

What's New?

Navigating the New CECR Website

As mentioned in previous issues of the *Newsbreak*, the Center for Educator Compensation Reform (CECR) recently launched a redesigned website at <http://cecr.ed.gov>. The website now features new ways to search for tools and resources, such as by topic area and resource type.

To find resources by topic area, click on the **Planning and Implementation** tab, and select one of the three subtopics:

- **Communication and System Support.** Resources include strategies for stakeholder engagement, developing a communications plan, and information systems and data infrastructures.
- **Program Structure.** Resources include award structure, performance measures, linking student achievement to educators, value-added models, other measures of educator performance, principals and other school leadership, financial sustainability, and program evaluation.
- **Perspectives on Compensation Reform.** Resources include case summaries and emerging issues papers.

To find resources by resource type, click on the **TIF Grantees** tab, and select **Resources and Tools**. Users can access the following resources:

- Guide to Implementation
- Emerging Issues
- Case Summaries
- Webinars
- Podcasts
- Other Videos

Corrections

The March CECR *Newsbreak* profiled the TIF program in Florence County, South Carolina, incorrectly identifying the name of the district. Florence County School District 3 administers the grant; however, TIF sites also include schools in Florence County School District 1 and Laurens County School District, which the original profile did not mention. The profile also did not detail the principal incentives available through the TIF grant. Principals are eligible to receive a bonus of up to \$10,000 based on schoolwide student achievement gains, school adequate yearly progress status, and Teacher Advancement Program leadership scores. A revised profile will be available the week of June 28 at <http://www.cecr.ed.gov/news/newsletter.cfm>.

The feature article in the April CECR *Newsbreak* incorrectly stated that the Weld County TIF site (Weld Re-8) uses alternative assessments such as NWEA MAP, ACT, or SAT, or subject-specific end-of-course testing as a part of its schoolwide student achievement measures; it does not. CECR removed the district Weld Re-8 from the list of program examples. The revised article will be available the week of June 28 at <http://www.cecr.ed.gov/news/newsletter.cfm>.

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Hot Off the Press

The Uncertain Impact of Merit Pay for Teachers—*New York Times Blog, Economix*. June 8, 2010.

<http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/06/08/the-uncertain-impact-of-merit-pay-for-teachers/?hp>

The article brings together results from recent studies on the impact of performance-based pay programs, showing mixed results. One difficulty in carrying out such studies, the article reports, is the lack of consistency in programs. One recent article found that many programs claiming to implement performance-based pay programs were not actually implementing true performance-based pay. The article suggests that although there are examples of improvement in locations where there is not performance-based pay, one can still argue that incentives should be included as a part of school reform.

D.C. Teachers' Union Ratifies Contract, Basing Pay on Results, Not Seniority—*The Washington Post*. June 3, 2010.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/06/02/AR2010060202762.html?hpid=sec-education>

Teachers in Washington, D.C., ratified a new contract that expands Chancellor Rhee's ability to remove ineffective teachers and establishes a performance-based pay program.

Performance-Pay Model Shows No Achievement Edge—*Education Week*. June 1, 2010.

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/06/01/33tap.h29.html>

(subscription required)

A recent evaluation of the Chicago Teacher Advancement Program by Mathematica Policy Research found that teacher retention and student achievement did not improve significantly in participating schools, as compared to other district schools. Though the study's results were not optimal, researchers also acknowledged that it might take more time for the program to have an impact. Mathematica Policy Research will continue to evaluate the program over the next few years. The report is available online at http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/pdfs/education/tap_yr2_rpt.pdf.

Christie Revises Education Money Bid, Wants Performance Pay—*Asbury Park Press*. June 1, 2010.

<http://pqasb.pqarchiver.com/app/access/2047575841.html?FMT=ABS&FMFS=ABS:FT&date=Jun+1%2C+2010&author=JASON+ME+THOD&pub=Asbury+Park+Press&edition=&startpage=n%2Fa&desc=Christie+revises+education+money+bid%2C+wants+performance+pay>

(available for a minimal fee)

New Jersey made some adjustments, some in opposition to the state teachers union, to its Race to the Top application in order to resubmit for Round 2 of the federal grant program. In the new application, Governor Christie proposed a performance-based pay program.

Grantee Updates

Fort Lupton Teacher Incentive Fund

CECR profiled the Fort Lupton Teacher Incentive Fund in July 2007 (see <http://cecr.ed.gov/news/newsletters/CECRNewsbreakJuly2007.pdf>). The program has undergone the following updates to its incentive structure:

- During Year 2 (2007–08), the incentive plan changed to align with the Colorado Department of Education student growth model, which compares each student's performance with students in the same grade throughout Colorado and divides students into growth percentiles. Teachers, principals, and content tutors received bonuses in October 2008 if their school's median growth percentile exceeded the state growth average.
- During Year 3 (2008–09), Fort Lupton developed the Voluntary Incentive Path program that creates additional incentives of up to \$1,000 for participation in one of three activities:
 - Action Research: Participate in a team or individually in a Teacher Research to Improve

Performance project. If the teacher or teacher team completes the project, the teacher(s) receive a \$250 bonus; if teachers meet their achievement goal, they receive an additional \$750.

- Student Assessment Goal: Individual or teams of teachers set a student achievement target using one of the district-adopted assessments. If they meet the target, teachers present their successful strategies in a professional development class or lesson fair and receive a bonus of \$1,000.
- School Improvement Plan or District Improvement Plan: Individual or teams of teachers choose an academic target related to the school or district improvement plan. If met, teachers receive a bonus of \$1,000.

For more information about this program, access the updated TIF grantee profile on the CECR website at <http://cecr.ed.gov/pdfs/profiles/FortLupton.pdf>.

Eagle County School District Performance-Based Compensation Program

CECR profiled the Eagle County School District Performance-Based Compensation Program in the December 2007/January 2008 newsletter (see http://cecr.ed.gov/news/newsletters/CECRNewsbreakDec07_Jan08.pdf). By the third year of the grant (2008–09), the program made the following changes:

- The district no longer has a traditional salary schedule. All salary increases in the district are now determined by teacher evaluation scores:
 - 50 percent based on two classroom evaluations each year

- 50 percent on student achievement growth
- Principal evaluations also based on the same formula
- The annual TIF bonus is determined based on an index of student assessment results:
 - Districtwide ACT
 - Districtwide CSAP
 - Buildingwide CSAP
 - Buildingwide NWEA

- Teachers can earn up to \$10,000 in bonus money for the following:
 - Sustained individual classroom gains
 - Hiring and retention bonuses for teachers in high-poverty schools
 - Stipends for master and mentor teachers
- In Year 3, the district developed and implemented the Excellence in Teaching Award as a part of the \$10,000 annual bonus. In June 2010, Eagle

County Schools announced that 11 teachers out of 34 applicants received the Excellence in Teaching Award.

For more information about this program, access the updated TIF Grantee profile on the CECR website at <http://cecr.ed.gov/pdfs/profiles/Eagle.pdf>.

Ohio Teacher Incentive Fund

CECR profiled the Ohio Teacher Incentive Fund in August 2007 (see <http://cecr.ed.gov/news/newsletters/CECRNewsbreakAugust2007.pdf>). By the third year of the grant (2008–09), Ohio TIF made the following progress:

- Columbus and Cincinnati implement TAP in 12 schools. More information about the program in Columbus is available at [http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us/website.nsf/\(ccs_pages\)/Staff_Resources?opendocument](http://www.columbus.k12.oh.us/website.nsf/(ccs_pages)/Staff_Resources?opendocument) and in Cincinnati at <http://www.cps-k12.org/academics/TAP/TAP.htm>.
- Ohio held its second summit in April 2009, which centered on teacher evaluation and best practices.
- Toledo and Cleveland participated in information sharing between staff, and Cleveland now implements a peer assistance

and review program modeled on the program in Toledo. More information about the program in Toledo is available online at <http://www.tft250.org/Tracs2.pdf>.

- Ohio hosted the third summit this past spring and brought together Ohio TIF districts and other key stakeholder groups to share best practices. The summit also brought in other educators from across the state to expand the dialogue on key components of the TIF program.

For more information about this program, visit the Ohio TIF website at <http://www.ode.state.oh.us/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=523&ContentID=62445&Content=84564>, or access the updated TIF Grantee profile on the CECR website at <http://cecr.ed.gov/pdfs/profiles/Ohio.pdf>.

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 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.

This work was originally produced in whole or in part by the Center for Educator Compensation Reform (CECR) with funds from the U.S. Department of Education under contract number ED-06-CO-0110. The content does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of CECR or the Department of Education, nor does mention or visual representation of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by CECR or the federal government.