



Somerville Public Schools

Education • Inspiration • Excellence

Mary E. Skipper, *Superintendent*

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Sam Catherine, Johnston, Ed.D.
Jess Gropen, Ph.D.
CAST
40 Harvard Mills Square, Suite 3
Wakefield, MA 01880

Dear Drs. Johnston and Gropen:

Somerville Public Schools is pleased to offer its commitment to participate in the project you are proposing to the National Science Foundation: “*Exploring the Impact of a Peer Tutor Teacher Exchange (APTTE) on Minority Students in High School Mathematics.*” The proposed project aligns with our school and district mathematics achievement goals and I am pleased to offer our commitment to the project should it be funded. I understand that you will be partnered with Dr. Adrian B. Mims Sr. of The Calculus Project to develop and evaluate an intervention that includes a web-based peer tutoring environment to support high school minority peer tutors and teachers in ninth grade math classes.

The proposed project builds on the success of The Calculus Project and will support teachers in developing practices that support minority students achievement and engagement in mathematics, while also building the leadership and teaching skills of the peer tutors. I am confident that the APTTE platform, as proposed, will fill a pressing need for our minority students and has the potential to expand the pipeline of minority students who pursue teaching and other mathematics-related pathways beyond high school.

Our district has worked with Dr. Mims for the past two years implementing The Calculus Project at our six elementary schools (K-8) and high school. Since the implementation of the program, we have observed students become more engaged and confident with mathematics. More importantly, our data indicate that students who participated in The Calculus Project have a 61 percent student-growth percentile on the state test (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System—MCAS).

We will actively support CAST and The Calculus Project in identifying and recruiting high school teachers for this project. I understand that our work will include participation in the co-design and pilot testing of the APTE intervention, which will take place mainly in the second two years of the project (2021-2022). Pilot testing may include participation in focus group interviews with students and teachers, classroom observations, surveys, the collection of tool usage data. Further, we will support the participation of APTTE teacher and peer tutors in professional learning. We understand that our participating teachers will receive stipends, and that we will cover the costs for substitute teachers.

I wish you success in securing funding for this exciting initiative, and appreciate your support of Somerville Public Schools students.

Sincerely

Mary E. Skipper
Superintendent of Schools