



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER
OFFICE OF SCHOOL INNOVATION
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November 28, 2012

Dr. Brian Howard
Superintendent
Troy City School District
2920 Fifth Avenue
Troy, New York 12180

RE: Notice of Award: Systemic Supports for District and School Turnaround Grant
Award Amount: \$231,960
Time Period: September 1, 2012 to August 31, 2014

Dear Superintendent Howard:

The New York State Education Department, School Turnaround Office (NYSED STO) is pleased to inform you that the Troy City School District has been approved for the above referenced grant. As stated in the initial grant application, this award is contingent upon the submission and approval of the final Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the LEA and the partners no later than November 30, 2012.

The NYSED STO will serve as your lead program office for project oversight, assistance, monitoring, and reporting. Within the next several weeks you will be contacted by a representative from NYSED STO to set up an initial welcome and introduction telephone call.

We look forward to working with you and your leadership team on this innovative opportunity to improve student achievement in underperforming schools.

Sincerely,

Sally Bachofer

c: Sandra Herndon
Owen Donovan

Systemic Supports for District and School Turnaround Proposal Narrative – Troy School District

I. Executive Summary

Executive Summary

The Troy City School District is a high-needs urban district of nearly 4,000 students P-12 with a FRL rate above 72%. The district currently has schools in both “focused” and “priority” status. The performance of students in both ELA and Math (All Students Group) is of concern, even in schools without “identification.” Recently, under the leadership of the new Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, the district has invested considerable effort and resources (including Race to the Top programs) in implementing Common Core ELA and Math initiatives through partnerships with Questar III BOCES.

The Troy School District with CASDA (Capital Area School Development Association) as our partner, have developed a proposal aimed at improving student achievement by changing the very nature of leadership and decision-making within the district. The scope of work under mandatory Strand #1 involves three (3) distinct but inter-related Projects to be funded by the Systemic Support for District and School Turnaround allocation. The effort begins with phase one at the Central Office Level with the goal of transforming the district view of decision-making and focus. The work there is expanded, in phase two, to include building leadership and the building of capacity both vertically and horizontally. The work of these two initial phases is seen as critical to the third phase of the proposal, which begins the work of plan alignment and progress monitoring across the district. Thus, efforts to improve student performance are coordinated and supported by all levels of the district.

The three Strand #1 projects include a Central Office Transformation, Leadership Capacity Project and a Plan Alignment Project. The objective of this design of the projects is to ensure that Data-driven Decision-making and Data-Driven Instruction form the core of the work in the entire project. What follows is a description of each of the three (3) project areas under this proposal.

For the **Central Office Transformation Project**, CASDA will provide educational expertise and work with central office staff to help them align their specific responsibilities (transportation, attendance, HR, Business, Curriculum, etc.) with the district’s goals regarding student achievement. The staff will be assisted in the collection, analysis and application of relevant data for decision-making. The ultimate outcome is the creation of an embedded system of data-driven leadership.

The **Leadership Capacity Project** builds upon the work of the Central Office Transformation project. CASDA will provide expertise and Professional Development for building administrators, curriculum staff and teacher leaders. The goal is to build leadership capacity across the district, and foster a unified focus encompassing both the district-level and the building-level leadership processes that aligns both horizontally and vertically.

The **Plan Alignment Project** is the natural extension of the work begun in the previous two projects. CASDA will begin with a review of the Troy School District's planning documents. Based on the outcome of this review, CASDA will provide expertise to assist the district in the development and/or revision of essential plans. The development of these plans will be informed by the decision-making techniques and systemic changes brought about the work in the previous two projects. At the core of this project is the coordination, by CASDA experts, of individual building plans with district-wide plans. Also, key is the process of aligning all plans to the central focus of student achievement.