TO: Members of the State Board of Education

FROM: Karen B. Salmon, Ph.D.

DATE: October 24, 2017

SUBJECT: Javits Grant

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this item is to summarize the Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act grant awarded to the Maryland State Department of Education.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

Even though Maryland has a mandate for gifted and talented identification and services, the implementation is not consistent across the state. For example, in 2015, Maryland's 24 school systems reported GT identification processes that included 62 different criteria and instruments.

The Javits competition supports initiatives to develop and scale up models serving students who are underrepresented in gifted and talented programs. In June 2017, MSDE submitted a grant proposal, *Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education: Technical Assistance for the Identification of Underserved Gifted Learners*. In September 2017, the US Department of Education notified Dr. Salmon that we received an FY 2017 Javits grant. The Javits grant competition was highly competitive – out of the 30 applications reviewed, only 12 were granted funding. Maryland's grant will be in the amount of $323,762 for the first budget period. It is anticipated that the grant will be for 5 years, totaling $1,597,938.

MSDE will partner with the Johns Hopkins University School of Education, Center for Technology in Education (JHU CTE) to create and populate *Gateway to GT Education*, an online technical assistance resource through with information, data, instructional toolkits, professional learning, guidance, and a forum for collaboration will be available to educators, students, families, researchers, and community members. *Gateway to GT Education* will host and facilitate the development and implementation of state policy and recommended identification protocols, thereby increasing local school system capacity to identify and serve more underrepresented students.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The goals of Maryland's 5-year Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act Program are as follows:

Goal 1: In partnership with JHU CTE, create *Gateway to GT Education¸* an online platform that will be a repository of resources, including data, identification and service delivery models, instructional strategies, and interactive online training modules and courses, as well as a collaborative e-community for educators, students, families, researchers, higher education, and community members.

Goal 2: Research and develop an equitable state policy and supporting guidelines for the identification of gifted and talented students. Convene local school system leaders, teachers, national experts, and other stakeholders to study and discuss options for the state. Use *Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education* to post research, host discussion and input, build consensus, and to facilitate the implementation of the new identification policy throughout the stages of implementation science.

The Javits grant aligns to the State Board's ESSA plan. In that plan the State Board noted it intends to take steps to add "gifted and talented students" as an additional student group by the end of school year 2017-18.

BOARD ACTION:

For information only.

ATTACHMENTS:

2017 Maryland Javits Application and Budget Narratives

Maryland Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education: **Budget Narrative**

Budget Categories/Narrative	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
1. Personnel	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$107,000**	**$0**	**$107,000**
Stipends for Participants in Regional Events (Year 4) – Funding for stipends and travel expenses to non-12-month employees for participation at the five regional events. Stipends will include 7% for FICA and Worker's Compensation, typically charged again salary stipends by LEAs. Compensation for the 100 maximum attendees for each of the five events is $200 per day + $14 FICA/WC = $214 per person X 100 people at each event = $21,400 X 5 events = $107,000	$0	$0	$0	$107,000	$0	
2. Fringe Benefits	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**
3. Travel	**$600**	**$600**	**$3,800**	**$13,100**	**$3,200**	**$21,300**
In-State Travel – Project Director and Project Manager to drive within state for Listening Tours to collect input with regard to a new policy and the new *Gateway*; focus groups will be convened to collect input on *Gateway*; visit pilot schools and classrooms where new GT identification policy is being implemented to verify that fidelity measures are in place; production and facilitation of a private (non-profit) school conference, interview teachers/ students/principals in pilot schools about the effects and their perceptions of the benefits of the new identification policy; present at state and local conferences and meetings to disseminate data and information about the new policy, protocols, and *Gateway*. Current GSA rate per mile and allowable per diem will be utilized, when appropriate. Travel will only be made when necessary and state vehicles will be used when available.	$600	$600	$1,200	$600	$600	
Travel Compensation for Regional Event Attendees (Year 4) – Travel costs will be reimbursed via stipend to help compensate for travel, based on the average mileage from points within the region for participants of the five regional events. Participation is expected by 100 attendees at	$0	$0	$0	$12,500	$0	

Budget Categories/Narrative	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
each of the five events. A flat-fee stipend of $25 per person paid per participant, regardless of whether they are a 10-, 11-, or 12-month employee. Cost of this compensation will be $25 per person X 100 people = $2,500 per event X 5 events = $12,500. Out-of-State Travel – Travel costs for Project Director to attend and present at the CSDPG/NAGC conferences in years three and five, in order to disseminate project outcomes. EXAMPLE: [1 conference x (registration @ $450) + (1 room x avg. 5 nights @ $300/night = $1,500) + (RT airfare @ $380) + (per diem x 6 days @ about $270/conference) = $1,445] = approximately $2,600 x 2 conferences = $5200	$0	$0	$2,600	$0	$2,600	
4. Equipment	**$2,000**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$2,000**
Laptop Computer – A laptop computer, docking station, and monitor will be purchased for the Project Manager in Year 1 and will be used for all five years of the grant.						
5. Supplies	**$1,000**	**$1,000**	**$1,000**	**$1,000**	**$1,000**	**$5,000**
Supplies – As needed by the Project Director and LEAs to the develop a Symposia, develop a private (non-profit) school conference, implementation of the new identification policy, roll-out meetings, e-community surveys, webinars, PD modules, support for the consultants, and evaluation of the effect of the new policy (e.g., portfolios, presentation folders, flipcharts, markers, post-its, posters, copies of materials, hands-on supplies, reference texts, etc.)	$1,000	$1,000	$1,000	$1,000	$1,000	
6. Contractual	**$276,000**	**$208,000**	**$203,000**	**$183,000**	**$158,000**	**$1,028,000**
Project Manager will manage the day-to-day operation of the grant; will meet with grant team, LEAs, JHU-CTY, and others, as appropriate; travel to LEAs, as needed; help to plan and facilitate Symposium, Regional Events, *Gateway* Demonstrations, Listening Tour events, Kick-off event, and other	$48,000	$48,000	$48,000	$48,000	$48,000	

Budget Categories/Narrative	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
special events, as needed; acts as MSDE liaison to JHU-CTY, provides weekly updates to the grant team, and performs other tasks as assigned. Compensation will be in the form of a contractual stipend for 40 hours work per week at $25 per hour for a maximum of 48 weeks during the 5 years of the grant. (40hr X $25 = $1,000 per week X 48 weeks = $48,000 per year X 5 years = $240,000. There will be no fringe benefits, workers compensation, FICA, or taxes involved the stipend. Travel expenses will be reimbursed monthly from the grant, using the current GSA rate, on application for such funds and proof of mileage.						
Gateway Platform: Contract with the Johns Hopkins Center for Technology in Education (CTE) for design, hosting, construction, and functional enhancement (Year 1) and creation of content, marketing, and communication to stakeholders, as well as content and site management of GT web platform (Years 2-5)	$200,000	$135,000	$125,000	$90,000	$90,000	
Program Consultants with extensive experience with the GT student identification, policy development, research evaluation, and or one or more underserved student groups, will complete the following tasks: • Act as a consultant to LEA Superintendents, GT Supervisors, and other LEA personnel • Collaborate with LEA GT Supervisors and other LEA personnel in developing and providing professional development for their teachers. • Provide face-to-face and online regional and statewide professional development regional professional learning workshops for principals and district-level GT supervisors on GT student identification. • Assist in or develop online modules about GT identification to support the new policy and protocols. • Act as resources in developing the Symposium and the five regional events.	$20,000	$20,000	$20,000	$20,000	$10,000	

