

2017-18 Evaluation of Title II Programs

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At-a-Glance

Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) received federal funds for training and recruiting through Title II, Part A. 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 many areas of professional development (PD), such as alternative certification training, instructional support services, advanced academic teacher training, specialized campus-based training, and content-area training. Funds were also used for recruitment, which included certified teacher recruitment and alternative certification intern recruitment efforts.

Methodology

The workscopes for Title II were reviewed to note the amount of funding allotted for each area, program goals and plans for implementation. In addition, formal and informal in-person interviews were conducted with program managers for implementation data related to 2017-18. Supplemental information including survey data were collected via phone and email.

Funding

The district received \$9,064,554 in Title II, Part A funds. The largest amount was budgeted for the Teacher Recruitment Program (\$1,693,990) followed by Early Learning PD (\$1,543,805), Positive Climate and Culture (\$1,280,070), Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) PD & PD Instructional Coaches (\$842,000), Alternative Certification Program (\$794,774), and Teaching & Learning PD (\$619,884). Other large amounts included the Instructional Support Services Training Program (\$385,950) International Baccalaureate and Montessori PD (\$351,600), and Advanced Academic Services (\$270,000).

Program Activities and Implementation

Teacher Recruitment and Retention Program

Human Capital Management (HCM) staff members were responsible for recruiting and screening highly qualified teachers to meet state and federal 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. HCM staff members conducted 49 recruitment events and visits between October 2017 and May 2018. A total of 490 elementary school teachers, 353 middle school teachers, and 370 high school teachers were hired as of March 2018.

Alternative Certification Program

Alternative Certification staff members used Title II funds to recruit, train, and certify new teachers that had not completed traditional teacher certification. Between summer 2017 and spring 2018, 156 interns enrolled in the program. Of those who completed the program in 2016-17, 113 (84.3%) continued to teach in Dallas ISD during the 2017-18 school year. On the intern feedback survey, most respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” (n=29; 74%) that their Alternative Certification teacher effectiveness coordinator had helped them improve their teaching practice.

Instructional Support Services Program

Instructional Support Services (ISS) staff members used Title II funds to provide supplemental PD and resources, including training on the Response to Intervention (RtI) framework. As of March 2018, ISS staff members conducted 94 PD sessions. Participants who chose to respond to the optional feedback survey generally responded positively toward the PD; almost all rated their session’s quality as either “Excellent” (n=266; 82.4%) or “Good” (n=54; 16.7%).

Advanced Academic Teacher Training

Advanced Academic Services staff members used Title II funds to increase the number of highly qualified advanced academics teachers by sending Advanced Placement (AP) and Pre-AP teachers to PD provided by the National Math and Science Initiative. A total of 89 teachers attended these sessions, while an additional 162 AP teachers attended the AP Summer Institutes hosted by local universities.

Content-Based Professional Development

Title II funds supported content-specific professional development to educators in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), computer science, social studies, world languages, improved arts-based curriculum, and reading language arts.

STEM staff members provided online and face-to-face science and mathematics pedagogy and content training to educators. In addition to face-to-face

professional development, STEM employees created virtual Professional Learning Communities (vPLCs)¹ to provide online PD. Teachers earned 252 mathematics and 432 science vPLC certificates throughout the year. Participants responded to the optional training feedback survey generally responded positively toward the PD for both mathematics and science.

Computer Science staff members coordinated PD for Dallas ISD's robotics and computer science teachers. Staff members also provided specialized training to teachers who coached students in robotics competitions. PD specialists conducted 63 PD sessions between June 2017 and March 2018. Almost all participants who responded to the optional training feedback survey rated their training session as either "Excellent" (n=211; 80.5%) or "Good" (n=49; 19%).

Social Studies staff members used Title II funds to provide PD to improve social studies instructional quality and student achievement. A total of 15 summer trainings were organized in 2017 and 19 face-to-face training sessions were organized between September 2017 and February 2018. Staff members also hosted a conference called Advocating Civic Literacy that was open to all social studies educators. Social Studies employees provided online PD through six vPLCs, granting 192 certificates to educators throughout the year. Participants responded positively toward the PD via the optional feedback survey, with all agreeing or strongly agreeing that the presenter demonstrated knowledge of the topic and that the session deepened their understanding of the topic.

World Languages staff members used Title II funds to create and conduct 89 face-to-face training sessions, and one online vPLC course. World Languages employees also sent educators to the annual Region 10 Foreign Languages Summit and provided support to educators who presented. Of participants who responded to the optional training feedback survey, almost all rated the training session as either "Excellent" (n=131; 80.4%) or "Good" (n=29; 17.8%).

The Visual and Performing Arts Department completed a 2017-18 Title II proposal, requesting funds to hire a PD coordinator to provide support and training to visual and performing arts teachers, instructional coaches, and academic facilitators, but was unable to fill the position. Despite the PD coordinator vacancy, the department offered 106 non-Title II funded arts-based PD sessions for visual and performing arts teachers throughout the year. Participants who responded to the optional training feedback survey generally responded positively toward the PD.

Reading Language Arts staff members used Title II funds to create and conduct 30 training sessions, serving 645 total participants. Almost all who responded to the optional training feedback survey rated their session as either "Excellent" (n=84; 82%) or "Good" (n=16; 15.7%).

Campus-Based Professional Development

Title II funds supported campus instructional coach positions at Solar Preparatory School for Girls at James B. Bonham Elementary School, Innovation, Design, Entrepreneurship Academy (IDEA) High School at James W. Fannin Elementary School, and City Lab High School. Between August 2017 and April 2018, these campus instructional coaches facilitated a total of 113 training sessions (47 at Solar, 60 at IDEA, and six at City Lab) serving all teachers on the campuses. Topics included project based learning, curriculum writing, action plans, and guidance on the use of assessment data to drive instruction.

Recommendation

Improve the collection of participant feedback.

Programs that hire outside vendors and experts to provide training should strive to gather feedback from participants about the quality of the PD. A large portion of Title II funds was spent on PD provided by vendors or outside experts. Although attendance information was collected for these PD sessions, in some cases feedback was not gathered to determine the quality and usefulness of the training. In others, the feedback was not collected from a large enough sample to draw meaningful conclusions. The data can then be used for future planning including the selection of highly qualified vendors and experts.

An electronic version of this report as well as the full 2017-18 report can be found at www.dallasisd.org/Page/888. For more information, please contact Program Evaluation at evaluation@dallasisd.org.

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¹ The vPLC modules provided 90 to 120 minutes of content and pedagogical instruction. The modules included opportunities for participant engagement.