



Contract for Excellence Narrative

2025 - 2026



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Program Narrative

Please address changes in your existing C4E programs, including any redesign or reallocation. Also, describe how activities support the Regents Reform Agenda.

In 2025-26, the Rochester City School District (RCSD) will continue many Contract for Excellence (C4E) initiatives that support the Regents Reform Agenda. The following C4E-funded activities will help students to meet ELA and Math standards as well as increase the college and career readiness of students:

- In-School Suspension (ISS) keeps students who receive a suspension at school in a learning environment. An identified “ISS Room” provides continued instruction and maintains engagement in the educational setting and process.
- Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) keeps students who receive a suspension from an RCSD school campus in a learning environment. An identified “OSS Room” provides continued instruction and maintains engagement in the educational setting and process in an RCSD classroom (after regular school hours).
- Social Workers and School Counselors to assist students and support improved academic performance as they fall behind academically.
- Parent Liaison and Home School Assistance to reach out to the community and ensure students are attending school and staying on track academically.
- English Language Learners’ educational needs are supported by bilingual and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) teachers and support staff, and activities in the Department of ELL. More than 3,800 RCSD students are ELLs (18% of the total District enrollment) and speak more than 70 languages.
- General Education Summer School. The goal of an equity-driven summer learning model is to ensure that all students have access to the same quality of instruction. Equity-driven summer learning models are essential in providing access to quality education for all students and closing the achievement gap.
- All City High is focused on providing extensive choices to learners through an expanded learning approach that embeds multiple pathways into the school's organization. The scheduling includes non-traditional days and clustered teams. The program is organized into small learning communities with class sizes of no more than 25 students. In addition, the program has a low student/counselor ratio with individual graduation mapping and post-graduation planning to ensure success.
- Rochester International Academy (RIA) provides new immigrant students with an instructional program that simultaneously develops English language proficiency while facilitating their acquisition of content knowledge. RIA also emphasizes parental and community involvement to not only enrich the school community, but to begin the transition of the families into their new school, city, and country. RIA ensures that students are in a space that is culturally responsive to their various social-emotional needs, so that they are able to realize their potential before they transition back to their home school.

Targeting Narrative

Please address both student educational needs and building-level accountability status as reflected in the attached Targeting Matrix. Explain how the district and school Comprehensive Plan supports the program.

2025 – 26 Accountability Status – This is the latest publicized information brought forth by the NYS Education Department.

The building-level accountability statuses are found by the school on the NYSED Public School Report Card Site. The need throughout the District is high. The majority of schools have an economically disadvantaged subgroup of 30 or more students. Performance for each subgroup of need varies from school to school; however, throughout the District students with disabilities are struggling to make progress. There have been significant gains for our English Language Learners consistently since 2014 in terms of graduation rate.

All RCSD schools (Local Support and Improvement (LSI), Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI), and Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) are required to submit a School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP), which serves as a road map for continuous sustained improvement. There are currently 35 schools designated as CSI, with 10 of them designated as CSI-R (Receivership). Professional development for principals and school representatives is conducted throughout the year, and school teams are required to implement the appropriate improvement plan. The ultimate goal is to develop an improvement plan that addresses academic needs (especially for the ELL and Special Education populations using the ESSA regulation and measures as the basis) as its priority and provides activities to support an effective school with positive outcomes. The required elements of the CEPs are:

- Plans based on the ESSA/Demonstrable Indicators measures and building level needs- assessment
- Data-driven plans that are aligned with the identified needs of the building and related specifically to English Language Arts (Literacy in the Content Area), Math, and graduation rates;
- Action steps toward correction of the cited area;
- Root cause analysis of cited area;
- Disaggregated data; and
- Integration and implementation of district benchmark.

Targeting Narrative

The Rochester City School District is a high-need district, as evidenced by its overall student poverty rate of over 87% (as determined by free and reduced-price lunch eligibility). In addition, 22% of the RCSD student population are students with disabilities, and 17% are English Language Learners.

As such, any program at any RCSD school will serve a large proportion of targeted C4E students. The District's Contract for Excellence targets more than 75% of its funds at students with the greatest needs as measured by the 75/50 Rule (i.e., 75% of C4E funds must support the 50% of schools with the greatest student needs as measured by the C4E targeted populations of poverty, students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students with low achievement.) This requirement will be addressed in the District's Contract through a combination of direct programs at schools and other funds used to support the Comprehensive District Planning Process.

Strategic Plan Goals

Describe the district's expected performance targets for the accountability criteria and disaggregated groups for those schools within the district not in good standing.

The current Superintendent of Schools Dr. Eric Jay Rosser will be appointed effective July 2025, by the Board of Education. In May of 2024, our strategic plan was adopted by the Interim Superintendent of schools, setting the stage from now through 2028.

