



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

April 30, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Administrators and Authorizers
Education Alliance
School Board Presidents

FROM: Michael P. Flanagan, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Project Reimagine Demonstration Sites

Many of you have heard me speak about the crucial need to reimagine our educational system and about our call for demonstration districts that will pilot ways to enact system-wide reform. Our state's future depends on all of our children graduating prepared for college and the workplace.

This is our once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to use federal economic recovery funds to support this dramatic level of change. State funding will not increase and may never return to former levels. We must stop thinking in terms of silver bullets and small-scale programs and use our time, talents, and available resources to implement systemic change.

This memorandum includes Project Reimagine Proposal Guidelines for any school district/organization that is ready to accept the challenge to significantly transform teaching and learning. We are seeking up to 20 demonstration districts to work with us to reimagine education and are securing \$1 million that will be available to support your efforts. In addition, those districts selected will be included in MDE's application for additional federal Stimulus funds.

Please work with your reform team to write up your proposal and send it to the Michigan Department of Education by close of business on Friday, August 14, 2009. If you have questions about this vital project, please contact Tom White at tomwhite2251@gmail.com or Jean Shane at shanej@michigan.gov.

Be bold. Tinkering won't do.

Attachment

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Project Reimagine Demonstration Districts Fact Sheet

INTRODUCTION

Why Reimagine our education system?

It's on our watch. We have the ethical and moral imperative to:

- Give **all** our students the competitive edge they need to lead and thrive in highly skilled, creative work that will continue to drive the modern global economy.
- Make sure **all** our students leave high school college and work ready.
- Eliminate persistent and deepening achievement gaps.
- Create a system built around students, not adults.
- Reimagine a system that cannot survive or thrive within its current financial structure and will not see new state funds for years to come.
- Be bold, be dramatic, be systemic. Tinkering won't do.

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is challenging the educational community to boldly and dramatically reimagine their systems to ensure **all** students learn and achieve at high levels. MDE is seeking system-wide reform, not projects. MDE will select up to 20 demonstration districts/organizations to create innovative plans and actions to fundamentally and significantly reform teaching and learning in our education systems.

REQUIRED CORE COMPONENTS

- Dramatically improved proficiency in core content areas by all students
- Innovative, multi-faceted delivery of educational programs
- Increased efficiency and effectiveness of school management
- Pre-school or other programs implemented by 2011-2012 to prepare all young children for school and all schools for young children
- Early transition options for students, based on proficiency and readiness, to access post-secondary opportunities
- Implementation of universal education in instructional practices



Project Reimagine Proposal Guidelines

"This electric toy has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication." - *William Orton, president of Western Union Telegraph Company* rejecting an offer from Gardiner Greene Hubbard to buy rights to Alexander Graham Bell's patents for the telephone, 1876.

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GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

FUNDING

Districts/organizations accepting the challenge to become a demonstration site for Project Reimagine may use Title I, IDEA and American Recovery and Rehabilitation Act Stabilization funds. MDE plans to seek additional funds from the federal Economic Recovery Race to the Top (\$4.35 billion) through a competitive application process. Demonstration districts/organizations for Project Reimagine will be included in that grant.

In addition, MDE is in the process of securing a \$1 million grant from a private foundation to support Project Reimagine initiatives.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Participation in Project Reimagine is voluntary. Up to 20 proposals will be selected. MDE seeks a variety of proposals representing Michigan's diverse educational community: K-12 districts and public school academies from rural, suburban, and urban areas; educational service agencies/intermediate school districts engaged in regional efforts; and public school academy authorizers. A written innovation design must be submitted following the requirements outlined below.

ASSURANCE OF ACCURACY

For each proposal, an assurance must be submitted stating that all information provided within the proposal is true and accurate. If, during the implementation of the project, MDE establishes that inaccurate or false information was provided in the proposal, involvement in Project Reimagine may be rescinded.

REQUIRED CORE COMPONENTS

1. Based on school district/organization self-assessment, school improvement plans, and other relevant data, summarize the core challenges you plan to resolve in reimagining your K-12 system.
2. Describe how you will accomplish the required outcomes (below) and any other outcomes you expect to achieve through implementation of your Project Reimagine. (See Pillars of Innovation Options {Attached} for possible best practices.)
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 - Increased efficiency and effectiveness of school management
 - Pre-school or other programs implemented by 2011-2012 to prepare all young children for school and all schools for young children
 - Early transition options for students, based on proficiency and readiness, to access post-secondary opportunities
 - Implementation of universal education in instructional practices
3. Describe how you have and will involve your school and community in designing and implementing your Project Reimagine.
4. Describe your capacity for rapid implementation, your ability and plan to sustain and continue reform, and how you will know if your Project Reimagine is successful.
5. Describe your timeline for planning and implementing your Project Reimagine.
6. Describe the federal, state, and local funding sources you will use, including American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. Include community, foundation, or business funding sources. After demonstration districts have been selected, MDE will work with those districts to provide financial support for planning and implementation.
7. What obstacles to and supports for do you envision for your Project Reimagine?

PROPOSAL DELIVERY INSTRUCTIONS:

Three copies of your complete proposal, including a cover letter bearing the original signature of the superintendent or public school academy authorizer, need to be delivered to Dr. Sally Vaughn by Friday, August 14, 2009, at the following address:

Michigan Department of Education
Project Reimagine
P.O. Box 30008
Lansing, MI 48909

If shipping by overnight express or UPS, the following address must be used:

Michigan Department of Education
Project Reimagine
John Hannah Building, 4th Floor
608 West Allegan Street
Lansing, MI 48933

PILLARS OF INNOVATION OPTIONS

(select from among any of the following or add others)

- **High Quality Standards, Instruction, and Assessments**
 - Curriculum aligned with Michigan's college ready standards and content expectations
 - Personalized, customized learning plans
 - Tiered intervention
 - Integration of virtual learning and technology into learning for both students and teachers
 - Expanded and/or alternative learning times and schedules (days, year)
 - World languages in elementary and middle school
 - Project-based learning
 - Formative and summative assessments
 - Just-in-time assessments
 - Transparent and aligned system of student expectations
 - Innovative ways to remove barriers of time and space

- **Teacher and Administrator Quality**
 - Sustained, job-embedded, data-driven professional development and training
 - Reconfigured compensation systems, including team, building, and/or district based pay-for-performance and/or pay-for-hardship areas
 - Innovative, high quality mentoring and induction
 - Building assignment criteria and processes
 - Evaluation systems focusing on coaching, instruction, performance, and student achievement
 - Collaboration and/or co-teaching

- **Low Performing Schools**
 - Technical assistance
 - Models for beating the odds
 - Reconstitution
 - Chartering
 - Early warning systems
 - Drop-out prevention

- **Data Systems**
 - Implementation and use of longitudinal K-20 data systems
 - Diagnosis of student needs and individualize intervention
 - Tracking of student performance by teacher

- **Community Involvement and Resources**
 - Innovative methods for accessing student voices in planning and implementing a reimagined system
 - Innovative methods for involving parents, non-parents, business, government, human services agencies in planning and implementing a reimagined system
 - Innovative methods for involving district staff and unions/professional associations in planning and implementing a reimagined system
 - School buildings as community centers
 - Consolidation of services
 - Partnerships with foundations and community stakeholders

- **Research Supported, High Impact Strategies**
 - Chicago High School Model
 - 90/90/90 Schools
 - Green Dot Schools
 - KIPP Schools
 - Tough Choices or Tough Times Model
 - Others

- **Other Great Ideas Identified by Districts**