

Evaluation of the Missouri Teacher Recruitment and Retention Grants Phase II Report

September 2022



Prepared for:



About CTAC:

The Community Training and Assistance Center is a national not-for-profit organization with a demonstrated record of success in the fields of education and community development. CTAC builds district, state, and community capacity by providing technical assistance, conducting research and evaluation, and informing public policy. It focuses on developing leadership, planning and managerial expertise within school systems, community-based organizations, collaborative partnerships, state and municipal governments, and health and human service agencies. Since 1979, CTAC has provided assistance to hundreds of public institutions, community-based organizations, and coalitions in the United States and several other countries.

CTAC's staff is comprised of nationally recognized executives, educators, policy makers, researchers and organizers who have extensive experience working with city, county and state agencies, educational institutions, federal legislative bodies, not-for-profit organizations, philanthropic institutions and the private sector.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To recruit and retain effective and diverse teachers, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) awarded more than \$50 million in 2021–22, through the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Grants, to local education agencies (LEAs), educator preparation programs (EPPs), and community colleges (CCs). By supporting and learning from these efforts, DESE aims at creating an exemplary state system of educator recruitment and retention.

The Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) is conducting an independent, external evaluation of the implementation of the grants. The Phase I evaluation (Liang & Slotnik, 2022) focused on building an initial understanding of the strategies selected by LEAs, EPPs, and CCs. This Phase II evaluation examines the initial implementation and impact of the grants. Findings of this report assist DESE in identifying opportunities for providing more targeted support.

The following research questions (RQs) guide the Phase II evaluation:

- RQ1: What factors enhance or hinder the implementation of the teacher recruitment and retention grants?
- RQ2: What is the quality of implementation of the teacher recruitment and retention grants? What criteria are grantees using to measure quality of implementation?
- RQ3: What is the perceived initial impact of the grants on teacher recruitment and retention? How are grantees measuring impact?

Findings

LEA Teacher Recruitment (Grow Your Own) Grants

- LEA lead contacts believe teacher recruitment is essential or a high priority for their LEAs, and the local communities support their teacher recruitment efforts.
- Lead contacts indicate it is particularly difficult for their LEAs to recruit teachers in specific content areas and racially/ethnically diverse teachers.
- It is generally more difficult for LEAs in rural and urban areas than in suburban areas to recruit teachers.
- Since the grant began, some LEAs have made modifications to their teacher recruitment grant strategies.
- Where implementation has begun, LEA lead contacts are generally positive about the quality of their teacher recruitment grant efforts to-date.
- Half of lead contacts indicate their LEAs have started to collect the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of their teacher recruitment grants.
- Some LEA lead contacts are already seeing early indicators of success of their teacher recruitment grants.

- Most LEAs have not yet shared or reported on results to-date of their teacher recruitment grants with key stakeholders and/or DESE.

LEA Teacher Retention Grants

- LEA lead contacts believe teacher retention is essential or a high priority for their LEAs, and the local communities support their teacher retention efforts.
- Lead contacts indicate it is particularly difficult for their LEAs to retain teachers in specific content areas and racially/ethnically diverse teachers.
- It is generally more difficult for LEAs in rural and urban areas than in suburban areas to retain teachers.
- Since the grant began, some LEAs have made modifications to their teacher retention grant strategies.
- Where implementation has begun, LEA lead contacts are generally positive about the quality of their teacher retention grant efforts to-date.
- Half of lead contacts indicate their LEAs have started to collect the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of their teacher retention grants.
- Some lead contacts are already seeing early indicators of success of their teacher retention grants.
- Most LEAs have not yet shared or reported on results to-date of their teacher retention grants with key stakeholders and/or DESE.

EPP/CC Teacher Recruitment Grants

- Lead contacts believe teacher recruitment is essential or a high priority for their EPPs/CCs, and the local communities support their teacher recruitment efforts.
- Lead contacts indicate it is particularly difficult for their EPPs/CCs to recruit racially/ethnically diverse teacher candidates, and teacher candidates in specific content areas.
- Since the grant began, some EPPs/CCs have made modifications to their teacher recruitment grant strategies.
- Where implementation has begun, EPP/CC lead contacts are generally positive about the quality of their teacher recruitment grant efforts to-date.
- The majority of EPPs indicate they have started to collect the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of their teacher recruitment grants; most CCs indicate they have not started to do so.
- Some EPP/CC lead contacts are already seeing early indicators of success of their teacher recruitment grants.
- Most EPPs/CCs have not yet shared or reported on results to-date of their teacher recruitment grants with key stakeholders and/or DESE.

Recommendations

Lead contacts for LEAs, EPPs, and CCs indicate they understand the purpose of the teacher recruitment and retention grants. For nearly all grantees, teacher recruitment and/or retention is a high priority. There is commitment from the grantees and support from the local communities for Missouri's statewide initiative.

The following recommendations are intended to assist DESE in providing more targeted support to LEAs, EPPs, and CCs.

- Provide opportunities for grantees to share learnings and promising practices
- Provide additional guidance in the form of Frequently Asked Questions
- Conduct reviews to ensure the implementation of all grants is moving forward

Conclusion

LEAs, EPPs, and CCs across the state are generally showing commitment to the purposes of the teacher recruitment and retention grant initiative. Some lead contacts indicate they are already seeing early indicators of success. Moreover, the guidance and support to-date from DESE are valued by grantees. The grantees are now aiming for a full-year of implementation of the teacher recruitment and retention grants.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

To recruit and retain effective and diverse teachers, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) awarded more than \$50 million in 2021–22, through the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Grants, to local education agencies (LEAs), educator preparation programs (EPPs), and community colleges (CCs). By supporting and learning from these efforts, DESE aims at creating an exemplary state system of educator recruitment and retention.

The Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) is conducting an independent, external evaluation of the implementation of the grants. The Phase I evaluation (Liang & Slotnik, 2022) focused on building an initial understanding of the strategies selected by LEAs, EPPs, and CCs. This Phase II evaluation examines the initial implementation and impact of the grants. Findings of this report assist DESE in identifying opportunities for providing more targeted support.

The Context

There is a nationwide shortage of classroom teachers (Barnum, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2022). Conservative estimates suggest there are at least 36,000 vacant teaching positions across the United States and 163,000 positions are being held by underqualified teachers (Nguyen et al., 2022). The impacts of the teacher shortage are particularly salient for disadvantaged districts serving large numbers of high-needs students (Jones, 2022).

The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbates the teacher shortage problem. National surveys show one in four teachers are considering leaving their job by the end of the school year (Steiner & Woo, 2021) and more than half of educators are thinking about leaving the profession earlier than they had planned (Walker, 2022).

The challenges are further exacerbated by a steady decline in enrollment in colleges of education for the past decade (Will, 2022). Between 2008–09 and 2018–19, the number of people completing a teacher education program declined by almost one-third, and traditional teacher preparation programs saw the largest decline of 35%. Teacher preparation programs also continue to struggle with recruiting more diverse candidates. Across the nation, 80% of teachers are white, but less than half of public school students are (Will, 2022).

In Missouri, 44% of teachers do not stay in the public schools beyond their third year of teaching and 53% do not stay beyond their fifth year (DESE, 2021c). Many positions have vacancies for years, including critical ones such as in Elementary Education and Special Education, or are filled with less-than-fully certified teachers (DESE, 2021b, 2022a). For example, of the 2,184 total vacancies in Elementary Education, 97 (or 4.4%) were filled with less-than-fully certified teachers (DESE, 2022a).

In a recent survey conducted by the Missouri State Teachers Association (2021), 51% of educators indicate they consider leaving the profession often or very often. The challenges of recruiting and retaining teachers are significant and escalating.

Staff turnover and shortages negatively impact school improvement efforts and student achievement (Learning Policy Institute, 2017). To help stimulate innovative approaches for recruiting and retaining teachers (especially male teachers, teachers of color, and teachers in hard-to-staff content areas), DESE designated more than \$50 million in state reserve funds from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund to establish the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Grant program (DESE, 2021a, 2021d).

The program supports the teacher recruitment and retention efforts of LEAs, EPPs, and CCs with three types of grants, which are briefly described below.

LEA Teacher Recruitment (Grow Your Own) Grants

Grow Your Own (GYO) programs support LEAs to develop their own teacher pipeline (DESE, 2021a). As of April 2022, 470 of the 555 LEAs (85%) in Missouri have a GYO program. DESE's goal is for 100% of LEAs to have a GYO program (DESE, 2022b). The GYO Grants provide LEAs with a fixed amount of \$10,000, which can be used to support activities focusing on (a) partnerships; (b) recruitment and selection; (c) preparation and support; and (d) evaluation (DESE, 2022c).

LEA Teacher Retention Grants

The Retention Grants support LEAs in implementing research-based, proven strategies for improving teacher retention. The maximum grant amount is the product of the LEA's teacher count and a per teacher allocation based on an LEA's Priority Level, which are determined by average percentages of students in poverty (i.e., Free and Reduced Priced Lunch) and minority students (DESE, 2022c).

EPP/CC Teacher Recruitment Grants

Recognizing the key roles EPPs and CCs play in the teacher development pipeline, DESE awards grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$40,000 to eligible EPPs and CCs for recruiting teacher candidates. EPPs and CCs can use the funds for activities in areas of (a) partnerships; (b) recruitment and selection; (c) preparation and support; and (d) evaluation (DESE, 2021d).

Support from the Missouri Teacher Development System

In addition to financial resources, DESE provides LEAs, EPPs, and CCs with regional support persons representing the Missouri Teacher Development System (MTDS). Serving as a resource to the grantees, the MTDS representatives review and monitor grants, and provide technical assistance on the implementation of the grants (DESE, 2021a, 2021d, 2022c).

Overview of the Report

The rest of this report is structured as follows. Chapter Two focuses on the methodology of the Phase II evaluation. Chapters Three through Five present the evaluation findings on, respectively, LEA Teacher Recruitment Grants, LEA Teacher Retention Grants, and EPP/CC Teacher Recruitment Grants. Chapter Six includes the recommendations and conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

CTAC's Phase II evaluation employed a mixed-methods approach, using both qualitative and quantitative data. The multiple sources of data included (a) a survey of lead contacts for LEAs, EPPs, and CCs; (b) interviews with select LEA, EPP, and CC lead contacts; (c) grant application data; and (d) a review of literature and artifacts.

Research Questions

The following research questions (RQs) guide the Phase II evaluation:

- RQ1: What factors enhance or hinder the implementation of the teacher recruitment and retention grants?
- RQ2: What is the quality of implementation of the teacher recruitment and retention grants? What criteria are grantees using to measure quality of implementation?
- RQ3: What is the perceived initial impact of the grants on teacher recruitment and retention? How are grantees measuring impact?

During the Phase II evaluation, grantees are still in the early stages of implementation of their teacher recruitment and retention strategies. Therefore, RQ1 probes on issues including (a) from the initial application to early implementation, what modifications have been made and why; (b) to what extent are grantees prioritizing teacher recruitment and retention; (c) what factors are enhancing grant implementation; (d) what issues are emerging; and (e) what additional support do grantees need to be more effective.

RQ2 examines the quality of the implementation and how grantees are monitoring grant progress. In particular, we examine the structures (e.g., roles, technology, and partners) that are being put into place to support the grants. RQ3 probes on the perceived initial impact of the grants. Both RQ2 and RQ3 also examine the mechanisms for evaluation grantees have chosen to measure the success of their strategies.

Data Collection

LEA, EPP, and CC Lead Contact Survey

In partnership with DESE, CTAC developed and administered a web-based, anonymous survey for all LEA, EPP, and CC lead contacts. CTAC sent the survey link to DESE and DESE forwarded the link to lead contacts for (a) LEA teacher recruitment grantees; (b) LEA teacher retention grantees; and (c) EPP/CC teacher recruitment grantees.

The survey launched on May 18, 2022. CTAC provided DESE with regular updates on survey participation. To maximize the number of responses, DESE sent multiple reminders. The survey closed on June 10, 2022.

The survey for LEA teacher recruitment grantees included a series of Likert-scale questions and bipolar (i.e., Yes/No) questions. The questions focus on their general knowledge and beliefs, priorities and challenges, modifications from initial application to early implementation, quality of implementation, initial impact of the grant, and public reporting and sharing of grant progress, findings, and recommendations.

A number of open-ended questions further explore the perceptions of LEA lead contacts about why they think their recruitment strategies will be effective; how they measure the quality of implementation and the impact of the grant; enhancing factors; impeding factors; and additional support they need.

The questions for LEA teacher retention grantees and EPP/CC teacher recruitment grantees include a similar set of Likert-scale, bipolar, and open-ended questions.

As Table 1 shows, more than seven out of ten (72%) lead contacts took the survey. This includes all EPP lead contacts (100%), and the majority of CC (69%) and LEA lead contacts (70%).

For LEA grantees, the response rates across the nine regional professional development centers (RPDCs) in the state range from 31% for the Heart of Missouri RPDC to 94% for the Central – Warrensburg RPDC.

Table 1. Lead Contact Survey Response Rates, 2022

	Number	Percent
Overall	436	72%
Local Education Agencies (LEAs)	385	70%
Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs)	42	100%
Community Colleges (CCs)	9	69%
LEAs by RPDC (n = 385)		
Central – Warrensburg	59	94%
Heart of Missouri	17	31%
Kansas City	31	62%
Northeast – Kirksville	26	54%
Northwest – Maryville	37	84%
South Central – Rolla	36	55%
Southeast – Cape Girardeau	47	68%
Southwest – Springfield	78	81%
St. Louis	54	87%

Table 2 shows the LEA lead contacts were superintendents (58%) and other educators (42%). By community type, the LEAs were primarily in rural areas (79%).

