

Lead Partner

Bidder



Representing a Consortium of Regional Offices and Intermediate Service Centers

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The mission of IARSS as a School Improvement Grant Lead Partner is to provide exceptional services to support student growth and achievement and to transform teacher and school leader effectiveness in schools.

All geographical areas in the State of Illinois will be served by the Lead Partner upon request.

The Lead Partner will serve all grade spans pre-school through twelfth grade.

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Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)  
Planning and Pre-Implementation

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School Improvement Grants have historically been granted for a three-year period with two years of implementation and one for sustainability. IARSS has a record for pre-planning with all school districts identifying the organization as Lead Partner while in the draft writing process.

Evidence of Proven Effectiveness: IARSS maintains a positive, constant working relationship with the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). By staying abreast of current application release and deadlines, IARSS has been able to contact local eligible districts and inform them of submission dates early in the process. There is evidence of participation on webinars, go to meetings, attendance at conferences, and email exchanges verifying IARSS' proactive planning and pre-implementation.

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)  
Governance

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New documented governance structures are a grant requirement for the Local Education Agency (LEA) in School Improvement Grants. As Lead Partner, IARSS ensures this transition is seamless and as Lead Partner we embrace and support the new organizational structure, organizing our staffing structure according to the needs of the district. IARSS supports the management of the intervention with willingness to support the principal or LEA or control the implementation of the plan, according to preference. IARSS has worked with internal LEA transformation officers on a daily basis to support the implementation of the grant.

Programmatic changes are identified as a joint effort of Lead Partner and LEA to choose the best programs to benefit student achievement.

Evidence of Proven Effectiveness: IARSS has a program handbook available for reference of LEA's. Performance evaluations are distributed and retained yearly for all personnel accountable for implementing interventions in SIG schools. Full compliance has been granted for each IARSS SIG school for governance structures, and efforts have been made to leverage capacity of SIG moving forward.

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)  
Operational Flexibility

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In order to maintain operational flexibility, the principal must have flexibility over staffing, calendars, time, and the budget. IARSS supports and encourages operational flexibility during initial planning phases and assists in identifying various avenues to maintain flexibility with alternate funds. There is a realization that schools must be free to perform in a different capacity, sometimes outside of contractual obligations to create change.

Evidence of Proven Effectiveness: IARSS works with districts to ensure a contract with the principal and school board exists describing specific operational flexibilities given to the principal for the duration of the grant. Full compliance has been granted to each IARSS SIG school proving flexibility is sustained throughout the grant.

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)  
Teacher/Principal Evaluation with Student Growth Component

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IARSS provides professional development on identifying and interpreting assessment data concerning student growth. The Danielson Framework is reviewed with staff by trained professionals to identify professional practice in development with the principal and teachers. Student Learning Objectives (SLO) are modeled and discussed for student growth.

Evidence of Proven Effectiveness: IARSS maintains a file containing a copy of the written policy approved by the teacher's union, describing the evaluation system in detail, for reference throughout observations and used as feedback for growth in teacher practice. Continual, rigorous instruction is encouraged to satisfy teacher professional practices in attempts to increase student achievement. Full compliance has been granted to IARSS SIG schools for creating an effective, legal evaluation system tied to student growth.

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)  
Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention Incentives and Strategies

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Within grant confines, financial incentives for career growth, flexible work conditions, and matching skills with needs of students is permissible. IARSS works with districts to recruit teachers by partnering with local universities and colleges. Identifying the best personnel with the highest level of proven effectiveness is imperative. Monetary and non-monetary recognition has been used to retain effective staff. IARSS works closely with consultants for each content area from National Louis University to set a foundation aligning curriculum practices with content standards.

Evidence of Proven Effectiveness: IARSS has gone into the communities of East St. Louis and Cahokia, interviewing and selecting candidates in coordination with district leadership. Parent Liaisons with a vested interest living within the communities have been hired to increase parental involvement. Teacher leadership recognition by assigning department chairs or PLC leaders has proven to be an effective practice. IARSS has received full compliance for each SIG school for the effective placement of personnel.

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)  
Rewards Associated with (Improving Student) Achievement or Graduation Rate

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Written descriptions of how teachers will be identified and rewarded for improving achievement exist in IARSS SIG schools. Principals are given explicit authority to remediate and remove teachers who do not improve.

Evidence of Proven Effectiveness: Full compliance has been granted to each IARSS SIG school for establishing a rewards system for teachers either monetarily or not for improving student achievement. This system is directly tied to evaluation for student growth as part of the teacher evaluation system.

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)  
Extended Time

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Increased learning time significantly increasing the total number of school hours by enhancing instruction in core, other subjects, or enrichment is implemented to create effective time for job-embedded professional development and PLC time for teachers. IARSS identifies opportunities for districts to leverage other funds to increase instructional learning time once grant funds end.

Evidence of Proven Effectiveness: Full compliance has been granted for each IARSS SIG school for increasing instructional time on the school calendar showing the increase in time and what that time is utilized for including Academic Lab, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Programs, Summer Enrichment, Summer Symposium, PD, or PLC/T time.



Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)  
Comprehensive Instructional Reform

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Comprehensive instructional reform is created using strategies and materials which are research-based, vertically aligned with grade level and standards. IARSS promotes the use of data through various district or grade level assessments, differentiated instruction, higher order thinking and open ended questioning. There is a great need to increase rigor in materials utilized in classrooms. IARSS assists in modifying ineffective curricula, RtI blocks, and technology use in classrooms.

Evidence of Proven Effectiveness: IARSS provides PD for effective groupings in RtI, differentiation for diverse learners, and enhancing the use of technology in classrooms for interactive learning. Documentation of completed curriculum alignment and curriculum guides exist including scope and sequence and lesson plans for all content areas driven by the district in coordination with IARSS for each SIG school.

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)  
Job-Embedded Professional Development

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IARSS implements the gradual release concept when training instructional coaches. It is our philosophy that job-embedded professional development with feedback is the most powerful driving force of teacher practice and formative assessment. IARSS provides ongoing, high-quality, job-embedded professional development to facilitate effective teaching and learning. Extended time is sacred to IARSS in providing a regular, structured schedule protecting grade-level and subject-area teacher meetings.

Evidence of Proven Effectiveness: Full compliance has been granted to each IARSS SIG school for providing consultants and coaches to effectively deliver job-embedded professional development to enhance professional practices in efforts to raise student achievement.

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)  
Use of Data to Drive Instruction

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Data interpretation is a focus of all IARSS Professional Learning Teams (PLT). Response to Intervention is a federal mandate that IARSS has national trainers to assist in addressing data interpretation used to group students to effectively deliver services.

Evidence of Proven Effectiveness: Data rooms are created as a focal point for continually reviewing data within the school. Benchmark and interim assessments are collected and analyzed with results being shared with teachers. Attendance, behavior, and academics are analyzed in a John Hopkins Early Warning Indicator report providing information on students at risk of dropout for early intervening by an IARSS data consultant. Presentations on data have occurred at each SIG school providing information on identifying, analyzing, and grouping students using data. IARSS has an apparent ability to rethink for student knowledge using current assessment systems.

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)  
Program Monitoring

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A written plan exists with IARSS and each SIG school in which quarterly updates are given to the local board, monthly leadership meetings take place, weekly building leadership meetings focused on data occur, and daily exchange between lead partner and schools exists. Program Monitoring is an area IARSS addresses in efforts to increase sustainability in the initial planning stage in the grant process. Coaches are identified and training is implemented on informal walk throughs and use of effective feedback. Often times, these roles are integral in the change process and are suggested as key pieces in the sustainability plan.

Evidence of Proven Effectiveness: IARSS and East St. Louis School District #189 with Cahokia Unit School District #187 have been identified as having a model Lead Partner/LEA relationship where transparent, fluid communication is essential for program monitoring. Presentations at the No Child Left Behind Conference and to the Illinois State Board of Education have occurred to share the effective practice of using frequent communication to enhance program monitoring on behalf of IARSS and the SIG schools represented. Weekly fidelity checks and frequent evaluation of data are used to continually enhance program monitoring.

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)  
Family and Community Engagement

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Family and Community Engagement is an essential piece of the school improvement puzzle.

Families must instill trust in the school in which their children attend. An effective process for communicating effectively with families must start at the leadership level. IARSS understands the strong expectation for courtesy to parents and the communities served.

Evidence of Proven Effectiveness: IARSS has provided training to all employees regarding appropriate exchange with parents and the communities we serve in various cultures. Parent Liaisons are hired from the local community to impress a strong relationship between community and school. IARSS has initiated a Pastoral Alliance and opportunities for parents to engage in opportunities with a schedule of events stemming from the community engagement plan. Activities offered to parents include financial aid workshops, health awareness workshops, tax preparation nights, Zumba, drug awareness, and technology fairs. Parents are communicated with and encouraged to attend events including Donuts with Dads, Muffins with Moms, and Cookies at Conferences, all initiated by IARSS.

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)  
Sustainability

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Sustainability is a thought on the forefront of IARSS' plan at the release of each Request for Proposals (RFP). Sustainability plans are started immediately once schools receiving the grant are identified based on a review of strategies. IARSS has the ability to effectively build staff capacity or utilize repurposing, resource reallocation, re-evaluation of partner agreements, and incorporation of stakeholder engagement. Sustainability plans must be drafted throughout the grant and finalized in the culminating year of the grant.

Evidence of Proven Effectiveness: IARSS has effectively identified alternate funding sources such as Title I to retain effective personnel to increase sustainability. An advantage IARSS has is the continual relationship maintained within Regional Offices of Education (ROE) and Intermediate Service Centers (ISC) after grant funds are exhausted.

Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS)  
Lead Partner

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IARSS provides ongoing, intensive technical assistance and related support with job-embedded professional development; shared accountability for staffing, budget, programs, and calendars; and daily, on-site presence in schools. The goal of IARSS is to substantially raise student achievement and satisfy responsibilities and deliverables according to contract established with SIG schools.

Evidence of Proven Effectiveness: IARSS provides daily, on-site presence with expertise in each content area, contributing to sustainability. Full compliance has been granted to each IARSS SIG school on behalf of the success completion of all components which reflect the Lead Partner's responsibility. Signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)'s exist for each SIG school to identify the outcomes and deliverables in which IARSS is accountable. Performance of IARSS is monitored and retention or replacement of personnel occurs based on the needs of each individual SIG school.