



Schools of Distinction Best Practice Grant

Disseminating and Replicating Best Practices in
Connecticut's Schools and Districts

Connecticut State Department of Education
Turnaround Office



Application Due: September 26, 2014
RFP Published: August 8, 2014
Application – RFP 808



Connecticut State Department of Education

Stefan Pryor
Commissioner of Education

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The CSDE does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. The CSDE does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction. Inquiries regarding the CSDE's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

Levy Gillespie
Equal Employment Opportunity Director
Title IX /ADA/Section 504 Coordinator
State of Connecticut Department of Education
25 Industrial Park Road
Middletown, CT 06457
860-807-2071



Schools of Distinctions Best Practice Grant

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SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

I. PURPOSE

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) recognizes and celebrates excellence by identifying schools that have achieved significant growth and/or sustained high performance. The purpose of this grant opportunity is to: (1) recognize high-performing schools, and (2) facilitate and fund the sharing of best practices, particularly strategies for implementing the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and educator evaluation and support systems.

II. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

All 2012-13 Connecticut Schools of Distinction are eligible to apply for this grant opportunity. Click [here](#) to view the complete list of eligible schools.

III. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

A. Minimum Submission Requirements

Any application that does not meet the following requirements will be deemed unacceptable and ineligible for further review and consideration:

1. Being an eligible applicant, as defined above in Section I, Part II.
2. Submitting a complete application
3. Meeting the submission deadline of Friday, September 26, 2014 at 4:00 PM EST

B. Grant Recipients Requirements:

Grant recipients will serve as “Spotlight Schools” and join a professional learning community to facilitate collaboration between high-performing and underperforming schools. In addition to the submission of a high-quality grant application (i.e., proposing a best practice strategy that is well established, innovative, positively impacts student achievement, and replicable), grant recipients must:

- Produce teacher videos describing and/or demonstrating the strategy proposed in this application;
- Attend and/or present at one or more quarterly meetings of Commissioner’s Network Schools;
- Prepare and deliver professional learning sessions at one or more quarterly Alliance District Convenings; and/or
- Host Commissioner’s Network and SIG schools for facilitated school visits.

C. Submission Deadline:

All applications must be submitted by e-mail to Kelly Mero, CSDE Turnaround Office, at the following address: kelly.mero@ct.gov. All applications must be received by 4:00 p.m. Friday, September 26, 2014.



D. Freedom of Information

All complete applications shall become the sole property of the State and will not be returned. All of the information contained in an application is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Section 1-200 et seq. of the Connecticut General Statutes. FOIA declares that, except as provided by federal law or state statute, records maintained or kept on file by any public agency (as defined in statute) are public records and every person has a right to inspect such records and receive a copy of such records in accordance with the terms of FOIA.

E. Questions

Any and all questions regarding this application should be directed to: Kelly Mero, CSDE Turnaround Office, kelly.mero@ct.gov.

IV. GRANT PERIOD

The anticipated grant term will be from the award date, targeted for Fall 2014, through June 30, 2015.

V. FUNDING AND USE OF FUNDS

The CSDE anticipates awarding approximately \$122,765 reserved under federal Title I, Part A funds (authorized by ESEA section 1117(c) (2) (A)). The CSDE will award grants of up to \$50,000 per school. The grant will be awarded on a one time basis at the beginning of the grant period. At least 50 percent of the total grant award must go toward the sharing and/or replication of the best practice in additional schools. Grant recipients may spend up to 50 percent of the total grant award on investments benefiting the school of distinction.

VI. SELECTION CRITERIA

A selection committee will use the rubric provided in Appendix A to review and score all applications that meet the minimum submission requirements. All awards are subject to the availability of funds. Grants are not final until the award letter is executed. Given the number of eligible applicants, the CSDE anticipates a highly competitive process resulting in funding being awarded to only those applicants submitting well-developed proposals.



