



Kansas City, Missouri, School District | Missouri

SUMMARY

The Kansas City Public Schools (KCPS) has extraordinary needs as it tries to bring academic excellence into its system, where every school is a high-need school made up of mostly minority, low-income student populations. In 2009–10, most of the schools in KCMSD did not meet state adequate yearly progress requirements. KCPS has 36 schools, 80 percent of which are in some level of school improvement. By the end of a student's freshman year, less than 25 percent of the students are on an on-time graduation trajectory, and the graduation rate has decreased to 62.98 percent. It is 73.72 percent for a five-year graduation rate. KCPS's PIONEER Program (Pay Incentives Based on Need for Excellent Education Reform) is a performance-based compensation system that awards eligible teachers and principals with differential compensation based on a combination of measurable outputs for student performance and observed principal/teacher performance. Measurable student performance outcomes in KCPS aim to capture student learning attributable to a teacher or a school and derive from scores on the Missouri Assessment Program (state testing program) as well as other assessments used to determine significant gains in student performance.

PROGRAM GOALS AND EVALUATION

The PIONEER goals are to:

- Recruit and retain effective teachers
- Improve educator effectiveness
- Improve student growth

The evaluation plan includes formative and summative components that will contribute to program improvement and document progress toward goals. The external evaluators will conduct participant surveys to monitor

State: Missouri

Location: Kansas City

Award amount (estimate): \$12,127,574

TIF Cohort: 3

STEM Grantee: No

Number of districts participating: 1

Number of schools participating: 10

Number of teachers eligible: 297

Number of principals & vice principals eligible: 14

Superintendent: R. Stephen Green

Key program staff:

Monica Landess, Project Director

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the effectiveness of the program and indicate areas for improvement. Additionally, the external evaluator will analyze data from the program over time to identify the effects of the program on retention, recruitment, professional development, student outcomes, and the effectiveness of the leadership coach program.

REWARD STRUCTURE

Under the PIONEER program, educators have four ways in which to earn incentives: by pursuing professional development, by contributing to a supportive learning environment, by teaching in a high-performing school, and by earning satisfactory performance evaluations and increased student growth. All certified staff who teach in K–8 are eligible to participate. Participants in the PIONEER program are eligible for a bonus of up to \$10,000, dependent on performance in the following components:

- Board Certification
- Professional Development
- Attendance
- Schoolwide Discipline
- Parent Engagement
- Building Growth
- Performance Assessment
- Student Growth—Math
- Student Growth—Comm. Arts

YEARS 1-4 HIGHLIGHTS

- Principals and participating teachers whose students demonstrated growth on the year's state assessments received awards through the performance-based compensation system (PBCS).
- PIONEER schools participated in grant-sponsored professional development and other grant-related activities to improve practice and build teacher leadership.
- Coaching of principals by the project director led to increased leadership capacity for observations and feedback and improved communication about PIONEER goals and activities.
- One of lowest performing schools made the most progress of all PIONEER schools in 2013–14.
- One PIONEER school has been a top performer every year of the grant.

- The district received Provisional Accreditation status from the state for SY13 and SY14.
- Four PIONEER schools received Full Accreditation status from the state in SY14.
- Three PIONEER schools received Provisional Accreditation status from the state in SY14.

YEAR 5 OUTLOOK

The outlook for Year 5 of the Teacher Incentive Fund Grant in KCPS is looking promising. Teachers were not satisfied with their growth results last year, and many are making adjustments in their teaching to reflect a more rigorous expectation in their classroom. Teachers are in the beginning stages of submitting documentation, and the numbers seem to be increasing. PIONEER is also doing a better job communicating the requirements and expectations of the grant with all staff, but especially the new staff members. We hope to see an increase in the last year of payouts by 20 percent.

SUSTAINABILITY

KCPS acknowledges the extra professional development the PIONEER schools have received and rely upon them to be mentors and trainers in various district initiatives. The district's focus for the past five years has been to regain accreditation. Now that we have been granted Provisional Accreditation, the district can begin to initiate discussions toward areas such as pay for performance. One step the district made in SY14 for SY15 was to implement a tiered administrative contract based on a principal's performance. Principals were granted one of the following: a contract with a pay increase, a contract with no pay increase, a contract on hold or no contract. This is a small step for our district toward sustainability of a PBCS.

PERFORMANCE-BASED COMPENSATION

On October 15, 2014, PIONEER paid out \$1,608,569.25 to 311 participants. This was an average of \$5,172.34/person.