Table 2. LEA Lead Contact Survey Respondents, 2022

	Number	Percent
By Current Position		
Superintendent	222	58%
Other (e.g., assistant superintendents, directors)	163	42%
By Community Type		
Rural	303	79%
Suburban	41	11%
Urban	41	11%

Note. N = 385. Throughout this report, due to rounding, percentages may not always add up to precisely 100%.

CTAC used cross tabulations to display survey findings. For the Likert-scale questions, CTAC utilized Kruskal-Wallis H Tests to examine the statistical significance of differences across three or more groups. For the bipolar questions, CTAC used Chi-square tests to examine the statistical significance of differences across groups. For the written comments, CTAC conducted thematic analyses (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to identify common themes and key issues.

Interviews

CTAC developed two protocols for interviews with LEA lead contacts and EPP/CC lead contacts across the state. The protocols included two similar sets of questions related to (a) priorities and general belief; (b) challenges, planning, and preparation; (c) quality of implementation; and (d) modifications from initial application to early implementation. The interviewees were also asked for their perceptions of (a) initial impact of the grant; (b) public reporting and sharing of grant progress, findings, and recommendations; and (c) support and enhancing/impeding factors.

Using a stratified random sampling process, CTAC selected 36 lead contacts for LEAs which have received both a teacher recruitment grant and a teacher retention grant across the nine RPDCs, and eight lead contacts for EPPs and four lead contacts for CCs across the nine regions in the state.

As Table 3 shows, CTAC conducted interviews with 29 lead contacts from 23 LEAs, five EPPs, and one CC.

Table 3. Number of Interviewees, 2022

	Number of Interviews
LEA Lead Contacts	23
EPP Lead Contacts	5
CC Lead Contacts	1
Total	29

Note. LEA = Local Education Agency. EPP = Education Preparation Program. CC = Community College.

CTAC conducted thematic analyses (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to identify common themes and key issues.

Grant Application Data

Using data made available by grantees in their grant applications, CTAC examined the relationship between the use of retention strategies and district level teacher vacancy rates.

Literature Review and Artifacts

CTAC conducted a literature review of effective, innovative teacher recruitment and retention strategies. In addition, CTAC collected and reviewed the artifacts from two LEAs.

Limitations

At the time of data collection and analysis, some grantees had not yet started the implementation of their grants. In addition, quantitative data (e.g., administrative records on teacher recruitment and retention) were not available to examine the impact of the grants. Therefore, this Phase II evaluation relied primarily on perceptual data from lead contacts.

Despite these limitations, data show common characteristics of initial grant implementation across LEA demographics (i.e., communities), and institutional priorities. Findings of the Phase II evaluation help DESE to better understand the initial implementation (e.g., institutional commitment, creativity of the approaches, stakeholder buy-in) and impact of the teacher recruitment and retention grants.

CHAPTER THREE: LEA TEACHER RECRUITMENT GRANTS

This chapter examines the initial implementation and perceived impact of the LEA teacher recruitment (Grow Your Own) grants.

General Knowledge and Beliefs

LEA lead contacts indicate they understand the purpose of the teacher recruitment grants and the availability of support from MTDS. They believe there is a high level of commitment in their LEA and support from the local community to teacher recruitment.

As Table 4 shows, nearly all LEA lead contacts (91–97%) agree the purpose of the teacher recruitment grant is clear, they know where to get information about the grant, and they understand help is available from MTDS. They also indicate there is a high level of commitment in their LEA to teacher recruitment (95%) and the local community supports their LEA’s teacher recruitment efforts (91%).

The perceptions of lead contacts for LEAs in rural, suburban, and urban areas are similar.

Table 4. General Knowledge and Beliefs of EPP/CC Lead Contacts

Survey Prompt	All Grantees			Rural		Suburban		Urban	
	N	A	U	A	U	A	U	A	U
The purpose of the teacher recruitment grant is clear to me.	343	97%	2%	97%	3%	100%	0%	97%	0%
I know where to get information about the teacher recruitment grant.	343	95%	3%	94%	4%	97%	3%	97%	0%
I understand that help is available for the implementation of my teacher recruitment grant from the Missouri Teacher Development System (MTDS).	343	91%	6%	91%	7%	89%	3%	94%	0%
There is a high level of commitment in my LEA to teacher recruitment.	343	95%	3%	96%	3%	92%	8%	94%	3%
The local community supports my LEA's teacher recruitment efforts.	343	91%	8%	92%	7%	92%	8%	83%	9%

Note. As the percentages of grantees who disagree or strongly disagree with the survey questions were very small, the table shows only the percentages of grantees who agree (A), a composite of strongly agree/agree, and are undecided (U) about the survey questions. Kruskal-Wallis H tests showed there were no statistically significant differences among the responses of grantees in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

Priorities and Challenges

Lead contacts indicate teacher recruitment is essential or a high priority for their LEAs.

As reflected in Table 5, nearly all LEA lead contacts indicate teacher recruitment is essential (49%) or a high priority (44%) for their LEAs.

The perceptions of lead contacts, regardless of LEA community type, are similar.

Table 5. Perceived Priority of Teacher Recruitment

To what extent is teacher recruitment a priority for your LEA?	All Grantees		Rural		Suburban		Urban	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Essential	170	49%	134	49%	16	43%	20	57%
High priority	152	44%	125	46%	13	35%	14	40%
Medium priority	22	6%	13	5%	8	22%	1	3%
Low priority	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Not a priority	1	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%

Note. Kruskal-Wallis H tests showed there were no statistically significant differences among the responses of grantees in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

Lead contacts indicate it is particularly difficult for their LEAs to recruit teachers in specific content areas and racially/ethnically diverse teachers. In addition, it is generally more difficult for LEAs in rural and urban areas than in suburban areas to recruit teachers.

As Table 6 shows, more than three-fourths of lead contacts indicate it is extremely difficult or very difficult for their LEAs to recruit teachers in specific content areas (83%) and racially/ethnically diverse teachers (77%). In addition, more than half (51–60%) highlight the difficulty of recruiting experienced high quality teachers, teachers in schools in hard-to-staff locations, and male teachers.

The table also suggests it is generally more difficult for LEAs in rural and urban areas than in suburban areas to recruit teachers. Within this context, lead contacts for LEAs in suburban areas indicate recruiting racially/ethnically diverse teachers is most challenging for them.

Table 6. Perceived Level of Difficulty of Teacher Recruitment

Please indicate the level of difficulty for your LEA to recruit the following teachers.		n	Extremely difficult	Very difficult	Moderately difficult	Slightly difficult	Not at all difficult	Mean
Racially/ethnically diverse teachers**	All Grantees	345	54%	23%	14%	5%	3%	4.19
	Rural	273	59%	21%	12%	5%	3%	4.26
	Suburban	37	46%	32%	16%	5%	0%	4.19
	Urban	35	23%	34%	34%	3%	6%	3.66
Male teachers*	All Grantees	340	19%	32%	33%	12%	5%	3.48
	Rural	269	20%	33%	32%	11%	4%	3.55
	Suburban	37	11%	24%	35%	19%	11%	3.05
	Urban	34	15%	32%	32%	15%	6%	3.35

Please indicate the level of difficulty for your LEA to recruit the following teachers.		n	Extremely difficult	Very difficult	Moderately difficult	Slightly difficult	Not at all difficult	Mean
Experienced high quality teachers* ****	All Grantees	343	26%	34%	26%	11%	2%	3.71
	Rural	272	28%	35%	27%	9%	1%	3.81
	Suburban	36	3%	25%	28%	31%	14%	2.72
	Urban	35	31%	40%	17%	11%	0%	3.91
Teachers in specific content areas (e.g., special education, math, science)* ****	All Grantees	343	56%	27%	13%	4%	0%	4.35
	Rural	271	60%	28%	10%	3%	0%	4.45
	Suburban	37	22%	27%	35%	16%	0%	3.54
	Urban	35	63%	20%	14%	3%	0%	4.43
Teachers in schools in hard-to-staff locations* ****	All Grantees	337	33%	27%	21%	10%	8%	3.67
	Rural	269	35%	31%	20%	10%	4%	3.83
	Suburban	34	15%	12%	18%	18%	38%	2.47
	Urban	34	38%	12%	35%	6%	9%	3.65
Other	All Grantees	28	36%	21%	18%	4%	21%	3.46
	Rural	20	40%	25%	25%	5%	5%	3.90
	Suburban	4	0%	25%	0%	0%	75%	1.75
	Urban	4	50%	0%	0%	0%	50%	3.00

Note. The means were calculated based on the following scheme: "Extremely difficult" = 5; "Very difficult" = 4; "Moderately difficult" = 3; "Slightly difficult" = 2; "Not at all difficult" = 1. * indicates statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence level between rural and suburban LEAs, ** between rural and urban LEAs, and **** between suburban and urban LEAs.

A number of lead contacts also indicate it is difficult for their LEAs to recruit certified teachers in multiple subject areas (e.g., ELL, special education, early childhood), especially at the elementary level.

EVERY certification area with the exception of agriculture has been hard to fill.

-LEA (Rural)

It is becoming more difficult to find elementary teachers. We also have a high school Family and Consumer Science opening with no applications.

-LEA (Rural)

In interviews and survey comments, lead contacts elaborate on why they think their LEA's strategies will be effective in recruiting teachers. Many indicate their strategies focus on improving teachers' working conditions and strengthening support to prospective teachers.

Due to our location, size, and lack of substitutes, we struggle to recruit and retain teachers...Teachers are physically and emotionally exhausted. Having built in collaboration time and relaxing mindfulness activities available for teachers will help create a more beneficial, relaxing environment.

-LEA (Rural)

We implemented employee daycare in our school district. In this year's interviewing process, we have had great feedback as this being a reason for interviewing at our school. One of our teachers was also retained because she could bring her child with her to the onsite daycare.

-LEA (Rural)

We shared our plan with teacher candidates before they were hired and determined it was effective in convincing candidates that the level of support in our district would be comparable and in some cases be superior to larger districts' new teacher supports. The additional resources provided by the retired teachers is something I have never seen in practice in a small, rural school district.

-LEA (Rural)

Many LEAs are also providing scholarships to students, higher compensation, and more benefits to teachers. They believe these approaches enhance student interest and teacher morale.

We recognize if we cannot get our students to enroll in education courses, we will not have a chance for our students to come back as teachers. This is why we chose to provide scholarships to students who choose the career of education.

-LEA (Rural)

We are providing funding assistance for future educators' college expenses, which can be a deterrent to students. This grant will help alleviate some of the cost to families.

-LEA (Urban)

Increasing the amount of money that teachers are paid is the number one factor in our ability to get and maintain highly effective educators.

-LEA (Rural)

We struggle with hiring minorities and high quality teachers in high-need subject areas. Our hiring of more substitute teachers and supplanting stipends for National Board-certified teachers are strategies to enhance morale, maintaining teacher plan time, and improving outcomes based on higher morale and better prepared teachers.

-LEA (Urban)

In addition to financial resources, some LEAs are providing opportunities for public recognition of teachers and students pursuing careers in education.

We hosted a community assembly that included K-12th grade students. At the assembly, two senior students who are pursuing a career in education were recognized and presented a \$2,500 scholarship through the Grow Your Own initiative. Students in each grade level were recognized for their work and then at the conclusion of the assembly, all students were rewarded with promotional items. This public recognition which included the entire school district was very impactful.

-LEA (Rural)

We are using some funds to help celebrate teachers throughout the year. This is an area of improvement that our teachers have consistently stated through surveys.

-LEA (Rural)

Some LEAs also focus on building a strong sense of community and connection between prospective teachers and LEAs.

The Grow Your Own money will financially help prospective teachers to pay for classes and hopefully build a relationship with the district that includes loyalty. When they begin seeking employment, they will remember that we helped to get them started.

-LEA (Rural)

The district will maintain contact with potential teacher recruits throughout a teacher education program and provide the support needed for the candidates to be successful. This support will create a relationship that will encourage teachers to come back to our district to teach.

-LEA (Rural)

Research shows that teachers tend to work in a 10 mile radius from where they grew up. We believe by giving our students the experiences and resources they need to be successful in college, they will want to come back and teach for the district.

-LEA (Suburban)

Lead contacts believe that showing interest in students as future teachers early on will contribute to effective teacher recruitment over time.

The focus of our recruitment efforts is on generating students interested in educational career paths. We believe this is one of our highest leverage opportunities because our system exercises considerable influence on student career path choices.

-LEA (Rural)

We believe that most teachers will come back to their home school to teach and the better job we do in getting our students to want to be teachers, the more likely they will be willing to teach for us.

-LEA (Rural)

In focusing on our current high school students, we have the opportunity to help identify students who will be great teacher candidates. We can help steer them in the correct path and coursework to help set them up for success in college. We believe students will want to come back here to teach if we can get them interested in the field.

-LEA (Rural)

A number of lead contacts indicate their LEAs are creating or have created new positions to support the teacher recruitment efforts.

We are hiring a part-time Director of Communication & Teacher Recruitment. This position provides the district a dedicated staff member who assists in not only marketing our positions but also seeking out other recruitment opportunities.

-LEA (Rural)

We have created a GYOT Program Developer position. The position will allow a dedicated person to research and plan a successful GYO program long-term.

-LEA (Suburban)

We have created a new position to lead our efforts in recruiting highly qualified, diverse, MO-certified and Montessori-trained teachers. This will allow us to recruit year round to find the best candidates as they are needed.

