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Program Abstract

San Marcos High School (SMHS) with a student population of 1,890 is the only high school serving San Marcos Consolidated Independent School District (SMCISD), a 212 square mile district lying midway between Austin and San Antonio, Texas. Over 50% of the district's students are economically disadvantaged, and 65% are minority, primarily Hispanics of Mexican descent. SMHS student alienation and apathy is manifest through low attendance, high dropout rates, high failure rates, and unacceptable performance gaps between student groups. This proposed project will serve approximately 1,300 students in three small learning communities at SMHS: the Ninth Grade Center (NGC), an Academy for Visual and Performing Arts, and an Academy for Math, Science and Technology. The identified problems will be addressed through a number of strategies intended to provide additional academic support and career awareness activities for students, and professional development and extended planning time for teachers. A Teacher Advisory Program (TAP) will support success of all students in SMHS. Each teacher will be assigned 15-16 students to meet with daily, for a 35-minute period. This system will ensure that all students will have at least one caring adult who will be responsible for supervising their attendance, monitoring their social and academic progress, advising them about career decisions, and helping them obtain needed support throughout their high school careers.

Funds will be used at the NGC to improve professional development of teachers and provide academic support to all ninth graders. Funds also will be used to create the two Academies and provide the technical assistance and professional development needed to adopt a plan developed two years ago by a 57-member school/community task force. This plan was approved, but not funded due to a lack of resources, by the SMCISD Board of Trustees in 1999. This proposal incorporates district resources, private funding, and university support. However, without federal assistance, the likelihood of success is low. We have planned the use of funds requested to maximize delivery of services to students and professional development for teachers. Finally, SMCISD staff are confident they can achieve the goals identified in this proposal with the resources made available through this grant.

SAN MARCOS HIGH SCHOOL
A PROPOSAL FOR SMALLER LEARNING COMMUNITIES

A. NEED FOR THE PROJECT

Data collected at San Marcos High School (SMHS) portrays a dismal portrait of widespread student disengagement, alienation and failure. Absenteeism is extraordinarily high. The dropout rate is double the state average. Academic performance gaps between the economically disadvantaged, Hispanic, and White students are disheartening. SMHS failure rates are unacceptable, i.e., 55% of ninth graders, 50% of tenth graders, 30% of eleventh graders and 16% of twelfth graders failed at least one course last year. In this setting, many teachers report they are overwhelmed. Contributing to the problem is a lack of long-term leadership at the high school. In the past five years there have been three principals. In addition, drug-use surveys at feeder schools show that incoming students are using alcohol and other drugs at levels higher than state averages (in some cases twice as high) for every substance investigated. Further, detentions in juvenile facilities in Hays County have tripled in the past decade.

While the description above and the data that follows paint a grim picture, there are strengths not demonstrated through these numbers. First, the local business community in San Marcos is eager to support improvement efforts at the high school. Second, Southwest Texas State University (SWT), a university of 22,000 students, is located in our community. SWT graduates more teachers than any other institution in the state, has faculty who are very interested in the small school concept, and have agreed to assist in its evaluation. In fact, two deans and faculty from eight different departments were involved in developing the plan presented in this proposal, and are eager to help implement the project. Third, there is a core group of experienced high school teachers at SMHS who have *not* given up, who have a strong vision of the proposed project, and who believe that virtually *all* SMHS students can succeed with the help that will be provided by this project. Fourth, outside consultants with extensive experience in implementing this type of program have agreed to help SMHS execute this proposal. The following data provide more detailed information about the need.

October '99 attendance data

In 1999-2000, SMHS had 1,884 students enrolled and an average daily attendance of 1,689. This means that on an average day, 10.3% of the students were absent. Equally distressing was the fact that 8% of the SMHS population were identified as “chronic absentees” that year.¹

Drop-out and attrition rates

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) reports the SMHS annual dropout rate to be almost double the state average (2.9% vs. 1.6%)². A new measure provided by T.E.A., the “actual longitudinal 6-year dropout rate” has been reported for the class of 1998; this measure was 18.4% for SMCISD, again with disparities between student subgroups (18.9% African American, 25.4% Hispanic, 5.7% White, and 26.8% Economically Disadvantaged). In SMCISD, the cohort Class of 2000, as eighth graders, numbered 501. In spite of the fact that San Marcos is growing rather rapidly, SMHS graduated only 343 students in 2000. This represents an attrition rate of 31.5%.

Incidence of violence

SMHS has not experienced gun violence, although there were numerous bomb threats made in the past year, some resulting in the evacuation of all buildings, and many hours of lost instructional time. Thirty-six students had “disruptive behavior” of sufficient concern to merit suspension for three days out of school, or placement in an alternative education setting. Four students were charged with felonies, three were found with weapons, four were charged with assault and one with retaliation against a teacher.

Drug and alcohol use

There were 57 documented incidents of tobacco, alcohol or drug possession at school. These included 25 tobacco, 25 marijuana, 6 alcohol, and 1 inhalant. Drug-use surveys at feeder schools have shown student drug use higher than state averages for every substance investigated.

Disciplinary actions

The most prevalent reason for disciplinary action was violation of student code of conduct (1,827 incidents), followed by disruptive behavior (283 incidents) and tobacco, alcohol and other drug use. In-school suspension (2,103 incidents) was by far the most frequently used disciplinary

¹ “Chronic absenteeism” is defined in the March 2000 report, *Career Academies: Impacts on Students' Engagement and Performance in High School*, as students who have an attendance rate of 85% or lower.

² T.E.A. AEIS Report, Baseline Attachment I, Appendix I.

action, followed by placement in an off-campus alternative education setting (114 incidents), and three-day out-of-school suspensions (110 incidents).

Percentages of students who pass graduation exams or local assessments

In Texas, an exit level Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) is given in 10th grade. This is a minimum skills test. Students who do not pass are allowed to re-take the exam in subsequent years, but must pass in order to graduate. In the academic year 1999-2000, an established pattern of differences in performance between student subgroups continued. As shown in Table 1, the greatest difference was a 24-point disparity between math scores of White and economically

Table 1

SMHS % Passing Year 2000 Exit-Level TAAS			
Student Group	Reading	Math	Writing
Eco Disad	71	65	80
White	94	89	92
Hispanic	76	65	79
Afri. Am.	71	48	88

Table 2

% Passing All TAAS Exit-Level Tests Taken (math, reading, writing)			
Student Group	2000	1999	1998
Ec Disad	56 (n=110)	53 (n=119)	55 (n=108)
White	86 (n=150)	81 (n=147)	86 (n=130)
Hispanic	58 (n=246)	57 (n=232)	53 (n=130)
Af. Am.	48 (n=24)	60 (n=24)	53 (n=15)

Disadvantaged students and between White and Hispanic students. As Table 2 demonstrates, the percent of students passing and the performance gaps have changed little over the past three years. State mandated end-of course exams in Algebra I and Biology have been required since 1998, and English II and American History were added in 1999. The percent testing and passing are reported in Table 3. Not included in the table are the most recently released scores, for students taking the test at the end of the 1999-2000 academic year. Data received from the state reveal that only 14 of 320 students (5%) who took the end-of-course Algebra I Exam passed it this last year. Disaggregated data are not yet available. A possible explanation for this very low passing rate is that teachers are using the Algebra I course to help prepare students for the 10th grade, exit level TAAS math (which does not include algebra). There is great emphasis on TAAS passing rates, because schools are rated by the state according to passing rates. The fact that passing scores were much higher in courses with no TAAS component (75% for Biology, and 79% for History) would support this conjecture. At any rate, this low pass rate for Algebra is obviously cause for concern.

Table 3

End-of-Course Exams	State		SMHS		African American		Hispanic		White		Econom. Disadvan	
	'98	'99	'98	'99	'98	'99	'98	'99	'98	'99	'98	'99
End of Course Alg I												
% Taking	17.4	18.0	23.8	16.8	28.9	16.8	29.8	20.3	13.8	11.5	24.5	22.0
% Passing	35.9	43.4	5.4	18.9	0.0	5.9	4.4	17.4	9.3	26.8	6.0	8.5
End of Course Biology												
% Taking	23.9	24.2	37.2	25.5	45.6	27.7	39.3	25.4	30.3	25.0	36.5	26.9
% Passing	76.4	76.4	67.3	66.1	63.4	64.3	58.9	54.8	84.6	84.5	58.5	43.1
End of Course Eng II												
% Taking		21.4		21.5		23.8		19.2		23.5		18.5
% Passing		72.7		64.0		58.3		54.6		76.7		52.5
End of Course US Hist												
% Taking		18.9		18.6		15.8		17.7		20.3		17.7
% Passing		69.8		81.7		75.0		72.4		95.2		70.5

Enrollment in advanced level courses

At SMHS, 18.8% of students are enrolled in advanced level courses (12.2% of the African American population, 11.5% Hispanic, and 31.1% White). Classes for dual (college and high school) credit were taken by 150 students (1 astronomy, 97 integrated physics and chemistry, 42 English IV, and 10 special education).

