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CP#5 Improve early learning objectives.

CP#6 Support college access and success.

CP#7 Address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities and limited

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I. Focus and Population

The overall focus of this proposal is to implement the My Access program, as an initiative to help improve the academic performance of 131 students in grades 6-8 at Preston Plains Middle School, a rural LEA, in the area of writing. Across all grade levels (3-8) students scored below the target goal of 80% on the 4th generation Connecticut Mastery Tests in writing. The district goal in Preston is for all students to reach 80% at or above goal in all academic areas. My Access, a product of Vantage Learning, provides a research-based online writing program that is backed by the federal governments' definition of strong evidence. Its instant feedback feature and ability to motivate students with the use of online learning is evidenced in this proposal. It aims to improve upon and individualize the writing skills of all students while also improving teacher effectiveness in teaching writing. Student populations served through this grant are 131 middle school students living in Preston, CT. Implementation of the My Access program will additionally differentiate for and target the writing skills of 13 students on free and reduced lunch, 19 special needs students and 4 English Language Learners in the district.

II. Scale-Up Grant

Partnering with Vantage Learning, Preston Plains Middle School is seeking a scale-up grant to provide funding for a research-based program backed by strong evidence called My Access, an online automated writing program. My Access utilizes computer software designed to read, analyze and produce instant feedback on student's strengths and weaknesses in writing. My Access provides strong evidence toward improving students writing with the use of data. With

ongoing professional development through Vantage Learning, teachers will be more effective in using data to inform and design instruction in writing for all students, including students with free and reduced lunch, special needs and English Language Learners. My Access develops individualized plans that are tailored to meet the needs of all students. Currently, Preston Public Schools has implemented the My Access program in 5th grade. In the Spring of 2009, a CMT cohort analysis revealed students in grade 5 raised their writing scores on the Connecticut Mastery Tests by 10% from 56.9% at or above goal in 4th grade to 76% at or above goal in grade 5 for the entire population of students. When special education population is disaggregated, students' scores raise from 62.8% to 82.2% at or above goal. The current fifth and sixth grades, where My Access has been implemented, district assessment using Blue Ribbon revealed highest overall writing scores among all other grade levels in content, organization and tone, word choice, capitalization and punctuation, and grammar usage.

In Brooklyn, CT, the school district received \$50,000 in state funding for implementing the My Access program with sixth graders. Teachers have already seen improvement in written essays since implementing it in the Fall of 2009. "In November, a sample of 25 students received on average a score of 2.9 on their essays on a scale from 1 to 6. In mid-January the average score jumped to 4.3", says teacher Sharon Loughlin. She also goes on to say that "it provides immediate feedback that one teacher in a classroom of twenty students couldn't possibly give."

III. Required Priority: Improve Achievement for High Need Students

Preston administration has implemented several initiatives specifically in the area of reading. One of those initiatives was to purchase a license for and provide professional development

in the use of AIMSWEB, a progress monitoring tool that identifies students who fall below the national target or 25th percentile in reading fluency and comprehension. Those identified received targeted, research-based instruction in each student's specific area of need. To complement the need to track student progress, grade level teams have been established and ongoing professional development in using data teams to inform and guide instruction.

Strategies, Research and Functionality of My Access Implementation

Strategy: Teachers will provide immediate diagnostic feedback to guide students through the writing process.

Research:

Marzano (2000) and Strong et al. (1995) have proven the importance of **immediate diagnostic feedback for improved student performance**. Explaining what the student did and did not do well, as well as modeling the skills they need to be successful, can help students improve their writing.

My Access features and functionality

Instant Scoring

When students submit their writing in MY Access!, they can immediately see their progress displayed as a holistic score and as traits scores in focus and meaning; content and development; organization; language use, voice, and style; and mechanics and conventions for IntelliMetric® prompts. A research study published in the Journal of Technology, Learning, and Assessment that was led by Larry Rudner of the Graduate Management Admission Council, confirms the accuracy of the IntelliMetric engine (Rudner, Garcia & Welch 2005). Using essays drawn from

over 100 different prompts, results indicated that IntelliMetric agreed within one point on a six-point scale with human raters over 97% of the time on average. This agreement rate was found to be slightly higher than the agreement rate between two human raters. As a result, the researchers concluded that IntelliMetric replicates the scores provided by human raters, providing superior agreement rates. When they submit their writing, within seconds, students will receive scores on a 4- or 6-point scale, based on genre-specific rubrics. Studies of scoring accuracy have shown that IntelliMetric:

- agrees with expert scoring, often exceeding the performance of expert scorers;
- accurately scores open-ended responses across a variety of grade levels, subject areas and contexts;
- shows a strong relationship with other measures of the same writing construct;
- shows stable results across samples.

