

**FY22 Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers Grant Report Form**

**Instructions:**

Please send an electronic copy of the Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers Grant (TMRG) final completed report by June 30, 2022 to [Laura.Dyer@state.mn.us](mailto:Laura.Dyer@state.mn.us).

**Report components:**

- I. Coversheet
- II. Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers Program Narrative – Please describe how your proposed activities for the teacher mentorship program has strengthened and/or supplemented your existing or attempted mentorship or retention efforts and how the awarded funds allowed you to do the work.
- III. Program Data – Please provide data from the past 3 years, as well as 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. 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	MN Zej Zog / Pang Yang
Total Grant Amount	\$58,400

**Identified Official with Authority**

Name of official with authority to sign	Pang Yang
Title	Co-Executive Director of MN Zej Zog
Address	8940 29th Ave N
City, State and Zip code + 4	New Hope, MN 55427
Phone Number and Email	952-993-0373

**Primary Program Contact**

Name of program contact	Pang Yang
Title	Co-Executive Director of MN Zej Zog
Address	8940 29th Ave N
City, State and Zip code + 4	New Hope, MN 55427
Phone Number and Email	952-992-0373

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

Our three goals for the grant proposal were to:

- increase capacity to grow Hmong language mentor teacher
- provide professional development specifically designed for Hmong language teachers that would fulfill subject matter standards for World Languages licensure
- strengthen and grow the capacity of the MN Hmong Educators Coalition to 100+ members by the end of 2022 to build a support system for Hmong students in higher education who would like to become teachers

Thanks to the support of PELSB funding, we were able to leverage additional funding sources to both work towards meeting these goals for our Minnesota Hmong language teachers by also creating a mutual support network with California and Wisconsin Hmong teachers, as well as our invaluable Hmong elder community educators and knowledge keepers and Hmong administrators. PELSB's funding created a firm core that additional funds were able to supplement so that our borderless Hmong language reclamation educator community and coalition was truly able to take flight together. Thank you for this opportunity and for your continued commitment to Hmong language, culture, and ethnic studies education. Your belief in us is allowing MN Zej Zog to change the shape and future of education for the children of Minnesota and the Hmong community as a whole.

### **Program Overview**

This year's mentoring program brought together 41 Minnesota Hmong language teachers as mentors and mentees. We combined small group mentoring with four whole group professional development sessions. This combination allowed teachers to receive Hmong language reclamation specific professional development while also engaging in healing practices that drew on their lived experiences and intergenerational trauma, which so greatly impact the language loss and reclamation dynamics of the Hmong community in refugee diaspora. This focus on language and culture reclamation as part of a healing journey also guided participating educators to bring these knowledge and practices into the language and culture classroom with their Hmong students to strengthen our Hmong educators' classrooms as spaces where intergenerational trauma and cycles of harm are

interrupted. In addition, these sessions provided necessary peer support and knowledge sharing, which bolstered teacher confidence and persistence to remain in the profession during what was an incredibly difficult year resulting in unprecedented teacher turnover and early exits from the profession.

### **Measurable Outcomes**

One of our primary goals was Hmong language teacher retention. Whether or not actions are working as interventions against teacher loss is difficult to claim. Anecdotally, however, we can say that only one of our participating Minnesota Hmong language teachers decided to leave the profession. According to a recent survey by the National Education Association (published in February, 2022), an alarming 55% of teachers were considering leaving teaching earlier than they had originally planned due to COVID-19 pandemic impacts - with disproportionately higher rates amongst BIPOC teachers. Although we can not claim that our initiatives were the intervening factor to sustain our participating Hmong educators through the difficult strains of the 2021/22 school year, feedback from our cohort of educators indicates that sustained mutual mentorship and support networks provided by MN Zej Zog's program created an environment that kept them afloat and believing that they were still able to serve their students's needs and goals, and that they themselves could make it through to another school year of changes.

Retaining our Hmong educators in this way also resulted in the the expansion of our MN Hmong Educators Coalition, which currently has over 100 active members. These members are able to connect with Hmong educators in Wisconsin and California, have access to free professional development, create and share resources and curricular materials, and offer peer support through our facebook group page, which has over 150 Hmong educators and pre-service teachers from around the U.S. In addition, we nearly one-third of our mentor teachers in this year's cohort transitioned from mentees into mentor roles - evidence of the increasing capacity, confidence, and believe in our participating Hmong educators' to step into leadership roles and identify what they have to offer as mentors and peer support for fellow educators.

