

### **LOUISIANA’S SUCCESS & CHALLENGE WITH STRUGGLING SCHOOLS**

The Louisiana Department of Education invites partners to join the state’s effort to transform low-performing schools and ensure that all students—regardless of where they live—have access to schools that prepare them for college and career. Interested partners will engage in a collaborative design process with school systems and school leaders to support innovative school improvement solutions across the state.

In recent years, Louisiana has become a national leader in improving school and student performance. Since 2012, Louisiana’s high school graduation rate has risen by 5.8 percentage points and 12.1 percentage points since 2008. Louisiana is the most improved state on the ACT® among states now using the ACT® as their high school test, the class of 2018 led the nation in FAFSA completion rates, achieved a record number of Advanced Placement® credits, and earned a record number of college credits by successfully taking the College-Level Examination Program® (CLEP). While Louisiana’s progress is compelling, so too is the urgent need to dramatically improve persistently low performing schools, particularly in smaller cities and rural communities across the state. In the state’s 100 most persistently low performing schools, either no more than 12 percent of students demonstrate mastery levels of proficiency in reading and math, or no more than 66 percent of students graduate from high school. And while African-American students comprise nearly 40 percent of the student population across the state, they make up 75 percent of the student population served in the state’s 100 most persistently struggling schools, making the redesign of these schools an issue of civil rights.

Leaders in mid-sized cities, small cities, and rural communities need partners willing to collaborate and able to add expertise and capacity to schools with persistent challenges. Frustratingly, no comprehensive inventory of possible partners exists, and few—if any—opportunities exist for school system and school leaders to meaningfully collaborate with industry experts and possible partners. Together, we can change this reality and ensure that students educated across Louisiana – including in small cities and rural communities – are not left to languish in low performing schools. The Louisiana Department of Education is committed to ensuring that our dramatic improvement efforts touch all districts, all schools and all students. To realize our vision, the Department is looking for expert partners willing to work with school and school system leaders to design innovative and community-relevant school improvement solutions.

The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) creates an important opportunity to improve achievement for students in persistently low performing schools or those in subgroups persistently under-served within schools. ESSA requires that states identify at least five percent of schools as chronically under-performing and in need of comprehensive school improvement and identify schools in which subgroups of students are in need of targeted support. The law further provides a new opportunity to direct resources to the individual needs of students.

### **ADDRESSING CHALLENGING STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

Based upon statewide behavior data, it is evident that the schools identified as having unusually high rates of out-of-school discipline are in need of targeted support. Each year, too many students are removed from their regular school setting for infractions that can be addressed through evidence-based interventions. During the 2016-2017 academic year, Louisiana’s cumulative student enrollment was 750,779 students. During the same timeframe, schools suspended 18.5 percent (139, 448) of the state’s students and expelled 1.2 percent (9,149). Eighty-eight percent of the suspensions and expulsions were for non-violent behavioral misconduct. The top five most used infraction codes for removal to alternative education settings include the following in rank use order: willful disobedience, instigates/participates in fights, disturbs the school and violates rules, treats authority with disrespect, and leaves school premises without permission. Clearly these are unacceptable behaviors that must be addressed; however, educators and behavioral experts agree that removal from a regular education setting – often without any other interventions – is unlikely to effectively address the problem. In fact, there is mounting evidence that it can make it worse.

## DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

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Louisiana's state education plan identifies students who are excessively removed from the regular education setting due to disciplinary reasons, defined as approximately twice the national average, as a student subgroup to be provided targeted supports. Based on 2017-2018 school data, the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) has identified 215 schools that have had excessive out-of-school suspension rates for three consecutive years. Together, they represent nearly 20 percent of the state's students that have been removed from regular education settings. It is imperative that both students and educators receive evidence-based academic, behavioral, and social and emotional interventions and supports that enable students to remain on a path toward college and career.

The LDOE intends to build a component of the state's ESSA plan to address this challenge in partnership with school systems and with local and national experts. Research suggests that while school improvement strategies vary widely, nearly every effective model relies on external support. As such, Louisiana seeks to identify partners that can provide best-in-class supports and co-design plans with schools, school systems, and the state to dramatically improve student behavior, and in turn, student achievement. Specifically, the LDOE will use information received from partners to:

- Create an inventory of high quality, proven school and school system improvement partners that specialize in behavioral interventions, student discipline practice, and multi-tier systems of support.
- Support the implementation of a statewide competitive grant process using federal funds annually allocated to school redesign.

### REQUEST FOR INFORMATION SUBMISSION DETAILS

The LDOE seeks to identify expert partners locally and across the country to join our school and school system leaders in their effort to transform Louisiana's lowest-performing schools and address schools' most pronounced challenges. These partners may provide a range of supports to schools including, but not limited to:

1. All aspects of behavioral intervention, including but not limited to, identification and implementation of evidence-based behavioral interventions.
2. Targeted expertise in necessary elements of behavioral intervention improvement such as student discipline response, codes of student conduct, classroom management, cross-cultural competencies, trauma informed approaches, hearing officer training, restorative practices, school climate and culture, fidelity of implementation supports, and data-driven decision making for student discipline practice.
3. Addressing discipline disproportionalities felt by specific subgroups of students such as African-American students, English language learners, students with disabilities and other diagnosed learning challenges, and/or economically disadvantaged.

