



# OLR RESEARCH REPORT

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## STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CONSULTANTS

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You asked for information about education consultants either currently or recently under contract with (1) the state Education Department (SDE) or (2) another entity on behalf of SDE. You also asked for a description of the consultants' contractual duties.

Table 1 provides, in roughly chronological order, brief descriptions of the consultants and their duties. Some consultant fee information was not immediately available, and we will update this report when it is.

As Table 1 shows, there are three different avenues through which SDE engages consultants: (1) contracts with SDE, some of which also have the State Education Resource Center (SERC) as a party to the contract; (2) contracts granted by third parties that SDE chooses to be the contracting agent on SDE's behalf; and (3) programmatic involvement when SDE and the State Board of Education approve an application for a commissioner's network school or a new charter school that involves a consultant.

**Table 1: Education Consultants and Their Work for SDE**

<b>Consultant</b>	<b>Description &amp; Website</b>	<b>Work or Services for SDE</b>	<b>Fee</b>
Education First, Inc., Seattle, WA	<p>“We are mission-driven strategy and policy consulting firm with unique and deep expertise in education improvement and reform issues.”</p> <p><a href="http://www.education-first.com/">http://www.education-first.com/</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assisted the state in developing and implementing the new teacher evaluation system</li> <li>Helped facilitate the activities of the Performance Evaluation Advisory Council (PEAC), the group charged with developing a new teacher evaluation system</li> <li>Met with teacher evaluation stakeholders, including teachers unions</li> <li>Helped draft human capital legislation that builds on the new evaluation system; (evaluation development, stakeholders meetings, and legislation drafting done working closely with Leeds Global)</li> </ul> <p>Contract period: December 2011 to January 2012, although work went beyond this period (SERC was also a party to this contract)*</p>	\$93,891*
Leeds Global Partners, New York City	<p>“Educational services and advisory firm that delivers sustainable policy and programmatic solutions to improve organizational effectiveness and raise student achievement.”</p> <p><a href="http://www.leadsequity.com/">http://www.leadsequity.com/</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assisted with the launch of the new education commissioner’s administration during his initial period</li> <li>Assisted with efforts to reorganize the State Department of Education (SDE)</li> <li>Provided strategic planning, and policy research, development, and planning</li> <li>Assisted with development of legislative strategy and package, including engaging key stakeholders</li> <li>Provided recommendations on innovative collective bargaining agreements to be used in low-performing schools and districts</li> </ul> <p>Period: January 12, 1012 to March 31,2012 (SERC was also a party to this contract)</p>	195,000*
DSA Capital, New Jersey	<p>“Offers business owners several financial solutions to help with funding and increasing sales and profits while keeping expenditures at a minimum.”</p> <p><a href="http://www.dsacapitalgroup.com/">http://www.dsacapitalgroup.com/</a></p>	<p>Assisted SDE in reviewing qualifications and experience of other consultants (including Leeds and Education First) before SDE selected them. SDE did not have a contract with DSA, but it is included on this table because DAS provided SDE with services for a fee paid for by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)**</p> <p>Period: December 2011-January 2012</p>	60,000 paid for by CCSSO**

**Table 1 (continued)**

<b>Consultant</b>	<b>Description &amp; Website</b>	<b>Work or Services for SDE</b>	<b>Fee</b>
New Leaders, *** New York City	<p>“New Leaders develops talented educators into transformational leaders who can drive great teaching and high academic achievement across whole schools.”</p> <p><a href="http://www.newleaders.org/">http://www.newleaders.org/</a></p>	<p>Assisted the state in developing and implementing the new administrator evaluation system</p> <p>Period: January to June 2012</p>	50,000
Ranjana Reddy	<p>Former charter school teacher in New Jersey and recent Yale University law school graduate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepared the state’s application to the federal Department of Education for a waiver of the No Child Left Behind Act requirements</li> <li>• Prepared new performance accountability measures the state agreed to meet in order to be granted the waiver</li> </ul> <p>Period: January 2012 – August 2012 (SERC was also a party to this contract)</p>	41,461
My Learning Plan, Great River, NY	<p>“Leading provider of web-based educator evaluation and professional learning data management solutions used by K-12 school districts throughout the United States and around the world.”</p> <p><a href="http://www.mylearningplan.com/">http://www.mylearningplan.com/</a></p>	<p>Data management system for teacher evaluation pilot program, contract awarded through EastCONN on behalf of SDE</p> <p>Period: 2012-13 school year</p>	300,000
Bloomboard, Palo Alto, CA	<p>“Using technology to take the principles of differentiated instruction for students and applying them to teacher” evaluation, development and support.</p> <p><a href="http://www.bloomboard.com/">http://www.bloomboard.com/</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data management system for teacher evaluation</li> <li>• Provides teachers, for a fee, with access to professional learning and development directly tied to evaluation results</li> <li>• contract awarded through Connecticut Association of Schools on behalf of SDE</li> </ul> <p>Period: 2013-14 school year and access to the data system will be ongoing beyond this school year</p>	1.2 million

**Table 1 (continued)**

<b>Consultant</b>	<b>Description &amp; Website</b>	<b>Work or Services for SDE</b>	<b>Fee</b>
<p>New Leaders, *** New York City</p> <p>Center for Collaborative Change, Newark, N.J.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See above</li> <li>A Newark, N.J. focused community agency that "connects people, ideas, and resources to Newark's most pressing needs." <a href="http://newarkchange.org/">http://newarkchange.org/</a></li> </ul>	<p>These two consultants are currently collaborating on developing a leadership development program with UConn Neag School of Education and the Connecticut Association of Schools</p> <p>Period: The consultants are collaborating on the project for 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years</p>	<p>Fee amounts not available</p>
<p>Education Trust, Washington, DC</p>	<p>"Promotes high academic achievement for all students at all levels. . . . Our goal is to close the gaps in opportunity and achievement that consign far too many young people . . . to lives on the margins of the American mainstream." <a href="http://www.edtrust.org/">http://www.edtrust.org/</a></p>	<p>Providing leader identification system for principals and other leaders</p>	<p>Fee amount not available</p>
<p>Our Piece of the Pie, Inc. Hartford</p>	<p>Hartford-based youth development agency with experience working with Hartford and Bloomfield school districts  <a href="http://www.opp.org/index.html">http://www.opp.org/index.html</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assisting in a program focused on helping over-age, under-credited students 18-24 in Briggs High School in Norwalk graduate college-and-career ready from high school; the effort will be funded through the commissioner's network of schools (starting with 2013-14 school year and ongoing after that)</li> <li>Starting a new charter school, Path Academy, in Windham for over-aged and under credited students (granted approval as charter management organization in spring 2013; school to open in 2014)</li> </ul>	<p>Funding through the commissioner's network for Norwalk and through the state's existing charter school grants for Windham</p>
<p>*Education First and Leeds each have unresolved claims pending with the Claims Commissioner seeking additional payments from SDE for their services. An earlier dispute over payments between SDE and Education First, Leeds, and New Leaders was resolved through a stipulated agreement dated April 3, 2013.</p> <p>**The Council of Chief State School Officers is an association of education department heads that provides various services to its members, including assistance with new commissioners beginning their tenure. It receives state and federal funding.</p> <p>***New Leaders appears twice in the table because it performed services under two different agreements.</p>			