

FY23 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, 2023** to 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	ISD #535 Rochester Public Schools
Total Grant Amount	\$136,400

Identified Official with Authority

Name of official with authority to sign	John Carlson
Title	Chief Finance Officer
Address	615 7th St. SW
City, State and Zip code + 4	55902
Phone Number and Email	507-328-3000

Primary Program Contact

Name of program contact	Will Ruffin II
Title	Executive Director of Equity and Engagement
Address	615 7th St. SW
City, State and Zip code + 4	55902
Phone Number and Email	507-328-4290

Teacher Mentorship & Retention of Effective Teachers Grant Program Narrative

Activity 1: Sustain and grow the teachers of color mentorship program

Rochester Public Schools (RPS) continues to find ways to attract and retain staff of color. During new employee training, all staff are made aware of the Employees of Color Resource Group (EoCRG) and given the option to opt in to the group via an Google form. This is a new practice for RPS as it previously relied on word of mouth for recruiting members to the group. The district also updated its website to include a landing page for the EoCRG which includes a link for members to opt into the group if they choose to do so.

With the end of the covid years in sight, the 2022/2023 school year provided an opportunity for RPS to increase the membership of the mentorship program from previous years where the need to stay socially distant from each other was prevalent. The EoCRG website also increases the awareness of various information items and opportunities throughout the district since the monthly EoCRG newsletter is also uploaded onto this landing page. The funds provided by the grant were used to create several networking and learning opportunities for nine mentors and thirteen mentees to meet and connect on a social level, allowing them to build relationships and discuss important issues in the mentorship process. The EoCRG purchased *The New Teacher Book: Finding purpose, balance, and hope during your first years in the classroom* by Linda Christensen, Stan Karp, Bob Peterson, and Moe Yonamine for the mentors/mentees to use. This book was used to facilitate meaningful conversations which allowed for the pairs to continue to strengthen their relationship while engaging in deep, relevant dialogue. The EoCRG also partnered with the Human Resources and Curriculum and Instruction departments, along with REA (Rochester Educators Association) to create one vision for mentorship for the district, instead of offering two programs that unintentionally wound up competing with each other. RPS now plans to use the framework the EoCRG created as a guide to build a cohesive mentorship program for new staff. This was a huge win and it would not have been possible without the state funds that allowed for staff to put in the time and effort to vet and create materials to guide the mentorship program.

Activity 2: Provide paid opportunities for teachers of color to collaborate with one another (within and between buildings)

The funds that were awarded to the EoCRG maybe it possible for the group to continue to provide an affinity space for all employees of color within the district. At a minimum, the EoCRG provides space for support , empowerment, and community building opportunities once per quarter.

There were several networking opportunities throughout the year:

- Back to School lunch: August 25th 2022
- PD Lunch: Jan 27th, 2023
- PD Lunch: March 3rd, 2023
- End of Year Picnic: June 8th, 2023

These meetings allow for networking opportunities as well as increasing support for one another; especially those who hold isolated positions in their buildings. The money has helped to pay for food, venue rentals, as well as classroom materials (i.e. professional books, diverse classroom resources, etc.). The End of the Year Picnic is a great opportunity for our members to come together and build community with friends and family to wrap up the school year.

The EoCRG also provided a quarterly newsletter to highlight employees of color who are doing great work in the community and around the district, as we know their efforts are often overlooked and undervalued. This newsletter is also used to communicate professional development opportunities, and cultural celebrations. The yearly subscription to Smore (the platform used to develop the newsletter), is paid for from these funds.

- Members of the EoCRG collaborate to find or provide professional development which allowed for staff to better work together on topics that supported the equity work of the district. These included The LatinoLead LiderCon Conference, the White Privilege Conference, NEA National Leadership Conference, Story Circles training from the Minnesota Humanities Center, and the Minnesota School Counselor Association Conference.
- Other projects for collaboration included participation in district wide committees, creating equity-centered professional development, and teachers of color collaborating to help each other build curriculum across the district.
- The Employees of Color Resource Group executive board met five times throughout the year to collaborate together to find resources and plan the events for the group. Extra planning time is something that rarely comes around for educators. The grants funds used to pay the costs of substitutes makes this intentional planning time happen. During these meetings, the group discussed plans for networking socials, organized guest speakers and professional development, planned ways to engage, support, and connect with members.
- The dates for these meetings are as follows:
 - August 24th, 2022
 - October 5th, 2022
 - December 7th, 2022
 - February 16th, 2023
 - May 10th, 2023

