



To: Harlem School District #122 Board Members
Dr. Terrell Yarbough, Superintendent
Josh Aurand, Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operations

From: Jacob Hubert, Director of Secondary Education

RE: Secondary Science and HMS School Improvement Grant

Date: 8/25/25

Background for Secondary Science:

Through research and planning, the secondary science departments decided to adopt OpenSciEd as the curriculum resource to support learning in the area of science. OpenSciEd is the only resource aligned to NextGen Science Standards that provide curriculum in grades 6, 7, 8, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics. In each of the areas, it combines the Earth, Life, and Physical Sciences in combination with one another as they occur naturally in the real world, and foundation of the curriculum is to develop the science and engineering skills that truly enable students to explore and understand science.

During the 2024-2025 school year, OpenSciEd was incorporated in 6th and 7th grade science and Biology with coaching support from ROE 17. OpenSciEd incorporates numerous hands-on experiences that develop science and inquiry, and the approach is different from what students and teachers are accustomed to, so the goal for the first year of implementation was to incorporate 2 science units of OpenSciEd. While the approach is initially more challenging for the teachers, the experience for the students in the classroom has been tremendous. The science teachers at the middle school and high school continue to support the implementation, and training was provided this summer for the rest of the science teachers who will be implementing the curriculum this year.

For the 2025-2026 school year, grades 6, 7, and Biology will be incorporating more units of OpenSci Ed, and 8th grade science, Chemistry, and Physics will be aiming to incorporate two units of OpenSciEd.



A Community of Leaders

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Request

I would like to formally request approval for a partnership with ROE 17 to support 7 days of coaching and 1.5 days of planning to work with the middle school and high school science departments to support the continued implementation of OpenSciEd at a cost of \$6,400.

Funding

Title II \$6,400

Background for IL MTSS Network:

In 2023, Harlem Middle School received a comprehensive designation from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). One of the requirements of the School Improvement Grant Title Funds based on Harlem Middle School's status is to work with an Illinois Approved Learning Partner. During the 2024-2025 school year, Harlem Middle School worked with the IL MTSS Network to analyze the current Multi-Tiered System of Supports and develop a plan to better identify and address students' needs in the area of literacy and math.

MTSS is a systemic approach designed to identify students in need of support early, match students with appropriate strategies to support their needs, focus on the whole child, including academic, social-emotional, and behavioral growth. The Middle School Improvement Team would like to continue to work with the Illinois MTSS Network for the 2025-2026 school year.

The IL MTSS Network is known for its expertise in providing professional development and support to schools, helping them implement research-based MTSS procedures effectively.

Request:

I would like to formally request the plan outlined in the attached proposal for Harlem Middle School to partner with the IL MTSS Network at a cost of \$16,116.

Funding Source: School Improvement Grant Funds - \$16,116.

Background for UPchieve:

One area Harlem Middle School would like to better support middle school students with is the availability of access to support. Harlem Middle School students are involved in numerous extracurricular activities in and outside of school, and many Harlem Middle School students have other family obligations that take away from their opportunity to access support directly before or after school.

UPchieve is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that aims to provide tutoring to low-income students. The trained and certified tutors are available 24/7 through the app, and students are able to connect with the tutors in core subjects for grades 6 - 12 within five minutes. Through partnerships with schools, UPchieve is able to serve all students and provide the following partner benefits:

- in-person presentation for students and parents, and live professional sessions for teachers and counselors.
- A student insights dashboard to see who is using UPchieve, when they use it, and what subjects they're getting help in.
- Teacher accounts to create classes, view students' usage, and assign tutoring to students.
- Reports to satisfy district and state reporting requirements related to providing students with academic support.

Once the school improvement grant funds are no longer available, students from families who qualify for free or reduced fees will still be able to use UPchieve at no cost.

Request:

I would like to formally request the approval of a partnership with UPchieve at a cost of \$10,000 for the 2025-2026 school year.

Funding Source: School Improvement Grant Funds - \$10,000