



Jefferson County Public Schools | Colorado

SUMMARY

The strategic compensation plan of Jefferson County Public Schools (Jeffco) rewards educators with stipends for achieving student achievement goals, receiving excellent evaluations, and taking on leadership roles. Jeffco is Colorado's largest school district; it has 84,000 students, 12,000 employees, and approximately 5,000 teachers. Jeffco provides stipends to educators in treatment schools and a 1 percent participation stipend to educators in control schools. The stipends reward principals and teachers based on observations from multiple evaluators and the attainment of team and school goals for student achievement. Jeffco measures student achievement using the Colorado growth model (CGM), which uses prior student test scores to estimate an expected level of growth for each student, as well as other measures. Because the research is not definitive about the best way to compensate teachers and principals, Jeffco is taking a balanced approach to rewarding individuals for evaluations and taking leadership roles as well as teams and schools that achieve the student achievement goals.

PROGRAM GOALS AND EVALUATION

The cornerstones of Jeffco's strategic compensation are student learning, teacher learning, and teacher leadership. Jeffco's goals for strategic compensation are to:

- Improve student learning
- Reward teachers and principals for achieving team and school student achievement goals and earning outstanding evaluations

State: Colorado

Location: Jefferson County

Award amount: \$38,331,740

TIF Cohort: 3

STEM Grantee: No

Number of districts participating: 1

Number of schools participating: 20

Number of teachers eligible: 636

Number of principals eligible: 33

Superintendent: Dan McMinimee

Key program staff:

Michael Maffoni, Project Director

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Kristy Parsons, Assistant Director

- Reward teachers who take on leadership roles as master and mentor teachers and
- Support teachers and principals as professionals by linking evaluation, collaboration, professional development, and career enhancement

REWARD STRUCTURE

- \$5,000-\$10,000 stipends are paid for teacher leader positions.
- Stipends for substantially above average evaluations are paid at three different performance levels: \$2,500; \$5,000; and \$7,500.
- Stipends are paid for growth in student achievement. Attaining the school goal pays \$3,750, and attainment of the team goal also pays \$3,750.

YEARS 1-4 HIGHLIGHTS

- All teachers had two evaluators, including at least one peer evaluator, leading to a co-owned final evaluation document.
- Teachers received at least 8 to 10 classroom observations.
- All teachers developed an individual Professional Practice Plan (PPP) with their master teacher and evaluators based on their observation feedback.
- Master teachers coordinated individualized, job-embedded professional development to help teachers meet the goals in their PPPs.
- Jeffco made payouts to Effective and Highly Effective teachers.

YEAR 5 OUTLOOK

Jeffco's pilot continues to build upon and fine-tune the concepts learned around improving teacher effectiveness by integrating feedback through the evaluation process and creation of an actionable professional development plan for each educator that is supported by the master teachers.

PLCs have been a focus this year to build capacity in all teachers, so sharing leadership and collaboration for student achievement can continue after the pilot is completed. We began in-depth training on the Rick DuFour model of professional learning communities at the beginning of the 2014–15 school year.

SUSTAINABILITY

- Creation of model laboratory schools to continue the most successful elements of the project in eight pilot schools—the schools experiencing the highest success for students and the greatest fidelity in implementation of project components as reflected in the research data, so these schools can serve as models and learning laboratories for the entire district as it scales up key concepts from the pilot to ensure sustainability.
- Starting salary increased districtwide—making it closer to the starting salary in the pilot. In addition, this school year educators districtwide for the first time received increases in pay based on their last year's effectiveness rating on the observation rubric. Teachers who were Highly Effective received nearly twice the increase as those who were rated Effective. Teachers rated less than Effective received no increase in pay. This approach is similar to what the TIF program has piloted.

PERFORMANCE-BASED COMPENSATION

The stipends for effectiveness ratings were paid on July 30, 2014, and stipends for student achievement were paid in September 2014. The total amount paid was \$1,941,525.