
INFORMATION BULLETIN

~ Teacher Centers ~

Introduction

In 1984 New York State United Teachers successfully lobbied the New York State Legislature to pass Section 316 of the Education Law. For the first time a New York State law established a governing structure that gave teachers control over an important aspect of their professional lives, their professional development. In the ensuing years a network of over 125 teacher centers have provided on-going consistently high quality, cost effective professional development for thousands of educators in our state.

The purpose of this Information Bulletin is to highlight the structure and governance of teacher centers, and to emphasize NYSUT's commitment to teacher centers as an important provider of professional development services. As districts implement new federal and state regulations that impact the professional work of teachers including Professional Development Plans (CR 100.2d), Annual Professional Performance Review (CR 100.2 O), and new mentoring and certification requirements, teacher centers have become more important than ever.

NYSUT celebrates the 20 years of exceptional service to professional development of teachers through the tireless efforts of directors and policy boards across the state.

Guiding Principles

New York State Teacher Centers provide a structure for teachers to take charge of their own professional growth and afford them an opportunity to share with one another the great wealth of expertise they possess. They also promote systemic, on-going, continuous inquiry, reflection and growth for the teachers served by using the following approaches:

- ◆ Application of knowledge of current research in professional development;
- ◆ Use of a variety of strategies for identifying the professional needs of constituents;
- ◆ Aligning of local needs with state initiatives, standards, and assessments;
- ◆ Enabling teachers to participate in collaborative activities;
- ◆ Addressing teachers' needs at different stages of their careers by providing opportunities for reflection and inquiry;
- ◆ Respecting and facilitating the leadership capacities of educators;
- ◆ Focusing on both individual and organizational goals;
- ◆ Supporting investigation of current issues in curriculum, instruction, assessment and application of technology;
- ◆ Building of partnerships with industry, higher education, cultural and community agencies to support the professional needs identified locally; and
- ◆ Job embedded, on-site facilitation of new approaches to instruction.

No. 200304

June 2003

Updated February 2005

New York State United Teachers
Division of Research and Educational Services
800 Troy-Schenectady Road
Latham, NY 12110-2455
800-342-9810 ● (518) 213-6000
Fax: (518) 213-6450

History

Teacher Center History in New York

In the 1970's Al Shanker visited England to learn more about the concept and operation of teacher centers. The idea was successfully promoted by the AFT and NEA and subsequently the federal government developed a competitive grant program for school districts, colleges and universities to develop teacher centers. Those federal regulations established control of the planning and management of the programs with practicing classroom teachers. Approximately 20 teacher centers were established in New York State under the federal funding. In 1980 the federal funding was eliminated and without that funding some centers closed and others operated on a reduced basis using district allocations. In 1984, NYSUT's lobbying efforts were successful in getting a state law passed for the establishment and funding of Teacher Resource and Computer Training Centers (Section 316 of Education Law). In the first year the funding was \$3.5 million to fund 44 teacher centers. Since that time the funding has changed based on state priorities but the state has provided financial support for every year except for 1991-92 when some centers closed and others operated on district and union contributions and fees collected from participants. In 2002-03 state grants of \$31 million supported 126 teacher centers in the state.

A fundamental principle established with the teacher center law is that teachers appointed by the collective bargaining agent serve in the majority on the local governance structure for a center, the policy board.

Statutory Purpose

The purposes and expectations for New York State Teacher Resource and Computer Training Centers are found in Education Law 316 and Commissioner's Regulations (Part 81).

Teacher centers provide on-going professional support services to teachers within the state in order to:

- ◆ Assist educators in assessing and meeting the learning needs of students;
- ◆ Provide computer demonstration and training sites and programs for educators;
- ◆ Promote educators' use of and involvement in educational research to develop and produce curricula and supporting materials;
- ◆ Provide educators with training for the improvement of teaching skills;
- ◆ Provide a location and atmosphere to foster sharing and increased understanding of resources, ideas, methods, approaches, information and materials among educators; and
- ◆ Train educators to prepare students to use technology and to teach the critical thinking and related skills needed for the changing world community.

