

**School Turnaround Office**  
**Systemic Supports for District and School Turnaround Grant (SSDST)**

**POUGHKEEPSIE CSD – AUGUST 2015**

<b>School/District Background</b>	<b>Provide a brief overview of your district including location, size, demographics served, and needs of the district. Please provide an overview of why you decided to participate in this grant.</b>
	<p>Poughkeepsie City School District is located in Dutchess County, New York, approximately 75 miles north of New York City. The school district is situated on the banks of the Hudson River in an area known as the Mid-Hudson Valley. The District is approximately 4.8 square miles in size, predominantly a walking district, and is composed of an Early Learning Center for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, four elementary schools, one middle school, one high school, and one administration building. The District provides educational programs for nearly 5,000 students. The school population is a diverse mix of African American 55%, Latino 30%, Asian 1%, Caucasian 10%, Students with disabilities 16%, and Limited English Proficient 10%. The District operates with a budget of more than \$85,000,000. Taxes and other local revenues account for approximately 40% of the budget, with the remaining 60% generated through State Formula Aid and Small City Aid. With an economically disadvantaged rate of 86%, the fact that our students are not achieving at proficiency on state assessments, and our graduation rate is less than 55%, we sought additional assistance with this grant.</p>

<b>Promising Practice to be Highlighted</b>	<b>Thoroughly describe a promising practice currently taking place at your district as a direct result of the strategies through the SSDST Grant with each strand implemented. Also provide an explanation as to why this particular practice was chosen to be implemented at your district.</b>
	<p>The District Implemented the Poughkeepsie City School District <i>Mission Literacy Model</i> for all schools across the district. The District identified the problem of practice as literacy and the levels of engagement for its students. In order to address this, the District implemented <b>Focused Instructional Learning Walks (FILWs)</b>. FILWs use a tool adapted from NYS United Teachers which highlights six performance indicators. This practice is being implemented above and beyond the approved APPR scheduled performance review observations required by the District.</p> <p>During walkthroughs of classrooms District-level administrators, building administrators, and teacher-peers visit classrooms for 7-12 minutes and are challenged to “notice” students using and being asked to use literacy strategies and apply higher order thinking skills in literacy tasks. Additionally, observers are asked to record “high-yield noticings, wonderings, and strategies.”</p> <p>For the 2015-2016 school year this document will be available in both paper and electronic form. The efficacy of the FILWs can be measured through observation and conversations with teachers about their pedagogy. Providing teachers with an electronic form of this information provides immediate feedback, and helps to gather data more efficiently. This practice also affords the District administration a prescribed method for which to visit classrooms in each building regularly to provide the technical assistance and support necessary to foster a culture of collaboration with teachers for improving practices (See attached supporting documents.).</p>
<b>Evidence</b>	<b>How do you know the practice you have described is promising and/or successful? How have you measured its effectiveness and/or success?</b>
	The practice of implementing FILWs as an instructional practice has proven to

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	<p>provide an additional means of collecting data points that speak to changes needed in instructional delivery. Information gathered from the FILWs indicates five out of 10 classrooms provided opportunities for collaborating and student-centered learning; however there was low-level cognitive demand. Four out of 10 classrooms created learning experiences that connect to prior knowledge, new learning and connect across disciplines. Trends from teacher evaluations have also been instrumental in helping to identify topics for professional development.</p> <p>Since the implementation of this initiative, students have exhibited academic gains in ELA and Mathematics achievement. Students are utilizing Active Reading Strategies and Extended Response Writing to analyze text and think critically. At Poughkeepsie High School we have already seen a dramatic increase in academic gains utilizing these strategies. Representatives from Poughkeepsie High School and the District were invited to the Model Schools Conference during the summer of 2015. At this conference, Poughkeepsie High School was highlighted for their academic gains. Specifically, Poughkeepsie High School made gains in seven of the nine Regents exams in 2014. Of notable exception include: on the U.S. History Regents the students had a 47% pass rate in 2013 and a pass rate of 59% in 2014; Algebra II Trigonometry 28% in 2013 and 36% in 2014; Geometry 22% in 2013 and 34% 2014; and Earth Science 42% in 2013 and 58% in 2014.</p>
<b>Looking Ahead</b>	<b>What are your sustainability plans and hopes for the future (both short and long-term) of your promising practice?</b>
	<p>The District is in year two of implementing active reading strategies at the secondary level. The District implements EngageNY modules and supplements this information with the GOMath curriculum at the elementary level. Additionally, HMM consultant group (formerly Scholastic, Inc.) will be contracted to work with our teachers to develop mathematics best practices for the 2015-2016 school year.</p> <p>Students in our District take the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) Assessment electronically. Teachers are provided with an itemized analysis of skill deficits to inform instructional decisions and plan during their Professional Learning Communities. Additionally, in conjunction with the Mid-Hudson Regional Information Center the District is able to receive an itemized analysis of students' state assessment scores. Further, this information can be delineated by teacher proficiency of delivering instruction, as well as trends across grade levels. This detailed information assists administrators with building the capacity of our instructors and further developing building-wide best practices. In the 2015-2016 school year we will implement benchmark assessments District-wide to monitor and adjust learning outcomes.</p> <p>The implementation of the Poughkeepsie City School District's Mission Literacy has already yielded results in state assessments within a two-year period. Use of FILWs has required the District to "inspect what we expect" in terms of best practices in our classrooms. All administrators are expected to complete a minimum of three FILWs daily, share this information with the teacher, coach the teacher where necessary, and keep a log book of all FILWs for the school year. Additional District-level administrators have been assigned to the FILWs for the 2015-16 school year. Increasing the responsibilities of additional District-level administrators allows more FILWs to be completed that can</p>

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	enhance the feedback to teachers and building leadership to improve instructional practices at a more rapid pace.
<b>Additional documentation</b>	<b>Please provide any additional documentation/attachments/website links created/demonstrate/communicated as a result of the implementation of the SSDST grant initiatives.</b>
	FILW District-level Administrator schedule/assignment © Poughkeepsie City School District  FILW Form © Poughkeepsie City School District  <a href="http://www.poughkeepsieschools.org/">http://www.poughkeepsieschools.org/</a>