INTRODUCTION
[Briefly introduce the program/strategy/team and the 3-5-year foundation goals that this investment will contribute to.]

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation’s K-12 Education strategy is driven by the guiding principle that all students – but especially Black, Latino, and low-income students – must have access to a great public education that prepares them for adulthood. Our goal is to significantly increase the number of Black, Latino, and low-income students who earn a high school diploma, enroll in a postsecondary institution, and are on track in their first year to obtain a credential with labor-market value.

School-level improvement is a critical component driving towards this goal. Over the next five years, the Gates Foundation will fund and evaluate models of Networks for School Improvement (NSI) to codify approaches that are most successful in helping schools to improve student outcomes across a range of critical milestones. Please refer to the published information on the Networks for School Improvement RFP for further information on the foundation’s NSI strategy, timelines, and goals.

A Network for School Improvement is a group of secondary schools working with an intermediary to solve common problems that schools face. The intermediary will work collaboratively with their schools to use data to identify a problem and root cause(s), select a strategy to address the problem, set a target for improvement, and iterate to make the approach more effective. An NSI’s aim will be to improve selected outcomes that are predictive of high school graduation and postsecondary success.

As the strategy plays out in classrooms across the country, we hope that over the next five years we prove and codify continuous improvement models that are effective and scalable.
BACKGROUND
[Describe the problem, why it is a problem, and who is impacted by the problem.]

We seek a Data Sourcing Partner (DSP) to work with the foundation, the Networks for School Improvement, and the summative and formative evaluation partners to support data collection and delivery. Key proof-points of the effectiveness of this strategy rely on timely, accurate, and comprehensive data collection to track and modify models and prove they are effectively improving the academic outcomes for kids. Therefore, the DSP is a critical component of the support and learning processes for this work.

The primary objective of the DSP is to ensure that the foundation, NSIs, and NSI evaluators receive what we refer to as Big 3 data from each intermediary on a timely basis. Big 3 data are critical in codifying models for the NSIs and understanding whether schools in the NSIs are improving in the ways we anticipate.

Big 3 data will consist of:

1. aggregate student outcome data, as measured by select indicators, for each participating school (see Predictive Outcomes and Indicators in the Glossary);
2. survey measurement of school climate and systems for each participating school;
3. survey measurement of NSI implementation and health.

No personally identifiable data will be collected by the Data Sourcing Partner. Big 3 data will be reported by select demographics, and secured to ensure data privacy; any student information sent to the foundation will be aggregated by school. These data will be collected annually and we anticipate the first delivery will be following the end of the 2018-19 school year.

A second objective of the DSP is to provide technical assistance to NSIs. The intermediaries will collect additional indicator data (beyond Big 3 data) depending on their aim or measurement plan. The scope of DSP technical assistance for these data will be limited to data sharing agreement best practices, collection, integration, cleaning, and submission for each NSI.

The DSP must have significant experience and a proven track record in (1) project management, data collection, and data integration, and (2) providing technical assistance to other organizations and individuals in effective, secure, and efficient data collection and data integration. This solicitation process will result in a contract to be structured with a set of success milestones for each year and service, an initial service year, and four option years. The options are at the discretion of the foundation.

The DSP should expect to work with 6-8 Type 1 intermediaries and 15-20 Type 2 intermediaries the first year, ramping up as funding is awarded to additional organizations over the next 4 years (see Type 1 and Type 2 Intermediaries in the Glossary). We estimate to roughly double the Type 1 intermediaries year-on-year, but will rationalize the pace of expansion depending on data analysis and practical implementation realities. Each intermediary will likely support between five and twenty schools.
The complexity of data collection and integration per NSI will be variable as intermediaries will differ in their overall data capacity to support the schools in their NSIs. We anticipate that these variances in data capacity will manifest in: (1) the number of data systems required to source the data, (2) the data security requirements of each school’s system, (3) data sharing agreement protocols, and (4) internal technical skills at the intermediary and school level. It’s also possible that schools in NSIs will not be located in the same geographic region, requiring the DSP to coordinate with the district(s) across regions and states. The DSP will need to be nimble, flexible, and prepared to manage data sourcing given these variables.

Note that the DSP must act in accordance to all applicable laws. The foundation adheres to the Bill & Melinda Gates Data Stewardship Principles and as part of this engagement, the DSP will be prohibited from sharing student personally identifiable information with the Foundation in violation of those principles.
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<td>DSP</td>
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![Diagram](image-url)
ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES
[Briefly describe the key anticipated outcomes of the request/call.]

The required outcomes of this project are that:

● The intermediaries and schools are positioned to be able to manage and sustain high-quality data systems to aid continuous improvement;
● The data collection and integration process for intermediaries, their schools, and their districts is easy, unobtrusive, and sustainable;
● Across all schools and intermediaries, the DSP identifies gaps in technical or operational capacity;
● The DSP provides support to improve the technical and operational capacity at schools and with intermediaries, as needed;
● The DSP creates documentation of technical and functional requirements, lessons learned, best practices, and the model for data collection in NSIs;
● The DSP creates and maintains a clear communication path among intermediaries, evaluators, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation;
● The foundation and the evaluation partners obtain Big 3 data in a complete, consistent, and on-time manner.

SCOPE AND APPROACH

Eligibility/Exclusion Criteria
[Describe who is eligible and the criteria for funding consideration/Describe any exclusion(s) for funding consideration. Provide examples as appropriate.]

Organizations will be selected for funding in a two-phase process: (1) submission of concept memos followed by (2) invited organizations’ submission of full proposals.

Respondents are welcome to propose services to fulfill this scope of work as individual organizations or in partnerships if they feel it will benefit the value of the services delivered. Organizations within and those outside K-12 education are encouraged to apply. We are flexible on the approach to deliver this scope of work and will be interested in recommendations for a creative, thorough, and efficient execution plan for this project.

Respondents to this solicitation should provide a concept memo to serve as the basis for our review. Please structure your concept memo as instructed below according to the page limit guidelines per section. Base your responses on both the scope of the project, articulated below, and your understanding of the project details. Additional headers can be added, and leading questions adjusted, but the page limits need to be maintained.
**SCOPE OF WORK**

This section outlines our current view of the functional and technical requirements of the Data Sourcing Partner in working with each intermediary. However, we invite applicants to adjust these requirements and propose alternates as they see fit. We look forward to considering these alternate requirements in our evaluation of the concepts; our choice to make an open call for concepts was partly based on the need to explore alternate data sourcing methods to serve our NSI strategy. Note that the requirement labeled “Optional” (Data Reports and Visualizations) is one we believe would be useful, but is a second order requirement and previous experience in this area is not required.

Final deliverables will be based on the results of this engagement and articulated during the proposal development stage.

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<th>Deliverable Number</th>
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<td>Project Plan Document</td>
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<td>Communication Model Document</td>
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<td>Data Capacity Gap Analysis</td>
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<td>Data Capacity Gap Resolutions</td>
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<td>2.4</td>
<td>Testing, QA and QC Plan</td>
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<td>Annual Strategy Data Delivery Bundle[IV1]</td>
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<td>Data Reports &amp; Visualizations</td>
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**Validation and Implementation Artifacts**
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**Deliverable 1.1. Project Plan Documents**

These are formal, approved documents guiding project execution and project control for each NSI. These documents will detail project scope, costs, and schedule baselines.

Following the requirements gathering process, the DSP will create a project plan for foundation and evaluation partner engagement outlining:

- executive summary;
- quality management plan;
- milestones with dates;
- assumptions;
- risks;
- activities and resources required;
  - costs and personnel/FTE;
- responsibilities of those working on project.

This project plan is a living document to be updated throughout the project. The foundation and relevant stakeholders must all have access to the project plan.

**Deliverable 1.2. Communication Management Plan**

The organizational structure of the Networks for School Improvement will be complex, with multiple actors involved: the foundation, the formative and summative evaluators, the intermediaries, the districts in which the NSI schools reside, and the schools. Therefore, a clear communication management plan is necessary to plan, implement, monitor and revise all channels of communication.