Budget Categories/Narrative	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
External Evaluator - An external, independent evaluation, provided by an experienced, reputable education firm. Evaluator will develop the evaluation tools and conduct all evaluations. Evaluator will collaborate regularly with Project Director, conduct multiple on-site visits to participating LEAs, observe project activities, conduct interview/surveys, collect/analyze quantitative and qualitative data, and provide formative progress reports, as well as summative reports. Cost includes the evaluator's travel to/from MSDE for periodic visits to MSDE and LEAs. The Evaluator will verify adherence to the Fidelity Measurers that they will help to develop.	$5,000	$5,000	$10,000	$10,000	$10,000	
MD GT Equity Symposium – Year 1, MD GT Equity Symposium will be held to host up to 100 people (e.g., 24 LEA Superintendents, LEA GT Supervisors, and at least two other LEA staff members) to disseminate information about the need for universal and equitable GT student identification and collect data about current identification practices and opinions relating to a statewide GT identification protocol and GT Identification Policy. Every effort will be made to select a site that is free and has easy access to food and beverages. Additionally, every effort will be made to structure the agenda so that there is time for participants to purchase their own food, beverages, and snacks. A site fee of $3,000 will be budgeted based on the average site fee for similar events.	$3,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	
Regional Events (5) – Year 2 events will be held in each of the state's five regions, in order to meet with teachers and Central Office staff, and teachers to provide technical support, provide information, solicit content for the *Gateway*, and provide opportunities for collaboration themed to the new identification policy and protocols, as well as the new *Gateway*. Every effort will be made to select sites that are free and have easy access to food and beverages.	$0	$0	$0	$15,000	$0	

Budget Categories/Narrative	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Additionally, every effort will be made to structure the agenda so that there is time for participants to purchase their own food, beverages, and snacks. A site fee of $3,000 per event (X 5 events = $15,000) will be budgeted based on the average site fee for similar events.						
7. Construction	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
8. Other	$500	$500	$250,500	$500	$500	$252,500
Sub-grants to Maryland LEAs – MSDE will disseminate an RFP to all 24 Maryland LEAs, including non-public schools. Sub-grants will be awarded to a maximum of 5 LEAs selected by score on the sub-grant application rubric. Eligible LEAs must include a strategic plan to implement the new GT identification policy, must not currently provide funding for a nationally-normed, purchased assessment too, must demonstrate a need to identify and support underserved student population(s), and must have the capacity to provide GT services to identified students. LEAs may apply for up to $60,000 to install and implement the identification process, including professional learning and the purchase of student identification resources.	$0	$0	$250,000	$0	$0	
Printing – This will also include printing of to support the symposium, listening tour, regional events, rollout and other meetings, as well as materials relating to the new policy, protocols, and *Gateway*.	$500	$500	$500	$500	$500	
9. Total Direct Costs	$280,100	$210,100	$458,300	$304,600	$162,700	$1,415,800
10. Indirect Costs	$43,662	$32,986	$32,703	$47,822	$25,544	182,717
11. Training Stipends	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0
12. Total Costs	$323,762	$243,086	$491,003	$352,422	$188,244	$1,598,517

Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education: Technical Assistance for the Identification of

Underserved Gifted Learners

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Project Narrative

Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education: Technical Assistance for the Identification of Underserved Gifted Learners

    In a study proposed to locate states with model policies to facilitate the identification of underserved gifted students, Coleman and Gallagher (1992) concluded that the lack of a federal mandate for standards in gifted education leaves the development of guidelines to the individual states, which often results in the underrepresentation of certain groups. More than 20 years later, this is still the case (National Association for Gifted Children [NAGC] & Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted [CSDPG], 2013)." (Cross and Dockery, 2014)

GT Identification and Data Collection in Maryland

Input measures in the 2015 Jack Kent Cooke Foundation report, *Equal Talents: Unequal Opportunities,* answered the question: "To what extent do state policies support and facilitate advanced learning for all students?" Maryland earned a grade of "C." The proposed *Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education* project aligns directly with the report's Recommendation 1 for states: "Make your high performing students highly visible." (Plucker, et. al., 2015)

Maryland's state regulations (COMAR 17A.04.07: Gifted and Talented Education) require local school systems to identify and provide services for gifted and talented (GT) students as defined in the Annotated Code of Maryland (Educational Article §8-201: Gifted and Talented):

A. Each local school system shall establish a process for identifying gifted and talented students as they are defined in the Educational Article §8-201;

B. The identification pool for gifted and talented students shall encompass all students;

C. The identification process shall use multiple indicators of potential, aptitude, and achievement;

D. The identification process shall be used to identify students for participation in the programs and services described in § .03 of this regulation; and

E. Each school system shall review the effectiveness of its identification process.

F. Each school system shall consider implementing an identification process that:

(1) Documents early evidence of advanced learning behaviors, PreK-2;

(2) Includes procedures for identification and a process for appeals that are clearly stated in writing, made public, and consistently implemented systemwide; and,

(3) Provides ongoing professional development for school staff in the characteristics and needs of gifted and talented students. (COMAR 17A.04.07, Appendix 2)

While Maryland is fortunate to be among the states that have a mandate for GT identification and services, the implementation is not consistent across the state. In 2015, Maryland's 24 local school systems reported GT identification processes that include 62 different criteria and instruments. The complete listing and number of local education agencies (LEAs) for each is included in Appendix 3.

State law requires Maryland LEAs to submit a comprehensive Bridge to Excellence Master Plan to the state annually in which the Gifted and Talented section includes, "…goals, objectives, and strategies regarding the performance of gifted and talented students along with timelines for implementation and methods for measuring progress…" in the areas of

identification, programs and services, and professional development (COMAR 13A.04.07). These reports include descriptive narratives rather than data.

Demographic and accountability data for Maryland public school students are collected yearly through an LEA-to-state reporting system; however, this system does not include a flag for gifted and talented students.   As there is no state policy on the identification of GT students, it is impossible to collect valid and reliable data about the number of GT students in the state and they cannot be considered a student group for the purpose of disaggregating state assessment data.

