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**Competitive Grant Toolkit  
For Alabama Schools**

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Provided by The BARR Center, your partner for evidence-based solutions   
and innovative change.

**Let’s do something extraordinary!**

Greetings,

This grant writing toolkit was created to assist Alabama schools that have chosen to apply for the 2021 CHANCE (Creating High Achieving Networks and Cultivating Excellence) Grant utilizing the BARR (Building Assets, Reducing Risks) Model.

The following types of schools are eligible for this exciting opportunity:

* CSI (Comprehensive Support and Improvement)
* ATSI (Additional Targeted Support and Improvement)
* GRCERH (Graduation Rate/Career Readiness Gap)

BARR is the nation’s leading evidence-based school improvement model and is listed as one of the examples that a school may apply for with the CHANCE Grant. We were honored to be recognized by the state as a good fit for schools and would be excited to explore if we are a good fit for your school.

BARR is a K-12 strengths-based educational model that improves the education system and creates strong schools and communities by empowering students, teachers, staff and family with intentionally deepened relationships and data so that schools can re-align existing resources to nurture a unified and personalized culture of support and success for every student, both inside and outside of the classroom.

On behalf of the entire BARR team, we are here to help you submit a winning application! This toolkit covers the main sections of your grant application and provides content for you to consider as you build your approach. In each section, there is specific information required about your school, and that is the information you’ll already have on hand. What we’ve provided is information about the BARR Model as it relates to each section, and we hope you find it helpful.

Please don’t hesitate to contact me with any questions or to set up an introductory conversation.

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BARR Center

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**GRANT APPLICATION AT-A-GLANCE:**

**Grant Narrative (60 Points)**

The narrative section of the application must be double-spaced, and the font must not be smaller than 12-point and shall not exceed 5 pages. Each narrative must contain the following:

**Project Description and Justification** ***(20 points)***—Describe how grant funds will be used to address proposed educational activities and practices, including plans to evaluate its impact on students, and address the rationale for the process, product, strategy, or practice that will enable the applicant to reach the level of success proposed in the application. It should also include the use of grant funds to address a particular area that resulted in the school identification of CSI, ATSI, and GRCRG.

**Goals/Objectives** ***(25 points)***— Provide a clear description that specifies goals, objectives, outcomes, and a timeline for the proposed project, as well as specific indicators of project benchmarks. These indicators will seamlessly connect to the plan or monitoring implementation and impact.1 This plan and timeline must be developed for the period of SY22, SY23, and SY24. Additionally, identify intended strategies for communications with and among school(s), ALSDE, and any stakeholders.

**Innovative Approach *(15 points)***—describe the implementation of promising activities and practices that build on, or are alternatives to, existing approaches that create equitable opportunities for students.

**Budget and Budget Justification (30 Points) -** Include a cost-effective budget and justification for line items that reflect the goals and priorities of this project. This budget and budget justification must be for SY22, SY23, and SY24.

**Sustainability (10 Points) -** Identify actions school and district will take to continue the innovation beyond the life of the grant. Include sufficient resources (human, fiscal, operational, external partnerships, etc.) that support the implementation and sustainability of the innovation.

**APPLICATION:**

**Part B: Grant Narrative (60 points) (5 pages total for this section)**

This section includes:

1. Project Description and Justification (20 points)
2. Goals/Objectives, Timeline/Benchmarks (25 points)
3. Innovative Approach (15 points)

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| 1. **Project Description and Justification (20 points)** |
| ***From the rubric:***  **Provide a detailed project description and justification that includes:**   * Detailed description of the project’s goal(s) and purpose and how these will be achieved with proposed educational activities and practices (10 points) * Connection to CHANCE Competitive Grant priorities that resulted in the school identification of CSI, ATSI, and GRCRG (5 points) * Addressed the rationale behind this project and how it will impact classrooms, school, district, and community (if applicable) and enable the applicant to reach the level of success proposed in the application (5 points) |

**Information about your school:**

*Start by letting the reader know whether you are applying under CSI, ATSI, or GRCRG. This is important because the category under which you apply gives the reader key information. Also tell the reader why you fall into this category.*

**Information about BARR:**

BARR, a strengths-based, whole-school system approach, will improve *[fill in your priorities that align with BARR outcomes. BARR’s grant writing team is willing to help you with this. Contact jennifer.fox@barrcenter.org].* This comprehensive approach allows for collaboration and capacity-building based on two pillars: positive intentional relationships and real-time actionable data. The BARR model consists of key interwoven strategies and supports, including evidence-based SEL curriculum (I-Times and U-Times), focus on the whole-student, effective use of block team meetings and risk review to discuss students’ strengths and barriers based on quantitative and qualitative data, integrated family partnerships, on-going virtual and in-person professional development and coaching for teachers and staff, and contextual supports.

