



2010 EDUCATION SCHOOL-BASED REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Implementation or Expansion of Data-Driven Instruction

The Tower Foundation seeks to facilitate improvement in the academic outcomes of youths, pre-kindergarten through grade 8, in ways that will lead to academic success and enhanced opportunities later in life.

The Tower Foundation aims to accomplish this goal by providing financial support for implementation of programs and services that have proven to be successful. This initiative is targeted toward the implementation or expansion of data-driven instruction in grades K-8.

Data-driven instruction refers to the practice of using data from a range of student performance assessments to plan curriculum and instruction. Educators use these data to plan diverse instructional strategies in response to the differences in how students think and learn.

Timeline	
January 20, 2010	Deadline for pre-application
February 10, 2010	Organizations notified if a proposal is desired
March 31, 2010	Deadline for proposals (if requested)
April – May 2010	Proposal review
June 30, 2010	Successful applicants notified

I. Description

Data-driven instruction refers to the practice of using student outcomes on various measures to plan curriculum and instruction. It is a system of teaching and management practices that gets better information about students into the hands of classroom teachers. According to Michael Fullan's framework for educational change, data-driven instruction requires three stages of development: initiation, implementation, and institutionalization.

With this initiative, the Tower Foundation seeks to support institutions **in the late initiation or implementation stages**.

Program **initiation** begins with an information gathering phase, within a school or school district learning about data-driven instruction, what it can do for student performance, and what data-driven instruction might look like in the classroom. Also essential to the initiation stage is the process of reculturing – staff at all levels are introduced to data-driven instruction, the norms that it challenges, and the impact it will have on their teaching methods. In the late initiation, or pre-implementation stage, institutions collect baseline student performance data, identify assessment tools, mobilize data teams, and outline professional development strategies for teachers and administrators.

Schools or school districts in the **implementation** stage have a clear conception of what data-driven instruction will look like and have a detailed, concrete, and high-quality plan for incorporating it into the classroom. Components of the implementation phase may include comprehensive professional development and training, regular data team meetings, and the purchase and launch of new student assessment tools.

At the **institutionalization** stage, the hard work of designing and implementing data-driven instruction has been completed. The challenge facing schools and districts at this point is sustainability; building data-driven instruction into the day-to-day routines of teachers and administrators so that it is ingrained in the culture.

The process of institutionalization falls outside the scope of this initiative.

To be considered for funding, applicants must demonstrate sufficient planning or progress to indicate readiness to undertake the activities associated with implementing data-driven instruction, as follows:

- Understanding of student achievement gaps
 - Ability to secure baseline data and set measurable academic goals
 - Identification of appropriate assessment tools and assessment practices
 - Readiness on the part of teachers and administrators to move toward a comprehensive use of data to inform instruction (e.g., data teams or professional learning communities are in place)
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Organizational readiness is essential. Schools and school districts that have reached this level of cultural readiness demonstrate a key characteristic: a team-based approach to assessing and improving student performance. At some level, teachers share the results of student assessments across classrooms and engage in dialogue about instructional approaches that get better results.

The Foundation, through this RFP, seeks to serve as a resource to those schools and school districts that are prepared to take on the challenges and rewards of implementing or expanding data-driven instruction.

II. Eligibility Requirements

A. Eligible organizations:

- Public and diocesan school districts
- Private and charter schools with 501(c)(3) classifications
- Tax-exempt organizations operating schools with 501(c)(3) classification from the Internal Revenue Service that are neither private foundations nor described as 509(a)(3) organizations

B. Geographic restrictions – eligible organizations must be located within the following geographic areas:

Massachusetts:

- Barnstable County
- Dukes County
- Essex County
- Nantucket County

New York:

- Erie County
- Niagara County

C. Organizations, school districts, and schools that received an award in 2009 should contact Foundation staff for eligibility determination.

III. Grant Awards

Grants of up to \$375,000 are available. Each grant will be for a 3-5 year time period, with grant payments made on an annual basis. Multiple awards may be made in each of the geographic areas served by the Foundation.

Grant awards will differ considerably. Factors used to determine the amount of a grant award include, but are not limited to: the scope of the project, the number of individuals trained, and the number of students affected.