For over a year, Maryland has been developing ambitious, long-term goals and designing a new accountability system to meet the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Without a statewide identification process, it is impossible to include the achievement of gifted learners in the state accountability plan. Recommendation 4 of *Equal Talents: Unequal Opportunities*, "Hold LEAs accountable for the performance of high-ability students from all economic backgrounds" cannot be accomplished without a state identification of gifted learners. (Plucker, et. al., 2015)

In 2016, the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 905, and House Bill 999 to create the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education. The "Kirwan Commission" will examine whether the state formulas in education are equitable and if they are adequate enough to provide students with the tools they need to be ready for college and the workforce. This is a unique opportunity to advocate for state funding to support gifted and talented education. However, weighted state funding is impossible without a state GT identifier in the data system.

The Excellence Gap in Maryland

In *Equal Talents: Unequal Opportunities,* Jonathan Plucker, et. al., also examined student outputs in each state, concluding that, "the performance of the most talented low-income children lags far behind that of their high-ability, higher-income peers." On these measures, Maryland earned a C+ grade, mirroring the "excellence gaps" nationwide. (2015)

In *Talent on the Sidelines,* a report by Plucker, et al., Maryland student National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) data are discussed in describing the excellence gap in Maryland with regard to Black and Hispanic students and Free and Reduced Meals eligible (FARMS) students. The *2012 Excellence Gap State Profile Report* for Maryland states:

> NAEP testing data as well as state assessment results reveal substantial excellence gaps for Black, Hispanic, and Free and Reduced Lunch Eligible (FARM) students. According to NAEP proficiency data, the Excellence Gap between White and Black students and Hispanic students in Grade 4 Math has increased significantly since 2003. The gap between these groups is even slightly wider in Grade 8 Math, and has increased since 2003. Wide Excellence Gaps also exist for 2011 between White and Black students in scores at the above average level, particularly in Grade 4 Math, Grade 8 Math, and Grade 4 Reading. (Plucker, et. al., 2012)

The report concluded that,

> The Maryland state assessment scores considerably more students at the advanced level than the NAEP assessment. For example, in 2011 NAEP scored 18% of White students in advanced Math, while the Maryland assessment scored 46% at that level. Still, the Maryland assessment does

confirm wide Excellence Gaps, particularly between White and Black students. In 2011, the gaps between White and Black students were particularly wide in Grade 8 Reading and Math. (Plucker, et. al.., 2012)

Self-reported 2015 data from Maryland's 24 LEAs in Table 1 below reflects national data wherein student groups are underrepresented in gifted and talented programs. There was no reporting of GT English learners (ELs) or twice exceptional students.

Table 1: *Maryland Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity: 2015*

	State Enrollment	State Percentage	GT Enrollment	GT Percentage
Total	874,514		142,621	16.3
American Indian/Alaska Native	2,612	.3	175	.1
Asian	53,929	6.2	18,895	13.2
Black/African American	302,645	34.6	30,651	21.5
White	349,197	39.9	72,016	50.5
Hispanic	128,175	14.7	13,274	9.3
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	1,296	.1	93	.1
Two or More Races	36,660	4.2	7,524	5.3

Equity in Maryland

Dr. Karen B. Salmon was appointed as Maryland's State Superintendent of Schools effective July 1, 2016. She has made equity a hallmark of the Maryland State Department of Education. Using the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) publication, *Leading for Equity: Opportunities for State Education Chiefs*, the Department is focusing all work through the equity lens. Of the ten commitments that state education agencies can take to improve

educational equity, this proposal, *Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education*, aligns directly with the following:

3. Measure What Matters: Create Accountability for Equity

4. Go Local: Engage Local Education agencies (LEAs) and Provide Tailored and Differentiated Support

6. Start Early: Invest in the Youngest Learners

7. Engage More Deeply: Monitor Equitable Implementation of Standards and Assessments

10. Empower Student Options: Ensure Families Have Access to High-quality Educational Options That Align to Community Needs.

(The Aspen Education & Society Program and the Council of Chief State School Officers, 2017)

Part 1: *Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education* Project Design

Maryland is in a unique position to create a world-class technical assistance operation that will improve the capability of schools to plan, conduct, and improve programs to identify and serve gifted and talented students. A geographically mid-sized state with only 24 LEAs, coordination and collaboration are easily facilitated as face-to-face meetings with each LEA represented are the norm. Local school systems have excellent technology resources, and the state has an existing partnership with the Johns Hopkins School of Education Center for Technology in Education. Outstanding national experts on gifted and talented education, associated with Maryland's universities and/or members of the Maryland State Advisory Council on Gifted and Talented Education, are easily accessible and are committed to create first-class resources.

The Maryland State Department of Education will create and populate *Maryland Gateway to GT*, an online technical assistance resource through which information, data, instructional toolkits, professional learning, guidance, and a forum for collaboration will be available to educators, students, families, researchers, and community members. *Maryland Gateway to GT Education* will host and facilitate the development and implementation of state policy and recommended identification protocols, thereby increasing local school system capacity to identify and serve more underrepresented students.

The two interdependent **goals** of the *Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education* project include:

Goal 1. In partnership with Johns Hopkins University School of Education, Center for Technology in Education (JHU CTE), create *Maryland Gateway to GT Education,* an online platform that will be a repository of resources, including data, identification and service delivery models, instructional strategies, and interactive online training modules and courses, as well as a collaborative e-community for educators, students, families, researchers, higher education institutions, and community members.

Objective 1.1. Develop Phase 1 of *Gateway* to host the exploration stage of implementation of a new state policy and protocol for identification of GT learners, including e-communities, data, research, and other resources.

Objective 1.2.   Design and develop Phase 2 technical assistance resources on GT education for *Gateway* based upon needs assessment findings.

Objective 1.3.   Demonstrate *Gateway* and train local school systems and interested private nonprofit elementary and secondary schools on its use. Disseminate *Gateway* and its capacity for customization to multiple state and national settings.

Objective 1.4   Create Phase 3 of *Gateway* to provide technical assistance and support the installation and implementation stages of new Maryland identification policy and protocols.

Objective 1.5 Develop strategies for expansion and sustainability of *Gateway.*

The project design for Goa1 1 builds on a partnership with the Johns Hopkins University School of Education Center for Technology in Education (JHU CTE) that produced *Maryland Learning Links* https://marylandlearninglinks.org/, a resource for educators and families related to special education in Maryland. *Maryland Learning Links* is a site developed with federal funding through a State Improvement Grant. It is co-owned by MSDE and JHU CTE. JHU CTE continues to operate and maintain the site through a cooperative agreement with MSDE and funding from a variety of sources. It offers dynamic online resources and tools for educators, families, and family support providers to strengthen the instructional and educational services provided to children and youth with developmental needs and educational disabilities. Launched in October 2011, *Maryland Learning Links* is home to high-quality, rich media, interactive resources, and educational tools aligned with evidence-based practices to facilitate and enhance instruction of children in need of special education in Maryland. An average of 15,000 to 20,000 twenty thousand users visit *Maryland Learning Links* a month. JHU CTE staff strive for at least one new piece of content daily posted to the site, with 1-3 social media posts per day. Representative screen shots of *Maryland Learning Links* are included in Appendix 4.

