking over 60 different languages, it has been difficult for districts to find certified bilingual teachers who speak the languages of all of the students they serve.

English learners in these schools have not performed well compared to others. The 2010 PSAE (Illinois State) assessment of 11th graders in District 219 indicated that only 31% of English learners met or exceeded standards in math (compared to the State average of 53%); 15% met or exceeded standards in science (compared to the State average of 52%), and 8% met or exceeded in reading (compared to the State average of 54%, Illinois Report Card, 2010). For all of the 11th graders in the district, by contrast, 63% met or exceeded standards in math, 62% met or exceeded standards in science, and 57% met or exceeded in reading (Gradeschools.org, 2010). In 2010, when 8th grade Limited English Proficient students in District 73.5 took the nationally-normed NAEP exam of academic progress in mathematics, only 7% scored at or above national cutpoints (Illinois District Report Card, 2011). When these English learners continue on to high school, they need very effective mathematics pedagogy in order to reach mathematics standards in high school and beyond. Teachers who are able to convey the language and content of mathematics and also have an understanding of the dynamics of second language acquisition are enormously important to these students' success. These are exactly the teachers targeted in the grant.

Niles Township ELL Parent Center: Due to the rapid changes in demographics in the Niles Township Schools, the Niles Township Superintendents' Association, with the support of local school boards, created the Niles Township Schools' ELL Parent Center, which opened its doors in July, 2008. The Center strives to provide the skills and tools to understand and navigate the United States' educational system for the rich and diverse tapestry that is the backdrop for sixteen schools (Niles North and Niles

West High Schools, and their Pre-K-8 feeder schools) in Skokie, Morton Grove, Lincolnwood, and Niles, Illinois.

The Illinois Resource Center : Founded in 1972, the Illinois Resource Center is a training center funded by the State of Illinois to serve the needs of English language learners. Specifically, it provides comprehensive professional development and technical support throughout Illinois for schools and districts serving ELLs, in grade levels pre-K-12. This activity consists of providing coursework, workshops, presentations, and other services at school districts as well as at the Illinois Resource Center's office. The Illinois Resource Center and National Louis have a long standing contractual relationship for the delivery of coursework for the Illinois State ESL and bilingual approvals, with NLU serving as the credit provider for the Illinois Resource Center's coursework. This partnership is proactive and responsive to changes in state and federal law, standards, and funding as they arise.

B. Project Design

Multilingual STEM Success weaves together four key goals which will have a positive effect on the culture and practices of the participating school districts, the related parent and community organizations, and National Louis University.

To monitor the accomplishment of the grant goals and objectives and to ensure that the grant is informed by input from all of the grant consortium members, an Advisory Committee will be convened twice yearly. Along with the project's directors and key personnel, the Advisory Committee will consist of: Dr. Jerry Ligon, Associate Dean of the National College of Education at NLU; Dr. Margo Gottlieb, Director of Assessment and Evaluation at the Illinois Resource Center; Robin Lisboa, Division

Administrator, Office of English Language Learning, Illinois State Board of Education; Dr. Thomas Porter, Area Instructional Leader in Thornton Township High Schools District 205; Ms. Kate Donegan, Superintendent of Skokie School District 73 ½; Ms. Corrie Wallace, Director of Niles Township ELL Parent Center; and Ms. Karen Lopez, Middle school math teacher, District 131. Additional members may be invited once the project launches. All listed have confirmed by e-mail and will supply a signed letter of agreement and CV once the grant is awarded. Please see the appendix for the Terms of Agreement.

Additionally, four working task forces will be formed: 1) The **ELL STEM Professional Development Task Force**, chaired by project Co-Director Dr. Lems, will address bringing STEM content pedagogy to teacher preparation faculty in both pre-service and in-service programs; 2) The **Paraprofessional Task Force**, chaired by project Co-Director Dr. Stegemoller, will identify and prepare potential paraprofessionals in less well-represented language groups for the State exam, and assist districts in working more effectively with them; 3) The **ELL Parent Involvement Task Force**, chaired by Professor of Education Leah Miller, will collect and analyze data from the ELL Parent Center in order to assess its effect in Niles Township and find ways to deepen the Center's relationship with the surrounding communities.; and 4) The **ELL Administrator Task Force**, chaired by project Partnership Liaison, Dr. Tina Nolan, Associate Director for the NLU Partnership Office, will work with administration in the districts to tackle ESL-related issues in the Multilingual Schools Network and plan bi-annual ELL Administrator Special Interest Group breakfasts. In addition, Dr. Timothy Collins from the Education program will assist in providing professional development

opportunities in STEM training for the teacher preparation faculty. Each task force will have its own members, chosen according to the objectives it will fulfill. These members will include representatives from the Illinois Resource Center, Niles Township ELL Parent Center, administrators from participating Niles Township school districts, paraprofessionals, parents, the NLU Partnership Office, the ELL Parent Center, and the NLU Center for Academic Development. The annual spring meeting of the Advisory Board will include progress reports by each of the four task forces.

1. **Goals, Objectives and Outcomes**

Goal #1: To improve the preparation and training of pre-service and in-service teachers, paraprofessionals and teacher preparation faculty in order to provide instruction in subjects for ELLs. Goal #1 has four objectives:

Objective #1: *To offer three, STEM-focused cohorts for in-service teachers seeking Illinois ESL or bilingual approvals.* Three STEM-focused cohorts for in-service teachers seeking Illinois ESL or bilingual approvals will be conducted and will take place over the course of two years. The courses will be taught by approved faculty teaching in the ESL/Bilingual Education Program at National Louis University and faculty will be chosen from among existing educators with strong STEM backgrounds. The project will recruit such qualified instructors from high school or middle school science or math programs, or through identifying faculty with strong backgrounds in both ESL and/or bilingual education and the STEM subjects.