Immediate Diagnostic Feedback

MY Tutor provides students with immediate scaffolded, diagnostic feedback. Students receive individualized revision goals based on criteria specified in the rubric, across the five traits of writing. Examples of goal setting are provided in the **feedback**, and teachers can set the level of **feedback** as well as traits that will be displayed. MY Editor, a multilingual grammar engine, provides detailed

descriptions and targeted **feedback** by analyzing text and detecting errors in grammar, mechanics, style, and usage.

Strategy: Teachers will teach students how to evaluate writing so that students will learn to think critically about their writing.

Research:

Peer review helps students reflect on their writing, create solutions, and consider another person’s perspective (Saddler & Andrade, 2004). Hillocks states that rubrics are among the most significant factors that favored improved writing skills (1987). As Donald Graves has suggested, through the help of rubrics, students learn to assess their own work or “read” their own writing (1994). As students revise, teachers can use the examples of problematic and exemplary writing, called writer’s models, to guide student revisions in a structured way, which as Duffy indicates, can “demystify” the often challenging revision process (2000). Revision plans will, as Nancy Sommers indicates, make students independent when revising since they will be able to recognize good writing (1980).

MY Access! Features:

With MY Access!, students can select from an extensive bank of **prepared peer review statements** to provide appropriate feedback to their peers.

MY Access! **rubrics**, written in language students can understand, provide scaffolded instruction that students need to become independent writers.

Writer's models with commentary for all IntelliMetric prompts help students understand how writing is evaluated.

Students complete **revison plans** to develop an action plan for goals, strategies, and reflection to strengthen their writing.

Strategy: Teachers will teach writing as a process to help writers become proficient.

Research: The *Writing Next* authors state, “Strategies for planning, revising, and editing their compositions have shown a dramatic effect on the quality of students’ writing. Strategy instruction involves explicitly and systematically teaching steps necessary for planning, revising, and/or editing text” with the “ultimate goal being to teach students to use these strategies independently” (Graham & Perin, 2007, p. 15). Cotton suggests that seeing writing as a process results in “greater writing achievement” than when students do not plan their writing (1988). Marzano points out that advanced organizers and nonlinguistic representations of students’ ideas help make not only better writers, but better learners (2001). Studies completed by Cowie indicate that when feedback is received often and in the early stages of writing, it is more likely to be judged by the student as valuable (1995). According to Cotton, sharing their writing with others through publication improves student motivation and achievement (1988).

MY Access! supports each stage of the writing process with **online and offline tools to plan, organize, draft, review, and edit each submission.**

Teachers can guide students in using an extensive variety of **non-linguistic graphic organizers and genre-specific prewriting activities** in MY Access! to analyze and synthesize informational text into outlines, prior to developing ideas.

During the writing process, as the writer adds, deletes, and reorganizes content and structure, students receive immediate feedback from **MY Tutor in scaffolded revision tips** for all traits.

Each time students submit their writing, they receive **automated holistic and trait scores.**

Teachers can make general and embedded **comments** on each student draft to guide students in the revision and editing process.

MY Editor provides suggestions for students to improve grammar, mechanics, style, and usage.

MY Access! provides a variety of template options for students to put the finishing touches on their submission through the **publish** feature.

Strategy: Teachers will use **focused instruction** to teach writing.

Research: Discussing how to implement the elements of effective writing instruction in schools, the *Writing Next* authors argued, “Excellent instruction in writing . . . instills in writers the command of a wide variety of forms, genres, styles, and tones, and the ability to adapt to different contexts and purposes” (Graham & Perin, 2007, p. 22). Students must be explicitly taught, and then practice, the components and subcomponents of the writing process. In “focused practice,” the teacher designs writing tasks that emphasize a specific component that is taught and practiced (Hillocks, 2005). Research supports the trait/analytical approach to writing assessment. Breaking the writing process into traits and creating expectations through rubrics based upon those traits is an accurate measure of student ability and offers the best indicator of the direction in which to focus instruction. (Culham, 2003; Spandel, 2001).