Year 1

JHU CTE and MSDE will provide an online platform focused on identification of GT learners, including e-communities for stakeholder groups: school system leaders, educators, private non-public school educators, parents, and community members. During Phase 1, content

added to the platform will include research, best practices for GT identification, particularly underrepresented groups.

A needs assessment will be developed and disseminated to all stakeholder groups to determine technical assistance content and resources that will be developed for Phase 2 to increase the capacity of all stakeholders to serve gifted and talented students.

Year 2

Gateway Phase 2 technical assistance content aligned to the needs assessment results will be developed by project consultants and state GT leaders. Content will expand to encompass any aspect of gifted and talented education that will appeal to a wide audience in multiple settings, including articles, research, data, videos, webinars, professional learning modules, blog entries, and e-communities. The consultants will be selected based upon their expertise in providing technical assistance on how to adapt content on *Gateway* for use by all students, particularly low-income and at-risk students.

Year 3

Project staff will provide onsite visits to each school system and interested non-public schools in the state to demonstrate *Gateway* and to solicit high quality content contributions from educators and stakeholders to share with our statewide audience. Examples of the kinds of content may include:

- Articles– topics might include instructional strategies, how-tos, Maryland success stories, or research

- Produced and edited video clips

- Blog entries on a topic relating to gifted and talented education

- Suggestions for links to other sites and resources that support current content on the site.

The content submission and vetting process will align to the proven model used by JHU CTE *Maryland Learning Links.*

MSDE and JHU CTE staff will collaborate to share the *Gateway* platform at the state and national level through webinars and conference presentations.

Year 4

Phase 3 of *Gateway* content development will circle back to a focus on GT identification. Contingent upon consensus and approval of a state policy and protocol for the identification of GT learners, *Gateway* content will provide technical assistance to school systems and schools to support <u>installation</u>, <u>initial</u>, and <u>full implementation</u>.   Technical support and professional learning activities that have been developed and provided throughout the state will be published on *Gateway.* Driven by needs assessments, surveys, and user input, content will be created and updated upon request.

Year 5

JHU CTE and MSDE will continue to expand the technical assistance and resources provided through *Gateway* while evaluating the use of the platform and its impact on GT student achievement. The partners will develop a plan to disseminate, sustain, and improve the platform to meet the needs of stakeholders at the state and national level.   MSDE will collaborate with LEA educators to identify and evaluate Open Educational Resources (OERs) using evaluation tools that reflect privacy policies, accessibility compliance, and resource attribution. High quality OERs will be meta-tagged for searching capabilities and included in *Gateway.*

<u>Goal 2</u>: Research and develop an equitable state policy and supporting guidelines for the identification of gifted and talented students. Convene local school system leaders, teachers, experts, and other stakeholders to study and discuss options for the state. Use *Gateway to Gifted*

and Talented Education to post research, host discussions, integrate input, build consensus, and

facilitate the implementation of the new identification policy throughout the stages of

implementation science: <u>Exploration</u>, <u>Installation</u>, <u>Initial Implementation</u>, and <u>Full</u>

<u>Implementation</u>.

<u>Objective 2.1.</u> Develop and host the Maryland GT Equity Symposium for superintendents, GT

supervisors, and other stakeholders to discuss the urgency of the excellence gap in MD and to

build consensus on how to establish state policies and protocols on the identification of GT

learners.

<u>Objective 2.2.</u> Gather input from all Maryland stakeholder groups on the identification of GT

learners.

<u>Objective 2.3.</u> Develop proposed GT identification policy and protocol for the state.

Disseminate and solicit additional input through five regional meetings.

<u>Objective 2.4.</u> Award competitive subgrants to one LEA in each region for the installation and

implementation of the draft identification policy.

<u>Objective 2.5</u>   Provide technical support and professional learning to scale up in LEAs and

regions for exploration, installation, and implementation phases of the new identification policy.

<u>Objective 2.6</u>   Present research findings and recommend State Board of Education approval of

the new state identification policy and protocols.

The project design for Goal 2 centers on the involvement of key state leaders, the

Maryland State Advisory Council for Gifted and Talented Education, and national and

state experts in building consensus on addressing equity and access for gifted and

talented students through a state identification policy. Although it presents a significant

challenge, Maryland is committed to achieving this goal. Despite the state's size and the

relatively few number of LEAs, Maryland is a "local control" state, and the policy developed must enable local school systems to implement identification systems that will match the services the school system will be able to provide while increasing the number of underrepresented students served through GT programs. The establishment of a state GT identification policy answers the question posed by policymakers and stakeholders when discussing accountability for gifted learners: What would it take?

Chester E. Finn, Jr., Distinguished Senior Fellow and President Emeritus at the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, as well as Vice President of the Maryland State Board of Education, in a recent book co-authored with Brandon Wright, *Failing Our Brightest Kids,* makes recommendations "that would lead to better education for high-ability American youngsters while also adding more disadvantaged students to their ranks." One step that the authors term a "heavier lift" is to "systematically identify children whose education could and should be beefed up." (2014)

Promising evidence from studies by David Card and Laura Giuliano support the Goal 2 component of Maryland's project. In *Can Universal Screening Increase the Representation of Low Income and Minority Students in Gifted Education?* the use of systematic identification processes "led to large increases in the fractions of economically disadvantaged students and minorities placed in gifted programs." (2015) Additionally, *Does Gifted Education Work? For Which Students?* reported reading and mathematics gains in GT programs: Our findings suggest that a separate classroom environment is more effective for students selected on past achievement - particularly disadvantaged students who are often excluded from gifted and talented programs. (2014)

VanTassel-Baska, et al., found "the academic and affective profiles of gifted students who were classified under the five prototypes of low-income White students, low income African American students, low-income other minority students, high on verbal and low verbal students, and twice-exceptional students…"suggesting the power of gifted program membership on enhancing self-confidence and building higher level skills of communication and thinking." (2009)

The evaluation plan for this project will test the intervention of identification and provision of services to students in 5 of 24 Maryland LEAs, interested nonpublics, and in other participating schools and LEAs on the inclusion of underrepresented students and student achievement in one or more core content areas.

