

# Miami-Dade County Public Schools Project RISE

*The objective of Project RISE – Rewards and Incentives for School Educators – is to champion teachers in high-need schools and encourage them to seek National Board Certification. Incentives will be available for Project RISE teachers for delivering high-quality instruction and professional development tailored to the schools needs. Incentives will also be available to administrators at the selected high-need schools. RISE schools will receive incentive funds for mini-grants, participation in action research, and conference attendance.*

## Needs Assessment Results and General Information

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), the fourth largest school district in the nation, serves approximately 350,000 students in a geographic region that encompasses 2,000 square miles. Ninety percent of the student body is minority, with 62 percent Hispanic, 26 percent black, 9 percent white, and 3 percent other. More than 50 percent of Miami-Dade's residents are foreign born; 68 percent of the population speaks a language other than English at home; and 15 percent of M-DCPS students are classified as limited English proficient.

## Background

The goal of Project RISE is to increase student achievement by implementing an innovative pilot program designed to support the development of highly effective teachers and administrators in high-need schools. A total of 287 pre-K-12 schools meet the definition of high need.

M-DCPS and the state of Florida already have performance-based compensation systems in place, both of which are based primarily on increases in student achievement.

RISE is designed to provide struggling schools with additional incentives, resources, and tools necessary to boost student achievement and enable these schools to reach the performance benchmarks necessary to obtain district and state incentives. The project will help teachers and administrators qualify for existing incentives and introduce a new system of sustainable performance-based incentives aimed at low-performing high-need schools.

A minimum of 36 high-need elementary and secondary schools will participate in RISE. The project will begin with 12 schools in year 1, and 12 additional schools will be added at the beginning of year 2 and year 3. Participating schools will have the services of up to two Nationally Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs). NBCTs will model best practices in their own classrooms and extend their expertise to other teachers, individuals, small groups, and/or the entire faculty. NBCTs will have released time for professional development, coaching, and modeling in the classroom. The NBCTs will provide a minimum of four professional development workshops on effective teaching strategies each year. Principals will be mentored by highly

<b>LOCATION(S)</b>	Miami-Dade County, Florida
<b>GRANT AMOUNT</b>	Year 1: \$2,691,841    Year 2: \$3,761,377    5-year total: \$18,312,808
<b>DURATION</b>	5 years
<b>AWARD DATE</b>	June 2007
<b>PARTNERS</b>	Center for Evaluation and Education Policy, Indiana University

qualified, retired school leaders. Leadership teams from each school will attend 1-week leadership development programs during the summer.

## Incentives

NBCTs who volunteer to teach at high needs schools and serve as Project RISE teacher leaders in those schools receive a stipend of \$3,000 per year. In addition, RISE NBCTs deliver staff development aligned to their schools' improvement plan, for which they receive a yearly stipend of \$2,500. Principals whose schools improve the student achievement measures on their School Incentive Scorecard by 10 percent receive an award of \$1,000, and assistant principals receive \$800. In November 2008, six principals and seventeen assistant principals from the first cohort of Project RISE schools (12 schools) received the incentive payments based on their school's improvement during 2007-2008.

## Evaluation

The Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) at Indiana University will evaluate Project RISE. The evaluation plan includes assessing measurable participant and organizational outcomes as well as the quality and delivery of project activities. Information gathered from this ongoing monitoring process will then serve as the basis of a formative evaluation (or planning tool) on which continual program improvements can be based. The evaluation will also include a summative evaluation.

## Resources

Matching funds will include salary and fringes for the NBCTs and grant personnel, released time, professional/technical support, and incentives (including business and community support). By the fifth year, M-DCPS will cover 75 percent of the costs of the differentiated compensation costs. Once the grant cycle has concluded, the incentive portion will be sustained through initiatives with community partnerships.

## Data Systems

Through the Office of Information Technology Services, the district maintains and continues to refine a sophisticated data warehouse environment that would be available to fulfill the needs of Project RISE. No additional capacity is needed. The warehouse uses software tools to manage all district-wide data. The data warehouse stores all historical and student information, including, but not limited to, demographics, attendance, and student achievement tests scores.

## Year 1 Activities

Due to the relatively late start, recruitment and placement of the NBCTs took place after the beginning of the school year. Despite the challenges noted above, teachers were recruited and selected for Project RISE positions for all of the schools in Cohort 1. Project RISE staff provided support and guidance to school administrators and NBCTs in implementation of project activities. The Project RISE NBCTs provided school-specific professional development and support to colleagues. Notably, of the Cohort 1 schools, 75 percent increased by at least one letter grade on the Florida A++ Education Plan school grading scale.

## Outlook for Year 2

A second cohort of high-need schools and NBCTs will be added to Project RISE in Year 2. The incoming cohort of schools will receive the same rigorous support provided to schools in Cohort 1, including systems of mentoring, embedded professional development, and non-instructional released time. Cohort 1 schools, now in their second year, will receive support in the implementation of strategies developed as a result of participation in the summer executive leadership institutes. All Project RISE schools will receive support in the implementation of the Classroom Instruction That Works (CITW) model and in the creation or expansion of professional learning communities.