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Adjusted Allocation | 0.00

Remaining | -896,425.57
Joseph Petrarca is currently Director of Student Services for the Summit and Medina County Educational Service Centers; he provides additional emphasis on transition to kindergarten and foundational skills related to literacy.

Carrie Spangler is employed at the University of Akron as the coordinator of the Hear and Learn program as an educational audiologist. She has fourteen years of experience in special education including classroom experiences and has developed district programs for students with special needs as a classroom teacher and director. Mrs. Longfellow has received and sustained a community based transition program for high school students in order to prepare students to be independent. Mrs. Longfellow has a successful track record of development, management, and sustainability of state and federal grants. Joseph Petrarca is currently Director of Student Services for the Summit and Medina County Educational Service Centers; he provides additional support to Portage County districts. His background in speech-language pathology and administration will provide expertise in programming and supervising the audiology lab and preschool listening and spoken language classroom. He has over 30 years of experience in developing and sustaining innovative programs for students with disabilities in the areas of assistive technology, autism, and transition programs. Dr. Carrie Spangler is employed at the University of Akron as the coordinator of the Hear and Learn program as an educational audiologist. She has 14 years of professional experience in developing and executing innovative and sustainable programs for children with hearing loss in the classroom. These projects include the development and startup of the SPEAK program (Stark Projective for Educating Audition in Kids); an integrated listening and spoken language preschool program. In addition, she has been involved in grant writing for Stark County's educational audiology lab equipment which services students in the Stark County schools. Carrie was a co-author of H&L50 which ensures all services are screened for hearing loss before leaving the hospital as well as a recent legislation to help children in need obtain hearing aids. Carrie has experience in transition support groups for students with hearing loss; while co-authoring a national advocacy program called GAP (Guide to Access Planning). In addition, her personal experience of growing up with a hearing loss helped with her community/academic success brings compassion and dedication to the success of implementing and sustaining this project.

Application

Field Local (049197) - Portage County - 2014 - Straight A Fund - Rev 0 - Straight A Fund - Application Number (133)

Applicants shall respond to the prompts or questions in the areas listed below in a narrative form.

A) APPLICANT INFORMATION - General Information, Experience and Capacity

1. Project Title: Project ACT: Audiology Center for Teaching

2. Executive Summary: Provide an executive summary of your project proposal and which goal(s) in question if you seek to achieve. Please limit your responses to no more than three sentences.

Project ACT (Audiology Center for Teaching) will provide the following goals: 1) an increase in student achievement closing the learning gap for students with hearing loss; 2) utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom by providing regional audiology labs for diagnostic and hearing assistive technology supports to students with identified and suspected hearing loss; 3) an implementation of a research and evidenced based listening and spoken language integrated special education preschool program, with an emphasis on transition to kindergarten and foundational skills related to literacy and the Third Grade Guarantee.

16416 3. Total Students Impacted:

4. Lead applicant primary contact: - Provide the following information:

First Name, Last Name of contact for lead applicant: Megan Longfellow
Organizational name of lead applicant: Field Local Schools
Unique Identifier (RN/Fed Tax ID): 049197
Address of lead applicant: 2900 State Route 43 Mogadore, Ohio 44260
Phone Number of lead applicant: 330-673-2659
Email Address of lead applicant: megan.longfellow@fieldlocalschools.org

5. Secondary applicant contact: - Provide the following information, if applicable:

First Name, Last Name of contact for secondary applicant: Joseph Petrarca
Organizational name of secondary applicant: Summit County Educational Service Center
Unique Identifier (RN/Fed Tax ID): 049565
Address of secondary applicant: 420 Washington Ave Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44221
Phone number of secondary applicant: 330-945-5600
Email address of secondary applicant: jpep@cybersummit.org

6. List all other participating entities by name: Provide the following information for each additional participating entity, if applicable: Mention First Name, Last Name, Organizational Name, Unique Identifier (RN/Fed Tax ID), Address, Phone Number, Email Address of Contact for All Secondary Applicants in the box below.

Roberta DePomper, Interim Dean, College of Health Professions The University of Akron School of Speech Language Pathology and Audiology, 2900 State Route 43 Mogadore, Ohio 44260
Email Address of additional applicant: rdepom1@uakron.edu

7. Partnership and consortia agreements and letters of support: - (Click on the link below to upload necessary documents).

