

10 teachers to be hired with \$1.3M grant

JUSTIN MURPHY

@CITIZENMURPHY

The Rochester City School District will hire 10 teachers to coordinate its push for restorative justice in schools, thanks to \$1.3 million in state grant funding announced earlier this week. The money is associated with the My Brother's Keeper program, an initiative founded by President Barack Obama that means to decrease inequity and help young men of color. The New York State Education Department awarded \$7 million in grant funding, \$2.6 million of which went to New York City. Of the remaining \$4.4 million, Rochester got by far the largest share.

The main effect will be hiring 10 teachers to serve as full-time "restorative practice coordinators" at individual school buildings.

There will also be a part-time data specialist to collect and track information regarding the grant's implementation as well as attendance, drop-out and graduation rates.

The funding will also propel the district's existing efforts to train all its staff in restorative practices, which generally are meant to treat misbehavior in a more productive way than simply suspending students. Dozens of administrators, teachers, teaching assistants and parents will attend a three-day training program. "Our district will improve by providing equity of access to educational opportunities for all students, with the necessary support to ensure high levels of achievement," Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Kendra March said in a statement. "This grant provides a timely boost to our critical work supporting young men of color, and I applaud the district team that helped Rochester achieve by far the largest award in New York state." Other large grants went to Buffalo (\$813,000), Syracuse (\$585,000), Hempstead (\$391,000) and Albany (\$346,000).

JMURPHY7@Gannett

.com