

Cover Page

Project Title:

Cabarrus County Schools Growing Excellence and Reach – Advanced Teaching Roles

Section 1. Applicant Information

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Section 2. Project Information

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Total Project Budget: \$1,300,319 Requested Grant Amount: \$512,026

Estimated Number of Schools Served: 14 Estimated Number of Students Served: 5,500

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:
 - 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.
 - Submit required financial and performance reports to NCDPI.
 - 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.
 - Begin serving participants before or by July 1, 2019.

Signature and date: (in blue ink) _____

Title: Superintendent

Phone: 704-260-5600

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GEAR Plan Design Committee

Name	Position	School/Department
James Roberts	Principal	Carl A. Furr Elementary School
Melanie Raso	Principal	A.T. Allen Elementary School
Adrian Parry	Principal	Hickory Ridge Elementary School
Michael Williams	Principal	H.E. Winkler Middle School
Sue Nash	Principal	C.C. Griffin Middle School
Steven Bookhart	Principal	Harris Road Middle School
Andrew Crook	Principal	Cox Mill High School
Dustin Shoe	Principal	Central Cabarrus High School
Adam Auerbach	Principal	Concord High School
Leanne Havely	C&I Coordinator/Project Director	Curriculum and Instruction
Erica Williard	Digital Teaching and Learning Coordinator	Curriculum and Instruction
Sarah Reeves	Director of Elementary Schools	Curriculum and Instruction
Mary Beth Roth	Director of Middle Schools	Curriculum and Instruction
Benjamin Allred	Director of High Schools	Curriculum and Instruction
Angela Wood	Human Resources Coordinator	Human Resources
Kelly Kluttz	Chief Financial Officer	Finance
Crystal Hill	Assistant Superintendent of C&I	Curriculum and Instruction

Background

Cabarrus County Schools strives to inspire minds, engage hearts, and shape futures. The Cabarrus County School (CCS) district is the eighth-largest school district in North Carolina with 42 schools and over 34,000 students (37% of whom are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch). CCS serves a diverse student body in terms of race, ethnicity, and exceptionalities: 48.9% White, 21.4% Black, 17.9% Hispanic, 6.7% Asian, 0.3% American Indian, 0.2% Hawaiian Pacific, and 4.6% Multi-Racial (January 10 – February 10, 2020 Gender Race Summary). In addition, 11.27% of our students are classified EC and 18% are classified as AIG.

After several years of stagnant student achievement data, CCS experienced a significant increase in both growth and proficiency during the 2018-19 school year. Tables 1 and 2 provide a summary of our student achievement results.

Table 1: CCS Achievement 2014 – 2019

School Year	Overall GLP (all EOG/EOC)	Percentage/Number of Schools Exceeding Expected Growth
2014-2015	61.9%	36.1%
2015-2016	61.9%	22.2%
2016-2017	62.2%	24.3%
2017-2018	62.0%	37.8%
2018-2019	65.6%	63.9%

Table 2: CCS 2018-29 GLP and CCR by Subgroup

Cabarrus County Schools - All EOG/EOC Subjects – 2018-19					
	All Students	Black	Hispanic	White	EDS
Grade Level Proficient	65.6%	51.8%	49.4%	74.6%	47.5%
College and Career Ready	51.7%	36.6%	35.0%	61.2%	32.7%

The increase in student achievement was the result of strategic district initiatives. For the past three years, CCS focused on moving teachers from simply understanding the North Carolina Standard Course of Study to collectively implementing the NCSCOS and reflecting on student mastery and growth. CCS supported the development of high-functioning professional learning communities and a growth mindset. In this time, the district adopted the six CCS Critical Factors for Teaching and Learning:

- Culture of care, concern, and collaboration
- High expectations teaching, and learning
- Culturally responsive teaching, and learning
- Instruction that includes 4 C's: critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity
- Implementation of the NC Digital Teaching and Learning Competencies
- Ongoing data-driven decision making

These critical factors drive the daily work and ensure the needs of students are met by providing access and equity to every student, every day.

In CCS, we nurture and maintain a culture of care, concern, and collaboration as the foundation of everything we do. Each member of our organization is vitally important. We believe that we are critically interdependent upon one another and, therefore, no good work can occur without collaboration at all levels. Each summer CCS hosts a leadership retreat. During this time, the superintendent shares highlights from the previous year and provides a focus for our work in the coming year. Two years ago, Dr. Christopher Lowder, Superintendent of Cabarrus County Schools, challenged us to “raise the bar.” Those three words have transcended the work we do and specifically apply to our primary purpose of teaching and learning. Those three words also shaped our second core critical factor of setting high expectations for all of our stakeholders.

Culturally responsive teaching and learning is vital to our district, as we serve over 34,000 students from various cultures, backgrounds, and socio-economic strata. Our focus on culturally relevant teaching has removed barriers, built bridges, and fostered a sense of community not only for our stakeholders but also our most precious asset, our students. In CCS we firmly believe if we are not responsive to the cultural needs of our students, we are irrelevant and committing what we refer to as *educational malpractice*.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) endorsed the Partnership for 21st Century Learning. This partnership challenged us to analyze and evaluate our approach to teaching and learning. During the last three years, our Teaching and Learning Teams (TLT) have focused heavily on “The Four C’s”: communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity. These learning and innovation skills are now embedded in our classroom walk-through instrument and have become an additional core critical factor of teaching and learning.