* Letters of support are for districts of academic or fiscal distress. If school or district is in academic or fiscal distress and has a commission assigned, please include a resolution from the commission in support of the project.

* If a partnership or consortium will be established, please include the signed Straight A Description of Nature of Partnership or Description of Nature of Consortium Agreement.

UploadGrantApplicationAttachment.aspx

8. Please provide a brief description of the team or individuals responsible for the implementation of this project including relevant experience in other innovative projects. You should also include descriptions and experiences of partnering entities.

Megan Longfellow is the special education director at Field Local Schools. Mrs. Longfellow oversees the district special education programming and budget preschool through grade 12. She has fourteen years of experience in special education including classroom experiences and has developed district programs for students with special needs as a classroom teacher and director. Mrs. Longfellow has received and sustained a community based transition program for high school students in order to prepare students to be independent. Mrs. Longfellow has a successful track record of development, management, and sustainability of state and federal grants. Joseph Petrarca is currently Director of Student Services for the Summit and Medina County Educational Service Centers; he provides additional support to Portage County districts. His background in speech-language pathology and administration will provide expertise in programming and supervising the audiology lab and preschool listening and spoken language classroom. He has over 30 years of experience in developing and sustaining innovative programs for students with disabilities in the areas of assistive technology, autism, and transition programs. Dr. Carrie Spangler is employed at the University of Akron as the coordinator of the Hear and Learn program as an educational audiologist. She has 14 years of professional experience in developing and executing innovative and sustainable programs for children with hearing loss in the school setting. These projects include the development and startup of the SPEAK program (Stark Projective for Educating Audition in Kids); an integrated listening and spoken language preschool program. In addition, she has been involved in grant writing for Stark County's educational audiology lab equipment which services students in the Stark County schools. Carrie was a co-author of H&L50 which ensures all services are screened for hearing loss before leaving the hospital as well as a recent legislation to help children in need obtain hearing aids. Carrie has experience in transition support groups for students with hearing loss; while co-authoring a national advocacy program called GAP (Guide to Access Planning). In addition, her personal experience of growing up with a hearing loss helped with her community/academic success brings compassion and dedication to the success of implementing and sustaining this project.

B) PROJECT DESCRIPTION - Overall description of project and alignment with Outcomes

9. Which of the stated Straight A Fund goals does the proposal aim to achieve? - (Check all that apply)

[ ] Student achievement
[ ] Spending reductions in the five-year fiscal forecast
[ ] Utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom

10. Which of the following best describes the proposed project? - (Select one)

[ ] New - never before implemented
[ ] Existing and researched-based - never implemented in your district or community school but proven successful in other educational environments
[ ] Mixed Concept - incorporates new and existing elements
[ ] Enhancing/Scale Up - elevating or expanding an effective program that is already implemented in your district, school, or consortia partnership

