Improving Teacher Effectiveness: An Examination of a Pay for Performance Plan for Boosting Student Academic Achievement in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

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Abstract

Throughout the United States, educational organizations are striving to find more effective ways to improve teacher performance and student learning. The increased pressure to improve teacher effectiveness in the classroom has led many public school districts to adopt a pay for performance system as a strategic compensation option for enhancing teacher performance, and thereby, improving student academic achievement. However, few studies have empirically substantiated the interdependence between performance pay, teacher performance and student achievement. Yet, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School district is in the process of implementing a new Pay for Performance plan before the plan has been thoroughly evaluated, properly tested, and completely developed. Given the multitude of factors that contribute to student learning, this paper concludes that a heavy reliance on a performance-based plan to motivate teachers may have negative effects on teacher effectiveness and student learning outcomes, if the plan is not well designed and/or if it is hastily implemented. Furthermore, it points out the problematic of operationalizing teacher performance and the intricacies of linking pay to performance as major hurdles to such a plan.

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Introduction

Pay for performance figures prominently in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) Strategic Plan 2014. The plan, *Strategic Plan 2014: Teaching Our Way to the Top*, as it is called, seeks to improve teacher effectiveness and student performance. Also, it aims to remedy educational failures in the district and to create a culture of effectiveness. To achieve these goals, CMS plans to reform the way it measures its employees' effectiveness, by linking pay to performance (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, 2010). In addition to improving teacher effectiveness, a pay for performance system is believed to be potentially an important tool for recruiting and retaining effective teachers.

Teacher performance enhancement policies are increasingly used by education policy makers due to failure of existing remuneration practices. According to Hanushek (2003) cited by Springer, Ballou, and Peng (2008), "These policy innovations are driven, in part, by the fact that existing teacher remuneration practices are not closely related to student performance and schooling outcomes" (p. 1). Yet, these policies continue to be controversial with some teachers, practitioners, parents, and researchers who share the same concern.

Scholars are still divided on the effectiveness of pay for performance as a driver and a potential lever of teacher effectiveness. As a matter of fact, measuring accurately the pedagogical performance of a teacher can be challenging because teacher performance is multidimensional and multifaceted by nature. The impact of a teacher both inside and outside of the classroom may be hard to quantify, leading to different conclusions in many cases. Goe, Bell, and Little (2008) acknowledge the elusive nature of teacher effectiveness: "Although there is a general consensus that good teaching matters and it may be the single most important school-based factor in improving student achievement, measuring teacher effectiveness has remained elusive in part

because of ongoing debate about what an effective teacher is and does" (p. 2). This statement highlights the need for a consensus about a method or a set of methods for evaluating teacher effectiveness.

The present paper examines relevant literature on pay for performance and proposes a conceptual framework for adopting a comprehensive teacher compensation system that accounts for the essence of teacher performance and student learning. It addresses the central question: Is Pay for Performance the right prescription for improving teacher effectiveness and student academic achievement in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools? In other words, is it possible to improve the quality of teaching by tying teacher pay to teacher performance?

Nature of the Problem

It is widely acknowledged that the American education system is undergoing an immense crisis. Gratz (2009, p. 113) notes that such words as "*crisis*, *scandal*, *deplorable*, *wretched*, and *disgraceful*" are most often employed to describe the current school system. In his state of the union address delivered on January 25, 2011, President Barack Obama described the crisis as follows: "Over the next 10 years, nearly half of all new jobs will require education that goes beyond a high school education. And yet, as many as a quarter of our students aren't even finishing high school. The quality of our math and science education lags behind many other nations. America has fallen to ninth in the proportion of young people with a college degree" (White House, 2011). According to President Obama, the educational crisis is attributable in part to schools. Hence, the primary objective of his "*Race to the Top*" initiative, which was designed to replace *No Child Left Behind*, is to encourage schools to improve teacher quality and student academic achievement.

However, the educational crisis is not novel in the United States. In 1985, Barker (1985), a

futurist who wrote a book on the business of paradigms, stated that "Education in its present form is being challenged by the parents, the corporations who are hiring its products, and by the students themselves who know they are getting a bad deal. The calls for change are at a fundamental level not at a cosmetic level" (p.115). In fact, there is virtually unanimous acceptance that American public schools are not in their best shape. However, researchers and educators do not always agree on the root causes of the problems. Debates over the causal factors of public education crisis often tend to be politicized.

Donald B. Gratz, a professor, department chair, and graduate director in education at Curry College outside of Boston, posits that today's educational crisis dates back to Sputnik in 1957. He points out that "The roots of the current view may be traced back to Sputnik in 1957, or at least to 1983, when the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE) proclaimed that "a rising tide of mediocrity" was threatening to engulf the country's schools, destroy its economy, and quite possibly bring down the nation" (Gratz, 2009, pp. 7-8). The author believes that American public schools were born in crisis, and the language of crisis has appeared in discussions of public education since the early 1800s.

Arguing about the roots of the crisis in public education, he contends that public schools have always been in crisis since the founding of the first public schools in Boston in the early 1800s. Gratz (2009) contends that "Despite a rose-tinted view of simpler times, Americans have rarely experienced an era when the public schools were not in crisis and the subject of a struggle" (p. 113). Some of the challenges include ineffective teaching practices, achievement gap between advantaged and low income students, lack of parental involvement, high student dropout rates, and poor graduation rates. Unquestionably, this crisis is complex and multilayered.

As indicated above, one of the significant challenges facing American public schools is

the graduation rate crisis. A former Education secretary lamented over this crisis. As Koedel (2008) observed, “Education Secretary Margaret Spellings recently referred to a small group of largely urban as “dropout factories” and did so with good reason - these schools are graduating less than 50 percent of their students” (p. 1). The graduation rate is inherently linked to the dropout rate. Orfield (2004) painted a grim picture of the dropout rate crisis in American public schools. He noted that “One of the most daunting challenges facing educators today is to prepare students for success beyond the classroom. Of grave concern is a steadily growing dropout rate. Nearly one of every three eighth-grade students in the United States does not graduate from high school, and half of Black and Latino students do not make it to graduation day” This problem is endemic in many school districts in the United States.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools are not faring any better than the schools described above. “We are part of a larger, national crisis in public education. The dropout rate in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools mirrors the national rate: One in three American students does not finish high school”, the Strategic Plan 2014 notes (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, 2010, p. 4). In fact, only 66.1 percent of students in this district graduated in 2008-2009. According to CMS, “The four-year graduation rate in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools was 66.1 percent for the 2008-2009 school year. The district needs to increase the rate of graduation for its students, and this area of focus sets 90 percent of students graduating within four years as the target for 2014” (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, 2010). Clearly, improvements in teacher quality can help mitigate the graduation rate crisis faced by these schools. It has been argued that teacher quality influences dropout outcomes and graduation rates (Koedel, 2008, p. 5).

Given the ultimate goal to boost the graduation rate considerably, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools devised a pay for performance plan that fosters teacher effectiveness. The

driving premise of the plan is that teacher effectiveness is a key ingredient for enhancing student performance. Before reviewing relevant literature pertaining to *teacher effectiveness* and *pay for performance*, it is worth examining these two key notions.

Important Definitions and Specifications

Teacher Effectiveness

Over the last three decades, there has been an increasing interest in teacher effectiveness. But what is meant by "teacher effectiveness" within the performance-based context? Does it mean that a large number of students achieve in standardized tests? Yes, but this is only one measure of teacher performance. In fact, students can achieve academic success without demonstrating one hundred percent mastery of course objectives or without passing standardized tests. Does it mean that a teacher has a long-term impact on students? Yes, but what about short-term and mid-term impact? Lack of immediate impact may suggest ineffective teaching practices to some policy makers. Does it mean closing the achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students? Does it mean motivating students to reduce the dropout rate? Does it mean instilling academic resiliency in students? Does it mean masterful teaching? To delineate clearly the notion of *teacher effectiveness*, it is important to address all these questions.

Clearly, a teacher can be effective with one group of students based on certain characteristics (gender, race, religion, age, and socio-economic status) but ineffective with another. A teacher can be effective with a small class but not so effective with a large class. A teacher can be ineffective in one school but effective in another. A teacher can be effective under one school leadership but ineffective under another. Finally, a teacher who is effective in one situation may not necessarily be effective in other situations. All of the above ideas show that teacher effectiveness is an extremely complex phenomenon.

Teacher effectiveness is quite an elusive and enigmatic concept. Its meaning varies depending on the context. As Goe, Bell, and Little (2008) put it, "Increasingly, policy conversations frame teacher effectiveness as a teacher's ability to produce higher than expected gains in students' standardized test scores" (p. 5). A group of educators at the University of Nottingham, School of Education, in United Kingdom, namely Day, Sammons, and Gu (2008) recognize that this view is widespread among educational professionals and policy makers. They argue that "teacher effectiveness should be assessed in relation to outcomes". By "outcomes", they mean "measurable academic gains" in standardized tests. Blanton, Sindelar, and Correa (2006, p. 117) point out that the use of student outcomes, particularly achievement, as a measure of teacher quality enjoys strong support from both education professionals and the policy community. Day et al's (2008) definition does not capture the true essence of teacher effectiveness because students' test scores cannot be the only indicator of teacher effectiveness.

This study stands against this narrow view of teacher effectiveness. It argues that several factors have an influence over teacher effectiveness. Encapsulating teacher effectiveness in one measure—student test scores—is indeed perilous. Research has shown that multiple indicators should be used to assess teacher performance.

The model of teacher effectiveness by Day, Sammons, and Gu (2008) presented in figure 1 exemplifies that a host of factors contribute to teacher effectiveness. Those factors include student attitudes to learning, student attainment, student achievement (long term), teacher self-efficacy, school or department leadership and culture (including teaching practices and continuing professional development (CPD), students' motivation and external social influences, and policy reform (conditions of service, standards, beliefs, and values).

