

National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, Project SUPPORT

In partnership with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET), the Lake County School District teacher incentive program, Schools Under Performance Pay Offer Remarkable Teaching (SUPPORT), focuses on increasing teacher effectiveness, student achievement, and teacher retention and recruitment by providing multiple career paths, ongoing applied professional growth, instructional accountability, and performance-based compensation for teachers and principals. SUPPORT will also implement a performance-based compensation program for principals that includes professional development.

Needs Assessment Results and General Information

The Lake County School District needs hundreds of new teachers each year because of rapid increases in population and high teacher attrition rates. Lake County, located in proximity to Orlando, is the 22nd fastest growing county in the United States. The county has experienced a 20 percent increase in population since the 2000 Census, with some areas experiencing an 89 percent increase. More than 1,600 new children joined the rolls of Lake County Schools in August 2006, for a total enrollment of 39,350 in its 39 schools. Lake County has struggled to attract and retain teachers because teacher compensation in the county is lower than in neighboring school districts. Lake County expects that 12 of its 39 schools will fall under corrective action sanctions within the next 3 years.

Background

The Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), which has been implemented in Lake County's Gray Middle School since 2006, is a research-based performance pay and accountability system that is combined with

professional development. The program is currently being implemented in about 200 schools nationally. TAP consists of four main elements: performance-based compensation, instructionally focused accountability, ongoing applied professional growth, and multiple career paths. Multiple career paths are structured to enable instructional leadership to be shared and distributed among the principals, mentors, and lead teachers. Mentors and lead teachers will provide evaluation, professional development, and instructional support for career teachers. Lake County will use TAP to meet the goals of Project SUPPORT.

NIET will work with Lake County Schools to develop and implement the Leadership Effectiveness, Advancement, and Development (LEAD) Program, a performance-based compensation program for principals, that will also provide professional development to successfully implement TAP. Under the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF), TAP will be expanded to 9 additional schools for a total of 10 schools. As a result of participation in TAP, Gray Middle School experienced significant improvement in student achievement, and the school will serve as a mentor site for the SUPPORT program.

LOCATION(S)	Lake County, Florida
GRANT AMOUNT	Year 1: \$1,219,957 5-year total: \$20,567,721
DURATION	5 years
PARTNERS	Lake County School District

Incentives

In the incentive system, 50 percent of teacher bonuses is based on growth in student achievement broken into two segments: (1) 20 percent is based on school-wide value-added growth, and (2) 30 percent is based on a teacher's individual classroom value-added gains. In this context, "value-added" refers to predicted student achievement scores based on prior performance. For teachers who do not teach a subject tested by the state or whose classroom does not meet the statistical requirements to receive a value-added score (e.g., student mobility precluded the ability to link enough students to a teacher), the 50 percent is based solely on school-wide gain.

The remaining 50 percent of a teacher's bonus is based on an individual teacher's classroom performance that is measured against research-based instructional rubrics and evaluated by multiple trained and certified evaluators. A minimum of \$2,000 per teacher in each SUPPORT school will be designated annually to create a bonus award pool. This fund will pay bonuses for all eligible teachers, with each teacher's percentage of payouts based on student performance and multiple evaluations.

A minimum of \$10,000 per school will be designated annually to create a bonus award pool for principals and assistant principals. This fund will be used to pay bonuses for all eligible administrators based on the formula that will be created under SUPPORT.

Evaluation

The purposes of the evaluation are to: (1) determine the effectiveness of SUPPORT in achieving the specific goals of the grant and (2) examine the implementation of TAP and LEAD as the key components of the TIF grant. A formative evaluation will be conducted

throughout each grant year, and a summative evaluation will be conducted at the end of each year. The formative evaluation results will serve to identify opportunities for improvements during the SUPPORT program's implementation, while the summative evaluation results will determine the extent to which the goals and objectives of SUPPORT have been met.

Resources

Over the 5-year project period, Lake County Schools will use a combination of local and Federal resources to cover an increasing percentage of the cost of the differentiated pay until it funds 90 percent in year 5. Funds will also be allocated to cover the costs of specialists who provide instruction while mentor and lead teachers are in cluster meetings.

Data Systems

The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) requires all TAP schools to provide data so that value-added calculations needed for determining performance bonus awards can be made. SUPPORT schools will collect and electronically submit Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test data to a contracted vendor. After the vendor makes the calculations, the information will be sent to the schools. The schools will be responsible for inputting the data into a compensation spreadsheet. Lake County already has a system to link individual teachers to individual student achievement, as well as basic student information. TAP schools use the Performance Appraisal Management System to track teacher evaluation data. As part of SUPPORT, NIET will create and implement a recruitment and retention tracking system, which will contain information on applicants as well as information on teachers who leave the system. The predictors of teacher retention will be statistically modeled.