Following conversations with the foundation, the intermediaries, and the evaluation partners, the DSP will create a communication management model for each intermediary:

- identifying each intermediary’s stakeholders;
• defining the collaboration among the DSP, the foundation, the intermediary, and the evaluation partners;
• identifying protocols for security updates and rapid response stakeholder notification;
• determining what information needs to be shared across all relevant parties;
• explaining in what format different pieces of information will be shared;
• codifying how often information will be shared;
  ○ including periodic status reports;
• detailing the organization and dissemination of new communication with all relevant parties;
• outlining who is responsible for transmitting what information;
• developing communication strategies;
• scenarios for risk communications;
• addressing the storage of information for posterity.

This document is a living document to be updated throughout the project. The foundation and relevant stakeholders must all have access to the communication management plan.

**Deliverable 1.3 Functional and Technical Requirements Documents**

Functional and technical requirements documents are required per structured data collection engagement per NSI. These documents will record both the functional steps and technical methods of data collection, integration, cleaning, submission, and provisioning as well as providing best practices for data sharing agreements. The DSP will not be giving legal advice.

These documents will be influenced by the systems involved, methods determined for effective data collection, and the technical assistance work described below.

**Section 2. Technical Assistance**

The role of the DSP is to deeply understand each intermediary’s data lifecycle (referenced below) and what gaps exist that may hinder completion of data sharing agreements, collection, integration, cleaning, and submission. The resolution of these gaps will be made in partnership with the intermediary and in accordance with supports provided by the formative evaluator and the foundation.

**Anticipated Flow of Data**

In the provision of services under this agreement, the DSP will work with multiple layers of organizations and data collection. While different NSIs will have different organizational relationships, respondents can generally assume that schools within the NSI will store and maintain data on student indicators in electronic, machine readable systems. We also anticipate that a school’s data will reside in centralized data applications managed by their Local Education Agency (LEA). These applications may reside on locally hosted servers, on the cloud, and/or in the hosting environment of contracted vendor partners.

When collecting functional requirements for the Big 3 Data, we expect the Data Sourcing Partner to also develop technical requirements which will define the databases, data collections,
and business rules for calculations needed for the required data. For schools in an individual LEA, these data may be housed in one or multiple systems, including an LEA’s student information systems, human resources systems, assessment system, and/or instructional management system. For NSIs which include schools in multiple LEAs, the data required from a school in one LEA may reside in a different combination of data applications for a school in another LEA.

These likely multiple layers of data flows to integrate the data required for submission by the DSP will necessitate technology solutions that facilitate data extraction, transformation, and loading (ETL) from a diverse set of source data applications for schools across NSIs and intermediaries into a common data repository housed at the DSP.

**Preference for Technical Solutions that Leverage Interoperability Standards**

Over the past years, buyers and sellers of education technology products have developed data standards to facilitate the exchange of data among a diverse set of source systems and integrated environments. Two prominent standards to emerge in the education technology market are those developed and coordinated by the IMS Global Learning Consortium (link) and the Ed-Fi Alliance (link). While designed for different data integration use cases, these standards aim to lower the cost of data collection and integration between source systems and enable the sharing and re-use of technical assets. The mature versions of the IMS Global and Ed-Fi standards also leverage Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) to facilitate the transportation of data between heterogeneous data applications and/or to and from Operational Data Stores.

Data integration among a broad spectrum of data applications will be central to the success of the Data Sourcing Partner. As such, the foundation is interested in supporting these interoperability standards in this solicitation to reduce cost, promote re-use, and facilitate the scaling of data integration procedures among intermediaries and with the field. **As such, the evaluation process for this solicitation will strongly preference respondents that propose data collection and integration solutions that leverage mature versions of the Ed-Fi and/or IMS Global interoperability standards, especially those that leverage the APIs built into these standards.** As stated previously, all technical solutions proposed to deliver the requirements of this solicitation must conform with foundation standards and all relevant state, federal and local laws to protect student data privacy.

In describing the technical architecture of data integration technologies you intend to use in your proposed solution, please describe how these standards are integrated within your solution as well as the relevant versions of the standards used in your application.
Deliverable 2.1. Data Flow Document

The DSP will be responsible for creating a data flow document for each intermediary and for the project overall. These models will clearly detail how data will flow from the systems and processes of schools, districts, and intermediaries, to the foundation and evaluation partners.