### **Hmong Language Mentoring Program:**

Our initial Google Survey asked interests for participants in this year's mentoring. We had 41 respondents from Minnesota, California, and Wisconsin. Luckily, we were able to fund stipends for the

Wisconsin and California mentoring/mentees from the Lub Zej Zog grant with Dr. Jenna Cushing-Leubner at University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and Fresno Unified School District, which supported California teachers. In addition, through the support network of the Minnesota Hmong Educators Coalition, four new Hmong language programs (secondary world language) were submitted for approval and accepted to begin Fall 2022. The teachers from these programs joined the cohort midway through the year, making for 45 total participants in the mentorship network. Of the 45 Hmong language teachers, we had:

<b>1st year</b>	<b>2-4 years</b>	<b>5-10 years</b>	<b>11+ years</b>
11	15	8	11

We had an excellent mix of experienced teachers, new teachers, and teachers transitioning through their induction years. We also had a range of grade levels, from college professors to Kindergarten teachers. Teachers identified the importance of oral language proficiency teaching to strengthen their abilities and create programs that provided learning environments that students wanted and would continuously return to as they set and met their own language reclamation goals. This included capabilities at differentiating for students at all proficiency levels, strengthening teacher capacity to use and teach Hmong Leng/Ntsuab (and underrepresented dialect within the community), and continuing to strengthen Hmong language reclamation teaching through an Hmong ethnic studies lens. Twenty-four of our mentor/mentee teachers were Hmong teachers (supported through PELSB funds). The remaining mentor/mentee teachers from California and Wisconsin were supported through previously mentioned additional funding sources.

Mentors and mentees connected at least twice a month (though some connected regularly in addition to these set times). These meetings were determined on the mentor/mentee schedules and were documented via monthly logs. Topics ranged from language proficiency, literacy development, Hmong language arts content, pedagogical questions, Hmong and intra-ethnic studies integration, youth mental health support, family needs (e.g. mental health, financial stability, and school navigation), and dilemmas of curriculum and instruction. Mentoring took place in person, virtually, and via ongoing exchanges by phone and social media. Some local mentors/mentees engaged in observation and coaching sessions in their classrooms. In addition we provided bi-monthly PD

opportunities on mental health, QPR (suicide intervention), oral language proficiency, cultural knowledge practices, educator self-care, licensing support, and other topics of interest.

These PD topics help teachers make it through one of the toughest years as we continue to navigate COVID-19 and anti-Asian and generalized xenophobic hostilities and violences in our communities and schools. In addition, we also were able to combine funds with additional sources to have in-person gatherings that ranged from three hours to two full days with our Minnesota mentors/mentees to reconnect, rejuvenate, network, and deepen our mutual knowledge of Hmong language, narrative structures, and the arts in February and June. During the St Paul and Minneapolis contract negotiations, members of the mentorship network also stepped up and provided mutual aid for colleagues (teachers and paraeducators) in the form of food, massages, and other forms of personal and financial supports.

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

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

Number of teachers disaggregated by race or ethnic group	Tier 3 Teachers new to the profession or district	Tier 2 new to the profession or district	Tier 1 teachers new to the profession or district	Teaching residents	Teacher in license shortage areas	Teachers with special needs	Experienced teachers in need of peer coaching
American Indian or Alaskan Native							
Asian or Pacific Islander	2	3	10		41	4	15
Hispanic							
Black							
Other							
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>41</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>15</b>

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

Number of Mentors by race or ethnic group	Tier 3 Teachers new to the profession or district	Tier 2 new to the profession or district program	Tier 1 teachers new to the profession or district	Teaching residents	Teacher in license shortage areas	Teachers with special needs	Experienced teachers in need of peer coaching
American Indian or Alaskan Native							
Asian or Pacific Islander					5		5
Hispanic							
Black							
Other							
Paid Mentors of color who received additional stipends					4		5
Total					5		5

**Analysis of Data**

Our three goals for this grant were to:

- increase capacity to grow Hmong language mentor teacher
- provide professional development specifically designed for Hmong language teachers that would fulfill subject matter standards for World Languages licensure
- strengthen and grow the capacity of the MN Hmong Educators Coalition to 100+ members by the end of 2022 to build a support system for Hmong students in higher education who would like to become teachers

