ABSTRACT

The Rochester City School District's Learning Technology Grant project, *Optimizing Technology Implementation in Schools* (OTIS), will deliver sustained professional learning to teachers and school library media specialists to increase the effective integration of technology in classrooms. Teachers and library media specialists will complete online courses and receive embedded coaching that will increase their knowledge of instructional technology and improve their skills for implementation of the Learning Standards of New York. Project activities will target the significant gaps in English Language Arts (ELA) academic performance for third through sixth grade students at five schools. The primary focus of this application is **Mary McLeod Bethune School #45**, which has been designated by NYSED as a "Struggling" (Priority) school and was placed in Receivership on July 1, 2015. Other District schools participating in this application are: **Dr. Walter Cooper Academy School #10, Nathaniel Hawthorne School #25, and Charles Carroll School #46**, all of which are designated as Focus schools. The non-public school partner is **Holy Cross School,** a Catholic elementary school.

Project activities include the development and facilitation of comprehensive, online professional learning courses, along with embedded coaching (push-in and grade-level mentoring) delivered by an Instructional Technology (IT) Resource Teacher. The *Cool Tools for Schools* program provides in-depth familiarity with social-networking and emerging technologies and will be facilitated for each school's library media specialist. Project OTIS is founded on the research-based cognizance that appropriately and sufficiently integrated use of instructional technology will result in increased student engagement and achievement. The goals of this project are:

1) Teachers will effectively utilize digital tools and devices to deliver technology-rich lessons, and
2) Student engagement and achievement will increase as result of teachers infusing 21st century technology skills in integrated ELA instruction.

Project activities will roll out by grade level, with each participating teacher and library media specialist completing a minimum of two (2) online professional learning courses and receiving eight (8) or more hours of embedded coaching. Anticipated outcomes of the project are: increased teacher technology competencies as demonstrated by higher levels and quality of technology integration, improved 21st century skills of students, and more students achieving proficiency on State ELA assessments. These objectives align with Common Core Learning Standards as adopted by NYSED and endorsed by the Rochester City School District's Board of Education, particularly the ELA Standards for Reading and Writing, and the National Educational Technology Standards for Students (NETS-S) and Teachers (NETS-T) as adopted by the Board of Education and as implemented by the District's Instructional Technology Department.