

Expansion of Propel's High Quality Model for K-12 Students

ABSTRACT

The Propel Schools Foundation of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania seeks funding from the U.S. Department of Education's "Replication and Expansion of High-Quality Charter Schools" grant program to support expansion of Propel Montour and Propel Northside, two existing Propel K-8 schools (by adding grade level classrooms to existing schools and opening a high school). Propel's past experience, project team expertise and stability provide great capacity to successfully execute the proposed project.

Propel's existing schools have guided disadvantaged students to improved academic achievement. Propel's educational model is based on a vision of inspiring each student toward three goals—academic excellence, community service, and personal power—and on six "Promising Principles" that together create a distinctive, high-energy, motivating school climate: agile instruction, embedded support, culture of dignity, fully valued arts program, vibrant teaching communities, and quest for excellence. Propel is consistently outperforming statewide averages and its sending districts with regard to overall test scores as well as in performance by educationally disadvantaged and minority students.

Anticipated project outcomes include: expanding the number of seats in high quality charter schools; further implementation of Propel's effective educational model; closing the achievement gap between new students enrolled during expansion and continuing students; achieving student academic proficiency rates higher than statewide averages while serving a predominantly educationally disadvantaged student body; and high rates of parent satisfaction, student and teacher retention at the project schools. An external evaluator will assess Propel's progress towards these outcomes.