Priority 1: Instructional Excellence **Preparing students for Life**

- Goal 1A: Increase the percentage of students in grades 3-8 who are proficient on the NYS ELA assessment from 16% to 40% by June 2028.
- Goal 1B: All students reading by third grade – increase the percentage of students proficient on 3rd grade NYS ELA from 15% to 50% by June 2028.
- Goal 1C: Increase the percentage of students in grades 3-8 who are proficient on the NYS math assessment from 14% to 40% by 2028.
- Goal 1D: Increase the number of students earning five or more credits in 9th grade from 70% to 90% by June 2028.

Priority 2: Provide Healthy, Joyful, and Inclusive **School Culture & Climate**

- Goal 2A: By 2028, 100% of RCSD schools will implement restorative practices with fidelity.
- Goal 2B: By 2028, the District will reduce the percentage of overall out-of-school suspensions to less than 8.5%.

- Goal 2C: By 2028, the District will reduce the current chronic absenteeism rate by 25%.
- Goal 2D: By 2028, at least 75% of District students will participate in annual student surveys (e.g., student climate survey and participatory budgeting) and identify their school community as “a place where they feel safe and belong.”

Priority 3: Recruit, Grow, and Retain

- Goal 3A: By 2028, increase the percentage of teachers identifying as BIPOC from 24% to 30%.
- Goal 3B: Increase employee engagement in professional development activities over the next three years, as evidenced by a 10% increase in participation rates and an average participant feedback rating of 3 out of 4 or higher on professional development activities.
- Goal 3C: Enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion by implementing inclusive practices and culturally responsive teaching methods, leading to a measurable increase in student engagement and satisfaction across all demographics within the next three years. Assessments will be conducted by identifying and administering a baseline survey to students and staff, followed by efforts to achieve incremental year-over-year increases.
- Goal 3D: Increase employee retention rates by 5% over the course of three years through the successful implementation of retention initiatives and employee well-being programs.

Priority 4: Strengthen School, Family, and Community Engagement

- Goal 4A: By 2028, 100% of RCSD schools will implement the community school model with fidelity.

- Goal 4B: By 2028, RCSD will strengthen the connection between School, Family, and Community by ensuring 100% of schools have representation of parents on school-based planning teams.
- Goal 4C: RCSD will provide enhanced communication channels to families to boost engagement across the District's community, as evidenced by a 30% increase in parents and students who signed up with the District's parent portal.
- Goal 4D: Increase the percentage of parents who agree or strongly agree they feel a sense of belonging to their child's school community from 59% to 75% by 2028.

Priority 5: Operational Efficiency/Excellence

- Goal 5A: Submit a balance budget to the Board of Education.
- Goal 5B: Actual General Fund revenue exceeds budget by no more than 1.0%, and actual General Fund expense is under budget by no more than 2.0%.
- Goal 5C: Develop a comprehensive long-range plan to optimize the efficient utilization of facilities and transportation services for students, aiming to reduce cost, minimize environmental impact, and enhance convenience and safety, resulting in a 15% increase in overall transportation efficiency and 10% improvement in facility utilization rates within the next three to five years.
- Goal 5D: RCSD will invest and improve facilities and resources to enhance student learning and ensure a safe school environment.



As noted earlier in this narrative document, District-wide programs include:

- **All City High** is focused on providing extensive choices to learners through an expanded learning approach that embeds multiple pathways into the school's organization. The scheduling includes non-traditional days and clustered teams. The program is organized into small learning communities with class sizes of no more than 25 students. In addition, the program has a low student/counselor ratio with individual graduation mapping and post-graduation planning to ensure success.
- **Rochester International Academy (RIA)** provides new immigrant students with an instructional program that simultaneously develops English language proficiency while facilitating their acquisition of content knowledge. RIA also emphasizes parental and community involvement to not only enrich the school community, but to begin the transition of the families into their new school, city, and country. RIA ensures that students are in a space that is culturally responsive to their various social-emotional needs so that they are able to realize their potential before they transition back to their home school.
- **Youth and Justice** consists of four separate program sites, in which students are assigned/admitted due to either struggles with mental health or involvement in the juvenile justice system. Serving approximately 1,200 students each year, the program partners with various entities to ensure that students receive appropriate instructional supports during their stay.
- **Agency Youth** is a Rochester-based organization that provides comprehensive programs and services for prevention education to counseling to emergency shelter to youth development opportunities with respect for and full participation of youth. In their partnership with RCSD and School #45, many Center for Youth staff work inside the school to deliver programs and services to students. Prevention educators develop and deliver prevention education curricula and workshops, and child family therapists establish relationships with parents, guardians and caregivers to foster the success of their children. Additionally, staff organize and run the Alternative to Suspension (ATS) program, aimed at reducing the number of out of school suspensions and keep youth on track with their academics by providing socio-emotional support, teaching life-skills and sending students home.
- **Home Hospital Program** offers a variety of students an opportunity to continue their education while in transitional situations. The Home/Hospital Program supports students that are referred for medical or mental health reasons, maternity, enrolled by CSE (the district's Committee on Special Education) or awaiting CSE placement, as well as 504/ADA (American Disabilities Act) Supplementary Teaching/Tutoring and long-term suspension. The Home/Hospital Program services students returning to the district and students awaiting placement in residential or day treatment programs.