Figure 1: Model of Teacher Effectiveness by Day, Sammons, and Gu (2008)

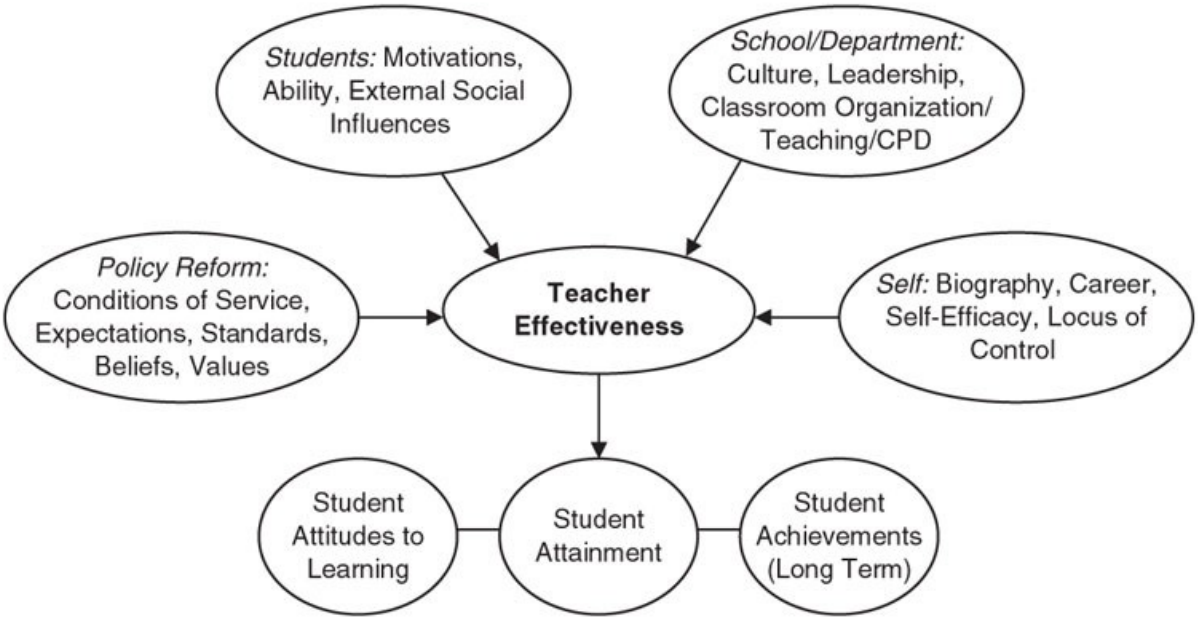


FIGURE 1. *Hypothesized initial model of factors contributing to variations in teacher effectiveness. CPD = continuing professional development.*

There is increasing acceptance that assessing teacher effectiveness based on results from one single measure (test scores) fails to accurately indicate the many ways in which teachers contribute to their student success and well-being (Goe, Bell, and Little, 2008). Goe et al (2008) summarized a broad class of teacher evaluation instruments used to assess teacher effectiveness encompassing (a) classroom observations, (b) principal evaluation, (c) instructional artifact, (d) portfolio, (e) teacher-self-report measure, (f) student survey, and (h) value-added model (p. 15). This coverage leaves out more indirect measures of teacher competency such as teacher demonstrations of knowledge, teacher responses to theoretical teaching situations (i.e. structured vignette), and parent satisfaction surveys.

It is crucially important to determine the validity of an evaluation instrument before using

it. Blanton, Sindelar, and Correa (2006) propose six criteria to evaluate the models and measures of beginning teacher quality. The six evaluation criteria include: (1) Comprehensiveness, (2) Generality, (3) Utility, (4) Practicality, (5) Reliability, and (6) Credibility. According to Blanton et al (2003, p. 14), *Comprehensiveness* refers to the degree to which a measure captures all of the various aspects of teacher effectiveness. *Generality* refers to how well an instrument captures the full range of contexts in which teachers work. *Utility* refers to how useful scores from one instrument are for a specific purpose. *Practicality* refers to the logistical issues associated with a measure such as "costs, training requirements, the developmental work required to adapt an existing model or measure" for one's own purpose. *Reliability* refers to the degree to which an instrument measures something consistently. Finally, *Credibility* is a specific type of validity—face validity—that is particularly important in measures of teacher effectiveness. Goe et al (2008) strongly urge the appropriate use of these tools for different types of teacher evaluations (high-stakes, low-stakes, formative, and summative). It is recommended that school leaders are highly trained professional evaluators in order for these instruments to yield valid results.

In addition to these six evaluation criteria, the four basic types of measures used in human resource development (HRD) studies can be considered. They are (1) observational measures, (2) self-report measures, (3) objective measures, and (4) estimates. Swanson and Holton (2005, p. 35) describe *observational measures* as measures recorded by a person observing something. Performance ratings and checklists are examples. *Self-report measures* are described as a person in the study's own report. Examples include a trainee's report of training on the job or knowledge gained. *Objective measures* are measures taken by instruments or highly accurate measuring devices. Examples might include cost data, quality measures from equipment, or knowledge tests. *Estimates* refer to estimates of measures, usually by subject

matter experts.

Of these four measures, three (observational measures, self-report measures, and estimates) may be used for teacher evaluation. Teachers or student teachers may use self-report measures to record knowledge gained in professional development training sessions. One disadvantage of self-report measures of performance on the job, Swanson and Holton (2005) note, is that "people tend to overrate themselves" (p. 35). However, they can still generate useful insights. These three measures contribute to the validity and reliability of teacher evaluations.

Cooper and Schindler (2011) suggest three major criteria for evaluating a measurement tool. They include validity, reliability, and practicality. Validity is defined as "the extent to which a test measures what we actually wish to measure"; Reliability refers to "the accuracy and precision of a measurement procedure"; and Practicality "is concerned with a wide range of factors of economy, convenience, and interpretability" (p. 280). As educational planners consider teacher evaluation measure tools, they need to think about reliable, valid, and practical tools that can yield consistent results.

Equally important is the measure of effective teaching. Anita Woolfolk, professor of Educational Psychology at Ohio State University, identifies three teacher characteristics that are vitally important for effective teaching. They include (1) knowledge, (2) clarity and organization, and (3) warmth and enthusiasm (Woolfolk, 2004). This characterization focuses on a three-dimensional approach. Many studies have adopted an integrative and multi-level approach to teacher evaluation (Woolfolk, 2004; Goe et al, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Day et al, 2008).

Ultimately, there is a level of credibility that students expect from an effective teacher. Stephen D. Brookfield, author of a widely used book, *The Skillful Teacher*, proposes a few indicators of teacher credibility encompassing (1) expertise, (2) experience, (3) rationale, and (4)

conviction. Brookfield (2006) reports that "Students say it is reassuring to know that the person in charge of their learning clearly knows, and can do, a lot" (p. 59). What qualifies a teacher to be regarded as an expert is the ability for the teacher to display a facility with the subject being taught. Regarding experience, "…students recognize pedagogical experience when the teacher not only knows the subject back to front but also is able to draw on a substantial history as the course instructor so that it allows her to teach it in a way that clearly helps students learn" (p. 61). The author notes that a backlog of experience enables a teacher to make informed decisions about learning activities. With respect to rationale, Brookfield (2006) argues that "Students say that it inspires confidence when they see that teachers clearly have a plan, a set of reasons, informing their actions" (p. 63). Finally, he notes that "conviction is recognized by students when teachers make it plain that they feel the subject matter, content, or skills being taught are so crucial that they want to explore every way they can make sure students have learned them properly" (p. 64). Indeed, these four indicators are essential to teacher credibility. However, some teachers may lack one (experience, for example) or two but still appear to earn students' trust through hard work.

Given the complex nature of teacher performance, it is argued in this paper that a comprehensive measure of teacher performance should include instructional artifacts, teacher portfolio, reflective journals, self-evaluations, peer evaluations, student evaluations, student portfolios, objective classroom observations, and videotaped lessons. Without these artifacts, it may be challenging to distinguish between perceived teacher effectiveness and measured (or observed) teacher effectiveness. Unfortunately, it may be time-consuming and, indeed, costly to evaluate all these instruments.

As argued earlier, research has shown that several variables are used to measure teacher

effectiveness. In 2006, three prominent educational scholars from Pakistan, Khan, Saeed and Kiran Fatima (2009) carried out a survey of 150 secondary school teachers in district Mianwali, Pakistan. They used the following variables: (1) leadership qualities, (2) instructional behavior, (3) capabilities of the interpersonal relationship, (4) professional attitudes, and (5) managerial abilities. The authors demonstrated the difficulty in measuring these variables. Indeed, measuring instructional behavior or professional attitudes of a teacher in an objective and credible manner is no easy task.

In North Carolina, the new teacher evaluation tool that the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools adopted this year is centered around five standards: (1) Teachers demonstrate leadership, (2) Teachers establish a respectful environment for a diverse population of students, (3) Teachers know the content they teach, (4) Teachers facilitate learning for their students, and (5) Teachers reflect on their practice. Although these standards are good measures of teacher performance, operationalizing them may be quite challenging. This paper will also address the problematic of operationalizing and measuring these constructs. But first, it is worth defining the nature and scope of Pay for Performance.

Nature and Scope of Pay for Performance

Definitions of Pay for Performance abound in the literature. Gratz (2009) defines Pay per Performance as "pay based on some objective measure of performance-at least in theory. This may be an output such as student achievement or demonstrated proficiency in class (according to various measures of effective teaching" (p. 11). In other words, teachers are compensated based on measurable outputs encompassing scores in standardized tests or other more complex assessments of student work. Furthermore, teacher pay is congruent with observed teacher performance (Chait and Miller, 2009). But teacher performance may be hard to measure.

Admittedly, while test scores may be an indicator of student performance, there are no similar measures for teacher performance. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District recognizes this reality in its Strategic Plan 2014: "Measuring student performance is relatively straightforward. Measuring the performance of teachers and school leaders is more complex—but it can be done fairly and professionally using a range of student assessments and other evaluation tools" (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, 2010, p. 16). Thus, with pay for performance, teacher performance should be measured in part through student academic achievement, not through teacher degree, certification, tenure, or longevity. It is unclear at this point what other factors will be considered when assessing teacher performance.

Chait and Miller (2009) provide a comprehensive definition of pay for performance. They note that "Pay-for-performance programs award teachers with differential compensation based on some combination of measurable outputs and observed teacher performance" (p. 3). The key question here is how to ensure that actual teacher performance—not perceived teacher performance—is measured accurately. In the absence of instructional artifacts, how can a school leader possibly have a true idea of pedagogical phenomena that take place in a given classroom every day? And even instructional artifacts do not always provide a full picture of classroom vivid occurrences. For example, it is quite hard to tell how humorous or human a teacher is by just looking at instructional artifacts or samples of student learning activities. There is more to teacher performance than student test scores or other learning output.

Along with student test scores, it is suggested that teacher effectiveness measures take into account teacher's content-based ETS's PRAXIS series designed to assess teacher proficiency, national certification assessments including the National Board Certification Examination, teacher's college overall grade average, teacher's tenure, teacher's qualification(s),

and other student performance assessment results. Teachers work hard to achieve these feats. Although D'Agostino and Powers (2009) contend that teacher test scores and preservice teachers' grade point averages (GPAs) in college do not predict teaching performance, the academic credentials abovementioned can still provide useful data about a teacher's preparation and teacher's status.