- MY Access! has over 1,100 prompts, and five genres from which teachers can choose assignments, providing students with instruction and practice related to writing in a variety of forms, genres, styles, and tones.
- MY Access! Instructional Units provide step-by-step guides for teaching specific MY Access! prompts, from prewriting to the editing process.
- In MY Access!, teachers have the flexibility to target their instruction by focusing scores and feedback to a specific domain.

IV. Absolute Priority 2: Use of Data

Significant Improvements

- Preston Public Schools has successfully implemented a district-wide online progress monitoring tool called AIMSWEB in the area of reading. 41 out of 186 students (22%) in grades 3-6 scored in the below average category in reading fluency on the AimsWeb assessment in the Fall of 2009.
- 37 out of 186 students in grades 3-6 scored in the below average category in reading comprehension on the AimsWeb assessment in the Fall of 2009.
- 30 out of 43 students in grades 3-6 scored at or above average on the AIMSWEB assessment in fluency and 29 out of 39 in reading comprehension in the Spring of 2010.
- Preston administration has required implementation of grade level data teams in all grades, pre-k – 8. Grade level teams are made up of regular education teachers, special education teachers and other specialists. Teams monitor progress of students and determine, using data and formative assessments, whether research-based strategies are working or not working and if those strategies are implemented with fidelity. The team then determines which students did not make adequate progress with additional interventions, tracked by the use of data and monitored weekly.
- Preston Public Schools recently adopted a technology plan that outlines the need for teachers and students to access technology as a “useful tool for problem solving and communicating.” The district has acquired a wealth of equipment including, but not limited to, two computer labs, 1-4 desktops per classroom, teacher laptops, smart boards,

and software such as the Read Naturally Program, echalk, and licenses for software that help to track data of student performance.

Goal: MyAccess implementation will allow teachers and students to use data to improve their writing abilities.

Strategy: Teachers will use data to inform instruction.

Research:

McLeod (2005) and Schmoker (1999) have shown that by connecting immediate improvement with consistent planning about classroom instruction and student learning outcomes, student achievement can be improved. In fact, data-driven instruction is a key principle in establishing effective differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 2000).

MY Access! feature or functionality to support the research:

Extensive reporting capabilities in MY Access! help teachers and administrators compile data and effectively make decisions about instruction. All student writing will be stored in the MY Access! electronic portfolios for the purposes of assessing writing achievement over time and promoting articulation between grade-level teachers. This provides students with the ability to collect and view a list of completed assignments, scores, cumulative data, and feedback (e.g., Summary Report, MY Tutor Feedback Report, MY Editor Report, Teacher Comments, and the Revision Plan) for each assignment. Tracking and

reporting student progress with the MY Access! Assignment Wizard provides a step-by-step process for teachers to assign student prompts. Using the Wizard, teachers select prompts and define the parameters for writing, instruction, feedback, scoring (4- or 6-point rubric) and use of writing-process tools. For example, teachers or administrators select feedback levels for MY Tutor (by readability level) and proficiency levels for MY Editor based on students' reading and writing levels. They may also "turn on" instructional tools, such as the Word Bank, graphic organizers, rubrics, and writer's models. For summative or benchmark assessments, tools may be turned off and a timer may be engaged. Teachers or administrators can assign a prompt and students can work from anywhere they have access to a computer with an Internet connection.

Parent Letters — Teachers can send student progress reports to parents in a variety of languages that provide updates on writing proficiency. MY Access! has extensive robust reporting features for quickly reporting instructionally valuable feedback about usage, demographics, and scores to students, teachers, and administrators.

Dynamic, aggregate reports can be grouped at the district, school, teacher, group, and student levels. This data-driven information provides opportunities for monitoring and modifying instruction and for providing differentiated instruction.

With a wide variety of filtering capabilities, MY Access! reports allow administrators to extract data on student performance by group, prompt,

demographics, etc. Users have the ability to export and share reports in several formats.

MY Access! reports include the following:

Performance Summary Report. Average Performance, by domain or holistic, filtered by group, school, students, classes, or district, time period, etc.

Frequency Distribution Report. Breakdown by percentage of student performance for holistic and/or domain/trait scores on one or more writing assignment or assessment.

Early Intervention Report. Identifies groups of students based on their performance on selected assignments.

Error Analysis Report. Determines number of errors and identifies areas of improvement, which gives teachers the opportunity to form instruction based on dynamic student data.

