

**California State University San Marcos  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

Distinguished Teacher in Residence Program  
Assigned Time Grant Proposal submitted for AY 2011-12

**COVER SHEET**  
**(Submit with Proposal)**

Title of Grant Proposal: *An Action Plan for Supporting Continuous School Improvement, Through Collaboration on Student Learning and Best Practice, Professional Collegiality, and the Promotion of School Climate*

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Involved Faculty: Mark Baldwin

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Partnering District(s): Solana Beach School District

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Number of units requested: 6

**SIGNATURE(S):**



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CSUSM Faculty Member

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CSUSM Faculty Member


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CSUSM Faculty Member

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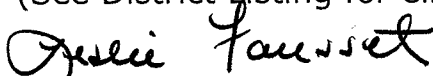
CSUSM Faculty Member

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PROPOSAL SUBMISSION:**



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DTiR Consortium District Representative  
(See District Listing for eligible signatures)



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**Checklist  
(Submit with Proposal)**

Objectives are clearly stated and appropriate	yes
Procedures are clearly stated and achievable	yes
Clear explanation of how involved parties will benefit from the proposed assigned time in accordance with the COE mission statement	yes
Timeline demonstrates a match between units requested and depth of work proposed	yes
Clear description of an evaluation process that is likely to yield useful information about the project's effectiveness	yes
Letters of support from teachers and/or administrators	yes
If this is a continuing project, is there a clear explanation of why this grant should be refunded?	yes

DTiR grant for 10-11?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, is interim or final report attached?	<input type="checkbox"/> Interim <input type="checkbox"/> Final
DTiR grant for 09-10?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, has final report been submitted to Donna Matanane?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Attached
This is a new project	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
This is a continuing project	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Signature of acknowledgment from district representative is included	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes

## **Solana Highlands Elementary School Proposed DTiR Grant**

*An Action Plan for Supporting Continuous School Improvement, Through Collaboration on Student Learning and Best Practice, Professional Collegiality, and the Promotion of School Climate*

### **BACKGROUND/CONTEXT**

Solana Highlands, an elementary school in the Solana Beach School District, is in the initial stages of implementing a multi-dimensional Site Strategic Action Plan based on the District's Strategic Plan. Several challenges to the implementation of the Action Plan have surfaced. These include the need to: 1) reestablish a strong school climate; 2) improve collaboration with a focus on student learning, professional best practice, and collegiality among faculty and staff as they work together within Professional Learning Communities; 3) strengthen communication both within and outside the school; and, 4) identify major gaps between instructional practice and the proposed strategic plan. The project connects to the CoE Mission Statement in the design's effort to transform public education, more specifically at Solana Highlands Elementary to create a strong community of learners focused on improving instructional practice with the goal of increasing student achievement.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The objectives listed below are designed to create the opportunity for Solana Highlands Elementary School to move forward on their Site Strategic Action Plan.

1. *School Climate.* Significant turnover in school leadership has created school climate challenges. The current principal has served four years; his tenure being longer than that of any principal for more than a decade. Reestablishing a strong school climate will be imperative to successfully implementing the strategic action plan.
2. *Collaboration/ Collegiality.* Currently, faculty and staff operate together successfully in 'pockets' of teams. Individual successes of their professional learning communities will need to be broadened to encompass all members of the school-wide community.
3. *Communication.* Currently, a strategy for communication both internally and externally has been developed. This strategy will need to be evaluated and strengthened in order to meet objectives 1 and 2.
4. *Strategic Plan.* Implementing the Site Strategic Action Plan and working together to meet the goals of the plan will assist the school community in assessing it's own progress on an ongoing basis and evaluate student learning once the plan is in place. In order to identify gaps between practice and the school's proposed strategic plan, each of the three previous objectives will need to be met to promote productive conversations regarding the successes and failures within the school without concern that either will reflect individually on a few.

### **PROCEDURES**

1. *Climate Survey:* The team involved in the project (principal, teachers, staff, CSUSM faculty member) will identify and conduct an established, valid and reliable school climate survey that will assess individual perceptions of the major issues surfacing within the school.
2. *Survey Analysis:* The faculty member from CSUSM will disaggregate and prepare a summary report for the principal and school staff .

