

PR Award #: S336S240024

Organization Name: University of North Carolina at Charlotte

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Absolute Priority: 2

Competitive Preference Priorities: 1-4

Requested Total Award Amount: \$2,158,238

Project Description:

The pandemic underscored the need for teachers who are prepared to address the academic and social and emotional learning (SEL) needs of children who have experienced trauma. Unfortunately, few teachers have received related preparation, especially in rural schools where turnover is higher than the national average and teachers have fewer opportunities for professional development (PD). In response, Project TRUSTED will recruit and retain 36 diverse teacher candidates to complete a customized residency program that leads to an initial license in a hard-to-staff position and includes PD on trauma-informed care and culturally responsive teaching practices to meet the SEL needs of underserved students. To promote educational equity, the candidates will be hired at strategically selected high-need schools with large numbers of underserved students who are exhibiting signs of trauma, but few teachers who are prepared to work with them. Project Trusted has three goals: 1) increase educator diversity in hard-to-staff positions in high-need schools; 2) improve the preparation of elementary school teacher candidates to meet the social, emotional, and academic needs of students in rural areas; and 3) retain diverse educators in hard to staff positions in high-need schools.

Project Expected Outcomes:

36 diverse teacher candidates will 1) complete the residency program and master's degree and fill vacancies in hard-to-staff positions in high-need schools; 2) earn an initial teaching license in elementary education and a professional certificate in trauma-invested teaching practices and policies; 3) exhibit increased readiness for trauma-informed care and ability to implement culturally responsive teaching practices; and 4) who remain teaching in a high-need elementary school for a minimum of three years. In addition, 36 mentor teachers in our partner schools will also earn a professional certificate in trauma-invested teaching practices and policies.

Project Special Features:

To recruit and retain diverse candidates, Project Trusted offers a GPA forgiveness program, licensure test boot camps, induction support from trained coaches in a statewide program designed to reduce attrition, and a summer orientation for residents and mentor teachers, and strategically pairs residents with mentor teachers of the same race/ethnicity to provide a positive role model. Responding to school partner needs, Project TRUSTED offers customized training to residents (and their mentor teachers) leading to a professional credential in trauma-informed instruction and enhanced ability to implement culturally responsive teaching practices.

Project Partners:

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte Cato College of Education, College of Human and

Earth Sciences, and School of Professional Studies and Union County Public Schools and Gaston County Schools, including a consortium of 12 high-need schools within the districts.