

Race to the Top LOI Template-Continuing Projects

1. Please select district(s) that are submitting this letter of intent.
 Highline Public Schools

2. Please list any involved partners.
 N/A

3. Please use the table below to fill out contact information for your district(s) including full names of contact person/people, title(s), email(s), telephone number(s), and name of lead applicant(s).

	Full Name	District	Title	Email	Telephone Number
Lead Applicant	Rachel Klein	Highline Public Schools	Director, Student Advancement	rachel.klein@highlineschools.org	206.631.3045
Contact Person 1	Alan Spicciati	Highline Public Schod	Chief Accountability	alan.spicciati@highlin	206.631.3073
Contact Person 2					
Contact Person 3					
Contact Person 4					
Contact Person 5					
Contact Person 6					

4. This application will be for a

Continuing Project of a Round 2 Project ending in 2015

New Project

5. Please provide the title of your project in the text below.
 On-Track to College & Career Success in Highline

6. Please provide a brief one-two paragraph description of the project.
 Research is unequivocal that the first year of high school matters significantly for a student's chance of graduating and persisting in college and thereby having a successful career. Our project began with this premise, but as we dug deeply into freshman year, we learned that for our vulnerable population, student challenges did not disappear by the start of 10th grade. We believe that we are starting to see the lights really turn on for our students in this second semester of sophomore year, and so we are requesting one more year of funding to continue

to scale the best practices that we have learned about 9th and 10th grade. Our goal this year will be to institutionalize some of these practices to ensure that future cohorts of high school students in Highline have the strongest start possible and all the supports they need until they are able to stand on their own in executing their plans for graduation, college, and beyond.

As our goal for all of this work is to increase the number of students who stay in high school and take challenging coursework to prepare them for college, we will retain a small portion of RttT funding to support the cost of AP tests at our high-needs schools. This was a pilot in 2014-2015 that we believe led to more students taking AP tests, but we need one more full year to test it to see if it is having an impact.

Some of the practices that we believe are contributing greatly include:

- Standards-based instruction and grading
- 9th grade academies in large high schools (and likely to extend into 10th grade academies next year)
- Success Deans regularly tracking data and working with teachers to intervene immediately with students
- Near-peer student mentoring, such as 11th & 12th graders mentoring 9th and 10th graders who are failing one or two classes
- Student Success Coaches – paraprofessionals who check in daily or weekly with students at-risk.

7. If applicable please describe how this project will be expanded from the Round 2 Project.
N/A – the project will not be expanded from Round 2.

8. Please name the high-needs school(s) involved. (For reference, click the following link to see the list of high-needs schools [RTT High Need Schools List](#))

Due to anticipated limits in funding, we will focus next year on:

Academy of Citizenship and Empowerment (ACE)

Arts and Academics Academy (AAA)

Global Connections HS

Health Science and Human Services HS (HS3)

Highline HS

Technology, Engineering, and Communications HS (TEC)

9. Will the project continue with the same high-needs school(s) involved in Round 2? If not, please list the high-needs schools involved in the text boxes below. (For reference, click the following link to see the list of high-needs schools: [RTT High Need Schools List](#))

Yes, these are the same schools as in round 2.

Which student groups' academic achievement is/are your district's highest priority for support and impact?

10. Check all groups that will be supported by the grant.

- English Language Learners (ELL)
- Special Education

- Low-Income
- White
- Pacific Islander
- Hispanic
- Black
- Asian
- American Indian

11. Check all grade levels that will be supported by the grant.

- 7th Grade
- 8th Grade
- 9th Grade
- 10th Grade
- 11th Grade
- 12th Grade

12. Who will be leading the project? What roles will these individuals play in the district(s), school(s) and project partnership(s)?

Rachel Klein, Director, Student Advancement: *oversees learning opportunities for students who struggle and who excel, as well as college & career supports for all students. Leads Success Dean community of practice and professional development, as well as AP success strategies, and general intervention supports like summer school, after school programming, credit retrieval, and associated funding that pays for those supports.*

Alan Spicciati, Chief Accountability Officer: *oversees progress toward our strategic plan, including data use, tracking, and school accountability when metrics are not tracking toward success.*

Trevor Greene and Kelly Raymond, Instructional Leadership Executive Directors for High Schools: *oversee support and accountability for high schools to meet their needs as they work to meet strategic plan goals as well as course-corrections when schools are not on track.*

Success Deans at all High Schools: *key points of contact for 9th and 10th grade student success. Track data, work with teachers and students as soon as students trigger early warning indicators, work with teachers and outside partners to ensure extra supports are in place for tutoring, reassessment, and student motivation seminars/groups. At times oversee Student Success Coaches to do regular one-on-one check-ins with students who struggle.*

In which one or two critical RTTT-D Goal Area(s) or Performance Measure(s) do you anticipate that your proposed P8 district project will move achievement for your high-priority student group?