Faculty teaching in STEM-focused approval courses will engage in ongoing professional development through the *ELL STEM Professional Development Task Force.* Each year, two workshops will be offered; these will be led by Karen Lopez, a

specialist in Math Discourse who teaches at Northern Illinois University and in West Aurora School District 131, Thomas Porter, adjunct professor in the program and area instructional leader for Thornton Township High Schools District 205 in math and English language learning, Dr. Collins, a published author in ESL and science, and Matt Granger, technology coordinator for DuPage County School District 45, who is an adjunct instructor teaching the technology course in the program at NLU. New faculty in additional years of the grant will be provided with an orientation session and workshops provided by Dr. Collins of NLU's Education Program. Among the outcomes of these meetings will be syllabi that are revised to reflect deeper STEM content. These faculty will teach the STEM-focused courses for all three of the in-service cohorts. By so doing, the project will create a cadre of highly-trained teaching faculty, increasing the capacity of NLU to prepare educators to deliver STEM courses in school districts with ELLs.

Students for the three in-service cohorts will be recruited by the school districts involved in the *Multilingual STEM Success*. Guidelines for selection of the cohort grant recipients will be distributed to representatives of the participating districts, and each district will be allotted a proportion of seats in each cohort, with priority given to teachers of STEM subjects and those able to speak languages that are less well-represented in the teaching staff. For each of the three starts, one district will host the six-course sequence on-site. The host district for each cohort will be entitled to 50% of the cohort seats. The outcome will consist of 45 ESL-approval program completers employed in instructional services for ELLs by the fifth year of the grant. The outcome benchmark is 15 per cohort for three cohorts and addresses GPRA 1.5 and 1.6.).

Objective #2: *To increase the number of paraprofessionals working with English language learners who are approved in the State of Illinois.* To accomplish this goal, a needs assessment will be conducted by The *Paraprofessional Task Force*, chaired by Co-Director Dr. Stegemoller. The *Paraprofessional Task Force* will consist of representatives of the ELL Parent Center, members of the Multilingual Schools Network, and John Hopp, Director of the Center for Academic Development at NLU. The needs assessment will help identify parents and community members interested in and appropriate for obtaining the paraprofessional approval. These potential paraprofessionals will be identified through community-based and district-supported parent organizations, most notably the Niles Townships' ELL Parent Center. Potential paraprofessionals will be identified from among underrepresented language groups. The program measure calls for identifying five potential candidates in the first year of the grant and in each year thereafter.

During the first year, the *Paraprofessional Task Force* will convene on three occasions to begin to develop a test preparation plan for potential paraprofessionals. The NLU Center for Academic Development will develop test prep materials for the potential paraprofessionals, working in close conjunction with district representatives.

In the second year of the grant and each year thereafter, workshops to prepare potential paraprofessionals for the state paraprofessional exam will be provided by the Center for Academic Development offered at NLU's North Shore campus, which is in close geographic proximity to the target districts. When the potential paraprofessional is ready to register for the exam, grant funds will pay the registration fees for the exam. Of the 25 candidates identified as potential paraprofessionals over the five years of the

grant, a program outcome of 15 State-approved paraprofessionals will have been established. This project meets GPRA 1.4.

Objective #3: *To provide training for districts working with already-approved paraprofessionals, especially those from less well-represented language groups, in order to make better use of their services within multilingual districts.* Based on the data from the needs assessment mentioned above, the *Paraprofessional Task Force* will, by the end of the first year, create a draft plan to train and orient districts and paraprofessionals to work together in an optimal fashion. In the second year of the grant, the plan will be piloted in at least one school building. The task force will meet twice during each subsequent year to assess progress and inform continual improvement of the plan. During the third, fourth, and fifth years of the grant, the training will be fine-tuned and extended to additional partners as needed.

Objective #4: *To provide professional development for teacher preparation faculty in preparing teacher candidates to deliver STEM content to English learners.* The grant will organize two 90 minute professional development meetings for at least two National Louis teacher preparation faculty members each year, starting in the first year and continuing each year thereafter. The first of the two professional development meetings will focus basic foundations of second language acquisition and effective strategies for ELLs. This session will be offered by co-Director Dr. Lems or another full-time faculty member. The second of the workshops will focus specifically on strengthening understanding of the discourse of math and its relationship to language needs of ELLs. Each year, the two sessions of professional development will be offered to two different faculty in the teacher preparation programs; the first session will always

focus on foundations and methods of second language acquisition, and the second will focus STEM topics. The STEM presentations will be offered by those faculty providing STEM workshops to the faculty. As a program measure, at least two teacher preparation faculty will take part in both professional development sessions offered annually. Evaluation forms will be completed at the end of each session. In this way, the teacher preparation faculty involved will learn about ELLs and optimal ways to present STEM content to them, and at the same time, the mentoring faculty will develop greater expertise in conveying ESL STEM content to teacher preparation faculty, adding value to each of the programs.

Goal #2: ***To increase the number of pre-service teachers who have the ESL endorsement (called "ESL Approval" in Illinois).*** This goal has two objectives.

Objective #1: To establish stronger coordination between the Program and Masters of Arts in Teaching (MAT) in elementary education at National Louis University in order to minimize the barriers students experience when attempting to pursue the approval. Because NLU offers coursework through the cohort structure around Chicagoland, it can be difficult for MAT candidates to attend classes to obtain the approvals. By coordinating more closely among faculty scheduling classes for pre-service teachers, a greater number of new teachers will be able to enter the work force with the expertise to teach in a linguistically and culturally diverse society. The coordination will occur through email between the Elementary Education Chair and the Program Coordinator, Dr. Leah Miller. These exchanges will occur intensively before the pre-service cohort begins in Winter 2012 and will continue annually as needed.

Objective #2: To offer a grant scholarship cohort for pre-service MAT students in

elementary education. The grant cohort will be offered at NLU in coordination with program requirements for the MAT. Guidelines for selection of the grant cohort will be conducted by members of the NLU's Elementary Education Department, based on guidelines provided by the co- Directors. Priority will be given to pre-service teachers with backgrounds in STEM subjects (including career changers), Illinois-approved paraprofessionals, and those able to speak languages that are less represented in the teaching staff of the Multilingual Schools Network. The students will complete their coursework by the end of the second year of the grant (Spring 2013) and State approvals will follow shortly thereafter. To meet GPRAs 1.2 and 1.3, data on 1) the progress of program completers to complete their State certification, 2) employment which includes working with English language learners, and 3) maintaining three years of employment in such jobs, will be collected by means of an emailed survey sent annually. The target outcome for Objective 2 is 15 pre-service ESL-approval program completers and it addresses GPRA 1.1

Goal #3: To facilitate data-based decision making regarding instruction for ELLs. There are two objectives to meet this goal.

Objective #1: To develop and implement an evaluation plan for the Niles Township ELL Parent Center in order to deepen their understanding of how best to serve the families and children in Niles Township. The *ELL Parent Involvement Task Force* will be headed by Dr. Leah Miller, coordinator of NLU's Approval Program. In year one, Dr. Miller and Corrie Wallace, Director of the Niles Township ELL Parent Center, will develop a plan to evaluate the activities of the Center. Assessment Directors from participating Niles Township districts will also participate on this project

as needed. The *ELL Parent Involvement Task Force* will meet three times during the first year of the grant. At the end of this year, a draft plan will be completed. The second year of the grant will serve as a pilot year for data collection and analysis. The *ELL Parent Involvement Task Force* will meet twice during the second year to offer feedback and suggestions on the pilot program. In years three through five, data collection and analysis of student progress by the ELL Parent Center will occur. The program measure will consist of a written report summarizing findings at the end of the fifth year of the grant and will be made available to the districts involved with the Center.

Objective #2: To provide professional development for administrators in collecting and analyzing data for use with ELLs. The *ESL Administrator Task Force* will be headed by project Partnership Liaison, Dr. Tina Nolan who is Associate Director of Partnerships at NLU. Working in partnership with the Illinois Resource Center, the *ELL Administrator Task Force* will involve teachers and administrators throughout the Multilingual Schools Network in a professional development series entitled, "Perfect Match"; Using Data and Standards to Drive Program Design" in years one and three of the grant. This program is intended to provide sustained professional development to teams of teachers and administrators interested in participating in a process to improve their district's language education programs for ELLs. The *ELL Administrator Task Force* will include professional staff from the Illinois Resource Center and the World Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium, who will provide engaging and dynamic opportunities for team participants to collect and analyze ELL assessment data. A structured framework will be applied to the data with the goal of crafting an exemplary program for ELLs while establishing a process for addressing

curricular and instructional implications. A target number of 50 individuals will participate in the workshop series in each of the two years it is offered. Participants will be recruited by the task force, using administrator contacts within the Niles Districts and neighboring districts with multilingual student populations.

Goal #4:To improve networking among districts, teacher preparation faculty, parents, and paraprofessionals. This goal has three objectives.

Objective #1: To create a composed of teachers, parents, and paraprofessionals in order to facilitate bidirectional learning opportunities necessary to explore cultural dimensions of STEM learning as they affect English learners. The term "bidirectional" is used to get at the notion that parents and paraprofessionals impart their expertise and funds of knowledge to school staff, while at the same time these parents and paraprofessionals are increasing their understanding of U.S. school culture, school protocols, and the educational mission of the district. When the skills and interests of families whose home language is not English are welcomed and included, the children of those families will be more fully integrated into the life of the school. In addition, intercultural understandings about education in general, and STEM subjects in particular, can be shared with the districts, providing inroads into culturally responsive pedagogy. A participant-led is one venue in which these kinds of discussions and insights may take place. To meet this objective, the *Paraprofessional Task Force*, chaired by co-Director Dr. Stegemoller, will convene in the second year of the grant and will meet three times that year and Illinois Continuing Professional Development Units will be offered for these meetings. During years three, four, and five of the grant, the will meet twice a year. Invitations to participate will be extended to employees and patrons

from the ELL Parent Center, potential or existing paraprofessionals working in the Multilingual Schools Network, and teachers or administrative support staff within any of the participating schools. The program measure is the creation of two or more programs or events pertinent to the topic of STEM instruction and English language learners to have occurred by the end of the fifth year of the grant. Copies of a relevant book will be distributed to all participants for one of the years, based on group interests.

Objective #2 *To provide professional development for K-12 teachers, paraprofessionals, school administrators, and university faculty to understand the needs of families of ELLs in helping their children to be successful in school.* This objective falls within the range of the *ELL Parent Involvement Task Force*. The Illinois Resource Center will work in partnership with the Niles Township ELL Parent Center to offer two-day workshops called, "Parents as Educational Partners: A School-Related Curriculum for Language Minority Parents" (PEP). The PEP curriculum helps educators learn ways to increase parental involvement using a variety of teaching techniques, including reading passages together, dialogues/ role-playing, problem-posing, and making cultural comparisons. All participants will receive a copy of the curriculum, which contains over 100 reproducible, classroom-ready activities and 200 illustrations for multilingual, multilevel parent classes and will be offered every year of the grant. PEP is an additional tool for parental empowerment in the Multilingual Schools Network.

Objective 3: *To expand the Multilingual Schools Network by establishing an administrators interest group.* This activity will fall under the *ESL Administrators Task Force*, chaired by Dr. Nolan, and will emerge from their regular meetings. The interest group will be encouraged to submit proposals to present at the Illinois TESOL/Bilingual

Education State Conference and the annual conference of the Illinois Association of Multilingual and Multicultural Educators. Additionally, the *ELL Administrator Task Force* will plan a networking breakfast to be held at the 35th Annual Statewide Conference for Teachers serving Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students. This conference is co-sponsored by the Illinois Resource Center, the Illinois Association for Multilingual Multicultural Education, and the Illinois State Board of Education and will coincide with the conference's Administrator Day. The *ELL Administrator Task Force* will develop the event, invite guest speakers, and invite additional multilingual school districts to join the Multilingual Schools Network.

2. Alignment of Project with Up-to-Date Knowledge

In order to address the needs of our partnering districts in successfully teaching English learners, particularly in STEM subjects, we utilize the concept of "networked improvement communities" (Bryk, Gomez, & Grunow, 2010). The network will consist of three primary communities: 1) university faculty and staff, 2) district administrators and teachers; and 3) aspiring paraprofessionals and paraprofessionals. Each of these communities has knowledge and values that can impact the education and academic achievement of English learners from multilingual districts. Teaching the content or mathematics and science makes certain language demands which must be understood by teachers who are working with English language learners. Explaining one's mathematical thinking in speaking and writing through cognitively guided instruction is a common technique used by mathematics educators (Franke, Webb, Chan, Ing, Freund, & Battey, 2009). Accomplishing this level of inquiry with English learners requires a complex understanding of the pedagogy of mathematics and the language demands

that are inherent. University teacher preparation faculty need specific preparation in understanding these language demands and in conveying them to teacher candidates.

Changes in employment forecasts, which are connected to demographic trends, have made the approval a valuable credential for new teachers trying to obtain their first teaching position, and the State approvals are considerably more in demand than they were even a few years ago. The Education Program at National Louis, for example, has 43 sections running in the spring term of 2011, with an average of approximately 20 students per class; this number has doubled in the past five years (NLU Registrar, 2011). In addition, a large number of approval courses are offered in conjunction with NLU's partner, the Illinois Resource Center. All of these courses are taught at the graduate level; however, an increasing number of students are interested in taking them before completion of their teaching certificates and before obtaining full-time employment. This trend reflects the state and national standards requiring that all teachers have foundational understanding of the principles and practices for teaching English learners (ISBE, n.d.a.; TESOL, n.d.a.).

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) has designated bilingual education as a teacher shortage area for the past 10 years (ISBE, n.d.a). Multilingual districts, in particular, find difficulty in obtaining bilingual teachers who speak languages represented by smaller populations of students within the schools. The needs of our consortium members reflect language trends in the Chicago metropolitan area, which has one of the largest proportions of Spanish speakers of any city in the United States, as well as one of the largest proportions of speakers of Arabic, Gujarati, Hindi, and Urdu (Shin & Kominski, 2010).

There are additional challenges in multilingual districts besides a lack of bilingual teachers from less-represented languages. The partner schools serve immigrant families from many different countries who bring with them a broad array of cultural practices and values. Strong leadership by well-trained administrators can weave these practices into a rich multicultural context, as well as create a welcoming, supportive, and productive environment for these learners. An administrator network sharing expertise among multicultural school districts will address this complex endeavor.

Parents and individuals from the communities of ELLs can make excellent candidates for paraprofessionals because of their linguistic and cultural knowledge. Paraprofessionals are often uniquely qualified to understand the languages and cultures of students they work with (Monzó & Rueda, 2001; Rueda & DeNeve, 1999). However, in contrast to this promise, researchers have also reported issues related to respect and trust between teachers and paraeducators (Chopra et al., 2004). Therefore, additional training and orientation, co-created by the districts and the paraprofessionals themselves, can help paraprofessionals function more effectively in the schools.

While the number of English learners from diverse backgrounds grows, statistics indicate low academic achievement of these learners (National Center for Education Statistics, 2010). To improve the academic achievement of English learners in STEM subjects, our project builds on the networked communities of university, districts, and communities in a way that builds "instructional congruence" (Lee & Fradd, 1998) for English language learners. The activities of the project create bidirectional learning among the three networked communities, university, district, and paraprofessionals. Parents and extended families of English language learners, in addition to highly

proficient educators in ESL and the STEM subjects, can help teachers relate science and math content to students' backgrounds, which can in turn benefit their families.

C. Project Personnel

1. Qualifications of Co-Project Directors

The project will be co-directed by Dr. Jason Stegemoller, Assistant Professor, and Dr. Kristin Lems, Professor. Both teach in the National College of Education at National Louis University in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Both will be teaching courses to pre- and in-service teachers and chairing one of the four task forces, along with directing the curriculum and instruction component of the grant.

Dr. Stegemoller received his Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction in the program of Second Language Acquisition and Teacher Education, and an MA in Teaching English as a Second Language from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His areas of expertise include English as a second language instruction and bilingual education with a focus on secondary and post-secondary contexts. Since 2002, Dr. Stegemoller has worked on three federally funded grants held at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, two of which targeted English as a Second Language instruction and bilingual education.

Dr. Lems holds a Doctorate of Education in Reading and Language from National Louis University, two Master degrees from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, in Teaching English as a Second Language and West Asian Studies, and is a former Fulbright Scholar. She joined NLU in 1985, and received tenure in 2006. Most recently, she directed *Building Community for English Language Acquisition,* a

grant-sponsored project by the US Department of Education Office of English Language Acquisition from 2004 – 2009.

2. Qualifications Key Project Personnel

The key project personnel include a *Partnership Liaison, Lead Faculty* and *Coordinator* position that will be hired once the grant is awarded.

Partnership Liaison Dr. Nolan joined NLU in 2006 as Associate Director of Partnerships and will serve as the project's Partnership Liaison. In this capacity, Dr. Nolan works to establish coherence among existing partnerships, create new partnership models and develop partnership assessment strategies. Dr. Nolan helped launch the Multilingual Schools Network partnership model in working with Skokie School District 73 ½. Prior to joining NLU, Dr. Nolan was Director of Education at the Chicago Academy of Sciences. Dr. Nolan has an M.Ed in Administration and Supervision and an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from National Louis University.

Lead Faculty Timothy G. Collins, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, serves on the Executive Board of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), and is active in NLU's faculty governance leadership. He is a published author in science education (Collins, 2010) and a former Fulbright Scholar.

Assistant Professor Leah D. Miller, Program Coordinator of NLU's Education Program, is a leader in the field of ESL and Bilingual Education in Illinois. She serves on the Board of Illinois TESOL/Bilingual Education and has collaborated with the Illinois State Board of Education in the design and implementation of the State ESL and Bilingual approvals.

Internal Evaluator Michael Shriner, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor in NLU's Education Foundations and Inquiry and will serve as the project's Internal Evaluator. Dr. Shriner has held several professional positions which have required increasingly more complex skills in research methods, evaluation, study design, data collection, and statistical analyses. Previously, he has served as a study director of a national evaluation of three developmental disabilities programs administered under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000, a director of evaluation of a Professional Development Schools Teacher Quality Partnership Enhancement Grant (TQE) administered by the US Department of Education, and a statistical consultant/evaluator of an Indiana Commission for Higher Education grant entitled *Reading with a Difference: Differentiated Reading Instruction.* He currently serves as a research associate on another TQE project entitled, the *Chicago Teacher Partnership Program*, which is also administered by the US Department of Education.

External Evaluator It is anticipated that Ann Mullis, Ph.D. will serve as the projects External Evaluator. Dr. Mullis is currently an Associate Professor at Florida State University and received training in assisting teachers of young ELLs during her Head Start Fellowship from 2002 to 2003, which was designed to assist teachers in developing strategies to recognize and validate prior knowledge and experiences of the children with whom they worked and how to provide appropriate scaffolding as children's proficiency increased. More recently she has worked with a Head Start program, a grantee of the Redlands Christian Migrant Association, to assist in the development of a professional development program for teachers working with Spanish speaking migrant families and children.

3. Position Descriptions

Project Co-Directors The Project co-Directors will oversee the implementation of all activities pursuant to the grant goals and objectives and will be responsible for managing the grant budget. In addition, the co-Directors will coordinate provision of courses to pre-service and in-service teachers by coordinating with the Department of Elementary Education, as well as districts and schools. The co-Directors will stay in regular contact with and oversee the activities of all grant personnel, including the Coordinator, the Partnership Liaison, task force chairs, full-time and adjunct faculty, presenters, and others. In addition, the co-Directors will each chair one of the grant task forces. The co-Directors will assist with data collection as requested by the Internal and External Evaluators, and cooperate in submission of the annual written report to the funder. The co-Directors will set up, chair and initiate grant advisory council meetings. Additionally, the co-directors will work with grant personnel in disseminating information at conferences and in reports and articles.

Partnership Liaison The Partnership Liaison will chair the *ESL Administrator Task Force*, liaise with the Illinois Resource Center to coordinate the implementation of the "Perfect Match" program and the Administrator breakfasts at annual conferences, work in close coordination with the *Paraprofessional Task Force*, and invite additional ELL administrators from other districts to take part in the Multilingual Schools Network.

Lead Faculty Lead faculty will support the co-Directors and Partnership Liaison by leading tasks groups and instructing courses for pre- and in-service teachers.

Internal Evaluator The Internal Evaluator, working with the External Evaluator, will ensure that both formative and summative evaluation and its associated

methodologies are central to the design and implementation of the program. Specifically, the Internal Evaluator will assist with the design of evaluation tools, conduct interviews, and facilitate the collection and analysis of data and final evaluation reports.

External Evaluator The External Evaluator will oversee evaluation activities and work collaboratively with the internal evaluator to ensure that evaluation is central to the design and implementation of the project. Specifically, the External Evaluator will design evaluation tools, analyze data, audit institutional documentation, write and disseminate annual evaluation findings and reports, and cooperate with project officers to submit required annual progress reports, final evaluation reports, and all data requests.

