



**The Working Group for
Educator Excellence**

MAKING SENSE OF COMPENSATION REFORM:

A Comprehensive Approach for Massachusetts

Executive Summary

The Working Group for Educator Excellence is a statewide coalition of educational stakeholders¹ committed to improving the educator pipeline for the state of Massachusetts and ensuring that every student has access to high quality teaching. In keeping with the core principles of the WGEE—that improving educator quality requires a comprehensive approach to reform and that no single reform is sufficient to ensure uniformly high quality teaching and leading—the WGEE presents this working paper to advocate for a comprehensive set of reforms, of which compensation reform may be a part. The WGEE presents this working paper to inform key decision-makers about the central issues that must be considered when evaluating educator compensation reforms. These include: economic issues, measurement and data issues, teacher quality issues, management and personnel issues, and professional culture issues. The paper then describes eight essential principles to guide viable and comprehensive reform to the existing system. The eight essential principles are:

1. The reforms are linked to a comprehensive and coordinated vision of teaching and learning.
2. The process of reform includes broad, and meaningful, stakeholder participation and endorsement.
3. The reforms are designed to promote continuous improvement for educators and schools.
4. There are multiple measures of performance and multiple incentives and rewards at all levels of the system.
5. The compensation system includes differentiated career opportunities and new roles and responsibilities for teachers and leaders.
6. The compensation system promotes and enhances a culture of high expectations, collaboration, teamwork, and innovation.
7. The compensation system is designed to be responsive to ongoing feedback about the effectiveness of the overall system
8. The compensation system is sustainable.

¹ The organizations of the Working Group for Educator Excellence presenting this paper are: Associated Industries of Massachusetts, Massachusetts Administrators for Special Education, Massachusetts Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, Massachusetts Association of College and University Reading Educators, Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Massachusetts Association of School Personnel Administrators, Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, Massachusetts Association of Science Teachers, Massachusetts Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education, Massachusetts Business Roundtable, Massachusetts Elementary School Principals Association, Massachusetts Foreign Language Association, Massachusetts Organization of Educational Collaboratives, Massachusetts Parent Teacher Association, Massachusetts Reading Association, Massachusetts Secondary School Administrators Association, Massachusetts Teachers Association, Small Business Association of New England, Stand for Children, Strategies for Children, Teachers²¹, and the Urban Superintendents' Network

Who We Are

The Working Group for Educator Excellence is a state-wide coalition of educational stakeholders² committed to improving the educator pipeline for the state of Massachusetts and ensuring that every student has access to high quality teaching. The coalition includes representatives from unions, professional associations, educational organizations, higher education, business associations, advocacy groups and members of the legislature working together to pursue a more comprehensive approach to supporting high quality teaching across the state.

Our Purpose

Drawing on the diverse knowledge and experience of its members, the WGEE presents this working paper to inform key decision-makers about the central issues that must be considered when evaluating educator compensation reforms and to describe eight essential principles to guide viable and comprehensive reform to the existing system. This paper is not meant as a blueprint for a particular compensation system; rather, it is intended to frame the discussion and present the key issues relevant to compensation reform. In keeping with the core principles of the WGEE—that improving educator quality requires a comprehensive approach to reform and that no single reform is sufficient to ensure uniformly high quality teaching and leading—the WGEE presents this working paper to advocate for a comprehensive set of reforms, of which compensation reform may be a part.

This working paper comes at a time when rethinking compensation, though not a new idea³, is part of both national and local conversations about education reform. For example, the federal Race to the Top program makes redesigning existing educator compensation a priority, and the Bill &

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³ Despite the recent surge in interest, educator compensation based on performance has a long history. In the mid-1800s, British schools and teachers were paid based on student test results but, eventually, this approach was abandoned due to bureaucracy and corruption. In the early part of the twentieth century, many U.S. public schools described their system of pay as "merit based" despite the fact this was largely based on paying white males more than their minority or female peers, leading to the movement for a uniform salary schedule. In the 1960s, there was a brief effort at instituting merit pay and again in the 1980s following publication of *A Nation at Risk*. Some districts experimented with such programs throughout the 1980s with limited impact. Now, a new wave of experiments is underway, drawing unprecedented attention from educators and policymakers (Gratz, 2009).