Structure – Three Different Models in New York State

Each teacher center in New York is uniquely structured to respond to local needs, but they can be generally grouped into three different models:

1. Single School District Teacher Center (serves teachers in one district or BOCES) - A single school district teacher center provides the teachers in one district with professional development opportunities, which are determined by the policy board. The policy board members are all associated with that school district and the teacher members are appointed by the collective bargaining agent. The district is the Local Education Agency (LEA) which receives and disburses the funds as the fiscal agent. Single school district teacher centers

range from a single K-12 building in a small rural community to a large urban school district with many buildings.

2. Consortium Teacher Center model (serves teachers in multiple districts and/or BOCES) - A consortium teacher center provides the teachers in more than one district or BOCES with professional development opportunities, which are determined by the policy board. The participating districts appoint all the policy board members with the teacher members “designated by the collective bargaining agent of the teachers served” by the center. Some consortia use an executive committee and standing committee structure to accomplish their work and communicate with their constituents. One district or BOCES agrees to be the LEA, which receives and disburses funds and serves as the fiduciary agent. The intent of the law is to have the staff members of the teacher center be employees of the LEA. Consortia teacher centers range from two neighboring school districts joining together to large multi-district and multi-BOCES consortia serving thousands of teachers.
3. New York City model (one citywide teacher center with teacher center staff in 325 buildings) - The New York City Teacher Center provides the teachers in all five boroughs with professional development opportunities, which are determined by the policy board. The policy board members represent broad citywide perspectives and the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) appoints the teacher members. The district is the LEA, which receives and disburses the funds as the fiscal agent. In New York City there is one director and one policy board with teacher center staff, paid by the Board of Education, located in 325 buildings and sites. The teacher center director is also the director of the NYC Regional School Support Center and directs a wide variety of other grants, which provide professional development to the teachers in New York City.

Governance – Policy Board

Teacher centers are governed by policy boards composed of the multiple constituencies set forth in Education Law 316. Policy boards:

- ◆ Must include the following constituencies: elementary and secondary teachers, and a Board of Education representative or their designee or BOCES; a representative of an institution of higher education, a parent, and an individual from the business community involved with computers;
- ◆ Members are designated by their respective constituencies;
- ◆ Include a majority of teachers appointed by the teacher collective bargaining agent(s);
- ◆ Establish the mission, goals, and strategic plan for the teacher center within the parameters of Education Law 316;
- ◆ Create policy for the teacher center to respond to the needs of constituents;
- ◆ Recruit, retain and employ personnel necessary to carry out the center’s mission;
- ◆ Provide fiscal oversight to all funds and expenditures to accomplish the purpose of the center;
- ◆ Recommend subcontracting for technical and other kinds of assistance;
- ◆ Ensure that the teacher center fulfills state and local reporting requirements;
- ◆ Operate with a set of adopted bylaws which govern the center and outline the role of the policy board and its relationship to other organizations; and
- ◆ Work in partnership with the Local Education Agency (LEA) to ensure compliance with all legal and fiscal requirements.

Management

Each teacher center is unique in its staffing and management functions depending on need and funding level. Some centers have full time directors, others halftime and others who teach full-time

and fulfill the expectations of the policy board after school and in the evenings. Some centers provide program specialists and assistant directors, and most have some level of clerical support provided by the grant or district. The location of the centers varies across the state, with some teacher centers located in school buildings or BOCES, colleges, storefronts, or commercial rental property. Every teacher center maintains an on-line presence through the NYIT web site <http://www.nyiteez.org/NYteachercenters/>. The State Education Department provides the state level oversight, application and fiscal award process and coordination through the Teacher Center Program Office <http://www.nysed.gov>.

Services

Each teacher center establishes its own mission, goals, and services to meet the needs of the teachers served by that teacher center. The following is a list of activities and services provided collectively by teacher centers across the state. Some centers may choose to offer one or two of these services to meet the priorities of the teachers they serve. This list provides a range of activities that a teacher center generally provides:

- New teacher training and support
- Mentoring for new and experienced teachers
- Mini grants to individuals and groups
- Peer coaching
- Courses for graduate and/or inservice credit
- Technology training
- Curriculum writing
- Parent support activities
- Publications of professional activities, and successful teacher practice
- Support for state-sponsored activities like Peer Review, Assessment Liaisons, Practical Uses of Data
- Support for acquisition of National Board Certification
- Lending libraries
- Educational technology lending libraries
- Professional materials lending libraries
- Reflection opportunities including study groups, collegial circles, professional circles, immersion groups, action research, and examination of student work
- Distance learning and videoconferencing

