

Secretary Betsy DeVos

US Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue SW

Washington, District of Columbia 20202-1510

Dear Secretary DeVos,

I am writing to express my support for a grant application submitted by New Teacher Center, with Boone County Schools *(Gray Middle, Kelly Elementary, North Pointe Elementary, Mann Elementary, Cooper High School, and Longbranch Elementary).*  NTC is submitting an application for the EIR Expansion grant focused on Absolute Priority 1: Strong Evidence, Absolute Priority 2: Scaling evidence-based, field- initiated innovations to improve student achievement, and Absolute Priority 3: Focusing on STEM content. This project will also focus on the teacher development needs of rural districts, an urgent issue.

This grant will allow NTC and partners to provide aligned support for teachers through professional learning communities and instructional coaching focused on inquiry cycles. This coaching support will further their practice and learning of their students. This grant will also support our districts to design a system to ensure capacity is built to sustain these efforts past the grant term. I believe the efforts of NTC around supporting teacher development will increase the number of effective teachers in the district and improve the achievement of our students. I am confident our districts will benefit from:

* NTC’s twenty years of research and evidence demonstrating that aligned and instructionally-focused coaching increases student achievement and accelerates teacher practice
* An increased number of highly trained instructional coaches to support more teachers in schools with high needs students
* Research-based professional development for instructional coaches and school leaders
* An external research study, conducted by SRI International, that will examine the impact of this work on teacher practice and student achievement

At Boone County Schools, we are especially energized by the alignment between our proposal with NTC and the work we are prioritizing to support our educators. This grant would extend our current work and build capacity to provide high-quality, instructionally focused coaching to more teachers annually. The EIR Expansion grant has the potential to impact many high needs rural students who will benefit from having a highly effective teacher. I hope you will give every consideration to this important project.

Thank you for this opportunity to express my support for this critical work.

Sincerely,

Jenny Watson

Assistant Superintendent Learning Support Services

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