

Louisiana Department of Education – School Redesign Request for Information

The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) is responding to the Louisiana Department of Education School Redesign Request for Information. In this response, we at NIET describe our organization and accomplishments aligned to assisting the students of Louisiana achieve their dreams. The remainder of this response addresses each of the requested pieces of information.

1. Partner Background

a. Organization name

National Institute for Excellence in Teaching

b. Summarize your organization’s mission and its connection to Louisiana’s plan for struggling schools

NIET is a national non-profit organization with a mission to advance educator effectiveness across America. NIET recognizes that an effective teacher is the most important school-based factor impacting student achievement, as such NIET is committed to ensuring a highly skilled, strongly motivated and competitively compensated teacher for every classroom in America. To accomplish our mission, we support states, districts and schools in attracting, developing, supporting and retaining high-quality human capital in order to raise achievement levels for all students.

Building on more than a decade of experience in implementing teacher effectiveness models in schools across the country, NIET provides tailored support services to schools, districts and states in developing highly effective educators. These services and support include strategic planning and assistance in the design, development and implementation of teacher effectiveness policies and systems in the areas of educator evaluation, performance-based compensation and school-based professional development, as well as access to innovative tools and resources. Working together with teachers, administrators, teacher associations, government, foundations, corporations and other leaders in educator quality and compensation reform, we aim to achieve our mission.

We believe our mission is directly connected to the Louisiana plan for struggling schools. As noted in the request for information, the Louisiana Department of Education seeks expert partners to support schools across multiple support categories that NIET has provided to thousands of schools across the county, including numerous schools within Louisiana. Specifically, NIET has provided a comprehensive system to support holistic redesign (NIET’s TAP System), provided targeted expertise in elements of school improvement such as talent development, data processes, and school culture (specific trainings from NIET’s Educator Effectiveness Series), as well as provided tailored support to address opportunity and achievement gaps (direct impact of NIET’s initiatives within schools).

2. Evidence of Track Record of Student and School Outcomes

a. In any format, please illustrate your organization’s track record in dramatically improving schools or systems of schools and/or radically increasing outcomes for targeted subgroups of students.

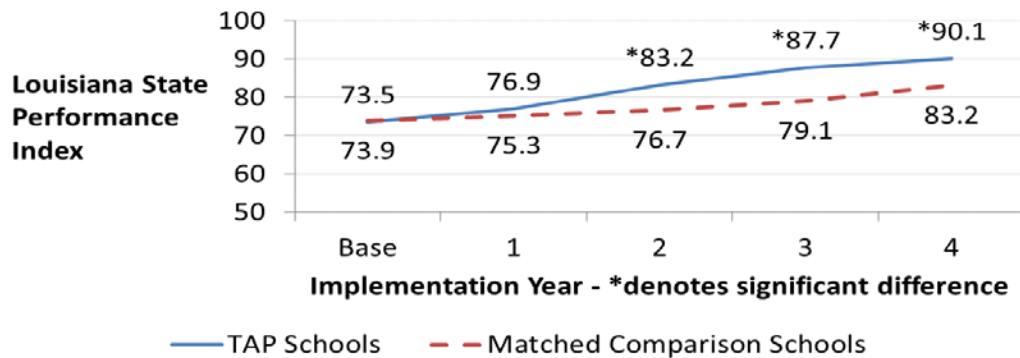
NIET’s initiatives stand out because of their long track record of success in high-need schools. The research evidence also reveals several key reasons for NIET’s positive impact: an evaluation system capable of differentiating teacher performance levels and providing detailed feedback for improvement, ongoing professional growth in classroom practice using student and teacher data to guide

improvement, recruitment and retention of effective teachers, and the creation of a challenging, rewarding, and collegial environment focused on high- quality instruction and student learning.

Specifically highlighting the success of the TAP System is the expanding preponderance of performance data that comes from examining the impact of the system across multiple locations and conducted by different researchers using varied methodological frameworks (Algiers Charter School Association, 2011; Barnett, Hudgens, & Alexander, 2016a; Barnett, Rinthapol, & Alexander, 2015; Barnett, Rinthapol, & Hudgens, 2014; Barnett, Wills, Hudgens, & Alexander, 2015; Buck & Coffelt, 2013; Daley & Kim, 2010; Hudson, 2010; Schacter & Thum, 2005; Schacter et al., 2002; Schacter, Thum, Reifsneider, & Schiff, 2004; Solmon, White, Cohen, & Woo, 2007)¹. Although examining different locations, different student populations, and using different methodological approaches, each of these studies has a clear finding to show the impact of NIET’s work with improving educator effectiveness and impacting student achievement. Below are two summaries selected from among these studies to demonstrate how changes in instructional effectiveness contributes to improvement in student achievement using NIET’s initiatives in Louisiana.

Mann, Leutscher, and Reardon (2013) examined the impact of the TAP System across fifteen schools in Louisiana. In order to determine impact, a one-to-one nearest-neighbor matching algorithm with replacements was created to find a comparison school for each TAP school. Based on the propensity scores computed using the selection model, the algorithm chose the non-TAP school with the propensity score closest to the propensity score of the TAP school. There was no significant difference between the TAP schools and their matched comparison schools in the pretreatment year, $t(26) = 0.080, p > 0.05$. However, results of the study indicate that in the four primary subjects assessed, there was a significant effect in favor of the TAP schools for ELA: $F(1, 6421) = 6.334, p = 0.012$; Mathematics: $F(1, 6421) = 86.386, p = 0.000$; Science: $F(1, 7084) = 31.792, p = 0.000$; and Social Studies: $F(1, 7085) = 87.411, p = 0.000$. Further, the study examined the impact of the TAP System across time to find that the TAP schools significantly outperform comparison schools, $F(1, 24) = 5.30, p = 0.031$. The study also found that 92% of teachers reported that TAP made a positive difference on student achievement in their school and 91% reported that the AYP status was improved as a result of the TAP System

Figure 1: Louisiana TAP Teachers Improve Instructional Practices



Barnett, Wills, and Kirby conducted a follow-up evaluation on the impact of the TAP System across 66 schools in Louisiana using two rigorous analytic strategies. First, the authors employed a linear regression to compare 2012-13 Assessment Index (AI) performance of the 66 TAP schools and non-TAP schools statewide, controlling for prior (2010-11) achievement, percentage of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch, school configuration, school size (number of students), and percentage of English language learners. Controlling for the covariates, implementation of the TAP System showed a

¹ References available upon request. Not provided due to page limitations.

significant positive effect on 2012-13 achievement: the 66 TAP schools scored 3.7 points higher on average than non-TAP schools ($p < .01$). Second, the authors compared the 66 TAP schools with a propensity score matched group of non-TAP schools. The average 2012-13 AI for TAP schools (64.45) was 5.47 points greater than the average for the matched controls (58.98). These two approaches to examining the impact of the TAP System demonstrate the significant effect it has on student achievement.

3. Your Organization's Model

a. How will you differentiate your services to meet the unique needs of schools and districts in Louisiana?

NIET has a consistent and long-standing track record of working with Louisiana schools in rural, urban, high poverty, and high-need environments. In each of these partnerships (and nationally), NIET provides a tailored support system based on the needs of each school, including support in coaching, evidence-based decision making, evaluation, instructional practices, and leadership. The model NIET uses to provide services begins with a thorough review of the data for the school, including teacher evaluation and achievement scores. These data are used to create a plan for each partner school to align to the support services NIET can provide.

b. What are the attributes of your ideal partner school or district?

NIET's ideal partner possesses a willingness to implement a comprehensive educator effectiveness model that uses practitioner developed tools, web-based technologies, and training services that provide specific feedback, coaching, and support.

c. Describe your experience working with other third party providers to support coherent school and district improvement.

NIET has worked extensively with third-party providers to provide coherent support for school and district improvement. Specifically, NIET has worked with value-added providers (states, universities, organizations) to provide student achievement data. These data are included in long-range planning meetings, as well as individual coaching sessions with administrators and teachers. Further, NIET has worked with curriculum providers, climate/school behavior program providers, and charter school authorizers to impact instructional practices and improve student achievement.

d. What support from the state, district or school partners would enhance your success in Louisiana?

Recognizing and promoting the importance of educator quality is essential for the overall success of the Louisiana education system. The state can continue to communicate support for NIET's model and share its impact on advancing instructional practices. The state can also continue to provide a point of contact within the state department to assist with the integration of NIET's educator evaluation data management system with the COMPASS System for logistical support. District and school partners could support NIET's success in Louisiana by continuing to set high expectations for their educators.