State Supported Networks

All New York State teacher centers are linked electronically and are urged to be involved with statewide committees and activities, which maximize the sharing of effective professional development activities. These networks and activities include:

- ◆ On-line electronic communication network required by State Education Department (SED) and supported by the New York Institute for Technology (NYIT) (Caucus);
- ◆ Seven regional networks (Long Island, Lower Hudson, Rochester, Southern Tier, Eastern Upstate, Far West and New York City);
- ◆ Five advisory committees (Evaluation and Strategy, Planning, Technology, Higher Education, Public Relations); and
- ◆ Three annual statewide meetings (annual status meeting in October/November, spring retreat in March, summer institute in July).

Collaborations and Partnerships

Collaboration and partnership building is a hallmark of teacher center work. Statewide, teacher centers engage in relationships with local, regional and state agencies, and organizations to support on-going systematic professional development for teachers. Some of the many partnerships include:

- ◆ In partnership with the NYS Education Department and local school districts support for

- Professional Development Plans (PDP) in each district
 - Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) in each district
 - No Child Left Behind Initiative (NCLB)
 - Mentor Teacher Internship program (MTIP)
 - Peer Coaching/peer review process for identification of learning experience outline (LEO)
 - Comprehensive District Educational Planning (CDEP)
 - Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID)
 - Training a variety of statewide initiatives related to data and others
- ◆ In partnership with regional educational networks, collaboration with
 - Special Education Training Resource Centers (SETRC)
 - Bilingual Technical Education Centers (BTEC)
 - Library Systems
 - Regional School Support Centers (RSSC)
 - BOCES and Staff and Curriculum Development Network (SCDN)
 - Head Start
 - Even Start (family literacy)
- ◆ In partnership with NYSUT, collaboration with
 - NYSUT Education and Learning Trust
 - NYSUT Effective Teaching Program (ETP)
 - New NYSUT Member workshops
 - Workshops customized for locals or regional offices
 - Union regional offices, meetings and individual locals workshops and seminars for locals
 - Support for National Board Certification process
 - American Federation of Teachers, Educational Research and Dissemination Program
- ◆ Other partnerships which support teacher professional development
 - Colleges, universities, museums
 - Departments of Social Services (city and county)
 - Youth Bureaus
 - Workforce Investment Board (WIB)
 - Early childhood agencies
 - Chambers of Commerce
 - Technology providers
 - Education Enterprise Zone (EEZ)
 - Regents Review Live/Cable TV and PBS (Public Broadcast System)
 - Business and Industry
 - Professional educational agencies
 - Area Labor Federations (ALF)

Teacher Centers Q & A

1. **What is the relationship between NYSUT and teacher centers?**

NYSUT has been successful in advocating for funding for teacher centers since 1984. NYSUT continues to support teacher centers through:

- A standing statewide committee, the NYSUT Task Force on Teacher Centers, which provides guidance to NYSUT officers, Board of Directors, regional offices and local presidents on teacher center policy and program implementation.
- Direct service from the Education and Learning Trust (ELT) and Effective Teaching Program (ETP) which provides hundreds of courses and workshops as well as customized professional development.
- Direct service from the Office of Research and Educational Services including workshops on certification and standards and assessments and two annual conferences– The Inservice Conference and the Standards and Assessment Conference.
- On-going legislative advocacy from the NYSUT legislative office, including supporting the attendance of teacher center representatives at the Committee of 100.

2. **How is a teacher center different from other educational professional development providers like BOCES, SETRC and RSSC?**

Teacher centers provide professional development for teachers as decided by teachers and often, provided by teachers. Teacher centers may partner with the other providers or may offer similar programs but the critical difference is the determination of the goal and directives and program offerings by the policy board which has a majority of teachers appointed by the teachers' collective bargaining agent. Teacher centers are the only funded program in New York State guaranteed to support teacher professional development exclusively.

3. **What are the funding differences between teacher centers and other professional development providers?**

Teacher centers receive funding from the New York State budget and the funds are administered by the State Education Department. Much of the funding comes from the state in the form of a competitive grant, but it is not the intent for state monies to fully fund a given teacher center. Many in-kind services from the districts to teacher centers include money to subsidize staff salary, secretarial support, space, phone, custodial services, equipment, and administrative assistance. Teacher centers work directly with district professional development plans to coordinate all professional development activities supported by state, federal and foundation funding sources.