-LEA (Urban)

Some lead contacts believe their LEAs' strategies are effective because they are field-proven and based on research.

Our practices have directly assisted our current teaching staff in growing their professional knowledge and addressing recent issues associated with teacher social and emotional health. Our community is aware and supportive of the current practices and we have seen an increase in applications within several content areas.

-LEA (Rural)

Grow your own efforts have shown to be effective in our area.

-LEA (Suburban)

Our strategies are effective because we are making the efforts to improve things like salary, facilities, culture and climate, resources and support for all staff, and then we can offer 4-day school weeks and small class sizes.

-LEA (Rural)

A few lead contacts share their concerns on the effectiveness of their teacher recruitment strategies. They highlight the necessity of a more comprehensive approach to fundamentally address the barriers to teacher recruitment in the long run.

I honestly do not know whether the strategies will be effective. There is a larger crisis than simple dollars can fix.

-LEA (Rural)

The strategies will address immediate needs and help us prepare a couple more teachers. However, the \$10,000 budget is not a long-term solution. We have a long way to go in addressing the barriers that deter candidates from the teaching profession.

-LEA (Urban)

Key Points on General Knowledge and Beliefs, and Priorities and Challenges

- LEA lead contacts indicate they understand the purpose of the teacher recruitment grants and the availability of support from MTDS. They believe there is a high level of commitment in their LEA and support from the local community to teacher recruitment.
- Lead contacts indicate teacher recruitment is essential or a high priority for their LEAs.
- Lead contacts indicate it is particularly difficult for their LEAs to recruit teachers in specific content areas and racially/ethnically diverse teachers.
- It is generally more difficult for LEAs in rural and urban areas than in suburban areas to recruit teachers.

Modifications from Initial Application to Early Implementation

Some lead contacts indicate their LEAs have made modifications since their teacher recruitment grants began. For example, as Table 7 shows, LEAs (25–30%) indicate they have made modifications to their fiscal support strategies, budgetary allocations, and recruitment strategies. In addition, grantees also made modifications in strategies for teacher preparation, evaluation, public sharing of grant progress, and partnerships.

Table 7. Modifications from Initial Application to Early Implementation

Please indicate if you have made modifications, since the grant began, to your teacher recruitment (Grow Your Own) grant strategies.	All Grantees		Rural		Suburban		Urban	
	n	Yes	n	Yes	n	Yes	n	Yes
Partnerships	335	16%	266	15%	35	26%	34	15%
Recruitment strategies	335	25%	266	25%	35	23%	34	32%
Selection strategies	332	12%	263	11%	35	14%	34	15%
Preparation strategies (e.g., learning opportunities and experiences)	333	22%	264	23%	35	23%	34	9%
Fiscal support strategies (e.g., scholarships, stipends)	335	30%	266	32%	35	26%	34	24%
Evaluation of effectiveness of grant strategies and/or activities	335	19%	266	21%	35	14%	34	15%
Budgetary allocations	334	28%	265	30%	35	20%	34	21%
Public sharing of grant progress and/or outcome data	333	17%	264	19%	35	9%	34	12%

Note. Chi-square tests showed there were no statistically significant differences among the responses of grantees in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

Some lead contacts indicate their LEAs are becoming more proactive in their teacher recruitment efforts.

The selection process has become more of what can we teach the candidates instead of the candidate does not have this quality. We are now paying for study materials and fees for teachers to become qualified in an area that we need them to be certified in versus just not hiring them.

-LEA (Rural)

We have widened our recruitment area. We have not been near as specific on certification/ areas of expertise when hiring some positions. We have created scholarships for assistance on cost of classes, and we have been more open to giving experience to new teachers to the district.

-LEA (Rural)

As examples, lead contacts elaborate on what modifications to fiscal support strategies (e.g., scholarships, stipends) their LEAs have made and the rationale for the modifications.

We increased the scholarship dollars for students entering teaching programs of study.

-LEA (Suburban)

We decided we wanted to offer a stipend for teachers who accept a position in a hard-to-fill content area such as math or science.

-LEA (Urban)

They also explain why their LEAs modified their budgetary allocations and partnerships.

We are now planning on allocating all grant money to teachers, whereas before we only allocated 90%.

-LEA (Rural)

We made some budgetary changes because we were able to partner with a school to provide dual credit opportunities for future teachers to attain their first four education credits as a high school senior and we wanted to invest more in our students in that area. We found a way to fund educational field trips to colleges and invited colleges in for a symposium so that money could be moved to scholarships which is an area of need.

-LEA (Rural)

We added additional partnerships and formalized experiences with local universities.

-LEA (Suburban)

Quality of Implementation

LEA lead contacts are generally positive about the quality of implementation of their teacher recruitment grants. As Table 8 shows, nearly all (93%) lead contacts agree their LEAs are implementing the grant as designed. The majority of respondents (72–87%) believe their LEAs are collaborating with partners, assigning sufficient personnel, and using research-based strategies and technology for the grant implementation.

Lead contacts also indicate they are using data for progress monitoring and their evaluation approach helps to understand the grant's impacts.

The responses from lead contacts for LEAs in rural, suburban, and urban areas are similar.

Table 8. Perceptions of Quality of Implementation

My LEA is...	All Grantees			Rural		Suburban		Urban	
	N	A	U	A	U	A	U	A	U
Implementing the grant as designed.	341	93%	6%	93%	6%	92%	8%	94%	6%
Using research-based strategies in the grant.	341	87%	13%	86%	14%	89%	8%	91%	9%
Utilizing data to monitor the progress of grant implementation.*	340	87%	12%	85%	13%	92%	5%	91%	9%
Using an evaluation approach that helps to understand the grant's impacts.	341	79%	19%	78%	20%	84%	16%	89%	11%
Assigning sufficient personnel to implement the grant.	341	84%	13%	81%	15%	89%	5%	94%	6%
Using technology to help manage the grant implementation.	341	72%	22%	70%	23%	73%	19%	86%	11%
Collaborating with partners during the grant implementation.	341	79%	15%	79%	14%	78%	16%	83%	14%

Note. As the percentages of grantees who disagree or strongly disagree with the survey questions were very small, the table shows only the percentages of grantees who agree (A), a composite of strongly agree/agree, and are undecided (U) about the survey questions. * indicates statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence level between rural and suburban LEAs.

Consistent with the finding in the Phase I evaluation (Liang & Slotnik, 2022), many LEAs reiterate their use of both quantitative and qualitative data to measure the quality of implementation of their teacher recruitment grants.

We will use multiple data sources, surveys, observation, recruitment and hiring data, and direct source interviews.

-LEA (Rural)

We will track whether students who participate in the GYO program enroll in a college teaching program. We are then going to track how many of those students apply at our LEA and if they ultimately get jobs. We will also look at the teaching interest survey data and compare the responses of GYO participants to those who indicated they were interested in teaching but did not go through the GYO program.

-LEA (Suburban)

We will collect quantitative data on student participation in strategies and activities, graduate students going into university education programs, and qualitative data from student surveys that ask which strategies affected their participation and career choice.

-LEA (Urban)

Some LEAs focus on quantitative data sources (e.g., number of students in GYO programs, dual credit students, number of teachers hired by the LEA) to measure the quality of implementation of their teacher recruitment grants.

Presently, we are monitoring the implementation of our grant funds by tracking student enrollment in introduction to teaching courses and students enrolling in educational career paths. We will also track numbers of students receiving dual credit and hours logged for student mentoring and field experiences.

-LEA (Rural)

We will monitor the growth in students who participate in our Educators Rising program and track and work with students from our Educators Rising program who get scholarships to ensure they return to our LEA.

-LEA (Suburban)

We will track the number of students participating in district sponsored teacher education groups and programs.

-LEA (Urban)

Some other LEAs are primarily using survey data from students and teachers to measure the quality of implementation of their teacher recruitment grants.

We will be using an interest and feedback survey to gather information from participating students and teachers regarding the program's effectiveness.

-LEA (Rural)

We will use survey data primarily; we are focusing on cadet teachers and will survey students and cooperating teachers as well as review portfolios.

-LEA (Suburban)

Our plan is to survey our GYO teacher candidates, university partners, and GYO mentors; qualitative, open-ended questions will be included in the survey as well.

-LEA (Urban)

Key Points on Modifications and Quality of Implementation

- Some lead contacts indicate their LEAs have made modifications since their teacher recruitment grants began.
- LEA lead contacts are generally positive about the quality of implementation of their teacher recruitment grants.
- LEAs are using a variety of quantitative and qualitative data to measure the quality of implementation of their teacher recruitment grants.

Initial Impact of the Grant

Half of lead contacts indicate their LEAs have started to collect the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of their teacher recruitment grants. As reflected in Table 9, half of lead contacts (51%) indicate their LEAs have started to collect the data needed for the evaluation of their teacher recruitment grants, and the other half (49%) have not started to do so.

The responses are similar for LEAs in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

Table 9. Evaluation Data Collection

Has your LEA started to collect the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of your teacher recruitment (Grow Your Own) plan?	All Grantees		Rural		Suburban		Urban	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Yes	171	51%	138	52%	18	50%	15	44%
No	166	49%	129	48%	18	50%	19	56%

Note. A Chi-square test showed there were no statistically significant differences among the responses of grantees in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

For those LEAs that have not started data collection, some lead contacts indicate that is because they have not started the implementation of their grants. They plan to begin in summer 2022 or the 2022–23 school year.

Our LEA hasn't begun the implementation of the grant yet. We are planning to do so in the 2022–23 school year.

-LEA (Rural)

We will start the monitoring in the coming school year as we really begin to work with our Educators Rising sponsors and students.

-LEA (Suburban)

We received notification of the grant in the 3rd quarter at a time when key staff was transitioning and much was in preparation for the end-of-year activities. We will begin implementation of this program when students return to school in the fall.

-LEA (Urban)

A number of lead contacts indicate their LEAs are intentionally using the 2021–22 school year as a planning year. They are using this time to build a stronger foundation of support so the grant can have a greater impact.

We are in the entry stages of establishing these processes for the 2022–23 academic year and look to utilize the first portion of funding to assist in creating the foundational elements for a successful program.

-LEA (Rural)

We have used the spring 2022 time to build our framework, expanding our mentor/mentee program for the 2022–23 school year. Additionally, we are revamping our collaboration system to ensure data collection and monitoring impacts is appropriately aligned.

-LEA (Rural)

We are in the planning stages. A team is evaluating our current cadet teaching program and creating guidance documents and supporting documents for the improvement of the program

-LEA (Rural)

Some other lead contacts indicate they are just getting started with the implementation of the grant. Therefore, there is no data to collect yet at this time.

We have just started our strategies, so there hasn't been sufficient time to begin the evaluation.

-LEA (Rural)

This is our first year of implementation, so we are in progress. Numbers will be collected as events continue.

-LEA (Suburban)

We have just begun the implementation, so we cannot collect new data. We are collecting baseline data so we have a comparison.

-LEA (Urban)

As Table 10 shows, **some lead contacts indicate they are already seeing early indicators of success of their teacher recruitment grants**, especially in terms of collaborating with EPPs/CCs (34%) and increasing interest in the teacher positions (30%).

More than one-fifth of lead contacts (21–25%) are also seeing early indicators of success in collaborating with community partners, building a larger candidate pool, and recruiting teachers in specific content areas (e.g., special education, math, science).

While only 7% of lead contacts, on average, indicate having seen indicators of success in recruiting racially/ethnically diverse teachers, the percentage is significantly higher for LEAs in suburban (17%) and urban (25%) areas than for LEAs in rural areas (4%).

Table 10. Initial Impact of the Grant

Are you seeing early indicators of success of your teacher recruitment (Grow Your Own) grant in terms of...?	All Grantees		Rural		Suburban		Urban	
	n	Yes	n	Yes	n	Yes	n	Yes
Increasing interest in the teacher positions.	328	30%	260	30%	36	25%	32	44%
Building a larger teacher candidate pool.	328	24%	261	24%	35	20%	32	31%
Recruiting racially/ethnically diverse teachers.*	328	7%	260	4%	36	17%	32	25%
Recruiting male teachers.	327	12%	260	10%	35	17%	32	16%
Recruiting teachers in specific content areas (e.g., special education, math, science).	328	21%	260	22%	36	8%	32	22%
Recruiting teachers in schools in hard-to-staff locations.	326	17%	259	19%	35	9%	32	13%
Providing customized support to schools related to teacher recruitment.	324	19%	258	19%	35	17%	31	16%
Collaborating with educator preparation programs/community colleges.	326	34%	259	34%	35	40%	32	31%
Collaborating with community partners.	326	25%	259	22%	35	34%	32	31%
Improving student achievement.	323	18%	257	18%	35	14%	31	23%

Note. *Chi-square tests showed the responses for Suburban and Urban LEAs are similar, and are statistically significantly different from rural LEAs.

In interviews and survey comments, lead contacts elaborate on the initial impacts of the grant. They indicate the grant helps to generate a broader interest in the teaching profession.

The implementation of the Future Teachers of America program has helped increase local interest in the field of teaching.

-LEA (Rural)

We have been talking with students about the GYO opportunity. This has garnered more interest in the profession from students of varying ethnicities and genders.

-LEA (Suburban)

Because we have engaged in continuous dialogue and action around our GYO strategy, we have seen new interest in the teacher profession due to intentionally seeking out males and persons of color for future teaching positions.

-LEA (Urban)

Our GYO efforts have started a buzz amongst staff who wish to serve as moderators for the FTA Chapters. They are remembering their "WHY" as they focus on leading students into the profession.

