



# Contract for Excellence Narrative

## 2023 - 2024





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## Program Narrative

Please address changes in your existing C4E programs, including any redesign or reallocation. Also, describe how activities support the Regents Reform Agenda.

In 2023-24, the Rochester City School District (RCSD) will continue many Contract for Excellence (C4E) initiatives that support the Regents Reform Agenda. The following C4E-funded activities will help students to meet ELA and Math standards as well as increase the college and career readiness of students:

- In-School Suspension (ISS) keeps students who receive a suspension at school in a learning environment. An identified "ISS Room" provides continued instruction and maintains engagement in the educational setting and process.
- Social Workers and Councilors to assist students and support improved academic performance as they fall behind academically.
- Parent Liaison and Home School Assistance to reach out to the community and ensure students are attending school and staying on track academically.
- English Language Learners' educational needs are supported by bilingual and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) teachers and support staff, and activities in the Department of ELL. More than 3,800 RCSD students are ELLs (18% of the total District enrollment) and speak more than 70 languages.
- All City High is focused on providing extensive choices to learners through an expanded learning approach that embeds multiple pathways into the school's organization. The scheduling includes non-traditional days and clustered teams. The program is organized into small learning communities with class sizes of no more than 25 students. In addition, the program has a low student/counselor ratio with individual graduation mapping and post-graduation planning to ensure success.
- Rochester International Academy (RIA) provides new immigrant students with an instructional program that simultaneously develops English language proficiency while facilitating their acquisition of content knowledge. RIA also emphasizes parental and community involvement to not only enrich the school community, but to begin the transition of the families into their new school, city, and country.
- LyncX is an alternative program for students that have been involved with level four conduct violations as mentioned by the district's code of conduct. Students in grades 7 – 12 receive three hours of instruction in core content areas so that they receive instruction to stay on pace as much as possible with their permanent school environment. Students are engaged in restorative practices with staff, including School Counselors, Social Workers, and staff.

# Targeting Narrative

Please address both student educational needs and building-level accountability status as reflected in the attached Targeting Matrix. Explain how the district and school Comprehensive Plan supports the program.

[2021 – 22 Accountability Status](#) – This is the latest publicized information brought forth by the NYS Education Department.

The building-level accountability statuses are found by the school on the NYSED Public School Report Card Site. The need throughout the District is high. The majority of schools have an economically disadvantaged subgroup of 30 or more students. Performance for each subgroup of need varies from school to school; however, throughout the District students with disabilities are struggling to make progress. There have been significant gains for our English Language Learners consistently since 2014 in terms of graduation rate.

All RCSD schools (Local Support and Improvement (LSI), Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI), and Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) are required to submit a School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP), which serves as a road map for continuous sustained improvement. There are currently 35 schools designated as CSI, with 10 of them designated as CSI-R (Receivership). Professional development for principals and school representatives is conducted throughout the year, and school teams are required to implement the appropriate improvement plan. The ultimate goal is to develop an improvement plan that addresses academic needs (especially for the ELL and Special Education populations using the ESSA regulation and measures as the basis) as its priority and provides activities to support an effective school with positive outcomes. The required elements of the CEPs are:

- Plans based on the ESSA/Demonstrable Indicators measures and building level needs-assessment
- Data-driven plans that are aligned with the identified needs of the building and related specifically to English Language Arts (Literacy in the Content Area), Math, and graduation rates;
- Action steps toward correction of the cited area;
- Root cause analysis of cited area;
- Disaggregated data; and
- Integration and implementation of district benchmark.

The Rochester City School District is a high-need district, as evidenced by its overall student poverty rate of over 87% (as determined by free and reduced-price lunch eligibility). In addition, 21% of the RCSD student population are students with disabilities, and 18% are English Language Learners.

## Targeting Narrative

As such, any program at any RCSD school will serve a large proportion of targeted C4E students. The District's Contract for Excellence targets more than 75% of its funds at students with the greatest needs as measured by the 75/50 Rule (i.e., 75% of C4E funds must support the 50% of schools with the greatest student needs as measured by the C4E targeted populations of poverty, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students with low achievement.) This requirement will be addressed in the District's Contract through a combination of direct programs at schools and other funds used to support the Comprehensive District Planning Process.

## Performance Narrative

Describe the district's expected performance targets for the accountability criteria and disaggregated groups for those schools within the district not in good standing.

The current Superintendent of Schools was appointed in December 2022, by the Board of Education. The strategic plan priorities that were acquired by the current superintendent expire in 2023. However, new goals have been established for the superintendent that serves as metrics toward success. Beginning July 2023, a new strategic plan process is being implemented to establish the new comprehensive goals for years to come.

The current goals in place are as follows:

### 1. Improve the Financial Condition of the RCSD

- Establish a Board process for the inclusion of participatory budgeting in the 2023-2024 budget cycle.
- Adopt Board budget priorities by the December 1 Board Work Session.
- Establish a comprehensive and inclusive budget process for 2023-2024 and adhere to approved timelines.
- Ensure that actual total revenues for 2023-2024 do not exceed the budget by more than 1%.
- Ensure that actual total budgeted expenditures for 2023-2024 do not exceed more than 1.5% of the total budget.
- Approve phase 3 of the Facilities Modernization Program (FMP). Modify the Managed School Choice Policy to better align District financial resources.

### 2. Increase Academic Achievement

- Increase ELA/math proficiency for students in grades 3-8 utilizing District-approved curriculum resources and materials.
- Increase college and career readiness through the comprehensive implementation of the Course Catalog for students in grades 7-12.
- Increase understanding of student achievement data and trends through quarterly Board work sessions.
- Increase Board participation in annual curriculum selection and review processes.



## Performance Narrative

- Reduce the number of unqualified CSE initial evaluation referrals through the implementation of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework by 15%.
- Increase the percentage of on-time completion of evaluations and CSE meetings to 95% to achieve compliance with the Consent Decree.
- Achieve a 95% completion rate of ELL transition plans documented in the Student Management System to support student transition to the receiving school.

### 3. Increase Equity for All Students

- Increase staff participation in professional learning opportunities centered on diversity, equity, and inclusion by 35%.
- Establish a three-year comprehensive District Equity Plan with clear benchmarks, metrics, and actions by providing timely feedback when requested.

### 4. Ensure a Positive School Climate by Assuring School Safety in All Schools

- Align appropriate resources to ensure a safe school environment utilizing Crisis Go data, including lockdowns, lockouts, and other safety-related incidents.
- Reduce long- and short-term suspensions by 10% to move to compliance with the recommendations from the New York State Office of Attorney General (OAG) and the Consent Decree.
- Implement recommendations received from the NYS Center for School Safety audits and allocate resources as needed.
- Double the provision of the School Climate Survey and increase participation across the District by 25%. Utilize survey results to appropriate funding for recommendation implementation.
- Ensure 100% participation of all coordinators of the Dignity for All Students Act (DASA) annual compliance training for proper reporting of bullying, intimidation, and harassment; and increase knowledge of how to support DASA complaints in buildings.
- Increase the number of school personnel trained in the use of restorative practices through District professional learning opportunities by 25%.

## Experimental or District-wide Programs Narrative

As noted earlier in this narrative document, District-wide programs include:

- **All City High** is focused on providing extensive choices to learners through an expanded learning approach that embeds multiple pathways into the school's organization. The scheduling includes non-traditional days and clustered teams. The program is organized into small learning communities with class sizes of no more than 25 students. In addition, the program has a low student/counselor ratio with individual graduation mapping and post-graduation planning to ensure success.
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