EXHIBIT C: SITE VISIT INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOLS

Site Visit Protocols

At the beginning of the study and at the end of each school year in 2008, 2009, and 2010 (if a third year of data collection is warranted), site visits will be made to all treatment and control schools to assess the implementation fidelity at treatment schools and the similarity of activities at control schools. The research team will work with the site coordinator to schedule these half-day site visits.

Each site visit will consist of semi-structured interviews with principals (treatment and control), leadership teams (treatment schools) or other school leaders (control schools), and McREL mentors (treatment schools). The interview with the McREL mentor will take place by telephone, but will follow the same interview protocol. Each site visit will also include a focus group with a cross-section of teachers (treatment and control schools). Interview and focus group questions are designed to elicit evidence of schools' engagement in the key activities involved in the intervention of study. Supporting artifacts will be requested, as available, as further evidence to support responses to interview and focus group questions.

Notes to reviewers:

- The interview and focus group questions measure the five stages of the intervention and the key activities within each stage.

- Interviews and focus group moderators will read the following statement regarding confidentiality to participants at the beginning of the data collection session:

  "Responses to this data collection will be used only for statistical purposes. The reports prepared for this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific district, school, or individual. We will not provide information that identifies you, your school or district to anyone outside the research team, except as required by law."

- Interviews and focus group moderators will have the following information regarding data privacy and OMB clearance available to show any respondent during the site visits.

The U.S. Department of Education wants to protect the privacy of individuals who participate in surveys. Your answers will be combined with other surveys, and no one will know how you answered the questions. This survey is authorized by law (1) Sections 171(b) and 173 of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Pub. L. 107-279 (2002); and (2) Section 9601 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 (Pub. L. 107-110). Responses to this data collection will be used only for statistical purposes. The reports prepared for this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific district or individual. We will not provide information that identifies you or your district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is **xxxx-xxxx**. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 37.5 minutes per respondent, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collected. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20208.

Site Visit Interview and Focus Group Questions

Stage 1: Taking Stock	
Key Intervention Activities	**Interview / Focus Group Question**
Create a vision for success	1. Do you feel that this school has a shared vision of how to help all students succeed? If yes, describe that vision. If no, what is missing…the what (goals) or the how (strategies)?
Assess readiness for change	2. Can you describe the structures, processes, and attitudes in place at this school that you feel support your school improvement efforts? (Probe all three)
Conduct broad needs assessment	3. What types of data have been examined to determine what influences student achievement at this school?
Stage 2: Focus on the Right Solution	
Use data to identify strengths, prioritize needs, and establish improvement goals	4. How have you used this data with regard to setting improvement goals?
Use research to identify solutions	5. How, if at all, has research informed the choice of solutions?
Identify specific improvement strategies	6. What specific actions have been taken, as a result, to bring about improvement?
Anticipate and manage the implications of change	7. Would you characterize these actions as a "break with the past," that is, requiring new norms, values, and knowledge or more of an "extension of current practices"?
Develop systems to monitor progress	8. How have you monitored whether your improvement efforts were successful?

Site Visit Interview and Focus Group Questions

Stage 3: Take Collective Action	
Key Intervention Activities	**Interview / Focus Group Question**
Establish shared ownership of the school improvement plan	9. How many people in the school are involved in taking action around this improvement effort? (Probe: Who was involved)
Create shared agreements for accomplishing goals	10. As part of the improvement effort, how, if at all, did those involved state *what* they would do and *how* they would be held responsible for their efforts?
Develop deep knowledge and skills needed to improve student learning	11. How did those involved in the improvement effort learn *what* to do, *how* to do it, and *why* to do it?
Stage 4: Monitor and Adjust	
Use school- and classroom-level data to track student progress, both as a group and individuals	12. In what ways was student progress monitored at a group and/or individual level? 13. In what ways was the implementation of the improvement strategies monitored?
Use formative and summative data to make course corrections as needed	14. What other types of "indicators" of improvement were monitored (e.g., school culture and climate, attendance)?
Identify successes and celebrate	15. How, if at all, were students' successes celebrated?
Stage 5: Maintain Momentum	
Identify strategies for maintaining current efforts	16. What strategies, if any, were identified to help sustain improvements that have been made?
Identify new opportunities for improvement – the next improvement cycle	17. What new opportunities for improvement were identified for the next improvement cycle?