

**Governor's Educator Excellence Award Program:  
Governor's Educator Excellence Grants**

**Year One Interim Report:  
Campus Plans and Teacher Experiences**

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EXAMINING PERFORMANCE INCENTIVES IN EDUCATION  
**NATIONAL CENTER ON  
PERFORMANCE INCENTIVES**

# **Governor's Educator Excellence Award Program: Governor's Educator Excellence Grants**

## **Year One Interim Report: Campus Plans and Teacher Experiences<sup>1</sup>**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the first in a series of evaluation deliverables reporting on the landscape, implementation, and impact of the Governor’s Educator Excellence Grant (GEEG). This report provides an overview of GEEG during its first year of implementation, including the defining features of schools’ incentive plans and early implementation experiences as evident through teachers’ attitudes and professional practice. Findings from future years of the GEEG program will be provided in subsequent evaluation reports.

### Key Policy Points

This report highlights and expands upon the following key policy points.

- Recently, Texas education policy efforts have focused on improving teaching quality throughout the state, culminating in the creation of the nation’s largest statewide performance incentive system.
- The Governor’s Educator Excellence Grant (GEEG) program is the first of several multi-million dollar statewide programs committed to the development of performance incentives for high-performing educators.
- Campus GEEG plans tend to focus on measures of student performance and teacher collaboration as criteria for distributing awards to teachers; schools are less inclined to use measures of teacher initiative and hard-to-staff areas, even though they are permitted under GEEG guidelines.
- GEEG award amounts for teachers are consistently poorly aligned with state recommended parameters (\$3,000 minimum; \$10,000 maximum); most awards are lower than the advised minimum.
- Teachers are in consistent agreement that school staff were involved in the development of GEEG plans, with the most involved stakeholders being administrators, teachers, and then non-instructional staff.
- On average, teachers agree that GEEG plans are both fair and having beneficial effects at their respective schools.
- Even during the first year of GEEG implementation, some – but not all – teachers appear to be adapting their professional practice in response to the opportunity to earn a financial incentive.

## Overview

The chapters of this report address the following questions.

- What is the landscape of public education reform in Texas, and what have its implications been for the development of a statewide performance incentive system?
- What are the key components and common characteristics of campus GEEG plans?
- What performance measures do campuses most frequently use in creating incentive plans to promote student achievement?
- What are teachers' attitudes toward campus GEEG plans?
- How are teachers changing their professional practices and behaviors – if at all – in response to the implementation of campus GEEG plans?

# CHAPTER 1

## STATE POLICY AND BACKGROUND

This chapter provides an overview of public education reform in the state of Texas. More specifically, the intent of this chapter is to:

- Highlight significant policy changes related to teacher quality;
- Situate these policy changes within the broader educational research literature related to teacher effectiveness and performance-based incentive pay plans;
- Introduce the role of educator incentive pay systems designed to enhance the number of highly qualified teachers, improve instructional effectiveness, and enhance student learning.

### Key Policy Points

This chapter highlights and expands upon the following key policy points.

- Texas continues to lead the nation in innovative education reforms, including school and district accountability programs and performance-based pay policy.
- Texas operates the single largest performance-based pay program in United States public education system that will provide much needed insight to further inform future incentive systems, both in Texas and nationwide.
- The direct evaluation literature on incentive plans is slender; nonetheless, it is sufficiently promising to support extensive policy experiments in combination with careful follow-up evaluations.
- The evaluation literature also puts forward initial – while not yet conclusive – recommendations for the design of performance-based incentive programs, including the need to provide sufficiently large award amounts to ultimately impact teaching and learning.

### Overview

This chapter addresses the following questions.

- What is the public education reform landscape in Texas?
- What issues within the Texas public education system are in need of improvement?
- How does research on teacher quality and pay reform inform these issues?

## Comprehensive, Systemic Reform

A long-term vision of standards-based accountability and incremental reform has shaped education policy in Texas over the past several decades. The scale of this state reform is enormous. These advances emerged from careful collaboration between state policymakers and business leaders. During the last 10 years alone, Texas has done the following.

- Rewritten the state education code.
- Introduced new curriculum standards and assessments.
- Aligned instructional materials with state standards.
- Constructed an accountability system that holds schools responsible for the performance of both individual students and special populations.
- Established a social promotion policy requiring students to meet standards at specific grade levels.
- Developed academic initiatives to assist underperforming students.
- Crafted new standards for educator preparation and certification.
- Designed a new school finance system.
- Enhanced local control through a set of new regulatory freedoms and financial incentives.

Results of reform are writ large in the performance of Texas students, as measured by state assessments and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). Although the standard for student proficiency has steadily increased, passing rates on state assessments have continued to grow and the achievement gap between student subgroups has narrowed.

For example, fourth-grade students in Texas public schools have posted steady increases in NAEP scores. As shown in Table 1 below, in 1992, state performance was just below the national average in fourth grade math for all students, but student performance exceeded the national average by 2005. Gains by all student subgroups in Texas public schools exceeded national gains, as well.

**Table 1: 4<sup>th</sup> Grade NAEP Math Scale Scores, Texas v. Nation**

|                  | Texas |      |      | Nation |      |      |
|------------------|-------|------|------|--------|------|------|
|                  | 1992  | 2005 | Gain | 1992   | 2005 | Gain |
| African-American | 199   | 228  | +29  | 192    | 220  | +28  |
| Hispanic         | 209   | 235  | +26  | 201    | 226  | +25  |
| White            | 229   | 254  | +25  | 227    | 246  | +17  |
| All Students     | 218   | 242  | +24  | 219    | 237  | +18  |

Source: The Nation's Report Card, State Mathematics 2005, Texas Snapshot Report, National Assessment of Educational Progress, NCES, 2006 <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/stt2005/2006454TX8.pdf>  
 NAEP State Mathematics 2000 Report, Texas, Table 1C, NCES, 2001  
<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/pdf/stt2000/2001519TX.pdf>



## Opportunities for Improvement

Despite these remarkable successes, there still is room for continued progress in Texas public schools. NAEP scores show the pace of improvement is slowing for elementary and middle schools, while the majority of young students fail to acquire the level of academic proficiency that appears essential for success in more advanced studies (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2005). This is particularly true for economically disadvantaged students, a population that currently represents 55% of K-12 public school enrollment in Texas and continues to grow.

In 2005 and 2006, less than one-third of Texas fourth- and eighth-grade students scored at the level associated with proficiency in various NAEP-tested subjects. The single exception was fourth-grade math, in which 40% of students demonstrated proficiency. As shown in Table 2, in comparison with national percentages, Texas students demonstrate a higher proficiency in math and lower proficiency in science and reading.

**Table 2: Percent At or Above Proficient,  
4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Student Proficiency on 2005 NAEP Texas v. Nation**

|                       | Math  |        | Reading |        | Science |        |
|-----------------------|-------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
|                       | Texas | Nation | Texas   | Nation | Texas   | Nation |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade | 40%   | 35%    | 29%     | 30%    | 25%     | 27%    |
| 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade | 31%   | 28%    | 26%     | 29%    | 23%     | 27%    |

Source: State Education Data Profiles, IES, National Center for Education Statistics, Expanded Data Listing

<http://nces.ed.gov/programs/stateprofiles/sresult.asp?mode=full&displaycat=7&s1=48>

The Nation's Report Card, State Science 2005, Texas Snapshot Report, National Assessment of Educational Progress, NCES, Grade 4 and Grade 8, 2006 <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard//pdf/stt2005/2006467TX8.pdf> and <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard//pdf/stt2005/2006467TX4.pdf>

The gains realized by Texas elementary and middle school students (see Table 1) have not translated into improved academic outcomes in high schools. Aside from modest improvements in graduation rates over the past decade, academic proficiency of graduates has remained stagnant.

Moreover, according to a Texas High School Project report (2006), the majority of students leave Texas public schools unprepared for skilled employment, vocational training, or higher education. Although 66% of Texas public school graduates indicate interest in postsecondary education by taking tests of postsecondary readiness, few demonstrate the academic readiness necessary to succeed. For example, while overall Texas ACT scores for English exceeded that of the college readiness benchmark in 2006 (19.4 v. 18), such was not the case for math (20.6 v. 22), reading (20.5 v. 21), and science (20.3 v. 24).

Consequently, while the greatest challenge facing public policy in Texas today appears to be improving high schools, it is the entire K-12 system of public education that must be substantially strengthened if Texas is to increase the high school graduation rate, boost postsecondary readiness of high school graduates, close the achievement gap, and create a skilled workforce. A state policy report describes the critical importance of improving Texas public schools as follows (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2000):

Texas stands at a crossroads. In one direction lies a future that follows the path of the current courses of action. Enrollments in the states public and independent colleges and universities are not keeping pace with the booming Texas population. There is a shortfall in the number of degrees and certificates earned. And, few degrees and certificates earned leads to a less educated workforce. The state's workers are not able to support a growing state economy, which is necessary for a higher quality of life for all Texans, and individuals have fewer personal choices.

At the current rate of population growth and educational attainment, the state's chief demographer predicts a 60% increase in the number of Texans without a high school diploma, 29% decrease in the number of Texans with a bachelor's degree, 13% decrease in average household income, and a 40% increase in poverty (The Center for Demographic and Socioeconomic Research and Education, 2002).

To overcome these obstacles, Texas will need to continue pushing forward state policies that target teacher quality and local innovation. In his recent testimony before the State Senate Select Committee on Education Reform & Public School Finance, Hanushek (2006) stated:

The State of Texas should be proud of its schools and of the policies that exists. The early development of a thorough accountability system has helped to improve the achievement of students, particularly minority and disadvantaged students. This policy leadership has received national attention. Now is the time to take the next steps – to push all students farther. Texas can, with some further improvements, establish itself as a 'high skill state.' But in my judgment the current system will not take Texas there. The policies that led to improvements over the past decade appear to be hitting a plateau. From research into student achievement, the only way to real improvement from here is through improvements in teacher quality.

## Connecting Performance Incentives with the Research

### Focus on Student Success

One of the primary challenges that must be addressed to improve student achievement and close the achievement gap is the fact that economically-disadvantaged students generally require more academic instruction and more effective teachers than are required by middle-class students (Education Trust, 2006; Ross, McDonald, Alberg, McSperrin-Gallagher and Calloway, 2005; Snipes, Doolittle and Herlihy, 2005). Research indicates that under-achieving students benefit from effective teachers more than students of average or high ability (Hanushek and Rivkin, 2003; North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 2005). Conversely, ineffective teachers exert an adverse impact on achievement for all students, but most particularly for under-achieving students (Gordon, Kane and Staiger, 2006; Education Trust, 2004).

Despite the importance of assigning the most effective teachers to the most at-risk students, several studies indicate that these students are least likely to be instructed by effective teachers (Peske and Haycock, 2006; Gordon, Kane and Staiger, 2006). State reports, furnished in compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act, confirm the disproportionate assignment of less experienced, less qualified teachers to classrooms and schools with large concentrations of economically-disadvantaged students (McClure, Piche and Taylor, 2006). Student performance in Texas public schools is challenged by a lack of qualified teachers, according to the state's most recent compliance

report for No Child Left Behind. Like other states, Texas has a significant proportion of unqualified teachers (i.e., not meeting highly qualified NCLB standards) in high poverty/minority schools, although this number is relatively low compared to other states (Texas Education Agency, 2006).

### **Teacher Effectiveness**

Research suggests the most effective way to improve student achievement is by enhancing teacher quality. Over the past decade, scientific studies using unique longitudinal databases provide compelling evidence that teacher quality is the single most important factor in a child's education. This evidence challenged prevailing assumptions about teaching and learning, particularly the belief that student characteristics have greater influence over educational outcomes than teachers and schools.<sup>1</sup>

A number of research studies conclude that increasing teacher effectiveness is very promising as a mechanism for improving student performance, outweighing the impact of other reforms. For example, Leigh and Mead (2005) discovered that switching from an average to a highly effective teacher can provide twice the academic benefit for students as the effect of a 10% reduction in class size. Additional research found that assigning students to effective teachers results in a full year of additional academic growth, over and beyond expected annual gains (Hanushek and Rivkin, 2003).

While researchers have been able to demonstrate the impact of individual teachers on students, they have been unable to identify a significant relationship between teacher quality and qualifications such as highest degree held, certification, licensing scores, and experience (Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain, 2005; Ballou and Podgursky, 1997). The inability to link teacher qualifications to teacher quality leaves student achievement as the only way to identify an effective teacher. As noted by researchers Ballou and Podgursky (1997), "The surest sign that schools have been hiring more effective teachers would be improvement in student achievement."

### **The Roots of Performance Incentive Programs**

Performance incentive programs are based on the theory that incentives furnish schools with the tools to identify and retain high quality teachers, and help teachers focus on the instructional changes required to help students make sizeable academic gains (changes that involve different ways of teaching). Incentive programs offer schools a way to make teacher salaries more comparable with and competitive to salaries earned by private sector professionals.

In contrast to how most public school teachers are paid today, compensation in the private sector is generally related to an individual's performance on the job and characteristics of the job (Podgursky & Springer, 2007). In the private sector, performance-related salaries and incentives have proven useful for increasing corporate productivity and employee compensation. The Business Roundtable reports that the vast majority of American businesses use some form of performance-related pay, and that two out of three programs produce increased productivity or other improvements (Business Roundtable, 2000). Moreover, a leading compensation textbook reports that over three-

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example Rivkin, Hanushek and Kain, 1998; Hanushek, Kain, O'Brien and Rivkin, 2005; Wright, Horn and Sanders, 1997; Kane, Rockoff and Staiger, 2004; Boyd, Grossman, Lankford and Loeb, 2006; Aaronson, Barrow and Sanders, 2003

fourths of exempt (non-hourly) employees in large firms are covered by merit pay systems (Mikovich & Newman, 2005).

### **The Research on Performance Incentives**

Performance-based pay and incentives are relatively new in public education, although their use is growing. Newness of these efforts means there is limited research, particularly little scientific research, examining the impact of introducing performance-based pay practices into education. Most of this research examines the impact of performance incentives awarded to groups of teachers or to schools, with little research devoted to individualized incentives.

Despite limitations, there are a number of scientific studies that offer sound information about the use of performance incentives in public education. In a recent review of the research on teacher pay, Podgursky and Springer (2007) concluded that:

The direct evaluation literature on incentive plans is slender, focused on short-run motivational effects, and highly diverse in terms of methodology, targeted populations, and programs evaluated. Nonetheless, it is fairly consistent in finding positive program effects, although it is not at present sufficiently robust to prescribe how systems should be designed – e.g., optimal size of bonuses, mix of individual versus group incentives. It is sufficiently promising to support more extensive field trials and policy experiments in combination with careful follow-up evaluations.

The two most rigorous evaluations to date come from abroad. Muralidharan and Sundararaman (2006) report first year results from a World Bank-sponsored experiment on performance pay in rural Indian schools. This is a first-year report on a project that is slated to run until 2011. The researchers randomly sampled 500 rural schools in a large Indian state (Andhra Pradesh) and assigned them to one of four treatment groups or a control group, with each group comprising one hundred schools. One of the treatment groups had an individual teacher pay bonus system tied to student test score gains and another had a school wide bonus tied to test score gains. The average bonus payments in either incentive scheme were small relative to base pay (4-5%), but the maximum possible payment amounted to a substantial share of pay (roughly 14 and 29% of pay for group and individual, respectively). The two other treatment groups were provided additional resources (teacher aides or an extra block grant), and a control group received no additional resources.