4. **Are there fees attached to teacher center services?**

Each teacher center is unique and may have a fee schedule that has been developed by its policy board. Eligibility to participate in teacher center activities or programs is determined by the policy board and may include teachers in non-public schools and administrators, college students, retirees, school support personnel and other groups identified by an individual center. Some centers charge participation fees to supplement grant funds. Centers may jointly sponsor events and, therefore, share the costs. With the advent of the Professional Development Plan (PDP) requirements, including the requirement that the districts provide and pay for opportunities for the teachers' professional development, centers that charge a fee may want to reconsider that position.

5. What is the relationship between the collective bargaining agent and a teacher center?

A teacher center grant application (new or renewal) will not be considered by the State Education Department without the sign off of the local teachers union. Further, the collective bargaining agent is responsible for designating the teachers to serve on the policy board (Section 316, paragraph 6). It is the policy board's responsibility to represent the needs of all teachers. It is important that a system of communication and accountability be established by the local union president(s) for the teacher members of the policy board so that the policies, plans, and activities are communicated clearly between local union leadership and policy board members. A single school district teacher center should have a defined means of communication using the local union executive council. Teacher members of consortia policy boards have a more complex task in communicating with the unions and the teachers of multiple districts they represent. It is critical to keep all the local union leaders included in the communication and decisions of teacher center activities.

6. What is the relationship between the Local Education Agency and the policy board?

The Local Education Agency (LEA) is the applicant and recipient of the teacher center grant – the applicant receives the money. Both the president of the local teachers' bargaining agent(s) and the superintendent must sign off on the application which includes a statement of assurances. By their signatures these parties acknowledge and approve the application document. The signature of the superintendent also serves to attest to the support and approval of the respective board(s) of education. The constitution and bylaws must be drawn within the language of the Education Law that authorizes the teacher center program and defines the policy board in Paragraph 6 of Section 316.

7. For whom does a teacher center director work?

It is the intent of the legislation that a teacher center director be a teacher who is hired by, supervised by, and reports to the policy board, and is considered an employee of the LEA, which is the fiscal agent for the grant. The subtleties of these employment terms are cause for attention for many who have accepted the position of teacher center director and the policy board(s) which employ them.

The original legislation was amended to protect the rights and benefits of any teacher from a component district taking a staff position in a center which is associated with their school district, or who is from a component district of a consortia center (Ed Law 316, paragraph 7a). The center may contract with the employing district for the services of a teacher and reimburse that district for those services. Because of the unique nature of each center, there is not one simple answer to employment questions. The determination of the employment status must be agreed to by the LEA and the teachers union.

Advice to Local Leaders

1. Give careful consideration to the appointments of teachers to the policy board. Choose strong, informed teacher/leaders from your union. Be sure they are aware of the significance of the commitment.
3. Establish a system within your executive committee so one person is the teacher center point person.
4. Encourage regular reports from the policy board members as well as the teacher center director to your members or executive committee.
5. Explicitly connect the goals, programs and services of your teacher center to the Professional Development Plan (PDP) of the district(s) served.
6. Know that your center staff is urged to participate with a network of regional centers.
7. Local presidents may want to bargain additional release days and flexibility to allow for policy board member attendance at teacher center network and SED sponsored meetings.
8. Teacher centers are your teacher-governed resource for getting scientifically-based professional development to your members.
9. Local presidents should be aware of and understand the teacher center grant application and the significance of the signature on the statement of assurances.
10. Local presidents should be aware of the employment status of teacher center staff and protections provided in amendment 7a (of Education Law 316) for teachers who become directors of teacher centers.
11. The position of teacher center director should be, whenever possible, a teacher with skills in professional development and be filled by a teacher from the district or one of the component districts in a consortium.
12. Work with your labor relations specialist to provide bargaining protections to preserve the teacher center and director's position.
13. Work to include language related to the teacher center into your collective bargaining agreement. There is a role for your teacher center in sections related to PDP, APPR, TIP, alternatives to teacher evaluation, teacher quality, mentoring of new teachers, and inservice education options.
14. When hiring a director or teacher center staff member, choose candidates with an understanding of the union connections to teacher centers.
15. Ensure that there is a connection between teacher center activities and the Professional Development Plan. All professional development in the district, including new initiatives under NCLB, should be coordinated through a district's PDP, which is required by state regulation to have a majority of teachers appointed by the union.
16. In a district with its own teacher center (single school district model) the required composition of the policy board is the same as the required PDP team. This could be the same group or different groups with overlapping members. It is also possible to include members of the APPR teams in this oversight group.
17. In a district that is a member of a Consortium teacher center (Consortium model) it is essential that the PDPs from all districts are part of the teacher center plan and services, and that there is regular communication between the teacher center policy board members and the districts' PDP team members.
18. Teacher centers should include in their plans services to school districts or buildings with low achieving students, including schools on the SURR list and those identified as in need of improvement or in need of corrective action under Title I of NCLB.