Percentage of students taking college entrance exams:

In 1998-1999, 168 students, or about half the number of graduates took the SAT exam. Verbal SAT scores: Hispanic verbal 441 vs. White 504. Math SAT scores: Hispanic Math 450 vs. White 511. According to the Department of Education, the national 1999 averages on SAT for Hispanics were: verbal 457; math 458.

Percentage of LEP and/or migrant

Last year there were 85 students (4.8%) attending SMHS with limited English proficiency. This percentage belies the impoverished language environments from which many of these students come. Parents often deny speaking Spanish in the home, although that is their primary language. In years past, students were not only discouraged, they were *punished* for speaking Spanish at SMCISD. Many of those students are now parents and grandparents, who after surviving those abuses themselves, believe it would be a detriment to their children to admit speaking Spanish at home. According to TEA, the mobility rate for students at SMHS is 21.3%

Low-income or otherwise disadvantaged

Only 30% of the SMHS students identify themselves as qualifying for free and reduced price lunch, but it is clear that many who would qualify for this program fail to apply to avoid the stigma attached to such designation. SMHS is the only high school in the community, and the percentage of economically disadvantaged students range from 49%-67% in grades K-8. Thus, economic factors lead many SMHS students to look for work to help support their families. As the unemployment rate is very low and our area is growing, teenagers who want to work have little trouble finding a job. Those who work typically try to handle the demands of a job and school as well. But, many eventually give up school for the immediate paycheck. Another problem faced by SMHS is teen pregnancy. Last year alone over 80 SMHS students became mothers, and almost as many became fathers. In addition, evidence provided by Hays County Literacy Action indicates that 45% of our *adult* population functions at levels that imply they failed to completed high school or obtain their GED. Thus, many parents are themselves in need of educational services, and not prepared to assist their children with high school level homework.

Other local need factors

In the 1996-97 school year, a school improvement review noted that the ninth grade class was swollen by student retentions. That is, there were 663 students in ninth grade that year, compared to 501 who had been in the eighth grade the year before. A school-community cadre initiated by the superintendent developed a plan for a Ninth Grade Center (NGC) that would house all *first-year* freshmen in a separate building, with it's own principal, staff, and counselors. This change resulted in marked reduction in failure rates for the first two years. Unfortunately, this success was short-lived. In the third year of operation (1999-2000), failure rates were higher than their original levels. This has been attributed to a lack of teacher training in the smaller learning communities concept, the numerous leadership changes that occurred at the high school and to high staff turnover at the NGC. In short, the culture at the NGC became a smaller version of "big" school culture with each teacher operating independently. A search is underway for new leadership for the NGC.

Applicant's fiscal capacity to fund programs described here without Federal assistance

The proposal for implementation of an Academy for Math, Science and Technology and an Academy for Visual and Performing Arts was approved by the Board of Trustees in Fall 1999, but not funded, due to a low fund balance. A failed bond proposal in 1999 has put further stress on the budget, and we face a roll-back election in late August of this year. Because the Academies Plan has such strong Board support, even in this time of fiscal constraint, funds have been allocated for an Academy Director (one position only) and for equipping a CAD (Computer-aided Drafting) lab. However, recent discouraging outcomes at the NGC make it clear that professional development, technical assistance, and structured time for staff to re-create their community, will be essential to ensure the future success of the NGC as well as the proposed Academies and the Teacher Advisory Program.

B. FOUNDATION FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Substantive stakeholder involvement

A school/community commission was convened to address issues of concern at SMHS in 1997. This commission, which became known as the "Academies Cadre," spent two years doing research, sharing their findings in public meetings, discussing options, visiting other career academies, and finally writing, and revising a plan³ for presentation to the Board of Trustees. The proposal for an *Academy for Math, Science and Technology* and an *Academy for Visual and Performing Arts*, which was approved by the Board of Trustees in Fall 1999, was the result of painstaking work of 55 volunteers (22 teachers, 3 administrators and central office staff, 4 SWT faculty, and 26 local employers, parents and students). Invitations to reconvene separate cadres for 2000-2001 have been issued; these three cadres will become a part of the management plan for the two career academies and the NGC. The SMHS Campus Improvement Team (which also includes teachers, administrators, parents and other community representatives) will assist in the implementation of the teacher advisory program.

Research-based findings and outside technical assistance

In March 2000, Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) issued a report on

³ See List of Cadre members, and Academy Proposal to Board in Appendix III.

Career Academies describing interim outcomes of research that began in 1993. The MDRC findings are very validating to the plans developed by the local Academies Cadres! In particular, MDRC investigations found the following.

- 1) *Career Academies substantially improved outcomes among students at high risk of dropping out. That is, Academies reduced drop-out rates, improved attendance, increased academic course-taking, and increased the likelihood of earning enough credits to graduate on time.* These are all issues of great importance to SMCISD, and will be addressed by this project. The effects of the proposed project on these outcomes at SMHS will be evaluated by SWT. (Also see “Needs” in Section A and “Goals” in Section C)
- 2) *When Academies produced particularly dramatic enhancements in the interpersonal support that students received from teachers and peers, they reduced dropout rates and improved school engagement for both high- and medium-risk students.* This proposal includes four elements that should enhance interpersonal support that students receive from their peers and teachers. First, the reduced class size alone should improve interpersonal relationships among students and teachers. Second, the common interests that teachers and students will share should improve bonding among teachers and students. Third, “Master Leaders” who have been trained at the DANA Center at the University of Texas, will provide professional development for math and science teachers involved in this project. The DANA Center focuses on helping teachers improve interpersonal relationships with their students, and stresses the importance of establishing a culture of peer cooperation and mutual support. Fourth, this proposal includes provisions for a “Teacher Advisory Program.” Class schedules have already been modified to allow for thirty-five minute periods each day. Teachers will be assigned 15 to 16 students each. This system will ensure that all students attending SMHS will have a portfolio-style individual education plan, and have at least one caring adult who will be responsible for monitoring their social and academic progress and helping them obtain the support they need throughout their high school careers. Funds are requested to provide training for the teachers in how to develop portfolio-style individualized educational plans, and in how to teach students organizational and study skills. Staff from Newman Smith High School in

Carrollton, Texas, which has been recognized for its exemplary “Career Advisory Program,” is providing technical assistance for this aspect of the project.

- 3) *MDRC’s policy recommendations include that Career Academies should serve a heterogeneous population, with a suggestion that “the pervasive positive impacts for students at high risk of dropping out may derive, in part, from exposure to a highly engaged peer group.”* Students in SMHS academies will represent a heterogeneous population ethnically, economically, and educationally, as no measure of merit will be used for placement in the academy, and substantial before and after-school academic support will be provided for students who need help to achieve high academic standards.
- 4) *MDRC’s findings indicated that if Career Academies do not complement their programs with strong interpersonal and academic supports, they risk reducing school engagement for some students.* The proposed project includes professional development for teachers and strategies to provide students with needed support. Extended-duty pay will allow teachers to work before and after school to provide additional academic support to those students who need it. Graduate students from SWT will also be paid to provide the same kind of support. Hispanic college students will be hired whenever possible to serve as role models for the many Hispanic SMHS students and encourage them to consider post-secondary education.
- 5) *Finally, MDRC data suggests that if academies are to improve academic achievement as measured by most standardized tests currently in use, promising approaches may involve aligning curricula with high standards and providing teachers with the incentives and capacity to deliver on such standards.* This proposal will give teachers the freedom to develop interdisciplinary curricula, aligned with high standards, and relevant to their specific emphases. Teachers in each of the three SMHS smaller learning communities will be given time and structured opportunities each year to reflect on their professional practices, analyze the strategies and results of the previous year’s work, and set goals for the coming year. Teachers will be paid stipends to provide the additional support that will be necessary for many of their students to achieve high academic standards, and will be given control over how to use their SMCISD professional development budget to their best advantage.

C. FEASIBILITY AND SOUNDNESS OF THE PLAN

The vision statement developed by the Academies Cadre (composed of teachers, students, administrators, employers, and parents) states:

“San Marcos High School will provide, through the development of the academy concept, a richer learning environment which is responsive to the needs and interests of students as individual learners. Students will have a clear understanding of how various disciplines relate to each other, and perhaps more importantly, how high school studies are relevant to their futures. This will increase the significance of their daily studies. In addition, they will have more opportunities to intensify their experience – and increase both academic and career skills – in activities relevant to their passion (area of specialization). Under these conditions, students will become increasingly dedicated students. Teachers creating this environment will experience increased gratification from student successes, leading to a cycle of optimism and achievement for both students and staff.”

The goals and objectives of this proposal attempt to honor this community developed vision while creating tangible measures to monitor progress in this endeavor.

