



## **ARRA Idea Development Worksheet – Turning Ideas Into Actions**

Prepared by Education Northwest (formerly Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory)

Revised September 2009

### **How To Use This Worksheet**

This worksheet is intended to help teams of district staff with decisions about investing *ARRA* funds. Responses can be recorded electronically, or the pages may be printed out in advance for individual thinking prior to meeting as a whole group. The boxed-in questions may be considered by a district-level leadership team and also by school-level teams to generate more awareness and to build buy-in and support. Parents, students, and community members may also be included in this effort.

**The example on page 2 shows how the form may be filled in, using the consideration “Build Sustained Capacity for Improvement.”**

**Build Sustained Capacity for Improvement.** Train-the-trainer programs or the creation of specialists may require a larger investment in the first years but can be sustained at much lower cost in the long run. For example, hiring an outside expert to develop and implement professional learning communities (PLCs) would necessitate an initial outlay of funds. However, the staff trained by the consultant would be responsible for leading subsequent groups, requiring few additional funds to build sustainability.

This document is available online at [www.educationnorthwest.org/nwarra](http://www.educationnorthwest.org/nwarra).

**EXAMPLE**

| <b>Investment</b>   | <b>Current revenue to support this resource</b>   | <b>Long-term capacity</b>  | <b>Supportive infrastructure</b>  | <b>Funding needed</b>   |
|---|---|--|---|---|
| <i>In what areas could existing “train-the-trainer” programs (e.g., reading coaches, instructional coaches, etc.) be enhanced?</i>  | <i>What is the current funding source?</i>  | <i>How could this program be expanded or enhanced to build long-term capacity?</i>   | <i>What system supports would be needed to accompany additional funds (e.g., training, consultant time, facilities)?</i>  | <i>What level of funding would be needed?</i>                                     |
| Reading First coaching model could be continued at existing elementary schools and adapted for Tier 2 & 3 students in 4th & 5th grades. Expand summer 1-week training to all elementary teachers. | Reading First federal funds, July, 2009<br><br>Title IA, ongoing<br><br>Title II, ongoing | Existing coaches would be retained for a “temporary” 2-year position. Additional teachers at the 4th and 5th grades would receive extensive training so that they can implement the program at their grade levels. Training would focus on sustainability when the extra money is not available. | Coaches and K-5 literacy teacher summer training sessions would be supported with new funds. A beginners’ session for teachers new to the model would add two days to the training and a larger facility would be needed. More substitutes would be secured and included in summer training. The school/ district would need to contract for consultant time for additional training and ongoing support. | \$600,000 minimum to \$750,000 maximum over two years for FTE and training costs. |



**Build Sustained Capacity for Improvement.** Train-the-trainer programs or the creation of specialists may require a larger investment in the first years but can be sustained at much lower cost in the long run. For example, hiring an outside expert to develop and implement professional learning communities (PLCs) would necessitate an initial outlay of funds. However, the staff trained by the consultant would be responsible for leading subsequent groups, requiring no additional funds

| <b>Investment</b>  | <b>Current revenue to support this resource</b> | <b>Long-term capacity</b>  | <b>Supportive infrastructure</b>   | <b>Funding needed</b>                         |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| <i>In what areas could existing "train-the-trainer" programs (e.g., reading coaches, instructional coaches, etc.) be enhanced?</i> | <i>What is the current funding source?</i>      | <i>How could this program be expanded or enhanced to build long-term capacity?</i> | <i>What system supports would be needed to accompany additional funds (e.g., training, consultant time, facilities)?</i> | <i>What level of funding would be needed?</i> |
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**Optimize and upgrade the use of existing resources for the long haul – technology.** Invest in technology upgrades or training in technology integration. For example, how would teaching and learning improve if the district were to purchase SMART Boards for every classroom?

| <b>Investment</b>   | <b>Current revenue to support this resource</b> | <b>Long-term capacity</b>  | <b>Supportive infrastructure</b>   | <b>Funding Needed</b>                         |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <i>In what areas does the district have unmet needs for technology upgrades? How would technology upgrades enhance teaching and learning?</i> | <i>What is the current funding source?</i>      | <i>How could this program be expanded or enhanced to build long-term capacity?</i> | <i>What system supports would need to accompany additional funds (e.g., training, software, tech support)?</i> | <i>What level of funding would be needed?</i> |
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**Optimize and upgrade the use of existing resources for the long haul – human capital.** Invest in staff through professional development, on-the-job training, reconceptualized tasks, and incentives that increase in-district expertise.

