Proposal Cover Page

Project Title: **Lead Teachers Developing Collective Efficacy and District-Wide Capacity for Student Success**

Section 1. Applicant Information

LEA: McDowell County Schools   Tax ID/EIN: 56-6001073

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Section 2. Project Information

Project Director Name and Position (if different from contact): _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Total Project Budget: $841,790   Requested Grant Amount: $746,790

Estimated Number of Schools Served: 14   Estimated Number of Students Served: 6398

By signing below, I assure NCDPI that I am an official of the organization and authorized to bind the organization. I certify the following *(check each box so as to indicate your review and certification)*:

- ❑ The information provided in this proposal is correct and complete.
- ❑ The applicant understands that this proposal and all attachments submitted are public records.
- ❑ The applicant understands that if awarded a grant, it will be required to:
  - o Participate in all evaluation activities, including collection, recording, and reporting of data, as required by NCDPI, NCSBE, or third-party evaluators, in compliance with relevant privacy laws.
  - o Submit required financial and performance reports to NCDPI.
  - o Comply with the North Carolina General Statutes, the North Carolina Administrative Code, and any other rules or regulations that may govern the performance and oversight of this program.
  - o Begin serving participants before or by July 1, 2019.

Signature and date: (in blue ink) _____

Title: _____ **Phone:** _____

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Lead Teachers Developing Collective Efficacy and District-Wide Capacity for Student Success

A. STATEMENT OF NEED

McDowell County Schools [MCS] has made significant gains in recent years but continues to struggle to establish a research-based instructional model district-wide that meets the needs of all learners. The number of students for whom English is not their home language is increasing, as are the numbers of students who present with significant mental health problems. Federal data indicates our schools are not fully meeting the educational needs of Students with Disabilities or English Learners.

The district was concerned when reviewing the 2018 Teacher Working Conditions Survey results because although most metrics were well above state averages, one key set of measures was below—the perception of support received from mentors by beginning teachers. On 20 out of 25 measures in this section, MCS was below the state average, indicating a strong need to revamp our mentoring practices (NCTWC, 2018).

On all 14 campuses of MCS, leaders are committed to ensure all students are taught by fully-trained, reflective teachers of the highest quality who meet unique learning needs. To do so, all teachers need an advanced understanding of the current focus areas: Personalized Learning, Social Emotional Learning, Culturally Responsive Practices, Students with Disabilities, and English as a Second Language. Bierly's 2016 work on Distributive Leadership, *Transforming Schools: How distributed leadership can create more high-performing schools,* serves as a theory of action for the school system. The philosophy being adopted is that teachers are in the best position to support and lead other teachers in instructional issues. The district has not employed instructional coaches at the system or school level in many years. While capacity exists within our teaching staff to lead in these areas, due to the relative poverty of the area, there is currently no mechanism to reward potential lead teachers for this advanced responsibility. Through the development of a compensation model for advanced teaching roles, we will pursue this important

work and develop collective efficacy. Although we have the support of the McDowell County Schools' Board of Education and the County Commissioners to reward teachers with higher supplements, without the three year grant from the state initiative, we will not be able to begin a district-wide effort.

McDowell County Schools seeks to develop a group of 22 Lead Teachers total who will continue to work in their classrooms in each of its 14 schools. This team of accomplished educators will lead a district-wide effort to implement Personalized Learning as an instructional model, embed Social Emotional Learning practices daily throughout the curriculum, and increase the abilities of all staff to support all students. At present, seven of the eight elementary schools do not even have an assistant principal, leaving those principals, especially, searching for ways to expand leadership opportunities for their best teachers to remain within their buildings. By having Lead Teachers on every campus who mentor beginning teachers and those new to the district, conduct action-research on their own best practices within a narrow focus, and spearhead a more extensive effort focused on identified key areas supported by data; the system expects to develop strong collective efficacy in its teaching corps and increase the attractiveness of the teaching profession to potential candidates for employment in McDowell County.

B. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

1. Description of McDowell County Schools and Data to Support Needs

McDowell County is located in Western North Carolina at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains. As of the 2017 Census Report, the population was 45,069, with 23% of the population between birth and 18. The race and ethnicity distribution of the county are as follows:

- 88% White
- 6% Hispanic
- 4% African-American
- 1% two or more
- 1% Asian

The poverty rate in McDowell County is 19.3%, about 20% higher than the rate in North Carolina (16.2%), and about 1.3 times the rate in the United States (14.6%). McDowell County recently improved its North Carolina rating of economic well-being from Tier 1 to Tier 2. Currently, the population in McDowell County falls well short of the national (86.9%) and state (87.3%) rates for the attainment of a high school diploma. For adults in McDowell County:

- 82.5% attained a High School diploma or higher
- 15.9 % reached a Bachelor's degree or higher

The public school system in McDowell, which serves approximately 6400 students daily, has achieved momentous gains in the past five years, climbing from a rank of 85th out of 115 systems in 2016 to 50th in the state in 2019 based on state accountability measures. In the 2018-2019 school year, all 14 schools met or exceeded expected growth as determined by EVAAS. Although the district's 2018-19 graduation rate of 83.2% is a significant improvement over 77% posted five years prior, much work remains to ensure every student graduates as a productive citizen. For example, the table below shows the progress of three relevant sub-groups of students who are not being educated well enough using our current methods:

	2014-15 Proficiency	2015-16 Proficiency	2016-17 Proficiency	2017-18 Proficiency	2018-19 Proficiency
Economically Disadvantaged	44.4%	41.5%	56%	49.6%	51.1%
Students with Disabilities	15.8%	16.6%	19.6%	20.2%	21.7%
English Language Learners	13.6%	11.9%	17.8%	33.3%	22.9%

Academic Achievement Data Analysis reveals that three subgroups, Economically Disadvantaged (3804 students), Students with Disabilities (1091 students), and English Language Learners (378 students), continue to have significant gaps in most McDowell County Schools. For that reason, other focus areas for all faculty and staff in the next three-year cycle will be on best practices in instruction for these targeted subgroups.

Analysis of Perception Surveys indicates that school administrators believe the district should expand training for teachers and administrators on differentiation to support subgroup performance. Developing Collective Efficacy, which has been rated by a meta-analysis of 26 studies as the number one influence on student achievement with an effect size of 1.57 (Hattie, 2015), will serve as a guiding principle. McDowell County Schools will employ a Lead Teacher model for Advanced Teaching Roles that allows teachers on all 14 campuses to remain in the classroom while delving deeply into their practice, linking their teaching actions explicitly with student outcomes, and then expanding their influence to all classes in the district. The theory for using action research for personal professional development will be grounded in the work described by Dodman, et. al. (2018).

In addition to experiencing academic gaps among subgroups, the county is concerned about a dramatic rise in the number of students presenting with mental health complaints. Daily, Teachers, and School Counselors verbally report this as their greatest concern. For example, at McDowell High School, the largest of the fourteen schools, 10% of the student population has been identified as needing mental health services during the period from August 2019 to February 2020.

This number does not include students who had previously been identified or who initiated services without going through school resources. Anxiety, depression, bullying, and suicidal ideation are the most reported issues. Increases in foster care placements and transitions from one home to another have led to an even larger number of students who require daily transition help from teachers just to function successfully at school. All schools have embarked on training for all staff in either Youth Mental Health First Aid or Trauma-Informed Practices. However, there is a need for exemplary teacher-leaders to demonstrate to their colleagues use of embedded best practices in Social-Emotional Learning for all students daily.

A statistic of great concern nationally is reported in Bierly's 2016 work *Transforming Schools: How distributed leadership can create more high-performing schools,* in which over 4.200 teachers, principals, and assistant principals were surveyed. This sample, from schools and districts of varying size and locations, used the Net Promoter Score to measure loyalty. Public school teachers scored -18, significantly lower than those in higher education or even other government employees. Only 27 percent of those surveyed nationally stated they would recommend their school as a good place to work. The biannual NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey affirms this as only 49% of McDowell County Schools educators agreed strongly with the statement "Overall, my school is a good place to work and learn" (NCTWS, 2018).

Analysis of local Human Resources Data by district leadership shows that the annual teacher attrition rate in McDowell is consistently one of the lowest in the state at 9.8%. However, 13.5% of our teacher workforce has 25 years or more experience. As these experienced teachers retire, MCS will likely face a shortage of incoming beginning teachers based on university projections for the next five years. Another factor of significance is the higher supplement rate provided by most neighboring systems:

Asheville City – average $4660

Avery County – average $1471

Buncombe County – average $7616

Burke County – average $2067

McDowell County – average $1353

Mitchell County – average $108

Rutherford County – average $1151

For these reasons, the district seeks to increase the attractiveness of teaching in McDowell via the Advanced Roles opportunity. In alliance with State Board of Education [SBE] Goals, McDowell County Schools requests funds to develop Advanced Teaching Roles to:

- Eliminate opportunity gaps by 2025

- Improve school and district performance by 2025

- Increase educator preparedness to meet the needs of every student by 2025

In alignment with LEA Strategic Priorities, the district will use focus points led by Lead Teachers to ensure:

- Each McDowell County Schools' student will graduate READY for their future, whether college or career.

- Annually, each MCS school, teacher, and the student will meet or exceed expected growth as measured by the NC Accountability System.

- McDowell County Schools will leverage internal and external partnerships to optimize outcomes for students.

- By December 2020, each McDowell County Schools teacher will be an active part of both horizontal (same grade level) and vertical (different grade levels) teams both within their building and in partnership with other MCS schools.

An application process is in development already. It will identify effective teachers who seek additional responsibilities and want to lead a district-wide effort focused on identified areas. A micro-credentialing system called Bloomboard will track self-directed professional development

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for all staff (Attachment D). Perception surveys of teachers, parents, students, and community

partners will also assess outcomes in satisfaction as the instructional model, and the professional

development model changes district-wide. Ongoing annual examination of EVAAS growth for

students, teachers, and schools will be tracked, and the district graduation rate and the rate of

successful employment of graduates will help determine the positive impact on the community.

