



**Uintah School District**  
**Eagle View Elementary School**  
**Teacher Recruitment and Retention Project**  
**School Year 2017-2018 Performance Report**

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The findings in this report are based on interviews of school personnel and supporting documents provided to the Lead Evaluator. Questions regarding this report can be addressed to Mr. Chris Jones, Principal: Phone: (435) 722-2247 or [chris.jones@uintah.net](mailto:chris.jones@uintah.net).

## **1. Executive Summary:**

### **Background:**

The Eagle View Elementary School Teacher Recruitment and Retention Project was funded in 2016 through the State of Utah American Indian and Alaskan Native Education State Plan Pilot Program. The primary goal is to improve academic achievement by addressing a major issue that had continuously affected Eagle View: teacher turnover. In the five years prior to the project, teacher turnover averaged 30% annually. During that same period, of the twenty-three Eagle View classroom teachers, 38% had taught at Eagle View for three years or less. By comparison, Uintah School District experienced only a 13% turnover rate during this period and the State average was less.

Based on exit interviews with teachers who resigned from Eagle View and surveys of teachers, it was determined there were three essential reasons why teachers left Eagle View:

- 1) The daily cost, both personal and financial, of traveling to/from Eagle View,
- 2) Teachers, especially new teachers, struggled to meet the needs of their students who are significantly educationally disadvantaged,
- 3) Teachers, most of whom are not Native Americans, did not understand the culture and traditions of our students.

The Teacher Recruitment and Retention Project was designed to address these issues. Moneys were approved to fund 1) teacher transportation; 2) supports for new teachers; 3) professional development to better prepare teachers to educate students who have different culture, beliefs, and customs; and 4) teacher incentive pay

### **Findings:**

The project has been implemented with fidelity. Transportation is being provided for staff to/from Eagle View; supports and training are provided to teachers, and bonuses have been paid to teachers based on their work. The results are:

- 1) Teacher turnover has been dramatically reduced: only two teachers resigned at the end of SY 2017-2018: one moved from the area and the other retired.
- 2) Student achievement significantly improved.
  - a. Eagle View Elementary School was exited from school improvement status.
  - b. SAGE results indicate that student achievement improved by 42% in both Language Arts and Math between SY 2014-2015 and SY 2016-2017.

The following describes in greater detail the strategies and status in implementing the Uintah School District's Eagle View Teacher Recruitment and Retention Project.

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## **2. Project Status:**

Uintah School District and Eagle View Elementary School proposed the following core strategies as part of the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Program.

### **Strategy 1: Increase the Number of Highly Effective Teachers**

#### **Proposed Plan:**

Uintah School District planned to continue its efforts to recruit highly qualified and effective teachers for Eagle View. Greater emphasis was to be given to ensure teachers understood the dynamics of Eagle View and were prepared to overcome the challenges they encountered and appreciate benefits they would receive.

In addition, the District planned to contract with qualified consultants and trainers who could provide a level of service as defined in the USOE Assessment to Achievement plan. The professional development and coaches were to support the school administrators and assist teachers improve their expertise in analyzing data and then use the analysis to inform instructional and program decisions. In addition, they were to provide coaching and mentoring to new teachers aimed at overcoming the challenges they encountered.

#### **Status:**

Implemented with Success:

New Teachers: Each new teacher, as defined as having three or less years of teaching experience at Eagle View:

- Receives at least one day per month of personalized professional development that is specific to his/her needs.
- Meets with either the principal and/or assistant principal every Friday for at least an hour. Although there is a meeting agenda, the teachers are encouraged to share and discuss concerns and successes. All coaching and mentoring is aligned to standards based instruction.
- Is encouraged to contact the principal or assistant principal as needed for "just in time" coaching which either they will provide or they will arrange for a specialist to coach and support the teacher.
- Attends at least one regional and/or national Indian education conference(s) to better prepare them to teach Native American children.

All faculty:

- Participate in grade level and school faculty trainings and meetings scheduled for pre-service, at the end of the school year, and every Friday during the school year. Teachers analyze student data and cooperatively plan instruction. Regular professional development is also held on Fridays.

