

## What's New?

### New Paper From the CECR Harvesting Project

The Center for Educator Compensation Reform (CECR) has a new report in the Harvesting Project series titled *Meeting the Challenges of Fiscal and Programmatic Sustainability: Lessons From Teacher Incentive Fund Grantees*. This report focuses on lessons learned from the 33 Cohort 1 and 2 Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grantees. The report provides insight into the strategies chosen by the TIF grantees to address fiscal and programmatic sustainability, examines the importance of developing a plan for both fiscal and programmatic sustainability early on, and presents the issues surrounding both areas of sustainability using in-depth examples from several grantees.

Researchers asked the following three questions:

- What fiscal and programmatic sustainability challenges have TIF grantees faced?
- What approaches to fiscal and programmatic sustainability have grantees taken?
- What lessons can grantees learn about sustaining performance-based compensation systems in our current economic climate?

The grantees reported the following strategies to address fiscal sustainability issues:

- Using sources of external funding
- Using non-TIF federal funds
- Using state appropriation for incentives
- Reallocating district resources
- Reconstructing the single-salary schedule

The grantees also reported the following strategies to address the programmatic sustainability issues:

- Collecting robust evaluation and impact data
- Aligning performance-based compensation with parallel school and district initiatives
- Ensuring stakeholder perception of fairness
- Providing consistent leadership

*Meeting the Challenges of Fiscal and Programmatic Sustainability* and other Harvesting Project reports are available at <http://cecr.ed.gov/reformInAction/HarvestingProject.cfm>.

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## Hot Off the Press

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### **Pennsylvania to Try Teacher Evaluation Pilot Program**—*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. August 8, 2011.

<http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/11220/1165984-298-0.stm>

Pennsylvania recently established a three-part pilot program for designing and implementing a teacher evaluation system. The system will base teacher evaluation results, in part, on value-added measures. For teachers in nontested grades and subjects, the program will base evaluation results on other measures of student and teacher performance. Twenty percent of the state's school districts plan to participate in the pilot program that starts during the 2011–12 school year.

### **Poll Shows Changing Teaching Force More Receptive to Education Reform Ideas**—

*Yahoo News*. August 1, 2011.

<http://news.yahoo.com/blogs/lookout/poll-shows-changing-teaching-force-more-friendly-education-203608710.html>

The National Center for Education Information recently released a new study that shows an increase in support for performance-based compensation among teachers. Of the teachers surveyed, 59 percent reported that they were in favor of linking performance to compensation, up from 42 percent in 2005. The percentage of teachers who believe that ending tenure would improve education was also up from 2005.

### **Race to the Top: New Evaluations Put Forward**—*Carroll County Times*. July 26, 2011.

[http://www.carrollcountytimes.com/news/local/race-to-the-top-new-evaluations-put-forward/article\\_e251373e-b785-11e0-86c7-001cc4c002e0.html](http://www.carrollcountytimes.com/news/local/race-to-the-top-new-evaluations-put-forward/article_e251373e-b785-11e0-86c7-001cc4c002e0.html)

Two committees in Maryland met during the first half of the year to design and implement changes to the teacher evaluation system, as required by their Race to the Top grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The two committees created a framework for teacher evaluation and principal evaluation. Both frameworks use multiple measures of teacher and student performance as the basis for evaluation results.

### **Gates Foundation Funds PR for CMS Reforms**—*WFAE 90.7 FM*. July 18, 2011.

[http://www.wfae.org/wfae/1\\_87\\_316.cfm?action=display&id=7581](http://www.wfae.org/wfae/1_87_316.cfm?action=display&id=7581)

The Charlotte Mecklenburg School District received a \$200,000 grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to conduct a public relations and communication campaign that explains recent district education reforms to the public. In order to avoid controversy, however, the district decided not to include performance-based compensation measures in the media campaign.