3. Individual/Focus Group Interviews: The CSUSM faculty member will conduct individual interviews with each member of the school community based on initial findings from the survey. This individual approach will mitigate the reported issue that all voices are not being heard in important discussions. Focus groups, likely grade level teams, will be used to delve more deeply into issues identified in the survey and individual interviews.
4. District Office Interviews: The superintendent has recommended similar individual interviews be conducted with her cabinet to provide yet another perspective on the school's ongoing climate issues.
5. Implementation Plan: The School Team will use data collected to design a draft action plan, with specific objectives, timelines and benchmarks to address the issues noted above in Objectives 1 – 3. The plan will be shared with all members of the school community and feedback will be collected. The final plan will be crafted by the School Team and presented to the school staff.

**Note:** The model for the implementation plan is based on a successful design developed by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI). The IHI model focuses on rapid change by clearly identifying three features:

1. What is it the organization is trying to accomplish?
2. How will we know that a change is an improvement?
3. What changes can we make that will result in an improvement?

The change sequence follows a pattern of “Plan, Do, Study, Act (P/D/S/A)”, occurs on a shorter timeframe than typically utilized in large scale changes, and includes a continuous cycle of P/D/S/A.

6. Monitoring the Implementation Plan: The School Team will meet on a regular basis to evaluate progress of the implementation plan, determine adjustments as necessary, and report back to the school staff.
7. Solana Highlands’ DTiR Grant Action Plan: The primary goal of the project is to both successfully implement the previously identified procedures and ensure implementation of the Site 2011-2012 Strategic Action Plan (not yet finalized): <http://www.sbsd.k12.ca.us/District/Strategic/2010-11/SH/SHStrategicPlan.pdf>  
As with many action planning efforts, this will occur in parallel with Procedures 1-6. The implementation of curricular issues cannot be halted while other school issues are addressed. The CSUSM faculty member will work with the school's strategic planning team to assist in keeping both efforts moving forward at the same time.

## **TIMELINE**

August - October 2011:

Conduct:

- Climate Survey
- Individual Interviews (including District Office Personnel)
- Focus Groups
- Data Analysis
- Report Findings to School Community:

*(Over 50 individual interviews and 7 focus groups will provide input)*

October 2011:

- The School Team will design a draft implementation plan (School Climate Action Plan) that will align and coordinate with the school's Strategic Action Plan. The Climate Plan will include assessment strategies and benchmarks to monitor progress.

- The Climate Plan will be based on findings from data analyses and focus on addressing project objectives. The plan will include specific expectations and responsibilities for teachers, staff, and the leadership team.
- The School Team will present a draft of the plan to school staff and district office personnel. The School Team will revise and prepare for implementation based on feedback.

October – December 2011:

The School Climate Plan will be implemented. The school principal and CSUSM faculty member will take primary responsibility for monitoring the initial stages of the implementation, reporting findings to the School Team and collaborating with them on the “Study and Act” stages of the cycle on a regular basis. The model for implementation is based on a design developed by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, one of the leading organizations focused on implementing positive changes within an organization.

September – June 2011:

Implementation of the Solana Highlands’ Site Strategic Action Plan in parallel with the School Climate Plan. The CSUSM Faculty member act as an advisor to the principal and School Team to assist in monitoring the implementation of both plans.

### **EVALUATION**

Multiple data points will be evaluated throughout the year. Some are already established in the Solana Highlands Strategic Action Plan. Those focusing specifically on the stated objectives include:

- Triangulation of data focused on school climate issues
- Established benchmarks to assist in monitoring the School Climate Plan
- Established benchmarks to assist in monitoring the school’s Site Strategic Action Plan
- Post administration of the Climate Survey Instrument used as an assessment tool at the beginning of the year
- Exit interviews with the Principal, School Team, and District Office Personnel

Yearlong findings will create an opportunity to assess improvement in school climate, faculty collaboration, and communication. New plans will be developed based on findings.

