Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) received federal funds for training and recruiting for the 2009-2010 year through Title II, Part A as authorized under the No Child Left Behind Act, Public Law 107-110. Title II, Part A funds emphasized two major purposes: firstly, to increase student academic achievement through strategies such as improving teaching and principal quality and increasing the number of highly qualified teachers, principals and assistant principals in classrooms and schools; and secondly, to hold local educational agencies and schools accountable for improvements in student achievement.

**Title II, Part A - Professional Development Program Description**

Dallas ISD used Title II, Part A funds to assist in the areas of professional development, class size reduction, certified teacher recruitment, the Alternative Certification (AC) Program, the Student Teacher Program, Leadership Initiative for Teachers (LIFT), the Superintendent’s Learning Community (SLC), and Laying the Foundation (LTF) pre-Advanced Placement (AP) training. Grant activities provided through the Professional Development Department, LIFT, SLC, and LTF were focused on staff training, whereas recruitment activities were key to class size reduction and certified teacher recruitment efforts. The AC and student teacher components included both training and recruiting activities.

**Program Activities and Implementation**

**Professional Development Grant Activities**

The district’s Professional Development Department provided ample professional development opportunities aligned to district goals and initiatives for administrators, teachers, other professional staff members, and paraprofessionals. In an effort to increase student achievement, especially at struggling schools, the district provided tiered professional development for teachers based on experience levels and needs. Teacher tiers included master teachers, general teachers, and teachers that were part of the Institute Promoting Teacher Excellence (IPTE). Principals determined teacher tiers based on years of experience, CEI ratings, leadership, and other areas viewed important. Throughout the year numerous training sessions were provided for the three tiers of teachers, non-administrative support staff, and paraprofessionals. The district trained administrators and instructional coaches to support teachers and students across the district. Some principals participated in the Rick and Becky DuFour Solution Tree training, Breakthrough Coach for Principals training, and ESC Region 10 administrator training. Professional staff training focused on building rigor into instruction using curriculum guides, Principals of Learning, and disciplinary literary concepts.

The Oracle Learning Management System was used for course registration, planning purchases, tracking attendance, and assisted district staff members with record keeping. Participants were able to enroll in professional development sessions through the Oracle training Self-Service Interface. Additionally, the system was used to track staff attendance, and the types of credit that staff members earned including mandatory and compensatory professional development credit.

**Classroom Reduction Program**

Through the district’s Class Size Reduction Program, supplemental elementary teachers were hired to reduce classroom sizes on an “as needed” basis throughout the year by the Human Resources department. Staffing managers within Human Resources worked with executive directors and principals to identify campuses and classes with the greatest needs. Specifically reviewed areas were classroom rosters and teachers assignments in core content areas to identify the largest classrooms and greatest needs in terms of student performance.

**Certified Teacher Recruitment Program**

Human Resources staff members assigned to teacher recruitment were responsible for recruiting and screening highly qualified teachers to meet the state certification and No Child Left Behind legislative requirements. Recruiting activities included advertising and conducting information sessions, hosting an annual job fair, screening applicants to ensure they were qualified and likely to meet district needs, processing selected candidates for H-1B visa application, and monitoring and documenting recruitment activities. Recruitment staff members worked closely with the Dallas ISD AC Program to recruit teachers outside of Texas.

An important part of the certified teacher recruitment component was pre-screening of candidates in critical need areas and/or based on campus needs. This included elementary bilingual candidates, special education candidates, and secondary core subject area candidates in the areas of math, science, English/language arts, reading, and social studies. Dallas ISD recruiters administered The Haberman Star
**Teacher Pre Screener** to make sure candidates were qualified and likely to meet the needs of students within the large, urban school district. The interview screening instrument is based on characteristics of teachers that have shown success working with children and youth that live in poverty. The idea behind screening teacher candidates is to eliminate teacher turnover and to find individuals that can reach and effectively teach at risk students.

