



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

# Retaining Teachers Grant Program

Submitted to:

**Colorado State Board of Education  
Colorado Joint Budget Committee  
Colorado House Education Committee  
Colorado Senate Education Committee**

By:

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## Executive Summary

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This report details initial implementation of the Retaining Teachers Grant Program pursuant to HB 18-1412 (C.R.S. 22-98-101-104); information concerning the State Board of Education (SBE) rules, Request for Proposals (RFP) release, and grant period is included. The Retaining Teachers Grant Program awards districts, BOCES, and/or charter schools grant funding to implement one or more of eight teacher retention strategies. Given the implementation timeline, this first-year report is limited to the initial stages of implementation. An addendum to this report will be submitted once grant recipients and amounts for FY 2018-19 have been determined. Future reports will also provide detail on teacher retention initiatives pursued, retention goals, and progress towards those goals.



## Introduction

During the summer and fall of 2017, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) conducted an in-depth study of teacher shortages throughout the state. The resulting strategic plan incorporates feedback from key stakeholders, including parents, students, community members, teachers, school leaders, BOCES, and educator preparation leaders among others.

The Retaining Teachers Grant Program directly addresses the first strategic goal in the plan: retain educator talent by increasing teacher retention. Pursuant to that goal, the Retaining Teachers Grant Program requires applicants to submit information regarding their need for a retention initiative, how their chosen initiative will directly address their need, their plan for implementation of the initiative, how funding will be allocated, and how they will measure progress towards their goals for teacher retention.

### Retaining Teachers Grant General Information

- Aims to alleviate teacher shortages across the state
- Allows for a variety of retention strategies that can be adapted to local context
- Provides supplementary funding to support the implementation of chosen retention strategy

## Background of the Retaining Teachers Grant Program

In response to documented teacher shortages throughout the state of Colorado, the legislature passed multiple initiatives aimed at alleviating these shortages. One such initiative is the Retaining Teachers Grant Program, which provides districts, BOCES, and/or charter schools funding to implement teacher retention strategies based on their individual context. Each grant is awarded for three years, subject to state board review and contingent upon annual appropriations by the state legislature. Grant funding must be used to supplement, not supplant, existing resources that grantees apply to their teacher retention initiatives.

### Allowable Teacher Retention Initiatives

To assist in retaining teachers, local education providers may implement one or more of the following allowable services and/or activities:

- Job sharing for teachers;
- Providing on-site early childhood care services for family members of educators;
- Robust teacher induction programs for new teachers;
- Peer review and mentorship programs and other career development and advancement strategies;
- Programs to provide professional development for the creation and implementation of career advancement pathways for master teacher and teacher leadership positions for effective teachers;
- Incentive programs to recognize and retain highly effective teachers;
- Reduced teacher-student contact hours and increased planning, mentoring, and collaboration time for new teachers and mentor teachers; and
- Increased use of technology in blended learning initiatives to create opportunities and financial incentives for teacher development and career advancement and cost savings to support salary increases.

### Grant Reporting Requirements

Grant recipients are required to annually submit progress reports concerning their use of funds, measurable goals for teacher retention, and progress made towards those goals.



## Retaining Teachers Grant Implementation

### Rule Development and Adoption

During the September 2018 State Board of Education meeting, CDE presented on the Notice of Rulemaking for the Retaining Teachers Grant Program. The proposed rules were then opened for public comment until mid-November. Stakeholder feedback was collated and aligned to the appropriate section of the rules. CDE staff analyzed the feedback and made minor changes based on trends in stakeholder comments. Subsequently, the revised rules (see Appendix A) were presented to and approved by the Colorado State Board of Education during the November 15, 2018 meeting.

The Retaining Teachers Grant Program provides districts, BOCES, and/or charter schools funding to implement teacher retention strategies based on their individual context.

### Application Release

Directly following the passage of the rules, the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Retaining Teachers Grant Program was released on November 16, 2018. The RFP details the application process, selection criteria and prioritization, reporting process, and overarching timeline. To aid in the application process, an informational webinar was conducted in December 2018 for entities interested in applying. Applications were due January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019; the department received 27 applications for the Retaining Teachers Grant Program, including 8 from charter schools, 16 from districts, and 3 from BOCES. The full application timeline is detailed in Table 1. *(Note: Based on the grant disbursement time table, local education agencies (LEAs) have until December 30, 2019 to spend year 1 funds.)*

Additionally, because LEAs may apply for a grant together, the RFP details funding tiers based on the size and number of entities involved. The funding tiers are provided below in Table 2.