Four years ago, the North Carolina Digital Teaching and Learning Competencies (NCDLCs) were introduced. Through partnerships with the Friday Institute and the North Carolina Superintendents' Association (NCSA), our executive leadership (including our superintendent) participated in the Digital Superintendents Group, a two-day work session. The work in that session prompted CCS to fully embrace the NCDLCs and identify their components our fifth teaching and learning critical factor.

Our sixth critical factor focuses on using data, evidence, and information to drive every decision we make to ensure we remain focused on our goals and student outcomes. We consider data at the individual, PLC, school, and district levels as we monitor and adjust instruction to improvement student outcomes.

Plan Development

Cabarrus County Schools was an early adopter of the ATR concept, beginning with a pilot in 2015. CCS partnered with Opportunity Culture to design and develop our current model. CCS piloted new staffing models which included multi-classroom leaders at two elementary schools and blended-reach teachers at six high schools to address achievement gaps. This extended the reach of excellent teachers and their teams to more students. During the 2015-2016 school year, the model included three elementary, two middle, and six high schools and began with fourteen teachers. Each year our program expanded; currently 27 teachers are serving in ATR positions.

CCS recognizes the importance of on-going reflection to evaluate the effectiveness of our programs. While we are currently implementing an ATR model, we have identified limitations and developed a plan to evaluate our current program. Our evaluation methods include collaborating with other school districts and partners and receiving feedback on potential areas

and opportunities for improvement. Our team collaborated with other educators and participated in ATR sharing sessions hosted by Best NC (Business and Educational Success and Transformation). As we researched how to best implement needed improvements, we explored research-based models to support our work. We utilized and adapted a tool from the University of Washington’s College of Education (Center for Educational Leadership, University of Washington, College of Education, 2014. *Creating a Theory of Action for Improving Teaching and Learning*. <http://info.k-12leadership.org/hs-fs/hub/381270/file-2166618739-pdf/documents/webinar-presentation-pdfs/creating-a-theory-of-action.pdf>) to evaluate the effectiveness and rigor of learning at the student-level (as evidenced by classroom walkthrough observations and student achievement data). Table 3 provides a summary of the CCS ATR Theory of Action.

Table 3: CCS ATR Theory of Action: Adapted from the University of Washington College of Education (2014)

Stakeholders	Questions for Reflection	Opportunities for Improvement
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are students aware of what they are learning and why it is relevant? • Do students work in a range of structures (i.e., whole group, small group, independent)? • Are students asked to recall information, apply strategies, employ strategic thinking, and extend thinking through synthesis and analysis? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most students agree that adults in their school care for them. • All students do not believe they can be academically successful. • During class time, students spend more time listening to the teacher than problem-solving and collaborating with peers with teacher support. • Students can report the type of activity being completed, but usually cannot explain how the activity connects to their learning. • Students are involved in responding to questions/tasks/activities that focus primarily on Depth of Knowledge (DOK) 1 and 2.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student access to highly effective teachers is inconsistent.
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the teacher’s instruction helping or hindering students’ performance? • Do teachers adapt daily lessons based on “real-time” student feedback and informal assessment? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers are focused on meeting the needs of the whole child. • Teachers know their content and standards. • Teachers collaborate in Professional Learning Teams (PLCs). • Teachers collect assessment data. • Teachers are not given the opportunity to strategically observe and learn from highly effective teachers. • Formative assessment lacks intentionality and response. • Teachers believe students’ ability to be academically successful is mainly depended upon socioeconomic status and exceptionality/disability. • Teachers doubt students’ innate ability and motivation. • Learning is teacher-driven and not student-driven. • Teachers focus on recall and reproduction rather than higher-order thinking skills. • Teachers view assessment as stifling creativity instead of an opportunity for students to demonstrate mastery of standards.
School Level Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are administrators’ practices helping or hindering teachers’ instructional performance? • Do administrators prioritize administrative duties and instructional duties? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrators are available, supportive and responsive to the needs of their individual school communities. • Principals are visible and provide feedback through the CCS Walkthrough process and NCEES. • Administrators attend PLC meetings. • Administrators do not have access to a large pool of highly

		<p>effective teacher candidates especially in hard to fill areas (EC, science, math).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrators have a difficult time retaining their most effective teachers. • Administrative receive competing directives that may become overwhelming. • Administrative duties often outweigh instructional duties. • Administrative teams do not identify highly effective teachers and strategically place those teachers to meet the needs of students who are most at risk for academic failure. • Administrative teams do not set high instructional goals, and expectations for students and staff. • Administrative teams provide inconsistent support and instructional follow up for PLCs.
District Level Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are the structures/supports at the district level helping or hindering principals' instructional leadership? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District leaders are available, supportive and responsive to the needs of administrators and teachers. • District leaders provide multiple opportunities for professional development. • Departments do not collaborate to strategically plan to ensure limited time out of the building for school leaders. • Competing district objectives create overlap and confusion in prioritizing adult learning at the school level. • District level departments are continually revising and evaluating current professional learning opportunities for administrators and teachers.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structures are not in place to recruit, develop and retain our most effective teachers. • Structures are not in place to support current ATR teachers in the areas of professional development, teacher leadership and teacher empowerment.
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The theory of action process provides an introspective look into how we support and hinder teaching and learning in CCS. The recurring theme for all four stakeholder groups was the importance of highly effective teachers at all levels and the lack of structures in place for students to learn from our most effective teachers. Furthermore, our evaluation process revealed limitations including a lack of structure for recruitment and retention, processes for advancement, limited role qualifications/descriptions including performance criteria, and structures to support teachers in ATR roles.