- Work with consultants who are experts in learning theory and the teaching of language arts to language deficient students. Data driven instruction is emphasized. Student achievement is analyzed and adjustments to curriculum and instruction are made.
- Engage in the Response to Intervention approach to instruction and related professional development. Three levels of teaching have been established: Tier 1: “Good First Teaching” by the classroom teacher; Tier 2: Small Group Instruction for students who are not making adequate progress; and Tier 3: Intensive instruction, often by specialists, for students who require targeted instruction focused on specific skills.

## **Strategy 2: Provide Competitive Salaries, Compensation and Incentives.**

### Proposed Plan:

Annually, the District was to review its salary schedule to ensure Eagle View teachers are appropriately compensated. The District also pledged to pay the Eagle View teachers a bonus for their commitment to Eagle View students. This incentive pay is above and beyond the salary schedule for teachers at its other schools.

### Status:

Implemented with Success:

Uintah School District annually reviews the salary schedule to ensure that Eagle View teachers are paid a competitive wage. In addition, teachers receive a bonus each year of \$5,600 for their dedication to Eagle View students. This payment is made in two installments: one in December immediately prior to Christmas break and the second at the end of the school year.

## **Strategy 3: Address Significant Teacher Concerns and Issues**

### Proposed Plan:

A significant issue and one that cannot be underestimated is the burden to teachers for teaching at Eagle View. They must travel at least sixty miles daily between Vernal and Eagle View Elementary School which causes wear and tear on their vehicle and creates undue pressure because of the drive. In addition, this places undue pressure on teachers who are distant from their families and cannot attend activities or meetings most of which are held in Vernal. Uintah School District proposed to adopt the successful practice found in private industry of purchasing a sixteen passenger van and operating a van service between Vernal and Eagle View. Based on a survey of staff, it was determined that fourteen teachers would use this service when it was first started.

### Status:

Implemented with Success:

Based on ridership, Uintah School District was approved to purchase two sixteen passenger buses which transport teachers to and from Eagle View. In addition, teachers are allowed flexibility in their schedule so they can attend appointments and meetings.

By riding the van, teachers are able to work, increase their collaboration, and innovate while they are riding. In addition, this has lessened the need for teachers to purchase a new or second vehicle or require them to make costly repairs.

What has turned into a secondary benefit for employees is the reduction in child care needs. Teachers have enrolled their children in Eagle View. Consequently, teachers have extended time with their families during the travel to and from school. In addition, they do not have to arrange for or incur the cost of babysitting which further reduces the personal, emotional, and financial cost of working at Eagle View.

Providing staff flexible hours has allowed teachers to better balance work and their family commitments. Most personal appointments are now scheduled for Friday afternoons. The more suitable work arrangements has reduced stress, decreased the amount of personal and sick leave that is taken, and increased instructional time since teachers are present during the days and times students are present.

According to the most recent study, every rider agreed that the flexible times helped to a great extent in not only the recruitment of employees but in retention of teachers and instructional staff. Teachers have confided that without this benefit they could not afford to continue at Eagle View because of the financial cost to them.

### **3. Proposed Future Action:**

Based on the results to date as evidenced by teacher retention and improved student achievement, it is requested that Eagle View Elementary School continue the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Project as was approved and implemented with the following refinements:

1. Expand Professional Development Opportunities. In addition to the original planned activities which included onsite professional development, regular principal meetings new teachers, and attendance at regional/national conferences for educators who teach Native American children and youth, Eagle View is prepared to select teams to attend distinguished and rewarding trainings such as the Harvard Graduate School of Education's:
  - a. *Instructional Rounds Workshop* which is has as its purpose to support educational leaders and practitioners in developing a shared understanding of what high-quality instruction looks like and what schools and districts need to do to support it. Participants will understand the elements of the instructional core; Develop skills in using protocols essential to improving teaching and learning; Identify what good teaching and learning look like in practice; Learn key elements to developing a culture that supports improving classroom instruction; and generate a first-draft theory of action that connects rounds with the other instructional improvement efforts at the school, district, and state levels.
  - b. *New and Aspiring School Leaders Workshop*. The workshop aims to: Examine leadership challenges from the ground up; Define participant's core values and understand how they help them promote educational excellence; Clarify the vision of an effective school and our role in leading it, including teacher supervision and evaluation, collaboration among faculty, maximizing time and resources, and achieving community support.
2. Increase the Number of Native American Teachers. Conduct teacher recruitment at colleges and universities that are respected for preparing Native American teachers with a goal of Eagle View having a more diverse teaching staff.
3. Study the expansion and refinement of the incentive pay program.