



Center for  
Educator Compensation  
Reform



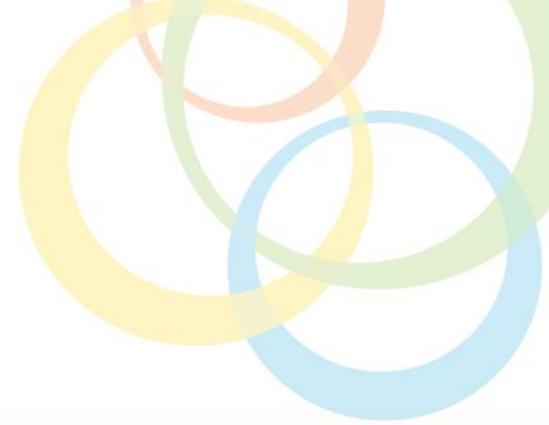
Center for  
Educator Compensation  
Reform

# **Structuring Your Alternative Compensation Program: Challenges and Opportunities**

**March 18, 2010**

# Introduction

- Topic, agenda, and goals for the webcast
- How to ask a question
- Speakers



# Using Assessments for Teacher Compensation

Michael S. Christian

**Wisconsin Center for Education Research**

# Outline

- Approaches to using assessments
  - Attainment, gain, value table, value added
- Level at which award is made
  - School, grade, teacher
- Absolute and relative criteria for awards

# Approaches for assessments

- Attainment
  - Uses student performance at a single point in time
- Gain
  - Uses student improvement from one year to next
- Value Table
  - Like gain, but focuses on proficiency levels
- Value Added
  - Uses statistical technique to get effects of schools

# Attainment

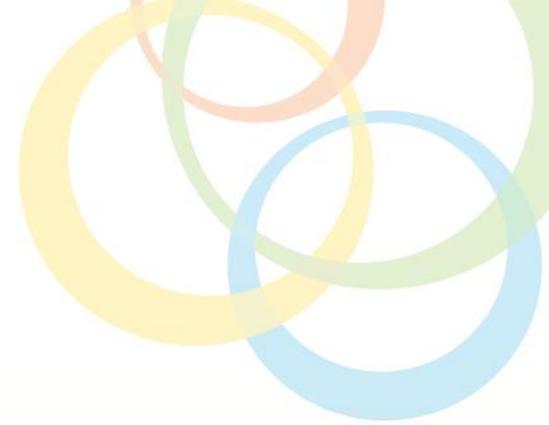
- Measures performance of students on an assessment at a single point in time
  - Example: Percent of a teacher's students proficient on state math test
- Easy to compute
- Includes effects of influences other than school
- Puts schools/teachers of low-attaining students at a disadvantage

# Gain

- Measures improvement of students on an assessment from one year to another
  - If, on average, the students in a teacher's fourth grade gained 5 points from their third grade score, average gain for that teacher's students is 5 points
- Also easy to compute
- Closer to identifying effects of schooling
- Lacks statistical rigor: strong assumptions about teaching and scale score gains

# Value table

- Assigns points when students change from one proficiency category to another
  - 80 pts for improving from “Proficient” to “Advanced”
  - 50 points for staying at “Proficient”
  - 0 pts for dropping from “Proficient” to “Basic”
- Schools scored on average points per student
- Proficiency categories can be subdivided
  - “Proficient Minus”, “Proficient”, “Proficient Plus”



## Value table

- Easy to compute
- Participatory
  - Bring stakeholders in when determining points for each different kind of movement
- Makes the test score scale cruder
  - Breaks down scale to a smaller number of categories
- Lacks statistical rigor
  - Points gained for each movement may not reflect difficulty of actually accomplishing the movement

# Value added

- Uses statistical approaches to identify the effect of teachers or schools on student performance
- Attempts to isolate the contribution of schooling from other influences using data available
- Equal to number of extra points a school's or teacher's students scored on a test relative to similar students across the district or state

# Value added

- Difficult to compute
  - Most states or districts bring in a partner from a research center or consulting firm to do it
  - Dallas is an exception: in-house for years
- Statistically rigorous, safer
  - Looks at multiple variables at once to best identify effects of teachers or schools
  - Criticism: not that it's too complicated, but that it still may not be enough!

# Schools, grades, and teachers

- Assessments can be used to make awards at the school, grade, or teacher level
  - School-level awards go to everyone at the school and are based on scores of students at a school
  - Grade-level awards go to people who work in a particular grade at a school and are based on the scores of students in that grade
  - Teacher-level awards go to individual teachers and are based on scores of teachers at a school
  - Mix and match!