This initiative will be following the State Board of Education Vision Statement: "Every

public-school student in North Carolina will be empowered to accept academic challenges,

prepared to pursue their chosen path after graduating high school, and encouraged to become

lifelong learners with the capacity to engage in a globally-collaborative society." The Advanced

Roles initiative is also aligned to MCS District Priority 2: Future Focused Leaders Goal:

"McDowell County Schools will have effective systems that support leadership recruitment, talent

development, and support for existing leaders."

2. Description of Program Structure, Advanced Teaching Roles, and Implementation Plan

An investigation into research-based best practices had already led the district to initial training on Personalized Learning as an instructional model to build student accountability, choice, and voice while utilizing blended learning activities. During the 2019-2020 school year, the Chief Academic Officer, three principals, and one teacher conducted a site visit to a model school in NC, Shuford Elementary. A district team participated in NCDPI training on the topic and began initial training for the first cohort of about 50 teachers. Post-training assessments showed that participants are excited by this instructional model and believe it is of great benefit to them and their students. A cohort of 20 teachers will do site visits to Shuford Elementary School and Newton-Conover High School in April 2020. They will return to begin assessing the district's needs to support further implementation.

McDowell's County Commissioners and the McDowell County Schools Board committed to providing technology tools on all campuses, so the teaching staff already have devices to customize learning experiences using blended learning strategies. What the district lacks is a cohesive instructional model with supports for accomplishing this. Personalized Learning as a structure will better meet the needs of most learners in 2020. When combined with advanced training for educators in Social-Emotional Learning practices to address the needs of the whole child, improvement is projected for all learners.

According to Truong, 2017:

> Personalized approaches focus on educating the whole child. Next generation learning models provide ELL students with comprehensive supports and services that are focused on whole-child learning and development. This approach takes into account the students' backgrounds, cultures, prior learning experiences, and learning preferences, among other considerations. Personalized strategies meet students where they are and allow for developing multiple pathways for learning that take into account students' interests, passions, and backgrounds. Competency-based progressions ensure a student demonstrates mastery with evidence of a performance of their learning before advancing to the next unit or lesson. This learning is holistic and recognizes the broader set of 21st-century skills and dispositions in addition to content

> knowledge. Educator capacity to use best practices in personalized learning strategies, meeting the needs of every student in a competency-based education system must develop quickly. Staff and principals also indicate a need to acquire culturally responsive teaching practices to serve subgroups better. Additionally, the role of educators needs to increase to provide both content and language instruction and scaffolds to expand access and support learning for ELL students…The focus is on student-centered curriculum, instruction and assessment that allows learning environments to meet students where they are and keep them on track toward successful outcomes.

With this in mind, the district formed a committee to begin developing advanced teaching roles.

Members were:

Mark Garrett, Superintendent,

Laura Davis, Chief Academic Officer,

Suzanne Rampey, Chief Finance Officer,

Brian Oliver, Executive Director of Administration,

Susan Westall, Director of Teacher Support,

Edwin Spivey, Principal of the year,

Desarae Kirkpatrick, former Principal of the Year,

Renata Crawley, President McDowell chapter NCAE,

Angela Autrey, former Teacher of the Year,

John Ballard, former Teacher of the Year.

This working group examined the district's strategic priorities, the state board of education priorities, and district data to determine needs for the next five years. The committee decided that becoming a pilot district for Advanced Teaching Roles would support State and District goals and move local student achievement forward. After sharing the initial ideas with NCAE members, the Superintendent's Teacher Advisory Council, Instructional Technology Facilitators, and the district leadership team, the committee determined that the focus should be on training 22 Lead Teachers. This group will consist of: one Lead Teacher for each elementary school, one for the small magnet middle school, one for each of the two Cooperative Innovative High Schools, two for each of the

traditional middle schools, and four for the large comprehensive high school. Additionally, the district plans to identify and train at least one EC teacher, one ESL teacher, and one AIG teacher for a total of twenty-two recipients of this designation.

The district committee's work will be ongoing in that they will oversee critical decisions and activities related to the grant, including:

- Communication with stakeholders

- Supporting principals and Lead Teachers in the change initiative

- Monitoring professional growth of Lead Teachers

- Monitoring the professional growth of other teachers pertaining to the activities of the Lead Teachers

- Identifying and supplying needed resources for implementation

- Problem-solving with schools around design and implementation challenges

- Analyzing district and school-level data of student outcomes and their correlation to changes in practice

- Identifying gaps or barriers in systemic practices such as human resource systems, scheduling, etc.

- Evaluating the process and its impact on school-wide practices

- Determining overall cost impact and return on investment to ensure value-added

- Organizing and communicating changes to make the initiative scalable and sustainable.

One key aspect of the professional growth component of this plan will be micro-credentialing using an online platform that allows lead teachers and others to pursue advanced training at their own pace in the areas of their highest interest within district-defined parameters. Teachers and leaders have already indicated interested in this type of self-directed and self-paced professional development. Still, currently, the system's budget does not allow for the purchase of a platform to manage it.

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Using an ADDIE Model (Analysis, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate) as a way to facilitate both learning and motivation of teachers (Ahmad, 2013), McDowell County Schools will design and implement career pathways that extend the impact of outstanding teachers, while converting their successes into actionable steps for other teachers. The identified Lead Teachers will expand their influence in their buildings and across the district and state as they train, support, observe, and provide feedback to other staff members in deep reflective work centered on the district's focus areas:

- Mentoring

- Culturally Responsive Teaching

- Personalized Learning

- Social-Emotional Learning

- Supporting Students with Disabilities

- Supporting English Learners

- Micro-teaching

Available training will eventually extend to other areas such as Inquiry-Based Learning, Project-Based Learning, and National Board Certification. The lead teachers will participate in advanced professional development both face to face, and online that deepens and broadens their teaching skills and strengthen their ability to guide adults. Training in Critical Friends protocols will support crucial conversations with their peers (NSRF Harmony, n.d.). During the summer of 2020, each Lead Teacher will earn micro-credentials in Mentoring and use the skills they acquire to support Beginning Teachers and those new to the district in August. The order in which they earn other micro-credentials and lead their peers in the other areas of focus will be self-directed with guidance from their principal, so the timing has the most appropriate impact on their buildings.

The primary long-term goal will be for these teacher leaders to build the capacity of all teachers in the district while remaining as classroom teachers themselves. The secondary objective

will be to increase the attractiveness of teaching in McDowell County Schools by demonstrating intensive support for beginning teachers and those new to the county, recruiting potential new teachers, and developing a career path for advancement that does not currently exist here. Each Lead Teacher will serve for three years and may reapply at the conclusion of their supplemental contract. As Lead Teachers leave the county, are removed, or voluntarily relinquish their role via written notice, new candidates may apply, creating a continuous pipeline of individuals expanding their skills and impact.

The modality for Lead Teachers (and eventually all teachers) to earn micro-credentials at their own pace will be Bloomboard. The training available through this platform and the endorsements earned are research-backed, evidence-based and aligned to InTASC, NEA, and PSEL standards and frameworks (Attachment D). Micro-credentials will be obtained through a rigorous process of demonstrating specific pedagogical skills based on self-identified goals in the context of online discussion cohorts and face to face coaching of Lead Teachers. Use of the Bloomboard micro-credentialing process will scale from about 22 Lead Teachers in 2020 to about 175 teachers across the district by the conclusion of the 2022-2023 school year. As part of the district agreement, the Bloomboard team will ensure high fidelity implementation and accountability across the MCS system for Lead Teachers, other educators, and potential on-staff reviewers, and will support the transition of the micro-credentialing process and development of new content to MCS staff after four years.

Due to the time commitment involved in demonstrating proficiency in areas of focus, Lead Teachers will occasionally be provided substitute teachers to allow them to visit other classrooms, collect and analyze data, and provide professional development to other staff during the school session. As a team, central office staff and school principals will work together to create systems that allow for the Teacher-Leaders to:

- have time to do study visits to schools that have fully implemented Personalized Learning,

- have paid time to complete micro-credentialing in district focus areas via Bloomboard and support their peers in doing the same,

- have time to participate in a Teacher Leadership Academy through NCCAT,

- have annual planning and assessment retreats in the summer to disaggregate data, determine focus points, and make program adjustments related to the outcomes,

- provide focused professional development for the teachers in their buildings,

- provide intensive support to beginning teachers and those new to the county,

- share their work via peer reviews within the system,

- share their work via presentations at conferences,

- share school-wide work via invitation peer reviews with other systems,

- give annual reports to the board of education, other stakeholders, and their peers.

Annually, the district implementation team, school principals, and the Lead Teachers will analyze district-level data, present to the Board of Education, and modify the plan accordingly.

3. Selection Process and Job Responsibilities of Lead Teachers

Beginning in spring 2020 and continuing annually, applications will be accepted and reviewed using a minimum screener, rubric, and interview. Twenty-two Lead Teachers will be accepted, and a waiting list will be maintained for use in the event one of them relinquishes his/her role. Minimum qualifications for advanced teaching roles will be:

1. Ratings of at least accomplished on Standards 1-5 on the NC Teacher Evaluation instrument (or the equivalent from out of state) for the past two years.

2. Demonstrated interest in Personalized Learning, as explained in a short essay.

3. Recommendation without hesitation of the current Principal.

4. Recommendation of a peer on the same campus vouching for the applicant's ability to be a strong leader and provide formative critical feedback to his/her colleagues on that campus.

A Minimum Requirements screener checklist (Attachment B) will be used to screen teachers and those who meet the minimum qualifications. Then, an additional checklist will be applied to those candidates who do (Attachment C) and will be awarded extra points for the following:

1. Master's Degree or higher in a related field

2. Current National Board Certification in the teaching area

3. Demonstrated existing proficiency in one or more of the identified focus areas (Culturally Responsive Practices, Social-Emotional Learning, Personalized Learning, Support for Students with Disabilities in the General Education Environment, and Support for English Learners in the General Education Environment) as measured by existing badges, evidence of advanced training, and walkthrough data or lesson plans

4. Successful experience as a mentor to beginning teachers as measured by BT surveys and principal input and verified by the Director of Teacher Support.

5. Exceeding expected growth as measured by EVAAS two out of the last three years.

6. Summative evaluation for the most recent year shows a "Distinguished" rating in NCEES Standard 1.

7. Artifacts to demonstrate a current classroom environment using digital tools to facilitate learning and inquiry.

The weighting and additional points available to applicants are correlated to Bierly's 2016 Distributive Leadership theory of action to ensure a credible and authoritative team of teachers to develop instructional excellence.

