Strategic Staffing in North Carolina

A Summative Review of Local and State Implementation across the Race to the Top Period

Authors:

Local—Robert Maser, Rodolfo Argueta, Brandy Parker, and Trip Stallings
The Friday Institute for Educational Innovation, North Carolina State University

State—Cassandra Davis, Ludmila Janda, and Bethany Stafford
Carolina Institute for Public Policy, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

September 2014
Acknowledgements

We would like to thank once again teachers, principals, and other representatives from the many Local Education Agencies, along with their Race to the Top Coordinators, who took time out of their very busy schedules to discuss state and local strategic staffing plans with us, review our descriptions of those plans, and entertain countless additional follow-up questions.
Table of Contents

Executive Summary ................................................................................................................................. 3
Introduction .............................................................................................................................................. 7
  State Strategic Staffing Initiative ........................................................................................................ 8
  Local Strategic Staffing Initiatives ....................................................................................................... 8
    Recruitment Support for District and School Transformation LEAs................................................. 9
    Other Federal Grants—Teacher Incentive Fund and School Improvement Grants ......................... 9
Purpose of this Report .......................................................................................................................... 9
Research Questions and Definitions ................................................................................................... 10
  Relevant Overall Research Questions for Teacher and Leader Supply and Distribution .......... 10
  Questions Specific to the State Strategic Staffing Initiative ........................................................... 10
  Questions Specific to Local-Level Strategic Staffing ........................................................................ 11
Data and Methods .................................................................................................................................. 12
  A Working Definition of Strategic Staffing ......................................................................................... 12
Data ....................................................................................................................................................... 13
  Statewide Strategic Staffing Initiative Data ......................................................................................... 13
  Local Strategic Staffing Data ............................................................................................................. 13
Methods ................................................................................................................................................ 14
  State Strategic Staffing Interview Analysis ......................................................................................... 14
  Local Strategic Staffing Data ............................................................................................................. 14
State Strategic Staffing .......................................................................................................................... 18
  Program Overview .............................................................................................................................. 18
  Implementation of the Initiative (RQ 1) .............................................................................................. 18
    Challenges to Implementation of the Initiative as a Teacher Recruitment Tool ......................... 19
  Factors Leading to Teacher Decisions to Pursue the Recruitment Incentive (RQ 2) ....................... 22
  Role of Incentives in Meeting Critical Needs for and Improving Equitable Access to Higher-Quality Teachers in Targeted Geographic Areas (RQ 3) ......................................................... 23
  Nature and Quality of the Experience for Participating Teachers (RQ 4) ........................................ 24
  Impacts of the Recruitment Incentive (RQ 5) .................................................................................... 25
    Impact on Teacher Retention ........................................................................................................... 25
    Changes in School Climate Related to the Incentive ....................................................................... 26
    Evidence of Impact on Student Outcomes ....................................................................................... 27
Local Strategic Staffing ......................................................................................................................... 29

Consortium for Educational Research and Evaluation–North Carolina
LEA-level Strategic Staffing Efforts that appear to Improve Access of Low-Performing Students to Effective Teachers (RQ 1) ........................................................................................................................................29
   Learnings from Educators Participating in Local Plans: Incentives and School Climate Matter for Recruitment and Retention ..................................................................................................................29
   Example LEAs ...........................................................................................................................................................................32
Strategic Staffing Efforts that appear to be Most Portable (RQ 2) ..................................................................................................................36
   Learnings from Educators Participating in Local Plans: Flexibility in Implementation is Key ...........................................................................................................................................................36
   Example LEAs ..............................................................................................................................................................................................................................37
Strategies for LEAs to Continue their Support for their Plans after Race to the Top (RQ 3) ...........................................................................................................................................................................................................38
   Learnings from Educators Participating in Local Plans: Make Identification of Sustainability Funding an Integral and Ongoing Part of the Plan ........................................................................................................39
   Example LEAs ........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................39
Findings and Recommendations ..................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................41
   Findings ..................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................41
   State Strategic Staffing Initiative ..................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................41
   Local Strategic Staffing Initiatives ..................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................41
   Recommendations ..................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................42
Appendix A. State Strategic Staffing Voucher ..................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................43
Appendix B. Local Strategic Staffing Data Collection Tools ..................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................47
Appendix C. LEA-Level Strategic Staffing Plans: A List ..................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................51
Appendix D. LEA-Level Incentives Plans for Strategic Staffing Plans Highlighted in Main Text ..................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................53
Appendix E. Descriptions of Strategic Staffing Plans not Highlighted in the Main Text ..................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................58
Appendix F. Race to the Top-Funded Technical Assistance for Teacher Recruitment and Retention ..................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................82
Executive Summary

Effective teachers are critical to the academic success of students, but all too often, students who struggle the most do not have access to them. Concern about low-performing, poor, and minority students’ access to effective teachers was a foundational component of the United States Department of Education’s Race to the Top (RttT) program, which encouraged state applicants to propose ways to counter this persistent trend. North Carolina’s RttT plan included several initiatives for achieving a more equitable distribution of effective educators, including support for one statewide and several locally-developed strategic staffing plans that aim to distribute an education unit’s more effective educators into its lowest-performing schools.

The State Strategic Staffing Initiative (SSSI) was designed to encourage highly-effective teachers statewide to relocate to lower-performing schools. The initiative provided ten traditional Local Education Agencies (LEAs; no charter schools were eligible) with vouchers to use as recruitment incentives at their highest-turnover schools. The annual amount of the voucher was $5,360 and could be used for tuition towards Master’s degrees related to education, student loan payments, housing, or any combination thereof. In addition, many of the individual Detailed Scopes of Work (DSWs) crafted by LEAs to demonstrate how they would use RttT funds to support RttT goals outlined strategies for developing or maintaining local strategic staffing plans.

An overriding goal of the evaluation of these plans has been to determine whether they contributed to an increase in the presence of effective teachers in low-performing schools. Specifically, the intent of this evaluation has been to:

- Examine the implementation of the state recruitment incentive;
- Identify, classify, and describe all LEA-level strategic staffing initiatives in operation across the state that support RttT goals (whether funded by RttT or by some other source);
- Provide assessments of the impact of RttT-supported staffing initiatives on outcomes related to the distribution of effective teachers in low-performing schools;
- Provide evidence for policy makers and other stakeholders that they can use to improve the design and implementation of these plans; and
- Provide recommendations for continuation, expansion, or termination of these plans at the conclusion of the RttT period.

This report assesses the impact of the state and local strategic staffing plans on moving the state as a whole, as well as individual LEAs, toward a more targeted and thoughtful distribution of their most effective educators, as well as the advisability of continuing these plans at the end of

---

1 For this report, effectiveness is broadly defined as any measure that differentiates educator impact on students.
the RttT period. The report updates the information and early conclusions drawn about the plans in two previous formative reports.²

Criteria for Identifying Comprehensive Strategic Staffing Plans

Three criteria were developed from a review of research and of extant examples of strategic staffing initiatives to aid in the identification of comprehensive strategic staffing plans. Comprehensive plans: (a) focus on low-performing schools or student populations, (b) differentiate teachers through some measure of their effectiveness, and (c) incorporate some type of incentive that is designed to increase the number of more effective teachers in low-performing schools.

Findings

State Strategic Staffing Initiative

1. Recruitment and Retention. Only 17 teachers received the recruitment incentive in 2013-14, and none of the interviewed teachers indicated that they were aware of the existence of the incentive before choosing schools. Despite indications from some administrators that it was used for recruitment purposes, there is no evidence available that the incentive actually functioned as either a recruitment or retention tool.

2. Impact. While data do not allow the Evaluation Team to form direct conclusions about the impact of the vouchers on student outcomes, teachers and principals suggested that the vouchers could be contributing indirectly in other ways, such as by improving school culture via the increased responsibilities administrators expected of their voucher recipients (including provision of support and professional development for peer teachers, as well as expectations of high-quality teaching).

3. Challenges. The primary challenge to the success of the voucher program identified by participants and implementers was a lack of communication between LEAs, schools, and teachers, although there was some indication in the third year of the initiative from teachers and LEA administrators that this problem was beginning to be addressed.

Local Strategic Staffing Initiatives

1. Reach and Diversity. Based on a review of the final versions of each LEA’s DSW, there were 21 LEAs statewide with comprehensive strategic staffing plans at the end of the RttT period—13 funded partially or wholly by RttT and eight funded entirely by another source. In addition, 49 more plans included some elements of a comprehensive plan. While there were some similarities across plans, overall the plans were diverse. LEAs invested about $76 million in RttT, local, and other federal funding in these plans across the RttT period.

2. Equitable Teacher Distribution. Incentives coupled with attention to non-monetary variables such as school climate appear to be key factors in plans that aim to increase low-achieving

students’ exposure to effective teachers. Though not feasible for all LEAs, plans with multiple avenues for teacher entry that can appeal to a broader spectrum of educators also may increase an LEA’s likelihood of more equitably distributing its most effective teachers.

3. **Portability.** Plans that leverage an LEA’s existing pool of effective teachers (rather than relying on recruitment from outside the LEA) and that allow for flexible implementation across schools in an LEA show promise for being more portable—that is, more likely to be implementable in other LEAs—than rigid plans that rely solely on costly incentive structures.

4. **Sustainability.** Strategies that may help to ease sustainability pressures include making identification of sustaining funds part of the strategic staffing plan’s ongoing implementation from the start, and considering ways to support the plan with funds that are currently earmarked for other purposes that directly relate to the strategic staffing plan.

**Recommendations**

- **Prioritize development and maintenance of a comprehensive communications plan.** Participant feedback about the implementation of state and local-level strategic staffing plans demonstrates that clear, consistent, and constant communication between implementers and teachers, as well as among implementers, is critical to the success of the recruitment and retention aspects of any staffing initiative. For example, teachers suggested that plan details be readily available on LEA websites, and that LEA- and state-level contacts be more clearly identified and more responsive to inquiries about staffing initiatives.

- **Design plans with shorter-term staffing targets—e.g., recruitment and retention of effective teachers—rather than with longer-term student achievement goals.** Recent quantitative research and early qualitative evidence from North Carolina’s state and local-level strategic staffing plans offer little evidence of a direct link between strategic staffing components (such as incentives) and improvements in student achievement, but there is growing evidence for the impact of strategic staffing on intermediate outcomes (such as recruitment and retention of effective teachers) that may have longer-term impacts on student achievement.

- **Plan for sustainability.** Even the longest-running, most robust, and most successful plans across the state struggle to maintain ongoing funding; consider pursuing multiple funding sources, and plan for the end of each funding source several years in advance.

- **Work together across school district boundaries.** Currently, there is no formal mechanism in place for LEAs to learn from each other’s experiences with the state-level strategic staffing plan and the dozens of local-level plans. The state should work with LEAs interested in developing or revising a strategic staffing plan to find ways to connect them with others across the state who can share their experiences and learnings.

- **Explore multiple plan options.** Similarly, LEAs interested in developing or revising a strategic staffing plan should consider multiple approaches and should be open to early experimentation with those approaches to support the development of an optimal plan for that LEA’s specific conditions. For example, the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System, which developed three separate programs to support local strategic staffing efforts, crafted an LEA-wide plan that first refined those programs based on field test results and then coordinated them to best meet the staffing needs of the LEA.
- Review the latest research. In addition to consulting with each other, LEAs also should stay current on constantly-updated findings about the effectiveness of new staffing strategies and work to share those findings with administrators and their human resources departments. As approaches to strategic staffing continue to expand, so, too, do data and evidence about their feasibility, sustainability, and effectiveness.
Introduction

Education experts and researchers agree that effective teachers are critical to the academic success of students, but all too often, students who struggle the most do not have access to effective teachers. Concern about the uneven access to effective teachers for low-performing, poor, and minority students was a foundational component of the United States Department of Education’s Race to the Top (RttT) program, which encouraged state applicants to propose ways in which they could work to counter this persistent trend. In response, North Carolina’s plan included several initiatives for achieving a more equitable distribution of effective educators statewide, including:

- Increasing the number of high-achieving, new college graduates teaching in North Carolina (Teach for America expansion; North Carolina Teacher Corps);
- Strengthening the development of novice teachers in the lowest-performing schools (New Teacher Support Program);
- Making further use of blended classes for students in an attempt to expand curriculum offerings and provide effective instruction when effective teachers for a subject are not available locally (Virtual Public School Blended Learning);
- Increasing the number of principals prepared to lead transformational change and improve access to high-quality instruction in high-need schools (Regional Leadership Academies); and
- Employing strategic staffing approaches to optimize the distribution of available human capital (State and Local Strategic Staffing Initiatives).

For these last initiatives, North Carolina’s RttT plan included support for three separate but related staffing approaches: a teacher incentives program based on student growth, available to educators in the state’s lowest-achieving schools; a state-level voucher program to encourage teacher movement to those lowest-performing schools; and flexibility for Local Education Agency (LEA) ³-level funding of strategic staffing efforts to strengthen their lowest-performing schools. This report—a final summative report that follows two earlier formative reports⁴—focuses on the state-level voucher plan and LEA-level strategic staffing plans. The performance incentive (which first provided school-wide bonuses for teachers in the state’s lowest-achieving schools that met annual student academic growth targets, and which now provides individual educator bonuses as well) has been addressed in more detail in other reports.⁵

³ LEA is North Carolina’s term for a traditional school district or charter school.


State Strategic Staffing Initiative

The State allocated $3.1 million for the 2011-12 through 2013-14 school years to fund recruitment vouchers for teachers who agreed to transfer into low-performing schools. Transferring teachers were to receive the voucher yearly, for the period of the RttT grant, as long as they remained in their new schools. The annual amount of the voucher was $5,360, and it could be used for tuition towards one of several education-related Master’s degrees, student loan payments, housing, or any combination thereof.

The recruitment incentive was available only to a sub-set of eligible teachers, and only certain LEAs were able to offer the voucher. In February 2011, the North Carolina State Board of Education approved a definition of teacher eligibility for the program, which specified that eligibility was limited to Career-status teachers (i.e., teachers who have successfully completed four consecutive years of teaching) with ratings at or above “Proficient” in each area of the state’s Teacher Evaluation Process (or the equivalent, for out-of-state teachers) and who have not in the previous year worked in an eligible school in the LEA into which they are transferring.

Eligible schools were selected first from the population of the lowest-achieving schools (schools with graduation rates below 60%, or the lowest 5% of conventional schools as measured by student performance). All schools in the same LEA then were grouped to reduce competition between schools within an LEA. The resulting list contained 36 LEAs, of which ten were selected based on their 3-year average turnover rate and their geographic location. Specifically, the LEA with the highest turnover in each Regional Education Service Alliance (RESA) and LEAs with a 3-year average turnover rate greater than 20% were selected. (See Appendix A for more details about the policy, a list of eligible LEAs and schools, and a map of the RESAs and eligible LEAs)

The implementation of the recruitment voucher has been limited. According to North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) estimates, the recruitment incentive was expected to reach approximately 181 teachers. To date, six teachers qualified for the voucher in 2011-12, six more qualified in 2012-13, and an additional 14 qualified for the 2013-14 school year, for a total of 26 qualified teachers. However, not all qualified teachers remained in target schools for more than one year, as discussed in greater detail in later sections of this report.

Local Strategic Staffing Initiatives

Many of the individual Detailed Scopes of Work (DSWs) crafted by LEAs outlined how they planned to use their shares of RttT funds and funds from other sources to support local-level strategic staffing plans. Following the definition established in a previous report, strategic staffing plans aim to distribute an education unit’s more effective educators into its lowest-performing schools. Ideally, these efforts support two of the four major RttT pillars: providing great teachers and leaders for every school, and focusing on turning around low-performing schools.

---

6 The career status designation was available through the 2012-13 school year; legislative changes (SL 2013-360, Section 9.6) eliminated the career status designation for school year 2013-14 and beyond.
7 Region 8 had no schools on the list of lowest-achieving; also, no large urban districts met the selection criteria.
8 For this report, in the context of local strategic staffing plans, effectiveness is broadly defined as any measure that differentiates educator impact on students.
schools. After careful review of all of the LEA DSWs toward the beginning of the RttT period (2012), the Evaluation Team identified over 70 traditional LEAs (out of 115) with some form of strategic staffing in their plans. For this final report, the Team reviewed the DSWs once again, updated the list of identified plans, and verified those identifications via surveys and interviews. While the number of LEAs with qualifying plans has changed little, there have been several changes in the details about these plans; these changes are discussed in greater detail below.

Two other efforts of note—one funded by RttT and the second by non-RttT federal funding—have supported implementation of these local strategic staffing plans in varying degrees during the RttT period.

**Recruitment Support for District and School Transformation LEAs**

North Carolina’s RttT proposal included a commitment to provide technical assistance to LEAs and their communities to help them plan and implement strategic staffing initiatives. To that end, the state selected Marstrats, a marketing and consulting firm, to serve as a technical advisor for the state’s 12 lowest-performing LEAs as they developed plans to recruit high-quality teachers.

**Other Federal Grants—Teacher Incentive Fund and School Improvement Grants**

During the RttT period, several LEAs have been recipients of one or more non-RttT, federally-funded grants that support strategic staffing efforts. One such grant, the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF), supports development and implementation of performance-based teacher and principal compensation systems in high-need schools. Compensation systems funded through this program also may provide educators with incentives to take on additional responsibilities and leadership roles. Another grant, the School Improvement Grant (SIG), is broader in scope, but some of those awarded in North Carolina include support for school-specific strategic staffing plans. While the plans developed under these two programs are not funded by RttT, they are included in this report’s descriptions of LEA-level strategic staffing efforts to ensure that the report reflects the full scope of comprehensive strategic staffing plans in place that address the state’s RttT goals.

**Purpose of this Report**

The Consortium for Educational Research and Evaluation–North Carolina (CERE–NC) has conducted the evaluation of North Carolina’s RttT initiatives. In previous reports, the roles of the RttT Evaluation Team have been to (1) document the activities of the RttT initiatives and (2) provide timely, formative data, analyses, and recommendations to help the initiative teams improve their ongoing work. The goal of the final series of reports is to (3) provide summative evaluation results to help determine whether the RttT initiatives met their goals and to inform future policy and program decisions to sustain, modify, or discontinue initiatives after the grant-funded period.

---

9 CERE–NC is a partnership of the Carolina Institute for Public Policy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Friday Institute for Educational Innovation at North Carolina State University, and the SERVE Center at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.
An overriding goal of the evaluation of the statewide and LEA-level strategic staffing plans has been to determine whether and to what extent they collectively or individually contributed to an increase in the presence of effective teachers in the lowest-performing schools in LEAs with these plans. Specifically, the intent of this evaluation has been to:

- Examine the implementation of the state recruitment incentive;
- Identify, classify, and describe all LEA-level strategic staffing initiatives in operation across the state that support RttT goals (whether funded in whole or in part by RttT, or by some other source or sources);
- Provide qualitative and, where possible, quantitative assessments of the impact of RttT-supported staffing initiatives on outcomes related to the distribution of effective teachers in low-performing schools;
- Provide evidence for policy makers and other stakeholders that they can use to improve the design and implementation of these plans; and
- Provide recommendations for continuation, expansion, or termination of these plans at the conclusion of the RttT period.

This final summative report addresses each of these goals for both the statewide and local-level strategic staffing initiatives to the extent allowable by available data.

**Research Questions and Definitions**

**Relevant Overall Research Questions for Teacher and Leader Supply and Distribution**

The strategic staffing evaluation is one of several included in the larger evaluation of all of North Carolina’s initiatives that are designed to impact the supply and distribution of effective teachers and leaders. Overarching evaluation questions guide all of the evaluations connected to this target outcome, a subset of which are relevant to the strategic staffing evaluations:

- Do performance incentives for teachers in low-performing schools have positive effects on student and teacher outcomes?
- Are students affected by these programs better off than similar students in similar schools and districts not served by these programs?
- Are these initiatives cost-effective and sustainable?
- To what extent do the initiatives meet critical needs for teachers and principals and improve equitable access to higher-quality teachers and leaders in targeted geographic and content areas?

**Questions Specific to the State Strategic Staffing Initiative**

1. Was SSSI implemented as intended? How are teachers recruited to the program? What factors limited implementation of this program, if any?

---

10 As defined by the state’s Educator Evaluation System.
2. What reasons do teachers cite for a) considering and b) finally deciding to pursue the recruitment incentive?

3. Did SSSI meet critical needs for teachers and principals to improve equitable access to higher-quality teachers and leaders in targeted geographic areas? Why or why not?

4. What is the nature and quality of the experience for teachers who receive the SSSI vouchers?

5. What are the impacts of the Recruitment Incentive? How does SSSI change the climate in eligible and participating schools? Is there any evidence of impact (either quantitative or qualitative) on student outcomes?

Questions Specific to Local-Level Strategic Staffing

The evaluation questions that govern this and previous reports were derived from application of the overarching evaluation questions to the specifics of strategic staffing. They include:

1. Which LEA-level strategic staffing efforts appear to be most effective at improving the access of low-performing students to effective teachers?

2. Which strategic staffing efforts appear to be portable (i.e., are likely to work in other LEAs/other contexts)?

3. If plans include additional ongoing costs, how can LEAs continue their support for the initiatives after the grant period ends?