BARR is grounded in the extensive experience of the practitioners involved in implementing and researching BARR. A mediation analysis of the BARR model demonstrates that BARR changes adults’ beliefs and behaviors, which then changes student beliefs. Thus, students feel more supported, set higher expectations, and are more engaged in school. These changes in student beliefs result in increased attendance and decreased behavioral issues, which then lead to improved academic performance (Bos et al., 2019). Thus, the BARR model has shown positive outcomes for high-need students in a variety of settings, including better academic performance on standardized assessments (Bos et al., 2019; Corsello & Sharma, 2015; Flay, Acock, Vuchinich, & Beets, 2006; Flay & Allred, 2003). As a result, BARR is listed five times in Evidence for ESSA for having strong evidence for all secondary students in math, reading, and socioemotional skills, and for struggling students in math and reading, based on the model’s ability to improve standardized test scores in these areas. Independent research on BARR’s effectiveness meets What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) standards without reservation at the high school level (Bos et al., 2019; Boulay et al., 2018).

For broader impact, networks of educational professionals and schools are facilitated and supported by BARR. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), webinars, network tools, and inter-network meetings provide educators and schools time to collaborate, identify common issues, work to collectively design solutions, and challenge common norms. Although strategies are often specific to the context of each school and its students, sharing these strategies and interventions within the network support schools’ efforts to distill whether common approaches are effective and scalable.

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| 1. **Goals/Objectives, Timeline/Benchmarks (25 points)** |
| ***From the rubric:***  **A detailed description of the Goals, Objectives, Project Timeline, and Benchmarks that include:**   * A description of CHANCE Competitive Grant priorities that will be used to determine success including clearly defined SMART goals, numeric objectives, and specific outcomes (5 points) * A project timeline with specific indicators of project success (benchmarks) at key points of the timeline (5 points) * Clear picture of how data will be collected and used to demonstrate degree to which outcomes are met and plan’s impact on school (5 points) * Intended strategies for communications with and among school(s), the ALSDE, and any stakeholders to include monitoring (10 points) |

**Information specific to your school:**

*Write a brief description of CHANCE Competitive priorities that will be used to determine success.*

**Information about BARR:**

The project timeline table below shows clearly defined SMART goals, numeric objectives, and specific outcomes for BARR implementation. You will see that data is collected throughout the process in many ways. BARR provides both training and tools for the collection of data as well as coaching on progress to goals.

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| **Timeline** | **Goal/Purpose** | **Description of Activity and Participants** | **Deliverable/Product** | **Measurement, Benchmark of Success** |
| January -- February 2022 | Obtain signed contract to implement the BARR model | School obtains necessary approvals from district, school board | Signed contract | Signed contract |
| Summer 2022 | Train school staff in the BARR model | Training for staff identified to implement BARR model | Implementation Training conducted | Feedback surveys from trainings |
| March 2022--June 2022 | Hire a BARR Coordinator | School posts for coordinator position, conducts interviews | Position description, job posting, interview protocol, hiring documents | 0.5 FTE BARR Coordinator hired by June 30, 2022 |
| School Year 2022-23 and beyond | Implement the BARR model | Educators implement model with assistance from BARR Coach | Eight strategies of BARR implemented fully over the three-year grant period | Fidelity achieved over the three-year period as measured by BARR fidelity rubric |
| Student surveys in March of every school year; student outcome data collected every grading period and summarized annually | Measure and analyze student SEL and outcome data | BARR student surveys conducted, data collected on student behavior, attendance, grades, and failure rates (secondary only), Math and ELA test scores with support from BARR Coach | Data on student SEL, behavior, attendance, grades, failure rates (secondary only), Math and ELA test scores | Increased SEL, decreased behavior problems, increased attendance, grades, decreased failure rates, increased Math, ELA test scores as compared to years past |
| April of every year (conference) and monthly PLCs | Network with other schools | 5 educators from school attend BARR National Conference and monthly PLCs as part of professional development | 5 educators attend BARR National Conference in Palm Springs (2022) and annually thereafter and attend monthly PLCs | Attendance at annual conferences and monthly PLCs |
| Annually in spring of every year and ongoing as well | Communicate BARR progress and findings to school board and other stakeholders | BARR Coordinator, other school educators and administrators, BARR Coach, BARR Communications manager | Leverage communication, including social media,  to share findings with the support of BARR Communications manager | Presentation materials, social media tracking, newsletters, communications to families |
| December of each year | Write annual and project end reports | School personnel with assistance from BARR Center Coach.  BARR Center provides school with yearly annual progress report. | Annual and project end final reports | Annual and project-end final reports are written and delivered on time to ALSDE |

