

# Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers Grant Report Form

## Instructions:

Please send an electronic copy of the Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers final completed report by June 30, 2021 to [Grants.PELSB@state.mn.us](mailto:Grants.PELSB@state.mn.us).

## Report components:

- I. Coversheet
- II. Teacher Mentorship & Retention of effective Teachers Program Narrative – Please describe how you have strengthened and/or supplemented your existing mentorship and retention efforts and how the awarded funds allowed you to do this work. Additionally, describe any specific work done to support teachers new to the profession or district, including teaching residents, teachers of color, teachers who are American Indian, teachers in license shortage areas, teachers with special needs, and/or experienced teachers in need of peer coaching. Finally, using the methodologies outlined in the “Progress Monitoring” portion of your original proposal, evaluate the effectiveness of the funded work.
- III. Program Data – Please provide data from the year funded by the grant. Please also describe how grant funding has impacted the data from the most recent reporting year. You are welcome to include graphs.
- IV. Additional Reporting Requirements – Please provide information on any additional funding that was used to support mentorship and retention efforts. Districts and schools must also provide information on retention strategies that were developed as a part of the grant program.
- V. Teacher Mentorship & Retention of effective Teachers Grant Funds Expenditure – Please list all awarded funds, differentiating between funds spent and funds yet to be spent this fiscal year. Fill in the “method of progress monitoring” and “data” columns based on the information in sections VI of your proposal.

## Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers Grant Report

### Grantee Information

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Legal Name of Applicant Organization    | Robin Mikiska  |
| Total Grant Amount                      | 46,000 FY20 and 30,000 FY21  |
| Identify the category you applied under | <input type="checkbox"/> a school district<br><input type="checkbox"/> group of school districts<br><input type="checkbox"/> a coalition of school districts, teachers <u>and</u> teacher education institutions X<br><input type="checkbox"/> a coalition of schools, teachers <u>or</u> non-licensed educators |

### Identified Official with Authority

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Name of official with authority to sign | Robin Mikiska                              |
| Title                                   | Teacher                                    |
| Address                                 | 146 <sup>th</sup> street                   |
| City, State and Zip code + 4            | Apple Valley, MN 55124                     |
| Phone Number and Email                  | 952.431.4046 robin.mikiska@district196.org |

### Primary Program Contact

|                              |                          |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Name of program contact      | Robin Mikiska            |
| Title                        | Teacher                  |
| Address                      | 146 <sup>th</sup> street |
| City, State and Zip code + 4 | Apple Valley, MN 55124   |
| Phone Number and Email       | 952.431.4046             |

## Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers Grant Program Narrative

The grants received from PELSB have caused an epiphany for the leaders in our district and union. The timing of these grants has had an important impact on our union members and district staff. When I received the FY20 and 21 grants George Floyd was still alive. After this event, life for all Americans changed and we were fortunate enough to have this grant to help support our members of color and to help retain them in our district with the information we gleaned from interviews/meetings with all teachers of color interested in speaking with us.

This grant was a lifeline for some of our teachers of color. Last spring, due to COVID, we were unable to successfully put a teacher of color affinity group in place. We were able to hire two affinity group coordinators and then added a third at the secondary level to support teachers at all levels in our schools. Our Teacher of Color Affinity Group was one of the most successful and impactful aspects of these grants. Approximately 45 out of the 70 teachers of color in our district attended the affinity meetings throughout the year, and they felt immensely supported by the group.

As a mentor coordinator I spent about eight hours a week interviewing/meeting with 50 individual teachers of color. We discussed whether or not they felt supported by administration and peers, what micro-aggressions they experienced in the workplace, and ideas they might have to improve the workplace climate for diverse employees.

This spring I presented the interview/meeting data to our superintendent's cabinet, union executive board, union worksite reps, social justice committee and the negotiation's team. The teachers of color shared many recommendations that will be discussed with our negotiation's team, our teaching and learning department, administration and new equity director and coordinator.

As a result of data collected our Director of Human Resources has instructed building principals to renew their teachers of color unless their position is being eliminated. Our HR director has never said this before. These grants have created opportunities for important equity conversations that otherwise may never have occurred. This summer and fall our negotiations' teams will be discussing ways to improve hiring and retaining teachers of color and contract language that might be helpful.