Following multiple collaborative work-sessions, we reinvented the CCS ATR model, now titled *Growing Excellence and Reach* (GEAR). We aligned the newly envisioned GEAR model to our district strategic plan and goals. When fully implemented, the GEAR model will exponentially grow and groom excellent teachers and expand the reach of highly effective teachers. GEAR will increase student achievement, provide equity and access to high quality instruction, create leadership opportunities, build leadership capacity, and improve the teaching and learning process.

While CCS has implemented an ATR model since 2015, we will discontinue our current model effective with the 2021-22 school year. We will begin our transition to the CCS GEAR Program during the 2020-21 school year (Year 1). During Year 1 of the pilot, we will partner with external and internal partners to further develop and solidify our GEAR plans including

marketing, recruitment, and professional development activities for future GEAR teachers. Current teachers serving in an ATR role will need to meet the minimum qualifications and participate in the selection process in order to be considered for the GEAR program. The CCS GEAR pilot will target 14 schools (8 elementary, 3 middle, 3 high). During the 2021-22 school year (Year 2), we plan to begin the program with 24 teachers. The goal is to increase to a total of 35 teachers by the 2022-23 school year (Year 3).

The CCS GEAR program goals and objectives align with the North Carolina State Board of Education and CCS Goals and objectives. A crosswalk is provided in Table 4.

Table 4: State – Local – Program Goals and Objectives Crosswalk

North Carolina State Board of Education	Cabarrus County Schools	GEAR
<p>Goal 1: Every Student in the NC Public School system graduates from high school prepared for work, further education and citizenship</p> <p>Objective(s): 1 - Increase the cohort graduation rate 2 - Graduate students prepared for post-secondary education 5 - Increase student performance on the state's End of Grade (EOG) and End of Course (EOC) Assessments and on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)</p>	<p>Goal 1: Every student in CCS will graduate from high school prepared for work, further education, and citizenship</p> <p>Objective(s): 1.1 - Increase the percentage of students prepared for post-secondary education and the workforce. 1.2 - Increase student performance on EOG/EOC</p>	<p>Goal 1: Every student impacted by GEAR will graduate from high school prepared for career and post-secondary education</p> <p>Objective(s): 1 – Increase academic growth for students impacted by GEAR teachers 2 – Increase EOG/EOC GLP and CCR for students impacted by GEAR teachers</p>
<p>Goal 2: Every student has a personalized education</p> <p>Objective(s):</p>	<p>Goal 2: Every student will experience a personalized education in the Cabarrus County School system</p>	<p>Goal 2: Every student impacted by GEAR will experience a personalized education</p> <p>Objective(s):</p>

<p>2 - Increase the number of teachers and students using digital learning tools 5 - Decrease the percentage of Low-Performing Schools and Low- Performing School Districts in the State</p>	<p>2.1 - Increase the percentage of students who successfully complete a specialty program 2.2 - Increase student demonstrations of global competencies and attributes</p>	<p>1 – Reflect NC Digital Learning Competencies (NCDLC) aligned teaching and learning in every GEAR classroom 2 - Increase student demonstrations of global competencies and attributes</p>
<p>Goal 3: Every student, every day has excellent educators Objective(s): 1 - Develop and support highly effective teachers 5 - Increase the access to effective and highly-effective teachers for students in low-achieving and high-poverty schools relative to their higher-achieving and lower-poverty peers.</p>	<p>Goal 3: Every student, every day has excellent educators Objective(s): 3.1 - Increase recruitment and retention of employees 3.2 - Expand differentiated PD opportunities</p>	<p>Goal 3: Every student, every day has excellent educators Objective(s): 1 – Increase recruitment and retention of the most effective GEAR teachers 2 – Expand the reach and impact of excellent GEAR teachers on an increased number of students and teachers 3 – Provide differentiated salary supplements for the most effective GEAR teachers 4 – Expand differentiated high quality professional development opportunities for GEAR Teachers 5 – Increase job satisfaction for teachers directly impacted by GEAR teachers.</p>

Measurable Outcomes

- By June 30, 2022, 90% of teachers serving at a GEAR school will agree with statements in the Teacher Leadership section of the North Carolina Working Conditions Survey (NCTWCS).
- By June 30, 2022, 90% of teachers serving at a GEAR school will agree with statements in the Professional Development section of the NCTWCS.

- By June 30, 2022, 90% of teachers serving at a GEAR school will agree with statements in the Instructional Practices and Support section of the NCTWCS.
- By June 30, 2023, 100% of GEAR teachers will respond favorably to items on the CCS GEAR teacher survey.
- By June 30, 2023, (reported August 2023), 90% of students impacted by a GEAR teacher will meet or exceed expected academic growth as calculated by the NC State Board of Education (NC SBE).
- By June 30, 2023, (reported August 2023), 85% of students impacted by a GEAR teacher will score proficient on the EOG/EOC assessment as calculated by the NC SBE.
- By June 30, 2023, at least 90% of student and parents within the GEAR pilot will respond positively to the CCS Student and Family Satisfaction Survey.