Candidates who receive the highest number of points will be invited to a behavioral event interview to ensure they have the personal competencies that would contribute to success in the new role. Interviewees will describe in detail successful/unsuccessful work experiences, including the circumstances and their thoughts, feelings, and actions (Duboise, 2004). A trained reviewer will provide a score on the interview transcript, but results will only be used as a final screening tool.

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The critical competencies the reviewer score are:

Impact and Influence	Acting to influence what others think and do
Planning Ahead	Tending to construct and execute a plan to reach goals and avoid potential problems
Achievement	Drive and consequent actions to set challenging goals and reach a high standard of performance despite barriers
Teamwork	Ability and actions to work with others to achieve shared goals
Developing Others	Influence with the specific intent to increase the short and long-term effectiveness of other people
Flexibility	Ability to adapt approaches to meet the requirements of a situation and change tactics

Lead Teachers will be notified annually in May (or sooner should a vacancy become available unexpectedly) and will maintain their roles for three years unless voluntarily relinquished or removed with cause from the position. A yearly application and interview process will ensure there are always candidates available to serve on each of the 14 campuses. McDowell County Schools' Lead Teachers will lead school-wide efforts to implement Personalized Learning as a data-driven instructional model in blended learning classrooms K-12 over three years, beginning with the establishment of the model in their classes and action research on its impact. They will engage in video reflection of their teaching as described in Spreading the Practice of Video Reflection (Lamkin, 2018) and action-research on their practices immediately, completing reflection sheets to share with other Lead Teachers each month. They will complete micro-credential training that certifies them as in-house providers and coaches of professional development in the district's focus areas leading to district-wide improvement for all students and addressing subgroup performance gaps. The Lead Teachers will act as ambassadors for the teaching profession in the region, mentoring beginning teachers and those new to the county, as well as helping to recruit and retain high quality, reflective teachers annually.

Throughout the first school year, the main tasks of the 22 MCS Lead Teachers will be to:

Task	Date of Completion
Participate in summer ADDIE retreat	July 2020
Participate in hiring of new employees for their schools	July 2020 ongoing
Plan with their principals for PD schedule and content for the year	July 2020 ongoing
Earn Mentoring micro-credential	August 2020
Begin observing and mentoring new teachers	August 2020 ongoing
Conduct short PD sessions with campus staff	August 2020 ongoing
Invite on-campus peers to visit their classrooms and provide feedback using Critical Friends protocols	September 2020 ongoing
Visit future teachers at MCS high schools as ambassadors for the profession	September 2020 ongoing
Attend MCS Leadership Academy at NCCAT	October 2020
Visit model sites outside the district	November 2020
Attend job fairs at either WCU or ASU to recruit potential beginning teachers	November 2020 annually
Visit the classrooms of other Lead Teachers in the district	December 2020 ongoing
Earn a second micro-credential in Bloomboard—Personalized Learning	January 2021
Attend job fairs at either WCU or ASU to recruit potential beginning teachers	February 2021 annually
Recruit and coach five on-campus peers in beginning micro-credential in Personalized Learning	February 2021
Collect data on the impact of Personalized Learning on their students	March 2021 ongoing
Observe on-campus peers and provide formative, data-driven critical feedback on chosen areas of focus	March 2021 ongoing
Visit the classrooms of other lead teachers in the district	April 2021
Attend job fairs at either UNC-A or WRESA to recruit potential beginning teachers	April 2021
Present data of their action research to their on-campus peers and the Lead Teacher team	May 2021
Present the first annual report to the local Board of Education and County Commissioners	May 2021

During the second and third years of implementation, the role of the Lead Teachers will continue similarly to the first with a few new responsibilities, such as:

- Presenting their work at the annual MCS convocation in August

- Submitting a proposal to present at a regional or state conference

- Conducting peer review/site visits at other schools within the district

- Earning a micro-credential in a second personal focus area

- Using and modeling micro-teaching (Fisher, Frey, n.d.) as a strategy for self-improvement,

- Doing at least 20 classroom observations of teachers on their campus and providing substantial and formative critical feedback on the district's focus areas, and

- Presenting their annual reports to the local board of education which will focus not only on the impact of the focus areas and Personalized Learning instructional model but also the effect of their own experiences as Lead Teachers

- Hosting site visits from other local schools

- Hosting an invitational event for schools outside the area

- Identifying and cultivating potential Lead Teachers for the future

- Building sustainability of best practices across the district

Lead Teachers will serve primarily in their buildings with an additional four weeks of work each summer in exchange for a total supplement of $6600 annually for each of the three years of their supplemental contracts. Schools must pay these salary supplements as a supplement to the classroom teacher's regular salary, and these shall not be included in the average salary calculation used for budgeting State allotments. To maintain their role and supplement, Lead Teachers may reapply every three years. To relinquish the role voluntarily at any time, they must submit written notice to the Director of Teacher Support and the Chief Academic Officer and participate in an exit interview. Should the Lead Teacher fail to maintain established criteria for holding the position of Lead Teacher, the school remains responsible for paying the salary applicable to the individual on the state teacher salary schedule and any other local supplements that would otherwise still apply to the classroom teacher's normal compensation.

Including summer work, the total contract hours for these salaried employees will be 1747.5 annually with about 72% of that time reserved for regular classroom responsibilities, about 12.6% spent on developing the skill sets of colleagues, about 11.3% invested in his/her professional development, about 2.2% spent working with potential future teachers and about 1.1% spent

analyzing data and reporting on impact.

Lead Teacher Job Responsibilities with Percent of Contract Hours and Evaluation Measure

Job Responsibility:	Estimated Number of Hours on Task and Percent of Total Contract Hours (1747.5)	Evaluation Measure:
Earning Micro-credentials	60 / 3.4 %	Review of Microcredential Portfolio
Summer ADDIE Retreat	80 / 4.5 %	Sign in Log and Work Artifacts
Leadership Retreat and Site Visits	40 / 2.3 %	Sign in Log and Work Artifacts
Leading face to face PD	40 / 2.3 %	Sign in Log and Work Artifacts
Hosting peer observations during regular class time with students		Sign in Log and Feedback Forms
Coaching colleagues in micro-credentialing	40 / 2.3 %	Review of Colleagues' Portfolios
Providing mentoring for BTs and New to County teachers	40 / 2.3 %	Mentoring logs
Analyzing data and preparing reports	40 / 2.3 %	Data Sheets and Reports
Visiting colleagues' classrooms and providing critical feedback	60 / 3.4 %	Feedback Forms
Attending and Presenting at Conferences	20 / 1.1 %	Attendance Records and Conference Agendas
Attending regional job fairs	20 / 1.1 %	Sign In Sheets
Working with Future Teachers from local High Schools	20 / 1.1 %	Records of Visits
Micro-teaching and Self Evaluation	20 / 1.1 %	Videos and Reflection Sheets
Improvement in and expansion of the use of technology and digital learning across the building via Personalized Learning	40 / 2.3 %	Student Pathways, Lesson Plans, and Walkthrough Data

Projected Costs:

Purchase of the Bloomboard platform for professional development and transition

support 2020 Platform plus micro-credentials for 25 people $

50,000

2021 Platform plus micro-credentials for 50 people $

75,000

2022 Platform plus micro-credentials for 100 people

$115,000

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   2023 and ongoing Platform plus micro-credentials for 100 people

   $115,000

  Lead Teacher annual supplements

   $600/month for 11 months per teacher = $6600/year

   Total projection for 3 years per teacher = $19,800

   22 Lead Teachers at 3 years each = $435,600

  Cost of Teacher Leadership Academy at NCCAT

   $8000/year for 3 years $ 24,000

  Cost of substitutes at $11,330/year for 3 years $ 33,990

  Cost of travel to site visits at $4,400/year for 3 years $ 13,200

          Total Grant Request = $746,790

4. Description of Communication Plan and Public Information on Progress

In April 2020, the Chief Academic Officer and Director of Teacher Support will visit each of the fourteen McDowell County Schools and meet with the entire staff to explain personally the intention of the Advanced Teaching Roles and the availability of financial supplements, the minimum requirements for eligibility, the application process, the calendar of expectations, and the micro-credentialing process. Emails will be sent to all staff with a clear and concise summary, including the submission deadline and having the application attached. Links will be embedded in the district's and schools' websites as well.

At monthly administrative team meetings, a standing agenda item will be a discussion of how the Lead Teachers are performing in each building. Lead Teachers will also meet with each other monthly to share best practices and support one another in action research.

Annually, the team of Lead Teachers will report to the faculty on their campuses and to the MCS Board of Education on their work. Topics will include: effects of their roles on the recruitment of new teachers, mentoring of beginning teachers, professional development of all teachers, and impact on the learning of all students with extra scrutiny paid to the effect on Students with Disabilities and English Learners. The district will ask to present annually to

business and industry at the Workforce Pipeline meetings. It will also submit a press release to the

local newspaper and radio outlets in an effort to inform the public at large.

