ALVAINA Project Concept Note

Education. Equity. Engagement

Problem Statement
Access, equity, teacher quality, and community engagement remain pertinent issues in education reform. The education reform process, especially in the United States, place emphasis on teacher quality based on research which suggests that they are the single most significant variable that impact student learning outcomes “in the school.” However, there is a need to give considerable attention to research which shows that the family is the most significant variable in a student’s overall learning experience. In view of the need for more emphasis on family and community engagement, ALVAINA is building a framework that seeks to shift education accountability to the demand side. Through this framework, ALVAINA aims to collect data from community members on their barriers to accessing a quality prek-12 schooling experience and share the information with relevant stakeholders. The community and relevant stakeholders include all participants in the schooling process at the home, school, government levels—including any concerned tax payer. ALVAINA intends to do a pilot in the District of Columbia with the aim of building a replicable framework for other school districts.

ALVAINA is both a concept and a nonprofit. ALVAINA as a nonprofit was initially conceived during the founder’s independent study course in the International Education Program (IEP) at the George Washington University. The ALVAINA concept is the replicable community engagement framework for school reform. ALVAINA is an acronym for A Leadership & Learning Venture Accessible Internationally and Nationally for All.

Overall Objectives
To increase community engagement in the school reform process, access to quality schools, and improve learning outcomes for all students in DC public schools.

Expected Outcomes and Indicators

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| Increase in the supply of quality schools in the District of Columbia | • Number and percentage of Tier 1 Schools  
• Number and percentage of Tier 2 Schools  
• Number and percentage of Tier 3 Schools |
| Increase in student learning outcomes | • Number and percentage of students who score proficient (disaggregated by ward, SPED, ELL)  
• Student attendance especially the top-ten with the highest truancy rates |
| Increase in community participation for school improvement | • Number and percentage of individuals who share information for data collection  
• Types of families/community members who participate (e.g. parent, student, teacher, administrator, public official, school teaching/non-teaching staff, citizen disaggregated by ward, socioeconomic status, living conditions, etc.)  
• Medium of participation (e.g. radio, website, social media, hotline)  
• Number of radio talk show hosts/stations with ALVAINA segments |
Implementation Approach

In the pre-implementation phase, ALVAINA seeks to work with a dedicated group of students who will meet monthly for the IEP Lunch & Learn program. At these meetings, students will discuss the ALVAINA concept and collaboratively develop a project implementation manual.

Subsequent implementation phases will be discussed in the meetings which include data collection (through radio, social media, a hotline, and government agency referrals), data analysis, periodic publications, and future opportunities to conduct training workshops or present at conferences. Participation in the subsequent phases will be optional for students. ALVAINA is also willing to collaborate with faculty to write proposals for the Short-Term Innovative Research (STIR) grant or other foundation funding.

Proposed IEP Lunch & Learn Meeting Dates

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| Friday, October 13, 2017 | 12:00-2:00 p.m. | GWU Campus Room B09, 2134 G Street NW | • Project Introduction & Overview  
• Students sign-up to commence virtual work |
| Monday, November 13, 2017 | 12:00-2:00 p.m. | GWU Campus Room B09, 2134 G Street NW | • *International Education Week*  
• Discuss the progress made on the draft Project Implementation Manual (PIM) and suggestions for improvement |
| Wednesday, December 13, 2017 | 12:00-2:00 p.m. | Virtual                                      | • *Finals Week*  
• Discuss the revisions and finalize the Project Implementation Manual (PIM)  
• Determine the next steps for conference presentations & workshops |

*Students are not expected to stay for the entire 2-hour duration. Students can join the project group at any time or drop-in during the scheduled meeting dates to listen-in or make any contributions.*