

Subject: 2004-05 Accountability Block Grants - A Year of Success!

To: All School Districts

From: Francis V. Barnes, Secretary of Education

Re: 2004-05 Accountability Block Grants - A Year of Success!

On behalf of the entire Department, I want to thank you for all of your hard work, innovation, and focus on results this year, as you implemented your Accountability Block Grant (ABG) programs.

Across Pennsylvania, hundreds of thousands of children are increasing their math and reading skills thanks to our partnership in this program. As we wind down this first year of the program, I'd like to take this opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments.

As a result of the first year of Accountability Block Grant funding:

- \* Approximately 3,000 children are enrolled in pre-kindergarten programs
- \* Almost 51,000 children are receiving full-day kindergarten
- \* Around 18,700 children are benefiting from reduced class sizes in kindergarten through 3rd grade
- \* More than 18,600 students are receiving tutoring so they can catch up with their peers
- \* Approximately 508,000 students will make greater learning gains because their teachers are engaging in more professional education and receiving help from teacher coaches
- \* Almost 360,000 students are benefiting from social and health services, science and applied knowledge programs, initiatives aimed at improving the performance of student subgroups, and other educational investments that are proven to help increase achievement levels

When the Department releases to you the Final Expenditure and Program Report template (via the eGrant system) in July, you will be able to share with us, in detail, the many accomplishments that you have achieved with the 2004-05 ABG funding. This information will be similar to the Mid-Year Report that you completed last year, but will have much more detailed focus on evaluation methods, assessment results, and data. It will be due to the Department September 30, 2005.

As we close out this successful first year, it is important to note that the goal is always to maximize the dollars to serving the needs of students and their improved performance. To that extent, it is essential that all expenditures or encumbrances occur by June 30. In addition, any procurement documents must be established and issued by June 30, 2005. Delivery should occur within 60 days after issuance of the local procurement document.

We continue to strive to be student-centered, data informed, personalized, and results-focused.

In 2005-06, we look forward to another successful year of increased student achievement through the Accountability Block Grant.