

## Reducing the Achievement Gap

### Macalester's Center for School Change a Partner in Implementing a \$3M Federal Grant to Reduce the Achievement Gap

Macalester College's Center for School Change is one of the key partners in a new, five-year, \$3 million federally-funded project designed to help produce significant improvements in several St. Paul district and charter public schools.

The project, *Turnaround Saint Paul*, is a replicable public/charter school leadership model to improve educational attainment for over 2,000 students in St. Paul.

"*Turnaround Saint Paul* is historic," according to Center for School Change Director Joe Nathan, "because it's the first time St. Paul district and charter public schools have collaborated on a grant proposal since the charter public school movement started in St. Paul in 1992."

The St. Paul Public Schools served as the lead organization on the proposal and received the grant. Other *Turnaround Saint Paul* partners include the Target Corporation, the Travelers Corporation, the Minnesota Business Partnership and the University of Minnesota.

Nathan was part of a team of educational leadership professionals who created an integrated system of supports and improvement efforts to increase high school graduation rates and reduce achievement gaps. Nathan's ideas that were in the proposal were designed to help strengthen the quality of school leaders, increase family involvement in schools, and build more effective partnerships with community organizations.

Between 2000 and 2006, with help from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Center for School Change worked with the Cincinnati Public Schools to increase overall high school graduation rates by almost 30 points and eliminate the high school graduation gap between white and African American students.

"We'll use a number of lessons learned in Cincinnati here in St. Paul," said Nathan. "But there is not single 'silver bullet.' We're including a number of research-based approaches with this project."

The Center for School Change works simultaneously at the school, community and policy levels. Its work around the country includes assistance to both district and charter public schools. More than 20 years old, the Center joined Macalester in January 2010.

September 1 2010

- [About Macalester \(http://www.macalester.edu/about/\)](http://www.macalester.edu/about/)
- [Academics \(http://www.macalester.edu/academics/\)](http://www.macalester.edu/academics/)
- [Admissions & Financial Aid \(http://www.macalester.edu/admissions/\)](http://www.macalester.edu/admissions/)
- [Life at Mac \(http://www.macalester.edu/lifeatmac/\)](http://www.macalester.edu/lifeatmac/)
- [Support Mac \(http://www.macalester.edu/supportmac/\)](http://www.macalester.edu/supportmac/)