Goal	Supporting Data/Sources	Current Findings/Outcomes
<p>Increase capacity to grow Hmong Language mentor/mentee teachers</p>	<p>Quantitative and qualitative data from before and after the mentoring program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Google form survey</li> <li>● Interviews</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal met</b> (see narrative below)</p>
<p>Increase the number of Hmong Language Teacher who get their World Language licensure through portfolio or alternative pathway</p>	<p>Number of Hmong language teachers who get their World language license via portfolio or alternative pathway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Self-report</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal in progress</b></p> <p>*Participants received necessary professional development that meets specific licensure content area requirements for K-12 World Languages-Hmong licensure by portfolio. MN Zej Zog has successfully leveraged our existing mentorship network and Hmong Educators Coalition work to collaborate with Concordia College's M.Ed. in World Languages + new Hmong World Language Education licensure option, with funding support from PELSB's 2022/23 grant cycle. We have 58 Hmong teachers who have expressed interest and ability to participate, and will be able to fully fund 30 teachers in the initial cohort.</p>
<p>Strengthen and grow the capacity of the MN Hmong Educators Coalition to 100+ members by the end of 2022 &amp; build a support system for Hmong students in high education who</p>	<p>Quantitative and qualitative data</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Survey data (quantitative and qualitative responses)</li> <li>● Qualitative post-interview data</li> </ul>	<p><b>Goal met</b> (see opening narrative and narrative below)</p> <p>(Qualitative data in progress)</p>

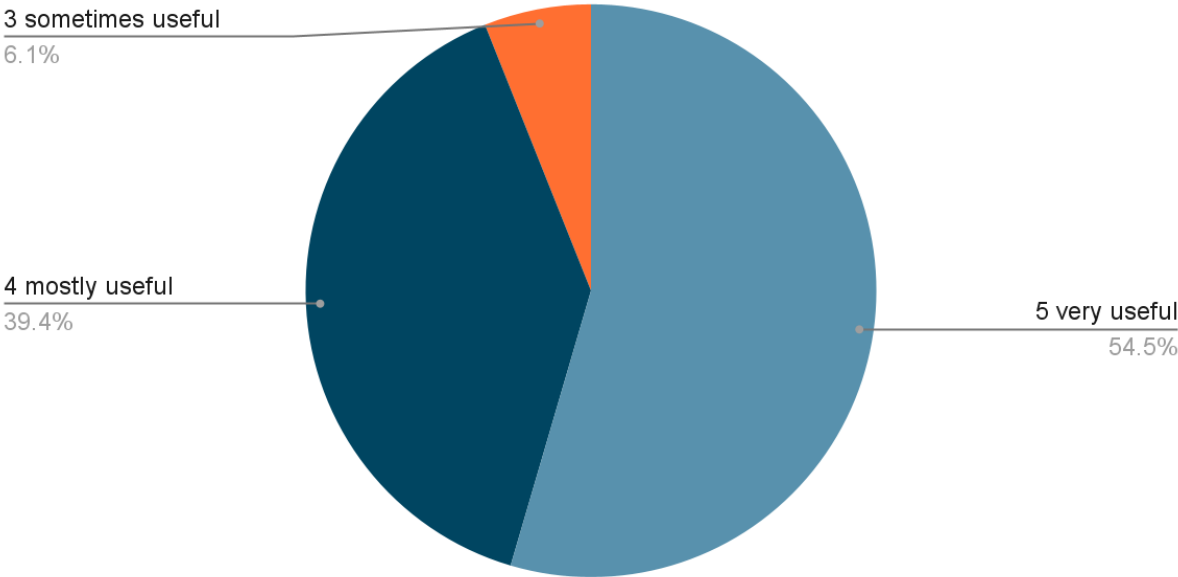


would like to become teachers		
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**Mentor/Mentee Experiences**