Successful applicants are required to provide a 10 percent cash match (i.e., one dollar for every \$10 requested from the Foundation).

IV. Use of Grant Funds

- A. In general, the Foundation will provide funds for the **incremental costs** that are associated with the implementation of data-driven instruction at a district, school, or data team level. **Incremental costs** are defined as costs that are new to the organization as a result of this project.

For the most part, grant funds are intended to be used for:

- professional development for teachers, principals and district-level staff
 - external consultants and trainers
 - data-driven instruction training materials
 - software and other technologies to improve data management practices at the at district, facility, or data team level
 - assessment materials
 - teacher release time and substitutes for training and professional development associated with data-driven instruction
 - teacher stipends for out-of-school training that is directly associated with the implementation of the data-driven instruction project
- B. Please note that grants through this RFP do not provide funds for existing personnel expense or the hiring of new staff.
- C. Grant money may not be used:
- for curriculum development or purchase
 - for development or purchase of remedial instructional material or software
 - for laptops or personal computers intended for general student use
 - for the private benefit of any grant recipient or affiliated person
 - for individual scholarships
 - for research
 - to attempt to influence legislation
 - to attempt to influence or intervene in any political campaign
 - for endowment or capital campaigns
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V. Application Procedure

This RFP has a two-step application process:

1. Submission of a brief pre-application.
2. Submission of a full proposal, if requested.

The Foundation accepts only **one** pre-application from each eligible organization. **Pre-applications must follow the attached format and may not exceed seven pages.** The pre-application must be signed by the organization's executive director, superintendent, or headmaster.

Please note that diocesan schools must make application through the local central diocesan education department.

To be considered for a grant through this RFP, pre-applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. on January 20, 2010.

E-mailed or faxed copies are not accepted.

Send pre-application to:

Glenda M. Cadwallader
Executive Director
The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation
2351 North Forest Road
Getzville, NY 14068-1225

All pre-applications are reviewed to determine if the Foundation wishes to pursue a full proposal. Applicants will be notified by February 10, 2010 of the result of this review. A request for a full proposal should not be interpreted as an indication of likely support. The deadline for a full proposal, if requested, is March 31, 2010. **Requests for full proposals are made at the sole discretion of the Foundation.**

The Foundation does not accept unsolicited proposals.

VI. RFP Contact Information

For more information about this RFP, please contact:

Glenda M. Cadwallader
Executive Director
(716) 689-0370 Ext. 204
gmc@thetowerfoundation.org

Donald Matteson
Senior Program Officer
(716) 689-0370 Ext. 207
dwm@thetowerfoundation.org



2010 School-Based Request for Proposals
Implementation or Expansion of Data-Driven Instruction

Pre-Application Face Sheet

1. Total Amount: \$ _____

2. Legal Name of Organization Applying:*

* Should be the same as on IRS determination letter and as supplied on IRS form 990

3. Address:

4. Contact Person:*

Title:

* Should be a person with detailed knowledge of the project.

5. Telephone Number: () _____

6. Fax Number: () _____

7. E-mail Address: _____

8. Web Site: _____

9. Organization's Annual Operating Budget: \$ _____

10. Anticipated Project Start and End Dates: From: _____ To: _____

11. Organization's Superintendent/Headmaster/Executive Director

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

☞ Please note: signature must be in blue ink.

Please Note: Pre-Applications may not exceed seven pages (not including attachments).

I. Organizational Information (approximately one page)

- A. Provide information about your school or school district, including the communities served and student demographics.
- B. Describe the role of any existing data teams or professional learning communities.
- C. Describe the data-driven instruction activities that already are in place within your school district.

II. Project Description (approximately 2-3 pages)

- A. Provide a brief description of your proposed project.
- B. Identify the number of students who will be affected annually.

III. Project Rationale (approximately 2-3 pages)

- A. Describe how your proposed project will result in improved student outcomes.
- B. State the student outcomes in measurable terms (*i.e.*, from what to what).

IV. Proposed Preliminary Budget (does not count against page maximum)

- A. Provide a preliminary budget, including the dollar amount requested and a brief description of how funds will be used. (Please note that organizations will be required to provide a 10% cash match for each item requested.)

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