# School and teacher awards

- School-level awards
  - May foster teamwork
  - Easier to use assessments at school level
  - Overlooks good teachers at otherwise bad schools
- Teacher-level awards
  - Rewards teachers for students actually taught
  - Harder to use assessments at teacher level
  - More controversial, more personal

# What is a good performance?

- To give an award, you have to define what an award-winning performance is
- “Relative” award criterion
  - Everyone in, say, top 20% gets an award
- “Absolute” award criterion
  - Theoretically, everyone can get an award, or no one can get an award

# What is a good performance?

- Often difficult to set an “absolute” criterion
  - Test score scales shift slightly from year to year
  - Reasonable one year may be too easy or hard next
- Alternative might be to set a “relative” criterion with a very large comparison group
  - State, consortium of districts



# **Performance Based Compensation Systems at the High School Level**

Patrick Schuermann

**Policy Director, Center for Educator  
Compensation Reform**

# Contextual issues associated with designing high school PBCS's



- The expanded subject area offerings taught in high school
  - Mainstream core subject area content
  - Resource offerings
    - Academic, Arts, Athletics, Vocational and Technical
- The departmentalization of teachers & expanded number of teachers interacting with each student
- The lack of valid and reliable assessments across the full spectrum of course offerings

# Key Design Considerations

- 1. Consider fairness from multiple perspectives.** All teachers must have an opportunity to earn awards for their contribution to student performance, regardless of the grade, subject, or types of students they teach. However, it is not necessary that access to rewards needs to be equal in every case.
- 2. Think systemically and holistically.** Provide support and professional development to help teachers meet growth targets and to ensure that the growth targets are linked directly to school and district goals.
- 3. Include multiple measures and award types.** Consider the advantages of using multiple measures of student performance and teacher effectiveness and the benefits of awards at the individual, team, department, and school levels.

# Key Design Considerations

- 4. Weigh transparency against accuracy.** States, districts and schools will need to make difficult decisions regarding the inclusion of measures that cannot be readily explained to key constituents or that cannot be verified as valid and reliable measures of teacher effectiveness. These trade-offs often hinge on the degree to which measures exhibit a necessary level of technical rigor while also remaining understandable to those whom they directly affect.
- 5. Be aware of potential unintended consequences.** In a performance-pay system, the manner in which teacher effectiveness and student performance are measured will influence teacher motivation. States, districts and schools should consider the manner in which the performance pay system influences the behavior of teachers at all grade levels, subject areas, and across the spectrum of student ability levels and demographic characteristics.

# Specific Approaches to Overcome Contextual Challenges

- Include teachers of non-tested grades by using existing tests that were developed for other purposes
- Adopt or develop new end-of-course tests
- Base rewards for high school teachers on department-wide performance, rather than individual classroom performance
- Supplement student test outcomes with school-wide measures such as high school dropout, attendance, and graduation rates

# Promising Practice Highlight: Student Learning Objectives

- Student Learning Objective (SLO) Overview
  - Conduct needs assessment and provide rationale
  - Determine specific content and student groups to target
  - Articulate learning objectives
  - Specify outcome assessments
  - Establish student growth targets
  - Determine strategies to be used to meet objectives and targets
  - Identify professional development to support success
  - Reflect upon and appraise process and progress, and set new data-based goals



EXCELLENCE  
FOR ALL

*The Pathway to the Promise.™*

EXCELLENCE

FOR ALL

Pittsburgh Principals' Incentive Program (PPIP),  
Alyssa Ford-Heywood

- Background
- Understanding the Payout Structure
- Program Challenges
- Program Successes

# Background of Pittsburgh Public Schools' PULSE Program

# Reasons for Focusing on Principals

Belief that leadership is the foundation of systems changes within school

- Effective accountability systems focus on improvement of practice and performance
  - Principals in best position to ensure school accountability and to facilitate practice changes and performance improvements within a school building

# What is PULSE?

**Comprehensive Accountability System that assists district leaders to become successful in improving student achievement through the following strategies:**

- **Recruitment**
- **Training**
- **Support**
- **Evaluation**
- **Improvement**
- **Compensation**



# Components of PULSE

- Pittsburgh Emerging Leadership Academy (PELA)
- Administrative Induction Program
- Leadership Academy
- Assistant Superintendent Mentoring and Training
- Performance-Based Evaluation
- Performance-Based Compensation

# Pittsburgh Principal Incentive Program (PPIP)

- Falls under the district's PULSE umbrella
  - Evaluation
  - Compensation
- Pittsburgh Principal Incentive Program (PPIP)
  - Funded by U.S. Department of Education TIF dollars

# Performance-Based Evaluation

- Evaluations differentiate between novice and experienced principals
- Process considers self-assessment that includes feedback from the assistant superintendents and evidence collected by both principals and assistant superintendents

# Performance-Based Evaluation

Common standards of leadership established for principals identified in the Administrators' Performance Standard Rubric

- Seven standards of the rubric are based on the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards
  - Focus on learning, teaching and creation of rich learning environments
- Designed to evaluate performance on four levels instead of satisfactory and unsatisfactory
  - New ratings include rudimentary, emerging, proficient and accomplished