Communications Strategy

Stakeholder Group	Key Message(s)	Person(s) Responsible	Feedback Strategy	Date of Completion
Teachers and Staff	• Advanced Roles allow teachers to advance their career and have greater influence • One or more teachers on each campus will be named a Lead Teacher • Criteria for being selected as a Lead Teacher and how they will be evaluated • Lead Teachers will receive $6600/year as a supplement for extra work • Lead Teachers will remain in the classroom with students • All teachers will learn advanced instructional strategies and a changed instructional model together with the support of Lead Teachers	Chief Academic Officer Director of Teacher Support Superintendent Principals	Q & A on each campus Follow up surveys	On-campus sessions beginning April 2020 annually MCS Convocation presentations August 2020 and annually
BOE/ County Commissioners/ School Partners/	• Summary of initiative and expected	Superintendent Chief Academic	Q & A Social Media	Board report May 2020 annually

Community Groups/Business & Industry	changes in the instructional model • Information on General Statute and other pilots • Criteria for selection as a lead teacher and the role of ambassadors for the teaching profession • Explanation of expected changes in graduate performance • Annual data analysis of the impact	Officer CTE Director Principals Lead Teachers	Follow Up Surveys	Social media posts monthly Workforce pipeline presentation annually
Parents	• Importance of changes in instruction and expectations of students and the home • Benefits for student learning and access to high-quality instruction • Criteria for teachers to earn this advanced role • How Lead Teachers will be evaluated	Superintendent Principals Lead Teachers	Q & A Social Media School Websites PTO Meetings	August 2020 annually
Students	• What their teachers may be working on • Why people may be visiting classes • How learning will look different • Benefits of the	Principals Teachers	Q & A Social Media School Websites Follow Up Surveys	August 2020 annually

	• personalized model • Changes in expectations for students • Criteria for teachers to earn this advanced role			
Media	• Information on General Statute and other pilots • Criteria for teachers to earn this advanced role and how they will be evaluated • Summary of changes at the school and district levels • Annual measures of success	Public Information Officer	Introductory email Press releases Social Media	August 2020 and May 2021 annually Social media posts monthly
Other School Districts	• The MCS Focus and process for selection of Lead Teachers and implementation of the initiative • Evaluation of Lead Teachers and the enterprise as a whole • Micro-credentialing • Data and classroom results • District-level changes • Sustainability plan	Chief Academic Officer Principals Lead Teachers Students	Introductory email Conference presentations Invitational site visits Social Media	Annual informational and invitational email each January for site visits in the spring Social media posts monthly Conference presentations as scheduled by organizers

Annually, the Director of Teacher Support, Chief Academic Officer, and the Lead Teachers

will report to the Board of Education and the public via presentations and news releases. Lead

Teachers will also present at the McDowell County Schools' Convocation with the results of their

action research and the overall impact of the program.

Lead teachers will also seek opportunities each year to present at regional and state

conferences to share the overall program as well as their personal action research from their

classrooms related to their shifts in practice. The district's YouTube Channel and other social

media sites will feature videos quarterly that highlight the work being done as part of this initiative

as well.

5. **Process for Voluntary Relinquishment**

Should a Lead Teacher relinquish his or her role and associated duties, the removal of that

title will not be considered a demotion under Part 3 of Article 22 of Chapter 115C of the General

Statutes. Upon relinquishment of the role, the teacher will no longer be paid the associated

supplement and will only be paid the salary applicable to that individual on the state teacher salary

schedule and any other local supplements that would otherwise apply to the classroom teacher's

compensation.

6. **Salary Supplement Information and Sustainability Plan**

Assuming a typical teacher's salary in McDowell is $45000/year, the proposed $6600/year

supplement represents an approximate 15% increase in salary. Grant funding will be crucial to

initial start-up in McDowell County as current budget projection does not allow for $145,200 to be

spent annually on supplements for Lead Teachers, nor for the cost of the micro-credentialing

professional development for all teachers. Aged buildings and other capital projects currently

require a significant portion of local funds. However, moving forward, district leaders commit to

leveraging vacant positions to continue offering supplements, reallocating professional

development funds to continue micro-credentialing, and reallocating other local funds to support

continuation of both as capital projects are completed. Additionally, the district will consider

reduction of the number of non-classroom positions. It will seek ongoing funding from County Commissioners, and the local Board of Education to continue Advanced Teaching Roles beyond 2023.

7. **Measurable Outcomes and Local Evaluation Procedures**

Each June, the Director of Teacher Support, Chief Academic Officer, and Superintendent will examine available indicator data and compare it to the established goals of the initiative. Indicators have been selected to provide a basis for measuring improved outcomes for student growth and proficiency as well as professional growth and collective efficacy for staff. One key piece of the evaluation of the program will be the evaluation of each Lead Teacher by his/her principal and the Director of Teacher Support. This annual evaluation will pay particular attention to the distinguished column of the rubric for Standard 1, with the expectation that all Lead Teachers meet those criteria annually. The requirements for being a distinguished teacher-leader as defined by the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation rubric are bullet listed below:

- Encourages students to take responsibility for their learning.
- Uses classroom assessment data to inform program planning.
- Empowers and encourages students to create and maintain a safe and supportive school and community environment.
- Collaborates with colleagues to improve the quality of learning in the school.
- Assumes a leadership role in implementing the school improvement plan throughout the building.
- Seeks opportunities to lead professional growth activities and decision-making processes.
- Actively participates, promotes, and provides strong supporting evidence for the implementation of initiatives to improve education.
- Models the tenets of the Code of Ethics for North Carolina Educators and the Standards for Professional Conduct and encourages others to do the same.

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In the event a Lead Teacher does not achieve the distinguished category, he/she will be given a course of action designed by the principal and Director of Teacher Support to improve that rating and will be re-evaluated after the first quarter of the subsequent school year. If the items in the course of action have not been satisfactorily addressed by the Lead Teacher, then a meeting with the teacher, principal, Director of Teacher Support and Chief Academic Officer will be convened to determine if the teacher may continue as a Lead Teacher or must be removed from that role. If the Lead Teacher is removed, or voluntarily relinquishes the role, another Lead Teacher will be appointed and trained for that building.

Based on the annual program evaluation, adjustments will be made to the program for the following year and addressed at the annual retreat in July. From the success stories found, presentations for the MCS annual Convocation, as well as regional and state conferences, will be encouraged. An ongoing documentary of the journey of the Lead Teachers will be filmed and uploaded periodically to the district's YouTube channel, and the video links will be shared with internal and external stakeholders at their convenience. Indicators and annual outcomes will include but not be limited to:

Indicator	Objective	Annual Outcome
Size of applicant pool	To have a sufficient pool of qualified teachers interested in fulfilling the role of Lead Teacher	Three interested parties for every one opening on each campus annually
Strength of applicant pool	To have a high-quality pool of applicants from which to choose	Two high-quality applicants for every one opening on each campus annually
Unfilled Lead Teacher Positions	To have every Lead Teacher position filled 100% of the time to maintain influence with all staff and ongoing effective mentoring of BTs	0 positions will be unfilled annually
Percent of students taught by a teacher with micro-credentials	To ensure that the influence of Lead Teachers extends beyond their classroom students as measured by rigorous professional development achievements of all teachers	Year 1 = 5% Year 2 = 20% Year 3 = 40% Year 4 = 75%
Growth measures of	To examine whether teachers with	Year 1 = baseline

teachers with micro-credentials	micro-credentials have higher growth than their peers as measured in EVAAS	Year 2 = baseline + 0.5 index Year 3 = baseline + 1.0 indes This data is not a goal but will be analyzed
Percent of non-Lead Teachers who indicate on a survey they feel supported to improve their practice	To ensure that Lead Teachers serve as guides and supports in reflection	Year 1 = baseline Year 4 = 100%
Job satisfaction surveys of lead teachers	To collect feedback from those in the Advanced Teaching Roles about their satisfaction with the duties and then adjust the plan accordingly	This data is not a goal but will be analyzed for improvements annually
NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey measures of Beginning Teacher indicators	To determine if using Lead Teachers as mentors improves the district's support of beginning teachers	2020 data = baseline 2022 data and beyond will be a comparison
NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey measure of agreement with the statement "Overall, my school is a good place to work and learn"	To determine if there is movement in the perception of all teachers that their school is overall a good place to work.	2020 TWC results are baseline. By 2022, the district measure and each school measure will have increased by 25% in the numbers who "strongly agree" with this statement.
NC Teacher Working Conditions Survey and biannual local survey measures of satisfaction with PD	To determine if Lead Teachers as coaches and micro-credentialing as a means of professional growth increase the satisfaction of all teachers	This data will be analyzed but is not a measurable goal.
Quality of mentoring logs and BT paperwork	The school system partners with others in the region to provide feedback on these. The Director of Teacher Support will document if this feedback shows improvement.	This data will be analyzed but is not a measurable goal except that there will be fewer red flags or errors over time.
Increase in the retention of teachers who are beginning teachers or new to the county	Beginning with 2019-2020 as a baseline, the district will see an increased percentage of BTs and new to county teachers who return to work in MCS the following year.	2019-2020 = baseline increase of 5% yearly
Records of professional development [PD] presented by Lead Teachers on their campuses	Records will show an increase in the amount of ongoing informal PD provided in house and a decrease in reliance on outside presenters.	Year 1 = baseline Year 2 = baseline + 25% Year 3 = baseline + 50% Year 4 = baseline + 50%
Records of horizontal and vertical PLC meetings with sister	Documentation will show that pairs of schools partner to allow teachers to work with those outside their	Year 1 = 2x/year Year 2 = 3x/year Year 3 = 4x/year

schools	buildings facilitated by Lead Teachers	Year 4 = 4x/year
Evaluation by Lead Teachers of annual activities	To ensure Summer ADDIE retreat, site visits, peer observations, and other activities are perceived as successful by the Lead Teachers and make adjustments accordingly	100% satisfaction with all activities is the goal annually.
Records of visits with future teachers at high schools and regional job fairs with follow up contact logs and a question on local applications that asks if an MCS Lead Teacher influenced the decision to work in MCS.	The number of contacts with potential future teachers at the high school and college levels will increase, resulting in later hires who state a Lead Teacher recruited them at one of these events.	Year 1 = 5 new hires report a Lead Teacher recruited them Year 2 = 10 new hires report a Lead Teacher recruited them Year 3 and ongoing = 15 new hires annually report they were recruited/influenced by a Lead Teacher.
Number of Regional or State Conference Presentations led by MCS Lead Teachers as evidenced by conference agendas	Lead Teachers will lead outside the district and expand MCS's influence	Year 1 = 2 presentations Year 2 = 4 presentations Year 3 = 8 presentations Year 4 = 16 presentations
Qualitative analysis of videos and reflection sheets from Micro-teaching beginning in year 2	To ensure that Lead Teachers are thinking and writing reflectively as part of their action research	Year 1 = N/A Year 2 and ongoing: videos and reflections will be analyzed by other lead teachers and rated as appropriate, helpful, and important
Increased numbers of lessons utilizing technology, blended learning, and personalized learning	Walkthroughs and lesson plans will show increased use of these approaches weekly in each classroom across the district	Year 1 = baseline Year 2 = baseline + 10% Year 3 = baseline + 20% Year 4 = baseline + 30%
Records of Lead Teacher observations of peers	Records will show dates and the focus area as well as critical feedback for the growth of the teacher in the area of focus	Year 1 = 10 observations per lead teacher with feedback Year 2 and ongoing = 20 observations per lead teacher with feedback
Records of Evaluations of Lead Teachers	NCEES and other formats will be used by the building principal and the district's Director of Teacher Support to evaluate the work of each Lead Teacher annually	All Lead Teachers will strive to earn a "distinguished" rating on at least Standard 1 annually

The annual increase in school-wide growth as measured in EVAAS.	One of the district's goals is for every student, every teacher, and every school to meet or exceed expected growth in EVAAS every year. This indicator will chart the growth index of each school over four years, looking for positive gains at the school level.	2019-2020 baseline index for each school 2021=baseline + 0.5 index 2022=baseline + 1.0 index 2023=baseline + 1.5 index
Increased proficiency percentages for Economically Disadvantaged, Students with Disabilities, and English Language Learners	End of Grade and End of Course test data will show these groups meet their annual targets as measured by the federal government	Varies based on school, grade, and subject with goal of exceeding federal targets by 2023.

