

# Information for Bd of Ed

## NORTHWEST TRI-COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (PAC) MEETING AGENDA ITEM 09/27/07

- ☒ RESPONSE NEEDED BY October 15, 2007  
☐ RESPONSE NOT NEEDED

- ☒ Already shared with: E-mail message sent earlier to Superintendents  
☒ Please share with: School District Board of Directors  
☒ We will share with IU Board of Directors

TOPIC: Common Cents Proposal

PRESENTED BY: Margie Wallace

The Common Cents initiative is a competitive program designed to encourage school districts to share services with one another to increase the efficient use of taxpayer resources and improve service delivery for students.

ADDITIONAL HANDOUT(S):

**Common Cents Overview**

**PowerPoint Presentation**

**Sample School District Resolution**

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Shared Services / Common Cents Initiative for FY 2007-2008  
Program Status Update  
August 23, 2007


*\$1 million*  
*11 different ways to*  
*make services cheaper*  
Overview / Purpose

Governor Rendell proposed the *Shared Services / Common Cents Initiative* as part of his General Fund Budget recommendations to the General Assembly. The General Assembly and the Governor approved this appropriation for FY 2007-2008.

The Shared Services / Common Cents Initiative is a competitive program designed to encourage school districts to share services with one another in order to increase the efficient use of taxpayer resources and improve service delivery for students.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) plans to foster this effort by facilitating individual school district studies to provide recommendations regarding potential efficiencies and cost savings that may be obtained through the combining/sharing of eleven (11) specific services or activities among school districts within a participating/selected intermediate unit region. The Department will provide professional consultant services at no cost to participating intermediate units and their member public school districts.

The consultant will conduct studies and provide specific recommendations about combining services and activities across participating school districts within each intermediate unit in order to promote improved service delivery, efficiency, economy of operations, and cost savings. The consultant's review will encompass each of the following service areas for each participating school district:

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- (1) Transportation
  - (2) Food services and nutrition
  - (3) Instructional services
  - (4) Safety and security
  - (5) Health services
  - (6) Purchasing
  - (7) Finance and payroll
  - (8) Facilities and real estate
  - (9) Human resources
  - (10) Technology services
  - (11) Administration

Each study's recommendations may also include sharing of services or activities with a municipality. The recommendations, however, are not binding upon any participating school district. School districts would decide which of the eleven service area recommendations to adopt for implementation.

The consultant will issue reports to PDE and participating school districts within intermediate units selected to participate in the Common Cents Initiative. The consultant will also be available to present and discuss the report/recommendations during a public meeting conducted by each of the participating school districts. The consultant develops and provides to the school district, PDE and the intermediate unit a written implementation plan for each service area recommendation adopted by each individual school district within the intermediate unit's region. Finally, the consultant provides assistance to each school district, as required, to implement the recommendations.

The Request for Proposal (RFP) is currently posted on the DGS and PDE websites. Potential bidders will participate in a pre-proposal conference on August 24, 2007. Consultants' bids must be submitted by September 14, 2007. PDE will evaluate and score the bids, and award the contract by October 12, 2007. PDE will select the consultant for the Common Cents program using a predetermined scoring rubric based on technical ability, cost, and disadvantaged business participation. The intermediate units and school districts do not participate in this process.



### Process

Each intermediate unit council meets with its school districts to discuss participating in the program. A majority vote of the intermediate unit's member school districts is required for the intermediate unit to develop an application to participate in the Common Cents Program on behalf of any of its member school districts. Applications to participate in the program must be submitted to PDE no later than November 1, 2007. Two Intermediate Units may apply jointly if the districts contained in these geographical areas agree, but an intermediate unit may not submit more than one application.