Plan Design

GEAR School Design Plan Process

Principals interested in applying to become a GEAR school must work with their School Improvement Team (SIT) to submit a GEAR design plan. The submitted plan must include the following components: 1) the current School Improvement Plan (SIP), 2) student achievement summary, including K-3 literacy indicators, 3) EOG/EOC results for the past two school years, 4) culture and climate survey summary (including North Carolina Working Conditions Survey and CCS Working Conditions Survey), 5) analysis of strengths and needs, and 6) principal narrative including goals, implementation plan, and support. The GEAR design plan will include assurances to ensure fidelity to the CCS GEAR project. Asking principals to submit a design plan has a specific purpose. This work is to ensure both the principal and SIT are fully committed to the program and collaborated as a team to determine areas of strength and need in

order to effectively implement GEAR in their schools. It is critical each school identify opportunities for improvement, as supported by evidence, that the proposed GEAR program in their school will address.

The District GEAR Leadership Team will be tasked with reviewing all GEAR design applications. Upon acceptance, schools will be contacted to inform them they may post a GEAR position (only available to potential GEAR candidates who have successfully completed the candidate pool process). The GEAR school design plan will expire two years after submission. After the two-year period, schools must reapply for GEAR status.

GEAR Teacher Job Descriptions/Roles/Responsibilities

The GEAR Design Team acknowledges the variance in the instructional models between elementary and secondary schools. In CCS, we have made the decision that we will not departmentalize in grades K-3 since our youngest children require a strong relationship with one primary adult in order to positively impact their social and emotional development. In fourth grade, principals may decide to departmentalize limited to two-teacher teams. Principals may decide to departmentalize limited to three-teacher teams in fifth grade. However, principals are encouraged to utilize flexible grouping between teacher teams in order to personalize the learning experience for children and maximize the instructional strengths of teachers. While elementary teachers are generalists and are responsible for all content areas, secondary teachers specialize in specific content areas. Additionally, the secondary schedule allows the opportunity for teachers to increase the direct teacher impact on an increased number of students that may not be developmentally appropriate in the younger grades. The way in which we have designed the GEAR teacher roles and compensation reflects clear advancement in both responsibility and compensation. We have designed four GEAR positions: GEAR-1, GEAR-2, GEAR-3, GEAR-

4. In order to provide clarity to all stakeholders including schools, GEAR teacher candidates, parents, and the community, we have delineated the roles and corresponding compensation based on elementary, middle, and high school level positions. Corresponding compensation is listed for each job description. However, supplements for individual teachers will not exceed 30% of the NC teacher salary schedule.

Elementary GEAR Teacher Job Descriptions, Responsibilities, and Compensation

Elementary GEAR-1 (\$4,000 Supplement/School Year). At the GEAR-1 level, the teacher will be responsible as teacher of record with a direct impact on 25% more students. The additional 25% of students assigned to the GEAR-1 teacher will be selected by the school administration, based on school improvement goals. The GEAR-1 teacher will also be responsible for one or more formal leadership roles

Elementary GEAR-2 (\$8,000 Supplement/School Year). At the GEAR-2 level, the teacher will be responsible for teaching 40% more students. The additional 40% of students assigned to the GEAR-2 teacher will be selected by the school administration, based on targeted school improvement goals. The GEAR-2 teacher is required to have a minimum of two formal teacher leader roles that impacts total school improvement.

Elementary GEAR-3 (\$12,000 Supplement/School Year). At the GEAR-3 level, the teacher will co-teach two classes and will be designated as teacher of record. During these periods, the GEAR-3 teacher will be responsible for co-planning, model teaching, co-teaching, providing small group instruction, and observing and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes). The GEAR-3 teacher is also responsible for the professional development of the opposite teachers in order to increase his/her skill sets. The GEAR-3 teacher is required to have a minimum of two formal teacher leader roles that impacts total school improvement.

Elementary GEAR-4 (\$16,000 Supplement/School Year). At the GEAR-4 level, the teacher will co-teach two classes and will be designated as teacher of record. During these periods, the GEAR-4 teacher will be responsible for co-planning, model teaching, co-teaching, providing small group instruction, and observing and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes). The GEAR-4 teacher is also responsible for the professional development of the opposite teachers in order to increase his/her skill sets. The GEAR-4 teacher will be assigned as teacher of record to lead a Professional Learning Community (PLC) of two to five teachers. Responsibilities include leading teachers in PLC meetings and ensuring that teachers are following the district PLC process (including analyzing data), modeling lessons, co-teaching, providing small group instruction and observing teachers and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes). The GEAR-4 teacher will also be required to have a minimum of two formal teacher leader roles in the school that impact total school improvement.

Middle School GEAR Teacher Job Descriptions and Compensation

Middle School GEAR-1 (\$4,000 Supplement/School Year). At the GEAR-1 level, the teacher will be responsible for teaching one blended-reach block, serving approximately 60 students. This block could be in an A/B day format with students receiving face-to-face instruction every other day (A day) and utilizing the CCS Learning Management System (LMS) Canvas, with instructional personnel support on the other day (B day) or using other methods to reach these 60 students. This teacher will also be responsible for teaching three additional traditional class periods during the day.

Middle School GEAR-2 (\$8,000 Supplement/School Year). At the GEAR-2 level, the teacher will be responsible for teaching two blended-reach blocks as the teacher of record, reaching approximately 120 students in possibly an A/B day format with students receiving face

to face instruction every other day (A day) and utilizing Canvas with instructional personnel support on the opposite day (B day). This teacher will also be responsible for teaching two additional traditional class periods. The GEAR-2 teacher will be required to have a minimum of one formal teacher leadership role during the entire school year that impacts total school improvement.

Middle School GEAR-3 (\$12,000 Supplement/School Year). At the GEAR-3 level, there are two options for implementation. In option one, the teacher will be responsible for teaching three blended-reach blocks, reaching approximately 180 students in possibly an A/B day format with students receiving face to face instruction every other day (A day) and utilizing Canvas with instructional personnel support on the opposite day (B day). The GEAR-3 teacher will also be responsible for teaching one traditional block.

In option two, the teacher will be responsible for teaching two blended-reach blocks (as described above) reaching approximately 120 students. During the remaining two of the teaching blocks, the teacher will co-teach and will be designated as teacher of record. During this period, the GEAR-3 teacher will be responsible for co-planning, model teaching, co-teaching, providing small group instruction, and observing and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes). The GEAR-3 teacher is also responsible for the professional development of the opposite teachers in order to increase his/her skill sets. In both options, the GEAR-3 teacher will be required to have a minimum of one formal teacher leader roles during the entire school year that impact total school improvement.

Middle School GEAR-4 (Reach, Extend, Lead) (\$16,000 Supplement/School Year). At the GEAR-4 level, there are three options for implementation. In option one, the teacher will teach two blended-reach block per semester (total of 2 per year), reaching 120 students. This

will possibly be in an A/B day format with students receiving face-to-face instruction every other day (A day) and utilizing Canvas with instructional personnel support on the opposite day (B day). During two of the teaching blocks, the teacher will co-teach and will be designated as the teacher of record for both classes. During these periods, the GEAR-4 teacher will be responsible for co-planning, model teaching, co-teaching, providing small group instruction, and observing and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes). During the remaining period of the day, the teacher will be assigned as teacher of record to lead a Professional Learning Community (PLC) of two to five teachers. Responsibilities include leading teachers in PLC meetings and ensuring that teachers are following the district PLC process (including analyzing data), modeling lessons, co-teaching, providing small group instruction and observing teachers and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes).

In option two, the GEAR-4 teacher will teach two blended-reach block per semester, reaching 120 students. This will possibly be in an A/B day format as described above. During one of the teaching blocks, the teacher will co-teach and will be designated as the teacher of record. During this period, the GEAR-4 teacher will be responsible for co-planning, model teaching, co-teaching, providing small group instruction, and observing and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes). The GEAR-4 teacher is also responsible for the professional development of the opposite teacher in order to increase his/her skill set. During one period of the day, the teacher will teach one traditional block (may be needed for specialty sections such as high school or advanced courses). During the remaining period of the day, the teacher will be assigned as teacher of record to lead a Professional Learning Community (PLC) of two to five teachers. Responsibilities include leading teachers in PLC meetings and ensuring that teachers are following the district PLC process (including analyzing data), modeling lessons,

co-teaching, providing small group instruction and observing teachers and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes).

In option three, the GEAR-4 teacher will teach three blended-reach block per year, reaching 180 students. This will possibly be in an A/B day format as described above. The GEAR-4 teacher will co-teach during one of the instructional blocks and will be designated as the teacher of record. During this period, the GEAR-4 teacher will be responsible for co-planning, model teaching, co-teaching, providing small group instruction, and observing and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes). The GEAR-4 teacher is also responsible for the professional development of the opposite teacher in order to increase his/her skill set. During the remaining period of the day, the teacher will be assigned as teacher of record to lead a Professional Learning Community (PLC) of two to five teachers. Responsibilities include leading teachers in PLC meetings and ensuring that teachers are following the district PLC process (including analyzing data), modeling lessons, co-teaching, providing small group instruction and observing teachers and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes). In all three options, the GEAR-4 teacher will also be required to have a minimum of one formal teacher leader role in the school that impact total school improvement and be a member of the school's TLT team.

High School GEAR Teacher Job Descriptions and Compensation

High School GEAR-1 (\$4,000 Supplement/Semester). At the GEAR-1 level, the teacher will be responsible as teacher of record for teaching one blended-reach block, reaching approximately 60 students. This block could be in an A/B day format with students receiving face-to-face instruction every other day (A day) and utilizing the CCS Learning Management System (LMS) Canvas, with instructional personnel support on the opposite day (B day) or using

other methods to reach these 60 students. This teacher will also be responsible for teaching two additional traditional class periods during the day.

High School GEAR-2 (\$8,000 Supplement/Semester). At the GEAR-2 level, the teacher will be responsible for teaching two blended-reach blocks as the teacher of record, reaching approximately 120 students in possibly an A/B day format with students receiving face-to-face instruction every other day (A day) and utilizing Canvas with instructional personnel support on the opposite day (B day). This teacher will also be responsible for teaching one additional traditional class period. The GEAR 2 teacher will be required to have a minimum of one formal teacher leadership role during the entire school year that impacts total school improvement.