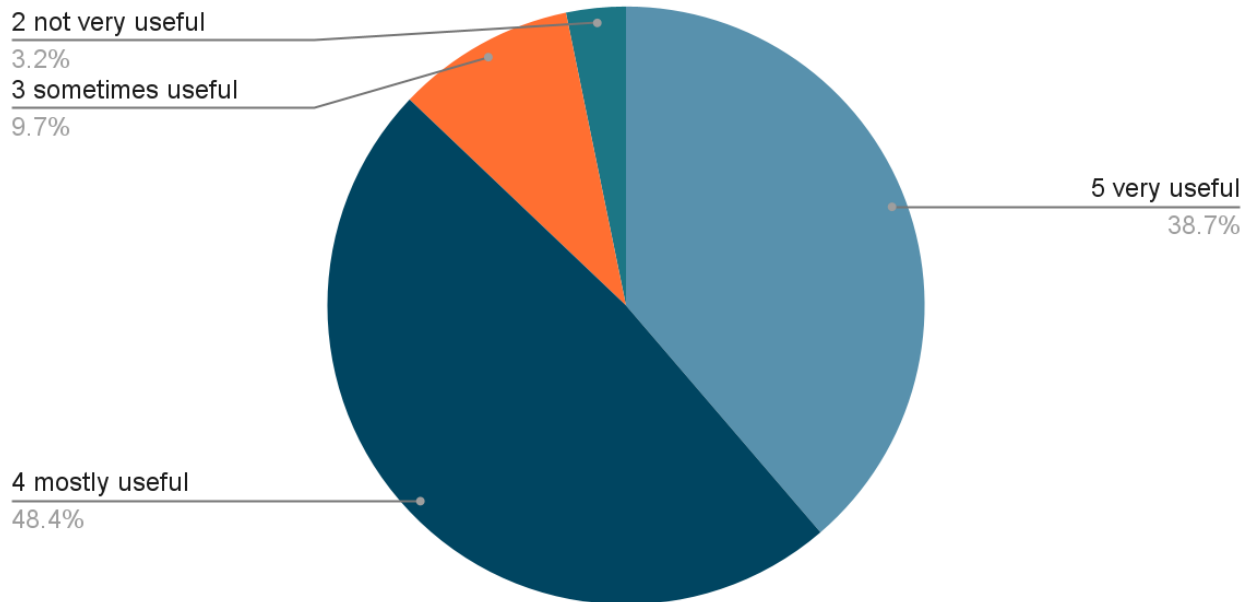
When asked to rank their experience with the whole group mentoring sessions on a scale of 1 (not at all useful) - 5 (very useful), 93.9% gave a four or five, with 54.5% of participating MN teachers stating that the ongoing mutual mentorship was “very useful (5)”. 39.4% said they were mostly useful (4), and 6.1% said they were sometimes useful (3). No participating teachers said these sessions were seldom (2) or not at all useful (1).

**How useful was your experience in the whole group mentoring sessions?**



When asked to rank their experience with their small group/individual mentoring experiences on a scale of 1 (not at all useful) - 5 (very useful), 87.1% gave a four or five, with 38.7% of participating MN teachers stating that the ongoing mutual mentorship was “very useful (5)”. 48.4% said they were mostly useful (4). 9.7% said they were sometimes useful (3) and 3.2% said their mentorship was seldom useful to them (2). No teachers said they were not at all useful (1).

## How useful were your small group/individual mentoring sessions?



### Retention of Mentees and Development of Mentors

Participation in the mentorship network suggested retention of Hmong educators across multiple dimensions. In terms of general retention, 98% (all but one teacher) stayed in the field and plans to remain in teaching for at least one more year. This is particularly promising, considering that twelve of our participating Minnesota Hmong educators are teaching on Tier 1 or Tier 2 licenses (due to a current bottleneck in the existence of a Tier 3 or 4 licensure pathway). Six of these teachers are within their first two years in the profession, three in the induction years (2-4 years), and three have been teaching for between five to twenty years. Retention of these Tier 1 and Tier 2 educators is even more pressing, as they do not have access to the professional and financial securities available to Tier 3-5 licensed teachers and typically have not had access to curriculum and pedagogy preparation to support their urgent work of language reclamation and knowledge keeping. Alongside this, fifteen participating educators have been teaching for between five and 20+ years. The retention of these master teachers and language/knowledge keepers is necessary for Hmong language, culture, and knowledge systems to

be sustained for future generations, and we are deeply grateful for their decision to continue in this work and in collaboration with newer educators.