**Expansion of the Alternative Certification Program**

The AC program is a district-based educator preparation program that has certified over 15,000 teachers since 1986. The program has two tiers including the Day Program and the Academy. Day Program interns are typically certified after one full calendar school year if they complete the program requirements and show success in the classroom. The Day Program is limited to training in the district’s three critical needs areas of bilingual, math, and science. The Academy includes training in additional certification areas including English/Language Arts/Reading, Social Studies, Special Education, Family and Consumer Science, Spanish, and Speech. Day Program interns are guaranteed employment in the district, but Academy participants are not. Even so, a high percentage of Academy participants that complete the program receive teaching positions in the district.

AC Program staff members recruited during the 2009-10 by holding job fairs, hosting hotel interviews, placing newspaper ads, utilizing Career Builder, and by taking recruitment trips to various locations in Texas, other states, Puerto Rico, and Monterrey, Mexico. These recruitment efforts focused on sites that previously yielded good candidates.

Two cohorts of AC interns, referred to as Phase 41 and Phase 42, were involved during the 2009-10 school year. As of early March, a total of 331 interns were in the program including 312 in Phase 41 and 19 in Phase 42. The Dallas ISD AC Program required a minimum of 300 hours of non-credit educator preparation hours as required by the state of Texas. This included training before, during, and after the internship along with field-based experience and test preparation. AC Program staff members designed an educator preparation training curriculum in response to these requirements. The curriculum was based on the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) educator standards and addressed relevant Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Training curriculum is specific to each certification area. Additionally, the district partnered with Texas Woman’s University (TWU) to provide university courses tailored specifically for AC Program participants in five certification areas: math, science, bilingual, Spanish, and social studies.

**Student Teacher Program**

The overarching goal of the expansion of the student teacher and field observer program was to focus on the recruitment of student teachers and field observers that will eventually serve as full-time teachers in the district. Recruitment efforts were made in all certification areas, but staff members worked especially hard to recruit students for the district’s critical need areas of bilingual education and math. Both student teachers and field observers were placed in a variety of campuses across the district.

The Office of Student Teaching was responsible for collaborating with university partners for the recruitment and support of student teachers and field observers. There were 136 student teachers during the fall semester of 2009 and 103 during the spring 2010 semester. Student teachers represented 20 universities and one alternative certification program. During both the fall and spring semesters, the University of North Texas, Southern Methodist University, Texas Woman’s University, University of Texas at Arlington and the University of Texas at Dallas yielded the highest number of student teachers.

During the 2009-2010 school year, there were 280 field observers during the fall and 257 during the spring representing both university and alternative certification programs. Throughout the year 14 universities and 11 alternative certification programs were represented. The greatest number of observers were from the University of Texas at Dallas, University of North Texas, Southern Methodist University and Texas Woman’s University.

Training each semester included an orientation (2 total) for cooperating teachers as well as student teacher orientation (2 total), 10 Student Teacher Academy workshops (20 total), and a student teacher summative meeting (2 total). The department exceeded attendance goals for orientation and summative meetings both semesters, and 14 of the 20 workshops were attended by more than 20 student teachers.

**Leadership Initiative for Teachers**

Dallas ISD partnered with TWU to provide LIFT, a leadership development program for teachers aspiring to become campus administrators. LIFT was an 18-month program which allowed participants to earn a Master’s degree in Educational Administration through TWU along with principal certification. Consideration for the LIFT program required applicants to meet certain criteria including: having at least three years of teaching experience, met the proficient rating on their PDAS summative for the last three years, and had a 3.0 GPA average during their last 60 hours of university coursework. Further district screening
processes and interviews were used before final participant selection was made.

A goal of the program was to recruit a diverse pool of future campus administrators, which was accomplished. This included seven African American participants, five Hispanic participants, and four Anglo participants. When reviewed by gender, there were 11 females and five males. A review by school level revealed seven elementary staff members, one middle school staff member, six high school staff members, and two central coordinators. Participants began the program in June 2009 and will complete the program at the end of fall 2010. As of early March, 16 of the original 18 participants were still active in the program. Shadowship, mentoring, and leadership training were key components of the program. Most shadowship and content training occurred in summer 2009.

