

## **The Federation for Children with Special Needs**

**U310A180070**

**State Served: MA**

The Federation for Children with Special Needs (FCSN,) in collaboration with consortia of family engagement organizations and State Education Agencies (SEAs), submits this Statewide Family Engagement Center (SFEC) application on behalf of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to create a statewide, systemic and coordinated approach to family engagement from Preschool through Grade 12. More specifically, FCSN and its partners seek to establish the Massachusetts Statewide Family Engagement Center (MA SFEC) to provide training, technical assistance and support to families, schools and community organizations in the implementation and enhancement of systemic and effective family engagement policies, programs and activities that lead to improvement in student development and academic achievement while also creating opportunities to more intensely work in a number of diverse communities to more intentionally embed family engagement as part of school turnaround strategies.

Collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Department of Early Education and Care (EEC), Parent Institute for Quality Education (PIQE), Collaborative Parent Leadership Action Network (CPLAN) and National Association for Family, School and Community Engagement (NAFSCE) will strengthen statewide efforts to effect systemic change. The project design calls for a statewide, comprehensive set of research-based approaches that address the need for a continuum of information, training, and technical assistance aimed at enhancing family engagement as well as opportunities to more intentionally engage families in policy making and design of policies, protocols and programs with schools and districts. Resources will be targeted to those communities and districts with the highest number of schools identified for improvement, as well as those with the greatest percentages of minority and limited-English proficient students, and students living in poverty. This approach ensures a statewide scope, while reaching the most disadvantaged families.

FCSN has a long history of serving the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as the MA Parent Information and Resource Center (Mass PIRC) from 1999 - 2011. This highly successful federally funded PIRC provided a comprehensive range of services to families and professionals to enhance their family engagement practices, and provided technical assistance to targeted school districts to develop family engagement plans. In recent years, the Federation has continued this commitment through its Family and Community Engagement Team (FACET) to provide professional development to families, schools and communities. The new MA SFEC will promote high-impact cradle-to-career family, school and community engagement strategies that build the capacity of families and professionals to engage in effective partnerships to support child development, literacy, student achievement and school improvement. The project, including the focus on communities in school turnaround, will be designed to enhance the capacities of parents, families, educators, administrators and other professionals (in rural and urban areas) to improve students' academic achievement through increased parental/family participation and through greater use of the provisions and options under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).