Muralidharan and Sundararaman found positive program treatment effects in math and languages respectively relative to the control group. They found no evidence of adverse effects of the program on other test scores or teacher morale, and no significant difference in program effects between the group and individual incentive schools. Since the researchers attempted ex ante to hold incremental spending in the different treatment groups the same, another interesting finding is that the incentive schemes yielded test score gains exceeding those of the added-resource treatments. Thus, the incentive schemes were not only found to be effective, but cost-efficient relative to added resource schemes. (This finding is replicated in Lavy's Israel studies discussed below.)

Lavy has undertaken careful studies of performance “tournaments” in Israel.<sup>2</sup> In both of these studies the program was designed to raise passing rates on high school exit exams in low socioeconomic high schools in Israel. Although schools were not randomly assigned to a control or

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<sup>2</sup> Tournaments award prizes not on the basis of an absolute standard but on the basis of relative performance.

treatment condition, both programs were implemented using three formal assignment rules (e.g., grade range, past performance, and matriculation rate) permitting for a more rigorous evaluation design<sup>3</sup>. The Israeli Teacher-Incentive Experiment was also carefully designed to minimize gaming or other opportunistic behavior on the part of teachers and school administrators (i.e., performance measures based on the size of the graduating cohort in order to discourage schools from encouraging transfer or dropout of poor students, or by placing poor students in non-matriculation tracks).

Lavy's (2002) first study considered a tournament in which a selected group of low-performing high schools competed on the basis of school-wide performance. The top-third of schools as determined by their year-to-year improvement in test scores were given awards ranging in size from \$13,250 to \$105,000. Teacher bonuses ranged from about \$250 to \$1,000, and were distributed equally to all teachers in the "winning" schools. Lavy found a positive effect on participating schools relative to a non-participating comparison group of low-performing schools. He also concluded that endowing schools with additional resources (i.e., 25% of school awards had to go to capital improvements) contributed to increased student performance.

The second study examined an individual teacher bonus program, also run as a tournament (Lavy, 2004). Essentially, teacher participants were ranked on the basis of value-added contributions to student achievement on a variety of exit exams, and bonuses were given to top performing teachers. The program included 629 teachers, of who 302 won awards. The bonuses were substantial; as large as \$7,500 per class on an average base pay of \$25,000. Results indicate a positive effect in that the performance of participating teachers (i.e., both bonus recipients and non-recipients) rose relative to a comparison group of teachers who did not participate in the incentive program.

Lavy (2004) also investigated whether the program exhibited the type of negative spillover consequences often discussed in the research literature. For example, test scores in other non-tournament subjects did not fall. In addition, and consistent with the teacher value-added literature, teacher characteristics such as experience or certification could not predict the winners. Another interesting feature of this study is that Lavy compared the cost-effectiveness of the individual bonus scheme with that of group bonuses or another program providing additional educational resources, aside from pay, to traditionally low-achieving schools. He found that the cost per unit gain in the individual teacher incentive program dominated that in the group incentive or added resource programs.

The studies considered thus far evaluated specific incentive interventions. Figlio and Kenny (2007) take a different approach and analyze data from a national sample of U.S. K-12 schools in an attempt to estimate the effect of incentive pay by comparing the academic performance of schools with various types of incentive programs to those without. Merging data from the National Educational Longitudinal Survey of 1988, their own survey on incentive pay, and the 1993-94 Schools and Staffing Surveys, they examine the natural variation in the use of incentive-based pay among both public and private schools. Variation in incentive programs enabled construction of a school-level measure of the strength of the teacher incentive "dosage" reflecting not only the existence of a performance-based pay scheme but also its pecuniary consequences. Figlio and Kenny concluded that the effects of even modest doses of incentive pay are statistically significant in public

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<sup>3</sup> Lavy used a regression discontinuity design in his studies of the effects of incentive pay in Israel. This design allows for more precise measurements of effects of an intervention before and after it is implemented.

and private schools, as well as the effect of a high level of implementation of incentives relative to no incentive program. In substantive terms, an incentive pay program's impact is comparable to a one standard deviation decrease in days absent for the average student and an increase in students' maternal education of three years.

While the authors creatively linked multiple national data systems with their Survey of School Teacher Personnel Practice, there are methodological concerns that warrant mention. First, there was an eight year lag between student test scores reported in NELS and the Figlio and Kenny survey, thus making sample attrition a significant concern. If differential sample attrition took place this makes it difficult to interpret the reason for differences in test scores between the treatment and comparison conditions. Second, while the authors were able to increase the number of schools satisfactorily responding to their survey by matching within-district responses across two or more schools, the response rate was still very low (approx. 40%). Finally, there are challenges in assuring that the incentive pay programs were in place at the time of the NELS testing. In spite of these measurement problems, which might be expected to bias their estimates of the treatment effect toward zero (errors in measurement of the treatment variable), Figlio and Kenny add crucial insight into the relationship between individual teacher performance incentives and student achievement.

Winters, Ritter, Barnett, and Green (2007) conducted a small scale, but rigorous evaluation of the first two schools participating in Little Rock, Arkansas' Achievement Challenge Pilot Project (ACPP). Their evaluation examines the effect of ACPP on student proficiency in math compared to three other elementary schools with similar demographic and baseline achievement characteristics. ACPP ties performance bonuses to individual student fall-to-spring gains on a standardized student achievement test, ranging from \$50 per student (0-4% gain) up to \$400 per student (15% gain). In practice this yielded bonus payouts ranging from \$1,200 up to \$9,200 per teacher per year.

An attractive feature of the study is that the student gain score outcomes are estimated with a different assessment from that used to determine the bonuses (i.e., the students took two different standardized spring assessments). Use of an alternative test reduces the potential bias caused by teachers narrowly "teaching to the test" used for the bonus payout. Winters et al's preferred student fixed-effect estimates find a statistically significant 4.6 Normal Curve Equivalent (NCE) math gain for every year a student spent in an ACPP school. The ACPP bonus system, unlike many of the studies considered in this review, remains in place and has since expanded to five elementary schools during the 2006-07 school year.

### **Elements of Successful Performance Incentive Plans**

Although the direct evaluation literature on incentive plans is slender; it seems to indicate that performance incentives can exert a strong impact on teacher and student outcomes, both positive and negative. For example, in a Michigan high school that offered bonuses to teachers who raised their students' course completion rates, completion rates were significantly increased, but overall passing rates and grade point averages dropped because academically under-performing students were encouraged to remain in the classroom (Eberts et al, 2002). Consequently, it is essential to design incentives with care, institute reliable performance measures to ensure incentives produce the desired outcomes, and include a rigorous evaluation component to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program.

The Michigan high school described above illustrates the importance of establishing student achievement gains explicitly and directly as the objective of performance incentives. Although short-term, indirect outcomes – such as increased teacher attendance, lower turnover, and improved recruitment for hard-to-staff schools – are valuable, research shows these are intermediate objectives that are generally associated with, but do not necessarily result in improving student achievement (Podgursky & Springer, 2007).

Despite the limitations of the extant body of research on incentive pay and its impact in public education, the literature is sufficient enough – and promising enough – to support extensive policy experiments in combination with careful follow-up evaluations. In designing incentives to improve student achievement, it is essential to target performance incentives for academically successful schools, an approach that seems contrary to current thinking that low-performing schools often require additional funding to underwrite the costs of educating hard-to-educate students. However, it must be recognized that performance incentives and compensatory funding are two very different types of funding and intended to serve two very different purposes. Providing incentives to low-performing schools would likely incentivize low performance and not encourage changes necessary to increase student achievement (Podgursky & Springer, 2007).

## Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of public education reform in the state of Texas. Moreover, it highlighted significant policy changes as well as improvement needs for student learning and teacher quality. Particular attention was given to the role of educator incentive pay systems in the state's public education system.

As will be discussed in Chapter 2, Educator Incentive Pay in Texas, state policymakers have recently devised a system of statewide performance incentive programs. Guided by the body of research discussed in this first chapter, this state program surpasses the size of any statewide program throughout the nation.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **EDUCATOR INCENTIVE PAY IN TEXAS**

This chapter provides an overview of incentive pay systems currently operating in Texas, including a discussion of how this statewide framework for pay reform fits within the context of other national reform efforts. It concludes with a brief overview of the National Center on Performance Incentives' statewide evaluation of the Governor's Educator Excellence Grant (GEEG) program that is designed to inform Texas policymakers and educators.

#### **Key Policy Points**

This chapter highlights and expands upon the following key policy points.

- There has been significant growth in the number of performance-based pay initiatives in the United States public education system.
- Many school districts across Texas have implemented performance incentive programs, including locally-developed differentiated pay and the state-funded Governor's Educator Excellence Award Programs (GEEAP).
- The natural variation of existing performance incentive programs in Texas provides a unique opportunity to learn more about the impact of various program types.
- Texas' willingness to partner with an independent, third-party will provide valuable information for future policy decisions through rigorous evaluation of GEEG's impact on teaching and learning.

#### **Overview**

The following sections of this chapter address these questions.

- What is the incentive pay reform landscape in Texas and how does it fit within the context of teacher pay reform in the United States?
- What are the characteristics and objectives of the Governor's Educator Excellence Award Program and, specifically, the Governor's Educator Excellence Grants?
- What plans are in place to evaluate the Governor's Educator Excellence Grant (GEEG) program?



## National Framework for Performance Incentives

The need to provide more market-based pay for public school teachers has stimulated development of performance incentive plans in many schools and districts throughout the nation. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2006), during the 2003-04 school year,

- 24% of the nation's districts provided bonuses to teachers for professional development;
- 8% awarded bonuses for attaining National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification;
- 12% paid incentives to recruit or retain teachers in shortage areas; and
- 8% paid incentives for excellence in teaching.

The most widely known performance-related salary plan developed by a school district is Denver Public Schools' Professional Compensation System for Teachers (ProComp). In 1999, the Denver Classroom Teachers Association and the Denver Public Schools reached agreement on an alternative teacher pay plan that linked pay to student achievement and professional evaluations. Following refinement of the pilot model by teachers, principals, administrators and community members, ProComp was adopted in spring 2004 by the Board of Education and members of the Denver Classroom Teachers Association (Community Training and Assistance Center, 2004). The plan offers bonuses to individual teachers for such criteria as improving student achievement, completing professional development, earning advanced degrees, and provides all teachers with the opportunity to augment earnings.

In July 2005, the Minnesota State Legislature approved Q-Comp, a performance-related pay program for teachers. Q-Comp incorporates both traditional career ladders and professional development for teachers, advancing existing state standards by compensating teachers according to state-approved measures of student achievement. Under Q-Comp guidelines, 60% of any compensation increase must be based on district professional standards and on classroom-level student achievement gains. Q-Comp presently operates in only 22 of 348 regular school districts across the state; however in the next two years 134 school districts have indicated intent to submit a Q-Comp proposal to the state. Districts that are approved by the state department of education can be awarded up to \$260 more per student to support implementation and sustenance of their performance-based compensation plan.

Also widely recognized is the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), a performance-related comprehensive school reform model developed in 1999 by the Milken Family Foundation. The program is designed to increase the number of highly qualified teachers, improve instructional effectiveness, and enhance student achievement. TAP currently operates in more than 125 schools in 9 states and 50 districts with another 10 states presently pursuing program implementation in routinely low-performing schools.<sup>4</sup>

In 2006, Congress appropriated \$99 million per annum for the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF). TIF funds are geared to school districts, charter schools, and states on a competitive basis to fund development and implementation of principal and teacher performance-related pay programs.

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<sup>4</sup> These numbers are anticipated to grow recognizing TAP was a principal partner in three federally-funded Teacher Incentive Fund awards totaling an approximate \$67 million in funding over five years.

Although the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) estimated TIF dollars would fund an approximate 10 to 12 performance-related compensation projects with a per-project award size of \$8 million per year, a total of 16 awards were granted in Fall 2006, expending less than half of the \$99 million appropriation.<sup>5</sup> Both Dallas ISD and Houston ISD received grant awards totaling \$22.3 million and \$11.8 million, respectively, over the next five years.

## Compensation Reform for Texas Public Schools

School districts in Texas, as in other states, have been experimenting with differentiated pay and performance incentives to improve recruitment and retention by making teacher salaries more responsive to the labor market. Differentiated pay and performance incentives offer districts a way to supplement the state's single salary schedule, the statutory requirement that teacher salaries be based on years of employment and degree held. Texas districts have the freedom to develop salary alternatives because there is flexibility built into the state's schedule that permits districts to pay teachers above, but not below, salary steps.

As a result, salaries of Texas teachers are linked only loosely to the state schedule. Today, salary incentives and differentiated pay are becoming more prevalent. A recent salary survey indicates that 53% of responding districts paid performance incentives to teachers during the 2005-06 school year (Texas Association of School Boards and Texas Association of School Administrators, 2006). Incentives were paid for work in shortage areas, acquiring advanced qualifications, serving as mentors, improving attendance, retention, and raising student achievement.

Performance-based incentives, however, occupy a relatively small part of the salary universe in Texas. Only about 12% of school districts used performance pay plans; most of the plans were based on campus, rather than individual, performance and focused on teacher attendance rather than student outcomes.

Although improving student performance does not occupy a direct role in most of the locally-developed performance plans created by Texas school districts, there are exceptions meriting attention (Patterson, 2005).

- Dallas ISD established performance pay in 1990, awarding campus bonuses on the basis of test score gains, student attendance, grade-to-grade promotion, dropout rates, enrollment in advanced courses, and scores on tests of postsecondary readiness.
- Aldine ISD introduced performance pay in 1995 on the basis of the percentage of students passing state assessments, the percentage of students passing state assessments at specific achievement levels, and student attendance.

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<sup>5</sup> As part of the United States Department of Education's (USDE) Appropriations Act (P.L. 109-149), the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) is a direct discretionary Federal grant program. USDE plans to distribute the remaining \$43 million of year one appropriations in summer 2007 through a second grant competition already underway. However, strong opposition from the National Education Association coupled with a joint funding resolution in the House of Representatives asking for a reduction of TIF appropriations to \$200,000 per year has some questioning whether TIF will be reauthorized in 2008.

- In February 2006, Houston ISD became the nation’s largest school district with a performance pay plan for teachers, offering teachers up to \$3,000 additional pay for student achievement on state and national assessments.

## State Framework for Performance Incentives

While performance incentives earned increasing prominence in local school district policy over the past decade, incentives were not established by state policy until 2004 when Governor Perry outlined a plan for financial incentives to reward schools and teachers demonstrating high levels of improvement in student performance (House Research Organization, 2004). This plan was realized in November 2005 when an executive order was issued to create the Governor’s Educator Excellence Grant (GEEG) program – a \$10 million, three-year non-competitive grant that provides financial incentives for teachers who improve student achievement at campuses serving high proportions of economically disadvantaged students.

