

## Request for Flexibility 2014-15 Proposal



**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please write your responses in the boxes below.

SCHOOL NAME: Dolvin Elementary School

CONCEPT NAME: School calendar waiver for full release days

Long-Term Goal #1-Foster Critical and global thinkers through rigorous and relevant learning  
Focus Area #1 Critical thinking across all content areas  
Strategic Initiatives

- Incorporate more STEM and Project-Based Learning opportunities for all students
- Explore implementation of School Enrichment Model
- Increase student choice through differentiating instruction based on student interest

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE: \_\_\_\_\_

Concept Summary	
1) Describe the need/challenge that your school seeks to address.	At Dolvin ES, our top priority is to guarantee excellent academic achievement for all students. Dolvin ES is an already high achieving school with a high percentage of students who score “Exceed” or significantly above average. Our goal is to continue to increase the number of students who score above average as well as expand all students’ critical thinking skills by providing rigor and relevance. <b>Our challenge is finding common professional development time to train teachers to help them achieve these goals.</b>
2) Describe the proposed concept, and explain how it addresses the need/challenge identified above.	To improve students’ critical thinking skills, teachers will engage in differentiated professional learning opportunities. These learning opportunities will include the TAG strategies class with 50 hours of instruction. To allow for this additional staff training and collaborative team planning, Dolvin ES will be asking for 3 full days for professional development. Two days during the first semester (September 4 <sup>th</sup> and October 13 <sup>th</sup> ) and one day during the second semester (February 16 <sup>th</sup> ). This request would be for the 2015-2016 school year. This concept is directly related to our School Strategic Plan and our purpose is to enhance teacher instruction that will provide all students with an academically challenging environment.
3) Include any research or evidence that the concept will positively affect your school’s student population. If no research exists, please articulate the rationale for the likelihood of success of	Professional development benefits both students and teachers. Research shows that as teachers grow and learn they are better able to serve their students. A 2010 paper titled “Why Professional Development Matters,” by Hayes Mizell of Learning Forward, shows the research to support professional learning for teachers.  This article points out that quality of teaching is the most important

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<p>the concept, and describe your plans for risk mitigation.</p>	<p>factor in a student’s success in school. Professional development is the most effective strategy schools and districts can utilize to achieve the high expectation of great teaching for every child. Mizell also says that the best time to implement professional development is during the school year so that teachers can learn from each other and help hold each other accountable. It is more applicable learning for teachers when they can immediately take what they learn and apply it in their classrooms.</p> <p>Mizell says that, “all effective teaching is the result of study, reflection, practice, and hard work.” Educators need to continually grow and learn new strategies to engage all students, increase student learning, and understand how each student learns. Professional development during the school year is the best way for teachers to receive this knowledge and understanding. Research indicates that an entire school learning team working toward a common goal through professional development is most effective.</p> <p>Dolvin believes that our teachers will increase their skill and ability to apply their professional development received during the school year over the course of several full day sessions. The extensive professional development Dolvin seeks to do with its staff will require an extensive amount of time (close to 50 hours). While there are various shorter professional learning opportunities, this sustained and continuous professional learning model will allow for the best outcomes for both students and teachers.</p> <p>With this new knowledge Dolvin intends to implement part of the Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM). In an article titled “What is Schoolwide Enrichment? And How Do Gifted Programs Relate to Total School Improvement?” (<a href="http://www.gifted.uconn.edu/sem/whatisem.html">www.gifted.uconn.edu/sem/whatisem.html</a>) states that this model “applies the know-how of gifted education to a systematic plan for total school improvement.” This is based on the idea that a “rising tide lifts all ships.” One of the goals of this model is to “escalate the level and quality of learning experiences for any and all students . . . the model provides guidance for the development of challenging and appropriate educational opportunities for all young people, regardless of differences in demographic and economic backgrounds or differences in the rates, styles, and levels at which they learn.” This is a program that, with the TAG strategies class professional development, the Dolvin ES staff can implement to reach our goals of improving overall critical thinking and problem solving abilities in students.</p>
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	<p>We believe using professional development days to learn the gifted pedagogy will directly impact our teachers' ability to implement the SEM and improve critical thinking ability in students. This program strives to attain three goals for students: developing talent in all children, providing a range of interest-based, advanced-level enrichment experiences for all students, and providing follow up opportunities for students based on their strengths. This pedagogy can be applied through multiple content areas which in turn will result in higher achievement overall.</p> <p>In another article by Renzulli and Reis titled "Schoolwide Enrichment Model Executive Summary," it says that "This approach [SEM] allows schools to develop a collaborative school culture that takes advantage of resources and appropriate decision-making opportunities to create meaningful, high-level and potentially creative opportunities for students to develop their talents." This model will help Dolvin to achieve multiple goals within our Strategic Plan through the TAG strategies class professional development.</p>		
<p>4) Outline the expected results in the columns to the right.</p>	<p><b>Project Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Professional development in the TAG strategies class (50 hours)</li> <li>*Strategic Plan Team collaboration time</li> </ul>	<p><b>Short-Term Goals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Increase student achievement using project-based learning</li> <li>*Increase the use of interdisciplinary connections</li> <li>*Increase critical thinking across all content areas</li> <li>*Increase teacher strategies for student-centered learning</li> </ul>	<p><b>Long-Term Outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Foster critical and global thinkers through rigorous and relevant learning</li> <li>*Develop an engaging student-centered environment that is differentiated to meet the unique needs and interests of each learner</li> </ul>
<b>Waiver(s) Requested</b>			
<p>5) List any waivers from state law, regulation, and/or rule required to implement the concept. (Facilitators will identify the specific laws, regulations, and/or rules requiring exemption.)</p>	<p>SBOE Rule 160-5-1-.02 School Day and School Year for Students and Employees.            GA State Law- Code sections:            O.C.G.A &amp; 20-2-151 (b) sets out the number of hours of instructional time for educational programs.            O.C.G.A &amp; 20-2-168(c) sets out the number of instructional days per year.</p>		