To the extent allowable by extant data at the time of the completion of all final analyses (Spring 2014), all state and local strategic staffing evaluation questions are addressed in this report. Also included is a final review of the assistance provided by the RttT-funded technical advisor to selected LEAs to support their development of targeted recruitment and retention strategies.
Data and Methods

A Working Definition of Strategic Staffing

Many states and school systems implement school improvement plans that include some mix of staffing strategies, but as yet there is no commonly accepted delineation of the key elements that comprise a comprehensive strategic staffing plan. The range of uses of the term is still quite broad and is applied to simple incentive-based plans as well as to more complex, multi-tiered plans that involve reassignment of entire staff of one or more schools. However, there does appear to be an emerging set of components that collectively lend some structure to the term and inform the definition of a comprehensive strategic staffing plan that is used for this report.

The first and most common of these components is the inclusion of some sort of financial incentive to recruit educators. But incentives alone do not constitute a fully-realized strategic staffing plan. In recent years, a second common component has emerged: the linkage of incentives to specific staffing needs, such as filling vacancies in hard-to-staff subject areas, recruiting and retaining more effective teachers, and addressing deficiencies in both of those areas in high-need schools. A natural evolution of both of these components has been their inclusion in more comprehensive human resources allocation plans that are themselves embedded in larger, whole-school reform efforts. Several local human resources allocation experiments that extend beyond simple, incentive-based recruitment plans already have been developed and implemented in North Carolina. For example, an initiative in Charlotte-Mecklenburg places effective school leaders and teacher teams in schools in need of improvement,\(^{11}\) and several LEAs are recipients of federal funding that supports development of staffing plans at both the individual school and LEA levels.\(^{12}\)

It is from this more complex approach to human resources allocation—the _purposeful distribution of an education unit’s more effective educators into its lowest-performing schools_—that the criteria used to identify strategic staffing plans for the purposes of this evaluation are derived. Broader definitions exist, but this evaluation’s criteria for identifying a comprehensive strategic staffing plan are that the plan (a) focuses on low-performing schools or student populations, (b) differentiates teachers through some measure of their effectiveness, and (c) incorporates some type of incentive to increase the number of more effective teachers in high-need schools. The RttT-funded Statewide Strategic Staffing Initiative meets all three of these criteria. In addition, using these criteria has allowed the Evaluation Team to include a wide variety of local plans in this report, honoring the intent for LEAs to develop unique plans that reflect specific local needs and situations.

---

\(^{12}\) These and other plans still in operation in the state are detailed later in this report.
Data

Statewide Strategic Staffing Initiative Data

Because of the small number of voucher recipients, all data compiled for this report were collected through interviews. Using protocols developed to reflect the initiative’s formal scope of work, the interviews were conducted with eligible teachers who received the recruitment voucher, their principals, officials in their LEAs, and NCDPI staff members involved with the implementation of SSSI. For this final summative report, semi-structured and structured interviews were conducted (primarily by telephone) in October 2013 and March 2014. In total, seventeen teachers were identified as receiving or as eligible to receive the recruitment voucher during this time period. The Evaluation Team interviewed 14 of the 17 (82%) eligible teachers, 5 of the 11 (45%) principals from their corresponding schools, 4 of 4 (100%) LEA officials, and 2 of 2 (100%) NCDPI administrators. Although the RttT Evaluation Team was unable to reach every person, the findings from all groups reached saturation, providing confidence that each was a representative sample.

Due to a high teacher turnover rate of voucher recipients from the second cohort, the Team also conducted interviews with teachers who received their vouchers during the 2012-13 school year but were no longer participating in the initiative. These teachers’ perspectives were instrumental in gaining a better understanding of why teachers left both their school sites and the initiative altogether. Their feedback is included in a section below that focuses on the incentive’s influence on teacher retention.

Local Strategic Staffing Data

Financial and descriptive data. As in the previous report, the primary data sources continued to be LEA DSWs and every SIG proposal funded by the federal government in North Carolina in 2010, 2011, and 2013. Additional data on local strategic staffing plan specifics (compensation tables, eligible schools, etc.) were retrieved from individual LEA websites or were supplied by the LEAs. Many LEAs also provided information via e-mail and telephone conversations to help clarify plan details.

Survey data. Data were collected via a formal survey that was administered to representatives in every LEA originally identified as having a strategic staffing plan that met two or three of the criteria described above (n=42). The Team requested that each representative who completed the survey be an individual familiar with her or his LEA’s strategic staffing plan. The survey collected information on the reach of the strategic staffing initiative (i.e., how many schools and teachers were involved) as well as on whether the LEA planned to continue the initiative after the RttT period. A copy of the survey is provided in Appendix B.


Six teachers were eligible in the 2011-12 school year, six more were eligible in the 2012-13 school year, and an additional 14 became eligible for the 2013-14 school year, but, due to program departures, only 17 of those 26 were active during the 2013-14 school year; see Table 1, below.

No SIG grants were awarded in 2012.
In addition, a six-item survey was emailed to 11 representatives whose LEAs received a customized recruitment and retention plan designed by Marstrats, the technical advisor contracted by NCDPI to support the development of targeted recruitment and retention strategies for those LEAs. The survey items were created to elicit feedback on the perceived quality and usefulness of each LEA’s plan. Of the 11 LEA representatives, only two responded to the survey, despite several follow-up contacts. The survey is provided in Appendix B.

**Interviews and focus groups.** In addition to gathering descriptive information about all of the LEA-level strategic staffing initiatives in place across North Carolina, the Evaluation Team also conducted several focus group, individual face-to-face, and telephone interviews with teachers, school administrators, and LEA-level administrators from three representative LEAs—one large urban LEA, one small rural LEA, and one mid-sized LEA—with comprehensive strategic staffing plans. Interview protocols were designed to gather participant’s perceptions and experiences of their local staffing initiatives. LEAs in which interviews were conducted shared a common characteristic—each was implementing a plan that incorporated all three elements of this evaluation’s working definition of strategic staffing. Interviews were approximately 30 to 60 minutes in length.

**Methods**

**State Strategic Staffing Interview Analysis**

Once all interviews were conducted and notes were completed, interviewers met to discuss common themes and important insights, which then were used to inform coding of interview notes in a manner reflective of the research questions. Interviewers coded notes, reviewed them for themes, and wrote summaries for each group of participants. Several meetings were held to ensure reliable interpretation of notes across interviewers, and further communication allowed for necessary clarifications.

**Local Strategic Staffing Data**

**Detailed scope of work analysis.** Because of the wide array of LEA-level strategic staffing plans and the diversity of approaches within those plans (which hindered the ability to aggregate data), this component of the evaluation continued to rely largely on qualitative analysis, primarily through a review of every LEA’s DSW.

LEAs initially submitted DSW drafts to NCDPI for approval between Fall 2010 and early Spring 2011. In 2012, members of the Evaluation Team reviewed Sections D(1) and D(3) of every DSW (the sections most directly related to strategic staffing), as well as other sections (most often Section E(2)) when they contained relevant information.

As part of this initial review, three Team members identified DSWs that appeared to contain strategic staffing plans and then began the process of differentiating the comprehensiveness of

---

16 A twelfth LEA declined to receive a plan.
17 The Evaluation Team reviewed only DSWs from traditional LEAs; many of the components of the strategic staffing definition used for this report (which focuses broadly on optimizing distribution of effective educators across schools) are not applicable for single-school charter schools.
each plan by looking for evidence of the presence of elements reflective of the three criteria discussed above: (a) a focus on low-performing schools or student populations, (b) a focus on differentiation of teacher effectiveness, and (c) incentives in support of either or both of those criteria. Team members also noted anticipated funding sources for each plan. At least two Team members independently reviewed and coded each LEA’s DSW. Text pertinent to the three strategic staffing criteria was highlighted and extracted for analysis.

Many LEAs continued to update and modify their DSWs through 2013. As a result of these revisions, details about strategic staffing plans in each LEA often changed, sometimes significantly; therefore, each revised DSW again was reviewed and re-coded by the Evaluation Team in late Spring 2012, and for a third time in Summer 2013.

After completion of the second and third rounds of coding, results for each DSW were compared to identify discrepancies between each Team member’s coding results. In situations in which there was (a) a disagreement about funding sources, or (b) a difference or differences in codes assigned by coders, all three raters met to re-read the DSW in question and mutually agree on the final appropriate coding. Most disagreements stemmed from nuanced interpretations of DSW text.

The Team assigned the first code—“Focus on High-Need Schools”—to any plan that included indications of high need based on school-level or whole grade-level student or teacher data, but not to plans in which high need was defined in terms of subject-area teacher shortages.

The Team assigned the second code—“Focus on Effective Teaching”—very broadly, applying it to plans that included qualitative (e.g., results on teacher evaluation instruments) as well as quantitative (e.g., teacher value-added estimations) assessments of effectiveness. The code was not assigned, however, to plans with a focus on “highly qualified” educators, since “highly qualified” typically refers to educator credentials only and not to educator effectiveness, which typically refers to impact on student growth and achievement.

The Team assigned the “Incentives” code whenever there was some indication in a plan that incentives were tied to at least one of the other two strategic staffing criteria (e.g., when an incentive was tied to a teacher’s move to a low-performing school, but not when an incentive was available for all schools in an LEA, regardless of school need). Table 1 (following page) includes examples of plan elements for each coding category.

After finalizing codes for the second round based on review of the DSWs, the Team then conducted a verification procedure during which every LEA whose DSW received all three codes was contacted to confirm the coding and to gather more information about the plans described in the DSWs. Several codings were amended to reflect the detailed information gathered during this verification process. After the third round of coding, if the Team was unable to reach consensus on interpretation of an LEA’s new or modified plan, a representative

---

18 Many of the DSWs indicated that their strategic staffing plans would be funded by one of two non-RtT federal programs: the SIG program and the TIF program (both described in greater detail above). To ensure that this report reflected the full scope of comprehensive strategic staffing plans that addressed the state’s RtT goals, the Team repeated the entire review process for each of the 61 SIG proposals submitted by traditional LEAs (24 in 2010, 17 in 2011, and 20 in 2013), as well as for all TIF-funded programs then in operation.
from each LEA in question was contacted for further information. For this final round of coding, the Team contacted 20 LEAs with follow-up questions.

Table 1. Summary of Variations in Operationalization of Strategic Staffing Elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Approaches to Operationalization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Focus on High-Need Schools                         | School identification based on:  
|                                                   |   - Measures of student socioeconomic characteristics  
|                                                   |   - Size of special needs population  
|                                                   |   - Teacher turnover rates  
|                                                   |   - NC ABCs Performance Composites and other measures of student achievement and/or growth  
|                                                   |   - Judicial mandate  |
| Focus on Differentiation of Educator Effectiveness | Differentiation based on:  
|                                                   |   - Student performance and/or growth (via value-added modeling or some other method)  
|                                                   |   - Formal and informal educator evaluations  
|                                                   |   - Voluntary participation in optional school programs  
|                                                   |   - Other qualitative measures (e.g., evidence of leadership, results of mandatory re-application for positions, etc.)  |
| Incentives in Support of High-Need School and Teacher Differentiation Foci | Individual incentives based on:  
|                                                   |   - Actions  
|                                                   |     o Development of exemplary teaching materials  
|                                                   |     o Willingness to move to a within-LEA target school  
|                                                   |     o Willingness to take on leadership roles  
|                                                   |     o Willingness to take on challenging teaching assignments  
|                                                   |   - Performance  
|                                                   |     o Student performance and/or growth  
|                                                   |     o Educator evaluation results  
|                                                   | Other incentives:  
|                                                   |   - Grade- and school-wide incentives based on grade-level or school-wide student performance and/or growth (including incentives for non-certified staff)  
|                                                   |   - Incentives in support of targeted professional development and additional coursework  
|                                                   |   - Recruitment incentives  
|                                                   |   - Retention incentives  
|                                                   |   - Non-financial incentives (e.g., housing, equipment, etc.)  |

For its first report, the Team developed narratives of each comprehensive plan, along with illustrative tables for some of the more complex plans, and shared these narratives and tables with the LEAs for confirmation of their accuracy. Most LEAs engaged in this verification process, but two LEAs did not respond to requests for confirmation; plans for these LEAs were
noted as being “not confirmed” in the text of that report. For this final report, narratives were updated to reflect new information and changes in plans between 2012 and 2013.

Based on the final review of the LEA DSWs and SIG proposals using the criteria outlined above, there were 21 LEAs at the end of the RttT period with plans that exhibited characteristics of all three criteria—13 funded partially or wholly by RttT and eight funded entirely by another source. This review also identified plans that included two of these components, as well as those that included only one component (either a focus on low-performing schools or on distribution of effective teachers; incentive-only plans with no clear focus on either low-performing schools or distribution of teachers were not included in the formal count, as they could not be tied directly to a goal related to equitable teacher distribution). The Evaluation Team identified 49 plans that met these less stringent criteria (Figure 1, following page, and Appendices C through E).

Also based on this final review, the Team estimated that, over the four years of the RttT period, LEAs invested about $76 million in RttT, local, and other federal funding in these plans.

Local staffing plan survey data analysis. The survey was administered online in October 2013 and was closed in February 2014. A total of 30 LEAs responded to the survey (response rate=71%), though many of these responses were incomplete. Several LEAs submitted multiple incomplete responses that together corresponded to a complete response; data for those LEAs were combined to create one response per LEA. For LEA responses that were incomplete, attempts were made to contact an LEA representative (via email and phone) for more information. All survey data were used to inform the individual LEA narratives included in this report. The following LEAs did not respond to the survey or to follow-up contacts by the Team: Ashe, Lincoln, Stanly, Washington, and Wilson.

Analysis of interview and focus group data. After each audio recording was transcribed, all transcripts were coded by an Evaluation Team member. A total of 14 transcripts were analyzed. Team members coded the data using a coding scheme comprised of three basic themes (effective distribution of teachers; plan portability; sustainability of plan) that reflect the local strategic staffing evaluation questions approved for this evaluation. After coding was complete, one Team member consolidated the quotes from each theme and integrated the data into the narratives.

Analysis of services provided by the technical advisor. The results of the focus group, coding, and survey analyses indicated that, while most of the LEAs served by the RttT-funded technical advisor did develop local strategic staffing plans, there were few direct connections between those plans and the services provided by the technical advisor. As a result, analysis of those services has not been incorporated into this report’s main text but instead is included in an Appendix (Appendix F). Though only a limited number of responses were received for the survey of the work of the technical advisor (n=2 of 11), all submitted feedback was summarized and included in this analysis. LEAs that received services from the technical advisor are indicated in Figure 1 (following page).
Figure 1. LEA-Level Strategic Staffing Plans

Note: Plans with incentives only (no clear linkage to supporting high-need schools or to differentiating teachers by effectiveness) are not included.
State Strategic Staffing

Program Overview

The purpose of this section of this summative evaluation report is to investigate the impacts and effectiveness of the State Strategic Staffing Initiative (SSSI) during its third year of implementation. The SSSI is a program that recruits and relocates highly-qualified teachers to the lowest-performing schools across North Carolina. The initiative’s goal is to enhance equality of educational opportunity for students in hard-to-staff areas, with the ultimate goal of increasing student performance in these areas.

A total of 26 teachers received the incentive across all three years of program implementation (Table 2). For Table 2, “participating teachers” is defined as both teachers new to the voucher and teachers who were retained from a previous year. In some cases, a participant received the recruitment incentive across cohort years. As the table illustrates, the third cohort represents the largest group of voucher recipients, comprising over half of the sample. The second cohort had the highest teacher turnover rate at 70%, with 7 teachers not returning to teach during the third cohort year. It is important to note that, of the 14 teachers who were interviewed, 100% of them were not aware of the initiative prior to moving to the eligible school.

**Table 2. Teacher Incentives and Retention across Cohorts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>Participating Teachers</th>
<th>New to Program This School Year</th>
<th>Teachers Who Left before Following Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Cohort (2011-2012)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; Cohort (2012-2013)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7 (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3&lt;sup&gt;rd&lt;/sup&gt; Cohort (2013-2014)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>n/a*</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *Some participants received the incentive across cohorts and thus a total was not calculated

Implementation of the Initiative (RQ 1)

In order for a teacher to qualify for this recruitment incentive, she or he had to a) be a career-status teacher (i.e., had to have completed three years of teaching, b) have a “Proficient” rating or better in each category on the North Carolina Educator Evaluation System, and c) not have taught in an eligible school in the prior year. The program was funded to support 181 teachers for three years each (see Table A1, Appendix A), but to date only 26 teachers (14% of the anticipated number of participants) have received the incentive, and none for all three years.

---

19 Interestingly, two teachers interviewed for this report received the incentive for the first time during the 2013-14 school year but were currently in their second year of teaching at an eligible school, even though, based on the initiative’s criteria, they should no longer have been eligible.
Challenges to Implementation of the Initiative as a Teacher Recruitment Tool

Voucher recipients commented most frequently on their lack of awareness of the incentive. Of the 21 teachers interviewed from the second and third cohorts for this report and the previous report, none of the participants knew about the incentive prior to moving to an eligible school. Thus, the incentive did not appear to function as an effective recruitment tool that encouraged highly-effective teachers to teach at eligible schools.

Largely corroborating claims from every participating teacher that none were aware of the incentive before taking a position at an eligible school, only two principals indicated that they used the incentive as a recruitment tool, with most indicating that the presence of the incentive did not change their recruitment strategies from previous years. They cited teaching fairs, webinars, relationships with universities, and use of their human resource departments as their primary methods for reaching out to highly-effective teachers. One principal stated, “I don’t think [teachers] know about [the recruitment incentive], honestly. It has not been articulated to them well.” In agreement, another principal stated, “I don’t know if teachers know if this money is out there. At the end of this conversation, I have three positions that are available and if people knew if this money was out there then maybe I could recruit more qualified teachers.”

In contrast to principal and teacher perceptions of the use of the incentive as a recruitment tool, LEA officials were more likely to report that their LEAs instituted an aggressive recruitment strategy specifically tied to the initiative in addition to using several traditional recruitment strategies; they also indicated that their LEAs placed a high emphasis on details about the incentive to increase awareness. One LEA official stated, “During the job fairs, we provide [candidates] with a list of incentives.” Another LEA official mentioned using webinars to inform teachers and principals about the incentive. She stated:

[When the first message [about the incentive] came out, it was unclear[, so we] got clear information on the criteria. Then we took the same webinar and spread it out to the principals. We sent it to the principals and made sure they were clear before we met with other teachers.

One LEA official criticized schools for not fully utilizing the incentive. She stated, “Great recruiting tool. If they all had worked together to make sure they used it to the fullest, they might have seen more of an impact.”

Participants and principals articulated three primary challenges to the successful implementation of the incentives program as a recruitment tool: poor communication; the incentive’s restrictive selection criteria; and difficulties inherent in trying to recruit teachers to rural areas.

Communication. Principals placed some of the responsibility for the underutilization of the incentive on poor communication from both LEA- and state-level personnel, not only with potential recruits but also with eligible teachers after they accepted positions. Several principals reported that their teachers had difficulty reaching the LEA office with their inquiries. One principal stated that he experienced long delays waiting for the LEA to address questions about the incentive. Another principal indicated that she was unable to share her input with the human resources department regarding the incentive. She recommended allowing principals to have
more input in the recruitment process, especially via open communication with their human resources departments. Finally, one principal noted, “[the LEA should provide] more information about . . . possible candidates. [The LEA should be] more cognizant of schools like this one under Race to the Top and knowing whom the best teachers are, based on the information.”

Teachers also indicated that poor dissemination of information resulted in confusion for qualified teachers, thereby lowering participation rates. One teacher made numerous phone calls to a human resources department in order to obtain additional information; however, she reported that it was very difficult to find someone who could answer her questions. Another teacher stated that the only information she received was from a short email:

That was pretty much it. It was not advertised and I had to do my own research. To be honest, I have questions; I did not receive the incentive last year. If the information [about eligibility] is accurate, I don’t know why.

Six teachers stated that the overall process was unclear. One teacher stated, “I learned about it mid-year but the details were fuzzy. It did not become a reality or tangible incentive until I was told that I would receive the bonus last month.”

Teachers and principals alike also argued that the incentive was not advertised enough. Several teachers stated that they were unable to find any information about the initiative on LEA websites. Another teacher voiced her concern that a lack of advertisement led to many qualified teachers being unaware of the recruitment initiative. One teacher shared a similar sentiment:

I knew nothing about it when I was hired to come work here. And I haven’t heard anything about it. That is key, whenever they post the position online, applicants can qualify for a bonus. . . . At the school level, I think principals could share this information, I am thinking about other individuals who may qualify. It makes me wonder if everyone who qualifies for it has received it. I am still confused and I don’t know the criteria.