Project Coordinator The Coordinator will provide assistance and support in implementing all activities associated with the grant goals and objectives along with managing the budget by preparing expense reports, check requests, tuition notifications, purchase orders, and regularly monitoring the budget and reporting discrepancies. The Coordinator will organize meetings, including scheduling, room reservations, agendas, refreshments, and other activities necessary for preparing for meetings. The coordinator will also become knowledgeable about the Illinois Paraprofessional Exam, Illinois Continuing Professional Development Units and State and University procedures for the approval coursework.

C. Management Plan

The following table entitled *Management Plan Activities and Timeline* outlines the execution of the project in terms of its goals and timeline, which corresponds with the budget narrative located in the appendix.

Table 1: Management Plan Activities and Timeline

Each Year of Grant (2011-2016)			
Grant Funded Responsible Person	**Major Activity**	**Milestones Completion Dates**	**Goals/Objectives, GPRA, Program Measures Addressed**
Advisory group, Grant representative(s)	Twice annual meeting of grant advisory group	Fall, Spring	GPRA: none Goal: - Program measure: The group met and meeting minutes
Grant Directors, Districts, Departments	Recruit and enroll students for grant cohorts	Fall 2011, spring/summer 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015	Goals 1.1, 2.2
Grant Directors, Departments	Coordinate course offerings with the program and elementary education program	When grant is funded and continues through 5 years	GPRA 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 Goal 2.1
STEM Task Force, Department Faculty	Professional development for at least 2 NLU College of Education faculty members on teaching English learners STEM subjects.	Every year	GPRA: none Goal: 4.1 Program measure: 2 higher education faculty
STEM Task Force, Department Faculty	Professional development for faculty members on teaching ELLs STEM subjects (twice first year, once a year each year thereafter)	First 4 years, ends last year of grant (no new cohort)	
Parent Involvement Task Force, ELL Parent Center	Planning, gathering, piloting, and interpreting data for ELL Parent Center		GPRA Comp. priority #2
Paraprofessional Task Force, ELL Parent Center	Identify potential paraprofessionals and determine their training and tutoring needs. Meetings once per quarter during academic	Starts as soon as grant is funded, continues	GPRA - none Goal 1.3 Program measures: 3 per year

	year (3x)	throughout grant	
Paraprofessional Task Force, ELL Parent Center	Assess needs and prepare materials in order for staff to use paraprofessionals effectively within their districts	Starts as soon as grant is funded, continues throughout grant	
STEM Focus Task Force Paraprofessional Task Force	Identify paraprofessionals, teachers, parents, and others interested in participating in regarding STEM subjects and ELLs	Starts as soon as grant is funded, continues throughout grant	GPRA - none Goal 1.4 Program measures: completed action plan
ELL Administrator Task Force	Annual administrator day at state conference with ELL administrators in Multilingual School Network	December conference	
Year One (2011-2012)			
Paraprofessional Task Force	Planning period to assess potential paraprofessional needs and needs of staff working with paraprofessionals in ELL settings.	Starts as soon as grant begins	GPRA 1.4
ELL Parent Center Director, Parent Involvement Task Force	Convene task force to discuss data collection goals and needs of ELL Parent Center (3 meetings, one per quarter)	Fall, Winter, Spring	GPRA: none Goal 3.1 Program measure: plan for data collection
Illinois Resource Center, ELL Administrator Task Force (NCE Partnership Office)	District Training in Parents as Education Partners program (2 day training)	Spring 2012	GPRA: Goal: 4.2 Program Measure: 20 per year, attendance and feedback from sessions
Year 2 (2012-2013)			
Responsible Person	**Activities**	**Milestones**	
Project Director	Cohort A ends for preservice teachers (3 courses)	Completion end of Sp13	GPRA 1.5, 1.6 Goal 1.1
Project Director	Cohort B begins for in-service	Start Fall 2012.	GPRA 1.5, 1.6

	teachers (3 courses)		Goal 1.1
ELL Parent Center, Parent Involvement Task Force	Implement pilot data collection and analysis at ELL Parent Center (Meet twice during the academic year)	To be arranged	GPRA: none Goal 3.1
IRC, ELL Administrator Task Force, NCE Partnership Office	Perfect Match training for Administrators in multilingual Schools Network	Nov, February, April, 2 days each time	GPRA: comp. priority #2 Goal: 4.3 Program measure: 25 individuals
Year 3 (2013-2014)			
Responsible Person	**Activities**	**Milestones**	
Project Director	Cohort B ends for in-service teachers (3 courses)	Completion end of Sp 2014	GPRA 1.5, 1.6 Goal 1.1
Project Director	Cohort C begins for in-service teachers (3 courses)	Start Fall 2013	GPRA 1.5, 1.6 Goal 1.1
Parent Involvement Task Force, ELL Parent Center	Data collection and data analysis at ELL Parent Center Year 1 of data collection after pilot year (3 meetings, one per quarter)	End of academic year	GPRA: Comp. priority #2 Goal 3.1 Program measure: progress report to Advisory Board
Illinois Resource Center, ELL Administrator Task Force (NCE Partnership Office)	District Training in Parents as Education Partners program (2 day training)	Spring 2014	GPRA: none Goal: 4.2 Program Measure: target 20 per year, attendance and feedback from sessions
Year 4 (2014-2015)			
Responsible Person	**Activities**	**Timeline**	
Project Director	Cohort C ends for in-service teachers (3 courses)	Completion end of Sp15	GPRA 1.5, 1.6 Goal 1.1

