



## Guilford County Schools | North Carolina

### SUMMARY

Building on the success of the 30 current Mission Possible program schools, Guilford County Schools (GCS) expanded interventions and supports to 20 additional highly affected schools. The Mission Possible Expansion Project achieves its goals by:

- Providing a one-time spot bonus to recruit teachers with high value-added data into program schools
- Annually recurring recruitment bonuses for teachers who work in hard-to-staff positions
- Need-targeted professional development to increase the success of teachers and principals
- Incentives for effective teachers who take on instructional leadership roles within their schools
- Individual performance incentives based on value-added data measures of student growth and schoolwide performance incentives based on the Systems Analytic Solutions Education Value-Added Assessment System (SAS EVAAS) growth model

**State:** North Carolina

**Location:** Greensboro

**Award amount:** \$23,231,899

**TIF Cohort:** 3

**STEM Grantee:** No

**Number of LEAs participating:** 1

**Number of schools participating:** 20

**Number of teachers eligible:** 898

**Number of principals eligible:** 20

**Superintendent:** Maurice Green

**Key program staff:**

Amy Holcombe, Project Director

**Email:** holcoma@gcsnc.com

### PROGRAM GOALS AND EVALUATION

The overarching goal of the Mission Possible Expansion Project is that by 2015, all Mission Possible Expansion faculty will be effective based on standardized measures, and an increasing percentage will receive performance incentives based on student growth over the course of the grant. GCS has the following subgoals:

- Recruit highly effective educators to work in Mission Possible Expansion Schools
- Retain and reward highly effective educators in Mission Possible Expansion Schools

- Increase the capacity of Mission Possible Expansion School faculty to be successful in achieving student growth by providing schoolwide and need-targeted professional development
- Provide incentives to highly effective faculty who take on additional instructional leadership roles and responsibilities

## REWARD STRUCTURE

Mission Possible is designed to recruit and retain teachers through the use of four types of monetary incentives. The grantee awards spot bonuses of \$5,000 to newly hired teachers who show evidence of two or more years of high value-added data. Newly hired teachers working in hard-to-staff positions are all eligible for additional compensation that ranges from \$2,500 to \$5,000 and recognizes the market value of their areas of licensure. Two performance incentives are available to treatment schools. The first is an individual performance award that ranges from \$2,000 to \$12,000 granted to teachers who earn high value-added data. The other is a schoolwide performance incentive awarded of \$750 to \$1,000 to all faculty at a school that Exceeds Expected Growth.

## YEARS 1-4 HIGHLIGHTS

- Mission Possible Specialists (master teachers) aid in the management of all key grant operations as communication point persons for the program and as primary providers of support, coaching, and professional development.
- Guilford's performance-based compensation system (PBCS) reform efforts were developed through a professional learning partnership with another TIF grantee, Winston-Salem Forsyth County Schools. Quarterly, the two TIF teams meet to discuss program implementation and sustainability.
- The Mission Possible Team developed more than 100 professional development workshops that each align to the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards, one of two measures GCS uses for teacher effectiveness. Workshop materials are all posted online.
- The grantee uses recruiting bonuses to attract effective teachers to self-select hard-to-staff jobs and schools.
- A web-based data dashboard was completed, allowing for extensive documentation of personnel data and coaching activities.

## YEAR 5 OUTLOOK

In this final year of the TIF grant, GCS is continuing to implement Mission Possible program activities. Master teachers are providing need-targeted coaching and support to teachers, delivering professional development, and continuing to manage all teacher leadership initiatives across the program. Principals are concluding their final year of the Instructional Leadership Institute, which has significantly affected the manner in which they support and develop teachers. Communication efforts focused on program sustainability and the closure of the federal grant.

## SUSTAINABILITY

In the final year of the TIF grant, the district is working with teachers, principals, district staff, the board of education, and the community to fund a sustainable PBCS. Possible sources of funding include local salary dollars, philanthropic support, state-funded differentiated pay dollars, and even future federal grants. The district recognizes that to maximize the effectiveness of a pay incentive program, faculty need to trust that the program will be in place long term.

## PERFORMANCE-BASED COMPENSATION

For the 2013-14 school year, student growth data was available in late November 2014. Mission Possible staff worked with schools to explain the growth data to individual teachers and whole faculty while also clarifying the data verification and payout process. Payments to faculty were not made until January 30, 2015, as a result of the late availability of the growth data. In total, \$523,848, in individual and schoolwide performance payments were distributed without error.