In June of 2006, Governor Perry and the 79<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature crafted the Governor’s Educator Excellence Award Program (GEEAP), creating the single largest performance-related pay program in the United States public education system. In addition to GEEG, GEEAP includes: the Texas Educator Excellence Grants (TEEG) and a district-level grant program yet to be named. If fully funded, by 2008, GEEAP is estimated to provide approximately \$330 million per annum to high-performing, high-poverty public schools in Texas.<sup>6</sup>

In the fall of 2006, the GEEG program made available funds ranging from \$60,000 to \$220,000 per year to 100 schools. Funds were distributed in the form of non-competitive grants to schools that were in the top third of Texas schools (in 2004-2005) in terms of percentage of economically disadvantaged students and either:

- Carried a performance rating of Exemplary or Recognized, or
- Were in the top quartile on TEA’s Comparable Improvement measure<sup>7</sup>

The TEEG program is state-funded at \$100 million per year. Eligibility criteria and requirements are nearly identical to those of the GEEG program. However, schools must be in the top half of Texas schools in terms of percentage of economically disadvantaged students. Grant amounts range from \$40,000 to \$295,000 per year. For the 2006-07 school year, 1,163 campuses are eligible for grants. Both the GEEG and TEEG programs separate funds into Part I and Part II funds, with the former based on objective measures to improve student performance and the latter on a variety of incentives and professional growth activities.

<sup>6</sup> The 79<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature appropriated \$100 million for 2006-2007 to fund the Texas Educator Excellence Grant program. The 80<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature is currently considering continued funding.

<sup>7</sup> Comparable Improvement (CI) is a measure that calculates how student performance on the TAKS mathematics and reading/English language arts tests has changed (or grown) from one year to the next, and compares the change to that of the 40 schools that are demographically most similar to the target school. CI is calculated separately for reading/ELA and mathematics, based on individual student *Texas Growth Index* (TGI) values. The student-level TGI values are aggregated to the campus level to create an average TGI for each campus.

The district-level program yet to be named will be funded at approximately \$230 million annually with state funds provided through the Texas Educator Excellence Fund. All districts in the state will be eligible for funding. Districts may apply for funds for all campuses or for selected campuses. Districts are required to use at least 60% of funds to directly reward classroom teachers based on improvements in student achievement. Remaining funds may be used: (1) as stipends for mentors or teacher coaches, teachers certified in hard-to-staff subjects, or who hold post-baccalaureate degrees; (2) as awards to principals based on improvements in student achievement; or (3) to implement components of the Teacher Advancement Program.

## **Governor's Educator Excellence Grants**

Schools participating in GEEG received three-year grants beginning in August 2006 and will be funded through the 2008-09 school year. GEEG has three principal objectives. First, GEEG is designed to provide financial incentives to educators who demonstrate improved levels of student academic performance. Second, GEEG is designed to create additional opportunities for educators to improve their instructional abilities through the use of research-based instructional strategies. Third, GEEG incentives intend to keep high-performing teachers in Texas' neediest schools.

With three years of funding – \$10 million per year, beginning in the 2006-2007 school year – GEEG represents a significant state commitment. The program is limited to 100 schools in an effort to make sufficiently large incentive awards available to schools. It provides three-year campus grants with annual awards ranging from \$60,000 to \$220,000, based upon the size of student enrollment. GEEG ensures incentives reward and reinforce high and improving academic performance by targeting schools with high campus ratings or in the top quartile of Comparable Improvement (see footnote 7 for further explanation).

As previously stated, all GEEG schools are high-performing or high-improving schools comprised of high percentages of economically disadvantaged students. In fact, nearly 40% of GEEG schools have populations that are more than 95% disadvantaged, and another 30% have populations that are more than 90% disadvantaged. Only 7 GEEG schools have student populations that are less than 75% economically disadvantaged. GEEG schools also serve high percentages of minority students; overall, the GEEG student population is 79% Hispanic, 11% African-American, and 10% white.

Participation in GEEG is voluntary for districts, schools, and teachers; schools must elect to establish an educator incentive program. Incentive plans are locally developed and endorsed; a school's plan must be created and supported by a campus-based committee with significant teacher engagement, and the plan must be approved by both the district and local school board trustees.

Guidelines developed by the Texas Education Agency require that schools devote 75% (Part I) of each campus grant to full-time classroom teachers. School incentive plans must determine teacher eligibility for awards based on measures of improved student achievement and effective collaboration with teacher colleagues. Measures of these criteria must be objective and quantifiable to evaluate teachers for incentives. State guidelines identify two other, optional criteria that schools may use as the basis for awarding teacher incentives. The first is teachers' on-going initiative, commitment, and professionalism in activities that have a direct impact on student achievement. Second is assignment to a subject area in an established teacher shortage area.

The state requires that the remaining 25% (Part II) of each grant award be devoted to providing additional incentives for principals, assistant principals and/or other school staff (e.g., teacher aides, counselors, librarians, nurses), professional development activities, signing bonuses, teacher mentoring programs, new teacher induction programs, funding for feeder campuses, or any other program that directly contributes to improving student achievement.

## Evaluation

A key component of GEEG is evaluation. Detailed analyses of school incentive plans and their impact will be conducted by independent researchers with the National Center on Performance Incentives (NCPI). The resulting findings will equip policymakers with a better understanding of GEEG's effectiveness and any necessary modifications to maximize outcomes of teacher quality and student achievement.

The three-year evaluation of GEEG will include the following five objectives.

- A descriptive analysis of the design and implementation of GEEG by participating schools, including descriptions of models and approaches used in distributing incentive awards to classroom teachers.
- Detailed information regarding the distribution of incentive awards to classroom teachers, including the measures used by campuses in determining the amounts of incentive awards to distribute.
- A comprehensive, quantitative analysis of the impact of GEEG at participating schools, including the impact on key outcomes such as student achievement, teacher workforce trends, teacher behavior, and schools' organizational dynamics.
- A comprehensive, quantitative analysis of the potential impact of GEEG compared to other, non-participating schools.
- A detailed statistical analysis of the factors and characteristics associated with successful GEEG programs.

In pursuit of these five objectives, the evaluation will employ the following strategies.

- Annual review of GEEG schools' models, including analyses of program applications and annual progress reports to gauge the fidelity of program implementation.
- Annual review of GEEG teachers' award amounts to improve statewide understanding of GEEG's impact on teacher salary.
- Annual surveys of GEEG teachers – and teachers in non-GEEG schools – to understand how schools' programs impact teacher behavior and organizational dynamics.
- Annual quantitative analyses of teacher workforce trends to understand the impact of GEEG on teacher mobility and retention/attrition.
- Annual quantitative analyses of student achievement gains in GEEG and non-GEEG schools.

## Chapter Summary

This chapter provides an overview of performance incentive pay and its current role in both the national and Texas public education landscape. Incentive pay programs are becoming increasingly popular and have taken root in several large districts nationwide. Additionally, Texas has implemented the largest statewide incentive program in the nation, including the on-going Governor's Educator Excellence Grant (GEEG) program. With \$10 million annually in state funds, GEEG is the first of three statewide incentive programs and has already been implemented in 100 schools throughout Texas.

With such landmark incentive programs in motion, the Texas Education Agency has contracted with the National Center on Performance Incentives, an independent evaluator, to monitor the impact of incentive pay on student learning and teacher quality. The following chapters provide an interim report on evaluation findings to date, including:

- An overview of key characteristics of GEEG schools' incentive plans (Chapter 3);
- An overview of teachers' initial attitudes towards and reactions to GEEG plans (Chapter 4)

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **SUMMARY OF GEEG INCENTIVE PROGRAMS, Part I**

This chapter offers a summary of campus plans implemented by GEEG awardees. It provides a descriptive analysis of common program characteristics implemented by GEEG schools. Specific attention is given to their use of Part I funds to reward full-time teachers for improving student achievement, collaborating with colleagues, and participating in other professional activities that contribute to student achievement.

#### **Key Policy Points**

This chapter highlights and expands upon the following key policy points.

- In Year One of GEEG, most plans were primarily focused on student performance (criterion 1) and teacher collaboration (criterion 2).
- Schools used a large variety of indicators to measure GEEG criteria, particularly for teacher collaboration (criterion 2) and teacher initiative and commitment (criterion 3).
- Only 13 GEEG schools (18%) included hard-to-staff areas (criterion 4) in their campus plans.
- Most campuses do not plan to modify their GEEG plans after the first year of implementation.

#### **Overview**

The sections of this chapter provide more detailed findings to address the following questions.

- What are the components and common characteristics of Part I of GEEG campus plans?
- What performance measures do campuses most frequently use in creating incentive plans to promote high student achievement?

## **Review of GEEG Program Applications**

This chapter provides an overview of common features of GEEG schools' plans, with particular attention to their use of Part I funds to reward full-time teachers. Evaluators conducted a detailed analysis of schools' three-year GEEG program plans – as described in their submitted applications to TEA in the fall of 2006. A systematic analysis of 74 GEEG program applications revealed schools' intended uses of Part I program funding, including the size of teacher awards, the criteria by which awards were determined, and the strategies by which awards were distributed.<sup>8</sup>

### **Overview of Part I of GEEG**

Part I funding represents 75% of a school's total GEEG grant, which can range between \$60,000 and \$220,000 depending upon the size of the school's student enrollment. Part I funds are earmarked for full-time teachers at GEEG schools. Teacher awards are determined by four broad criteria, two of which are required, while the other two are optional. Schools must use quantifiable, objective measures of student performance (criterion 1) and collaboration with teacher colleagues (criterion 2). Additionally, they can use measures of teacher commitment and initiative (criterion 3), as well as placement in hard-to-staff areas (criterion 4),<sup>9</sup> to determine teacher award amounts.

For the first year of distributing GEEG teacher awards (2006-07), award amounts were determined retroactively by teacher performance during the previous school year (2005-06) – a year in which GEEG was not yet established. Accordingly, the 2005-06 school year is considered to be Year One of GEEG. In Years Two and Three of the program (2006-07 and 2007-08), GEEG plans will already be in place by the beginning of the school year allowing teachers to work towards the set award criteria in their schools. Thus, incentives will be distributed in the school years following each GEEG program year (i.e., awards for teacher performance in 2006-07 distributed in 2007-08, and awards for teacher performance in 2007-08 distributed in 2008-09) to allow schools time to analyze teachers' performance for the entire school year.

### **Methodology for Reviewing GEEG Applications**

In order to analyze schools' GEEG plans, evaluators developed a detailed taxonomy to code key features of program applications (see Appendix A: Glossary of Taxonomy Components). With a focus on Part I funding, this taxonomy allowed evaluators to identify characteristics of program components, such as:

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<sup>8</sup> The focus on Part I funding results from the nature of the GEEG funding distribution timeline. Schools received funding for Part I funds in the fall of 2006, while Part II funds were not distributed until later in the 2006-07 school year. Consequently, program applications submitted in the fall of 2006 contained more details on how schools intended to use Part I funds.

<sup>9</sup> Designated teacher shortage areas are identified using the Texas Education Agency's 2006-07 proposal for the state-developed alternate methodology as specified in 34 CFR §682.210(q)(7). This methodology is based on surveys of school personnel administrators and private non-profit school administrators. Using this methodology, shortage areas identified for the 2006-07 school year are mathematics, science, foreign language, special education, bilingual education, technology applications, and English as a Second Language.



- Amount of total campus grants;
- Minimum and maximum amounts of individual teacher awards;
- Indicators used to measure teacher performance on the four Part I criteria; and
- Strategies used to distribute teacher awards.

During the fall of 2006, evaluators used this taxonomy to analyze 74 GEEG applications that had been approved at the time. Two evaluators coded key program components within each of the applications,<sup>10</sup> and subsequently reviewed each other's findings to establish inter-rater reliability. These findings were then transferred into a statistical software package to conduct quantitative analyses of GEEG program characteristics.

This systematic approach for reviewing applications enhanced the validity of findings presented in the remaining sections of this chapter. However, it should be noted that information provided in GEEG applications may not have been an exhaustive explanation of schools' plans. Evaluators conducted follow-up calls with site coordinators to seek clarification when needed in hopes of minimizing that limitation. Additionally, implementation of GEEG programs at schools may vary from the stated application plans. Future evaluation initiatives, as described at the conclusion of this report, will clarify how GEEG programs may have changed upon implementation, if at all.

## Funding Information

In the fall of 2006, the GEEG program made available funds ranging from \$60,000 to \$220,000 per year to qualifying schools. Funds were distributed in the form of non-competitive grants to the 100 schools that were in the top third of Texas schools (in 2004-2005) in terms of percentage of economically disadvantaged students and either: (1) carried a performance rating of Exemplary or Recognized, or (2) were in the top quartile on TEA's Comparable Improvement measure (see footnote 7).

Qualifying schools earned various grant amounts based on the size of the student population at each campus. The following seven distribution categories were created based on campus size.

- Campuses with 1-449 students received grants of \$60,000.
- Campuses with 450-599 students received grants of \$90,000.
- Campuses with 600-699 students received grants of \$100,000.
- Campuses with 700-999 students received grants of \$135,000.
- Campuses with 1,000-1,399 students received grants of \$180,000.
- Campuses with 1,400-1,799 students received grants of \$210,000.
- Campuses with 1,800 or more students received grants of \$220,000.

Table 3 provides a breakdown of the campus grant amounts of the 74 schools included in this analysis. Over half of campuses received \$60,000 with another 12 and 13 schools receiving \$90,000 and \$135,000, respectively. Only one school received over \$180,000.

<sup>10</sup> See Appendix B: Part I Chart in GEEG Application – evaluators made extensive use of this component of GEEG applications when coding, as it organizes program characteristics in a uniform fashion across all 74 applications.

**Table 3: Breakdown of Campus Award Amounts**

| <b>Campus size</b>     | <b>Campus Award Amount</b> | <b>Number of Campus Recipients</b> | <b>Percent of Campus Recipients</b> |
|------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1-499 students         | \$60,000                   | 40                                 | 54.1%                               |
| 450-599 students       | \$90,000                   | 12                                 | 16.2%                               |
| 600-699 students       | \$100,000                  | 2                                  | 2.7%                                |
| 700-999 students       | \$135,000                  | 13                                 | 17.6%                               |
| 1,000-1,399 students   | \$180,000                  | 6                                  | 8.1%                                |
| 1,400-1,799 students   | \$210,000                  | 1                                  | 1.4%                                |
| 1,800 or more students | \$220,000                  | n/a                                | n/a                                 |

Campuses were required to allocate no more than 75% of the total campus award for funding Part I awards and 25% for Part II awards. Campuses could use no more than 5% of the total grant award to offset administrative costs associated with the grant. The majority of campus spending plans adhered to these guidelines, while four campuses distributed more than 75% of their total campus grants to reward teachers under Part I.

Planned awards for teachers varied considerably between campuses. GEEG guidelines recommended awards ranging from a minimum of \$3,000 to a maximum of \$10,000 per teacher. Part I awards to teachers for Year One are further detailed in Table 4. Overall, teacher awards ranged from \$250 to \$10,937. The average minimum award was \$2,897 and the average maximum award was \$3,726, limiting the distinction between minimum and maximum award amounts.

Overall, there was great variation of award amounts distributed to teachers in GEEG schools, also shown in Table 4. The most frequently used minimum awards - \$250 and \$2,250 – were only used by three schools. However, 43% of minimum awards fell within the range of \$1,000 to \$1,999. Similarly, the most frequently used maximum awards - \$2,250 and \$7,500 – were used by only three schools. Over one-third of maximum awards fell within the range of \$2,000 to \$2,999.