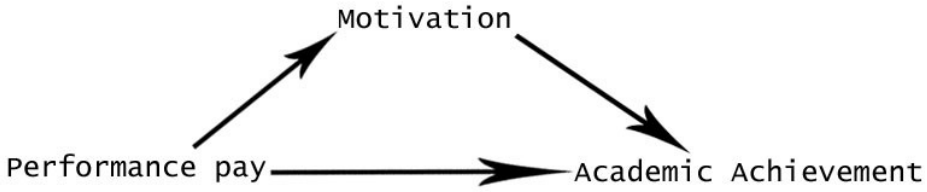
In sum, it is worth pointing out that a pay for performance system is designed to improve teacher performance and attract and retain higher quality teacher candidates. The primary purpose of a PFP system is two-fold: (1) to improve teacher performance, and (2) to improve student achievement. A PFP system has also been utilized to reform teacher compensation. However, tying pay to performance may be controversial because of the complex nature of teacher performance. There is no known method that can accurately and credibly quantify and measure teacher performance. Naturally, the impact of teaching is not always immediate. Long-term educational outcomes can hardly be considered for short-term teacher effectiveness evaluations. In fact, several prior studies have investigated the effects of pay for performance on teacher performance and pointed out problems inherently associated with pay for performance plans.

Background Literature

Often used as an incentive tool to improve test scores and student academic proficiency, performance pay plans have been around for years. Jensen, Yamashiro, and Tibbetts (2010) provide a context for the inception of performance-based plans. Jensen et al (2010) posit that "Teacher compensation has long been based solely on individual development criteria such as length of service and level of education attained. These criteria were initially aimed at preventing pay inequity between men and women prevalent until the 1940s" (p. 2). Gratz (2009) provides

two foundational premises justifying most performance pay schemes: (1) “higher pay leads to greater motivation” and (2) “greater motivation leads to better results” (p. 20). Hence, the basic idea is that performance pay increases teacher motivation, which, in turn, increases student academic achievement as illustrated in figure 1.

Figure 1 Model of Pay for Performance



According to proponents of PFP, teachers work harder if they are offered the opportunity to earn more money for their work. The underlying rationale is that linking pay to performance leads to improved teacher quality and elevated student performance. It appears virtually unclear how performance pay leads to the effectiveness of instructional practices. However, performance pay plans are being vastly adopted by many school districts. Gratz (2009) contends that more than twenty states and many school districts implemented or considered these pay plans for teachers in 2009.

Historically, pay for performance plans have been tried regularly in the United States for more than two hundred years (Gratz, 2009; Jacob & Springer, 2007). Jacob and Springer (2007) trace teacher performance pay back to Great Britain. They argue that “Teacher PFP dates back to Great Britain in the early-1700s, with analogous ideas forming intermittently during the historical development of the United States K-12 public education system” (p. 4). Allan Odden and Carolyn Kelley, professors of Educational Administration at the University of Wisconsin-

Madison, provided a historical perspective on teacher compensation initiatives in the United States. They noted that "Over a 50-year period, up to about 1995, state and local policymakers enacted several well-publicized efforts to link teacher pay to performance—either their own performance or the performance of students" (Odden and Kelley, 2002, p. 1). They concluded that "those efforts were largely ineffective, unsuccessful, and short-lived" (Odden and Kelley, 2002, p. 1). Given this failure, why are these performance-based compensation programs still in place in many American public schools? Why are they not so widespread in American colleges and universities?

As noted above, the educational crisis was instrumental in the move toward performance-based pay systems. In fact, many school districts seriously considered performance-based compensation systems as an alternative or supplement to the traditional single salary schedule after the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE) released in 1983 a report titled "a Nation in Crisis" in which it spoke about "a rising tide of mediocrity" that threatened the country's schools, its economy, and the nation as a whole (Gratz, 2009). Three years later (1986), the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy released a report on the need to transform teaching into a full-fledged profession Odden and Kelley (2002, p. 17). The two reports called for a revamping of the teacher compensation systems.

Furthermore, the No Child Left Behind legislation (NCLB) of 2001 moved all states of the union to develop standards to measure student performance. Under NCLB, all schools were expected to demonstrate that their students were proficient in reading and math. With the pressure to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) came a renewed interest in teacher performance pay systems. Since 2001, several states have invested substantially in domestic teacher PFP programs. Here is a tableau of PFP expenditures in 2006:

> "In 2006, the United States Congress appropriated $99 million per year to local education agencies, state education agencies, and charter schools on a competitive basis to fund development and implementation of PFP programs. At the state level, Florida, Minnesota, and Texas lead the nation with more than $550 million going to high-performing educators each year" (Jacob and Springer, 2007, p. 4).

Despite the growing interest in PFP programs, these programs are filled with promises and perils. It is no doubt that teachers should be paid on the quality of the work they do as they work towards enhancing student learning to higher levels of performance. The biggest challenge is to design a performance-based remuneration plan that takes into account teacher performance and credentials.

Practically, it is difficult to implement pay for performance plans without risks because measurements of student performance and teacher performance can be imprecise at best. A recent study conducted between 2007 and 2009 in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools by Vanderbilt University has shown the limits of pay for performance. Over a period of three years, the Project on Incentives in Teaching, the POINT Experiment as it is called, studied 296 mathematics teachers teaching grades 5 through 8. Presenting his findings on the first scientific study measuring whether teacher bonuses alone raised student test scores based on, Vanderbilt researcher Matthew Springer noted that "We believe there is an important lesson here: Teachers are more likely to cooperate with a performance pay plan if its purpose is to determine whether the policy is a sound idea, than with plans being forced on them in the absence of such evidence and in the face of their skepticism and misgivings" (Moran, 2010). It was reported that approximately 70 percent of all middle-school math teachers (that is, 300 teachers) in Nashville public schools participated in this three-year experiment with minimal teacher attrition effect.

There were some gains but they did not cover all grades over the three years of the POINT experiment. As Moran (2010) observed, "While there was no overall effect on student achievement across the entire treatment group, the researchers found a significant benefit for fifth graders in Year 2 and Year 3 of the experiment: fifth graders taught by teachers who earned bonuses did show gains in test scores. However, the effect did not carry over to sixth grade when students were tested the following year." In sum, the study concluded that performance pay alone does not raise student performance.

PFP programs have historically failed to produce expected results. Odden and Kelly (2002) argue that "teacher compensation structures today look pretty much as they did decades ago, and relative teacher pay levels are not better, and in many cases are worse, than they were decades ago" (p. 1). In other words, PFP systems today are not as different as those used in the past.

Overview of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Strategic Plan 2014

The *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Strategic Plan 2014* was designed with a view to effect direct and transformational change in educational services and to improve the outlook for the class of 2014 and beyond. It has six areas of focus encompassing (1) effective teaching, (2) performance management, (3) increasing the graduation rate, (4) teaching and learning through technology, (5) environmental stewardship, and (6) parent and community connections. The two key goals of the plan include improving teaching and managing performance.

The cornerstone of the *CMS Strategic Plan 2014* is teacher effectiveness. The plan redefines the way teachers are chosen, paid, trained, and retained. Specifically, it emphasizes the need for effective teachers, rather than qualified teachers. It underlines that "The most effective instructors are those who can teach students to achieve more than one year's growth in one

year's time" (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, 2010, p. 8). It is assumed in the plan that effective teachers can essentially address the achievement gap among students.

One of the issues about performance bonuses awarded to schools is who gets the benefit of the performance award. Before recent budget cuts, the performance award programs in Charlotte-Mecklenburg and in Dallas provided a bonus to all professional staff members and about half to all classified members. This all-inclusive strategy recognizes everyone in school—teachers, administrators, support staff members, and students (Odden and Kelley, 2002, p. 158). Odden and Kelley (2002) claim that in order to determine performance levels and performance improvement, Charlotte-Mecklenburg along with South Carolina, and Dallas use the scores of all students in a school. Other states such as Kentucky and Maryland use the scores of students in a limited number of grade levels.

Ultimately, the *Strategic Plan 2014* is intended to build on the strengths of the existing programs to create a cultural change of performance throughout Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. This profound, far-reaching change across CMS 176 schools, 19,000 employees and seven learning communities in North Carolina should be achieved through a pay for performance plan. CMS envisions "a day when the performance of teachers, principals, administrators and all district employees is the basis of compensation, using measurements that are fair, professional and rigorous"(p. 7). However, the issue of performance measurements is often open to question. It will be addressed later in this paper.

Pay for performance is the centerpiece of the *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Strategic Plan 2014*. The superintendent of Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools provided a context for the process in a letter he addressed to all CMS teachers on February 3, 2011. He observes that

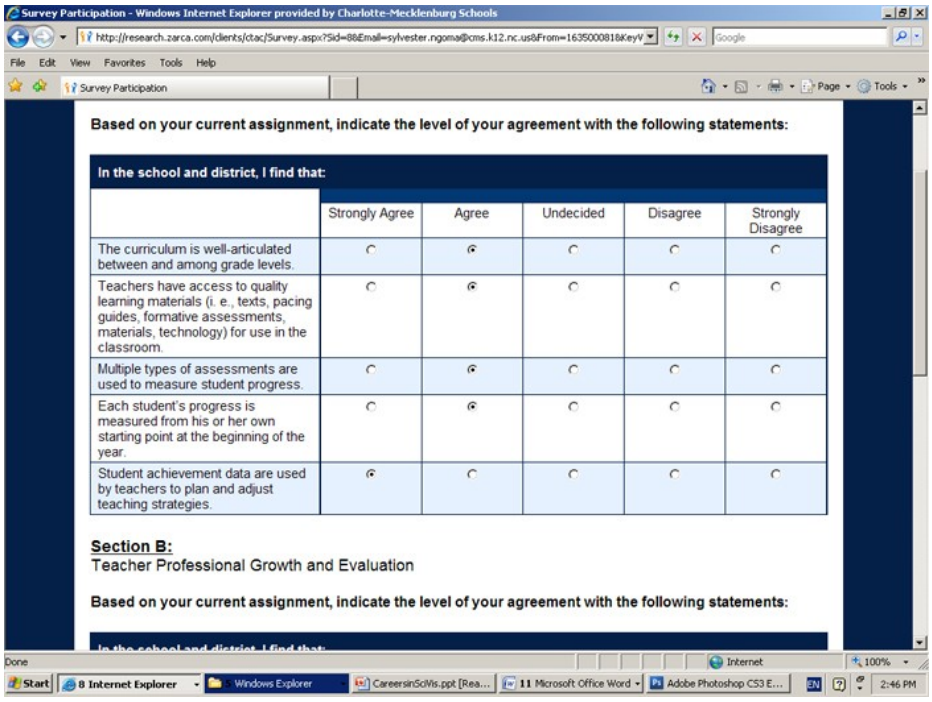
> "This process began in 2007 when CMS, in partnership with the Community Training

> and Assistance Center (CTAC), received a Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) federal grant for an initiative called Teacher Incentive Fund – Leadership for Educators' Advanced Performance (TIF-LEAP). This initiative is now in 20 CMS schools that will participate through the 2011-2012 school year" (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, 2011).

The superintendent asked teachers to provide their input about the PFP plan by completing a survey. A sample page of the survey is presented in figure 2 below. The problem with the survey is that it left no room for teachers to post written comments. None of the questions was open-ended. Hence, teachers were simply asked to check boxes. One Harding University High School teacher alluded to the survey design problem: "I have a lot to say about the performance plan. Unfortunately, the survey did not allow me to write my comments". This statement provided the impetus for open-ended survey questions for this study.

It is unlikely that teachers expressed openly their feelings about the PFP plan through this survey. The superintendent noted that teachers' responses would be used "to frame conversations, inform working groups, improve conditions and processes, and evaluate progress". However, many teachers believe that district leaders have already made their decisions and their feedback would not affect that decision.

Figure 2 CMS PFP Survey of teachers



Survey Participation - Windows Internet Explorer provided by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

Based on your current assignment, indicate the level of your agreement with the following statements:

In the school and district, I find that:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The curriculum is well-articulated between and among grade levels.	○	◉	○	○	○
Teachers have access to quality learning materials (i. e., texts, pacing guides, formative assessments, materials, technology) for use in the classroom.	○	◉	○	○	○
Multiple types of assessments are used to measure student progress.	○	◉	○	○	○
Each student's progress is measured from his or her own starting point at the beginning of the year.	○	◉	○	○	○
Student achievement data are used by teachers to plan and adjust teaching strategies.	◉	○	○	○	○

Section B:
Teacher Professional Growth and Evaluation

Based on your current assignment, indicate the level of your agreement with the following statements:

Moreover, teachers were encouraged to join the Design Team to make their feedback count before the actual implementation of the PFP plan scheduled in 2013.

Teachers' Views on Pay for Performance

Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District teachers completed a Pay for Performance survey between March 11 and March 17, 2011 for this paper. The results are presented in verbatim in the tables that follow. Overall, 47 teachers agreed to respond to eight open-ended questions. The questions were intended to allow teachers to voice their opinions about the CMS PFP plan. The format of the questions was dictated by the fact that CMS survey of teachers only had closed-ended questions that limited the range of responses. Therefore, the eight-question survey was designed to gauge teachers' feelings, perceptions, and attitudes about the PFP plan.

The survey was sent electronically (via email) to all Harding University High School teachers and to 34 teachers randomly selected from several Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools (elementary, middle, and high). A total of 47 teachers (34 from Harding University High School and 13 teachers from other schools) responded. Responses are disaggregated in one set. It should

be noted that the sample from Harding University High School is mostly a convenience one. The survey administrator is a Harding University High School staff member. It was anticipated that this convenience sample would provide fairly significant insights.

There is no doubt that 47 teachers do not represent the opinions of the 1900 employees who work for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District. However, their responses do offer a glimpse into CMS employees' perceptions of the new pay for performance plan. Responses from Harding University High School teachers and CMS teachers are reported in tables 1 through 8. By design, no nominal variables (age, gender, experience, and ethnicity) were considered for respondents to encourage them to voice their opinions. The survey was administered through *SurveyMonkey*.

Table 1: Survey Question 1

CMS Staff Open Ended Responses	
Question 1: What is your opinion about the new Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Pay for Performance plan?	
1.	I think it is unfair, and will cause good teachers to leave the county.
2.	No opinion
3.	I have a low opinion of the plan.
4.	I don't approve, especially because it is costly to develop at a time when teachers are being laid off.
5.	I do not agree with any pay for performance plan. This strategy has been tried many times before under various names. It creates competition where some teachers enter the playing field at a disadvantage. Teachers simply need to be paid and treated just as other professionals are in their respective fields.
6.	It is flawed
7.	Double-edged sword, the plan sounds good, but I do not foresee CMS having enough money to pay the qualified teachers. The teacher evaluation plan also is very subjective, admin, peer observations, all are from the point of view of someone who may or may not like the teacher. If they do like the teacher, then they will be less likely to look for negatives and just focus on the positives, I see it happen, I hear it happen, year after year....
8.	It is a way for the superintendent to add to his resume. He wants to be the first. It is also a way to cut expenses. I think it is a very BAD idea. If they want to improve teachers, follow the models established by Finland or Japan or even china for that matter. A business model cannot possibly work. Read Charlotte Observer March 12 oped. by Kay McSpadden.
9.	It's a great idea however it should serve as a bonus for teachers that consistently go above and beyond inside and outside the classroom.

10. I don’t think it can be fairly implemented.
11. Base pay should never be predicated on "performance." That is a covert way of not providing cost-of-living adjustments for employees. It's not legitimate for it doesn't take into account all teachers equitably.
12. I am nervous about the plan because it seems to be solely based on students' test scores.
13. It is causing a lot of confusion and tension, I'm not against the program--though I don't think the school district is going about it the right way.
14. If they want to pay teachers form performance it is fine with me However if student perform below par then will that teacher fall from the previous status of the prior year or quarter.
15. In theory, I think that it is a good idea to award teachers that show exceptional growth and achievement, however, I do not agree with how CMS is setting up the structure of the plan.
16. I disagree with it, because, if you are indeed a good worker but not in the principal's "click" or if he/she has personal issues with you, he/she can give you an evaluation that could hurt you.
17. I have concerns about it, its implementation and execution and the associated student testing process.
18. I do not like it. If the state and system is having money problems then this system is not going to help if there is no money and teachers will continue to have to be laid off.
19. Not good, we will end up competing with each other to get bonus money
20. I think it would take years to ensure these tests are accurate and that they reflect the NCSCOS.
21. Good idea in theory; nearly impossible to facilitate accurately, fairly and it may create unethical behaviors
22. I think it is an important step, but one that must be implemented carefully and marketed well.
23. I think it is unfair when your pay depends on the success of others. I have administered test and see how some students fall asleep or rush through the test so that they can go to sleep.
24. okay
25. I think it does not foster deeper understanding nor thinking skills as it entices teachers to teach towards a test.
26. I don't like it. It is a cheap way for CMS to save money and destroy the prosperity of families.
27. NA
28. I think it will motivate teachers to help their students learn if the learning is what determines how well they do their jobs.
29. The system is investing a lot of time, money and effort in an unproven method.
30. It will reward effective educators--something that should have taken place years ago.
31. I think that it is not fair to all teachers in the district.
32. I don't think it measures the effort a teacher has put into teaching students. Not all students come to us with the required prior knowledge.
33. I feel that it is an innovative way to improve student achievement.
34. I don't like it. What is the purpose
35. I feel that it punishes experienced teachers by leveling the playing field with inexperienced teachers.
36. The evaluators are making very important decisions using very minute data.
37. I do not know all of the details yet. But I believe that the end result will be a drastic reduction in pay for most of the underpaid CMS teachers.
38. I am not sure that it provides the right measure for performance pay.
39. I do not believe that it will be implemented in an equitable way.
40. It is a bad idea.
41. I feel that the PFP plan will be beneficial because it will motivate teachers who usually do the

bare minimum to do more for their students and to grow professionally. Similar models are used in the business world and it gives professionals who go above and beyond a chance for recognition.
42. I think it will be difficult to fairly implement the plan. There should be ways for teachers to increase their pay, but I don't agree with this method.
43. I do not think this is an effective or honorable method to pay or treat professionals.
44. I think it is a bad idea.
45. Anything subjective will not carry.
46. Not going to work; Teachers will not work together if they are competing with one another.
47. I do not agree with the possibility of Pay for Performance.

Only 5 respondents (or 10.6%) expressed optimism about the PFP plan. They thought that it could motivate teachers to elevate their performance. However, the vast majority expressed reservation about the plan for a number of reasons: Lack of collegiality, subjective evaluations, implementation problems, unproven plan, lack of scientific studies, and high cost of the plan. One had no opinion, and one had a low opinion of the plan.

Table 2: Survey Question 2

CMS Staff Open Ended Responses
Question 2: Do you like the Pay for Performance plan? Why? Or why not?
1. No. The pay for performance plan requires teachers to do too much outside the class room taking their attention away from their students.
2. No opinion
3. I don't like it because it does not consider important variables, such as the difficulty of the content, nor the number of preps that a teacher has.
4. see above
5. I do not agree with or support the Pay for Performance. I have many reasons, one of which was stated above. Another reason, however, is the four year tiered system that CMS wants to implement. With so many of hundreds of millions of dollars being cut from the budget each year, how can we be certain that there will be money to pay teachers in four years. As well, teacher performance and student scores, the determinant factors, will guarantee everyone a bonus before four years except for teachers. I certainly don't agree that as I continue to work hard, the Superintendent will reap the rewards of hard work before I do.
6. No, I think there will be discrepancies in performance levels from different schools. It will be like comparing apples to oranges.
7. Yes and no, see 1st response. I wouldn't mind making 70 grand a year, but I don't trust CMS to pay me that...
8. Absolutely NOT. Why? Last year I had over 35 students in a class, mixed ability level students (1,2,3,4). I was compared with the teacher next to me who had 12 students in her class, all level 3 and 4 students. The superintendent says they have that they use a value added formula. HAH!! The environment in a 12 member class is quite different in the environment of an over 35 member

	class. There is no way to come up with a formula to make it fair. This year, I was told to teach 3 different IB/AP subjects I have never taught. I was given 130 students many of whom read at a 4th to 7th grade level. Our Text books are 11th grade Lexile level. And I am going to be evaluated fairly???? How is that possible? I will be compared to another teacher with 15 year experience teaching the same class with students who must first interview and qualify to take the class.
9.	Again it's a great idea to reward effective teachers.
10.	No. The evaluation instrument is too subjective and requires so much effort to maintain that it takes away from classroom preparation.
11.	It's a horrible plan. We already had pay for performance called BONUSES for teachers whose schools made AYP and other targets. For THREE years, no teachers have been paid for their performances--why should it start now?
12.	I am undecided. I guess I like that teachers can be rewarded for student performance, but I don't like the idea of other teachers taking pay cuts.
13.	I like the idea of holding teachers accountable and paying them for the work that they do.
14.	No! because students are not always consistent no matter how good the teacher is.
15.	I do not like the plan mainly because of the action of saying that you will not pay teachers their master's pay when they have put in the hard work to earn their degree. This is discouraging to teachers that want to pursue higher levels of degrees.
16.	No, I do like it. I have been in CMS for a couple of years now. And this is the lowest paying job I have ever been on, and because of this Plan, I could make even less, based on something someone else feels.
17.	No, I do not. I do not feel that it will accurately reflect the true performance of a teacher in the classroom. There are too many variables with the average student today, to base teacher performance on tests or otherwise given such circumstances with students.
18.	NO, my reasons are stated in question number 1.
19.	No, it pits teachers against one another
20.	No. NO one will come to CMS to teach from other states if they have to start so low. CMS will lose teachers to other districts AND EVERY TEACHER IN CMS WILL HAVE THEIR HOUSE FORECLOSED ON!!!!!!
21.	I am neutral because I believe performance is crucial and necessary; however, I cannot honestly visualize a positive outcome to this system. I think it will draw the wrong types of teachers, I think teachers will abuse it, I think it is impossible to objectively identify growth.
22.	I like it as a new teacher as it is the easiest way for me to earn an increase in pay.
23.	No. It does not measure the effectiveness of teachers.
24.	If it is properly done, it will work. However, there must be some sort of incentives for students so that they are motivated to work harder as teachers teach them.
25.	I'm mainly against pay for performance. I think the best teachers will be going to low-income schools where growth is much easier to track and attain (which can be good). However, those teachers placed at high ranking schools will struggle more to show growth.
26.	See above
27.	NA
28.	I like it because I think teachers don't necessarily improve as they gain years of experience. I think that better teachers should get paid more regardless of how long they have been teaching, just as employees of corporations are paid based on how well they perform the tasks asked of them.
29.	The metric is entirely "data" driven. There is no measurement for intangibles that are also important in the education process. It will not attract better teachers; it will only encourage the

