



## Questar III BOCES

### Program Overview

The Questar III led consortium will accomplish a program for virtual advanced placement by providing blended, asynchronous learning across 5 school districts, and one school. The participating school districts include Catskill CSD, Germantown CSD, Greenville CSD, Rensselaer City SD, Taconic Hills CSD, and Tech Valley High School (TVHS). The anticipated initial AP courses will be AP Calculus, AP US History, AP US Government & Politics, AP English Literature and AP Psychology.

### Program Activities

The project plan includes the following overall Goals:

Goal 1. Offer low income students access to online AP coursework by providing assistance. Increase the accessibility and achievement of AP coursework for low-income students through offering asynchronous virtual learning opportunities and incrementally expanding these opportunities beyond the project duration. Initially, the consortium will purchase College Board approved AP content from Apex Learning in order to startup the AP courses within the limited timeframe of the one year grant.

#### Goal 2. Teacher training

Each district will select teachers for the AP courses that will learn to incorporate learning theory and CCLS into virtual Advanced Placement® courses and learn to teach virtual AP® courses. To improve teacher preparation to transfer and conduct virtual courses all AP® teachers from Consortium districts will be invited to participate in training to acquire both the pedagogical skills and content knowledge necessary to teach virtual Advanced Placement® courses effectively.

#### Goal 3. Course Design & Development

Design Teams will be formed through a partnership among Consortium districts that will select teachers for the four courses across all five districts. These Design Teams will share expertise in the same AP® course content and combine pedagogical knowledge and skill to transfer content to a LMS. Frequent collaboration sessions among the Design Group teachers will occur face-to-face as well as through synchronous videoconferencing using Jabber, a supported desktop video conferencing client that allows point-to-point (2-way) video calls with other users or host a 4-way video call. It also allows multi-point control unit (MCU). Peer review of content and pilot demonstrations will occur prior to launch with students.

## **Professional Development**

Sessions in virtual instruction delivered through Questar III's Office of School Improvement to include support for the transition into a blended environment through emphasizing the shift in the teacher's role including:

- i. Assessment of student understanding of learning objectives
- ii. Creating and facilitation group discussions
- iii. Making adjustments to course resources
- iv. Valuable resources for work with at-risk learners and students with disabilities (e.g., iNACOL brief: *An Exploration of At-Risk Learners and Online Education*; *Virtual K-12 Public School Programs and Students with Disabilities: Issues and Recommendations*; and *the National Standards for Quality Online Teaching*)
- v. Maximizing tools included with the LMS, such as giving parents access to the online syllabus and gradebook

## **Evaluation and Sustainability**

The evaluation design leans heavily on formative methods to ensure that the program reaches its end of year goals through constant diligence and frequent progress monitoring to make sure all activities occur as proposed. The Project Director will receive support from an Evaluation Specialist to collect data on formative and summative evaluation areas.

## **Program Contact**

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