TABLE 1: Application Timeline

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| December 3, 2018   | Application Webinar held for interested LEAs.   |
| December 19, 2018  | LEAs interested in applying must submit an intent to apply form.  |
| January 11, 2019   | Applications due to CDE.  |
| February 8, 2019   | Applicants will be notified of final award status.  |
| September 30, 2019 | LEAs receiving grants must submit a report detailing their use of grant funds, their progress made towards identified goals, and updates to goals based on progress made. |
| December 30, 2019  | Year 1 grant funds must be expended.  |



TABLE 2: Funding Tiers

| Program Focus  | Maximum funding per grant per year |
|--|------------------------------------|
| • Single schools   | \$50,000                           |
| • Single schools partnering with an institute of higher education (IHE)                      | \$75,000                           |
| • Single districts<br>• Consortiums of schools   | \$125,000                          |
| • Consortiums of schools partnering with an IHE<br>• Single districts partnering with an IHE | \$150,000                          |
| • Single BOCES<br>• Consortiums of districts   | \$175,000                          |
| • Consortiums of districts partnering with an IHE<br>• Single BOCES partnering with an IHE   | \$200,000                          |
| • Consortiums of BOCES   | \$225,000                          |
| • Consortiums of BOCES partnering with an IHE  | \$250,000                          |

### Next Steps

Annually in January of each year, future reports will provide greater detail and insight into the impact of the Retaining Teachers Grant Program. Those reports will include the name of each grant recipient and the amount of each grant, a description of the initiative to be implemented with each grant, and information on progress made by each grant recipient in achieving the goals of the initiative. Because applicants have not yet been notified of final award status, such information is unavailable for this year’s report.

### Conclusion

The Retaining Teachers Grant Program, established pursuant to HB 18-1412, is in its initial implementation stages. So far, the state board has promulgated rules for the program, and the department has released the application for submissions. Information concerning the teacher retention strategies pursued by grantees, their use of funds, and the impact on teacher shortages will be reported on in future years as the data become available.



## Appendix A

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### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

#### Colorado State Board of Education

#### RULES FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE RETAINING TEACHERS GRANT PROGRAM

#### 1 CCR 301-102

*[Editor's Notes follow the text of the rules at the end of this CCR Document.]*

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**AUTHORITY:** ARTICLE IX, SECTION 1, COLORADO CONSTITUTION. 22-98-101 ET SEQ. OF THE COLORADO REVISED STATUTES (C.R.S.).

#### 0.0 STATEMENT OF BASIS AND PURPOSE

The Retaining Teachers Grant Program, 22-98-101 et seq., C.R.S., requires the State Board of Education to promulgate rules as necessary to implement the program. At a minimum, the rules must include: the application process, including requirements; criteria for the award of grants, including award priorities; the duration of the grants; and the approved uses of the grant.

#### 1.0 DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 "Board of Cooperative Services" means a board of cooperative services created pursuant to article 5 of this title 22.
- 1.2 "Department" means the department of education created and existing pursuant to section 24-1-115, C.R.S.
- 1.3 "Fund" means the retaining teachers fund created in section 22-98-104.
- 1.4 "Grant Program" means the retaining teachers grant program created in section 22-98-103.
- 1.5 "Local Education Provider" means a school district, a board of cooperative services that operates a public school, a charter school that is authorized by a school district pursuant to part 1 of article 30.5 of this title 22, or an institute charter school that is authorized pursuant to part 5 of article 30.5 of this title 22.
- 1.6 "Postsecondary Institution" means an area technical college, a local district college, or a state institution of higher education, as defined in section 23-18-102.
- 1.7 "School District" means a school district in Colorado that is organized and existing pursuant to law but does not include a local college district.
- 1.8 "State Board" means the state board of education created pursuant to section 1 of article IX of the state constitution.



**1.9** “Teacher” means any person employed to instruct students in any school in the state, including licensed special service providers.

**2.0 RETAINING TEACHERS GRANT PROGRAM**

**2.1** The department shall create and administer the retaining teachers grant program to assist local education providers in retaining teachers by implementing one or more of the following initiatives designed to improve the ability of a local education provider to retain teachers.

2.1.1 Job-sharing for teachers;

2.1.2 Providing on-site early childhood care services for family members of educators;

2.1.3 Robust multi-year teacher induction and mentoring programs for new teachers;

2.1.4 Peer review and mentorship programs and other career development and advancement strategies;

2.1.5 Programs to provide professional development for the creation and implementation of career advancement pathways for master teacher and teacher leadership positions for effective teachers;

2.1.6 Incentive programs to recognize and retain highly effective teachers;

2.1.7 Increased planning, mentoring, and collaboration time for new teachers and mentor teachers that reduces teacher-student contact hours for teachers but does not result in reduced instruction time for students; and

2.1.8 Increased use of technology in blended learning initiatives to create opportunities and financial incentives for teacher development and career advancement and cost savings to support salary increases, including but not limited to:

2.1.8.1 Providing support to teachers to enroll in higher education courses to become qualified to teach concurrent enrollment courses.