Fifty-four (73%) schools planned to use minimum awards below the TEA-recommended \$3,000. Additionally, 34 schools (46%) planned to use maximum awards of less than \$3,000.

**Table 4: Breakdown of Individual Teacher Award Amounts**

| Minimum award amounts | GEEG Schools |         | Maximum award amounts | GEEG Schools |         |
|-----------------------|--------------|---------|-----------------------|--------------|---------|
|                       | Number       | Percent |                       | Number       | Percent |
| Missing/Invalid       | 2            | 2.7%    | Missing/Invalid       | 2            | 2.7%    |
| \$0 to \$999          | 9            | 12.2%   | \$0 to \$999          | 1            | 1.4%    |
| \$1,000 to \$1,999    | 32           | 43.2%   | \$1,000 to \$1,999    | 7            | 9.5%    |
| \$2,000 to \$2,999    | 13           | 17.6%   | \$2,000 to \$2,999    | 26           | 35.1%   |
| \$3,000 to \$3,999    | 7            | 9.5%    | \$3,000 to \$3,999    | 10           | 13.5%   |
| \$4,000 to \$4,999    | 3            | 4.1%    | \$4,000 to \$4,999    | 11           | 14.9%   |
| \$5,000 to \$5,999    | 3            | 4.1%    | \$5,000 to \$5,999    | 9            | 12.2%   |
| \$6,000 to \$6,999    | 1            | 1.4%    | \$6,000 to \$6,999    | 2            | 2.7%    |
| \$7,000 to \$7,999    | 2            | 2.7%    | \$7,000 to \$7,999    | 4            | 5.4%    |
| \$8,000 to \$8,999    | 0            | 0.0%    | \$8,000 to \$8,999    | 0            | 0.0%    |
| \$9,000 to \$9,999    | 1            | 1.4%    | \$9,000 to \$9,999    | 1            | 1.4%    |
| \$10,000 to \$10,999  | 0            | 0.0%    | \$10,000 to \$10,999  | 1            | 1.4%    |

**Overall GEEG Criteria**

In order to allow schools to adapt to their particular needs, GEEG guidelines require that schools use at least two of four criteria. All participating schools were required to incorporate criterion 1 and criterion 2 into their plans, with the option of including criterion 3 and/or criterion 4. Each criterion provided various pathways for teachers to receive Part I awards.

- Criterion 1: Student Performance (required)
- Criterion 2: Teacher Collaboration (required)
- Criterion 3: Teacher Initiative and Commitment (optional)
- Criterion 4: Hard-to-Staff Areas (optional)

Additionally, schools were given the option of creating incentive plans that could change from Year One to the subsequent years of the program. Otherwise, they could create incentive plans that would remain consistent throughout each of the three program years. Schools were given this option due to the unique nature of Year One of GEEG. In Year One, teacher awards were retroactive, based upon their performance in a school year (2005-06) in which plans were not yet in place; while in Years Two and Three, teacher awards will be based on their performance after GEEG plans have already been established. Our review of GEEG applications indicated that 50 schools – over two-thirds (68%) – created plans that will remain consistent over all three years.

The following sections provide a more detailed analysis of schools’ use of Part I funds during Year One of GEEG. Future evaluation initiatives will review school plans for subsequent years. However, these analyses offer a glimpse of those future years knowing that most GEEG schools intend to maintain the same GEEG plan.

Table 5 presents the criteria used by schools during the first year of GEEG. Thirty-four schools (46%) developed plans that incorporated only the required criteria – student performance and

teacher collaboration. Another 26 schools (35%) used the optional criterion 3 (teacher initiative and commitment) in addition to required criteria. Only one school used required criteria and criterion 4 (hard-to-staff areas). Eleven schools (15%) used all four criteria.

**Table 5: GEEG Criteria Used in Year One**

| <b>GEEG Criteria</b>                                                                                                                                             | <b>Number of Schools</b> | <b>Percent of Schools</b> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Criterion 1: Student Performance +<br>Criterion 2: Teacher Collaboration                                                                                         | 34                       | 45.9%                     |
| Criterion 1: Student Performance +<br>Criterion 2: Teacher Collaboration +<br>Criterion 3: Teacher Initiative & Commitment                                       | 26                       | 35.1%                     |
| Criterion 1: Student Performance +<br>Criterion 2: Teacher Collaboration +<br>Criterion 4: Hard-to-Staff Areas                                                   | 1                        | 1.4%                      |
| Criterion 1: Student Performance +<br>Criterion 2: Teacher Collaboration +<br>Criterion 3: Teacher Initiative & Commitment +<br>Criterion 4: Hard-to-Staff Areas | 11                       | 14.9%                     |

The following sections provide a more detailed analysis of each of these four criteria and how GEEG schools used them in distributing Part I awards to teachers.

### **Criterion 1: Student Performance**

GEEG guidelines require that Part I awards be designed for full-time teachers who demonstrate “success in improving student performance using objective, quantifiable measures, such as local benchmarking systems, portfolio assessment, end of course testing, value-added assessment, etc.” Schools could choose from various indicators of student achievement and performance in creating measures for the teacher incentives. Measures included campus-wide ratings of academic performance, standardized student assessments, and other non-academic indicators related to student performance (e.g., student attendance, dropout rate, etc.).

#### **Measures of Student Achievement**

As outlined in Table 6 below, schools tended to use a number of student performance measures for criterion 1, including campus ratings, state and local assessments of student academic performance, and non-academic indicators. Evaluators used these indicators when coding GEEG applications.

**Table 6: Types & Frequency of Student Performance (Criterion 1) Measures**

| Type of Student Performance Measure    | Number of Schools | Percent of Schools |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>TEA Campus Rating</b>               | 32                | 42.3%              |
| Exemplary                              | 14                | 18.9%              |
| Recognized                             | 18                | 24.3%              |
| Acceptable                             | 16                | 21.6%              |
| <b>Comparable Improvement</b>          | 4                 | 5.4%               |
| Quartile 1                             | 4                 | 5.4%               |
| <b>Adequate Yearly Progress</b>        | 3                 | 4.1%               |
| <b>Student Assessments</b>             | 59                | 79.7%              |
| TAKS                                   | 58                | 78.4%              |
| SDAA                                   | 26                | 35.1%              |
| TPRI                                   | 15                | 20.3%              |
| Formative/benchmark tests              | 15                | 20.3%              |
| End-of-year/course tests               | 3                 | 4.1%               |
| Student portfolios                     | 1                 | 1.4%               |
| Other                                  | 25                | 33.8%              |
| <b>Other (Non-academic) Indicators</b> | 17                | 23.0%              |
| Student attendance                     | 7                 | 9.5%               |
| Drop-out rate                          | 5                 | 6.8%               |
| Teacher attendance <sup>†</sup>        | 5                 | 6.8%               |

N = 74

<sup>†</sup>Teacher attendance, used by five (6.8%) of schools, is not an indicator of student performance.

**Campus Ratings:** Each year, TEA assigns a rating to each campus based upon a combination of student passing percentages on state-level standardized tests, annual graduation rates and completion rates. One option used by schools to measure student performance (criterion 1) for GEEG was to base their teacher incentives on an overall campus rating. That is, if the campus achieved the required rating, all teachers eligible for Part I (i.e., full-time teachers) would receive the award amount associated with criterion 1.

Overall, thirty-seven schools (50%) included some measure of a campus rating (e.g., TEA Campus Rating, Comparable Improvement, AYP) for criterion 1. Of those, the following trends emerged.

- Only 11 schools (15%) used campus rating as the sole measure of this criterion.
- Another 16 schools (21.6%) used campus rating along with student assessment measures.
- The remaining ten schools used other combinations of measures – seven (9.5%) used campus rating, student assessment, and other non-academic measures, while the other three (4.1%) used campus rating only in combination with non-academic measures of student performance.

Thirty-two schools (43.2%) used campus ratings of Exemplary, Recognized, and/or Acceptable; making them the most commonly used measures of campus-wide performance.<sup>11</sup> Of those 32 schools, ten distributed awards if the campus achieved only the Acceptable rating; seven used only the Recognized rating; and another four used only the Exemplary rating. The other eleven schools used combinations of the TEA rating scale; for example, distributing one award amount to teachers if a school achieved an Acceptable rating and a higher amount if it achieved Recognized.

Schools also used – but less frequently – campus measures of Comparable Improvement (see footnote 7) for determining awards. Four schools (5%) distributed awards if campus performance placed them in the top quartile among comparable schools.

**Student Assessments:** Student performance was also measured using a variety of standardized test score results. Student assessment measures included Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), State-Developed Alternative Assessment (SDAA), and Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) scores. Schools also used results of local assessments, such as formative/benchmark assessments, student portfolios, and end-of-course assessments. Overall, 59 schools (80%) used student assessment measures for distributing criterion 1 awards. Table 7 provides a recap of how frequently GEEG schools used these various student assessments.

**Table 7: Types & Frequency of Student Assessment Measures**

| Type of Student Assessment      | Number of Schools | Percent of Schools |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| <b>State Assessments</b>        |                   |                    |
| TAKS                            | 58                | 78.4%              |
| SDAA                            | 26                | 35.1%              |
| TPRI                            | 15                | 20.3%              |
| <b>Local Assessments</b>        |                   |                    |
| Benchmark/formative assessments | 15                | 20.3%              |
| End-of-course assessments       | 3                 | 4.1%               |
| Student portfolios              | 1                 | 1.4%               |

N = 74

Twenty-nine schools – nearly half of the 59 using student assessments – used only student assessment measures for determining criterion 1 awards. Another 30 used the measure in combination with other indicators of criterion 1 (i.e., campus ratings, other non-academic indicators). Sixteen schools – over half of those 30 schools – used combinations of student assessment and campus ratings; seven schools used student assessment and a non-academic measure of student performance; another seven schools used student assessment, campus rating, and non-academic measures in combination.

**Unit of Analysis:** In addition to determining which measures of student performance should be used for criterion 1, schools also defined the levels at which assessment results would be analyzed.

<sup>11</sup> See the Texas Education Agency *2006 Accountability Manual* at <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/account/2006/manual/index.html> for a review of performance requirements for each of the three campus ratings (i.e., Acceptable, Recognized, Exemplary).

Schools most commonly used achievement levels (i.e., passing rates), while others used measures of student growth (i.e., value added). Of those using achievement levels, 21 schools (28%) used aggregate measures of campus achievement, such as school-wide passing rates on state standardized tests (e.g., TAKS). Twenty-nine schools (39%) used individual teachers' class achievement, and two schools analyzed student performance at the grade level. Additionally, of the 21 schools using campus measures of achievement, only six used them in combination with other units of analysis (e.g., teacher-level, student growth, or grade-level).

Among the 24 schools (32%) using measures of student growth, there was noticeable variation in approaches, such as:

- Student growth measured as 1% or 1 grade-level growth requirements for 80% of class/roster in assessments applicable to grades PK-5 and Special Education;
- Measures of student growth depending upon grade level, for example:
  - Upper-grade teachers - 10% growth in a teacher's homeroom class for those passing benchmark assessments during the year; 10% increase by grade level for those students attaining "Commended Performance" on TAKS;
  - Lower-grade teachers - school looks at classroom achievement levels at the middle and end of year and requires 70% passing mid-year and 80% passing end of year (i.e., increase of 10% passing rate).
- Student growth indicator that measured 10% classroom-level growth on grade-specific assessments;
- Awards based on district-generated Classroom Effectiveness Index (CEI)<sup>12</sup> that is used to determine how many students achieved value-added gains. Each teacher received \$30 for each student who had a value-added gain.

### **Structure of Performance Level Benchmarks<sup>13</sup>**

After schools developed criterion measures, they established performance benchmarks. That is, they determined the performance level thresholds that the campus, teacher, and/or grade would have to achieve in order to receive an award. Schools commonly used one of two structures for setting these performance benchmarks: one-level and tiered structures. One-level structures are those for which there was only one benchmark, and additional awards could not be earned for performing above that threshold. Tiered structures were those in which there was more than one benchmark level, with higher awards being associated with achieving higher thresholds of performance.

Among the 74 GEEG schools analyzed, 60 schools (81%) employed one-level structures, while seven schools (9.5%) used tiered structures. Another seven schools used combinations of tiered and one-level structures.

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<sup>12</sup> The Classroom Effectiveness Index (CEI) is a value-added accountability model for computing classroom teachers' effectiveness. The system uses a combination of regression and hierarchical linear modeling to control for pre-existing student differences and school-level variables to compare teachers across different circumstances by accounting for the school and student-level characteristics such as mobility, % English Language Learners, % free lunch, % minority, prior achievement level, etc.

<sup>13</sup> Future evaluation deliverables will provide further analyses to identify the rigor of performance thresholds used by GEEG schools in measuring student performance.

### **Example of One-level plus Tiered Performance Level Structure**

A GEEG high school distributed various award amounts based upon teachers achieving a combination of student performance measures, using both one-level and tiered performance structures.

The school established one-level structures for attaining a combination of student-related measures, including student assessments (TAKS) and non-academic indicators (student attendance and dropout rate). For example, teachers received \$500 for achieving the following one-level thresholds:

\$500 for 80% class passing rate (or 10% increase) on TAKS reading/language arts

\$500 for 80% class passing rate (or 10% increase) on TAKS math

\$500 for 80% class passing rate (or 10% increase) on TAKS science

\$1,000 for a campus student attendance rate of 97%

\$500 for a campus dropout rate of 2.5% or less

The school also used a tiered structure for distributing awards based on campus rating; that is, higher award amounts were associated with achieving a higher campus rating:

\$1,500 for a campus rating of “Acceptable”

\$2,000 for a campus rating of “Recognized”

### **Expectations over Time**

‘Expectations over time’ refers to the ways in which performance thresholds might change over the duration of the three-year GEEG program. Again, performance thresholds represent the performance levels that must be achieved to receive given award amounts. Schools tended to use one of several approaches: maintaining the same thresholds over the course of three years; increasing the minimum threshold requirements over time; or decreasing the minimum threshold requirements over time.

Among the 67 schools using one-level performance structures for criterion 1, 40 used stable expectations, three increased expectations, and only one school used increasing and decreasing expectations in combination. Information was not available on the remaining schools’ plans to determine the expectations over time.

### **Example of One-Level Structure with Increasing and Decreasing Expectations**

A GEEG high school used both increasing and decreasing thresholds for award distribution. In Year One, criterion 1 awards were distributed for meeting the following performance thresholds:

Campus performance on TAKS exhibits 10% growth from previous year scores

Student Attendance is at least 95%

In Years 2 & 3, however, the thresholds changed so that awards were distributed as follows:

Campus performance on TAKS exhibits 5% growth from previous year scores

Student attendance is at least 97%

Expectations for TAKS growth decrease, while expectations for student attendance increase.

Among the 14 schools using tiered performance level structures, 10 used stable expectations. Only one school used increasing expectations and another employed both increasing and decreasing expectations. Information was not available on the remaining two schools’ plans.



## Unit of Distribution

The unit of distribution for awards refers to the teacher or group of teachers to whom the award is targeted. While ultimately individual teachers received Part I awards, schools devised various award distribution strategies, some of which focused on grade-level, department-level, or campus-wide units as the first phase of distribution.

