A+SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

Summary of Components, Timeline and Estimated Costs for the First Three Years of A+ Implementation (In-State NC Schools)

Introduction

A+ Schools of North Carolina began in 1993 with two pilot schools that were the inspiration for the development of the current statewide network. Initial implementation is a three-year process, after which schools continue to work with A+ staff to collaboratively plan professional development to sustain and strengthen their A+ school over time. A+ also works with other states to develop large statewide A+ Networks similar to ours, or to develop one or two schools as pilot A+ schools for their district, region or state. We will assist you in planning the scope and development of your initiative.

Overview of Key Components of Implementation

A+ Institutes: While becoming an A+ school is a process that involves the entire school over several years, the key event that launches a school into their first year of A+ implementation is a five-day A+ Institute for all staff members. The Institute is conducted by A+ Schools staff and designed to prepare your staff, including teachers, administrators, special area teachers and teacher assistants, to begin implementing the eight A+ Essentials™, the key philosophical commitments made by all A+ schools. More than 20 years of program evaluations from teams of researchers and from participants have identified the five-day Institute as a transformative process and the primary change agent in becoming an A+ school.

In years two and three of A+ implementation, schools attend a three-day, whole-school summer A+ conference. In subsequent years, schools attend one, two or three-day summer conferences as needs and resources indicate.

Pre-application Meeting: Prior to submitting an application, potential new A+ schools participate in a mandatory pre-application meeting conducted by A+ Schools staff and designed to assist schools in making an informed decision about becoming an A+ school. These are hands-on, experiential sessions that have proven to be a key step in developing the staff buy-in and level of commitment needed for successful implementation and sustainability of the program. Attendees from each school are assisted in creating a plan for sharing new information with their staff and gaining the required 85% school commitment prior to submitting an application.

School-year Professional Development: During the first three years of implementation, A+ Schools staff offer professional development during the academic year designed specifically for schools new to A+ practice and philosophy. After the initial three years, schools are offered professional development as needed during the school year that is planned collaboratively with individual schools. Throughout the process, A+ schools learn to conduct self-assessments to determine their particular needs and goals for each year.

A+ Network: One of the benefits of being an A+ school is the networking among schools that provides mutual support and opportunities for resourcing and shared practice as each school works to develop their unique creative, engaging learning environment. In North Carolina, and in other states with A+ schools, we have developed strong A+ networks that include within it A+ principals, A+ Coordinators, A+ teachers and A+ Fellows (professional development facilitators) who can offer mentoring, support, connections and resources on a wide range of A+ practices and challenges.

A+ Network Events: It is expected that the principal and A+ Coordinator(s) attend two bi-annual A+ Leadership Meetings. These dates are provided well in advance and most costs for attending are covered by A+. Schools are also expected to maintain regular communication with A+ staff, send new teachers to the A+ New Teacher Training (held once or twice per year), participate in twice annual A+ Liaison visits to their school, occasionally allow pre-scheduled visitors to their school, and keep abreast of current happenings in the A+ network.

Estimated Costs

Below is a timeline and overview of the estimated costs for professional development and participation in the A+ Schools Network. Please note that A+ is often able to offer financial support for new schools with demonstrated financial need, and when financial support is available, costs will be re-negotiated to reflect any available discount.

1. ESTIMATED COSTS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PLANNING AND PRE-APPLICATION MEETING

- Information sessions for potential new A+ schools – Spring Regional Meetings
- Potential school team visit to one-day of 5-Day Summer Institute
- Pre-Application Meeting for teams from potential A+ schools at a central location
- Planning meeting with senior A+ Schools staff via phone or on-site as needed

