

Formative Evaluation: Using Educator Reactions

Educator Reactions and Their Importance to TIF Programs

Tony Milanowski

What are educator reactions?

- Perceptions
- Beliefs
- Cognitions
- Feelings
- Opinions

- Typically assessed by asking:
 - Focus groups
 - Surveys
 - Interviews

Why be concerned with educator reactions?

- Performance pay systems can't be sustained in the face of persistent negative reactions
- “Theories of action” connecting performance pay with improved student achievement depend on educator perceptions, cognitions, & beliefs
- Perceptions of program implementation are important fidelity indicators

Educator Reactions & Sustained Support



- Research has shown that several types of reactions are related to support:
 - Understanding program procedures
 - Consistency with other valued goals & behaviors
 - Procedural justice
 - Distributive justice
 - Trust in management

To improve chances of sustaining the program:



- Assess reactions in pilot or initial year
- Regular assessment added to any district or school surveys
- Regular schedule of focus groups
- Examples of negative perceptions that kill programs

For more on Formative Evaluation

- View the video presentations “Theories of Action” (Part 1 & 2) and “Methods for Assessing Educator Reactions”
- Read the Guide to Implementation module on Formative Evaluation

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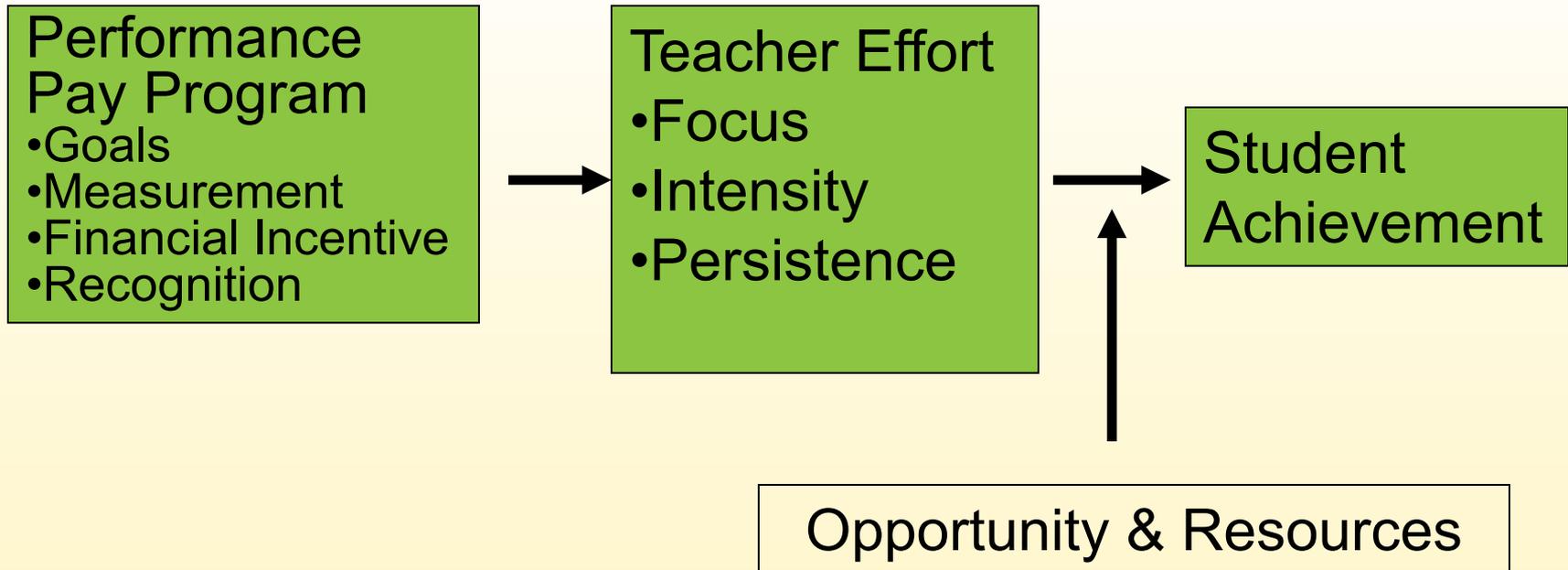
Theories of Action: Part 1, Motivation Theory of Action

