Section 1. COVER SHEET FOR PROPOSALS TO THE EDUCATION PROGRAM

Submit in Word or Excel format; please do not submit .pdf files.

Date submitted or revised	July 1, 2008
Name of applicant organization	CHABOT-LAS POSITAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
Organization's address, phone number, general fax number, and website url of project, if applicable	5020 Franklin Drive, Pleasanton, CA 94588 Fax (925)-485-5255
Head of organization's name and title (if university, name of head of school)	Dr. Joel Kinnamon, Chancellor Chabot-Las Positas Community College District
Name and contact info for principal investigator(s), project director(s), or lead person on the proposal; include email address(s)	Cynthia Hicks chicks@chabotcollege.edu Tom deWit tdewit@chabotcollege.edu Dr. Katie Hern khern@chabotcollege.edu Sean McFarland smcfarland@chabotcollege.edu
Name and contact info for individual responsible for submission of reports, if different from previous line; include email address	Cynthia Hicks
Amount Requested	$ _1,750,000; length of the project 30 months/2.5yrs)
% of total program, project, or organizational budget	100%
For multiple year grant requests only: please indicate desired payment schedule	$_640,000 in year one $_778,000 in year two $__332,000 in year three
Organization's fiscal year end	Month June Day 30
Method of payment: ___ CHECK Name and mailing address to which check(s) should be made payable (for U.S. non-profit organizations, this should be the name on 501c3 or other documentation of IRS tax-exempt status) ___ WIRE TRANSFER omplete and sign attached wire transfer form	
Hewlett Foundation Education Program priority. See program areas and strategic plan at http://www.hewlett.org/Programs/Education	___ Improving Instruction, K12 ___ OER ___ Technology, Other ___ CA Reform, K-12 _x CA Reform, Community Co

> **Public description of your project** *Please provide a brief statement that describes your proposed work. This description will appear on our website and in our annual report. It can be no longer than 15 words beginning with "For" (see examples below).*
> **Examples:**
> - For partial support of a randomized trial study of instruction in community colleges.
> - For general support for the North American Council on Online Learning.
>
> **For support of a professional development program to strengthen basic skills education in community colleges**

Project Summary

In response to the urgent and widely recognized need to strengthen basic skills education at California community colleges, this proposal seeks to create a new state-wide professional development program. This program would serve as a complement to the efforts currently underway in the Basic Skills Initiative and the emerging Basic Skills Resource Network, by creating a network of 15 colleges across the state working collaboratively to improve basic skills education. Building upon the work of the Hewlett-Carnegie SPECC project, participants from the 15 colleges would be trained and guided in two complementary approaches: 1.) Faculty Inquiry into how our students learn, what's getting in the way of their learning, and how we can better reach them, and 2.) Making Visible the results of these inquiries through multi-media windows into teaching and learning (e.g. videos, websites). The initiative will be grounded in values and practices that we believe are essential to improving outcomes for students who arrive at the open doors of the community college system under-prepared for the demands of the college environment. An effective approach to basic skills education demands that community college educators come up with new ways of seeing our students, new language about basic skills education, and new ways of imagining the learning environments of our classrooms. It requires a belief in the capability of our students and a willingness to change our practice to more effectively engage this capability. And it requires that we invest intentional time and effort into understanding our students and what they need to find their footing and thrive in the college environment. To evaluate our expected outcomes, we will gather a variety of qualitative and quantitative data to trace and assess the process by which Inquiry affects teachers' understanding of students, and leads to changes in classroom practice and institutional culture. Our findings will be captured in report, web, and video formats.

A. Background

Chabot College proposes to establish a state-wide professional development program to strengthen basic skills education in California. This program will build upon the momentum of Hewlett's previous project on Strengthening Pre-Collegiate Education in Community Colleges (SPECC) by taking the complementary approaches of faculty inquiry and "making teaching and learning visible" to a broader network of colleges. Inquiry, in the context of this grant proposal, is the act of looking closely at student learning and practice, in an effort to better understand how our students learn, what's getting in the way of that learning, and how we can better reach them. "Making Visible" refers to the creation of multi-media windows into teaching and learning – e.g. videos, websites – that serve as catalysts for student self-awareness, teacher reflection and changes in teacher thinking and practice.