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<p>6) List any flexibility from Fulton County Schools' policy required to implement the concept. (Facilitators will identify the specific Fulton County Schools policies requiring exemptions.)</p>	<p>We seek to waive Fulton County Board Policy: Policy AE- Applicable School Year, which states: "The school year shall consist of 180 teaching days or the equivalent, except in the event of emergency school closures" for the next school year (2015- 2016).</p>
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**Impact on Students and Families, Personnel, Departments, Processes, and Schools**

<p>7) List any impact of the concept on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students and families;</li> <li>▪ Personnel;</li> <li>▪ The school schedule;</li> <li>▪ Transportation;</li> <li>▪ School nutrition;</li> <li>▪ Teaching, learning, and assessment;</li> <li>▪ Other schools; and</li> <li>▪ Any other area not addressed above.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students and family:</b> Families will have to coordinate childcare on the professional development days. Dolvin will make every effort to plan the days alongside an additional student holiday or on Mondays or Fridays as to try to help parents with potential childcare needs. In doing so, parents can potentially enjoy a longer weekend and/or travel with their children that would otherwise result in unexcused absences.</p> <p><b>Transportation:</b> Professional development whole days will have a positive impact on transportation as it will save the county money on gas. The bus routes for our elementary school will not have to run on these days.</p> <p><b>Personnel:</b> Paraprofessional's schedules would be adjusted so that they would work two and one-half days during the preplanning week and one half day during the post planning days. This schedule would allow them to assist with school responsibilities and wouldn't impact their pay.</p> <p>Staff who have already received training in this course and our support staff (technology specialist, media specialist, etc.) will also receive work to develop our plan for the School Enrichment Model by visiting other schools using this plan, or assisting with writing curriculum and developing classes for students to be rolled out during the 2016-2017 school year.</p> <p><b>Other Schools:</b> In an effort to help parents with childcare and transportation, we will strive to schedule our professional development days in conjunction with Autrey Mill Middle School, State Bridge Elementary School and Medlock Bridge Elementary School.</p> <p><b>School Schedule:</b> While the school schedule will be impacted with three less days the year that we are receiving the professional development, the students</p>
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	will benefit more throughout the year and following years as teachers apply the knowledge and skills they develop through the course.
<b>Budget</b>	
8) Please use the budget template on the next page to provide the estimated costs of the proposed concept. In the space to the right, please identify, to the extent possible, how you plan to modify your school budget to cover additional costs. If applicable, identify external funding sources.	We will seek funding from the Seed Fund to support the TAG strategies class with 50 hours of instruction for the implementation for the 2015-2016 school year.

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**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please enter the expected costs of your concept for the applicable school year(s). To calculate the totals for the Amount Budgeted columns, highlight the entire table, and press F9. You may customize the budget items.

**SCHOOL NAME:**

Budget Item	Item Description (Include quantities if applicable)	2015-2016		<Insert School Year>		<Insert School Year>		Notes
		Amount Budgeted*	Proposed Funding Source(s)**	Amount Budgeted*	Proposed Funding Source(s)**	Amount Budgeted*	Proposed Funding Source(s)**	
Teacher(s)		0		0		0		
Paraprofessional(s)		0		0		0		
Support Staff		0		0		0		
Additional Pay (certified)/Overtime (non-certified)		0		0		0		
Equipment		0		0		0		
Supplies/Materials		\$5,419.20		0		0		Books
Professional Development		\$3,600.00		0		0		Instructor Fee
Independent Contractor(s)		0		0		0		
Transportation		0		0		0		
Supplements		0		0		0		
Other Professional Services		0		0		0		
Other		0		0		0		
Other		0		0		0		
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>		<b>\$9019.20</b>		<b>\$ 0.00</b>		<b>\$ 0.00</b>		

\*When determining the *Amount Budgeted* for personnel costs, the principal should consult with the Learning Community Human Resources Director.

\*\*For the *Proposed Funding Source(s)*, please indicate which of the following funding sources you intend to use: General Fund, Student Activities Fund, School Foundation/PTA, FCS Seed Fund, Grants, or Other (please specify the source).