TO:  Chief School Administrators
     Charter School Lead Persons
FROM: Susan Martz, Assistant Commissioner
      Division of Student Services & Career Readiness
SUBJECT: New Jersey Department of Education Seeking Partners for the School Climate Transformation Grant

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) is pleased to announce its intention to apply for the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) School Climate Transformation Grant (SCTG). As part of the process, the NJDOE is seeking applications from “high-need” local education agencies (LEA). This application defines a “high-need LEA” as an LEA (a) that serves not fewer than 10,000 children from families with incomes below the poverty line; or (b) for which not less than 20 percent of the children served by the LEA are from families with incomes below the poverty line. Consistent with the definition of “poverty line” in section 9101(33) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, census data is the appropriate measure to use to determine this rate (http://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe).

The SCTG will allow the NJDOE to develop, enhance, or expand subsystems of support for, and technical assistance to, local education agencies implementing an evidence-based, multi-tiered behavioral framework for improving behavioral outcomes and learning conditions for all students over a five-year period. The NJDOE must submit its SCTG application to the USDE on June 23, 2014. Therefore, the application deadline for LEAs to partner with the NJDOE is June 10, 2014, to allow time for the NJDOE to process applications, contact selected LEAs, and secure Letters of Commitment.

We welcome interested districts to send their applications and inquiries to the Office of Student Support Services via fax to 609-633-9655 or via email to SchoolClimate@doe.state.nj.us. An application is an LEA narrative that must include, but is not limited to, the following information:

- District name, contact information and name of individual who will be point of contact for this application;
- Describe why your school/district is interested in partnering with the NJDOE to promote the positive transformation of school climate;
- Describe the capacity of your school/district’s willingness to participate;
- Describe the ability of your district to commit to this five-year project;
- Describe the current school/district school climate initiatives;
- Describe other initiative/activities that could be coordinated;
- Describe how your district meets the definition of “high needs” as indicated; and
- Tell why your district/school should be selected.

All applications must be signed by the building principal for each school in the district willing to participate and the chief school administrator or charter school lead person. The number of LEAs selected cannot be determined until the applications are screened, eligible schools are established and the NJDOE has the opportunity to assess all submissions. The full grant announcement from the USDE is attached.
We look forward to reviewing your applications and possibly working with you on the SCTG beginning in the 2014-2015 school year.

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Attachment
c: Members, State Board of Education  Kelly Allen
   Acting Commissioner David C. Hespe  Executive County School Superintendents
   Senior Staff  Executive County School Business Administrators
   Nancy Curry  Executive Directors for Regional Achievement Centers
   Diane Shoener  Garden State Coalition of Schools
   Amanda Schultz  NJ LEE Group