If awards were distributed at the individual teacher level, teachers earned awards based on their own responses to the incentive. That is, each teacher was evaluated individually. For team distributions (e.g., grade-level and department-level), awards were given collectively to members of a particular team who met the established performance expectations. Finally, campus-wide award distribution resulted from a school achieving expectations for campus-wide performance. Most schools distributed awards based upon teacher performance, followed by campus-wide performance. Upon reviewing applications, the following patterns emerged:

- 35 schools (47%) distributed awards based solely on individual teacher performance;
- 25 schools (34%) distributed awards based solely on campus-wide performance;
- 8 schools (11%) distributed awards based on a combination of teacher and campus-wide performance; and
- 5 schools (7%) distributed awards based on grade-level or subject-level performance.

### **Example of Grade-Level Distribution for Student Performance**

A GEEG elementary school developed a plan for distributing criterion 1 awards based upon performance at the grade level.

For 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers, the following grade-level criteria must be met:

Campus rating of “Exemplary” based on grade-level TAKS scores (or required improvement) **and** the Gold Performance Award for Commended Performance on all subjects (or required improvement).

For K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers, the following grade-level criteria must be met:

90% of all student groups scoring “Developed” on TPRI **and** 90% passing end-of-year benchmark tests for math and writing.

## Method of Distribution

Schools used multiple strategies for distributing criterion 1 awards once measures of student performance and the requisite performance levels were established. Schools tended to use one of several strategies, including flat award amounts or weighting schemes; others treated criterion 1 as a prerequisite for becoming award-eligible. Each of these distribution strategies is further explained in Figure 1 below.

### **Figure 1: Explanation of Award Distribution Strategies**

#### **Flat Amount**

Schools allocate awards at one flat amount for achieving performance requirements for a given criterion. This method is often associated with a one-level performance structure (i.e., there is only one benchmark, and additional awards cannot be earned for performing above that threshold.).

#### **Weighting Scheme**

This method is used to assign differential importance to criterion measures required to earn an award amount. Common strategies for weighting include:

**Qualitative** – A base award is distributed for achieving a given performance requirement, and supplemental award(s) are distributed upon meeting other additional performance requirements.

**Point** – Points are assigned in an increasing fashion to a series of performance requirements. Typically, points are assigned a dollar amount, and awards are calculated as a multiple of the number of points.

**Percentage** – This approach is similar to the points scheme. Percentages are assigned in an increasing fashion to performance requirements; therefore, highly weighted requirements are assigned a higher percentage of the total award amount associated with that criterion.

#### **Prerequisite**

An award amount is not determined by performance on a given criterion; rather, that required performance must be achieved in order to qualify as an award recipient. The total award amount is then determined by performance on a different criterion (i.e., criterion 2, criterion 3, and/or criterion 4).

Twenty-two schools (30%) distributed flat amount awards based upon performance on criterion 1. Even more schools used weighting schemes. In fact, 42 GEEG schools – over half (57%) of the 74 schools analyzed – used weighting schemes to distribute awards for criterion 1. Of these schools, 37 – or half of the sample – implemented qualitative weighting schemes. Another five schools used percentage weighting schemes, while only four schools used point schemes.

#### **Example of a Qualitative Weighting Distribution Scheme**

A GEEG elementary school developed a plan to distribute all Part 1 funds to teachers based upon teachers' performance on criterion 1 requirements. As the school met AYP requirements for the previous school year, it was decided that all teachers should receive some portion of Part 1 funds.

These awards were distributed using a qualitative weighting scheme. That is, teachers in TAKS-testing grades and subjects (i.e., 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grades, special education) received a greater award amount (\$1,985) than teachers in non-testing grades (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>), who received a smaller award amount (\$1,400).

## Criterion 2: Teacher Collaboration

Criterion 2 (Teacher Collaboration) is the second required component that all GEEG schools must consider when distributing Part I awards. TEA defines the criterion as “collaboration with faculty and staff that contributes to improving overall student performance on the campus.” Upon reviewing GEEG applications, it was apparent that schools interpreted and have enacted this criterion with noticeable variation.

### Measures of Teacher Collaboration

Schools used various measures of criterion 2 in their GEEG plans. In fact, of all four criteria, teacher collaboration displayed the greatest variability among measures used. Table 8 provides an overview of recurring teacher collaboration activities that emerged from reviewing GEEG applications.

**Table 8: Types & Frequency of Teacher Collaboration (Criterion 2) Activities**

| Teacher Collaboration Activities                     | Number of Schools | Percent of Schools |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Professional development                             | 21                | 28.4%              |
| Teacher PDAS <sup>14</sup> rating                    | 8                 | 10.8%              |
| Instructional, curricular leadership activities      | 22                | 29.7%              |
| Staff meetings and committees                        | 46                | 62.2%              |
| Collaborative lesson plan development and evaluation | 32                | 43.2%              |
| Team teaching                                        | 3                 | 4.1%               |
| Mentoring, induction, coaching activities            | 6                 | 8.1%               |
| Sharing and analyzing student achievement data       | 6                 | 8.1%               |
| Parent involvement activities                        | 6                 | 8.1%               |
| Teacher attendance                                   | 7                 | 9.5%               |

N = 74

Most schools used combinations of teacher collaboration measures for this criterion. These combinations varied from school to school. Among the 74 applications reviewed, the most frequently occurring combination appeared only seven times. Overall,

- Seven schools (9.5%) used both staff meetings and collaborative lesson planning;
- Six schools (8.1%) used teacher attendance combined with another measure;

<sup>14</sup> PDAS, otherwise known as the Professional Development and Appraisal System, is the state-approved appraisal system for teachers. It consists of at least one 45-minute observation and the completion of a Teacher Self-Report form. PDAS consists of eight domains focused on learner-centered instruction, a set of proficiencies adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification in 1967.

- Another six schools (8.1%) combined instructional leadership and staff meetings; and
- All other schools used combinations that appeared in no more than three applications.

### **Structure of Performance Level Benchmarks**<sup>15</sup>

While schools used a wide variety of indicators to measure criterion 2 performance, far less variation was apparent in schools’ use of performance level benchmarks. As described in the previous section, schools commonly used one of two structures for setting performance benchmarks: one-level and tiered structures. One-level structures are those for which there is only one benchmark, and additional awards cannot be earned for performing above that threshold. Tiered structures include more than one benchmark level, with higher awards associated with achieving higher thresholds of performance.

Overall, 66 schools (89%) used one-level structures for criterion 2 performance requirements. Only seven schools (9.5%) used tiered structures. Of those seven, one school used a tiered structure in combination with a one-level structure. Specifically, in order to achieve a criterion 2 award, teachers had to serve as a “team leader” and “Campus Advisory Council member”; additionally, they could earn various levels of awards for achieving one of several tiered expectations for after-school tutoring (i.e., three points for ten days or less of tutoring, five points for 11 to 30 days of tutoring, ten points for 31 to 45 days of tutoring, and 15 points for 45 plus days of tutoring).

Overall, the majority of schools used multiple indicators of teacher collaboration and established only one threshold for performance.

#### **Example of One-level Performance Structure with Multiple Measures**

A GEEG high school used multiple measures for the determination of criterion 2 awards including: (1) participation in professional development, (2) score on monthly, locally-developed teacher evaluations (PDAS), and (3) participation in school-based project committee meetings. The GEEG plan established one performance threshold for each of these measures. That is, teachers received an award amount for achieving these established requirements, but did not receive greater award amounts for exceeding any of the thresholds, as specified below:

- Participation in a minimum of 16 hours of professional development
- Achieving a minimum score of 3.0 on monthly teacher evaluations
- Participation in at least 60% of monthly Project Committee meetings

### **Expectations over Time**

Quite consistently, GEEG schools established stable expectations for criterion 2 over the course of the three-year program. That is, most did not create performance requirements that will either increase or decrease over time. Among the 66 schools using one-level performance thresholds, 45 created systems of stable expectations over time.

With the exception of one school, all of the seven schools using tiered performance thresholds created stable expectations over time. That one school created increasing expectations over time.

<sup>15</sup> Future evaluation deliverables will provide further analyses to identify the rigor of performance thresholds used by GEEG schools in measuring teacher collaboration.

### **Example of Tiered Performance Structure with Increasing Expectations**

A GEEG elementary school used multiple measures for the determination of criterion 2 awards such as: (1) teacher attendance, (2) after-school tutorials, (3) serving as chairperson of academic or grade-level committee, (4) being a mentor for struggling students, (5) participating in Saturday School, (6) completing graduate coursework or Master's degree, and (7) presenting at staff development.

The school established a point system for distributing awards, in which teachers earned a given number of points for reaching tiered performance thresholds for each measure. For example,

- Teacher attendance – 1 point (4 – 6 absences), 2 points (3 or less absences)
- Mentor for struggling students – 2 points (student does not pass TAKS), 4 points (Student does pass TAKS)
- Graduate coursework – 3 points (degree in progress), 4 points (completed Master's)
- Present at staff development – 1 point (grade-level presentation), 3 points (multi-grade presentation), 6 points (campus-wide presentation)

The more points a teacher earned, the more award money they achieved. Over the course of the three-year GEEG program, the school requires teachers to earn more points before becoming eligible for awards. For example,

| <u>Year 1 Point Ranges</u>          | <u>Years 2 and 3 Point Ranges</u>   |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 20 – 50 points (100% teacher award) | 30 – 50 points (100% teacher award) |
| 10 – 19 points (85% teacher award)  | 15 – 29 points (85% teacher award)  |
| 5 – 9 points (70% teacher award)    | 10 – 14 points (70% teacher award)  |

### **Unit of Distribution**

Another point of consistency was the unit (e.g., teacher, grade-level, subject-area, campus) held accountable for performance. Of the 74 schools, 70 distributed criterion 2 awards based upon performance at the teacher level. That is, teachers' individual performance was evaluated to determine whether or not they qualified for the criterion 2 award amount.

For example, one GEEG campus distributed criterion 2 awards at the teacher-level using a points weighting scheme. Each semester, all teachers individually selected the five colleagues who had most helped them accomplish their professional goals. Each teacher received a point for each time they were nominated by a colleague. Points were totaled, and the resulting award amounts were paid out to individual teachers.

### **Method of Distribution**

As described previously, schools used multiple strategies for distributing awards. Schools used one of several strategies, including flat award amounts or weighting schemes, or prerequisite approaches (see Figure 1 for a review of distribution methods).

Thirty-four schools – nearly half (46%) – used criterion 2 as a prerequisite for distributing awards. That is, if teachers met criterion 2 requirements, they became eligible to receive Part I awards at their school; however, the actual award amount was determined by performance on other plan criteria.

### Example of a Prerequisite

A GEEG elementary school devised an incentive system in which criterion 2 was set as a prerequisite. Criterion 2 was measured by participation in faculty meetings, grade level meetings, lesson planning, professional staff development, campus planning, steering committee meetings and parent conferences.

If teachers achieved performance requirements for each of those criterion 2 measures, they would become eligible to receive a Part I award. However, the amount of that award was determined by their performance on criterion 1 (i.e., student performance). Specifically, teachers' students had to achieve an 80% passing rate to earn a base award. If 90% of students passed, a teacher received a supplemental award.

Among other schools, 19 (26%) distributed awards as flat amounts, and 13 schools (18%) used weighting schemes. Of the latter group, five used point schemes, another five used percentage schemes, and three used qualitative weighting schemes.

### Criterion 3: Teacher Initiative and Commitment

Criterion 3 measures teacher initiative and commitment, and is one of two criteria that were not required as part of a school's GEEG plan. The TEA program guidelines describe criterion 3 as "a teacher's demonstration of on-going initiative, commitment, personalization, professionalism, and involvement in other activities that directly result in improved student performance." TEA provided applicants with examples of such activities, including: working with students outside of assigned class hours, creating programs to engage parents, and taking initiative to personalize the learning environment for every student.

#### Measures of Teacher Initiative and Commitment

Overall, half of the 74 schools reviewed – 38 schools – used criterion 3 in their incentive plans. Similar to criterion 2, schools had some flexibility in developing their own measures of teacher initiative and commitment. Table 9 provides an overview of recurring teacher collaboration activities that emerged from reviewing GEEG applications.

**Table 9: Types & Frequency of Teacher Initiative and Commitment (Criterion 3) Activities**

| Teacher Collaboration Activities         | Number of Schools | Percent of Schools |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Professional development                 | 17                | 23.0%              |
| Teacher PDAS <sup>16</sup> rating        | 6                 | 8.1%               |
| Tutoring students, after-school programs | 19                | 25.7%              |
| Parent involvement activities            | 8                 | 10.8%              |
| District leadership activities           | 1                 | 1.4%               |
| Teacher attendance                       | 11                | 14.9%              |

N = 74

<sup>16</sup> PDAS, Professional Development and Appraisal System, is the state-approved appraisal system for teachers. It consists of at least one 45-minute observation and the completion of a Teacher Self-Report form. PDAS consists of eight domains focused on learner-centered instruction adopted by the State Board for Educator Certification in 1967.

While Table 9 details the frequency by which each indicator of criterion 3 was used, schools tended to use them in combination. Upon reviewing applications, it was apparent that schools were using a wide range of combinations of criterion 3 indicators and few consistent patterns emerged. The most common approaches are listed below.

- Five schools (7%) used tutoring students/after-school programs to measure criterion 3.
- Three schools (4%) used teacher attendance combined with other criterion 3 measures.

### **Structure of Performance Level Benchmarks**

The structure of performance levels for criterion 3 also mirrored the tendencies of criterion 2; that is, most schools established one-level performance structures. Of the 38 schools using criterion 3, 32 used solely one-level structures. Teachers at those schools had to achieve one threshold in order to receive an award; exceeding that threshold was not associated with higher award amounts. Another four schools used tiered performance-level thresholds, while two used combinations of one-level and tiered structures.

### **Expectations over Time**

Nearly all schools using criterion 3 in their GEEG plans established stable performance expectations for the three-year program. All schools using one-level structures had stable expectations, as did all but one of the schools with tiered performance structures. That one exception used increasing expectations for criterion 3 performance.

### **Unit of Distribution**

All 38 schools using criterion 3 based award distribution upon individual teacher performance. As was the case for criterion 2, this was a noticeable variation from the approach used by many schools for criterion 1 (student performance). Less than half of the schools (47%) used individual teachers as the unit of distribution for criterion 1, while 95% of schools did so for criterion 2.

### **Method of Distribution**

There was greater variation among schools' methods for distributing awards based upon criterion 3 performance. Of the 38 schools using criterion 3, fifteen schools distributed awards with weighting schemes. Of those, seven used percentage schemes, five used qualitative weighting schemes, and three used point schemes.

### Example of Weighted: Points Distribution Scheme

A GEEG elementary school developed a points system for determining award eligibility in all four criteria, including criterion 3. Under the points system, teachers can earn points for specific activities in each of the four criteria. Each point is representative of a specific dollar amount, with a total of 100 points possible across the 4 categories. For Criterion 3, the maximum points a teacher can earn is 15. Points in Criterion 3 can be earned for the following activities:

- National Board Certification (3 points)
- Holding (or in progress) an advanced degree in the education field (3 points)
- Completion of 30+ hours of non-required professional development (3 points)
- Highly Qualified status (3 points)
- Attendance (3 points)

The other schools were evenly split between using flat amounts and prerequisite approaches. Ten schools – 13.5% of all schools – distributed flat award amounts for achieving criterion 3 measures. Another ten treated criterion 3 as a prerequisite for becoming eligible to receive a Part I award amount to be determined by performance on other criteria.

### Criterion 4: Hard-to-Staff Areas

Criterion 4 is the other optional criterion for GEEG plans. It was designed to reward those teachers who work in hard-to-staff areas. This was intended to include areas that are historically hard-to-staff at the state or local level. Only 13 GEEG schools (18%) used this criterion in their plans. It was noticeably the least commonly used criterion.

#### Measures of Hard-to-Staff Areas

Figure 2 provides an overview of the hard-to-staff areas considered when reviewing applications. The listed state-shortage areas are those designated by the Texas Education Agency using surveys of school personnel administrators and private non-profit school administrators. Schools were also allowed to consider local shortage areas.

**Figure 2: State-Designated Hard-to-Staff Areas, 2006-07**

|                              |
|------------------------------|
| Mathematics                  |
| Science                      |
| Foreign Language             |
| Special Education            |
| Bilingual Education          |
| Technology Applications      |
| English as a Second Language |

Of the 13 schools that included criterion 4 in their incentive plans, three used solely state-designated shortage areas and another three only used local shortage area. Seven of the 13 schools used a combination of both state and local shortage areas.



Among those schools that targeted state-designated shortage areas, the following patterns were identified.

- Two schools (2.7% of all GEEG schools) used bilingual education alone.
- Two schools used special education and bilingual education.
- Two schools used mathematics and special education.
- Two schools used mathematics and science.
- Only one school used a combination of mathematics, science and special education.
- Another school used special education alone.

For schools that focused on local shortage areas, there was a good deal of variability in how those areas were determined. Although some applications were vague in their conceptualization of a local shortage area, others were more descriptive. Among those, three schools rewarded teachers for retention based on historically high teacher turnover at the school. That is, a teacher could earn supplemental awards for extra years of teaching service at the school. Two other schools labeled TAKS subjects as being a shortage area, the rationale being that those teachers were under additional pressure due to the high stakes of TAKS testing.

#### **Example of a non-state sanctioned shortage area**

A GEEG elementary school incorporated criterion 4, hard-to-staff, into their performance incentive plan. While the school did reward several state-designated shortage areas, including special education and bilingual education, the plan also distributed awards to several locally-specified shortage areas. The school explained that their district “does not provide any stipend award for teachers that carry the responsibility of producing campus ratings based on state-mandated formal assessments”; therefore, they opted to include TAKS teachers in grades 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> as recipients of the \$1,800 stipend for hard-to-staff teaching areas.

#### **Structure of Performance Level Benchmarks**

All 13 schools incorporating hard-to-staff areas used one-level performance structures. This stemmed from teachers receiving awards if they fell within a given subject area and/or grade level. That is, a teacher was either in a shortage area or was not, thereby creating only one threshold for qualification.

#### **Expectations over Time**

Additionally, all of the criterion 4 schools used stable expectations over time. That is, schools required that a teacher be placed within a given shortage area; those expectations will not change over time.

#### **Unit of Distribution**

Criterion 4 awards were always based upon an individual teacher’s placement in a shortage area. Qualification for the award was never evaluated at the grade, subject, or campus-level.

## **Method of Distribution**

Despite the consistency among performance structure, expectations, and unit of distribution, there was noticeable variation among the 13 schools award distribution methods. Five schools distributed awards for criterion 4 as flat amounts.

Two schools treated the criterion as a prerequisite. That is, the only teachers eligible for a Part I award were those in designated shortage areas. One school coupled weighting and flat amount distribution methods, while another used solely a qualitative weighting scheme. Information on the remaining four GEEG schools could not be found.

### **Example of a Qualitative Weighting Distribution Scheme**

One GEEG campus used a qualitative weighting scheme to distribute criterion 4 awards. The school distributed awards as follows:

- New teachers to the school receive \$500 as an incentive to attract them to the historically high-turnover school.
- Returning teachers who completed a full year of service received \$1000 as an award for retention.
- TAKS teachers (grades 3, 4, &5) who completed a full year received an additional \$500 in recognition of the additional pressure for teachers in high-stakes testing areas.

## **Year 2 and 3 Plans**

As previously mentioned, schools had the option of changing their GEEG plans between the first and subsequent two years of the GEEG program. Schools had the flexibility to change as much or as little of their first year plan as they wished, although revised plans would remain the same for the second and third years. Additionally, schools opting to change their plans were still required to use criteria 1 and 2, with criteria 3 and 4 remaining optional.

Only 24 schools (32%) intended to change their GEEG plans from the first year to subsequent years of the program. The following information pertains only to those 24 schools.

The overall performance criteria used by these 24 schools for the latter years of GEEG varied somewhat from the criteria used by these schools during the first year. In reviewing how schools intended to adapt their plans from the first year to subsequent years, we identified the following trends.

- 14 schools (58% of the 24 schools) intended to use the same criteria in all three years.
- 10 schools (42% of the 24 schools) intended to use different combinations of criteria, the most common adaptation being a transition from using criteria 1 and 2 in year one to the use of criteria 1, 2, and 3 in subsequent years.

Overall, we identified the following plans among the 24 schools:

- 12 schools (50%) planned to use criteria 1 and 2 only.
- 8 schools (33%) planned to use criteria 1, 2, and 3.

- 1 school (4%) planned to use criteria 1, 2, and 4.
- 3 schools (12.5%) planned to use all four criteria.

Over the next three years, evaluation initiatives will continue to monitor how schools implement their GEEG plans, with particular attention to differences that appear between the first and latter years of implementation. At this time it is difficult to draw too many distinctions because the implementation of GEEG plans in future years may vary from the stated plans in previously submitted applications. Recognizing the importance of studying the adaptation of GEEG over time, those future initiatives will address key questions of interest, including but not limited to:

- How are schools using GEEG criteria to reward teacher performance?
- Are expectations for performance increasing over time?
- Are schools changing the award amounts distributed to teachers?

## Chapter Summary

This chapter provides an overview of key components of GEEG schools' performance incentive programs, with particular attention to their use of Part I funds. Based on a systematic review of GEEG applications, it appears that schools' plans share some characteristics. Overall, the chapter concluded the following.

- In Year One (2005-06), most schools used no more than the required criteria – criterion 1 (student performance) and criterion 2 (teacher collaboration) – for distributing Part I awards to teachers.
- Schools used a variety of indicators for measuring all four performance criteria.
- Most schools determined award distribution based on individual teacher performance; however, some used campus-level and team-level (i.e., grade and/or subject area) measures of performance.
- Most schools planned to hold performance expectations stable over the course of the three-year GEEG program; very few created performance thresholds that will increase over time.
- Only 24 schools (32%) intended to change their GEEG plans between Year One and subsequent years of the program.

These key characteristics provide a context for understanding teachers' initial attitudes about and behavioral responses to the GEEG program. Chapter 4 discusses these early findings about teachers' reactions to GEEG.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **TEACHER ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR**

Our research team conducted a survey of full-time instructional personnel in GEEG schools to learn more about their attitudes toward and reactions to incentive pay, and more specifically, the Governor’s Educator Excellence Grant (GEEG) program. This survey instrument asked teachers in GEEG schools to respond to the following issues.

- The value they place on factors that have been suggested for determining incentive pay.
- Their involvement in the design and implementation of their schools’ GEEG programs.
- The fairness of their schools’ GEEG plans.
- Changes in their teaching behaviors since the implementation of their campus GEEG plans.

#### **Key Policy Points**

This chapter highlights and expands upon the following key policy points.

- Several consistencies and inconsistencies exist between teachers’ perceptions of what is important in an incentive plan and what is important in their schools’ GEEG plans.
- Teachers agree that school staff were involved in the development of GEEG plans.
- Teachers agree that GEEG plans are both fair and having beneficial effects at their schools.
- Some teachers appear to be modifying their professional practices in desired ways, including efforts to improve their classroom instruction, implement data-driven decision making, increase collaborative activities with colleagues, engage in professional development, and increase parent involvement.
- Some teachers explained that they are continuing the use of desirable instructional practices that they were already using before GEEG was implemented in their schools.

#### **Overview**

The following sections of this chapter provide more detailed findings to address the following questions.

- What performance measures do teachers believe to be important for the design of performance incentive systems?
- What performance measures do teachers believe to be important in distributing awards in school GEEG plans?
- Who was involved in the development of school GEEG plans?
- Do teachers perceive GEEG plans as being fair and having a beneficial impact in their schools?
- How are teachers changing their teaching practices and behaviors in response to the implementation of GEEG, if at all?

## Survey Overview

### Survey Methodology

GEEG teachers were given an online survey in January 2007 to evaluate their initial attitudes about and reactions to GEEG programs. The survey was administered to full-time instructional personnel at the 74 GEEG schools that were approved at that time. Teachers were given four weeks to respond, and all responses were anonymous.

This survey addressed several key concepts related to performance incentive programs in general and GEEG, specifically. A sample survey is provided in Appendix C, and is comprised of four key concepts, including:

- Teachers' attitudes about performance incentive programs and specifically about GEEG;
- Teachers' professional behavior in response to their schools' GEEG programs;
- The implementation process of GEEG school programs; and
- Teacher background characteristics (i.e., professional experience, educational background).

The survey contained quantitative and qualitative items in order to gather both standardized and open-ended responses. The evaluation team plans to continue administration of an annual survey that will monitor trends in teachers' attitudes and behavior over the course of the three-year GEEG program. Previous research indicates that teachers' attitudes and perceptions toward performance-related pay policies do change over time (Burgess et al, 2001).

### Teacher Respondents

The survey was administered to full-time instructional personnel at 74 GEEG schools. We restricted responses to a total of 52 schools because the other 12 had responses that made up either fewer than five teachers or less than 10% of their teaching staffs. These schools were excluded to ensure anonymity and to protect respondents from identification. The final response rate of 62% represented a total of 1,571 teachers at 52 GEEG schools.

As shown in Table 10 below, average response rates varied by the size of GEEG-eligible teaching staff at the 52 schools. The average school responding to our survey had 30.2 respondents and 48.4 GEEG-eligible teachers.

**Table 10: Average Response Rates by Eligible Teachers**

| Eligible Teachers          | Number of Schools | Average Response Rate |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| 6-20                       | 7                 | 76%                   |
| 21-40                      | 17                | 69%                   |
| 41-60                      | 13                | 68%                   |
| 61-80                      | 7                 | 48%                   |
| 81+                        | 8                 | 58%                   |
| <b>Total Teachers</b>      |                   | 1,571                 |
| <b>Total Schools</b>       |                   | 52                    |
| <b>Total Response Rate</b> |                   | 62.4%                 |

Teacher respondents had many years of full-time teaching experience, with over half being in the profession 10 years or more. It is worth noting, however, that the vast majority of respondents (72%) had taught nine years or less in their current school, and 30% had only been in their current school between one and three years. (Table 11 provides an overview of teachers' professional experience.)

**Table 11: Respondents' Years of Teaching Experience**

| Response Category | Overall Years Teaching |         | Years Teaching at School |         |
|-------------------|------------------------|---------|--------------------------|---------|
|                   | Number                 | Percent | Number                   | Percent |
| Missing/Undefined | 29                     | 1.8%    | 32                       | 2.0%    |
| 1 to 3 years      | 254                    | 16.2%   | 472                      | 30.0%   |
| 4 to 9 years      | 481                    | 30.2%   | 659                      | 41.9%   |
| 10 to 14 years    | 238                    | 15.2%   | 188                      | 12.0%   |
| 15 to 19 years    | 201                    | 12.8%   | 121                      | 7.7%    |
| 20 or more years  | 368                    | 23.4%   | 99                       | 6.3%    |

*Note.* Percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding.  
N = 1,571

Roughly two-thirds (67%) of respondents held a bachelor's degree and 26% held a master's degree. Additionally, the vast majority of teachers (86%) earned between \$30,000 and \$59,999 for their current annual salary, with half of those earning between \$40,000 and \$49,999. Table 12 provides an overview of teachers' current annual salaries.

**Table 12: Respondents' Annual Salary**

| Response Category    | Number of Respondents | Percent of Respondents |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Missing/Undefined    | 38                    | 2.4%                   |
| \$20,000 to \$29,999 | 63                    | 4.0%                   |
| \$30,000 to \$39,999 | 397                   | 25.3%                  |
| \$40,000 to \$49,999 | 678                   | 43.2%                  |
| \$50,000 to \$59,999 | 279                   | 17.8%                  |
| \$60,000 to \$69,999 | 96                    | 6.1%                   |
| \$70,000 or more     | 20                    | 1.3%                   |

*Note.* Percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding.  
N = 1,571

## Teacher Attitudes about Incentive Pay

### Attitudes about Incentive Pay Design

Teachers were asked to explain how much importance they would give to 17 different measures of performance when designing an incentive pay program. Rating these measures on their level of importance (1=None, 2=Low, 3=Moderate, 4=High), teachers identified a number of measures as being of greatest and least importance for designing an incentive pay program.

Table 13a provides an overview of the top five ranked performance measures, according to teacher respondents. Teachers believed that improvements in students' test scores (mean=3.49) and collaboration with faculty and staff (mean=3.29) were the most important measures of performance to be incorporated into incentive pay programs. Interestingly, these are the two measures that were required of schools when distributing awards to GEEG-eligible teachers (i.e., Criterion 1: Student Performance, Criterion 2: Teacher Collaboration).

Additionally, teachers also identified teaching in hard-to-staff fields and time spent on professional development as high-ranking performance measures. The former, while a potential criterion for GEEG programs, was rarely used by schools (only 13 of 74 schools used it). Professional development, however, was commonly used by schools as a measure of teacher collaboration (i.e., criterion 2 of GEEG).

**Table 13a: Most Important Performance Measures for Incentive Pay**

| <b>Performance Measures<br/>(in descending rank order)</b> | <b>None<br/>(1)</b> | <b>Low<br/>(2)</b> | <b>Moderate<br/>(3)</b> | <b>High<br/>(4)</b> | <b>Mean<br/>(avg.)</b> |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Improvements in students' test scores                      | 2.2%                | 4.7%               | 34.8%                   | 58.3%               | 3.49                   |
| Collaboration with faculty and staff                       | 3.1%                | 10.4%              | 40.9%                   | 45.6%               | 3.29                   |
| Teaching in hard-to-staff school                           | 6.4%                | 10.8%              | 38.3%                   | 44.6%               | 3.21                   |
| Teaching in hard-to-staff fields                           | 6.7%                | 11.5%              | 40.5%                   | 41.2%               | 3.16                   |
| Time spent in professional development                     | 3.5%                | 12.2%              | 50.2%                   | 34.1%               | 3.15                   |

Note. Total number of respondents varies by item. Survey n = 1,571.

The least important measures identified by teachers are detailed in Table 13b. Teachers believed that students' evaluation of teaching performance (mean=2.55) and independent evaluations of teacher portfolios (mean=2.60) were the least important measures to include in an incentive pay program.

**Table 13b: Least Important Performance Measures for Incentive Pay**

| <b>Performance Measures<br/>(in descending rank order)</b>      | <b>None<br/>(1)</b> | <b>Low<br/>(2)</b> | <b>Moderate<br/>(3)</b> | <b>High<br/>(4)</b> | <b>Mean<br/>(avg.)</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| National Board of Professional Teaching Standards certification | 14.8%               | 24.3%              | 36.4%                   | 24.5%               | 2.71                   |
| Parent satisfaction with teacher                                | 12.8%               | 25.6%              | 41.6%                   | 20.1%               | 2.69                   |
| Performance evaluation by peers                                 | 13.8%               | 24.2%              | 44.9%                   | 17.0%               | 2.65                   |
| Independent evaluation of teaching portfolios                   | 13.6%               | 27.3%              | 44.6%                   | 14.5%               | 2.60                   |
| Student evaluations of teaching performance                     | 17.2%               | 28.3%              | 37.2%                   | 17.3%               | 2.55                   |

Note. Total number of respondents varies by item. Survey n = 1,571.

A small percentage (10%) of teachers also provided open-ended responses to this question, explaining what they thought to be other important performance measures for consideration, including:

- A need for holistic evaluation;
- Rewards for specialized teachers;
- Preparation and development beyond mandates;
- Length of teacher service; and
- Teacher and student attendance.

Teachers' responses varied somewhat when asked to rate the importance that performance measures had in determining awards to teachers in their schools' GEEG plans. Table 14 below provides an overview of the top ten performance measures that teachers identified for (1) what is most important for an incentive pay plan versus (2) what is most important for their schools' GEEG plans. Of these top ten responses, four of the measures were perfectly aligned in rank order.

- "Improvements in students' test scores" was ranked as the most important measure in response to both questions.
- "Mentoring other teachers" was ranked as the least important of measures for both.
- "Time spent on professional development" and "efforts to involve parents in students' education" were both aligned as mid-ranking measures.



**Table 14: Comparing Importance of Performance Measures,  
General Incentive Pay v. GEEG Incentive Plan**

| Performance Measures                                     | Teachers' Rank<br>Order of Important<br>Incentive Pay<br>Measures | Teachers' Rank<br>Order of Important<br>GEEG Plan<br>Measures |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Improvements in students' test scores</b>             | <b>1</b><br>(mean = 3.49)                                         | <b>1</b><br>(mean = 3.46)                                     |
| Collaboration with faculty and staff                     | 2<br>(mean = 3.29)                                                | 3<br>(mean = 2.89)                                            |
| Teaching in hard-to-staff school                         | 3<br>(mean = 3.21)                                                | 9<br>(mean = 2.57)                                            |
| Teaching in hard-to-staff fields                         | 4<br>(mean = 3.16)                                                | 8<br>(mean = 2.58)                                            |
| <b>Time spent in professional development</b>            | <b>5</b><br>(mean = 3.15)                                         | <b>5</b><br>(mean = 2.78)                                     |
| Working with students outside of class time              | 6<br>(mean = 3.14)                                                | 4<br>(mean = 2.83)                                            |
| <b>Efforts to involve parents in students' education</b> | <b>7</b><br>(mean = 3.13)                                         | <b>7</b><br>(mean = 2.62)                                     |
| High average test scores by students                     | 8<br>(mean = 3.05)                                                | 2<br>(mean = 3.37)                                            |
| Performance evaluations by supervisors                   | 9<br>(mean = 3.04)                                                | 6<br>(mean = 2.76)                                            |
| <b>Mentoring other teachers</b>                          | <b>10</b><br>(mean = 2.94)                                        | <b>10</b><br>(mean = 2.40)                                    |

*Note.* Performance measures are ranked from 1 to 10, with 1 being the most preferred and 10 being the least preferred. Measures with equal ranks are in bold type. Respondents rated items' importance as None (1), Low (2), Moderate (3), or High (4). Total number of respondents varies by item. Survey n = 1,571.

Not all measures were well-aligned with one another. Specifically, teachers believed “high average test scores by students” to be of lower importance for incentive pay, but identified it as an important feature in campus GEEG plans. Additionally, “teaching in hard-to-staff school/fields” was identified as being of high importance for incentive pay, but less important for GEEG plans.

Finally, teachers were again given the opportunity to provide open-ended responses to explain other performance measures important in their schools' GEEG plans, which included:

- Teacher and student attendance;
- Length of teacher experience; and
- Assignment to TAKS grades.

It is worth noting that the first two responses mirror the open-ended responses provided for the question of what teachers think is important for incentive pay plans.

## Perceptions about GEEG Campus Plans

The survey gauged teachers’ perceptions about the level of school staff involvement in the development of GEEG plans, as well as the fairness and impact of GEEG plans. We used a series of survey items to measure these issues, as outlined in Table 15 below. Teachers were in consistent agreement that school staff were involved in the development of GEEG plans. They were convinced that administrators, teachers, and then non-teaching staff – in that order – took part in development processes. This is noteworthy, as guidelines for GEEG call for school-wide involvement in the development process. Additionally, teachers, on average, agreed that GEEG plans are both fair and having beneficial effects at their schools.

**Table 15: Teachers’ Perceptions of Involvement, Fairness, and Impact of GEEG**

| <b>“Involvement” Index</b>                                                                | <b>Strongly Disagree</b> | <b>Disagree</b> | <b>Agree</b> | <b>Strongly Agree</b> | <b>Don’t Know</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| “Administrators at my school were involved in the development of this program.”           | 3.0%                     | 3.0%            | 34.7%        | 48.1%                 | 11.2%             |
| “Teachers at my school were involved in the development of this program.”                 | 5.1%                     | 7.6%            | 40.8%        | 35.4%                 | 11.1%             |
| “Other non-teaching staff at my school were involved in the development of this program.” | 7.4%                     | 12.2%           | 32.4%        | 23.8%                 | 24.3%             |
| <b>“Fairness and Impact” Index</b>                                                        | <b>Strongly Disagree</b> | <b>Disagree</b> | <b>Agree</b> | <b>Strongly Agree</b> | <b>Don’t Know</b> |
| “The GEEG incentive system developed by my school is fair to teachers.”                   | 10.0%                    | 14.7%           | 34.7%        | 31.3%                 | 9.2%              |
| “The GEEG incentive system is having beneficial effects on my school.”                    | 7.1%                     | 10.5%           | 35.9%        | 30.9%                 | 15.5%             |
| “The GEEG incentive system is having negative effects on my school.”                      | 29.0%                    | 29.7%           | 14.4%        | 8.7%                  | 18.3%             |

Note. Total number of respondents varies by item. Survey n = 1,571.

Teachers were further asked whether they agreed with various approaches to measuring educator performance for the purpose of changing pay practices. As described in Table 16, teachers tended to agree with using measures of school-wide performance, individual teacher performance, and the state’s performance appraisal system (PDAS) as part of changing educator pay practices.

**Table 16: Teachers’ Perceptions of Measuring Educator Performance**

|                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Strongly Disagree</b> | <b>Disagree</b> | <b>Agree</b> | <b>Strongly Agree</b> | <b>Don’t Know</b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| “Incentive pay for teachers based on overall performance at the school is a positive change to teacher pay practices.”                                                         | 7.9%                     | 14.2%           | 44.4%        | 28.4%                 | 5.1%              |
| “Incentive pay for teachers based on individual teaching performance is a positive change to teacher pay practices.”                                                           | 11.3%                    | 17.1%           | 41.2%        | 24.2%                 | 6.2%              |
| “Incentive pay for administrators based on overall performance at the schools is a positive change to administrator pay practices.”                                            | 9.6%                     | 15.8%           | 43.3%        | 21.6%                 | 9.7%              |
| “The state performance appraisal system (PDAS) provides an objective and fair means of determining individual teaching performance for use in a performance incentive system.” | 12.2%                    | 21.4%           | 44.5%        | 14.9%                 | 7.1%              |

Note. Total number of respondents varies by item. Survey n = 1,571.

**Teacher Behavior and Incentive Pay**

This survey also provides a platform to learn whether and how teachers are adapting their teaching practices and behaviors in response to the implementation of GEEG plans at their schools.<sup>17</sup> Using a series of open-ended response questions, we asked teachers to explain how they might be changing:

- Classroom instruction;
- Data-driven decision making;
- Collaborative activities with colleagues;
- Professional development; and
- Parent involvement.

Table 17 provides an overview of the most frequently recurring teacher responses to each of those five categories. Evidently, some GEEG teachers have been adapting their professional practices, while others have not for various reasons.

<sup>17</sup> Future evaluation deliverables will include more detailed analyses of these qualitative responses, including the frequency by which various open-ended responses occurred.

**Table 17: Teachers' Changing Professional Behaviors**

|                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Classroom instruction</b>                                             |
| More focus on lowest scoring students                                    |
| Closer alignment with state standards and material covered by state test |
| More small group instruction and individual tutoring                     |
| Greater use of student groupings (by skill level)                        |
| No change                                                                |
| <b>Data-driven decision making</b>                                       |
| Identify class's strengths and weaknesses                                |
| Identify lowest performing students                                      |
| Review topics for which class had poorest performance                    |
| Use test results to group students by ability                            |
| No change                                                                |
| <b>Collaborative activities with colleagues</b>                          |
| Horizontal and vertical alignment                                        |
| More planning with other teachers                                        |
| Share teaching resources and materials                                   |
| Peer observations and evaluations                                        |
| No change                                                                |
| <b>Professional development</b>                                          |
| Attend requisite number of professional development hours                |
| Attend all available professional development opportunities              |
| Attend professional development for specific subject areas               |
| Too many sessions are not applicable to teaching responsibilities        |
| No change                                                                |
| <b>Parent involvement</b>                                                |
| Parent-teacher conferences                                               |
| Phone calls home                                                         |
| Assign homework requiring parent involvement                             |
| Recruit parents to participate in school activities                      |
| No change                                                                |

### **Classroom Instruction**

Many teachers are making conscious efforts to adapt their classroom instruction in light of GEEG while others are not. Among those who are changing, several common themes emerged:

- Focusing instruction on low-performing students;
- Making greater efforts to engage students, including small group instruction, individualized instruction, and hands-on learning;
- Aligning instructional content with state standards and assessments; and
- Grouping students by skill level.

One teacher's explanation of his/her changes to instruction represented the essence of these findings:

I have grouped my students by areas of strengths and weaknesses. It has helped me to target those that are below expectations. I have also used manipulative games to emphasize learning and reinforce new concepts. The neediest group is with me all the time. I target the ones who are having difficulty understanding the skill. I work with them on a one-to-one basis during recess, my conference time, migrant tutorial, Saturday tutorial, or intervention time.

Not all teachers are adapting their classroom instruction in response to GEEG. Some teachers believe that they are already inclined to teach to the best of their ability, and therefore, would be advancing their classroom instruction with or without GEEG. As one teacher explained,

My primary focus is, and always will be, the academic advancement of my students. The incentive is a nice thought, but it does not motivate me; my kids motivate me.

### **Data-driven Decision Making**

Teachers also expressed a combination of evolving practices and no change due to GEEG implementation at their school. Changed practices related to data-driven decision making included:

- Identifying class's strengths and weakness;
- Identifying lowest performing students;
- Reviewing topics for which class had poorest performance; and
- Using test results to group students by ability.

One teacher explained, "I more closely review past performance by students on TAKS to identify those in need of one-on-one assistance"; another mentioned incorporating more assessments that are closely aligned with classroom instruction and provide more immediate feedback on levels of student mastery.

Other teachers explained that they are not consciously changing their practices in light of GEEG; rather, they are continuing the use of data-driven decision making strategies that they always enact. As one respondent wrote:

I was already doing this prior to the grant and am continuing to do this. It is just what we do here. We base our teaching on [student] master learning. We continue to address weaknesses or areas that need improvement on a daily basis.

### **Collaborative Activities with Colleagues**

Horizontal and vertical alignment,<sup>18</sup> more collaborative lesson planning with fellow teachers, sharing teaching resources and materials, and peer observations and evaluations are common responses when teachers were asked how they are changing collaborative activities in lieu of GEEG.

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<sup>18</sup> Horizontal and vertical alignment refers to strategies for aligning/pacing curriculum within grade-levels and subject areas. Horizontal alignment ensures that curricular concepts are aligned with appropriate grade-level standards and are introduced consistently within a grade level. Vertical alignment ensures that curriculum is well-sequenced in order that content from one grade-level provides a foundation for subsequent levels.

One teacher summed up the nature of these activities, saying:

We observe each other to share our best practices and gain ideas to incorporate into our classroom. We plan lessons and attend professional development together to help improve our classroom practices and student achievement.

Still other teachers expressed the recurring theme that their practices are not changing. They explained that collaborative practices were already the norm in their schools, with some even attributing their GEEG awards to their colleagues' pre-existing commitment to collaboration. As one teacher noted:

We worked as a grade level very extensively. Hence, the reason why my grade level received roughly the same bonus as opposed to other grades where there were great differences in the amount received.

### **Professional Development**

While many teachers told of going to more professional development opportunities, there was little clarity in regards to the nature of these professional development experiences and how they might be evolving in light of GEEG. Teachers emphasized their intentions to attend requisite numbers of professional development hours, including training in specific subject areas. Others seemed somewhat discontent about the lack of opportunities geared towards their subject area expertise. Unfortunately, few other details could be garnered from teacher responses to understand how the quality of professional development might be changing.

As expected, a number of teachers insisted that they are not changing their involvement in professional development due to GEEG. As one said, "Before the Governor's Educator Excellence Grant I attended professional development sessions; as long as I [am a] teacher I will attend such sessions."

### **Parent Involvement**

Although some teachers explained changing practices to involve parents in student learning, others expressed doubt about the usefulness of such efforts. Parent-teacher conferences, phone calls home, and assignments intended to involve parents at home were common responses. As one teacher explained:

Our campus has made a great effort to involve the parents. We have meet the teacher night, parent meetings, parent phone calls, and home visits made to keep our parents informed of what is occurring at the school. I have called parents and sent letters home to explain progress or lack of progress. I have also called parents to inform them of the need to attend TAKS tutorials on Saturday.

A number of teachers have not changed parent involvement strategies; some because they already practice such efforts regardless of GEEG, others because they doubt the usefulness of parent involvement as a worthwhile activity. For example, one teacher commented:

For the type of students we have, I would venture to say that the majority of them have attained a higher level of academic achievement than their parents. Consequently, it does not do much good to try to work with the parents to help the students.

Overall, GEEG is inciting variable changes in teachers' professional practice. Some teachers appear motivated to adapt their strategies in light of the grant, while others uphold the opinion that any change in practice is the result of self-motivation and the usual adaptations made in the field of teaching, regardless of the grant's existence.

## Chapter Summary

Chapter 4 provides an overview of survey findings related to teachers' initial attitudes about and behavioral reactions to the implementation of GEEG. Overall, teachers believe that GEEG plans are fair and were implemented with widespread involvement of school staff. Teachers also believe that student performance and teacher collaboration – the two required criteria for GEEG programs – are important for determining teacher performance pay.

In addition to these attitudinal findings, some teachers' behaviors seem to be changing in response to school GEEG programs. Teachers reported using new practices related to classroom instruction, teacher collaboration, data-driven decision-making, professional development, and parent involvement. Others, however, reported few changes to their practice in response to GEEG, commenting that they are continuing the use of desirable instructional practices in which they were engaged before the program began.