-LEA (Urban)

Some lead contacts believe the grant is helping to build a larger candidate pool.

Early data have shown an improvement in the teacher pool. Two teachers who participated in the scholarship program will be moving from an aide position to a full-time certified teaching position for the 2022–23 school year.

-LEA (Rural)

We have seen an increase in the number of applicants who applied for our teacher positions in the months of April and May. Many are from referrals from our teacher ambassadors and collaboration with the community partners.

-LEA (Urban)

Many lead contacts indicate the grant contributes to a stronger partnership between LEAs and EPPs/CCs.

Due to the grant, we have increased communication with community partners and universities on how to best utilize the funding available.

-LEA (Rural)

We have extended our student-teaching partnerships from five universities to eight in an attempt to attract teachers and service providers for the district.

-LEA (Suburban)

We have been meeting with our partner to increase the collaboration with their urban teacher program, and create a dual credit opportunity for high school students interested in becoming a teacher.

-LEA (Urban)

Some lead contacts elaborate on other early indicators of success (e.g., student achievement, recruitment of teachers in specific content areas) that they have observed.

Our early data indicate our recruitment efforts are having a meaningful impact on student achievement.

-LEA (Rural)

While we still struggle with finding qualified teachers, we have been able to fill positions in high need areas (e.g., math, science) more easily than normal this year.

-LEA (Rural)

Utilizing grant funds and strategies, we were able to staff three positions that had previously been open for several months with no applicants. These positions were in the areas of science, special education, and social studies.

-LEA (Rural)

A number of lead contacts highlight the multiple impacts of their teacher recruitment grants, which they believe help to address teacher shortage.

We are beginning to see small increases in the number of teacher applications after starting our strategies from this grant... We have been able to fill difficult positions such as early childhood and high school math without any issues. In the past, this was next to impossible. Our team has been able to build relationships with area universities and community organizations to find teachers and promote education. We are seeing growth in student performance in our spring assessment tools.

-LEA (Rural)

The Grow Your Own grant has provided financial support and flexibility to address the teacher shortage more immediately and creatively.

-LEA (Rural)

Many lead contacts indicate their LEAs are collecting a variety of quantitative data (e.g., GYO applicants and enrollment, dual credit hours earned, scholarships awarded, graduates attending EPP programs) and qualitative data (e.g., surveys of teachers and students) to measure the impact of their teacher recruitment grants.

In the short term, the quantitative data include the number of teacher interns recruited and completing the program, and the qualitative data include the satisfaction of program participants with their experience and support, and their intent to pursue a degree in education. In the long-term, we will measure how many teacher interns complete degrees in education and how many return to the district for careers.

-LEA (Rural)

We will survey those who go into college for teaching to see whether GYO increased their interest in the profession. We will also measure whether students end up working as teachers or other student-related professions in the district.

-LEA (Suburban)

We will measure the number of students enrolling in the student clubs and will follow each event with surveys to gauge their growing interest in the profession.

-LEA (Urban)

Public Reporting and Sharing

As Table 11 shows, **most LEAs have not yet shared or reported on results to-date of their teacher recruitment grants with key stakeholders and/or DESE (86%)**. This finding is consistent for LEAs in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

Table 11. Public Reporting and Sharing of Grant Progress, Findings, and Recommendations

Has your LEA shared or reported on results to-date of your teacher recruitment (Grow Your Own) grant (e.g., grant progress, findings, recommendations) with key stakeholders and/or DESE?	All Grantees		Rural		Suburban		Urban	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Yes	47	14%	36	14%	7	19%	4	12%
No	286	86%	227	86%	29	81%	30	88%

Note. A Chi-square test showed there were no statistically significant differences among the responses of grantees in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

For those LEAs that have shared or reported on results to-date, some lead contacts elaborate in their responses (e.g., what results, shared with whom, how).

We have shared our success with the coalition, local business partners, and key stakeholders working on the development of our strategic plan.

-LEA (Rural)

We have shared our stipend study with the board of education, the NEA leadership and offered three faculty meetings for staff. At the meetings, our employees were invited to review the adoptions and changes, share wonderings, and ask clarifying questions.

-LEA (Suburban)

We have shared some of our teacher recruitment data and results with the superintendent's cabinet and the Board of Directors.

-LEA (Urban)

Key Points on Initial Impact and Public Reporting

- Half of lead contacts indicate their LEAs have started to collect the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of their teacher recruitment grants.
- Some lead contacts indicate they are already seeing early indicators of success of their teacher recruitment grants.
- LEAs are collecting a variety of quantitative and qualitative data to measure the impact of their teacher recruitment grants.
- Most LEAs have not yet shared or reported on results to-date of their teacher recruitment grants with key stakeholders and/or DESE.

Enhancing Factors for LEA Teacher Recruitment Grants

Lead contacts underscore the importance of support from teachers and district leadership teams.

Our district provides strong leadership at the district and building levels. The administrative team has an emphasis on recruitment efforts and is working collaboratively to shape how this grant addresses our challenges in an effective way.

-LEA (Rural)

One factor that really enhances our Grow Your Own grant is the fact that we have teachers and administrators across the district who are extremely excited about this program. Their enthusiasm serves as a great recruitment tool.

-LEA (Rural)

[Enhancing factors include] Buy-in from the administrative team and the desire to really start a program that will encourage students to return to our district to work.

-LEA (Suburban)

[Enhancing factors include] Commitment from school administrators and teachers.

-LEA (Urban)

Lead contacts believe collaboration between LEAs and their partners also helps to enhance the implementation of their grants.

The relationship with the college has been vital! They can offer some hands-on opportunities to the kids on their campus that we can't. It has really sparked serious interest in students.

-LEA (Rural)

[Enhancing factors include] Collaboration with the post-secondary institution.

-LEA (Urban)

Working with our partner university is helpful with regard to solidifying what our schools need and the assistance the university can provide.

-LEA (Urban)

Many lead contacts find the availability of financial resources and the flexibility of using the grant funding valuable. One rural LEA indicates they are providing matching funds to make the grant more impactful.

The ability to provide financial assistance, the ease of the application process, and the multiple options in which we can use the grant, all enhance the implementation of the teacher recruitment grant.

-LEA (Rural)

Having resources to study issues and create actionable plans and systems has been helpful not only in the short term but to build long-term success.

-LEA (Suburban)

The fact we have funds to support these initiatives is key.

-LEA (Urban)

Our CFO is matching funds so it makes it more financially appealing.

-LEA (Rural)

A number of lead contacts highlight the support from DESE as a factor enhancing the implementation of their grants.

Our district has felt extremely supported through the RPDC. We developed a team to plan and support our GYO grant.

-LEA (Rural)

The DESE math specialist has been tremendously helpful.

-LEA (Suburban)

DESE and the RPDC have been helpful. Now it is on us to implement a successful program. We must leverage our resources, seek further collaborations, connect with similar programs, and learn from their process and effectiveness. DESE support has been there and we have the technical support available.

-LEA (Urban)

Emerging Issues for LEA Teacher Recruitment Grants

Many lead contacts note the lack of interest in teaching makes it challenging to recruit individuals into the profession, especially candidates of color and candidates in hard-to-staff content areas.

The overall attitude toward education from political leaders to our parents and families has been overwhelmingly negative and lacking support. Furthermore, students recognize Missouri is at the bottom regarding teacher pay/salary which is a significant roadblock when trying to foster interest in teaching as a career.

-LEA (Rural)

Teachers need to be compensated more. It is extremely challenging to convince some students that education financially makes sense to spend the money and time on a degree when Missouri teachers' pay ranks 50th out of all of the states.

-LEA (Suburban)

A challenge is the lack of interest in teaching. The teaching profession does not have the respect it deserves. The point is to direct the funding and give opportunity and advocacy for a career in education.

-LEA (Suburban)

There are just not candidates available, especially racially diverse or in hard-to-reach content areas who want to teach in an urban and high-need district.

-LEA (Urban)

Recruitment challenges can be more salient for small, rural LEAs whose candidate pool is likely to be small and they may lack personnel to implement the grants.

We are a small, rural district and the pool of students so far who are interested in education is small.

-LEA (Rural)

[The impeding factors are] Simply our small size and the lack of staff to run the program.

-LEA (Rural)

Lead contacts feel the size of the grant is relatively small, and the timing of grant approval and notification makes it hard for some LEAs to implement their grants as proposed.

The focus on GYO is good, but there is not enough funding to make a significant impact. There is a lot of tracking and time spent on the grant with little fiscal help.

-LEA (Rural)

The amount of grant money (\$10,000) is extremely small compared to the big goal.

-LEA (Urban)

[The impeding factor is] Timing: at the end of the year, it was hard to collaborate with all individuals.

-LEA (Suburban)

We were awarded the grant in January. The budget was entered and approved in ePegs in March. We have not had the time to implement the plan as proposed.

-LEA (Rural)

These issues were further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and uncertainties regarding the sustainability of the grants.

COVID has created a negative view of teaching.

-LEA (Urban)

It is an extremely challenging time in schools with COVID issues and more work in grants than we have staff to keep up.

-LEA (Suburban)

[The impeding factor is] Sustainability - working to see how to continue these programs once funds are done.

-LEA (Urban)

After we spend our initial grant amount, we are concerned about the continuation of the program.

-LEA (Rural)

Additional Support Needed by LEA Teacher Recruitment Grantees

Lead contacts describe a need for higher levels of funding over a more sustained period of time.

I am hopeful this program continues to receive funding at the state level for several more years to allow us to follow through with the students and see whether they complete their program in college and where they go for employment upon graduation.

-LEA (Rural)

The Grow Your Own grant is very small and it only provides a little funding for those entering the field. I would have liked to see equal efforts financially committed to both grow your own (recruitment) and teacher retention.

-LEA (Suburban)

DESE knows there is a national teacher shortage and I appreciate the efforts to help schools. However, there needs to be more assistance to help school districts. For those districts that can't find teachers, there should be more funds allocated so that at least certified virtual teachers could deliver instruction to students in the classroom.

-LEA (Urban)

Many lead contacts want more guidance related to grant implementation (e.g., structure or curriculum for FTA chapters, timeline of grant implementation, sample surveys, steps for making grant modifications), **and opportunities for LEAs to share learnings and promising practices.**

Guidance on helping the follow-through of former students to finish their degrees in education by keeping them connected.

-LEA (Rural)

We just need continued guidance if we have questions. We have been very pleased with the help and support we have gotten so far.

-LEA (Suburban)

I would love to see with RPDC a networking with local districts about their challenges and successes.

-LEA (Urban)

It would be great if other districts share their ideas on creative ways to increase teacher recruitment.

-LEA (Rural)

LEA lead contacts hope the state can make the teaching profession more attractive (e.g., by providing paid student teaching, scholarships, loan forgiveness, higher teacher salary).

Our society is devaluing teaching and education, and getting people into the education field is becoming harder and harder. Maybe DESE can provide paid student teaching and award scholarships for teaching in the state.

-LEA (Rural)

I believe that the state must invest in a more sustainable approach to teacher recruitment, such as, loan forgiveness for all teachers at all levels. We have to make the profession more attractive to the younger generation.

-LEA (Urban)

We need the support of legislators and professionals to promote education as a career field and to fund schools in a way that allows for competitive wages. We lost good teachers this year because they took higher paying jobs outside of education.

-LEA (Rural)

LEA lead contacts also want the state to provide more routes to alternative certification.

We need easier ways for staff to get certified for specific content areas. DESE needs to work better with districts in this area. I know there are requirements for those content areas. If that could be changed or tweaked, it will be easier for teachers to get certified.

-LEA (Rural)

DESE should market the profession across the state, help people understand how they can become certified to teach, and encourage people to become teachers.

-LEA (Suburban)

*The state should allow Montessori training to qualify teachers for MO certification.
We also need pathways for low income/ non-college graduates to qualify as teachers.*

-LEA (Urban)

Summary

LEA lead contacts indicate teacher recruitment is essential or a high priority for their LEAs, and the local communities support their teacher recruitment efforts. Since the grant began, some LEAs have made modifications to their teacher recruitment grant strategies (e.g., fiscal support strategies, budgetary allocations, recruitment strategies).

Where implementation has begun, LEA lead contacts are generally positive about the quality of their teacher recruitment grant efforts to-date. Some lead contacts are already seeing early indicators of success of their grants. Most LEAs have not yet shared or reported on results to-date of their teacher recruitment grants with key stakeholders and/or DESE.

CHAPTER FOUR: LEA TEACHER RETENTION GRANTS

This chapter explores the initial implementation and impact of the LEA teacher retention grants.

General Knowledge and Beliefs

LEA lead contacts indicate they understand the purpose of the teacher retention grants and the availability of support from MTDS. They believe there is a high level of commitment in their LEA and support from the local community to teacher retention.

As reflected in Table 12, nearly all LEA lead contacts (94–98%) believe the purpose of the teacher retention grant is clear, they know where to get information about the grant, and they understand help is available from MTDS. They also indicate there is a high level of commitment in their LEA to teacher retention (98%) and the local community supports their LEAs’ teacher retention efforts (93%).

The perceptions of lead contacts for LEAs in rural, suburban, and urban areas are similar.

