

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 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 more than 361,000 students in a geographic region that encompasses 2,000 square miles. Ninety percent of the student body is minority, with 60 percent Hispanic, 28 percent black, 10 percent white, and 2 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 16 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 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 qualified, retired school

LOCATION(S)	Miami-Dade County, Florida
GRANT AMOUNT	Year 1: \$2,691,841 5-year total: \$18,312,808
DURATION	5 years
PARTNERS	Center for Evaluation and Education Policy, Indiana University

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

Incentives

NBCTs who volunteer to teach at high-need schools will receive an additional \$3,000 per year. In addition, RISE NBCTs will deliver professional development for which they will receive a yearly stipend of \$2,500. Principals whose schools improve by 10 percent on the “Achievement of Measures” section of their School Incentive Scorecard will receive an award of \$1,000, and assistant principals will receive \$800.

Incentive funds awarded to RISE schools will be used to reward teachers for successful in-house mini-grant proposals, action research, and innovative strategies which have resulted in an increase in student achievement.

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.