

RESEARCH ON THE USE OF INCENTIVE PAY FOR IMPROVING INDIVIDUAL & SYSTEM PERFORMANCE

PROFESSIONAL COMPENSATION FOR TEACHERS

American Federation of Teachers Resolution, 2002

This comprehensive position on teacher pay makes clear that the AFT is willing to consider—and that in fact its locals have implemented—alternatives to the traditional pay scale. Most notably, plans that provide pay for additional roles, National Board Certification, specific knowledge and skills, and schoolwide collaborations around achievement goals are already in place around the country. The statement also points to relatively new possibilities: increased compensation for those who agree to teach in low-performing or hard-to staff schools, and consideration of multiple measures of student achievement as part of schoolwide or group incentives.

TEACHER PERFORMANCE PAY: A REVIEW (EXCERPT)

M.J. Podgursky and M.G. Springer, *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, Fall 2007

This excerpt provides a brief history of U.S. teacher pay policies since the early 1800s, an overview of types of performance pay—including “merit-based pay” and “knowledge and skill-based pay”—and a description and chart offering a comparison of many current performance pay plans. Unfortunately a few recently enacted models, such as the New York City plan, are not included.

PAY-FOR-PERFORMANCE: NEW DEVELOPMENTS AND ISSUES

M. D. Cannon, Working Paper, National Center on Performance Incentives, October 2007

This paper explores the increased use of pay-for-performance, drawing examples from healthcare, education, and the government. The author makes suggestions on how best to implement pay-for-performance programs, while drawing attention to key implementation problems. He argues that such plans will be enhanced by greater research and experimentation, as well as an increased emphasis on initial design. Specifically, practitioners need to be wary of common design problems, including difficulty in measuring performance, limited funds for payouts, and perceptions of unfairness.

TESTIMONY, HEARING ON THE STATUS OF FEDERAL PERSONNEL REFORM

J. Pfeffer, Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, Postal Service, and the District of Columbia, U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, March 8, 2007

This leading advocate of evidence-based management practices urges caution in the adoption of performance pay plans, arguing that “the evidence for the effectiveness of individual pay for performance is mixed, at best.” While noting that motivation enhances performance, he observes that money is not always the prime motivation and offers a comprehensive list of what he calls “high commitment or high performance work practices” that may be more important. These, says Pfeffer, are rooted in a philosophy that is “one of valuing the workforce, treating it with respect and dignity” and “as if their jobs are meaningful and their contributions important.”