Deliverable 2.2. Data Capacity Gap Analysis

Each intermediary will have a data lifecycle (figure one above) with strengths and weaknesses. In addition to the data flow document, the DSP will analyze and document discovered gaps in data capacity and make recommendations on how to scaffold these gaps. This is necessary in ensuring that the capacity of NSI intermediaries match the data requirements.

Data capacity gap analysis can include:

- determining if the intermediary is collecting all relevant strategy data already or if there are indicators missing;
- understanding the intermediary’s experience with collecting survey data with their staff;
- discovering whether data sharing agreements with the schools and districts need to be set up or updated;
- examining the intermediary’s QA and QC process;
- assessing whether the intermediary has the staff and resources to properly clean, aggregate, submit and/or analyze data.

These documents are living documents to be updated throughout the project. The foundation and each intermediary must have access to the appropriate data capacity gap analysis.
Deliverable 2.3. Data Capacity Gap Resolutions

Once gaps have been identified and analyzed, the DSP will present recommendations on how to fill these gaps. Included in these recommendations will include the path to resolving these gaps including those who are involved, which we expect will be the DSP, subcontractors (if applicable), and the entities themselves.

The DSP will work with the foundation, NSIs, and evaluation partners to determine whether to move forward with the proposed resolutions.

These resolutions could take the form of trainings, webinars, documentation, and other forms of technical assistance. The foundation and all relevant stakeholders must have access to the data capacity gap resolutions.

Deliverable 2.4. Testing, Quality Assurance, Quality Control Plan

The DSP will develop a testing, quality assurance, and quality control plan specifically for the Big 3 data that will be delivered to the foundation and the evaluation partners. These plans will result in verification that any data sent to the foundation are fully de-identified, accurate, comprehensive, and in compliance with education data laws.

The DSP will propose what tools or resources are needed to ensure quality control of data received from intermediaries and to ensure datasets used are reproducible. In addition, the DSP will ensure intermediaries are using descriptive file names, providing business rules, and fulfilling other data quality assurances.

Deliverable 3. Data Delivery

Deliverable 3.1. Big 3 Data

The DSP is expected to deliver the annual Big 3 data from each intermediary following collection and cleaning. These data will be used by the foundation and the evaluation partners to gauge progress towards the strategy goal.

The Big 3 data bundle includes:

- data from each intermediary in ‘tidy’ csv’s – i.e., structured to facilitate analysis;
- documentation of business rules;
- documentation and metadata;
  - codebooks with variable names;
  - questionnaires and interview guides;
  - any code created by DSP during reporting or visualization.

The bundle should be delivered in an easily accessible way and preferably through a workspace that allows retrieval of previous years’ data. The foundation, intermediaries, and the evaluation partners must all have role-based access to the annual Big 3 data.
**Deliverable 3.2. Data Reports & Visualizations**

Once the Big 3 data have been collected, cleaned, and delivered, the DSP can optionally propose to provide data reports and visualizations for reporting to the foundation. These reports and visualizations facilitate analysis and can bring forth insights to guide decision making. Data reports and visualizations could include:

- automated reports;
- informational summaries;
- dashboards;
- ad hoc responses;
- analysis presentations.

The format of these outputs depends on the purpose and can vary widely; however, we greatly prefer the use of open access tools and interfaces. We expect data reporting and visualization work to be done in partnership with the K-12 team's analytics experts. The foundation and relevant stakeholders must have access to the data reports and visualizations.

**Deliverable 4. Validation and Implementation Artifacts**

**Deliverable 4.1. Data Sharing Agreements**

We are looking for a data sourcing partner who has expertise in providing best practices for education data sharing agreements and can provide evidence of their experience. The DSP will be required to follow applicable local, state, and federal laws in collecting and storing data. Strict adherence to education data privacy laws will foster trust and collaboration among intermediaries and their schools, districts, or other relevant parties.

