



Pana School District

The Challenge

It has been difficult to attract new teachers to our district due to our rural, remote location and because of the shortage of housing. Pana is located several miles from a larger urban area that offers many of life's amenities that the newer generations of teachers are looking for. Our secondary schools (Pana Junior High and Pana High School) have the most unfilled positions. In addition, it is hard to find special education teachers at all levels. We also have people who leave to go to larger neighboring districts that pay higher salaries.

\$100,747
Annual Grant Award

Strategic Local Investments

Strategy 1: Grow Our Own Teachers

We identified three paraprofessionals who we thought would be good special education teachers and offered to pay their tuition costs to get licensed. We also had a social studies and drivers education teacher who was retiring. Finding someone with a drivers education endorsement was challenging, so we paid the tuition costs for a teacher to get this endorsement.

Outcomes

- **Filled the three vacant special education teacher positions.** Hired the paraprofessionals as long-term substitutes. Will hire them as full-time teachers when they finish their degrees.
- **Filled the drivers education position.**

Strategy 2: Retain our Current Staff

We paid retention bonuses of \$675 to keep current staff.

Outcomes

- **Retained all but one staff member.**

Strategy 3: Provide Assistance to New Teachers

We paid a \$1,000 sign-on bonus for new teachers. We also hired a teacher who came from the Philippines. The grant paid for travel expenses and fees for that person to get a degree.

Outcomes

- **Filled a science position** with a teacher from the Philippines.
- We were able to help teachers with the sign-on bonus.

"I am very fortunate that Pana Community School District 8 has provided me with the opportunity to continue my education at no cost to me. I am grateful for this opportunity as it relieves the financial stress that comes when attending college courses. I cannot express my gratitude enough to the administration for investing their time, effort, and money into my career as a future educator. I am excited to be a part of an amazing group of people."

**- Twyla Goff, Pana Paraprofessional
Currently Becoming a Teacher**