It is important to note, however, that three teachers described the process of getting details about the initiative after they were hired differently and said that information about the incentive was clear and “easily understandable.” This was the first time across the three years of the initiative that any teachers indicated that the process for gaining the incentive was clear, which may illustrate that communication from the state and participating LEAs to teachers—at least to those deemed eligible after hire—has improved over time. One teacher described the process in this way:

First, I received a phone call from an HR [representative who] then told me about the process. She told me that I would qualify. She told me that she would send me an email about all of the documentation that I would need to apply. The process was clearly defined for me. It was clear for me. Then she said that there was a meeting that I could attend if I had questions about the process.
Similarly, LEA officials were more likely to claim that communication was successfully disseminated to schools and teachers. One LEA official shared his human resource department’s success in disseminating information to principals:

    We’ve had pretty good success with getting that information out to principals. Our HR department did do some checking to see who was eligible in looking at the criteria and then going through to see who was eligible, then those principals were asked to pass that information along to the teachers.

Another LEA official reported that his LEA conducted webinars for principals to help disseminate information about the recruitment initiative. He described this process as a way to ensure that principals were clear about the message before discussing the initiative with their teachers.

In addition to the positive perception the LEA officials shared about their dissemination processes, the officials also reported using what they deemed to be effective advertising methods to reach eligible teachers. They started advertising the recruitment incentive at job fairs and during the hiring process for eligible teachers. It was through this process, they claimed, that eligible teachers were identified and recruited to their neediest schools.

Although LEA officials generally were positive about their dissemination processes, the majority of LEA officials did admit that there were issues with communication, which they attributed to NCDPI. Overall, LEA officials concluded that the success of future initiatives would depend on improved communication from NCDPI to their offices. One LEA official described being overwhelmed by the entire RttT initiative. She stated:

    It seems to have almost gotten lost in all the RttT things to do. The first year especially, I don’t know how much the opportunity was taken advantage of. I feel like it got lost in the shuffle. This was an initiative we could have done a better job in working with the LEAs to use it as a recruitment tool. As an RttT Coordinator, I didn’t hear of it.

Participants provided suggestions for improving communication moving forward. One LEA representative suggested sending communication to curriculum leaders as well as to human resources and finance departments:

    A lot of that information typically goes to human resources and to finance. My only suggestion would be to also send that to curriculum leaders. Very often they are the ones in direct communication with the principals about a variety of issues so that the more people can receive the general information the better the communication efforts will be.

Selection Criteria. In addition to communication being a barrier in implementation, several participants said that the incentive selection criteria were not broad enough. Participants indicated that the specifications for eligible schools and teachers should have been altered in order to meet greater need. For example, LEA officials and one NCDPI representative agreed that it was a disadvantage that the recruitment incentive did not consider out-of-state or beginning teachers. LEA officials also felt that the recruitment initiative should have been available to more high-needs schools. One LEA representative stated:
We have other schools. . . . I understand that these schools were identified under RttT, I understand that there was a limitation to the schools identified, but we have other high-needs schools that it would be beneficial to disperse that money in a different way.

**Rurality.** Finally, the last major barrier to successful implementation was identified as the ability to recruit effective teachers to rural areas. Participants agreed that recruiting teachers in general to rural schools is difficult, but coupling that with a high-needs environment makes employing effective teachers even more difficult, regardless of the presence of an incentive. One NCDPI representative stated:

> When you think of rural areas, it is hard to get teachers to move to these areas. It is hard to get a family to move and you can’t find employment and reasons why it would be a good thing for them to all move to the rural community. . . . You have to think about a spouse and have to think about these other needs. . . . [Y]ou have to think [about] more than just the teachers.

One teacher expressed a similar sentiment:

> I think that it is a nice bonus, but it is not incentive enough for a teacher to devote her/himself to a high-risk school. It takes a special type of teacher to be willing to work in such conditions and with such students, and to the right type of teacher. . . . that is a reward within itself.

**Factors Leading to Teacher Decisions to Pursue the Recruitment Incentive (RQ 2)**

The Evaluation Team was unable to answer definitively the evaluation question about teachers’ reasons for pursuing the incentive, given that none of the voucher recipients indicated moving to an eligible school because of the incentive. Participants did, however, report personal reasons for transitioning to their new school environments that may be useful as the state and local LEAs consider ways to attract more teachers to those schools. Nine teachers who began teaching in one of the eligible schools during the 2013-14 school year mentioned reasons such as a change in a spouse’s employment location, a desire to return to a school in which they had previously taught or at which they had previously attended, and a desire to live closer to family members.

Teachers stated that the incentive was attractive; however, they were apprehensive about commenting on its effectiveness, since none of them moved because of the voucher. Overall, teachers agreed that the incentive met their monetary needs, and several indicated that, hypothetically, they might move to an eligible school for an incentive, especially if, like the current incentive, the money could be used toward a Master’s degree, housing, or payments on student loans. In contrast, four teachers felt that the incentive might not be large enough to attract teachers to high-needs schools, and teachers in one LEA indicated that the amount received was lower than expected. They reported that their incentives were taxed higher than those in neighboring counties, resulting in the value of the incentive dropping by almost 2,000 dollars. One teacher stated:

> Other counties are matching the retirement for their teachers and paying their portion of social security, [but this] county is not, and they took that away even before it got to the
teachers. My recommendation is that they explain that in the beginning before the teacher takes the position, or they find the funds to match the funds.

One teacher spoke about creating an incentive that met both monetary and personal needs. He stated, “No, I do not think [the voucher] is good enough, but I think it is a good start. If I am being interviewed for a job, that in itself is going to drive me to a school. Either more resources or more money, complimentary vacation days, mileage, something.” Another participant commented that money would not have been a factor in choosing his school anyway, because he already had a desire to teach at this particular school:

Yes, I really don’t feel that if I had known about it that that was my other reason for coming. That is just a part of the reason. I have no intentions of leaving because thinking of just the funds. I have other reasons why I would want to work in this county. I don’t think that a person would choose to come to this county because of the voucher.

Overall, teachers indicated that they accepted the incentive because a) it was a nice bonus and b) it validated their ability to teach high-needs students. One participant expressed that receiving the incentive provided confirmation that he was a good teacher:

Of course monetary gain, but also [the incentive] verified for me that I was a really good teacher. At this district there was not a local supplement. When they told me that I would receive an incentive, it was validation that I am a good teacher.

Another teacher echoed those sentiments: “I felt that I was deserving of the bonus . . . [because] I impacted classrooms.” That is, she believed that her hard work and dedication to students were proof enough that she deserved an incentive.

Role of Incentives in Meeting Critical Needs for and Improving Equitable Access to Higher-Quality Teachers in Targeted Geographic Areas (RQ 3)

As indicated above in the section on recruitment, interview data from NCDPI administrators, LEA officials, principals, and teachers revealed conflicting views regarding whether the incentive helped to meet critical needs for eligible schools. Some argued that the incentive assisted them in bringing in high-quality teachers to the targeted LEAs, while others noted that the voucher did not help to counter high teacher turnover rates. Overall, interviewees concluded that, at best, the incentive helped only some high-needs schools meet particular needs.

Principals and LEA officials indicated that the teachers impacted by the initiative were indeed of high quality, which ultimately created more successful learning environments. Four principals noticed positive changes in students and argued that the voucher-supported teachers helped improve their achievement. One principal described his voucher-supported teachers as having the “right stuff” to be effective in his school. He stated, “They don’t just have the title ‘highly-qualified,’ they [also] have the grit. They are teachers with advanced degrees; they have a track record for improving student achievement. They persevered and go above and beyond.”

Officials and principals in other LEAs were most critical of the program’s failure to provide teachers with the incentive monies to which they were entitled. One principal stated that he
recruited several teachers to his school, but later discovered that these teachers never received the incentive. Since his teachers never received the incentive, they transferred to another school. He stated:

Four people were supposed to receive the incentive and only one has received the money. We have been having these questions ongoing since the beginning of this process. I spoke with [NCDPI official] and with the Instructional Coaches. I was told by the former coach, about two years ago, that there was additional funding for people to come to this school. We found that none of our people could receive our funding. This made me look like a fool because my integrity was shot. Somehow one person did receive his funding. It’s been messy since they are still waiting for their money.

**Nature and Quality of the Experience for Participating Teachers (RQ 4)**

Overall, teachers characterized the quality of their experiences in their new schools as positive, primarily because they were treated as knowledgeable leaders who their peers sought out for help. However, some teachers noted that their experiences were difficult because they had to adjust to new school cultures while simultaneously handling self-imposed pressure to improve student achievement.

For three of the teachers, adjusting to a new school culture was not challenging, since they had taught in similar high-needs schools in the past and were used to teaching in schools that lacked resources and funding. On the other hand, three other teachers spoke of their difficulty in adjusting to the culture of their new school. One teacher described her transition to a new school as “stressful” and “challenging,” and another teacher stated that, although the school established a culture of high expectations, there was often inadequate planning time and a lack of flexibility to truly meet that objective. One teacher noted a lack of collaborative relationships amongst seasoned and newer teachers. She argued that her current working conditions likely would cause people to leave, including herself. She stated, “The older teachers give the newer teachers a hard time. [Newer teachers] who come in from outside the county, they are floored because of what they encounter, so regardless of the money I wouldn’t stay here.”

In addition to reflecting on the challenges of integrating into their new school environments, teachers also discussed integration into their new classrooms. While most teachers (ten) reported that they believed that their moves led to an increased ability to deliver high-quality instruction, two teachers expressed frustration about their inability to reach students due to their students’ lack of on-grade fundamentals. One teacher stated:

My students are coming to me with virtually no foundation. If they got a bit of a foundation at the elementary level, it’s a crumbling foundation; it wasn’t very much of a solid foundation. There is stuff that I used to teach when I taught second grade that I am now having to teach at a seventh grade level because it was never taught to them. Stuff that they should have learned last year under the new curriculum, they’ve never been taught.

Also, most recipients reported that their schools’ expectations for them to take on increased leadership responsibilities affected their experiences in positive ways, with several indicating
that they were viewed by their colleagues as knowledgeable resources for supporting students’ needs. Specifics about the nature of these leadership roles are included in the next section.

**Impacts of the Recruitment Incentive (RQ 5)**

Since the actual number of voucher recipients did not approach the anticipated number of participants, and since participants’ decisions to move to eligible schools did not appear to be incentivized by the voucher, it is difficult to determine the incentive’s impact. With a high teacher turnover rate in previous cohorts, it appears that the incentive did not impact teacher retention. However, teachers, principals and LEA officials all indicated that the incentive did impact school climate, both positively and negatively, and that it may have had an indirect impact on student achievement.

**Impact on Teacher Retention**

As noted above, the incentive did not appear to have an impact on teacher retention at eligible schools. Only three of ten voucher recipients from the second cohort received the incentive again in the third cohort year, and only two of those remained at their original school sites. One NCDPI administrator, two LEA officials, and three teachers all expressed their belief that one of the greatest flaws of the initiative was that it was not able to address teacher retention. One LEA official stated that the “quality of teachers has shifted, and that part has been met, [but] getting them here is one thing and keeping them here is another. [The incentive] is not enough.” Another LEA official added:

> [Our targeted school] struggle[s] with teacher retention for varied reasons. Where they are positioned, they are located about 30 minutes down the road from [an urban LEA], which has a larger local supplement. In [this] small town, there’s not very much to do. They recruit a lot of young people and they discover there’s not very much to do. Sometimes they go to counties where there are more after-hour activities.

Echoing the remarks of LEA officials, one teacher stated:

> It has to be more than just a recruitment incentive. Many times people see recruitment [and think,] “Oh, I can get this.” They will go there and then not even realizing what they are getting into and they are gone. It needs to be more than just a recruitment incentive; it needs to be [a] recruitment and retention incentive. Because the state needs to find a way to keep the teachers, because right now they are not keeping the good ones.

Teachers who formerly received the voucher but have since moved out of eligible schools suggested several options that they believe could have encouraged them to remain at their eligible schools, including additional incentives for retention, improvements to teaching resources, improvements in behavior modifications for struggling students, and class size reduction. One former teacher said that the reason she chose to leave was because she never felt that she could meld into her new school’s culture. She added that her school created teaching barriers that prevented flexibility and freedom: “There is more expected but not enough planning time to implement everything that is expected.”
The two recipients who remained at their eligible schools for a second year stated that the incentive had no direct impact on their decisions to remain there. These individuals indicated that it was a personal choice for them to continue teaching at an eligible school. As one teacher put it: “I have always chosen to teach at at-risk schools. [The incentive] was just an extra.”

Changes in School Climate Related to the Incentive

Although the voucher did not incentivize teachers to move to eligible schools, teachers, principals, and LEA officials all indicated that the presence of the incentive led to changes—primarily positive but also negative—in the culture of the eligible schools. Principals and teachers alike indicated an improvement in school climate due to increased professional development opportunities for teachers that were directly related to the presence of voucher-supported teachers. One principal stated:

[My voucher recipient is] highly tech-savvy. He is a leader in the fifth grade PLC [professional learning community] and leads integrating technology in his classroom. . . . He supports other teachers and helps them look at their lesson plans, doesn’t mind going above and beyond to share with the other teachers.

Several voucher recipients spoke about the support they provided for their colleagues through both formal and informal professional development. One voucher recipient characterized the support in this way:

Generally, teachers come in and view my classroom. I give them more [professional development], I am able to give them advice. I think I made a huge impact on my students and teachers. We are doing well; a lot of other students are wanting to learn the same techniques in [their] classroom.

More specifically, one participant stated that other teachers consulted her about classroom management, which she estimated impacted the entire school culture, and not just her classroom. Another participant conducted meetings with colleagues on a weekly basis in order to encourage collaboration with a goal of improving student outcomes throughout the school. Two teachers brought expertise in the area of special education and were able to help educate teachers on Individualized Education Plans, lesson planning, and testing accommodations, and a third described how she trained teachers about inclusive education for students who were identified as academically or intellectually gifted (AIG):

I do a lot of PD as far as the AIG goes and helping the teacher learn the characteristics for an AIG student and the importance of enrichment. Not just giving them more but giving them a deeper depth and giving them real-life lessons with the AIG students.

Finally, other teachers explained how they and supported their colleagues by sharing strategies for improving literacy and by delivering information on technology and teaching skills:

One thing is that by being an employee at this school, I think I am bringing in 25 years of experience into the school. . . . I integrate a lot of technology in my classroom. I think my
students benefit from that and I take PD on technology. I also support my staff. . . 
[W]hen we have our small meetings, I do collaborate a lot in those meetings.

As indicated in the previous section, another area in which participants identified positive impacts on climate was school leadership. As one participant noted:

I have joined the school leadership team, I have led writing workshops for the county, and I have participated in professional development workshops that have required me to train the faculty at my new school. As it is, I have become a leader at my school, have fostered friendships and relationships among co-workers and students, and I have become a part of the community.

In contrast, a few principals and LEA officials argued that the incentive created a negative climate by incentivizing new teachers and ignoring the veteran teachers who had been successful in the schooling environment. One LEA official shared that she explained to her staff that, according to the incentive guidelines, only “highly-qualified teachers” who moved into a targeted school were eligible. For her, it was difficult telling the seasoned teachers who worked in her eligible school that, although they performed well, they did not qualify for the incentive. She stated, “When we talk about school culture and climate, and some teachers don’t understand how I can give one teacher something and not another, like someone who has been there for one month versus 16 years, money causes problems.” Another principal addressed that the incentive created an unfair and obvious tension between her new and veteran teachers.

Evidence of Impact on Student Outcomes

Given that participating teachers did not move to their schools because of the incentive, any impact on student outcomes cannot be attributed directly to the incentive. However, some LEA officials theorized that, while teachers did not move because of the incentive, the incentive may have helped them feel supported in their teaching. One stated, “When you have an opportunity to hold onto successful teachers and reward that success in this financial way, it has a direct impact on student performance.” Another was more hesitant, however, stating that it was premature and challenging to assess whether student outcomes were impacted by the incentive.

Principals were more positive in their anecdotal assessments of the impact of the incentive on student outcomes. According to four principals, the incentive impacted students by giving them the ability to acquire engaging and highly-skilled teachers. One principal stated, “[the incentive] had a great impact. I was able to hire high-qualified teachers who are familiar with North Carolina and able to come in and move students to the next level.” Another principal agreed, contending that the incentive allowed him to bring in the right person to meet the needs of his students. In no cases, however, did principals provide clear examples of specific student outcomes, offering instead only a general appreciation of the incentive.

The voucher recipients themselves spoke of their perceptions of both improvement and stagnation in student outcomes. Of those who thought student outcomes had improved, one indicated that she believed that there was quantitative evidence of improved student outcomes, saying her class was the reason her school had shown growth in the previous year. Another participant stated that she was able to maintain higher expectations for her students, due to her
past teaching experiences, implying that those expectations would translate into concrete student gains. Although several teachers believed that they positively impacted student achievement, none of the participants were able to provide data to support those beliefs.

Two participants sensed stagnation in their students’ achievement due to their inability to reach their highest-needs students. One teacher commented that her population of students previously had experienced high teacher turnover, resulting in students who expected teachers to leave and therefore were less likely to work hard. She stated that these “students are used to people not staying with them,” and that some of her students were instructed by five different teachers for the same subject in the previous year.

Overall, teachers and principals provided some anecdotal evidence of recipients’ impacts on student outcomes, but quantifiable evidence was limited, and LEA- and state-level administrators were more hesitant about the impact of the incentive on student outcomes.
Local Strategic Staffing

This section addresses the three questions that guided the evaluation of the LEA-level strategic staffing efforts: 1. Which LEA-level strategic staffing efforts appear to be most effective at improving the access of low-performing students to effective teachers?; 2. Which strategic staffing efforts appear to be portable (i.e., are likely to work in other LEAs/other contexts)?; and 3. If plans include additional ongoing costs, how can LEAs continue their support for the initiatives after the grant period ends? Interview and focus group data gathered from teachers and administrators in three representative LEAs with comprehensive local strategic staffing plans supplement descriptions of selected local plans that contain elements that correspond to each evaluation question’s area of focus.

**LEA-level Strategic Staffing Efforts that appear to Improve Access of Low-Performing Students to Effective Teachers (RQ 1)**

Beyond relying on recruitment of talent external to the LEA, an LEA can improve its low-performing students’ access to effective teachers either by supporting the development of all teachers currently employed by the LEA or by increasing the number of its most effective teachers who work in its low-performing schools. The first option is possible through targeted professional development, coaching, and other training. For the second option, the challenge for LEAs is to create effective staffing strategies that not only influence teachers to relocate to targeted schools but also differentiate teachers by some measure of effectiveness and support the long-term retention of identified teachers in those targeted schools. This first section explores elements of current strategies in North Carolina that show promise for effectively accomplishing this three-pronged task.

**Learnings from Educators Participating in Local Plans: Incentives and School Climate Matter for Recruitment and Retention**

There is little research evidence to support a direct connection between incentive pay in isolation and changes in student performance. However—and despite the experiences of the recipients of the state-level strategic staffing voucher—evidence from several focus groups of teachers who participated in three local comprehensive strategic staffing initiatives suggests that incentives may, indeed, matter—at least in some cases—when it comes to a teacher’s decisions to move to and then stay in a lower-performing school. More so than any other aspects of their LEAs’ comprehensive plans, focus group participants focused on the incentive elements of those plans, 

---

20 See, for example, the review of the research literature on incentives in the Evaluation Team’s *Race to the Top Performance Incentives in North Carolina: A Summative Report* (forthcoming; will be posted at [http://cerenc.org/rttt-evaluation/teacher-and-principal-effectiveness/](http://cerenc.org/rttt-evaluation/teacher-and-principal-effectiveness/) by Fall 2014). It should be noted, however, that one recent study not cited in that report (Glazerman, S., A. Protik, B. Teh, J. Bruch, J. Max. (2013). *Transfer Incentives for High-Performing Teachers: Final Results from a Multisite Experiment* (NCEE 2014-4003). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.) did cite evidence of statistically significant impacts not only on teacher recruitment and retention but also on student outcomes from a targeted strategic staffing plan introduced across seven different states. The incentive amount for this plan was $20,000 over two years.
and their feedback helps to illustrate both the value and limitations of incentives linked to performance, recruitment, and retention.