High School GEAR-3 (\$12,000 Supplement/Semester). At the GEAR-3 level, there are two options for implementation. In option one, the teacher will be responsible for teaching three blended-reach blocks, reaching approximately 180 students in possibly an A/B day format with students receiving face-to-face instruction every other day (A day) and utilizing Canvas with instructional personnel support on the opposite day (B day).

In option two, the teacher will be responsible for teaching two blended-reach blocks (as described above) reaching approximately 120 students. During one of the teaching blocks, the teacher will co-teach and will be designated as teacher of record. During this period, the GEAR-3 teacher will be responsible for co-planning, model teaching, co-teaching, providing small group instruction, and observing and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes). The GEAR-3 teacher is also responsible for the professional development of the opposite teacher in order to increase his/her skill set. In both options, the GEAR-3 teacher will be required to

have a minimum of one formal teacher leader roles during the entire school year that impact total school improvement.

High School GEAR-4 (\$16,000 Supplement/Semester). At the GEAR-4 level, there are three options for implementation. In option one, the teacher will teach two blended-reach block per semester (total of 2 per year), reaching 120 students. This will possibly be in an A/B day format with students receiving face-to-face instruction every other day (A day) and utilizing Canvas with instructional personnel support on the opposite day (B day). During one of the teaching blocks, the teacher will co-teach and will be designated as the teacher of record. During this period, the GEAR-4 teacher will be responsible for co-planning, model teaching, co-teaching, providing small group instruction, and observing and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes). The GEAR-4 teacher is also responsible for the professional development of the opposite teacher in order to increase his/her skill set. During the remaining period of the day, the teacher will be assigned as teacher of record to lead a Professional Learning Community (PLC) of two to five teachers. Responsibilities include leading teachers in PLC meetings and ensuring that teachers are following the district PLC process (including analyzing data), modeling lessons, co-teaching, providing small group instruction and observing teachers and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes).

In option two, the GEAR-4 teacher will teach one blended-reach block per semester, reaching 60 students. This will possibly be in an A/B day format as described above. During one of the teaching blocks, the teacher will co-teach and will be designated as the teacher of record. During this period, the GEAR-4 teacher will be responsible for co-planning, model teaching, co-teaching, providing small group instruction, and observing and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes). The GEAR-4 teacher is also responsible for the professional

development of the opposite teacher in order to increase his/her skill set. The GEAR-4 teacher will teach one traditional block (may be needed for specialty sections such as AP courses).

During the remaining period of the day, the teacher will be assigned as teacher of record to lead a Professional Learning Community (PLC) of two to five teachers. Responsibilities include leading teachers in PLC meetings and ensuring that teachers are following the district PLC process (including analyzing data), modeling lessons, co-teaching, providing small group instruction and observing teachers and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes).

In option three, the teacher will teach one traditional block (may be needed for specialty sections such as AP courses). During two of the teaching blocks, the teacher will co-teach and will be designated as the teacher of record. During these periods, the GEAR-4 teacher will be responsible for co-planning, model teaching, co-teaching, providing small group instruction, and observing and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes). The GEAR-4 teacher is also responsible for the professional development of two teachers in order to increase his/her skill sets. During the remaining period of the day, the teacher will be assigned as teacher of record to lead a Professional Learning Community (PLC) of two to five teachers.

Responsibilities include leading teachers in PLC meetings and ensuring that teachers are following the district PLC process (including analyzing data), modeling lessons, co-teaching, providing small group instruction and observing teachers and providing critical feedback (not for evaluative purposes). In all three options, the GEAR-4 teacher is required to hold at least one formal leadership role during the entire school year.

Formal Leadership Roles

GEAR teachers are expected to hold formal leadership role(s). Below are the descriptions of possible leadership roles. Each school will identify the targeted formal leadership roles in the GEAR school design plan.

- School Improvement Team (SIT) Chair: Leads the SIT in developing and monitoring the school improvement plan. Focuses on methods of improvement for school performance issues.
- Professional Learning Community (PLC) Facilitator: Leads his/her content/grade level PLC. Creates weekly agendas and facilitates the team through the four stage PLC process developed by the district. Leads the team in analyzing student data using a strategic process.
- Grade Level Chair: Leads regularly scheduled grade level meetings. Topics addressed include field trips, guest speakers, special events, and sharing of information.
- Mentors a first or second-year teacher. Meets regularly with the mentee to assist with lesson planning, data analysis, and instruction. Observes mentee teaching and provides feedback.
- Lead Mentor: Leads all mentors in the school in carrying out mentoring duties. Meets with all mentees monthly to provide support in the areas of classroom management and instruction.
- Cooperating Teaching: Hosts a student teacher from a local university. Observes, coaches, and provides feedback on instruction and classroom management.