NYSUT contact information to support teacher centers in New York State

1. NYSUT General Contact Information

Kathleen Graham Kelly
800 Troy-Schenectady Road
Latham, NY 12110-2455
Phone 518-213-6000 or 1-800-342-9810
Fax: 518-213-6450
web site www.nysut.org

2. NYSUT Regional Offices

Your NYSUT regional office is your link to the Labor Relations Specialists in the districts served by your teacher center. They are the voice of NYSUT in working with local presidents, executive board, contract negotiations and in problem solving. (See list on the next page.)

3. Information links to teacher centers as of May 2003

➤ **From NYSUT web site:**

<http://www.nysut.org/links/index.html>

Scroll down to end of links page to find Teacher Centers

- [New York State Teacher Centers](#)
- ProgramEvaluation.org
- [UFT Teacher Center](#)

➤ **From SED web site:**

Application information

<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov:80/funding/teachercentersnewrfp200304.doc> 2003-2004 Teacher Resource and Computer Training Centers New Applicants THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Separate proposals and different submission deadlines for existing, established and new teacher centers.

➤ **From Caucus:**

Teacher Center directory by region, and alphabetical list:
Some parts open to public, some require password, directories accessible.

<http://www.nyiteez.org/NYteachercenters/homepage.htm>

For direct links to NY Education Law 316 and Commissioner's Regulations Part 81
<http://www.nyiteez.org/Nyteachercenters/laws.htm>

REGIONAL OFFICES

NYSUT Headquarters
800 Troy-Schenectady Road
Latham, NY 12110-2455
(518) 213-6000

Capital District Regional Office
800 Troy-Schenectady Road
Latham, NY 12110-2455
(518) 783-7977
Linda Stanczik, Regional Staff
Director

Elmsford Regional Office
570 Taxter Road
Elmsford, NY 10523
(914) 592-4411
Marc Laffer, Regional Staff Director

Mid-Hudson Regional Office
201 Stockade Drive
Kingston, NY 12401-3867
(845) 339-4450
Ann Harrison, Regional Staff Director

Nassau Regional Office
Jericho Atrium
500 N. Broadway - Suite 123
Jericho, NY 11753
(516) 938-4871
Michael Margolis, Regional Staff
Director

New York City Regional Office
52 Broadway, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10004
(212) 533-6567

North Country Regional Office -
Plattsburgh
79 Hammond Lane
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
(518) 561-0150
Sheila Stevens, Regional Staff
Director

North Country Regional Office -
Potsdam
12 Elm Street
Potsdam, NY 13676
(315) 265-2160
Sheila Stevens, Regional Staff
Director

North Country Regional Office -
Watertown
200 Mullin Street
Watertown, NY 13601
(315) 788-0270
Sheila Stevens, Regional Staff
Director

Rochester Regional Office
Union Place
30 North Union St. - Suite 302
Rochester, NY 14607
(585) 454-5550
Tom Gillett, Regional Staff Director

Southern Tier Regional Office - Vestal
305 Vestal Parkway West
Vestal, NY 13850
(607) 786-5742
Brian Laud, Regional Staff Director

Southern Tier Regional Office -
Elmira
100 West Church Street Suite 200
Elmira, NY 14901
(607) 732-1928
Brian Laud, Regional Staff Director

Southwestern NY Regional Office
1 Lockwood Terrace
4th & Cherry Streets
Jamestown, NY 14701
(716) 664-7425
David Eggert, Regional Staff Director

