



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Deborah A. Gist
Commissioner

November 10, 2011

To: RI public districts/schools or approved special education programs

Subject: Pilot Recovery High School

The Rhode Island Commissioner of Education invites RI public districts/schools or approved special education programs to submit plans to create a pilot recovery high school in RI. The purpose of this pilot is to demonstrate the effectiveness of a model Recovery High School in RI.

The RI Board of Regents approval shall be required in order for the recovery high school to begin operation. **All proposals are due by 4:00p.m. on Thursday, December 1, 2011.**

Enclosed you will find the following item:

- Request for Plans

Questions concerning this solicitation may be e-mailed to Lauren McCarthy at RIDE, Division of Accelerating School Performance, at lauren.mccarthy@ride.ri.gov no later than November 18, 2011. Responses to questions will be posted as an addendum to the request on RIDE's website.

Thank you for your interest in creating a pilot recovery high school in RI.

Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
255 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903

RECOVERY HIGH SCHOOL PILOT PROJECT

Commissioner's Invitation to Submit a Plan for a Pilot Recovery High School

The Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) invites RI public districts/schools or approved special education programs to submit plans to create a pilot recovery high school in RI. The purpose of this pilot is to demonstrate the effectiveness of a model Recovery High School in RI.

Expected Duration of the Recovery High School Project: 2-Year Pilot

Project School Year Commencement Date: August/September 2012

Funding: In accordance with the legislation, the state and local per pupil allocation will follow the student to the recovery high school. Additional information on the RI's education funding formula can be found on RIDE's website at: <http://www.ride.ri.gov/Finance/Funding/FundingFormula/>. In FY 2010, the average state per pupil was approximately \$15,000. Per pupil amounts vary by community and will change based on annual data updates. Participation is subject to referrals by the sending district. No estimate or commitment to a specific number of participants or to a specific level of funding is made by this request.

Plan Submission - Please adhere to the following submission guidelines:

- Each page (including appendices and attachments) should be consecutively numbered;
- All pages must be standard letter size, 8½" X 11" using 12 point, Times New Roman or comparable font, double spaced, one-inch margins;
- Not to exceed 30 pages (excluding appendices and attachments)
- Signed and completed cover sheet (See page 7);
- See Plan Requirements (page 4).

Applications will not be returned. Please keep a copy for your records. Please submit one (1) unbound, signed original and three (3) hard copies which include all appendices and attachments.

Applications must be submitted by 4:00 p.m. on December 1, 2011 to:

ATTN: Lauren McCarthy
Accelerating School Performance
Rhode Island Department of Education
255 Westminster St.
Providence, RI 02903
lauren.mccarthy@ride.ri.gov

BACKGROUND: The Need for Recovery High Schools

Nationally, Rhode Island ranks among the states with the highest percentages of adolescents reporting use of illicit drugs and alcohol. Analyses of data from the National Survey of Drug Use and Health and other sources show that Rhode Island's rates of illicit drug use, including marijuana, continue to be unacceptably high as compared to other states in the nation and within the Northeast region. This trend has been consistent, even increasing, for multiple time periods. *One out of every four Rhode Island students reported using marijuana in the past 30-days, a prevalence rate 25%*

higher than the rest of the country and in 2009, Rhode Island's prevalence rate was the fourth highest in the country. Moreover, Rhode Island students were 10 percent more likely to begin use at an earlier age than their counterparts throughout the nation. Currently in RI, there are approximately 435 youth in substance abuse treatment.

According to the 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), one in five U.S. high school students reported taking a prescription drug without a doctor's prescription. Among RI high school students in 2009:

- 50% of 12th graders and 29% of 9th graders reported ever having used marijuana.
- One in five (19%) of 12th grade students reported using painkillers (OxyContin, Codeine, Percocet, or Tylenol III without a doctor's prescription).
- One in ten (10%) of 9th grade students in 2009 reported using inhalants, 6% reported using ecstasy, and 4% reported ever using any form of cocaine (RI 2009 YRBS).

Among RI high school students, the use of illicit drugs varies dependent upon risk factors. Substance use risk behavior disparities exist for students who have disabilities and for students who report their sexual orientation as lesbian, gay, bisexual or unsure/questioning (LGBU). Youth who report substance use issues also have lower grades when compared to their 'non-using counterparts'.

