School District of the City of York

Office of Federal Programs

"Great Expectations: Failure is Not an Option"

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. Deborah Wortham
cc: Board of School Directors
FROM: Cathy L. Ash
DATE: February 2012
RE: Federal Program Report

PRESENTATION:

Sophia.org: This was a presentation at National Title I of a new resource available for free for students; teachers and parents on the internet. At SOPHIA, they make their money in higher education and have made their online resources for K-12 free. The study/lesson packets are arranged by subject area and align with standards. They are infused with technology. An user can search by keyword. This resource will be advertised through the principals and the parent advisory councils.

SUBMITTED:

Keystones for Opportunity: Pre-Application was released on 12/6. Pre-Application is due to PDE by 1/13/12. Pre-Application webinar was 12/9/11. Planning committee for required Local Literacy Needs Assessment met on 12/12/11, 12/19/11 and 1/3/12. Factors that will be examined in the application will include: need; capacity; comprehensive literacy plan for birth through 12th grade; quality of proposed or existing program; target population; and quality of data. The district will be looking to partner with the American Reading Company (100 Book Challenge and Action 100). Dr. Wortham, Mrs. Shaffer and I had a conference call with ARC and came up with a plan for implementation of a reading program Pre-K to 12. More will be completed once the guidelines are released and the requirements known. The Lincoln Intermediate Unit will be offering technical assistance throughout the process. Two of the planning committee members and I met with the LIU representatives on 12/15/11. A group toured Susquehanna HS in Harrisburg on 12/14/11 to see how the program works in a high school. After submitting the pre-application, PDE will invite qualifying applicants to submit full proposals. Invites are to be made by February 1, 2012. The full proposal will be due March 2, 2012 and grant awards announced March 16, 2012.

PENDING:

Learning Teams Partnership Site Application – Pearson Learning is offering a grant opportunity for school district who receive an invitation (we did), to get one free year of Learning Teams support for schools. The LT funding would fuel professional development for teachers by utilizing a peer coaching methodology. We have two schools who were invited to submit an application: Jackson and Devers Elementary Schools. The applications are due no later than March 30, 2012. I am working with the principals on the applications. I will keep you informed.

Fuel Up to Play 60 – Grant for up to $4000 for physical education and nutrition sponsored by Fuel Up to Play 60 and National Dairy Council. Cindy Rose, nurse at E.F. Smith is applying for this funding. If funded, it will support programs encouraging students to eat better and engage in physical activity at least 60 minutes a day.

Green Ribbon Schools Program: The Green Ribbon Schools program was recently launched by the U. S. Department of Education to recognize schools that save energy and reduce operating costs, create environmentally friendly learning spaces, promote student health, and provide environmental education to incorporate sustainability into the curriculum. According to the guidance released, Green Ribbon Schools will have achieved or made considerable progress toward the three pillars established in the program: energy efficient buildings; healthy students and school environment; and - environmental literacy of all graduates. The combined achievement in these three areas will be the basis for the Green Ribbon Schools award. Brad Harman, Director of Buildings and Grounds, has one of our engineers working on a nomination for Ferguson Elementary School.

Laura Bush Library Grants: Each of our librarians is seeking funding from the Laura Bush Library Foundation. In the past we have been very successful in obtaining funding from the foundation. The application is to boost the libraries in areas where the current titles are old, obsolete or insufficient for the needs of the students. I will keep you up to date.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

York Education Foundation – The District has an education foundation that is dormant. Much conversation has been had about the advantages of dusting it off and using it to supplement the district's revenue. There are several ways to do that. I recommend that we form a committee to investigate the situation further and come back with recommendations as to how to proceed. Jane Conover and I met on January 18, 2012 for a good while to review the status of the York City Education Foundation and what steps were needed to enable the district to get it up and active in order to apply for Education Tax Credits. We had a good meeting. The foundation is still a qualified 501(c)(3) with the IRS, but has been dropped from the Pennsylvania's List of Charitable Organizations. In order to qualify for donations, it would have to be re-registered. In addition, in order to garner the kinds of donations sought the foundation needs to have community oversight, not be school board controlled. We found the by-laws most recent update and the current YCEF is 100% school board controlled. The York County Community Foundation recommends that we engage in discussions with the York Dollars for Scholars to replicate a good partnership as found at Northeastern and other districts between the district education foundation and Dollars for Scholars. I received an email from the York Dollars for Scholars that they are interested in meeting. I will set that up in February to move us forward. The YCCF also recommends using a three-prong approach for soliciting funds: 1) endowment – which they would manage for the district; 2) scholarship – which would run through York Dollars for Scholars; and 3) special projects – which would permit the district to raise funds for specific educational needs throughout the district. YCCF also stressed the need to have an in-district administrator (me, according to Dr. Wortham); and an outside marketer that would solicit both special project and endowment funds. York Dollars for Scholars would continue their practices

for the scholarship funds. In addition, the district foundation would apply for education tax credits for both scholarships (to the benefit of YDFS) and special projects (District). I will keep the board up to date with these ongoing deliberations.

PASBO Alternative Funding Webinar – On Tuesday, December 13, 2011, PASBO did a webinar on alternative funding in light of the budget shortfalls this year. Topics within the webinar included

* Overview of alternate funding stream options
* Corporate sponsorship/advertising models
* Merchandise sales and concessions
* Working with foundations that exclusively serve your LEA
* Other Grants and Foundations - options, expectations and cautions
* Policies and Alternative Revenue Committees - how to organize and manage
* Non-financial benefits to pursuing alternative revenues

We are pursuing the foundation angle with the York County Community Foundation and York Dollars for Scholars. We are working with community groups for any kind of in-kind services that we can get for our students and their families. However, we have to make a decision about whether the district wishes to engage in corporate advertising for revenue. A decision must be made by the school board about the desire to engage in corporate advertising/sponsorship, as well as on appropriate policies and guidelines around such a decision. The state has several districts who are willing to share their policies and guidelines for how much to charge and what size and placement restrictions to make. The board needs to reflect on the issue and determine whether or not the district should look into this possibility.

CONFERENCES:

Improving School Performance Conference – theme is "Aiming High; Achieving Success" Conference will be held at Sheraton Station Square in Pittsburgh from January 29 through February 1, 2011. Two workshops were submitted and approved from the School District of the City of York. The first will be a partnership between Pre-K Counts; ELL and Title I Parent Liaison on Parent Involvement initiatives that are inclusive and growing. The second is the stellar turn-around of McKinley Elementary. The focus is specifically for schools in school improvement. Both workshop teams (two participants for each workshop paid for by PDE, PRE-K will pay for Julie. This is a great opportunity to let the state and other district know about the good work being done at the School District of the City of York. The parent session will be presented twice and the McKinley session will be presented three times over the course of the conference.

National Title I: Dr. Wortham asked that Dr. Brown and I attend the National Title I Conference in Seattle, Washington from January 21-24, 2012. We will gather information on trends and projections and bring it back to the district. As you are aware, the district gets a good handle on the upcoming initiatives at the federal level every year we attend. It allows us to be proactive in meeting the compliance and programming agendas set at the federal level as well as get information about the monitoring thrusts for the upcoming year.