



## Contract for Excellence

### Needs and Strategies Report For School Year 2009-10

WAPPINGERS CSD

SUPERINTENDENT RICHARD POWELL

**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.**

Major issues identified for WCSD have been: a) the majority of failures are at the 9th grade level; b) many classified students have not taken the required exams; c) black and Latino students from a residential juvenile facility in the district felt no connection to their school community, and d) students drop out because they cannot earn the required 4 credits for ELA and Social Studies in 4 years. Our C4E plan is to provide students with a solid foundation in literacy in the elementary years, provide multiple opportunities to pass ELA and Social Studies from the first year of high school, provide support for classified students in all areas, and create opportunity for positive experiences for transient students. To accomplish this:

1. The summer school program for students in grades 8 -9 implemented in July 2008 to remediate those who failed ninth grade and to prepare 8th graders at-risk of academic failure for entry into high school will be expanded to include other subjects and levels. Twenty-six classes in ELA (grades 8-11), Social Studies (grades 8-11), Algebra, and Biology will be offered with class sizes limited to 15 students. Classes for students in grade 12 may also be added if space allows. Both classified and non-classified students will be invited to attend. A hands on, project based approach is designed to better motivate students to learn and retain what they have learned.
2. Ninth graders will be assigned to teams at both high schools. Special education teachers and Guidance Counselors will provide support for students, with a special emphasis on those in the targeted populations. Teams will follow an inclusion model, provide a non-lab science course, and allow teachers to track student progress, discuss intervention strategies during a common planning period, provide AIS, and take immediate intervention steps as necessary. A team spirit will enable students to identify with and be part of a community.
3. The alternative 9th grade (small learning community) initiated in 2008-09 had only limited success. Very few students took advantage of this opportunity. Those in the program actually required much more social and emotional support than we were able to provide. This program will be re-designed for the 1009-10 school year to continue working with the 2008-09 freshman students as they move forward and to expand the interventions available for all students in the alternative high school.
4. Supplemental lab classes for high school students provide a greater intensity and variety of Academic Intervention Services at that level. The same teacher teaches both the main class and the lab so that instruction can be adjusted or expanded to provide differentiated and targeted interventions that are applicable to the individual student.
5. Reduced elementary class sizes continue in the 2009-10 school year. Teaching assistants supervise small pull-out groups as needed. These types of interventions provide students with a solid academic base and allow teachers to intervene before a problem becomes a stumbling block to success.
6. Reading specialists at the high school level provide support for students struggling with literacy skills.
7. Some classified high school students are given the opportunity to participate in a School-to-Work program. Students work with a mentor/advisor who supervises them on a job site that works cooperatively with the school. The student's supervisor also monitors and provides support for student academic progress. An emphasis on classified students' participation in the exams will be a focus and goal for all secondary schools as well.

**Maintenance of Effort: Describe how you will continue your previous years' C4E expenditures. Districts are required to maintain total expenditures for C4E allowable programs at the level of their 2007-08 and 2008-09 amounts, as approved by the Commissioner. The total amount to be maintained in 2009-10 therefore is equal to the approved 2008-09 Contract amount, including the 2007-08 MOE amount.**

Most of the programs added under C4E since 2007-08 have been very successful and will be continued. These include: Additional time on task in ELA and Math (extra classes every other day) at the junior high schools, guidance counselors for the 6th grades, literacy coaches for the elementary and junior high schools, an ELA coordinator for the elementary and junior high schools, reduced class sizes at both elementary and high school levels, restructuring of the high schools (teaming) and the alternative high school program. The two-week summer camp for elementary students in reading and math kept students interested and engaged in learning for a short time beyond the regular school year. However, these students were not always the ones who needed the extra time and were using the program more as enrichment rather than remediation. Therefore, we did not see huge gains in achievement among the students attending the program. This program will no longer be funded through C4E. Instead, these funds will be reallocated to expanding and maintaining efforts in the secondary summer school, which is currently a C4E program, and target students more directly "in greatest need".