Activity 3: Increase financial and systems-level support for the Employees of Color Resource Group (EoCRG) and its Executive Board

The Employee of Color Resource Group currently has nine members on the executive board. These members represent all levels of the organization from elementary to secondary; as well as certified and non-certified staff members. This is the most diverse working group within RPS with approximately 100 members signed up for the newsletter and information newsletter. Having a working group that reflects the diversity of the district by including several different ethnicities is important and also done this way intentionally. The EoCRG wanted to ensure as many voices as possible were at the

table. The executive board meets approximately once per quarter. The funds have helped to pay for substitute teachers during those meetings. Each member also receives a stipend as compensation for working on items outside of their regular contract hours. A higher stipend amount was added for the two co-leaders, who attend more meetings and have increased responsibilities than the others in the group. This year, the EoCRG used funds from the grant to help expand and establish subcommittees. The subcommittees have a specific focus tied into furthering the overall goals of the group. The subcommittees also helped distribute the workload so people didn't feel burnt out. There are currently three subcommittee members, who oversee professional development, community engagement, and mentorship and leadership development. The group will look to expand the membership of the subcommittee groups next school year.

The Employees of Color Resource Group organized different opportunities for staff to collaborate with each other. Staff collaborated on various trainings, projects, and organizing events for the members of color at the district level.

Finally, EoCRG was able to provide tiered professional development for our members. This professional development was a five part series with the Minnesota Humanities Center on participating in story circles. The goal of this yearlong trajectory of professional development is to support Employees of Color within Rochester Public Schools to strengthen their racial literacies as it relates to their professional work. Participants were guided in discussions related to racism and its impacts, offered tools to navigate and resist racism, and provided ways to transform and reimagine their schools and district towards the wellbeing of communities of Color.

These five sessions included:

Session 1: Story Circles: I See Me- December 12th 2022

Session 2: Story Circles: Story Circle Within a Circle- January 23rd 2023

Session 3: Author Meet and Greet- February 27th 2023

Session 4: Author Meet & Greet- March 20th 2023

Session 5: Story Circles: The Gift- April 10th 2023

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 4	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 resident s	Teacher in license shortage areas	Teachers with special needs	Experienced teachers in need of peer coaching
American Indian or Alaskan Native		1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asian or Pacific Islander	1	3	1	1		1		
Hispanic	2	1	0	3		5	0	
Black	0	2	1	0		3	0	1
Other	2	5	0	2		1		
Total	7	14	6	11	0	10	0	0

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

RPS had nine paid mentors during the 2022-2023 school year. The categories on the grid don't necessarily line up with our numbers.

Totals: Asian (5 total) = Tier 3 (1) and Tier 4 (3) ; Black (2 total) = Tier 3 (1) and Tier 4 (1); Hispanic (1) = Tier 4; Mixed race (1) = Tier 3

Number of Mentors by race or ethnic group	Tier 3 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				
Hispanic					
Black			1		
Other					
Paid Mentors of color who received additional stipends					
Total					

Analysis of Data

The number of employees of color in the Rochester district increased from our total number last year. We had nine mentors and sixteen mentees participate in our mentorship program, which was the highest participation rate we ever had in the Rochester district since starting this program. Some mentors took on two mentees this past year. Through these efforts we were able to increase our presence in the district and beyond. We saw results within our mentorship program as mentees were recognized as leaders in their buildings and are beginning to take on leadership roles in our executive committee. As we continue working on retention efforts, we anticipate to have similar numbers and hope to increase the number of networking and mentorship opportunities next year in shortage areas in the Rochester Public School district.

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
\$366.22	MN School Counselors Association Training	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction		The counselor who attended this training was promoted at the end of the year to Lead Counselor for the district. This was a good investment for sure.
\$444.97	LiderCon travel expenses	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction		One member has stepped into an executive committee role and the other was promoted to a Director in the district. It is clear investing in people is paying off.
\$91.25	Leaders of Color Leadership Conference	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction		

\$252.72	Dream Catcher Kick Off	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction		Two staff members who continue to take on leadership opportunities within RPS.
\$1022.35	Minnesota Indian Education Association	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction		
\$149.37	Urban Leadership Academy	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction		
\$9708.69	NEA Leadership Summit	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction		
\$9800.44	White Privilege Conference	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction		
\$1670.55	Institute for Teachers of Color	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction		
\$2899.47	Family Engagement and Community Schools Conference	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction		
\$2734.94	Racial and Social Justice Conference	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction		
\$2052.93	MDE Restorative Practices Training	<input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Retention <input type="checkbox"/> Induction		