Year 1

Exploration: MSDE, the GT Advisory Council, and national GT experts will design and host the Maryland GT Equity Symposium to emphasize the need and to build momentum among leaders in the state school systems to establish a statewide policy aligned to MD regulations that mandate the identification of GT learners. A steering committee consisting of the Maryland State Superintendent, one school system superintendent, a state board member, and Jonathan Plucker, author of *Equal Talents: Unequal Opportunities,* will plan and approve all content for the Symposium. Research, data, and other resources will be posted on the *Gateway* platform before, during, and after the Symposium. *Gateway* will be the host and drive input, discussion, and consensus building around student identification.

Year 2

Exploration/Installation: The GT identification workgroup, with representation across LEAs and stakeholders, will draft identification policy and protocols, posting on *Gateway* and revising throughout the process based upon stakeholder online discussion and input. Project staff and the GT identification workgroup will replicate the strategies used to gather input from stakeholders on draft versions of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Plan, including listening tours, surveys, and focus groups.

Year 3

Maryland will award subgrants to one LEA in each region through a competitive application process for the installation and implementation of the draft identification policy, customized to meet the needs of its communities. LEAs eligible to apply must have GT instructional delivery models in place and evidence of progression through the exploration stage of implementation. Required elements of the LEA projects include professional learning for leadership and teacher teams, communication, and sustainability plans.   The *Gateway* project team will provide virtual and onsite technical assistance and monitor each LEA project.

Year 4

While the pilot school systems continue implementation of the identification policy and protocol, *Gateway* project staff and consultants will facilitate scale up of implementation to the remaining nineteen LEAs, providing technical support and professional learning as they move through the stages of implementation. Five regional workshops with school teams selected by the superintendent will offer professional learning on GT identification with a focus on underserved students, exploring resources available on the *Gateway* platform. These technical support and professional learning modules will be posted on *Gateway.*

Year 5

Project staff and consultants will continue to provide technical support to local school systems as they implement the GT identification policy. Additionally, the project will be disseminated through state, regional, and national conferences and on the *Gateway* platform. Informed by monitoring of pilot LEAs and the scale up throughout the state, project staff and MSDE leadership will present the research data and recommend approval of the MD GT identification policy and protocol.

Based on these goals and objectives, the **outcomes** for *Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education* are:

1. A comprehensive open online technical assistance resource on GT education accessible to all stakeholders

2. Professional development and implementation modules aligned to new MD policy and protocol for the identification of GT learners

3. Initial implementation of proposed MD policy and protocol for the identification of GT learners in 5 LEAs

4. New Maryland policy and protocol for the identification of GT learners in the state

5. A state GT flag for data collection and collection of disaggregated student achievement data

6. Increase in the number of students identified in Maryland from underrepresented groups.

Part 2: *Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education* Project Personnel

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has chosen a grant team with relevant backgrounds and professional experience to ensure that all goals and objectives of

Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education are met. In addition to those currently employed by MSDE, it is the intent of MSDE in compliance with all state and federal hiring requirements to contract with the following personnel to work on the project.   Resumes are provided in Appendix 5

Project Director:

Bruce Riegel, Ed.D. will be supported by state funds at 20% of his time as Project Director. He serves as MSDE's Lead Specialist for Gifted and Talented Education, providing leadership and technical assistance for gifted and talented education for the state school systems as well as collaboration with institutions of higher education and professional organizations. Dr. Riegel is the Board Secretary of the Council of State Directors of Programs for the Gifted and presents nationally on professional learning and on gifted and talented education. Previously, Dr. Riegel was the specialist at MSDE responsible for the management of Maryland's Summer Programs for Gifted and Talented Students. In his prior position at MSDE, he was the STEM, GT, and Next Generation Science Professional Learning Specialist and the Co-Project Manager for the Race-to-the-Top (RTTT) professional learning project. In that role, he managed a $15 million budget, wrote RTTT amendments, contracts, and managed most procurement and budget aspects of a project that provided professional learning for over 45,000 educators. Dr. Riegel came to MSDE after serving the as a secondary science teacher for the Howard County Public School System in Maryland as a secondary science teacher and Gifted Education Specialist. Dr. Riegel holds a bachelor's degree in biology, a master's in Secondary Administration and Supervision, and a doctorate in Educational Leadership.

Contractual Education Program Specialist: MSDE will begin the process of hiring a full-time project manager with expertise in gifted and talented education and experience in grant management as soon as possible within federal grant timelines and in compliance with state and federal personnel requirements. MSDE recruits applicants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In the interim, Dr. Riegel will assume the project manager duties.

External Evaluator

External Evaluator for this project will be hired on an expedited timeline through the Maryland state procurement process using a Request for Quotation (RFQ). The position will require expertise in gifted and talented education, research, and project evaluation. MSDE recruits applicants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

Gifted and Talented Underrepresented Groups Consultants:

Julie Skolnick, M.A., J. D. will provide expertise in the area or twice exceptionality. She is the founder and president of With Understanding Comes Calm, LLC. She works to support parents and educators of "Gifted & Distractible" children. Creator of the One-to-One Process, including its associated education, strategies and advocacy training. She is frequently asked to conduct trainings for educators and administrators. She also acts as a speaker to parents, educators and professionals. She publishes a monthly Newsletter, "Gifted & Distractible," which features a monthly blog. Julie also appears monthly on Facebook Live "Let's Talk 2e!" She spends much of her time mentoring twice exceptional adults toward success in professional and

personal relationships. Julie is a graduate of the Cornel University School of Law, has been employed by the Anti-Defamation League, United State Department of Justice, the National Labor Relations Board, and is a member of the Maryland State Advisor Council for Gifted and Talented Education.

Additional expert consultants will be hired to develop content for identifying and supporting all students, particularly students who are economically disadvantaged, English learners, and students who have disabilities, for the *Gateway* platform and to provide expertise for the development of the state identification policy. MSDE will use the state procurement process and recruit applicants who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability.

Goal 1 *Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education* Online Platform Director:

Chris Swanson, Ed.D., Senior Director for Quality Care and Education with the Johns Hopkins Center for Technology in Education. In this capacity, he serves as the executive editor of the *Maryland Learning Links* website, a resource he helped create in collaboration with the MSDE through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Swanson will bring his expertise in working with exceptional learners and understanding of strategic mass-communication platforms for engaging and educating professional and family audiences to the development and oversight of the Maryland Gifted and Talented *Gateway* platform. In his position with Hopkins, he will oversee the sub-grant award's budget and deliverables, and can allocate staffing and resources as required to achieve the project goals.

Goal 1 *Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education* Online Platform Project Manager:

Shannon Ensor, Communications and Marketing Manager with the Johns Hopkins Center for Technology in Education. She serves as the Managing Editor of the *Maryland*

Learning Links and Maryland EXCELS websites, two joint initiatives between Hopkins and MSDE. Ms. Ensor's expertise in site design, content strategy, and social engagement will serve as the structural anchor for the development of the Maryland Gifted and Talented *Gateway* platform. Ms. Ensor manages a team of in-house and external writers, graphic designers, and web developers, and will allocate those resources toward the creation, maintenance, and operation of this new web platform.