Chabot College is well positioned to lead this effort. As one of the 11 community colleges who participated in SPECC, Chabot has been engaged in faculty Inquiry and Making Visible for three years now, and our work has been highlighted across the state and in several national forums, including *Inside Higher Ed* (http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2008/01/29/california). One of the projects to emerge from Chabot's work in SPECC is Instructor Katie Hern's multimedia website presenting the findings of her Inquiry into the "academic sustainability gap" among students who demonstrate the ability to be successful and then withdraw or fail. Our SPECC work has also included creating four full-length documentaries centered on students' experiences as learners. One of the movies, *Reading Between the Lives*, is comprised entirely of student voices, talking candidly about their backgrounds as readers, their struggles, their perceptions of instructors and their views of themselves as learners. At Chabot, the video has sparked college-wide dialogue around the "basic skill" of reading, a conversation that extends well beyond the hallways of developmental English. More than 1,500 copies of the DVD have been distributed, and the movie has been shown at more than 50 community colleges to date.

Chabot has been a leader in basic skills education for years – founding the Puente learning community in the 1980s, pioneering the integration of reading and writing instruction in English in the 1990s, and leading the current state-wide Umoja community for African-American

students. And under the SPECC grant, we have experienced the generative power of Inquiry and Making Visible as catalysts for improving basic skills education. We want to use our own experience to help spread this work to other colleges around the state. We will also draw upon the expertise of our extensive network of relationships with other colleges, foundations, and non-profit organizations. This network includes the 10 other SPECC colleges, the state-wide Basic Skills Initiative, and several outside organizations funded by the Hewlett foundation, such as California Tomorrow, the Digital Bridge Academy, and the California Benchmarking Project.

B. Problem/Theory of Action

For millions of learners, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, community colleges are the main access point to higher education. Yet access alone is not enough. Currently fewer than half of all community college students meet their educational goals. The percentage of students who enter the system under-prepared for college level work is staggeringly high. According to the American Association of Community Colleges, up to eighty percent (80%) of first-time students are placed into developmental English or mathematics courses. Data from California Community Colleges corroborates this problem, with colleges reporting that 70-80% of students require work in developmental mathematics or English upon entry to college (Basic Skills Study). Facing a long series of "catch-up" courses, only a small percentage of these students ever make it to college-level English and mathematics and thus to the opportunities afforded by higher education.

The approach to basic skills education by community college educators is often part of the problem:

- They give students bite-sized curricula.
- They separate discrete skills (paragraph writing, using a ruler, grammar skill and drill) from the kind of motivating, engaging intellectual work that higher education is about.
- They see students as deficient for not already knowing this stuff and either pity these students or think they are not cut out for higher education.
- They try keep basic skills students segregated in certain hallways – English, math, ESL, counseling – until students are "fixed" and "ready" for a true college education.

This paradigm makes it difficult to see students clearly and engage them where they are. In

particular, it keeps instructors from seeing the tremendous capacities students bring to the classroom – their ability to analyze, to problem-solve, to use creative thinking to synthesize information, and grapple with big ideas. Instructors tend to focus narrowly on student deficits – their inexperience with academic language and culture, their lack of background knowledge – and then design "basic skills" classrooms and assignments in ways that don't elicit students' fullest capacities. In transfer level courses, instructors often make no adjustment to their teaching practice to help students gain access to the kinds of "basic" language, habits, and cognitive routines that their instructors -- as experts in the discipline -- take for granted.

As a result, huge numbers of students fail or withdraw. Many of them come to community college with difficult educational histories and precarious academic identities. And they can only withstand failure and disaffection in community college for so long. They also can't sustain an engagement with learning when their pain, anxiety, or misinformed expectations repeatedly knock them out of the learning experience. Meanwhile they are under great pressure to make money and progress economically. To address these complex problems, we need new ways of seeing our students, new language about basic skills education, and new ways of imagining the learning environments of our classrooms.