Project Director	Cohort D begins for in-service teachers (3 courses)	Start Fall 2014	GPRA 1.5, 1.6 Goal 1.1
IRC, ELL Administrator Task Force, NCE Partnership Office	Perfect Match training for Administrators in multilingual Schools Network	Nov, February, April, 2 days each time	GPRA: comp. priority #2 Goal: 4.3 Program measure: 25 individuals,
ELL Parent Center, Parent Involvement Task Force	Data collection and data analysis at ELL Parent Center year 2 of data collection after pilot year (3 meetings, one per quarter)	End of academic year	GPRA: none Goal 3.1 Program measure: Progress report to Advisory Group
Year 5 (2015-2016)			
Responsible Person	**Activities**	**Timeline**	
Project Director	Cohort D Ends for in-service teachers (3 courses)	Completion end of Sp16	GPRA 1.5, 1.6 Goal 1.1
ELL Parent Center Director, Assessment Directors from partner districts, grant representative	Data collection and data analysis at ELL Parent Center year 3 of data collection after pilot year (3 meetings, one per quarter)	End of academic year	GPRA: none Goal 3.1 Program measure: Three year report summarizing data collected and analyzed during previous three years of the grant
Illinois Resource Center, ELL Administrator Task Force (NCE Partnership Office)	District Training in Parents as Education Partners program (2 day training)	Spring 2016	GPRA: Goal: 4.3 Program Measure: 20 per year, attendance and feedback from sessions

E. Quality of Project Evaluation

In collaboration with an independent external evaluator which will be put to bid per National Louis University policy, *Multilingual STEM Success* will develop and implement a comprehensive evaluation. The evaluation plan will use multiple methods to gather formative and summative data that ultimately addresses the various ways in which the culture and practices of the participating school districts, the related parent and community organizations, and National Louis University have been impacted by grant activities. Formative methods will provide on going and critical feedback to ensure that the goals, objectives, and activities are appropriately formalized, sufficiently structured, and successfully implemented as designed. Subsequently, feedback from early grant activities will inform the structure and implementation of later activities. Summative methods will use GPRA Measures to assess the degree to which appropriate activities have been successfully implemented in an effort to address *Multilingual STEM Success's* goals to: 1) Improve the preparation and training of pre-service and in-service teachers, paraprofessionals, and higher education faculty to provide instruction in STEM subjects for ELLs; 2) Increase the number of pre-service teachers who have the ESL endorsement (called "ESL approval" in Illinois); 3) Facilitate data-based decision making regarding instruction for ELLs; and 4) Improve networking among districts, higher education faculty, parents, and paraprofessionals in multilingual school districts.

Evaluation Design: *Multilingual STEM Success's* core components serve as the framework around which the key evaluation questions and methodology are designed. Summative and formative evaluation methods include interviews with university faculty and staff, district administrators, teachers, community members, and parents.

Additionally, partnership visits and focus groups, pre- and post-professional development and symposium reviews, course-embedded assessment of teacher candidates, document reviews, and surveys will be utilized. Data will be analyzed using appropriate statistical methodology, including content analysis of interviews, documents, and focus groups, and descriptive and inferential analysis of teacher candidate assessments and pre- and post-professional development and symposium reviews.

Evaluation Plan Management: *Multilingual STEM Success's Advisory Council* will work collaboratively with the independent, external evaluator to offer insight on how better to align activities to ensure the evaluation is central to the design and implementation of the project. The external evaluator (with input and assistance from the internal evaluator) will design evaluation tools, conduct interviews, review documents, observe activities, and analyze data. The internal and external evaluators will also write and disseminate annual evaluation findings reports and cooperate with project co-Directors to submit all required annual progress reports, final evaluation reports, and all data requests.

The mixed-methods and multi-layered evaluation will seek to answer the following:

Key Formative Questions (and Corresponding Data Sources):

1. To what extent are already-approved paraprofessionals participating in the planning, training, and orientation process with regard to the needs of their respective districts (interviews, surveys)?
2. To what degree are task force members: (a) participating in test preparation for potential paraprofessionals; (b) developing an assessment strategy for the needs of partner districts as they concern the use of paraprofessionals; and 3)

identifying issues and sources of data measuring common concern amongst administrators in multilingual school districts (interviews, surveys, and document review)?

3. How has networking among districts, the university, parents, and paraprofessionals evolved (interviews, surveys)?

Summative Evaluation Questions (and Corresponding Data Sources)

1. GPRA Measure 1.1: What percentage of pre-service program completers are State and/or locally certified, licensed, or endorsed in EL instruction (survey)?
2. GPRA Measure 1.2: What percentage of pre-service program completers are placed in instructional settings serving EL students within one year of program completion (survey)?
3. GPRA Measure 1.3: What percentage of pre-service program completers are providing instructional services to EL students three years after program completion (survey)?
4. GPRA Measure 1.4: What percentage of paraprofessional program completers meet state and or local qualifications for paraprofessionals working with EL students (survey)?
5. GPRA Measure 1.5: What percentage of in-service teacher completers are ESL-approved in Illinois (survey)?
6. GPRA Measure 1.6: What percentage of in-service teacher completers are providing instructional services to EL students in Illinois (survey)?
7. To what extent have professional development activities been attended (program attendance records) and impacted NLU faculty participants (pre- and post-

experience surveys, interviews) and district administrators in terms of collecting and analyzing data for use with ELLs (pre- and post-experience survey, interviews)?

8. Has networking amongst teachers, parents, and paraprofessionals been developed (frequency of events) and if so, to what extent have participants' need been met and networking been improved (pre- and post-experience surveys)?

Table 2 documents outcomes, indicators, targets, and data collection methods of the evaluation plan.

