

Achievement Issues

The FCSD is a District in Need of Improvement (DINI) based upon the performance of students with disabilities (SWD) in English language arts (ELA). The G. Ray Bodley High School is a School in Need of Improvement (SINI) Year II for the performance of SWD and low income students in ELA and mathematics. The FCSD has been engaged with the NYS Education Department School Improvement Office for support and guidance in developing plans and implementing systemic change within the district over the past eighteen months. Further, the district recently completed a VESID review during the 2006-07 school year and is implementing district wide initiatives to address 1) Literacy, 2) behavioral supports and 3) accommodations and modifications for all learners. The district plan for the Contract for Excellence targets funds for strategies and practices to address the learning and performance needs of SWD, low income, ELL and at risk learners throughout the school district with particular emphasis at the high school level due to the SINI II status.

Contract Plan

The Contract for Excellence will address the learning and performance needs of SWD, low income, English language learners and at risk learners at the high school level and through out the schools district. The Contract Plan in keeping with the DINI and SINI Plans submitted to the State Education Department (SED) and the VESID Quality Improvement Plan.

The Contract Plan supports a district **data administrator** to provide a data gathering, analysis and evaluation function. This position will enhance the district, individual schools and teaching staff to use data in assessing student performance, instructional practices and evaluation of the effectiveness of practices and programs. Through professional development and the activities of the data administrator, data based decision making will become a central practice in responding to the learning needs of all students most particularly SWD, low income students and at risk learners. To aid in the use of data the district will subscribe to the **Small Cities School District (SCSD) School Improvement Institute** for data benchmarking for student achievement.

The district will implement the **Fast For Word Program** at all four elementary schools as an Academic Intervention Service (AIS) and support to build the reading and learning skills of elementary SWD, low income, ELL and at risk learners. This implementation will support and align with the use of the Fast For Word Program that was initiated at the junior high school and high school level during the 2006-07 school year. At the junior high school level the **Read 180 Program** will be initiated to address the reading needs of SWD, low income, ELL and at risk learners. The FCSD will implement a **new reading series** that incorporates best practices in the teaching of reading skills in grades UPK to 8.

Restructuring for learning to address the needs of SWD, low income, English language learners and at risk learners is a major direction in the district and at the high school level for the Contract for Excellence. As an outcome of the VESID review the 1) delivery of

and differentiation of instruction and 2) the provision of the learning accommodations and supports for SWD, low income and at risk learners will be improved through the restructuring of the role and assignments of **6.0 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) special education teachers**. There will also be an increase in the **instructional staff of 1.0 English language learners, 1.0 FTE mathematics and 1.0 FTE English/social studies**. The mathematics, English and social studies positions will provide instruction in smaller class sizes and additional instructional sections (classes) to provide instruction for SWD, low income and at risk learners. The ELL teacher will provide English as a second language instruction to English language learners.

An additional restructuring area at the high school level is the role of a **guidance counselor** to be the lead transition counselor to coordinate transitioning planning for SWD for post secondary education, work or entrance into the military. The counselor will be involved in restructuring efforts promoting parent involvement and student engagement to enhance connectivity with their school program. This function of more coordinated and effective transition planning was directed as a requirement of the VESID review and subsequent compliance plan.

The high school will also continue to have a **school home liaison (social worker)** whose role is to connect with at risk youth including SWD, low income, ELL and homeless students to keep them enrolled in school and benefiting from their learning experiences so they will graduate from high school. The school home liaison will engage parents in supporting their child's education and promoting parent involvement and education related activities.

The high school will offer extended learning time through providing a **summer school program** for at risk students including as a priority SWD, ELL, low income and at risk students. The high school restructuring activities will provide career and technical education course works at the local BOCES for students, particularly SWD, ELL and low income students.

The Contract for Excellence funding will support the **new restructuring initiatives of 1) the Breaking Ranks II Advisory Model at the high school, 2) 0.5 FTE Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) external district coach and 3) a 0.5 FTE Coordinator of Alternative Instruction and tutoring services**. The Breaking Ranks Advisory Model will support developing a personalized environment and student connections at the high school to address students staying in school and earning a high school diploma. The PBIS external coach will provide instruction and embedded professional development for all staff and parents on the implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. This strategy responds to the behavioral recommendations of the district's VESID review. The coordinator of the Alternative and Tutoring services will ensure that grade 7-12 SWD, ELL, low income and at risk learners who are experiencing academic and behavioral problems in school receive tutoring support to pass required courses and meet graduation requirements.

In responding to the district systemic reform initiative the district will **maintain as existing programs lower class size reduction (CSR)** at the elementary school level. The goal of this approach is to maintain low class sizes to increase learning time and interactions with teachers to support student differentiated instructional needs. These positions were targeted during budget discussions to be eliminated by the district. As a result of the Contract for Excellence funding these positions in all four elementary schools will be maintained. The maintained elementary teaching positions include five (5.0) FTE teachers at the kindergarten (1.0 at GBY), first (3.0 at LGN, GBY, VOL), third (1.0 at FGR) grades.