

New York State Education Department
Contract For Excellence
2008-09 Needs and Strategies Report

ALBANY CITY SD

SUPERINTENDENT EVA JOSEPH

Achievement Issues : Describe the overall student achievement need presenting the greatest challenge in your school district which the Contract for Excellence addresses. In particular, describe the needs for those schools in improvement status that qualified your district for the Contract for Excellence.

Among the challenges that exist within the City School District of Albany are the performance needs at two of its middle schools and its high school. Both Hackett Middle School and Philip Livingston Magnet Academy are designated as schools in need of restructuring according to the New York State Education Department's system of accountability, and Albany High School is designated as a School Requiring Academic Progress. Further, during the 2007-2008 school year, Philip Livingston Magnet Academy was designated as a School Under Registration Review (SURR) in the subject area of mathematics.

Contract Plan : Describe the overall strategy your district will implement under the Contract for Excellence to address the above needs. Detail the new and innovative programs selected and how they will integrate with existing improvement plans.

The Contract plan that will be implemented in 2008-2009 will address efforts toward improving student achievement at the above-named schools, along with building the School District's capacity to serve students in high needs schools across the District.

At Albany High School, the C4E commitment of \$830,506 will provide the following:

Increased Time on Task - Efforts at the high school will be to increase time on task by adding a teacher to provide program services for English as a Second Language students, adding an attendance teacher to increase student attendance monitoring, expansion of the educational program serving students on long-term suspension, and the purchase of calculators as learning resources to enhance instruction.

Improved Teacher/Principal Quality - Targeted professional development to improve the quality of instruction will be provided to teachers and the high school administrators by the National Urban Alliance for Effective Education (NUA). The primary objective of the NUA/Albany High School Initiative is to plan and deliver professional development that significantly enhances the capacity of teachers and administrators to create and deliver classroom lessons that more effectively engage all students in rigorous intellectual discussions, research, written and oral presentations and student developed projects, in all curriculum areas, leading to high levels of student achievement aligned with State Standards. The C4E amount for NUA is \$160,035.

At Hackett Middle School, the C4E commitment of \$502,405 will provide the following:

Increased Time on Task - Instructional program changes will be implemented by adding full-service school services to address students' social, emotional, and behavioral needs in order to sustain their attendance in class.

Improved Teacher/Principal Quality - The Contract plan includes an instructional coach to support teacher development and also professional development in value-added analysis.

At Philip Livingston Magnet Academy, the C4E commitment of \$240,799 will provide the following:

Improved Teacher/Principal Quality - Targeted professional development will be provided by the NUA. The C4E amount for NUA is \$30,000. Improvements in mathematics instruction toward implementing the mathematics standards will also be made by providing new instructional resources, a mathematics coach,

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and training in value added analysis.

For other high needs schools in the City School District of Albany serving students in pre-kindergarten through grade 8, the C4E commitment of \$416,296 will provide the following:

Pre-kindergarten Expansion ∩ The District's full-day pre-kindergarten program for four-year-old children will be expanded.

Improved Teacher/Principal Quality ∩ Professional development will be provided to teachers and administrators at the District's high needs schools by adding a instructional coach, developing their capacity for value-added analysis, the methods of the NUA, and providing improved instructional resources and training toward implementing New York State Mathematics Standards.

Increased Time on Task ∩ The middle level alternative education program for students suspended from school on a long-term basis will be expanded to increase instructional time.

Last, a C4E commitment of \$380,955 will provide for unrestricted programs that already exist in additional high needs schools as follows:

Class Size Reduction ∩ In selected elementary schools, primary grade classrooms will be made smaller to accommodate for a more favorable teacher-student ratio to support students who are struggling to meet the NYS Learning Standards.

Increased Time on Task - In selected elementary schools, kindergarten & Reading Recovery teachers will provide supports to struggling early readers.

Special Populations : The needs of special populations (LEP, students with disabilities, poverty and students with low achievement) should be assessed, with specific programmatic efforts identified.

The Contract Plan for the City School District of Albany will provide services to special populations of students at each of the three above-named schools, namely students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and students with low achievement. The poverty rate of the schools are: Albany High School - 53%; Philip Livingston Magnet Academy ∩ 79%; Hackett Middle School ∩ 72%. Each of the schools has a significant percentage of students with disabilities and have been identified as schools demonstrating low academic achievement.

Targeting to Need : Provide evidence that funds are targeted to students with the greatest educational needs. Refer to the Educational Need Matrix e-mailed to each superintendent.

The Contract for Excellence for the City School District of Albany targets students with the greatest educational need as identified on the Educational Need Matrix provided by the New York State Education Department. New and expanded program opportunities that comprise the Contract for Excellence are focused on services to students attending Albany High School, Hackett Middle School, and Philip Livingston Magnet Academy at levels specified for those schools. The Albany School District has targeted 66% of the Contract for Excellence funds for these three schools, in particular. Further details on the Contract for Excellence educational programs are provided in the sections below.

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Performance Targets : You will need to complete a detailed Performance Matrix in the application that will capture the specific gap reduction you expect in each school with C4E funds for specific accountability areas and subgroups of students. In this narrative, describe the overall achievement outcomes that you anticipate will result from the C4E programs.

The Contract for Excellence regulations indicate that the Contract for Excellence program plan should result in a least a 10% gain in the percent of the target group students achieving the State standards. The target group students are those at the Contract for Excellence schools that did not meet their benchmark for annual progress denoted by the New York State Education Department as Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) or Safe Harbor (SH). Target student groups that did not meet their AYP, but met their SH, have performance targets of 5% gain.

Maintenance of Effort : Describe how you will continue your previous year's C4E program expenditures. Explain any reductions in expenditures that will be reallocated as part of this year's contract.

There are no previous year's C4E expenditures to report, since in 2007-2008 the City School District of Albany did not qualify for Contract for Excellence funds.

New vs. Continuation of Existing Programs : Describe how funds will supplement and not supplant current programs, except where allowed.

New staffing positions will be added in the District to increase time on task efforts via new programming, student supports, attendance monitoring, and expanded Pre-K. Additionally, student resource materials will be purchased. To improve teacher and principal quality the District will increase services of the NUA professional development program and implement a value-added analysis model.

The Contract for Excellence allows up to 35% of the funds to be used to continue existing programs that fall within the spirit of C4E. The School District will continue existing programs in the areas of class size reduction, time on task (attendance officer, home school coordinator, Reading Recovery teacher), teacher/principal quality (curriculum supervisors), and middle school/high school restructuring (strategic planning).