Table 12. General Knowledge and Beliefs

Survey Prompt	All Grantees			Rural		Suburban		Urban	
	N	A	U	A	U	A	U	A	U
The purpose of the teacher retention grant is clear to me.	294	97%	2%	97%	2%	97%	3%	100%	0%
I know where to get information about the teacher retention grant.	295	98%	2%	98%	2%	97%	3%	97%	0%
I understand that help is available for the implementation of my teacher retention grant from the Missouri Teacher Development System (MTDS).	295	94%	3%	95%	3%	85%	9%	97%	0%
There is a high level of commitment in my LEA to teacher retention.	295	98%	2%	97%	2%	100%	0%	100%	0%
The local community supports my LEA's teacher retention efforts.	294	93%	6%	94%	5%	88%	12%	91%	9%

Note. As the percentages of grantees who disagree or strongly disagree with the survey questions were very small, the table shows only the percentages of grantees who agree (A), a composite of strongly agree/agree, and are undecided (U) about the survey questions. Kruskal-Wallis H tests showed there were no statistically significant differences among the responses of grantees in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

Priorities and Challenges

Lead contacts indicate teacher retention is essential or a high priority for their LEAs.

As Table 13 shows, nearly all lead contacts indicate teacher retention is essential (58%) or a high priority (37%) for their LEAs. The level of priority is particularly high for LEAs in urban areas.

Table 13. Perceived Priority of Teacher Recruitment

To what extent is teacher retention a priority for your LEA?	All Grantees		Rural		Suburban*		Urban	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Essential	170	58%	133	58%	13	41%	24	73%
High priority	110	37%	86	38%	15	47%	9	27%
Medium priority	12	4%	9	4%	3	9%	0	0%
Low priority	1	0%	0	0%	1	3%	0	0%
Not a priority	1	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0	0%

Note. *Kruskal-Wallis H tests showed there was a statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level between the responses of grantees in suburban and urban areas.

Lead contacts indicate it is particularly difficult for their LEAs to retain teachers in specific content areas and racially/ethnically diverse teachers. In addition, it is generally more difficult for LEAs in rural and urban areas than in suburban areas to retain teachers.

As reflected in Table 14, approximately two-thirds of lead contacts indicate it is extremely difficult or very difficult for their LEAs to retain teachers in specific content areas (69%) and racially/ethnically diverse teachers (64%). In addition, half of lead contacts (45–56%) highlight the difficulty of retaining teachers in schools in hard-to-staff locations, experienced high quality teachers, and male teachers.

It is generally more difficult for LEAs in rural and urban areas than in suburban areas to retain teachers.

Table 14. Perceived Level of Difficulty of Teacher Retention

Please indicate the level of difficulty for your LEA to retain the following teachers.		n	Extremely difficult	Very difficult	Moderately difficult	Slightly difficult	Not at all difficult	Mean
Racially/ethnically diverse teachers	All Grantees	291	42%	22%	20%	8%	8%	3.82
	Rural	228	48%	19%	18%	7%	8%	3.91
	Suburban	31	26%	26%	29%	13%	6%	3.52
	Urban	32	16%	44%	25%	9%	6%	3.53
Male teachers*	All Grantees	290	22%	23%	31%	15%	9%	3.33
	Rural	228	25%	23%	32%	14%	7%	3.45
	Suburban	30	10%	13%	27%	23%	27%	2.57
	Urban	32	16%	31%	28%	13%	13%	3.25

Please indicate the level of difficulty for your LEA to retain the following teachers.		n	Extremely difficult	Very difficult	Moderately difficult	Slightly difficult	Not at all difficult	Mean
Experienced high quality teachers * **	All Grantees	290	26%	27%	27%	15%	5%	3.55
	Rural	227	30%	29%	26%	12%	3%	3.70
	Suburban	31	6%	10%	29%	32%	23%	2.45
	Urban	32	22%	28%	34%	16%	0%	3.56
Teachers in specific content areas (e.g., special education, math, science)* **	All Grantees	292	42%	27%	21%	7%	2%	3.99
	Rural	229	45%	28%	20%	6%	1%	4.09
	Suburban	31	13%	16%	39%	19%	13%	2.97
	Urban	32	50%	31%	16%	3%	0%	4.28
Teachers in schools in hard-to-staff locations* **	All Grantees	286	29%	27%	24%	10%	10%	3.56
	Rural	225	33%	28%	23%	10%	6%	3.73
	Suburban	29	7%	14%	24%	10%	45%	2.28
	Urban	32	22%	31%	28%	13%	6%	3.50
Other	All Grantees	33	33%	18%	18%	9%	21%	3.33
	Rural	27	41%	19%	15%	7%	19%	3.56
	Suburban	5	0%	20%	20%	20%	40%	2.20
	Urban	1	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	3.00

Note. The means were calculated based on the following scheme: "Extremely difficult" = 5; "Very difficult" = 4; "Moderately difficult" = 3; "Slightly difficult" = 2; "Not at all difficult" = 1. * indicates statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence level between rural and suburban LEAs, and ** between suburban and urban LEAs.

Elaborating in interviews and survey comments, lead contacts believe their LEAs’ retention strategies will be effective because they solicit teacher input and the retention strategies align with the needs of teachers.

I believe the retention strategies will be effective because we met with teachers to ask them what they needed and what would be motivation for them to stay in the district. The strategies that we chose align to what they said.

-LEA (Rural)

I surveyed teachers and used their feedback to construct the grant. So in that way we intertwined the grant with our district goals and objectives.

-LEA (Rural)

We surveyed all teachers and shaped our plan to meet their preferred needs.

-LEA (Suburban)

We surveyed all stakeholders and used their input for our strategies.

-LEA (Urban)

They also indicate **the retention strategies are based on research.**

Our retention strategies are research-based.

-LEA (Rural)

The strategies are based on research, the guidance document or recommended by the RPDC teacher development specialist.

-LEA (Urban)

Lead contacts believe **the grant helps their LEAs to provide a range of support to teachers, which they feel will contribute to better teacher retention** (e.g., leadership opportunities, mentors, substitute teachers, higher pay, teacher appreciation). By building an inviting atmosphere where teachers feel appreciated, lead contacts indicate these strategies improve school climate and culture, boost teacher morale, and increase job satisfaction.

We have prioritized giving teachers voices through a teacher leadership team that allows them direct impact on their work environment. Mentor/Mentee programs have also been a priority. Having a support system is key.

-LEA (Rural)

Allowing teachers to keep their plan time by having substitutes teachers in each building gives for peace of mind of support. Teachers' feeling supported helps us to retain quality teachers which ultimately works as a recruitment effort for new staff.

-LEA (Suburban)

Our strategies address teacher pay, which has been a huge factor in great teachers leaving the profession. It also addresses support for new teachers, which is associated with staying in the profession.

-LEA (Urban)

We focus on showing our teachers that they are valued and heard. We intend to promote pride in the profession in our efforts to attract and retain our staff.

-LEA (Suburban)

Key Points on General Knowledge and Beliefs, and Priorities and Challenges

- LEA lead contacts indicate they understand the purpose of the teacher retention grants and the availability of support from MTDS. They believe there is a high level of commitment in their LEA and support from the local community to teacher retention.
- Lead contacts indicate teacher retention is essential or a high priority for their LEAs.
- Lead contacts indicate it is particularly difficult for their LEAs to retain teachers in specific content areas and racially/ethnically diverse teachers.
- It is generally more difficult for LEAs in rural and urban areas than in suburban areas to retain teachers.

Modifications from Initial Application to Early Implementation

Some lead contacts indicate their LEAs have made modifications since their teacher retention grants began. For example, as reflected in Table 15, approximately 20% of LEAs indicate they have made modifications to their budgetary allocations and retention strategies. In addition, grantees also made modifications in strategies for evaluation, partnerships, and public sharing of grant progress.

Table 15. Modifications from Initial Application to Early Implementation

Please indicate if you have made modifications, since the grant began, to your teacher retention grant strategies.	All Grantees		Rural		Suburban		Urban	
	n	Yes	n	Yes	n	Yes	n	Yes
Partnerships	284	8%	221	7%	32	13%	31	10%
Retention strategies	285	16%	222	18%	32	16%	31	6%
Evaluation of effectiveness of grant strategies and/or activities	283	10%	220	11%	32	9%	31	3%
Budgetary allocations	286	23%	223	22%	32	28%	31	23%
Public sharing of grant progress and/or outcome data	282	7%	219	7%	32	9%	31	6%
Other (e.g., personnel change)	134	3%	104	4%	16	0%	14	0%

Note. Chi-square tests showed there were no statistically significant differences among the responses of grantees in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

In interviews and survey comments, lead contacts elaborate on the modifications their LEAs have made to budgetary allocations.

We have adjusted our budgetary allocations to provide scholarship and stipendiary opportunities for staff to pursue new interests in their content areas.

-LEA (Suburban)

We put more funds into permanent subs and the national board certification.

-LEA (Suburban)

We moved budget allocation from salary and benefits to contracted services.

-LEA (Suburban)

A number of lead contacts also comment on the modifications their LEAs have made to their retention strategies.

We have made modifications to the salary schedules and have also agreed to pay additional stipends for those who receive the national board certification.

-LEA (Rural)

We were going to pay towards student loans, but decided against it.

-LEA (Rural)

We have modified the quantity of ambassadors and the amount of remuneration for the ambassador work.

-LEA (Suburban)

A few lead contacts indicate their LEAs plan to continue their support to teacher retention when the grant ends.

As a retention strategy, the district now offers employees affordable daycare options for children ages 0–3, which was not offered previously. This service will continued to be provided and funds have been allocated for this in future budgets.

-LEA (Rural)

The district plans to continue the mentor and teacher leader stipends after grant money is used, as long as survey data indicate the program is successful.

-LEA (Rural)

Quality of Implementation

LEA lead contacts are generally positive about the quality of implementation of their teacher retention grants. As reflected in Table 16, nearly all (93%) lead contacts indicate their LEAs are implementing the grant as designed.

Most lead contacts (72–87%) also believe they are using research-based strategies and technology, assigning sufficient personnel, and collaborating with partners for the grant implementation. They agree their LEAs are using data for progress monitoring (85%) and their evaluation approach helps to understand the grant’s impacts (82%).

The responses are similar for LEAs in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

Table 16. Perceived Quality of Implementation of LEA Teacher Retention Grants

My LEA is...	All Grantees			Rural		Suburban		Urban	
	N	A	U	A	U	A	U	A	U
Implementing the grant as designed.	289	93%	6%	93%	6%	97%	3%	91%	6%
Using research-based strategies in the grant.	289	87%	12%	85%	12%	84%	16%	97%	3%
Utilizing data to monitor the progress of grant implementation.	289	85%	12%	83%	15%	94%	6%	97%	3%
Using an evaluation approach that helps to understand the grant's impacts.	289	82%	16%	81%	17%	75%	22%	97%	3%
Assigning sufficient personnel to implement the grant.	289	84%	11%	84%	11%	75%	13%	94%	6%
Using technology to help manage the grant implementation.	289	75%	19%	76%	18%	72%	25%	75%	19%
Collaborating with partners during the grant implementation.	287	72%	20%	71%	21%	75%	16%	81%	13%

Note. As the percentages of grantees who disagree or strongly disagree with the survey questions were very small, the table shows only the percentages of grantees who agree (A), a composite of strongly agree/agree, and are undecided (U) about the survey questions. Kruskal-Wallis H tests showed there were no statistically significant differences among the responses of grantees in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

Many lead contacts indicate their LEAs are using both quantitative and qualitative data to measure the quality of implementation of their teacher retention grants.

Our qualitative measures include a survey to determine if teachers stayed, in part, because of our retention efforts. The quantitative measures include documenting the number of teachers who stay in the teaching profession at our district each year.

-LEA (Rural)

We will monitor the number of participants and retention data of participants. Additionally, survey data will be collected from participants that assess benefits of participation, impact on work satisfaction, and impact on future career plans.

-LEA (Suburban)

We will track the percentage of teachers retained over the three years of the grant and track any data through exit surveys of what reasons teachers give. Vacancies will also be tracked by how long they were open, the number of candidates applied, and how many passed each step of the interview process.

-LEA (Urban)

Some LEAs focus on quantitative data sources (e.g., retention and attrition rates, number of participants) to measure the quality of implementation of their teacher retention grants.

We will compare our teacher retention percentages at the end of next school year to our previous years. We will also look at how many paras utilize the opportunity to pursue teaching certifications of the next couple of school years.

-LEA (Rural)

We will look at the number of teachers who have resigned in past years compared to this year and next year to determine the effectiveness of the grant.

-LEA (Suburban)

We will examine the sub group data to see if providing stipends increases the retention rates of those groups receiving compensation for work outside of the school days versus the retention numbers for our general population.

-LEA (Urban)

Some other LEAs utilize primarily teacher survey data to measure the quality of implementation of their teacher retention grants.

We will use teacher climate and culture surveys at the beginning and end of each school year to determine the effectiveness of the teacher retention grant.

-LEA (Rural)

From our survey, we feel our implementation of permanent substitutes was effective. Conversations with our building leaders has confirmed implementation has gone well.

-LEA (Suburban)

We will compare pre and post-survey results and their open-ended comments.

-LEA (Urban)

Key Points on Modifications and Quality of Implementation

- Some lead contacts indicate their LEAs have made modifications since their teacher retention grants began.
- LEA lead contacts are generally positive about the quality of implementation of their teacher retention grants.
- LEAs are using a variety of quantitative and qualitative data to measure the quality of implementation of their teacher retention grants.

Initial Impact of the Grant

Half of lead contacts indicate their LEAs have started to collect the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of their teacher retention grants. As Table 17 shows, 54% of lead contacts indicate their LEAs have started to collect the data needed for the evaluation of their teacher retention grants, and the other half (46%) have not started to do so.

