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**TEXAS EDUCATION AGENCY**  
**Standard Application System (SAS)**  
**Continuation Funding for**  
**Technology Applications Readiness Grants for Empowering Texas**  
**(TARGET) Cycle 1 Year 2**  
**School Year 2004-2005**  
**SCHEDULE #4B--**  
**Program Description- Part 1**  
**Program Requirements**

**188-950**  
 County District No. \_\_\_\_\_

Amendment No. \_\_\_\_\_

**Limit to 5 pages, front side only, font size not less than 9 point, Arial or Times New Roman.**

**Strategies for improving academic achievement and teacher effectiveness**

A 5<sup>th</sup> grade student that participated in Year 1 shared this with his teacher: "I like the Palms. They make me smart." The teacher of this student reported that she had previously requested a parent conference to discuss his low reading scores. He now makes close to 100 on every TAKS practice assessment. This TARGET partnership grant, the Panhandle Academic Advancement in Literacy and Math (PAALM) project, is enabling students of Region 16 to "be smart" by:

- improving student academic achievement through the use of technology in elementary schools;
- assisting students in crossing the digital divide by improving the technological literacy of each participating student; &
- encouraging the effective integration of technology into the curricula.

Year 2 of the PAALM project will continue with teachers attending professional development on methodologies in how to integrate handheld computers in their classrooms. The teachers will continue to write and implement TEKS-based lessons for handheld integration. A modification for Year 2 will be that a lesson plan will be required for each of the software packages presented during the professional development trainings. These lessons will continue to be posted on the WebBoard for all teachers in the project and throughout the state of Texas to use. Teachers will continue to collaborate with one another, with the PAALM Instructional Team, and with other community members through e-mail, the WebBoard, PAALM collaboration teams and face-to-face or videoconference meetings. This collaboration is building a community of knowledge for technology integration with handhelds.

**Goals**

The 1999 Student Success Initiative "mandates new passing requirements beginning in school year 2002-2003 for the reading test at Grade 3 and beginning in school year 2004-2005 for the reading and mathematics tests at Grade 5." The Region 16 partnership TARGET PAALM project goals will focus on reading in grades 3, 4 and 5 and on math in grade 5.

- Goal #1: All participating students in grades 3 through 5 will pass the TAKS reading test. This goal will continue into Year 2.  
 Goal #2: All participating students in grade 5 will pass the TAKS math test. This is the added focus of Year 2.

**Steps to increase accessibility**

The needs assessment for Year 2 was achieved through a variety of means. The primary means of determining what the needs for Year 2 would be was through the on-going formative evaluations the teachers submitted. This was done during each videoconference training and was also conducted through the on-line surveys. To continue to affect student learning, teachers needed more assistance in reading instruction. For Year 2, this will be supplied through additional software, up-to-date hardware and continuing training. New resources, such as the program Inspiration<sup>®</sup>, is now available for the handheld. In Year 1, classroom sets of handhelds were distributed to 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade reading classes. Each 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade reading teacher was furnished a handheld, a carrying case, a collapsible keyboard and a projector adaptor device. Software programs for reading instruction and TEKS assessment were purchased for use with the handhelds. For Year 2, similar equipment will be provided for 5th grade math classes and math teachers. In Year 2, all teachers participating in the project will receive a new handheld and additional equipment which will enable them to keep current with the emerging technologies and to allow for more diversification in the implementation of the lesson plans.

As in Year 1, to leverage existing resources, each PAALM campus has committed some of their Title II, Part D technology "formula technology funds" to furnishing each PAALM teacher and students access to an infrared capable printer. This use of locally allotted monies from state and federal sources will continue. For Year 2, the district will supply to each teacher's classroom a desktop version of the program Inspiration<sup>®</sup> for teacher and student use (see Appendix 4).

To further leverage existing resources, the teacher handhelds from Year 1 will be collected and re-distributed as classroom sets for students. This will reduce the number of student handhelds that will need to be purchased in Year 2, thus allowing more access to other instructional materials. Some project funds will be provided to each campus to acquire additional projection devices or computers and videoconference support. The decision of what equipment to purchase will be based upon local need, existing equipment, and the input of the PAALM teachers, the appropriate campus administrator and the project manager. Districts will supply on-site technical videoconference support for evening PAALM project trainings.

Each PAALM campus has supplied computer access to teachers for the professional development trainings in the summer and in the evenings via the Region 16 videoconferencing network (region16.net). Many of these computers were purchased from either previous TIF or TIE grant funds. PAALM campuses have committed to support the PAALM project's goals and objectives with their "formula technology funds" and with state technology allotment monies (see forms of commitment from original grant application).