Whenever dealing with student or other sensitive data, the DSP must ensure that the proper data sharing agreements or memorandums of understanding exist between the actors and that all entities are abiding by these agreements. Actors must ensure that all their subcontractors are also bound by these agreements or memorandums and reasonable privacy and security protections as applicable. Data sharing agreements and memorandums of understanding must all be saved in an easily accessible place for the foundation and each intermediary.

**Deliverable 4.2. Acceptance and Adoption Report**

The DSP will demonstrate each deliverable to the foundation to ensure that each deliverable satisfies the end users requirements developed during the requirements gathering process. The DSP will ensure that the deliverables address end-user challenges and will support data-driven decision-making and changes to instructional practice.

These reports can be included in the periodic status reports.

**Deliverable 4.3. Tools, Trainings, and Resources**

During the DSP's work, we expect that tools, trainings, and other resources will be created for intermediaries, their schools, or their districts. As new intermediaries launch NSIs, we want to make these resources accessible to make their onboarding and capacity building as easy and
smooth as possible. A primary outcome of the NSI work is the codification of models for improvement, to which these resources will contribute.

Resources we are expecting include, but are not limited to:

- training for project deliverables;
- documentation of best practices for Data Sharing Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding for sharing student-level data between schools and intermediaries, districts and intermediaries;
  - these do not necessarily need to be created from scratch but can be adapted and modified;
- data privacy training – understanding PII, FERPA, COPPA, and security best practices;
- documentation on successfully administering surveys.

These resources should be delivered in an easily accessible way and preferably through a workspace that allows easy sharing and retrieval of previously created resources. The foundation and all intermediaries must have access to the tools, trainings, and resources.

**Deliverable 4.4. Performance Appraisal Report**

Because the DSP investment aims to create a process that is easy, unobtrusive, and sustainable for NSIs, we expect to receive regular feedback from intermediaries about how they perceive working with the DSP.

This information can come from multiple sources, such as:

- creation of a service level agreement between the DSP and intermediary with a rubric against each deliverable;
- documented, regular feedback on deliverables, training materials, and the partnership;
- periodic satisfaction surveys;
- observing intermediary improvement and data capacity gap closure from year to year.

These reports can be included in the periodic status reports.

**Deliverable 4.5. Data Warehouse**

The DSP will be sending non-PII strategy level data to the foundation and relevant stakeholders on an annual basis. A data warehouse for all users with permission settings appropriate to the privacy and security of the data will be useful for holding information in one place.

The complexity of this warehouse can vary widely, from a Dropbox account to a warehouse that hosts dashboards and APIs. We require version control for any data warehouse. The foundation and all relevant stakeholders must have access to the data warehouse, with only applicable data visible to each party.
CONCEPT NOTE STRUCTURE

1. Executive Summary of Concept (1 page)
2. Description of Organization and Experience Relevant to this Project (1 page)
3. Project Approach (3 pages)
   a. Timelines and Scheduling

   How will you monitor data delivery schedules and related milestones? How will you ensure intermediaries adhere to these schedules in a smooth, integrated way?

   b. Engagement Model

   How would you organize the chain of communication among the intermediaries, the foundation, and the evaluation partners?

   c. Appraisal Model

   How will you keep the foundation and the evaluation partners informed of the progress and challenges of data collection? How will you determine whether the intermediaries feel satisfied with the service they are receiving? How will you identify areas of improvement for yourself?

   d. Data Delivery

   What is involved in the data transfer process and timeline for transferring data? What format do you anticipate sending data to the foundation and the evaluators? How does your solution leverage interoperability standards?

   e. Documentation

   How will you ensure that tools, trainings, etc. are shareable and broadly applicable to future intermediaries?

