After being developed with the assistance of a SEED grant from Indiana University South Bend, Project WRITE was submitted as a RFP (Request for Funding) in September of 2010 as an exploratory research proposal in the area of reading and writing. The parameters were described in CFDA84.305a from the U.S. Department of Education through the Institutes of Education Sciences. The goal of Project WRITE was to produce an evidenced based approach as model for use in public schools at the middle school level. Activities include utilizing select potent variables and statistics that will give information for decision masking for in developing interventions to improve reading and writing scores. All research activities were to occur in three grade five to eight schools in an urban school district with the principals and teachers serving as the subjects in the grant. Using an inductive model for the research design, the exploratory research activities intended to identify malleable variables, mediating variables, clusters of malleable variables, and clusters of mediating variables that influence teacher behaviors that lead to increased (or improved) reading and writing achievement for intermediate level students. Additionally, the statistical formulae will be investigated to identify key areas of strength and weakness for potency and robustness given the applied school settings. Intensive data collection, development of instruments to yield quantitative values, and mathematical exploration of statistical methods were to lead to the development of the model at the end of the requested three years of funding from Project WRITE. The dependent variable in Project WRITE is reading and writing achievement and the independent variables are 20 malleable and mediating variables. Multivariate statistical analysis is the primary form of analysis. The model produced as the outcome product through the activities of Project WRITE was to be described with a detailed specificity that would allow application studies for further validation.
R. Lee Smith coordinated the writing, budget, and submission of the grant. Other faculty involved were Drs. Emily Williams and Bruce Watson from the Department of Professional Educational Services in the School of Education at Indiana University South Bend. Dr. Cynthia Oudghiri and Ms. Christine Pochert were collaborating partners from the South Bend Community School Corporation. Tim Patterson and Lindsay Dadosky worked as student researchers on the grant. Mr. Lee Streby and Ms. Erika Zynda from Academic Affairs at Indiana University South Bend supported through editing, logistics, and submission through the bureaucracy at Indiana University. The funding request was approximately $310,000 per year for a period of three years. Most all of the grant activity would have occurred within three public middle school sites in the South Bend. SEED grant fund were utilized primarily to pay faculty for summer work and to pay student researchers.

Unfortunately, the grant was not funded. However, there were several positive outcomes. The grant was the first federal grant in nearly a decade to be jointly conceived and written with personnel from the South Bend Community School Corporation. All the IUSB personnel on the grant gained insight to the funding intricacies at Indiana University, and two assistant professor were involved in the grant processes that included academic research, writing, budget issues, and final submission. Currently, one of those is leading the writing of an article with the IUSB faculty and SBCS administrators describing the collaborative endeavor. The RFP has recently been a re-occurring invitation within the U.S. Department of Education and there is the possibility of resubmission.