

Pitt County Schools, NC
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ED ABSTRACT NARRATIVE

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Five year funding: \$16,197,438

Pitt County Schools (PCS) is a single Local Education Agency (LEA) serving approximately 23,500 students living in Pitt County, North Carolina. The LEA operates 37 schools of varying grade ranges located throughout the county, in which an average of 59% of students qualified for free or reduced-price school meals in 2014-15. Thirty schools in the LEA qualify as “High-Need,” as defined by TIF guidelines, and the project targets 28 of these high need schools. Eight of the 28 high-need schools were classified as “Low Performing” in 2014-15, based on an A-F rating scale implemented by the State of North Carolina, and none of the remaining high-need schools was rated above a C. These data are consistent with research that suggests a linkage between academic achievement and students’ race and family income, with high-need schools often staffed by less qualified or lower-performing teachers.

In four of the last five years, the PCS teacher turnover rate has exceeded the state average. This turnover impacts not only student instruction and achievement, but also leadership development and growth among peer teachers, disproportionately affecting high-need schools. To address these challenges, PCS deployed the *R3* Human Capital Management System in 2013 to the extent possible with available resources. This project will enable PCS to fully implement the Career Pathways and Performance-Based Compensation elements of the *R3 Framework* in 28 high-need schools. Grant funds will be used to implement strategies designed to (1) Recruit, retain and reward effective and highly effective teachers working in high-need schools; (2) Increase student growth and academic achievement in targeted schools; and (3) Reduce the number of high-need schools labeled “Low Performing.”