better ones to leave.
30. Yes. It will compensate high-performing teachers for the work they do and will address issues with weaker-performing teachers.
31. I like the fact that good teachers will be rewarded with money for their good teaching but I don't like that this will be the sole criterion for getting a monetary reward.
32. Personally, I do not think so. A teacher in class A might not achieve what another teacher in class B does simply because of the kind of students each teacher has to start with. The end results when it comes to test score can totally different.
33. Yes, because educators should be rewarded (compensated) for improving student achievement.
34. No, I'm already poor and this could make it worse.
35. Pay for Performance can work if managed correctly. What measures will be in place to ensure that teachers are evaluated objectively, not subjectively?
36. No. The administrators start with the assumption that everybody is to be measured against how the administrators rated themselves. Our rating by them affects our pay whereas their rating by themselves aids in their understanding of the model. Their self-rating does not affect their pay.
37. It will lower the overall quality of teachers in North Carolina. Quality educators will not be willing to stay in the profession.
38. No, good teachers teach well, get rid of the teachers that aren't performing.
39. Different people have differing opinions about classes. The matrix is too complex for proper implementation.
40. No. It will base teachers' jobs on scores students receive on tests that, from all I have seen, are poor measures of ability. It also assumes that poor performance on the students' part is a result of faulty teaching, when often the causes lie elsewhere. I wonder, if students' scores are tracked over the years, and if that information would be included. For example, if a student has performed poorly for years and years, is the current high school teacher going to be penalized for this? If we are frank, most of the factors in students' performance at school are home-based.
41. I do like the PFP plan because, as a young teacher, it will give me an opportunity to move up the pay scale more quickly through being compensated for high achievement and student success. I do feel that the base pay needs to reflect what is necessary to meet one's needs based on the current cost of living and the repayment of student loans. Teachers just beginning their careers need to be able to support themselves and their families comfortably by earning a salary that is comparable to other professional careers.
42. No, I think teachers should be rewarded but cannot understand how this plan will be more effective than what is in place now.
43. No, it does nothing but penalize teachers for students who have no desire to earn an education. I feel that it will undermine the collaboration that we have been developing.
44. Because it will be difficult for electives to show the data needed.
45. Areas that are subjective and not objective.
46. *
47. I do not like the idea of the PFP plan because it does not encourage teachers to work as a PLC and collaborate with one another because everyone wants to be better than the other. Also, I do not see the formula as truly placing each teacher on fair playing field.

This question was designed to help teachers clarify their positions with regards to the plan. It appears that teachers maintained their positions. Some provided more information. One teacher

noted that the PFP plan did not measure teacher effectiveness.

Table 3: Survey Question 3

CMS Staff Open Ended Responses
Question 3: How supportive are you of different methods that would be used to evaluate your performance including student test scores and the new North Carolina teacher evaluation tool?
1. I think the new evaluation tool is too subjective and unclear. I'm not sure if there is a fair assessment of teachers when you base their performance review on one student test. I think the correlation between the grade the student earns in class and earns on the test should be a better judge. If I receive an A in class and a D on the test that could be a problem.
2. No opinion
3. I am not supportive because there are many other factors to consider, and I do not trust the evaluations of some administrators.
4. Student test scores should be part of a plan, but only part, and with student readiness, etc. factored in.
5. The methods used for performance don't always tell the entire story. The reality is that student performance is not solely based time spent at school and in class. As well, teacher evaluations are biased based on the evaluator. Administrators are human being who arrive and leave with their biases, prejudices and criticisms. The N.C. teacher evaluation tool is definitely a step up from the previous tool; however, there are unrealistic goals that need to be looked at for reconsideration. Except of course, the reasoning is that no teacher is expected to attained accomplished in all areas so as to not qualify for Pay for Performance.
6. The problem is that the new teacher evaluation tool does not address test score. A teacher who gets all of their students to pass the final could still be developing on the evaluation.
7. Not supportive at all, with the EOC gone, now they will use the district summative, which are total garbage; the questions, the format, etc. They need to be made by teachers not office people.
8. Not supportive at all. Perhaps if we had administrators who were competent, fair and not intimidated by the fact that many of their staff members are more intelligent and have a better grasp of education than they do. They harass and intimidate the teachers. TFA teachers are used and abused. They cannot complain or quit. Many of them know not to call for help because they won't be helped. I listened to an administrator yell at a first year teacher who was on the phone ON HER LUNCH period, in her room, with NO students there. He told her to "get off that phone!" Rude. My mid-year summative was a joke. My administrator has no idea of the time and preparations I have made to teach a course I have never even taken!!! Another course I took 30 years ago. My scores last year were excellent. I believe they want me to be knocked down a few pegs.
9. Different methods are a must in order to differentiate between teachers that report to work to collect benefits and teachers that enjoy educating and collaborating with learners.
10. Teachers can only do so much to help a student pass. The students who typically do not pass EOC's are the ones I spend the most time with.
11. The same administrators who placed specific teachers on action plans for meager reasons, the same administrators who intimidate their employees are the same one conducting the evaluations. YOU tell me what's wrong with that.
12. I do not support student test scores being used to determine teacher salaries.
13. I like the new evaluation method, because it is similar to what I used before I started working for CMS. Again, I don't think the tool has been correctly implemented.
14. Not supportive of the concept because a student may do well in the classroom but he/she may not

test well.
15. I don't know all of the methods, but I definitely do not agree with test scores. I support rewarding teachers, but I do not support CMS's plan.
16. It is hard to go by student test scores. There are some teachers who teach their heart out, however if we do not have the support from home. That makes it hard. I think it needs to be a collaboration of methods. Because some children just do not test well.
17. Different methods MUST be employed as conveyed in item #2. Teachers CAN NOT be evaluated on just two assessment tools, after all, we are asked to evaluate our students in various ways...so, too should we be. Outside and Inside the classroom assessment must be completed to evaluate teacher effectiveness.
18. I am against it because a teacher cannot make a student study at home if they do not want to. That is the parent's responsibility.
19. Not, we are reducing the equation to a statistic and our children are not numbers.
20. That is fine but not pay
21. Not supportive; growth in various ways such as character, fluency, literacy, listening skills, leadership, 21st century skills (skills which we are encouraged to foster in the classroom) are unassessed on a standardized test. Furthermore, for specific subjects such as English, Foreign Language, Social Studies and Science, a trust test of growth would be shown on a project and/or higher level, critical thinking assignment than a Scantron, mass-produced test.
22. I believe that many of these tools can be very subjective. I have little confidence in the ability of multiple choice test scores to accurately gauge student understanding.
23. Supportive of the teacher evaluation tool as long as it is being used to help teachers and not get rid of them.
24. Okay
25. I'm supportive. However, I don't think it is enough.
26. I don't want to put my pay check in the hands of parents and students who do not value education. I can lead a horse to water, but I can't make it drink.
27. NA
28. Very supportive because student learning isn't solely based on the teacher--there are variables such as student effort, student resources and it would not be a reliable measurement of teacher effectiveness to evaluate on factors that teachers cannot control.
29. The NC evaluation tool is good in that all teachers are judged by the same metric. However, student test scores are not the only metric to use when evaluating students education.
30. Student test scores are an essential means to measure teacher effectiveness. Without such an objective means to measure teacher effectiveness, such evaluations are subjective and a dis-service to students.
31. I am very supportive! I answered this before I read this question.
32. All we need to do is get used to the new tools or methods
33. I support the new NC Teacher Evaluation Tool. It is an instrument that will help teachers improve their instruction, leadership, classroom management and etc. However, teachers should receive adequate support from school administrators, instructional coaches, etc.
34. Not supportive at all.
35. Classes typically used as dumping grounds are subject to low test scores, which is unfair to the teacher. Measures must be in place to ensure that students select and are enrolled in classes of their choice. Then, and only then, would the use of test scores be advisable.
36. Very. But find fair ratings.
37. No consistency in the evaluations.
38. I think that there should be combination of variable to evaluate teacher performance, such as,

student achievement, teacher credentials, teacher attendance...
39. The new tool is too cumbersome.
40. See above for thoughts on student test scores. Regarding the new NC teacher evaluation tool, it is ineffective. It can be very subjective and at times prejudicial. Let's say a teacher has differentiated instruction for inclusion classes in the past, but this year has only been scheduled with honors classes. Why, then, does the teacher end up scoring "Developing" because s/he has no inclusion students? This does happen. Many of the categories are subjective at best, nonsensical at worst. Further, the rubric reads differently from its implementation. Nothing in the rubric says that a teacher has to be doing something school-wide in a particular category in order to get "Accomplished" or something district-wide to score "Distinguished." Yet this is the case. So a teacher who practices excellence in the classroom on a daily basis can never score above the second level, "Proficient," unless s/he spends perhaps a little less time worrying about his/her students in order to do something "Distinguished" in the district. Beyond the fact that these conditions are NOT reflected in the evaluation tool language (try letting a teacher use a rubric with hidden expectations and see how far that goes), but the conditions are borderline ridiculous. It's great to have teachers bouncing around the district sharing their wisdom, but let's not penalize them for focusing instead on their classrooms. When cuts come, is an excellent teacher, who ranks only "Proficient" because of the rubric's hidden agenda, going to be the first to go? Will this teacher be compensated less?
41. Well, I feel that as long as the process includes various methods in the evaluation process (i.e. test scores, NC teacher evaluation tool, professional growth, leadership) and it takes into consideration the factors that play a role in the classroom (i.e. socio-economic status, teacher-to-student ratio, McKinney-Vento students, etc.) then it will be a fair process that will look at the big picture. The methods for deciding how performance will be measured have not yet been determined.
42. There are a lot of variables that affect student test scores. Sometimes the teacher has a lot to do with it, and sometimes very little to do with it. I am not supportive of unfair practices. Policies that change a person's livelihood should be beneficial to the teachers and students.
43. I do not find the new evaluation tool to be very user-friendly and basically lumps all teachers into a single category of proficient.
44. Not supportive
45. Same as above (Areas that are subjective and not objective).
46. *
47. Teachers are only one part in how students do on tests and EOGs. There are many other factors, several out of our control, that we are judged by ultimately which is unfair.