The mentors for first year probationary teachers had five trainings. The topics covered were: how to mentor a new to district teacher, how to discuss teacher evaluation using the Danielson rubric, how to support new teachers during the winter months when they are disillusioned by their job and all of the stress that is thrust upon them, and a final meeting with all probationary teachers to discuss what to do if their job is eliminated.

The mentor coordinator positions were imperative jobs. As our district has no centralized process for tracking new hires the mentor coordinators had to find all 260 new teachers that were hired and what buildings they were aligned with and assign a mentor at their site. Added to this difficulty the fact that some new teachers and some mentors were working remotely. The list took more than a month to finalize. All meetings were held and recorded via Zoom. Therefore mentors that were unable to attend were able to watch the video and implement suggestions and ideas they found usable for their mentees.

The affinity group leaders met with me almost monthly so we could share information gleaned from meetings we had with teachers of color and problem solve concerns brought forward. The affinity group met eight times this school year. The year ended with an affinity group picnic, the group chose a book to use as a basis for their upcoming meetings based on improving resilience as a teacher of color in a highly white district. As I talked with teachers of color I shared information about the teacher of color affinity group because it is new and was not well known anywhere in the district. The leaders have planned a new roll out of their group for the fall to increase support for new teachers.

Our district has chosen to create an equity and inclusion director and coordinator position. I will be meeting with them later this summer to discuss the information I collected and what ideas the teachers of color shared with me that they feel need to be discussed with them.

These grants have made a world of difference in our district. This work has been the pinnacle of my career and I hope there are more grants available in the future. The fact that our HR department is willing to have conversations about teachers of color is growth. It also gives me hope for our future!

## Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers Grant Program Data

Please provide the total expected numbers and percentages of total participants for each of the following groups that your program will involve. Numbers may reflect teachers in multiple categories being counted more than once. Each category's percentage is of the total number of teachers being mentored under this grant.

**Table 1: Total number of teachers new to the profession or district that received mentoring as a result of this grant.**

| <b>Teachers Mentored Using Grant Funding</b>      | American Indian or Alaskan Native | Asian or Pacific Islander | Hispanic | Black | White | Other |
|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|----------|-------|-------|-------|
| Tier 3 Teachers new to the profession or district | 3                                 | 5                         | 7        | 5     | 233   | 7     |
| Tier 2 new to the profession or district          |                                   |                           |          |       |       |       |
| Tier 1 teachers new to the profession or district |                                   |                           |          |       |       |       |
| Teaching residents*                               |                                   |                           |          |       |       |       |
| Teacher in license shortage areas                 |                                   | 1                         | 2        | 1     | 48    | 2     |
| Teachers with special needs                       |                                   |                           |          |       |       |       |
| Experienced teachers in need of peer coaching     |                                   |                           |          |       |       |       |
| Total: All teachers supported by grant funding    | 3                                 | 5                         | 7        | 5     | 233   | 7     |

\*Teaching residents are those in a special in-service induction program, usually with a reduced instructional loads during the first year of employment and additional mentoring and/or professional development. For the purposes of this grant, residents are not pre-service candidates seeking initial licensure in their field and participating in a PELSB-approved residency program or student teachers completing other licensure programs.

**Table 2: Total number of mentors who were paid stipends under this grants for providing mentorship to teachers.**

\*Please note in your analysis if this data is a duplicated headcount, meaning teachers are counted in more than one racial/ethnic category.

| Mentor Demographics               | Paid a stipend as part of a larger mentorship program | Paid an additional stipend |
|-----------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| American Indian or Alaskan Native | 2   | 2                          |
| Asian                             | 1   | 1                          |
| Black, Not of Hispanic Origin     |   |                            |
| Hawaiian/Pacific Islander         |   |                            |
| Hispanic                          |   |                            |
| Multiple Categories               |   |                            |
| White, Not of Hispanic Origin     | 63  | 0                          |
| Total                             | 66  | 3                          |

Analysis of Data

(All information is taken from the narrative portion of the report)

\*This year the teachers of color shared many recommendations that will be discussed with our negotiation’s team, our teaching and learning department, administration and new equity director and coordinator.

