



Center for
**Educator
Compensation
Reform**

**Educator Compensation Reform
Implementation Checklist**

Educator Compensation Reform Implementation Checklist

This checklist identifies the major components of an alternative educator compensation plan and the planning, design and implementation steps that should be followed. Before launching a new compensation plan at the school or district level, we recommend that districts and states use this checklist to discuss and decide the following:

- Who should be involved
- How decisions will be made
- Where necessary resources will be obtained
- When major project milestones will be completed

A. Overall Plan Components	Yes	No	NA
1. Have you identified a project director who is willing to serve in this capacity for multiple school years to ensure continuity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Does the project director have sufficient authority to make decisions related to the budgets, personnel and processes of the associated departments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Are individuals at the upper levels of district or institutional leadership informed, engaged and committed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Have you created a representative compensation committee to ensure that you have the necessary collaboration with and support from stakeholders?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Have you agreed upon the type (individual, team/group, whole school) and size of performance awards?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Have you identified several valid and reliable measures you will use to assess the performance of all teachers included in the program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Have you determined how much the new compensation plan will cost, overall and per year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Have you identified sources of funding and secured the necessary commitments to promote a sustainable program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Do you have a comprehensive communication plan in place that addresses all internal and external stakeholders, including the media?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Do you have sufficient capacity in the domains of data infrastructure, assessment, and testing to implement and evaluate a compensation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Are other relevant organizational components aligned, such as Human Resources, Payroll and Testing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Have you developed an evaluation design that will provide comprehensive information regarding key process and outcome variables?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Have project staff and leadership agreed to incorporate feedback from the evaluation and undertake midcourse corrections?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Have you established benchmarks to assess project progress?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Is this program being approached as part of a holistic human capital development strategy and in alignment with core district and school instructional goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Has your program linked targeted professional development and support structures to each proposed goal in the program?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B. Stakeholder Approvals and Engagement	Yes	No	NA
1. Have you assembled a compensation committee that includes school district officials as well as the teachers and/or principals whose salaries will be affected by the new plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have you invited the following individuals and groups to serve on the committee so that they are active participants in discussions, planning and decisions from the beginning?			
a. Superintendent	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Teachers' union/association representatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. A representative group of teachers included in the plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Principal(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Other central office personnel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. School board members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Other community representatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. State or municipal officials, if necessary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C. Communication Plan	Yes	No	NA
1. As part of your communication plan, have you developed informational materials that clearly explain to teachers and principals the criteria you are using to determine which educators are eligible for a performance award and what they must do to earn one?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have you developed informational materials that clearly explain the professional development opportunities you are providing to help teachers and principals improve their performance so that they can earn a performance award?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. As part of your communication plan, have you developed materials specifically for parents, students and community members that explain how the new compensation plan works and why the school or district is implementing it?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Does your communication plan include multiple means of distributing information to educators and the public (e.g., brochures, pamphlets, newsletters, town meetings, email alerts, and an updated website)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Is there a formal process in place for teachers, principals and other stakeholders to ask questions and raise concerns?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Does your communication plan also provide other ways for educators to gather information quickly and easily (e.g., confidential hotline, convenient afterschool drop-in sessions, trained individuals at each school site who can answer questions)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Does your communication strategy specifically and proactively address the media (e.g., do you have a plan in place to respond to Freedom of Information requests – both with internal and external constituents)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Does your communication plan include strategies to sustain the new compensation plan by building support for it among policymakers, the business community, foundations, the public, and other key stakeholders?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Does your communication plan include targeted activities related to key events in the life cycle of the plan (e.g., program kickoff, specific measures of performance, the payout)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D. Award Structure	Yes	No	NA
1. Have you decided which and how many educator positions will be included (e.g., all classroom teachers, only teachers of core academic subjects, paraprofessionals as well as teachers, assistant principals as well as principals)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have you decided whether you will reward individuals, groups or both?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. If you are planning to reward groups of teachers, have you decided which groups (e.g., all teachers in the school, all math teachers in the school, all 4th-grade math teachers in the school)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. If you intend to reward all teachers or groups of teachers, have you determined how you will evaluate the performance of those who teach nontested subjects and grades (e.g., preschool, art, music, physical education, 5th-grade science)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. If your compensation plan will exclude any individuals or groups, have you developed a clear justification that explains why?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Have you agreed upon the size of the awards you will offer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Have you decided to offer any noncash awards (e.g., housing incentives, tuition assistance, tax incentives, additional credit toward retirement)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Have you decided whether the new compensation plan will be voluntary or mandatory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Have you decided to phase in the new compensation plan as new teachers are hired or switch all teachers to the new plan at the same time?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Will current teachers be allowed to opt out if they want to remain under the present pay plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Have you determined if there will be any competitive element of the program by virtue of how performance targets are established (e.g., average growth of student achievement in math is in top decile of participating teachers)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Is the award structure directly linked to desired teacher behaviors and student outcomes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

E. Financial Consequences	Yes	No	NA
1. Have you identified the sources of funding that you will use to pay for the new compensation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have you calculated the maximum cost of the new compensation plan year by year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Have you decided how the awards will be paid (e.g., one-time bonus; permanent increase to base salary; premium for teachers of hard-to-fill subjects in addition to their regular salary; in-kind payment made in the form of goods and services, rather than cash)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Have you decided whether awards will count toward individual pensions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Have you determined how close to the period of performance the awards will be paid?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Have you decided how you will time the payouts, so that you allow enough time for the reasonable delivery of data as well as rigorous quality control checks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Have you identified the agency that will actually pay the awards (e.g., state education agency, school district or community foundation)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Have you purposefully constructed a plan that will exhibit financial sustainability?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Is there a necessary degree of equity between teacher and administrator award amounts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

F. Performance Measures	Yes	No	NA
1. Have you decided on the method that you will use to measure student achievement (e.g. attainment, growth and value added)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have you decided upon the specific assessments and rubrics that you will use to measure student achievement (such as state accountability tests, evaluation rubrics, portfolios, student learning objectives)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. If you are contracting out any of the data collection and analysis, does your timeline correspond with the contractor's timeline?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Have you identified multiple sources of information that you will use to assess educator performance over time:			
a. Supervisors' judgments (e.g., principals, mentor teachers)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Peers' judgments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Have you identified the teacher or principal evaluation instrument(s) that will be used?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Have you developed a plan for initial and ongoing training of the individuals who will be using these instruments to evaluate teacher and principal performance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Have you determined if the following non-performance-based dimensions will be included in your compensation system:			
a. Completes specific professional development activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Assumes additional roles and responsibilities (e.g., master teacher, mentor teacher)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Works in a hard-to-staff school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Teaches hard-to-fill subject or specialization (e.g., math, science, special education, bilingual education)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. If any of the additional actions above will be rewarded, have you decided how you will weight them?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Information Technology Considerations			
G1. Decision Support Needs	Yes	No	NA
1. Does your accountability system provide timely data for effective data-based decision making? (For example, are diagnostic test results available in time and in the right subject areas to allow school staff to identify students who need additional support to pass high-stakes tests?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Are data available at the appropriate level of specificity? (For example, does your data system enable you to link students to teachers and subjects taught so that you can identify which teachers to reward when student performance improves? Can you do this at both the elementary and secondary levels?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Are multiple forms of evidence or data included in any evaluation of performance? Consider the following:			
a. Value-added measures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Observational/evaluative ratings of teachers and school leaders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Adequacy of classroom resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Portfolios or other examples of student work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Schools and classroom climate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

G2. Reporting Applications	Yes	No	NA
1. Does your information technology system allow you to go beyond basic compliance reporting and evaluate curriculum effectiveness, success of teacher induction practices and other variables?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Are formal or informal processes in place to identify the data and reporting needs of individuals at varying levels of the organization (e.g., district administrators, school principals, classroom teachers)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Does the data collection design process include capacity for future growth?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Does your school or district have the ability to collect additional data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Does your school or district have the ability to collect existing data more frequently?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Does the information technology system development process allow users to define new information needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

G3. Technical Considerations	Yes	No	NA
1. Have you determined who needs information or data access and from where?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Do you have a governance system in place to respond to changing needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Does your vendor have the capacity to be flexible if system modifications are needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Are the information technology systems used for creating and viewing reports available at the school and classroom levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

G4. Organizational Considerations	Yes	No	NA
1. Are information technology system users an integral part of the design process?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Have you decided whether you will use school, grade, or classroom value-added information?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do information technology system managers have performance and use targets that will inform them of the effectiveness of the system?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Do you have a data dictionary system in place that contains information about the stored data, including details of their meaning; their relationship to other data; and their origin, usage and format?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Is a process in place to capture and incorporate changes to the data dictionary system?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Does the group charged with developing and deploying decision support resources have access to senior decisionmakers in the district?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Do senior district leaders support the creation of cross-functional teams (e.g., groups that include curricular specialists with information technology and accountability staff)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Center for Educator Compensation Reform

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The Center for Educator Compensation Reform (CECR) was awarded to Westat—in partnership with Learning Point Associates, Synergy Enterprises Inc., Vanderbilt University, and the University of Wisconsin—by the U.S. Department of Education in October 2006.

The primary purpose of CECR is to support the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grantees with their implementation efforts through the provision of ongoing technical assistance and the development and dissemination of timely resources. CECR also is charged with raising national awareness of alternative and effective strategies for educator compensation through a newsletter, a Web-based clearinghouse, and other outreach activities. We look forward to an exciting partnership with the TIF grantees as we embark together on blazing a new path for education reform.

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