# Performance-Based Compensation

Recognizes the and rewards the contributions of  
“top performers”

- Compensation no longer rewarded based on seniority
- Principals now compensated based on their performance and student achievement outcomes
  - Performance Increment
  - Achievement Bonus

# Performance Increment

- Based on demonstration of leadership effectiveness as measured by the performance standard rubric
- Increment amount of up to \$2000
- Becomes part of the regular salary

# Achievement Bonus

- Based on demonstrating growth in student achievement
  - VAM (SPI-2, Third Grade Reading and High School Measures)
    - Includes various components depending on school configuration
- One time payment
- Does not become part of the regular salary

# Each Principal Can Earn Up To \$10,000 Based on Student Achievement

## *Maximum Possible Bonuses for Each Component*

### SPI-2 Components

Level	Regular	3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Reading Emphasis	High School Measures	Total
K-5	\$6,000	\$4,000		\$10,000
K-8	\$8,000	\$2,000		\$10,000
6-8	\$10,000			\$10,000
9-12	\$8,000		\$2,000	\$10,000

# Implementation Challenges

# Programmatic Challenges

- Special Schools
- Communication

# Special Schools

- Achievement bonus calculations appeared to be a poor fit for many of our special schools
  - Growth not always measured in the same way as traditional schools
    - Gifted
    - High incidents
    - Alternative
    - Emotional Support



## Other Concerns Identified for the schools serving these students:

- Some students only attended the site once a week
- Some did not take our state assessment
- State assessment may be attributed to their home school

# Solutions We Explored

- Attempted to identify alternative bonus calculations suitable for the populations served by the schools
- Appealed to the Dept. of Education for a change of scope excluding this group from the achievement bonus only

# COMMUNICATION

## Communication (Year 1)

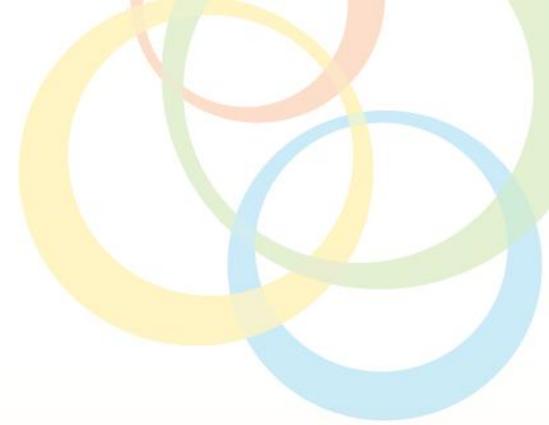
- Principals provided with a variety of written communications and trainings
  - There was still evidence that principals experienced some difficulty in understanding some of the core components of the initiative during the first year

# Lessons Learned

- Communicate often
- Communicate in many forms
  - PULSE Website
  - PULSE Bulletin
  - Sharing Steering Committee Meeting Minutes
  - Question and Answer session related to PPIP during each month principal meeting

# Our Success!

- Seniority-Based Salary System replaced with Pay for Performance Compensation for All District Principals
  - Indicating a district commitment to sustaining the program
- Buy-in from principals and community groups
- Increased comfort using the tools associated with evaluation
- Development of a plan to ensure that the most effective principals in the highest need schools



**Questions?**

# Conclusion

- Archived and Remaining Webcasts
  - Archived webcasts available on the Center for Educator Compensation (CECR) website: [www.cecr.ed.gov](http://www.cecr.ed.gov)
  - Participation, Cooperation, and Buy-In: Stakeholder Engagement and New Forms of Teacher Compensation
    - April 1, 2010  
2:00 pm EDT
  - Anticipating the Data Quality Challenges in TIF: Delivering Student-Teacher Linkages and Managing and Presenting Complex Data
    - April 15 , 2010  
2:00pm EDT
- Resources
  - CECR Award Structure webpage:  
<http://www.cecr.ed.gov/planning/structure/awardStructure.cfm>
  - CECR Guidebook Module: Principals and Alternative Compensation:  
<http://www.cecr.ed.gov/guides/principalCompensation.pdf>
  - Texas DATE Learning Modules:  
<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lpo/dateproject/lm2/resources.php>

# Contacts

Cortney Rowland, Learning Point Associates

[Cortney.rowland@learningpt.org](mailto:Cortney.rowland@learningpt.org)

Michael Christian, University of Wisconsin

[mchristian2@wisc.edu](mailto:mchristian2@wisc.edu)

Patrick Schuermann, Vanderbilt University

[Patrick.schuermann@vanderbilt.edu](mailto:Patrick.schuermann@vanderbilt.edu)

Alyssa Ford-Heywood, Pittsburgh Public Schools

[afordheywood1@pghboe.net](mailto:afordheywood1@pghboe.net)