For the most part, teachers were not supportive of the new evaluation tools. They listed the following reasons: Lack of clarity, subjectivity, mistrust of administrators, evaluator's bias, concern about administrators' fairness, and need for more evaluation instruments, questions about test scores. Teachers were not asked to compare the new evaluation tools with the old ones.

Table 4: Survey Question 4

CMS Staff Open Ended Responses
Question 4: Should teacher pay be based on the quality of teacher performance? Please explain.

1. No. I think that a teacher's retention should be based on performance, but the pay should be agreed to before the year and should be based on years of service.
2. No opinion
3. Performance must be based on several variables, not just test scores. If these variables could all be considered and measured accurately, I would then say a percentage of the pay (perhaps as high as 20%) could be based on teacher performance. But there should also be some incremental pay for years of experience.
4. Higher performance, measured appropriately, should be used to give bonuses, not as a way to lower the pay of less outstanding teachers below the state pay grades. Years in service and advanced degrees in the certified subject should still be rewarded.
5. Teacher pay should not be based on his or her performance. It should be based on his or her credentials. However, teacher bonuses should definitely be based on individually performance, not the performance of the school as a whole.
6. Yes, but the question is how do you judge.
7. Yes, but again it is very subjective, for example at my school being involved with athletics gets a teacher no credit, no respect, nothing... The admin never give credit or show empathy for a coach or ad who is working 80hrs a week. These coaches are sacrificing their time with kids to keep these kids on track and in school. Without them, most of these kids would fail, dropout, or maintain a low 2.0 average.
8. How do you come up with an agreed upon definition of quality? One teacher lectures for 45 minutes every day and then gives 45 minutes of worksheets. he is seen as an exemplary teacher because he is constantly lying to administrators about what he does. He is a department chair and has been given extremely poor reviews by members of his team. he was caught stealing an lcd projector and trying to get a team mate to take the rap. He has been caught in an administrator's office tampering with the schedule. I could go on and on, but he is still the department chair because he makes up dirt on other members of his team. 50% of this team has left each year for the past 3 years of his tenure. One administrator even "fixed" his certificate so he would qualify as a teacher.
9. It should be based on multiple areas such as parental partnership, dedication, team work, teacher surveys, etc.
10. Yes but student population, class size and students taking classes for which they are not prepared should be considered as well.
11. Bonuses--not salary--should be based on performance.
12. Yes, but only in bonuses. All teachers should still receive appropriate salaries based on years of experience.
13. Yes, teachers who come and handout worksheets, care little for their students and generally are here "just to collect a paycheck" should not make the same amount (or even more) than those who put in countless hours of overtime.
14. If it is dependent on how well the students do, no
15. Yes, to an extent. You should not have to scare teachers into doing a good job. Where is the influence on intrinsic motivation? I don't want to be stressed about my job every day that I wake up and end up hating what I do when this is all I ever wanted to do. It is very disappointing that our school system has made some of the decisions that have occurred over the last few years. Teachers should definitely be rewarded for great performance; however, they should not be punished for not being able to reach unrealistic levels.
16. No. We are already one of the lowest paying job in the world. If this is done. You will lose a lot of good teachers. Even the great ones who have been teaching for years will resign and seek other careers.
17. There should be many different tools used to determine teacher performance and too pay. But, a

significant base and/or appropriate compensation must be employed to begin with. The "performance" should be bonus.
18. No, I think there must be some checks and balances to help offset just on teacher performance.
19. A base line salary could then be adjusted by bonuses if they are done fairly
20. They should get bonuses but the pay scale should be left alone.
21. Once again, it is a good idea in theory; however, I am unsupportive of the plan. Also, I have heard rumors that some (extremely unmotivated) students plan to "fail" to get the teacher in trouble. Additionally, some students may have intrinsic work ethic/parental support at home which will cause them to grow more so than a non-motivated student. This does not reflect the teacher.
22. Yes I believe it should. We should reward good performance.
23. No. If a teacher is determined not qualified to teach, they should be let go.
24. Yes. However, all other parameters must have been measured to justify the performance pay. Should teacher performance pay measurement tool be the same for all school? No. The tool used to measure teacher performance at Butler High should be different for teachers at Garinger. Students are different from one community to another.
25. Yes. However, how do we track performance? I'm not convinced that CMS can accurately track a teacher's performance.
26. I believe bonus pay and recognition would work.
27. NA
28. Yes. If a teacher's job is to teach content material to students, then teachers should be evaluated on whether or not they are performing that task. We should be evaluated on whether or not students can do what they are supposed to after they take our class.
29. No, not as currently proposed. Teachers should get a bonus depending on end of year performance,
30. Yes. In every field except education workers are rewarded and compensated for the quality of their work.
31. I think that quality teaching is a must. Teachers should not just teach because.... They should love their job and really keep kids accountable while doing their job. Education should not only be about a grade. It should also be about reinventing the whole child for the good of him/herself and society. This is why we also address inappropriate behavior in the classroom and on campus.
32. How do you judge a teacher performance? Is it based on how his students do on tests or is it how far the teacher has taken them based on where they were when they came to the teacher?
33. Yes, the primary role of a teacher is to educate children.
34. No. All teachers teach different children.
35. How can quality be measured?
36. Yes - Teachers are there to do a job. There should be a good rubric for measuring good work.
37. No. Fire teachers that don't perform.
38. Yes, the quality of teacher performance is a direct correlation to student achievement.
39. Theoretically, it should be based upon performance. The problem is that each principal has a different idea about what quality teaching looks like.
40. I have mixed thoughts on this. I think teachers who have invested in higher education in order to increase their knowledge in content or in teaching practice, should certainly be compensated for that investment. I think that longevity should be rewarded as well--it is in other government employment. If a teacher isn't a good teacher, why are we bothering with a sliding salary scale? Why is the teacher still here?
41. Yes, teachers should be held accountable for the growth and progress their students make. However, the measurement of "student growth" is complex because every class is different...from

period to period and year to year. There are many factors to take into consideration.
42. Teacher should receive bonuses but base pay should remain the same across the board.
43. Not unless the performance is NOT student achievement based.
44. It should but it can't there are too many variables in education to base pay on performance
45. It wouldn't be fair because some students have sound home and basically working on or above grade level and some are below grade level or not even on the radar.
46. *
47. Teacher performance cannot just be based on test scores and growth. We are treating our students as though this is a business. This could encourage teachers to do whatever it takes, good or bad, in order to make the scores show what they want them to.

Teachers were asked whether their pay should be based on their performance. Interestingly, many disagreed for various reasons. One teacher argued that teachers teach students with individual differences. The general consent among teachers who felt that their pay should be based on their performance was a "yes, but…" They raised some questions: "How do you judge?" "How can quality be measured?" "How do you come up with an agreed-upon definition of quality?" Subjectivity was also mentioned as a potential problem.

Table 5: Survey Question 5

CMS Staff Open Ended Responses
Question 5: After completing the CMS survey on Pay for Performance, do you feel that your input would help shape or reshape the CMS Pay for Performance plan?
1. No. I think CMS is doing everything they can to save money including under evaluating teacher performance.
2. No opinion
3. I doubt it. I have raised the issue of number of preps and difficulty of content, and nobody involved in developing the new system seems to realize the importance of these many issues.
4. I don't believe that CMS administration really wants to hear anything but praise for their plan, which they will implement as they choose.
5. I did not complete it and won't because I feel that teacher input has not standing in whatever policies CMS decide to implement. The survey is only procedural.
6. No
7. No, because no one is listening to the teachers. They say they are, they meet with teachers to setup the plan, but it's just a setup. They get teachers to think that they are part of the process but in reality it's all about money and the teachers are just pawns to CMS game plan.
8. Are you kidding??? Teachers are at the bottom of the pit. Even student opinion is more important than ours.
9. I hope so...
10. No... CMS will implement the policy they want in spite of my opinion or the opinion of other

teachers. This is not a way for teachers to increase their pay, rather a way for CMS to save on teacher pay by saying we are not up to standard, therefore giving them the excuse to pay us less.
11. No. Not at all. Peter Gorman is going to do what he wants to do--and his minions will bring the necessary changes per their superintendent. What teachers say is merely sound and fury signifying nothing.
12. No
13. No.
14. No, because CMS has a tendency to do what it wants to whether they get input or not.
15. No, teacher's opinions have not really been considered in this school system for the 4 years that I have been in.
16. No. I believe decisions have been made. And CMS is going to do what they want to do.
17. No, as with many District wide survey methods.
18. No, I think the decision has already been made. This survey is just a way of justifying the decision so that the powers that be can say they gave us a chance to voice our opinions.
19. No, this is driven from above and either you agree or you need to leave
20. No
21. No.
22. I believe my input would help provide suggestions for how to shape the plan.
23. No, I think the decision is already made.
24. Not sure
25. Not really.
26. Nope! CMS is a dictatorship
27. No
28. If someone listens to my input, then yes my input may shape or reshape the CMS plan.
29. No.
30. Unclear.
31. I do not think that my input will make much of a difference at this time. I hope that the state of the economy will help the "powers that be" change their mind. We have not had a cost of living raise in almost 4 years now and everyone knows that teachers don't make much any way.
32. Maybe.
33. No. The decision will ultimately be made by the CMS Board.
34. No. We're the little men, no one listens.
35. I feel that the administration in CMS has already made up their minds, with little input from teachers.
36. No. I feel that CMS has made up its mind and that is that.
37. No, I think that the agenda is already in place by CMS.
38. Reshape the CMS PFP plan
39. I doubt if it will be considered, because CMS is already committed to doing it this way.
40. No. Teachers have completed these surveys before, and the district just does what it wanted to in the first place. I really don't think our input matters that much.
41. Yes, I believe that it will help shape the CMS PFP.
42. No
43. No - I think that the decisions have already been made and no one listens to teacher opinion.
44. No
45. Only if you can understand that students, schools, and teacher are different. When students leave

	elementary school they well below grade level, and we expect the middle school teacher to bring them up to grade level. They leave middle school well below grade level and expect the high school teacher to bring them up to grade level, even though the student is missing some of the most basic skill.
46.	*
47.	No, I don't feel that my input will matter as anyone can manipulate and make data show whatever it is they want it to. If CMS already has their mind made up then I don't see my opinion or anyone else's opinion mattering that much.

Teachers overwhelmingly felt that CMS decision-makers would not use their input to shape or reshape the pay for performance plan. It is unclear what their pessimism was based upon. It might be useful to probe this question further to learn the source of teachers' pessimism.