Melinda Gates Foundation recently made a \$335 million investment in projects to improve teacher effectiveness, funding experiments in, among other initiatives, educator compensation reform. Clearly, some policy makers are viewing compensation as a critical lever for improving teaching and leading in our nation's schools.

The WGEE offers a somewhat different perspective. While compensation reform may have the potential to influence the quality of teaching in our schools, it cannot do so as a stand-alone initiative. Rather, reforming educator compensation would have to be part of a larger, coordinated effort that aims to improve the supports and accountability for high quality teaching, including systemic reforms of training, supervision, evaluation, and overall school conditions. With this systemic perspective in mind, we urge policy makers and educational leaders to keep the focus on the impact of any reforms, not only on teachers and schools but, more importantly, on the students of the Commonwealth. We ask that those considering these reforms continually ask the question: How will these reforms affect students?

The Massachusetts Context

Massachusetts is a state with both great assets and real challenges in terms of preparing students for the 21st century. We can be rightfully proud that students in the Commonwealth lead the nation in reading and math scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress⁴, and outscore the nation and most of their international peers on the TIMSS, the world's largest study of student performance in mathematics and science⁵. However, Massachusetts continues to have a significant achievement gap--comparable to the national average--between African American and Latino students and their white and Asian counterparts, as well as between high-poverty and low-poverty groups. Although, on average, our students may do well compared to other states, we know that not every student is achieving to his or her potential, and this disproportionately affects students of color in high-poverty schools. As concerned educators, parents, and citizens, we know that our work is far from done--we have to close these gaps and achieve positive results for all the students in the Commonwealth.

Research overwhelmingly indicates that teachers play an important role in improving student learning and closing achievement gaps (Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2002; Rowan, Correnti, & Miller, 2002; Rockoff, 2004; Goldhaber & Anthony, 2007). Yet, in 2008, Massachusetts lost almost 3000 teachers for reasons other than retirement, and nearly 2000 additional teachers left one district for another in the same time period⁶. If Massachusetts is to realize the important goals of raising student achievement and preparing all students to compete in the global economy with the capacity for critical and innovative thinking, the Commonwealth must continue to improve both its preparation and retention of high quality educators for all our students. Some educational leaders

⁴ <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states>

⁵ <http://www.doe.mass.edu/news/news.aspx?id=4457>

⁶ Data provided by personal correspondence with Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, from EPIMS data

and policymakers in Massachusetts and across the nation suggest that redesigning the system of educator compensation may be a way to realize these goals.

Whereas some states, as well as several large urban districts, have instituted fairly elaborate compensation reforms in the last few years⁷, Massachusetts has not seen the same widespread work in this area. However, there have been some local efforts to revamp educator pay scales, linking compensation to performance and student outcomes. What is notable about these local efforts is that they have taken place within the context of negotiations between districts and their teachers' unions, rather than being imposed from outside. For example, in 2000, the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District implemented a system-wide award incentive, with the school board certifying a 1 percent teacher salary bonus for all teachers if the district improved tenth grade student performance from the previous year's MCAS results. Since then, the district has modified the performance award program, and applied additional performance measures, as the state and national systems of measurement have evolved. In addition, the district has linked this compensation reform to reforms in the teacher evaluation system, and all of this has been done as part of the contract negotiations between district management and the local union⁸.

In 2005, Springfield, the state's second largest school district, implemented significant changes to the teacher pay scale. Specifically, Springfield established a new career ladder for teachers. The district created new positions for teachers, with added roles and responsibilities, and required those interested in advancing into these new positions to demonstrate their impact on student achievement in order to be eligible for added responsibilities and compensation⁹. Although we do not yet have data on the impact of these reforms over time, it is significant that Springfield, a large urban district, engaged key stakeholders to institute these changes. In fact, this hard-won agreement involved the local union and management in an intense process of negotiation and mediation. There are two important lessons from these local efforts. First, that redesigning educator compensation may be effectively initiated at the local level and involve key constituents in the planning process, and second, that management and unions can work together to design a reformed system of compensation.

Compensation Reform: Understanding the Issues

There is no magic bullet to improve teaching. Although some policymakers look to compensation reform to radically alter the profession, changing the traditional educator pay scale will not, on its own, transform teaching and learning. Instead, compensation is one piece of a much larger picture of

⁷ see Johnson & Papay, 2009; Koppich, 2009, and the Center for Educator Compensation Reform at <http://cecr.ed.gov/>, for more about current initiatives in these and other states

⁸ Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School Performance Award Program FY98-FY11, Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, Superintendent

⁹ Springfield Education Association contract

reform. Here we delineate the many issues related to educator compensation in order to encourage a thoughtful and comprehensive approach to reform.

Economic Issues

Of course, compensation is about money—most reform proposals recommend financial incentives and rewards linked to particular behaviors and outcomes. Thus, we must ask what the financial impact of changes in teacher salary schedules might be, and what costs might be associated with establishing appropriate structures and resources to support a redesigned system of teacher compensation.

In some instances in the past, in education as well as in fields such as finance, healthcare, and government, experiments with financial incentives and performance-based pay did not adequately account for the possibility of increased costs as people met the expectations for performance (Palumbo, 2007). If these new models are to be more effective than earlier experiments in educator compensation reform, those designing the system must account for the possibility that, as more people meet performance goals, costs could increase. Whether reforms are built on top of the existing pay structure or the pay scale is redesigned entirely, the question is the same: what strategies can districts employ to financially sustain a redesigned pay system in the long term?

Measurement and Data Issues

Much of the discussion about reforming compensation centers on the ways in which success should or could be measured. In order to make progress regarding compensation reform, we have to be clear about what will be measured and how. Some recent work has been very helpful in providing a framework for thinking about different kinds of measurement (Jerald 2009; Rowland, Potemski, and Learning Point Associates, 2009).

First, this work divides performance measures into several useful categories that capture the range of inputs and outcomes that might be assessed in a reformed educator compensation system. In general, the following categories are suggested:

Knowledge and Skills: This refers to the teacher's inputs in terms of content and professional knowledge and training, ongoing professional development, and other activities that indicate knowledge and skill development, such as additional degrees and licenses.

Roles and Responsibilities: This refers to additional responsibilities such as mentoring, coaching, leading teams, afterschool work with students, and tutoring.

Student Outcomes: This refers to the evaluation of teachers/schools based on student outcomes. The most common outcome described with regard to measures of student learning is student performance on state-sponsored standardized tests, and the gains students make on these tests compared to average gains (growth scores). In addition, there are many other relevant outcomes related to student learning such as student attendance, graduation rates, curriculum-specific student performance, student portfolios, and social and emotional outcomes.

School Outcomes: School outcomes are not discrete from student outcomes but include measures such as overall standardized test scores or growth on those scores, graduation rates, parent involvement, and other indicators of school-wide efforts to improve teaching and learning.

Market Factors: This refers to attracting teachers to hard-to-staff schools (high poverty, urban schools) or subject areas (mathematics, science, special education).

In addition, recent literature offers some critical questions to ask about any proposed measures of performance:

How is “performance” measured?

(e.g. standardized tests, principal evaluations, peer review, and/or other measures)

Who measures “performance”?

(e.g. district office, principal, peers, others)

At what level is the input or outcome measured?

(e.g. individual, classroom, team, school, district)

Who is being rewarded?

(e.g. individual teacher, team, school, district)

For example, if differentiated instruction is something that the district values, then a particular measure of teacher performance might examine how well teachers in the district differentiate their lessons to meet the needs of all students in the class. The system might reward an individual teacher for practicing differentiated instruction based on a principal’s observation of the teacher’s practices, guided by a rubric that evaluates differentiated instructional strategies. In this example, the individual teacher is compensated for her individual performance. Another measure of performance might evaluate the entire staff of a school—teachers and administrators—based on the school’s student learning gains on the statewide test. Both of these are measures of performance and are linked to student learning, but they are quite different in terms of how performance is measured, and at what level evaluation is conducted and the remuneration offered.