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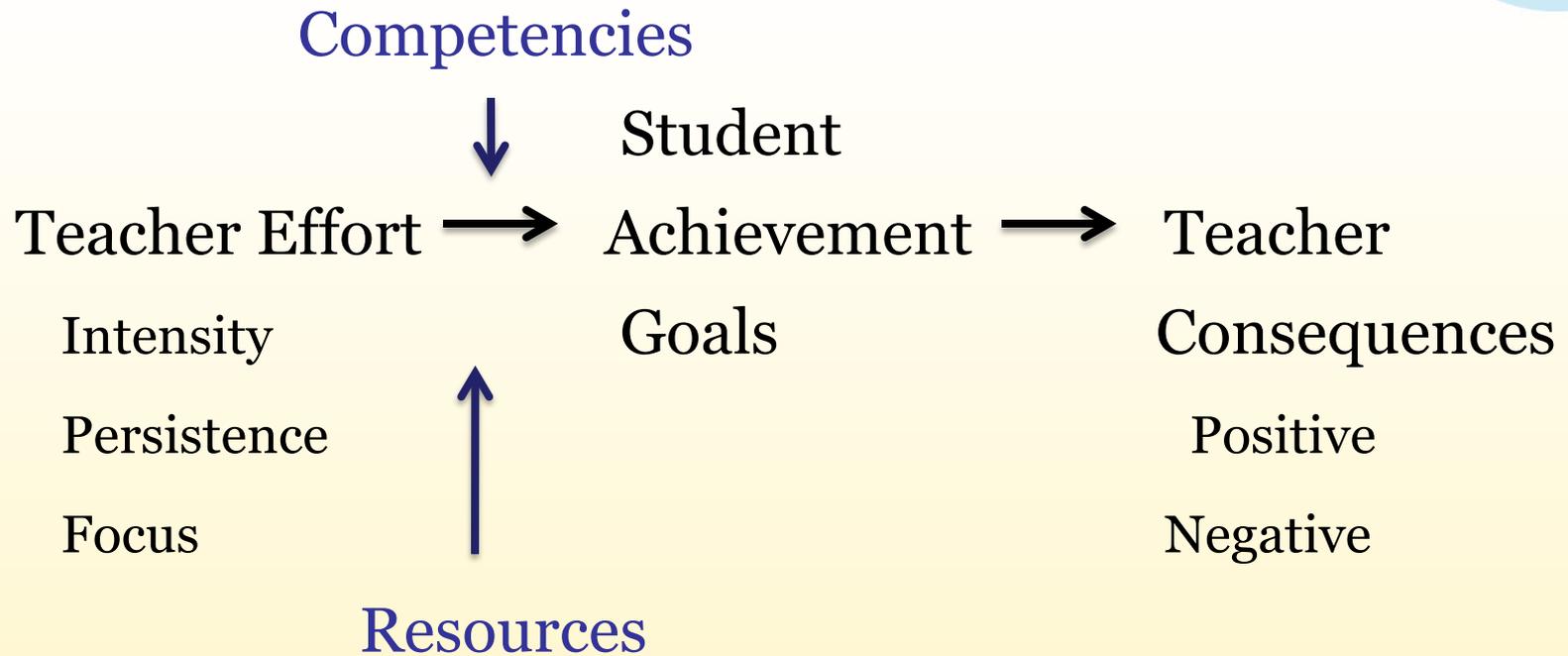
The Role of Educator Reaction in Performance Pay “Theories of Action”

- Motivation of effort
- Differential attraction & retention

Motivation Theory of Action



Motivation Model for Teachers



Which Teacher Reactions Should We Assess?