11. Describe the innovative project.

Project ACT is an innovative project that utilizes a greater share of resources and improves student achievement through collaborative partnerships between local school districts, educational service centers, and higher education. ACT will provide centrally accessible audiology services as well as research based listening and spoken language preschool program that will prepare and educate children with hearing loss to fully participate across the educational lifespan. Problem: speaking and listening is one of the Common Core Standards that Ohio has adopted. Research indicates that children spend at least 60% of the day listening and learning in classrooms. Access to the curriculum includes being able to hear and participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about grade level topics and texts with peers and adults in small and large groups. In addition, literacy skills depend heavily on auditory skills. Children with hearing loss have subsequent language and other cognitive skills. Child development is positively influenced if "hearing" is emphasized and negatively affected if hearing is minimized. In addition, the public schools are experiencing an increase in the number of children with hearing loss. Today, 85-90% of parents of children born deaf or hard of hearing are choosing listening and spoken language for their child. In 1990 a study showed that approximately 60% of children with hearing loss used sign language. In 2012, only 10% of children with hearing loss used sign language. This demonstrates the increased need for educational audiology.
services to serve the 21st century learners with hearing loss who use hearing aids and cochlear implants to achieve student success in the classroom. The American Speech and Hearing Association shows that 14.9% of school children have some degree of hearing loss. Ohio, through the Common Core Standards, has taken positive steps in the forward thinking of the skills that students need to acquire to be productive members of conversations; thus integrating into our academic, college, and work settings. Ohio has a fortuitous component in Project ACT to provide innovative continuum of services for all students with auditory needs in the classroom as well as creating a “hub and spoke” model for replication in other Ohio public schools. The strength of Project ACT lies in the committed experience and expertise of the partnerships. Field Local Schools, Summit County ESC, and the University of Akron School of Speech Language Pathology and Audiology join shared resources in order to build, implement, sustain, and provide the framework for other Ohio districts and partnerships to replicate. The target of Project ACT is the development of Regional Educational Audiology Centers to support children with hearing impairment and those suspected of having a hearing loss across the educational lifespan. The funds requested will provide the necessary capital outlay to provide services which will include assessment, diagnosis, and consultation with districts and school personnel regarding classroom accommodations, auditory access for students with hearing aids, cochlear implants, and related assistive technology needs. Purchased services from the U of Akron's audiology professionals will ensure that the competencies for programming and testing are met; ensuring student achievement for students with or at risk for hearing loss. ACT will provide both onsite and telepractice models to school staff to reduce the cost of time and travel; all consortium school districts will have complete access to this facility which ensures a greater share of resources for the classroom.

Project ACT’s second component includes the implementation of an evidence based intensified Listening and Spoken Language Preschool program. Each child with hearing loss will be provided with the necessary academic and developmental intensive listening and spoken language skills required in order to successfully transition to kindergarten with their normal hearing peers. The timely intervention to preschoolers with hearing loss and their families will reduce the need for future special education and related services and/or self contained/residential programs for the deaf and hard of hearing, which are costly to school districts and taxpayers. The Field Local director has administrative experience in preschool curriculum as does the Summit County ESC’s director who will provide direct supervision of the program and staff. The partnership with the U of A and the national leadership they provide in this area of expertise further solidifies sustainability by providing support and experience in components necessary for a quality, listening and spoken language preschool. Project ACT’s third component of Educational Audiology Outreach to the classroom through onsite and teleaudiology promotes both student achievement and shared resources to many classrooms. Even though hearing loss affects 14.9% of school age students the cost of each school district hiring an IDEA 2004 mandated audiological professional is approximately $342,969.39. The!’s Univerity of Akron and Summit ESC audiology services models a collaborative approach to strategically invest the special education funds that are currently allocated for students who are deaf/hard of hearing to be affordable, replicable, scalable, accountable, and efficient. The activity of hiring educational audiological ensures that services provided (hearing assistive technology support and expertise) bridge the auditory access gap that many students with hearing loss and auditory needs encounter. This component is necessary for the Ohio Core College and Career Readiness. By Act 6, students need to be prepared for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

C) SUSTAINABILITY - Planning for ongoing funding of the project, cost breakdown

13. Financial Documentation - All applicants must enter or upload the following supporting information. Responses should refer to specific information in the financial documents when applicable:

- a. Enter a project budget
- b. Upload the Straight A Financial Impact Template forecasting the expected five-year forecast resulting from implementation of the project. If applying as a consortium or partnership, include the five-year forecasts of each school district, community school or STEM school member for review.
- c. If subsection (b) is not applicable, please explain why, in addition to how the project will demonstrate sustainability and impact.

14. What is the total cost for implementing the innovative project?

896,425.57 * Total project cost

* Provide a brief narrative explanation of the overall budget. The narrative should include the source and amount of other funds that may be used to support this concept (e.g., Title I funding, RTT money, local funding, foundation support, etc.), and provide details on the cost of items included in the budget (i.e. staff counts and salary/benefits, equipment to be purchased and cost, etc.).

The total cost of the project is $896,425.57. This includes salaries and benefits ($353,736.97) for two educational audiologists supporting the audiologist offices, preschool classroom, and districts, and an incumbent hearing loss education specialist (HLE; project coordinator) in the preschool classroom. Purchased services ($342,969.39) are requested to support facility renovations and retrofitting available space for the audiology labs and preschool classroom, as well as computerized audiological diagnostic equipment. A fiscal fee ($36,839.59) is applied to the total cost of the project for budget management to support Field Local Schools fiscal services. ($26,879.66) is included to support the Summit County Educational Service Center application and evaluation of this project.