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| 1. **Innovative Approach (15 points)** |
| ***From the rubric:***  **A detailed description of how the project uses an innovative approach:**   * An assurance that the project does not conflict with existing or imminent school/district goals, technology initiatives, policies, or procedures * Addresses specific need(s) and potential benefits of change are made clear * Promotes with strong rationale innovative teaching/leadership methods apparent through description, proposal, goals and objectives, and evaluation methods. |

**Information specific to your school:**

*Provide an assurance that the project does not conflict with existing or imminent school/district goals, technology initiatives, policies, or procedures.*

**Information about BARR:**

The use of the BARR model is innovative on several levels.  First, it utilizes the educators already in the building, with the foundational premise that these educators know their students, families, and communities best.  What they need is the support to create a successful experience for their students.  BARR’s tagline, “Same Students.  Same Teachers.  Better results” speaks directly to this.  Second, the BARR model creates a communication framework for teachers.  They no longer operate in siloed environments but rather, meet regularly to discuss all the students in their cohort.  Third, the approach is strengths-based.  Instead of asking what is wrong with students, BARR emphasizes what is right.  By focusing on what is right, teachers can then move to intervening on areas in which students need help.  They have a strong foundation from which to start.  Fourth, the model does not change existing academic curricula.  While BARR teachers utilize an SEL curriculum, no academic curricula are changed in BARR implementation.  Fifth, this emphasis on SEL results in academic outcomes, as shown in the Theory of Change below.  Even though academic curricula are not touched, academic outcomes are achieved.

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| * Developmental Assets * Risks and Protective Factors * Attribution Theory of Student Motivation | * Professional Development and Coaching * Restructuring Schedule * Family Partnership * I-Time or U-Time Curriculum * Block/Team Meetings * Risk Review * Whole Student Emphasis * Contextual Supports | **Teacher Mindset**   * Strength-based approach * Teacher self-efficacy * Collective efficacy * View on collaboration | **SEL Outcomes**   * Self-efficacy * Supportive relationships * Classroom engagement * Expectations and rigor * Sense of belonging | **Student Outcomes**   * Lower rates of absenteeism * Lower rates of behavioral incidences * Lower rates of course failures | **Academic Achievement**   * Increased academic achievement ELA * Increased academic achievement – Math * Reduction in achievement gaps |

Short-term outcomes follow the eight strategies for both teachers and students. For teachers, the short-term outcome is growth in teacher mindset, which includes a strength-based approach, self-efficacy, collective efficacy, and view on collaboration. This view, that teacher mindset affects student SEL, is a key underlying construct to BARR’s conceptual framework and represents an innovation in the field.  This theory of change shows that enhanced student SEL leads to student mid-term outcomes, leading to the long-term outcome of student achievement.  This represents the innovation mentioned above, namely that academic outcomes can be achieved through attentiveness to SEL.

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| **Part D: Budget and Budget Justification (30 points) No page limit given** |
| ***From the rubric:***  **A detailed description of the Budget and Budget Justification that includes:**   * A project budget for anticipated funding up to $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (10 points) * A budget justification that is clearly tied to the scope and requirements of the project (10 points) * A fiscal agent with the capacity and experience to manage the financial requirements of the grant (10 points) |

**Information specific to your school:**

*Provide proof of a fiscal agent with the capacity and experience to manage the financial requirements of the grant.*

**Information about BARR:**

The following budget outlines the costs of BARR implementation with brief explanations of the items included each year. The grant requires that schools show budgets for SY22, SY23 and SY24. The following table is a summary with a more extensive explanation following.

**Budget**

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| BARR | Professional Contracts | Travel | Total |
| Year 1 | $54,207 | $11,500 | $65,707 |
| Year 2 | $64,167 | $12,000 | $76,167 |
| Year 3 | $53,167 | $10,500 | $63,667 |
| Total | $171,541 | $34,000 | $205,541 |

Professional Contracts: These annual amounts include all BARR services that support the successful implementation of the BARR model, registration for five attendees for the BARR National Conference each year, and the BARR model materials.

Travel: These annual amounts include travel costs for the five attendees to travel to the BARR National Conference for professional development and networking and travel for BARR staff to travel to the schools for professional development and coaching.

Additional Considerations: You may want to include staff salaries and employee benefits in the budget to cover the following: participation in professional development, weekly participation in BARR team meetings, the BARR coordinator position, and attendance at the BARR conference.

