

## Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness 3 Program

### Grantee Information:

Grantee: **Watertown City School District**

### Abstract:

The Watertown City Schools is a high-need/low resource small city seeking to establish, refine and sustain a (6) tiered Career Ladder Program for teachers and school leaders – aptly named **Growing Our Own**. The Program will offer: a) clearly established and articulated criteria for selection of candidates; b) targeted training and resources to enhance skill sets in support of students with disabilities and those who are economically disadvantaged; and c) more challenging roles and responsibilities for teachers and leaders. Serving more than four thousand students, including 2,269 who are economically disadvantaged and 752 who have special needs, the proposed career ladder includes:

- I. A **novice teacher program** (years 2/3) including professional development (*Direct, Explicit Instruction* and *Data-Driven Instruction*) relevant to populations served, mentoring and provision of professional resources and other supports as needed for 20 candidates;
- II. A **professional teacher program** for all utilizing the aforementioned professional development approaches and the support of a private, research university with significant resources related to successful inclusion of students with disabilities in urban contexts;
- III. An **teacher leader program** for 48 candidates including *Cognitive Coaching* training and the assumption of leadership roles (with support) within the district to build both individual and systemic capacity;
- IV. A **novice principal program** to serve 5 building-level administrators in their 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years (at the time of funding) including professional learning and mentoring aligned with individual candidate's needs analysis as conducted by an independent evaluation team;
- V. A **professional principal program** (serving all) applying key training such as *Cognitive Coaching, Direct Explicit Instruction* and *Differentiated Instruction* so that they may

## Strengthening Teacher and Leader Effectiveness 3 Program

assume Instructional Leadership roles in the District's 8 buildings and support teachers and students effectively; and

- VI. A **principal leader** to further aid the District in supporting the growth of leaders and teachers across the districts.

Key needs of the District are addressed including significant turnover that has and will occur in the principal ranks and a lack of any defined teacher or leader career ladders or differentiated support for teachers or building leaders in the most diverse, high-need/low resource small city school north of Syracuse. Student learning gaps are clearly documented in the district while recently applied professional development resources (regional RTTT network teams, for example) were too scant and diffused to improve teaching and leadership practice in the District.

The District will collaborate with Syracuse University's School of Education to enact **Growing Our Own** to ensure that programming and supports align with the most rigorous research in the field of teacher induction, leadership development and teaching economically disadvantaged students and students with special needs. Support from the R/E/D Group, an independent evaluation firm, will ensure that a system of data collection and analysis is used to track program implementation, inform the application of professional development and resources to candidate's needs, shape mid-course program corrections and document impact to support sustainability.

### **Project Contact:**

Name: Mary-Margaret Zehr

Title: Assistant Superintendent for Instruction

District: Watertown City Schools

Address: 1351 Washington Street, P.O. Box 586, Watertown, NY 13601

Phone: 315.785.3708

Email address: [mmzehr@watertowncsd.org](mailto:mmzehr@watertowncsd.org)