Goal 2 Gifted and Talented Policy Development: MD GT Advisory Council Co-Chairs:

The Maryland Gifted and Talented Education Advisory Council Co-Chairs will assist the Project Director, Project Manager, and Lead Consultant with the planning and implementation of Goal 2.

Keri M. Guilbault, Ed.D, serves as assistant professor of gifted education at the Johns Hopkins School of Education. She has worked as a district supervisor of gifted and talented programs and as a teacher of the gifted in both Florida and Maryland. She graduated from the University of South Florida with her master's degree in gifted education, and holds Ed.S. and doctorate degrees in educational leadership, with a specialization in gifted-education program administration from the University of Central Florida. Her research interests include academic acceleration, parenting the gifted and affective characteristics and needs of the highly gifted. In 2016, she received the Maryland State Leadership in Gifted and Talented Education award for her leadership and service at the state and national levels. She currently serves on the board of directors of the National Association for Gifted Children and is the Chair of the Maryland State Advisory Council on Gifted and Talented Education.

Penny Zimring serves as the Co-chair of the Maryland State Advisory Council on Gifted and Talented Education. She is a recent retiree of the Howard County Public School System

where she spent over 30 years as an elementary school teacher, Gifted and Talented Resource Teacher, and school system Instructional Facilitator for Gifted and Talented Education. She is also the President of the Maryland Educators of Gifted Students (MEGS), the state affiliate to the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC). Ms. Zimring has received numerous state and local awards for her work in gifted and talented education and is frequently a presenter at the state, regional, and national levels on the topic of gifted and talented education.

Goal 2 Gifted and Talented Policy Development Lead Consultant:

Jonathan Plucker, Ph.D. will serve as keynote speaker for the Maryland GT Equity Symposium and provide leadership and expertise for the development and implementation of a state GT identification policy and protocols. He serves as Julian C. Stanley Endowed Professor of Talent Development at Johns Hopkins University, where he works in the Center for Talented Youth and School of Education. Previously, he was Raymond Neag Endowed Professor of Education at the University of Connecticut and Professor of Educational Psychology and Cognitive Science at Indiana University, where he was the founding director of the Center for Evaluation and Education Policy. He graduated with a B.S. in chemistry education and M.A. in educational psychology from the University of Connecticut, then after briefly teaching at an elementary school in New York, received his Ph.D. in educational psychology from the University of Virginia. His research examines education policy and talent development, with over 200 publications to his credit and over $40 million in external funding to support his work. His recent books include Excellence Gaps in Education with Scott Peters (Harvard Ed Press), Critical Issues and Practices in Gifted Education with Carolyn Callahan (Prufrock Press), Intelligence 101 with Amber Esping (Springer), and Creativity and Innovation (Prufrock). He is an APA, APS, AERA, and AAAS Fellow and recipient of the 2012 Arnheim Award for

Outstanding Achievement from APA and 2013 Distinguished Scholar Award from the National Association for Gifted Children.

Goal 2 Gifted and Talented Policy Development Stakeholders

Key to the development of a new identification policy and protocols for the state will be the engaged participation and consensus by the 24 local school system superintendents, state and local board of education representatives, and school- and community-based stakeholders.

Part 3: *Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education* **Management Plan**

The management team for *Gateway* consists of the MSDE leadership: Project Director (Dr. Bruce Riegel), and the MSDE Project Manager (Education Program Specialist), JHU CTE design leadership (Dr. Chris Swanson and Shannon Ensor), the expert consultants (Jonathan Plucker, etc.), the GT Advisory Council Co-chairs (Dr. Keri Guilbault and Penny Zimring), the external evaluator, and the LEA sub-grant managers (Years 3-5).

The management team will meet monthly during Year 1 and quarterly during Years 2 through 5 to ensure that project milestones are achieved in a timely and effective manner. The time commitments of the Project Director (20%), Project Manager (100%) and other consultants are appropriate and adequate to meet the project objectives. Table 2 presents the activities necessary to achieve the project objectives, personnel responsible, and timelines for milestones.

Table 2 Management Plan

Activities	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Milestones
YEAR 1 (9/17 – 9/18)			
Procure and hire Project Manager (PM)	Riegel Plucker Guilbault Zimring MSDE Leadership	9/17 – 11/17	Project Manager hired

Activities	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Milestones
Procure and hire External Evaluator (Evaluator)	Riegel Plucker Guilbault Zimring MSDE Leadership	9/17 – 11/17	External Evaluator hired
Gateway to GT Education Phase 1: GT Identification Development	MSDE PM (once hired) Riegel Swanson Ensor	9/17 – 1/18	*Gateway* operational
Study 1: Evaluation of Effectiveness of *Gateway* through surveys and content hits	Evaluator	1/18 – 9/18	Study 1 data collected and disaggregated by LEA and stakeholder group
Needs Assessment designed, distributed, collected, and analyzed	MSDE PM External Evaluator Riegel Swanson Ensor Plucker Guilbault Zimring	12/17 – 1/18	*Gateway* Phase 2 technical assistance content assigned to consultants
GT Equity Symposium: Planning	MSDE PM Riegel Guilbault Zimring Plucker Skolnick LEA Superintendent MD State Board of Education member	1/18-3/18	Symposium planned for participation by leaders in all 24 LEAs
GT Equity Symposium: Implementation	MSDE Project Manager Riegel Guilbault Zimring Plucker Skolnick Other consultants as needed LEA Superintendent MD State Board member	5/18	GT Equity Symposium
GT Equity Symposium on *Gateway*	MSDE PM Evaluator Swanson	5/18 – 6/18	All resources and input from school system

Activities	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Milestones
	Ensor		leaders posted on *Gateway* for input
Study 2: GT Equity Symposium Evaluation	MSDE PM Evaluator	5/18 – 6/18	Responses to symposium evaluation questionnaire posted on *Gateway*
YEAR 2 (10/18 – 9/19)			
Gateway to GT Education: Phase 2: Resource design, development, and posting to Gateway	MSDE PM Riegel Swanson Ensor Plucker Guilbault Zimring Skolnick Additional consultants as needed	10/18 – 9/19	Phase 2 resources designed, developed, and posted on Gateway
Create State GT Identification Policy and Protocols Draft	MSDE PM Riegel Plucker Guilbault Zimring Skolnick GT Identification workgroup Additional consultants as needed LEA Superintendent State Board member	10/18 – 12/18	State GT student identification policy and protocols written and posted on *Gateway*
Policy and protocols revised using stakeholder input	MSDE PM Riegel Swanson Ensor Stakeholders	12/18 – 3/19	E-community stakeholder discussions drive policy and protocols revision
Listening Tours	MSDE PM Evaluator Riegel	12/18	Input from stakeholders about draft GT policy and protocols collected and posted on *Gateway*
Develop disseminate LEA subgrant RFP for pilot implementation of draft GT student	MSDE PM Riegel Plucker Guilbault Zimring MSDE Leadership	1/19 - 3/19	RFP created and distributed to eligible LEAs

