February 25, 2014

TO: District Superintendents
Charter School Leads

FROM: Evo Popoff
Assistant Commissioner

RE: Instructional Improvement System Notice of Grant Opportunity Intent

The NJDOE has released a notice of grant opportunity (NGO) which will provide funding for districts in order to implement the New Jersey Instructional Improvement System (IIS). Awards will be up to $150,000 for those who are a participating LEAs in Race to the Top 3 and up to $120,000 for those who are not participating LEAs. Total, there will be 2.1 million dollars available. These funds will be able to be used to cover subscription fees for two years of the platform along with technology upgrades and equipment that may be needed to better support the program in your classrooms and schools. Please see “Available Grants” at http://www.nj.gov/education/grants/discretionary/ for the IIS NGO.

The Instructional Improvement System is an online platform the New Jersey Department of Education is developing in partnership with Pearson Schoolnet that will provide educators, principals, and district staff with a suite of tools designed to improve their practice and their students' achievement by providing efficiencies and resources on one integrated system. Teachers will have access to their classroom and student data reports, be able to create and distribute assessments (online/paper pencil), and browse the Common Core State Standards, New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and the New Jersey Model Curriculum to find aligned instructional and professional development resources. Administrators and central district staff will be able to comment on lesson plans, create professional learning communities, share resources with a group or with individual teachers, and analyze classroom, grade, subject and school- or district-level reports. These will inform strategies to improve instruction at both a micro and macro level. Districts will benefit from receiving a tool that organizes educators' daily instruction, allowing them to analyze their students' performance in order to make strategic decisions to better differentiate their practice in turn raising their students' achievement. Administrators and District staff can identify trends to allocate necessary resources and provide a snapshot of each day in their district or school while providing the means to monitor and support their teachers’ efforts.
In order to facilitate this grant process, we are asking for districts to send an email to IIS@doe.state.nj.us in order to get a better understanding of who may be interested in applying for this grant. Please email with the subject line: “District Name – Intent to Apply for NGO”. Please place your name and contact information of your superintendent, director of curriculum and technology in the body of the email. You may still apply even if you do not send this email though we ask that you send this email by Wednesday March 12th, 2014 in order for us to properly prepare.

Please review more information about the NJ Instructional Improvement System on our website: http://www.state.nj.us/education/techno/iis/

EP/EL:/Instructional Improvement System

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