



Conference Announcement

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and the Pennsylvania Association of Federal Program Coordinators (PAFPC) are pleased to announce that the 2019 Pennsylvania Title I Improving School Performance (ISP) Conference will be held at the Sheraton Station Square in Pittsburgh, PA.

The Conference will begin at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 13th and end at noon on Wednesday, January 16th. Registration will be January 13th from 4:00-7:00 p.m. with conference sessions beginning on Monday, January 14th. The cost of full registration for the conference is \$400.00 and includes continental breakfast each day and lunch on Monday and Tuesday.

Conference Theme: The theme of this year's conference is *Mission Equity: Empowering Students to be Future Ready*. The theme directly reflects the purpose of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015 and the Pennsylvania Department of Education's goals in ensuring that every student has the supports needed to be successful and prepared for college and/or career opportunities. Our expectation is that districts and schools use federal funds to implement programs and practices that are evidence-based and proven effective. Serving as examples of excellence and equity, the 2018 Distinguished Schools will be honored for their achievements and share their successes during the conference.

Goals: Our primary goal is to present the most up-to-date information on Pennsylvania students and schools in order to build the capacity of Pennsylvania educators, as well as provide networking opportunities for conference participants. By providing sessions on effective practices, participants will learn about proven strategies that have made a positive academic impact in schools and districts across the Commonwealth. By focusing on key areas, participants will be provided with fundamental information necessary to meet the continuing challenges facing educators and students in Pennsylvania.

Presenters: For the 2019 PA ISP Conference, presenters will be recruited and accepted from:

- PDE
- Intermediate Units
- Title I distinguished schools
- Schools making significant academic progress with specific subgroups
- Schools implementing creative and effective educational programs
- Schools experiencing great success with parent and family engagement
- Administrators who have implemented and managed rigorous school reform programs
- Administrators who have examples of effective federal programs management and implementation
- Schools that have successfully improved climate and culture
- Schools with demonstrated success in early childhood or preschool programs
- Schools implementing effective science, math, engineering, and technology programs

Conference Strands and Topics: The proposed strands/targets for the 2019 conference will be organized around the general requirements of ESEA with respect to:

- Reading and language arts
- Parent and family engagement
- School reform and improvement
- STEM subjects
- Teacher evaluation and support
- Early childhood
- Federal programs

Call for Session Proposals: The sponsors of this conference encourage the staff of all schools and districts that have improved their performance with respect to one or more of the above strands/targets to consider responding to the conference Request for Proposal (RFP) that is available on the PAFPC website: www.pafpc.org. This invitation is meant for all schools and districts, irrespective of whether improvements have been achieved solely through local initiatives, achieved with the help of external technical assistance groups, and/or achieved through support from specific state and federal programs.

Sessions will be approved by PDE and will include information on session activities, demonstrated success in impacting student academic achievement, data to support changes in achievement, conference targets to be addressed, length of session, audience, presenter information, and session date/time preferences. All session proposals must be submitted by **November 1, 2018**.

Conference Sessions: Over sixty, 90 to 180-minute sessions will be offered during the conference. For educators who have never participated in the conference, the 2018 conference program book is available on the PAFPC website: www.pafpc.org. The program book includes descriptions of the sessions that were presented and reflects that, in general, conference sessions are presented by staff members of schools/districts that have improved performance on one or more of the targets and who are prepared to share:

- Data that demonstrate the improvement(s) made, as well as the data that informed the design for improving performance
- The design itself, as well as experiences in delivering and implementing the design
- The specific changes with respect to other high-leverage educational practices

The program booklet also shows that sessions were collaboratively presented by district/school staff members and by PDE staff, Intermediate Unit staff and/or outside resources persons.

Priorities for 2019 Sessions: The ISP Conference has always had a significant number of sessions on effective school improvement strategies resulting in the improvement of elementary reading achievement. Conference organizers have consistently attempted to increase the number of sessions in elementary mathematics and science and secondary school programs. This year, we again extend targeted and specific invitations to those schools and educators that have made significant improvements in secondary schools. Please consider sharing your successes at the 2019 ISP Conference. We want to be sure to highlight these content areas and grade-levels as they continue to be a high-need within our schools.

Registration: Participants must register online through the PAFPC website: www.pafpc.org. All conference information and registration information will be posted on the PAFPC Title I ISP Conference page.

Assistance Available for ISP Proposal Submissions: The primary purpose of the ISP Conference is to facilitate the sharing of rich information about successful school improvement efforts. To help school/district staff write quality session descriptions for the program booklet, PDE has again asked a consultant to be available by email to help writers understand what session descriptions should include and to provide editorial suggestions on how their proposed session descriptions could be strengthened. As part of the proposal review process, the consultant will provide suggestions on how each description might be strengthened.

To obtain pre-submission help, email: pa.ispconsultant@miu4.org. **Note:** If a school has a concern about meeting the proposal deadline, please email the ISP consultant at: pa.ispconsultant@miu4.org.

The PDE recognizes the costs that districts/schools may incur when presenting a session at the ISP Conference. To help with these expenses, PDE will cover the registration costs of two presenters for each accepted session as well as the cost of two hotel rooms.

PLEASE SHARE THIS INFORMATION with curriculum directors, school principals, lead teachers and other staff involved in school improvement efforts!