4. Technical Assistance Approach (3 pages)
   a. Methodology

   How will you determine intermediary data capacity? How will you monitor burden on intermediaries, schools, and districts?

   b. Timeline

   How much time will you need to assess capacity with respect to people, systems, and process? Will work be evenly distributed throughout the year or do you anticipate heavier burden at different times?

   c. Student Data Experience

   What experience do you have working with student data and working with different student information systems?

   d. Data Capability Gap Analysis
What experience do you have in addressing gaps in data capacity by providing technical assistance?

e. Student Privacy

Given that it is the intermediaries’ role to deidentify student data, how will you ensure that data being sent to you by intermediaries protect student privacy and do not disclose any Personally Identifiable Information? Have you created any documentation regarding K-12 data sharing best practices or worked with data privacy agreements, such as with K-12 and postsecondary schools? What steps will you take to ensure data security?

f. Data Quality

How will you validate the quality of the data received from intermediaries?

g. Tool Building

Please provide a relevant example of a tool and resource you have created. What was the problem these tools were trying to solve, who was the audience, in what format was the tool, what evidence do you have that the tool was useful or successful?

5. Diversity and Equity (1/2 page)

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in our organization and with our partners. The foundation particularly encourages minority- or women-led organizations to respond.

How is your organization working both internally and externally to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion? Please describe in a brief statement. This could include:

- information on the work that you have done for Black, Latino, and low-income students;
- spending history with diverse suppliers during past project management projects; and/or
- make-up of your full-time staff, by gender and by race/ethnicity and make-up of the board of your organization, by gender and by race/ethnicity.

6. Open Source Software/ Interoperability Standards (1/2 page)

We are also committed to information sharing, transparency, and developing products for greater public benefit. We prefer organizations who have knowledge of open-source software and can prioritize their use over proprietary software, such as using free and open-source software for data wrangling or interoperability standards such as Ed-Fi and IMS Global. How would you intend to use open-source software and/or interoperability standards in the proposed work?

7. Cost Structure (1/2 page)

How much do you anticipate this work will cost across time? Are there any contingencies that will impact the cost?
EVALUATION CRITERIA

[Briefly describe the process and criteria by which responses will be reviewed and selected (as informed by the RFP Review & Selection Plan). If this request will be multi-phased, with a concept memo followed by invitation for full proposal, describe that here.]

Submissions received by the deadline will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- quality of proposal;
- proposed solution design;
- identified or assumed risks;
- vendor experience and vendor expertise;
- appraisal of customer service approach;
- estimated costs.

The criteria above provide a general framework. The evaluation criteria will inform the decision but is not a substitute for judgment.

ACTIVITIES AND TIMELINE

[List key dates for submission, Q&A, review, selection, etc.]

All dates are approximate.

Day 01: Concept memo announced.
Day 30: Concept memo due.
Day 45: Decision made and communicated to potential partners.
Day 75: Deadline for submitting proposals.
Day 90: Revised proposal submitted.
Day 105: Final proposal documents submitted.
Day 120: Contract agreement letter sent to Organization for countersignature.
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Aim:** An aim is a specific and measurable goal that the network commits to accomplish by a specific date. An NSI’s aim is to improve the percentage of Black, Latino, and low-income students who make progress against a specific outcome(s) or indicator(s) that is predictive of high school graduation or postsecondary success. An NSI’s aim focuses the network’s improvement efforts and provides a specific and measurable goal for the network’s collective action.

**Big 3 Data:** Big 3 Data are critical to the foundation’s ability to codify NSI models and understand whether schools in the NSIs are improving in the ways we anticipate. These data will be non-Personally Identifiable, annually collected, disaggregated by subgroup, and secured to ensure student privacy. Data will consist of:

- student outcome data, as measured by select indicators, for each participating school;
- survey measurement of school climate and systems for each participating school;
- survey measurement of network implementation and health.

**Continuous improvement:** Continuous improvement is a process for addressing a specific problem of practice by developing, testing, and refining promising solutions. Teams that engage in continuous improvement use multiple and varied data to: (a) deeply understand a problem and the system that produces it; (b) set a clear and specific aim related to improving the percentage of Black, Latino, and low-income students who make progress against an outcome(s) or indicator(s) that is predictive of high school graduation or postsecondary success; (c) develop a theory (informed by research and practice) of the highest-leverage changes to make to reach their improvement aim; and (d) engage in inquiry cycles to test the effectiveness of multiple evidence-based solutions to address the problem and reach their aim.

Network intermediaries will determine which continuous improvement methodology their NSI will use to guide its work. All methodologies must meet the criteria outlined in the glossary.

