

Indicator: The LEA/School has developed a system of providing performance-based incentives using valid data on whether performance indicators have been met. (5169)

Explanation: The evidence review indicates that performance-based evaluation systems, increasingly popular in reform models, are more likely to be effective when district and school leaders establish a clear, transparent, and fair awards system. In addition, the LEA/School must establish a clear and valid process for determining whether performance indicators are met. Doing so entails identifying what data is readily available and will be collected to ascertain mastery of performance targets. The district and school in conjunction with key stakeholders, should document the process and data types used in performance indicator success.

Questions: How will the district/school determine which data will be used to ascertain staff meet their performance targets? What process will the district/school use for reaching consensus with key stakeholders on which data to use to confirm that performance indicators are met? How will the LEA/school ensure clear, transparent communications regarding the data used to determine performance targets are met?

Evidence Review: Providing Performance-Based Incentives

An increasingly popular local reform strategy to supplement teacher pay and increase shared accountability for student results is to design and implement a performance-based incentives program. Performance-based incentives typically are monetary and may apply to individuals or be based on the collective performance of all staff in the school. Although the evidence on the impact of performance-related incentives on student learning is only starting to emerge, early figures indicate a range of results, including no significant effect (Springer et al., 2009), positive impact on student achievement on high-stakes mathematics tests (Vigdor, 2008), and some positive gains in student achievement scores at the elementary level, although effects may drop off in later years (Springer et al., 2008). In addition, a more consistent finding is that performance-based incentives lead to teacher retention in targeted schools (Springer et al., 2009). Further, there is evidence that the traditional resistance among teachers to differentiated pay is subsiding. A recent study finds that Generation Y teachers (e.g., those born between 1977-1995) are more open to differential pay than are their more veteran counterparts, and that between half and two-thirds of teachers from all age groups support pay incentives for teachers who achieve National Board Certification, take on difficult assignments, put in more effort, or consistently receive high ratings from their principals.

To be effective, performance-based incentive systems should involve significant teacher input at each stage of development and implementation, set clear performance goals, use multiple measures of teacher performance, provide monetary incentives that are large enough to affect teacher behavior, be sustained with resources available over the long-term, and be subject to rigorous evaluations of program implementation.

Action Principles

For District

1. Base performance incentives on multiple measures of strong performance.

2. Ensure that valid data are available on whether performance indicators have been met.
3. Decide whether to award individual or school-wide performance incentives.
4. Create a system for making awards that is transparent and fair.
5. Determine the amount of the incentives, based on budgetary considerations and consideration of what is needed to be effective.
6. Work with teachers and teachers' union at each stage of development and implementation.
7. Secure sufficient funding for long-term program sustainability.
8. Develop and implement a communication plan for program clarity and building stakeholder support.

(Perlman & Redding, 2011, p. 93)

In its 2013 *Teacher Keys Effectiveness System*, the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) describes how it took some of its Race to the Top funds to launch the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES), stating, "Research indicates the most important factor in a student's education is first and foremost the teacher. When students are assigned to ineffective teachers for three years in a row, insurmountable academic losses occur. The goal of Georgia's Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) is to provide teachers with meaningful feedback and support opportunities which lead to improved teacher performance and consequently, improved student outcomes. The new evaluation system offers clear and precise indicators and resources to guide teachers and evaluators through the process. This document outlines the TKES framework, as well as the initiatives procedures which apply to full implementation years beginning 2012-2013, unless otherwise specified during a pilot year for the district" (Barge, 2013, p. 11).

The GaDOE says TKES consists of three components which contribute to an overall Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM): Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS), Surveys of Instructional Practice (student perception surveys) and Student Growth and Academic Achievement. It says it has designed TKES with multiple components "that provide data and feedback regarding teacher performance from different sources and perspectives. The evaluation system is designed to provide information that will guide professional growth and development for each teacher, as well as to provide information that will be used in the calculation of the annual Teacher Effectiveness Measure (TEM). The collection of educator effectiveness data and feedback to educators will occur throughout the process for the TKES as the effectiveness system is designed to provide another forum for ongoing instructional dialogue" (Barge, 2013, p. 12).

The GaDOE says, "The Teacher Assessment on Performance Standards (TAPS) component of the Teacher Keys Effectiveness System provides evaluators with a qualitative, rubrics-based evaluation method by which they can measure teacher performance related to quality performance standards. TAPS offers a balance between structure and flexibility. It is prescriptive in that it defines common purposes and expectations, thereby guiding effective instructional practice. At the same time, it provides flexibility by allowing for creativity and individual teacher initiative. The overarching goal of TKES is to support the continuous growth and development of each teacher by monitoring, analyzing, and applying pertinent data compiled within a system of meaningful feedback that will contribute to increasing student achievement" (Barge, 2013, p. 25).

References and Resources

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