Project Goals

- I. To improve practices and policies at the Ninth Grade Center so that all ninth grade students (700 in yr 1) have a solid foundation in core academics, study skills, and the development of individual academic goals for success during high school.
- II. To ensure through the development of a teacher advisory system that all students attending SMHS have at least one caring adult responsible for monitoring their social and academic progress throughout their high school career, developing a portfolio-style individual education plan and making referrals for additional support when appropriate.
- III. To improve student academic success and engagement in the learning process through the development of two career academies: The Academy for Visual and Performing Arts, and the Academy for Math, Science and Technology.

Project Objectives (Outcomes) and Methods

Objective IA. Reduce the failure rate of the 545 *incoming* freshmen class from 55% to 38.5% (a 30% reduction) at the end of the first year, to 30.8% (an additional 20% reduction) by the end of year 2, and to 24.6% (an additional 20% reduction) by the end of year three. Methods: 1) Provide before and after school and weekend academic support by teachers and graduate students. 2) Focus on creating study groups for peer support. 3) Monitor student performance on learning benchmarks at three-week intervals; prescribe interventions as appropriate.

Objective IB. Improve the end-of-course-exam passing rate for Algebra I students by 200% by the end of the first year (5% passing to 20% passing) and by an additional 100% in year 2 and by 75% in year 3 (40% passing in year 2 and 72% passing in year 3). Methods: 1) Provide professional development through consultants trained by the Charles A. Dana Center, University of Texas at Austin, “TEXTEAMS” (Texas Teachers Empowered for Achievement in Mathematics and Science). 2) Create a sense of urgency for Algebra education in the community, making clear that resources are available for additional academic support for struggling students, and publicizing the link of success in Algebra to future academic success.

Objective IC. Reduce the number of disciplinary actions by 20% year one, 30% by year two, and by 40% year three. Methods: 1) Provide extensive professional development for teachers in how to design and implement integrated, interdisciplinary, thematic teaching units for mastery learning, so that school is more relevant, motivating, and engaging to students. This will be provided through training by Dr. Roger Taylor, and from online resources available by becoming registered to use units from “Curriculum Design for Excellence Online.” 2) Provide teacher training in how to develop a culture of peer support through peer study groups. This training is a component of the Math Institutes provided by Dana Center, University of Texas at Austin. 3) Schedule classes so that teachers teach 5 of 7 classes, with one period scheduled as common planning time, so teachers across disciplines can meet, discuss and address student concerns, including emerging

discipline issues, on no less than a weekly basis.

Objective IIA. Improve school bonding, as demonstrated in the attendance rate of all 1,890 high school students, specifically by decreasing absenteeism from 10% in 2000 to 8% in 2001, 7% in 2002 and 2003. *Methods:* 1) Each student will meet for 35 minutes each day in an advisory period; advisors will immediately follow up on absences by contacting parents to check on wellbeing and attendance status of student. 2) Provide training for all teachers on the effective use of the teacher advisory period. Outside technical assistance will be contracted to provide the training. Newman Smith High School in Carrollton, Texas has a recognized advisory program which we would like to replicate with possible modifications for our population and needs.⁴ 3) Provide all students with planners (Preimer Agendas, a Franklin Covey publication) and training in time management, study skills, and goal setting, for use during the advisory time.

Objective IIIA. Recruit a minimum of 600 students grades 10-12 (300 in each academy) by the beginning of year 3, with targets of 200 for each academy in year 2 and 150 in each, mid-year of year 1. *Methods:* 1) Ensure recruitment messages emphasize that academies can better prepare students for higher education (four or two year colleges, conservatories) and for movement into careers (such as through CISCO or CAD training, or in the performing arts). Students and parents must be aware that additional academic assistance is available for those who need it to. 2) The director of the academies will visit civic and service organizations, and other public meetings to inform the community about the goals of the academies. 3) Presentations will be made to all ninth grade students about the benefits of attending the academies, and the additional academic support available for those who may need it to meet higher standards.

Objective IIIB. Academic success will improve as demonstrated through: Exit level TAAS passing rate improving by 10% each successive year of the project; by improvement in student GPA's; by SAT scores improving by 10% each successive year of the project; and by increasing

⁴ Because of ongoing summer construction (and no telephones) at Newman Smith High School, we have not secured their commitment to provide this consulting service. If they decline, we would contract with another successful program to assist in development of the advisory component of this plan.

numbers of students taking and passing advanced level courses. *Methods:* Methods will focus on three areas, improving teaching, providing additional academic support for students who need it, and providing multiple career awareness activities to help inspire and motivate students, and help them see the relevance of their studies. Professional development will focus heavily on the weakest area, which is math, and on the development of an integrated curriculum. Activities involved in use of these methods will include: 1) Math teachers will attend Math Institutes provided by Dana Center, University of Texas at Austin. These will include 5 days each on Algebra I, Algebra II/Pre-calculus, and Geometry. In attending these institutes, teachers will extend their own mathematical knowledge and understanding as well as learning new content and new ways of conceptualizing the content they already know. 2) Provide extensive professional development for teachers in how to design and implement integrated, interdisciplinary, thematic teaching units for mastery learning, so that school is more relevant and motivating to students. This will be provided through training by Dr. Roger Taylor, and by becoming registered to use units from “Curriculum Design for Excellence Online.” 3) In year one, which will begin mid term, or January 2001, schedule classes so that teachers teach 5 of 7 classes, with one period scheduled as common planning time, so teachers across disciplines can meet, discuss and address student concerns, including emerging discipline issues, on a regular basis. In years two and three, the academies will go to block scheduling, but still ensure teachers’ common planning time.

Strategies to enable all students to reach challenging State content and performance standards, ensuring the successful completion of high school and preparation for college or a career

All the strategies included in this proposal are intended to enable all students achieve these goals so that they can do well on college entrance exams, and/or embark on a challenging, well-paying career. These strategies are briefly reviewed on the following pages.

- **The Teacher Advisory System** will benefit all SMHS students (Academy and Non-Academy) by helping them articulate their goals, teaching them time management, organizational skills,

and giving them other necessary skills to reach their goals. Teachers will be responsible for contacting parents or guardians of their 15 student-advisees any time they are absent, and will serve as an advocate for them when they referrals to tutoring, counseling or community resources, peer mediation or conflict resolution, or in-school support groups.

- **The Ninth Grade Center (NGC)** teachers will be given professional development in the teaming approach, so that they can effectively use their common planning time to address emerging student concerns, both academic and social. They will be given time to participate in setting goals and methods for improvement in the performance of their students, thus giving them more “ownership” of the outcomes. The resulting outcomes in improved attendance, reduced failure rates, and greater academic success at the ninth grade level will create a foundation of success for students in the next three years of their high school experience.
- **Professional Development in Weakest Performance Area.** Math is clearly a problem for many SMHS students. When only 14 of 320 students pass an end of course exam in Algebra I, the fault cannot be placed on the students. Professional development will be provided to all math teachers in this project by expert staff from the Dana Center. The DANA Center recommends not only changing instructional techniques and stressing the development of peer study groups,⁵ they also emphasize the need to convince teachers and students alike of the importance of math and the need to improve math literacy.
- **Professional Development in Integrated Instruction** will be provided through conferences offered by Dr. T. Roger Taylor. In five days, the training will cover how the curriculum can be integrated to tap into the multiple intelligence strengths of all learners, the use of databases to develop integrated, interdisciplinary units aligned with state standards, and developing anticipatory sets that grab students’ attention to produce highly diverse project/problem

⁵ Uri Treisman, the Director of the Dana Center, University of Texas at Austin, is a visionary and a winner of the Mac Author “genius” award for his work with minorities. He is especially noted for his success in teaching calculus to minority students at the university level. While the DANA institutes do focus on improving teacher understanding of mathematical concepts, the development of peer study groups are a hallmark of Uri’s techniques and are also included in his professional development trainings.

learning products. His training utilizes a collaborative learning model based on brain research that facilitates project/problem learning and illustrates the use of timetables of history and science to enhance and connect disciplines.

- **Changes in Scheduling, for Academies** during the first year, will have to stay with a seven period day because students who begin a two semester course in August will be best served by completing it with the same teacher in the second semester. Academy teachers will teach five out of seven periods to allow them adequate, common planning periods. However, in year two, consideration will be given to changing to block scheduling for the academies.
- **Before and After School Assistance for Students** will be provided by Academy teachers and SWT graduate students. This academic support is necessary if all students are to have truly equitable access to the Academies. The graduate students (to be recommended by their respective SWT departments) will provide help not only in subject areas, they will serve as role models. When possible, these positions will be given to minority students.
- **Career Focused Classes** will be offered to students in the academies. Students excelling in Computer Aided Drafting or CISCO networking classes will be able to move directly into jobs paying over \$30,000 per year. Those in the Visual and Performing Arts will be better prepared for auditions, and will have had opportunities at conferences to make important contacts.
- **Extensive Career Awareness Activities for Academy Students** will be an important component to maintain student interest and involvement, and to help students create a long-term vision (and plan) for their future. Because San Marcos is small, and much of our economy evolves around services for the tourist industry (i.e., food and retail), we will take advantage of the local university to provide a breadth of awareness opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable to us. In addition, student field trips will travel to sites in Austin, Texas, (30 miles away) where a burgeoning economy is fueled first by technology, and second, by the entertainment industry.

Ensuring that curriculum and instructional practices within each smaller learning community are aligned with its goals and to its theme or emphases, where they exist.

Curriculum-writing training, five-day extended contracts for the Academy's teachers to do curriculum writing (having time to use the skills acquired), and modified scheduling for teachers to have common planning time, will all contribute to ensuring that curriculum and instructional practices are aligned with each Academy's goals, themes, and emphases. It may be noted that field-specific professional development is provided for math, but not for visual and performing arts. This is because the SMCISD arts department is already an award-winning department in their field, yet *all* students must succeed in math if they are to meet graduation requirements.

- **Outside Technical Assistance in Math, Science and Technology Academy Program Development.** Technical assistance in program development and management will be provided by Margaret Greff⁶, who has successfully initiated and maintained a successful science and technology academy in San Antonio. Since the Fall of 1999, when the Academies were approved, the art faculty at SMHS have done considerable planning in anticipation of funding. Math and science departments, however, have not had the same degree of leadership and vision, and will benefit from the additional technical assistance and hands-on experience of this exceptional teacher, administrator and consultant.
- **University-based career awareness activities:**
 1. ***Two-month-long summer apprenticeships for students in the sciences:*** Students who are capable yet undecided about attending post-secondary education will be targeted for a summer apprenticeship at the college of science at SWT. The SMHS students will work for two months on a science-project together with undergraduate students, high-school teachers, and SWT-faculty. The outcome will be presented at a Science Fair or regional conference. This project will enable SMHS-students to get a better idea of the

⁶ See vita, Appendix II.

sciences and the value of postsecondary education. According to our agreement with SWT, the academy student will receive a summer stipend of \$440 a month. This is important, as we have many economically disadvantaged students who are expected to contribute financially to their families during summer months, and they would be unable to participate without some remuneration. An amount of \$1200 per student intern will be used for research supplies, tools, and travel to regional conferences. The Academy director will be responsible for the selection of the students and will visit the interns and their coaches at SWT during the summer. Placement of the students within the school of Science will be done in cooperation with Dr. Wilhelmus Geerts (department of Physics). One summer apprenticeship will also be available with the MD Anderson Cancer Research Institute in Smithville, Texas, paid for by their outreach program.⁷

2. ***Archeology Field School*** Math, Science and Technology Academy students and selected teachers will participate in an archaeological excavation for two Saturdays, each year, learning about the work of archeologists. Students will be introduced to Texas Prehistoric and Historic archaeology, and learn basic field methods employed by archaeologists through active participation on the excavation of an archaeological site in San Marcos. Because of our location at natural springs that create the headwaters of the San Marcos river, our area is one of the oldest continually inhabited sites in North America, and is rich with archaeological treasures. This hands-on workshop will provide students with an opportunity to hypothesize, explore, collect, catalog and discuss their findings over two days of fieldwork and lectures.
3. ***Geography*** Students of the Math, Science and Technology Academy will be taken to SWT on three consecutive Saturdays each year to learn what modern-day geography is about, particularly GIS, remote sensing, GPS technology, cartographic visualization, water

⁷ This has verbal confirmation, but there is no written commitment accompanying this proposal.

resources, and other important topics in environmental geography, and use SWT's computer laboratories. At the same time, students will learn more about SWT, its programs, and its campus. A total of 120 students will attend over the three years.

4. ***IC-technology fabrication lab demonstrations*** Students will be offered the opportunity to participate in a one-day course, "Integrated Circuit Technology," offered by the Departments of Physics and Technology at SWT. It will consist of an interactive lecture that covers the steps involved in making an electronic circuit, and a laboratory experience in which the students will make their own chip in the new microfabrication facility. The purpose of this activity is three-fold. First, by exposing our students to the interdisciplinary IC-fabrication process, they will get a better understanding of how chemistry, physics, and mathematics work together and form the building blocks of modern technology. Second, this one-day activity will provide examples and illustrate important principles studied in the core courses of our curriculum. Third, it will introduce our students to an important new career option for the area. The growth of the high-tech industry in the Austin – San Antonio corridor, e.g. companies like VLSI, Sony, AMD, Motorola, IBM, Dell, Samsung, Texas Instrument and Applied Materials, is limited by the lack of qualified workforce. By exposing SMHS students to the fabrication process and to the fact there are many high paying jobs available in the area, we hope to convince many to stay in school, go to college and choose a career in the sciences.
5. ***Academy for Visual and Performing Arts*** will bring in as yet undetermined guest lecturers or "master teachers" who are experienced in specific areas such as set design, screenplay, digital design, drama, or dance. These visiting masters will provide professional development for staff as well as career awareness for the students. Collaboration with SWT College of Fine Arts, and contracting with artists who are scheduled to visit that campus will allow us savings in travel costs for these consultants.

Professional development activities offered to teachers, non-instructional school staff, and others are aligned with smaller learning community goals.

Team Building/Culture Building retreats will be facilitated each year for each of the three learning communities. Teachers will be afforded an opportunity to reflect on their growth as individual professionals, as well growth as a team. At the retreats, the project evaluator will provide process and outcome findings, which the team will use to inform their creation of goals for the coming year.

Teaming ensures that teachers with a common group of students meet regularly to assess those students' progress, and address any emerging academic or behavioral, social concerns. All teachers in the project will be trained in teaming, and schedules will be developed to assure teachers common planning time with their teams.

Interdisciplinary teaching is not currently used at SMHS, where most departments and teachers operate in isolation from others. Training in development of integrated curricula, and online resources will be provided through this grant, as well as five days of extended contract for teachers to work together in developing their curricula.

Rationale for grade levels and ages to be served by the smaller learning communities; and the methods and timetable for placing students in the smaller learning community:

All ninth grade students will be placed in the NGC, and all 10-12th grade students will be invited to attend the academies. If selection by student choice does not afford the academies a population that reflects the general SMHS population, recruitment efforts will focus on encouraging enrollment from the student group needed to achieve that. Students will not be placed according to ability, performance, or any other measure of merit.

The NGC is included in this proposal because this transition time from middle school to high school is so important to the future success of students. Our district has recognized this and made initial investments three years ago to implement a smaller learning environment. Those investments went into a schedule that supported teaming, but professional development and team building was neglected. A lack of leadership compounded the problem, and teachers fell into a

pattern duplicating that of the rest of the high school, with teachers working in isolation, with little sense of community. Correcting this is of high priority, particularly in light of disturbing 9th grade failure rates this year. The NGC will also “market” the academies to students.

The tenth through twelfth grades were chosen for career academies, because students will require the full three years following their ninth grade years to meet requirements for graduation.

The themes chosen for the academies will allow us to take advantage of our strengths (visual and performing arts) and to focus on improving our weakest area (math). Further, the economy in our area, particularly in Austin, Texas, supports development of careers in these two areas. High tech, as well as music and film-making are fueling the growth of the Austin economy.

Management plan

Project Director Beatriz Flores, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, will serve as Project Director for this grant. Improvement in student success is an issue of primary concern to her over the next several years, as all other schools in SMCISD have been successful in achieving “recognized” or “exemplary” status, yet SMHS was rated “low performing” three years ago, and has barely retained the ranking of “acceptable” since that time. Therefore, she will commit a minimum of 10% of her time to management of this project, as part of her focus on improvement of learning at SMHS. Bea has over 27 years of service in education, and has served as teacher, assistant principal, and principal, before being named assistant superintendent. She has managed many state and federal grants successfully. She and her staff currently manage six million dollars in state and federal grants (including Title grants). She will be responsible for coordinating the start-up tasks such as negotiating a consultation contracts, convening interview teams and expediting the selection of the Academy Director, coordinating with the technology department to order CAD equipment authorized by the board, and assigning a team to address scheduling issues that must be resolved by mid term. Once the Academy Director is hired, the Project Director will meet with him or her monthly, and provide administrative support, advocating for Academy budgetary and other needs in Management Team (comprised of the

Superintendent and Assistant Superintendents). She will stay apprised of the progress in meeting goals. Primary responsibility for day-to-day operations of the Academies will lie with the Academy Director. The Project Director will assume the same process for communication and monitoring the success of the NGC by meeting regularly with the Ninth Grade Principal, accessing evaluation reports, and advocating for their needs.

Director of Academies The director of the academies (to be hired with district funds) will report, directly to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. The director will provide leadership and vision for the academies. He or she will do the following: 1) vigorously support the vision statement of the academy; 2) serve on a “campus council” which meets monthly; 3) meet with separate advisory committees for each academy quarterly; 4) work with the district grant writer to identify additional funding needs, or potential sources of support to hire a second director; 5) be responsible for developing partnerships with businesses for work-based learning and career awareness opportunities; 6) schedule outside speakers/teachers in career awareness efforts; 7) promote the academies to the public; and 8) be the primary contact with the project evaluator. Qualifications include a Master’s Degree or comparable professional experience, a background either in the arts or in math, science, or technology, management experience, classroom experience, a consensus style of leadership, and demonstrated dedication to the academy concept or vision statement. As the district creates a new bond issue for public vote (which will include building a new high school) the director will educate community planning groups about the importance of school size, and how architectural design can enhance and support the implementation of smaller learning communities.

Ninth Grade Center Principal (existing position). This position is currently open. The person who fills this position will serve in the same capacity as the Academy Director , but for the NGC. A search team is looking for a positive, visionary leader who has been successful in creating collaborative environments in other settings. He or she will coordinate with the Academy Director in planning training times for common

Teacher Advisory Coordinator Angela Forrest, assistant principal at SMHS will coordinate the implementation of the Teacher Advisor Program. She will be the primary contact for the evaluator for this component of the project. Angela has a background in math and science teaching, and has served as an assistant principal for five years. The Campus Improvement Team will monitor progress of the Teacher Advisory Program.

Outside Consultants Consultants will be important to the success of this project and include Margaret Greff, who is currently director of John Jay Science Academy in San Antonio. She has a Master of Science in geophysics, and taught from 1975 until 1997, when she became director of the John Jay Science Academy. She will advise on program development and management issues. SWT College of Education will provide evaluation services, and will facilitate annual retreats for teachers each of the three smaller learning communities. SWT's involvement will not only bring expertise to the project, it may create greater awareness of the advantages of smaller learning communities to graduating teachers.

Campus Council This group will consist of the SMHS principal, the academy director, the NGC principal, and teacher representatives from each group. They will meet monthly to resolve any issues arising in regard to shared space (gyms, band hall, auditorium, CAD lab, etc.) or programs (athletics, other UIL competitions), campus safety concerns, and other issues affecting all groups.

Student Review A common planning time will be designated weekly as the student review meeting, during which time teachers can bring up concerns about any student for discussion and problem solving. If the problem is academic, tutoring or testing may be recommended. If the concern is behavioral, actions could vary from talking to the parents, referral to a counselor, a community agency, an in-school support groups, or peer mediation.

Learning Community Meetings Each academy and the NGC will have faculty meetings at least monthly. This time will be spent in self-observation and reflection regarding the development of instructional programs, individual professional growth, and in dealing with the discomfort that arises with the process of change. This process will be documented by SWT. The data obtained will be used to describe the formative process in annual reports.

Advisory Councils School/community groups will serve as advisory boards for each of the academies and the NGC. Letters have been delivered to former Academies Cadre members requesting their participation in this capacity. They will be reconvened monthly August 2000 through January 2001, when the academies open. Thereafter they will meet quarterly.

Timeline	Milestone
August 2000	5 th : school starts, with teacher advisor periods scheduled 31 st : Smaller Learning Communities award announced Ninth Grade Center Principal hired/announced. Academies Cadres meet monthly through January, then quarterly.
September 2000	Project Director initiates search for Academy Director Equipment for CAD lab is ordered, to be installed before 2 nd semester Contracts for Teacher Advisory training and evaluation completed Graduate students to serve as tutors for Ninth Grade Center selected/hired. Ninth Grade Center has first team building retreat.
October 2000	Academy Director hired. Training for Teacher Advisory System begins. Teacher selection for academies begins. Student recruitment for academies begins. Public relations for academies begins. Evaluator develops and distributes process and action forms. Graduate students to serve as tutors for academies selected/hired. First Campus Council Meeting Ninth Grade Center has first Learning Community meeting.
November 2000	Teacher selection for academies completed Director establishes additional Professional Development in integrated curriculum writing. Math teachers attend Math Institutes
December 2000	Each academy has first retreat Students are scheduled into academy classes
January 2001	Academies begin operation Student recruitment continues if targets not met. First Learning Community Meeting for academies (monthly thereafter) Initial student focus groups.
Jan-June 2001	Student career awareness activities at SWT at work-based learning sites. Visiting master artists/teachers provide enrichment Campus Council and Learning Community Meetings Monthly. Reports to evaluator monthly.

May 2001	Follow-up student focus group. Request Board approval of second Academy Director position.
June 2001	End of first instructional year; teachers have five days for curriculum writing. First student apprenticeships at SWT and MD Anderson Cancer Research Institute begin Student placements at other work-based learning sites continue.
July 2001	First annual evaluations prepared; Second retreat for academies and Ninth Grade Center
August 2001	First performance report to Department of Education First <i>full year of academy operation</i> begins. Second year of Teacher Advisory system begins.
June 2002	Second year of project ends. Teachers have 5 days of curriculum writing Number of student summer apprenticeships increases
July 2002	Annual evaluation completed. Third retreat for academies and Ninth Grade Center, goals set for 3 rd year.
August 2002	Third year (second <i>full year</i> for academies) of project begins.
June 2003	Third instructional year ends Teachers have five days of curriculum writing Students participate in summer internships.
August 2003	Project ends, on basis of excellent outcomes, the Board of Trustees continues investment in professional development, extended duty time for teachers to provide academic support to students. ☺

D. QUALITY OF THE PROJECT EVALUATION

Faculty from the SWT College of Education will conduct both a formative and a summative evaluation of this project. Data on all the above-mentioned items, with the exception of extracurricular activities, are routinely input by the campus clerks into a real time database that is maintained by district technology and evaluation staff. They routinely keep the data current, and ready for required submissions to the Texas Education Agency, three times a year. Custom reports are easily obtained by request to district technology staff. Data will be made available to the outside evaluator without student-identifying information. The evaluator will then use this information to determine progress toward set goals on a quarterly basis, and give the information to the Academy Director, who will share it with teachers as they review progress toward goals. Forms outlining the extracurricular data will be developed to meet the requirements of the grant, and provided to campus sponsors of extracurricular activities. The project director will ensure that

these forms are distributed, that data is gathered and entered into an extracurricular database with student numbers so that extracurricular activities of academy students can be differentiated from extracurricular activities of the general population, and accessed by the evaluators. Evaluators will attend faculty meetings and the annual retreats of the three smaller learning communities to collect data, present their findings and participate in goal setting.

Method for describing, on an annual basis, the smaller learning communities and related program changes undertaken to make the smaller learning communities safe and successful.

The faculty of each academy and the NGC will meet to review and reflect on their progress monthly. The evaluator will develop a “process observation” form and an “action item” form. Each form will be completed by a designated teacher during their monthly meetings. The “process observation” will gauge the contributions of staff toward problem solving, and the “action item” will record any changes that are made to staffing, scheduling, procedures or instructional techniques. These will be forwarded to the evaluator monthly, and analyzed along with performance data for an annual report. The evaluator will include findings of focus groups with students in the annual report to the district.

E. ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES

This proposal includes a commitment of \$330,444 from SMCISD, a commitment of \$30,201 from SWT, and a request for federal support in the amount of \$486,017 in direct costs, and \$13,983 in indirect costs. A high tech media lab has been provided through a corporate foundation grant for Visual and Performing Arts Academy, and district E-rate funds are being used to equip the Academy for Math, Science and Technology Academy with a CAD (Computer-aided Drafting) lab. The local contributions noted in this proposal do not include in-kind support from local businesses who have volunteered to assist in career awareness activities. The district has committed to fund one position for a Director of both academies. Private funds will be sought to fund a second position.

SMCISD has asked for no funds to purchase equipment, and has planned the use of funds to maximize the delivery of services to students and professional development for teachers. That is, we have asked for \$254,500 to provide additional academic support and career awareness activities for students, and approximately \$126,000 for professional development and extended planning time for teachers. These funds will be sufficient (but necessary) for this project to succeed. The Superintendent has agreed support a request for additional district funding to continue this project beyond the funding period. In closing, with the resources made available through this grant, SMCISD staff are confident they can and successfully implement this project and achieve the goals identified.

Section 427 of GEPA Statement

The parents of economically disadvantaged students may not encourage their children to participate in activities or take advanced coursework leading to post-secondary education, fearing that they would not be able to afford it. Therefore, we ensure that information regarding the availability of financial assistance for college, and the type of coursework needed to attend, is communicated to parents beginning in sixth grade. Also, a counselor is specifically assigned to help students find scholarships and other kinds of financial aid while in high school.

Past cultural abuses of Hispanic students may make the families feel unwelcome in the school setting. Therefore, programs will incorporate activities which honor the Hispanic culture. Specifically, Visual and Performing Arts will include screenplays by Hispanic authors, include Hispanic visiting artists, and include Ballet Folklorico in the dance program. Math, Science and Technology will incorporate projects such as the documentation of contributions of Hispanic community members in the history of San Marcos in a web-based media.

The narrative includes details of extensive efforts to provide additional academic support to students who need it to meet high standards, and to achieve a population in the programs funded which reflects the general population by gender, race, economic linguistic advantage.

Budget Summary: Federal Contribution

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
PERSONNEL				
Five day extended contracts for teachers to create curriculum together.	\$16,100	\$16,100	\$16,100	48,300
Extended duty pay for teachers to provide before and after school academic support	22,500	30,000	30,000	82,500
Training Stipends for teachers to attend math institutes in second year.	0	9,000	0	9,000
Training Stipends for teachers to be trained in effective use of the teacher advisory system.	12,000	3,000	3,000	18,000
Training Stipends for day-long retreats Team building and professional growth.	6,000	6,000	6,000	18,000
Hourly Pay for Graduate students to assist teachers and provide support for students.	30,000	42,000	42,000	114,000
Total Personnel	86,600	106,100	97,100	\$289,800
FRINGE BENEFITS				
For professional staff	4781	5449	4663	14,893
For part-time staff	390	546	546	1,482
Total Fringe Benefits	5,171	5,995	5,209	\$16,375
TRAVEL				
Field trips for students	2,000	3,000	4,000	9,000
Travel for teachers to attend institute conducted by Dr. T. Roger Taylor	3,624	0	0	3,624
Travel for teachers to attend workshops On smaller learning communities	1,708	1,708	1,708	5,124
Total Travel	7,332	4,708	5,708	\$17,748
SUPPLIES				
Visual & performing arts software	11,899	0	0	11,899
Math, science & technology software	6,000	0	0	6,000
Total Supplies	17,899	0	0	\$17,899
CONTRACTUAL				
Evaluation	7,500	7,500	7,500	22,500
Career Awareness: IC-technology fabrication lab demonstrations	4,000	4,000	4,000	12,000
Career Awareness: summer apprenticeships for students in the sciences.	8,320	14,560	14,560	37,440
Career Awareness: Archeology Field School	2,500	2,500	2,500	7,500
Career Awareness: Geography	2,500	5,000	5,000	12,500
Program Development: Training in use of teacher advisory periods.	5,000	0	0	5,000
Program Development Consultation in program development and academy management.	5,000	2,500	0	7,500
Professional Development: Facilitation of three team-building retreats each year.	2,250	2,250	2,250	6,750
Professional Development: Creative writing.	0	2,100	0	2,100
Professional Development Math Institutes by leaders trained through the Dana Institute.	0	7,500	0	7,500
Professional Development for teachers & Career Awareness for students	2,500	5,000	5,000	12,500
Total Contractual	39,570	52,910	40,810	133,290

Continued on next page.

Budget Summary: Federal Contribution (continued)

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
OTHER				
Professional Development: Registration fees for teachers to attend curriculum-writing institute.	2,370	0	0	2,370
Curriculum Development: School Site Registration Fees.	405	315	315	1,035
Career Awareness: Registration fees for state conventions in theatre.	1,500	3,000	3,000	7,500
Total Other	4,275	3,315	3,315	10,905
Direct Costs Totals, Federal Contribution				486,017
Indirect Costs (rate 2.877%)				13,983
Grade Total Request				\$500,000

Budget Summary: Local Contributions (SMCISD)

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
PERSONNEL				
Project Director (10% of time managing project)	\$7,832	\$7,953	\$8,072	\$23,857
Academy Director	\$50,000	\$51,200	\$52,400	\$153,600
FRINGE BENEFITS				
For Directors	4,881	4,993	5,103	14,977
EQUIPMENT				
Computer Aided Drafting Lab (SMCISD)	46,000	0	0	46,000
Digital Media Lab (from Apple Computer)	75,000	0	0	75,000
SUPPLIES				
Student planners for all students in both Academies and the Ninth Grade Center	5,670	5,670	5,670	17,010
Total SMCISD by Year	189,383	69,816	71,245	
Grade total – Local Contributions SMCISD				\$330,444

Budget Summary: Local Contributions (SWT)

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
CONTRACTUAL				
Evaluation (Donated by SWT)	9,167	9,167	9,167	27,501
Professional Development (Donated by SWT)	900	900	900	2,700
Total SWT by Year	10,067	10,067	10,067	
Grade total – Local Contributions SWT				\$30,201



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BUDGET INFORMATION

NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

OMB Control Number: 1890-0004

Expiration Date: 02/28/2003

Name of Institution/Organization: San Marcos Consolidated ISD
San Marcos, TX 78666

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

**SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel	\$86,600	\$106,100	\$97,100			\$289,800
2. Fringe Benefits	5,171	5,995	5,209			16,375
3. Travel	7,332	4,708	5,708			17,747
4. Equipment	0	0	0			0
5. Supplies	17,899	0	0			17,899
6. Contractual	39,570	52,910	40,810			133,290
7. Construction	0	0	0			0
8. Other	4,275	3,315	3,315			10,905
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	160,847	173,028	152,142			\$486,017
10. Indirect Costs	4,628	4,978	4,377			13,983
11. Training Stipends						
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	165,475	178,006	156,519			\$500,000

Name of Institution/Organization: San Marcos Consolidated ISD
 San Marcos, TX 78666

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

**SECTION B - BUDGET SUMMARY
 NON-FEDERAL FUNDS**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 (a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel	\$57,832	\$59,153	\$60,472			\$177,457
2. Fringe Benefits	4,881	4,993	5,103			14,977
3. Travel						
4. Equipment	121,000					121,000
5. Supplies	5,670	5,670	5,670			17,010
6. Contractual	10,067	10,067	10,067			30,201
7. Construction						
8. Other						
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	199,450	79,883	81,312			360,645
10. Indirect Costs						
11. Training Stipends						
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	199,450	79,883	81,312			360,645

SECTION C - OTHER BUDGET INFORMATION (see instructions)

BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

The district's accounting and financial reporting system conforms to Generally Accepted Accounting Principals and complies with the Texas Education Agency Financial Accountability Resource Guide. The District applies all GASB pronouncements as well as the Financial Accounting Standards Board pronouncements. The district accounts for all grant programs in individual special revenue funds. In addition, the district uses encumbrance accounting and requires that purchase orders be used in all grant purchases. The district's financial statements are audited annually under OMB Circular A-133 by an outside CPA firm.

This proposal includes a commitment from the district for \$330,444 toward the project, \$30,201 from Southwest Texas State University, and a request of federal support of \$486,017 in direct costs, and \$13,983 in indirect costs. The indirect cost rate of 2.887% is the rate calculated by the Texas Education Agency as a restricted indirect cost rate; this rate has been accepted by the Department of Education for federal grants to the district.

In preparing this plan, an attempt has been made to balance the provision of professional development services to some extent between academia (higher education) and those who are currently in schools, successfully implementing the strategies that are included in this proposal. The district has a history of successful collaborative relationships with the local university (SWT), and they have made substantial contributions in helping us develop this proposal. It is for that reason that SWT will be so heavily involved in the actual implementation of this project.

No salaries, per se are requested, although the personnel line item is a significant portion of this budget. That is due to district policy that "stipends" are not allowed. This narrative uses the word "stipend" because it is an easily understood term, but by district policy, this use of funds is to be considered "extra duty pay". Thus the personnel line item includes extended duty pay (for teachers to provide additional assistance to students before and after school and on weekends), extra-duty-pay for training to be received on week-ends, and extended contracts (to provide time outside of the regular schedule of instructional days for curriculum writing or other planning). These are all considered personnel costs. The District has committed to fund the salary of one Director to oversee the two proposed academies.

No funds for equipment are requested, as a private grant has funded hardware for a media lab for the Visual and Performing Arts Academy, and the district has committed to purchase equipment and lease software for a Computer Aided Drafting (CAD) lab to be used by the Math, Science and Technology Academy.

In the table with detailed budget descriptions that follows, *descriptions and amounts in italics and in shaded boxes represent non-federal contributions to the project.* Non-italicized font in unshaded boxes describes amounts requested from the Department of Education, Smaller Learning Communities Initiative. Budget Summaries follows this narrative.

Description (Federal Contribution) (Local or Other Contribution described in Italics)	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Total
Personnel				
<i>Project Director 10% FTE, Beatriz Flores. Bea Flores, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction will devote a minimum of 10% of her time to managing this project, overseeing contracts, and monitoring progress toward meeting goals. She has had over 25 years in education, has served as a teacher, an assistant principal and a principal. She was involved in the Cadre that developed the plans for the Academies.</i>	7,832	7,952	8,072	23,856
<i>Academy Director The district has approved the funding of 1FTE position to oversee the development of the academies. An amount of \$50,000 is budgeted for planning purposes but the actual salary would, by district policy, be based on years of experience, at a coordinator level. The budgeted amount is based on 12 years experience.</i>	50,000	51,200	52,400	153,600
Five day extended contracts for a core of teachers in each academy (14 teachers total) to spend 5 days creating curriculum together. The contract would be extended at their normal daily rate, which for purposes of planning is calculated on the daily rate of a teacher with 20 years experience, or \$230. (5 days X \$230 X 14 teachers). Actual rates would vary according to experience (i.e. salary) of teachers involved.	16,100	16,100	16,100	48,300
Extended duty pay for teachers to provide before and after school (and/or weekend) academic support for students requiring additional assistance to meet high academic standards. This is based on a total of 20 teachers (5 in each academy and 10 in the Ninth grade center). The rate is figured at a \$1,500 annual stipend. (Academies will not be operational until mid-year in year one, and the amount reflects that.) It is the policy of the district to consider extended time as personnel cost rather than contractual.	22,500	30,000	30,000	82,500

Description (Federal Contribution) <i>(Local or Other Contribution described in Italics)</i>	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Total
Training Stipends for 6 teachers to attend Algebra I Institute for 5 days, Algebra II/Precalculus Institute for 5 days, and Geometry Institute for 5 days, with stipend budgeted at \$100 per day. Because of the length of training, and the timing of award announcements, it is not believed that these can be accomplished in year one. Funds are budgeted to train teachers in year two, although it would be completed as early in the award as logistically possible.	-0-	9,000	-0-	9,000
Training Stipends for all SMHS teachers to be trained in effective use of the teacher advisory system. This component of the plan will allow us to ensure that all students, including those not in one of the academies or in the Ninth Grade Center, will have consistent contact with one caring adult throughout their high school. All 120 teachers will receive training in the effective use of this program to assist each student in the development of a portfolio-style individualized educational plan and to provide a differentiated counseling program at each grade level. One day of training, with \$100 stipend. Stipends for refresher training and/or training of new employees is budgeted at 30 persons in years 2 and 3.	12,000	3,000	3,000	18,000
Training Stipends for day-long retreats each year, for teachers from each academy and the Ninth Grade Center. for team building, goal setting, and group and individual reflection on professional growth as educators. (Total of 60 teachers, one day annually, @ \$100 per day.)	6,000	6,000	6,000	18,000
Hourly Pay for Graduate students to provide classroom and lab assistance to teachers and additional academic support for students requiring additional assistance to meet high academic standards. These students would be paid \$15 per hour, to be competitive with the rates paid for teacher assistants at the university. Funds are requested for 2 graduate students at each academy in year one, for 2.5 hours per day, 80 instructional days and then 160 days in years 2 and 3. A total of 3 are requested for the Ninth Grade Center, also at 2.5 hours per day, for 160 days in each of the three years	30,000	42,000	42,000	114,000
Fringe Benefits				
Fringe benefits for professional staff are budgeted by the following formula for the portion of salary paid by the grant only: Medicare (.0145 X salary); Health Insurance (paid by district); unemployment (.000718 X salary); Workers' Compensation (.00417 X salary); Teacher Retirement (.065 X salary for extra duty pay, extended contract, and stipends).(Based on a total of 184,800 budgeted for regular employees.)	4,781	5,449	14,893	14,893
As per district policy, fringe benefits for part time, hourly employees (graduate students, in this project) will be figured by the following formula: Deferred Compensation (for employees not covered by Teacher Retirement System) Salary X .013 (Based on a total of 114,000 for hourly temporary part time employees).	390	546	546	1,482

Description (Federal Contribution) <i>(Local or Other Contribution described in Italics)</i>	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Total
Travel				
Due to the fact that San Marcos is small, for students to get an appreciation for some careers will require travel to surrounding areas. Buses will be used to transport Math, Science and Technology students to places such as MD Anderson Cancer Research Institute in Bastrop, Dell Computer in Round Rock; and Visual and Performing Arts students to recording studios in Austin, advertising agencies' art studios, dance workshops, etc.	2,000	3,000	4,000	9,000
Travel for interdisciplinary teams of three teachers from each academy to attend a 5-day institute by Dr. T Roger Taylor on connecting the curriculum using integrated, interdisciplinary approaches. Registration fees are \$395. (See in "other" category.) Actual location for training in Fall of 2000 and Spring 2001 has not been announced, so for planning purposes, travel to Houston is costed out, with airfare at $75 \times 6 = \$450$; Hotel @ $75 \times 5 \text{ nights} \times 6 \text{ persons} = 2,250$ and per diem @ $28 \times 5.5 \text{ days} \times 6 = \924 .	3,624			3,624
Funds are budgeted for representatives from each academy to attend workshops on smaller learning communities each year. For planning purposes, calculations are based on three nights, with travel to Washington, D.C. (Airfare \$320 each; hotel \$150 X 3 each; per diem \$28 each per day.)	1,708	1,708	1,708	5,124
Equipment				
<i>Funds have been approved by the district, contingent on the award of this grant, to provide a fully equipped Computer Aided Drafting (CAD) lab with 15 high-speed workstations leased drafting software, and drafting tables for students.</i>	46,000			46,000
<i>Apple Computer, Inc. has already provided to SMHS Arts Department 14 computers (PowerMacs and G3's), scanners, digital cameras and printers to equip a digital media lab to be used primarily by students in the academy of visual and performing arts. Only minimal software was included in this grant, however, and assistance is requested for software, included in the "supplies" category.</i>	75,000			75,000

Description (Federal Contribution) <i>(Local or Other Contribution described in Italics)</i>	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Total
Supplies				
<i>1,890 student planners published by Premier Agenda, a Franklin Covey company. These planners will be used during advisory period to teach time management, goal setting, and study skills, as well as provide a consistent method to communicate with parents. These will be purchased with funds from a vendor contract with Pepsi. Each planner costs \$3 .</i>	5,670	5,670	5,670	17,010
Visual and Performing Arts Software Funding is requested for Adobe Photoshop 5.5 (15 copies), Adobe Illustrator (10 copies), Macromedia Freehand (10 copies), Macromedia Flash (10 copies), Bryce and Poser (10 copies), 3-D Studio Max (2 copies), RAM (increase from 64 to 128MB), and 10 Wacom graphics tablets. This software will run the Digital Media Lab. (Except for 3-D Studio Max, which will be installed on PC's in the CAD lab, and will be used by Visual and Performing Arts two periods daily.)	11,899			11,899
Math, Science and Technology Software Funding is requested to purchase software including but not limited to ArcView (GIS training), \$500; Interactive Physics, 10 station license, \$800; World In Motion, a physics video analysis software, 10 station license, \$450, and Amusement Park Physics, a digitized video collection for motion analysis, 10 station license, \$100.	6,000			6,000
Contractual				
Evaluation will be contracted out to the College of Education, SWT. The cost of evaluation is normally 10% of an award amount, but SWT has agreed to donate a portion of the cost. The cost to the grant will be only 7,500 per year, with 9,167 contributed by SWT.	7,500	7,500	7,500	22,500
<i>Evaluation, (Italics denotes SWT contributed services)</i>	9,167	9,167	9,167	27,500
Career Awareness: IC-technology fabrication lab demonstrations provided by SWT departments of physics and technology where students have hands-on experience. Contracted at a cost of \$100 per student, 40 students total per year, for each of three years.	4,000	4,000	4,000	12,000
Career Awareness: SWT Two-month-long summer apprenticeships for students in the sciences , for 4 students in year one, 7 in year two and 7 in year three. SWT will pay stipends to the mentoring professor, as well as a small stipend (\$440 per month) to students. Because we have many economically disadvantaged students, and will be targeting students who are academically capable but undecided about attending postsecondary education for these apprenticeships, a student stipend makes "good sense".	8,320	14,560	14,560	37,440

Description (Federal Contribution) <i>(Local or Other Contribution described in Italics)</i>	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Total
Career Awareness: Archeology Field School Math, Science and Technology Academy students and selected teachers will participate in an archaeological excavation for two Saturdays, learning about the work of archeologists. Students will be introduced to Texas Prehistoric and Historic archaeology, and learn basic field methods employed by archaeologists through active participation on the excavation of an archaeological site in San Marcos. This hands-on workshop will provide students with an opportunity to hypothesize, explore, collect, catalog and discuss their findings over two days of fieldwork and lectures. The contract will cover the cost of a stipend for the workshop leader (a senior faculty member affiliated with SWT's Center for Archaeological Studies), four assistants for two days, and materials. One field school will be offered each year.	2,500	2,500	2,500	7,500
Career Awareness: Geography Students of the Math, Science and Technology Academy will be taken to SWT on three consecutive Saturdays to learn what modern-day geography is all about, particularly GIS, remote sensing, GPS technology, cartographic visualization, water resources, and other important topics in environmental geography, and use SWT's computer laboratories. At the same time, students will learn more about SWT, its programs, and its campus. One group of 24 would go in spring 2001, two groups of 24 in year 2, and two groups of 24 in year 3. The contract will cover SWT's cost of 2 doctoral student Teaching Assistants for each 8-hour Saturday to supervise, demonstrate, and lead interactive learning activities. Three Saturdays for 24 students will have a contracted cost of \$2,500. Funds are budgeted for a total of 120 students over three years.	2,500	5,000	5,000	12,500
Program Development: Consultation and Training in use of teacher advisories, provided by consultants from Newman Smith High School in Carrollton, TX, a school that has been recognized by the Department of Education for their innovative program. There is a different focus for each successive grade level. Two days @ \$500 per day are included for consultation including modifications for our population. Training will be provided on four Saturdays, one for all teachers of each grade level each Saturday. The consultant fee (including travel costs and supplies as a part of the contract) is \$1,000 per day. Follow-up training for new in years 2 and 3 will be completed by district trainers.	5,000			5,000
Program Development Consultation in program development and academy management provided by Margaret Dolan Greff, current director of John Jay Science Academy in San Antonio, Texas. She has led the development of a successful academy in a school with a population very similar to SMCISD's, and will bring management experience and knowledge to this project. Cost is budgeted at \$500 per day, for 10 days in year one and 5 days in year two.	5,000	2,500		7,500