Activities	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Milestones
identification policy and protocols			
Additional *Gateway* content created using Listening Tour input	MSDE PM Swanson Ensor Riegel Plucker Guilbault Zimring Skolnick Underrepresented groups consultants Additional consultants as needed	1/19 -9/19	Listening Tour input analyzed and utilized by grant and writing teams
Draft of new GT student identification policy and protocols vetted by LEA Superintendents for approval	MSDE PM Riegel Plucker Guilbault Zimring Skolnick Underrepresented groups consultants Additional consultants as needed	3/19	New state policy and protocols for GT student identification prepared and vetted by LEA Superintendents
Review subgrant applications and select pilot LEAs	MSDE PM Riegel Plucker Guilbault Zimring MSDE Leadership Subgrant review team	5/19	Subgrants awarded to 5 Pilot LEAs
Additional *Gateway* content created using Listening Tour input	MSDE PM Swanson Ensor Riegel Plucker Guilbault Zimring Skolnick Underrepresented groups consultants Additional consultants as needed	1/19 -9/19	Listening Tour input analyzed and utilized by grant and writing teams

Activities	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Milestones
Study 1: Evaluation of Effectiveness of *Gateway* through surveys and content hits	Evaluator	10/18 – 9/19	Study 1 data collected and disaggregated by LEA and stakeholder group
YEAR 3 (10/19 – 9/20)			
Gateway to GT Education : Installation and Support	MSDE Project Manager Riegel Swanson Ensor	10/19 – 9/20	Virtual and/or face-to-face technical support provided to LEAs and non-public schools who use *Gateway*
Monitor implementation of GT identification policy and protocols using fidelity measures in 5 pilot LEAs	MSDE PM Riegel Plucker Guilbault Zimring MSDE Leadership	1/20 – 9/20	Subgrants awarded to 5 Pilot LEAs
Study 1: Evaluation of Effectiveness of *Gateway* through surveys and content hits	Evaluator	10/19 – 9/20	Study 1 data collected and disaggregated by LEA and stakeholder group
Study 3: Teacher Monitor Feedback from Professional Development	MSDE PM Riegel Evaluator Ensor Swanson	5/19 – 9/22	Feedback data from Professional Development collected and posted on *Gateway*
Study 4: Part A: Changes in numbers of pilot students and percentages in each student group identified using new policy and protocols	MSDE PM Riegel Evaluator	10/19-9/20	Study 4A data collected and analyzed
Study 4: Part B: Regression Discontinuity Design Study (RDD) of pilot student test group achievement data pre-to-post implementation of policy and protocols	MSDE PM Riegel Evaluator	10/19-9/20	Study 4B data collected and RDD complete

Activities	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Milestones
YEAR 4 (10/20 – 9/21)			
Study 1: Evaluation of Effectiveness of *Gateway* through surveys and content hits	Evaluator	10/20 – 9/21	Study 1 data collected and disaggregated by LEA and stakeholder group
Study 3: Teacher Monitor Feedback from Professional Development	MSDE PM Riegel Evaluator Ensor Swanson	10/20 – 9/21	Feedback data from Professional Development collected and posted on *Gateway*
Study 4: Part A: Changes in numbers of <u>pilot students</u> and percentages in each student group identified using new policy and protocols	MSDE PM Riegel Evaluator	10/20 – 9/21	Study 4A data collected and analyzed
Study 4: Part B: Regression Discontinuity Design Study (RDD) of <u>pilot student</u> test group achievement data pre-to-post implementation of policy and protocols	MSDE PM Riegel Evaluator	10/20 – 9/21	Study 4B data collected and RDD complete
Study 4: Part C Regression Discontinuity Design Study (RDD) of <u>non-pilot student</u> test group achievement data pre-to-post implementation of policy and protocols.	MSDE PM Swanson Ensor Riegel	10/20 – 9/21	Study 4C data collected and RDD complete
Gateway to GT Education : Phase 3 content focused on GT identification	MSDE PM Riegel Swanson Ensor Underrepresented groups consultants Additional consultants as needed	10/20 – 1/21	Phase 3 content created and posted *Gateway* with technical assistance providing access to professional learning to all LEAs, non-public schools, and national stakeholders

Activities	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Milestones
Gateway Demonstrations	MSDE PM Riegel Swanson Ensor	10/20 – 1/21	*Gateway* demonstrations and training for LEAs and interested non-publics held in each region
Study 5A: *Gateway* Demonstrations Evaluation Perceptions	MSDE PM Evaluator Riegel Swanson Ensor	10/20 – 1/21	Feedback data from *Gateway* demonstrations posted on *Gateway*
Study 5B: Disaggregated analysis of hits on *Gateway* for use and content contributions	MSDE PM Evaluator Riegel Swanson Ensor	10/20 – 9/21	Study 5B data collected and analyzed
Study 5C: Changes in amount of content posted on *Gateway* pre-to-post- *Gateway* Demonstrations	MSDE PM Swanson Ensor Riegel	10/20 – 9/21	Study 5C data collected and analyzed
"Scale-up" of implementation of GT identification to LEAs not in pilot and interested non-publics	MSDE PM Swanson Ensor Riegel	10/20 – 9/21	Identification-related professional development content publically available on *Gateway*
5 Regional PD workshops focusing on underrepresented students	MSDE PM Riegel Plucker Guilbault Zimring Underrepresented groups consultants Other consultants as needed	10/20 – 4/21	Professional learning opportunities and technical support provided to school teams, including non-public schools, selected by LEA Superintendents
YEAR 5 (10/21 – 9/22)			
Study 1: Evaluation of Effectiveness of *Gateway* through surveys and content hits	Evaluator	10/21 – 9/22	Study 1 data collected and disaggregated by LEA and stakeholder group
Study 3: Teacher Monitor Feedback	MSDE PM Riegel Evaluator	10/21 – 9/22	Feedback data from Professional