The responses are similar among lead contacts for LEAs in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

Table 17. Evaluation Data Collection

Has your LEA started to collect the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of your teacher retention plan?	All Grantees		Rural		Suburban		Urban	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Yes	155	54%	124	55%	16	50%	15	47%
No	133	46%	100	45%	16	50%	17	53%

Note. A Chi-square test showed there were no statistically significant differences among the responses of grantees in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

For those LEAs that have not started data collection, some lead contacts indicate that is because they have not started the implementation of their grants. They plan to collect data in summer 2022 or the 2022–23 school year.

We have not implemented the grant at this time and some areas will be implemented in the 2022–2023 school year.

-LEA (Rural)

Our plan rolls out in fiscal year 2023.

-LEA (Suburban)

We will start training and implementation of the grant in the 2022–23 school year.

-LEA (Urban)

Some lead contacts also indicate they are just beginning to implement their retention strategies. Therefore, there is no data to collect yet at this time.

We are just implementing the first strategy of the grant. We will be collecting data at a later time.

-LEA (Rural)

We are in the process of generating an end-of-year survey.

-LEA (Urban)

As Table 10 shows, **some lead contacts indicate they are already seeing early indicators of success of their teacher retention grants**, especially in terms of retaining experienced high quality teachers (29%), and teachers in specific content areas (23%).

Approximately 20% of lead contacts are also seeing early indicators of success in terms of providing customized support to schools, improving student achievement, retaining teachers in schools in hard-to-staff locations and male teachers, and collaborating with community partners.

While only 8% of lead contacts, on average, indicate seeing indicators of success in recruiting racially/ethnically diverse teachers, the percentage is significantly higher for LEAs in urban (26%) areas than for LEAs in rural areas (5%).

Table 18. Initial Impact of the Grant

Are you seeing early indicators of success of your teacher retention grant in terms of...?	All Grantees		Rural		Suburban		Urban	
	n	Yes	n	Yes	n	Yes	n	Yes
Retaining racially/ethnically diverse teachers.*	282	8%	221	5%	30	10%	31	26%
Retaining male teachers.	282	17%	221	19%	30	10%	31	13%
Retaining experienced high quality teachers.	283	29%	222	32%	30	13%	31	19%
Retaining teachers in specific content areas (e.g., special education, math, science).	281	23%	220	25%	30	13%	31	13%
Retaining teachers in schools in hard-to-staff locations.	280	18%	219	20%	30	13%	31	13%
Providing customized support to schools related to teacher retention.	281	21%	220	20%	30	23%	31	26%
Collaborating with community partners.	281	16%	220	15%	30	30%	31	16%
Improving student achievement.	277	19%	218	19%	29	10%	30	27%

Note. * indicates statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence level between rural and urban LEAs.

In interviews and survey comments, lead contacts elaborate on the initial impacts of the grant. They believe **the retention strategies are helping to retain teachers**.

By paying a stipend for National Board Certification, we were able to keep a teacher who had gone through the rigor of that program. Without this, I know we would have lost that teacher as other schools were making contact and trying to recruit.

-LEA (Rural)

This is the first year in three years that we have retained a special education teacher.

-LEA (Rural)

The onsite daycare service had helped the district to retain a 5th grade teacher, a music teacher, an art teacher, a second grade teacher, and recruit a librarian/ELA teacher.

-LEA (Rural)

The data collected so far indicate this year's percentage of racially/ethnically diverse teachers leaving the LEA is lower than non-racially/ethnically diverse teachers.

-LEA (Urban)

Lead contacts also highlight other early indicators of success (e.g., improvements in teacher morale, job satisfaction, student achievement) that they have observed.

A couple of teachers stayed after being recruited by other districts. One factor was the efforts we are making to improve morale and offer another discipline option.

-LEA (Rural)

The strategies we have implemented have been beneficial. Exit interviews reflect a high level of satisfaction of teachers with the district and the profession.

-LEA (Rural)

Early indicators tell us both teacher satisfaction and student achievement has increased.

-LEA (Rural)

Lead contacts indicate multiple factors contribute to the effectiveness of the grant (e.g., higher pay, more substitute teachers, opportunities for teacher leadership).

I believe the commitment to compensation improvements helped retain teachers who may have considered leaving the district or the profession.

-LEA (Rural)

We have been able to shape our plan to provide permanent subs in each site based on teacher requests. Focus groups and the ESSER planning team identified permanent subs as an important component to stability in schools for our teachers.

-LEA (Suburban)

Providing leadership opportunities has been attractive to many of our staff of color and has kept them in our district.

-LEA (Urban)

A few lead contacts also believe the grants contribute to stronger partnerships with higher education.

We have expanded partnerships with several colleges and universities.

-LEA (Suburban)

We are working more closely with university partners.

-LEA (Urban)

Lead contacts indicate their LEAs are collecting a variety of quantitative data (e.g., teacher retention, staff mobility) and qualitative data (e.g., climate and culture surveys) to measure the impacts of their teacher retention grants.

Climate and culture surveys along with teacher retention data will be used to measure the quality of implementation of the teacher retention grant.

-LEA (Rural)

We plan to use multiple data points, including but not limited to, staff input surveys, reduction of movement from staff, and staff morale surveys.

-LEA (Rural)

We will monitor the retention of staff and survey them on PD and mentoring effectiveness.

-LEA (Suburban)

We will measure the rate of teacher retention to see if it has increased over prior years.

-LEA (Urban)

District Level Teacher Vacancy Rates and Retention Strategies that LEAs Use

Data are not yet available to examine the impacts of the strategies LEAs use on teacher retention. As a first step, Table 19 compares the use of the 11 research-based strategies that DESE provides for teacher retention by LEA teacher vacancy rates.

The table shows LEAs facing greater challenges in teacher retention (i.e., 21% or higher of teacher positions are vacant each year) are more likely to use two strategies than LEAs facing lesser challenges (i.e., 0–10% of teacher positions are vacant each year). These strategies are (a) strengthening the mentor program for early careers teachers; and (b) providing professional learning opportunities to teachers based on needs identified by staff.

Table 19 also shows similar percentages of LEAs, regardless of teacher vacancy rates, are using the other nine strategies to retain teachers.

Table 19. LEA Use of Retention Strategies by Teacher Vacancy Rates

Retention Strategy	All Grantees	LEA Teacher Vacancy Rates		
		0–10%	11–20%	21% or higher
Strengthen the mentor program for early career teachers*	27%	21%	28%	35%
Provide or increase stipends for mentors of new teachers	15%	11%	19%	15%
Provide or increase stipends for other duties not contractually specified	41%	42%	40%	44%
Hire additional substitute teachers, aides, or para-professionals to provide further support to teachers	14%	16%	12%	14%
Hire additional substitute teachers, aides, or para-professionals to ensure dedicated teacher planning time or to increase fill rates for time-off requests	18%	22%	18%	11%
Create scholarships for teachers completing National Board Certification or stipends for teachers who have already earned their National Board Certification	3%	4%	4%	2%
Utilize culture and climate surveys to determine and address working condition issues	40%	40%	36%	47%
Provide training to teachers on strategies for addressing the social-emotional needs of their students	6%	6%	6%	6%
Provide services that address the social-emotional needs of teachers	34%	34%	33%	39%
Provide professional learning opportunities to teachers based on needs identified by staff*	40%	34%	40%	54%
Increase teacher voice and teacher leadership opportunities	11%	9%	13%	13%

Note. N (All Grantees) = 500; N (0-10%) = 187; N (11-20%) = 228; N (21% or higher) = 85. * indicates statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence level between the “0–10%” group and the “21% or higher” group. Three LEAs did not provide their teacher vacancy information and were excluded from the analysis. The survey prompt in the grant application was “On average, what percentage of total district teacher positions become vacant each year?”

Public Reporting and Sharing

As Table 20 shows, **most LEAs have not yet shared or reported on results to-date of their teacher retention grants with key stakeholders and/or DESE (87%)**. This finding is consistent for LEAs in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

Table 20. Public Reporting and Sharing of Grant Progress, Findings, and Recommendations

Has your LEA shared or reported on results to-date of your teacher retention grant (e.g., grant progress, findings, recommendations) with key stakeholders and/or DESE?	All Grantees		Rural		Suburban		Urban	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Yes	37	13%	28	13%	5	16%	4	13%
No	248	87%	194	87%	27	84%	27	87%

Note. A Chi-square test showed there were no statistically significant differences among the responses of grantees in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

For those LEAs that have shared or reported on results to-date, some lead contacts elaborate in their responses (e.g., what results, shared with whom, how).

We have shared the distribution plan and desired effects with the certified staff and our school board at two meetings. There will also be a general meeting for discussions at the beginning of the 2022–23 school year.

-LEA (Rural)

We have shared an overview of the grant and our school climate and culture survey results with our Board of Education through the superintendent's report.

-LEA (Suburban)

We have shared key information related to teacher retention and grant strategies with the Board and the Board's sub-committees.

-LEA (Urban)

Key Points on Initial Impact and Public Reporting

- Half of lead contacts indicate their LEAs have started to collect the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of their teacher retention grants.
- Some lead contacts indicate they are already seeing early indicators of success of their teacher retention grants.
- LEAs are collecting a variety of quantitative data and qualitative data to measure the impact of their teacher retention grants.
- LEAs facing greater challenges in teacher retention are more likely to use the following two strategies: (a) strengthening the mentor program for early careers teachers; and (b) providing professional learning opportunities to teachers based on needs identified by staff.
- Most LEAs have not yet shared or reported on results to-date of their teacher retention grant with key stakeholders and/or DESE.

Enhancing Factors for LEA Teacher Retention Grants

Lead contacts highlight the importance of support from teachers and district leadership teams. When teachers are involved in the design of the grant and selection of the strategies, they are more likely to see the value and benefits of the program.

Strategies to implement were designed by the teachers.

-LEA (Rural)

[Enhancing factors include] Support from the top leadership, and interest among staff to participate.

-LEA (Suburban)

[Enhancing factors include] Teacher input, and support from the district and stakeholders.

-LEA (Urban)

Lead contacts believe effective communication supports the implementation of their grants.

[An enhancing factor is] Communication in the district and clear guidelines.

-LEA (Rural)

[An enhancing factor is] Open communication on current and projected needs with all teachers and administrators.

-LEA (Suburban)

[An enhancing factor is] Open communication about our district's policies.

-LEA (Urban)

Many lead contacts emphasize the importance of the availability of targeted financial resources and highlight the flexibility of using the grant funding.

The grant provided the financial opportunity to express appreciation and administrative support that has not been in the regular budget.

-LEA (Rural)

The flexibility within the grant is very appreciated. Each district has unique needs and it is refreshing to be able to tailor a program to fit our specific situation.

-LEA (Rural)

The grant allows for a variety of options.

-LEA (Suburban)

[An enhancing factor is] The flexibility associated with deciding how to use the funds.

-LEA (Urban)

A number of lead contacts believe the support from DESE enhances the implementation of their grants.

[An enhancing factor is] Help from the RPDC.

-LEA (Rural)

[Enhancing factors include] Support from the RPDC/ regional partners, and the ability to expand and improve current programs.

-LEA (Suburban)

Support from DESE and the local community for information and assistance is great.

-LEA (Urban)

Emerging Issues for LEA Teacher Retention Grants

Lead contacts note a number of issues that they believe impede the implementation of their teacher retention grants. **One issue is related to changes in LEA leadership and the lack of qualified personnel to implement the grants.**

Leadership and major stakeholders changed at the end of the 2021–22 school year.

-LEA (Rural)

[An impeding factor is] The lack of available persons to hire on a part-time basis to mentor new teachers.

-LEA (Suburban)

[An impeding factor is] Not having enough qualified staff to serve as grade-level leads.

-LEA (Rural)

Some lead contacts are also concerned the size of the grants may not be sufficient to address the challenges.

There is only so much money to share with staff. Trying to sustain what we have started may prove difficult in future years.

-LEA (Rural)

The amount of the grant makes it difficult to have a significant impact on teachers.

-LEA (Suburban)

The amount of the grant is limited compared to the big goal of retaining teachers in these difficult labor shortage times.

-LEA (Urban)

This funding is just a drop in the bucket to what is truly needed. The entire profession needs a financial overhaul. This extra money is nice, but not nearly enough to make truly transformational changes.

-LEA (Urban)

These issues were further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and uncertainties regarding the sustainability of the grants.

When this grant money runs out, being able to sustain the financial incentives will put a strain on the already strained local budget.

-LEA (Rural)

It has been a very stressful school year with COVID related challenges, staffing challenges, and high volume of grant requirements for limited staff to complete.

-LEA (Suburban)

The fall-out from COVID.

-LEA (Urban)

Additional Support Needed by LEA Teacher Retention Grantees

LEA lead contacts indicate there should be more funding targeted to teacher retention and the grants should be for longer periods of time.

A two-year grant of this size will do little to make a difference in teacher turnover. This program needs to be funded on a long-term basis.

-LEA (Rural)

I hope this money continues to be made available to allow for effective long-term implementation, and access to data to determine its effectiveness and the next steps.

-LEA (Rural)

We are very grateful for this grant... While we are planning on using every penny of this grant to support our teachers, it is merely a drop in the bucket and we are still struggling with teacher/ staff retention in this current climate.

-LEA (Urban)

Lead contacts find the support from the DESE team valuable. Within this context, **lead contacts hope they continue to receive guidance and support from DESE related to grant implementation** (e.g., webinars, networking opportunities, retention strategies, timeline, how to modify goals or strategies, allowable uses of funds).

Continue to host webinars or face-to-face meetings to share ideas, network with other colleagues, and to continue to recruit and retain the current teaching staff.

-LEA (Rural)

More clarity on DESE's goals, intentions, and expectations would be very helpful.

