

Coventry's FMS looks for grant

\$100,000 grant would help school environment

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COVENTRY — Alan Shawn Feinstein Middle School Principal Dr. Arthur Lisi is among the school district officials who have applied for the Gates Foundation Grant, worth \$100,000 in an effort to continue to provide innovative programs to the students.

Lisi, along with Coventry High School Principal Mike Hobin and Coventry School Superintendent Mike Almeida applied to be a part of the Strengthening Proficiency Based Graduation Institute, sponsored by RI Dept of Education and the Center for Collaborative Education.

“I wanted to be involved in this year-long program as it gave Feinstein Middle School and Coventry High School an opportunity to work together to examine the kinds of assessments we give our students and help us to develop quality performance assessments,” Lisi said

The grant targeted at personalizing the learning environment for students (differentiated learning instruction, technology, advisory, virtual learning, alternative pathways to graduation and more)

One aspect that makes this grant different than some others available is that this is in three phases; planning, implementation and evaluation.

At the Institute’s training in October, RIDE staff asked several schools in attendance if they would help the League of Innovative Schools

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Grant improves learning environment

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in their application for Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's "Next Generation Systems" grant.

The League, part of the New England Secondary Schools Consortium, was one of 20 groups/associations in the country asked to submit on behalf of member schools like the middle and high schools in Coventry.

Lisi explained that like the high school, ASFMS would be in a position to receive funds to further personalize the

learning community, provide coaching, and use additional resources to develop and support systemic programs to support student learning.

"Once the League gets the funding, Coventry schools would be eligible to receive direct funding based on need and more importantly, our ability to act in a timely manner to move on the expected work," Lisi explained.

Because the grant and its possibilities align to the District's Strategic Plan, it is a win-win for the entire school district.

The criteria to apply for the grant is fairly straightforward.

The funding is given to the League of Innovative Schools; in turn, the League provides funds to those schools that show a strong willingness to move quickly to capitalize on the funding to best support student learning and growth.

The principal explained there are a myriad of RIDE requirements that schools and districts have had to meet.

Some of these funds could certainly be used to strengthen existing systems such as data analysis, advisory, Response to

Intervention programming, and math and literacy interventions.

"As we adopt more ways to help struggling students and enrich the learning for others, there is an increasing need for technological resources to support this differentiated learning, as well as embrace Common Core standards in every classroom and begin preparation for the PARCC, the new state assessment program," he said.

The district should be notified by January if they've been awarded.