\*This summer and fall our negotiations’ teams will be discussing ways to improve hiring and retaining teachers of color and contract language that might be helpful.

\*As a result of data collected our Director of Human Resources has instructed building princpals to renew their teachers of color unless their position is being eliminated.

\*The mentor teachers had five trainings. The topics covered were: how to mentor teacher that is new to the district, how to discuss teacher evaluation using the Danielson rubric, how to support new teachers during the winter months when they are disillusioned by their job and all of the stress that is thrust upon them, and a final meeting with all probationary teachers to discuss what to do if their job is eliminated.

\*The mentor coordinator positions were imperative jobs. As our district has no centralized process for tracking new hires the mentor coordinators had to find all 260 new teachers that were hired and what buildings they were aligned with and assign a mentor at their site. Added to this difficulty the fact that some new teachers and some mentors were working remotely. The list took more than a month to finalize. All meetings were held and recorded via Zoom. Therefore mentors that were unable to attend were able to watch the video and implement suggestions and ideas they found usable for their mentees.

\*The affinity group was VERY successful. The leaders have planned a new roll out of their group for the fall to increase support for new teachers to increase the efficacy and support available to all new teachers of color in the fall.

\*Our district has chosen to create an equity and inclusion director and coordinator position. I will be meeting with them later this summer to discuss the information I collected and what ideas the teachers of color shared with me that they feel need to be discussed with them.

\*These grants have made a world of difference in our district. The fact that our HR department is willing to have conversations about teachers of color is growth. It also gives me hope for our future!

## Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers Grant Additional Reporting Requirements

### Retention Strategies

Per Minn. Stat. § 122A.70, a school district that receives a grant must negotiate additional retention strategies for teachers who are of color or who are American Indian in their beginning years of employment, such as financial incentives for working in the school/district for at least five years or providing collegial support through teacher placement. Please describe the strategies your organization developed.

As one of the mentor coordinators I met with the district Human Resources Director and the district cabinet to help improve the retention of all teachers of color in our school district. They agreed not to release any of the probationary teachers of color. This conversation would never have happened if this grant was not in place. I also shared all of the data I collected from my meetings with our teachers of color with our negotiations team and our mentors. The negotiations team will be discussing ways to improve our environments and ways to increase financial incentives for teachers of color. The impacts of LIFO will be discussed.

### Additional Funding

Please list any and all additional funding you used to support teacher mentorship and retention efforts. Specify if these funds were used to support teachers new to the profession or district, including teaching residents, teachers of color, teachers who are American Indian, teachers in license shortage areas, teachers with special needs, and/or experienced teachers in need of peer coaching.

The additional funds of approximately \$15,000 was used to support the mentoring program for probationary teachers. Over the last 15 months most of the mentoring has been focused on first year teachers and the teachers of color in the district. Some of the time has been spent on second and third year probationary teachers. The majority of it helped pay for mentors and the coordinators during the pandemic.

## Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers Grant Funds Expenditure

**Table 3: Grant Funds Expenditure**

| Amount               | Description of Use of Funds                               | Primarily Used for:        | Method of Progress Monitoring | Data                         |
|----------------------|---|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| \$2,482              | Gifts to new teachers                                     | X Mentoring<br>X Induction | Discussions                   | Teacher lists                |
| \$24,987             | Mentor stipends+fica and TRA                              | X Mentoring<br>X Induction | Mentor logs                   | 63/67 logs received by 6/11  |
| \$19,500             | Coordinator stipends+fica and TRA                         | X Mentoring<br>X Induction | Meeting                       | Weekly meetings and sharing  |
| \$2,894              | Secondary Affinity coordinator+fica and TRA               | X Mentoring<br>X Induction | Monthly meetings              | Monthly meetings and sharing |
| \$320.11             | Food  | X Mentoring<br>X Induction | Attendance                    | Attendance                   |
| \$203.54             | Rental for picnic   | X Mentoring<br>X Induction | Attendance                    | Attendance                   |
| \$848.83<br>\$450.00 | T-shirts for affinity group and logo                      | X Mentoring<br>X Induction | Attendance at meetings        | Orders                       |
| \$1,285              | Books for professional development for affinity group use | X Mentoring<br>X Induction | Book sharing                  | Numbers at meetings          |