1. Do teachers understand and accept the goals?
2. Do teachers believe that if they try, they can meet the goals?
 - Do they believe they possess the competencies & resources needed to succeed?



3. Do they perceive that if they achieve the goals they will experience positive consequences?

- Receive \$ rewards, recognition
- Avoid negative consequences
- Not rewarded if they don't achieve?



4. Do they value the rewards?

- Is the incentive amount meaningful?
- Does the value of the incentive outweigh the negatives such as stress, less freedom to teach, and working harder?

Is motivation taking place?



- Do teachers say they have focused their efforts on the goals?
- Can they identify actions that they have taken to improve their chances of receiving the incentive?
- Do teachers say that the incentive motivates them to focus their efforts, expend more effort, or persist in their effort?

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- Read the Guide to Implementation module on Formative Evaluation

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Theories of Action: Part 2, Differential Attraction and Retention Theory of Action

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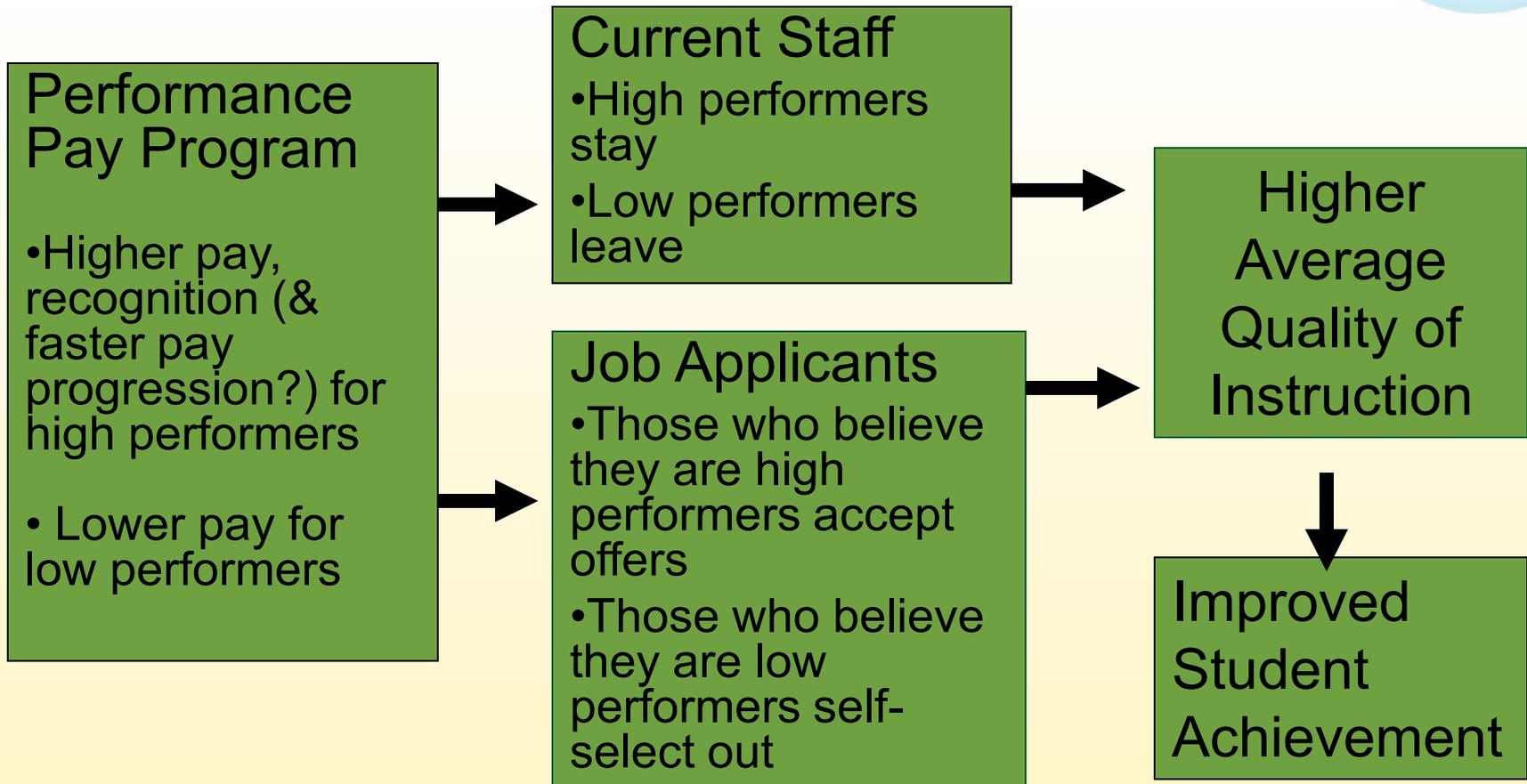


