



## Safford Unified School District | Arizona

### SUMMARY

Safford Unified School District's (SUSD) Effective Teachers and Principals Program (ETAPP) builds on the current performance-based compensation system (PBCS) in place, a state-initiated program called Career Ladder. ETAPP improves and expands the Career Ladder program while maintaining a focus on student achievement, higher level leadership responsibilities, performance evaluation, the analysis of student assessment data, collaboration with peers, and professional growth. ETAPP helps recruit and retain effective teachers and principals in high-need schools and improves teacher and principal effectiveness by focusing on professional growth, student achievement, and greater leadership responsibilities.

ETAPP provides performance bonuses for teachers based on individual student achievement, schoolwide student achievement, and peer group goals; performance bonuses for principals based on personal goals and school achievement; and sign-on bonuses for highly qualified effective teachers. ETAPP also provides stipends for teachers and principals who assume higher level leadership responsibilities, such as peer coaches, mentors, staff development trainers, or action researcher.

### PROGRAM GOALS AND EVALUATION

ETAPP's goals are to increase student achievement in core content areas, improve the existing PBCS, recruit and retain effective teachers and principals in high-need schools, and develop a more comprehensive staff development approach that focuses on individual student achievement data. To evaluate progress toward these goals, Safford hired Measurement, Inc., to conduct an external evaluation of the program in Year 2 of the grant.

**State:** Arizona

**Location:** Safford

**Award amount:** \$3,277,055

**TIF Cohort:** 3

**STEM Grantee:** No

**Number of districts participating:** 1

**Number of schools participating:** 6

**Number of teachers eligible:** 157

**Number of principals eligible:** 8

**Superintendent:** Mark Tregaskes

**Key program staff:**

Henry Dunkerson, Project Director

**Email:** hdunkerson@saffordusd.com

## REWARD STRUCTURE

ETAPP has a 3-tiered pay structure. Tier 1 is a personal goal based on student achievement. Tier 2 is a peer group goal based on student achievement of a targeted group of students. The third tier is based on the school achievement profile/school label issued by the state of Arizona and based on student achievement on the state mandated assessment. There is a pay structure in place for leadership responsibilities as well.

## YEARS 1-4 HIGHLIGHTS

In Year 1, all six schools participated in the rollout of the program. Teachers and principals submitted Tier 1 and Tier 2 goals based on the format used in the PBCS that has been in the district over 20 years. SUSD completed two formal evaluations on both teachers and principals, initiated a needs assessment for professional development and created a plan based on the assessment, and made payouts in June and October. Based on the end-of-year survey, most participants felt that ETAPP had a positive impact on student achievement.

In Year 2, teachers and principals established even more rigorous goals. As a result, even though many compensation amounts were lower, the overall school achievement was higher. Safford also had its first external evaluation by Measurement, Inc., in Year 2, with overall positive results.

In Year 3 and Year 4, the payout structure within each tier was revised to address sustainability issues. SUSD conducted communication and outreach activities, including onsite presentations to all participating teachers and administrators of the incentive program adjustments

## YEAR 5 OUTLOOK

While there have been changes in the incremental payout scales, the requirements of ETAPP have not changed. A very high percentage of our teachers participate in the opt-in program.

## SUSTAINABILITY

The projection for sustainability is very dim. Our governing board has chosen not to go out for an override election because of the political climate. This was our original plan for sustainability. The board may choose to use funding from other sources in the future to sustain individual pieces of ETAPP.

## PERFORMANCE-BASED COMPENSATION

Payouts for 2013–14	
<b>June 2014</b>	
Tier 1	\$181,150
Tier 2	\$140,200
Leadership	\$66,800
<b>August 2014</b>	
Tier 3	\$262,500