



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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To: Focus District Superintendents
From: School and District Review Team, Office of Accountability
Date: August 25, 2015
Subject: Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness Professional Learning Community

The purpose of this memo is to inform you of the Focus District Professional Learning Community (PLC) for the 2015-16 school year. The Focus District PLC will consist of two cohorts, those who have previously been involved in the PLC initiative and are now implementing the three-year Strategic Plan for School Excellence (SPSE) and those new to PLC who intend to develop a SPSE by the end of the year.

Focus District Professional Learning Community

The goal of the Focus District PLC is to build school and district staff's capacity to create and effectively implement a SPSE, a three-year school plan that will drive reforms and replace the school's annual School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP). The PLC will provide participants the opportunity to deepen their understanding of the Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness (DTSDE) rubric and engage in a rich learning experience with other districts, along with national and state experts, to support a school's turnaround goals and initiatives.

The PLC will convene for both face-to-face sessions and web-based sessions from September 2015 to May 2016. The PLC will have five face-to-face sessions in October, December, February, April, and May in Albany, NY.

The State Education Department anticipates being able to accommodate up to ten district and accompanying school teams for this initiative. All teams should consist of five (5) representatives at every session; the district superintendent (or designee) along with the school principal are required members for each team and must remain constant throughout program. The majority of the participants should represent the participating school. To participate in the initiative, districts must identify the school(s) it will support during the PLC. Schools that are new to the PLC should have received a recent State-led Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) DTSDE review, or should be scheduled to receive an IIT DTSDE review during the 2015-16 school year. Schools that participated in the PLC during the 2014-15 school year should continue with the PLC initiative as they implement their three-year strategic plan. Districts must complete the enclosed District Readiness Assessment and submit it by **Friday, September 25, 2015** to DTSDereviews@mail.nysed.gov.

Participating Title I eligible districts can use 1003 (a) funds to attend and participate in the PLC program. These funds are available to support participation in the program in the following ways:

- Staff coverage to attend sessions during contract hours
- Stipends and overtime/per session employment outside contractual hours to prepare for and/or attend sessions
- Travel costs per state rates and regulations
- Mileage or Car Rental and gas, tolls and parking
- Meal per diem for breakfast and dinner per state rates and regulations. Please note, 1003 (a) funds may not be used to purchase food.

We look forward to supporting your improvement efforts in the new school year.

Enclosures

cc: Stephen Earley
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