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**Reallocation: Specifically describe how you will reallocate any funds which will not continue to support prior year C4E programs. The reallocation of funds must be for new C4E allowable programs and be approved by the Commissioner. Reallocated funds will reduce the prior year's MOE by an equal amount. Describe specific programs and items to be purchased and how the new programs will improve student achievement. Revised Narratives, Programs, Options, Input Metrics, Performance**

The summer reading and math camps at the elementary level were fun, but did not make a significant difference in reading and/or math achievement once students were back to school in September. The summer school program for 8th and 9th graders, however, made a huge difference in achievement for the students attending this program and their subsequent success in the next grade level. We will be reallocating funds used at the elementary level for extended year to the secondary level school summer school program.

**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.**

Due to the targeted efforts made possible by C4E funding, both junior highs are currently making AYP and ELA achievement scores in grades K-8 are significantly higher this year than last year. John Jay High School has most recently been identified as failing to meet standards. This is due to a lower than desired graduation rate among classified students. Efforts were made to improve participation in state exams, which has been a problem in the past but was not an issue this year. Although John Jay's classified students would have made AYP with the "safe harbor" adjustments, they were not eligible for "safe harbor" because of the low graduation rate and are now identified as "Requiring Academic Progress (Year 2)". The actual number of students contributing toward this identification is very low. While we will address these students on an individual basis, it is important that we continue to focus our efforts on the larger population and provide a solid foundation in ELA and study skills.

**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 data is not yet out for 2008-09 to determine whether there are any achievement issues particular to an ethnic subgroup. In any case, the number of students in these groups is too small to be counted in John Jay High School's report card. Students with disabilities at this school failed to meet state standards (due to the inability to use "safe harbor" because of the low graduation rate) and are considered as "students with the greatest educational needs". The actual number of students in this category is 49 out of a total of 2161 in the high school. For this reason, our plan remains more global and district-wide, and is designed to remediate every single student who is not achieving the NYS standards regardless of classification or subgroup.

**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.**

Programs targeting the elementary and junior high schools based on previous C4E analysis have been very successful in helping those schools meet AYP. Elementary schools feeding into the junior high schools, as well as the high schools receiving students from the junior high schools were targeted (along with these junior high schools) for the coming year to provide a district-wide initiative for reform. The program implemented and maintained in 2007-09 has strong AIS and early intervention programs, and uses literacy coaches, differentiated instruction, seamless integration of Special Education with Regular Education, staff development in intervention strategies, technology integration, character education, critical thinking and reading/writing across all content areas. The 2008-09 focus on the high school populations added academic intervention services for students at risk, which included all of the sub-populations mentioned above. Recognizing that the problem does not suddenly appear and disappear just because a student enters or leaves junior high school, it has been essential and effective to take a global approach instead of just concentrating on the subgroup identified on the state report card as the reason AYP was not met. As a result, we will continue to focus our attention and maintenance of effort on the elementary and secondary schools for the 2009-10 school year as part of our continuing district-wide reform initiative. A task force on special education has given suggestions on improving the structure of our special education program, specifically the Special Education Alternative (SEA) program at John Jay High School.



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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.

We anticipate additional improvements in achievement at all grade levels as we continue our global approach. We also anticipate that our efforts to restructure the special education programs at the high school will improve achievement as well as graduation rate among classified students. Continuing the additional reading support at the high school, additional guidance counselors, individualized academic intervention services at all levels, increased time on task through an expanded summer school program, smaller learning communities, and greater teacher accountability for student success through teaming are all expected to raise the level of student achievement in 2009-10.

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

Without additional funding, no new programs will be initiated this year. We will be using all of our C4E funds to maintain existing C4E programs: 9th Grade Teaming, a secondary summer school, reading remediation in the secondary schools, School-to-Work program, literacy coaches, K-8 ELA coordinator, an extra period for junior high students in ELA and math every other day, additional support services, and an intensive AIS program K-12. These programs have been designated *¿C4E¿* programs since their inception and have not supplanted any existing programs.

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