**The following is a longer explanation** of what is provided in each year of BARR:

**Year 1: SY22**

Instructional Staff Training and Professional Development

* $48,667 - This includes Year 1 BARR services that support the successful implementation of the BARR model, including professional consultation, training, coaching, and functional tools.
* $3,500 – This includes registration for five attendees for the BARR National Conference, which provides the opportunity for school personnel to hear the latest research and policy information from leaders in the national education landscape.

Travel Costs incurred for Professional Development

* $7,500 – This includes travel costs for the five attendees to travel to the BARR National Conference, estimated at $1,500 per person to cover airfare, hotel, meals, and incidentals.
* $4,000 – This service delivery fee covers travel for BARR staff to travel to the schools for in-person professional development and coaching.

Curriculum and Materials

* $2,040 – This includes all BARR model materials, including the I-Time or U-Time curriculum, video training on Block Meetings, Risk Review Meetings, and I-Time or U-Time Activities, and the BARR Implementation Manual. These resources continue to be available in future years.

**Year 2: SY23**

Instructional Staff Training and Professional Development

* $60,667 - This includes all Year 2 BARR services that support the successful implementation of the BARR model, including professional consultation, training, coaching, and functional tools.
* $3,500 – This includes registration for five attendees for the BARR National Conference, which provides the opportunity for school personnel to hear the latest research and policy information from leaders in the national education landscape.

Travel Costs incurred for Professional Development

* $7,500 – This includes travel costs for the five attendees to travel to the BARR National Conference, estimated at $1,500 per person to cover airfare, hotel, meals, and incidentals.
* $4,500 – This service delivery fee covers travel for BARR staff to travel to the schools for in-person professional development and coaching.

**Year 3: SY24**

Instructional Staff Training and Professional Development

* $49,667 - This includes all Year 3 BARR services that support the successful implementation of the BARR model, including professional consultation, training, coaching, and functional tools, as outlined in the Three-year Model and Services section of the grant narrative.
* $3,500 – This includes registration for five attendees for the BARR National Conference, which provides the opportunity for school personnel to hear the latest research and policy information from leaders in the national education landscape.

Travel Costs incurred for Professional Development

* $7,500 – This includes travel costs for the five attendees to travel to the BARR National Conference, estimated at $1,500 per person to cover airfare, hotel, meals, and incidentals.
* $3,000 – This service delivery fee covers travel for BARR staff to travel to the schools for in-person professional development and coaching.

Additional considerations for every year:

* School staff will participate in two days of professional development as a part of BARR implementation. You may want to include staff salaries and employee benefits for this time in the budget.
* School staff will participate in weekly team meetings, known as Block Meetings. These meetings are often scheduled as common prep periods. Depending on your teacher contract, you may want to include staff salaries and employee benefits for this time in the budget.
* You may want to include the salary and benefits for the BARR Coordinator position in the budget.
* The BARR Conference and BARR Trainings may take place on school days. You may want to include substitute teacher costs if coverage may be needed

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| **Part E: Sustainability (10 points) No page limit given** |
| ***From the rubric:***  **A detailed description of how the work from this project will reach sustainability from LEA:**   * Illustrates a thorough plan to sustain grant activities after the grant period * Identify donors or sources of funds that can leverage the state and/or local funds and help to ensure the project is sustainable beyond the grant period |

**Information specific to your school:**

*Provide any specific information about your school’s plan to sustain grant activities including success stories of other initiatives that have been successful and sustained over time.*

**Information about BARR:**

The BARR model requires three years of implementation, after which the model is considered to be fully operational within the school.  This grant will fund the model for that critical three-year period.  After that, the cost of the model drops dramatically from $50,000 per year to $15,000 per year when our school decides to continue services. By choosing to continue services, coaching, materials, and other services continue to be available. Our school will find a means to afford this cost of $15,000 per year.

In addition, BARR has shown a considerable return on investment.  When students fail less courses, fewer remedial classes need to be offered.  That is, fewer students repeat courses.  They matriculate to the next grade and graduate on time.  The cost of retaining students for extra courses and grades is therefore removed from the school budget.

At the teacher level, BARR has shown itself to be sustainable since the model results in greater teacher satisfaction, empowerment, and retention.  Existing staff are trained in the BARR model, and these same staff almost always remain after the grant ends.  They have been trained in the model, have experience implementing it, and through success with students, will remain committed to continuing it.  Because BARR utilizes existing staff and does not bring in outsiders to implement the model, sustainability is built in.

BARR Center staff have experience with helping schools obtain funding from Foundations and federal grants.  We will continue our relationship with them and seek outside funding if needed.  In reality, success breeds success.  Community funders want to invest in young people’s success.  As we show that our students and staff succeed at higher rates with BARR, the support to continue BARR will be there.