

Peer Assistance and Review Pilot Program

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Year Two Progress Report



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Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) Program Salt Lake City School District

Description:

The Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) Program is a joint collaboration between the Salt Lake City School District and the Salt Lake Teachers Association focused on improving the quality of teachers in Salt Lake City. PAR is designed to promote effective instruction by providing guidance and support to novice (beginning) teachers and veteran teachers who are deemed to be minimally or not effective. The program uses highly effective educators as consultants to mentor novice teachers and provide guidance and remediation strategies to underperforming teachers.

Year one preparation 2012/13:

During the first year of the PAR pilot the steering committee; Patrick Garcia, Susan McFarland, and Craig Ruesch worked together to write the initial grant, and created parameters for which the program would operate. At the end of the 2012/13 school year two elementary consulting teachers, Pat Draper and Laura Wheeler, were hired to provide the intensive support that drives the program. In July of 2013 Logan Hall was added to the team to serve as PAR Facilitator and chair of the PAR Panel. Shortly thereafter 20 teachers new to the district were selected to participate in the PAR program for the 2013/14 school year. Over the summer of 2013 membership in the PAR Panel committee was established consisting of three teachers and three school based administrators.

Year two pilot 2013/14:

Before the start of the 2013/14 school year the Consulting Teachers met with each of the novice teachers assigned to them to set up classrooms and help develop plans to start the school year. After school began the Consulting Teachers were able to schedule half day visits with each Participating Teacher once every week to conduct observations, provide support, and hold conferences focused on helping the novice teachers succeed. As part of the Consulting Teacher's duties, they kept track of each novice teacher's progress and provided regular reports to the PAR Panel throughout the year. The PAR Panel met at least once a month to review the progress reports, and make the final determination of whether the novice teachers should be retained or not based on the Consulting Teacher's recommendation.

The PAR Panel's second duty is to review intervention referrals to accept struggling career teachers into the PAR program after conducting a class observation. Intervention referrals are made either by the principal or the teacher them self after a collaborative intervention has been completed unsuccessfully as an alternative to the traditional remediation process. Once accepted, one of the Consulting Teachers is assigned to provide intensive support to the struggling teacher in an effort to correct the poor performance. After the intervention period, which typically lasts 30 school days, the Panel then decides whether the intervention had been successful and if the teacher should be retained or recommended for termination.

By mid-September 2013, word had spread about the good work PAR Consulting Teachers were doing with novice teachers and a request was made to add two additional Participating Novice Teachers to their caseload. The Panel accepted these new teachers to the program which brought the total number of Participating Teachers to 22, of which 20 successfully completed the year-long program and are prepared to continue their teaching career in SLCSD. The PAR Panel accepted two intervention referrals in the first year, and despite intensive support and additional resources they were both deemed unsuccessful and resulted in those teachers being recommended for termination. Before the school year ended, funding was granted to expand the program to hire a third Consulting Teacher to focus on secondary schools. Sue Tice has been selected as the third Consulting Teacher who joined the PAR team in early August 2014.

Year three pilot 2014/15:

With the addition of the third Consulting Teacher we have been able to include 13 novice secondary teachers in our Participating Teacher Cohort for the 2014/15 school year. In total, the three Consulting Teachers will be able to provide mentorship and support to 35 novice teachers in their first year of service. Before the start of school this year the Consulting Teachers were able to meet with each novice Participating Teacher to help them set up classrooms, answer questions they had and provide the necessary support to effectively start the school year with appropriate plans in place for both instruction and classroom management. At the start of the year there is also one struggling teacher intervention that is already underway and is expected to continue through mid-October. We anticipate receiving more intervention referrals for struggling teachers throughout the year and will be able to provide additional information at a later date.

Expanding the PAR program to include three Consulting Teachers this year has allowed the Salt Lake City School District to provide much needed support to an increased number of our novice teachers, but still leaves many new teachers without PAR services. In order to provide an equal level of support to all our new teachers we would need an additional two consulting teachers.

PAR Program Budget	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15 *projected
Training	\$76,853.55		
Equipment	\$72.00	\$3,686.42	\$1,808.00*
Salaries		\$251,382.58	\$352,766.00*
Indirect Cost Rate		\$5,506.00	
Total:	Year One \$76,925.55	Year Two \$260,575.00	