Activities	Person(s) Responsible	Timeline	Milestones
from Professional Development	Ensor Swanson		Development collected and posted on *Gateway*
Study 4: Part A: Changes in numbers of pilot students and percentages in each student group identified using new policy and protocols	MSDE PM Riegel Evaluator	10/21 – 9/22	Study 4A data collected and analyzed
Study 4: Part B: Regression Discontinuity Design Study (RDD) of pilot student test group achievement data pre-to-post implementation of policy and protocols	MSDE PM Riegel Evaluator	10/21 – 9/22	Study 4B data collected and RDD complete
Study 4: Part C Regression Discontinuity Design Study (RDD) of non-pilot student test group achievement data pre-to-post implementation of policy and protocols.	MSDE PM Swanson Ensor Riegel	10/21 – 9/22	Study 4C data collected and RDD complete
Develop strategies for expansion and sustainability of *Gateway*	Swanson Ensor MSDE PM Riegel	10/21 – 1/22	Plan for expansion and sustainability of the *Gateway*
Continued expansion of Gateway	Swanson Ensor MSDE PM Riegel Stakeholders	10/21 – 9/22 and beyond	Content collection on *Gateway* expansion through meta-tagged high-quality OER stakeholder contributions
Proposed GT student identification policy and protocols vetted by State Board of Education for adoption	MSDE PM Riegel MSDE Leadership Plucker Guilbault Zimring	11/21 – 9/22	Policy and protocols for GT student identification recommended for approval by State Board of Education

Part 4: *Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education* **Project Evaluation**

The research and evaluation plan will employ experimental studies to measure the impact of the interventions on various groups. There will be five studies included in this project. The findings from each study will result from statistical analysis utilizing several instruments and different experimental designs, each chosen to provide the most reliable and valid usable results to collect the desired data and affect change. The following plan divides the evaluation and experimental design phase by goal and identifies the years in which each aspect of evaluation occurs.

An external evaluator will be hired using the state procurement process through a Request for Quotation (RFQ). The evaluator will consult with the project team to design all evaluation instruments and will oversee all evaluations and assessments, including surveys, needs assessments, and a regression discontinuity design study (RDD), as well as provide monthly updates to the project team, and write yearly project evaluation reports.

Goal 1

Study 1 will help to evaluate effectiveness of *Gateway*, as well as its content. This will begin in Year 1, when *Gateway* first goes online and continue through the life of the grant. The study will first utilize a questionnaire to look at a comparison of perceptions of individuals who utilize *Gateway* and its content. It will measure perceptions of users as related to the aesthetics, ease of use, perceived helpfulness and accuracy of consulted content and links, perceptions about the design and usefulness of the e-community, and suggestions that the user may have regarding any of the aforementioned aspects of *Gateway* design and content. The survey contains questions

that will alternate between a five-point Likert scale and open-ended questions to collect written feedback about *Gateway*. Data collected will be disaggregated by stakeholder group and LEA. Additionally the number of "hits" on *Gateway* and each of its components and content pieces will be tracked to determine needs/interests of the users and compare that to demographic user information. These data will be used to design or re-design *Gateway* and its content, as well as determine the effectiveness of *Gateway* and needs of users. This will also help to align content to stakeholder needs.

Goal 2

Study 2 will consist of a post MD GT Equity Symposium (Year 1) evaluation for the participants using an online questionnaire and designed to determine the perceived effectiveness of the symposium and its use as a vehicle to provide information about gifted and talented students, identification, and programming, while collecting information from LEA superintendents and other participants about consensus on the concept of the development of new policy and protocols regarding GT student identification. It will also act as a needs assessment to help drive development of resources for *Gateway*.

Study 3 will also be a survey-based feedback study for teachers receiving professional development. This will begin in Year 3 and continue through Year 5. It will utilize questionnaires to evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development materials and sessions, including webinars, online content, modules, etc. This will aid designers and presenters in future presentations and material designs, as well as provide information relating to the need for supplemental training and help conclude the effectiveness of the professional development as it relates to this project.

Study 4A will look at changes in the number of students typically identified in each of the pilot LEAs compared to the numbers of student identified after the treatment (new identification protocols administered by teachers who were trained using professional development designed by the LEA as part of their sub-grant agreement). The study will look at both the total number of students and the students with their identifying groups disaggregated. It will also look at changes in student group (e.g., Black, Hispanic, EL, twice exceptional, FARMS, and any other groups of students who are typically underrepresented, specific to the school or LEA) percentages for the identified GT student group.

Study 4B, performed using students from the five pilot LEAs during Years 3-5, will involve a regression discontinuity design study (RDD) that will compare pre- and post-"treatment" data. The "treatment" in this study will the influence on the newly-identified GT students after having received gifted and talented support and intervention over the course of one, two, or three years, depending on the experimental group. Each group of students, Year 3, Year 4, and Year 5, will constitute an experimental group.

The experimental design for Study 4B will involve utilizing previous classroom achievement data, including formative and summative assessment data, for each student in core content classes (English, mathematics, social studies, and science), as well as PARCC achievement data (English and mathematics). Particular attention will be given to look for positive changes in achievement after receiving appropriate intervention and support for students who belong to student groups that typically are underserved by gifted and talented programs in their school or LEA.

Report card grades, in-class test data, formative assessment data, and other information provided by teachers, as available, as well as PARCC data, will be collected from a two-year

period prior to the student being identified as gifted and talented. Those data will be compared to similar data collected after that student was identified and began receiving gifted and talented services and support. The study will collect post-treatment data for each year within the timeframe of the grant.

Study 4C, occurring in Years 4 and 5 only, would also look at changes in achievement for students in the remaining nineteen LEAs whose teachers have been trained using the new identification materials and the students who were identified using the new protocols. The external evaluator will make a determination if an RDD can be conducted on the pre-and post-treatment achievement data for these students as there may be extra variables and a lack of data, since these LEAs and schools may not have had the proper preparation for this study. If sufficient data can be collected this study would provide additional results about the effectiveness of both the new identification protocols and the professional development. If an RDD is utilized, the experimental design for Study 4C will be the same as Study 4B.

During Year 4, there will also be statewide demonstrations about *Gateway*, e-community, professional development opportunities, and how to post and access content. Special efforts will be made to solicit educators to post high-quality content on *Gateway*. This training will also be made available to non-public, non-profit schools. Study 5 will look at three topics related to these training sessions and *Gateway*. Study 5A examines the perception of the effectiveness of the training and will be measured via questionnaires given to all participants. Study 5B investigates the changes in the number of hits on the *Gateway,* e-community, and content, disaggregated by LEA and stakeholder group pre- and post-Gateway demonstrations. Study 5C tracks the amount of content being posted on *Gateway* before and after the demonstration events, to see if there is an increase after the training occurs.

Further, the project team, state and LEA leadership, and pilot LEAs will collaboratively develop fidelity measures aligned to the new state GT identification policy and protocols. Throughout the stages of implementation, the fidelity measures can be used to collect quantitative and qualitative data that informs implementation progress.

MSDE reserves the right to include additional evaluation and research design measures in consultation with the external evaluator, stakeholders, superintendents, and other leaders from Maryland's 24 LEAs who participate in the Maryland GT Equity Symposium, the development of the state's new GT identification policy and protocol, as well as numerous stakeholders expected to use the *MD Gateway to Gifted and Talented Education* online platform.