

Title II, Part A – Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting: 2015-2016

Sarina Rapini, MPA

EA16-142-4

At-a-Glance

Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) received federal funds for training and recruiting through Title II, Part A as authorized under the No Child Left Behind Act, Public Law 107-110. The two-fold purpose of Title II, Part A is to increase student achievement through improved teacher and principal quality and to hold local educational agencies and schools accountable for student academic improvement.

Program Description

Dallas ISD used grant funds to assist in the areas of certified teacher recruitment and quality, Instructional Support Services (ISS), expansion of the Compass alternative certification program, and other professional development (PD) programs that were campus-specific or content-based. Recruitment activities included certified teacher and Compass recruitment efforts, whereas staff training was the focus of the remaining grant activities. Full-scale program evaluations of three additional Title II components (Reasoning Mind, the Principal Fellows Academy, and the Early Childhood Quality Classroom Initiative) were conducted separately.

Methodology

The worksopes for Title II, Part A were reviewed to note the amount of funding allotted for each area, program plans for implementation, and goals. In addition, formal and informal interviews were held with program managers to find out details related to 2015-16 implementation and to collect program documentation. Follow-up information was collected via phone and email.

Amounts of Funding

The district received \$7,923,739 in Title II, Part A funds. The largest amount was budgeted for the Certified Teacher Recruitment Program (\$1,801,062) and almost one million was budgeted for the Compass Alternative Certification Program (\$955,910) and Principal Fellows Academy (\$902,245). Other large amounts included ISS (\$575,202), Reasoning Mind PD (\$525,000), Advanced Academic Teacher Training (\$436,000), and Early Childhood Quality Classroom Initiative (\$400,029). The remaining allocations were for specialized campus training and academic content training and ranged from \$24,985 to \$374,998.

Program Activities and Implementation

Certified Teacher Recruitment Program

Human Capital Management (HCM) staff members were responsible for recruiting and screening highly qualified teachers to meet state and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislative requirements. Recruitment activities included attending recruitment events, advertising, conducting information sessions, screening applicants, processing H-1B visa applications, and monitoring and documenting recruitment activities. Between August 2015 and March 2016, HCM staff facilitated 47 recruitment activities and scheduled an additional 37 activities from April 2016 to June 2016. Throughout the year, HCM staff hired 2,529 teachers¹ and processed 94 new H1-B teacher visas.

Instructional Support Services Program

Instructional Support Services (ISS) staff members utilized Title II funds to coordinate 22 *Student Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR)/End of Course (EOC)* Academy training sessions with Region 10. ISS staff also conducted 47 Response to Intervention (RtI) and Exceed training sessions and expanded Schoolnet as the new documentation database.

Compass Alternative Certification Program

Grant funds were used to continue reforming and expanding the Compass program, formally known as the Alternative Certification Program, by supplementing recruitment, screening, and training activities. In 2015-16, 214 interns participated in the Compass program, and the largest certification area was bilingual with 94 interns. Of the 246 interns that completed the program in 2014-15, 218 (89%) continued to teach in the district during the 2015-16 school year. According to the 2015-16 mid-year intern survey, a majority of respondents (N=92; 81%) felt that Compass was a significant factor in becoming a more effective teacher.

Campus Leadership Professional Development

School Leadership staff used Title II funds to send 102 teachers to Purposeful Activity Centers PD sessions provided by Vida Education and 370 teachers to reading language arts PD provided by Empowering Writers. Due to a change in program management, funds were not used until January 2016 and program activities were modified.

¹ The data were collected in March 2016. This number includes Compass alternative certification interns but does not include internal transfers, in which a teacher moved from one campus to fill a vacancy at another campus. Teachers were

hired to fill both 2015-16 vacancies and new 2016-17 openings.

Distance Learning

Through the Distance Learning program, Educational Technology staff provided technical support to instructional staff in the creation of virtual Professional Learning Communities (vPLCs).² Educational Technology staff also facilitated the district's new robotics and computer science initiative by assisting with district competitions and providing 17 training sessions to educators. Educational Technology staff continued to provide blended learning PD and conducted six sessions through the school year.

Advanced Academic Teacher Training

Advanced Academic Services staff sent AP and Pre-AP teachers to PD provided by the National Math and Science Initiative (NMSI) and the Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture. A total of 47 teachers attended the Dallas Institute workshops throughout the school year. Also, 49 teachers attended the fall NMSI sessions and 84 teachers attended the spring NMSI sessions. Funds will also be used to send teachers to summer 2016 Laying the Foundation (LTF) training.

Content-Based Professional Development

World Languages Department staff used Title II funds to conduct and facilitate 70 PD sessions for teachers, instructional coaches, and academic facilitators. World Languages staff also sent 25 teachers to the annual Region 10 Foreign Languages Summit and, in conjunction with the Bilingual Department, organized a districtwide Language Acquisition Symposium.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Department staff used Title II funds to provide science and mathematics pedagogy and content training to educators. In addition to face-to-face professional development, STEM staff provided online training by creating D-Tubes³ and vPLCs. STEM staff granted 217 mathematics and 161 science vPLC certificates to educators.

Social Studies Department staff used Title II funds to provide PD for social studies educators to improve instruction quality and student achievement. Social Studies staff conducted 43 face-to-face training sessions and provided online PD through D-Tubes and vPLCs. A total of 224 vPLC certificates were granted throughout the school year.

Reading Language Arts (RLA) staff provided educators with PD to improve RLA instruction quality and student achievement. RLA staff conducted 39 face-to-face training sessions and also created D-Tubes and vPLCs to provide online PD.

The Improved Arts-Based program provided PD to educators for the improvement of art instruction. Program

staff conducted 123 PD sessions between June 2015 and March 2016. Program staff also continued to facilitate two visual performing arts competitions, including UIL and the Texas Visual Arts Scholastic Event; participation increased from the 2014-15 to 2015-16 school year.

Campus-Based Professional Development

Title II funding provided the specialized PD required at 15 campuses with nontraditional instructional models. This included nine International Baccalaureate (IB) schools, three Montessori schools, two single-gender schools, and one STEAM⁴ program school. The nine IB schools were in various stages of authorization; three were fully authorized and six were awaiting an authorization visit.

A majority of Title II program managers administered a survey to gather feedback from PD participants. Survey designs varied across the programs, but respondents were generally positive about the training. Detailed survey responses can be found in the full report.

Recommendation

A large portion of Title II funds was spent on PD provided by vendors or outside experts. Although attendance information was collected for all PD sessions, in some cases feedback was not gathered to determine the quality and usefulness of the training. Programs that hire outside vendors and experts to provide training should strive to gather feedback from participants about the quality of the PD. The data would be useful for future planning and quality control.

It would be beneficial to compile the nine individual campus IB worksopes into one combined IB workscope for uniformity. In 2015-16, each school received a different Title II funding amount, regardless of authorization status. Per interviews, new IB coordinators often end up securing fewer funds for their schools than other IB schools because they are unfamiliar with the Title II process.

References

Bush, J. (August 2013). Dallas ISD Evaluation Report: Title II, Part A – Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting – 2012-13.

Rapini, S. (August 2014). Dallas ISD Evaluation Report: Title II, Part A – Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting – 2013-14.

Rapini, S. (August 2015). Dallas ISD Evaluation Report: Title II, Part A – Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting – 2014-15.

The full 2015-16 Title II report can be found at www.dallasisd.org/Page/888. For more information, please contact Program Evaluation at 972-925-6457.

² VPLCs allow educators to collaborate online to improve teaching practice and student learning.

³ D-Tubes are short videos created by content specialists for teachers.

⁴ STEAM stands for science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics.