

**Title:** A review of integrated and systematic approaches to teacher professional development

**Date:** June 2010

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**Question:** Could you provide information on professional development incentive programs?

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**Response:**

This response synthesizes effective professional development incentive practices in other districts to address the following questions:

- How do districts deliver and compensate for teacher professional development?
- How do districts link evaluations and/or school/district priorities to professional development?
- How do districts define what professional development is allowable?
- How do districts monitor professional development participation and/or track its results?
- What lessons have the districts learned from implementing these approaches to professional development?

**Districts contacted**

To identify districts that are innovating in the area of teacher professional development, REL West staff initially spoke with teacher quality scholars affiliated with the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, the Center for Educator Compensation Reform, and the National Center on Performance Incentives. Staff then collected data on a subset of the districts recommended by these experts, reviewing key documents and interviewing district officials. (One district, District of Columbia Public Schools, was added based on the recommendation of U.S. Department of Education advisor, and Denver ProComp designer, Brad Jupp.) Table 1 lists basic descriptive data on the five districts reviewed.

**Table 1. Districts included for review**

School district	Students	Schools	Teachers (FTE)	System of interest
Denver Public Schools (CO)	73,053	152	4,142	Professional Compensation System for Teachers (ProComp)
District of Columbia Public Schools (DC)	58,191	175	4,400	IMPACT Effectiveness Assessment System
Minneapolis Public Schools (MN)	35,631	117	2,227	Alternative Teacher Professional Pay System (ATPPS)
Montgomery Co. Public Schools (MD)	137,717	206	9,639	Teacher Professional Growth System (PGS)
St. Francis Public School District (MN)	5,844	9	361	Student Performance Improvement Program (SPIP)

*Note:* Review of the Minneapolis Public Schools' ATPPS system was carried out via appraisal of district documents only; no staff interviews were feasible.

*Source:* National Center for Education Statistics Common Core of Data (CCD) public school district data for SY2007/08, retrieved 05/12/10 from <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/>.

## What we learned

Findings below are summarized from the results of interviews with one representative from each district, as well as from a review of system handbooks and related documents. Interviewed personnel and key resources are listed at the end of the report.

### How do districts deliver and compensate for teacher professional development?

Each of the five districts uses a systematic approach to professional development, but, among them, they take one of two broad approaches: Denver Public Schools and Minneapolis Public Schools offer direct financial rewards for completing specific professional development activities, while District of Columbia Public Schools, Montgomery County Public Schools, and St. Francis Public School District tend to use professional development as a means to achieve positive teacher evaluations, which, in turn, are rewarded. Among the latter three districts, St. Francis offers the most dramatic departure from the traditional step-and-lane teacher salary schedule, while Montgomery County has a more traditional salary structure. (District of Columbia is currently working to finalize its new teacher contract.)

- The **Denver Public Schools** (Denver) ProComp system is a comprehensive, alternative compensation system that awards teachers additional pay for any of four factors: satisfactory evaluations, teaching in hard-to-staff schools or assignments, attaining student-growth objectives, and — the focus of this Reference Desk response — demonstrated growth in knowledge and skills. Professional Development Units (PDUs) are the core salary-building element in the knowledge and skills aspect of the system. Teachers can participate in pre-approved PDU activities or design their own; all PDUs involve three steps: study, demonstrate (via observations, portfolios, etc.), and reflect. The teacher collaborates with his or her professional development team (a school administrator, administrators from district curriculum and instruction division, and/or

teachers on release to ProComp) to select how to best demonstrate learning and judge success, using the district's PDU rubric.

- The salary schedule underlying the **Minneapolis Public Schools** (Minneapolis) Alternative Teacher Professional Pay System (ATPPS) looks similar to a traditional schedule, but its vertical "steps" are referred to as "Career Increments" and its rows are "Professional Growth Credit Lanes." It takes 15 professional growth credits (PGCs) to advance one PGC lane (resulting in a base-building salary increase), and teachers can advance up to two lanes per year (the equivalent of 30 PGCs). Professional development activities (i.e., activities that result in PGCs) include teachers 1) receiving acceptable classroom observation ratings from mentors in the Minnesota Teacher Advancement Program (MnTAP); 2) fulfilling individual professional development goals, which not only must align with the school's improvement plan and student outcomes (as verified by the teacher's administrator-led professional development planning team), but also must include two surveys of students, family, and/or staff; or 3) producing a videotape or action research paper demonstrating their growth from the district's ProPay 1-2-3 courses.<sup>1</sup>
- **District of Columbia Public Schools** (District of Columbia) has recently developed a formulaic evaluation system tied directly to teacher compensation. Through this evaluation system, known as IMPACT, the district is seeking to award additional compensation to teachers who earn a rating of "highly effective." Notably, 40 percent of a general education teacher's overall IMPACT score is determined by his or her instructional expertise, which is measured through five 30-minute formal classroom observations (three by the teacher's principal or assistant principal; two by a Master Educator) during the year.<sup>2</sup> The observations rely on a detailed rubric for scoring teachers on the nine standards in the district's Teaching and Learning Framework (TLF). Within two weeks of the observation, the observer meets with the teacher to provide feedback and discuss next steps for professional growth. Subsequent professional development choices are up to the teacher; for example, a teacher can work with the Instructional Coach in place at the school (a school may have up to three Instructional Coaches), or have a Master Educator conduct an informal, follow-up evaluation.
- Although **Montgomery County Public Schools** (Montgomery County) retains a traditional salary schedule, it has developed a robust teacher Professional Growth System (PGS) with a set of interconnecting components to support continuous teacher development: standards-based evaluations, a professional development program, Peer

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<sup>1</sup> The Minneapolis Professional Pay (ProPay) program is a primary component of the district's umbrella program for alternative compensation, ATPPS. It offers teachers a variety of opportunities to earn salary increases for professional advancement. Through ProPay 1-2-3, teachers can earn professional growth credits by completing the following three elements: coursework, implementation/demonstration of new strategies and skills learned from the coursework, and reflection and results.

<sup>2</sup> IMPACT teacher evaluations use a combination of measures, each weighted differently, depending on the type of teacher being assessed. Student value-added accounts for 50 percent of the evaluation for a teacher of English or math in grades 4 through 8, while classroom observations account for 40 percent. For the majority of District of Columbia teachers, where DC Comprehensive Assessment System (CAS) data do not exist, classroom observations account for 80 percent of the teacher evaluation.

Assistance and Review (commonly known as PAR), and a career lattice. Implementation of the teacher PGS began in 2000, and today the system closely links the district's teaching standards<sup>3</sup> to teachers' formal evaluations, which follow a precise schedule over the course of a teacher's tenure in the district. The first evaluation cycle lasts three years, with the time between evaluations extending to five years as teachers become more experienced. During non-evaluation years, teachers are expected to continue a cycle of professional growth, designing a collaborative, multi-year professional development plan that aligns with the school's improvement plan and must be approved by the school's Staff Development Teacher (SDT) and principal, with whom the teacher must meet and consult at least twice a year. This professional development work between evaluations is then taken into account as the principal writes the teacher's subsequent evaluation.

- The **St. Francis Public School District** (St. Francis) worked collaboratively with its teachers union to establish in 2001 its Teacher Academy, which offers professional development classes from the American Federation of Teachers' Education Research and Dissemination (ER&D) program. In addition to having access to a menu of district ER&D options, teachers in St. Francis can design their own professional development activities, provided they can get approval from the Teacher Academy coordinator (who bases approval on how well the proposed professional development maps to established criteria) and from their own Performance Review Team (PRT), which is made up of the teacher, two peer teachers, and one administrator. (All licensed administrators in the district participate on a PRT.) Under the district's comprehensive alternative compensation system, the Student Performance Improvement Program (SPIP),<sup>4</sup> instituted in 2005, salary enhancements are linked to teachers' professional growth, which is assessed in the course of four annual classroom observations by PRT members.<sup>5</sup> For many of the professional development options offered through the ER&D program, the district has established desired outcomes that an observer would be able to readily discern in the classroom. In other cases, a teacher develops his or her own rubric for the observer to use to confirm that the teacher has successfully implemented new skills/knowledge.

Table 2 offers additional details about the mechanics of each of these five approaches to professional development incentives, grouped by general approach (i.e., professional development unit/credit rewards or evaluation focused).

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<sup>3</sup> Montgomery County's teaching standards were derived from the core National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) propositions.

<sup>4</sup> SPIP officially began at the same time that Minnesota's Quality Compensation (Q-Comp) alternative pay law was implemented.

<sup>5</sup> Teacher salary enhancements also are linked to evidence of student growth, as measured by achievement data and other forms of reporting.

**Table 2. Notable details from districts' approaches to professional development incentives**

<b>Rewarding professional development (PD) units/credits</b>	
<p>Denver Public Schools (CO)</p> <p>ProComp Knowledge and Skills pay, Professional Development Units (PDUs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers can earn and be paid for 1 Professional Development Unit (PDU) per year.</li> <li>• For teachers with 14 years of service or less, the PDU builds the teacher's permanent base salary by 2% of the salary index.</li> <li>• For teachers with 15 or more years of service, PDUs result in a non-salary-building bonus of 2% of the salary index.</li> <li>• All ProComp incentives count toward the base for a teacher's pension.</li> </ul>
<p>Minneapolis Public Schools (MN)</p> <p>Alternative Teacher Professional Pay System (ATPPS) Professional Growth Credits (PGCs), Category 2 – Professional Development</p>	<p>ATPPS PD activities and their PGC values or one-time payment amounts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills, Knowledge, and Responsibility (SKR) score from MnTAP mentor, multiplied by 3 (3 to 15 PGCs)</li> <li>• District ProPay 1-2-3 course (15 PGCs)</li> <li>• District Professional Skills course (1 PGC per 10 hours)</li> <li>• Fall, Winter, Spring PD progress reports/surveys (5 PGCs)</li> <li>• Serving on a peer's PD planning team (\$200)</li> <li>• Professional Support/Tenure action plan participant (\$300)</li> <li>• National Board certification (\$1500, or \$500 for renewal)</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluation focused</b>	
<p>District of Columbia Public Schools</p> <p>IMPACT Effectiveness Assessment System</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40% of each general education teacher's IMPACT score is based on his or her instructional expertise, as assessed on each standard of the district's TLF rubric (1–4 scale) during 5 classroom observations per year (3 by school administrator, 2 by Master Educator).</li> <li>• Other IMPACT score components include the teacher's individual- and school-value-added contribution to student achievement.</li> <li>• Teacher's post-evaluation PD is self-directed and may include working with the Instructional Coaches at the school and/or informal follow-up evaluation(s) by the Master Educator.</li> </ul>
<p>Montgomery Co. Public Schools (MD)</p> <p>Teacher Professional Growth System</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulting teachers provide support and conduct evaluations for novice and underperforming teachers.</li> <li>• Each school has a fully released Staff Development Teacher (SDT), paid on a 10-month schedule, but receiving 15 days of per diem pay for summer PD work.</li> <li>• During an evaluation year, tenured teachers must meet standards in 2 classroom observations conducted by observers who have completed the district's Observing and Analyzing Teaching 1 &amp; 2 courses (six sessions each).</li> <li>• Teachers who continuously meet standards in their evaluations are formally evaluated in their 1st, 2nd, 5th, and 9th years, plus every fifth year thereafter. (If a teacher appears to be underperforming, principals can request a special evaluation.)</li> </ul>
<p>St. Francis Public School District (MN)</p> <p>Student Performance Improvement Program (SPIP) salary schedule</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starting salary was raised 20% under new SPIP schedule, but no automatic increases (beyond COLA) were instituted.</li> <li>• To advance on salary schedule, teachers must demonstrate (to their Performance Review Team) results based on completion of approved PD; teachers get rated as <i>in progress</i>, <i>proficient</i>, or <i>established</i>; in first 6 years, 3 consecutive <i>proficient</i> (or higher) ratings are required to advance; in latter career stages, <i>established</i> ratings are generally required (see levels below). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Level 1 (entry level): no reviews required</li> <li>- Level 2: 3 reviews required earning <i>proficient</i> or higher rating</li> <li>- Level 3: 6 reviews required earning <i>proficient</i> or higher rating</li> <li>- Career 1: 10 reviews required (with 7 <i>established</i> ratings)</li> <li>- Career 2: 13 reviews required (with 10 <i>established</i> ratings)</li> <li>- Career 3: 16 reviews required (with 13 <i>established</i> ratings)</li> <li>- Teacher Leader/Mentor: eligible after 7 reviews (with 4 <i>established</i> ratings)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## How do districts link evaluations and/or school/district priorities to professional development?

