

Teacher Vacancy Grant FY 2024

Farmington Central CUSD 265

\$92,164

FY 2024 Grant Award



The Challenge

Farmington Central CUSD 265 has experienced challenges with the teacher shortage like many other rural schools throughout the state of Illinois. Specifically, our students who require Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) need credentialed educators who have the formal training and background to understand students with disabilities and the necessary skill set to appropriately advocate and empower them. Unfortunately, we have been unable to meet the necessary staffing needs within our special education department for years. Our junior high received the “Targeted” accountability designation in 2023, due to the performance of students with IEPs. Our students with IEPs in elementary and high school also need additional staffing support.

The Teacher Vacancy Grant has allowed Farmington Central CUSD 265 to implement a three-pronged approach to address teacher vacancies with an emphasis on special education teachers.

Strategy 1: Special Education Teacher Recruitment

Grant funds allow us to grow the universal wealth of knowledge, camaraderie, advocacy, and support within the Special Education Department. The district also identifies student teachers or credentialed teachers who will come to Farmington and offers to financially assist with them seeking an endorsement in special education.

Outcomes

- We have doubled the number of attendees at the job fair in addition to adding one additional job fair that we attend. The more "Farmington faculty" you have to talk with potential candidates, the more personalized you can make the recruitment. We have at least one alum of the institution that we are recruiting with us.
- Three staff members are working toward a LBSI endorsement for special education.



“It may seem trivial, but you wouldn’t believe how engaging a little knickknack with the farmer logo can be at a recruiting fair.”

- **Toby Vallas, Recruitment Coordinator for Farmington Schools**

Strategy 2: Special Education Teacher Retention

The district has utilized grant funds to provide retention bonuses to its current certified special education teachers to incentivize retention.

Outcomes

- One hundred percent retention of special education teachers in school year 2024-25

Strategy 3 (Projected for Year 3 of Grant): World Language Teacher Recruitment

State law now requires two years of world language for graduation beginning in 2028 to align with admissions requirements at most institutions of higher education. We currently have **no world language teachers** within our district. As a result, we have had to resort to online curriculum with a monitor supervising the class period. A third year of grant funding will allow Farmington to focus on recruiting world language teachers.