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## **What's New?**

### **CECR to Convene Meeting of Round II Grantees**

Staff at the Center for Educator Compensation Reform look forward to an inaugural meeting with the 18 Round II Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grantees September 17–18, 2007, in Arlington, Virginia.

The agenda for the two-day meeting includes both general and concurrent sessions designed to help grantees develop technical assistance plans, tackle data issues, engage stakeholders through effective communication, and learn about CECR and its available tools and resources.

### **Technical Working Group to Meet September 19**

CECR's Technical Working Group (TWG) plans to meet on September 19 to hear an update on current CECR activities and strategize on project work planned for the next six months.

The CECR TWG consists of practitioners, researchers, and policymakers experienced in educator compensation reform. The TWG meets twice per year to provide strategic input on short-term and long-term work plans for CECR.

## Hot Off the Press

**Creating a Successful Performance Compensation System for Educators**—National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, July 2007

[http://www.talentedteachers.org/pubs/successful\\_performance\\_pay\\_july\\_2007.pdf](http://www.talentedteachers.org/pubs/successful_performance_pay_july_2007.pdf)

*This report from the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching identifies best practices in the design and implementation of effective teacher compensation systems. Design elements include the following: ongoing, job-embedded professional development; performance-based pay; teacher evaluations based on professional standards; and opportunities for career advancement. Recommendations for successful implementation of new compensation systems include securing a stable funding source, effectively communicating the compensation system to teachers and other stakeholders, relying on skilled leadership to implement the compensation system, targeting schools and subjects of high need, ensuring program effectiveness by incorporating program evaluation and monitoring measures into the compensation system, and integrating and aligning the new compensation system to larger efforts of improving teaching and learning.*

**Newly Released Issue Paper Series on Teacher Compensation**—Education Commission of the States (ECS), June 2007

*This four-paper series by the Education Commission of the States discusses different aspects of diversified teacher compensation systems. Topics discussed in this series include funding, teacher evaluation, student performance assessment, and the use of diversified teacher compensation systems to address equitable teacher distribution.*

- **Issue Paper 1: Funding Diversified Teacher Compensation Systems**

<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/74/75/7475.pdf>

*The first in a series of four issue papers addresses the costs of financing alternative teacher compensation systems and discusses examples of diversified teacher compensation systems across the country.*

- **Issue Paper 2: Teacher Evaluation in Diversified Teacher Compensation**

<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/74/78/7478.pdf>

*The second paper in the series covers knowledge- and skill-based evaluation criterion and performance- or standards-based evaluation criterion and then discusses how existing and emerging programs use both types of criterion.*

- **Issue Paper 3: Student Performance Assessment in Diversified Teacher Compensation Systems**

<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/74/76/7476.pdf>

*The third paper in the series discusses student performance assessment measures used in alternative compensation systems including standardized assessments, established learning objectives, and value-added modeling. The paper provides examples of performance assessment measures at the district and state level and methods for tracking data.*

- **Issue Paper 4: The Use of Diversified Compensation Systems to Address Equitable Teacher Distribution**  
<http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/74/77/7477.pdf>

*The fourth paper in the series considers local, district, state, and federal efforts to implement teacher compensation systems aimed at attracting highly qualified teachers to hard-to-staff and at-risk schools and subjects.*

## Grantee Spotlight: The Ohio Teacher Incentive Fund

A cooperative venture of the Ohio Department of Education; Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Toledo City Schools; and the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching comprises the Ohio Teacher Incentive Fund (OTIF). Key strategies of the OTIF include implementing the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) in the Cincinnati and Columbus City Schools, expanding the Toledo Review and Alternative Compensation System (TRACS) in the Toledo City Schools, and developing and implementing the Cleveland Teacher Incentive System (CTIS)—a program modeled on TRACS—in the Cleveland City Schools.

OTIF enhances existing district incentive programs that reward teachers and principals who make contributions to increase student achievement and meeting school or district goals, assume additional professional responsibilities, and participate in professional development opportunities designed to improve teacher performance.

Most important, the OTIF project seeks to transform and re-engineer schools for the 21st century. Through OTIF, schools transform using a systems approach; teachers assume differentiated roles and responsibilities; and leadership becomes a shared responsibility.

For example, in the TAP schools, change results from the implementation of well-developed and tested protocols that allow teachers to work collaboratively toward clearly constructed and focused goals. Teachers participate for up to 90 minutes weekly in job-embedded professional development sessions, which focus on learning and implementing powerful research-based instructional strategies coupled with rigorous curricular expectations. The school leadership team meets weekly to monitor student achievement and identify areas of progress and need.

The TRACS program also supports and promotes teacher quality while improving the academic performance of students. An integrated, focused system facilitates the achievement of these goals and includes ongoing professional development targeted to specific student academic needs and highly qualified teachers assuming additional responsibilities and leadership roles.

### **What need is the project trying to address?**

OTIF attempts to address the following objectives: attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers and supporting the existing compensation programs in the four districts that participate in the program.

## **What are the goals of the project?**

OTIF aims to reward principals and teachers who demonstrate the ability to raise student achievement and retain educators who teach in low-achieving areas. Ohio suffers from statewide teacher retention issues, and from 1998 to 2000, more than 25 percent of teachers left their respective districts within five years of teaching. In 2003 alone, the state lost almost 20 percent of its teachers after two years of teaching. The four participating school districts also exhibit at-risk characteristics, with the number of students receiving free and reduced-price lunch ranging from 73.8 percent (Toledo) to 89.7 percent (Cleveland).

OTIF also seeks to establish state standards for educator evaluation systems to ensure that evaluations are fair, utilize multiple measures of performance, link to student performance, align with Ohio's educator standards, and suggest professional development that will enhance professional performance. These standards will be benchmarks for statewide development of evaluation and compensation systems.

## **How much are the incentives?**

In Cincinnati and Columbus, TAP offers incentives to teachers for demonstrated teaching skills, willingness to take on additional responsibilities, and contribution to student learning. TAP offers \$2,000 per teacher for the demonstration of teaching knowledge and skills.

In Toledo and Cleveland, TRACS and CTIS offer incentives to teachers and administrators who succeed in raising student achievement; assume additional curriculum, instructional, and school improvement responsibilities; and demonstrate improved student performance while on assignment in at-risk schools. Teachers can earn \$2,000 for meeting all three annual improvement goals or \$1,000 if two of the three improvement goals are met. The teacher performance component of both TRACS and CTIS features a career ladder with differentiated roles and compensations, and teachers can earn bonuses of 5 percent to 15 percent of their salary as they assume different roles on the ladder.

## **What are the strengths of the project?**

To make compensation decisions, the four districts use the frameworks that are already in place as well as the data systems that maintain necessary assessment information on school and district academic improvement.

TAP uses teacher observations from reviews conducted by trained and certified evaluators and incorporates value-added gains and school improvement gains into the evaluations.

TRACS and CTIS require districts to set two academic and one related improvement goal. Gains toward the Ohio Performance Index or increases in the number and percentage of Ohio grade-card indicators serve as a measure of academic growth. TRACS and CTIS utilize performance-based evaluation tools of effective instruction based on national standards and Danielson's *Framework for Teaching*, which includes peer ratings, observations, assessments of written communications, and review of a standards-based portfolio.

State general revenue and matching funds from Title II also ensure OTIF a steady source of funding. In addition, CTIS receives \$300,000 in matching funds from the Joyce Foundation (based on a three-year commitment).

## Contact Us

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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 this 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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