According to the 2009 YRBS:

- Alcohol and drug use was higher among 'D&F' than 'A&B' students. Current drinking rates were greater, and binge drinking was over twice as common
- Low-performing students used marijuana 2.5 times more often, and were at greater risk from trying cocaine, inhalants, and painkillers without a prescription
- LGBU students were more likely than heterosexual students to be current marijuana smokers, current smokers or to have tried cocaine, inhalants, or painkillers
- Students with disabilities were more likely to smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol, and use marijuana before the age of 13. They were also more likely to continue these risky behaviors by currently smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol, and using marijuana

Rhode Island school level data is available on SurveyWorks!

The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), *Preventing Drug Abuse Among Children and Adolescents*, reports that "the key risk periods for drug abuse are during major transitions in children's lives [...] When they enter high school, adolescents face additional social, emotional, and educational challenges. At the same time, they may be exposed to greater availability of drugs, drug abusers, and social activities involving drugs. These challenges can increase the risk that they will abuse alcohol, tobacco, and other substances. When young adults leave home for college or work and are on their own for the first time, their risk for drug and alcohol abuse is very high. Consequently, young adult interventions are needed as well". The Recovery High School focus is providing tools and educational goals while the youth is in the recovery high school as well as preparing those youth for their return to their home schools or those starting out in college or work.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs (OJJDP) notes that young people who persistently abuse substances often experience an array of problems including academic concerns (declining grades, absenteeism from school and other activities, and increased potential for dropping out of school), cognitive and behavioral problems, injuries due to car and other types of accidents, physical disabilities and diseases, and the effects of possible overdoses are among the consequences of teenage substance abuse. Youth involved with alcohol and other drugs face an increased risk of death through suicide, homicide, accident, and illness. There are significant social, economic and family consequences. According to the OJJDP, *there is an undeniable link between*

substance abuse and delinquency. Arrest, adjudication, and intervention by the juvenile justice system are eventual consequences for many youth engaged in alcohol and other drug use.

**RHODE ISLAND GENERAL LAW TO DEFINE AND ESTABLISH RECOVERY HIGH SCHOOLS:
Chapter 95, Section 16**

Recovery High School means a public school or a special education program licensed by RIDE that:

- (i) Serves students diagnosed with substance use disorder or dependency as defined by the diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders IV-TR; and
- (ii) Provides both comprehensive four (4) year high school education and a structured plan of recovery

16-95-3. Recovery high schools established.

(a) The commissioner is authorized to create a pilot recovery high school for the purposes of demonstrating the effectiveness of this model in Rhode Island.

Any currently licensed entities eligible to establish a recovery high school, as defined in subdivision 16-95-2(1), may submit a proposal to operate a pilot recovery high school to the commissioner no later than December 1st of the school year before the school year in which the recovery high school is to begin operation.

The approval of the board of regents shall be required in order for the recovery high school to begin operation.

(b) By approval of the proposal upon the recommendation of the commissioner, the board of regents will be deemed to have authorized all necessary variances from regulations enumerated in the proposal.

(c) After two (2) years of operation, the pilot recovery high school will be required to submit an analysis demonstrating the educational outcomes, including, but not limited to, graduation rates, retention rates, course performance, and performance on the state assessment attained through the pilot to the commissioner.

16-95-4. Transfer of aid.

(a) Any school district in Rhode Island that may have a student or students who are currently or were last enrolled in said district and who are considered by the sending district to be both clinically and academically appropriate for referral to a Rhode Island recovery high school may be referred for voluntary enrollment in such school. If said student is admitted to said school, the sending school district shall ensure that payment pursuant to subsection (b) herein for students who attend the recovery high school is paid, and further, that upon completion of all other graduation requirements, said student or students shall receive a diploma.

(b) A sending school district shall transfer the per pupil allotment it receives pursuant to chapter 16-7.2 ("The Education Equity and Property Tax Relief Act") to a recovery high school for any student attending the recovery high school and meeting the following criteria:

- (1) The student is currently enrolled in the district or currently resides in the municipality in which the district is located;
- (2) The student is considered by a clinician licensed pursuant to RIGL 42-35 to be clinically appropriate, using the criteria for substance use disorders as defined in the

diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders IV-TR; and

(3) The student meets all matriculation criteria as outlined by the sending district and the department of elementary and secondary education, with determination of academic eligibility based on existing documentation provided by the district. The district and the recovery high school shall arrange to confer a diploma when a student completes state and district-mandated graduation requirements. The local share of education funding shall be paid to the recovery high school in the same manner as the local share of education funding is paid to charter public schools, the William M. Davies, Jr. Career and Technical High School, and the Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center, as outlined in section 16-7.2-5.