8. Community Involvement

Three years ago, the Board of Education embarked on the creation of a new District Strategic Plan for 2017-2020, and is currently beginning stakeholder communication efforts in the development of a subsequent plan. The district implementation team will use this opportunity to reach out to current stakeholders as well as those who have traditionally not been involved with the school system and build an understanding of the work of Teacher Leaders and look for opportunities for two-way partnerships in this work. One important district goal has been to partner with local workforce development boards and local industries to provide awareness of current and future career opportunities via intentional collaborations (partnerships, externships, internships, and the like) between MCS and stakeholders in the community. A strong network of connections between the schools and the community is already established. Lead Teachers can tap into this network as they strive to build relevance in classrooms. Additionally, the Lead Teachers will serve as ambassadors in the community for the teaching profession, advocating for schools and students, and informing the public about the criteria for their selection as leaders and their roles and responsibilities.

At present, there is a county-wide initiative #finishwhatyoustarted to address developing a

community culture of high school graduation, a key metric for McDowell County. Work is ongoing

from kindergarten through grade 13 to make classroom learning more relevant, engaging, and

personalized to today's students. Lead teachers can build on this initiative to create school cultures

that lead to the long-term success of all students and families.

In summation, McDowell County Schools is answering Bierly's call in *Transforming*

Schools: How distributed leadership can create more high-performing schools, to pledge ongoing

resources to develop a model of "distributed leadership" by investing in a group of committed

teachers on each campus who will guide the professional growth of their colleagues and take

shared responsibility for student achievement. In this way, teacher-leaders can extend their

influence and have a pathway to career advancement and higher compensation without leaving the

classroom. Lead teachers will become ambassadors for the profession in the western region and

within a year for the entire state. The McDowell County Schools initiative will provide more

excellent mentoring for new teachers and embedded and personalized professional development for

the Lead Teachers that will honeycomb out to reach about half of the teaching force within three

years, creating a pathway with support for all teachers to advance their credentials. As a result, the

community can expect improved student outcomes not only for targeted subgroups, but for all

learners. The seed money from the grant for Advanced Teaching Roles will allow the district to

start more quickly and reach scale and build structures for sustainability within three years.

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APPENDIX A
Budget

Budget Category	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
Lead Teacher Supplements	$145,200	$145,200	$145,200	$435,600
Substitute Teachers	$ 11,330	$11,330	$11,330	$ 33,990
Travel to Site Visits	$ 4,400	$ 4,400	$ 4,400	$ 13,200
NCCAT Teacher Leadership Academy	$ 8,000	$ 8,000	$ 8,000	$ 24,000
Bloomboard Micro-credentialing Platform for years 1-3 (to be picked up by the district afterward)	$50,000	$75,000	$115,000	$240,000

Total Costs	$218,930	$263,930	$263,930	$746,790

ATTACHMENT B
Minimum Screener Checklist

Directions: This screener is to be used only to determine if applicants meet the minimum requirements as outlined in the MCS Advanced Teaching Roles Grant Proposal. For each item, simply check yes or no for each candidate.

Candidate's Name: _____

Current School: _____ **Grade/Subject:** _____

Requirement	Yes?	No?
1. Ratings of at least accomplished on Standards 1-5 on the NC Teacher Evaluation instrument (or the equivalent from out of state) for the past two years.		
2. Demonstrated interest in Personalized Learning as measured by an appropriate short essay that shows a clear understanding of Personalized Learning as an instructional model.		
3. Recommendation of the current Principal without hesitation or qualifying words such as "except" or "provided."		
4. Recommendation of a peer on the same campus that states this person would be an influential lead teacher providing critical feedback to his/her colleagues.		

Does the candidate meet all minimum requirements? _____

Comments or items to follow up on if interviewed

_____

_____

_____

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ATTACHMENT C
Additional Points Scoring Sheet

Candidate's Name: _____

Current School: _____ **Grade/Subject:** _____

Criteria		No. of Pts.
1. Master's Degree or higher in a related field (2 points)		
2. Current National Board Certification in the teaching area (2 points)		
3. Demonstrated proficiency in the following as measured by existing badges, provided evidence of advanced training, or principal attestation of supporting evidence via walkthrough data or lesson plans (3 points **for each**) • Culturally Responsive Practices • Social-Emotional Learning • Personalized Learning • Support for Students with Disabilities in the Gen Ed environment • Support for English as a Second Language in the Gen Ed environment		
4. Successful experience as a mentor teacher within the past five years as verified by Director of Teacher Support (3 points)		
5. Exceeded expected growth as measured in EVAAS at least 2 of the past three years (5 points)		
6. Summative evaluation for the most recent year shows "Distinguished" rating in NCEES Standard 1. (2 points)		
7. Artifacts to demonstrate a current classroom environment using digital tools to facilitate learning and inquiry. (3 points)		

Total Additional Points Earned _____

Comments or questions for follow up interview:

_____

_____

<div align="center">**Attachment D**</div>

<div align="center">**Bloomboard Research**</div>

BLOOMBOARD PLATFORM SUMMARY

BloomBoard, Inc. ("BBI") is a nationally recognized vendor offering a micro-credential platform designed to meet the needs of schools and districts across the country. BBI's platform, described in more detail below, provides customized micro-credential programs with tools to facilitate the review of micro-credential submissions and the issuance of digital badges.

A. BloomBoard Professional Development Products and Services

BBI offers competency-based professional development programs with micro-credentials to improve instructional practices, content knowledge, and classroom management skills via our web-based software (the "BBI Platform"). Micro-credentials are modular, competency-based credentials for professional learning that recognize demonstrated mastery of skills and prior knowledge.

In addition, BBI offers training to our district clients using a train-the-trainer model to (1) train educators to use the BBI platform to engage in micro-credential programs, and (2) equip district personnel with the professional development knowledge and skills needed to guide their educators through BBI programs using the BBI Platform.

BBI is currently working with 15 states and hundreds of districts across the country to use micro-credentials to redesign teacher certification and training programs. These state and district programs include competency-based professional development designed to improve educator effectiveness for all students. BBI has a variety of specific programs aligned to each state's or district's unique goals and priorities, and the BBI team also works with states and districts to create customized programs:

BloomBoard's National Micro-credentialing Landscape

ARKANSAS
Teacher Induction, Teacher Leader, & Master Teacher Endorsements

KANSAS
Induction & Response to Intervention (RtI)

DELAWARE
Teacher Induction

MINNESOTA
CTE Alternative Certification

KENTUCKY
CTE Workforce Development

ILLINOIS
Leadership for Equity

LOUISIANA
Teacher Leader & Principal Licensure

CONNECTICUT
English as a Second Language

WASHINGTON
Computer Science & Cultural Responsiveness

UTAH
Financial Literacy

RHODE ISLAND
Computer Science Endorsements

TENNESSEE
Core Instruction, STEM, & SEL Practices

FLORIDA
Growth Mindset & Clinical Educators

WISCONSIN
Competency-Based Salary Schedules

TEXAS
Micro-Credential Licensure Pathways (HB2424)

1. BloomBoard Micro-Credentials

Micro-credentials provide educators an ongoing opportunity to earn recognition for the specific skills and competencies they learn throughout their careers. BBI works with clients to organize sets of micro-credentials into micro-endorsements aligned to career advancement and licensure requirements. Micro-endorsements provide educators an ongoing opportunity to earn recognition for the specific skills and competencies they learn throughout their careers. For example, BBI's Master Teacher Foundations Micro-Endorsement is a competency-based professional development program composed of a stack of micro-credentials designed to improve instructional practices, content knowledge, and classroom management skills.

What is a Micro-Credential?

Facilitating and Engaging Online Discussions

A digital form of micro-certification earned by demonstrating competency in a specific skill via classroom practice.

Key Components:
1. Description of the skill
2. Requirements for proving competency
3. Performance rubric for each requirement

Micro-Credentials are less like...

✗ A College Course... not time based, does not require scope and sequence

✗ A PD Workshop... no seat-time, no sub or travel requirement/expense

✗ A Test or Traditional Assessment... not measured by passing an exam

Micro-Credentials are more like...

✓ A Driver's License... learn by practice and support, earn by demonstration

✓ The Pole Vault... a bar is set. objective is to get clear of the bar using available tools. Train to clear the bar. Practice makes perfect

✓ A Single-Skill Version of Familiar Education Certification... allows practitioners to distinguish themselves as accomplished

To begin the process of earning the micro-credentials within a micro-endorsement using the BBI Platform, an educator logs onto their profile page and chooses a micro-credential from the designated micro-endorsement. When the teacher accesses the micro-credential, she may also peruse a list of resources recommended on the BBI Platform to help her learn new strategies and practice her skills in the classroom, throughout the course of her normal teaching day. Once she feels confident that she has developed the requisite competency, the teacher submits the required evidence of her competence for assessment by a trained reviewer. The Scoring Criteria within each micro-credential explain how the teacher can provide sufficient evidence to meet each requirement.