**Recruitment and retention incentives.** Principals and teachers commented on the importance of recruitment and retention bonuses for attracting highly-effective teachers to—and then retaining them in—their LEAs’ highest-need schools:

> I just know that the thousand dollar sign-on bonus for beginning teachers or first-year teachers has been a godsend for me as someone who’s trying to staff a school with teachers who . . . really want to come in and help make a difference. That retention part that we added in really was a godsend this past year for me . . . . I have great teachers here, I have wonderful teachers here. They could go somewhere else in this school system and teach and not be distracted by some of the culture and some of the things that we work with in this school . . . and some of the behavioral issues and the poverty issues and the things that we work with here. So that incentive pay does help to keep them. [Principal]

> [S]everal of the teachers who were not beginning teachers—who are maybe mid-career teachers who have been here for three, four, five, six years—they were very happy to see that retention bonus put in there. I mean, at the same time, they have the opportunity to earn the other aspects of the incentive pay, but just to, someone to acknowledge the fact, “Hey, I keep coming back year after year; I already know the culture and such great need and how tough it is to teach in an environment like this, but someone is recognizing that financially.” [Principal]

> [The incentive in our LEA is] a pretty big bonus if you get it in all three [awarded] areas. It would be something that I would really think seriously about before I would leave, you know, if I were early in my career. [Teacher]

The teacher’s comment in particular alludes to one important question for LEAs to consider as they structure their plans: What amount will produce the desired effect on teacher recruitment and retention? As one principal indicated, the effectiveness of an incentive used to recruit teachers to his school was reduced because of its size:

> I don’t think the small amount of [bonus] money that teachers get actually influences their decision to necessarily work at [our high-needs] schools. . . . [I]t’s still really hard to get good teachers to come to [our high-needs] schools. [Principal]

Another principal pointed out, however, that there is potential value in simply being known as an “incentive school,” no matter how large the incentive is, just by virtue of the interest the label can generate among teachers:

> I will say that as I have interviewed, [teachers] are very knowledgeable of the fact that we’re an incentive-based school and they typically inquire as to how does that work. So it’s certainly a plus in their eyes that they could possibly earn incentive pay. I can honestly say I don’t think that has made or broken someone’s decision to come here. That may be a drawing card to get them to at least apply and come visit, and then once they
see [the school], the money’s [no longer] as important. So to some extent, yes, it’s a factor. [Principal]

Several teachers concurred, insisting that incentives were a nice gesture but did not drive their decisions to work at their current schools:

[F]or me it’s not made a difference because I enjoy the students at [my school], I enjoy the challenge of this population, so I probably would have come here even if I hadn’t had it. Now it was a nice little bonus to get, but for me it didn’t make a difference. [Teacher]

[O]nce I was interviewed and understood everything that this school has, like the challenges and the benefits and everything, this was already my first choice. The incentive was just an added bonus. [Teacher]

Pay-for-performance incentives. As noted above, most evidence suggests that the other major category of incentive pay—pay-for-performance—has little direct impact on changes in student performance, and most of the teachers in the focus groups echoed that assessment:

It’s nice to . . . see the numbers and know that I did well, but I think . . . the one [thing] that I was most excited about was not even the fact that I got the money for it—it was like I was excited that my kids grew! Because I was looking in there and I was thinking, there is no way that these kids are going to grow at all, and they said, “You met your standard of growth and your kids grew,” and I was more excited about that than I was the thousand dollars that was attached to it because that validated [my work]; “You know what, you did a good job last year, you did your job, you did well and your kids learned. As crazy as they were and as insane as they were and as much as you thought that they didn’t care, they grew,” and that was actually more exciting for me than the money that I did get. [Teacher]

However, some teachers shared that, at the least, these kinds of incentives may serve as another retention bonus of sorts, because they motivate teachers to not give up—“It might be like that little glimmer that you need to get you through some of those days that we have,”—and to keep working hard with struggling students. Furthermore, and as was noted above by teachers interviewed for the evaluation of the state strategic staffing initiative, many teachers thought of the pay-for-performance incentives as a recognition for their hard work and persistence in the classroom that they would not normally receive otherwise:

So it’s something, for me it’s kind of neat to be rewarded for something that you would never ever probably again in our careers get awarded for. [Teacher]

I believe that it is more of a celebration at the end, through the hard work you get some reward to look forward to, you know. . . So that’s like a positive reinforcement that keeps you trying to pass the expectation that you made last year, to get that this year and just keep moving forward. [Teacher]

School climate. The importance to these teachers of job recognition points up a potentially powerful component of strategic staffing that is included in only a handful of plans, and then only indirectly: a focus on developing a supportive school climate. For example, when
discussing other factors that motivated their decisions to stay at their schools, focus group participants often noted that the quality of their working environments influenced their decisions to stay more so than did incentives:

[1] I mean I’m happy at my school and I have no desire to go anywhere. . . . It’s, you know, what I do, my coworkers, my administrator . . . that has more influence than [a bonus]. [Teacher]

[2] [It] goes back to, I think, who you work with and the people you work for in the building. [Teacher]

And like at our school, I don’t think any teacher would [leave] because the relationship amongst the staff is so strong. [Teacher]

Data from these focus groups and interviews help to clarify both the potential benefits of and limitations to the use of incentives as tools for increasing the number of effective teachers who work in high-needs schools. While some types of incentives likely do have the potential to promote change in high-needs schools, the more effective plans are likely to be those that include elements that extend beyond financial rewards alone.

**Example LEAs**

The two plans detailed below—one from Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools and one from Guilford County Schools—are good examples of far-reaching, comprehensive strategic staffing plans that include elements other than incentives alone as part of their overall strategies for impacting the equitable distribution of effective teachers.

1. **Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools**

There are three programs operating in the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools (WSFCS) that contribute to an overall strategic staffing plan: Project ENRICH (a targeted teacher preparation program), Equity+ (a targeted teacher retention program), and STAR\(^3\) (a performance-based school turnaround program). Funding for the three programs comes from RttT and other federal sources (as noted below). All three programs are part of WSFCS’s two-year strategic plan, which focuses on (1) producing 21\(^{st}\) century graduates and (2) providing effective teachers and principals. The LEA continues to move toward alignment of these incentive pay plans system-wide.

In addition to these three programs, WSFCS is investigating factors that impact teacher and principal effectiveness, with results of the study to be used to determine whether effective staff currently are equitably distributed and, if not, how to move the LEA toward equitable distribution. Analyses of the various components of WSFCS’s strategic staffing plan are scheduled to be completed between June 2014 and the conclusion of the 2014-15 school year.

---

- Project ENRICH (funded by a five-year Teacher Quality Partnership grant)\(^{22}\)

Based on the work of Betty Epanchin at the North Carolina Teacher Academy (and now of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro), Project ENRICH is a partnership with UNCG that provides highly-qualified lateral entry and traditionally licensed teachers for hard-to-staff areas (mathematics, science, English as a second language, and exceptional children) in high-need WSFCS schools that are in the process of successful turnaround. Lateral entry candidates (of which there have been three cohorts—the first comprised of 12 candidates, the second cohort of 12, and the third of 8 candidates) complete a compressed master’s program (1½ years) and intern in an identified WSFCS school; then, if there are openings and the candidates are identified by their coaches, cooperating teachers, and program coordinators as suitable candidates, they are offered positions in a high-need school. Their commitment is at least three years. Eight of 12 members of the first cohort and seven of the 12 members of the second cohort now work for WSFCS. In exchange, they are awarded an annual stipend ($30,000) while completing the master’s degree that can be used for personal expenses or to cover tuition costs. Lateral entry candidates spend four days a week in a public school classroom and a fifth day on campus at UNCG. In addition to the lateral entry candidates, 50 to 60 UNCG undergraduates also participate as part of their licensure programs, completing their student teaching internships in an identified WSFCS school.

- Equity+ Schools

WSFCS’s Equity+ program identifies high-need schools with a minimum required proportion of free and reduced-price lunch students (75% or more at the elementary level and 50% or more at the middle and high school levels) and provides bonuses to teachers who already work at or agree to work in these schools. In 2012, the incentives program began moving toward a performance-pay model (based on student growth measures) as WSFCS worked to align all incentives programs across the LEA. Current Equity+ supports include on-demand professional development, as well as immediate feedback and support to teachers after observations.

- STAR\(^{3}\): Teacher Incentive Fund—Leadership for Educators’ Advanced Performance (LEAP) 2 (2011-2016)

Awarded at the start of the 2010-11 school year (a planning year), the STAR\(^{3}\) (School Transformation by Actively Recruiting, Retaining, and Rewarding) program is designed to support whole-school turnaround. The program has completed its third implementation year (2013-2014) and will run through 2014-15. It is funded by the federal Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) and operates in 15 WSFCS high-need schools (12 elementary schools and 3 middle schools).

Participation in the program begins with a “360°” school-needs evaluation in consultation with the principal. The program then provides classroom observation and coaching, intensive professional development (both planned and on-demand), and instructional support for teachers and principals (provided starting in the 2012-13 school year via a Teacher

\(^{22}\) http://www.uncg.edu/soe/project_enrich/
Development Academy and an Executive Leadership Academy, respectively). Classroom observers use a version of the District of Columbia’s classroom observation tool, which LEA leaders determined was better suited to single-class observations than was the standard North Carolina observation tool but was still aligned with the North Carolina teacher evaluation standards. Classroom teachers are directed to web-based professional development that corresponds with their areas of need as determined by the observation and review process. Also included as part of the STAR program are a staff development facilitator for each school and a new integrative software program for identifying data-driven student interventions.

STAR includes a matched-pair pay-for-performance experimental component. Teachers in a randomly-chosen sample that includes six of the elementary schools and two of the middle schools are eligible for several levels of pay bonus; the other elementary and middle schools serve as matched comparison schools. Matches were based on school grade composition, school achievement level, and demographic similarities. Teachers in the performance pay schools are eligible to earn pay bonuses based on student growth as measured by the SAS EVAAS value-added model; growth-based grade-level and school-level bonuses also are available. Since there are no state tests for grades K-2, bonuses for these grades are determined based on results of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), which SAS has been able to include in its value-added modeling. Total compensation for an individual teacher can equal up to an additional $10,000 annually. All teachers in the matched comparison schools receive a flat 1% pay bonus for working in a targeted school. Teachers in all 15 schools are eligible for recruitment incentives and bonuses based on demonstrated leadership. The STAR incentive structures are outlined in detail in Appendix D.

2. Guilford County Schools

Guilford County’s strategic staffing initiative—Mission Possible—has been in operation since the 2006-07 school year, and from 2007 forward has been supported by a federal TIF grant, which was awarded again in 2010 but will be depleted after the 2014-15 school year. The LEA has used some of its RttT allotment to support the program.

Mission Possible includes a performance-based compensation system designed to recruit highly-effective educators to any of 42 identified schools designated as high-need (based on student poverty, teacher turnover, and school performance) and, once hired, to retain them in those schools. Teachers and administrators at Mission Possible schools have access to specialized training and resources, and they are eligible for performance incentives that are tied to value-added estimates.

---

23 The Teacher Development Academy and the Executive Leadership Academy are available for educators in all WSFCS schools.
Three different incentives programs—the Original program from 2006-07 (O), the Incentive program (I), and the Bonus program (B)—are now available for teachers and principals, with each tied to a different set of schools. The two newer programs (the Incentive and Bonus programs) were created as part of an experimental design to attempt to determine whether one approach is more successful than another at supporting gains in student performance. Currently available incentives for each program include:

- **Recruitment Incentives**: Awarded to teachers with evidence of high estimates of the value they add to their students’ learning (i.e., their value-added scores, as estimated by EVAAS; $5,000)—O, I, B
- **Hard-to-Staff Incentives**: Awarded to teachers in hard-to-staff subject areas ($2,500-$5,000)—O, I, B
- **Performance Incentives**: Individual teachers are eligible to receive graduated performance incentives based upon value-added measures ($2,000-$12,000). In addition, entire school staff (including administrators) are eligible to receive graduated performance incentives based on school-wide value-added data ($750-$1,500; $15,000 for administrators)—O, I
- **Leadership Incentive**: Individual teachers are eligible for recognition of their leadership in helping colleagues to increase student achievement ($2,000)—I, B
- **School Supplement Bonus**: A flat 1% of salary is added to the pay of all certified and non-certified staff at schools with this incentive option—B

Historical and current Mission Possible incentives structures are included in Appendix D.

**Summary**

Because of the relative newness of most of the state’s local strategic staffing plans and the small scope of this component of the overall RttT evaluation work, this study is limited primarily to exploring the details of and participant and implementer reactions to plans offered across the state; investigation of the fidelity of plan implementation and of measurable outcomes related to actual teacher movement or student performance lie outside the scope of the current evaluation. Even with those limitations, however, interviews with participating educators help to point up the potential importance of carefully-chosen incentives and a plan’s attention to non-monetary factors such as school climate as key factors in increasing low-achieving students’ exposure to effective teachers. Furthermore, the complexity and scope of the Winston-Salem and Guilford plans help to demonstrate how an LEA can increase its likelihood of attracting and more equitably distributing a higher proportion of its most effective teachers.

However, not every LEA has the resources required to implement complex plans with significant incentive opportunities across multiple schools. Therefore, the next section explores another key

---

25 The Original program started as a locally-funded program for 22 schools, and then grew to 30 schools when Guilford was awarded its first TIF grant in 2007. When that first TIF grant ended, Guilford kept the Original program in place but modified it to prioritize performance-based incentives and de-emphasize recruitment incentives.

ingredient of locally-implemented strategic staffing in North Carolina: the degree to which a plan is implementable in multiple LEA settings.

**Strategic Staffing Efforts that appear to be Most Portable (RQ 2)**

Identifying plans (or characteristics of plans) that are successful in one LEA and that might be successful in other LEAs with similar problems (e.g., because the LEAs have similar resources at their disposal, similar student populations, similar staffing needs, etc.) is a luxury many LEAs across the state may not have, due to limitations of time and resources. The purpose of this section is to identify characteristics of current local strategic staffing plans that make them more likely to be portable (that is, more likely to be implementable in other LEAs), with an emphasis on components that can support the equitable distribution of effective teachers.

**Learnings from Educators Participating in Local Plans: Flexibility in Implementation is Key**

Though the topic was not addressed as much as was incentives, one characteristic teachers and administrators identified during focus groups and interviews as critical to a plan’s portability was the degree to which the plan allowed for implementation flexibility.

School and LEA administrators valued the ability to adjust their staffing initiatives. Indeed, many of the staffing plans that are identified in this report have undergone incremental changes based on feedback from plan implementers, often in response to changes in the availability of resources. For instance, in one LEA the original plan was designed to retain teachers via incentive, but the incentive was deemed ineffective on its own; the LEA “felt like new teachers, especially, and lateral entry teachers needed extra support,” so they adjusted their plan by adding that support. Other administrators shared similar examples:

I’ve had the opportunity last year and the beginning of this year so far to actually come back together with the coordinator of the Race to the Top monies and other individuals from central office to discuss, give input, and give feedback on the incentive pay—you know, did it work, what things would you like to add, how would we like to improve it, what things did not work. So I do have an opportunity to give feedback to that. [Principal]

We really want to find out what the best pieces are and then just implement those, because we can . . . re-envision our [staffing plan], but I wouldn’t re-envision it until we have strong data to say which pieces are working well. [LEA Administrator]

I will say that I think they gave us a lot of flexibility, if I must say, as far as the implementation, because it’s no direct way they said we have to use [our teacher leaders]. . . . But the district hasn’t said, “[Teacher leaders] must do x, y, and z,” so within every building . . . the principal has the flexibility to determine what role . . . and actually what actions the [teacher leaders] are going to take, based on their strengths. [Principal]

In addition to the power such flexibility gives administrators to help LEA plans fit well at the school level, it also makes portability of those plans more feasible because they can again be altered to fit a different LEA’s specific implementation needs. However, an important distinction
is the difference between reasonable plan flexibility and a level of variability that affects its stability. Without a clear mission or without a vision for how and why the elements of a particular initiative are being implemented, for instance, the greater the likelihood that differences in implementation success will emerge, as evidenced in the teacher feedback below:

I mean, none of us [participating teachers], really, have the same roles or strategies, or even opportunities. I’m in a very different school; I mean, they’re all low-performing schools, but the management of those [participating] low-performing schools is very different, and so . . . that management piece is . . . what [the specifics of] your job is [based on]. [Teacher]

I’ve enjoyed all of the leadership training that I’ve gotten, but I think we’re all still kind of navigating, like, where this thing is supposed to go, because right now, in the classroom, it’s just kind of hard to be . . . successful in this program, I think, as [teacher leaders who] have freedom. . . . [Teacher]

**Example LEAs**

The two plans shared here—one from Pitt County Schools and one from Columbus County Schools—provide good examples of other plan aspects that may increase their portability—most notably a focus on allowing plan participants to play active roles in implementation and the inclusion of no- or low-cost plan components in addition to (or even instead of) incentives.

1. Pitt County Schools

The Pitt County strategic staffing plan\(^{27}\) centers on development of a Teacher Leadership Cohort (TLC), which is designed to support small groups of highly-effective teachers who volunteer to transfer to a lower-performing school. The original intent of the program was for groups of teachers who had worked together in the past to move together to a new school, but Pitt abandoned the cohort requirement after the first year in favor of increasing the number of teachers involved. The program was piloted on a small scale (5 teachers) at one school during the 2010-11 school year, and in school year 2011-12 it expanded to include more than three times as many teachers (some of whom moved together as cohorts) who worked in six lower-performing schools.

Pitt identified eligible teachers in tested subject areas only, and only teachers who demonstrated three or four years of exceptional student growth (Pitt considered both raw growth measures and EVAAS-adjusted estimates, as well as supporting teacher evaluation data). Participating teachers identified up to three high-need schools to which they were willing to move, but final placement was made by Central Office staff. Teachers were required to commit three years to the program, if accepted.

School eligibility was determined based on two factors: a performance composite below 60%, and progress made toward achieving court-ordered unitary status measures (such as evidence of teaching experience that is reflective of the LEA’s average). Pitt initially identified five such schools (all elementary or middle), with a sixth school identified for the 2011-12 school year.

---

\(^{27}\) The plan is scheduled to be discontinued after the 2013-14 school year, when RttT funds are exhausted.
Pitt County offered a varied menu of incentives to the TLC participants, which included two
weeks of paid, targeted professional development over the summer, an iPad, and the opportunity
to move their children to the schools to which they transferred, in addition to a more traditional
stipend ($3,000) for making the move. Based on learnings from the pilot year that staff in
identified schools were hesitant to embrace and integrate TLC teachers into their new school’s
culture, the summer professional development experience was modified to include a focus on
helping TLC teachers learn how to develop and maintain professional relationships in their new
schools.

2. Columbus County Schools (a notable two-criteria plan)

Columbus County provides training for a cadre of lead teachers who then support each of its
highest-need schools (which are identified through analysis of school assessment data). Areas in
which these lead teachers receive professional development include: best practices; high-yield
strategies; data analysis; and Common Core/Essential Standards. The lead teachers typically are
assigned to one school, where they provide a variety of services, based on each school’s needs,
including: facilitation of professional learning communities; professional development; modeling
of effective implementation of strategies and practices learned in their professional development;
and monitoring of current school initiatives, teachers’ instructional practices, and student
progress.

Summary

Both of the plans above leverage each LEA’s existing pool of effective teachers to enhance the
capacity of other teachers via mentoring, coaching, modeling of best practices, and facilitation of
professional learning communities. These characteristics, coupled with the flexibility highlighted
by teachers and administrators in the focus groups, might make them better-suited for
implementation in a wider variety of LEAs than plans that rely solely on complex and rigid
incentive structures that assume the availability of significant funds. In short, they are plans that
most LEAs should be able to emulate or adapt to meet their specific needs, even when funds for
incentives are limited or unavailable.

Strategies for LEAs to Continue their Support for their Plans after Race to the Top (RQ 3)

Perhaps the most pressing question for LEAs at the end of the RttT funding period is how they
will sustain the initiatives that have been most successful in their schools—whether strategic
staffing plans or any of the other state- and local-level initiatives. For most of the strategic
staffing plans, sustainability largely involves finding funding sources to support monetary
incentive components.

As noted above, however, some elements of a plan may be inherently sustainable if they are
based on changes in LEA policy rather than on direct changes in school finance. The goal to
increase lower-achieving students’ access to effective teachers, for example, may be able to be
accomplished in some cases without resorting to incentives. Plans that build teacher capacity via
targeted professional development also can support an LEA’s effort to increase and maintain its
population of effective teachers at minimal additional cost.
For the most part, the experiences of the implementing LEAs during the RttT period have not added many ideas beyond those cited here for sustaining plans after funding is gone, but this section considers a few additional elements that may make financial sustainability somewhat more feasible for some LEAs as RttT comes to an end.

Learnings from Educators Participating in Local Plans: Make Identification of Sustainability Funding an Integral and Ongoing Part of the Plan

One LEA-level administrator noted what for some LEAs with experience in maintaining strategic staffing plans may seem obvious but for others that are new to strategic staffing may bear repeating: the necessity of identifying alternative funding sources well before an initiative’s funding runs out.

Well, we always think of sustainability when we are in the middle of grants, not at the end of them. . . . We are going for additional grant funds that would help sustain [our initiative] and [in the meantime] we’re repurposing [other] federal dollars. . . . So, we’re pulling people together to think through that. . . . [LEA Administrator]

Example LEAs

While there were no additional insights gathered during interviews with regard to specific details about how LEAs plan to sustain their local strategic staffing initiatives, some of the current LEA plans include details that potentially could support sustainability efforts.

1. Moore County Schools

All instructional staff employed at Moore County’s SIG school receive a $5,000 incentive annually to compensate them for the additional training and time required to participate in the school’s reform process. As part of this process, instructional staff undergo frequent observations and evaluations to determine areas for professional development support, which is then tailored for individual teachers based on their specific identified needs (e.g., differentiated instruction, cultural awareness, effective engagement-based learning strategies, etc.). All instructional staff also are afforded opportunities to work regularly with instructional coaches in literacy and math.

2. Rowan County Schools

An incentive plan that includes both recruitment and pay-for-performance bonuses is available to all certified and classified staff at one Rowan County SIG school. While the school’s grant ended prior to the 2013-14 school year, Rowan County used Title I funds to sustain the incentive plan at the SIG school and to support the same plan at one additional school through Spring 2014.

Summary

Both the Moore County and the Rowan County plans include components that may allow funding from sources not typically ear-marked for incentives to be used in that way. The Moore County plan (as well as several other LEA plans; see Appendix E) leverages targeted professional development to enhance the capacity of its teachers and thus allows for a case to be made for using professional development funds to support the incentive. The Rowan County plan
focuses on a school with a large population of low-income students and thus opens the door for the use of federal Title I funds to sustain its incentives. In addition to efforts to identify other funding sources well before the initiative ends, LEAs also may have some success reallocating funds to support strategic staffing incentives that meet more than one purpose.
Findings and Recommendations

Findings

State Strategic Staffing Initiative

- **Recruitment and Retention.** Only 17 teachers received the recruitment incentive in 2013-14, and none of the interviewed teachers indicated that they were aware of the existence of the incentive before choosing schools. Despite indications from some administrators that it was used for recruitment purposes, there is no evidence available that the incentive actually functioned as either a recruitment or retention tool.

- **Impact.** While data do not allow the Evaluation Team to form direct conclusions about the impact of the vouchers on student outcomes, teachers and principals suggested that the vouchers could be contributing indirectly in other ways, such as by improving school culture via the increased responsibilities administrators expected of their voucher recipients (including provision of support and professional development for peer teachers, as well as expectations of high-quality teaching).

- **Challenges.** The primary challenge to the success of the voucher program identified by participants and implementers was a lack of communication between LEAs, schools, and teachers, although there was some indication in the third year of the initiative from teachers and LEA administrators that this problem was beginning to be addressed.

Local Strategic Staffing Initiatives

- **Reach and Diversity.** Based on a review of the final versions of each LEA’s DSW, there were 21 LEAs statewide with comprehensive strategic staffing plans at the end of the RttT period—13 funded partially or wholly by RttT and seven funded entirely by another source. In addition, 49 more plans included some elements of a comprehensive plan. While there were some similarities across plans, overall the plans were diverse. LEAs invested about $76 million in RttT, local, and other federal funding in these plans across the RttT period.

- **Equitable Teacher Distribution.** Incentives coupled with attention to non-monetary variables such as school climate appear to be key factors in plans that aim to increase low-achieving students’ exposure to effective teachers. Though not feasible for all LEAs, plans with multiple avenues for teacher entry that can appeal to a broad spectrum of educators also may increase an LEA’s likelihood of more equitably distributing its most effective teachers.

- **Portability.** Plans that leverage an LEA’s existing pool of effective teachers (rather than relying on recruitment from outside the LEA) and that allow for flexible implementation across schools in an LEA show promise for being more portable than rigid plans that rely solely on costly incentive structures.

- **Sustainability.** Strategies that may help to ease sustainability pressures include making identification of sustaining funds part of the strategic staffing plan’s ongoing implementation from the start, and considering ways to support the plan with funds that are currently earmarked for other purposes that directly relate to the strategic staffing plan.
Recommendations

- **Prioritize development and maintenance of a comprehensive communications plan.** Participant feedback about the implementation of state and local-level strategic staffing plans demonstrates that clear, consistent, and constant communication between implementers and teachers, as well as among implementers, is critical to the success of the recruitment and retention aspects of any staffing initiative. For example, teachers suggested that plan details be readily available on LEA websites, and that LEA- and state-level contacts be more clearly identified and more responsive to inquiries about staffing initiatives.

- **Design plans with shorter-term staffing targets**—e.g., recruitment and retention of effective teachers—**rather than with longer-term student achievement goals.** Recent quantitative research and early qualitative evidence from North Carolina’s state and local-level strategic staffing plans offer little evidence of a direct link between strategic staffing components (such as incentives) and improvements in student achievement, but there is growing evidence for the impact of strategic staffing on intermediate outcomes (such as recruitment and retention of effective teachers) that may have longer-term impacts on school culture and student achievement.

- **Plan for sustainability.** Even the longest-running, most robust, and most successful plans across the state struggle to maintain ongoing funding; consider pursuing multiple funding sources, and plan for the end of each funding source several years in advance.

- **Work together across school district boundaries.** Currently, there is no formal mechanism in place for LEAs to learn from each other’s experiences with the state-level strategic staffing plan and the dozens of local-level plans. The state should work with LEAs interested in developing or revising a strategic staffing plan to find ways to connect them with others across the state who can share their experiences and learnings.

- **Explore multiple plan options.** Similarly, LEAs interested in developing or revising a strategic staffing plan should consider multiple approaches and should be open to early experimentation with those approaches to support the development of an optimal plan for that LEA’s specific conditions.

- **Review the latest research.** In addition to consulting with each other, LEAs also should stay current on constantly-updated findings about the effectiveness of new staffing strategies and work to share those findings with administrators and their human resources departments. As approaches to strategic staffing continue to expand, so, too, do data and evidence about their feasibility, sustainability, and effectiveness.

---

28 Though the study by Glazerman et al. (2013) cited earlier is promising.
Appendix A. State Strategic Staffing Voucher

North Carolina State Board of Education Policy on Statewide Strategic Staffing

Attachment 1 TCS 1
Revised 2/3/2011

Recruitment Incentive for Lowest Achieving Schools
(A Race to the Top Initiative)

The following initiative was included in the Race to the Top (RttT) application, section D3 (2):

NC will provide every new teacher who chooses to work in the lowest-achieving schools – regardless of her or his point of entry (through TFA, through the NC Teacher Corps, through lateral entry, or through traditional routes) – with a voucher that can be used for either:

- The forgiveness of student loans for each year of teaching;
- Tuition for obtaining a Master’s degree in education, educational administration, or the content area in which she or he teaches;
- Housing; or
- Any combination of the three.

The value of the voucher will be equivalent to the cost of two semesters of coursework, two courses per semester, at an in-state degree-granting program.

The State Board of Education will approve the definitions used within the above Race to the Top (RttT) initiative:

1. Define the term “new teacher”;
2. Approve the schools selected to be eligible;
3. Determine the length of time the teachers are eligible for the voucher;
4. Determine the documentation responsibilities for the payments.

1. DEFINITION OF “NEW TEACHER”

- A classroom teacher who holds a Standard Professional II license and, if evaluated using the North Carolina evaluation instrument, has received a performance rating of above proficient.
- Instructional support and school-based administrators are not eligible;
- A teacher is “new” if they have not worked in a lowest achieving school within the LEA in the previous 12 months;

2. THE SELECTED LOWEST ACHIEVING SCHOOLS

Schools were selected from the population of lowest achieving schools. Lowest achieving schools are those with a graduation rate less than 60% (9 schools) and the lowest 5% of conventional schools. The list does not include alternative, hospital, special or charter schools.
In order to avoid competition between schools within the same LEA, all lowest achieving schools are grouped within the LEA. Therefore, if an LEA is selected, all the lowest achieving schools within that LEA are selected for the program. Only the 36 LEAs with at least one lowest achieving school are considered.

**LEAs were selected based on**

- LEA 3-year average teacher turnover rate
- LEA geographic location

**The 10 LEAs selected are**

- The LEA in each district with the highest 3 year average teacher turnover rate.
- The LEAs with a 3-year average teacher turnover rate greater than 20%.

**Note: District 8 has no lowest achieving schools.**
None of the large urban districts met the selection criteria. These LEAs have current programs addressing recruitment.

### 3. HOW LONG WILL THE NEW TEACHERS BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE VOUCHER?

- Teachers will be eligible for the voucher for each year that they work at the selected school.
- A new teacher who works a portion of the year will be eligible for a pro rata share of the voucher.
- LEAs will receive a letter of intent from the teacher, stating that they will work at the school for the length of the pilot.
- The RttT budget for the recruitment vouchers is approximately $1 million for each of the 3 years, starting in 2011-12 school year. At the end of the RttT grant, the effectiveness of the program will be evaluated.

### 4. THE MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

The voucher shall be paid to the teacher through payroll, and related taxes will be assessed if applicable. LEAs are responsible for obtaining documentation from the teacher, proving the funds were used for the allowable expenses. This documentation shall be maintained at the central office and made available for audit purposes.
### Table A1. Schools Eligible for the Statewide Strategic Staffing Voucher

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Teacher Turnover</th>
<th>LEA*</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Est. New CT FTE**</th>
<th>Budget Per Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17.03%</td>
<td>Hertford</td>
<td>Hertford County Middle</td>
<td>6.61</td>
<td>$38,140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Riverview Elementary</td>
<td>6.22</td>
<td>$35,890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Student Development Center</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>$5,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.40%</td>
<td>Lenoir</td>
<td>Northeast Elementary</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>$30,293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rochelle Middle</td>
<td>6.19</td>
<td>$35,717</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Southeast Elementary</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>$24,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.27%</td>
<td>Edgecombe</td>
<td>Coker-Wimberly Elementary</td>
<td>5.82</td>
<td>$33,582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>W A Pattillo A+ Elementary Sch</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>$33,178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Princeville Montessori</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>$29,081</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.33%</td>
<td>Halifax</td>
<td>Aurelian Springs Elementary</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td>$31,620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dawson Elementary</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>$13,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enfield Middle</td>
<td>6.30</td>
<td>$36,351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Everett Elementary</td>
<td>4.90</td>
<td>$28,273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inborden Elementary</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>$28,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Northwest High</td>
<td>12.12</td>
<td>$69,933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pittman Elementary</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>$13,386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Scotland Neck Primary</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>$13,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Southeast Halifax High</td>
<td>9.80</td>
<td>$56,546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>William R Davie Middle</td>
<td>7.70</td>
<td>$44,429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.57%</td>
<td>Weldon City</td>
<td>Weldon Middle</td>
<td>7.42</td>
<td>$42,814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weldon STEM High School</td>
<td>9.05</td>
<td>$52,219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.10%</td>
<td>Vance</td>
<td>L B Yancey Elementary</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>$31,274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.77%</td>
<td>Hoke</td>
<td>Hawk Eye Elementary</td>
<td>6.36</td>
<td>$36,697</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.03%</td>
<td>Thomasville City</td>
<td>Thomasville Primary</td>
<td>12.12</td>
<td>$69,933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.47%</td>
<td>Anson</td>
<td>Anson Middle</td>
<td>7.05</td>
<td>$40,679</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Morven Elementary</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>$20,080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wadesboro Elementary</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>$14,137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Anson High School</td>
<td>11.62</td>
<td>$67,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.27%</td>
<td>Rowan-Salisbury</td>
<td>Knox Middle</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>$33,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>North Rowan High</td>
<td>6.08</td>
<td>$35,082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Projected Annual FTE</strong></td>
<td><strong>181.24</strong></td>
<td><strong>3-Year Program Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,045,762</strong></td>
<td><strong>$3,137,286</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure A1. Map of LEAs Eligible for the Statewide Strategic Staffing Voucher
Appendix B. Local Strategic Staffing Data Collection Tools

**RttT Strategic Staffing Survey**

The RttT Evaluation Team would like to find out more about your district’s local strategic staffing efforts. Please answer the following questions regarding your district’s strategic staffing initiative(s).

Please indicate your LEA

For the purposes of this study, we are most interested in the plans described in sections D(1) and D(3) of your Detailed Scope of Work (DSW) or plans tied to your School Improvement Grant (SIG). We have complied relevant text from each LEA’s DSW and SIG (if applicable). Please review your LEA’s text using the link provided. For the rest of this survey, we will refer to the initiatives described in the text we provided as your “strategic staffing” initiatives. In the remaining questions, please respond with only these initiatives in mind.

1. How many different and distinct initiatives are described in the text from your LEA’s RttT DSW and/or SIG? (Please provide names for each initiative, if applicable.) Note: Most LEAs only have one initiative. How many schools have been involved in any part of your district’s strategic staffing initiative(s) since it first began?

2. Please list the names of the schools involved, as well as grade levels involved (if applicable).

3. Which of these schools are no longer participating?

4. How many teachers have participated in your district’s strategic staffing initiatives since it first began? (You may enter an exact number or a range.)

5. How many teachers have opted out or have been removed from the strategic staffing initiative(s) since it first began?

We would like to track teacher movement as part of our evaluation of strategic staffing initiatives across the state; however, we want to avoid using any identifying information (such as names). We understand the very sensitive nature of information of this kind, so we will not be reporting on individual teacher movement as part of our study; our smallest unit of analysis will be at the district level. Please keep in mind that this survey is secure. Please indicate the best method for sharing with us information about current and past teacher participants in your district:

6. I can provide the unique identification number (UID) of teachers who participated in the strategic staffing initiative.

7. I would prefer to provide this information via telephone or email OR I have questions/concerns related to this request.
8. Does your district plan to continue with all, some, or none of its strategic staffing initiative(s) after the current funding for each initiative runs out?
   a. All
   b. Some
   c. None

9. a. If answer to Question 8 is ALL or SOME:
   How does your district plan to continue funding this/these initiative(s)?
   What will change about your district’s strategic staffing initiative(s), if anything, when funding changes?

9. b. If answer to Question 8 is NONE:
   Can you share any specific reasons why your district does not plan to continue this/these initiative(s)? (e.g., lack of funding)

Please provide any additional comments you would like to share regarding your district’s strategic staffing initiatives
Local-Level Strategic Staffing Interview Protocol

A. Teacher Focus Groups

Nature and Quality of Experience:

1. How would you describe your experience with [local Strategic Staffing initiative]?

2. How do you think [local Strategic Staffing initiative] will impact/has impacted
   a. The climate/culture of the school?
   b. Student achievement?

3. How do you think your participation in [local Strategic Staffing initiative] has impacted your own teaching practice?
   a. What adjustments have you had to make as a result of your participation in [local Strategic Staffing initiative]? 

Promise for Continuation/Portability:

4. Do you think [local Strategic Staffing initiative] will influence/has influenced your decision to remain at this school? If so, how?

5. What do you like about [local Strategic Staffing initiative]? What do you think could be done to improve it?

B. School and LEA Administrator Focus Groups

Nature and Quality of Experience:

1. How would you describe your experience with [local Strategic Staffing initiative]?
   a. (If principal has flexibility in implementation) How have you implemented [local Strategic Staffing initiative] at your school?

2. How do you think [local Strategic Staffing initiative] will impact/has impacted the climate/culture of your school?

Critical Needs/Equitable Teacher Distribution:

3. How effective has [local Strategic Staffing initiative] been in providing students with better access to high-quality teachers?
   a. In particular, how do you think it has impacted student achievement?

Cost Effectiveness/Sustainability/Portability:

4. What do you like about [local Strategic Staffing initiative]? What could be done to improve it?

5. Do you think [local Strategic Staffing initiative] could be effective if it were implemented in additional schools in this LEA? Why or why not?
Survey for Recipients of Marstrats Recruitment and Retention Plan

1. How well does the recruitment and retention plan prepared for your district by Marstrats meet your district’s needs?

2. Did the plan meet your expectations? Why or why not?

3. To what extent are you utilizing (or plan to utilize) the plan to recruit and retain teachers?

4. What, if any, are the strengths of the plan?

5. Do you have any anecdotal or actual evidence that your recruitment numbers increased from 2013 to 2014? If so, do you attribute that change to the plan?

6. What else could Marstrats have included in the plan to make it more useful?
## Appendix C. LEA-Level Strategic Staffing Plans: A List

### Plans Meeting All Three Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>LEA Code</th>
<th>Identification of Effective Teachers</th>
<th>Incentives</th>
<th>Focus on High-Need Schools</th>
<th>LEA using RTT funding to support some/all plan(s)?</th>
<th>Total 4-Year Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Plans Meeting Two Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>LEA Code</th>
<th>Identification of Effective Teachers</th>
<th>Incentives</th>
<th>Focus on High-Need Schools</th>
<th>LEA using RTT funding to support some/all plan(s)?</th>
<th>Total 4-Year Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>770</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>980</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes:

- Plan with incentives only (no clear linkage to supporting high-need schools or to differentiating teachers by effectiveness), listed but not included in counts of strategic staffing plans.
- ^The Evaluation Team was unable to verify plan details.
- + Plan only; no identified funding source(s) or not yet implemented.
- ~ LEA with strategic staffing elements in its SIG plan.
- " LEA working with RTT-funded Technical Advisor.
- † Incentives present, but not linked to LEA’s other strategic staffing element(s).
- Bold - Plan includes a pay-for-performance element.
### Strategic Staffing in NC: Summative Review of Local and State Implementation
September 2014

#### Plans Meeting One Criterion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>LEA Code</th>
<th>LEA</th>
<th>Identification of Effective Teachers</th>
<th>Incentives</th>
<th>Focus on High-Need Schools</th>
<th>LEA using RtT funding to support some/all plans?</th>
<th>Total 4-Year Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>Bladen</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>Burke</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>Clay</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>Kannapolis City</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>Hickory City</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>Chatham</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>Hinton-Chowan</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>Whiteville City</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>Craven</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>Thomasville City&quot;</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>Franklin</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>Graham</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>Hamett</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>Haywood</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>Hertford&quot;</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>Hoke</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>Johnston</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>Jones</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>Martin</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>McDowell</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>Mitchell</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>Pamlico</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>Elizabeth City-Pasquotank</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>710</td>
<td>Pender</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>Rutherford</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>821</td>
<td>Clinton City</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>Stokes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>Swain</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>890</td>
<td>Tyrrell</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>990</td>
<td>Yadkin</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Other LEAs of Note

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>LEA Code</th>
<th>LEA</th>
<th>Identification of Effective Teachers</th>
<th>Incentives</th>
<th>Focus on High-Need Schools</th>
<th>LEA using RtT funding to support some/all plans?</th>
<th>Total 4-Year Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>Weldon City**</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>Lee*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>540</td>
<td>Lenoir*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>Robeson*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>Rockingham*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>Surry*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Criteria:
1. Does the LEA indicate that it attempts to determine or differentiate teacher effectiveness in some way?
2. Does the LEA’s plan focus on high-need schools or on identified student needs, based on data?
3. Does the LEA offer – or plan to offer – incentives clearly linked to other strategic staffing efforts?

#### Notes:
* Plan with incentives only (no clear linkage to supporting high-need schools or to differentiating teachers by effectiveness), listed but not included in counts of strategic staffing plans

^ The Evaluation Team was unable to verify plan details

+ Plan only; no identified funding source(s) or not yet implemented

~ LEA with strategic staffing elements in its SIG plan

* LEA working with RtT-funded Technical Advisor

† Incentives present, but not linked to LEA’s other strategic staffing element(s)

Bold - Plan includes a pay-for-performance element
Appendix D. LEA-Level Incentives Plans for Strategic Staffing Plans Highlighted in Main Text

Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools: STAR³ Incentives Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
<th>Instructional Staff</th>
<th>Student Support Staff</th>
<th>Admin &amp; Operations Support Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Assistant Principal</td>
<td>Core Teacherᵃ</td>
<td>Core Elem TAᶜ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1 – Whole School Performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVAAS Campus Composite ≥ 1.0 SE</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2 – Grade-Level Performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EVAAS Grade-Level Composite (one composite each for Grade K through 5) ≥ 1.0 SE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$750 per Grade</td>
<td>$500 per Grade</td>
<td>$3,000ᶜ</td>
<td>$750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3 – Teacher-Level Performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher observations plus EVAAS Teacher Composite:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level A - ≥ 0.5 SE Composite</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level B - ≥ 1.0 SE Composite</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level C - ≥ 1.5 SE Composite</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level D - ≥ 2.0 SE Composite</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Bonus - Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid to effective teachers in selected leadership roles as defined by the STAR³ District Team</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum Potential Payout Per Employee</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$3,500</td>
<td>$10,500</td>
<td>$3,750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Middle Level 1 – Whole School Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVAAS Campus Composite Composite ≥ 1.0 SE</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
<th>Instructional Staff</th>
<th>Student Support Staff</th>
<th>Admin &amp; Operations Support Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Level 2 – Grade-Level Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVAAS Grade-Level Composite (one composite each for Grades 6, 7, and 8) ≥ 1.0 SE</th>
<th>Administrators</th>
<th>Instructional Staff</th>
<th>Student Support Staff</th>
<th>Admin &amp; Operations Support Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$1,500 per Grade</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$3,000f</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000 per Grade</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$750f</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Level 3 – Teacher-Level Performance

- **Teacher observations plus EVAAS Teacher Composite:**
  - Level A - ≥ 0.5 SE Composite
  - Level B - ≥ 1.0 SE Composite
  - Level C - ≥ 1.5 SE Composite
  - Level D - ≥ 2.0 SE Composite

### Additional Bonus - Leadership

Paid to effective teachers in selected leadership roles as defined by the STAR\(^3\) District Team

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Administrators</th>
<th>Instructional Staff</th>
<th>Student Support Staff</th>
<th>Admin &amp; Operations Support Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$2000</td>
<td>$2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Maximum Potential Payout Per Employee

|                             | $5,000         | $3,500              | $10,500               | $5,500                         | $1,250                         | $500                            | $500                            |

---

\(a\) Core Teacher includes Elementary grade level teachers (K-5), Middle School Math and Language Arts teachers, 8th grade Science teachers, EC teachers in self-contained classrooms teaching core subjects or in co-teaching classrooms, and primary reading teachers (PRTs) who are co-teaching. EC teachers in classrooms where less than 10 students take regular assessments are only eligible for Whole-School Performance bonuses.

\(b\) Non-Core Teacher includes all teachers not listed above under Core Teacher, ENCORE teachers, curriculum coordinators, school-based instructional coaches, learning team facilitators, and media coordinators. For purposes of this pay plan, 6th and 7th Grade Science and 6th – 8th Grade Social Studies teachers are considered non-core, unless they are teaching one of the core areas defined above.

\(c\) Core Elementary TA includes all Teacher Assistants in Core classrooms (as defined above); Non-Core TA includes all K-5 teaching assistants not included under Core TA (above) and all middle school Teacher Assistants.

\(d\) Student Support staff includes guidance counselors, social workers, nurses, speech/language pathologists, home-school coordinators, school psychologists, EC case managers, pre-K teachers, pre-K assistants, media assistants, and technology coordinators.

\(e\) Administrative & Operations Support Staff includes administrative assistants, secretaries, NCWISE managers, custodial staff, cafeteria managers, and cafeteria workers. Transportation staff (bus drivers, magnet stop assistants, traffic officers) are not included in the pay plan.

\(f\) Bonus calculated based on percentage of time at each grade level.
### Guilford County Schools: Mission Possible Incentives Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Original Incentive Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Add it up:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recruitment Incentives</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual VAD Performance Incentives (You must have VAD to qualify)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School-wide VAD Performance Incentive</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salary Bonus</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership Incentives</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Incentives</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participating Schools:** Andrews High, Welborn Middle, Jackson Middle, Union Hill Elementary, Foust Elementary, Gillespie Park Elementary, Oak Hill Elementary, Smith High, Dudley High, Hampton Elementary, Bessemer Elementary, Falkener Elementary, Hairston Middle, Fairview Elementary, Washington Elementary, Wiley Elementary, Ferndale Elementary, High Point Central High, Kirkman Park Elementary, Parkview Elementary, Allen Middle, Cone Elementary

---

2. Incentives Plan Structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Add it up:</th>
<th>Incentive</th>
<th>Principals</th>
<th>Secondary Math</th>
<th>EC: OCS or Adaptive, 6-8 Science, Physics, Chemistry</th>
<th>3-5 Classroom Teachers, 6-8 LA, English I, Civics &amp; Economics, Biology, Economics</th>
<th>All Other Licensed Faculty</th>
<th>Classified Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment Incentives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Start with</strong></td>
<td>High VAD Recruitment Incentive</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>Hard-to-Staff Position Incentive</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual VAD Performance Incentives (You must have VAD to qualify)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>Level 4 VAD</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or +</td>
<td>Level 5 VAD</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-wide VAD Performance Incentives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>Above (Coded Green)</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
<td>$750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary Bonus</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Incentives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>Teacher Leader (6 per school)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Incentives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>Minimum Incentives</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>Maximum Incentives</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$25,500</td>
<td>$8,500</td>
<td>$17,000</td>
<td>$3,500</td>
<td>$750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Participating Schools:* Peck Elementary, Frazier Elementary, Hunter Elementary, Allen Jay Elementary, Bluffwood Elementary, Bluford Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics Academy, Montlieu Elementary Academy of Technology, Jamestown Middle, Southern Middle, Northeast Middle
### 3. Bonus Plan Structure

**Add it up:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incentive</th>
<th>Principals</th>
<th>Secondary Math</th>
<th>EC: OCS or Adaptive, 6-8 Science, Physics, Chemistry</th>
<th>3-5 Classroom Teachers, 6-8 LA, English, History, Civics &amp; Economics, Biology</th>
<th>All Other Licensed Faculty</th>
<th>Classified Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recruitment Incentives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start with</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High VAD Recruitment Incentive</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard-to-Staff Position Incentive</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual VAD Performance Incentives (You must have VAD to qualify)</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School-wide VAD Performance Incentives</strong></td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salary Bonus</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1% of Salary</td>
<td>1% of Salary</td>
<td>1% of Salary</td>
<td>1% of Salary</td>
<td>1% of Salary</td>
<td>1% of Salary</td>
<td>1% of Salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Leader (6 per school)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Incentives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>Minimum Incentives</td>
<td>$5,000  +</td>
<td>$5,000 $1% of Salary</td>
<td>$5,000 $1% of Salary</td>
<td>$5,000 $1% of Salary</td>
<td>$2,500 $1% of Salary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=</td>
<td>Maximum Incentives</td>
<td>$12,000 +</td>
<td>$7,000 $1% of Salary</td>
<td>$9,500 $1% of Salary</td>
<td>$2,000 +</td>
<td>$2,000 +</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participating Schools**: Eastern Middle, Archer Elementary, McLeansville Elementary, Vandalia Elementary, Rankin Elementary, Sumner Elementary, Sedgefield Elementary, Guilford Middle, Kiser Middle, Murphey Elementary
Appendix E. Descriptions of Strategic Staffing Plans not Highlighted in the Main Text

This appendix provides overviews of the most comprehensive strategic staffing plans identified in Appendix C that have not been included in the main body of the report. While these plans are similar in that they incorporate all three of the elements included in this evaluation’s definition of a comprehensive strategic staffing plan, each LEA has operationalized those elements in different ways (as indicated in Table 2 in the main text). The descriptions in this overview demonstrate the variety of ways in which LEAs have combined these basic components to form their plans.

Following the designations in Appendix C, the section is divided into two major subsections. The first subsection describes representative plans from LEAs whose plans are supported in whole or in part by RttT funds (as indicated in their DSWs). In keeping with the RttT grant’s emphasis on ensuring that RttT-funded initiatives are structured to prepare for their continuation after RttT funding ends, it is important to note that only a handful of the plans in this subsection are exclusively funded via RttT; most of these plans also are funded by a combination of other federal grants (e.g., TIF) and local sources, as noted below. The second subsection describes plans supported wholly from other sources, including those that are part of an LEA’s SIG plans.

As discussed in the main report, there are 50 additional plans that meet only one or two of the criteria used to identify comprehensive plans for this report; descriptions of a representative set of the most notable of these plans are included in a final subsection.

In a few cases, full narratives verified by some LEAs have been truncated before inclusion in this report to focus them exclusively on the elements of the plans that reflect the strategic staffing definition used for this evaluation.

Selected Comprehensive, RttT-Supported Plans

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) approach to building sustainable human capital capacity in high-need schools focuses on school leadership and leader retention as the keys to school turnaround. Principals in their first five years of leadership are provided with a layered series of school leadership-focused programs, including: the Queens University/McColl Educational Leadership Institute; consultant coaching; and strategic coaching for struggling principals. The LEA also addresses high-need school staffing and teacher development via a partnership with Teach for America and a federally-supported program called the New Teacher Project.

---

30 For this report, a strategic staffing plan is categorized as “RttT-funded” regardless of the proportion of the funds derived from RttT to support the plan. Because funding sources for each plan or set of plans are differentiated with varying degrees of specificity across LEA DSWs, it was not possible to provide exact funding amounts for this report. Future reports will attempt to include such information when possible.

In past years, CMS has provided signing bonuses and student achievement growth-based salary supplements via a Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant (detailed below), but 2011-12 was the final year of this program (though some elements of the TIF program were continued at individual schools with federal School Improvement Grant [SIG] awards). In addition, CMS has supported a separate Strategic Staffing Initiative (SSI) with a focus on school leadership through a combination of local and RttT funds, as well as a staffing and incentive structure referred to as an Opportunity Culture plan at some of its Project Leadership and Investment for Transformation (L.I.F.T.) schools.

1. Teacher Incentive Fund: LEAP (2007-08 through 2011-12)

CMS adjusted its TIF-funded merit pay plan each year. The first three years of the plan (2007-08 through 2009-10) included recruitment and performance-based bonuses, in addition to professional development-related stipends. For the final two years of the program (2010-11 and 2011-12), the LEA focused all of its resources on a more complex series of performance-based bonuses only. Each iteration is described in more detail below.

2007-08 through 2009-10: For the first three years of the program, teachers and principals were eligible for recruitment signing bonuses of $10,000 for accepting positions in hard-to-staff, high-need schools, and teachers also were eligible for signing bonuses of $8,000 for agreeing to teach hard-to-staff subjects (math, science, special needs, high school subjects with end-of-course exams). Stipends of $115 per day were provided for professional development activities, or for assuming additional leadership responsibilities related to student achievement. Performance-based incentives changed each year as per-course Student Learning Objectives (SLOs, used to measure student growth in non-tested subjects) and teacher- and school-level Value-Added Measures (VAMs) were introduced in the LEA alongside extant state tests.

Year 1 (2007-2008)

a. Recruitment Bonuses. $10,000 signing bonus for teachers and principals who accepted positions in hard-to-staff, high-need schools; $8,000 signing bonuses for teachers who agreed to teach hard-to-staff subjects

b. Stipends. $115/day, including benefits for attending approved professional development or assuming leadership roles and extra duties that are related to improving student achievement

c. Performance-Based Bonuses (based on EOG/EOC scores). Up to 15% of employee’s normal salary for High Growth and up to 10% for Better-than-Expected Growth

Year 2 (2008-2009)

a. Recruitment Bonuses. $10,000 signing bonus for teachers and principals who accepted positions in hard-to-staff, high-need schools; $8,000 signing bonuses for teachers who agreed to teach hard-to-staff subjects

b. Stipends. $115/day, including benefits for attending approved professional development or assuming leadership roles and extra duties that are related to improving student achievement
c. **Performance-Based Bonuses (based on Student Learning Objectives [SLOs]).** Bonuses paid as flat amounts of $5,600 for principals and $4,200 for assistant principals for facilitation, and of $1,400 for each SLO completed by teachers (to a maximum of $2,800)

### Year 3 (2009-2010)

a. **Recruitment Bonuses.** $10,000 signing bonus for teachers and principals who accepted positions in hard-to-staff, high-need schools; $8,000 signing bonuses for teachers who agreed to teach hard-to-staff subjects

b. **Stipends.** $115/day, including benefits for attending approved professional development or assuming leadership roles and extra duties that are related to improving student achievement

c. **Performance-Based Bonuses:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>SLO Facilitation</td>
<td>$1,000 (Tier 1)</td>
<td>Up to $4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,500 (Tier 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$2,000 (Tier 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Growth (VAM)</td>
<td>$500-$2,000 (in top 40% of LEA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principals</td>
<td>SLO Facilitation</td>
<td>$750 (Tier 1)</td>
<td>Up to $3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,125 (Tier 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,500 (Tier 3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Growth (VAM)</td>
<td>$500-$2,000 (in top 40% of LEA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers with EOC/EOG Test(s)</td>
<td>SLO Attainment</td>
<td>$1400/SLO (2 required)</td>
<td>Up to $5,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classroom Growth (VAM)</td>
<td>$500-$2500 (in top 30% of LEA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers without EOC/EOG Test(S)</td>
<td>SLO Attainment</td>
<td>$1,400/SLO (2 required, 1 optional in lieu of Team Growth)</td>
<td>Up to $4,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Team Growth</td>
<td>$400-$1,400 (in top 30% of LEA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2010-11 through 2011-12: For the final two years of the program, CMS eliminated the recruitment bonuses and daily stipends in favor of a complex performance-based, incentives-only plan that took into account data from SLOs, school-level VAMs, and individual teacher VAMs. Under this revised plan, administrators could earn up to $5,400 per year, and teachers could earn up to $7,400 per year.
### Years 4-5 (2010-2011 and 2011-2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLO Facilitation</td>
<td>$1,800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Growth (VAM)</td>
<td>$2,200-$3,600 (in top 40% of LEA)</td>
<td>Up to $5,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assistant Principals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLO Facilitation</td>
<td>$1,800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Growth (VAM)</td>
<td>$1,500-$2,900 (in top 40% of LEA)</td>
<td>Up to $4,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EOG/EOC Teachers</strong> (Primary Instructors)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLO Attainment</td>
<td>$1,000/SLO (2 required)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Growth (VAM)</td>
<td>$1,000-$2,400 (in top 40% of LEA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual Growth (VAM)</td>
<td>$2,000-$3,000 (in top 30% of LEA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shared-Instruction Teachers</strong> (Secondary Instructors)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLO Attainment</td>
<td>$1,000/SLO (2 required)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Growth (VAM)</td>
<td>$1,000-$2,400 (in top 40% of LEA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Team Growth (VAM)</td>
<td>$1,000-$2,000 (in top 50% of LEA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non EOG/EOC Teachers</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SLO Attainment</td>
<td>$1,000/SLO (2 required)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Growth (VAM)</td>
<td>$1,000-$2,400 (in top 40% of LEA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Strategic Staffing Initiative (Start Year: 2008-09)**

The CMS Strategic Staffing Initiative (SSI) is a multiple-year, two-phase initiative. To date, 28 CMS schools have participated (seven beginning in 2008-9, seven in 2009-10, six in 2010-11, six in 2011-12, and two in 2012-13).

The first phase of the plan, which covers the first three years of a school’s five-year participation in the initiative, combines a school principal talent search and recruitment process with ongoing support and a supplement/benefits pay plan. The talent search—which is part of a broader CMS Talent Pool Process for planning for principal succession—screens potential candidates for leadership positions at high-need schools. These potential candidates are identified by the superintendent, chief academic officer, and area superintendents as being potential change-leaders. They come from a pool that includes current CMS teachers who have demonstrated the potential for leadership, current CMS principals who have shown gains in student achievement that surpass a year’s worth of growth in a year’s worth of instruction, and others. Principals selected to participate are moved to a low-performing school, are allowed to select their assistant principals, literacy specialists, and behavior management experts, and are allowed to bring up to five staff members (who also have demonstrated effectiveness in increasing student achievement) with them; they also are allowed to dismiss current teachers who they consider to be disruptive to the development of a healthy and successful school culture. These principals receive priority attention from the CMS central office whenever issues are raised.

Differentiated incentives also are part of the first phase of the plan. Principals, assistant principals, and literacy facilitators receive a 10% pay supplement to their base salaries, which
also is factored into retirement. Teachers receive an initial recruitment bonus of $10,000, plus retention bonuses of $5,000 in the second and third years, for a total of $20,000 in bonuses.

The first phase is supported by local funds.

The second phase of the plan (Years 4 and 5) transitions participating schools from a recruitment and retention plan that impacted only a subset of educators in a school to a pay-for-performance plan that involves a larger proportion of a school’s educators. In this second phase, every teacher of a tested subject and every administrator is eligible for a pay-for-performance bonus:

- Principals, Assistant Principals, Deans of Students, and Academic Facilitators—Bonus based on school-level EVAAS (value-added) data;
- Subject-Area Coordinators—Bonus based on subject-level EVAAS data; and
- Teachers of Tested Subjects—Bonus based on classroom-level EVAAS data.

Through the end of the 2013-14 school year, the second phase is supported by RttT funds; for 2014-15 through 2016-17 (the last year the final cohort of SSI schools will participate), the second phase will be supported by local funds.

3. The Federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) Program in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (Start Year: 2010-11)

CMS used elements of its TIF-LEAP model to design unique incentive plans for each of the five schools identified for SIG support.

4. Opportunity Culture at Project L.I.F.T. Schools (Start Year: 2013-13)

As part of its Project Leadership and Investment for Transformation (L.I.F.T.) initiative—a school redesign initiative focused on nine underperforming CMS schools that began at the start of the 2012-13 school year—four of the nine participating L.I.F.T. schools incorporated an Opportunity Culture strategic staffing model into their overall transformation plans. For the 2014-15 school year, 17 more CMS schools will adopt similar plans, with up to half of all schools in CMS projected to adopt Opportunity Culture plans by 2017-18. Initial support is being provided by a private foundation, with full adoption of the model expected to reach cost neutrality after the initial implementation period.

The Opportunity Culture model offers schools one of three general paths (Multi-Classroom Leadership; Subject Specialization; and Class-Size Change), all guided by staffing and

---

32 With the exception of the first cohort (2008-09), Phase Two began the year following the third year of Phase One; for schools in the first cohort, Phase Two did not begin until 2012-13 (no bonuses under either Phase were available to those schools in 2011-12).

33 Eligible principals also continue to earn the 10% salary supplement from Phase One.

34 In Phase Two, teachers of untested subjects—even those originally brought over by the principal as part of Phase One and eligible for the recruitment and retention bonuses—are not eligible for performance pay.

compensation principles that emphasize differentiating teacher roles and responsibility and then matching compensation to those roles and responsibilities. CMS schools largely have followed the Multi-Classroom Leadership team teaching model, in which lead teachers select, evaluate, support, and direct teams of other teachers, with a goal of extending the lead teachers’ reach into more classrooms than would be possible in one-teacher/one-classroom (traditional) models. Pay is based in part on responsibility level, with substantially higher-than-normal pay (up to 23,000 per year) possible for lead teachers and others in similar leadership roles; supplements are tied to responsibilities but not directly to student outcomes.

Halifax County Schools

Halifax County has developed an LEA-wide incentive plan for all certified teachers and staff. The plan outlines five “focus areas” for teachers; teachers who meet or exceed the criteria for four of the five are eligible for a $500 bonus at the end of the school year:

- **Staff attendance**—Staff members cannot miss more than five days of work;
- **Professional development**—Staff must attend 80% of all scheduled professional development sessions;
- **Staff evaluation**—Staff must be rated at Proficient or higher on standards one through five of North Carolina’s Teacher Evaluation Process;
- **Schoolwide or classroom-level growth**—To meet this criterion at the schoolwide level, a staff member’s school must meet or exceed at least one of the following targets: make high growth; increase performance composite by five points; and/or meet at least 60% of Annual Measurable Objectives. To meet this criterion at the individual level, at least 60% of her or his students must score at or above grade level on an applicable assessment tool (Measures of Academic Progress, common LEA assessments, or common formative assessments).
- **Parental involvement**—Staff members must attend any combination of two Parent-Teacher Association meetings and/or Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) family nights, as well as one community forum.

In addition, since the 2011-12 school year, teachers new to Halifax County have been eligible for a one-time $1,000 signing bonus, as well as an additional $1,000 retention bonus if they complete their first year and return for a second year.

Certified teachers at each of Halifax County’s four SIG schools are eligible for the same incentives but receive higher incentive pay ($2,000) if they meet the plan’s requirements.

Iredell-Statesville Schools

The Iredell-Statesville Schools strategic staffing plan focuses on supporting human capital development in its most challenging schools. Prior to RttT, Iredell-Statesville provided financial incentives for teachers who elected to work in its two alternative schools, and beginning with the 2010-11 school year, the LEA also provided financial support for targeted professional
development. Because of non-traditional staffing demands in its alternative schools, where candidates most suited for the environment are not traditionally licensed and teachers often are expected to teach more than one subject, Iredell-Statesville provided funding for coursework and testing necessary for teachers to achieve highly-qualified status in multiple subject areas. These incentives were expanded under RttT in an attempt to attract and retain teachers for a larger set of identified priority schools. Schools of priority were identified based on high staff turnover rates and low school achievement as measured by state accountability outcomes. In addition to the incentives and training support, Iredell-Statesville also provides incentives to encourage experienced teachers to serve as mentors for beginning teachers in these schools.

The original incentive-only plan did not lead to full realization of the desired outcomes, so in school year 2011-12, Iredell-Statesville introduced an additional staffing approach at one of its lowest-performing schools. Before the school year began, all teachers at the school were required to re-apply for their jobs, and the LEA has committed to re-evaluating the staff at the school each year until the school’s outcomes meet expectations. Those who were re-hired were provided with two weeks of professional development targeted to the specific needs of the school, as well as compensatory pay commensurate with the additional time commitment required by the professional development. Teacher rehiring was based on student achievement data (raw state testing data, as well as EVAAS results, when applicable), results from LEA-developed assessments whose results have been determined to correlate strongly with state test results, and evaluations by experts who observe and critique demonstration lessons for every teacher. Applications for positions at the school are not restricted to current LEA employees, which helps to ensure that hiring for most vacancies is competitive. In addition, Iredell-Statesville reimburses teachers at the school for fees and renewals associated with pursuing and maintaining National Board Certification.

New Hanover County Schools

Teachers in four New Hanover schools are eligible for recruitment, retention, and/or performance incentives. Of the four schools, one is supported by a performance-only incentive, two by a recruitment and retention-only incentive, and one by an incentive plan that includes all three elements.

New Hanover’s Teacher Incentive Plan (TIP) is available to career teachers who are willing to transfer to one of two identified high-need schools, one of which is a federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) school. TIP provides incentive pay to teachers for their contributions to student achievement as well as for their willingness to take on a challenging teaching assignment. The goals of TIP are: to link teacher compensation more closely to student achievement; to reward and recognize teachers for meeting and exceeding expectations; and to enable target schools to attract and retain the most qualified and effective teachers. Financial incentives are earned based on increases in student proficiency scores (by subject and/or overall school performance), individual teacher effectiveness ratings that “exceed expectation”, and/or a school-level effectiveness rating that exceeds expectation. School-level performance and effectiveness bonuses range between $250 and $2,250; additional individual teacher incentives can equal up to $750 per qualifying teacher.
Teachers at one of these two schools also are eligible for recruitment and retention incentives. Certified staff new to this school receive a $2,300 hiring bonus, and they remain eligible for an annual $2,300 retention bonus, as long as they receive an evaluation rating of “Proficient” or better on all six rating standards and “Accomplished” or better on at least two of the following standards: II, III, IV, and VI.

Teachers at two other schools in the LEA are supported by a recruitment and retention-only program that provides a $2,400 signing bonus for teachers who move to the schools, and subsequent $2,400 retention bonuses for teachers who remain at the schools.

**Northampton County Schools**

Northampton indicates in its RttT DSW that it provides signing bonuses to fill positions in hard-to-staff grade levels and schools. The LEA also provides performance-based retention bonuses to keep those positions filled. Beginning in 2011-12, teachers in targeted grades and schools have been eligible to receive retention bonuses based on their performance as measured by student achievement.

**Vance County Schools**

Vance County operated two Race to the Top-funded strategic staffing plans. The first was intended to support recruitment of effective teachers to six hard-to-staff schools, and the second was an additional pay-for-performance plan for one of those six schools.

**Recruitment.** Vance County’s strategic staffing recruitment plan mirrored the state-level strategic staffing plan in a number of ways. Vance identified six schools for its program, which started in the 2012-13 school year. Each of these schools had ABCs Composite scores below 60% in at least two of the most recent three school years for which data were available at the time the program started (2008-09, 2009-10, and 2010-11). Teacher eligibility also was based on the criteria used for the state-level strategic staffing plan: Teachers had to hold P2 licenses, they had to have ratings above “Proficient” on each of the original five standards of the Teacher Evaluation Process, and they could not have taught in the eligible school during the preceding 12 months. In addition, Vance considered ways to include aspects of the new sixth TEP standard—the Student Growth standard—in its teacher eligibility identification process, but the standard was not incorporated ahead of the final year of recruitment (2013-14).

The Vance plan only set aside a total of $15,000 a year for incentives for each of the 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14 school years, but since the plan was not operational for the 2011-12 school year, funds for that year were made available for the final two years. In addition, one of the six identified schools also qualified for state RttT District and School Transformation intervention, which meant that teachers who transferred to that school and met the eligibility requirements described above also were eligible for the state-level strategic staffing voucher. Vance used that program to fund incentives for that school, leaving the remaining funds available for incentives in its other five identified schools.
For the 2012-13 school year, Vance identified 11 eligible teachers, with at least one teacher accepting a position at each of the six schools. Of those 11 teachers, six remained at their schools for the 2013-14 school year. For the 2013-14 school year, an additional five teachers were eligible. Vance LEA representatives identified clear communication about the incentives—between principals and recruits, between LEA officials and principals, and, in the case of the state-level incentive, between NCDPI and the LEA—as the component that they thought was most important for ensuring the success of initiatives like this.

**Pay-for-Performance.** One of the six schools identified for the recruitment plan also was identified for support via the RttT-funded Turning Around Lowest-Achieving Schools (TALAS) initiative. As such, additional RttT funds were available for the school, and Vance included in its plans for that school a pay-for-performance plan based on outcomes from school years 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14. The plan provided two scenarios under which a pay-for-performance award would be made available: the first was a school-wide award (e.g., an award for all teachers, classified staff, and administrators) if the entire school made federal Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) targets or achieved a performance composite of 65% or greater; the second scenario awarded individual teachers whose classrooms demonstrated proficiency rates of 70% or greater, if the school as a whole failed to meet the AYP or performance composite targets.

For the school-wide incentive plan, administrators and teachers received $950, and classified employees received $300. For the individual teacher incentive plan, eligible teachers received $950.

For the 2011-12 school year, the target school made high growth but did not achieve a school-wide performance composite of 65%. There were, however, two classroom teachers whose students demonstrated proficiency rates of greater than 70%; those teachers received the incentive award. For the 2012-13 school year, the target school again made high growth but did not achieve a school-wide performance composite of 65%. In addition, no individual teachers saw 70% or more of their students demonstrate proficiency, so no incentives were awarded. of note, the state’s adoption of new standards and more stringent proficiency rates for the 2012-13 school year likely played a role in the target school’s lower overall achievement rates.

**Continuation of the plans.** Vance is working with County Commissioners to improve teacher supplements LEA-wide after RttT funding ends, but at the time data collection for this report was completed (Spring 2014), there had been no discussion of attempting to find resources to sustain the strategic staffing incentives funded by RttT.

**Wake County Public School System**

1. **Project Renaissance**

   At the beginning of the 2009-10 school year, the Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) identified four high-need schools to participate in a strategic staffing program called Project Renaissance. Project Renaissance provides several incentives to encourage highly-effective teachers to move to one of these schools, including recruitment bonuses and
performance bonuses. A teacher’s eligibility for the performance bonus is based on demonstrated growth on the state’s teacher evaluation instrument, whole-school growth, and, for teachers of tested subjects, classroom-level growth.

The four schools were identified based on their composite scores, all of which were below 60%. A fifth school, which was a new school in 2011-12, also was identified to receive support upon opening that was similar to the support provided to the Project Renaissance schools, based on what its composite score would have been, had its students been in attendance at the school in the previous year.

2. Targeted Recruitment Partnerships with Institutes of Higher Education

In addition to its targeted strategic staffing work, WCPSS also continues to investigate ways to expand its recruitment pool. In the past, the LEA maintained a relationship with the teacher preparation program at Slippery Rock University (in Pennsylvania) whereby students in that program completed internships in Wake County schools. The LEA intends to reinstate that initiative in Summer 2015. In support of its focus on recruiting a teacher corps that reflects the LEA’s student body, the LEA has attempted to establish similar relationships with several historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) in the hopes of increasing the size of its pool of minority teacher candidates.

3. The School Improvement Grant Program and WCPSS

WCPSS uses SIG funds to support extension of the teacher effectiveness incentives included in its Project Renaissance School program as part of its plan for its SIG school.

Wayne County Public Schools

Wayne County uses RttT funds to support strategic staffing as part of its implementation of a school turnaround model at one of its District Transformation schools, with support for continuation of the plan made possible by the one-year RttT no-cost extension. The incentive plan offered at this school is available to instructional certified and classified staff only. Incentives are awarded at the individual level for staff development participation and for teacher performance as measured through the state’s Teacher Evaluation Process (TEP). An incentive is awarded to any staff member who receives minimum ratings of “Proficient” on all areas of the TEP, as well as to all other staff who receive minimum ratings of “At Standard” for all areas on their evaluation instruments. Teachers who receive a minimum rating of “Proficient” on the student growth measure are awarded an additional bonus. In addition, the incentive plan provides a school-wide bonus for meeting the student proficiency standard, a one-time sign-on bonus for teachers who are new to the school, and a retention bonus for returning qualified teachers. In the RttT-funded Transformation school, incentives can reach as high as $4,500 per year for certified staff, and up to $2,750 for classified staff.
Strategic Staffing in NC: Summative Review of Local and State Implementation
September 2014

Performance Pay Plan for Wayne County DST School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Sign-On</th>
<th>Retention</th>
<th>Staff Development Participation</th>
<th>School-wide Performance</th>
<th>Evaluation Results of Proficient or Better on Original TEP Standards</th>
<th>Evaluation Results of Proficient or Better on TEP Standard 6 (EVAAS)</th>
<th>Maximum Possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher New to School</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$4,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returning Teacher</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$4,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classified Staff</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$250</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$2,750</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^ Awarded for 40+ contact hours
* Standards 1 through 5 of state evaluation instrument for certified staff; in-house evaluation tool for classified staff
# Based on student growth for classified staff whose work is directly connected to the work of certified staff (e.g., teacher’s assistant); based on Administration assessment of student performance for other classified staff (e.g., computer lab instructor) who work directly with students.

Wayne County’s school board considered in Spring 2014 whether to add temporarily a second level to the incentives scale for 2014-15—for instance, awarding $1,500 for a rating of “Accomplished” or higher for Standards 1 through 5, or Standard 6, or both—which would be supported by remaining RttT funds. A decision had not been made when data collection for this report ended (Spring 2014).

Selected Comprehensive, Non-RttT-Funded Plans
(Including SIG-Funded Plans with Comprehensive Strategic Staffing Elements)

Thirty-seven persistently low-performing North Carolina schools currently are receiving federal School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds as authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. In 2010-11, over $63 million in SIG funds were allocated to the first cohort of schools in 18 LEAs across the state. For 2011-12, over $50 million in SIG funds were allocated to the second cohort of schools in 13 LEAs; and for 2013-14, over $30 million in SIG funds were allocated to the third cohort of schools across 14 LEAs.

While not a required component of the SIG application, many LEAs incorporated strategic staffing plans into their SIG proposals (all of which already meet the criterion for focusing on high-need schools). LEAs whose SIG proposals include strategic staffing plans that meet all three of the criteria used to identify plans for this report are described briefly here. In some cases, these plans have supplemented their SIG funding with RttT funding to support some of the strategic staffing components identified in their plans.

In addition to these SIG-funded plans, this section also includes descriptions of other comprehensive plans not funded by SIGs (e.g., Cumberland County’s locally-funded plan).
Anson County Schools

The strategic staffing portion of Anson County’s SIG plan provides a structured, evaluation-based incentive as well as a school-wide growth incentive for teachers who agree to teach at either of the LEA’s two SIG schools. For each of the five original standards in the Teacher Evaluation Process for which a teacher earns an overall rating of “Accomplished,” the teacher receives $200. For each standard for which a teacher earns an overall rating of “Distinguished,” the teacher receives $300. For rewards based on “preliminary school-wide growth data:” teachers receive $1,500 if the school exceeds growth expectations and $1,000 if the school meets growth expectations; non-certified staff receive $750 or $500, respectively. The LEA also provided recruitment bonuses of up to $1,000 for teachers who were new to these schools each year.

Teachers were eligible for the evaluation-based incentive for the first two years of the grant only. The school-wide growth incentive, however, has been available to teachers every year, though rewards for the first two years were distributed retroactively to eligible teachers in the Fall 2013-14 school year.

Cabarrus County Schools (plan-only status)

Ten Cabarrus County schools plan to adopt Opportunity Culture37 strategic staffing models for the 2014-15 school year. (Schools in neighboring CMS adopted similar plans in 2012-13; see above.) Schools will choose between one of the three Opportunity Culture models (Multi-Classroom Leadership; Specialization; and Class-Size Change), depending upon specific school needs and model fit. The models are designed to differentiate teacher roles and career pathways within each school and subsequently allow schools to differentiate teacher compensation substantially (depending on each teacher’s role in the school) while relying only on existing resources (primarily via reallocation of funding as positions and out-of-classroom expenses are either modified or eliminated). Individual teacher pay supplements are tied to responsibilities but not directly to student outcomes. At the time this report was prepared, the participating Cabarrus County schools had not yet selected their specific models.

Cumberland County Schools

1. Locally-Funded Plan

In 2007, the Cumberland County Board of Education implemented an incentive program to recruit National Board Certified Teachers and highly-effective teachers with special licenses (teachers in target licensure areas who demonstrate a history of student success via academic growth as measured by standardized test scores and EVAAS estimations of teacher value-added) into 10 of the LEA’s most academically-challenged schools. Schools were identified based on a number of factors, including overall academic progress (as demonstrated by the

Strategic Staffing in NC: Summative Review of Local and State Implementation
September 2014

proportion of students performing below grade level on state End-of-Grade and End-of-Course [EOC] tests), the proportion of students at the school classified as being socio-economically disadvantaged, the proportion of identified special needs students, and the school’s recruitment success with and retention rates of highly effective teachers.

The Board approved the stipend, awarded on a monthly basis, for up to 30 teacher positions across the 10 schools. Eligible teachers have the opportunity to earn as much as $12,000 per year through this program (depending on licensure level; teachers with bachelor’s-level licenses earn less). The LEA reports that retention rates for these teachers have been high.

In addition to the stipend, Cumberland also continues longstanding partnerships with three area universities (Fayetteville State University, Methodist University, and the University of North Carolina at Pembroke) to facilitate targeted recruitment of novice teachers to high-need schools. Cumberland’s Human Resources department works with the universities to make strategic placement decisions for student-teacher internships. In addition, a staff member from Human Resources actively participates on two of the universities’ Teacher Education Committees, and the third university provides a representative to participate in the regional Personnel Administrator’s Association in which Cumberland maintains membership.

2. SIG-funded Plan (2011-12 through 2012-13)

Cumberland County Schools received SIG funds to implement a school turnaround model at Walker-Spivey High School, which serves exceptional children. As part of the turnaround process, Walker-Spivey was consolidated with another local high school, but Walker-Spivey’s function remains to serve its original target population as a separate program within the larger school. The Walker-Spivey turnaround plan included an incentive program with some strategic staffing elements, including school- and individual-level pay for performance based on student achievement as demonstrated via state EOC tests. The incentive plan was first offered during the 2011-12 school year and extended through the 2012-13 school year – the final year of the grant. Details of the plan are provided below.

---

38 Since the stipends are not limited to teachers who change schools within the LEA but are also open to teachers new to the LEA, they also function as recruitment incentives.
39 All state colleges and universities are required to develop and maintain such partnerships, but some LEA-higher education partnerships are more targeted than others.
### Cumberland County Schools: Incentives Plan for SIG School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incentive Component</th>
<th>Minimum Requirement(s)</th>
<th>Incentive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Achievement</strong></td>
<td>50% or more of students school-wide meet proficiency</td>
<td>$500 for each teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50% or more of students of an individual teacher of a tested subject meet proficiency</td>
<td>$500 for individual teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attendance</strong></td>
<td>At least 97% attendance (175 student days)</td>
<td>97%=$250; 100%=$350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(Does not include professional leave)</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Reform Efforts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attend 97% of all PLC meetings</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attend 97% of Collaborative Planning/Departmental Meetings</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Attend 97% of School Improvement Team (SIT) meetings (SIT Members only)</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Development</strong></td>
<td>To qualify, staff member must:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>- Attend PD that is a component of her or his PD Plan</td>
<td>$100 per qualifying PD session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Ensure the PD does not require teacher to miss more than 5 instructional days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Attend a CCS-provided PD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Share information from PD in department meetings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Submit reflection sheet within one week of PD completion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Provide artifacts to support implementation of PD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Attend at least ONE PD per year that is not required by CCS or school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State ABCs Local-Option Goals for Alternative Schools</strong></td>
<td>School must meet 80% of local-option target goals</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Durham Public Schools

Durham Public Schools (DPS) has been awarded five three-year, school-level SIGs from the United States Department of Education—one in 2010 (which ended in 2012-13), two in 2011, and two more in 2013. Incentive plans at the 2011 and 2013 SIG award schools vary based on specific school needs.

**2011 SIG Award Strategic Staffing Plans.** As part of overall efforts to transform the two 2011 SIG award schools (one elementary school and one high school), each school is implementing a strategic staffing component called the Teachers of Power (TOP) plan. TOP includes both targeted recruitment and performance-based incentives for teachers; however, the recruitment bonus currently is available only to eligible teachers at the high school.
1. Teacher Recruitment and Retention Incentives (High School Only)

DPS offers the following recruitment incentives to attract teachers whose students have demonstrated two or more years of high growth or (for teachers of non-tested subjects) who have other proven records of success:

- A $2,500 one-time bonus for teachers in the following content areas: English I, English II, Biology, Exceptional Children, and Common Core Math; and
- Eligibility for the performance incentives outlined below.

To support retention, teachers who leave prior to the end of their third year will be required to repay recruitment incentives on a prorated basis.

2. Teacher Performance Incentives

Teachers are eligible for annual performance incentives for the achievement of school-wide and individual goals. Incentives are both school-based and individual-based. These incentives include:

- $1,000 to each licensed employee if the school is designated “High Growth” or better as designated under the new state accountability plan; or
- $1,500 for each teacher of a tested subject whose students demonstrate high growth.

In addition, all certified teachers also are eligible to receive a high growth bonus of $1,500 from RttT funds. Thus, teachers in tested subject areas may receive up to $3,000 total for high growth results.

2013 SIG Award Strategic Staffing Plans. Teachers at the 2013 SIG schools (one elementary school and one middle school) either receive supplemental pay or performance-based incentives (similar to the TOP plan). Teachers at the middle school who are pursuing additional or high-need certification (e.g., English as a Second Language, Academically and Intellectually Gifted, and/or National Board Certification) receive a local 12% supplement (in addition to the state’s National Board supplement) after earning certification. Teachers in tested grades at the elementary school are eligible to receive individual performance incentives based on “high student growth” results, while teachers in non-tested areas are eligible to receive a performance incentive based on evidence of “high, school-wide student growth.”

Gaston County Schools

Existing staff and new hires at Gaston County’s two SIG schools are eligible for retention and recruitment incentives in addition to the signing bonus that Gaston County already offers teachers LEA-wide in hard-to-staff subject areas (mathematics, science, foreign languages, English as a Second Language, and special education). Staff at each school are eligible for both evaluation- and performance-based incentives, though requirements and rewards vary between the two schools and across staff positions.
To be eligible for the *evaluation-based* incentive, a teacher must either: (1) show growth in at least one of the standards that comprise the state’s Teacher Evaluation Process (does not apply to new teachers) and have no ratings below “Proficient”; and/or (2) earn or maintain ratings of “Accomplished” or “Distinguished” for every standard.

To be eligible for *performance-based* incentives, certified staff at one SIG school must: maintain or increase their students’ collective attendance rate to 85%; increase community member involvement in school activities; and increase the combined average growth of their students’ STAR Reading and STAR Math (Computer-adaptive reading and mathematics diagnostic tools) scores by at least 0.5 points. Certified staff at the other SIG school are eligible for individual, grade-level, and school-level performance rewards based on meeting student growth targets in reading and mathematics.

Gaston County also has developed an LEA-level incentive plan that will differentiate rewards for teachers based on teacher position, grade level, and subject area. Once the plan is operational, teachers will be eligible for several rewards based on: individual teacher, grade-level, and school-wide student growth results; willingness to serve as a mentor to beginning teachers; willingness to work in a hard-to-staff school or subject area; and teacher attendance. As of this writing (Spring 2014), Gaston is still attempting to determine when the plan can be implemented and how it will be funded.  

**Guilford County Schools**

Guilford County Schools is using SIG funds to support staffing efforts at three schools. At each school, all staff were required to re-apply for their positions, with no more than 50% eligible for rehire. A new staffing protocol includes the identification and recruitment of highly-qualified staff from other Guilford County schools who: exhibit evidence of high value added (via EVAAS); meet the expectations detailed in the LEA’s Interactive Computer Interview System screening process; and exceed expectations in team interviews and observations of a lesson in the candidate’s area of certification. Qualified candidates receive recruitment bonuses and are eligible for performance incentives (based on annual measures of value added via EVAAS); they

---

40 Gaston County Schools began this work in response to federal requests (linked to both RTtT and SIG funding) for LEAs to share what they have learned as a result of their grant-funded work. Gaston County’s work also was in response to language in North Carolina Senate Bill 795 (2012)—titled the “Excellent Public Schools Act”—which included a section (Part X, Section 10.(a)) that required LEAs to develop plans for performance pay for teachers and submit them to the State Board of Education. In the final appropriations bill (SL 2013-360), which included several of the Excellent Public Schools Act components, the responsibility for developing plans was transferred from the LEAs to a state-level Task Force, which met in Spring 2014 and developed recommendations ahead of the 2014 Short Session.

41 Two were awarded SIGs in 2011; the third was awarded a SIG in 2013. A fourth school’s SIG expired in 2010. All four of these schools, along with three more that were never awarded SIG funding, are part of a larger turnaround effort that has been supported by a mix of several funding sources (SIG, Title I, and local).

42 This computer-assisted interviewing process is designed to measure the skills and knowledge of prospective teachers. The tool was developed by the American Association of School Personnel Administrators: [http://www.aaspa.org/publications/product/4/](http://www.aaspa.org/publications/product/4/)

43 Interviews include representatives from the school and from the LEA.
also are offered extended employment agreements. Incentive structures vary across the three schools.

*Nash-Rocky Mount Schools*

Nash-Rocky Mount Schools introduced two strategic staffing plans via federal SIG funding. The first plan, in operation at an alternative school serving grades 6 through 12, originally included individual teacher bonuses for evidence of student academic growth and for personal attendance rates. Teachers in core subject areas—Algebra I, biology, English I, reading (6th through 8th grades) and math (6th through 8th grade)—were eligible for a $3,000 incentive if their students demonstrated overall positive academic change, based on ABCs results. Most staff also were eligible for a graduated attendance incentive of up to $500 for missing five or fewer student and mandatory work days. Nash-Rocky Mount’s SIG also included bonuses for administrators, teachers, and other staff for whole-school academic growth (as measured by the ABCs accountability model) and for meeting a whole-school student attendance rate goal. Total maximum compensations ranged between $1,500 (classified staff) and $4,000 (core subject teachers).

The SIG funding that supported this plan ended in 2013, but the LEA was able to extend funding to some degree through the 2013-14 school year with local support, though with significant changes to the original plan in response to funding limitations. Under the extension, staff elected to eliminate individual-level incentives entirely, but retain school-level incentives at a reduced rate. In order for teachers at the high school level to receive the incentive, 50% or more of the school’s students had to pass a minimum of 75% of their courses in order for the staff to earn the incentive. At the middle school level, 40% or more of the school’s students had to advance one grade level during the school year. The chart below includes a breakdown of the incentives for each employee classification. The incentive plan assumes that staff member attendance rates are 95% or higher; if that target is not met, incentive are prorated. This plan is scheduled to end after the 2013-14 school year, but the LEA is exploring options for continuation through 2014-15.

*Nash-Rocky Mount Locally-Funded SIG Incentives*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee Classification</th>
<th>Incentive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Certified: Classroom Teacher, Principal, Assistant Principal</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified: Social Worker and Counselor</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Assistant</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classified Staff</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nash-Rocky Mount’s plan for the school that was awarded SIG funding in 2013 includes individual teacher, school-level, and even student bonuses for evidence of student academic growth, as well as bonuses for staff who meet personal attendance targets (see incentive chart below). In addition, the plan includes retention and recruitment bonuses. Teachers on staff during
the 2013-14 school year are scheduled to receive retention bonuses of $2,000 during the 2014-15 school year (distributed in two installments) if they remain at the school, and new staff who take positions at the school for the 2014-15 school year will receive a $1,500 signing incentive, also to be distributed in two installments during their first year on staff.

**Nash-Rocky Mount 2013 SIG Incentive Plan**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incentive Goal</th>
<th>School Community Members Eligible</th>
<th>Incentive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in reading proficiency</td>
<td>All staff participating in daily literacy and guided reading block</td>
<td>$500/$350/$250, based on percentage of improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in mathematics and science proficiency</td>
<td>Mathematics and science teachers, homeroom teachers</td>
<td>$250/$200/$150, based on percentage of improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students meet proficiency targets for total composite scores school-wide</td>
<td>Principal, assistant principal, non-homeroom certified staff, and classified staff</td>
<td>$500 (principal)/$400 (assistant principal)/$250 (non-homeroom and other certified staff)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students meet growth targets in all content areas</td>
<td>Homeroom teachers</td>
<td>$500 (for exceeding target) or $250 (for meeting target)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students meet proficiency targets for growth school-wide</td>
<td>Principal, assistant principal, non-homeroom certified staff, and classified staff</td>
<td>$500 (principal)/$400 (assistant principal)/$250 (non-homeroom and other certified staff)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff meet or exceed 95% attendance rate for the school year.</td>
<td>All staff</td>
<td>$150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Incentive</td>
<td>Students</td>
<td>Class Trip</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Pitt County Schools**

The Pitt County SIG plan operated in three schools through the 2012-13 school year. The strategic staffing components of the plan originally included individual- and school-level pay-for-performance incentives, as well as provisions for staff removal, with cumulative potential awards as high as $10,750. In the final year of the SIG-funded portion of the plan, the individual-level incentives were eliminated.

The revised version of the plan continues to be supported by local funds. Though not as complex as it was when it included individual-level incentives, the revised incentive plan still offers all certified and non-certified staff in the three SIG schools multiple opportunities to earn.
Strategic Staffing in NC: Summative Review of Local and State Implementation
September 2014

performance pay as a result of meeting or exceeding expectations in areas such as personal attendance, willingness to teach hard-to-staff courses, and whole-school performance in both achievement and graduation rates. To be eligible for the whole-school performance pay, staff have to be rated at least at the Proficient level in all standards of their evaluation. Cumulative awards are as high as $2,600. In addition, for the 2013-14 school year, Pitt County used local funds to include hiring incentives of up to $4,000 for the three former SIG schools; whether these incentives or the performance-based incentives will be continued in succeeding school years is not yet clear.

Revised Performance Pay Plan for Pitt County Former SIG Schools, 2013-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Attendance Goal</th>
<th>Class Differentiation</th>
<th>Campus Progress Award (school-wide)</th>
<th>Maximum Possible</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>$200/sem</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>$1,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12 Teachers</td>
<td>$200/sem</td>
<td></td>
<td>$700</td>
<td>$1,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR English/Math</td>
<td>$200/sem</td>
<td>$250/class</td>
<td>$700</td>
<td>$2,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certified Instr. Support</td>
<td>$200/sem</td>
<td></td>
<td>$700</td>
<td>$1,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Assistant</td>
<td>$200/sem</td>
<td></td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical/Custodial</td>
<td>$200/sem</td>
<td></td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cafeteria/Bus Driver</td>
<td>$200/sem</td>
<td></td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>$600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Criteria:**
- 2 absences or less per semester. All staff included.
- Students in class(es) taught deemed to be at-risk

**Either:**
- Graduation rate >75% and/or +3% over previous year.
- Grade B or higher under the state accountability model.

*Note:* To be eligible for performance payment, employee a) must not have missed more than 5 student instructional days/semester, b) must be employed at the end of the school year, and c) must achieve a minimum rating of “proficient/at standard” on all evaluation measures.
Recruitment Incentive Pay Plan for Pitt County Former SIG Schools, 2013-14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>2013-14 only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly-Qualified Exceptional Children-certified, and Highly Qualified in Core Subject</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highly-Qualified Math, English, Science, or Social Studies</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other Teachers</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
- Current PCS employees at a SIG school or who transfer to a SIG school are not eligible for hiring incentives but are eligible for performance payment.
- No individual can receive more than one hiring bonus from PCS under this plan.

Pitt County received SIG funding for a fourth school in 2013. Administrators and teachers at the school are rewarded based on teacher and principal evaluation ratings on each of the five (teacher) or seven (principal) non-value-added standards. Each rating of “Accomplished” results in a $250 bonus for teachers, and each “Distinguished” rating in a $500 bonus, with a total possible bonus of $2,500 (teachers) or $3,500 (principals). The school also offers a $1,000 signing bonus to new staff, and retention bonuses of $250 per subject tested are available to teachers with 80% or more of their students who demonstrate growth of 10% or higher on state test scores. Finally, annual stipends of $5,000 are provided to teachers who have demonstrated effectiveness and leadership characteristics and who agree to serve as co-teachers or coaches.

Richmond County Schools

At Richmond County’s DST school, teachers are awarded bonuses based on school-wide and individual performance as measured by the state’s value-added growth model. All certified staff receive $1,500 if the school’s value-added composite reaches the “exceeds student growth” range, and an additional $500 for individual teachers whose students meet the same standard. If the school does not meet the student growth target but an individual teacher does, she or he receives the full $2,000.

Richmond County also was awarded SIG funding in 2013 for a plan that could include performance incentives that reward individual teachers based on student growth. Due to limited funding, however, the plan was not implemented for the 2013-14 school year—the first year of the grant.

Washington County

The strategic staffing portion of Washington County’s plan for its SIG school (awarded in 2013) provides performance, evaluation, and recruitment incentive opportunities. Teachers have the potential to earn $1,500 for effective performance, additional bonus opportunities for evaluation ratings of accomplished or higher, and up to $1,000 for reimbursement of relocation expenses for staff new to the SIG school.
Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools

WSFCS is using SIG funding to support extension of the educator effectiveness incentive component of their STAR³ program (see the Descriptions of Selected Comprehensive Strategic Staffing Plans section, above) at two SIG schools, one in its third year and the other in its first year of SIG funding. Staff at the third-year SIG school also receive one month’s additional pay, accrued across the year as a result of a 30-minute extension to the school day. Staff at the first-year SIG school were offered a signing or retention bonus, the amount of which varied based on a teacher’s past experience, effectiveness, and performance.

Notable Plans that do not All Meet Three Criteria (RttT-Funded and Non-RttT-Funded)

Caldwell County Schools

Caldwell County’s Detailed Scope of Work includes plans for a strategic staffing program that is not funded. The plan and background for the plan are described here.

1. Historical Experiments with Strategic Staffing in Caldwell County

   Several years ago, one Caldwell County school was identified via No Child Left Behind’s Annual Yearly Progress measures as a school in need of improvement. As part of a host of other school improvement efforts, teachers in that school were eligible for differentiated pay during the 2008-09 school year. Several of the school’s teachers were moved to other schools across the LEA to make room for new teachers who exhibited the energy levels and confidence student potential that the LEA deemed necessary to turn around the school. The move was a one-year experiment only, but the LEA partially attributes positive changes in that year’s school outcomes to the move. Pay differentiation was not based on measures of teacher effectiveness but instead on willingness to transfer to the high-need school. All certified personnel in the school received an additional $1,200 that year, and non-certified staff received $600. All of these compensation funds were locally sourced. In addition, a lead Exceptional Children’s Teacher was employed and received an additional $2,000 that year ($200 per month) from School Improvement Funds (Title I).

2. Current Strategic Staffing Plans under Race to the Top

   As part of its commitment, Caldwell County used student achievement data, principal recommendations, and performance to identify about 150 “high-flyer” teachers who were asked to serve as leads in the LEA’s preparation for its transition to Common Core State Standards. The LEA identifies this process as a first step toward teacher differentiation (via differentiated teacher leadership). Ensuing steps may include intentional staff movement within the LEA and the return of some sort of incentive pay plan, but at this point, those developments are still in the planning stages.

   Caldwell County also is making progress toward differentiation of teacher effectiveness by investing significant resources in the development of a data warehouse to help principals and LEA leaders more effectively use student achievement and growth data for decision-making. The LEA has contracted with TetraData (a Follett company) to develop a data system that
will allow for seamless integration of state-generated data (such as EVAAS results) with locally-generated data (in particular, results from Discover Assessment [elementary] and ClassScape [middle school] benchmark testing). The warehouse is functional, and the LEA is moving toward implementation of a data dashboard interface for classroom use. Currently, principals receive monthly training on how to utilize these data for decision-making purposes, and training for teachers has begun as well.

**Chatham County**

While not a strategic staffing plan *per se*, the Chatham County Schools incentives program is unique among incentive-only plans, in that it is entirely locally-funded and available to all full-time licensed or classified employees whose primary job involves the delivery, monitoring, and/or assessment of instruction, regardless of the schools in which they work. The plan awards performance bonuses at the school level and not individually; each eligible licensed staff member employed at a school that receives a performance composite score that corresponds to the state’s highest growth targets—“Meets Expected Growth” or “Exceeds Expected Growth”—will qualify for a $500 or $1,000 bonus ($250 or $500 bonus, respectively, for classified employees). In essence, the plan mirrors the similar statewide ABCs plan that was discontinued after the 2008-09 school year due to lack of funding. The incentive plan will be implemented for the first time during the 2014-15 school year, and the LEA plans to continue the program in subsequent years as long as funding is available. While not an active component of the current incentive plan, the LEA also is considering an option to provide an additional bonus for schools that meet the state’s most rigorous accountability standard (the “A” grade designation), as well as a bonus for LEA-level staff who work directly with any of the schools in the LEA but who are not assigned to a specific school.

**Lexington City Schools (plan-only status)**

Lexington City’s Detailed Scope of Work includes plans for a strategic staffing program that is not funded. The plan and background for the plan are described here.

All six of Lexington City’s schools are identified by the LEA as high-need schools, based on school demographics and the proportion of students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch. Prior to the 2011-12 school year, all schools received the incentives outlined below. However, due to limited funding, only two schools received incentives during the 2011-12 and 2012-13 academic years, and no schools received funding for the 2013-14 academic year.

1. **LEA-Wide Recruitment and Retention**

   All teachers new to the LEA were eligible for a signing bonus, which was awarded in installments to encourage both retention and personal development. Half of the bonus was awarded when a teacher met No Child Left Behind highly-qualified teacher standards. Since most teachers in the state already met this definition (in the 2010-11 school year, all teachers in Lexington City were designated highly-qualified), this portion of the bonus often was offered in support of relocation costs. Teachers received the second half of the bonus—the
Strategic Staffing in NC: Summative Review of Local and State Implementation
September 2014

retention bonus—in December of their second year in the LEA. If teachers left the program before the second installment was awarded, they were required to return the initial installment. While the LEA did not differentiate among its six schools, it did differentiate across subject areas based on relative need. Teachers placed in high-need areas (e.g., math and secondary science) received a larger bonus ($2,000) than teachers placed in other areas (e.g., career and technical education; $1,500). After the plan was put in place, the LEA-wide two-year retention rate hovered around 80%, up from about 60% in previous years.

In addition to the financial retention plan, Lexington City continues to receive assistance from Winston-Salem State University and High Point University for provision of its teacher induction program.

2. Pay for Professional Growth

Between the 2007-08 and 2012-13 school years, Lexington City used its District and School Supplemental Funding to support a supplement plan tied to participation in targeted professional development. All teachers who completed a staff development curriculum geared toward implementation of the Common Core State Standards received a 1.5% bonus. Bonuses were paid on the last work day of the school year. Teachers were eligible every year, and since most teachers met the eligibility requirements each year, the plan essentially operated as a second recruitment and retention bonus.

3. Innovative 100 – A Micro-Performance-Based Pay Plan

Since the 2010-11 school year, Lexington City has supported a locally-developed Innovative 100 program, which rewards teachers for developing innovative instructional strategies and methods. To be eligible, a teacher must submit a request to have one of her or his lessons observed. The lesson must include at least one specific objective from the North Carolina Standard Course of Study for her or his subject. The teacher’s principal and the assistant superintendent review all such requests. If accepted for observation, students in the teacher’s class are given a pre- and post-test to measure student achievement levels on the selected objective. If appropriate gains are met (i.e., if all students demonstrate achievement levels of 90% or greater, or if they demonstrate a 70% gain between pre- and post-tests), the teacher then works with her or his principal to conduct a staff development session focused on the lesson and instructional technique(s). Teachers who complete all requirements are awarded $400. Principals of schools in which 10 innovative practices have been submitted, completed, and approved are awarded a $1,000 incentive bonus. Lexington City has a goal of awarding the bonus to 100 teachers a year, but the LEA has had limited funding for this program in the past (around $20,000 a year), and for the 2011-12 school year funding was reduced to $10,000.

Union County Public Schools

Since 2002, Union County Public Schools has provided a $1,500 supplement to teachers who agree to teach full-time in one of the LEA’s high-priority schools. Schools are designated as high-priority when the proportion of free and reduced-price lunch students at the school is at or above 50%. As the LEA has grown, the number of high-priority schools also has risen; in the
2013-14 school year, teachers in 16 of the 52 Union County schools were eligible. Union County continues to use local funds to support this supplemental pay and plans to sustain the initiative indefinitely.

Union’s Human Resources Division also uses the supplement as one of several recruitment tools at job fairs it sponsors that are designed specifically to recruit applicants for positions in its high-priority schools. In addition to the supplement, prospective teachers are given tours of the schools, and the Division prepares special information packets about the schools.

In addition, Union County works to maintain staff continuity at its high-priority schools by limiting the annual number of staff who are eligible for transfer from those schools to other schools in the LEA. Once assigned to a high-priority school, a teacher must teach there for three years before becoming eligible for a voluntary transfer. The LEA believes that this policy has helped to ensure continuity in instructional practice and design at the high-priority schools, as indicated by increases in academic growth on state and local assessments.

*Sampson County Schools*

Sampson County provides signing bonuses and supplemental pay to attract and retain STEM teachers in high-need schools and hard-to-staff subject areas. Newly hired high school mathematics and science teachers are awarded a $4,000 signing bonus, paid over two years; other newly hired teachers receive a $2,000 signing bonus, also paid over two years. Newly hired teachers with a lateral entry teacher license are paid a $1,000 bonus when the license is cleared. In addition, most of these teachers receive supplemental pay equivalent to 10% of their base salaries, and mathematics and science teachers at one targeted high school receive a 12% supplement, while other teachers receive a 7% supplement.

Sampson County also provides all teachers in high-need subject areas in non-high-need schools LEA with reimbursement for their Praxis II costs, and the LEA also provides LEA-wide reimbursement for courses that lead to Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) licensure.

---

44 The LEA notes that these job fairs have declined in number in recent years in response to challenging economic conditions.
Appendix F. Race to the Top-Funded Technical Assistance for Teacher Recruitment and Retention

Overview of Vendor’s Plan

With RttT support, Marstrats—a marketing and consulting firm—supported the development of recruitment and retention efforts related to strategic staffing in the state’s 12 District and School Transformation LEAs:

- Anson County Schools
- Durham Public Schools
- Edgecombe County Schools
- Greene County Schools
- Halifax County Schools
- Hertford County Schools
- Northampton County Schools
- Robeson County Schools
- Thomasville City Schools
- Warren County Schools
- Washington County Schools
- Weldon City Schools

Marstrats proposed a three-pronged approach to supporting these LEAs that included a due diligence period, regional workshops, and the development of customized recruitment and retention plans for each LEA (see Timeline, Table F2, third page following).

Due Diligence Period

The due diligence period was conducted during the Spring and Summer of 2012. During this time, Marstrats reviewed current research, conducted on-site meetings with eligible LEAs, administered a Needs Assessment Survey, and used a GeoAnalytics process to gather information about population, geography, commerce, lifestyle, and other descriptive statistics in order to develop a unique community profile for each LEA. This information was used to inform the development of customized LEA recruitment and retention plans.

Regional Workshops

Prior to delivering the customized LEA plans, Marstrats conducted two regional one-day workshops in March 2013. These workshops focused on recruitment and retention. Marstrats offered the same workshop in three different locations (Concord, Durham, and Greenville) on three different dates in order to accommodate LEA representatives; however, one workshop was cancelled due to lack of interest. These workshops were available to the 12 targeted LEAs as well as to 36 of the state’s Turning Around Lowest-Achieving Schools LEAs. A total of 19 participants attended the workshops, representing 11 LEAs.45

The workshops focused primarily on teacher recruitment, with little discussion of teacher retention. The workshop was organized into three sections: discovery; developing a candidate

45 LEA attendance included five of the 12 DST districts (Greene, Halifax, Robeson, Washington, and Weldon) and seven additional TALAS districts (Alamance, Bertie, Hyde, Nash, Pitt, and Wayne).
pool; and identifying and hiring candidates. The discovery portion of the workshop focused on the information collected during the due diligence period. The other two sections focused on strategies and tools for LEAs to use. Marstrats presented website and social media tools that LEAs could use to develop candidate pools and identify candidates. Participants were encouraged to share their experiences and any strategies they currently were employing for attracting candidates. Because there were LEAs in attendance that would not be receiving a plan, the customized LEA plans were not discussed during the workshops.

Marstrats collected participant feedback at the conclusion of each workshop. Participants were asked to rate the quality and relevance of each section of the workshop (Table F1). All participants responded favorably to the all items, indicating that they agreed or strongly agreed that all three sections of the workshop were of quality and were relevant.

Table F1. Participants Perceptions about the Quality of the Workshops

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Item</th>
<th>Discovery</th>
<th>Developing Your Candidate Pool</th>
<th>Identifying and Hiring Candidates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The information presented will assist me in my leadership role to support</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaching and learning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The information is relevant to my practice.</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The presentation met my professional education needs.</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Today’s professional development was helpful in leading the district in the</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recruitment process.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The session was well organized.</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My thinking about the topic was expanded.</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Survey responses were recorded on a 5-point scale: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree. All participants agreed or strongly agreed with each item (n = 19).

Recruitment and Retention Plans

Following the workshops, Marstrats provided 11 of the 12 LEAs with their customized recruitment and retention plans (one LEA chose not to receive a plan). These plans were to address the specific needs of each LEA. Each plan was to include details on employer (LEA) branding, retention strategies, information on media usage (including digital and social media),
and information on public relations. A comparison of the plans by the Evaluation Team revealed that they were all very similar in structure and content. For example, the plans all described the same general and teacher-specific recruitment strategies, though they did acknowledge and make (sometimes superficial) site-specific recommendations based on an LEA’s local strategic staffing initiatives. The Evaluation Team also noted that several of these plans were incomplete, with both content and formatting details left unfinished.

The Evaluation Team, with the assistant of the DST staff, emailed a short survey (Appendix B) to the 11 LEAs that received a plan. LEA representatives were asked how they felt about the value and feasibility of the recruitment and retention plan they received from Marstrats. Only two LEAs provided feedback.

Regarding how well the plan meets the LEA’s needs and expectations, the two respondents reported that, though the plan was clear, concise, and informative, it did not provide enough specific information necessary for recruiting and retaining candidates. The plan also did not outline potential obstacles (e.g., housing) or solutions.

The two LEAs surveyed reported that they are not using the plans because they either do not have the resources to support the plan or they currently do not have the personnel necessary to implement it. To date, NCDPI has not followed up with the 11 LEAs regarding the implementation of their customized plans.
Table F2. Marstrats Timeline for Developing Recruitment and Retention Plans for 12 DST LEAs (2012-2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Initial Meeting with NCDPI</strong></td>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirm proposal parameters, strategy, and tactics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final approval of plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation to Governor's Education Transformation Commission</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Due Diligence</strong></td>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-site meetings w/individual school district leadership/community leaders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best practices from Due Diligence meetings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follow-up visits to targeted districts (as needed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Plan Development</strong></td>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of individual plans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of initial individual plans to districts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final plans with survey data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research</strong></td>
<td>Feb</td>
<td>Mar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GeoAnalytics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudinal survey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of research findings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Regional Workshops (4)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Key:*  
- **Green** = Project Mgmt  
- **Orange** = District Planning  
- **Blue** = Due Diligence  
- **Purple** = Regional Workshops

Shared on May 7, 2012
Contact Information:
Please direct all inquiries to Trip Stallings
dtstalli@ncsu.edu