The participating colleges in the SPECC grant have demonstrated the value of Inquiry as a method for professional development. The Carnegie team articulates this well in their final report. "Faculty inquiry is a form of professional development that engages teachers in looking closely and critically at student learning for the purpose of improving courses and programs. The inquiry process is ongoing, directly linked to teaching and learning, and undertaken in a setting that is collaborative and collegial. Their findings come back to the classroom in the form of new curriculum, new assessments and new pedagogies." Carnegie compiled strong survey data that underscores these claims. Our goal is to follow up on this work by tracing Inquiry to changes in teacher thinking and educational practice and -- ultimately -- improved student learning outcomes.

We will build on the work of the SPECC grant by expanding the network of colleges using faculty Inquiry and Making Visible to improve basic skills. Teams from participating colleges will propose Inquiry projects investigating basic skills education. The goal of the Inquiry will be to uncover and understand what is happening in the basic skills arena, even if it means uncovering that what we are doing is not effective. Participants will pursue their Inquiries over several semesters – moving from hunches and early questions to examining data from interviews, surveys,

focus groups, think alouds, student work, and institutional research. Participants will be in regular dialogue about what they're learning –with their team, with students, with colleagues from other participating colleges, with the Regional Inquiry Coaches -- and this dialogue will lead them into deeper and more focused questions, additional layers of data. Finally, the grant will guide them in creating multimedia representations to share what they have learned with other faculty. Throughout the process, participants will be guided by Regional Inquiry Coaches, meet regularly with teams from other colleges in their region, and attend regional and state-wide trainings, all of which will help them further shape and deepen their investigation into student learning.

In creating this kind of sustained, collaborative approach to improving basic skills education, we aim to overcome three barriers that limit the effectiveness of many professional development programs:

1. **Isolation of Teaching: Classroom as a Private Space.** One of the impediments to educational improvement is that the classroom has been treated as a private space, a space as Lee Shulman has called it, of "pedagogical solitude" (The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching). As a consequence, faculty have few models to draw on and few opportunities to see alternative approaches across diverse settings. It is difficult to improve teaching when faculty remain isolated from one another and lack a clear idea of what excellent teaching looks like in various contexts. *Making the invisible work of faculty visible* is a critical piece that is often missing from professional development efforts.

2. **Insufficiency of Stand-Alone Workshop Format.** As noted in the Basic Skills Initiative's literature review, there is little evidence that "one-shot" workshops produce any change in pedagogical practice, and yet workshops are still the most common form of staff development offered by community colleges. To deeply impact teaching and learning, community college personnel must have time to question and reflect together, examine data, share ideas and address problems. Community college educators need extensive, sustained opportunities to investigate what works in basic skills and what does not. College-wide cultural change is a complex endeavor that does not happen through workshops alone.

3. **Basic Skills Are Not So Basic Or Simple.** The apparent simplicity of the basic skills in question often provokes a simplistic, sequential approach to pedagogy, one that emphasizes repetition, drill and memorization despite emerging information about how adults learn and the ineffectiveness of these practices. While repetition and practice are important, "skill and drill" without a connection to big ideas can frustrate students and teachers alike. This project takes the perspective that even at the most fundamental levels of ESL, English and mathematics, **intellectually engaging issues exist which students are fully capable of exploring.** More to the point, current research on literacy suggests that these so-called "basic skills" are not so basic or simple. The reading process that most of us take for granted is highly complex. As we "decode" a text, we bring to bear a vast reservoir of cultural and linguistic knowledge, connecting new ideas

to old ones and actively questioning what we read as we read it. Too often, our discussions gloss over the complexities involved in teaching and learning basic skills. Faculty, administrators and counselors rarely have an opportunity to delve into these deeper learning issues together.

We will use our network of contacts from across the state to identify colleges and faculty that are doing good work in basic skills, and then invite them to submit an inquiry proposal. In our Request for Inquiry Proposals (RFIP), we will intentionally plant seeds of topics/directions to explore. These will include elements we consider essential to a new approach to basic skills education. Pre-seeded topics will also build on the work of several prior Hewlett projects, including SPECC, the Digital Bridge Academy, and the California Benchmarking Project: reading, equity, acceleration, basic skills across the curriculum, high structure and intensity, and the affective dimension of basic skills (identity, academic sustainability, self-esteem, emotional intelligence, community). By pre-identifying promising themes and directions to pursue, we hope to facilitate deep cross-college investigations and enable the colleges' local inquiries to build directly on each others' findings.