- a. In Year 1, all high-need campuses received a classroom set of handhelds. This allowed 100% on-demand access to the new technology for the students and teachers. The non-high need PAALM campuses shared classroom sets of the handheld computers

and some will continue to share in Year 2. Teachers in high-need campuses will receive additional instructional materials, such as the TAKS Coach workbook, that can be utilized with the software and hardware of the project.

b. All teachers will participate in professional development on how to use and integrate the handheld computers. The professional development classes are designed to meet requirements for “sustained, high-quality, on-going professional development.” In Year 2, teachers new to the project will attend four days of face-to-face professional development during the summer at Region 16 ESC. The curriculum for the professional development includes:

Day 1 – an introduction to the handheld computer, use of the Operating System (OS), use of built-in software, synchronization with the computer and other handhelds

Day 2 - the use of TEKS-based assessment software (TANGO)

Day 3 – the integration of subject-specific software and the writing of a TEKS-based integration lesson plan

Day 4 – WebBoard collaboration tool, LoTI assessment and how to find and download software from the Internet for the handheld

Teachers who are currently in the project as reading teachers, but who also teach math, will attend the Day 3 math software training during July 2004.

As in Year 1, teachers will attend a total of four half-day professional development sessions held outside the school day. During these sessions, the PAALM teachers will:

- ✓ self-evaluate the effectiveness of the lesson(s) they taught utilizing the handheld computer
- ✓ submit these evaluations to the PAALM Instructional Team
- ✓ share and collaborate about the effectiveness of student learning with the handheld computer
- ✓ learn new software and hardware
- ✓ create and submit a new TEKS-based lesson plan that integrates the handheld computer
- ✓ evaluate the current effectiveness and progress of the PAALM project’s goals and objectives

### **Promotion of curricula and teaching strategies that integrate technology**

As stated in the goals, the curricula focus for Year 1 was reading TEKS in grades 3, 4 and 5. For Year 2, the math TEKS will be added in grade 5 for all campuses. To fully meet the needs of the high-need campuses and because math is a subject that “builds” on previous knowledge, the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade math teachers and students from the high-need campuses will also be included in Year 2. This decision was based upon the math TAKS test results and its passing standards for students, along with the Campus Texas STaR Chart results of the high-need schools. The 2004 math TAKS test for 5<sup>th</sup> grade will be the “benchmark” year for scores. Benchmark scores for reading and math in Years 1 and 2 will be compared to scores in Year 2 and 3.

### **Professional development**

The professional development plan for the PAALM project has been structured to place the main emphasis on technology integration into the curriculum and to allow the teacher to be responsible for planning and implementing the project. This strengthens the competencies teachers need to provide for successful student learning by supplying the teacher with on-going professional development opportunities, teaching strategies, and the hardware and software to provide for student learning. The design leaves the actual implementation of strategies (lesson plans) to the teacher. Each teacher is the expert in his or her own classroom and can best decide which lessons and strategies are most appropriate for their particular students’ learning styles.

Continuing in Year 2, teachers will not miss instructional time to participate in the PAALM project. For teachers new to the project, there will be four days of professional development during the summer, with an additional four ½ day each trainings outside the school day during the year. Reading teachers currently in the project will also attend the four additional trainings outside the school day. The teachers will be active participants, responsible for their own learning. They will post lesson plans implemented during the school year. After implementing a lesson, they will be responsible for assessing it. For on-going communication, discussion and collaboration, all PAALM teachers are subscribed to a listserv, registered to a bulletin board program with a chat component and grouped into “PAALM collaboration teams.”

PAALM teacher input is very important. In Year 2, teachers will continue to have the opportunity to learn from and share with fellow teachers of the same grade level and subject area. During Year 1, teachers learned how to download and install freeware and shareware programs. Their lessons and experiences with students were shared with all the project participants. Teachers are making recommendations on software for reading and math for the Year 2 implementation. During the summer professional development, the teachers will continue to be given the opportunity to research software programs and to make recommendations on what programs should be purchased in the future. They have been invited to attend vendor software demonstrations and to download demo programs for trial use.

As in Year 1, each PAALM collaboration team will write a lesson plan that focuses upon a specific need of a high-need campus. After the collaborative lesson plan is created, it will be posted on the WebBoard. Teachers are encouraged to utilize it in the classroom, implement the lesson and share the outcomes with the rest of the PAALM teachers. The PAALM Instructional Team will include Instructional Technology Specialists, Communications Technology Instructional Specialists and Instructional Services Content Specialists employed by Region 16 ESC. The summer professional development will be provided on-site at Region 16 ESC, and the school year professional development will be offered via the region16.net videoconference system after school. The Region 16 Instructional Services Content Specialists for reading and math will attend professional development during the summer and school year, will be members of the listserv, and will have access to the WebBoard. The ESC Curriculum specialists’ involvement will focus upon the integration of technology in the curriculum.