### Selection Criteria

PDE will select intermediate units, and their designated school districts, to participate in the program through a competitive process. Preference will be given to applications that include:

1. 100% participation from all school districts within an intermediate unit
2. Joint intermediate unit applications
3. Low-wealth and/or academically challenged districts, and
4. To ensure geographic diversity

### Duties and Responsibilities of Intermediate Units and School Districts

#### School Districts

- 1) Each participating school district's board of school directors passes a resolution setting forth the board's agreement to participate in the program and certifying that the board will comply with the requirements of Section 807-A of the Public School Code as amended.
- 2) Each school district must cooperate with the consultant during the time of the study.
- 3) School districts must provide required data and information requested by the consultant so long as the disclosure is consistent with Federal or State Statutes protecting confidentiality of certain information.
- 4) Each school district must make relevant staff available for interviewing by the consultant.
- 5) Upon completion of the study each school district shall post the report on their School District website for a period of 30 days for public review.
- 6) Each school district shall have at least one public meeting to discuss the consultant's recommendations and receive input from the general public regarding these recommendations.
- 7) Within six months from the receipt of the consultant's report each school district's board of school directors shall vote whether to pursue each separate recommendation contained in the consultant's report.
- 8) Each school district's board of directors forwards the result of the vote on each recommendation to the intermediate unit council and to PDE.
- 9) Each school district adopting the consultant's recommendations receives an implementation plan from the consultant.
- 10) Each school district implements the consultant's plan for the school district and provides status reports to PDE.

#### Intermediate Units

- 1) Each intermediate unit convenes a meeting of the intermediate unit council to discuss the program and based on a majority vote of the intermediate unit's member school districts develops an application to participate in the Common Cents Program.
- 2) No later than November 1, 2007, each intermediate unit submits its application to PDE.
- 3) Each intermediate unit coordinates/facilitates as necessary the consultant's activities within and among its member school districts.
- 4) Each intermediate unit must cooperate with the consultant during the time of the study including providing required data and information requested by the consultant so long as the disclosure is consistent with Federal or State Statutes protecting confidentiality of certain information.
- 5) Each intermediate unit must make relevant staff available for interviewing by the consultant.
- 6) Each intermediate unit receives the results of each of its member school district board's vote on each recommendation.
- 7) Each intermediate unit council reviews each board's resolutions and forwards a written request for the consultant to create an implementation plan for any recommendation approved by the member school districts.



- 8) The consultant's recommendations do not need to be approved by all of the intermediate unit's member school districts. Only the school districts that adopt the consultant's recommendations are included in the implementation plans.
- 9) Each intermediate unit council receives copies of the consultant's school district implementation plans.

### **Timeline**

11/01/2007 Deadline: Intermediate Units, on behalf of their eligible school districts, submit applications to PDE.

12/03/2007 Deadline: PDE announces the participating Intermediate Units and their eligible school districts.

12/03/2007 thru 02/09/2008: Consultant works with participating school districts to collect and review data and other information. This includes interviewing pertinent school district staff/personnel to develop written recommendations regarding the combination of services to promote improved service delivery, efficiency, economy of operations and cost savings among school districts.

04/13/2008: Consultant issues completed report of recommendations in both electronic and written form to each participating school district, intermediate unit, and PDE.

04/16/2008 thru 06/30/2009: School Districts post the consultant's recommendations on their school district's Internet website for 30 days and, in addition, must hold a public meeting for discussion and comment on the consultant's recommendations:

- Within six months of the receipt of the consultant's report, the board of school directors shall vote on each recommendation separately, whether to pursue each recommendation contained in the consultant's report.
- Approved recommendations are forwarded to the Intermediate Unit and PDE. The Intermediate Unit provides a written request for the consultant to develop written plans to implement each of the recommendations adopted by each of the participating school districts within the Intermediate Unit.
- Consultant will have thirty (30) working days from receipt of the Intermediate Unit's written request to complete a written Implementation Plan for those school districts that accept any or all of the report's recommendations.
- Completed Implementation Plans are provided to the school district, PDE, and the Intermediate Unit.

### **Recommendations From the Consultant's Study**

Recommendations from the consultant's study will not be binding upon any school district participating in the Common Cents Initiative. The recommendations prepared for the participating school districts may also include sharing of services or activities with a municipality.

### **Implementation Plan**

The consultant's implementation plan for each school district adopting the various recommendations shall list potential suppliers, including any intermediate unit, for each of the services provided and may include sharing of services or activities with a municipality. However, the implementation plan may not recommend a single supplier for any service. Only those school districts that approved specific recommendations will receive an implementation plan.

### **Resultant Cost Savings**

Each school district shall expend funds realized through the cost savings resulting from implementing the consultant's recommendations for academic purposes in the schools or the school district. For the purposes of the Common Cents Program, academic purposes include the following:

- a) professional development
- b) student supplies
- c) textbooks
- d) classroom technology
- e) school safety
- f) improvement of classroom facilities
- g) any other instructional activity directly affecting student performance or the learning environment.

School districts may use such funds first to pay for any one-time expenditure that may be required to implement the consultant's recommendations.

### **Submission of Applications**

Intermediate units must submit applications to PDE no later than November 1, 2007, for the 2007-2008 fiscal year program. The intermediate unit application must include a resolution by each member school district board of school directors setting forth its agreement to participate in the study and certifying that it will comply with the requirements of Section 807-A of the Public School Code as amended. Applications will be provided to each intermediate unit's Executive Director prior to September 14, 2007.

Completed applications should be sent to:

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Bureau of Budget and Fiscal Management  
Fiscal Management Division  
Attention: Jeannine Weiser  
333 Market Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333



Pennsylvania Department of  
Education: Shared  
Services/Common Cents Initiative

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*Midwestern Intermediate Unit IV  
Superintendents Advisory Council Meeting  
September 12, 2007*

*Presented by  
Cecelia H. Yauger  
Executive Director*

Overview/Purpose

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- o Governor Rendell proposed the *Shared Services / Common Cents Initiative* as part of his General Fund Budget recommendations to the General Assembly.
- o The General Assembly and the Governor approved this appropriation for FY 2007-2008.

Overview/Purpose (Continued)

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- o The Shared Services / Common Cents Initiative is a competitive program designed to encourage school districts to share services with one another in order to increase the efficient use of taxpayer resources and improve service delivery for students.

Specific Services

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- o The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) plans to foster this effort by facilitating individual school district studies to provide recommendations regarding potential efficiencies and cost savings that may be obtained through the combining/sharing of eleven (11) specific services or activities among school districts within a participating/selected intermediate unit region.
- o The Department will provide professional consultant services at no cost to participating intermediate units and their member public school districts.

### Role of the Consultant

- o The consultant will conduct studies and provide specific recommendations about combining services and activities across participating school districts within each intermediate unit in order to promote improved service delivery, efficiency, economy of operations, and cost savings.

### Areas of Review

- o The consultant's review will encompass each of the following service areas for each participating school district:
  - Transportation
  - Food services and nutrition
  - Instructional services
  - Safety and security
  - Health services
  - Purchasing
  - Finance and payroll
  - Facilities and real estate
  - Human resources
  - Technology services
  - Administration

### Possible Recommendations

- o Each study's recommendations may also include sharing of services or activities with a municipality.
- o The recommendations, however, are not binding upon any participating school district.
- o School districts would decide which of the eleven service area recommendations to adopt for implementation.

### Reporting

- o The consultant will issue reports to PDE and participating school districts within intermediate units selected to participate in the Common Cents Initiative.
- o The consultant will also be available to present and discuss the report/recommendations during a public meeting conducted by each of the participating school districts.

### Reporting (Continued)

- o The consultant develops and provides to the school district, PDE and the intermediate unit a written implementation plan for each service area recommendation adopted by each individual school district within the intermediate unit's region.
- o Finally, the consultant provides assistance to each school district, as required, to implement the recommendations.