Suffolk Regional Office
330 Vanderbilt Motor Pkwy.
Hauppauge, NY 11788
(631) 273-8822
Dan Bahr, Regional Staff Director

Syracuse Regional Office
4983 Brittonfield Parkway
East Syracuse, NY 13057
(315) 431-4040
Bernie Perry, Regional Staff Director

Utica Regional Office
7 Ellinwood Court
New Hartford, NY 13413-1105
(315) 768-0131
Fred Monaco, Regional Staff Director

Western NY Regional Office
Centerpointe Corporate Park
270 Essjay Road
Williamsville, NY 14221-8276
(716) 634-7132
Michael Preskop, Regional Staff Director

4. NYSUT Education and Learning Trust

This is the place to find out about educational courses and programs including the Effective Teaching Program, graduate courses, inservice courses, FREE new member workshops, and programs for School Support Personnel (SSP).

For questions about NYSUT's Effective Teaching Program, contact NYSUT via e-mail to ELTmail@nysutmail.org, or call 1-800-528-6208 (213-6000 in the Capital District).

5. NYSUT Office of Research and Educational Services

This department in NYSUT provides up to the minute Information Bulletins (IB) and Briefing Bulletins (BB) on current topics, posted on the web site. This department also supports seminars about teacher certification, mentoring, federal and state initiatives and is the hub for the NYSUT subject area committees. This department also conducts NYSUT member surveys on a wide variety of topics.

For specific departmental information refer to the list below:

The general NYSUT contact information is:
800 Troy-Schenectady Road, Latham, NY 12110-2455
800-342-9810, 518-213-6000, Fax: 518-213-6450

National Board Certification contact Stu Horn ext. 6040
Special Education contact Larry Waite ext. 6644
Teacher Certification contact Dave Rothfuss ext. 6651 or Dave Marhafer ext. 6522
Mentor Teacher Intern Programs contact Carolyn Williams ext. 6686
PDP, APPR, Professional Development contact Kathy Graham Kelly ext. 6637
Subject Area Committees contact Elizabeth Sheffer ext. 6642

6. NYSUT Political Action Committees (PAC) and Committee of 100

NYSUT has a strong lobbying presence in Albany through the NYSUT legislative department. NYSUT's goal is to influence policy to improve public education in New York State. Every NYSUT Election District (ED) has a PAC contact. To find out the name of your PAC contact, see your local union president. Please coordinate all teacher center political action with the NYS legislature with your NYSUT PAC and ED Director.

In addition, NYSUT directly influences legislators through the Committee of 100, a semi-annual lobby group effort sponsored by VOTE-COPE funds. In the past, Teacher Centers had separate lobby days, but in 2000 the Committee of 100 was expanded to include two representatives from each teacher center. By inviting and paying for teacher center people to become part of the broader lobby effort, NYSUT is demonstrating the integral role that teacher centers now play in the complex fabric of education in our schools.

New York State Teacher Center Fact Sheet February 2005

Models of Teacher Center and Current Funding

Model of Teacher Centers	Number of Teacher Centers in 2002-03	Funding range
Single School District	78	\$60,000 – \$710,000
Consortium Model	47	\$64,500 – \$1,330,000
New York City Model	1 teacher center with sites at 325 buildings in 5 boroughs	\$11,250,000
Total	126	\$31 million

Summary of State Funding of New York State Teacher Centers 1984-2003

Funding year	Total allocation from legislature and governor's budget	Total number of funded centers
1984-85	\$3.5 million	44
1985-86	\$6 million	57
1986-87	\$10 million	74
1987-88	\$15 million	91
1988-89	\$16 million	99
1989-90	\$17.5 million	103
1990-91	\$21.5 million	111
1991-92	0	0
1992-93	\$10 million	110
1993-94	\$12 million	115
1994-95	\$17 million	118
1995-96	\$12.48 million	117
1996-97	\$15 million	119
1997-98	\$20 million	119
1998-99	\$20 million	119
1999-00	\$20 million	121
2000-01	\$30 million	122
2001-02	\$30 million	125
2002-03	\$31 million	126
2003-04	\$31 million	127
2004-05	\$31 million	127