## Grantee Spotlight

# Louisiana Department of Education: TAP System

Louisiana's proposed performance-based compensation system (PBCS) includes a significant differentiated compensation plan that is aligned with the state's approach to reform and reliant upon value-added measures of student achievement. The program targets the highest need students through the recruitment and retention of effective teachers, strong evaluation systems, and high-quality professional development. The intent of the project is to increase teacher effectiveness, thereby closing student achievement gaps and improving the educational experience for all students. Louisiana planned this PBCS expansion with the goal of modeling a fiscally sustainable TAP system so that the teacher quality reforms continue beyond the period of the grant. The Louisiana TIF effort is a partnership of the Louisiana Department of Education, the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET), and seven Local Educational Agencies (Ascension Parish, Desoto Parish, Jefferson Parish, Pointe Coupee Parish, St. Mary Parish, Tangipahoa Parish, and West Baton Rouge Parish).

### Primary Components of the Program

TAP: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement, also known as the TAP System, consists of four main approaches to improving teacher and student performance:

- **Instructionally focused accountability** consists of formal and informal classroom observations. The teacher evaluation component of TAP uses a set of research-based, objective rubrics. Trained evaluators observe Louisiana TAP teachers a minimum of four times per year.
- Master and mentor teacher positions provide **multiple career paths** for teachers. The teacher leaders deliver school-based professional support and conduct classroom observations.
- The program provides ongoing applied **professional growth** through continuous, job-embedded professional development specific to student and teacher needs.
- Teachers and principals can earn **performance-based compensation** that recognizes the growth of student learning and instructional or teaching

performance. Performance-pay incentives are based on multiple measures: classroom observation scores, classroom achievement growth, and schoolwide achievement growth.

The TAP System aligns performance pay with teacher career advancement, highly effective professional development, and meaningful evaluations. The outcomes of teacher evaluations guide the types of professional development services provided at the individual teacher and cluster-group level. The Louisiana TAP program plans to balance Louisiana's ongoing efforts to strengthen the educator workforce, using data and evaluations for professional development as well as retention and tenure decisions, well beyond the duration of the grant.

### Program Goals

The Louisiana TAP System has three main goals:

- Increase the percentage of effective educators in LEA partner schools.
- Build the capacity of the partner LEAs to implement and sustain a PBCS for teachers and principals.
- Increase student achievement in the partner LEAs.

## System Incentives

The Louisiana TAP grant provides incentives for teachers, principals, and assistant principals based on the following reward structure:

- TAP **teachers** receive incentive pay of varied amounts based on their effectiveness ratings, drawing from an incentive pay pool of \$2,500 per teacher. In addition, teachers serving as TAP mentor or master teachers under Louisiana TAP also receive annual salary addendums of \$5,000 and \$10,000, respectively.
- For **principals** and **assistant principals** in the Louisiana TAP program, the program offers \$10,000 and \$5,000 in annual bonuses, respectively. Principals receive incentives calculated by student achievement growth using a schoolwide value-added score, performance on the Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education (VAL-ED) instrument, and performance on the TAP System Annual Review. Assistant principals receive incentives for schoolwide value-added growth and performance on the TAP System Annual Review.

## Recent Highlights of the Program

Louisiana has a history of implementing the TAP System, growing from five TAP schools in 2003–04 to 41 TAP schools in 2009–10 using state and local funds. The Louisiana Department of Education's early efforts focused on working with individual schools to redirect existing resources to TAP implementation. As districts participate through this new Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant, the districts will provide an increasingly greater share of the performance-based pay for teachers and principals, ultimately fully absorbing the costs for the program. Louisiana seeks to not only sustain the program in districts participating under TIF but to have these districts serve as models for additional districts to implement and sustain TAP at the district level.

For more information about the TAP System in general, visit the organization's website at <http://tapsystem.org>. The Louisiana Department of Education provides resources for Louisiana TAP schools online at <http://www.louisianaschools.net/divisions/tap>, and additional information on Louisiana TIF grant efforts are available at [http://www.louisianaschools.net/divisions/tap/tap\\_tif\\_grant.html](http://www.louisianaschools.net/divisions/tap/tap_tif_grant.html).

## *Contact Us*



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The Center for Educator Compensation Reform (CECR) was awarded to Westat — in partnership with Learning Point Associates, an affiliate of American Institutes for Research; 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 Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grantees in their implementation efforts through provision of sustained technical assistance and 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.

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