We need healthy and open debate in Massachusetts about the best way to approach evaluation, measurement, data collection, analysis, and ultimately compensation for teachers and leaders who realize the desired goals and outcomes of the reforms. The categories and questions outlined above demand clarity and specificity. Much of the recent discussion about measurement, and teacher

quality, would benefit from a clear and precise discussion of exactly what we measure, how we measure it, and how we reward educators for achieving the desired outcomes.

Teacher Quality Issues

In recent years, defining what quality teaching is and how to recognize it has been the subject of considerable research and debate. Compensation reform is intended to improve the quality of teaching by instituting changes in teacher pay in order to affect the recruitment, training, retention, continuous improvement, and motivation of quality teachers. Compensating teachers based on their performance is intended, in part, to motivate teachers to work harder and smarter for their students' success. In addition, some policy proposals recommend financial incentives to attract high quality teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools and reward them for staying.

The challenge, of course, is that teacher effectiveness is not easy to define or to measure. In addition, even when we know exactly what we want teachers to know and be able to do, preparing and supporting them to do these things are not easy tasks. Teacher quality depends on a range of reforms, including supports to teachers and schools to promote ongoing teacher professional development and continuous improvement of instructional practices. Related to compensation reform, research about past pay-for-performance initiatives shows us that efforts to reform teacher pay, when conducted as stand-alone initiatives, not linked to broader improvement plans, tend to have only modest effect (Jerald, 2009). Compensation reform may indeed have the potential to contribute to teacher quality if it is considered as a tool for more comprehensive changes to the human resources in schools.

Management and Personnel Issues

Of course, whatever the reform plan is, it must be carried out, and compensation reform will require new strategies for assessing, evaluating, and rewarding teachers and leaders. Any reforms will have to consider the impact on management and personnel to establish and support a new system in a sustainable way. For example, any reform effort will have to consider what capacity must be added at the district or school level in order to implement new systems of evaluation, new tracking systems for teachers and students, and revisions to central payroll systems, among other changes. Perhaps more important, how can this increased capacity be established and supported over time?

In Massachusetts, as across the nation, there is a critical need for more effective systems of supervision and evaluation. There is widespread agreement from diverse stakeholders that the current system of supervision and evaluation needs reform (Little, 2009; Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, and Keeling, 2009; Rothman and Toch, 2008). Many current evaluation systems are neither useful to teachers in improving instruction nor effective for making real assessments of the impact of teachers on their students. In addition, in some cases, those who conduct the evaluations of teachers either do not have the appropriate training, or the time, or both, to do so effectively. Compensation

reform offers an opportunity to reform supervision and evaluation systems so they provide useful information to teachers and leaders, contribute to improving instruction, and ultimately advance student achievement. In fact, effective, reliable, and consistent evaluation is a key component of any compensation system based on performance. Therefore, compensation reform efforts must make new and improved supervision and evaluation a critical component of the design.

Professional Culture Issues

Often ignored in the larger discussion about compensation reform is the impact of these reforms on the culture of schools. Any reform to a school's or district's system of compensation will influence professional culture in the schools. Reforms have the potential to splinter a staff or alienate individuals, but they also have tremendous potential to promote collaboration and collegiality. Thus, the impact on culture must be considered a relevant aspect of any system of reform. Of course, connected to this, the impact on students must be considered as well. Compensation reform should be considered an opportunity to promote dynamic, engaged, and committed educators, who work collaboratively and with collegiality, for all students.

A Word on Terminology

We have tried, whenever possible, to avoid educational jargon in favor of clear and precise language. Much of the disagreement in policy circles may have to do with the use of imprecise or euphemistic language related to reforming educator pay. For example, the language used to describe these reforms includes: pay-for-performance, merit pay, differentiated compensation, alternative compensation, incentive pay, and so on. These different terms imply different approaches to reforming compensation but they are often used without clear description of what is meant. In fact, key stakeholders, who may in fact share quite similar goals, often do not engage in meaningful discussion because of differences in terminology. Therefore, in the recommendations for reform processes and policy outcomes described in this paper, we have attempted to be as clear as possible about what we mean. We believe that defining the terms we use when we talk about compensation reform, and being consistent in how we use these terms, will be important for productive dialogue across the various stakeholder groups in the state.

Eight Essential Principles for Effective Reform

In the pages that follow, we outline eight essential principles of effective reform. These principles have to do with the overall process of reform as well as the elements of an effective compensation system itself. In our considerable experience as educational practitioners and leaders, we recognize that compensation reform cannot be imposed from above nor can the reforms stand by themselves.

Rather, compensation reform must be carefully planned, with the meaningful involvement of key educational stakeholders. In addition, the reforms have the best chance of achieving the desired goals of improving teaching and learning if they are linked to broader reform efforts.

In order for compensation reforms to achieve the broad goals of improving teaching, leading, and learning, the WGEE recommends adherence to the following principles:

1. The reforms are linked to a comprehensive and coordinated vision of teaching and learning.
2. The process of reform includes broad, and meaningful, stakeholder participation and endorsement.
3. The reforms are designed to promote continuous improvement for educators and schools.
4. There are multiple measures of performance and multiple incentives and rewards at all levels of the system.
5. The compensation system includes differentiated career opportunities and new roles and responsibilities for teachers and leaders.
6. The compensation system promotes and enhances a culture of high expectations, collaboration, teamwork, and innovation.
7. The compensation system is designed to be responsive to ongoing feedback about the effectiveness of the overall system.
8. The compensation system is sustainable.

The reforms are linked to a comprehensive and coordinated vision of teaching and learning.

Lessons from previous experiments in compensation reform teach us that, when the reforms are not linked to more comprehensive improvement plans, they are unlikely to be effective or sustainable. Research suggests that compensation reforms as stand-alone initiatives have limited impact (Odden, 2008; Odden & Kelly, 2008; Heneman, Milanowski, & Kimball, 2007). Linking compensation reforms to a broader reform effort is particularly important as it debunks the assumption behind these earlier reforms—that teachers, if only provided with financial incentives, would be able to improve their students' learning and were not doing so because they did not believe they were adequately compensated (Gratz, 2009).

Of course, most people enter teaching for the very reason that they want to have an impact on the students they teach, and because they love their subject and they love working with children and young adults. Therefore, it may not be the appropriate strategy to design a pay-for-performance

system based on the premise that teachers and leaders would perform better simply if we offered them more money for trying harder. Instead, compensation reform should be designed to be part of a larger and coordinated system of reforms that focuses on providing high quality teacher training and development, and meaningful supervision and evaluation. With comprehensive human resource development, and a strong supervision and evaluation system in place, compensation reform can reward people and schools for taking advantage of new and important resources. In fact, without this comprehensive approach, it is unlikely that compensation reform will achieve the desired results of improving student achievement.

The process of reform includes broad, and meaningful, stakeholder participation and endorsement.

This is only possible if key constituents such as the unions, school management, educational leaders, community groups, and the business community are engaged from the beginning in the very early planning phases of the initiative. Recent compensation reform efforts in districts and states around the country indicate that collaboration among the unions, management, and key stakeholders is critical to the success of the initiative (Koppich, 2009; Slotnik, 2009). Without the participation and buy-in of local teachers, administrators, and other educational stakeholders, implementation of these plans will run up against multiple hurdles. This process must not only include key constituents in a meaningful way, but it must be fair and transparent to all. Examples of recent, more comprehensive reforms make transparency a key aspect of the reform process, providing many opportunities for key constituents to participate in the planning processes, ensuring widespread understanding of proposed reforms, and eliciting feedback about proposed changes (Johnson & Papay, 2009; Koppich, 2009).

Furthermore, Johnson and Papay (2009) note that compensation reform does not have a one-size-fits-all solution, as local circumstances dictate different needs and possible approaches. Therefore, the involvement of local experts at all levels of the system, from district leaders to local unions to parent groups, will be important in ensuring that specific district circumstances are considered in the initial design of any reforms. In the development of these reformed compensation systems, we may expect to see differences in the reforms as specific local priorities dictate particular designs.

The reforms are designed to promote continuous improvement for educators and schools.

