

## Four city schools net \$10M in grants

**JUSTIN MURPHY @CITIZENMURPHY**

Four Rochester City School District schools received a combined \$10 million in a round of state funding announced Monday morning, including a grant for Charles T. Lunsford School 19 allowing it to implement its planned partnership with the State University of New York College at Geneseo.

The district applied on behalf of 12 of its schools for the seventh round of state School Improvement Grants (SIG-7), eligible to low-performing schools across the state. The four Rochester recipients were among 18 awarded outside of New York City and 39 overall, totaling \$95 million.

Each of the four grants is about \$2.5 million over five years and is tied to a distinct plan for school improvement:

» Dr. Walter Cooper Academy School 10, in the 19th Ward, will deepen its partnership with the organization Expeditionary Learning, particularly around analyzing student data and designing lesson plans.

» School 19, in the Plymouth-Exchange neighborhood, will partner with Geneseo for a teacher-led school. The college will support it with teacher training, student teachers and expanded extracurricular opportunities.

» Kodak Park School 41 on West Ridge Road launched its extended school day last year and will focus in particular on school climate and students' social-emotional needs. According to a recent survey, less than 20 percent of staff at the school reported a "positive, upbeat culture" there, or said there was an effective system in place to build students' social-emotional health.

» Integrated Arts and Technology High School, at the Franklin campus, submitted a plan for an "evidence-based whole-school reform strategy." It will use the grant funding to partner with the Institute for Student Achievement. An earlier draft of the grant proposal included removing school principal Kevin Klein, but the school community raised a furor and the plan was changed.

The four schools will each also add focus to restorative practices in the place of harsh student discipline.

Buffalo Public Schools received seven grants, the most outside New York City. Syracuse received two and Binghamton, East Ramapo, Mount Vernon, Utica and Yonkers received one each.

The district had 18 schools eligible to receive the grants and sent in applications for 12 of them. Though each was highly specific, they revealed common problems in the basics of teaching and learning across buildings.

At School 10, for example, observers noted that most of the questions asked of students "required only low levels of cognitive demand." The School 41 application said teachers there were using state-provided curriculum modules as a script, rather than as a basis for their own individual lesson plans; the School 19 application reported that lesson plans were "inconsistently done, and ... most instruction was low-level (and) teacherfocused."

Superintendent Barbara Deane-Williams and School Board President Van White said Monday that while the additional funding is helpful, the best way to address those systemic shortcomings is through fundamental changes that the district develops itself.

"It won't hurt for these four schools to have this kind of support," White said. "But our success is not tied to

SIG 7.”

[JMURPHY7@Gannett.com](mailto:JMURPHY7@Gannett.com)

---

Tuesday, 09/13/2016 Pag.A04

Copyright © 2016 Democrat and Chronicle 9/13/2016