**Intermediary:** An intermediary is defined as a central, coordinating entity that brings together multiple school leadership teams to tackle common problems and work toward common aims. Intermediaries serve several functions, including: (a) supporting individual school teams to use continuous improvement to improve student outcomes; (b) networking school teams with one another to innovate, improve, and build capacity; (c) sharing and codifying lessons learned within and across the network; and (d) bringing together key stakeholders who can support and accelerate a network’s success, including external experts. Intermediaries may be, but are not limited to: non-profit school improvement organizations; regional education service agencies; school districts; charter management organizations (CMOs); higher education institutions; or for-profit professional services firms.

**Network for School Improvement:** A Network for School Improvement (NSI) is defined as a group of secondary schools (grades 6-12) working both collectively and individually in
partnership with a high-quality intermediary to use a continuous improvement process to improve outcomes for Black, Latino, and low-income students. To support the acceleration of learning and improvement, NSIs set a network aim, tackle problems of practice that are common across the network schools and track their progress using indicators that are predictive of student learning, graduation, and postsecondary success.

NSIs are:
- Led by an intermediary skilled in: continuous improvement processes; data collection and data analysis from multiple sources; and developing school-level adult capacity to address the network problem and aim; and
- Facilitated to drive school and network improvements; surface learning within and across schools; and uncover meaningful variance as schools work to reach a specific and measurable aim.

NSIs have the following characteristics:
A. Network is focused on addressing a problem of practice and reaching a measurable, time-bound aim that is shared by all network schools. An NSI’s aim is related to improving one or more predictive outcomes or indicators for Black, Latino, and low-income students.
B. Network comprises an intermediary and multiple school teams from one or more districts and/or Charter Management Organizations (CMO).
C. Network is structured to support school teams to reach their aim and build their capacity to use a continuous improvement process.
D. School teams are guided by a working theory, informed by research and practice, of how to reach the aim (e.g. logic model, network theory of action, or driver diagram).
E. School teams engage in rapid inquiry cycles to develop, test, and refine interventions.
F. Network has the necessary data, research, measurement, and analytic skills to drive improvement, surface learning within and across sites, and uncover meaningful variance.
G. Network is organized to spread and accelerate learning and improvement.

Non-Personally Identifiable: The DSP will need to receive and deliver an anonymous data file for the purpose of education research, and in which a student is identified only by a non-personal identifier and the following requirements are met:

1. the non-personal identifier itself –
   a. is not a scrambled social security number or student number, unless such identifiers are protected by written agreements reflecting generally accepted confidentiality standards within the research community; and
   b. cannot be linked to an individual student by anyone who does not have access to the linking key;

2. the anonymous data file is populated by data from education records in a manner that ensures that the identity of any student cannot be determined, including assurances of sufficient
cell and subgroup sizes; and

3. the linking key that connects the non-personal identifier to student information is itself an education record subject to the privacy provisions of FERPA. In other words, the linking key must be kept with the intermediary and must not be shared with the DSP.

As a reminder, in reporting information, if cell size or other information would make a student's identity "easily traceable," that information would be considered "personally identifiable." The intermediary should use generally accepted statistical principles and methods to ensure that the data are reported in a manner that fully prevents the identification of students. If that cannot be done, the data must not be reported.