When participating teachers were asked if they would be willing to continue on in a cohort of mentors and mentees the following year, all but two teachers said “Yes, please include me”. One teacher said it depended on if their school planned to keep their Hmong language program and would retain them as a teacher, and one teacher said it depended on time commitment alignment with their family’s needs. We also found that participation in the mentorship network bolstered participating Hmong educators’ interest and confidence in moving into mentorship roles themselves. 21% of our participants were positioned as lead mentors (supporting individual and small groups of mentees). When asked “Would you like to be a mentor next year?”, 35% of participating teachers said yes.

#### **Quotes from mentor/mentee network:**

Network teachers expressed desires for this form of mentorship to be continued, and shared that their experiences with the mentorship network had bolstered their interest and confidence in mentoring and knowledge sharing both within the Hmong education community and with educators and administrators who were not Hmong educators:

- “Keep this committee going for our community and our language programs to collaborate.”
- “Thank you to all the mentors for doing an amazing job. I enjoyed every session.”
- “I wonder if it would be possible to have the mentorship program participate in some larger PD opportunities for the public, for example, in MN the MEA educators conference. I hope that with the retreats and events, we continue to highlight Hmong educators and their expertise in specific topics where they can help teach others like this last session with the lus txhaj, the example lesson on littering, and the story-telling. This was so wonderful to be exposed to the way others teach and their knowledge.
- “Please continue the mentor mentee program. It is such a benefit to networking especially with new Hmong teachers and the state of Minnesota as Hmong teachers enter with Tier 1 licensure and new to teaching. In addition, the coalition is a support network that will enhance Hmong

language training and provide leadership collaboration. Thanks so much for allowing this opportunity to happen for our Hmong educators across the USA.”

Regarding the large group sessions, they shared the positive impact of a focus on teaching strategies, learning in community with fellow Hmong language educators, and the specific focus on Hmong language and literacy. They described these sessions as “relevant”, “encouraging”, “refreshing”. and “valuable”:

- “I appreciate that all the leads who worked tirelessly to get all educators together so we have this network of connection from all over the states. It's like a movie where I get to see the movie without being a part of the behind the scene action. Thank you! This is truly a work from the hearts of passion and love for our children and community. I am so pleased to be a part of this and have learned a lot. I've enjoyed every session that we've had and the part of having self care was very important because educators get so busy we lack care for ourselves or our families. So, this is reminder to take care of ourselves as well as we get the work done.”
- “This year's whole group meeting mentor session experiences has been very informational. I feel like every time we have our meetings, I'm always leaving with 1-2 new things from these meetings. I would love to have us do fun and hands on workshops activities. Overall, I am happy with this years mentoring sessions. As a new first year Hmong teacher, this session has given me a lot of great ideas and on how I can better as a Hmong Teacher.”
- “Learned from others, got more strategies to use in my own classroom.”
- “Such great information! I loved the information from stages of language acquisition to story telling. I wish there was more time to interact given a 6 hour time frame. Thank you for everyone who put this PD together!”
- “I learned so much to help me teach Hmong and make it interesting for my non-Hmong students as well. This help encourage me to continue my path as a Hmong teacher and my passion for the language.”

Regarding small group/individual mentoring, teachers described these as “awesome”, “supportive”, “full of knowledge”, “diverse”, and “close and intimate”:

- “The small mentoring sessions were meaningful. It gave the opportunities for the mentor and mentees to engage at a comfortable and personal level. The conversations were tailored to the group specific and unique needs. It would have been better if there were more time for more small mentoring sessions so the conversation could go deeper and truly explore the why we do what we do toward language reclamation.”
- “Getting to meet and talk to people who has the same passion like me reaffirms the thought that I am not alone in this journey and that I have a group of people that I can always reach out for help and support. It is nice to have a group like this.”
- “everyone is responsive and is willing to share ideas for us to learn from each other.”
- “I enjoyed the small group and discussions we have within our groups and as well as joining other groups. I enjoy getting to meet new people in other groups and just being able to listen to other's ideas.”
- “It was close and intimate. We were able to share and connect.”
- “I love that teachers are willing to share their ideas and strategies with us so that new teachers can also use these to implement in the classroom.”
- “Everyone had a voice sharing their knowledge and being open minded to each and everyone's experiences.”
- “great learning from other teacher. very good strategies to try out in the classroom”
- “I love the personal and close quarter group mentoring. All my questions were answered.”
- “Each has such a rich and unique background and perspective. Discussions are so interesting!”
- “The mentor was awesome and knowledgeable.”

