Louisiana Believes

**Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program
Cohort 2 Subgrant Application**

**John White
State Superintendent of Education**

March 19, 2013

Application Due Date: April 16, 2013, 4:00 p.m. CST

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Application Purpose

The **purpose** of the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy (SRCL) program is to increase student achievement on the Common Core State Standards in literacy for students across our state. The focus of this grant aligns with the state's Louisiana Believes plan and with the Classroom Support Toolbox released in February 2013.

Louisiana Believes, our state's reform plan starts with a simple idea: in order for students to achieve, those closest to them should be empowered to make the decisions necessary to support their achievement.

As such the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) is focused on ensuring teachers have the tools they need in order to set goals, plan, instruct and collaborate with each other. The department will focus with districts on ensuring that systems are established to support teachers in this work. The LDOE will focus with districts on four key focus areas:

Focus Areas	Excellent districts…
School Leader & Teacher Learning Targets	- Determine which common assessments teachers use to establish SLTs - Determine which data teachers use to initially diagnose students' academic starting point - Set deadlines for when teacher and leader SLTs should be finalized - Describe how evaluators should engage with teachers to set SLTs
Assessment & Curriculum	- Identify benchmark assessments to be used across grade levels in ELA. In instances where assessments are district created, the district has determined who will revise these and by when to ensure alignment to the CCSS - Establish a schedule for assessments that includes administration dates and data review opportunities for principals and teachers - Ensure year-long scope and sequences align to the CCSS
School & Teacher Collaboration	- Ensure each school has time for teacher collaboration and a designated leader - Create plan and schedule for principal collaboration and a designate a leader - Create plans for principal and teacher PD days that prioritize content aligned to the CCSS and Compass and designate a leader - Identify specific responsibilities for Louisiana Teacher Leader school representative in teacher collaboration process
Compass Observation & Feedback	- Set district-wide observation feedback timelines - Determine who participates in co-observations at both the school and district level and when they occur to ensure rigor of observation/feedback process - Establish a process to compare observation ratings to student achievement outcomes (VAM or SLTs) to ensure rigor of observation/feedback process - Identify and support most struggling teachers and leaders

The SRCL grant allows districts the opportunity to enhance these critical systems across the birth through grade 12 continuum.

School districts and charters, including Cohort 1 subgrantees, are eligible to apply for Cohort 2 funding. Applicants must select a feeder system that is likely to serve the same disadvantaged children as they progress through their education. Each age span (preschool, elementary, middle, and high) must be included. Charters without a complete feeder system may apply as a consortium to meet this requirement.

Applicants are encouraged to include Early Head Start/Head Start and/or non-profit childcare. Additionally, applicants are required to partner with a non-profit community-based organization or agency such as a library or health care provider with a demonstrated record of effectiveness in improving the early literacy development of children, birth through kindergarten entry, and in providing professional development in literacy.

LDOE will award up to 11 Cohort 2 subgrants for a project period of at least 16 months and up to 42 months, pending continual Congressional approval and recipient's demonstrated performance. Cohort 2 subgrantees will receive $253,940.00 for the period June 18-September 30, 2013 and approximately $800,000.00 to $2,000,000.00 in each subsequent year (October 1-September 30), depending on the number of students served in Year 1 and availability of funds. Subgrantees will be required to submit an annual budget in October in each subsequent year.

2. Application Timeline

Release of the Cohort 2 SRCL application follows the release of the 2013-2014 Classroom Support Toolbox. The selection process will be completed prior to the start of the 2013-2014 school year. Network Teams will provide appropriate support for preparing SRCL applications to all districts submitting an application.

SRCL Timeline Completion

Activity	2013 Timeline
Application Release	March 19
TA Meetings for Districts	March 26 – Lafayette* April 2 – Alexandria *
TA Webinar	April 11, 11:00 a.m.
Application Due	April 16
External Review	April 17-26
Validation of Scores	April 29-May 1
Rank and Select Applications for Interview	May 2-3
Interviews Announced	May 7
Interviews Conducted	May 13-17
Validate Scores and Rank/Recommend Winners and Leadership Approval of Selections	May 20-24
Prepare for BESE Review/Approval	May 27-31
BESE Approval	June 18

*Applicants must register for TA meetings on Coursewhere.

3. Application Criteria and Evaluation

The application consists of five major components. Reviewers will evaluate the SRCL application according the following criteria and will award funds to the highest ranked applications. All proposals will not be funded.

Component	Possible Points	Points Awarded
Project Need	10	
Project Goals	15	
Project Design	50	
Project Management Plan	15	
Project Budget	10	
Total	**100**	

a. **Need for the Project (10 points)**

- Provide a narrative describing the need for the project in the proposed feeder schools.

   o Applicant provides compelling description of literacy achievement results to demonstrate need for the project.

   o Proposed feeder schools show an adequate number of students moving from one feeder school/site to the next.

   o Applicant describes a plan to expand the project to serve more disadvantaged youth in subsequent years.

- Complete Appendix A: LEA Proposed Feeder Schools/Sites – Number of Students and Contact Information

   Each feeder system may include up to four preschools/early childhood centers, two elementary schools (K-5), a middle school (6-8), and a high school (9-12), or a similar configuration that represents all levels. Provide the number of students and contact information for each site.