All of the reviewed districts have sought to engage in efforts to connect teachers' professional reviews to actionable goals and activities each year.

- Both Montgomery County and St. Francis spent years collaboratively working with their teachers to develop systems that lead from teacher evaluations to jointly developed plans for teacher growth. In **St. Francis**, this linkage is established through a teacher's regular meetings with members of his or her Performance Review Team, whose members also conduct observations in the teacher's classroom. **Montgomery County** addresses the connection between evaluation and professional development by assigning a full-time Staff Development Teacher in each school.<sup>6</sup>
- **District of Columbia** is working to facilitate this link by clearly identifying teacher needs during observations (based on the district Teaching and Learning Framework) and, then, encouraging teachers to address these needs by working with school-based Instructional Coaches or, more informally, with roving Master Educators.
- **Minneapolis** teachers must align their annual professional development/growth goals with the school's improvement plan and student outcomes, and this alignment must be verified by the teacher's professional development team.
- In **Denver**, teacher professional development is self-directed and grounded in district and individual goals. Teachers have discretion around the content of their PDUs, unless they have received an unsatisfactory evaluation.

Maintaining the link between evaluation and professional development can require extensive work. Two respondents emphasized the importance of workplace conditions and an administrative infrastructure that allow regular interactions and collaborations between a teacher and, at least, the school principal and an instructional coach, if not a larger team.

- "We expect the principal of the school to be monitoring (the link between evaluations and professional development), to be ensuring that it's happening," said Susan Marks, **Montgomery County's** associate superintendent. "And then the people who evaluate principals need to be asking the principals' questions: How are you implementing the professional growth cycle? What's happening?"
- "When we developed the ProComp PDUs, [we] tried to couple them with professional evaluation [by creating] a feedback loop between these two cycles," **Denver ProComp** designer Brad Jupp explained. "But... it's very difficult set of workplace procedures. You have to consider the kinds of workplace routines that are going to need to be in place so

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<sup>6</sup> Due to recent budget cuts, the Staff Development Teachers in the smallest 20 elementary schools are half-time.

that principals and other instructional leaders can ascertain the development needs of professionals and link them to the academic needs of students.”

Table 3 provides information on individuals assisting teachers with professional development and/or participating in their evaluations.

**Table 3. Who assists teachers with professional development (PD) and/or participates in their evaluations**

School district	Staff assisting with teacher PD/evaluations
Denver Public Schools (CO)	Professional Review Panel, including teachers and school administrator (school-based)
District of Columbia Public Schools (DC)	Instructional Coach (generalist, school-based); Master Educator (specialist, roving); school administrator
Minneapolis Public Schools (MN)	MnTAP mentor (if applicable); PAR mentor (if applicable); PDP/IGP <sup>7</sup> team (including school administrator)
Montgomery Co. Public Schools (MD)	Staff Development Teacher (school-based); Consulting Teachers (for new and underperforming teachers); school administrator. In secondary schools, resource teachers and content specialists support PD.
St. Francis Public School District (MN)	Teacher Academy coordinator; Performance Review Team (consisting of peer team leader, specialist/PD provider, school administrator).

### How do districts define what professional development is allowable?

The five reviewed districts have varying levels of stringency when it comes to approving eligible professional development. In **Denver**, teachers can participate in pre-approved PDU activities (generally offered via district providers) or design their own. If they design their own, teachers must submit an application and receive advance approval from a review team consisting of educators from the district’s curriculum and instruction division and teachers on special assignment to ProComp. Assuming their professional development proposal is approved, teachers must spend a minimum of three months completing the PDU activities. Similarly, in **Montgomery County**, a teacher’s multi-year professional development plan must align with the school’s improvement plan and be approved by the school’s Staff Development Teacher and principal. The Teacher Academy in **St. Francis** offers professional development classes from the American Federation of Teachers’ Education Research and Dissemination (ER&D) program. But teachers in St. Francis can also design their own professional development activities, provided they can get approval from the Teacher Academy coordinator (who bases approval on how well the proposed professional development maps to established criteria) and from their own Performance Review Team. Teachers in **Minneapolis** can receive professional growth credits by completing the requirements of the district’s professional development coursework

<sup>7</sup> Minnesota state law requires all teachers to annually complete a Professional Development Process (PDP) or a Minnesota TAP (MnTAP) Individual Growth Plan (IGP). To successfully do so in Minneapolis (and earn 5 professional growth credits), teachers must fulfill all their fall, winter, and spring PDP/IGP expectations and also conduct two online surveys of students, families, or staff. The overall results of the PDP/IGP are assessed at the spring team meeting, and signatures from all PDP/IGP team members are required for completion.

(including ProPay 1-2-3 courses) and/or engaging in the state-required PDP/IGC process (described below and in footnote 5). In the ***District of Columbia***, professional development choices within the IMPACT system are up to the teacher.

### **How do districts monitor professional development participation and/or track its results?**

The two districts that offer direct rewards for professional development (Denver and Minneapolis) have established specific processes for reviewing whether teachers have completed it. In addition, Minneapolis has a process for reviewing results of the professional development. The other three districts (St. Francis, Montgomery County, and the District of Columbia) are less stringent in monitoring completion because teacher compensation is not tied to whether teachers complete professional development, but, rather, to the outcomes of teachers' formal evaluation — outcomes that, ideally, will reflect growth resulting from a teacher's professional development.

- In ***Denver's*** district-approved courses, teachers' participation is monitored and assessed by the instructor. In cases where a teacher has designed and received permission to pursue his or her own PDU activities, the teacher collaborates with his or her own professional development team and uses a PDU rubric to select how best to demonstrate learning and judge success.
- Like Denver, ***Minneapolis*** tracks teachers' participation in professional development, but the district also tracks results. In the fall, teachers meet with their professional development team (including a school administrator) to review student assessment data and develop goals, with additional review conducted at the winter meeting. The overall results of the professional development plan are assessed at the spring team meeting, and signatures from all team members are required for completion.
- For most of its professional development options, ***St. Francis*** has defined specific observable activities/skills that reviewers look for in the classrooms of teachers who have gone through professional development. In self-directed professional development, teachers develop the rubric with which their growth will be assessed. The Performance Review Team also reviews a teacher's portfolio that shows how his or her professional learning has impacted students in his or her classroom.
- In ***Montgomery County's*** system, a school's principal and Staff Development Teacher (SDT) work with teachers to monitor implementation of their professional development plan.<sup>8</sup> The SDT's primary responsibility is to oversee and support teachers' professional development plans at that school. In secondary schools, resource teachers (i.e., department heads) and content specialists support professional development. During evaluation years, tenured teachers collect and prepare

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<sup>8</sup> Montgomery County provides each school with funding for staff development substitute teachers to use when staff teachers are attending professional development. According to the teacher contract, these substitutes "allow teachers to participate in professional development and growth during their normal school day" (p. 42). Montgomery County teachers also have two unscheduled days (16 hours) "to work collaboratively with other teachers" (p. 55). Each school or department is responsible for determining how this time is used; prior approval on use of the time isn't required.

information and analyze their own progress on their professional development plans. As principals write a teacher's evaluation, they consider the professional development the teacher has done during non-evaluation years. Any time a teacher has a formal evaluation, which includes a classroom observation, post-observation conferences are held within three days.

- As noted earlier, ***District of Columbia*** teachers have five formal, 30-minute classroom observations throughout the school year to assess the teacher's proficiency in the district's Teaching and Learning Framework. Within two weeks of the observation, the observer meets with the teacher "to share their ratings, provide feedback, and discuss next steps for professional growth" (IMPACT handbook, p. 18). So, in District of Columbia there is not a direct review of professional development outcomes per se, but rather an expectation that teachers will use the results of their observations to select follow-up professional development from an Instructional Coach at the school or a Master Educator.

### **What lessons have the districts learned from implementing these approaches to professional development?**

District contacts shared several key lessons from their respective experiences. First, respondents from all five districts emphasized **the need to support teachers' self-directed improvement through regular collaboration, coaching, and feedback** (despite the administrative burden that such work imposes). All five also noted that **significant investments of time and money were required for planning, development, and training prior to actual implementation and management of the programs.**

- ***Denver ProComp*** designer Brad Jupp made the case for undertaking these resource-intensive efforts: "You need a workplace with many more classroom interactions [e.g., between teachers and principals or coaches] than those permitted in traditional evaluation systems, and much more informal information sharing than is typically permitted in the way we evaluate teachers. You need more thoughtful exchanges about strengths and weaknesses, and then... the school district has to work at the local level and at the regional level to make sure that there are appropriate, closely-coupled professional development interventions... [which] are usually going to be done by instructional coaches."
- ***Montgomery County*** offers one example of how such a system might be managed. To administer all aspects of its staff development system, this district has created a Teacher Professional Growth System Implementation Team that meets monthly and is co-chaired by the union vice president and an associate superintendent. (The county also has implementation teams to manage its systems for developing administrators and support services employees.) In addition, the district employs Community Superintendents who oversee groups of schools and ensure that principals are properly implementing the professional growth system for teachers. "We certainly have structures in place, and I think that's been very important," Associate Superintendent Susan Marks stated. "We try to coordinate professional development across the district and we link that to our strategic priorities, and I think it has been a very good structure that's been very, very helpful for us."

In addition, officials from two of the five districts emphasized **the benefits of generating teacher buy-in and engagement during system development.**

- A joint committee of four school district officials and four union officials originally designed the ***St. Francis*** SPIP alternative compensation system, and the district subsequently spent approximately 18 months conducting outreach with teachers. Teachers voted three times to continue to go forward with the system, and SPIP was finally implemented with 85 percent teacher approval. “They found that we paid close attention and asked what they thought... and we listened and tried to address their issues,” SPIP coordinator Randy Keillor explained. “It was a lot of work, but there has been a pretty close collaboration between the union and the district all the way through.” From the district’s perspective, this buy-in has increased the system’s validity in teachers’ eyes and has undercut challenges to performance evaluation results and dismissals.
- ***Montgomery County*** built its professional growth systems over the course of approximately 10 years. District and school leadership and the employee unions and their members essentially worked as partners to design and implement the system and other reform components, which, again, helped facilitate stakeholder engagement and ownership. Notably, the county has faced limited leadership turnover on both the district and union side in recent years.

## **Conclusions**

The teacher compensation systems in place in these five districts tend to vary in structure and connect to their district’s professional development in different ways. For example, one approach awards permanent salary-base-building increases for completion of professional development activities, while another involves a revised salary schedule that offers a quicker path to higher pay if teachers can develop in ways that meet evaluators’ expectations. Whatever their structural differences, all of the reviewed districts have sought to craft professional development approaches that support self-directed improvement through collaboration, coaching, and feedback. And although these approaches tend to require more time and money to plan, develop, and administer compared to more traditional compensation systems, respondents felt that the investment has been worthwhile because it has led to productive discussions among various stakeholders about what high-quality instruction looks like.

## **Methods**

Experts from federally funded research centers suggested investigating the innovative professional development systems in place in Montgomery County and Denver, as well as two Minnesota districts working under that state’s Quality Compensation for Teachers (Q-Comp) system: Minneapolis and St. Francis. However, we were unable to reach a contact for Minneapolis Public Schools during the project timeframe, so our analysis for this district is based on document review only. During our phone interview, Denver respondent (and current ED advisor) Brad Jupp suggested we also include District of Columbia Public Schools.

We excluded several suggested systems because we could not find comprehensive, relevant information during the project period. For example, the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) systems in Louisiana and South Carolina were eliminated because they were implemented in individual schools rather than districtwide. We did not include Dallas (TX) or Toledo (OH) because their alternative compensation models focus less on professional development than other areas. For example, Dallas' program focuses primarily on value-added performance pay, while Toledo's system rewards teachers mainly for obtaining NBPTS certification, assuming additional responsibilities, and teaching in high-need assignment areas.

For the final pool of cases, we reviewed district materials available online, such as program websites, program guidebooks, union contracts, evaluations, and case studies. This provided contextual information that reduced the burden on respondents and prepared interviewers to ask relevant questions to confirm and supplement publicly available information. We made initial contact with district officials via phone and email, describing the project scope and purpose. After developing a standardized interview protocol, with open-ended and semi-structured questions, we conducted one 30–45 minute interview with a representative from four districts. All interviews were recorded and transcribed. In some cases, we reviewed additional materials (not available online) that were sent to us by respondents.

This paper thus represents a synthesis of information collected from selected materials and from one interview in each district. Our qualitative analysis involved reviewing data from program documents and interview transcripts to inductively identify and group themes and patterns to address the requester's questions. Conducting a more systematic document review and/or interviews with other district representatives might yield additional information and considerations.

## Resources

### *Expert contacts*

- Julia Koppich, President, Koppich & Associates; Consultant, Center for Educator Compensation Reform and the National Center on Performance Incentives  
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- Laura Goe, Research Scientist, National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality  
[lgoe@ets.org](mailto:lgoe@ets.org) or 609-734-1076
- Ellen Behrstock, Policy Associate, National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality  
[Ellen.Behrstock@learningpt.org](mailto:Ellen.Behrstock@learningpt.org) or 312-288-7623
- Molly Lasagna, Policy Specialist, National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality  
[Molly.Lasagna@learningpt.org](mailto:Molly.Lasagna@learningpt.org) or [202-778-4582](tel:202-778-4582)

### *District contacts*

- Denver Public Schools: Brad Jupp, U.S. Department of Education advisor and former head of the Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA) and developer of ProComp  
[Brad.Jupp@ed.gov](mailto:Brad.Jupp@ed.gov) or 720-289-2444
- District of Columbia Public Schools: Jason Kamras, Director of Teacher Human Capital Strategy and director of the IMPACT program, and 2005 National Teacher of the Year  
[Jason.Kamras@dc.gov](mailto:Jason.Kamras@dc.gov) or 202-321-1248
- Montgomery County (MD) Public Schools: Dr. Susan F. Marks, Associate Superintendent in the Office of Human Resources and former principal of two elementary schools  
[Susan.Marks@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Susan.Marks@mcpsmd.org) or 301-279-3270
- Saint Francis (MN) Public Schools: Randall Keillor, Quality Compensation (Q-Comp) program contact and SPIP Coordinator for the district  
[Randall.Keillor@stfrancis.k12.mn.us](mailto:Randall.Keillor@stfrancis.k12.mn.us) or 763-213-1516

### *Links to relevant district information*

- Denver Public Schools' *ProComp at a Glance: A Quick Reference Handbook* (Nov 2006); online at  
<http://www.dpsk12.org/manila/programs/denverprocomp/ProCompHandbook.pdf>
- District of Columbia Public Schools' *IMPACT: The District of Columbia Public Schools Effectiveness Assessment System for School-Based Personnel 2009–2010: Group 1–General Education Teachers with Individual Value-Added Data*; online at  
<http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/Files/downloads/TEACHING%20&%20LEARNING/IMPACT/DCPS-IMPACT-Group1-Guidebook-September-2009.pdf>

- *Montgomery County Education Association Contract Agreement*; online at <http://mcea.nea.org/publications/contract.php>
- *Montgomery County Public Schools' Professional Growth System (Teacher Level) Handbook 2008–2009*; online at [http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/development/documents/TeacherPGS\\_handbook\\_08-09.pdf](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/development/documents/TeacherPGS_handbook_08-09.pdf)
- *St. Francis School District's Student Performance Improvement Program: A Collaborative Approach to Professional Development and Alternative Compensation* (handbook)
- *Minneapolis Public Schools' Alternative Teacher Professional Pay System (ATPPS) Guidelines* (updated for 2008–2009 School Year); online at <http://atpps.mpls.k12.mn.us/uploads/ATPPS+Guidelines+Updated+for+2008-09.pdf>

This memorandum is one in a series of quick-turnaround responses to specific questions posed by educators and policymakers in the Western region (Arizona, California, Nevada, Utah), which is served by the Regional Educational Laboratory West (REL West) at WestEd. This memorandum was prepared by REL West under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Contract ED-06-CO-0014, administered by WestEd. Its content does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.