| <b>Investment</b>  | <b>Current revenue to support this resource</b> | <b>Long-term capacity</b>  | <b>Supportive infrastructure</b>   | <b>Funding needed</b>                         |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| <i>What are the district’s human capital development needs (e.g., what professional development would build long-term effectiveness for our staff)</i> | <i>What is the current funding source?</i>      | <i>How could this program be expanded or enhanced to build long-term capacity?</i> | <i>What system supports would need to accompany the establishment or expansion of this effort?</i> | <i>What level of funding would be needed?</i> |
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**Increase the efficiency of essential services to reduce long-term fixed costs.** Invest in the physical plant by improving such things as classroom space, science laboratories, and technology access or products.

| <b>Investment</b>  | <b>Current revenue to support this resource</b> | <b>Long-term capacity</b>  | <b>Supportive infrastructure</b>   | <b>Funding needed</b>                         |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| <i>What are the district's human capital development needs (e.g., what professional development would build long term effectiveness for our staff)</i> | <i>What is the current funding source?</i>      | <i>How could this program be expanded or enhanced to build long-term capacity?</i> | <i>What system supports would need to accompany the establishment or expansion of this effort?</i> | <i>What level of funding would be needed?</i> |
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**Use research and other evidence-based resources to drive decisions about planning, implementing, and evaluating district programs.** Consider investments in innovative programs with potential major benefits in their first years of operation, building a case for future support by government or other sources.

| <b>Investment</b>  | <b>Progress monitoring</b>   | <b>Evaluation</b>  | <b>Reporting*</b>   | <b>Sustaining</b>   |
|--|--|--|---|---|
| <i>In what areas can we become more transparent in our decisionmaking around these additional funds?</i> | <i>How will we monitor implementation of the use of new funds (e.g., who will be responsible for tracking progress and completing required reporting)?</i> | <i>How will the district evaluate the effectiveness of these efforts so that decisions can be made about continuing efforts?</i> | <i>What types of reporting are districts responsible for?</i> | <i>What other (non-federal) funds may be available to support programs started with stimulus funds (e.g., foundation grants, state money, business and community partnerships)?</i> |
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### **\*Reporting Considerations**

**Title IA funds:** Each LEA receiving funds is required to file with the SEA, no later than December 1, 2009, a school-by-school listing of per-pupil educational expenditures from state and local sources during the 2008–2009 academic year. SEAs shall report LEA information to the Secretary by March 31, 2010.

**School improvement funds:** Funds will be made available beginning in fall 2009, and will be conditioned on receipt of further information to be outlined in future guidance.

**Stabilization Funds (SFSF):** SFSF authorization contains specific reporting requirements to help ensure transparency and accountability for program funds. States must report on 1) the use of funds provided under the SFSF program; 2) estimated number of jobs created or saved with program funds; 3) estimated tax increases that were averted as a result of program funds; and 4) the state's progress in the areas covered by the application assurances. States must maintain records that will permit the ED to monitor, evaluate, and audit the SFSF effectively.



**Reserve some funds for long-term investment in innovation and improvement.** Consider investments in innovative programs with potential major benefits in their first years of operation, building a case for future support by government or other sources

| <i>How can our district tap into new and additional resources to reward innovation and improvement within the district (e.g., what development capacity exists inside and outside the district)?</i> | <i>What types of federal grants should the district seek now to avoid the potential “funding cliff” in 2011?</i> | <i>What other (non-federal) funds may be available to support programs started with stimulus funds (e.g., foundation grants, state money, business and community partnerships)?</i> |
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Education Northwest is a nonprofit organization dedicated to transforming teaching and learning. Founded in 1966 as the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Education Northwest now conducts more than 200 projects annually, working with schools, districts, and communities across the country on comprehensive, research-based solutions to the challenges they face. For more information, please visit [www.educationnorthwest.org](http://www.educationnorthwest.org).

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