HS Graduation

13. Check no more than two from list of relevant RTTT-D Goal Area or Performance Measure.

(Please click the following link to access RTT Goal Areas and Performance Measures: [P8 Goal Areas.Performance Measures](#))

- Decreasing Achievement Gaps
- Minimum College Requirements
- High School Graduation
- College Enrollment
- AP and IB Enrollment
- Remediation Rates

14. Identify the school years when the proposed P8 district project is expected to impact student targets in the identified goals areas or performance measures identified above : Please check all that apply

- 2016-2017
- 2017-2018
- 2018-2019

15. Please describe the intended Goal Areas and Performance Measures for students and the theory of action about how the project activities will improve student outcomes. How does the project fit into the district's strategic plan? (Please click the following link to access RTT Goal Areas and Performance Measures: [P8 Goal Areas.Performance Measures](#))

High School Graduation: according to years of research begun at the Chicago Consortium on School Research and continued through Johns Hopkins University and the National High School Center, students who fall off-track in ninth grade are significantly less likely to graduate from high school than those who finish ninth grade with strong attendance, no behavior incidents, and having earned all of their credits. As far as we can tell, the bulk of this research was conducted in the traditional high school setting where ninth grade is only slightly more supportive than 10th-12th and where credit retrieval programs are haphazard. It is our belief that by having a strong focus on student support in both 9th grade and 10th for students who are off-track, and by having a robust, intentional, and immediate system for credit retrieval, that our students will not meet the same fate as national statistics on HS graduation.

AP/IB Course-Taking: our school leaders, our Superintendent, and our strategic plan talk regularly about the importance of experiencing rigorous, college-level work while still in the supportive environment of our high schools. More and more of our students are taking AP and IB courses, and we expect that to continue to increase as more and more of our students get to 11th and 12th grade without the need for serious remediation or credit retrieval. As our AP/IB numbers have increased, we are proud that the diverse ethnic makeup of our AP/IB students has been maintained, though it is a metric we will continue to keep our eye on.

16. Please describe any changes or course corrections made to the design of the Round 2 Project concerning (1) the goal areas for students and (2) the theory of action that articulates how the project activities will impact outcomes. What changes or course corrections will the Project team be making? Why will the team be making these changes? Please describe how data and evidence inform these changes.

The only major change we are making from Round 2 is to continue the “academy” structure at our large high schools into 10th grade. Our 9th grade academies have proven to be a powerful support for students, especially at Highline HS where there is a 20% increase in students who earned all of their credits 1st semester over last year, and that increase looks to be continuing into second semester as well. The design for the 10th grade academy is in process right now but will hold some of the same key tenants: aligned expectations and grading across all the teachers in the academy, a small group of core-course teachers sharing the same students, regular “student of concern” meetings among those teachers, and a high level of family engagement.

17. Please describe how your project strategies are culturally responsive.

The biggest way in which our strategies are culturally responsive is the extreme one-on-one focus that they have enabled. Between Success Deans, Student Success Coaches, restorative justice meetings, and other teacher-student connections, we believe we have seen that teachers are working more directly with students and their families and getting to know their issues and concerns more intimately. More work could be done in this area and we welcome input and best practices from other districts as they focus more directly on this issue.

18. How has your district's education association been involved in the planning of your proposed project?

Given the challenging time constraints of this LOI falling during a major testing cycle, collective bargaining, and state legislative budget year, coupled with the fact that our project is not changing from Round 2, we have not yet had a chance to collaborate with our education association this year on project 8. That said, we met several times to develop the proposals for rounds 1 and 2, and our education association meets throughout the year with district administration on our strategic plan, of which this project is a wholly aligned. As such, we hope and expect the conversations to develop the full proposal will be straightforward.

19. Please describe your estimated budget for the project in the text box below.

We are requesting the same budget for next year as this current year to continue our work for one more year: \$256,488.