The district is changing the focus from principal certification to teacher leadership in 2010-11, so the 2009-10 cohort will be the only group to complete the program as initially intended.

**Superintendent’s Learning Community**

Professional development and technical assistance was provided for staff members at eight high priority high school campuses that were part of the SLC during the 2009-2010 school year. The eight campuses that made up the SLC included Carter, Kimball, North Dallas, Pinkston, Samuell, Seagoville, Smith, and Spruce. SLC staff members assisted the campuses in establishing Professional Learning Communities (PLC’s) through implementation of Principles of Learning training strategies along with technical assistance in using MyData Portal to analyze student data, utilizing Curriculum Central for lesson plan development, and using common assessments as part of department collaboration efforts.

A key goal of the SLC initiative was to increase TAKS scores at the 8 SLC high schools in English/Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies. For the eight high schools combined, there were increases for each grade level and subject area with increases ranging from 1.8% (eleventh-grade English/Language Arts) to 15.5% (tenth-grade science). When reviewed by grade level, the percentages of students that met expectations in 2009 and 2010 were higher for eleventh graders than for ninth or tenth graders in all comparisons. North Dallas, Pinkston, and Smith had increased percentages that met expectations for all grade and subject area comparisons.

This was accomplished in part by the focus of 2009-10 teacher training sessions which emphasized helping staff members at the eight campuses deepen their knowledge related to curriculum content, effective use of common planning time, using data to prescribe interventions for struggling students, and Principles of Learning. SLC team members also worked in close collaboration with instructional coaches to explain expectations for what should be stressed and emphasized at each SLC campus as coaches worked with teachers. Additionally, campus CILT members and administrative staff were also involved and received professional development training.

**Laying the Foundation**

LTF, a non-profit organization, provided pre-AP math, science, and English training for teachers in grades 6 through 10, and Dallas ISD required all pre-AP teachers in grades 6 through 10 to attend the LTF training. LTF sought to offer teacher training and resources that prepared students before they enrolled in rigorous high school AP courses. The program included three core components: teacher training in grades 6-10, guides and lessons, and assessments.

LTF provided face-to-face instruction for pre-AP math, science, and English teachers. Resources included model lessons and labs, whereas assessments included AP end-of-course simulations along with diagnostic questions. LTF Year 1 training was provided at W.T. White High School on June 7 - 10, 2010. Year 1, 2, and 3 training sessions were held at Ranchview High School in Carrollton from June 21 - 24, 2010.

Through grant funds, pre-AP English, math, and science teachers received “extra duty” pay to attend LTF training in June 2010. The number trained the past three summers increased from 191 in 2008 to 357 in 2009 to 474 in 2010; however, the number of 2010 participants was notably lower than the approximately 800 anticipated. The number that participated in Year 1, 2, and 3 training was 383, 88, and 3, respectively. This included 280 middle school teachers and 194 high school teachers.

**Survey Results**

The professional development evaluation team administered surveys during Spring 2010 to AC program interns, student teacher program participants, LIFT participants, and SLC teachers and staff. The purpose of the surveys were to gather intern, participant and staff perceptions of training received, program quality, and future plans.

Results of the **Dallas ISD Alternative Certification Program Intern Survey – Spring 2010** showed that the majority of interns were positive toward the AC program and district staff members that supported them. Most (98%) planned to teach in Dallas ISD, and over half (58%) intended to stay in the district five years or more.

Similarly, results of the **Dallas ISD Student Teacher Post Assessment Survey – Spring 2010** showed that the majority of student teachers were positive toward the workshops attended, the cooperating teacher, and preparation for a full-time position in the district. Over
half (60%) anticipated teaching in Dallas ISD in the future.