(c) A recovery high school shall submit to the board of regents academic data considered necessary by the board to provide information regarding each student's academic performance, subject to applicable health confidentiality laws and regulations.

(d) The board of regents, in consultation with the department of behavioral health, developmental disabilities and hospitals shall promulgate rules and regulations as necessary to implement and carry out the intent of this chapter.

PLAN REQUIREMENTS: The Recovery High School Plan must address, but not limited to, the following:

- Serving students diagnosed with substance use disorder or dependency; include anticipated number of students to be served
- Designed specifically for students recovering from substance abuse or dependency
- Plan for curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- Requirements for awarding a secondary school diploma aligned with RI education regulations
- Admission requirements, recruitment and student retention
- Provide both academic services and assistance with recovery (including post-treatment support) and continuing care
- Duration of school year and school day
- Summer program services
- Recovery/ working a program of recovery
- Strategies to address relapse to insure continued education
- Information and referral
- Family involvement
- Aftercare/Transition
- Staffing plan
- Monthly progress reporting to include, but not limited to, number of students served, retention rate, academic performance, attendance, etc.
- Evaluation

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:

- Facilities certifications
- Fiduciary health (e.g. current audited financial statements)

REVIEW: The RI Department of Elementary and Secondary Education will implement a review process to assess all submissions.

SAMPLE RECOVERY HIGH SCHOOL MODEL

Massachusetts Department of Education: Recovery High School Model

Recovery High School is a four-year alternative public high school. The schools are expected to serve approximately 30-50 students, all whom have been assessed and diagnosed with a substance use or dependence disorder. Class size is anticipated to be small, with a maximum 15:1 student/teacher ratio. The school will be based on a 12-month calendar that is anticipated to run from September to the end of June in accordance with the academic school year and continue with programming throughout the summer months. The duration of the school day is anticipated to include hours outside of the traditional school day for afterschool programming and recovery support services.

The Recovery High School model in Massachusetts resulted in a school that becomes much more than academic learning. The school takes on the responsibility of the academic achievement of a young person, but also the health and wellness of the whole child. The Massachusetts model of recovery high school has become a wraparound model of care that includes recovery supports, behavioral health expertise, information and referral supports, intensive family engagement, and ongoing after-care support and contact. These institutions are comprehensive, multi-service centers whose commitment and influence extends far beyond “graduation” (Massachusetts Department of Education, 2011).

Cover Page

RECOVERY HIGH SCHOOL PILOT PROJECT

APPLICANT INFORMATION

District/School: _____

Address: _____

Contact Person: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Signatures:

Superintendent/School Authority: _____

School Committee/Board Chair: _____

Partner CBO Director if applicable: _____

Partner CBO Board Chair if applicable: _____

Scoring Rubric: Recovery High School

I – Applicant Understanding of Issue (25 points)

Did the applicant:	Yes	No	Comment
Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the work needed (0-10)			
Demonstrate knowledge of RI High School Regulations, diploma System, and curriculum, instruction and assessment (0-10)			
Demonstrate knowledge specific to Rhode Island (0-5)			

Points
Section I

II – Work Plan (30 points)

Did the applicant present a detailed work plan for all primary tasks that includes:	Yes	No	Comment
A list of tasks/activities that will be employed including designation of responsibilities (0-10)			
A detailed project schedule (0-10)			
A list of possible barriers and solutions (0-5)			
Evaluation, analysis and reporting of student outcomes (5)			

Section II

III – Applicant Capacity (25 points)

Did the applicant:	Yes	No	Comment
Describe previous experience related to this type of work (0-10)			
Provide a description of the applicant's organizational structure that would accommodate this work (0-10)			
Provide a listing of similar projects (0-5)			

Section III

IV – Key Personnel (20 points)

Did the applicant:	Yes	No	Comment
Define roles and responsibilities of assigned staff (0-10)			
identify existing staff responsible for project activities (0-5)			
Provide descriptions of staff areas of expertise (0-5)			

Section IV

V – Cost Proposal – Not applicable

TOTAL POINTS: _____