

## New Day – Una Nueva Dia – ABSTRACT

### Warden and Highland School Districts with NLA Group

Washington State is divided by the Cascade Mountain Range into two unequal halves: the west is greener in both vegetation and economic prosperity; the east is hardscrabble with families working hard for meager earnings. Education is the resource that will help students in two small rural central Washington towns, Warden School District in the town of Warden (pop. 2,700), and Highland School District in the town of Cowiche (pop. 2,350), reach out from the poverty they were born into, toward a life of promise and prosperity. Poverty rates in these districts' range from 79-88% eligibility for free and reduced meals; at the two elementary buildings nearly half the students are identified as 'transitional bilingual' with Spanish as their first language. The percent of students identified as 'migrant' ranges from 14%-27%; the state's rate overall is 1.7%. The percent of residents living below the poverty line is twice the state rate as is the rate of utilization of Food Stamps. Adult learning levels are low: adults with less than a 9<sup>th</sup> grade education are three times more prevalent here than across the state. Students in these districts need a strong education and skills to move out of the poverty that limit their parents' choices.

This 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center program, "A New Day", submitted by the Northwest Learning and Achievement Group (NLA) with partner school districts Warden and Highland, provides before- and after-school (40 school weeks) and summer school (6 week) programs to a targeted 420 students in five school buildings in Warden and Cowiche. The academic focus will be on math and reading, with a strong multifaceted literacy focus for students and their families given the high number of children from homes where the primary language is Spanish. To engage students' minds and imaginations while strengthening math and reading skills, the program brings in online math skill-building curricula, engaging hands-on STEM activities and literacy programs using high interest reading materials in English and Spanish. The program will help high school students stay on path to graduation. With strong partnerships and carefully chosen, well- researched interventions, this project will help students see *A New Day--Una Nueva Dia.....*for themselves and their families.

#### OBJECTIVES:

1. Improve students' academic achievement in math and reading.
2. Improve students' behavior in and out of the classroom.
3. To help parents improve family literacy practices to support their child's education; and help parents work on English and work skills.
4. To involve the Hispanic community in school districts' activities affirming families' culture.