



Texas Education Agency/Uplift Education | Texas

SUMMARY

The Uplift Education Shine Through Teaching Excellence (STTE) program rewards highly effective school leaders and teachers for creating, reaching, and maintaining high standards of student achievement. This program identifies and rewards effective school leaders based on a combination of direct and value-added measures of student achievement and rewards effective teachers based on value-added measures of their students' achievement. In addition to rewarding high achievement, the program includes refinement of Uplift's database for tracking student and teacher performance, incentives for highly effective teachers and school leaders to move to and stay in high-needs schools, and the implementation of a tool for common formative assessments. This program will be internally evaluated, using the Context, Input, Process, Product framework, based on key metrics and goals, to ensure the integrity and success of the program.

PROGRAM GOALS AND EVALUATION

The four main objectives of the STTE program are: (1) to increase teacher effectiveness, (2) to increase principal effectiveness, (3) to improve teacher/principal retention, and (4) to improve program sustainability. An internal evaluation tracks a series of specific metrics to measure these objectives. A longitudinal report will document the changes in effectiveness of teachers and school leaders in high-need schools. The evaluation will also report the percentage of Uplift's budget spent on performance-related payments to effective teachers and school leaders.

State: Texas

Location: Dallas

Award amount: \$5,725,163

TIF Cohort: 3

STEM Grantee: No

Number of districts participating: 1

Number of schools participating: 12

Number of teachers eligible: 322

Number of principals eligible: 12

Chief Executive Officer: Yasmin Bhatia

Key program staff:

Anisha Srinivasan, Project Director

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REWARD STRUCTURE

Uplift Education teachers are rewarded based on four performance goals: full observation based on Uplift's observation & feedback framework, performance evaluation based on Uplift's core competency model, and percentage met of individualized scholar growth goals.

Uplift Education principals are rewarded based on five performance goals: director observation focuses on professional development (PD), teacher conferences, and data meetings; performance evaluation based on Uplift's leadership competency model; percentage met of individualized scholar growth goals; teacher retention; and campus budget management.

YEARS 1-4 HIGHLIGHTS

- Uplift uses a combination of growth and achievement outcomes to measure teacher effectiveness.
- The grantee developed an individualized student growth goal model using historical assessment data for its students. These data included nationally normed assessments (MAP, ACT, SAT), state assessments (STAAR, EOC), and local assessments (Common Assessments (CA), Uplift EOC).
- Teachers and leaders at Uplift now use the iShine portal to access data on students, teachers, and staff. The dashboards created (Coaching Action Steps Dashboard, Teacher Key Performance Indicator Dashboard, and the CFA Dashboard, for example) allow leaders to use more data points on student outcomes and instructional practices to drive the scope and sequence of PD for teachers.
- Uplift's Internal School Review (ISR) process measures the success of its schools' instructional practice and measures the effectiveness of its campus directors to ensure their ongoing development and growth. The classroom observation component of this process lets the reviewers capture real-time data and provides specific, actionable feedback to help leaders develop and grow.

YEAR 5 OUTLOOK

In Year 5, Uplift will continue to rely on its data-driven culture and data tools to push scholar growth and scholar

achievement. Uplift's instructional model is consistently being improved to fit the needs of our scholars, and the performance-based compensation system (PBCS) is reviewed to ensure equality and equity for all teachers and leaders. As Uplift moves forward into Year 5 and beyond, the PBCS will only get stronger based on our continuous feedback loop that will ultimately allow Uplift to grow scholars and retain the teachers and leaders that do an excellent job of doing so.

SUSTAINABILITY

Through collaboration with Uplift's Curriculum team, the grantee has introduced tools that simplify work for teachers and allow for stronger alignment of instruction and assessments toward college readiness. These resources include College Readiness standards, state standard breakdowns, unit/lesson plan templates, blended learning tools, and assessment materials. In addition to bolstering curriculum and resources, Uplift identified additional PD tools such as the learning management system, Blackboard, to build capacity within teachers and other staff members across the network.

To ensure the personnel and financial sustainability of the PBCS, Uplift has invested in the Data Analytics Team to support a data-driven culture by creating value-add tools that build capacity for real-time action, in order to increase scholar achievement. From a financial perspective, Uplift has incorporated its PBCS into its financial model with the objective being to continue the current program after TIF Year 5. Uplift has done a solid job modelling its financial position in future years by using historical performance data (student outcome, observations, and evaluations) to predict future outcomes.

PERFORMANCE-BASED COMPENSATION

Uplift awarded \$59K in bonuses to teachers, assistant principals, and principals at our 12 target schools in September 2014 for their 2013–14 performance. In October 2014, Uplift awarded \$388K in salary increases to teachers, assistant principals, and principals at our 12 target schools. The performance pay process was very transparent regarding data used to calculate performance-pay bonuses and raises such as student outcome data, classroom observation data, and performance evaluation data.