History Report and Student History Report. Enables administrators and teachers to view the performance of one or more students, classes, or schools over a period of time.

User Frequency Report. Provides information about how many students are writing to each prompt, as well as the performance of the students as a group for each prompt.

District Usage Report. Provides descriptive data on overall student usage and achievement by school.

Teacher Usage Report. Provides descriptive data on overall student usage and achievement by teacher.

Data Management — With the support of the Vantage Learning Implementation Specialist (see the Professional Development Services section), the MY Access! Account Management System (AMS) allows the administrative user the ability to view orders and upload and manage students. At the district or school level, the user is able to manage administrators, teachers, and student users by easily uploading/importing a standard template with user information. Qualified MY Access! customer support representatives are available via telephone to assist in the upload process and to resolve any data exceptions. Administrators have the option to sign up for an automatic weekly usage and achievement report via e-mail to monitor school, teacher, and student progress.

Strategy: Vantage Professional Development will guide teachers to effectively use data-driven instruction.

Research: In an October 2009 speech to Columbia University’s Teachers College, U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan said that young teachers “were not taught how to use data to improve instruction and boost student learning.”

MY Access! feature or functionality to support the research:

Vantage Professional Development focuses on teachers’ ability to extract and analyze data to make decisions regarding their instruction. Using scoring rubrics, portfolio/report data, and their own student writing as guiding factors, teachers will develop skills in evaluating student writing and develop strategies for differentiation instruction.

Teachers will learn how to configure report options based on research questions, use MY Access! report data to guide instruction, report student performance to parents, and provide timely intervention or enhanced learning opportunities for students (differentiated instruction).

Session Objective: This session will instruct teachers on how to use a variety of MY Access! reports to extract data on student performance. Professional development also leads teachers through analyzing and evaluating their students’ writing for evidence of skills taught in the writing curriculum.

V. Competitive priorities:

CP#5. Improve early learning objectives.

CP#6. Support college access and success.

CP#7. Address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities and limited English proficient students.

CP#8. Serve schools in rural LEAs.

Explanation:

All strategies and research in this section address the competitive priorities, improve early learning objectives, support college access and success, address the unique learning needs of students with disabilities and limited English proficient students, and serve schools in rural LEAs.

Vantage Learning will be working with Preston Public Schools to provide many options for quality, university-backed professional development that supports differentiated instruction as well as the needs of any educational level or region.

In the following section you will see the strategy, supporting research, and the specific way that MY Access! will support the strategy.

Competitive Priority 5: Improve Early Learning Objectives

Strategy: Teachers and Administrators will focus on literacy skills particular to early learners.

Research: Morrow (2001) suggests that early literacy instruction should include an integrated language arts approach, integrating literacy development into the total curriculum with thematic units for many subject areas. Other effective early literacy objectives include language, spelling and vocabulary development, and reading comprehension. The particular needs of the early literacy educator may also include support for effective data intervention and partnering with families.

MY Access! feature or functionality to support the research:

MY Access! has dozens of upper-elementary cross-curricular prompts to choose from to support a complete curriculum.

Writing, spelling, and literacy development can be supported in MY Access! through the audio-based word web, Lexipedia, spelling lists, and word banks; color coding can be used in oral lessons.

MY Access! helps develop early reading comprehension of the Texts through Literature Series comprehension questions and literary prompts that are presented in instructional units and lesson plans.

Early intervention and editing and spelling error data, as well as parent letter templates, help manage and communicate student literacy progress.

Competitive Priority 6: Support College Access and Success

Strategy: Teachers and administrators will teach, on demand, academic essay strategies.

Research: Educators such as Gere (2005) and Newkirk (2005) have researched the need to support college access by providing authentic opportunities to write effective on demand and academic essays. Teachers should provide students with a repertoire of writing tools and strategies to help practice what is expected on the writing portions of the SAT®, AP exams, state exit tests and college entrance essays/exams.

MY Access! feature or functionality to support the research:

MY Access! advocate and high-school educator Katherine Pabst has found that students using MY Access! tools such as the timer, rubrics, and persuasive writing tools have learned “that they can be effective and efficient writers on a wide range of topics because they know once they hit the keyboard they only have 30 minutes to be the lawyer who wins his/her case before the judge.” Pabst points out that “students will be prepared for all assessments of a timed nature in an authentic setting . . . once they have these skills embedded with practice for the SAT®, AP® test, or state assessment (Pabst, 2008). Furthermore, MY Access! has a variety of college-level writing prompts that can be used for enrichment.