-LEA (Rural)

We just need to know someone is available if we have questions. So far we have gotten great support.

-LEA (Suburban)

Other strategies that do not require money to improve staff retention.

-LEA (Urban)

LEA lead contacts also hope the state can enhance the statewide climate and culture for the teaching profession. The strategies may include providing more state funding for higher teacher salary, or public campaigns from state leaders to show support for Missouri teachers.

People are not going to work for the amount they get paid in education. I refused to allow my children to become teachers and work paycheck to paycheck like I have done for so many years.

-LEA (Rural)

Marketing teaching as a profession and pride of work in schools makes a difference. Schools often cannot sustain pay rates similar to other industries.

-LEA (Suburban)

We need structural solutions across the state to make the profession more attractive to all. This definitely includes financial compensation.

-LEA (Urban)

Summary

LEA lead contacts indicate teacher retention is essential or a high priority for their LEAs, and the local communities support their teacher retention efforts. Since the grant began, some LEAs have made modifications to their teacher retention grant strategies (e.g., budgetary allocations, retention strategies).

Where implementation has begun, LEA lead contacts are generally positive about the quality of their teacher retention grant efforts to-date. Some lead contacts are already seeing early indicators of success of their teacher retention grants. Most LEAs have not yet shared or reported on results to-date of their teacher retention grants with key stakeholders and/or DESE.

CHAPTER FIVE: EPP/CC TEACHER RECRUITMENT GRANTS

This chapter presents the perceptions of EPP/CC lead contacts on the initial implementation and impact of their teacher recruitment grants.

General Knowledge and Beliefs

EPP/CC lead contacts indicate they understand the purpose of the teacher recruitment grant and the availability of support from MTDS. They believe there is a high level of commitment in their EPP/CC and support from the local community to teacher recruitment.

As Table 21 shows, all lead contacts for EPPs (100%) and CCs (100%) agree the purpose of the teacher recruitment grant is clear. Most of them also indicate they know where to get information about the grant and they understand help is available from MTDS.

They also believe there is a high level of commitment in their EPP/CC to teacher recruitment and the local community supports their teacher recruitment efforts.

Table 21. General Knowledge and Beliefs

Survey Prompt	Educator Preparation Programs				Community Colleges			
	n	A	U	D	n	A	U	D
The purpose of the teacher recruitment grant is clear to me.	42	100%	0%	0%	9	100%	0%	0%
I know where to get information about the teacher recruitment grant.	42	90%	10%	0%	9	89%	11%	0%
I understand that help is available for the implementation of my teacher recruitment grant from the Missouri Teacher Development System (MTDS).	42	79%	14%	7%	9	78%	11%	11%
There is a high level of commitment in my educator preparation program/community college to teacher recruitment.	42	95%	5%	0%	9	78%	11%	11%
The local community supports my educator preparation program's/community college's teacher recruitment efforts.	42	90%	7%	2%	9	89%	11%	0%

Most EPP/CC lead contacts indicate their institutions have strong partnerships with LEAs.

We have long-standing strong relationships with our LEAs for candidate development and recruitment. We have existing GYO programs with LEAs and have strong relationships with community organizations.

-Education Preparation Program

We have strong partnerships with several LEAs. Our students are frequently placed in these districts for field experiences and student teaching. Teachers and administrators are frequent speakers in our courses.

-Education Preparation Program

Our local schools are supportive of our teacher education program and openly take our students for field experience placements.

-Community College

Priorities and Challenges

Lead contacts indicate teacher recruitment is essential or a high priority for their EPPs/CCs. As Table 22 shows, lead contacts indicate teacher recruitment is essential or high priority for nearly all EPPs (95%) and all CCs (100%).

Table 22. Perceived Priority of Teacher Recruitment

To what extent is teacher recruitment a priority for your educator preparation program/community college?	Educator Preparation Programs (n = 42)		Community Colleges (n = 9)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Essential	24	57%	6	67%
High priority	16	38%	3	33%
Medium priority	2	5%	0	0%
Low priority	0	0%	0	0%
Not a priority	0	0%	0	0%

Lead contacts indicate it is particularly difficult for their EPPs/CCs to recruit racially/ethnically diverse teacher candidates, and teacher candidates in specific content areas.

As Table 23 shows, lead contacts indicate it is extremely difficult or very difficult to recruit racially/ethnically diverse teacher candidates (64% for EPPs and 88% for CCs), and teacher candidates in specific content areas (48% for EPPs and 44% for CCs). In addition, one-third of lead contacts highlight the difficulty of recruiting male teacher candidates.

Table 23. Perceived Level of Difficulty of Teacher Recruitment

Please indicate the level of difficulty for your educator preparation program/community college to recruit the following teacher candidates.		n	Extremely difficult	Very difficult	Moderately difficult	Slightly difficult	Not at all difficult	Mean
Racially/ethnically diverse teacher candidates	EPPs	42	33%	31%	26%	5%	5%	3.83
	CCs	9	44%	44%	0%	11%	0%	4.22
Male teacher candidates	EPPs	42	12%	24%	43%	14%	7%	3.19
	CCs	9	11%	22%	44%	11%	11%	3.11
Teacher candidates in specific content areas (e.g., special education, math, science)	EPPs	42	19%	29%	40%	10%	2%	3.52
	CCs	9	0%	44%	44%	11%	0%	3.33
Other (e.g., academically strong candidates with rural backgrounds; male candidates for elementary education)	EPPs	6	33%	33%	17%	0%	17%	3.67
	CCs	1	0%	0%	100%	0%	0%	3.00

Note. The means were calculated based on the following scheme: "Extremely difficult" = 5; "Very difficult" = 4; "Moderately difficult" = 3; "Slightly difficult" = 2; "Not at all difficult" = 1.

In interviews and survey comments, EPP/CC lead contacts elaborate on why they think their strategies will be effective in recruiting teacher candidates. Many indicate their EPPs/CCs provide a variety of supports (e.g., scholarships, mentors) to prospective teachers.

We are providing scholarship funds to students. We believe this will help retain students by decreasing the economic burden. We are also affording them two mentors: one at the university and the other a classroom teacher. The hope here is that they will build a network and a community with the school district.

-Education Preparation Program

Because the strategies fund tuition and childcare; the cost itself is a big hurdle with the salaries of teachers even with the recent increase. We are using the Grow Your Own strategies and research that most teachers work near their hometown.

-Education Preparation Program

Offering monies to offset the cost of college, which is a major barrier, for our students is crucial for recruiting. Furthermore, using the grant to reach more students to show them the opportunities teaching provides for them, their families, and the community.

-Community College

Some lead contacts believe by engaging students early and increasing their awareness of preparatory programs, EPPs/CCs can be more effective in recruiting teacher candidates.

We used the funds to support an event in which we invited high school students to spend a day on campus. They were able to connect, in person, with students, faculty, and staff to ask questions, hear about our programs, tour campus, and participate in activities on campus. The feedback we have received has been incredibly positive.

-Education Preparation Program

It is great to get more of a voice to LEAs about what community colleges have to offer. I am certain some/may do not know they can begin at the community college in becoming a teacher...and how much there is a need to consider becoming a teacher.

-Community College

A couple of lead contacts highlight the pros and cons of partnership efforts between EPPs/CCs and LEAs.

The partnership element of our strategies will increase the effectiveness of our work. Recruiting is now being viewed as a common need for LEAs and EPPs and I believe this will prove to be helpful in recruiting students to our profession.

-Education Preparation Program

I am no longer sure that my strategies will be effective as I do not have the support of the school administrators.

-Education Preparation Program

Key Points on General Knowledge and Beliefs, and Priorities and Challenges

- EPP/CC lead contacts indicate they understand the purpose of the teacher recruitment grant and the availability of support from MTDS. They believe there is a high level of commitment in their EPP/CC and support from the local community to teacher recruitment.
 - Lead contacts indicate teacher recruitment is essential or a high priority for their EPPs/CCs.
 - Lead contacts indicate it is particularly difficult for their EPPs/CCs to recruit racially/ethnically diverse teacher candidates, and teacher candidates in specific content areas.
-

Modifications from Initial Application to Early Implementation

Some lead contacts indicate their EPPs/CCs have made modifications since their teacher recruitment grants began. For example, as Table 24 shows, more than 30% of EPPs/CCs indicate they have made modifications to their budgetary allocations, fiscal support strategies, and partnerships.

Table 24. Modifications from Initial Application to Early Implementation

Please indicate if you have made modifications, since the grant began, to your teacher recruitment grant strategies.	Educator Preparation Programs			Community Colleges		
	n	Yes	No	n	Yes	No
Partnerships	42	31%	69%	9	44%	56%
Recruitment strategies	41	37%	63%	9	22%	78%
Selection strategies	41	17%	83%	9	11%	89%
Preparation strategies (e.g., learning opportunities and experiences)	41	27%	73%	9	11%	89%
Fiscal support strategies (e.g., scholarships, stipends)	41	37%	63%	9	44%	56%
Evaluation of effectiveness of grant strategies and/or activities	41	17%	83%	9	22%	78%
Budgetary allocations	41	39%	61%	9	56%	44%
Public sharing of grant progress and/or outcome data	41	5%	95%	9	22%	78%
Other (e.g., timeline)	10	20%	80%	3	0%	100%

Some lead contacts indicate they made modifications in response to needs which changed during early implementation.

Initially, our target partner schools were only those that had an FTA, Educator Rising, Cadet Teaching, or similar organization. However, we expanded to other schools when there were minimal applicants from the original target schools.

-Education Preparation Program

Some of our partners decided to use their portion of the grant in other areas. With the changes to partners' needs, we shifted some of our resources to better support them.

-Community College

Some other lead contacts note they are utilizing more recruitment strategies and providing more intensive support to teacher candidates.

We did not initially have a great deal of money directed to scholarships. We were able to secure more funding outside our grant money to provide additional scholarships.

-Education Preparation Program

We have increased the number of dual credit Foundations of Education courses in our area high schools. We have added in additional funding to promote candidates in our area to become teachers.

-Education Preparation Program

When we first began, we were going to focus on Future Teachers of America. Now we plan to implement the Educators Rising program. The advisors who went to the meetings decided that program would best fit our student needs and our community.

-Education Preparation Program

Some EPPs are expanding their recruitment candidate pool.

Our original proposal was geared specifically toward adult undergraduate students working with a local community organization, but we have expanded that to include traditional undergraduate students and post-baccalaureate candidates.

-Education Preparation Program

We were not able to get enough African-American males to apply, so we opened the application up more widely.

-Education Preparation Program

Quality of Implementation

EPP/CC lead contacts are generally positive about the quality of implementation of their teacher recruitment grants. As reflected in Table 25, approximately 90% of lead contacts agree their EPPs collaborate with partners and implement the grant as designed.

Most EPP lead contacts (76–83%) also indicate they assign sufficient personnel, and use research-based strategies, data, and technology for the grant implementation. They believe their evaluation approach helps to understand the grant's impacts.

The majority of CC lead contacts (56–100%) concur with these statements.

Table 25. Perceived Quality of Implementation

My educator preparation program/community college is...	Educator Preparation Programs				Community Colleges			
	n	A	U	D	n	A	U	D
Implementing the grant as designed.	41	88%	12%	0%	9	78%	11%	11%
Using research-based strategies in the grant.	41	83%	17%	0%	9	78%	22%	0%
Utilizing data to monitor the progress of grant implementation.	41	83%	17%	0%	9	100%	0%	0%
Using an evaluation approach that helps to understand the grant's impacts.	41	78%	22%	0%	9	89%	11%	0%
Assigning sufficient personnel to implement the grant.	41	76%	20%	5%	9	56%	22%	22%
Using technology to help manage the grant implementation.	41	76%	22%	2%	9	67%	22%	11%
Collaborating with partners during the grant implementation.	41	90%	7%	2%	9	89%	11%	0%

Note. A = Total Agree, a composite of strongly agree/agree. U = Undecided. D = Total Disagree, a composite of strongly disagree/disagree.

Many EPP/CC lead contacts indicate they are using both quantitative and qualitative data to measure the quality of implementation of their teacher recruitment grants.

The information we will collect include [the] number of recruitment visits and contacts with prospective students... We are also working on a pre/post survey to gather data about students' experiences prior to, during, and after engaging in this program.

-Education Preparation Program

We are going to monitor/ track the number of students that enter our classes and from where. We will also provide a survey to all students that attended events, received scholarships, etc.

-Community College

Some EPPs/CCs indicate they are focusing on either quantitative data (e.g., enrollment) or qualitative data (e.g., interviews, surveys) to measure the quality of implementation of their teacher recruitment grants.

The quality of implementation of the teacher recruitment grant will be determined by an increase in teacher education candidates, retention of education candidates and an increased number of certified teachers graduating from our university.

-Education Preparation Program

We will (1) conduct interviews of participants and mentors; (2) administer surveys to measure efficacy (before, during and after); (3) keep logs of contacts between mentors and mentees; and (4) administer surveys about the professional learning.

-Education Preparation Program

We will compare the number of current students and the number of Black students currently in the program to the numbers one and two years from now.

-Community College

Key Points on Modifications and Quality of Implementation

- Some lead contacts indicate their EPPs/CCs have made modifications since their teacher recruitment grants began.
- EPP/CC lead contacts are generally positive about the quality of implementation of their teacher recruitment grants.
- EPPs and CCs are using a variety of quantitative and qualitative data to measure the quality of implementation of their teacher recruitment grants.

