

QUALITY PROFESSIONALS & SPECIAL SCHOOLS
Summary of State Board of Education Agenda Items
October 18-19, 2012

OFFICE OF THE MISSISSIPPI TEACHER CENTER

17. Report on Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Grant

No Action: Discussion only

Back-up material attached

Teacher Incentive Fund Grant Overview

In 2010, the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) was awarded a federal five-year/\$10 million Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant. The purpose of the TIF program is to support projects that develop and implement performance-based compensation systems (PBCSs) for teachers, principals, and other licensed personnel in order to increase educator effectiveness and student achievement, measured in significant part by student growth.

To determine school eligibility for participation, MDE reviewed assessment results and QDI ranges (133 to 139). In addition, elementary and middle schools not meeting growth, on Academic Watch, and/or at the lower end of the Accountability Bracket were eligible to participate. Nineteen schools were identified and ten of those volunteered to become TIF pilot sites.

Those pilot sites (now called *Mississippi's TerrIFic Schools---leading the way to top!*) are as follows:

<u>School</u>	<u>District</u>
Bruce Upper Elementary	Calhoun County School District
Oak Forest Elementary	Jackson Public School District
Van Winkle Elementary	Jackson Public School District
Franklin Academy	Columbus Municipal School District
Cook Elementary	Columbus Municipal School District
North Jones Elementary	Jones County School District
Central Elementary	George County School District
Mendenhall Junior High	Simpson County School District
Magee Middle	Simpson County School District
Buckatunna Elementary	Wayne County School District

The project will implement five components based on grant criteria and research-based best practices. The five components (with status updates) are as follows:

1. A Teacher and Principal Evaluation System

After significant feedback from educators, an objective, standards-based rubric to evaluate teacher performance was created for use in the pilot schools. The new instrument, the *MS Statewide Teacher Appraisal Rubric (M-STAR)*, provides a reliable and valid system of performance assessments based on common standards to gauge teacher effectiveness, help track educational progress, identify areas of need, and improve practice throughout a teacher's career.

M-STAR includes multiple measures of evaluation in order to obtain a comprehensive understanding of each teacher's areas of strength and challenge. Measures include formal classroom observations, informal walkthrough observations, artifact reviews and a teacher self-assessment component. Student surveys are also recommended as an effective formative assessment tool.

The Mississippi Principal Evaluation System adheres to well-established principles of effective personnel assessments. The system relies on multiple sources of data and is tightly linked to the Mississippi Standards for School Leaders. The principles that animate the system are clustered into three categories: foundational principles, process principles, and outcome principles.

2. **An Appropriate Data System**

A data system to determine student growth will be established and implemented. The data will move beyond simple student achievement and will be utilized to identify professional development needs, effective practices, and eligibility for performance based compensation.

3. **Professional Development Activities**

The professional development activities of the school were expanded to improve student achievement. TIF funds were used to secure licenses to purchase PD 360, an online professional development system for teachers and principals. In addition, Level 1 and Level 2 in-depth training for the online system ensured that teachers were equipped with the technological tools they would need to fully access appropriate training videos matched to their areas of development.

In addition, TIF educators recognized the importance of improving teacher performance to positively impact student achievement. To achieve that goal, each pilot site worked diligently to develop and implement effective Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). MDE contracted with a consultant who had expertise in the establishment of PLCs. In collaboration with the leadership team, the consultant assisted in the development of SMART Goals, and visited each school monthly to ensure PLCs were maximizing their effectiveness.

4. **A Performance Based Compensation System (PBCS)**

A PBCS rubric was created to reward educators for increased student performance. School staff was involved in development of the system, and all educators were trained on the system. Based on two years of data to determine teacher effectiveness (educator evaluations and student performance) rewards will be disbursed by December 2012 to educators in schools that attained growth, as measured by the state's growth model. Targeted, job-embedded training will be provided to improve performance and probability of receiving future rewards.

5. **A Career Ladders for Teachers**

A system of career ladders for teachers was developed to allow for expanded roles to improve instruction and student learning. Each TIF school now utilizes the services of a master teacher, mentor teacher and a professional development coordinator. Master teachers analyze student data, assist in creating academic achievement plans, lead

professional learning community groups and provide coaching to classroom teachers. Mentors share best practices with both novice and veteran teachers, provide feedback on the instructional practices of the teachers, and deliver monthly reports regarding the progress of their work. Professional development coordinators assist master teachers in the design, delivery, evaluation, and refinement of professional learning experiences, analyze evidence to inform and improve teacher practice, and promote increased teacher leadership to maximize resources.

It is our belief that by providing financial incentives and the support system necessary to create a climate of change and high expectations, we will not only improve student achievement in *Mississippi's TerrIFic Schools*, but we will also positively impact the recruitment and retention of highly effective teachers for those classrooms as well.

TIF TIMELINE

Year 1 (2010-2011)	Award Announcement and Planning Year
Year 2 (2011-2012)	Full implementation, training and data gathering
Year 3 (2012-2013)	Full implementation and disbursement of awards based on 2011 – 2012 data
Year 4 (2013-2014)	Full implementation and disbursement of awards based on 2012 – 2013 data
Year 5 (2014-2015)	Full implementation and disbursement of awards based on 2013 – 2014 data