



For Immediate Release:

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State awards over \$6.6 million in grants to low-performing schools

(HARTFORD, CT)—Commissioner Stefan Pryor today announced that the state awarded over \$6,666,242 in aid to support turnaround efforts in 28 schools across ten districts for the 2014-15 academic year. These grants are specifically designed to assist local towns and districts as they improve outcomes for students in Connecticut's lowest-performing schools.

"Providing all our students the opportunity to receive a high-quality education requires greater investments in our schools that are struggling. That's why we've increased funding to our lowest performing districts by over \$130 million and created the Commissioner's Network to effect school-level change," Governor Dannel P. Malloy said. "We are pleased to offer additional investment opportunities to support school improvement and commend our districts for pursuing such resources."

The three grants—the School Improvement Grant (SIG) 1003(g), the 1003(a) Competitive Grant, and the High School Redesign Grant—are funded through federal and state resources. The State Department of Education distributed the awards through a competitive application process.

"Support for school-level transformation is essential to closing achievement gaps and raising student achievement across the state. We are encouraged by the innovative approaches our districts are pursuing to improve outcomes for their students," Commissioner Pryor said. "We are grateful for the leadership of Governor Malloy and for his continued prioritization of improving education in Connecticut."

New Haven Mayor Toni Harp, along with Superintendent of Schools Garth Harries, joined Commissioner Pryor today for the announcement.

"In New Haven we're working to refine public education so it more effectively addresses the needs of today's students, with programs and hours of operation to more effectively match the needs of today's families," Mayor Toni N. Harp said. "We're grateful to Governor Malloy, Commissioner Pryor, and so many others at the state level for the creative partnership we have with them in this effort to build a public school system that will prepare students to participate in today's knowledge-based economy."

New Haven Public Schools (NHPS) has leveraged the state's funding opportunities, including the Commissioner's Network, to support school-level turnaround efforts in eleven schools serving more than 6,000 students. In 2014-15, the district will receive approximately \$2.7 million to support school-level turnaround initiatives resulting from the recent SIG 1003(g), 1003(a), and High School Redesign competitions. Also, the State Bond Commission recently approved over \$1.2 million in bond funding to support infrastructural improvements and technology investments at Lincoln-Bassett Community School, a Commissioner's Network school, and James Hillhouse High School, a recipient of the High School Redesign Grant.

“New Haven is embracing school transformation with an urgency and passion that is rooted in our shared desire to help all kids rise to success. This investment by the State Department of Education in our school transformation work sends a message to students at Lincoln-Bassett, Hillhouse and beyond that we believe in them and want them to succeed,” Superintendent Harries said. “I thank Governor Malloy, Commissioner Pryor, and our state delegation for investing in our children’s future.”

The Commissioner’s Network, Connecticut’s flagship initiative to transform some of the most chronically underperforming schools, provides additional resources, greater flexibility, and increased accountability to dramatically improve student achievement. In the 2014-15 academic year, the State is investing more than \$15 million in the 16 Network schools serving nearly 10,000 students.

The three grants announced today are additional opportunities to support school-level turnaround efforts. Of the 82 schools eligible to apply for the competitive funds, 47 schools submitted applications and 28 applicants were granted awards.

Through low-performing school bond funding, the Department launched the **High School Redesign Grant**, a new competition to support comprehensive high schools converting to smaller learning communities (SLCs) or autonomous academies. Through capital improvements and technology investments, this secondary reform model is designed to foster student engagement and promote personalized learning.

High School Redesign Grant:

District:	School:	Amount:
Derby Public Schools	Derby High School	\$496,040
New Haven School District	James Hillhouse High School	\$500,000
New Britain School District	New Britain High School	\$449,400

The Department received applications for the federal **1003(a)** school improvement funding from schools pursuing comprehensive and transformative plans. Awardees of the 1003(a) grants are pursuing innovative strategies in the areas of talent, academics, culture and climate, and operations. Schools may seek continued funding for a second year which would be contingent on first year results.

1003(a) Competitive Grant:

District:	School:	Amount:
Bloomfield	Bloomfield High School	\$200,000
Bridgeport	Cesar Batalla School	\$200,000
	Geraldine Johnson School	\$200,000
	Columbus School	\$182,282
	Tisdale School	\$130,000
East Hartford	Anna E. Norris School	\$200,000
Hartford	McDonough Elementary School	\$200,000
	Americas Choice at SAND	\$130,000
	Burns Latino Studies Academy	\$130,000
Meriden	John Barry School	\$100,000
Middletown	Bielefield School	\$130,000
New Britain	Smalley Academy	\$200,000
	Northend School	\$130,000
	Smith School	\$130,000
	Pulaski Middle School	\$100,000
	Slade Middle School	\$100,000

New Haven	Katherine Brennan School	\$200,000
	Clemente Leadership Academy	\$200,000
	Hill Central Music Academy	\$200,000
	John S. Martinez School	\$100,000
	Wexler/Grant Community School	\$100,000
	Augusta Lewis Troup School	\$100,000
	James Hillhouse High School	\$200,000
	West Rock Author's Academy	\$100,000
New London	New London High School	\$200,000
	Jennings School	\$130,000

The federal **SIG 1003(g)** grant program provides states, districts, and schools with additional funding to dramatically increase student achievement over a three-year period. Schools must pursue one of four federal reform models – turnaround, restart, transformation, or closure.

SIG 1003(g) grant

District:	School:	Amount per year:
New Haven	West Rock Author's Academy	\$307,130
Meriden	John Barry School	\$307,130
New Britain	Pulaski Middle School	\$307,130
New Britain	Slade Middle School	\$307,130

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