SC TEACHER

FY27 RRRI Categories + Possible Metrics

+ Rural Teacher Recruiting + Retention Incentive (RRRI)

Retention is measured at two levels: staying in the RRRI school district that provided the support (primary outcome) and remaining in South Carolina public school teaching if the teacher leaves that district (secondary outcome). Results will be reported at two levels: individual results for each district (in the District Landscape) and combined results for the state.

CATEGORY	POSSIBLE METRICS	WHAT THIS TELLS US
Alternative Certification Fees Expenses associated with obtaining and maintaining certification through an approved alternative certification pathway. Eligible costs may include, but are not limited to, application fees, examination fees, instructional materials, program tuition, required coursework, training and registration fees, travel and lodging related to certification requirements, and other reasonable expenses directly connected to participation in an approved alternative certification program.	• Retention of funded vs. unfunded alt cert candidates staying in the RRRI district (primary) and remaining in SC teaching (secondary) • Professional certification completion within 3–4 years, funded vs. unfunded • Outcomes by dollar amount received per teacher • Cost per additional teacher retained or certified • Working conditions and intent-to-stay perceptions of funded alt cert teachers vs. unfunded peers	Whether paying program fees helps provisionally certified teachers finish their certification and keep teaching—first in the district and second if they move to teach in another SC district

Certification Exam Support Expenses associated with preparing for, taking, and successfully completing educator certification examinations required for initial certification in a traditional pathway, credential attainment, and/or licensure advancement. Eligible costs may include, but are not limited to, certification support seminars, examination fees, preparation courses, test preparation materials, tutoring or coaching services, and other approved expenses directly connected to certification exam preparation and completion.	• Exam pass rates for supported vs. unsupported teachers • Retention of supported teachers after earning the credential, in the RRRI district first and in SC teaching second • Cost per successful exam completion	Whether paying for exam fees or tutoring help teachers pass their required exams and keep teaching afterward
Critical Needs Stipends Salary stipends provided to educators serving in district-designated critical need subject areas or positions, such as mathematics, science, and special education. Eligible expenditures may include recurring or one-time stipends intended to support the recruitment and retention of educators in these critical areas. Districts **must** apply the stipend consistently to all eligible educators within the designated subject area or position, including current employees, newly hired educators, and first-year teachers, as defined by district policy. While this incentive is not intended to function as a signing bonus, districts may choose to award stipends after educators have committed to employment for the subsequent school year.	• Retention of recipients in the RRRI district and in the critical-need position (primary) and remaining in SC teaching (secondary), compared to similar teachers in districts without stipends • Retention within the shortage assignment, not just within the district • Before-and-after retention comparison within a district once stipends begin • Cost per teacher-year retained in the shortage area	Whether this extra pay keeps teachers in hard-to-fill subjects like special education and math—and keeps them in the district paying the stipend

First-Year Stipends Salary supplements designed to support the recruitment and early retention of beginning educators by increasing first-year teacher compensation. Eligible expenditures may include stipends that elevate a first-year teacher's salary to the equivalent of the second-year salary schedule placement or provide comparable compensation enhancements. Districts should ensure that teachers receiving this support continue to progress through the district salary schedule in subsequent years, including receipt of the applicable second-year salary during their second year of employment.	• Retention of stipend recipients vs. first-year teachers in non-stipend districts staying in the RRRI district (primary) and in SC teaching (secondary) • Multi-year tracking of recipient cohorts to see whether effects last past year one • Cost per additional first-year teacher retained	Whether first-year bonuses keep new teachers coming back for a second year and beyond
Graduate Coursework Expenses associated with coursework and academic programs that support district workforce needs via educator credential advancement and professional growth. Eligible costs may include, but are not limited to, books, fees, instructional materials, tuition, and other reasonable expenses related to graduate coursework. Coursework should align with district recruitment, retention, workforce development, and/or instructional improvement goals.	• Course and degree completion rates for funded teachers • Credential advancement in SC Educator records • Retention at 3 and 5 years, in the RRRI district first and in SC teaching second, vs. comparison teachers • Movement into leadership roles • Cost per completed credential • Perceived working conditions and satisfaction among funded teachers	Whether tuition helps teachers finish degrees, advance their careers, and stay in the district and the profession