Competitive Priority 7: Address the Unique Learning Needs of Students with Disabilities and Limited English Proficient Students

Strategy: Teachers will use differentiated instruction as well as other strategies specific to the needs of ELL and AYP students.

Research: According to Short and Echevarria, “Teachers can use the regular core curriculum and modify their teaching to make the content understandable for ELLs” (2004). The NCTE has set out strategies for teachers with students who have limited English Proficiency. They include: introducing cooperative, collaborative writing activities that promote discussion and promote peer interaction in conjunction with extensive, encouraging teacher comments. According to the NCTE, scaffolding writing instruction is also important for ELL instruction. According to Hall, Strongman, and Meyer, differentiated instruction allows all students to access the same classroom (curriculum) by providing entry points, learning tasks, and outcomes that are tailored to students’ needs (2003).

MY Access! feature or functionality to support the research:

MY Tutor’s immediate diagnostic feedback is scaffolded so students can review multiple goals for revision that apply to their proficiency status for each submission. Students maintain control of their writing while evaluating their own writing and the work of peers. Prepared peer review comments guide students in a focused, positive peer review. Likewise, teacher comments can be general or embedded and teacher generated or preformatted. Two unique features to support ELL instruction are found in the feedback tools in MY Editor and MY Tutor. MY Editor identifies errors most commonly made and provides instructional feedback on spelling and grammar in their native language. Spanish language MY Tutor feedback is available at two levels of proficiency.

MY Access! addresses various learning styles:

Visual Learners — Students who think in terms of pictures.

- MY Access! provides picture and art prompts that encourage visual interpretation and analysis.
- Scores can be displayed graphically at the student level.
- All of our instructional materials can be printed by the student or teacher. There are many prewriting tools to help students develop and display their ideas visually.
- MY Tutor feedback incorporates color coding to engage student thinking.

Auditory Learners — Students who learn and understand by hearing or reciting material.

- A variety of multimedia resources from iSEEK can supplement instruction.

Kinesthetic Learners — Students who learn by touch and experience.

- MY Access! allows students to type their responses and activate feedback within the program with just one click.
- MY Access! instructional handouts can be used for tactile lessons. For example, students can cut up the handout, fill it in, and build and deconstruct their ideas by moving the pieces until the ideas make sense.

Differentiated instruction with an emphasis on collaboration in the special-education classroom is supported by MY Access! For example, instructional tools like the spell-checker can be turned on to provide extra help. Teachers or administrators can create subgroups to assign the most appropriate tasks in small-group instruction. iSEEK resources and MY Access! Writing Support Series assessments are available to help teachers provide remediation or enrichment activities. Parents can access any student work at any time using their student's account information. Letters to a parent can be generated for any student submission. The program can be used for cross-curricular instruction in ELA, science, history, and math.

Competitive Priority 8: Serve Schools in Rural LEAs

Strategy: Teachers will use technology to teach writing instruction to provide equal learning opportunities for all geographical areas.

Research: The National Commission on Writing in America's Schools and Colleges (2003) recommends that a major effort be launched to apply new and emerging technologies to the teaching, instruction, and assessment of writing. Creating technology environments that heighten students' motivation to become independent readers and writers can increase their sense of competency, according to Kamil et al (2000). The ability to revise quickly using word processing programs, combined with spell-checking features, has been found to improve all students' writing (Kamil & Lane, 1998).

MY Access! feature or functionality to support the research:

Word processing of all student text can be inputted 24 hours/day, 7 days/week. All levels of students can use the writing process to prewrite online using graphic organizers and revise and edit using automatic MY Tutor and MY Editor feedback, which provides specific and descriptive feedback. Students will also receive automated, instant scoring assessment based on genre-specific rubrics. Collaborative writing, a critical part of the writing process, is managed through teacher/student online messaging/comments. All levels of students set goals, select and apply strategies, and reflect using established revision plans that are saved with each draft. Cumulative writing portfolios are used by teachers and students for tracking student progress analysis of writing skills, reflection, and for developing continuous learning targets. Teachers and administrators have constant access to student progress via the secure SSL MY Access! account.

A. Need for Project

Problem:

Teachers require professional development in the use of My Access.

Outcome:

Teachers learn how to analyze writing using data to help inform instruction in the area of writing by offering individualized plans that differentiate for all students.

Problem:

Students living in rural areas, special needs, and English Language Learners require equal opportunities to engage in 21st century learning strategies using technology.

Outcome:

My Access allows students to instantly see their areas of strengths and weaknesses and creates detailed, individual writing plans, allowing for differentiation.

Problem:

Students in grades 3-8 have not met the districts goal of 80% at or above goal on the CMT's in the area of writing.

Overall:

CMT % at or above goal in writing	Spring 2006	Spring 2007	Spring 2008	Spring 2009
Gr.3	77.8 (84.2)	56.9 (62.8)	72.5 (80.6)	46.2 (48.9)
Gr.4	63.2 (75)	80.4 (81.8)	76 (82.2)	62.2 (64.7)
Gr.5	63.8 (71.4)	63.9 (72.2)	70.2 (72.7)	72 (80)
Gr.6	49.2 (63.8)	58.3 (67.3)	58.7 (66.1)	59.5 (60)
Gr.7	44.4 (49)	47.6 (59.6)	64.1 (74.1)	56.1 (62.7)
Gr.8	72 (91.9)	72.2 (81.3)	50.8 (67.4)	66.1 (78.4)

* All data shown is % mastery of each strand; number between () represents % mastery when special education is disaggregated.

B. Quality of the Project Design

Goals/Objectives

- 1. 131 students in grades 6-8 will achieve 80% at or above goal on the DAW on the CMT in writing within 3 years.**
- 2. A cohort of 25 students in grade 6 will achieve an average holistic score of an 8 (top score being a 12) by the end of year one implementation. (2010-2011)**

3. A cohort of 25 students in grade 7 will achieve an average holistic score of a 9 by the end of year two implementation. (2011-2012)
4. A cohort of 25 students in grade 8 will achieve an average holistic score of a 10 or above by the end of year one implementation. (2012-2013)
5. Up to 20 teachers will receive ongoing professional development through Vantage Learning on the use of My Access.

Timeline

*Projected gains toward 80% at or above goal on the Connecticut Mastery Test in the area of writing. () indicates average cohort score on the DAW. The current grade 5 will serve as the cohort for tracking 3 years of data of implementation in grades 6-8.

Spring 2009		Spring 2010 Unknown	Spring 2011	Spring 2012	Spring 2013
46.2	Current grade 4		60 (8)	70 (9)	80 (10+)
62.2	Current grade 5		70 (8)	75 (9)	80 (10+)
72	Current grade 6		75	80	
59.5	Current grade 7		80		

D.Strategies and Capacity to bring to Scale including experienced personnel

- 1. Implement the My Access online writing program in grades 6-8 for the next 3 years.**
- 2. Students will have access to student rubrics to help give instant feedback in areas of strengths and weaknesses.**
- 3. Teachers will provide immediate diagnostic feedback to guide students through the writing process.**
- 4. Teachers will teach students how to evaluate writing so that students will learn to think critically about their writing.**
- 5. Teachers will teach writing as a process to help writers become proficient.**
- 6. Teachers will use focused instruction to teach writing**
- 7. Teachers will use data to improve instruction**
- 8. Vantage professional development will guide teachers to effectively use data-driven instruction.**
- 9. Teachers will teach effective writing that is based on standards and impacts overall student achievement.**
- 10. Teachers and administrators will teach, on demand, academic essay strategies.**
- 11. Teachers will use differentiated instruction as well as other strategies specific to the needs of all students including those on free and reduced lunch, special needs and English Language Learners.**
- 12. Teachers will use technology to teach writing instruction to provide equal learning opportunities for all geographic areas**

D.Experience of Eligible Applicant

Preston Public Schools management team comprises a full time doctorate level superintendent, part-time business manager, full-time curriculum and special education director, as well as a full-time principal at the middle school. Project director (Ivy Davis) and Superintendent (John J. Welch ED.D) have experience managing federal entitlement grants including current grants through ARRA and IDEA. Past experience also include entitlement grants securing Title I funds for students in a high need district.

