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**YOUNGSTOWN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
ACADEMIC DISTRESS COMMISSION**

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March 16, 2012

Mr. Stan Heffner
State Superintendent of Instruction

via E-Mail

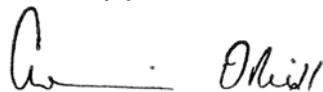
Attached please find the March 15, 2012 Update of the Youngstown Academic Recovery Plan that includes the Community Engagement Strategy that you previously approved. The update highlights the need for on-grade level instruction in all grades. Further, it requires that the district cooperate with the SST and the SIG grant monitors and requires financial planning and collaboration between the Treasurer and the Superintendent.

It is the intent of the Youngstown Academic Distress Commission to monitor the plan at its monthly meetings with the help of the State Support Team preK-8. Currently this is possible because the Department of Education has SIG grants monitoring happening in all high schools that have consistently performed at the lowest rating levels and the timing of this update is in the final quarter of the school year concurrent with OGT testing and shortly before the grade 3-8 annual testing period.

The September 2012 meeting of the Academic Distress Commission will be devoted to an in-depth examination of the 2011-2012 accountability results. The content of the required annual update and re-examination of the monitoring question will be discussed at that meeting. This plan update does not include an in-depth review of special education or retentions but those issues will be addressed at the September 2012 meeting.

We have a few suggestions as a result of our work since November 2011. There is a bottleneck that could be avoided if a slightly different process happened when an Academic Distress Commission was appointed. If the law permitted, a paid audit team with an experienced and outstanding superintendent, treasurer, principal, curriculum coordinator and special education director would be simultaneously appointed by the Ohio Department of Education. Members of this team would visit every classroom in every school and would make recommendations to the Academic Distress Commission for the first Academic Recovery Plan. Then a paid on-the-ground monitor would be appointed to keep the ADC updated with regard to implementation of the plan. This person would also be the author of the required annual update to be reviewed by the Academic Distress Commission. Ideally an annual audit would be part of the update process or perhaps greater use could be made of the Diagnostic Review Teams.

Sincerely yours,



Adrienne O'Neill, Ed.D.
Chair, Youngstown Academic Distress Commission