

Grantee Name: East St. Louis School District #189

Project Name: Back To Basics Transition To Teaching (BTBT3)

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Partner District / LEAs: East St. Louis School District #189

The Back to Basics Transition to Teaching (BTBT3) program goal is to decrease teacher shortages in hard-to-staff positions, by recruiting and preparing participants through the Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program. One hundred twenty five qualified individuals (25 participants each program year) will be selected for hard-to-staff areas in secondary mathematics, science (biology, chemistry, physics, and earth and space), foreign languages, English, reading, and history (economics, civics and political science). BTBT3 recruitment efforts will be directed to select from a pool of mid-career professionals, paraprofessionals, military veterans, and recent college graduates with sufficient credits to constitute a teaching certificate for the middle and high school levels. Selected candidates also will demonstrate an education or work background in the project's high-need subject areas.

Much of the recruitment efforts will center on the grow-your-own teacher concept, and will target participant groups who are current or past residents of East Saint Louis, or from other surrounding communities. Recruitment activities will consist of conducting informational sessions and workshop, as well as attending local, state, regional, and/or Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) teacher recruitment fairs. In addition, the project will develop multiple modes of media to advertise the project, such as creating program brochures and informational packets.

Steps to increase teacher placement and retention in hard-to-staff positions will be accomplished by evaluating current recruitment, professional development, and retention strategies in District 189. The district will disseminate a plan to revise gaps and weaknesses within the current infrastructure, and expand strategies for, (1) recruitment; (2) retention; (3) professional development; and (4) increasing course offering through alternative certification. Retention efforts will combine resources with the current teacher induction and mentoring programs, and will request to expand the mentoring program from one year to three years. Differing from existing induction and mentoring programs, BTBT3 will offer incentives for veteran mentors as well as BTBT3 participants over the course of three years. Professional Development will consist of online mentoring, subject specific workshops, certification and content test prep, and portfolio prep sessions provided by SIUE faculty, District 189 personnel, and contractual affiliates of the district.