ESTIMATED TOTAL PLANNING COSTS - No Cost to School, Network Contribution** $ 00

YEAR ONE

• Five-day Institute for entire school staff – summer Estimated costs, may adjust up or down based on size of school staff *does not include meals/overnight accommodations		22,500
• Two full days of onsite follow-up at school during school year (estimated costs)		4,000
• Spring and Fall A+ Leadership Meetings	no cost	
• Fall New A+ Teacher Training	no cost	
• Resources, updates and on-line opportunities	no cost	
• Pre-Conference Survey – spring	no cost	
ESTIMATED TOTAL YEAR ONE		$26,500

YEAR TWO

• Three-day Conference for entire school staff – summer Estimated costs, may adjust up or down based on size of school staff *does not include meals/overnight accommodations		15,500
• Two half or full days of onsite follow-up at school during school year (estimated costs)		4,000
• Spring and Fall A+ Leadership Meetings	no cost	
• Fall New A+ Teacher Training	no cost	
• Resources, updates and on-line opportunities	no cost	
• Pre-Conference Survey – spring	no cost	
ESTIMATED TOTAL YEAR TWO		$19,500

YEAR THREE

• Three-day Conference for entire school staff – summer Estimated costs, may adjust up or down based on size of school staff *does not include materials/overnight accommodations		14,500
• One half or full day of onsite follow-up at school during school year (estimated costs)		2,500
• Spring and Fall A+ Leadership Meetings	no cost	
• Fall New A+ Teacher Training	no cost	
• Resources, updates and on-line opportunities	no cost	
• Pre-Conference Survey – spring	no cost	
ESTIMATED TOTAL YEAR THREE		$ 17,000

ESTIMATED TOTAL THREE-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION **$63,000

** **A+ Schools contributes approximately $15,000** per school in services, events and materials over the three-year implementation period, not including additional financial support.

2. ADDITIONAL COSTS TO SCHOOL/DISTRICT FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

a. **BOARD AND LODGING FOR SCHOOL STAFF**
When schools must travel to attend an institute or conference, board and lodging is additional to the above costs listed for the Institute. For budgeting purposes, estimate $90 per day ($450 total for five-day, $270 total for three-day) for each person attending. This would cover the costs for double occupancy hotel rooms, breakfast and dinner for each attendee. Lunch is included in the institute/conference cost projection and occasionally the hotel includes breakfast.

b. **MILEAGE, TRAVEL EXPENSES AND STIPENDS FOR SCHOOL STAFF**
Other budget items paid with school funds could include reimbursement for school staff mileage/travel expenses, and payment of stipends for those attending the institute/conference, based on district policy of each school. *Even if funding support is available from A+ Schools of NC, it cannot be used to cover the costs for mileage/travel expenses nor staff stipends.

3. NORTH CAROLINA NETWORK ACTIVITIES

Other costs to the school beyond the summer institute/conference are the expenses of participating in A+ Network activities. While most A+ meeting/event costs are paid for by A+ Schools of NC the school should allow some budgeting for travel expenses as follows:

1. Fall – Statewide A+ Leadership Meeting (required attendance) and New Teacher Training
2. Spring – Regional A+ Leadership Meetings (required attendance)
3. Visits to other A+ Schools for staff or leadership

A+ Schools of NC covers the following meeting costs:

a. Costs of the network meetings, including facilitation by program staff (Program Director and A+ Fellows), meeting space, materials and lunch
b. Professional development costs of the New Teacher Training, including trainers, meeting space, materials and lunch
c. Costs for substitute teachers so staff can attend network meetings (maximums in place)
d. Costs for overnight accommodations (double occupancy) for those traveling long distance

Each A+ School/district would cover the following meeting costs:

a. Travel expenses to attend network meetings (mileage, additional meals)
b. Costs for teacher stipends if applicable
c. Costs for substitutes or travel to visit other A+ schools.

Other costs to be negotiated:

a. Additional professional development, coaching or support
b. A+ Network special events or statewide conferences – registration costs for these special events or conferences are dramatically reduced for A+ schools as a network benefit and generally cover a portion of meals and supply costs. A+ also works with schools to find affordable lodging in the conference area.

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