Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) received federal funds for training and recruiting for 2010-2011 through Title II, Part A as authorized under the No Child Left Behind Act, Public Law 107-110. The two-fold purpose of Title II, Part A is to increase student achievement through improved teacher and principal quality and to hold local educational agencies and schools accountable for student academic improvement.

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

Dallas ISD used grant 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), and Teacher Leadership Program (TLP). Grant activities provided through the Professional Development Department, LIFT, and TLP focused on staff training. Recruitment activities were key to class size reduction and teacher recruitment efforts, the AC and student teacher components included training and recruiting activities.

**Program Activities and Implementation**

**Professional Development Grant Activities**

The district’s Professional Development Department coordinated extensive professional development that was aligned to district goals and initiatives. The content of district professional development is supported through the content area departments, whereas the professional development department manages the operational aspects of training. Grant funds were used to support administrators through leadership institutes, Region 10 training, Region 10 principal coaching, the Administrative Support Systems to Improve School Training (ASSIST) website, and online training modules for new campus administrators. Tiered teacher training focused on the core teacher and learning process and was aligned to student needs and defined district academic goals; teacher tiers included master teachers, general teachers, and teachers that were part of the Institute Promoting Teacher Excellence (IPTE). Grant funds were also used for paraprofessional training, new teacher training, National Board Certification training and support, Campus Instructional Leadership Team (CILT) training, new teacher mentor and new teacher support team training, Spanish classes for teachers, instructional coach training, and summer writing institutes for elementary and secondary teachers. Staff members relied on the Oracle Learning Management System for course registration, planning purchases, tracking attendance, and assisting district staff members with record keeping.

The evaluators reviewed documents related to preparation and management of sites for districtwide training days. The internal document review showed that the department used a formula to determine the number of site facilitators needed based on the number of classrooms involved; however, flexibility was maintained to meet needs specific to each site and training day. Staff-to-facilitator ratios were computed to note the average number of people registered per site facilitator. Results showed that staff-to-facilitator ratios varied widely by training day and site and did not fully adhere to the department’s formula for determining the number of site facilitators needed.

**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. In 2010-11, funds were in place to hire 17 positions per learning community for a total of 68. As of early May, there were 51 teachers across 45 campuses including 16 from the southwest learning community, 14 from the northwest learning community, 11 from the northeast learning community, and 10 from the southeast learning community.

**Certified Teacher Recruitment Program**

Human Resources staff members used grant funds to recruit and screen teachers. Recruitment included attending recruitment events, advertising, conducting information sessions, screening applicants, processing candidates for H-1B visa applications, and monitoring and documenting recruitment activities. Recruitment staff members worked closely with the Dallas ISD AC Program to recruit teachers. Staff used The Haberman Star Teacher Pre Screener to screen candidates in critical need areas. In all, 89 were screened and the 89 were hired including 28 bilingual teachers, 29 math teachers, and 32 science teachers. However, 34 of those screened did not meet the district’s criteria but were hired anyway due to campus needs. Those hired in spite of not meeting criteria included 13 bilingual teachers, 10 math teachers, and 11 science teachers.

**Expansion of the Alternative Certification Program**

Grant funds were used to supplement the recruitment, training, and retention efforts of the AC Program. The
2010-11 program consisted of two tiers including the Day Program and Academy. The Day Program was limited to the district’s critical need areas of bilingual, mathematics, and science and guaranteed interns full-time employment in the district upon certification. Through evening and weekend educator preparation, the Academy included additional certification areas but no guarantee of future employment. In past years, a high percentage of Academy participants that completed the program received teaching positions in the district.

There were 312 interns in Phase 43, the 2010-11 cohort. Most (61%) were in the district’s critical need areas including 129 bilingual, 28 math, 33 science, and 1 math/science/engineering. Of the 330 2009-10 interns (Phases 41 and 42), 258 were formally certified in August 2010 and as of March 2011, 243 (94% of certified participants) were full-time teachers in the district. Due to the district hiring freeze followed by a reduction in force in spring 2011, AC spring recruitment events were cancelled, several AC staff members were laid off, and the department could no longer guarantee future jobs to incoming interns.

**Student Teacher Program**

Title II funds were used to expand the Student Teacher Program. Staff actively recruited, worked with an advisory council of university representatives, coordinated the placement of student teachers and field observers within the district, and provided training. In 2010-11, there were 272 student teachers and 877 field observers, and like last year, noticeably more were placed in elementary than secondary schools. Recruitment events included 15 presentation visits, 9 university planning visits, and 7 career day events; recruitment efforts were put on hold in January due to the district hiring freeze and future uncertainty. Training for student teachers 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).

**Leadership Initiative for Teachers**

Dallas ISD partnered with Texas Woman’s University (TWU) to provide LIFT, an 18-month leadership development program for teachers aspiring to become campus administrators. A goal was to develop a diverse pool of future campus administrators, which was accomplished. LIFT began with 18 participants in June 2009 and ended with 16 in December 2010. Upon completion of the program, 14 attained a master’s degree, 13 passed the principal Texas Examination of Educator Standards (TExES), 15 completed Instructional Leadership Development (ILD) training, and 15 finished Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) training. As of February 2011, none had moved into a campus administrator position. The district changed the direction of the program from principal certification to teacher leadership in 2010-11, so the 2009-10 cohort was the only group to complete the program.