In addition to uploading the suggested evidence (which may include lesson plans, videos of the teaching modeling the practice, criteria the teacher has developed to measure the impact of the practice, and supporting data), the teacher submits written reflections and answers to the questions set forth in each requirement of the micro-credential. When the teacher completes her submission on the BBI Platform, BBI assigns the submission to an expert assessor for review. BBI provides the expert assessors who review the micro-credential submissions, and BBI ensures that every person chosen to review and assess micro-credential submissions has been calibrated and trained according to BBI's best practices. If the expert assessor concludes that the educator has earned the micro-credential based upon the Scoring Criteria, the assessor will award the teacher a micro-credential, which can be shared in the form of a digital badge. If the teacher does not successfully demonstrate competence, the assessor will provide feedback and encourage the teacher to try again.

To support educators as they engage in the micro-credential process, BBI also provides certified facilitators. The facilitators provide feedback and guidance to micro-credential program participants using collaboration and discussion tools built into the BBI Platform. In addition, participants may also collaborate with and support their peers and cohort members using BBI's discussion rooms and messaging tools.

2. Training and Calibration of BloomBoard Assessors and Facilitators

Assessment of micro-credential submissions is an integral part of the micro-credential ecosystem. When educators receive valid assessments, aligned ratings, and quality feedback on their submissions, the assessment process is a positive factor in earning educator trust and building confidence in the validity of micro-credentialing to improve educator practice.

BBI provides an expert assessor to review every BBI micro-credential submission, as well as an additional "approver" to review and confirm each recommendation issued by an assessor. When an educator uploads a micro-credential submission to the BBI Platform, it is given a unique ID number (submissions are anonymous) and assigned to a certified assessor. The assessor conducts the initial review, scores the evidence based on the rubric, provides feedback, and makes a recommendation (Earn / Not Earned) to the approver. The approver reviews the assessor's recommendation and, if aligned, the approver completes the assessment transmits the scoring and feedback to the educator using the BBI Platform tools. As a part of ongoing calibration, the approver may also return the assessment to the assessor with questions and comments.

To ensure that the assessment and approval process is rigorous and calibrated, every person wishing to serve an assessor must meet BBI's qualification and training process. First, every candidate must meet specific qualifications set by BBI, including prior experience as educators and evaluators. Next, candidates must conduct an assessment without prior direction or training

to ensure that they already possess a high level of assessment skills. Candidates with an appropriate baseline of assessment skills are then invited to apply to earn the BBI Certified Assessor Micro-credential, *Assessing Evidence to Determine Competency*. By successfully earning the Assessor Micro-credential, the candidate demonstrates that they have achieved calibration to a set of true-scored micro-credentials and have the knowledge and skills necessary to provide quality feedback.

Once educators earn the Certified Assessor Micro-credential, they enter the BloomBoard Certified Assessor Program. To train and calibrate certified assessors, BBI first requires each trainee to study the micro-credentials they will be reviewing, paying close attention to the learning resources, artifacts, upload requirements and passing descriptions. Trainees then attend a webinar with a BBI Senior Learning Strategist to discuss the micro-credential, walk through the scoring of an exemplar submission, gain a better understanding of the justification for different scores, and learn how to provide useful feedback to educators on their micro-credential submission. After the webinar, trainees access three sample submissions for calibration using the BBI platform. Trainees independently review evidence and score each of the submissions using a scoring template provided by BBI. Trainees then share their recommended score (Earn / Not Earned as well as the rubric achievement level) with the training team by an agreed upon date. The trainees' submission must also include justification for their recommended score, as well as written feedback that they would propose to send to the fictional educator. Trainees must achieve 80% alignment to true score and alignment to true feedback are then eligible to begin reviewing micro-credential submissions from educators.

Finally, BBI reviews assessor reports on an ongoing basis to check for "outliers" (e.g. assessors who are passing submissions at a higher or lower rate than the norm.) It is BBI's policy to remove an assessor if the quality of assessing and/or the provision of feedback does not meet BBI's expectations.

BBI engages in a similar quality control process for our expert facilitators. BBI places each teacher within a micro-endorsement program into a virtual PLC or cohort of other educators working on the same micro-credential(s). Every BBI cohort is facilitated by a certified facilitator. The certified facilitator engages with the cohort to ensure that participants are making progress towards earning their micro-credentials. By navigating to their Discussion pages, educators can communicate with their facilitator, connect with other teachers in their Program to share resources, discuss ideas for practicing in the classroom, and provide each other with coaching and feedback.

BBI facilitators are teaching professionals with extensive experience coaching, mentoring, and leading professional learning. BBI only selects facilitators who meet BBI's eligibility and experience requirements, and each facilitator candidate must successfully earn BBI's *Facilitating Engaging Online Discussions* micro-credential, which certifies them to begin facilitating cohorts on the BBI platform. By engaging in the micro-credential and the related learning resources, facilitator candidates demonstrate that they are qualified to carry out the primary role of a BBI program facilitator, which is to strategically nurture, moderate, and support educators consistent with the principles of adult learning theory (Andragogy).

To earn micro-credentials using the BBI Platform, an educator logs into their BBI account. They are taken to their Learning Pathway, where they can see all of the professional learning Programs they are a part of.
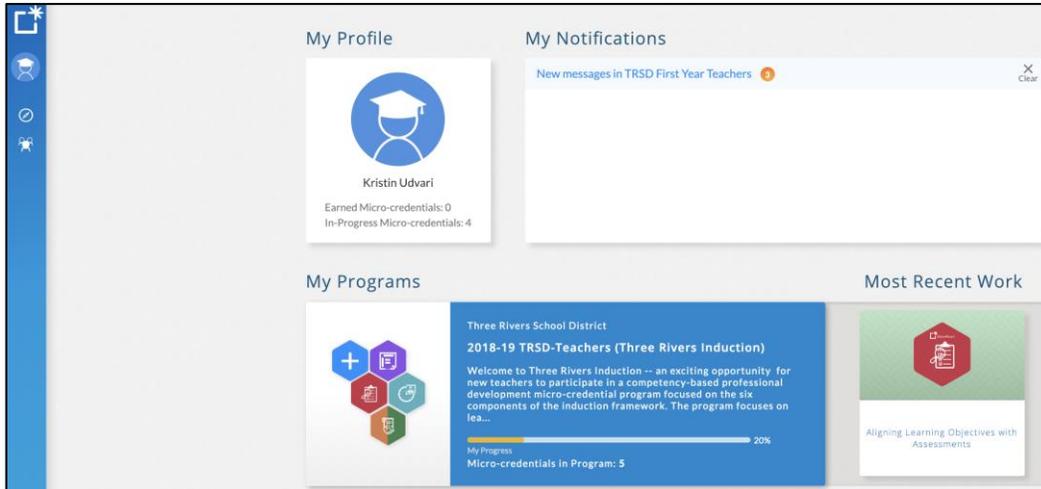
BBI partners with states, districts, and professional development partners to create professional learning Programs with micro-credentials aligned to each organization's initiatives and goals. Organizations can select specific micro-credentials for their educators and also provide individual choice.

A brief overview of the organization's Program is given at the top of each Learning Pathway page. In this space, each organization may choose how to describe their Program vision, goals, timelines, and incentives. To begin a Program, an educator selects the Program and then chooses the micro-credential they wish to earn first:
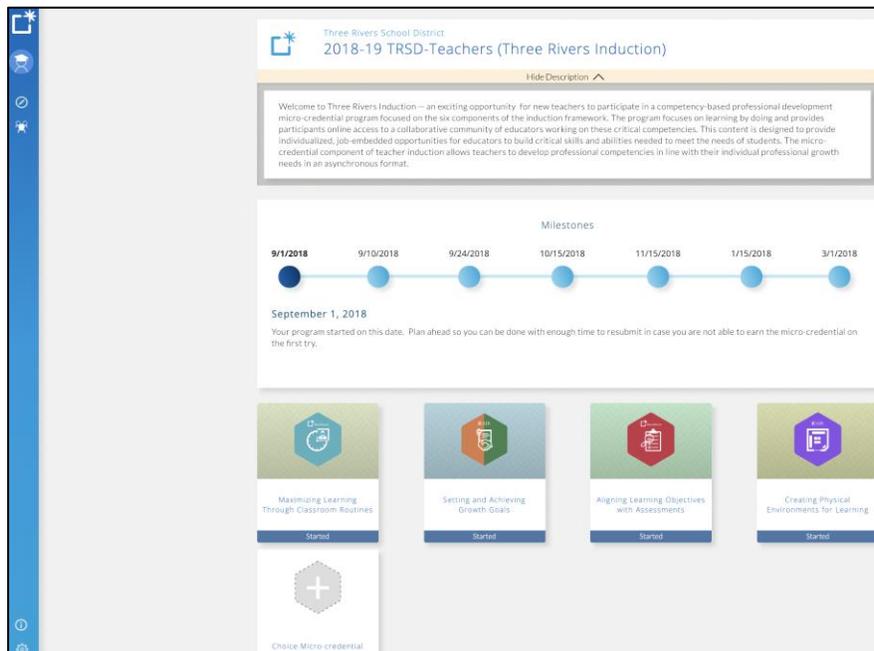
The educator is then taken to a page where they are prompted to begin the Learning Cycle for the chosen micro-credential. The Learning Cycle page contains a brief overview of how to get started, including the recommended preparation activities chosen by the micro-credential issuer to help the educator develop skills and successfully earn the micro-credential. The Learning Cycle page also displays the key elements that make up the micro-credential, including the Submission Requirements and the Scoring Criteria or Rubric for each ADDIE component.