Description (Federal Contribution) <i>(Local or Other Contribution described in Italics)</i>	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Total
Professional Development: Facilitation of three team-building retreats each year (for two career academies and the Ninth Grade Center). Dr. Mary Ann Reese, through the SWT College of Education, will structure each day-long retreat to encourage a culture of self-reflection regarding the group as a team focused on teaching, as well as on individuals' professional growth. Time will be spent on analysis of what has evolved during the past year, and goal setting for the upcoming year (individually and as a group). Facilitation cost will be \$750 per retreat.	2,250	2,250	2,250	6,750
Professional Development: <i>Facilities for three team-building retreats each year (see above) SWT will donate retreat facilities. These facilities rent for \$300 per day.</i>	900	900	900	2,700
Professional Development: Creative writing: a full day workshop will be offered to SMCISD Academy teachers to learn effective strategies in using creative writing in the humanities/fine arts and math/science projects. This is a hands-on workshop that will provide new approaches to using creative writing strategies to meet curricular goals. The workshop will focus on active learning projects in creative writing that are useful for diverse students with different learning styles and ability levels. Teachers will be guided through a series of suggested projects and will also develop and "pilot" their own new projects, leaving with a portfolio of useful ideas, activities and materials. The contract will cover the cost of a stipend for the workshop leader (a senior faculty member of SWT's Master of Fine Arts program) to prepare projects and materials, materials, and to lead a day-long session.		2,100		2,100
Professional Development Math Institutes (Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry) each 5 days, by Master Leaders trained through the Dana Institute. \$500/day fee. (Stipends for participants in this training are listed in Personnel category). Training in Year 2 and Year 3.	-0-	7,500		7,500
Professional Development for teachers/Career Awareness for students Academy for Visual and Performing Arts. Funds are requested to bring in guest lecturers or "master teachers" who are experienced in specific areas such as set design, screenplay, digital design, drama, or dance. These masters will provide professional development for staff as well as career awareness for the students.	2,500	5,000	5,000	12,500
Other				
Professional Development: Registration fees for two interdisciplinary teams of three teachers to attend a week-long curriculum-writing institute with Dr. T. Roger Taylor. Cost is \$395 per participant.	2,370			2,370

Description (Federal Contribution) <i>(Local or Other Contribution described in Italics)</i>	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Total
Curriculum Development: School Site Registration Fee of \$45 per month for the “Curriculum Design for Excellence On-Line”, a service of Dr. Roger Taylor. By paying this fee, users can access as many curricula developed using Dr. Rogers integrative principles as desired. The fee is reduced to \$35 for those who have attended his institute, so the cost is based on a \$45 for nine months in year one, and \$35 a month in years two and three.	405	315	315	1,035
Career Awareness: Registration fees of \$120 for state conventions in theatre are unaffordable for some students; funds are requested be used to defray the cost for students who would be unable attend without financial assistance. (Texas state theatre conventions offer students opportunities to audition for colleges and conservatories.)	1,500	3,000	3,000	7,500
<i>Direct Cost Totals, Local Contributions</i>				345,666
Direct Cost Totals, Federal Contribution				486,017
Indirect Cost Rate 2.887%				13,983
Grand Total Request for Federal Support				500,000

Budget Summary: Federal Contribution - Page 1 of 2

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
PERSONNEL				
Five day extended contracts for teachers to create curriculum together.	\$16,100	\$16,100	\$16,100	48,300
Extended duty pay for teachers to provide before and after school academic support	22,500	30,000	30,000	82,500
Training Stipends for teachers to attend math institutes in second year.	0	9,000	0	9,000
Training Stipends for teachers to be trained in effective use of the teacher advisory system.	12,000	3,000	3,000	18,000
Training Stipends for day-long retreats Team building and professional growth.	6,000	6,000	6,000	18,000
Hourly Pay for Graduate students to assist teachers and provide support for students.	30,000	42,000	42,000	114,000
Total Personnel	86,600	106,100	97,100	\$289,800
FRINGE BENEFITS				
For professional staff	4781	5449	4663	14,893
For part-time staff	390	546	546	1,482
Total Fringe Benefits	5,171	5,995	5,209	\$16,375
TRAVEL				
Field trips for students	2,000	3,000	4,000	9,000
Travel for teachers to attend institute conducted by Dr. T. Roger Taylor	3,624	0	0	3,624
Travel for teachers to attend workshops On smaller learning communities	1,708	1,708	1,708	5,124
Total Travel	7,332	4,708	5,708	\$17,748
SUPPLIES				
Visual & performing arts software	11,899	0	0	11,899
Math, science & technology software	6,000	0	0	6,000
Total Supplies	17,899	0	0	\$17,899
CONTRACTUAL				
Evaluation	7,500	7,500	7,500	22,500
Career Awareness: IC-technology fabrication lab demonstrations	4,000	4,000	4,000	12,000
Career Awareness: summer apprenticeships for students in the sciences.	8,320	14,560	14,560	37,440
Career Awareness: Archeology Field School	2,500	2,500	2,500	7,500
Career Awareness: Geography	2,500	5,000	5,000	12,500
Program Development: Training in use of teacher advisory periods.	5,000	0	0	5,000
Program Development Consultation in program development and academy management.	5,000	2,500	0	7,500
Professional Development: Facilitation of three team-building retreats each year.	2,250	2,250	2,250	6,750
Professional Development: Creative writing.	0	2,100	0	2,100
Professional Development Math Institutes by leaders trained through the Dana Institute.	0	7,500	0	7,500
Professional Development for teachers & Career Awareness for students	2,500	5,000	5,000	12,500
Total Contractual	39,570	52,910	40,810	133,290

Budget Summary: Federal Contribution – Page 2

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
OTHER				
Professional Development: Registration fees for teachers to attend curriculum-writing institute.	2,370	0	0	2,370
Curriculum Development: School Site Registration Fees.	405	315	315	1,035
Career Awareness: Registration fees for state conventions in theatre.	1,500	3,000	3,000	7,500
Total Other	4,275	3,315	3,315	10,905
Direct Costs Totals, Federal Contribution				486,017
Indirect Costs (rate 2.877%)				13,983
Grade Total Request for Federal Funds				\$500,000

Budget Summary: Local Contributions (SMCISD)

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
PERSONNEL				
Project Director (10% of time managing project)	\$7,832	\$7,953	\$8,072	\$23,857
Academy Director	\$50,000	\$51,200	\$52,400	\$153,600
FRINGE BENEFITS				
For Directors	4,881	4,993	5,103	14,977
EQUIPMENT				
Computer Aided Drafting Lab (SMCISD)	46,000	0	0	46,000
Digital Media Lab (from Apple Computer)	75,000	0	0	75,000
SUPPLIES				
Student planners for all students in both Academies and the Ninth Grade Center	5,670	5,670	5,670	17,010
Total SMCISD by Year	189,383	69,816	71,245	
Grade total – Local Contributions Applicant				\$330,444

Budget Summary: Local Contributions (SWT)

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
CONTRACTUAL				
Evaluation (Donated by SWT)	9,167	9,167	9,167	27,501
Professional Development (Donated by SWT)	900	900	900	2,700
Total SWT by Year	10,067	10,067	10,067	
Grade total – Local Contributions SWT				\$30,201

BASELINE DATA SUMMARY

1. Students scoring at each proficiency level for each subject measured by state or district assessment: See Texas Education Agency's *AEIS Report for San Marcos High School*, which follows, as **Baseline Attachment 1**.
2. Number of students taking SAT and ACT, and their average scores. See **Baseline Attachment 1, page 4**, and *SAT Summary Report*, which follows, as **Baseline Attachment 2**.
3. Number of students who take courses for which they receive both high school and college credit: 150. See breakdown in report which follows, attached as **Baseline Attachment 3**.
4. Number of Students completing high school: 343 in 2000.
5. Number of students involved in extracurricular activities: 620 in 2000.
6. Number of incidents of school violence: See report attached as **Baseline Attachment 4**. These are the reporting categories required by the state education agency.
7. Number of suspensions, expulsions, and other disciplinary actions. See in narrative, and on report attached as **Baseline Attachment 4**.
8. Number of reported incidents of student alcohol or other drug use: 57 (Documented in Baseline Attachment 4).
9. Overall reported average daily attendance for October: 1,689, in Oct. 1999.