### **Technology type and costs**

To meet the Campus Texas STaR Chart needs of the schools, to enable the reading and math students to “be smart” and to address the need to supply new and emerging technologies into today’s classrooms, the hardware selected for the TARGET PAALM project is the Palm OS handheld computer. Each teacher handheld and other equipment for Year 2 will be approximately \$325 and each student handheld will be approximately \$150. Each teacher new to the project in Year 2 will also receive a projector adaptor (Margi) for approximately \$160 and a CD case for the software.

Approximately \$90 per handheld will be spent on math software in Year 2, and \$45 for additional reading software. In Year 1, each PAALM campus committed their Title II, Part D technology “formula technology funds” to provide access to an infrared capable printer. As in Year 1, a small amount of project funds will be provided to acquire a projection device or computer, based upon campus need. Districts have spent additional funds to acquire handhelds, storage solutions, training and additional software. Administrators and technology support staff have acquired the necessary hardware and software to support the teachers and students, and have attended the trainings. To implement this PAALM project, the total cost per student would be \$209 per student. None of the high-need PAALM campuses could have spent this amount per student due to insufficient Title II, Part D Formula Technology Funds. Refer to per student dollar amounts shown in Column E of Schedule 4A for each high-need campus. In Year 2, each campus has committed to furnish each reading teacher’s classroom with the desktop version of the program Inspiration<sup>®</sup>.

### **Coordination with other resources**

As in Year 1, the PAALM campuses will support the PAALM project in a variety of ways. Each campus will provide access to an infrared capable printer or infrared adapter. The PAALM campuses will continue to provide the PAALM teacher access to a computer with a USB port for the evening videoconference sessions and for classroom use. These computers were acquired from previous TIF or TIE grant funds or local funds. Existing T1 lines and videoconference systems will be utilized for the professional development during the school year. All districts have teacher computer workstations that are Internet accessible which all communication with email and Internet web sites. All districts have committed to continuing project support with staff, equipment and training as needed in 2004-2005. (see Appendix 4)

### **Integration of technology with curricula and instruction**

All districts have submitted their technology plans online through ePlan (see Appendix 2). All plans address the need of increased access to technology and increased use of technology in the curriculum. This grant allows the districts to accomplish those objectives. Integration of technology into the curriculum is the focus of all PAALM teacher professional development. Lesson plans from Year 1 are posted on the PAALM WebBoard. See: <http://www.esc16.net/dept/techserv/paalm>

In Year 2 professional development and collaboration will continue. New software will be acquired and the teachers will be trained on its integration into the reading or math curriculum. Teachers will continue to post lesson plans on the WebBoard. Again in Year 2, each PAALM collaboration team will be responsible for creating, posting and implementing a lesson plan that focuses upon the need of a high-need campus. Website resources and software available will be posted on the WebBoard. There were 120 reading teachers participating in Year 1 and each posted two lesson plans and collaborated on a third plan. For Year 2, each teacher will be asked to create one lesson plan in their curriculum area for each software program presented during trainings. New WebBoard conferences will be created for Year 2 for the teachers to post the lesson plans. These posted lesson plans are a valuable resource to any other Texas campus that wishes to replicate this endeavor.

### **Innovative delivery strategies**

There are two aspects of delivery strategies for this program. One aspect is to deliver professional development to the PAALM teachers and the other aspect is to deliver instruction to the students (by the PAALM teacher).

In Year 2, PAALM teachers will continue to receive professional development via the region16.net videoconference system. Because of the existence of this system, evening professional development for geographically distant teachers is possible. Of the fifteen districts partnering in the project, twelve have videoconference sites. Districts that do not have videoconference sites will have no further than thirty miles to travel to attend evening professional development sessions. Another delivery strategy for professional development of the PAALM teachers is communication via email and WebBoard postings. In Year 1, a bulletin board software program (WebBoard ) was purchased that is hosted on a server at Region 16. The WebBoard enables PAALM teachers and the PAALM Instructional Team to communicate and collaborate in a new and unique way. In Year 2 the use of the WebBoard will be emphasized to provide for additional, expanded collaboration.

The second aspect of delivery strategy focuses upon the student use of the handhelds (see survey results in Evaluation Report #2).

Below are a few student “success stories”:

- ✓ “Students are motivated in subject areas that are usually of little or no interest to them, such as spelling. They are eager to practice and take tests on the handhelds. Our spelling grades have increased, especially for two struggling spellers. It is also a good incentive for the students to work on listening skills as well as following directions. Everyone is very careful with the Palms and takes them very seriously. They do a great job helping their neighbor’s complete tasks, and can use the Palms with no problem. We love them!”
- ✓ “Teaching vocabulary words has always been a difficult task for me. My students are eager to learn new words using their Palms and Vocabulary Buddy. The Palms make learning fun for the students as well as me. I enjoy finding new and free programs on the internet that make learning fun for my students. Palms are a great tool!!”
- ✓ “I watched a special ed student who is ADD work so intensely! He was so excited about his work he got up in front of the class for the first time.”
- ✓ “My special ed student that had been failing all spelling tests began to pass once he began entering his words into his Palm.”