SECTION II: APPLICATION TEMPLATE

I. APPLICANT INFORMATION

District Name:	Superintendent's Name:	
School Name:	Principal's Name:	
Grades Served:	Approximate # of Students Served:	
Grant Contact Name:	Grant Contact Email:	Grant Contact Phone #:

II. BEST PRACTICE OVERVIEW

Program Title: Identify a title for the grant application and best practice presented in this application.
Program Description: In 5-10 sentences, describe the best practice that the school seeks to share, scale, and replicate through this grant application. Summarize the program components, population served, and the implementation process.



III. EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS

Impact and Results: In 5-10 sentences, summarize the results achieved by the best practice outlined herein. Include quantitative data that speak to the impact the practice has had on students, staff, and/or families.

IV. BEST PRACTICE SHARING

Lesson Learned: In 5-10 sentences, summarize any lessons learned in implementing and/or refining this best practice. How would the school support other schools as they seek to employ or replicate this strategy? What lessons learned could the applicant offer to these schools?

Vehicles for Collaboration: In 5-10 sentences, explain how the school would share this strategy with other schools (e.g., videos, webinars, toolkits, professional development, site visits, etc.).



V. BUDGET PROPOSAL

Grantee Name:	Town Code:	
Grant Title: Schools of Distinction Best Practice Grant: Disseminating and Replicating Best Practices in Connecticut's Schools and Districts		
Fund: 12060 SPID: 20679 Year: 2014 Prog: 82166 CF1: 170101 CF2:		
Grant Period: 9/1/2014-9/30/2015		
<p>Budget Narrative: In 5-10 sentences, summarize the costs associated with scaling, sharing, and/or replicating this practice. At least 50 percent of the total request must be used for the cost associated with best practice sharing; the other 50 percent must be used to expand a best practice in your school. In addition, complete the chart below outlining proposed investments. List costs by their ED 114 cost category using the Uniform Chart of Accounts on the next page. If you need additional rows for a given cost category, please add rows to the template; unused rows can be left blank or deleted.</p>		
ED 114 Code:	Description and Cost Justification:	Cost:
100		\$
200		\$
300		\$
400		\$
500		\$
600		\$
700		\$
800		\$
		\$
		\$
Total:		\$



ED114 Cost Categories – Uniform Charts of Accounts

Please code all expenditures in accordance with the state’s Uniform Charts of Accounts as summarized below.

CODE:	OBJECT:
100	PERSONNEL SERVICES – SALARIES. Amounts paid to both permanent and temporary grantee employees including personnel substituting for those in permanent positions. This includes gross salary for personnel services rendered while on the payroll of the grantees.
200	PERSONNEL SERVICES – EMPLOYEE BENEFITS. Amounts paid by the grantee on behalf of employees; these amounts are not included in the gross salary, but are in addition to that amount. Such payments are fringe benefit payments and, while not paid directly to employees, nevertheless are parts of the cost of personnel services.
300	PURCHASED PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES. Services, which by their nature can be performed only by persons or firms with specialized skills and knowledge. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided. Included are the services of architects, engineers, auditors, dentists, medical doctors, lawyers, consultants, teachers, accountants, technical assistance support organizations, school management partners, etc.
400	PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES. Services purchased to operate, repair, maintain, and rent property owned or used by the grantee. Persons other than grantee employees perform these services. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.
500	OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES. Amounts paid for services rendered by organizations or personnel not on the payroll of the grantee (separate from Professional and Technical Services or Property Services). While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.
600	SUPPLIES. Amounts paid for items that are consumed, worn out, or deteriorated through use; or items that lose their identity through fabrication or incorporation into different or more complex units or substances.
700	PROPERTY. Expenditures for acquiring fixed assets, including land or existing buildings, improvements of grounds, initial equipment, additional equipment, and replacement of equipment.
800	OTHER OBJECTS. (Miscellaneous Expenditures) Expenditures for goods or services not properly classified in one of the above objects. Included in the category could be expenditures for dues and fees, judgments against a grantee that are not covered by liability insurance, and interest payments on bonds and notes.