Laws and Regulations Governing Teacher Centers

Education Law 316 Commissioner's Regulations Part 81

EDUCATION LAW 316

§ 316. Teacher Resource and Computer Training Centers

1. As used in this section, unless another meaning clearly appears from the context:

a. "Teacher resource and computer training center" means any site operated by a school district, board of cooperative educational services or a consortium of school districts and/or boards of cooperative educational services which is specifically established pursuant to this section to provide professional support services to teachers within the state in order to:

- (1) assist teachers, diagnose learning needs, experiment with the use of multiple instructional approaches, assess student outcomes, assess staff development needs and plans, and train other school personnel in effective pedagogical approaches;
- (2) provide demonstration and training sites where teachers are trained, specifically in the use of computers as teaching aids; the criteria for school acquisition and use of computer equipment and software; and the evaluation of computer-related materials;
- (3) develop and produce curricula and curricular materials designed to meet the educational needs of students being served through application of educational research or new or improved methods, practices, and techniques;
- (4) provide training to improve the skills of teachers in order to enable such teachers to meet the special educational needs of the pupils they serve, and to familiarize such teachers with developments in curriculum formulation and educational research, including the manner in which the research can be used to improve teaching skills;
- (5) provide a location where teachers may share resources, ideas, methods and approaches directly related to classroom instruction and become familiar with current teaching materials and products for use in their classrooms; and
- (6) retrain teachers and other educational personnel to become better qualified to teach in subject areas necessary to prepare students for the developing high technology era, in the disciplines of mathematics, science and computer technology.

b. "Site" for the purposes of this section shall mean the location or locations where the curriculum development and training activities of the teacher resource and computer training center take place.

2. In order to provide the school districts and teachers of the state with an opportunity to develop systematic, ongoing in-service training programs, assure the dissemination and application of educational research developments to classroom instruction and develop new curricula and curricular materials specifically designed to meet the educational needs of the students served, the commissioner shall, within available state appropriations and subject to the procedures established in this section, provide funds to school districts and boards of cooperative educational services to plan, establish and operate teacher resource and computer training centers. Any school district or board of cooperative educational services requesting such funds shall make application therefor at such time, in such manner, and containing or accompanied by such information as the commissioner may through this section or by regulation require.

Applications shall be made within the following categories:

- (i) a school district with a teacher population of one thousand or more;
- (ii) a school district with a teacher population of five hundred or more but less than one thousand;
- (iii) a school district with a teacher population of less than five hundred;
- (iv) a board of cooperative educational services; or
- (v) a consortium of two or more school districts and/or boards of cooperative educational services.

3. Each such application shall be reviewed by the state professional standards and practices board for teaching. The board shall in each instance recommend to the commissioner action, as appropriate, including specific reasons when it is negative. Any school district, board of cooperative educational

services or consortium whose original application is rejected may resubmit a revised application for further review. Notwithstanding any other provision to the contrary, an application to continue a teacher resource center which was in operation prior to the nineteen hundred eighty-four--nineteen hundred eighty-five school year shall be deemed automatically approved.

4. The commissioner shall establish criteria and standards by which applications shall be evaluated which shall include provisions for furnishing technical assistance and information provided by the department through the facilities of the proposed teacher resource center, provided, however, that such criteria and standards shall be consistent with federal regulations which were applicable to teacher resource centers in operation during the nineteen hundred eighty-two calendar year.

5. Any school district, board of cooperative educational services or consortium having an application approved under this section may collaborate, consult and contract with an approved institution of higher education in New York state to carry out activities under or provide technical assistance in connection with such application. Each application shall be reviewed by the professional practices subcommittee of the state professional standards and practices board for teaching.

6. Each teacher resource and computer training center shall be operated by a board, the majority of which shall be composed of elementary and secondary school teachers representative of teachers served by the teacher resource and computer training center. Teacher members shall be designated by the collective bargaining agent of the teachers served by the teacher resource and computer training center. Such board shall also include individuals designated by the school board or board of cooperative educational services served by such center and at least one representative designated by the institutions of higher education located in the area served by such center. Such board shall also include at least one parent of an elementary or secondary school pupil and at least one representative of a business or industry that uses, produces or is involved with computer equipment and software.