- Complete Appendix B: Data Tables 1-4

   o Table 1: Disadvantaged Youth in Proposed Feeder Schools – Provide percentage and number of disadvantaged youth by category. (If current SRCL grantee, select a different feeder system.)

   o Table 2A and 2B: Disadvantaged Youth in Comparison Feeder Schools – Provide data for two additional feeder school systems with the next greatest number and percentage of disadvantaged youth by category. (If not applicable, state reason.)

   o Table 3A: Literacy Achievement Results for Proposed Feeder Schools
   Table 3B: Evidence of Literacy Success for Cohort 1 SRCL Schools (Current SRCL grantees only)

   o Table 4: Proposed Feeder Schools Flow Through – Provide the number of children moving from highest age level/grade level served in school/site to lowest grade level served in feeder school/site (including children in preschool centers such as Head Start).

b. Project Goals (15 points)

Project Goals
Applicant uses literacy data from state assessments to identify and prioritize literacy needs of students and to set goals aligned to student achievement, Advanced Placement achievement, ACT achievement, and graduation rates. Goals are measurable, time bound, and ambitious, and support attainment of district performance goals. Description includes: o A gap analysis, describing reasons for gaps o Discussion on the most common data trends o Alignment between need/gap and project design to reach goals

c. Project Design (50 points)

Project Design
The LDOE believes districts should build systems around the Focus Areas introduced in the Classroom Support Toolbox and highlighted in the opening section of this application. Functional systems aligned against the Focus Areas of: •School, Leader and Teacher Learning Targets •Assessment and Curriculum •School and Teacher Collaboration •Compass Observation and Feedback are characteristic of high functioning school districts. The project design of each applicant should include a clear description of the process to implement at least one of these systems in the district. Applicants may outline the build of more than one system if they also clearly identify the district capacity required for the work. The project design should include a description of: • An assessment of the current strengths and weaknesses of the applicant relative to the proposed system(s). • The framework the applicant intends to build relative to the proposed system(s). • How the district will leverage funds to achieve the implementation of the proposed system(s) given their current position. Each application will be assessed to the extent the applicant proposes a high-quality plan to effectively use program funds to establish or improve district capacity against the focus areas.

d. Project Management Plan - **Ability to execute/implement project (15 points)**

Project Management Plan
Plan must clearly communicate ability of the LEA to successfully implement the plan. This plan should include:.   1) Milestones that describe key interim points towards achieving the ultimate aim described in the grant   2) Owners responsible for completion of key tasks.   3) **Appendix C:** Job descriptions of all key personnel paid for with SRCL funds (project director, interventionist, integration specialist/coach, etc.).   4) If current SRCL grantee, describe how staff will be organized at the district level to adequately support success of two feeder systems.

e. Project Budget (10 points) - **Use the spreadsheet in Appendix D to** prepare a budget for $253,940.00 for June 18-September 30, 2013.

Project Budget
Include *all of the following* components: 1) **Narrative & Appendix D:** All budgeted expenses are detailed and directly align with the project plan and the four key focus areas described above.   2) **Appendix D:** Budget adheres to the following federal funding distribution. *At least*:   • 15 percent of funds are used for birth to age 5;   • 40 percent of funds are used for kindergarten through grade 5;   • 20 percent of funds are used for grades 6-8; and   • 20 percent of funds are used for grades 9-12.   3) **Appendix D:** All items appear to be coded in the correct funding distribution and category.   4) **Narrative:** Applicant provides a plan for leveraging funds (e.g., state, federal, private) to implement, sustain, and scale the project.

4. Application Submission Instructions and Checklist

Applications must be submitted **no later than Tuesday, April 16th at 4:00 pm** via email to Jill.Slack@la.gov.
Applications should be saved as a single PDF document with the file name: LEA Name: SRCL Grant. (*For example, Assumption: SRCL Grant.pdf*) Direct questions to Jill.Slack@la.gov.

OR mail four copies to:
Louisiana Department of Education
ATTN: Jill Slack
Room 4-164
1201 North Third Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Review your application to ensure you have the following sections:

Part 1: Application Narrative

❑ Title Page

❑ Application Narrative
Maximum length is 12-pages, not including the title page or the appendices.

- Formatting guidelines:

    o Use 1" margins at the top, bottom, and both sides.

    o Double space all text in the narrative. However, text in citations, charts, tables, figures, and graphs may be single-spaced.

    o Place the name of the applicant in the header.

    o Number each page.

    o Use one of the following 12-point fonts for all narrative text: Times New Roman or Arial. Text in tables may be 10-point.

Part 2: Appendices

❑ Appendix A: LEA Proposed Feeder Schools/Sites – Number of Students and Contact Information

❑ Appendix B: Data Tables 1-4

❑ Appendix C: Job Descriptions and Resumes for Key Personnel (2-page max resume for each) such as project director, literacy integration specialists/coaches, and interventionists **(Applicant must attach)**

❑ Appendix D: Budget

❑ Appendix E: Signed MOUs from partners (i.e., early childhood partners with demonstrated record of effectiveness, Charter agreement on fiscal agent) **(Applicant must attach)**

Reviewers will evaluate each application on how well it responds to the criteria (in the narrative and appendices). The maximum score an application may receive is 100 points.