**Teacher Leadership Program**

The district replaced LIFT with TLP, which was designed to serve a diverse group of teachers that desired to increase their leadership potential but did not wish to become campus administrators. TLP was limited to teachers that had a minimum of three years of experience and were former Dallas ISD AC interns. Through a partnership with University of Texas in Arlington (UTA), the first cohort of 15 completed 48 hours of training and received joint certification from UTA and Dallas ISD as well as three graduate hours from UTA. Due to district budget constraints, it was unclear whether TLP would continue after June.

**Survey Results**

Online evaluator-developed surveys were administered during the spring to IPTE teachers and principals as well as AC interns. Also, student teacher surveys were administered during fall and spring summative meetings. In addition to the evaluator-developed surveys, the AC and Student Teacher programs collected internal program information through a series of online surveys. The purpose of the surveys was to determine perceptions of training and support.

IPTE survey results showed that most principal respondents had communicated with teachers why they were referred to IPTE, reviewed teachers’ action plans, and provided feedback during the year. Also, the majority of principals believed that IPTE participation positively impacted teachers in the assessed areas. In contrast, 44 percent of teachers reported that they had not reviewed their action plan with a campus administrator, and 35 percent responded that they had not received administrator feedback during the year. High school IPTE teacher respondents were noticeably less positive than middle or elementary respondents about improvement in assessed areas; less than half of the high school IPTE teachers “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that participation in IPTE helped them improve their classroom management and organization skills, their instructional organization skills, or how they monitor student progress.

Summer 2010 internal online AC surveys, respondents were positive toward the TWU instructor and very positive toward the district educator preparation sessions, the AC coordinator, and the AC office staff. Results of the Dallas ISD Alternative Certification Program Intern Survey – Spring 2011 showed that the majority of interns were positive toward the AC program and district staff members that supported them. Most (93%) planned to teach in Dallas ISD, and
over half (56%) intended to stay in the district five years or more.

Student Teacher survey results were strongly positive both semesters. Results of internal online surveys as well as the evaluator-developed summative survey revealed that most student teachers were positive toward the training received, the cooperating teacher, and preparation for a full-time position in the district. Most fall (90%) and spring (75%) student teachers anticipated teaching in Dallas ISD in the future.

**Recommendations**

**Professional Development**

As noted last year, the Professional Development Department should be commended for clearly aligning core content training to the district’s strategic plan, for clearly communicating information through the *InSights* publication, for providing training that meets a wide variety of staff needs and experience levels, and for having an efficient system in place for registering and tracking the attendance of staff members and the multitude of training sessions provided.

No quantitative data was available to assess staff perceptions of training operations, quality, and relevance. Systemic quantitative evaluation measures are needed for quality control purposes so that curriculum and professional development staff members have "real time" summary information. Consider incorporating quick feedback measures such as short online surveys with one to four questions during or after a carefully selected sample of sessions to collect operational and instructional feedback.

Less than half of high school IPTE teachers indicated that participation in IPTE helped them improve their classroom management and organization skills, their instructional organization skills, or their monitoring of student progress. In addition, for all teachers combined, 44 percent indicated that they had not reviewed their action plan with a campus administrator, and 35 percent did not receive campus administrator feedback during the year. As a result, it will be important that IPTE teachers, especially at the high school level, receive increased support to make improvements in all areas, that administrators be held accountable for reviewing the action plans and providing feedback to their IPTE teachers, and that high school IPTE training be tailored to better support the needs of high school teachers.

Documentation review related to site team procedures showed wide variation in registrant-to-facilitator ratios across sites and across training days. It will be important to monitor the number of facilitators used and to have staff members try to follow the pre-set formulas as much as possible. Some variation will be necessary due to site-specific requirements or building layout. However, most likely, some training sessions could be efficiently handled with fewer facilitators.

**Class Size Reduction**

Human Resources staffing managers filled 51 of the possible 68 class size reduction positions on an as-needed basis. In future evaluations, it would be helpful to review class sizes before and after positions are added and to receive feedback from campus staff members related to the process and effectiveness of adding positions.

**Certified Teacher Recruitment**

Several teachers that were hired in critical need areas (N=34) did not meet Haberman screening criteria but were hired anyway due to campus need. Due to restricted funds in the district, it may not be worth the cost to screen applicants if all screened will be hired whether or not criteria is met. The hiring of screened teachers that did not meet criteria due to district need shows the importance of recruiting for critical need areas in spite of the hiring freeze.

AC recruitment in previous years has resulted in numerous district-trained teachers in high need areas. As a result, the Human Resources Department should review internal data to note the highest yield of qualified candidates that fill critical needs based on Human Resources general recruiting efforts versus recruitment through the AC Department. Key information should be analyzed to note the number of positions filled coupled with teachers’ tenure in the district and classroom success.

**Expansion of the Alternative Certification Program**

The AC Department should be commended for strong internal evaluation activities that included training surveys, recruitment data base information, and detailed intern information. In spite of reduced staff, it will be important to keep these measures in place so that funds can be used as efficiently as possible.

Per spring end of year questionnaire findings in 2010 and 2011, elementary interns were more positive than middle or high school interns, especially toward the TWU coursework. AC staff members should communicate the information to TWU leaders and hold TWU accountable for making the courses more useful to high school interns.

**Student Teacher Program**

The Student Teacher Department continued to collect participant data, focus on recruitment activities within all activities, and maintain strong partnerships with area universities. The internally collected information is valuable to ensure program quality, to determine perceptions of the program, and to understand students’ and universities’ future plans. These measures should be continued and reviewed on an
ongoing basis with a special emphasis on targeting students preparing to teach in critical need areas.

For more information, see EA11-142-2, available at www.dallasisd.org/inside_disd/depts/evalacct/.