**3.0 APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS**

**3.1** The department shall provide information to the local education providers concerning the grant program, the requirements for applying for a grant, the initiatives that local education providers may implement using grant money, and the availability of assistance in writing grant applications.

**3.2** On an annual basis on a date determined by the department, local education providers interested in obtaining funding shall submit a retaining teachers grant application electronically to the department, using the application form provided by the department.

**3.3** Local education providers must assure that grant funds are used to supplement local education provider funding and is not used to supplant funding.





- 3.4** Each application submitted shall include, but need not be limited to the following:
- 3.4.1 Evidence describing the level of difficulty that the applicant encounters in retaining teachers, including teacher turnover and retention rates, the specific reasons for the difficulty, and a specific accounting of the grade levels and subjects for which the applicant is unable to retain teachers;
  - 3.4.2 An accounting of the existing monetary or other resources available to the applicant to use in implementing initiatives to retain teachers;
  - 3.4.3 A description of the initiative to retain teachers that the applicant intends to implement using the grant, how the initiative is designed to address the specific issues causing the difficulty with retaining teachers, and the applicant's strategy to build capacity;
  - 3.4.4 The specific, measurable goals that the applicant expects to achieve in implementing the initiative, an explanation of the applicant's capacity to achieve the goals, and how the applicant expects to measure attainment of the goals; and
  - 3.4.5 The cost, including cost-effectiveness, of implementing the initiative and the applicant's plan for sustaining the initiative after the grant money is no longer available.

**3.5** Local education providers are encouraged to partner with other local education providers, nonprofit entities, or postsecondary institutions to apply for a grant.

**3.6** Upon request, the department shall provide technical assistance in writing the grant application described above and in complying with the annual review requirements described in section 6.0.

#### **4.0 APPLICATION EVALUATION**

**4.1** In reviewing grant applications to determine which applicants should receive grant funding, the department and the state board shall prioritize applicants meeting the following criteria:

- 4.1.1 A high number of positions for which an applicant is unable to retain teachers; and
- 4.1.2 Evidence of a high rate of teacher turnover if the applicant is a low-performing school or within the low-performing schools operated by the applicant.

**4.2** In addition, the department and the state board shall consider:

- 4.2.1 The applicant's capacity to successfully implement the proposed initiative and the likelihood that the proposed initiative will increase the applicant's ability to retain teachers;
- 4.2.2 The cost-effectiveness and quality of the proposed initiative; and
- 4.2.3 The applicant's plan for sustaining implementation of the initiative after the grant money is no



longer available.

**5.0 AWARD PROCESS**

- 5.1 On an annual basis, the department shall make recommendations for grant awards to the state board.
- 5.2 Subject to available appropriations, the state board, taking into account the recommendations of the department, shall award the grants from money appropriated to the fund.
- 5.3 Each grant awarded through the grant program continues for three budget years, subject to annual review by the department and renewal by the state board as described in section 6.0.

**6.0 ANNUAL REVIEW AND REPORTING**

- 6.1 The department shall annually review the progress achieved by each grant recipient in attaining the goals of the initiative funded by the grant and recommend to the state board that the grant be extended or revoked.
- 6.2 For the annual review, grant recipients shall submit, at a minimum, the following information to the department:
  - 6.2.1 How the grant money was used to fund the initiative;
  - 6.2.2 Narrative explanation and evidence of grant outcomes against the goals set in the beginning of the year and in the grant proposal; and
  - 6.2.3 Updates to the goals set in the grant proposal based on the progress made.
- 6.3 Taking into consideration the recommendations of the department, the state board shall extend the grant only if it is determined that the grand recipient is making adequate progress toward achieving the goals of the initiative.
- 6.4 On or before January 15, 2019, and each year thereafter, the department shall submit annually to the state board, the joint budget committee, and the education committees of the senate and house of representatives, or any successor committees, a report concerning the implementation of the grant program, including, at a minimum, the following information:
  - 6.4.1 The name of each grant recipient and the amount of each grant;
  - 6.4.2 A description of the initiative to be implemented with each grant and a report of the progress made by each grant recipient in achieving the goals of the initiative;
  - 6.4.3 For the reports submitted in 2021 and 2022, an evaluation of the effect of the grant program in improving teacher retention by local education providers and in reducing the overall teacher shortage in the state;
  - 6.4.4 Any recommendations for legislative changes to improve the effectiveness of the grant program; and



- 6.4.5 For the report submitted in 2022, a recommendation concerning whether to continue the grant program.