Attitudes Matter

Effect of 1 STD Increase in Average Expectancy Perception on School Performance		
	Effect Size	N schools
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	.24-.34	114
Kentucky	.22-.30	204

Source: Kelley, Heneman, & Milanowski, 2002.

Differential Attraction & Retention Theory of Action



Reactions to Assess



- Are current staff & applicants aware of pay differentiation?
- Do new applicants & current staff accept the legitimacy of pay differentiation?
- Do they attribute performance to their own efforts?
- Do they believe they can sustain high performance?
- Do they believe the rewards are worth the extra effort?



Educator Reactions & Program Implementation

- Educator Experiences with Key Program Components
 - Did they receive communications about the program?
 - Did school leaders support the program?
 - Did they receive performance results when planned?
 - Did they understand why they did or did not receive the incentive?
- Unintended Consequences
 - Just one more thing
 - Fourth-grade exodus
 - No more cookies on Friday?

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Methods for Assessing Educator Reactions

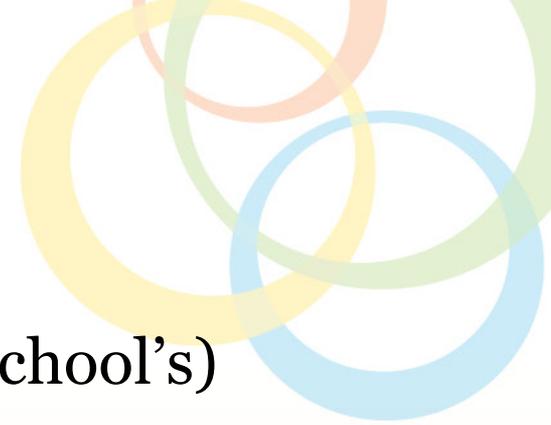
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Methods for Assessing Educator Reactions

- Focus groups
 - General reactions
 - Biggest problems
- Surveys
 - Implementation experience
 - Motivation
- Interviews
 - Individual impacts
 - Unintended consequences

Focus Group

- Do you understand how the incentive works? What more would you like to know?
- How has your school been affected by the incentive program?
- How have you personally been affected by the incentive program?
- What do you like (dislike) about the incentive program?
- How do you feel about the incentive amounts?
- Is the incentive program fair? Why or why not?



Surveys

- I have a clear understanding of my (my school's) performance goals.
- Working toward the goals prevents me from achieving other important educational goals.
- My value-added score is a fair way to measure my performance.
- The process of determining who gets the incentive rewarded is fair.
- I got the incentive I deserved last year.
- How much influence does your effort have on whether you get the incentive?



Individual Interviews

- What has your school done to make it more likely teachers will earn the incentive?
- How have you changed your teaching to make it more likely you will earn the incentive?
- What are the biggest factors that would prevent you from earning the incentive?
- Does your principal support the performance pay program?
- How do other teachers feel about the ones that received the incentives?
- Has the incentive program made working in the district more or less attractive to you?

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