Table 6: Survey Question 6

CMS Staff Open Ended Responses	
Question 6: What indicators should CMS use to measure teacher performance?	
1.	Student performance, classroom management, an accurate growth measurement and attendance.
2.	No opinion
3.	Not just test scores, but also number of preps, difficulty of content, and number of students taught.
4.	student performance, content knowledge, engagement in the life of the school and community
5.	Student Growth - a recent development which needs to be continued.
6.	Don't know - see question 4
7.	Growth based on accurate data; you can't tell a teacher who is teaching all level 4s to grow them, how can you grow a level 4? they should use scores from a 'good' test prepared by the teachers from achieving schools... attendance records, athletics, time spent on campus preparing & helping staff and students, leadership,
8.	Number and variety of assessment strategies. Number of days at school. Number of after school tutorial sessions. Documented calls and contacts home. Documented contracts made with students for behavior and academic improvement TOO MANY THINGS!! I don't want to waste my time because it won't matter to anyone!
9.	Tenure, Collaborative efforts, Teacher surveys, peer and administrative observations, etc.
10.	1. The old TPAI evaluation instrument. 2. Outside observers like in the old days... Currently, school administration has too much ability to collaborate against certain teachers. 3. EOC scores over a range of time. .. Not just one semester or year.
11.	Students who fail when they've actually implemented every strategy given by the teacher. Right now, students can do nothing and unless the teacher does 15 steps--call parents incessantly, meet with student, counselors and parents, reloop, pdp, tutor, enrichment, homework, multi-intelligence classwork, differentiation, retest until student masters content, video, songs, growing plants, drawing charts, presentations, finger puppets, modeling expectations, summer school--they can't fail because "failure is not an option."
12.	Observations, peer evaluations, student input.
13.	Location and students that the students work with (ex. Title I schools), growth of students,

proficiency of students, student investment, etc.
14. Caliber of students base on their effort
15. Certainly NOT just test scores. And certainly NOT these "growth" scores that are being produced. I teach math and there is no way that you can base a student's performance in one math class based on the previous EOC math score. That makes no sense. The math's are not related. It makes no sense for other subjects either, which are even less related than math. A better system would involve pretesting IN THE CLASS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SEMESTER, then issuing a summative at the end. Then, you can accurately tell how much a student "grew" based on the comparison of the two scores.
16. If teachers are here every day and they assist the children with tutoring. And the children are actually learning something new daily. That says a lot.
17. Teacher leadership inside/outside the classroom District level and community involvement Attendance Peer and Administration evaluation Student Evaluation Student Interest/Selection of Course Test Scores Etc./More--research based for others utilizing this system
18. experience
19. None, until the administration can get all principals to be calibrated on the instruments they use. We have a new evaluation tool and it is not consistent across the board.
20. test scores, attendance stats, extracurriculars
21. Growth as captured FREQUENTLY, not by 3 "observations" during the school year. Peer (colleague) observations, departmental observations, etc. It should be an ongoing look at the teacher, not just 3 small, inaccurate snap shots in the "observation" rounds. CMS should look at the daily activities, EVERYDAY by reviewing lesson plans/powerpoints/exams/exam data, etc. to really grasp what the teacher is doing.
22. Test scores, ratings, observations by third-parties
23. Classroom management, evaluation tools, parent/students evaluation.
24. Did that teacher show incremental growth from year to year or semester to semester?
25. school test scores, demographics, teacher's education level and years of experience, resources available to teacher, teacher made assessments, alternative assessments, student behavior, etc.
26. Quality of teaching, attendance, years of experience, effectiveness
27. Delivery of lessons, activities, etc , but not just students' scores.
28. Students' grades on EOC's and Students' grades on assessments in their classroom, as well as some representation of how hard the teacher is trying.
29. Teachers should be clustered as teams and the performance measured in that manner.
30. Student achievement, teacher responsibilities outside of the classroom, leadership within the school.
31. The new evaluation tool seems good for now. After its full year implementation I may or may not change my mind.
32. Do a serious study of the knowledge of the students first. Honestly recognize what the students know before and seriously find out what they after. Look at the growth and from there determine the work accomplished by the teacher. THIS IS HOW YOU CAN JUDGE THE PERFORMANCE OF A TEACHER
33. Student achievement and student growth and/or progress.
34. Attendance
35. Years of experience, track record, degrees and continuing education.
36. Student Achievement, Workload - class sizes and class diversity (students and courses taught).
37. I'm not sure what was the problem with the system that was in place before.
38. Student growth, teacher credentials, teacher attendance.

39. Parent complaints, student performance, teacher preparedness and classroom management.
40. I'd like to say that observations should be part of this, but I've already expressed my thoughts on the tool currently in use. Portfolios and lesson plans are a factor to consider. What is the teacher actually doing in the classroom? What do the teacher's assessments look like? Is s/he raising the standards for students? Are higher-order questions being asked? Are students asked to think independently? Also, there are many facets of the teaching profession that have little to do with academic performance. How do we measure the teacher who creates the safe environment for students, who goes beyond tests to the personhood of the students. Some teachers get great test scores, which is fine, but connect very little to students. In this day and age, we are expected to do a lot more than facilitate academic learning, and where is the pay scale for that? How do we even measure it?
41. The indicators should include a multitude of items, including but not limited to: student growth, leadership within the school community, participation in professional development, participation and leadership within Professional Learning Communities, etc.)
42. Standardized test scores that have been reviewed and validated, observations, professional development, national board recognition
43. I have no clue. I do not believe that student performance is necessarily a good indicator of teacher performance.
44. Leave it alone. Give bonuses to teachers that are exceptional
45. Advance degrees (because the teacher has gone the extra mile), Experience (there is no substitute), Knowledge of content area, workshops (in and out of area), belonging to professional organization in specified area.
46. *
47. Performance within the classroom (teaching, observations), collaboration, contribution to the school, and partly test scores.

Responses to this question are indicative of the difficulty for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools to link pay to teacher performance. Teachers themselves do not seem to agree on indicators that should be used to measure their performance. Such indicators as content knowledge, engagement, growth, attendance, and parent complaints only provide a partial picture of what a teacher does. Whereas tenure, certification, and education may be easily quantifiable, determining a teacher salary on the basis of engagement may not be as easy.

Until recently, teachers received a longevity bonus. Some Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Board of Education members found no justification for such a bonus because it did not reward teachers for being effective but for lasting long in their jobs. Arguing against a longevity bonus in a public forum aired on CMS TV channel, one Board member once observed that “We should not pay teachers for just being in a classroom”. A counterargument is that the evaluation system in place in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

is highly selective. It makes it hard for ineffective teachers to remain in the classroom for a long time. Ineffective teachers quit in their own terms or are forced out one way or another. The CMS board member's remark raises the question of teachers' portrayal in the media or by decision-makers. There are few professions that pummel employees into so much continuing education training, certification training, and testing as teaching does with a relatively low pay. Then, why are teachers often so negatively portrayed? Back to indicators of student performance, here are teachers' responses.

Table 7: Survey Question 7

CMS Staff Open Ended Responses
Question 7: What indicators should CMS use to measure student performance?
1. Portfolios are the only accurate measures of student understanding. It would also show the level of rigor being presented by the teacher.
2. No opinion
3. Tests, quizzes, exams, assignments, projects, positive participation in class.
4. test score growth when it is possible to measure it, day-to-day performance on subject-related tasks
5. A variety of factors not limited to standardized test scores. Portfolio and holistic grading measures can also be used as indicators. National instead of state standards will also help to bridge gaps.
6. The system needs at the very least needs tests that are valid. Right now students can get 50% on the EOC's and pass - It is all smoke and mirrors. The students are being told the have mastery of a subject when in reality they do not.
7. attendance records, behavior records, growth, test scores, class grade, student work, extracurricular activities
8. Teacher generated scores with advice from peer teachers on makeups, retests, amount of homework, etc.
9. Diagnostic Tests
10. Measured growth per individual student. - Pre-Test / Post-Test
11. Everything a student doesn't do.
12. Observations
13. Various assessment methods--standard exams, presentations, internal assessments used by teacher.
14. They are not concern about student performance because a policy has been put out that a student cannot receive a grade lower than a C.
15. Certainly not just test scores. Standardized tests are NOT representative of student performance. Unfortunately, this will probably not change because no one wants to put time, effort, or money into creating a better system. Also see question 6.
16. I believe you should just simply ask the students if they are indeed learning. Then get to the route of the problem as to why they are not learning. Most of the time it is because of issues at home and not because of the teacher. Give them surveys as well.
17. Survey of curriculum learned Growth level within the content area Standardized assessment
18. How often they do their homework, how often do they study, how often does the parents check to

make sure that the homework is being done or has been done, etc. Parents should be held accountable as well. They should be required to fill out paperwork too.
19. Even the state is struggling with this and doing away with required EOCs, when will CMS get its head out of the dirt.
20. test scores, growth
21. Teacher data
22. Growth, answers on non-multiple choice tests
23. Teacher made test and EOG/EOCs.
24. Increase in performance per student population per course. The former ABC statewide performance system work well at the time. What is it that is missing from that school by school measurement tool?
25. Students' behavior, oral/written interviews, alternative assessments, projects.
26. Growth, portfolios and test scores.
27. Grades, attendance, participation
28. Student's grades are an acceptable indicator of their performance. Students' performance includes their behavior as well as their grades. But teachers cannot be evaluated on student behavior.
29. CMS should look into how many students graduate from college within four years, or how many students have completed a trade/apprenticeship program in two years. As well as monitor drop-out rates.
30. State-created summative assessments.
31. Grades, attendance, behaviour and academic growth.
32. Multiple factors should be taken into account.
33. Formative and summative assessments, daily assignments and projects.
34. Behavior and progression
35. Performance assessments and test scores
36. Test Grades, Deportment and Project work.
37. Grades and End of course testing
38. State test scores, common assessments
39. Student behavior, their assignment grades and their quiz and test grades.
40. Portfolio assessment, which can trace a student's development and effort, is a good idea. Some students, with very little effort, can score well on standardized tests. Perhaps they need to do very little to score well. While our tests seem to focus on basic standards, what about the students who have the ability to do more? Perhaps higher-level students need to be evaluated on what they do with their abilities. This has very little to do with a standardized test. While I don't think any student should be handed a diploma if s/he has not mastered basic skills that a diploma should reflect, and therefore understand the need for some measurement, I don't think standardized tests reflect all that students can or should be able to do.
41. I think that the indicators used to measure student performance need to mirror what is expected in the NCSCOS and National Standards for each subject area. The tools used to measure student performance (an EOC/EOG or other final examination) should reflect the tools used during the course to measure performance. Every subject area is different and the indicators should reflect this. For example, courses such as chorus, band, ROTC, foreign language, apparel, etc. should have performance-based assessments in which the students apply the knowledge they have gained. Standardized multiple choice examinations do not accurately measure what the students have acquired in these courses.
42. test scores, grades, attendance
43. Growth if students are accurately placed in subject areas. It is impossible to assess whether a

student will grow if they are in classes that are too difficult, just because parents think their students are brilliant.
44. Not sure. Test scores are not reflective of learning
45. I think test are oaky, but done on a sliding scale based on student current skill level.
46. *
47. Growth, attendance

It appears that teachers suggested multiple indicators of student performance but they do not agree on specific student performance indicators. Some of the indicators listed include attendance, academic growth, state test scores, common assessments, behavior, grades, participation, teacher data, and EOG/EOC. In light of the indicators mentioned above, it can be surmised that teachers are not certain about student performance measures. There is no consensus among teachers concerning the most straightforward way to measure student learning outcomes. Thus, it is not surprising that the PFP planners continue to struggle to find the most effective tools to measure student performance.

