

*Professional Articulation for Recruiting/Retaining Teachers  
for Neighborhood Engagement and Renewal (PARTNER) Project*

The PARTNER Project will develop an efficient and effective **system** that articulates the work of schools, community colleges, universities, as well as community agencies and businesses, to recruit and retain quality teachers. The unique aspects of the PARTNER project are 1) obtaining **community support** for becoming a teacher and becoming a member of the local community; 2) **linking recruitment and support services** from all partner institutions; and 3) **tracking** individuals through the various levels. The PARTNER system will establish strategies and resources that can be sustained after the grant. Federal funds will support the design and evaluation of system components; the creation of staff and instructional development that addresses the needs of children in the partner schools and facilitate consensus building on the criteria for candidate selection and assessment.

The PARTNER Project is designed to develop an articulated system for recruitment and retention. The project will increase the number of individuals from the Little Village community who enter teacher education programs and return to Chicago to teach and to develop community resources. The PARTNER Project will also recruit current teacher education candidates at partner colleges and other institutions to explore Chicago, allowing candidates to consider Chicago as a viable option for their clinical experiences, student teaching, and professional careers. The PARTNER project seeks to leverage and further enhance teacher education by meeting the critical needs of urban teachers and thereby ultimately ameliorating urban teacher retention.

The activities of the project will: 1) bring personnel from all partners together in working teams to design and implement reform strategies of the project; 2) redesign preservice teacher preparation to include instruction that meets the needs of the partner schools; 3) examine practices of the schools and the district to be able to identify quality candidates for positions in the district; 4) develop support services for beginning teachers in the schools to enable them to become quality teachers; and 5) bring personnel from all partners to be active participants at each level of the teacher recruitment and retention system.

The work of the PARTNER Project will take place in Work Teams organized around each of the levels of the system. The teams will be formed around the following objectives: 1) Pre-college recruitment; 2) Lower Division college recruitment; 3) Upper Division college recruitment; 4) Program graduates recruitment and assistance; 5) Effective hiring and employment practices; 6) Support of new teachers; 7) Scholarship and support; 8) Assessment; 9) Project evaluation. Each Work Team will have a coordinator or chairperson who is supported by the project and include members from each of the partners as appropriate.

### ***Measurable Improvements in Teacher Quality and Student Learning***

**Objective 1:** Increase the number of individuals from the Little Village community, particularly from underrepresented groups, who pursue teacher education programs at community colleges in Chicago, ISU, or other educational institutions.

Outcome: The number of individuals from the Little Village neighborhood participating in teacher education programs will increase each year: Year 1, 15; Year 2, 25; and Year 3, 35.

**Objective 2:** Increase the quantity and quality of teachers hired by Little Village and other Chicago schools and those teachers retained beyond the beginning years of teaching.

Outcome: The number of teachers advancing from level to level within the Recruitment and Retention System increases by 50% each year of the project.

**Objective 3:** Enhance teacher education programs at ISU and expand teacher education courses at the community colleges based on the documented needs of the Little Village schools for quality teachers and the information gained from experiences in the schools and community and from results of assessment of teacher quality and student learning.

Outcome: Teacher education programs will collect data to document that preparation impacts the quality of teaching in Little Village schools.

**Objective 4:** Improve teaching and learning in the Little Village schools as measured by assessment of teachers and assessment of learners and use that information for program improvement.

Outcome: Student achievement will increase learning on selected lessons and on standardized achievement assessments.

**Objective 5:** Increase the capacity of the partners to work in a community context to improve the quantity and quality of teachers working in Little Village schools.

Outcome: Partners implement a long range plan that commits personnel and resources linked to expressed needs, with a regular feedback process on effectiveness of joint initiatives.

The partnership will improve teaching and learning through the implementation of the Work Teams' proposals.

### *The Nine Work Teams and Their Objectives*

**\* Pre-college Recruitment:** This Work Team will focus on facilitating communication between pre-college students, their respective parents, and community members on teaching opportunities. These individuals may be in middle or high school; they may also be high school graduates who have not yet entered college. Activities will include the following:

- Development of materials, including a Spanish edition, which will provide information on scholarships and other support for college;
- Demonstration of how enrollment in a local community college can address issues of cost and convenience and how part of the remaining two years can be spent back in the community through participation in the senior-year professional development school; and
- Existing *Future Educators of America* chapters will be enhanced and new chapters will be initiated, especially in partner schools where Golden Apple graduates are teaching and can assist in this development process.

**\* Lower Division College Recruitment:** This Work Team will focus on students enrolled in Daley and Truman City Colleges of Chicago, students enrolled at ISU, and members of the community who have earned some college credit. Within each subgroup, students may not yet be committed to teaching. This Work Team will examine the following practices to provide a coordinated approach to recruitment.

- Develop or refine advisement procedures to recruit students for teaching in Chicago;
- Create early field experiences in partner schools in teacher education courses;
- Promote organizations for teacher candidates that have a focus on urban teaching; and
- Provide scholarships to students from ISU, Golden Apple, Truman and other sources.

**\* Upper Division College Recruitment:** This Work Team will focus on those students already enrolled in teacher education programs at ISU as well as individuals and community members interested in teaching who have sufficient college credit to qualify as juniors or seniors. The activities promoted by this Work Team will include the following:

- Implement year-long residency programs at PDS sites to provide students with rich opportunities to observe, reflect, and later deal with problems associated with establishing their own classrooms;
- Recruit teacher education students to teach in Little Village or elsewhere in Chicago and provide clinical experiences in partner schools;
- Implement an approach to help teacher candidates focus on student learning (e.g. *The Teacher Work Sample* strategy); and
- Provide mentoring to these upper division students by Golden Apple and National Boards certified teacher coaches.

**\* Program Graduates' Recruitment and Assistance:** This Work Team will focus on recruiting those students at ISU or other institutions, or individuals who previously completed teacher education programs, to seek employment in Little Village or other Chicago schools. The activities of this Work Team will include:

- Programs and materials to aggressively attract individuals to apply for Chicago teaching positions and that target the community's support for becoming teachers;
- Target *Golden Apple Scholars* who are completing programs in any Illinois higher education institution; and

- Assist with the development of electronic portfolios that carefully document student and teacher success in Little Village classrooms.

**\* Effective Hiring and Employment Practices:** This Work Team will examine hiring practices common to the CPS District and unique to the Little Village schools to assess their effectiveness in meeting the needs of these schools. The Work Team will evaluate:

- Employment practices (including teacher retention and attrition) in partner schools and their criteria for employment;
- Follow through of possible candidates to ensure timely process of information; and
- CPS provides assistance with housing, including up to \$7500 down payment assistance for teachers who have taught at least one year and commit to five additional years of service in CPS.

**\* Support of New Teachers:** This Work Team will focus on creating an effective and strong system of support within each school building. This localized mechanism will also require appropriate levels of support from administration and trained mentors. This team will collaborate with higher education personnel to provide specialized support services to the school sites. The Work Team will facilitate this process by:

- Training mentors in local partnership schools and provide in-class coaching;
- Offering masters level courses tailored to the needs of beginning teachers and examine ways to providing specialized services from the campus in timely and cost effective ways;
- As one of its program strengths, Golden Apple will provide mentoring services and work with schools to improve mentoring; and
- Working with ISU Alumni Network to support ISU graduates currently teaching in Chicago.

**\* Scholarship and Support:** This Work Team will have a special focus on using scholarship dollars to recruit and attract minorities into entering teacher education programs. Scholarships will be awarded to students from the Little Village community who make a commitment to teacher education and to college students who make a commitment to seek employment in Little Village schools upon certification. The Work Team will facilitate this process by collaborating with the following institutions:

- Illinois State University;
- The Golden Apple Foundation;
- Truman College; and
- In addition, a goal of the PARTNER Project will work with LVDCD to identify other sources of scholarships for students.

**\* Assessment:** This Work Team will focus on the relationship of teacher quality to improved student learning. This will supplement the teacher evaluation strategies utilized throughout the district. The information from the assessment of teachers and preservice teacher candidates will be utilized in the redesign of teacher education programs and teacher induction activities at the university level. The Work Team will facilitate this process by:

- Creating measurement tools to collect and analyze data;
- Utilize state mandated assessment instruments;
- Work with and evaluate preservice teacher candidates; and
- Making data-driven decisions to improve student learning.

**\* Project Evaluation:** This Work Team will be comprised of an internal group of individuals who will objectively measure the outcomes associated with the overarching program goals.

