

EXHIBIT D: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Memorandum of Understanding

Date:

Site: School District
School
Address
City, State, Zip
Telephone:
Fax:
Superintendent:
School Principal:

McREL: 4601 DTC Boulevard
Suite 500
Denver, CO 80237
Telephone: 303-337-0990
Fax: 303-337-3005
Contact:

ASPEN Associates, Inc.: 7701 France Avenue South
Suite 200
Edina, MN 55435
Telephone: 952-837-6243
Fax: 952-837-6245
Contact: Dr. Elisabeth Palmer, Director of Research

This Memorandum is between _____ School of the _____ School District (“Site”), Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (“McREL”), and ASPEN Associates, Inc. (“ASPEN Associates”).

OVERVIEW

Success in Sight is a comprehensive approach to school improvement that is based on research and focused on results. Through *Success in Sight*, schools learn how to apply a five-stage improvement cycle that helps them focus on the “right work” in the right way. In the process, school staff members learn how to work together effectively and promote a school-wide culture of continuous improvement. Engaging in *Success in Sight* over a period of two years provides a unique opportunity for long-term professional development and support to improve teaching and learning.

MCREL RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide training and technical assistance to treatment schools related to the following:
- Applying a continuous improvement process to increase student achievement
- Using data to establish and monitor goals and determine the effectiveness of improvement strategies
- Implementing actions related to research-based factors associated with student achievement
- Sharing leadership for school improvement
- Maintaining a purposeful community among school staff

McREL RESPONSIBILITIES (CONTINUED)

The training and technical assistance provided to treatment schools includes:

- Three, two-day professional development sessions per year
- Monthly facilitated online discussions
- Dedicated web site for posting resources to support the school leadership team's work
- Six one-day, onsite meetings with the school leadership team to
 - Assist the school leadership team in defining and implementing the school improvement plan
 - Serve as a critical friend
 - Help structure and facilitate in-school meetings
- Regularly scheduled meetings with the principal to plan and reflect on the work of the leadership team and the role of the principal in that work
- Technical assistance about the school improvement process and the content learned through participation in *Success in Sight*
- Coordinate with ASPEN Associates on all data collection.

DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES

- Send clear and consistent messages about the expectations for participation in the study, including adherence to random assignment; provide moral support through actions and words.
- Provide resources (i.e., time, money) to support treatment school's participation in *Success in Sight*.
- Provide waivers for policies/practices that interfere with treatment school's ability to implement research-based practices associated with student achievement. Consider conducting a policy audit to determine which policies hinder and which support the school's efforts to improve.
- Ensure that the data management system is operating efficiently and that there is sufficient technology to support data collection, analysis, and use at treatment schools. Provide the treatment school with the data it needs in a timely manner.

PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

TREATMENT SCHOOLS

- Form a leadership team that includes the teacher and principals and which represents different grade levels and specialist areas (e.g., ESL, special education, counselor).
- Provide time for the leadership team to participate in *Success in Sight* consortium meetings.
- Provide time and other support as necessary for the leadership team to meet with the McREL school improvement advisor at least once per month during the school year between consortium sessions.
- Allocate sufficient resources to support the work of the leadership team in leading implementation of the school improvement plan.
- Participate fully as a member of the leadership team by attending *Success in Sight* consortium meetings and monthly onsite leadership team meetings.
- Agree to share leadership for school improvement.
- Meet on a regular basis with the McREL school improvement advisor to plan and reflect on the work of the leadership team and the role of the principal in relation to that work.
- Participate in on-line discussions (~ 1 hour per month) with other principals in the consortium.

CONTROL SCHOOLS

- Continue their usual school improvement practices and refrain from participating in *Success in Sight* until after the study ends in the spring of 2010.

ALL SCHOOLS

- Send clear and consistent messages about the expectations for participation in the study, including adherence to random assignment.
- Ensure that all teachers complete all data collection activities.
- Select one site coordinator, who will help provide requested information to ASPEN Associates.

LEADERSHIP TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES

TREATMENT SCHOOLS

- Apply the knowledge and skills learned during *Success in Sight* consortium meetings by completing tasks assigned between consortium sessions and after meetings with the McREL school improvement advisor.
- Work with a McREL school improvement advisor to implement the school improvement plan.
- Provide feedback to McREL about the quality of the training and technical assistance provided to the school.
- Collect data to determine the effectiveness of the improvement strategies being implemented.
- Foster a climate of support, respect, and trust that is open to risk taking, new ideas, and collaboration.
- Guide, direct, and be accountable for school improvement efforts.
- Facilitate communication about the school improvement plan and process.
- Be examples of commitment to both school and student success.

CONTROL SCHOOLS

- Continue their usual school improvement practices, complete data collection activities, and refrain from using *Success in Sight* until after the study ends in the spring of 2010.

ASPEN ASSOCIATES

- Lead a study orientation with participating schools.
- Coordinate with McREL to conduct and monitor the process of all data collection.
- Manage the distribution and return of study instruments, analyze the data, report findings, and provide partial compensation for participation in data collection that occurs outside the regular school day or is over and above normally assigned duties.
- Assign all districts, schools and individual participants ID numbers and strip all identifying information from the data. No identifying information will be included in reports on this study.

Note: 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. ASPEN Associates will not provide information that identifies you, your school, or your district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.

MANAGEMENT

The activities described in this Memorandum of Understanding will be coordinated by Dr. Elisabeth Palmer, representing ASPEN Associates, Inc., and Dr. Ceri Dean, representing McREL. The McREL contact person will designate McREL staff with the appropriate experience, background, and expertise to provide the training and technical assistance outlined in this Memorandum of Understanding. The ASPEN Associates contact person will designate ASPEN Associates staff with the appropriate experience, background, and expertise to conduct the research study as outlined in this Memorandum of Understanding.

TIMELINE

The activities will commence on (Date) and conclude on (Date).

ENTIRE AGREEMENT

This memorandum signifies that (Site) commits to participate in activities with McREL and ASPEN Associates in order to improve their students' achievement. It does not create legally binding obligations, but is a statement of *bona fide* intent of the parties. It sets forth the entire understanding of (Site), McREL, and ASPEN Associates with respect to the collaboration contemplated. This memorandum may be amended only by a written instrument executed by both parties.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Responses to 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.

IN WITNESS THEREOF the parties have executed this memorandum on the dates set forth below to be effective as of the date first written above:

FOR _____ SCHOOL DISTRICT:

Date: _____

By: _____
Superintendent, _____ School District

Date: _____

Principal, _____ School

FOR McREL:

Date: _____

By: _____

Date: _____

By: _____

FOR ASPEN ASSOCIATES:

Date: _____

By: _____
CEO

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.