Induction & Mentoring Support Expenses associated with the recruitment, onboarding, development, and retention of early-career educators through mentoring and induction programs. Eligible costs may include induction program implementation costs; instructional resources and materials; mentor stipends (up to $2,500 per mentor per year); professional development for mentors and beginning teachers; salary stipends for employees who lead, coordinate, or actively participate in mentoring and induction activities; and training and coaching supports. Funding should support efforts to strengthen teacher effectiveness, increase job satisfaction, and improve retention among early-career educators.	• Retention of supported teachers vs. induction-contract teachers without support, staying in the RRRI district (primary) and in SC teaching (secondary) • Retention by dollar amount of support received per teacher • Mentor retention (stipends are attributable to named mentors) • Mentee outcomes by mentor, if mentor-mentee pairings are reported • Certification progression of supported early-career teachers • Cost per additional early-career teacher retained • Early-career teachers' perceptions of mentoring quality, support, and working conditions, supported vs. unsupported	Whether structured mentoring keep new teachers in the classroom and whether the mentors themselves stay too
International Teacher Recruitment Expenses associated with the recruitment, placement, onboarding, and retention of internationally trained educators. Eligible costs may include credential evaluation services, fees paid to international teacher recruitment or placement agencies, immigration and legal fees, and orientation and onboarding activities. This category may support teachers participating through J-1, H-1B, or other approved employment visa pathways.	• Cost per teacher hired and by visa type • Contract completion: share of teachers completing full 3-year J-1 terms • H-1B transitions and retention beyond visa terms, staying in the RRRI district first and in SC second • Time-to-placement and success rate per recruitment attempt • International teachers' perceptions of working conditions	How much each international hire costs, whether those teachers finish their contracts, and whether any find a path to stay working in SC longer

Professional Development Expenses associated with professional learning opportunities that strengthen educator effectiveness, increase job satisfaction, support career growth, and promote educator retention. Eligible costs may include, but are not limited to, conference registration, instructional coaching, professional learning communities, professional resources and materials, training programs, travel related to approved professional development activities, workshops, and other learning experiences aligned with district workforce and instructional priorities. Professional learning activities should align with identified district needs and support strategies designed to recruit, develop, support, and retain a high-quality educator workforce. These funds may not be applied to costs for meeting refreshments/meals.	• Participant retention, reported as description rather than ROI • Participation rates and completion of multi-session programs • Satisfaction and working conditions responses, participants vs. non-participants • Cost per participant	Who takes part in training and whether they stay, reported as a description of participants and their experiences, not as a dollar-for-dollar return
Recruitment Expenses Expenses associated with attracting, recruiting, and hiring qualified educators to address district workforce needs. Eligible costs may include candidate outreach campaigns; promotional items; recruitment marketing and branding materials; travel and registration expenses for recruitment events, job fairs, and campus visits. Districts may spend up to 5% of their allocation in this category and should demonstrate how recruitment activities align with identified workforce challenges and support strategic goals related to educator recruitment, hiring, and workforce sustainability.	• New hires per dollar, if applications begin asking how the applicant heard about the district • Applicant volume per campaign or event • Hire composition: new to SC vs. transfers from other SC districts • Cost per applicant and cost per hire by activity type	Whether job fairs, advertising, and marketing bring in applicants and new hires and whether those hires are new to SC or moving from other SC districts

Strategic Workforce Initiative Expenses associated with a district-designed recruitment or retention strategy that does not align directly with an existing incentive category but addresses a clearly identified workforce need. Districts requesting funding through this category must present a compelling rationale for the proposed investment; describe how the strategy supports educator recruitment, retention, and/or workforce sustainability goals; and identify measurable outcomes that will be used to evaluate effectiveness. Eligible requests may include innovative pilots, emerging workforce strategies, unique local partnerships, or other evidence-informed approaches designed to address district-specific challenges. **Districts must provide an implementation plan, proposed metrics for success, and a method for tracking outcomes and ROI. Approval of requests within this category will be determined based on the strength of the proposal, alignment with program goals, and the district's ability to measure and report results.**	• District-defined success measures stated in advance in the application • Case-study evaluation of each funded project • Promotion of successful projects into named categories in future years	Districts design their own projects and definition of success, and each project is judged on its own terms.