Below is an example of the "Analyze" page for a micro-credential entitled "*Maximizing Learning Through Classroom Routines:*"
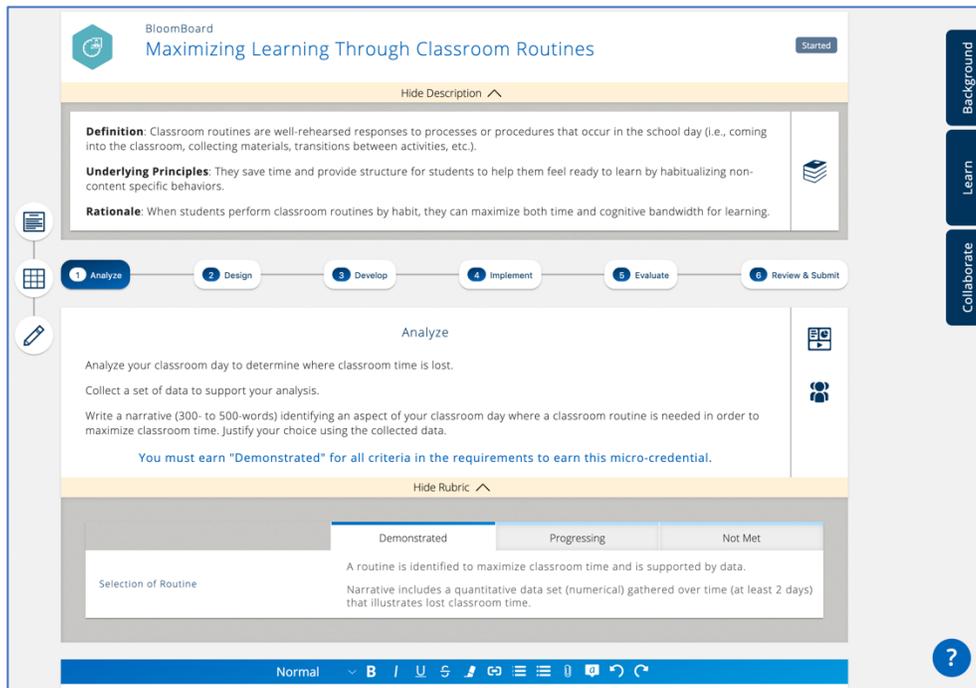
The BloomBoard Platform enables the micro-credential issuer to describe the types of artifacts and evidence the educator must submit under each component to meet the scoring criteria. To earn the micro-credential, the educator must earn a "Demonstrated" score for each component. The three possible scoring levels are: *Demonstrated*, *Progressing*, and *Not Met*.

For example, under the "Analyze" component for the *Maximizing Learning Through Classroom Routines* micro-credential shown above, an educator is first required to analyze her classroom day to determine where classroom time is lost, collect a set of data to support her analysis, and write a narrative (300- to 500-words) identifying an aspect of her classroom day where a classroom routine is needed in order to maximize classroom time. The educator would earn the "Demonstrated" score for this step if (1) she identifies a routine to maximize classroom time that is supported by data, and (2) she provides a narrative that includes a quantitative data set (numerical) gathered over time (at least 2 days) that illustrates lost classroom time. Once she completes this step, she then moves on to the "Design" phase to design a routine to maximize classroom time consistent with the need identified in the "Analyze" step.

To achieve the required "Demonstrated" score for each component of the micro-credential, BBI recommends three steps to achieving and demonstrating competency using BBI Programs:

1. The first step in the Learning Cycle is engaging in content-based learning. This step involves leveraging the resources of an educator's choice to learn about the specific skill at hand. Some resources are recommended in the list curated by the issuer of the micro-credential, but educators may also seek out their own or access other district-provided supports. Depending on their learning style, such resources might include reading online materials, attending a workshop, or watching instructional videos.

2. The second step in the Learning Cycle is collaborating with a certified facilitator and other peers participating in the Program. As part of the Program, BBI places each teacher into a virtual PLC or cohort of other educators working on the same micro-credential and facilitated by a certified facilitator. The certified facilitator engages with the cohort to ensure that participants are making progress towards earning their micro-credentials. By navigating to their Discussion pages, educators can connect with other teachers in their Program to share resources, discuss ideas for practicing in the classroom, or provide each other with coaching and feedback.

3. The third step in the Learning Cycle is classroom practice. The most important piece of competency-based professional development is learning by doing. This means educators must apply what they have learned to their classroom practice. After applying their new skills in their classroom, educators can then upload evidence that demonstrates the skills they have learned. This evidence could include lesson plans, artifacts of student work, or a video of an educator practicing in the classroom. This evidence, along with student reflections and the educator's own reflections, constitutes the final step in completing a micro-credential application.

Once an educator has completed all of the requirements for her micro-credential application and uploaded them to the BBI platform, she simply hits the "submit" button to turn in her application. A certified assessor will review the application and grant or deny the micro-credential. If the application is denied, the educator can review the feedback provided by the assessor and resubmit a new application.

When the educator clicks on the "Start Resubmission" button, the micro-credential opens to allow them to submit new evidence and revise their original submission. The evidence last submitted displays in the text and upload fields. The educator may edit, delete, and upload new files as needed. If the micro-credential is granted, the educator receives a digital badge that they can display on their resume and social media profiles, such as the following:

4. BloomBoard Reporting Tools

BBI also offers built-in reporting tools to our clients. BBI's Program Reports provide administrators with high-level micro-credential status data and detailed views of individual educator's progress on the micro-credentials included in the organization's programs. The designated administrators or program leaders may view reports for all programs in their organization.

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When an administrator opens the reports within their organization's landing page on the BBI platform, data displays for the program(s) in the administrator's organization. The administrator can view the total number of members in each program as well as the number of Learning Cycles in progress. Administrators who are responsible for more than one program can easily view the data for each program by using the program picker tab to toggle between programs. Currently, there are two main reporting tabs to guide users to the competency reports, each described in detail below: (1) *Competency Metrics*, and (2) *Competency Progress Overview*.

For each program, the *Competency Metrics* tab provides charts that offer both aggregate views of micro-credential activity and detailed views of individual educators' progress on micro-credentials. Designated administrators from within an organization can use the *Competency Metrics* reporting tool to view how many program members are working on or have completed specific micro-credentials as well as individual member's progress on each micro-credential in the program. Administrators can customize their view by manipulating the filters above the *Competency Metrics* charts to see data about specific educators, view specific status metrics, and/or narrow to specific micro-credentials.
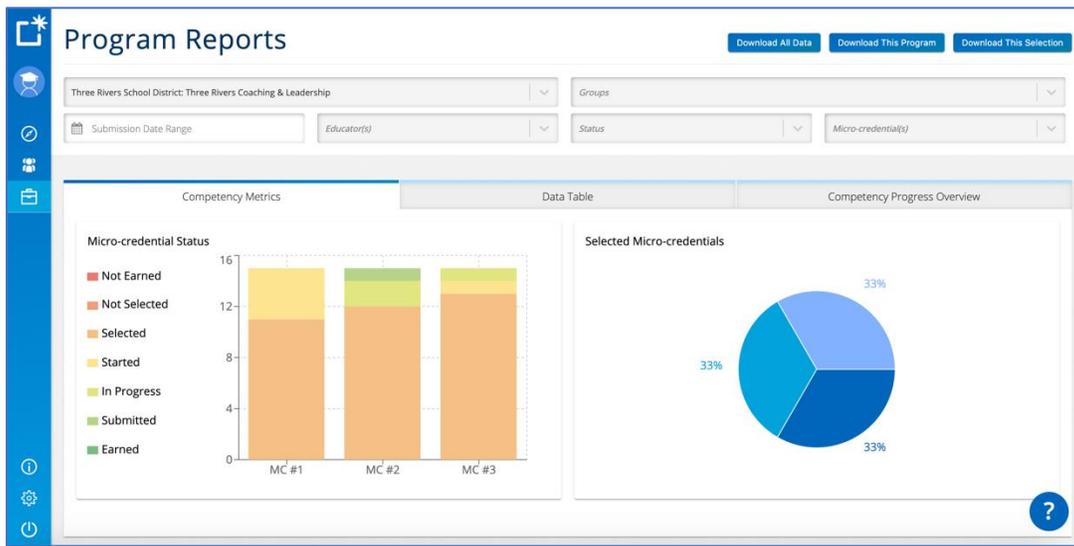
The *Competency Progress Overview* reporting tool provides additional visual depiction of which program-related micro-credentials members are engaging in and their progress. A handy color-coded key makes it easy to sort and identify members' statuses.
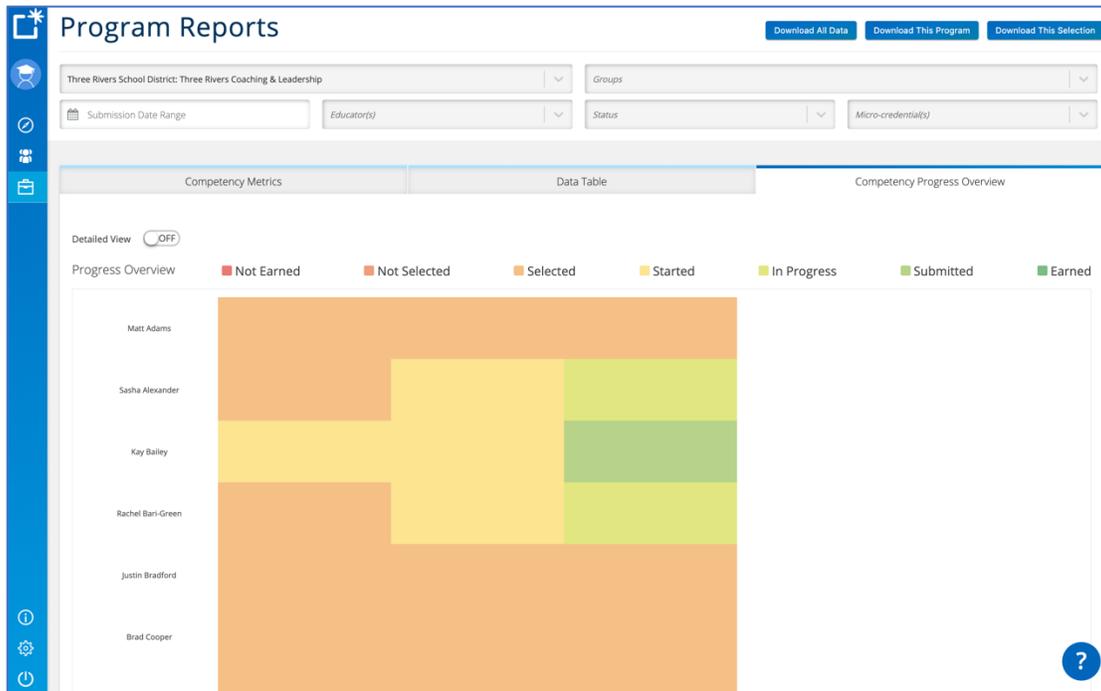
5. BloomBoard Career Pathway Mapping