### Request for Proposal Process

- o The Request for Proposal (RFP) is currently posted on the DGS and PDE websites.
- o Potential bidders will participate in a pre-proposal conference on August 24, 2007. Consultants' bids must be submitted by September 14, 2007.
- o PDE will evaluate and score the bids, and award the contract by October 12, 2007

### Request for Proposal Process (Continued)

- o PDE will select the consultant for the Common Cents program using a predetermined scoring rubric based on technical ability, cost, and disadvantaged business participation.
- o The intermediate units and school districts do not participate in this process.

### Local Process

- o Each intermediate unit council meets with its school districts to discuss participating in the program.
- o A majority vote of the intermediate unit's member school districts is required for the intermediate unit to develop an application to participate in the Common Cents Program on behalf of any of its member school districts. Applications to participate in the program must be submitted to PDE no later than **November 1, 2007**.
- o Two Intermediate Units may apply jointly if the districts contained in these geographical areas agree, but an intermediate unit may not submit more than one application.



### Selection Criteria

- o PDE will select intermediate units, and their designated school districts, to participate in the program through a competitive process.
- o Preference will be given to applications that include:
  1. 100% participation from all school districts within an intermediate unit
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  3. Low-wealth and/or academically challenged districts, and
  4. To ensure geographic diversity

### Duties and Responsibilities of the School District

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- o Each school district must cooperate with the consultant during the time of the study.
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- o Upon completion of the study each school district shall post the report on their School District website for a period of 30 days for public review.

### Duties and Responsibilities of the School Districts (Continued)

- o Each school district shall have at least one public meeting to discuss the consultant's recommendations and receive input from the general public regarding these recommendations.
- o Within six months from the receipt of the consultant's report each school district's board of school directors shall vote whether to pursue each separate recommendation contained in the consultant's report.
- o Each school district's board of directors forwards the result of the vote on each recommendation to the intermediate unit council and to PDE.
- o Each school district adopting the consultant's recommendations receives an implementation plan from the consultant.
- o Each school district implements the consultant's plan for the school district and provides status reports to PDE.

### Duties and Responsibilities of the Intermediate Unit

Each intermediate unit convenes a meeting of the intermediate unit council to discuss the program and based on a majority vote of the intermediate unit's member school districts develops an application to participate in the Common Cents Program.

No later than November 1, 2007, each intermediate unit submits its application to PDE.

Each intermediate unit coordinates/facilitates as necessary the consultant's activities within and among its member school districts.

### Duties and Responsibilities of the Intermediate Unit (Continued)

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### Timeline (Continued)

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### Timeline (continued)

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### Application Submission (Continued)

- o Completed applications should be sent to:

Pennsylvania Department of Education  
Bureau of Budget and Fiscal Management  
Fiscal Management Division

Attention: Jeannine Weiser  
333 Market Street, 4th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

### MIUIV Next Steps/Timeline

- o 1. Form a committee to develop strategies and approach for implementation of program.
- o 2. District Resolution due to MIUIV by October 15, 2007.
- o 3. Application due to PDE by November 1, 2007.



**Sample School District Resolution to Participate in the Common Cents Program**

WHEREAS, the \_\_\_\_\_ School District is committed to delivering a quality education while being accountable to our taxpayers; and WHEREAS, that opportunities to operate more efficiently while improving services are in the best interest of the taxpayers and students; and WHEREAS, that the Common Cents program is an opportunity to receive recommendations on sharing services without any commitment to implement those recommendations; therefore be it RESOLVED, that the \_\_\_\_\_ School District hereby applies on (date) \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in the Common Cents program to explore ways to share services with other school districts in order to improve quality and drive down costs, and be it further RESOLVED, that the \_\_\_\_\_ School District will publicly present the recommendations it receives; and be it further RESOLVED, that after receiving public comment the \_\_\_\_\_ School District will vote to approve or reject the recommendations that it receives.