### **Integration to Support Teaching Practices**

We also asked participating educators “What is something you are going to take back to your classroom and implement”? Teachers expressed a greater likelihood they would be confident and able to integrate what they had been learning because information, resources, and ideas had been shared in Hmong (rather than English-only). They also identified very specific culturally and linguistically sustaining pedagogies and curricular content that are immediately relevant to their teaching and their

students' educational successes, and they reflected on their own assertion of ethnolinguistic pride and making their Hmong-American identities more visible in their schools and classrooms:

- "I will take back to the classroom as much as possible, from self-care to singing to story-telling."
- "The strategies shared."
- "Definitely being persistent on using Hmong to help model"
- "Building background knowledge with lots of support."
- "Xyaum hais kwv txhiaj."
- "How to move my students to the next level or oral language." ... "try out some strategies in the classroom to promote oral language in the classroom."
- "Story telling" ... "I love the story telling aspect of the Paj Ntaub. This is something I will have to play with more when sharing stories and incorporating Hmong language in the curriculum."... "Embedding more Story telling into our district's Hmong curriculum and providing a more thorough PD of Language acquisitions to my teachers." ... "Something I am going to take back to my classroom is implementing Hmong story telling (Hais dab neeg). I would like to make a small space in my classroom and have Hmong story books and puppets. I think this would be a great way for them to be creative and use their imagination. Another thing is implement more chants in my classroom."
- "Originally, I had decided to really implement story telling into my lessons so hearing Vee tell the story definitely empowered me to really do and also gave me an idea of how to do it. I also really like the language exercises so I'm hoping to find areas to implement them."
- "Wear a piece of Hmong clothing at least once every week, Story telling with props, use the Hmong vocabulary words on the slide 80 to help with Hmong words such as lus paj lug, lus sib piv, etc. and continue using songs/chants to help scholars transition."
- "Self-care, the theories presented in the various sessions and the resource pertaining to language acquisition and language development."
- "The idea about accessing student's prior knowledge before delving into the lesson. Also, remembering to teach both HMong and English at home like Therese said so that Children can know how to speak both languages."

- “I took away the most with the focus on Hmong pragmatics and teaching key words/ connecting words in Hmong that would help students form sentences more clearly and add more depth to their answers. This also prompted me to think about how to help bridge writing for students as they get better at the oral speaking.”
- “I am planning shift my teaching strategy, so I can reach out to everyone in the classroom.”

**Continued Data Collection and Dissemination:**

We are still compiling and analyzing data we have gathered from this grant-funding. This includes ongoing interviews with teachers and both quantitative and qualitative data from surveys. Dr. Jenna Cushing-Leubner and Dr. Vicky Xiong-Lor are working together to analyze these data and present them in ways that can be accessed by educators, administrators, and community/family members through the Lub Zej Zog website and other avenues of dissemination (presentations and publications).

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

**Table 3: Grant Funds Expenditure: [2021-2022 budget](#)**

Amount	Description of Use of Funds	Primarily Used for:	Method of Progress Monitoring	Data
FYI 2021-2022 \$11,250.00	Food, space rental, supplies for gatherings	X Recruitment X Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction	Scan receipts saved in drive, book keep supporting documentations	Photos, videos, documentation of receipts
FY 2021-2022 \$7,000.00	MN Hmong Educators Mentor/Mentee Program	X Recruitment <input type="checkbox"/> Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction	Excel spreadsheet tracking time	Time completion tracker
FY - 2021=2022 \$1,500.00	MN Hmong Educators Coalition: lead mentor stipends	X Recruitment <input type="checkbox"/> Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction	On-going meetings with notes	100% commitment from all 3 leads

<p>FY - 2021-2022 \$33,650</p>	<p>National Hmong Language Teacher Coalition: Mentor/Mentee Stipends</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment X Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction</p>	<p>On-going meetings with notes</p>	<p>95% of teachers completed their commitment from beginning to end., partial stipends given to those who could not complete the whole program.</p>
<p>FY - 2021-2022 \$5,000.00</p>	<p>National Hmong Language Teacher Coalition: Additional Mentor Stipend</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment X Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction</p>	<p>On-going meeting with notes</p>	<p>95% of lead mentors continued from beginning to end, Two could not finish their obligations so partial stipends were given.</p>