The Department welcomes responses from a wide range of entities, including school systems, not-for-profits, charter school organizations, innovation management organizations, start-up organizations, and institutions of higher education. Organizations must be willing to partner with local school systems and schools to co-construct and execute improvement plans.

**All submissions must be received by LDOE no later than 5pm Tuesday, September 18th, 2018. All submissions should be emailed to [Dari.Miller@la.gov](mailto:Dari.Miller@la.gov).**

## REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Using the attached writeable PDF document, please tell us about your organization and its accomplishments. All submissions must be received by LDOE no later than 5pm Tuesday, September 18th, 2018. All submissions should be emailed to [Dari.Miller@la.gov](mailto:Dari.Miller@la.gov)

### 1. PARTNER BACKGROUND

Organization Name:		
Organization Contact Person:	Email:	Phone:
What age group(s) and grade levels can you serve? <i>Please identify pre-K through 12th grade.</i>		
Organization mission and its connection to improving behavioral intervention and student discipline through use of multi-tier systems of support:		

## DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Identify the organization's specialty areas of behavioral intervention. This includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Specialized knowledge in the development and implementation of a multi-tier system of support to identify, address and respond to student behavior
- b. Utilization of a case management approach to prioritize use of evidence based theory and intervention techniques
- c. Comprehensive knowledge of risk factors that impact student behavior, including but not limited to, life changes, developmental milestones, trauma, substance use, conduct disorders, etc
- d. Specialized knowledge of strategies that focus on early identification of concerning behavior, coupled with prevention and early intervention techniques
- e. Code of Student Conduct rewrite
- f. Restorative practices
- g. Implementation fidelity measures
- h. Classroom management
- i. Tackling disproportionality in discipline practice, including African-American students, English language learners, students with disabilities and other diagnosed learning challenges, and/or economically disadvantaged.
- j. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) strategy implementation
- k. Assessments and Evaluation
- l. Develop progress monitoring for implementation fidelity to ensure a routine feedback loop for school systems regarding their implementation and continuing behavioral intervention practice. This should include, but not be limited to, measures of student engagement, teacher evaluation, and school leader evaluation
- m. Specialized training on how to conduct effective data analysis and how to utilize data to inform strategic planning and practice. Training should include data use foundations, such as data use principles and data assessment
- n. Family engagement

**Describe:**

Describe (continued):

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2. EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS IN IMPROVING STUDENT, SCHOOL AND SCHOOL SYSTEM OUTCOMES

- a. In any format, please illustrate your organization's track record in improving student, school and/or school system outcomes related to behavioral intervention, student discipline, and multi-tier systems of support? Please note improvements for targeted subgroups and discipline, including economically disadvantaged, African American students, students with disabilities, English language learners, students/schools with high rates of exclusionary discipline, improvement of school safety, etc.
- b. Provide efficacy data for school systems/school sites that you have worked with in the past. Does the discipline and/or alternative education site referral data reflect changes following your organization's engagement with the school system and/or school site? Can you provide any other pre and post assessment or evaluation data to demonstrate efficacy?

**Describe:**

Describe (continued):

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### 3. YOUR ORGANIZATION'S MODEL/APPROACH

- a. How will you differentiate your services to help Louisiana schools and school systems improve behavioral intervention, student discipline and implement effective multi-tier systems of support?
- b. What evidence based interventions does your model/approach incorporate for behavioral interventions?
- c. What type of implementation planning and fidelity of implementation processes do you utilize?
- d. What are the attributes of your ideal partner school/school systems?
- e. Describe your experience working with schools and school systems to support coherent school and school system improvement efforts?
- f. What support from the Louisiana Department of Education, school systems or schools would enhance your success in Louisiana?
- g. Detail the costs associated with the purchase, implementation and training of your services and/or program.

**Describe:**

Describe (continued):

#### 4. TARGETED SUPPORTS AND TRAINING

- a. Describe all professional development that you provide (on-site, off-site, etc.) to assist in implementation and execution of behavioral interventions. Please detail the trainings and the time frame associated with each component.
- b. Detail any on-going coaching and/or technical assistance supports that you provide to strengthen fidelity of implementation.
- c. How does your organization evaluate and/or assess the effectiveness of your training and supports?
- d. Describe your capacity to serve a school system. For example, could you serve multiple school systems simultaneously? Would you prefer to work with large school systems or smaller school systems? Are you willing to engage school systems at any location in Louisiana or do you prefer to focus on a particular region of the state?

**Describe:**

Describe (continued):