



## Round Rock Independent School District | Texas

### SUMMARY

The Round Rock Incentives for Superior Education (RRISE) Program serves seven high-need elementary and middle schools in the Round Rock Independent School District (Round Rock ISD). The RRISE Program awards teachers an incentive based on value-added growth on standardized test scores according to grade-level bands as well as performance on classroom observations, completion of an action research project, collaboration with fellow educators, assumption of a leadership role, and teaching in a hard-to-staff area. Campus administrators can earn awards through schoolwide value-added growth, performance on observations, completion of an action research project, collaboration with fellow educators, and successfully retaining at least 85 percent of the high-performing teachers at their campus. The RRISE Program also provides extensive professional development to support teachers and campus administrators as they work to increase student achievement.

### PROGRAM GOALS AND EVALUATION

The goal of the RRISE Program is to increase student achievement and teacher retention at high-need schools in Round Rock ISD by providing differentiated performance incentive awards to teachers and campus administrators. Round Rock ISD hired Copia Consulting to conduct summative and formative evaluations of the program. Summative evaluation metrics include the percentage of RRISE teachers, RRISE campus administrators, and RRISE teachers in hard-to-staff positions who have a

**State:** Texas

**Location:** Round Rock

**Award amount:** \$21,776,883

**TIF Cohort:** 3

**STEM Grantee:** No

**Number of districts participating:** 1

**Number of schools participating:** 7

**Number of teachers eligible:** 330

**Number of principals eligible:** 16

**Superintendent:** Steve Flores, PhD

**Key program staff:**  
Anthony Sorola, Project Director  
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record of effectiveness based on observation results and student achievement data. In addition, RRISE measures the retention rate of teachers and campus administrators whose students demonstrate greater than one year's growth on student achievement tests. The formative evaluation builds on those metrics and also examines the quality and the degree of program planning and implementation, including the strengths and weaknesses of the program.

## REWARD STRUCTURE

The RRISE Program differentiates incentive awards for both teachers and campus administrators based on student achievement and performance on classroom or school observations. Educators earn placement in one of four possible tiers based on their performance ratings, with each tier earning a different level of incentive payment.

The RRISE Program uses a two-part incentive plan for teachers. The tiered portion provides participants with differentiated awards based on student academic growth, as measured by standardized tests and the results of observations. Participants may earn the flat incentives by completing an action research project, showing evidence of career leadership, participating in collaborative meetings, and filling a hard-to-staff position.

Similar to teacher incentives, campus administrator incentives are also based on a two-part plan. The tiered structure for administrators is based on student achievement and the results of school observations. The program also awards incentive pay to administrators based on whether they meet certain criteria, including completion of an action research project, participating in collaborative meetings with faculty, participating in collaborative meetings with other RRISE campus administrators, and retention of 85 percent or more of their effective teaching staff.

## YEARS 1-4 HIGHLIGHTS

- RRISD uses value-added measures (VAM) to determine RRISE awards based on student achievement gains. Where possible, the VAM accesses three years of student growth data and measures growth at the grade and then aggregate-band level.
- The grantee developed a user-friendly RRISE website that provides basic information about the program and specific TIF-related data, professional development opportunities, monthly frequently asked questions, informational videos, and many other helpful tools for the project's stakeholders.

- RRISE's Data Management Application addresses the integration of multiple systems (Human Resources, payroll, financial accounting, grant expense data), data warehouse needs (state and district test results), and student-teacher-course linkages.
- RRISD contracted with Copia Consulting, an external evaluator. The Copia evaluation plan is non-experimental and provides focus group and survey data from participants on the continued satisfaction and understanding of the RRISE program. The evaluation plan also looks at the GPRA measures.

## YEAR 5 OUTLOOK

The RRISE Program looks to build on achievements from its first four years of existence. It is especially important for the program to see tight alignment between the observation results for program participants and their students' academic progress reflected in achievement scores. Both observation results and student achievement data are fundamental components of the program's definition of a highly effective educator.

## SUSTAINABILITY

The RRISE Program is pursuing private sources of funding from charitable organizations that have shown interest in funding pay-for-performance programs. Additionally, the school district is committed to dedicating an increasing portion of its funds for future teacher and principal payroll increases to the growing support of the program.

## PERFORMANCE-BASED COMPENSATION

On November 25, 2014, participating teachers and campus administrators received the following amounts: \$1,583,553.75 for teachers and \$89,090.00 for campus administrators