



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Acting Commissioner

April 11, 2011

TO: Chief School Administrators
Charter School Lead Persons
Middle School Principals

FROM: Marie Barry, Director
Office of Career and Technical Education

SUBJECT: New Jersey Schools to Watch

I am pleased to announce that the New Jersey Department of Education will host three half-day regional information sessions for the New Jersey Schools to Watch[®] (NJSTW) program. NJSTW is a partnership between the department, New Jersey Middle School Association, New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, New Jersey Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and the Garden State Partnership for Teacher Quality, which includes Kean, Rowan and William Paterson Universities. New Jersey is one of 19 states using the Schools to Watch[®] framework for middle grades improvement. This national program is designed to help schools take a critical look at the needs of middle level students, defined as students in grades 6, 7, and/or 8. The school does not have to be organized as a middle school in order to participate. This research-based program seeks schools that are continuously improving student achievement. It requires schools to engage in significant reflection about how they operate, the vision for their work, and the outcomes of programs and services. Schools that meet specific criteria become part of a state and national network designed to share promising practices and success stories.

These sessions will provide information about the program and online application process for becoming a New Jersey School to Watch. Applications for the NJSTW program are due on October 14, 2011.

I encourage you to visit the website (<http://www.nj.gov/education/dsis/stw/>), review the application materials and learn more about the program. All participating schools receive technical assistance and become part of the New Jersey Schools to Watch Professional Development Program (NJSTW-PDP). This is a wonderful opportunity to conduct a self-assessment, develop new goals for your school, and learn from other middle level leaders.

The sessions will be held at the following locations:

- May 23, 2011** 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Rowan University, Glassboro
May 24, 2011 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. PSE&G Training and Development Center, Edison
May 25, 2011 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. William Paterson University, Wayne

To register for one of these sessions, please go to <http://education.state.nj.us/events/>. **You must register as space is limited.**

Additional information, including the Principal's Checklist, the NJSTW Application, the NJSTW Self-Study and Rating Rubric, and a Power Point presentation that provides information about the national Schools to Watch program, can be found on the department's website at <http://www.nj.gov/education/dsis/stw/hpmgs.htm>.

For more information on NJSTW, please contact David McNair, program coordinator, Office of Career and Technical Education at NJSTWapps@doe.state.nj.us or via phone at (609) 777-3578. Thank you for your commitment to middle level education.

MB/dm/S:/David M/STW/2011 memo to field

- c: Members, State Board of Education
Christopher Cerf, Acting Commissioner
Senior Staff
Executive County Superintendents
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group