



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: December 13, 2023

To: Local Educational Agency Leads, Administrators of Approved Private Schools for Students with Disabilities, Non-public School Supervisors

Route To: Business Administrators, Principals, School Safety Specialists, School Administration, School Social Workers, School Psychologists, School Faculty

From: Christopher Irving, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner
Division of Field Support and Services

2024 Invent2Prevent Opportunity: Student-Led, Peer-Developed Initiative to Prevent Targeted School Violence

New Jersey high schools are once again invited to participate in a free school safety and prevention program sponsored by the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) starting January 2024.

[Invent2Prevent](#), now in its third year, is offered to both high schools and universities in the United States, challenging students in a class or student organization to create and implement peer-developed initiatives, products, and tools to prevent targeted violence and hate in ways that will be most effective in schools and communities. Each school receives a \$1,000 budget to implement the Invent2Prevent project. These experiential projects are developed by youth for youth and are designed to be creative and effective. Since its launch in 2021, over 1,100 students have participated in the program at both the high school and college level.

The program is free of charge and sponsored by the DHS Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships. Invent2Prevent is managed by [EdVenture Partners](#) and the [McCain Institute](#), who work with students throughout the project period in a guiding, mentoring, and coaching capacity. Five students, faculty, and a chaperone from each of the top three high school teams are awarded an all-expense trip to Washington, D.C. to present to DHS leadership and compete for \$9,000 in prize money. Graduating seniors are also eligible to apply for scholarship money.

Thirty-five spots will be made available to high schools for the spring 2024 academic period on a first-come, first-served basis.

The New Jersey Department of Education would also like to recognize Glassboro High School in Glassboro, Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy in Elizabeth, and Passaic County Technical Vocational Schools in Wayne, which swept the podium with 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place finishes, respectively, at the Invent2Prevent [Final Presentation and Competition](#) on June 28, 2023 in Washington, D.C.

For more information or interest in participating, please contact Tony Sgro, Chief Executive Officer of EdVenture Partners, at tony@edventurepartners.com or (415) 264-7666.

c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group