To position Inquiry projects for maximum impact within their institutions, our RFIP will ask participants to meet several important criteria:
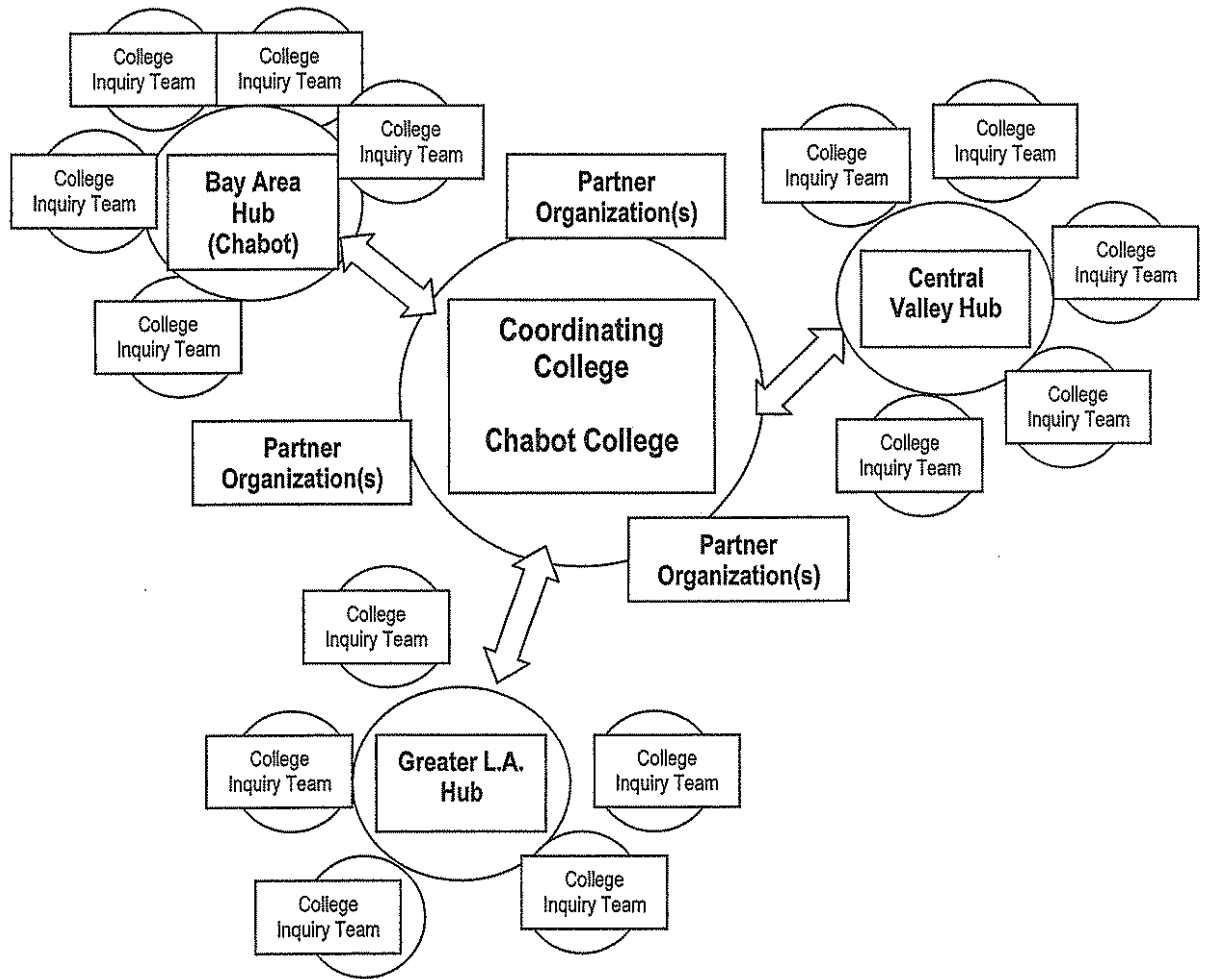
- Work in teams of 4 to 8, with a strong recommendation that at least one team member have some knowledge of Making Visible tools (web/video)
- Collect and use institutional & classroom data to inform their Inquiry
- Connect inquiry to BSI funding and other resources at their campus
- Commit to making student voices an integral component of their Inquiry
- Make classroom-based Inquiry the focus of their work
- Work to understand the thorny challenges involved in basic skills education
- Articulate a persuasive, deeply considered Inquiry proposal
- Work in an open, transparent, and collegial manner

To maximize the impact of this work in the broader context of the state, we will align our work closely with other projects currently underway. We will draw upon the tools and people involved in the state-wide Basic Skills Initiative (BSI), and offer our own work to enrich that effort. We also plan to integrate several of the equity assessment tools developed by the California Benchmarking Project. Finally, we see a natural alignment with the emerging Basic Skills Resource Network (BSRN), which is working to fulfill a state-wide need for "high quality, intellectually engaging professional development for teaching at a basic skills level" (Feb. 2008 draft, "Purpose, Mission, Vision"). In our emphasis on multi-media representations of issues and effective practices in basic

skills education, this project contributes to one of the core needs identified by the Basic Skills Resource Network: "The community college sector needs to build 'educational capital' --new knowledge, tools, and materials--that can be broadly shared and used in basic skills education settings."

Of course, our ultimate goal in creating a network of sustained, ongoing faculty Inquiry into basic skills education is to improve the learning experiences of our students. In their draft literature review, Rose Asera (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching) and Robert Gabriner (Institutional Research, City College of San Francisco) recently described the kinds of professional development that have an impact on student success: "When professional development is ongoing, is directly linked to the curriculum and instruction, and is undertaken collaboratively and collegially, it makes a difference." We hope that fostering local inquiries into issues of student learning and success – and facilitating an ongoing, collaborative process for examining these issues – will ultimately lead to higher student self-confidence, retention, success, and persistence.

C. INPUTS

Diagram showing:
- Bay Area Hub (Chabot) surrounded by College Inquiry Teams
- Central Valley Hub surrounded by College Inquiry Teams
- Greater L.A. Hub surrounded by College Inquiry Teams
- Coordinating College — Chabot College (center)
- Partner Organization(s) (three instances)

Fifteen Participating Colleges, Each Pursuing a Local Inquiry

Working in collaborative teams, colleges will propose inquiry projects to be supported through the grant. The questions and data framed in their proposals will be the starting point for an extended research and reflection process, through which the teams will pursue deeper and more coherent questioning, gather new rounds of data, work with Regional Hub Coaches, and share their emerging findings with other participating colleges. In the later stages of the process, participants will develop compelling multi-media representations (web, video), housed in a central basic skills resource website where key findings and effective practices from around the state can be shared.

Three Colleges Serving as Regional Inquiry Hubs, Led by a Regional Inquiry Coach

One Greater Los Angeles, One Central Valley, One Bay Area

College Inquiry Teams will be supported and guided by Regional Inquiry Coaches, faculty leaders from Chabot and two other colleges from the greater Los Angeles and Central Valley regions (ideally participants in SPECC project). Hub Coaches will work closely with their own campus and four other colleges on their inquiries: they will articulate and share the core values of project, convene regional forums for sharing results and engaging in critical conversation, review regular written updates from inquiry teams and conduct site visits to campuses, build cross-college connections among faculty with overlapping inquiries, identify and nurture inquiries to highlight in state-wide forums (e.g. list-serve, project website, conference presentations); and work with coordinating college leaders to organize project convenings (e.g. Summer and Winter Institutes, Regional Symposia).

One Coordinating College

As the state-wide hub for the regional hubs, Chabot College will conduct leadership development for the Regional Inquiry Coaches, maintain ongoing contact with Coaches, design the RFP, oversee the budget, organize key training strands (e.g. making visible, bringing student voices into the foreground, re-framing the basic skills paradigm, using data in meaningful ways, building a collaborative working team); build project infrastructure (e.g. list-serve and/or website with links to local inquiry project websites); and produce a multi-media meta-inquiry that synthesizes local Inquiries, presents insights about basic skills education, and reflects on the process of Inquiry itself.