15. What are the new/recurrent costs of your innovative project will continue once the grant has expired? If there are no new/recurrent costs, please explain why.

355,736.97 * Specific amount of new/recurrent cost (annual cost after project is implemented)

* Narrative/explanation/rationale: Provide details on the costs of items included in the budget (i.e. staff counts and salary/benefits, equipment to be purchased and cost, etc.). If there are no new/recurrent costs, please explain why.

The recurring costs of the project will be the salaries and benefits ($353,736.95) for the listening and spoken language preschool staff. It is expected that these costs will be covered by the tuition districts will charge for the new students this project attracts. The project also pays for the costs of the coordinators, the University of Akron. Tuition charged by the University of Akron. Tuition charged for support of the Director of the Educational Audiology Outreach (EDAO) position at $20,123.08. An additional annual fiscal fee ($36,839.59) is requested to support facility renovations and retrofitting existing space for the audiology labs and preschool classroom, as well as computerized audiological diagnostic equipment. A fiscal fee ($36,839.59) is applied to the total cost of the project for budget management to support Field Local Schools fiscal services. ($26,879.66) is included to support the Summit County Educational Service Center application and evaluation of this project.

16. Are there expected savings that may result from the implementation of the innovative project?

353,736.97 * Specific amount of expected savings (annual)

* Narrative/explanation/rationale: Provide details on the anticipated savings (i.e. staff counts and salary/benefits, equipment to be purchased and cost, etc.).

The savings realized by this project are the salaries and benefits for the specialized staff (audiologists, speech-language pathologist, intervention specialist, etc.). When factoring in the costs of the capital outlay and the initial purchase of the specialized equipment investment, actual savings approximate the total costs of the project ($896,425.57). Recently research has shown that approximately 90% of children are choosing listening and spoken language as the means of communication for their child who has a hearing loss. Many children and families with hearing losses have a history of education in the listening and spoken language preschool program and a continuum of educational audiology services there can be a savings in the salary of an interpreter. The average annual starting salary for full-time interpreters is approximately $23,000, with salaries ranging from $11,000 to $43,000. When looked at as an hourly rate, the average is $17.76, with a range of $10.34 to $30.55. Over the educational lifespan; this averages to a cost of $299,000, with a range of $143,000 to $559,000 per child with hearing loss. By providing an intensive Listening and Spoken Language Preschool Program vs specialized preschool services, will, over the educational lifespan of a child, reduce special education costs. Research shows that if children receive specialized instruction and related services (e.g., speech-language therapy) in an intensive listening and spoken language preschool program, their foundational skills in literacy are commensurate with their normal hearing peers by the time they transition to kindergarten. However, this project does not reduce expenditures for special education services. The project does, however, result in higher personnel costs to the district. By intervening early and giving students the foundation for literacy, they have the potential to defy odds of illiteracy and learning difficulties currently experienced by students with hearing loss. Project ACT hopes to defray the national statistics represented below which are costly over time when children with special needs are retained:

- 55% of children with unilateral hearing loss will experience continued academic difficulties through and up to 50% will require additional resource assistance in the guise of special education and related services. By the time these students enter high school 44% who have a profound hearing loss will drop out of school; 37% of students with unilateral hearing loss will fail a grade and another 30-55% of children with unilateral hearing loss will experience continued academic difficulties through and upon completion of high school. The school costs are enormous as these individuals, as adults, will require on-going taxpayer assistance. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, individuals with unmanaged hearing impairment at 19.5 years old can lose one conclusion there are other significant costs to society in the form of unemployment benefits paid to individuals. Unmanaged hearing loss is shown to have negative effect on nearly every dimension of the human experience, including: physical health, emotional and mental health, perceptions of mental acuity, social skills, family relationships, and self-esteem, not to mention work and school performance. Potential cost savings over the educational lifespan for an individual student may then be well over $1,000,000; indirect costs to society are incalculable.