The purpose of these reforms should be to ensure the best teachers and leaders for all schools and all students. Therefore, compensation reforms will be most effective if they are designed to improve instruction, rewarding all educators who achieve the goals defined by the reforms. Clear expectations for performance must be articulated and these expectations must be reasonable within the existing system. In other words, if teachers have access to high quality training and support, avail themselves of these resources, and have a positive effect on their students' learning, they should be rewarded. Furthermore, ensuring that the resources exist to make these rewards available to all teachers who meet the defined expectations will be important for promoting a culture of

shared responsibility and collaboration, rather than feeding a culture of scarcity and unhealthy competition among colleagues.

Furthermore, the system will be most effective if it anticipates—as the professional resources become available—that more and more teachers will succeed in reaching the goals. In turn, the goals should evolve so that they continue to be meaningful for the continuous improvement of teacher practice and student learning. For example, if a district focuses on improving instructional practices in literacy, the district might establish both short and long-term goals for teacher knowledge and practice, and link compensation to these goals. As more teachers reach the short-term objectives, and as more students demonstrate mastery, the district would shift focus to the long-term goals, and link compensation to the long-term objectives.

There are multiple measures of performance and multiple incentives and rewards at all levels of the system.

We cannot depend on any one measure to determine the quality of teaching and leading in schools. Instead, any compensation system that rewards performance must employ a range of measures to establish teacher, school, and district quality. These measures might include:

- ✓ **Student achievement** as determined by a range of indicators such as standardized tests/growth scores, district-based assessments, and samples of student work;
- ✓ **Teacher knowledge and skills**, as indicated by proficiency in content and pedagogical knowledge, and as demonstrated through classroom practices and evaluation of these practices;
- ✓ **Teachers' and leaders' work context** such as working in a hard-to-staff school;
- ✓ **Teacher roles and responsibilities** such as mentoring new teachers, instructional leadership positions, participation in a study group, tutoring, or after-school work with students.

A critical element of this multiple measures approach is the recognition that learning is not always easy to document and measure. Thus, employing multiple measures takes the pressure off of any one data source to tell the whole story for any particular educator, school, or district. This multiple measures approach also recognizes that student test scores may not reflect the teachers' or schools' efforts or effectiveness, and may not accurately reflect the students' learning in a particular class or year. Therefore, multiple measures of performance, and multiple types of student outcomes, ensure that educators and schools that meet other important criteria will not be judged based solely on test scores that may not reflect student growth. This approach is also important as it allays fears that educators will shy away from the most challenging schools and students—those most in need of high quality teachers—because turning around test scores with the least confident and least skilled

students may not happen quickly. In addition, multiple measures should afford districts and schools the flexibility to identify the appropriate measures, and the weight given to each measure, to meet their particular needs.

Accountability for student learning is both an individual and a shared responsibility, and is linked to the overall school conditions. In a school where student achievement goes up and test scores improve, and in a culture where collaboration is valued and supported, rewards for these accomplishments should be shared as well. For example, it is not only the eighth grade mathematics teacher who is responsible for gains in eighth grade test scores. Rather, the science teacher who taught formulas for chemistry or the homeroom teacher who instituted a homework help time or the principal who built in time for teachers to collaborate or the soccer coach/physical education teacher who required students to complete homework while waiting for the bus to arrive for a game—all these people have a part in the improved performance of their students.

However, educators are certainly responsible for what happens in their classrooms and with their students, and should be held accountable for this work. Thus, teachers must be observed and evaluated, based on their teaching practice, and these practice-based observations and evaluations should play a part in any proposed compensation reforms. In addition, if we are to bring high quality teachers to hard-to-staff schools, and keep them there, then rewarding teachers to work in these schools with monetary compensation may contribute to this goal. All of this means that, as evaluating teaching and learning is complex, the incentives and rewards cannot be one-size-fits-all.

Finally, money is not the only remuneration that might be used in a reformed system. Teachers value time, opportunities to learn, and resources for their classrooms just as they value their salaries. Therefore, a compensation system might provide educators with other rewards, in addition to money—new opportunities for high-quality professional development; extra planning time with grade-level peers; new technology or materials. All of these rewards can motivate teachers and, simultaneously, improve the quality of teaching and learning.

