

What's New?

CECR Hosts Annual TIF Grantee Meeting in Washington, D.C.

The Center for Educator Compensation Reform (CECR) hosted the fourth annual Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Grantee Meeting August 23–24, 2010, in Washington, D.C. At the meeting, CECR provided TIF grantee representatives with the opportunity to network with one another and to learn from other grantees' compensation reform efforts.

The meeting opened with some initial results from the CECR Harvesting Project. Researchers conducting the harvesting discussed lessons learned from the data collection including the importance of the following:

- Quality data systems and verifiable student-teacher linkages
- Leadership in the successful design and implementation of the program
- Flexibility in program design based on stakeholder input
- Clear communication about the program
- Valid and reliable measures of teacher performance, such as value-added measures and fair and rigorous teacher and principal performance evaluations
- Quality program evaluation

The meeting continued with a variety of panel discussions. Presenters included researchers, CECR staff members, and TIF grantees. The panel format allowed attendees to learn about the work currently under way in other states and districts, as well as lessons learned from program implementation across the country.

Panel topics included the following:

- Making use of TIF program evaluations
- Professional development components of TIF programs
- Program sustainability, communication, and continued stakeholder engagement
- Fiscal and programmatic sustainability
- How TIF fits into district-wide human capital reform
- Teacher and principal evaluation

Researchers from SRI International closed the meeting with some findings from the TIF program evaluation and lessons learned from current TIF work.

CECR plans to post presentations and other meeting materials on the website soon.

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Hot Off the Press

Grading the Teachers: Who's Teaching L.A.'s Kids?—*Los Angeles Times*. August 14, 2010
<http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-teachers-value-20100815%2C0%2C2695044.story>

The *Los Angeles Times* created a database of teacher information, using student test score growth data, and released an analysis of its research. The analysis presents some early findings, indicating that teacher qualification has few effects on effectiveness and that the most and least effective teachers are not concentrated in the most or least affluent schools but instead are spread across the district. The *Times* plans to run a series of articles during the next few months. This report has received criticism from both local and national teachers and unions.

Dade Among Pilot Systems for Teacher Effectiveness Measure—*Chattanooga Times Free Press*. August 14, 2010
<http://www.timesfreepress.com/news/2010/aug/14/dade-among-pilot-systems-teacher-effectiveness-mea/?local>

Four school districts in Georgia—Atlanta, Dade, Gwinnett, and Peach—will pilot a new system for evaluating teacher effectiveness using student growth data this year. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has provided a new Teacher Effectiveness Momentum Grant, which funds this pilot program in Georgia.

St. Mary's, Charles Teacher Evaluations to Be Tied to Student Scores—*The Washington Post*. August 12, 2010
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/08/10/AR2010081005877.html>

In response to legislation recently passed by the Maryland legislature to increase its ability to compete for the federal Race to the Top grant program, public schools in St. Mary's and Charles Counties, as well as five other counties in the state,

will pilot a new evaluation system that ties educator evaluations in part to student growth, as measured by test scores such as the Maryland School Assessments. Eventually, schools throughout the state will operate under the new evaluation system. Some educators in the state are opposed to the system.

PISD Begins New Student Performance, Teacher Retention Initiative—*Community Impact Newspaper*. August 6, 2010
<http://impactnews.com/round-rock-pflugerville/163-education/9340-pisd-begins-new-student-performance-teacher-retention-initiative>

Pflugerville Independent School District becomes the latest school system to implement the TAP System, beginning this fall. Nine schools in the district—three high schools, one middle school, four elementary schools, and one charter school—will participate in the program, which provides teachers with multiple career paths, job-embedded professional development, and financial incentives for effectiveness.

Harvard Study Examines Teacher Effectiveness—*District Administration*. July/August 2010
<http://www.districtadministration.com/viewarticle.aspx?articleid=2477>

A recent study from researchers at Harvard examined the link between teacher qualifications and teacher effectiveness. Researchers found that teacher qualifications—years of experience and a bachelor's or master's degree—do not predict a teacher's level of effectiveness. This study raises questions about both teacher tenure decisions and teacher pay. The full study is available online at http://www.hks.harvard.edu/pepg/MeritPayPapers/Chingos_Peterson_10-08.pdf.

Grantee Updates

Dallas Principal and Teacher Incentive Pay Program

CECR profiled the Dallas Principal and Teacher Incentive Pay Program in the February 2008 issue of the *NewsBreak* (see <http://cecr.ed.gov/news/newsletters/CECRNewsbreakFeb2008.pdf>). The program shares the following updates and highlights:

- When the program began in 2006–07, principals were eligible to receive between \$7,500 and \$10,000, based on a “principal incentive rating.” The incentive structure evolved during the past few years as follows:
 - In 2007–08, in 26 schools, teachers and principals could receive \$6,000 and \$10,000 respectively.
 - The district also awarded teachers in 59 schools between \$1,600 and \$4,000 in incentives during the 2007–08 school year through a new district pilot performance-based pay program.

- In November 2008, the district secured a new grant from the state of Texas, the District Award for Teacher Excellence (DATE), which paid incentives for student achievement for the 2008–09 school year. The DATE program supplements TIF funds by contributing incentives for TIF eligible staff and non-TIF eligible staff.
- DATE funds enabled the program to expand district-wide to 230 schools. Teachers in these schools can now earn between \$1,600 and \$3,200 for individual value-added measures and between \$600 and \$800 in school-level value-added measures.

For more information about this program, see the Dallas Independent School District website on incentives at <http://www.dallasisd.org/performancepay/incentive.cfm> and the updated TIF Grantee Profile on the CECR website at <http://cecr.ed.gov/pdfs/profiles/Dallas.pdf>.

Amphitheater Unified School District Project EXCELL!

CECR profiled the Amphitheater Unified School District in the April 2008 issue of the *NewsBreak* (see <http://cecr.ed.gov/news/newsletters/CECRNewsbreakApr2008.pdf>). The program shares the following updates:

- Full implementation of the program began during the 2008–09 school year. The district focused on increasing student achievement through data analysis, curriculum alignment, assessment, professional development, and enhanced leadership opportunities.
- Amphitheater created design teams, made up of teachers and administrators, to develop classroom performance assessments and create indicators for teacher and school administrator reflections.

- In May 2009, the district approved a new teacher evaluation system for the 2009–10 school year.

For more information about this program, see the following resources:

- Amphitheater Project EXCELL! website: <http://www.amphi.com/departments/teachlearn/projexcell/home.html>
- Project EXCELL! 2010–2011 Implementation Manual: <http://www.amphi.com/departments/teachlearn/projexcell/files/5CCB554F061A4C7489D15DCD723FF425.pdf>
- Updated TIF Grantee Profile on the CECR website: <http://cecr.ed.gov/pdfs/profiles/AmphitheaterUnifiedSchoolDistrict.pdf>

Contact Us



Center for
Educator Compensation
Reform

Allison Henderson, Director
Phone: 888-202-1513
E-mail: cecr@westat.com

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 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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