### **BENEFITS to Solana Highlands Elementary and the College of Education**

1. The primary benefit of the DTiR ATG will be to students, faculty, staff and leadership of Solana Highlands Elementary School. Upon conclusion of the project, a set of expectations will be established for all school community members to maintain and support a strong school climate, inclusive of all members. This will promote increased opportunity for the school to accomplish goals in their multi-year action plan and better utilize professional development communities to meet stated goals. Solana Highlands could potentially model for the district new strategies for identifying issues, addressing them, and implementing clear evaluations to document progress in meeting stated goals.
2. The development of an action plan designed using the principles of the IHI model will be instructive to understanding organizational change processes. The CSUSM faculty member will study the organizational change process developed by IHI, be able to share findings with graduate students and faculty members with an interest in this area of study.
3. Hopefully, the grant will re-establish a tie with a DTiR partner that has not taken advantage of the grant process in over 7 years, thereby helping to sustain Solana Beach School District’s commitment to the program.

# Solana Highlands Elementary School

3520 Long Run Drive  
San Diego, CA 92130  
(858) 794-4300  
fax (858) 794-4350

**Principal**  
Jerry Jones



**Solana Beach School District**  
309 North Rios Avenue  
Solana Beach, CA 92075  
(858) 794-7100  
[www.sbsd.k12.ca.us](http://www.sbsd.k12.ca.us)

**School Board:**

Debra H. Schade Ph.D.  
Arthur M. Palkowitz Esq.  
Vicki F. King, Esq.  
Jeff Busby  
Richard Leib, Esq.

**Superintendent:**

Leslie Fausset

**Solana Beach Schools**

Carmel Creek  
Skyline  
Solana Highlands  
Solana Pacific  
Solana Santa Fe  
Solana Vista

March 28, 2011

To Whom It May Concern,

Having had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Mark Baldwin, and in helping to prepare the CSUSM Distinguished Teacher in Residence (DTiR) grant proposal, I am confident that this grant will greatly enhance our school's climate, professional collaboration and collegiality amongst staff, and serve as a catalyst to surface any major gaps between Solana Highlands instructional practices and our strategic plan.

Richard DuFour, in *Learning by Doing: A Handbook for Professional Communities at Work*, states that "Great schools row as one; they are quite clearly in the same boat, pulling in the same direction in unison." He goes on to say, "That the best schools are tightly aligned communities marked by a palpable sense of common purpose and shared identity among staff - a clear sense of we." This DTiR grant proposal, if accepted, will better equip our school staff to work toward common goals, create a dynamic learning environment, and enhanced implementation of our Strategic Plan.

I hope that this proposal is given strong consideration, in that I am confident that this proposal, under the guidance of Dr. Mark Baldwin, will give Solana Highlands the shared vision, direction, and tools needed to create a school where all students maximize their potential intellectually, physically, socially, and emotionally.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry Jones".

Jerry Jones  
Principal, Solana Highlands



solana beach school  
district

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Jeff Busby, *President*  
Vicki F. King, Esq., *Member*  
Richard H. Leib, Esq., *Vice President*  
Arthur M. Palkowitz, Esq., *Member*  
Debra H. Schade, Ph.D., *Clerk*

**SUPERINTENDENT**

Leslie Fausset

March 24, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to request consideration of our Distinguished Teacher in Residence Assigned Time Grant Proposal. I have read and thoroughly endorse the plan and goals that have been outlined in the proposal.

Solana Highlands is one of six schools in the Solana Beach School District. The school has experienced considerable leadership change throughout the last two decades, which has resulted in myriad of unanticipated consequences. At this time, the school staff, site leadership, and district leadership are eager to work together to create an open, healthy, and trusted learning environment committed to meeting the needs of all students.

We believe that the DTiR program will be enormously helpful to our work. The expertise you bring through support from Dr. Mark Baldwin, coupled with credible, external perspective and support, will greatly enhance and enrich our efforts.

Thank you for consideration of our project.

Sincerely,

Leslie Fausset  
Superintendent