Initial Impact of the Grant

The majority of EPPs indicate they have started to collect the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of their teacher recruitment grants; most CCs indicate they have not started to do so. As Table 26 shows, 64% of EPP lead contacts indicate they have started to collect the data needed for the evaluation of their teacher recruitment grants; 78% of CC lead contacts indicate they have not started data collection.

Table 26. Evaluation Data Collection

Has your educator preparation program/ community college started to collect the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of your teacher recruitment plan?	Educator Preparation Programs (n = 42)		Community Colleges (n = 9)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	27	64%	2	22%
No	15	36%	7	78%

For those EPPs/CC that have not started data collection, some lead contacts indicate that is because they have not started the implementation of their grants. They plan to begin the collection of evaluation data in the 2022–23 school year.

We will officially start at the beginning of the school year 2022–23. This is when all data will be collected and surveys conducted.

-Education Preparation Program

We will implement the program in fall 2022. We are still in the planning stage.

-Education Preparation Program

We will begin in the fall 2022 semester to collect data. Our grant partnerships begin that semester.

-Community College

Table 27 shows **some EPP/CC lead contacts indicate they are already seeing early indicators of success of their teacher recruitment grants**, especially in terms of collaborating with LEAs (63% for EPPs and 67% for CCs) and community partners (55% for EPPs and 56% for CCs).

Many lead contacts for EPPs and CCs are also seeing early indicators of success in building a larger teacher candidate pool, providing customized support to teacher candidates, and increasing interest in the teacher positions.

In addition, lead contacts for EPPs (20–35%) and CCs (22–33%) indicate they see early indicators of success of their recruitment grant in recruiting targeted teacher candidates (e.g., male, racially/ethnically diverse, and in specific content areas).

Table 27. Initial Impact of the Grant

Are you seeing early indicators of success of your teacher recruitment grant in terms of...?	Educator Preparation Programs			Community Colleges		
	n	Yes	No	n	Yes	No
Increasing interest in the teacher positions	40	45%	55%	9	44%	56%
Building a larger teacher candidate pool	40	53%	48%	8	50%	50%
Recruiting racially/ethnically diverse teacher candidates	40	35%	65%	9	33%	67%
Recruiting male teacher candidates	40	35%	65%	9	22%	78%
Recruiting teacher candidates in specific content areas (e.g., special education, math, science)	40	20%	80%	9	33%	67%
Providing customized support to teacher candidates	40	55%	45%	9	44%	56%
Collaborating with local education agencies (LEAs)	40	63%	38%	9	67%	33%
Collaborating with community partners	38	55%	45%	9	56%	44%

In interviews and survey comments, EPP/CC lead contacts indicate the grant helps to enhance interest in the teaching profession.

We had over 50 students who took trips and engaged in conversations around teaching. We even had students who changed college majors after visiting our campus.

-Education Preparation Program

Our partnerships are expanding the dual credit/ dual enrollment opportunities for high school students. One of our partners has had more than (double) anticipated interest from high schools students.

-Community College

Local news agencies focused on our new degree which is the basis for our grant application—a new degree with scholarships and high school visits. There was a significant increase in inquiries about the new degree and associated scholarships.

-Community College

EPP/CC lead contacts are also seeing a larger teacher candidate pool.

We are seeing more applications from underserved students and students of color populations. We had 85 applications in March, 87 in April, and 90 in May. We market to those students.

-Education Preparation Program

Our application numbers are already up from last spring for the fall 2022 class. We meet with prospective students individually and send hand-written follow-up cards. We are in contact with local schools about our programs to seek interested students.

-Education Preparation Program

Our numbers are trending up in the program. I have been speaking with area superintendents and I believe that has been very beneficial.

-Community College

Many lead contacts believe the grant strengthens their partnership with LEAs.

The grant has afforded our program opportunities to increase support for our teacher education candidates and improve collaboration with LEAs and community partners.

-Education Preparation Program

We have increased direct communications and planning with multiple LEAs and have plans for more formalized partnerships.

-Education Preparation Program

We are having more frequent, intentional conversations with LEAs and potential candidates for our programs. As a result, there are more high schools scheduling field trips to our campus and more invitations for our faculty to visit school districts.

-Education Preparation Program

EPP/CC lead contacts indicate they are collecting a variety of quantitative data (e.g., enrollment, completion) and qualitative data (e.g., pre/post surveys) to measure the impact of their teacher recruitment grants.

We are measuring the impact based on the number of students involved in the program, their progress reports, and the reports of our mentors. We also implemented a pre and post survey of participants.

-Education Preparation Program

We are looking to survey each student that comes to our campus for a visit.

-Education Preparation Program

We will be comparing enrollment numbers next spring to those this spring. We will be comparing completion numbers in two years with those next year.

-Community College

Public Reporting and Sharing

As Table 28 shows, **most EPPs and all CCs indicate they have not shared or reported on results to-date of their teacher recruitment grants with key stakeholders and/or DESE.**

Table 28. Public Reporting and Sharing of Grant Progress, Findings, and Recommendations

Has your educator preparation program/community college shared or reported on results to-date of your teacher recruitment grant (e.g., grant progress, findings, recommendations) with key stakeholders and/or DESE?	Educator Preparation Programs (n = 42)		Community Colleges (n = 9)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	10	24%	0	0%
No	31	76%	9	100%

For those EPPs/CCs that have shared or reported on results to-date, some lead contacts elaborate in their responses (e.g., what results, shared with whom, how).

Results of the first-year implementation of our recruitment grant have been shared with leaders at the university, and during the LEA board of education meetings and the LEA Foundation Gala celebration. We also presented our collaborative GYO plan at the spring MACTE conference.

-Education Preparation Program

We shared grant progress updates with our Teacher Education Advisory Group, which includes K–12 HR staff, K–12 administrators from public and private schools, alumni K–12 teachers, and a faculty member.

-Education Preparation Program

Key Points on Initial Impact and Public Reporting

- The majority of EPPs indicate they have started to collect the data needed to evaluate the effectiveness of their teacher recruitment grants; most CCs indicate they have not started to do so.
- Some EPP/CC lead contacts indicate they are already seeing early indicators of success of their teacher recruitment grants.
- EPPs and CCs are collecting a variety of quantitative data and qualitative data to measure the impact of their teacher recruitment grants.
- Most EPPs and all CCs indicate they have not shared or reported on results to-date of their teacher recruitment grants with key stakeholders and/or DESE.

Enhancing Factors for EPP/CC Teacher Recruitment Grants

Lead contacts underscore the importance of support from EPP/CC faculty and leaders.

A strong partnership and the leadership at that college in combination with teachers that engage well with students.

-Education Preparation Program

Buy-in from our college and faculty support. I believe these are strong right now and we will be successful with implementation in the future.

-Education Preparation Program

EPP/CC lead contacts believe collaboration with LEAs and community partners enhances the implementation of their recruitment grants.

Having dedicated community partners has a huge impact on fostering buy-in from students. They see how community people are interested in their development and then they want to do more.

-Education Preparation Program

The program director has strong ties with the community and districts. We also have a high number of alumni in the education sector who have completed our programs—this makes it easier to collaborate with LEAs.

-Education Preparation Program

School districts have identified specific persons with whom I can work/communicate and they have actively put into place the ideas in the proposal.

-Community College

Lead contacts appreciate having financial resources available to address recruitment needs.

Innovative uses of resources allow us to attract and support students. Monetary barriers encountered prior to the dissemination of the grant have been eliminated.

-Education Preparation Program

The money is greatly appreciated and I know students are very interested in applying for the scholarships.

-Community College

A couple of lead contacts believe the support from DESE contributes to the effective implementation of their grants.

All support from DESE has been very effective.

-Education Preparation Program

Great support from our RPDC.

-Community College

Emerging Issues for EPP/CC Teacher Recruitment Grants

Many EPP/CC lead contacts are concerned about the current public perceptions of the teaching profession. The lack of interest makes it challenging to recruit teacher candidates.

The overall lack of interest in the teaching profession is the obvious challenge. We have significant challenges in recruiting diverse candidates, and candidates into specific programs (e.g., special education).

-Education Preparation Program

Our EPP is currently dealing with overall low enrollments; there is a lack of interest from prospective candidates with slow recruiting efforts from the outset.

-Education Preparation Program

[Impeding factors include] The continuing negative portrayal of teaching in the media and the lack of support from the legislature.

-Education Preparation Program

The challenges are further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the budget and personnel cuts.

Many factors impede the programs supported by the grant. In general, COVID has had a huge effect on students and their capacity to take part in new programs.

-Education Preparation Program

Our EPP is currently undergoing budget and personnel cuts which will impede the implementation of the grant.

-Education Preparation Program

The lack of support personnel has negatively impacted the intentions of the grant.

-Community College

Lead contacts are also concerned about challenges related to grant sustainability and partnerships with LEAs.

The limitation on fund availability will make it hard to continue the program once the fund is gone.

-Education Preparation Program

Some school districts have decided not to implement our ideas. Some other school districts said they were interested in the ideas but have not maintained communication and/ or implemented the ideas.

-Community College

Additional Support Needed by EPP/CC Teacher Recruitment Grantees

In interviews and survey comments, EPP/CC lead contacts highlight a variety of supports they need for purposes of teacher recruitment (e.g., grant funding, curriculum, sample lessons).

Additional funding would mean I could offer more incentives to students and support the community teachers who give their time to help develop students.

-Education Preparation Program

More resources: ready-made curriculum and sample lessons, cheaper access to assessments and supplies.

-Education Preparation Program

EPP/CC lead contacts hope there are more opportunities for sharing learnings and promising practices related to teacher recruitment.

I would like organized opportunities for EPPs/ CCs to regularly discuss issues/ develop collaborations.

-Education Preparation Program

Other than additional financial support, suggestions or ideas from other successful GYO programs would be most helpful.

-Education Preparation Program

There should be avenues of communication across all grant efforts in my area.

-Community College

Lead contacts want stronger collaboration between EPPs/CCs and LEAs.

We need more conversations and in-person interactions with K–12 administrators and para professionals as well as increased collaborations with high school teacher pathway programs for high school students (prospective EPP students) and EPPs.

-Education Preparation Program

There should be more dedicated communication from school districts.

-Community College

Lead contacts hope the state can more actively promote the teaching profession (e.g., by providing higher teacher salary, statewide messaging).

The MO legislature has got to do more to increase salaries for teachers. It is proving very difficult to keep teachers in MO when they know they can go to KS, NE, or IA and do the same job with more money.

-Education Preparation Program

There needs to be a state-wide messaging initiative (and subsequent reform) to reframe how people think about teaching. Right now, teaching is viewed as a field that is woefully underpaid, understaffed, disrespected, at the center of national cultural wars and schools are the epicenters of mass shootings.

-Education Preparation Program

We need public messaging about the value of the teaching profession, its impact on communities, and the power to change lives as an educator.

-Education Preparation Program

Summary

Lead contacts indicate teacher recruitment is essential or a high priority for their EPPs/CCs, and the local communities support their teacher recruitment efforts. Since the grant began, some EPPs/CCs have made modifications to their teacher recruitment grant strategies (e.g., budgetary allocations, fiscal support strategies, partnerships).

Where implementation has begun, EPP/CC lead contacts are generally positive about the quality of their teacher recruitment grant efforts to-date. Some are seeing early indicators of success of their grants. Most EPPs/CCs have not yet shared or reported on results to-date of their teacher recruitment grants with key stakeholders and/or DESE.

CHAPTER SIX: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Lead contacts for LEAs, EPPs, and CCs indicate they understand the purpose of the teacher recruitment and retention grants. For nearly all grantees, teacher recruitment and/or retention is a high priority. There is commitment from the grantees and support from the local communities for Missouri's statewide initiative.

The following recommendations are intended to assist DESE in providing more targeted support to LEAs, EPPs, and CCs.

Recommendations

Provide opportunities for grantees to share learnings and promising practices.

Grantees highlight the importance of collaboration and partnerships between LEAs, EPPs, and CCs. They want to have more opportunities to share their learnings and promising practices from the grant implementations.

DESE should convene the grantees at bi-annual forums to share (a) issues that emerge during the implementation of the grants; (b) promising practices for addressing the issues; and (c) innovative strategies for teacher recruitment and retention. In addition to promoting inter-grantee sharing and collaboration, the forums can help DESE to learn of new challenges related to teacher recruitment and retention efforts as they emerge.

Provide additional guidance in the form of Frequently Asked Questions. Grantees value the guidance they have received so far from DESE related to grant applications and the initial implementation of their grants. They believe the support from DESE enhances the quality of their teacher recruitment and/or retention grant efforts to-date.

To continue to provide grantees with the quality guidance they need, DESE should develop a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section on its website related to the implementation of the grants. Initially, topics in the FAQ section could include (a) timeline of grant implementation; (b) procedures for making modifications to grant goals or strategies; (c) allowable uses of grant funding; (d) sample survey and interview questions; and (e) other common questions that grantees raised to the MTDS team. The FAQ section should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

Conduct reviews to ensure the implementation of all grants is moving forward.

Lead contacts for some grantees indicate that, at the time of data collection, they had not started the implementation of their grants. To ensure all grantees are actively supporting teacher recruitment and retention, DESE should review the reimbursement requests for the ESSER I-funded expenditures that are due on September 30, 2022. Those grantees who are not requesting full reimbursements should be contacted to ascertain the impediments to their recruitment and retention plans.

Conclusion

LEAs, EPPs, and CCs across the state are generally showing commitment to the purposes of the teacher recruitment and retention grant initiative. Some lead contacts indicate they are already seeing early indicators of success. Moreover, the guidance and support to-date from DESE are valued by grantees. The grantees are now aiming for a full-year of implementation of the teacher recruitment and retention grants.

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