**Predictive Outcomes and Indicators:** The foundation is focusing on a set of student outcomes and indicators that, when increasing or achieved, are predictive of students successfully earning a high school diploma, enrolling in a postsecondary institution, and being on track in their first year to earn a credential with labor-market value. The table below encompasses these outcomes and indicators associated with secondary schools, and includes example measures per indicator. Note that the example measures were derived from research on a limited set of districts, and we expect each intermediary to work with schools and districts to derive optimal measures according to their context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Example Measure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle School On-Track</td>
<td>8th Grade On-Track (% of 8th graders meeting composite measures)</td>
<td>% of 8th graders with a GPA of 2.5 or better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% of 8th graders with attendance 96% or better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% of 8th graders with no Ds or Fs in ELA or Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% of 8th graders never suspended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th Grade Math Proficiency</td>
<td></td>
<td>% of students demonstrating 8th grade student ability in Math on benchmarked assessment aligned with a high-quality curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th Grade ELA Proficiency</td>
<td></td>
<td>% of students demonstrating 8th grade student ability in ELA on benchmarked assessment aligned with a high-quality curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th Grade On-Track</td>
<td></td>
<td>% of freshman students who accumulated at least five course credits (or regional equivalent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Indicator</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th Grade On-Track</td>
<td>% of 9th grade students who failed no more than one semester course in a core subject (English, math, social science, or science) during their freshman school year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of freshman students with attendance 96% or better</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of freshman students with an GPA of 3.0 or better</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Ready On-Track</td>
<td>HS Math Proficiency</td>
<td>% of 10th or 11th grade students demonstrating grade-level ability in Math on benchmarked assessment aligned with a high-quality curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HS ELA Proficiency</td>
<td>% of 10th or 11th grade students demonstrating grade-level ability in ELA on benchmarked assessment aligned with a high-quality curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College Ready On-Track (9th graders meeting composite measures)</td>
<td>% of 11th and 12th grade students completing at least one AP, IB, or dual credit class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of 11th and 12th grade students with a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School College Access</td>
<td>Financial Access</td>
<td>% of 12th grade students demonstrating knowledge of, experience with, and/or completion of requirements to access financial support for college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>College Entrance Exam</td>
<td>% of graduates who have completed a college entrance exam (e.g., SAT, ACT) and met state thresholds for proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Postsecondary Application</td>
<td>% of graduates applying to credentialing postsecondary institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-Time High School Graduation</td>
<td>On-Time High School Graduation</td>
<td>% of students graduating high school on time (Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postsecondary Enrollment</td>
<td>Postsecondary Enrollment</td>
<td>% of graduates enrolled in a credentialing postsecondary program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postsecondary On-Track</td>
<td>Postsecondary Match</td>
<td>% of college-enrolled graduates who enroll in an institution whose average attendee is at or above the academic profile of the enrolled graduate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Postsecondary On-Track (% of post-secondary students meeting composite measures)</td>
<td>% of high school graduates who, upon entrance to a postsecondary institution, complete mathematics and English gateway courses after the first two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% of high school graduates who, upon entrance to a postsecondary institution, have a GPA of 3.0 after the first two years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% of high school graduates who, upon entrance to a postsecondary institution, meet all these criteria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Problem of Practice:** An NSI’s problem of practice is the specific student-focused problem or issue the network schools are brought together to address. Addressing this problem will make significant progress toward the network’s aim for Black, Latino, and low-income students. The problem of practice that guides an NSI’s efforts should be within a school’s sphere of control.

**Root cause:** A root cause is the underlying or essential source of an NSI’s problem of practice. When teams engage in a root causes analysis, they use multiple and varied data to drill down into a problem to undercover what is truly causing the negative effect. Determining a problem’s root cause helps team ensure their work is addressing a problem’s exact causes and not its symptoms.

**Type 1 Intermediaries:** These are intermediaries that have demonstrated capacity and experience in the following areas: continuous improvement methods; data collection and analysis; network facilitation; school-level leadership development; improving outcomes for Black, Latino, and low-income students; and knowledge management.

These intermediaries
- have successfully facilitated a network of schools or districts that used a continuous improvement process to improve one or more predictive student outcomes or indicators for Black, Latino, and low-income students, and
• are (or will be with planning funds) ready to launch an NSI in 2018 or early 2019 that aims to increase the number of Black, Latino, and low-income students who make progress against a predictive student outcome or indicator in 10-50 schools.

Type 2 Intermediaries: These are intermediaries that have demonstrated experience in some, but not all, of the following areas: continuous improvement methods; data collection and analysis; network facilitation; school-level leadership development; improving outcomes for Black, Latino, and low-income students; and knowledge management.

Intermediaries that apply for Type 2 grants are developing their capacity to facilitate an NSI. As such, these grants are generally smaller in scope and duration.

The purpose of the Type 2 investment is to support intermediaries to lead a specific improvement project that seeks to improve a student predictive indicator while simultaneously building capacity and potential to apply for a Type 1 grant in future years.