

**September 23, 2010**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

For more information:

Melissa Reeves, [mdreeves@jeffco.k12.co.us](mailto:mdreeves@jeffco.k12.co.us), Jeffco Public Schools, 303-856-8098

**\$32.8 MILLION FEDERAL GRANT FOR JEFFCO TO SUPPORT STRATEGIC COMPENSATION**

Jeffco Public Schools, in collaboration with the Jefferson County Education Association (JCEA) and the Jefferson County Administrators Association (JCAA), received a five-year federal *Teacher Incentive Fund* grant to pilot strategic compensation for licensed staff in high-needs schools.

The grant of \$32.8 million will involve 20 schools.

The grant allows the district to be at the forefront of developing new ways to compensate educators here and across the nation. The Jeffco Schools will test the impact of strategic compensation on increasing student achievement, and attracting, retaining and rewarding top educators.

“We know that outstanding educators make a difference in student success. By rewarding excellence, we are being accountable to students, parents and the community,” said Superintendent Cindy Stevenson.

Strategic compensation is a cultural shift in how educators are paid, and how they navigate their career paths. Instead of paying teachers solely based on years of experience and more education, they will be rewarded for outstanding performance.

Jeffco’s plan is based on three pillars of educational excellence – student learning, teacher learning and teacher leadership. Educators are rewarded for meeting individual, team and school student achievement goals as well as receiving successful evaluations and taking on leadership roles.

“I am excited about this grant because it gives Jeffco teachers the opportunity to shape our profession now and in the future. We know change is coming, and we want to help plan that change,” said JCEA President Kerrie Dallman.

The grant award is timely following the new state accreditation law that rates schools and districts in part by how much students learn from year to year.

Jeffco’s strategic compensation aligns with the state law that goes into effect in 2014, requiring teachers and principals to be evaluated more frequently, and that at least half of their evaluations be based on how much students learn from year to year. With this grant, Jeffco educators will be able to take a leadership role in planning for these changes. See the Strategic Compensation web site at: <http://jeffcostrategiccompensation.org/>

## Background

- For three years, the district, JCEA and JCAA have studied alternative pay plans – and what kinds of ideas might be good for Jeffco. The Strategic Compensation Steering Committee includes Jeffco teachers, administrators, parents, community members and school board members.
- The committee learned that alternative compensation systems that make a difference for student learning are developed collaboratively by teachers and administrators. They also include more time for teachers to share their expertise and work together, more people in the building to analyze data and support teachers, and significant financial rewards.
- While many alternative pay plans essentially add stipends to a traditional salary schedule, Jeffco will pilot an entirely different kind of system that integrates student achievement, professional development, collaboration, leadership, evaluation and compensation.

## The Pilot

- Up to 20 high-needs Jeffco schools will participate in a pilot.
- There will be two categories of schools. Half of the schools will fully implement strategic compensation. The other half will be a control group.
- At least 50 percent of students in each pilot school must qualify for free or reduced-price school meals. Only elementary and middle schools are eligible to participate in this grant opportunity.
- This school year will be year one of the pilot. It's a planning year to allow teachers and principals to work together to develop details. Next year is a transition year. In years three through five, Jeffco will fully implement a proposed three-tier salary structure in half of the pilot schools.
- All pilot schools will receive identical support – an additional half-time assistant principal for school and strategic compensation support, and more mentor and master teachers to support excellence in instruction. Teachers also will receive an additional planning period each week.
- The only difference between the two groups of pilot schools will be compensation. Staff in half the schools will pilot the proposed three-tier salary structure in years three to five, while the staff in the other half will receive a 1 percent annual participation stipend.
- Under the three-tier salary structure, teachers will earn stipends by contributing to individual, team and school goals based on growth in student achievement. They will also be rewarded for earning successful evaluations from administrators and peers, and for

taking on additional leadership responsibilities such as serving as a mentor to other teachers.

- The highest paid teachers will be top performers who serve as master and mentor teachers, working a longer school year and providing support to help their peers become better teachers.