SECTION III: APPENDICES

I. APPLICATION RUBRIC

Overview		
<p>All applicants for the Schools of Distinction Best Practice Grant will be evaluated based on the criteria below. Each section of the application will be rated as: 1 – Below Standard; 2 – Developing; 3 – Proficient; or 4 – Exemplary. Sections of the application are weighted differently. The Schools of Distinction Best Practice Grant is competitive, and awarded schools may receive up to \$50,000.00.</p>		
Rating Key:		
<p>1 – Below Standard: The response lacks meaningful detail, demonstrates a lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant’s understanding of a replicable best practice program. Proposed best practice and vehicle for sharing is not transformative or sustainable in nature.</p> <p>2 – Developing: The response lacks critical details in certain areas. The response requires additional information in order to be considered a reasonably comprehensive best practice program, and to demonstrate a clear vision and vehicle for best practice sharing.</p> <p>3 – Proficient: The response indicates solid preparation and a grasp of a best practice strategy program that is impactful. Applicant provides a clear, realistic picture of how the best practice operates and how it can scaled, shared, and replicated by another school.</p> <p>4 – Exemplary: The response reflects a thorough understanding of a comprehensive best practice program that is both impactful and sustainable. The response indicates careful preparation for successful implementation, and a clear and compelling picture of how the best practice at the school operates and how the best practice strategy can be scaled and replicated at another school in the state.</p>		
Section:	Weight:	Points Available:
II. Best Practice Overview	X6	24
III. Evidence of Success	X6	24
IV. Best Practice Sharing	X8	32
V. Budget Proposal	X5	20
Total Points Available:		100



II. STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
STANDARD STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES
GRANT PROGRAMS

PROJECT TITLE:

Schools of Distinction Best Practice Grant

THE APPLICANT:

HEREBY ASSURES THAT:

(insert Agency/School/CBO Name)

- A. The applicant has the necessary legal authority to apply for and receive the proposed grant;
- B. The activities and services for which assistance is sought under this grant will be administered by or under the supervision and control of the applicant;
- C. The project will be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and in compliance with regulations and other policies and administrative directives of the State Board of Education and the CSDE;
- D. Grant funds shall not be used to supplant funds normally budgeted by the agency;
- E. Fiscal control and accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of all funds awarded;
- F. The applicant will submit a final project report (within 60 days of the project completion) and such other reports, as specified, to the CSDE, including information relating to the project records and access thereto as the CSDE may find necessary;
- G. The CSDE reserves the exclusive right to use and grant the right to use and/or publish any part or parts of any summary, abstract, reports, publications, records and materials resulting from this project and this grant;
- H. If the project achieves the specified objectives, every reasonable effort will be made to continue the project and/or implement the results after the termination of state/federal funding;
- I. The applicant will protect and save harmless the State Board of Education from financial loss and expense, including legal fees and costs, if any, arising out of any breach of the duties, in whole or part, described in the application for the grant;
- J. At the conclusion of each grant period, the applicant will provide for an independent audit report acceptable to the grantor in accordance with Sections 7-394a and 7-396a of the Connecticut General Statutes, and the applicant shall return to the CSDE any moneys not expended in accordance with the approved program/operation budget as determined by the audit;



K. REQUIRED LANGUAGE (NON-DISCRIMINATION)

1) References in this section to “contract” shall mean this grant agreement and references to “contractor” shall mean the Grantee.