The compensation system includes differentiated career opportunities and new roles and responsibilities for teachers and leaders.

Research indicates that some of the best and brightest young teachers may leave the classroom because they yearn for added responsibilities and opportunities for professional growth (Johnson and Birkeland, 2003; Johnson, Berg, and Donaldson, 2005). Meanwhile, around the country, teachers are taking on new roles, from mentoring other teachers to participating in learning teams, from serving as instructional coaches to taking on administrative roles, while continuing to teach students everyday. These added roles and responsibilities allow teachers to learn and grow while continuing to find satisfaction working with students. Reforming compensation can be effectively linked to this larger effort to reform the teaching profession by adding diversified compensation to these new roles and opportunities. Thus, compensation reform stands to have a more potent impact on teacher attrition if it is linked to these larger efforts to transform the teaching profession.

For example, a reformed compensation system that is linked to career differentiation might provide teacher mentors, in addition to a stipend, with more time in order to observe and meet with their mentees. The system might also provide early-career teachers with time and compensation for participating in an ongoing data workshop that instructs teachers in how to gather student data, and arms them with the skills to use those data to improve instruction. In both instances, educators are encouraged to improve their practice, and are provided with the necessary time to do so, as well as offered additional financial compensation.

The compensation system promotes and enhances a culture of high expectations, collaboration, teamwork, and innovation.

Reforming educator compensation presents an opportunity to promote a positive culture in schools. Instead of the isolation that often accompanies teaching, reforms to teacher pay systems have the potential to promote a culture of increased collaboration, teamwork, and innovation, where everyone in the school is committed to the learning of all students. Massachusetts should approach these reforms as an opportunity to improve everyone's work, and promote a culture of shared responsibility, shared learning, and teamwork.

In addition, compensation reform may play a part in creating a new culture in schools: a culture that rewards educators for their efforts to innovate in their classrooms and schools, to try new curricula, and to experiment with new instructional strategies and technology. Compensation reform could play a significant part in incentivizing this type of innovation, giving teachers and leaders the permission to take risks and do things differently for the benefit of all students. If we approach it right, compensation reform may serve as a vehicle not only for improving instruction, but also for creating a truly innovative and imaginative culture in Commonwealth schools.

The compensation system is designed to be responsive to ongoing feedback about the effectiveness of the overall system.

The compensation system must be designed with a strong evaluation and monitoring system built in, and must be flexible enough to respond to the results of this ongoing monitoring. For example, if the system of evaluation is not functioning well because the principals who are supposed to conduct observations have too many to complete in any given year, there should be an effective way for this information to feed back into the system. In turn, based on this feedback, appropriate modifications to the system should be made. Similarly, if the plan for assessing teachers appears to put more weight on one measure--such as a particular measure of student learning or principal evaluations--than turns out to be useful or appropriate, the measures, and the weight assigned to various measures, should be altered to more reasonably reflect teachers' effectiveness. Building in a formal monitoring system to work out the kinks of the new reforms will ultimately ensure that they are of benefit to teachers, administrators, and students. In short, the system should be designed to be flexible to the particular needs of the local context and adaptable based on the results that feed back into the system over time.

The compensation system is sustainable.

Sustainability may be the most critical design element of all. Previous efforts to reform educator compensation in states and districts around the country should serve as lessons to Massachusetts—when the reforms were not designed with clear plans for sufficient and stable resources to administer the systems of data collection and evaluation, these reforms ended up being discarded. Furthermore, when promised rewards did not materialize, educators lost faith in the system and the reforms ultimately did not serve the goal of improving instruction or student learning (Palumbo, 2007).

The sustainability of compensation reform will be dependent upon a process of reform that is participatory and that maintains a long view of change. The principles we put forth all suggest that reform must be comprehensive and thorough in approach, taking into consideration the appropriate resources needed to build a new system, not just of compensation, but of educator preparation, training, and support. If compensation reforms are to contribute to the critical goal of raising achievement for all the students in the Commonwealth, the reforms must be thoughtful, thorough, and comprehensive.

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