Foundation and Statewide Partners

Several partner organizations will provide tools, strategies and expertise to the project:

- Basic Skills Initiative--Professional Development Leadership (BSI): Deep resource for best practices in basic skills instruction and student services; current literature review of basic skills research; recognized activity in all community college campuses; leadership training; symposia and conferences; statewide network of community colleges and trainings; focus on use of data and assessment strategies.

- California Benchmarking Project (CBP): Focus on equity and basic skills; leadership training; team building activities; curriculum mapping; syllabi review process; theoretical framework for analyzing practitioner; comprehensive use of quantitative data and benchmarking; and experience in inquiry.

- California Tomorrow (CT): Focus on campus change; leadership training; team building activities; equity and diversity awareness strategies; assessment, self-reflection and institutional mapping tools; and exercises in inquiry.

- Digital Bridge Academy (DBA): Innovative curriculum and program design for basic skills education; team building activities; summer institute training; broad set of evaluation tools and strategies; focus on student voices; effective use of quantitative and qualitative data.

- Umoja: Culturally responsive curriculum & program design; team building strategies; symposia, conferences and summer institutes; strategies for effective integration of student services and instruction; statewide network of community colleges; and focus on qualitative and quantitative data.

Key Staff & Facilities Inputs

Position	Time Commitment	Primary Responsibilities
Grant Director Chabot College Cynthia Hicks, Instructor	.5 FTE	• Oversee grant implementation and coordinate major components • Act as liaison between the host college and the Foundation • Administer grant budget and coordinate with Business Services for fiscal oversight • Hire and supervise staff • Oversee all grant reporting requirements including college based reports and overall reporting to the foundation • Maintain frequent and continuous contact with colleges • Design, produce and multi-media production resources (website, list-serve) • Help plan and organize symposia and institutes • Support planning of regional forums • Coordinate with stakeholders and statewide basic skills initiatives • Connect colleges with larger statewide opportunities to develop, support and showcase their work • Participate in planning retreats and meetings • Oversee publicity and dissemination • Co-coordinate meta-inquiry and evaluation
Grant Co-Chairs Chabot College Tom deWit, English Instructor Katie Hern, English Instructor	.75 FTE & .60 FTE	• Support and monitor Regional Inquiry Coaches • Assist Regional Inquiry Coaches with college self-assessments and action plans • Maintain frequent and continuous contact • Serve as liaisons to coordinate project efforts with Basic Skills Initiative and Basic Skills Resource Network • Help plan and organize symposia and institutes • Link colleges to external expertise and resources • Synthesize and report on work occurring regionally/statewide • Participate in planning retreats and meetings • Assist Director with publicity and dissemination • Co-coordinate meta-inquiry and evaluation of project as a whole
Making Visible Coordinator Chabot College	.75 FTE	• Work with each college to design and produce multimedia representations of teaching and learning

Sean McFarland, English Instructor		• Support "Making Visible" teams at each Hub with technical support and training for student researchers • Help plan and organize convenings • Link colleges to external expertise and resources • Participate in planning retreats and meetings • Produce video components of meta-inquiry into key themes/findings of project • Participate in evaluation of project and dissemination of results
Regional Inquiry Hub Coordinators College Partners	.2 FTE Fall 2008; .4 FTE Spring 2009-Fall 2010	• Support and monitor Regional Inquiry Hubs and 4 college inquiry projects • Assist colleges with self-assessments and action plans • Maintain frequent and continuous contact with assigned colleges • Help plan and organize regional meetings and forums • Link colleges to external expertise and resources • Gather lessons learned from the field to prepare project reports • Participate in planning retreats and meetings
Office Coordinator Chabot College	1.0 FTE	• Coordinate scheduling, facilitators and venues for training • Process travel stipends and expenditure requests • Prepare meeting agendas/minutes • Assist with data aggregation and maintaining project databases and website • Work closely with Making Visible Coordinator and student researchers
Subject-Matter Experts Project Partners	Hourly	• Plan and facilitate institute trainings • Consult with colleges to support program improvement efforts
Student Inquiry Leaders Chabot and Partner Colleges	Hourly	• Work with colleges across the state to design and produce multimedia representations of teaching and learning
Facilities and Equipment	Chabot and Partner Colleges	• Space for meetings, ongoing work • Utilities, computers, telephones, copy machines, faxes, etc