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To: Superintendents of Focus Districts
From: Ira Schwartz *Ira Schwartz*
Date: September 17, 2014
Subject: Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness Certification Program

The purpose of this memo is to inform you about the Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness (DTSDE) Certification Program, which is designed to build the capacity of staff within Focus Districts in the DTSDE review process.

DTSDE Certification Program

The DTSDE Certification Program is designed to build the expertise and capacity of staff within Focus Districts to conduct the DTSDE review process. Selected candidates will participate in monthly professional development during the 2014-2015 school year that will engage the participants in school visits during which specific DTSDE protocols, Sub-Statements of Practice, and/or Conceptual Frames will be studied.

Upon completion of the DTSDE Certification Program, candidates will be certified and have gained the knowledge, expertise and skill sets to successfully lead a DTSDE review, write a high-quality DTSDE report, deliver quality professional development aligned to the DTSDE, and implement their District's DTSDE capacity plan.

Prospective candidates for this program must complete a DTSDE Certification application and create a District Capacity Plan. This two-pronged application process is designed to assess both individual reviewer capacities for certification as well as district-level commitment to the DTSDE process. The DTSDE certification application will measure the candidate's ability to perform tasks aligned to the DTSDE process.

All Focus Districts are eligible to have representatives participate in the DTSDE Certification Program. To be eligible to apply for the DTSDE Certification Program, candidates must have participated in at least three DTSDE training sessions during the 2013-2014 school year. Candidates must be employees of a Focus District, except that districts with three or fewer Priority and Focus schools may request that their contracted Outside Educational Expert participate in the DTSDE Certification Program. Districts with fewer than 20 Priority and Focus schools may nominate one person to participate in the DTSDE Certification Program. Districts with 20 or more Priority and Focus Schools may nominate up to three participants. Program participation is limited to 15.

Participating Title I eligible districts will receive a supplemental allocation for their 2014-15 Basic 1003(a) School Improvement Grant in the amount of \$5,000 per

participant up to a maximum of \$15,000 for multiple participants to support implementation of lessons learned during the Certification training, including implementation of the District Capacity Plan. Districts will be able to submit an FS-10-A amendment for their approved 2014-15 Basic 1003(a) School Improvement Grant after they have been accepted for the DTSDE Certification program.

Interested candidates should complete the enclosed DTSDE Certification Application, including District Capacity Plan, and submit via email to: DTSDereviews@mail.nysed.gov by Friday, September 26, 2015. More information regarding the program is available in the Certification Application.

Should you have any questions about the Certification Program, please contact the Office of School and District Review through our electronic mailbox at DTSDereviews@mail.nysed.gov and designated staff will respond to the query as expeditiously as possible.

We look forward to supporting your improvement efforts in the new school year.

Enclosures

cc: Monica George-Fields
Peter L. McFarlane
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Stephen Earley