

CFDA 84.411C Education, Innovation and Research Program – Early Phase

Minnesota Reengagement Centers: Ensuring Education and Employment Success

Absolute Priority 1 & 6:

Supporting High Need Students & Reengagement of Disconnected Youth

ABSTRACT

It is estimated that there are over 12,000 disconnected youth in Minneapolis and St Paul.

Project for Pride in Living, Inc. (PPL), a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering low-income people to become self-reliant, in partnership with the **Minnesota Alliance With Youth**, a nonprofit that leads the **GradMinnesota** statewide initiative with a goal of reaching a 90% graduation rate by 2020, propose a coordinated initiative to reengage disconnected youth ages 14 -24 (including grades 9 -12). The project will set a new precedent in collaboration and include critical stakeholders committed to achieve a common goal: Minneapolis and Saint Paul cities and school districts; Hennepin and Ramsey County; Minneapolis Community and Technical College, St Paul College; state agencies and community based organizations.

The goal of this project is to organize currently disjointed reengagement efforts by establishing 2 Youth Reengagement Centers and a Virtual Reengagement Center.

Long-term objectives include

1. **Increase number of students who re-enroll and make progress** toward an education credential, postsecondary education and/or employment.
2. **Improve accountability of reengagement efforts** by developing a coordinated infrastructure and data system.
3. **Implement a system that can be effectively sustained and replicated** throughout the state and used to establish policy.

Key features of the proposed project will include

- **Targeted services and options** tailored to youth based on developmental, cultural, educational, psychosocial, employment and workforce needs
- Development of a **Virtual Reengagement Center** as a website and an app on mobile devices
- Effective utilization of **best practice components** including outreach strategies, intake procedures, comprehensive assessment, longitudinal data system and ongoing support
- Use of **Early/Middle College model**
- Targeted **Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act** services
- **Incorporation of youth voice** in development and continuous improvement
- **Expert local technical assistance**
- **External evaluation** that incorporates rigorous design and informs implementation

This grant will increase the depth of reform addressing the needs of opportunity youth; build and sustain infrastructure and implementation; replicate and scale up functional procedures and sites.