(a) For purposes of this Section, the following terms are defined as follows:

- i. "Commission" means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities;
- ii. "Contract" and “contract” include any extension or modification of the Contract or contract;
- iii. "Contractor" and “contractor” include any successors or assigns of the Contractor or contractor;
- iv. "Gender identity or expression" means a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose;
- v. “good faith” means that degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations;
- vi. "good faith efforts" shall include, but not be limited to, those reasonable initial efforts necessary to comply with statutory or regulatory requirements and additional or substituted efforts when it is determined that such initial efforts will not be sufficient to comply with such requirements;
- vii. "marital status" means being single, married as recognized by the state of Connecticut, widowed, separated or divorced;
- viii. "mental disability" means one or more mental disorders, as defined in the most recent edition of the American Psychiatric Association's "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders", or a record of or regarding a person as having one or more such disorders;
- ix. "minority business enterprise" means any small contractor or supplier of materials fifty-one percent or more of the capital stock, if any, or assets of which is owned by a person or persons: (1) who are active in the daily affairs of the enterprise, (2) who have the power to direct the management and policies of the enterprise, and (3) who are members of a minority, as such term is defined in subsection (a) of Connecticut General Statutes § 32-9n; and
- x. "public works contract" means any agreement between any individual, firm or corporation and the State or any political subdivision of the State other than a municipality for construction, rehabilitation, conversion, extension, demolition or repair of a public building, highway or other changes or improvements in real property, or which is financed in whole or in part by the State, including, but not limited to, matching expenditures, grants, loans, insurance or guarantees.

For purposes of this Section, the terms "Contract" and “contract” do not include a contract where each contractor is (1) a political subdivision of the state, including, but not limited to, a municipality, (2) a quasi-public agency, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 1-120, (3) any



- other state, including but not limited to any federally recognized Indian tribal governments, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 1-267, (4) the federal government, (5) a foreign government, or (6) an agency of a subdivision, agency, state or government described in the immediately preceding enumerated items (1), (2), (3), (4) or (5).
- (b) (1) The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, mental retardation, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the State of Connecticut; and the Contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to insure that applicants with job-related qualifications are employed and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, mental retardation, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by the Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (2) the Contractor agrees, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the Contractor, to state that it is an "affirmative action-equal opportunity employer" in accordance with regulations adopted by the Commission; (3) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which the Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which the Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission, advising the labor union or workers' representative of the Contractor's commitments under this section and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (4) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this Section and Connecticut General Statutes §§ 46a-68e and 46a-68f and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §§ 46a-56, 46a-68e and 46a-68f; and (5) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor as relate to the provisions of this Section and Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56. If the contract is a public works contract, the Contractor agrees and warrants that he will make good faith efforts to employ minority business enterprises as subcontractors and suppliers of materials on such public works projects.
- (c) Determination of the Contractor's good faith efforts shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following factors: The Contractor's employment and subcontracting policies, patterns and practices; affirmative advertising, recruitment and training; technical assistance activities and such other reasonable activities or efforts as the Commission may prescribe that are designed to ensure the participation of minority business enterprises in public works projects.
- (d) The Contractor shall develop and maintain adequate documentation, in a manner prescribed by the Commission, of its good faith efforts.
- (e) The Contractor shall include the provisions of subsection (b) of this Section in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted



by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes §46a-56; provided if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.

- (f) The Contractor agrees to comply with the regulations referred to in this Section as they exist on the date of this Contract and as they may be adopted or amended from time to time during the term of this Contract and any amendments thereto.
- (g) (1) The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of sexual orientation, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or the State of Connecticut, and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their sexual orientation; (2) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities advising the labor union or workers' representative of the Contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (3) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56; and (4) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor which relate to the provisions of this Section and Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56.
- (h) The Contractor shall include the provisions of the foregoing paragraph in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56; provided, if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.

L. The grant award is subject to approval of the CSDE and availability of state or federal funds.

M. The applicant agrees and warrants that Sections 4-190 to 4-197, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes concerning the Personal Data Act and Sections 10-4-8 to 10-4-10, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies promulgated there under are hereby incorporated by reference.



I, the undersigned authorized official, hereby certify that these assurances shall be fully implemented.

Signature:

Name: *(typed)*

Title: *(typed)*

Date:
