



## ANNOUNCEMENT - JANUARY 16, 2007

### Phased Announcements

The implementation of the new opportunities made possible by the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant require a great deal of planning and careful thought. We appreciate all the feedback we have received from teachers after meeting with you in your schools in December. To see a listing of the questions asked, along with responses, please visit [www.eagleschools.net](http://www.eagleschools.net), Staff Resources/TIF Grant Information. To log in to this area of our web site, your user name will be "teacher" and the password is "ecs."

District Leadership Team is continuing to work closely with Principals from each building and ECEA leadership to develop the best possible plan for developing and rolling out opportunities made possible by the TIF grant. In the first year of the grant, we will make announcements in four phases. Below is an overview of each Phase.

#### *Phase I - December 11 - 15*

- Hiring of Data & Assessment Analyst
- Overview of data collection and analysis system
- Master & Mentor Teacher stipends
- K-2 & 9-12 classroom-level assessments
- Instructional best practices training

#### *Phase II - January 16 - 18*

- New training opportunities
- Overview of new bonus opportunities - high-poverty schools

#### *Phase III - mid-March*

- Differentiated contracts
- New training opportunities

#### *Phase IV - mid-May*

- More bonus opportunities

### Training Opportunities

#### *TAP Summer Institute in Eagle County*

This four-day training event allows the Instructional Leadership Teams in each of our buildings to come together for training on all the elements of the Teacher Advancement Program. The TIF grant award makes it possible for us to hold this event in Eagle County on August 6 - 9 for approximately 125 Principals, Master and Mentor Teachers to attend.

The curriculum for the *Tap Summer Institute* will be based on needs identified through program reviews and on input from current leadership team members. Participants will learn the various roles of the leadership team members and how to analyze data, both formatively and summatively, in order to develop a school plan for cluster learning. Using sample data and a sample plan, participants will analyze clusters that are implementing the school plan's cluster work. The cluster training will focus on issues such as using formative assessment effectively in every cluster meeting, "chunking" information, identifying the critical attributes of strategies, and modeling the strategy. Further, the cluster work will directly connect to what Master and Mentor Teachers should provide in terms of classroom follow-up support for teachers, emphasizing an analysis of student work. The work with clusters will lead to the Individual Growth Plan (IGP) training, which again will be tied to the plan and the cluster work from the examples. Participants will also evaluate a classroom

lesson and use that information to develop an effective post-conference and to inform their work with the IGP's.

#### *Standards-Based Instruction Training*

We believe that in order to increase student achievement, we must continue the focus of teaching and learning being aligned to state standards. Through cluster trainings, teachers are learning to deliver lessons with a stated objective aligned to a standard, pre-test to determine current levels of understanding, provide instruction and then post-test to determine if their students have met the objective. Standards-based instructional training will begin in February for Principals and Master Teachers, and a plan is being developed for a year-long series of trainings and follow-up for instructional leaders. New learnings will be delivered in schools primarily during cluster, team and/or content-specific meetings.

*Whenever we can  
write grants for  
teachers, we will.*

*All teachers will  
benefit from some  
components of the  
grant, but not all  
teachers will benefit  
from all components.*

*Growing  
professionally is  
part of our culture.*

*It's all about  
increasing student  
achievement and  
rewarding excellence  
in teaching.*



## Signing Bonuses for High-Poverty Schools

We believe that students from poverty are generally behind their peers academically and therefore to be successful deserve the most effective teachers to close the achievement gap. Schools with 50 percent or more of the student population living in poverty provide additional challenges for recruiting and retaining teachers. It is necessary to staff these buildings with highly-effective teachers to meet the needs of students, and therefore, we will utilize TIF grant funds to assist us in recruiting and retaining these teachers.

In an effort to retain our most effective teachers, we will provide a \$2,000 one-time signing bonus to all full-time teachers and principals in our high-poverty schools. Bonus amounts for part-time teachers in high-poverty schools will be prorated.

A high-poverty school is defined as a school with 50 percent or more of its students qualifying for free and reduced lunch as of October 1 of the previous year. High schools will qualify based on the free and reduced lunch percentage of their elementary and middle feeder pattern schools. Schools that qualify for this bonus based on the October 1, 2005 count are:

- Avon Elementary
- Edwards Elementary
- Berry Creek Middle
- Red Canyon High

Teachers currently in these buildings will receive a \$2,000 signing bonus on their February 20, 2007 paycheck. Teachers and principals are only eligible to receive this signing bonus once in their career in Eagle County Schools and must stay for two years from the date the bonus is issued in order to earn the entire bonus. If a teacher leaves (voluntary or involuntary) at the end of the first year, one half of the bonus (\$1,000) will be deducted from his/her final check.

Based on the October 1, 2006 count, the same four schools will qualify for a signing bonus for the 2007-08 school year. New hires for these schools will receive their signing bonuses in the first check of the contract year (September 2007).

## Updates on Phase I Announcements

### *K-2 & 9-12 Assessment Committees In Action*

On Tuesday, January 9th a committee of high school educators led by Mike Gass, Director of Secondary Curriculum, met to begin the process of identifying a comprehensive battery of 9-12 assessments for core content areas. Members of the committee include: Dave Russell, Bob Zimmerman, Ross Morgan and Charles Vogel from Eagle Valley High; Lauren Wilson, Sage Voliter, Cassie Harrelson, Dana Zilliox and Robin Gersten from Battle Mountain High; and Linda Dudley from Red Canyon High. The goal of the group is to have assessments in place to enable teachers at the high school level to participate in individual classroom student achievement bonuses by the 2007-08 school year.

The first committee meeting of elementary educators also met on Tuesday, January 9th to identify assessment tools for students in PreK through 2nd grade. Again, the goal is to have assessments in place by fall 2007 to enable teachers to participate in individual classroom student achievement bonuses for the 2007-08 school year. Carolyn Neff, Director of Elementary Education, is leading this effort. Committee members include: Shiloy Sanders, Jason Douglas and Roxie Careon from the District Office; Erika Donahue (EES); Mary Ward (RSES); Becky Cuevas (GES); Tiffany Gross (AES); Susan Forsythe (EVES); Donna Dino, Jacque Flyr and Linda Verderber (BCES); and Beth O'Riley (ECCA).

## Q&A

Do other school districts offer signing bonuses for teachers in high-poverty schools? Many school districts in the nation offer teachers incentives to work in high-poverty schools. These incentives come in many forms, include signing bonuses, pay for performance, tax-deferred annuities or growth funds, loan pay-backs and teacher housing. Signing and retention bonuses in high-poverty schools are used in districts from Baltimore to Dallas to Los Angeles. California and Massachusetts have put incentive bonuses in place for high-poverty schools at a state-wide level. If we are to close the achievement gap, we must first close the teacher gap by recruiting and retaining effective teachers in our high-poverty schools.

Why are most of the training opportunities for Master and Mentor Teachers?

Our on-going, professional development model is designed to have Master and Mentor Teachers develop and guide instructional training for all teachers within the contract day. It isn't cost-effective or logistically possible to utilize outside training consultants or off-site conferences to train 400-plus teachers. Therefore, we are utilizing a "train the trainer" model for both the *TAP Summer Institute* and the *Standards-Based Instruction* training which have been announced in this Phase.

In Phase I, we introduced training for approximately 80 teachers at all levels on *Instructional Best Practices*. Phase III announcements will contain more training opportunities as well.

*Students from poverty are generally behind their peers academically.*

*The most effective teachers are needed in high-poverty schools in order to close the achievement gap.*

*Your colleagues are working towards assessment solutions for PreK-2 and 9-12.*

*Thank you for your commitment to increasing student achievement.*