Table 2: Evaluation Objective Matrix

Objectives	*Indicator(s)*	*Target(s)*	*Data Collection Methods and Timeline*
1.1 Offer three STEM-focused cohorts for in-service teachers seeking Illinois ESL or bilingual approvals	Employment of ESL-approval program completers in instructional services for ELLs	45 (15/year)	Job record; Annually
1.2 Increase the number of paraprofessionals working with ELLs who are approved in the State of Illinois.	State of Illinois approval	15 state-approved paraprofessionals over 5 years	Job record; Annually
1.3 Provide training for districts working with already-approved paraprofessionals, especially those from less well-represented language groups, in order to make better use of their services within multilingual districts.	A task-force created training plan	Training plan piloted in at least one school building by end of year two and then implemented annually	Survey Year two; Annually
1.4 Provide professional development for teacher preparation faculty in preparing teacher candidates to deliver STEM content to English learners	Professional development meetings convened	Two per year	Meeting attendance records; Annually starting year two Revised syllabi
2.1 Establish stronger coordination between the program and Masters of Arts in Teaching (MAT) in Elem. Education at National Louis in order to minimize barriers students experience when pursuing approval	Seamless coordination between the Elem. Education Chair and the program coordinator	Students in MAT programs taking approval courses	Course enrollment records beginning Winter, 2012/Annually Coordinated schedules
2.2 Offer grant scholarship cohort for preservice MAT students in elementary education	Grant cohort offered starting in Winter, 2012	15 pre-service ESL-approved program completers	Graduation Records, Spring 2013 or Spring 2014 (when they finish MAT program) survey 3 years after completion of MAT
3.1 To develop and implement an	Task force convened	Formalized Data	Survey; years 3 through 5

Table 2: Evaluation Objective Matrix

Objectives	*Indicator(s)*	*Target(s)*	*Data Collection Methods and Timeline*
evaluation plan for the Niles Township ELL Parent Center in order to deepen their understanding of how best to serve the families and children in Niles Township.	to develop data collection plan	collection and analysis plan for the ESL Parent Center	Year 1 = needs assessment Year 2 = pilot Year 3, 4, 5 = collect, analyze, and report data
3.2 Provide professional development for administrators in collecting and analyzing data for use with ELLs	Perfect Match	50 administrators in Years 2 and 4	Years 2 and 4, attendance at event
4.1 Create composed of teachers, parents, and paraprofessionals in order to facilitate bidirectional learning opportunities necessary to explore cultural dimensions of STEM learning as they affect English learners	Two to three meetings	"bidirectional" learning	Meeting Attendance records, two related events, End of grant
4.2 Provide professional development for K-12 teachers, paraprofessionals, school administrators, and university faculty to understand the needs of families of ELLs in helping their children to be successful in school	Participants receive a copy of the curriculum, which contains over 100 reproducible, classroom-ready activities and 200 illustrations for multilingual, multilevel parent classes	Educators increase ELL parental involvement in schools	Meeting attendance years one, three, and five; pre- and post-experience surveys
4.3 To expand the Multilingual Schools Network by establishing an administrators interest group	A networking breakfast to be held at the Conference for Teachers serving Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students	Additional multilingual school districts to join the Multilingual Schools Network	First year, Survey

F. Sustainability and Dissemination

Several important long-term benefits will accrue to the participants in the five year grant. A number of teacher preparation faculty, in both the education program and the pre-service teacher education programs, will have built capacity in training pre-service and in-service teachers of English language learners to deliver STEM-focused content. The Niles District ELL Parent Center will have data to support its impact upon families in its districts through data analysis of families using the Center, resulting in potentially deeper relationships with its school districts. ELL administrators in multilingual districts will have added to their expertise through a network specifically focused on issues facing multilingual schools; they will meet during the year and participate in the annual Administrators Day at the State Conference of the Illinois Association of Multilingual and Multicultural Educators. The partner districts will have added new paraprofessionals to their ranks and will have discovered ways to make better use of them, with a target of mentoring paraprofessionals from less well-represented language groups. National Louis University will have established a closer relationship between the coursework schedules and the pre-service students at the University so that it will be easier for those students to access the courses needed for their approvals. Parents in the districts will have new options for participation through the Parents as Educational Partners program and bidirectional discussion group, in which parents can share their funds of knowledge more meaningfully with the district. Most of all, the Departmental faculty working as Directors and task force leaders on the grant will add a great amount of knowledge and expertise to their work in the field, and this will impact all of the many districts whose teachers will take coursework at National

Louis. This added knowledge and experience will have real impact on ESL instruction in the State of Illinois.

The key grant personnel intend to incorporate the work of the grant into their research, presentation, and publication plans. The overarching goal of the grant is to improve the preparation of teachers and other education professionals to instruct English learners, which coincides with the ongoing scholarship of the grant personnel aimed at increasing and disseminating knowledge related to instruction for English learners. Researchers and educators in the field of ESL and bilingual education recognize that it is vital to learn more about how to help English learners acquire both language and content knowledge, for example in STEM subjects, and how to help better help them develop language and content knowledge (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders & Christian, 2006). We plan to incorporate grant activities in generating data related to how teachers, schools, and districts learn to improve instruction for English learners, particularly those related to STEM subjects. This data will contribute to practical and theoretical knowledge about the potential of networked communities of practice for improving the language acquisition and content knowledge development of English learners. We plan to disseminate this knowledge to scholars and educators at the local, state, and national levels, for example, through presentations at Illinois TESOL, National TESOL, and AERA, and by submitting manuscripts for publication.