



NEWSBREAK

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What's New?

Online Case Summaries Offer Detailed Information on Compensation Programs

The Center for Educator Compensation Reform (CECR) profiles alternative compensation efforts from across the country through detailed case summaries. These case summaries are housed on the website at <http://cecr.ed.gov/guides/summaries.cfm>.

These case summaries are designed to provide readers with more complete and detailed coverage of selected alternative compensation initiatives. They complement the short descriptions available on the CECR national map of compensation reform initiatives <http://cecr.ed.gov/initiatives/maps/>.

The programs captured in the case summaries include current initiatives and programs that are no longer running. Case summaries share the story of alternative compensation programs from conception through implementation and provide valuable “lessons learned” for others who are designing or implementing such programs.

CECR staff use multiple resources to write the case summaries, including state and district websites and documents, research articles, teacher and student data, legislative information, and interviews with program organizers and stakeholders. The combination of these resources allows readers to get a comprehensive understanding of the alternative compensation programs from a variety of different perspectives.

Currently, CECR has five case summaries posted on the website: Georgia’s school-based performance program; the Mission Possible initiative in Guilford County, North Carolina; the evolution of performance pay in Florida; the principal compensation restructuring initiative in Palm Beach County, Florida; and Texas’s state-level pay-for-performance programs. The case summaries range from 10 to 15 pages, and new case summaries are regularly added to the website.

Hot Off the Press

Texas Teachers Get Bonuses Under New District Plan—*The Austin American-Statesman*, July 30, 2008.

http://www.statesman.com/search/content/shared/money/stories/2008/07/0730compensation_SF.html

Teachers and principals in nine Austin, Texas, schools will receive bonuses this year as a part of the district's pilot educator compensation plan. The amount of the bonus is tied to student performance goals set by each teacher.

Note: For more information about pay-for-performance programs in Texas, read our CECR case summary on Texas state-level alternative compensation programs at

<http://cecr.ed.gov/guides/summaries/TexasCaseSummary.pdf>.

Pay-Hike Plan for Teachers in D.C. Entails Probation—*The Washington Post*, July 24, 2008.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/story/2008/07/24/ST2008072402525.html>

District of Columbia Schools Chancellor Michelle Rhee proposed a massive teacher pay increase to nearly \$100,000 for teachers with at least five years of experience. Teachers participating in the proposed salary structure will have to forfeit their seniority and spend a year on probation with the risk of dismissal as a condition of participating.

Teacher Pay Measure Qualifies for Ore. Ballot—*Argus Observer*, July 23, 2008.

<http://www.argusobserver.com/articles/2008/07/23/news/doc48876fd9275f3855995911.txt>

Despite strong opposition from the state's teachers union, Oregon's November ballot will include a classroom-based performance award measure for all teachers.

John McCain Speaks to NAACP Convention—*Local 12.com*, July 16, 2008.

http://www.local12.com/news/local/story.aspx?content_id=69fdc825-e8f5-46b4-908a-118031a15db2

John McCain, speaking at the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) convention in Cincinnati, Ohio, expressed his support for merit-based pay programs based on student achievement and for the expansion of educational opportunities for students in struggling schools.

Teacher Pay Plan Turns Into Battlefield—*Rocky Mountain News*, July 11, 2008.

<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/news/2008/jul/11/teacher-pay-plan-turns-battlefield/>

Denver's ProComp program is struggling to identify the most effective distribution of the \$25 million approved by the city's residents to implement the performance-based initiative. The district is deciding between awarding additional money to new teachers to increase retention and awarding teachers for teaching in hard-to-staff subjects and schools. The union fears these increases will bankrupt a program that has yet to increase student achievement.

Teacher Pay Set by the Results—*Baltimore Sun*, July 6, 2008.

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/bal-te.md.pay06jul06.0,7466501.story>

In response to the increased demand for raising student achievement, school districts throughout Maryland are planning to institute performance-based compensation programs for both teachers and principals. Awards for teachers could reach as high as \$10,000, and principals could receive an extra 10 percent incentive award.

Grantee Spotlight: Beggs Independent School District System to Motivate and Reward Teachers

Beggs Independent School District (BISD), located in Oklahoma, designed the System to Motivate and Reward Teachers (SMART) in partnership with several high-need local education agencies (LEAs), the University of Oklahoma Center for Effective Schools, and Northeastern State University. This partnership forms the REACH (Rural Educational Achievement Can Be Higher) coalition. The goal of SMART and the REACH coalition is to implement a student achievement-based differentiated compensation program for teachers and administrators.