These findings provide an initial overview of GEEG's impact in schools. Future evaluation initiatives will further develop these findings and others related to student achievement and teacher workforce trends in order to more fully understand the impact of GEEG on student learning and teacher quality.

## CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE EVALUATION

### Overview of Key Findings

This first interim report on the Governor’s Educator Excellence Grant (GEEG) program provides an overview of the policy landscape surrounding GEEG’s development, the nature of GEEG schools’ performance incentive programs, and teachers’ initial attitudes about and behavioral reactions to GEEG. More specifically, this report expanded upon the following findings.

#### Policy landscape and the role of performance incentives

- Over the last decade, Texas has implemented a number of statewide reform initiatives targeting student learning and teacher quality. State policymakers continued these efforts with the 2006 implementation of the nation’s largest performance incentive program to date – the Governor’s Educator Excellence Award Program (GEEAP).
- The Governor’s Educator Excellence Award Grants (GEEG), one of GEEAP’s initiatives, provides high-performing, high economically disadvantaged schools with three-year campus grants allowing them to develop performance incentive plans to reward high-performing teachers.

#### Characteristics of GEEG plans (Part I awards)

- During the first year of implementation, most GEEG schools used no more than the required criteria – criterion 1 (student performance) and criterion 2 (teacher collaboration) – for distributing Part I awards to teachers.
- GEEG schools used a variety of indicators for measuring all four performance criteria.
- Most schools determined award distribution based upon individual teacher performance; however, some did use campus-level and team-level (i.e., grade and/or subject area) measures of performance.
- Most schools planned to hold performance expectations stable over the course of the three-year GEEG program; very few created performance thresholds that will increase over time.
- Only 24 schools (32.4%) intended to change the nature of their GEEG plan between the first year and subsequent years of the program.

#### Teacher reactions to GEEG plans

- Teachers believe that student performance and teacher collaboration – the two required criteria for GEEG programs – are important for determining teacher performance pay.
- Teachers agree that school staff were involved in the development of GEEG plans.
- Teachers agree that GEEG plans are both fair and having beneficial effects at their schools.
- Some teachers appear to be modifying their professional practices in desired ways, including efforts to improve their classroom instruction, implement data-driven decision making,



increase collaborative activities with colleagues, engage in professional development, and increase parent involvement.

- Other teachers are continuing the use of desirable instructional practices that were already in place before the implementation of their schools' GEEG plans.

## **Future Evaluation Initiatives**

This first report on GEEG provides an early understanding of the nature and impact of GEEG in Texas schools. However, these early findings cannot rightfully address the totality of questions that are of interest for evaluating the impact of GEEG. Future evaluation initiatives, introduced in Chapter 2, will more definitely fulfill the following objectives.

- Refining descriptive analyses of the design and implementation of GEEG school programs, including descriptions of models and approaches used in distributing incentive awards to classroom teachers.
- Providing detailed information regarding the distribution of incentive awards to classroom teachers, including the measures used by campuses in determining the amounts of incentive awards to distribute.
- Conducting a comprehensive, quantitative analysis of the impact of GEEG at participating schools, including the impact on key outcomes such as student achievement, teacher workforce trends, teacher behavior, and schools' organizational dynamics.
- Conducting a comprehensive, quantitative analysis of the potential impact of GEEG compared to other, non-participating schools.
- Providing a detailed statistical analysis of the factors and characteristics associated with successful GEEG programs.

These evaluation objectives will provide state policymakers and practitioners with a comprehensive body of evidence to more fully understand how performance incentive programs – as enacted by GEEG schools – address key policy concerns of student learning and teacher quality.

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## APPENDIX A: Glossary of Taxonomy Components

### Part 1 Funding Component:

The Part 1 funding component of GEEG represents 75% of a school's total award. This award money must be used only for financial incentive payments to classroom teachers, and must be structured in such a way that teachers receiving payments demonstrate: (1) success in improving student performance using objective, quantifiable measures, such as local benchmarking systems, portfolio assessment, end-of-course assessment, or value-added assessment; and (2) collaboration with faculty and staff that contribute to improving overall student performance on the campus.

Part 1 awards may also take into consideration the following two optional criteria: (1) a teacher's demonstration of on-going initiative, commitment, personalization, professionalism, and involvement in other activities that directly result in improved student performance; and (2) a teacher's assignment in an area that is historically hard to staff or has had high turnover.

Campus plans for Part 1 funding may change from Year One to subsequent program years.

- **Amount \$\$**
  - **Total campus grant** – Total amount of Part 1 funding awarded to the school. This amount represents 75% of the total GEEG grant given to the school.
  - **Maximum \$\$ for teachers** – The maximum amount of money that an individual teacher could possibly earn from the Part 1 funding component.
  - **Minimum \$\$ for teachers** – The minimum amount of money that an individual teacher could possibly earn from the Part 1 funding component.
- **# Eligible teachers** – The number of teachers that could possibly earn money from the Part 1 funding component.

### Criterion 1: Student performance

- **Measure of student achievement** – The type(s) of indicator(s) that a school uses to evaluate academic performance. These indicators are broken down into three distinct categories: campus ratings, student assessment instrument/source, and other performance measures.

### Criterion 2: Teacher collaboration

- **Measure of collaboration** – The type(s) of indicator(s) that a school uses to evaluate teacher collaboration.

### Criterion 3: Teacher initiative and commitment

- **Measure of initiative and commitment** – The type(s) of indicator(s) that a school uses to evaluate teacher initiative and commitment.

### Criterion 4: Hard-to-staff areas

- **Criteria for hard-to-staff** – The type(s) of indicator(s) that a school uses to define a hard-to-staff teacher.

**Performance level benchmarks** – The performance levels that must be met in order for a teacher or group of teachers to qualify for an award. These performance levels have three dimensions – structure, standard, and expectations.

- **Structure** – The way in which performance-level thresholds are organized. A school might establish one threshold that a teacher or group of teachers must meet or exceed in order to qualify for the award. Others might establish a tiered threshold whereby teachers earn more money as they advance from a lower threshold to a higher one.
- **Expectations** – The way in which the performance-level threshold(s) change(s) over time. Schools might set expectations whereby all thresholds decrease, remain constant, or increase over the duration of the three-year program. Others might set expectations whereby the minimum and/or maximum threshold decreases, remains constant, or increases over time.
- **Distribution strategy** – A school’s approach for distributing awards to eligible teachers. This approach can be described by two dimensions – unit of determination and method.
  - **Unit of determination** – The unit by which award distribution is determined. Some schools distribute awards to teachers based upon the performance of an “individual teacher”, while others distribute awards based on the performance of a “team” of teachers (i.e., grade-level, subject department). A third approach is distributing awards based on “campus-wide” performance.
  - **Method** – The way in which award distribution is related to performance on a given criterion. Schools use varying methods, including “weighting”, “flat amount”, and a “prerequisite”.
    - **Weighting** – This method is used to assign differential importance to criteria/measures required to earn performance incentives. Criteria that are weighted more should be associated with higher pay amounts. This method is often associated with a tiered performance level benchmark structure. Common strategies for weighting include:
      - (1) Qualitative – Base award is assigned for achieving performance criterion measure, and supplemental awards are assigned based upon meeting some other additional measures or classification.
      - (2) Points – Points are assigned in an increasing fashion to performance criterion measures.
      - (3) Percentages – Percentages are assigned in an increasing fashion to performance criterion measures; therefore, highly weighted measures are assigned to a higher percentage of the total award amount associated with that criterion.
    - **Flat amount** – A school does not use a weighting scheme to distribute awards; instead, it allocates awards at one flat amount based on the required performance threshold for given criterion/criteria. This method is often associated with a one-level performance level benchmark structure.
    - **Prerequisite** – An award amount is not determined by the performance threshold of a given criterion; rather, that required threshold must be achieved in order to qualify as an award recipient. The award amount is then determined by performance on a different criterion.

## APPENDIX B: Part I Chart in GEEG Application

|                                                          | Included in Incentive Plan? (Yes or No) | Specific qualities, activities, behaviors and/or outcomes measured by criterion | Data source or methodology for specific criterion | Description of how varying degrees of achieving this criterion will be weighed in overall incentive system | Description or use of criterion in overall incentive system including weight or importance of criterion relative to other criteria | Rationale for criterion and its use |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Criterion 1 (Student Performance)</b>                 |                                         |                                                                                 |                                                   |                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                    |                                     |
| <b>Criterion 2 (Teacher Collaboration)</b>               |                                         |                                                                                 |                                                   |                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                    |                                     |
| <b>Criterion 3 (Teacher Initiative &amp; Commitment)</b> |                                         |                                                                                 |                                                   |                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                    |                                     |
| <b>Criterion 4 (Hard-to-Staff Areas)</b>                 |                                         |                                                                                 |                                                   |                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                    |                                     |



## APPENDIX C: GEEG Teacher Survey Instrument

### I. WHAT SHOULD BE REWARDED WITH INCENTIVE PAY?

- The current teacher salary schedule rewards experience and education. Several additional factors have been suggested for determining incentive pay for *individual teachers*. If you were designing an incentive pay program for individual teachers, how much importance would you give to each of the following:

- 0 = No Importance
- 1 = Low Importance
- 2 = Moderate Importance
- 3 = High Importance

|   |                                                                    | <i>Importance</i> |   |             |   |
|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---|-------------|---|
|   |                                                                    | <u>None</u>       | → | <u>High</u> |   |
| A | Time spent in professional development .....                       | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| B | High average test scores by students .....                         | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| C | Improvements in students' test scores .....                        | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| D | Performance evaluations by supervisors .....                       | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| E | Performance evaluations by peers .....                             | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| F | Independent evaluation of teaching portfolios .....                | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| G | Independent evaluations of students' work (e.g., portfolios) ..... | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| H | Student evaluations of teaching performance.....                   | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| I | Collaboration with faculty and staff .....                         | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| J | Working with students outside of class time .....                  | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| K | Efforts to involve parents in students' education .....            | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| L | Serving as a Master Teacher                                        | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| M | Mentoring other teachers .....                                     | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| N | NBPTS certification .....                                          | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| O | Parent satisfaction with teacher .....                             | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| P | Teaching in hard-to-staff fields .....                             | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| Q | Teaching in hard-to-staff schools .....                            | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| R | Other (Please describe):                                           | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
|   | _____                                                              |                   |   |             |   |
|   | _____                                                              |                   |   |             |   |
|   | _____                                                              |                   |   |             |   |
|   | _____                                                              |                   |   |             |   |

2. Please indicate how important you believe each factor was in determining awards provided to teachers in your school from the Governor’s Educational Excellence Grant (GEEG).

- 0 = No Importance
- 1 = Low Importance
- 2 = Moderate Importance
- 3 = High Importance

|   |                                                                    | <i>Importance</i> |   |             |   |
|---|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---|-------------|---|
|   |                                                                    | <u>None</u>       | → | <u>High</u> |   |
| A | Time spent in professional development .....                       | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| B | High average test scores by students .....                         | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| C | Improvements in students’ test scores .....                        | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| D | Performance evaluations by supervisors .....                       | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| E | Performance evaluations by peers .....                             | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| F | Independent evaluation of teaching portfolios .....                | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| G | Independent evaluations of students’ work (e.g., portfolios) ..... | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| H | Student evaluations of teaching performance.....                   | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| I | Collaboration with faculty and staff .....                         | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| J | Working with students outside of class time .....                  | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| K | Efforts to involve parents in students’ education .....            | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| L | Serving as a Master Teacher                                        | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| M | Mentoring other teachers .....                                     | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| N | NBPTS certification .....                                          | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| O | Parent satisfaction.....                                           | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| P | Teaching in hard-to-staff fields .....                             | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| Q | Teaching in hard-to-staff schools .....                            | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
| R | Other: _____                                                       | 0                 | 1 | 2           | 3 |
|   | _____                                                              |                   |   |             |   |
|   | _____                                                              |                   |   |             |   |
|   | _____                                                              |                   |   |             |   |
|   | _____                                                              |                   |   |             |   |

## II. EFFORTS TO EARN GEEG AWARDS

3. How have you changed your teaching practices to try to earn an incentive award in response to the GEEG program? Please list specific changes you made this year. Write "none" if you did not do anything different from the previous year. .

a. Classroom instruction: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. Using student achievement data to make teaching decisions: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. Collaborative activities with colleagues: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

d. Professional development: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

e. Working with parents: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

f. Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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### III. PROCESS OF PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement about the GEEG awards program at your school.

|                                                                                         | Strongly<br>Disagree     | Disagree                 | Agree                    | Strongly-<br>Agree       | Don't<br>Know            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Teachers at my school were involved in the development of this program.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other non-teaching staff at my school were involved in the development of this program. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Administrators at my school were involved in the development of this program.           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The GEEG incentive system developed by my school is fair to teachers.                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The GEEG incentive system is having beneficial effects on my school.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The GEEG incentive system is having negative effects on my school.                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each general statement about incentive pay for teachers and administrators in Texas.

|                                                                                                                                      | Strongly<br>Disagree     | Disagree                 | Agree                    | Strongly-<br>Agree       | Don't<br>Know            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Incentive pay for teachers based on individual teaching performance is a positive change to teacher pay practices.                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Incentive pay for teachers based on overall performance at the school is a positive change to teacher pay practices.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Incentive pay for administrators based on overall performance at the school is a positive change to administrator pay practices.     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The state performance appraisal system (PDAS) provides an objective and fair means of determining individual performance incentives. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**IV. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Including this year, how many years have you taught on a full-time basis?

- 1 - 3 years
- 4 - 9 years
- 10 - 14 years
- 15 - 19 years
- 20 or more years

Including this year, how many years have you taught on a full-time basis at this school?

- 1 - 3 years
- 4 - 9 years
- 10 - 14 years
- 15 - 19 years
- 20 or more years

|                                      |                          |                          |                          |                                     |                 |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
|                                      | Associate<br>Degree      | Bachelor's<br>Degree     | Master's<br>Degree       | Doctorate or<br>professional degree | Other (specify) |
| What is the highest degree you hold? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | _____           |

Did you receive an award from the Governor's Educator Excellence Grant (GEEG) program based on your performance during the 2005-06 school year?

- Yes  No

If yes, how much did you receive as an ***individual*** award?

- \$0 to \$999
- \$1,000 to \$1,999
- \$2,000 to \$2,999
- \$3,000 to \$3,999
- \$4,000 to \$4,999
- \$5,000 to \$5,999
- \$6,000 to \$6,999
- \$7,000 to \$7,999
- \$8,000 to \$8,999
- \$9,000 to \$9,999
- \$10,000 or more

If yes, how much did you receive as a ***group-based*** award?

- \$0 to \$999
- \$1,000 to \$1,999
- \$2,000 to \$2,999
- \$3,000 to \$3,999
- \$4,000 to \$4,999
- \$5,000 to \$5,999
- \$6,000 to \$6,999
- \$7,000 to \$7,999
- \$8,000 to \$8,999
- \$9,000 to \$9,999
- \$10,000 or more

What is your annual salary?

- \$20,000 to \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$29,999
- \$30,000 to \$34,999
- \$35,000 to \$39,999
- \$40,000 to \$44,999
- \$45,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$54,999
- \$55,000 to \$59,999

- \$60,000 to \$64,999
- \$65,000 to \$69,999
- \$70,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 or more

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