GEAR Teacher Qualifications

GEAR Teacher candidates must possess, or qualify to obtain, a North Carolina Teacher

License in a related field, with at least two years of teaching experience. Advanced certifications, such as National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification or Master's degree, are preferred and required for GEAR-4 candidates. GEAR candidates must have at least two years teaching experience; GEAR-4 teachers must have three. All GEAR teachers are required to have at least 1.0 approved CEUs in Content, Literacy, and North Carolina Digital Learning Competencies (NCDLC). Elementary candidates must have successfully participated in Foundational Reading Professional Development. GEAR-4 candidates must have successfully completed or eligible to complete the CCS Teacher Leader Cohort Program. Prior experience as a teacher-leader and working with diverse student populations is preferred for GEAR-1 and GEAR-2 teachers and is required for GEAR-3 and GEAR-4 teachers. All applicants must have a rating of at least accomplished or higher on each of the Teacher Evaluation Standards 1-5 (1 and 4 if on the abbreviated evaluation instrument) on the candidate's most recent summary evaluation (or the equivalent on an out-of-state evaluation system). Evidence that the candidate has exceeded expected student growth for two years as calculated by the State Board of Education is required for all GEAR candidates (or the equivalent for out-of-state applicants). Successful GEAR teaching candidates must embody the six CCS Critical Factors of Teaching and Learning. Additionally, candidates must have the ability to apply systems thinking skills and work collaboratively with teams of educators. Candidates must also possess excellent time management and communication skills. Each of the teacher qualifications are weighted and are outlined in Table 5.

Table 5: Weighted GEAR Teacher Qualifications

* = Low, ** = Medium, *** = High

Qualifications	GEAR 1	GEAR 2	GEAR 3	GEAR 4
*Certification(s)	NC Teaching License (or ability to obtain)	NC Teaching License (or ability to obtain)	NC Teaching License (or ability to obtain)	Master's Degree <i>or</i> NBPTS Certification
*Years of Experience	2+	2+	2+	3+
**Previous Professional Development	Minimum 1.0 CEU of Content, Literacy or NCDLC	Minimum 1.0 CEU of Content, Literacy or NCDLC	Minimum 2.0 CEU of Content, Literacy or NCDLC	CCS Teacher Leader Cohort (or eligible to complete in 2 years)
**Evidence of Prior Successful Teacher Leadership	N/A	N/A	One year or more formal leadership role(s)	Two years or more formal leadership role(s)
***Most Recent NCEES Summary Evaluation	Accomplished or Higher on All Required Standards			
***Evidence of Teacher Effectiveness	Exceeded Expected Growth at Least Two Years	Exceeded Expected Growth at Least Two Years	Exceeded Expected Growth at Least Two Years	Exceeded Expected Growth at Least Three Years

GEAR Candidate Pool

It is critical to the success of the GEAR program to recruit the most effective internal and external teachers. All prospective GEAR teacher candidates must go through a rigorous application and interview process. In order to apply for a GEAR position, teachers must submit the following documents:

- On-line application
- Two letters of recommendation (one from a current principal/supervisor)
- Evidence of teacher effectiveness
- One-page professional essay

An interview committee will include members of the District GEAR Leadership Team along with the Cabarrus County Principal and Teacher of the Year. Interview questions will

address the skills, attitudes, and dispositions necessary to be successful based on CCS GEAR pilot program. Once candidates successfully enter the pool, approved GEAR schools may conduct a school-level interview and offer a GEAR position. The purpose of the district process is to ensure fidelity and equitable opportunities for all candidates.

Recruitment

CCS is committed to attracting the best talent for GEAR teaching positions. The CCS Public Relations department will develop a marketing campaign to advertise these positions. All communication will be housed on the CCS GEAR website, social media outlets, and air on the CCS channel. Additionally, information about the CCS GEAR program will be available at all recruitment events and highlighted at the CCS Teacher Fair held during the spring of every year. This campaign will allow us the opportunity to advertise the program, application process, and criteria for selection.

GEAR Teacher Evaluation/Renewal Process

In our current model, teachers serving in an ATR are evaluated solely on the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation Process. GEAR teachers will be evaluated annually utilizing multiple methods. Principals will evaluate GEAR teachers utilizing two NCEES instruments: Teacher Evaluation Tool and the Teacher Leadership Specialists (depending on the role). Additionally, GEAR teachers will participate in a feedforward model (Hirsch, 2017). Finally, teachers will be evaluated utilizing impact on academic student performance measures including EVAAS.

By December 1st of year two of each GEAR cohort, teachers interested in renewal must submit a GEAR renewal application with the following information/evidence:

- Two-page self-reflection of GEAR experience

- One recorded lesson demonstrating CCS Core Critical Factors of Teaching and Learning with reflection of lesson
- Evidence of teacher effectiveness

The District GEAR Leadership Team will evaluate each application and inform the candidate of their status by March 1st. Once renewed, GEAR teachers may choose to remain at their current school or re-enter to pool for consideration at different approved GEAR school site.

Non-renewal and Voluntary Relinquishment of GEAR Role

A teacher may choose to voluntarily relinquish their GEAR role/responsibilities by submitting a formal letter to the school principal and copying both the Personnel Director and the GEAR Project Director. All parties will work together to develop a time line that is least disruptive to the impacted students and advantageous to the GEAR teacher.

If a GEAR teacher fails to maintain the minimum criteria established for the position, is not successfully performing the additional duties associated with the advanced teaching role, or voluntarily relinquishes the advanced teaching role, the teacher shall 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.