SMART uses a three-group quasi-experimental design, where BISD is the fiscal agency and primary implementation site. This means that BISD is the full-treatment group and receives all the benefits of the program. Teachers and principals in BISD receive financial incentives for meeting set student achievement goals (both individual and schoolwide measures are included) as well as for taking on additional school responsibilities. Teachers earn these incentives for participating in activities such as mentoring and coordinating summer tutorial programs or for participating in content/pedagogical training delivered by the University of Oklahoma. Principals receive incentives for using the Teacher Appraisal System at their sites and for participating in administrator coaching provided by Northeastern State University.

The other eight LEAs are randomly assigned to low-dosage treatment and control groups. The low-dosage groups receive professional development and staff appraisal but not financial incentives. One goal of the evaluation for the program is to focus on the marginal effects of dosage level.

What need is the project trying to address?

The REACH coalition represents 22 rural elementary, middle, and high school campuses that enroll 7,130 students. The LEAs in the REACH coalition face high levels of poverty. Average per capita income is \$12,000, which is half the state average. More than half (67 percent) of students are enrolled in the free or reduced-price lunch program. Ninety percent of the elementary campuses are schoolwide Title I schools. The remaining 10 percent receive “targeted assistance” funds under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

SMART is implemented in an environment of high principal and teacher turnover and low levels of student achievement. Three of the coalition schools are in some form of NCLB school improvement or restructuring as a result of poor performance. In addition, 36 percent of students in BISD were below proficient in mathematics, and only 20 percent of students in Beggs High

School passed the state high school exit exam in 2006. Significant portions of the area faculty are considered “underqualified” in terms of credentialing under NCLB standards; most have limited field experience in education.

What are the goals of the project?

The main goal of the BISD SMART program is to raise principal, vice principal, and teacher effectiveness in the areas of leadership, building/classroom management, pedagogy, curriculum, and instruction. Secondary goals include the following:

- Develop, implement, and evaluate a teacher and administrator performance-based compensation system.
- Raise student achievement.
- Increase faculty recruitment and retention.
- Increase the number of effective teachers instructing poor, minority, and disadvantaged students in hard-to-staff subjects, and increase the number of effective principals in high-need schools.
- Increase motivation of educators to set and to accomplish goals.
- Sustain a performance-based compensation system throughout and beyond the five-year grant term in rural Oklahoma school districts.

How much are the incentives?

Educators receive incentives on two levels and in three categories (core academic learning, individualized and stretch learning, and educational engagement).

Level I. Educators receive the first level of incentives based on their students reaching student achievement and schoolwide performance goals on state tests and interim norm-referenced assessments. Rewards in the basic level I incentive structure can reach as high as \$1,000 per goal met.

Teachers receive incentives for student performance, measured through the Oklahoma Core Curriculum Test and the End of Instruction Test Indicator. Teachers also receive incentives for college readiness of their students, as measured by the Explore/Plan test and the Access Interim test.

Principals receive incentives for student achievement based on meeting academic performance index goals. Both teachers and principals receive Level I incentives for surpassing the graduation requirement as well as for meeting goal graduation rates.

Level II. Educators receive second-level incentives based on leadership roles taken or active participation in professional development. Incentives for the Level II goals can be as high as \$5,000 annually, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Level II Incentives for Teachers and Administrators

Leadership Role	Incentive Amount
Teachers as National Board Certified leaders	\$1,000 sign-up incentive \$5,000 annual teacher incentive
Teachers as National Board Certified assessors	\$5,000 annual teacher incentive
National Board Certified assessors and teachers acting as three-phase training team	\$1,500 annual teacher incentive
Teachers as mentors	\$500 annual mentor teacher incentive
Teacher leaders of academic support programs	\$3,000 annual teacher incentive
Teacher leaders of summer intensives	\$2,000 annual teacher incentive
Raising-the-bar teacher leader	\$3,000 annual teacher incentive
Student advisory leader	\$3,000 annual teacher incentive
Mentoring for novice and incoming teachers	\$500–\$750 annual teacher incentive
Three-phase professional development for teachers	\$300 annual teacher incentive
Principal coaching/support	\$500 annual teacher incentive

Additional retention and recruitment incentives are available for teachers and administrators who meet student achievement goals for three or more years in a row.

What are the recent highlights of the project?

This year, the SMART grant has produced exciting developments in BISD. Teachers accomplished the goal of increased student learning by attending more professional development, gaining National Board Certification, and taking advanced graduate-level classes. Prior to the inception of the grant, BISD had only two National Board Certified teachers. To date, the district has eight teachers who have been through the process of National Board Certification and are awaiting their certification results. BISD also has six teachers in the district pursuing advanced graduate degrees.

The Oklahoma Legislature and the chair of the House Education Committee are working closely with BISD on its current teacher-incentive program in the hopes of using BISD’s successes as a model for a statewide teacher-incentive program.

Contact Us

Center for Educator Compensation Reform

Babette Gutmann, Director

Phone: 888-202-1513 • E-Mail: cecr@westat.com

Website: cecr.ed.gov

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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