- ✓ “Vocabulary Study Buddy on the Palms has been my saving grace this year. It really helped to improve student skills in word meaning and was very motivational!”
- ✓ “I was able to integrate much of my language arts curriculum. The students used the Palms to take spelling tests, write reports, drill and practice in spelling, game based learning, and many other activities. These activities were very supportive in the implementation of TAKS objectives.”
- ✓ “I had 13 of 17 students make 100 on the weekly spelling test. I have been teaching for 20 years and that has never happened before!”

### **Parental involvement**

Each PAALM campus will share with parents and community members how the handhelds are being used in the classroom. Communication between the campus and parents can be achieved through a variety of ways: newsletters, school websites, phone calls, teacher notes and/or newspaper articles. This communication with parents and the community will continue in Year 2, with each campus having some type of parent technology night where the PAALM teachers and students will demonstrate to the parents and other community members how the handhelds are being integrated into the curriculum. For Year 2, all PAALM project campuses will be expected to create a PAALM project website. This website will be another means of parent and community involvement and information and will be linked to the Region 16 PAALM grant website.

### **Collaboration with adult literacy service providers – Not Applicable.**

### **Accountability measures**

PAALM teachers will have a variety of accountability measures.

As in Year 1, after the summer professional development, each PAALM teacher will submit a lesson plan to be implemented before the next training occurs. During the videoconference sessions, PAALM teachers will have an evaluation form to complete to self-assess the lesson they taught. PAALM teachers will also be required to continue to post lesson plans throughout the school year that integrate the handhelds into the curriculum. In Year 2, the Levels of Technology Integration (LoTI), an on-line assessment tool of technology skills and integration will be continued. These results will become cumulative over the life of the project. Teachers will take the assessment at the beginning of each year (or during the summer training) and again at the end of the year. Yearly results will be part of the evaluation plan, as well as cumulative results from Year 1 to Year 2.

The students will be assessed throughout the year through the use of TEKS-based assessment software. Instead of requiring a pre- and post assessment using a TAKS release test, the frequency of use will be teacher and district driven. This modification of student assessment was done to address the concerns and needs of the districts. All of the districts had a pre-determined time frame, and strategies for use of the TAKS release tests. The teachers will continue to use the TANGO program, but will determine themselves when it is most appropriate and not be required to give the test at a set time for project purposes.

As in Year 1, the PAALM teachers will complete online surveys to evaluate the project. The evaluation will cover all aspects from professional development, student achievement, management, and parent and community involvement. The questions as well as the structure of the questions and information of this survey has been taken and adapted from evaluations from previous technology and handheld grants (TIE and PEP). This web-based feedback form will be revised as recommended by the independent evaluator.

### **Supporting resources**

As In Year 1, the PAALM teachers will have support through a listserv for communication between teachers and the PAALM Instructional Team. The teachers will continue to have WebBoard access for posting of questions, lesson ideas, lesson plans and outcomes. Training on new software for reading instruction will be presented and used in the integration lesson plans. Printed and on-line materials will be posted on the WebBoard for easy, up-to-date and on-demand access. Supplemental resources on technology integration, the use of handhelds in the classroom and curriculum resources will continue to be posted on the WebBoard. The PAALM Instructional Team will continue to be available for support through phone, email and on-site visits.

The training provided via the videoconference system will continue to be supported through the existence of the region16.net network. These units were all installed through a TIE 1998 grant, a TIE 2001 grant or TIF funds. Each site is equipped with a phone and fax in the videoconference room. All campuses involved have at least one T1 line for Internet and videoconference connectivity, which are discounted through E-rate. All classrooms have teacher and student computers with Internet connectivity. At least one computer in each classroom will have a USB port, which is needed for the synchronization of the handheld computer. Each PAALM teacher classroom will also have access to an infrared printer or an adapter on a current printer to allow “beaming” of information to the printer from the handheld computer.

No external trainers were utilized in Year 1. For Year 2, the PAALM Instructional Team will explore options for additional trainings for the PAALM teachers through the use of an outside consultant.

The PAALM Instructional Team will continue to research, study and acquire printed, on-line and media resources to support the PAALM teachers and their students. The Region 16 ESC Instructional Services consultants will be available for advice regarding the specific TEKS, recommendations on the appropriateness of software and for general instructional methodology. Region 16 ESC is committed to the PAALM project, with staff support of the PAALM Instructional Team and other support staff members.