E.Quality of Project Evaluation including Implementation and Sustainability

Measure of Evaluation, Implementation, or Sustainability	Supportive Research	MY Access! Feature, Functionality, or Vantage Learning Program
Evaluate how effectively professional development integrates and sustains	Researchers, such as Harwell, state that for continuous improvement, effective professional	For successful writing instruction and student performance, the strategies from the trainings must be reinforced and re-taught . They are established during the years of implementation and repeated through

<p>a long-term effective writing program.</p>	<p>development needs to sustain focus over time (2003).</p> <p>Professional development must provide teachers with sufficient time and follow-up support to master new content and strategies and successfully integrate them into practice (US DOE 1995).</p>	<p>professional development when necessary.</p> <p>Ongoing success requires several years of continuous use and monitoring of MY Access!</p> <p>Each coaching and mentoring session is tailored to a teacher’s unique needs and learning style and will focus on a specific subject and/or instructional strategy delivering a customized learning experience. Typical lessons utilize the writing process, focusing on using cognitive organizers, rubrics, writer’s models, revision and editing strategies, and data analysis to inform instruction.</p>
<p>Evaluate the effectiveness of cooperative relationships to further enhance student development.</p>	<p>Rayman contends that teachers should “forge cooperative relationships with faculty, advising professionals, student</p>	<p>For each year of implementation, a dedicated implementation specialist will provide on- and off-site services, which include the following:</p> <p>Help to establish the core school/district</p>

	<p>affairs professionals, administrators, parents, and student groups to take advantage of the multiplier effect that such collaborative relationships can have in furthering our goal of enhanced student development” (1999, p. 179).</p>	<p>MY Access! goals and objectives.</p> <p>Assistance in the establishment of a pre-/post-writing assessment and benchmarking plans.</p> <p>A regular review and report of the district/school program usage to key district/school contact(s).</p> <p>Engagement in ongoing, regularly scheduled discussions with key persons at each district/school involved in the program to ensure program integration.</p>
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<p>Use data to track student and teacher performance for curriculum improvement.</p>	<p>Reeves shows we can find teacher and student strengths and discover challenges when we assess data (2002).</p>	<p>MY Access! has extensive features for quickly reporting instructionally valuable feedback about usage, demographics, and scores to students, teachers, and administrators. Dynamic, aggregate reports can be grouped at the district, school, teacher, group, and student levels. This data-driven information provides opportunities for</p>
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	<p>Frye illustrates that the assessment cycle of continuous monitoring, implementing, and revising of instruction based on assessment data is the most effective way to improve student achievement (2003).</p>	<p>monitoring and modifying instruction and for providing differentiated instruction. With a wide variety of filtering capabilities, MY Access! reports allow administrators to extract data on student performance by group, prompt, demographics, etc. Users have the ability to export and share reports in several formats:</p> <p>Performance Summary Report. Shows the average performance, by domain or holistic, filtered by group, school, students, classes, or district, time period, etc.</p> <p>Frequency Distribution Report. Shows the breakdown by percentage of student performance for holistic and/or domain/trait scores on one or more writing assignment or assessment.</p> <p>Early Intervention Report. Identifies groups of students based on their performance on selected assignments.</p>
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		<p>Error Analysis Report. Determines number of errors and identifies areas of improvement, which gives teachers the opportunity to inform instruction based on dynamic student data.</p> <p>History Report and Student History Report. Enables administrators and teachers to view the performance of one or more students, classes, or schools over a period of time.</p> <p>User Frequency Report. Provides information about how many students are writing to each prompt, as well as the performance of the students as a group for each prompt.</p> <p>District Usage Report. Provides descriptive data on overall student usage and achievement by school.</p> <p>Teacher Usage Report. Provides descriptive</p>
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		data on overall student usage and achievement by teacher.
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VI. Vantage Learning Letter of Partnership

May 10, 2010

Connecticut State Department of Education
Education Technology Office
165 Capitol Avenue
Hartford CT 06106

To Whom It May Concern:

Vantage Learning, headquartered in Ewing, New Jersey with offices serving Connecticut, and a provider of educational technology services and products, is delighted to partner with the Preston Public Schools and its other partners, for the purpose of applying for the I 3 grant being submitted to the Connecticut Dept of Education.

Writing has been chosen as the focus of this grant proposal, and Vantage Learning is prepared to support and assist Preston Public Schools in their efforts. Vantage believes it can contribute in a meaningful way to help the very difficult instructional issues in the elementary and middle schools. In addition, Vantage desires to partner because it is our fundamental belief that we can make a difference in the lives of students by helping them be productive citizens in the future. Effective communication, particularly writing, is something our students will need beyond school. By participating in this project, Vantage can bring to bear our expertise across multiple districts and communities and help serve them well beyond the scope of the project.

Kindest Regards,

Dave Hewes
Vice President