7. The powers and duties of each teacher resource and computer training center board shall include policy formulation, the employment of staff or consultants, budget control and expenditure of funds to accomplish the purposes of this section, recommendations for subcontracting to secure technical and other kinds of assistance, and any other appropriate managerial or supervisory activities not otherwise prohibited by state or local law or regulations of the commissioner.

7-a. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a teacher resource and computer training center board may collaborate, consult and contract with a school district or board of cooperative educational services which is included in the application for the establishment of such teacher resource and computer training center for the assignment of teachers employed by such school district or board of cooperative educational services; provided, however, in such case such teacher shall continue to accrue all employment rights and benefits, including seniority, with the employing school district or board of cooperative educational services and the teacher resource and computer training center board shall reimburse such school district or board of cooperative educational services for the services of such teacher.

8. Funds provided each school year to school districts and boards of cooperative educational services by the commissioner to plan, establish and operate teacher resource and computer training centers shall not exceed two million dollars per center, except that for the city school district for the city of New York such center shall not exceed eleven million two hundred fifty thousand dollars; and provided further that each approved center shall receive not less than twenty thousand dollars. In any year in which there is a statewide increase in funding for teacher resource and computer training centers, such increase shall be distributed proportionately among existing centers that have satisfactorily fulfilled the requirements of such centers' current grant. A portion of the increase shall be made available to new applicants to establish new teacher centers, and to current teacher centers to develop and implement regional and statewide teacher center activities.

9. Evaluation and annual reports. a. Teacher resource and computer training centers shall provide data annually as prescribed by the commissioner.

b. The commissioner shall prepare and submit to the governor, the temporary president of the senate and the speaker of the assembly, not later than May first, nineteen hundred ninety-nine and by the first day of January in each year thereafter, a report detailing the financial and programmatic information for teacher

resource and computer training centers. Such report shall, at a minimum, set forth with respect to the preceding school year: cost information for individual services provided by such centers; numbers of teachers and other staff served, summarized in the aggregate, by elementary and secondary school levels, and by home school district; lists of programs and courses offered, including identification of those with credit toward college graduate degrees and those which relate to specific academic areas and higher learning standards; and aggregate expenditure data for the following categories: administration, staff development services, rent and other facilities costs, and other services; and such other information as deemed appropriate by the commissioner to assist the commissioner in identifying cost-effective services and programs which may be successfully replicated in other centers, school districts and boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES). The format for the report shall be developed by the commissioner in consultation with school district officials, and teacher resource center officials, provided that all information in such report shall be displayed on both a statewide and individual center basis. Such report shall include changes from the year prior to the report year for each such item for all teacher resource and computer training centers and shall be made available to other interested parties upon request.

c. Funds provided under the teacher resource and computer training centers program may be used to contract with educational organizations for the purpose of conducting a statewide program evaluation. The professional practices subcommittee of the professional standards and practices board shall review and approve grant applications submitted for this purpose.

REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION PART 81

TEACHER RESOURCE AND COMPUTER TRAINING CENTERS

81.1 Application

In order to qualify for State funds pursuant to Education Law section 316, each applicant shall submit in a form prescribed by the commissioner a proposal to plan, establish and operate a teacher resource and computer training center approved by the board of education or board of cooperative educational services submitting the application or by each such board of a consortium submitting the application.

81.2 Criteria

Each application shall reflect the following criteria:

- (a) Compliance with the requirements set forth in Education Law section 316.
- (b) The extent of participation by the center board in the preparation of the application.
- (c) The existence of formally established policies to guide the work of the board in an effective and efficient manner.
- (d) The extent to which activities or planned activities fit one or more of the purposes set forth in subdivision(1)(a) of section 316 of the Education Law.
- (e) The strength of linkages with institutions of higher education and with other cultural and educational institutions with learning technology inservice capacity.
- (f) The adequacy of the qualifications and experience of the staff operating the center.
- (g) The adequacy of the resources and facilities to carry out the propose activities.
- (h) The reasonableness of the proposed cost in relation to the expected outcomes.
- (i) The degree to which the center's activities are coordinated with and support the applicant's annual staff development program.

81.3 Award of Grant

In evaluating the applications submitted pursuant to section 81.1 of this Part, the commissioner may consider the distribution of centers on a regional basis so that access to such centers is available on a wide geographical basis.

Adopted by the Regents April 27, 1984.