17. Provide a brief explanation of how the project is self-sustaining. If there are ongoing costs associated with the project after the term of the grant, this explanation should provide details on the cost that will be made at that time to the equal amount of new/recurrent costs detailed above. If there are no new/recurrent costs, explain in detail how this project will sustain itself beyond the life of the grant.

Funding Briefed said Local Schools and Summit County Educational Service Center (ESC) have identified students within the region with hearing loss and that receive special education funding for tuition. State and tuition funding will be used to cover the cost of the Summit County Educational Service Center (ESC) have identified students within the region with hearing loss and that receive special education funding for tuition. State and tuition funding will be used to cover the cost of the next tier of services. The Ohio Core College and Career Readiness (CCC) identifies students who achieve the potential of high school degrees for their future goals. Students with managed hearing loss across the educational lifespan will experience barriers removed while providing the flexibility to maximize the classroom resources.
D) IMPLEMENTATION - Timeline, communication and contingency planning

18. Fill in the appropriate dates and an explanation of the timeline for the successful implementation of this project. In each explanation, be sure to briefly describe the largest barriers that could derail your concept or timeline for implementation and your plan to proactively mitigate such barriers. In addition, the narrative should list the stakeholders that will be engaged during that stage of the project and describe the communication that occurred as the application was developed.

Describe the ongoing communication plan with the stakeholders as the project is implemented. (Stakeholders can include parents, community leaders, foundation support and businesses, as well as educational personnel in the affected entities.)

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<th>* Proposal Timeline Dates</th>
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<td>Narrative explanation</td>
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January 2014 - Obtain funds from State A - Execution of a contract between Field Local Schools Board of Education, the Summit County Educational Service Center, and the University of Akron, - Focus group meetings weekly to facilitate implementation activities listed in this timeline - Purchase service contracts developed and signed by Field Local, Summit County ESC and The University of Akron - Building renovations begin for audiologist center and preschool classroom - Order Audiology Center equipment and schedule time after renovations complete to install - Intervention Specialist, Teacher Assistant, Speech Language Pathologist, Educational Audiologist job postings and search - Conduct a survey of current knowledge base needs of educators, speech pathologists, and other professionals working with deaf and hard of hearing students for Professional Development planning February 2014 - Information meeting for parents of children with hearing loss - Presentation to school personnel re: services (building level with select groups including school psychologist, speech-language pathologists, special education directors) - Classroom renovations to begin - Monthly focus group meeting March 2014 - Audiology center installation begins - Educational Audiologist interviews and hiring - Intervention Specialist and Teacher Assistant interview - Speech Language Pathologist Interview - First Professional Development Module offered through purchased services of the University of Akron - Monthly focus meeting April 2014 - Audiology Center open for assessments and appointments - Preschool classroom set up (materials and equipment ordered) - Teleaudiology lab open for district support - Educational Audiology services provided to consortium - Monthly focus meeting - Monthly Professional Development webinar May 2014 - Monthly Focus Meeting - Enrollment open for Preschool classroom for Fall - Screening of tuition based early childhood program for audiology services - Preschool classroom set up (materials and equipment ordered) - Audiology Center open for services - and community members - Monthly Professional Development seminar/webinar June 2014 - Monthly focus meeting - Professional Development Learning seminar/webinar July 2014 - Administrative duties for upcoming year August 2014 - Preschool classroom open - Educational Outreach Services fully implemented - Professional Development Learning seminar/webinar - The largest barrier to the timeline are schedules of the focus group participants; assurances will be obtained once the grant is secured by the members of the group to commit to monthly meetings to monitor progress and timelines.

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As per the timeline above, the Project will conduct monthly focus group meetings with stakeholders, purchase needed materials and supplies, begin (and by the end of June) have completed the renovation and retrofitting of approved space in each facility for the audiology labs and preschool classroom; begin the process of strategic interviewing of staff (screening of candidates, interviews, and final selection of candidates); and by the end of summer 2014 have all of the projects in place and operational.

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Although, the focus group and stakeholders will continue to meet beyond the grant timeline to ensure sustainability and success of Project ACT, the summative evaluation will occur upon completion of all aspects of the Audiology labs and preschool classroom.

* Describe the expected changes to the instructional and/or organizational practices in your project.