Dallas ISD Superintendent’s Learning Community Teacher Survey – Spring 2010 results revealed most teachers were positive toward the initiative. Overall by subject, most teachers of English (80%) and math (85%) felt they had increased their use of MyData Portal in comparison to the previous years. Seventy-eight percent of both math and English teachers “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they had deepened their knowledge of the Principals of Learning. Most importantly, math (87%), science (88%), English (76%), and social studies (78%) teachers believed the SLC content training they attended was relevant and useful.

Outcomes

Through the district’s Class Size Reduction Program, supplemental elementary teachers were hired to reduce classroom sizes on an “as needed” basis. A total of 57 teachers were hired between August 2009 and February 2010, and one position was vacant. This included 17 in the northwest learning community, 17 in the northeast learning community, 15 in the southeast learning community, and 15 in the northeast learning community. The added positions were spread over 54 district elementary campuses.

Human Resources staff used grant funds to recruit and screen teachers. Recruitment included attending recruitment events, advertising, conducting information sessions, hosting an annual job fair, screening applicants, processing candidates for H-1B visa applications, and monitoring and documenting recruitment activities. As of mid June, 168 individuals that attended one of the 2009-10 recruiting events had been hired. Staff used the Haberman Star Teacher Pre Screener to screen candidates in critical need areas. Of 128 screened between July and mid February, 94 were hired.

Grant funds were used to supplement the recruitment, training, and retention efforts of the AC Program. A total of 331 interns were involved and spread across 131 campuses during 2009-10. Most were in the district’s critical needs areas including 127 bilingual, 56 math, and 39 science interns. Staff recruited through job fairs, hotel interviews, newspaper advertisements, Career Builder, and recruitment trips. Recruitment efforts were tracked over time and focused on sites that yielded good candidates in the past. Interns participated in Dallas ISD educator preparation training, and some received credit for a three-hour TWU course as part of the program. AC staff members developed 12 training modules that were field tested during summer 2009, revised, and used in summer 2010 training. Interns were monitored and supported through an assigned AC coordinator and mentor teacher.

Professional development and technical assistance were provided at eight top priority high school campuses that were part of SLC. Teacher and principal training focused on content knowledge, effective PLCs, Principles of Learning, and data use. Core content teachers received training through University of Texas Dana Center, district instructional coaches, and other district instructional staff. Campus administrator training was an integral part of the initiative and included book studies, principal presentations, and focused learning walks. SLC staff members conducted audits twice a semester to help campuses refocus their efforts as needed.

Recommendations

In 2010-11, the evaluation should be expanded to collect perceptual data from staff members at all levels of the district related to training quality, relevance, and impact. Currently, no systemic quantitative data was available to assess staff perceptions of 2009-10 training quality. During 2010-11, systemic inter-departmental quantitative evaluation measures should be put into place so that staff have “real time” summary information overall, by instructor, by training session, and by content area.

A challenge of evaluating the Dallas ISD AC Program is that interns from a variety of AC programs complete their internships in the district. As a result, in future evaluation reports, it will be important to analyze long-term outcome data for Dallas ISD AC interns hired in the district and if possible, for teachers hired from other AC programs as well as other first-year teachers. Examples of outcome data could include district tenure, teacher satisfaction indices, and classroom effectiveness indices.

A key emphasis of the SLC initiative was to help staff members effectively analyze and use data in their planning and teaching. Central staff members developed color-coded reports that allowed staff members to quickly see how students were performing on specific objectives. Additionally, campus audits were conducted twice a semester, which provided detailed findings, held staff members accountable for implementing what had been stressed in training, and included actionable recommendations for needed improvements. Principals were debriefed at the end of each campus visit and given clear guidance on needed changes at the campus. The audits provided relevant, useful “real time” information. These efforts should be continued, and emphasis should be placed on retaining SLC campus administrators so that the improvements that occurred during the 2009-10 school year can be sustained.

For more information, see EA10-142-2, available at www.dallasisd.org/inside_disd/depts/evalacct/.