



NEWSBREAK

Volume 3, Number 10

October 2009

In This Issue

What's New? 1

Hot Off the Press 2

Grantee Spotlight 3

This month, CECR profiles the Community Training and Assistance Center and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Leadership for Educator's Advanced Performance (LEAP)

Contact Us 6

What's New?

CECR Hosts Evaluation Work Group Meeting on September 23–24, 2009

Each Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grantee is required to conduct an evaluation of its grant, which will provide insight into the program's overall results. To support evaluation efforts, the Center for Educator Compensation Reform (CECR) recently hosted a technical assistance workshop focused on several components of high-quality program evaluation for the TIF grantee evaluators.

CECR staff and other experts in program evaluation provided workshop participants with information and resources on the purpose and function of local TIF evaluations as well as on designing a rigorous approach to evaluation. At workshop sessions, participants learned how to:

- Identify goals and objectives of the TIF program and the inputs, processes, and outcomes that an evaluation will measure.
- Develop and refine evaluation questions based on the evaluation framework or logic model.
- Identify the best measurement tools for evaluating inputs, processes, and outcomes.
- Develop experimental or quasi-experimental evaluations to estimate causal effects.
- Develop appropriate outcome indicators.
- Use local evaluations to build consensus among education stakeholders.
- Understand the use of cost-benefit analysis in local TIF evaluations.

CECR staff also presented a session on the evaluation of Chicago's TIF program to demonstrate the concepts of program evaluation in a hands-on way. Materials from the workshop are available online at <http://cecr.ed.gov/initiatives/september2009meeting/>.

Hot Off the Press

Obama Education Views Can Sway Public, Poll Says—*Education Week*. September 1, 2009.
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/08/31/03ednext.h29.html?tkn=OLUFnWJj6BBc1pKdvc1FFtZeMRZAmimrC%2FfM>

An Education Next survey indicates that 13 percent more Americans showed support for alternative compensation after learning that President Obama favors the issue.

Effective Teachers Found to Improve Peers' Performance—*Education Week*. September 14, 2009.
<http://www.edweek.org/login.html?source=http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/09/01/03peer.html&destination=http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/09/01/03peer.html&levelId=2100>

A recent study finds that effective teachers have a positive effect on their peers. These findings underscore the importance of incentive systems that provide schoolwide rewards versus individual rewards; the latter can create competition among teachers, negating any positive influence that effective teachers have on their colleagues.

NEA to Spend \$6 Million for Teachers in High-Needs Schools—*Education Week*. September 16, 2009.
http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/teacherbeat/2009/09/nea_to_put_6_million_for_teach.html

The National Education Association plans to use four strategies outlined by the Center for Teaching Quality to guide the distribution of \$6 million over six years with the goal of increasing teacher effectiveness in high-need schools. One of the strategies calls for comprehensive initiatives to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools as opposed to stand-alone performance-pay plans.

12,000 Teacher Reports, but What to Do?—*The New York Times*. September 8, 2009.
http://www.nytimes.com/2009/09/09/nyregion/09teachers.html?_r=1

The New York City Department of Education evaluated teachers based on student achievement on standardized tests during the last school year. Currently, the department is deliberating how to use the information in the reports because of controversy regarding the use of student test scores to evaluate teacher performance.

Grantee Spotlight: The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Leadership for Educator’s Advanced Performance (LEAP)

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) Leadership for Educator’s Advanced Performance (LEAP) initiative is a pilot program that began during the 2007–08 school year. The initiative combines recruitment and retention initiatives with bonuses based on student performance to focus on instructional improvement and support for teachers in hard-to-staff subjects and high-need schools. In total, 20 high-need schools are participating in LEAP. Six of the district’s neediest schools were targeted in Year 1 (2007–08). The first six schools are part of the district’s Achievement Zone, which is made up of 10 schools with the highest needs and lowest performance that have been identified as priority schools by the state. The remaining four Achievement Zone schools were added in Year 2 (2008–09). This year, the number of participating schools doubled. By Year 5, nearly 14,000 students and 1,300 teachers and principals will be involved with the program.

The Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) provided CMS with guidance and expertise during the initial design phase. The initiative awards bonuses to teachers based on their implementation of student learning objectives and the results of teacher performance evaluations. The student learning objectives are developed by individual teachers and approved by site-based administrators. The objectives are measured through student performance using a combination of existing assessment instruments and teacher-designed tools as well as through data collected from the North Carolina End-of-Grade and End-of-Course tests.