Professional Development

Overall results of the 2018 NCWCS for Cabarrus County Schools were positive. One of the challenges indicated was the need to offer differentiated professional development to meet the needs of individual teachers as evidenced by 63.1% of CCS teachers agreeing. Often the assumption is our most effective and talented teachers do not crave professional learning opportunities. In order to address this challenge with our GEAR teachers, we will develop a Professional Learning Network (PLN) for GEAR teachers utilizing the Teachers Network

framework developed by the Ministry of Education in Singapore. The PLN for GEAR teachers will include an annual two-day summer retreat, mid-year check-in, and state/national conference selected by the group. The summer retreat will be held at a location that will allow the group to recharge and refocus. During the first half day of the retreat, GEAR teachers will engage in leadership and team building activities and celebrate the success of the previous year. The remainder of the retreat will be driven by the needs and interest of our GEAR teachers. Teachers will assemble in Teacher Network circles determined by commonly identified problems. Teacher circles will work to identify barriers and develop possible solutions. The work of our GEAR PLN will drive future program changes.

Depending on the GEAR role, professional development requirements and options will vary and increase in rigor and intensity. As a district, we capitalize on the resources that are currently available to educators across the state such robust options through Home Base in the North Carolina Educator Effectiveness System (NCEES). With the implementation of GEAR, we will require some of these courses while offering others as suggested options.

One of the goals of the program is to build the leadership capacity of GEAR teachers. CCS has offered a few experiential learning opportunities to teachers and have received positive feedback. Teacher Expeditions, structured visits to local businesses, will be cornerstone in the GEAR program as it connects our profession to businesses. GEAR teachers will have the opportunity to tour local government and business facilities and collaborate with leaders of those organizations.

CCS values a globally-minded and diverse workforce. We partner with World View by participating in educational workshops and global study visits. One of the richest professional development opportunities we offer selected Teachers of the Year are the global study visits.

World View's mission is to equip K-12 and community college educators with global knowledge, best practices, and resources to prepare students to engage in our interconnected and diverse world. CCS will expand participation by adding two GEAR teachers to our annual global study visits. By doing so, we will increase global mindedness in our most effective and impactful teachers.

During the 2020-21 school year (Year 1), we will utilize state and local funding sources to contract with internal and external experts to further design our GEAR Teacher Professional Development Plan. The GEAR website and monthly newsletters for GEAR schools and teachers will ensure connections are maintained between stakeholder groups.

Sustainability and Scalability

The GEAR application process and criterion is designed to identify and employ our most effective teachers. The reach of the GEAR teacher is not limited to their students and teachers on their teams. All GEAR teachers will also serve as demonstration classrooms. The demonstration classroom will allow teachers from the district to visit and observe the CCS Critical Factors of Teaching and Learning in action. Each GEAR school will be assigned a SWIVL, Inc. robot to record model lessons. An iPad is mounted on the robot while the teacher wears a microphone. The SWIVL robot follows the teacher and records the lesson. At present, new teachers participate in New Teacher Orientation (NTO), led by Human Resources. The Curriculum and Instruction department supplements NTO by providing all first and second year beginning teachers with 4 additional days of professional development which is rooted in the CCS curriculum and instructional frameworks. During this time, beginning teachers will visit GEAR demonstration classrooms to observe first hand best teaching practices that are tightly aligned to the CCS Core Critical Factors of Teaching and Learning.

CCS has been given the opportunity to collaborate with districts across the state through forums facilitated by NCDPI and other partners such as Best NC, Opportunity Culture, The Innovation Project, and RtI International. The opportunity to collaborate with and visit other districts has been instrumental in the implementation of many strong initiatives in CCS. In order to support the continuation of ATR across the state, CCS will host two ATR mini-conferences which will include an overview of the CCS GEAR program, classroom visits, GEAR panels (teacher, parent/community), and facilitated team reflection/planning time. All participants will also be provided access to the CCS GEAR Canvas course. The CCS GEAR Canvas course will include resources and information that can be duplicated for use in any district across the state along with a video library, organized by the CCS Core Critical Factors of Teaching and Learning.

The North Carolina Teacher Compensation Models and Advanced Teaching Roles Award grant funds are essential for the successful implementation of our GEAR ATR pilot program. We have submitted a strong proposal that will provide opportunities for scalability across the state. Grant funds will be used primarily for salary supplements for GEAR teachers. CCS currently uses funds available from vacant certified positions and lag hire to fund our current ATR model. Again, grant funds will allow the opportunity for us to expand and utilize state and local funding sources to focus on professional development and other aspects of the grant as detailed in the GEAR Budget (Attachment A).

Project Evaluation Plan

The GEAR Program will participate in a formal evaluation in September of every year. A GEAR annual presentation will be made by the GEAR Project Director, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, GEAR teacher and GEAR principal

representatives. The evaluation committee will be a joint body of the Superintendent's Cabinet (Superintendent, Deputy, Assistant Superintendents, and Chief Financial Officer) and the District Curriculum and Instruction Committee (includes 6 teacher leaders, Curriculum Department directors, and 2 Board of Education members). The presentation will include an overview of GEAR as it relates to program goals, objectives and measurable outcomes as described in the proposal. The Project Director will provide a summary which includes strengths and needs for improvement (as identified by outcome data, anecdotal data, classroom walkthroughs, and GEAR summer retreat teacher feedback). Feedback from the formal evaluation process will be implemented and presented to GEAR teachers and administrators and synthesized to inform program adjustments.