BBI strives to embed our micro-credential programs into career pathways to create meaningful incentives for educator participation. To create customized career pathways for each district, BBI works with school, district, and state leaders to develop customized career pathway maps, such as the following:
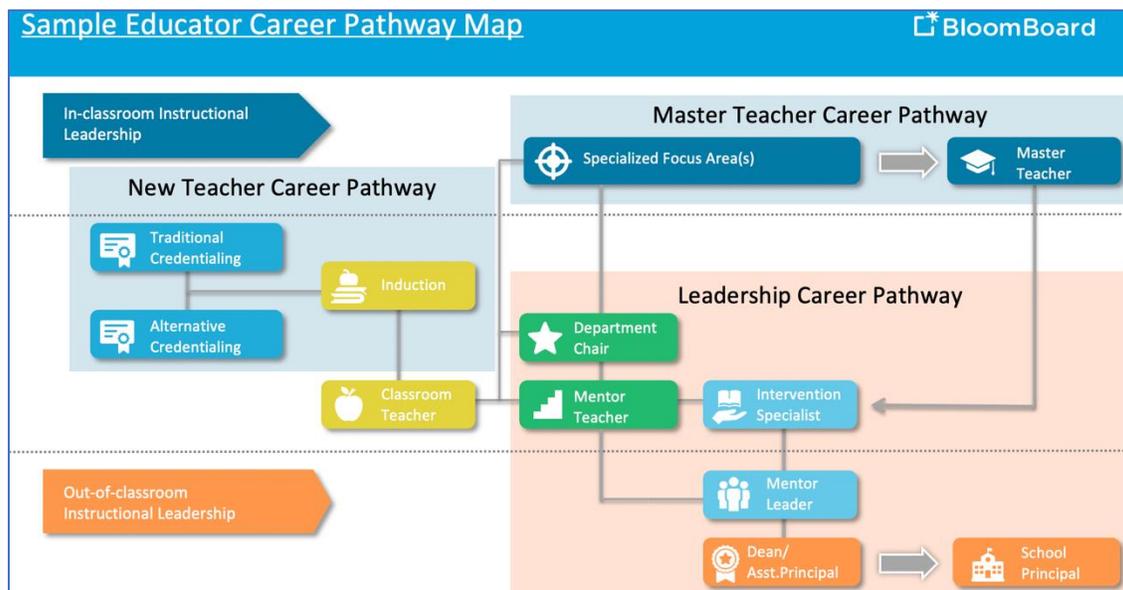

BBI then works with each organization to curate the clusters of micro-credentials for each tier, based upon the organization's identified needs. For example, a Master Teacher Pathway might

look like similar to the diagram below. Each hexagon shape represents a micro-credential, and the micro-credentials are organized into clusters represented by colors.
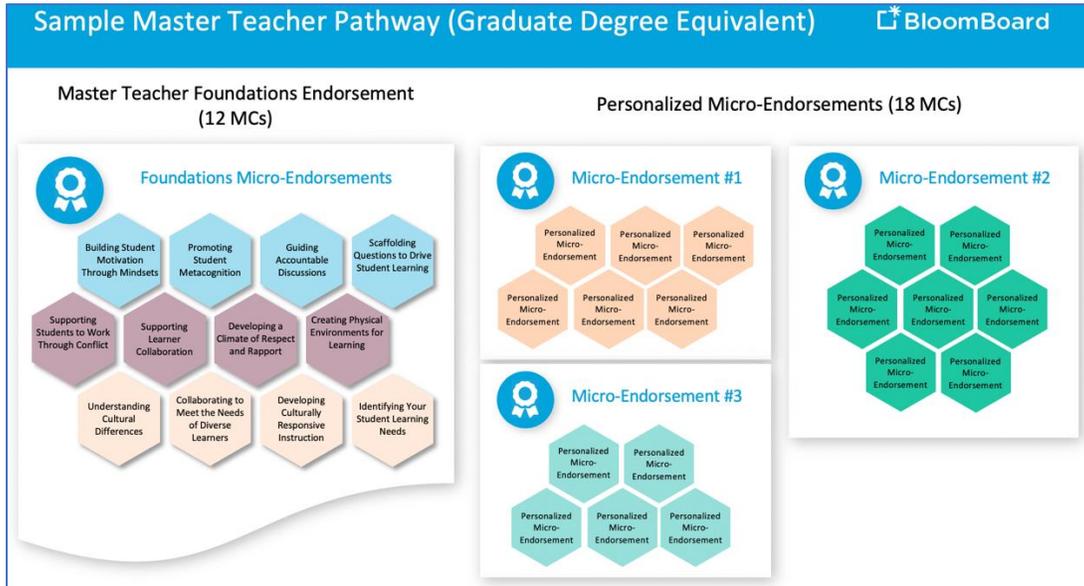

Sample personalized micro-endorsements will vary depending upon each teacher's unique roles and needs:
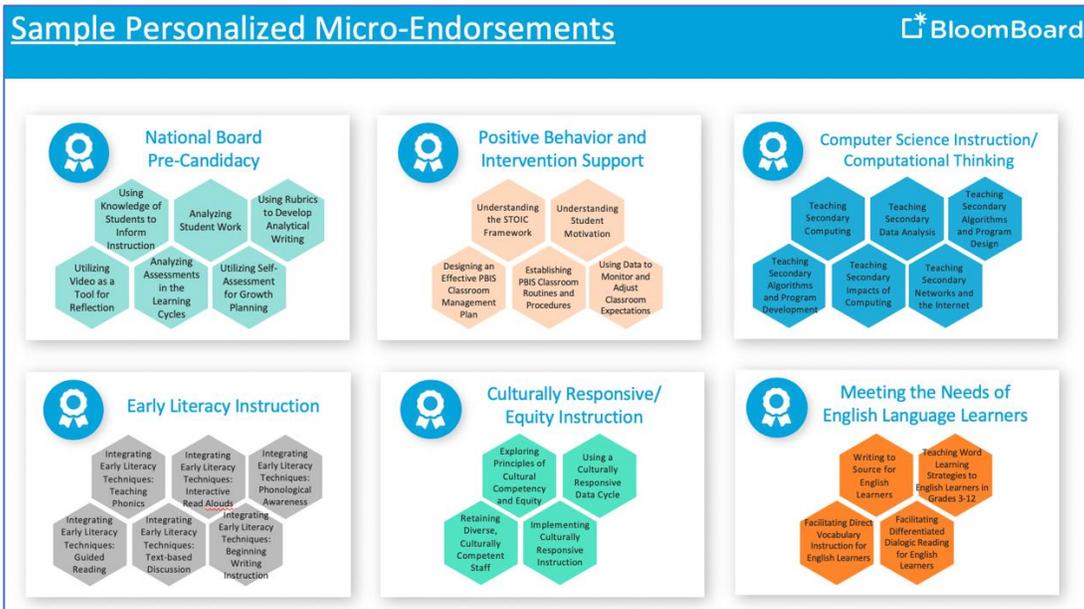
If desired, the Master Teacher micro-credentials fit into a larger competency map that depicts the micro-credentials that an educator may pursue in order to advance their career:

BloomBoard Competency Map© Professional Educator (InTASC-Aligned)
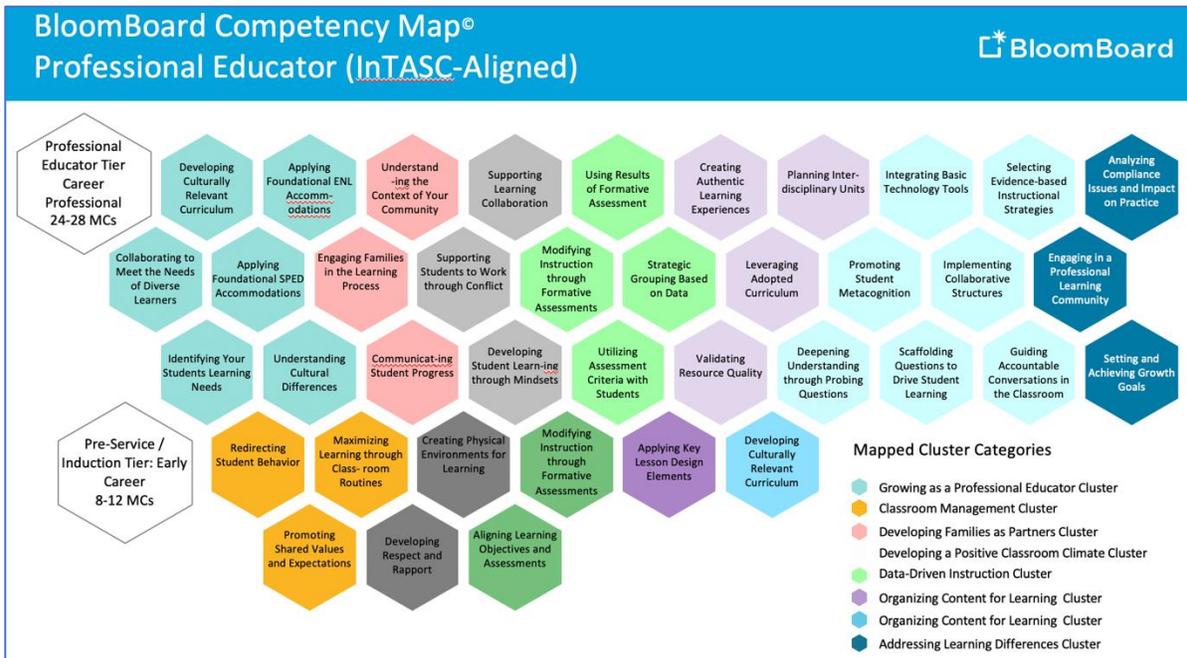
As depicted in the following graphic, BBI helps districts embed micro-credential programs into their current professional development structures.

Step 4: Embed the work in your current training and support structures

In addition, BBI can also help districts to determine when and how to offer meaningful incentives aligned to their micro-endorsements programs, such as salary increases, career advancement, and endorsements.