To receive their bonuses through the classroom observation component, teachers must earn a rating of “at standard or above” on all functions of the Teacher Performance Appraisal Instrument-Revised (TPAI-R). Administrators must receive a rating of “very effective” on the Principal or Assistant Principal Appraisal Instruments. TPAI-R requires at least three annual reviews on management of instructional time and student behavior; instructional presentation, monitoring, and feedback; and facilitating instruction, communication within the education environment, and performing noninstructional duties.

What need is the project trying to address?

CMS is the 21st largest school district in the United States, with 70 percent of its schools identified as high need. As such, CMS faces many of the issues common to high-need districts: meeting student achievement goals as well as attracting and retaining teachers. Sixty-five percent of CMS schools have fallen short of their adequate yearly progress (AYP) goals. In addition, CMS expects a surge of nearly 50,000 students during the next 10 years. District officials have predicted that CMS will need more than 16,000 new teachers during the same time period. Furthermore, teacher and principal turnover at these schools is worse than the state average; teacher turnover is as high as 24 percent, and 75 percent of principals have fewer than three years of experience.

What are goals of the project?

LEAP has four goals: (1) create a differentiated compensation model for teachers and principals that is based on increased student achievement and multiple classroom observations and other evaluations; (2) improve and support recruitment and retention efforts in hard-to-staff schools and subject areas; (3) align school support systems to build teacher and principal capacity for increasing student achievement; and (4) develop district capabilities to sustain and grow the performance-based compensation system.

How much are the incentives?

The following table shows the sizes of the annual bonuses that teachers and principals who reach their student learning goals and meet observation requirements may receive:

Position	Criteria	Amount	Total
Principals	SLO Facilitation	\$1,000 (Tier 1) \$1,500 (Tier 2) \$2,000 (Tier 3)	Up to \$4,000
	School Growth	\$500–\$2,000 (in top 40% of district)	
Assistant Principals	SLO Facilitation	\$750 (Tier 1) \$1,125 (Tier 2) \$1,500 (Tier 3)	Up to \$3,500
	School Growth	\$500–\$2,000 (in top 40% of district)	
Teachers in tested subjects	SLO Attainment	\$1,400/SLO (2 required)	Up to \$5,300
	Classroom Growth	\$500–\$2,500 (in top 30% of district)	
Teachers in nontested subjects	SLO Attainment	\$1,400/SLO (2 required, 1 optional in lieu of Team Growth)	Up to \$4,200
	Team Growth	\$400–\$1,400 (in top 30% of district)	

Other financial incentives available include the following:

- A \$10,000 signing bonus for teachers and principals who accept positions in high-need schools
- An \$8,000 signing bonus for teachers who agree to teach hard-to-staff subjects
- A \$115 daily stipend, including benefits, for teachers who attend approved professional development or take on leadership roles and extra duties related to improving student achievement

What are the recent highlights of the project?

During the first year of LEAP implementation, CMS focused on the following:

- Creating a formal steering committee and working group
- Engaging key departments within the district, such as Accountability and Assessment, Executive Office, and Human Resources
- Securing stakeholder input through focus groups and surveys
- Adopting a research-based framework for student learning objectives during Years 2–5
- Creating financial models leading to the long-term organizational and financial sustainability of the initiative
- Creating a five-year communication plan and project control plan

During the second year of LEAP, CMS continued to work on project development and to plan for long-term organizational and financial sustainability. Activities included the following:

- Formal monthly meetings of the steering committee and ongoing input from four stakeholder groups
- Engagement of key departments within the district
- Securing district and community input through surveys, focus groups, and individual interviews
- Adoption of a research-based framework for student learning objectives during Years 2–5
- Modification of financial models leading to long-term sustainability
- Continued implementation of the five-year communication plan

The initiative began Year 3 with an increased focus on student growth achievement at both the classroom and school levels. Challenges for Year 3 include the following:

- Executing a district-developed growth measure
- Providing ongoing instructional support for successful implementation of SLOs
- Refining data management systems for students and teachers
- Adjusting assumptions and modeling capacity for projecting long-term financial sustainability

More information about the LEAP initiative is available at the following links:

- CECR TIF Profile:
<http://www.cecr.ed.gov/initiatives/profiles/pdfs/CommunityTrainingandAssistanceCenter.pdf>
- CECR National Map Profile:
http://www.cecr.ed.gov/initiatives/maps/pdfs/CECR_NC_Charlotte-Mecklenburg.pdf

More information about Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is available at:
<http://www.cms.k12.nc.us>

More information about the Community Training and Assistance Center is available at:
<http://www.ctacusa.com/>

Contact Us

Center for Educator Compensation Reform

Allison Henderson, 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.

This work was originally produced in whole or in part by 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.

4040_10/09