* Implementation of Project ACT will: - Improve management of hearing loss by promoting strategies that are effective in the classroom and increasing literacy which is critical to educational success - Provide specialized services for preschools with hearing loss supporting successful transition into kindergarten - Assist in the monitoring of hearing acuity across the educational lifespan - Minimize delays in unmasked hearing loss that leads to educational difficulties through shared resources of the Audiology center - Decrease the need for specialized services (self-contained classroom/resource room/speech and language services) and increase the services provided in the general education classroom - Decrease in the overall cost of special education and related services for children with hearing loss - Improve overall academic achievement measured by the project’s achievement and graduation tests.
Learning: children with hearing loss have the potential to contribute to our community and state of Ohio with college and career readiness skills. The listening and spoken language special education preschool addresses the foundational listening, speech, language, and literacy needs for children with hearing loss. Data currently indicates that children who are deaf and hard of hearing read at a third grade reading level. Ohio’s report cards and school districts cannot afford to continue to replicate this statistic. Unmanaged hearing loss in children can result in a high cost to society. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, individuals with unmanaged hearing loss had an unemployment rate of 15.6%; thus one can conclude there is an additional cost to society in the form of unemployment benefits paid to individuals. Hearing and listening is critical to effective communication in the workplace. Most jobs require proficiency in spoken communication in order to engage effectively in commerce and in dealing with the public. At the beginning of the 21st decade of this new century, children with hearing loss have more opportunities than ever before to use audition and acquire age-appropriate spoken language. Likewise, these same children have the chance to be mainstreamed in local schools and achieve literacy levels previously thought to be out of reach. Project ACT aims to give every child with hearing loss or suspected hearing loss served access to a high quality education, by removing communication barriers and addressing their unique hearing and listening needs. This is essential to give children with hearing loss an opportunity to achieve the third grade reading guarantee, close the achievement gap, and prepare them for successful careers.

24. What are the specific benchmarks related to the fund goals identified in question 9 that the project aims to achieve in five years? Include any other anticipated outcomes of the project that you hope to achieve that may not be easily benchmarked.

Student achievement and a utilization of a greater share of resources is the aim of Project ACT. Children served in the Listening and Spoken Language Preschool program will transition successfully to kindergarten and be served in the least restrictive environment in the general education classroom. Additionally, children in the region served by the audiology centers will have a timely and accurate diagnosis of hearing impairment; those children with hearing loss who need assistive technology will be appropriately identified and served. Ongoing support from the University of Akron will provide districts, students and their families the necessary resources and professional development necessary to meet the learning and specialized instructional needs of children with hearing loss. The project will benchmark against the success of SPEAK by monitoring the number of children referred to the audiology labs and those children determined to have a hearing loss; number of professional development activities provided to districts and specific teams by the educational audiologists; the number of children served in the Listening and Spoken Language classroom and the number of children able to be served in the general education classroom in kindergarten. Additionally, improved results on Ohio’s achievement and graduation tests will be evaluated on a yearly basis to aid in the determination of successful student achievement.

25. Describe the plan to evaluate the impact of the concept, strategy or approaches used.

* Include the method, process and/or procedure by which the program will modify or change the program plan if measured progress is insufficient to meet program objectives.

Along with the monthly focus group meetings, which will monitor the benchmarks and timelines established by this proposal a survey will be developed with assistance from the University of Akron to measure the success of each child transitioning to kindergarten; parents and teachers will be the recipients of the survey which will examine children's literacy, spoken language, listening ability and academic readiness. The survey will be conducted three times in the school year: beginning of the year; mid year; and at the end of the school year. Analysis of each child's spoken language skills will be conducted when children transition to kindergarten measured against their baseline data when enrolled in the Listening and Spoken Language preschool classroom. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the Audiology Lab and Outreach Services; the audiologists will track the number of students referred to the audiology center who pass and do not pass the hearing assessment. This data will also be compared to the national statistics identified earlier to monitor progress. Identified children with hearing loss will receive outreach services through onsite and telepractice models to ensure auditory access to classroom instruction. This will be measured through audiological functional assessments (Functional Listening Evaluation) and teacher questionnaires specifically designed to measure classroom auditory participation. Participating districts in the Project will receive yearly satisfaction surveys.