

Harrison School District Two Recognizing Engagement in the Advancement of Learning

The Harrison School District Two (HSD2) in Colorado's Pike's Peak region is working with a new superintendent and a new curriculum department and is supported by a new school board to institute education reform focused on improving instructional practices and raising student achievement. It is in this environment that HSD2's Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant is being implemented. The HSD2 R.E.A.L. performance-based incentive plan provides incentives in three areas: (1) differentiated compensation based on student achievement gains, which includes recruitment and retention incentives for effective educators working in high-need areas; (2) teacher advancement through professional development, which focuses on the teaching of math and reading, as well as other areas where HSD2 is not making adequate yearly progress (AYP); and (3) high-need and hard-to-staff positions in math and science and other special programs.

Needs Assessment Results and General Information

HSD2 consists of 25 schools (K-12) that enroll 11,167 students. Twenty-one percent of the district is below the poverty line, which is twice the percentage of the local region (Pike's Peak). Nearly two-thirds of the students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. HSD2 has been on state academic watch for 3 years, has not made AYP for 5 years, and has now been moved to Corrective Action Notice by the state education department. HSD2 has a larger minority population than the surrounding county: 34 percent are white; 24 percent are black; 35 percent are Hispanic; 5 percent are Asian; and 2 percent are Native American.

Background

The district has begun to stop declines in achievement and is beginning to move student proficiency in a positive direction. However, it still lags behind comparable

districts in the state. The need for reform is well understood, and HSD2 is committed to sustaining reform by developing organizational leadership, investing in professional development, and focusing on recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers and support staff.

Incentives

The district has created a criterion ("Real AYP") that measures actual student achievement against the expectation that a year's progression will maintain a student's grade-relative proficiency. Against this criterion, teachers whose students realize an average 1-1/3 years' growth will obtain a \$2,000 bonus. Teachers whose students obtain 1-1/4 years' growth receive a \$1,000 bonus. In cases where team teaching can be identified as effective, larger, shared bonuses will be given; the actual distribution is to be determined by the school principal. The more highly effective teachers would receive additional yearly bonuses after 4 years

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| LOCATION(S) | El Paso, Colorado |
| GRANT AMOUNT | Year 1: \$1,170,393 5-year total: \$3,751,039 |
| DURATION | 5 years |
| AWARD DATE | June 2007 |
| PARTNERS | None |