Table 8: Survey Question 8

CMS Staff Open Ended Responses
Question 8: What question(s) do you still have about the CMS Pay for Performance plan?
1. When are teachers going to stand up for themselves and fight for fair compensation?
2. No opinion
3. What will be done to protect teachers with ample experience from suffering from the change to the new system?
4. How can it be paid for without lower salaries of some teachers below the NC pay rates? And grant money doesn't count, because it is not permanent!
5. I don't have nay questions. Their mind is made up.
6. None.
7. How is this going to be fair? How can CMS afford to pay teachers, when they can't even give them a 2% raise, when there has been a pay freeze, over 1400 layoffs, etc? How are they going to fairly pay teachers that know their administration...
8. No questions. Read the articles written by Kay McSpadden in the Charlotte Observer about this topic and you will get my opinion.
9. None
10. How will individuals who are paid on the teacher's pay scale that do not teach students in a classroom (i.e. AVID Coordinator / Testing Coordinators) be evaluated? How will student improvement be graded for these individuals?
11. How many Ram Bucks will it take to make it go away?
12. How can CMS justify paying some teachers less than they make now with the new plan?

13. Exactly what will be measured, how will each factor weigh into the final product. Where will they get the funds from this new program, how will the tests be created, will there be any review of the program after it is implemented? How many teachers have been consulted on this matter? What changes is our district to improve other models of pay for performance?
14. What is the real purpose of this pay for performance when you have students in the eleventh and twelfth grade that cannot read at their level.
15. None. I'm not really interested in it for my future.
16. Why is this being done?
17. Will teachers votes actually matter in its implementation (i.e., if voted 'no' by the majority, will it still be implemented?) How it will be employed in the current non-tested areas that are highly performance based void of the traditional written assessments? Will it be short lived--done away with in time?
18. Are there measures in place that will hold the parents and students accountable too?
19. why is it necessary and how do they see it being equitable across the board
20. When do I need to put my house up for sale so I can move to another freaking city????
21. N/A
22. None at this time.
23. Will it be implemented?
24. Why can't we use that ABC tool, add what is missing and use it to measure performance school by school. It promotes team work, school spirit, common goal and focus and everybody is happy.
25. I don't really have any questions at the moment.
26. Is it legal?
27. N/A
28. are the CMS officials really going to shape the PFP plan based on what teachers think or are they going to hire an outside consultant to do whatever research indicates is best?
29. *
30. None.
31. Why spend all the money on making summative assessments when we have a budget crunch? Can the pay for performance be postponed until more teacher feedback is obtained?
32. I personally think that there are many other ways to reward teachers. The bonus ideas based on how a school does on EOGs etc...
33. What will be the base salary for teachers?
34. None
35. What steps will be taken to ensure that Pay for Performance is measured objectively, not subjectively?
36. None - Why? Have they grown interested ears?
37. If teachers have this potential to get large bonuses, where is the money coming from? When this gets voted on who is actually going to vote for it?
38. None.
39. *
40. 1. Why does CMS think they can make this work, when by their own admission, this idea has failed elsewhere? 2. When will we stop penalizing teachers for issues in student learning that frequently have more to do with the home environment than with the school's/teacher's performance.
41. Since this plan will roll out next school year for Dr. Gorman, what indicators do they have planned to measure his performance? We all know that they are still developing the indicators for teaching staff at this time, but if we could see the indicators that he will be measured against,

maybe it would give us a better idea of what to expect.
42. Will the current pay scale still be in place? Will teachers receive bonuses? Will teachers be rewarded for professional development, advanced degrees, and certifications?
43. What will happen to tenure status? What is going to happen to longevity pay? How will this affect teachers who are near retirement?
44. Why are we working on this when we have so many other issues?
45. I just think it's unfair in its current state. Needs to be modified to address the above issues.
46. *
47. None

Responses to this question indicate that CMS teachers still have several unanswered questions about the plan. CMS PFP planners are encouraged to diligently address the many concerns raised by teachers. Some of the concerns include the legality of the plan, parents' accountability, compensations of administrators, the base salary of teachers, the protection of teachers with many years of experience, and the implementation of the PFP. It is hoped that teachers will find answers to these questions before the plan is implemented.

The Problematic of Teacher Performance Operationalization

It is worth establishing the nature of operationalization in research at the outset. Shuttleworth (2008, ¶ 1) encapsulates the essence of this concept best when he writes: "Operationalization is the process of strictly defining variables into measurable factors." This definition emphasizes the need for measurement and validity of variables. Brown (1988), Professor of Second Language Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, argues that this process "should take a variable out of the realm of theory and plant it squarely in concrete reality" (p. 8). In other words, the operationalization of variables is a researcher's chance to explain how a theoretical construct is defined with respect to a concrete construct based on observable, testable, or quantifiable characteristics (Brown, 1988, p.8). Emphasizing the empirical and quantitative aspects of operationalization, Shuttleworth (2008, ¶ 2) argued that "The process defines fuzzy concepts and allows them to be measured, empirically and

quantitatively". Comim (2001) suggests four sequences/alternatives of operationalization. They include

1) Theoretical inclusion: elaboration of theoretical concepts with potential empirical significance;
2) Measurement: transformation of these concepts into empirical variables;
3) Application: use of these variables in qualitative empirical analysis;
4) Quantification: use of these variables in quantitative empirical analysis.

This approach requires that operationalization should not be reduced to quantification alone and the application of the process of operationalization in its entirety. Hence, it is critical for a researcher to operationally define the constructs to be examined, to measure the constructs, to use different variables in further qualitative analysis, and, finally, to quantify the variables.

With respect to teacher performance, this would mean the quantification of performance indicators. According to Cooper and Schindler (2011, p. 211), teacher performance should be transformed into variables to make it measurable and subject to testing. It would be useful to delineate the specification of the boundaries of key performance indicators and develop credible measurements of key dimensions of teacher performance. As can be expected, defining these constructs in measurable terms may prove to be more challenging that one would imagine. Additionally,

It should be noted that teacher performance is a highly complex phenomenon that involves many variables including teacher motivation, teacher enthusiasm, teacher skills, teaching styles, student learning styles, student resiliency, student motivation, student drive or

ambition, school leadership, and parental involvement. Measuring teacher performance implies turning these concepts into measurable variables. Needless to say, it may be difficult to measure or otherwise operationalize such key variables.

Thus, Charlotte-Mecklenburg School leaders must decide how to operationalize these constructs. In a phone interview conducted on March 8, 2011, the CMS pay for performance plan coordinator was asked to how CMS would define and measure teacher performance. He stated

> "Right now, we are in the midst of trying to define teacher performance. We will approach it by different measures. One measure is based on student achievement currently assessed by standardized tests. We would like to be able to measure student achievement in additional ways that we would call value-added measures. Those measures include contribution of individual teachers, of teams of teachers, and of schools to student achievement. A second measure of effectiveness is through class observations. We are using the rubrics from the state… We know that those two are certainly going to be two of our measures; we are looking at additional measures such as student perceptions of teacher effectiveness through surveys" (Interview conducted on March 8, 2011).

This response suggests that CMS is still in the process of delineating key parameters of teacher performance. Time seems to be running short since the plan is scheduled to be implemented next school year. It should be noted that without an operational definition of teacher performance, tying teacher pay to performance could be viewed as a highly subjective endeavor. "There is always going to be a certain amount of subjectivity in any kind of evaluation not just teaching. What we can do is try to minimize it," the PFP plan coordinator added. He also pointed out that

CMS may consider using outside evaluators to ensure that evaluations are objective, in case of dispute. Unfortunately, subjectivity often disqualifies the validity and reliability of an evaluation.

On September 30, 2010, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools PFP plan coordinator graciously responded to five questions we asked via email. In his response to the question, "How does CMS plan to operationalize a teacher's performance in measurable and concrete terms?" about the problematic of operationalization of teacher performance, the plan coordinator indicated that "We are going to test different measures for validity, reliability and feasibility, like we are doing with value-added now. We'll develop them, roll them out to teachers before any stakes are attached, and get feedback, tweak, and then when the measures are right, we'll start to put more stakes on them." It appears that new test measures have not been tested for validity, reliability, and feasibility to this day.

But, according to Frazier (2011), the chief strategy and accountability officer for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools may be leaving Charlotte-Mecklenburg School district soon. He has been named the sole finalist for the position of superintendent in Fulton County in suburban Atlanta. Thus, one of the architects of the pay for performance plan is leaving before fleshing out all measurable variables of teacher effectiveness and teacher performance that the PFP plan will be based upon. He appears poised to move to the state of Georgia which adopted and implemented a pay-for-performance plan called *GeorgiaGain* in the mid-1990s. *GeorgiaGain* failed to produce intended results and did not enjoy broad-based support among state employees.

On March 8, 2011, the PFP plan coordinator provided more details about the quantification of teacher performance. He stated that CMS would have multiple measures. Together, those measures would account for overall teacher performance. By way of illustration,

he provided an example. He said that value-added may count 25 percent, for example; evaluations may count 25 percent; two other measures may count 25 percent. Then, teachers would be grouped in different categories and salaries would be determined based on these groupings and these scores. According to the accountability office, the details of this part of the plan will be sorted out next year.

The teacher pay portion of PFP is scheduled to be implemented in 2013. The superintendent portion will go into effect in 2012. Yet, until March 8, 2011 (the date of the interview), there was no clear operational measurement system of teacher performance. Interestingly, with the traditional single schedule pay system, teachers know what their degrees, certifications, and experiences are worth. It remains to be seen what variables will account for teacher performance in the new pay for performance plan.

In the meantime, the superintendent of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Dr. Peter Gorman, continues to lobby state legislators to encourage them to pass HB 546. If adopted, this law would allow Charlotte-Mecklenburg School district to take teachers off the state salary schedule and implement pay for performance. Before HB 546 becomes law, CMS needs to complete the design of the PFP plan. It appears that the pay for performance plan is in its preliminary design phase. There are several unfinished aspects of the plan, as indicated earlier. Unfortunately, state legislators are sometimes asked to vote on educational matters that they do not fully grasp. Figures 3 and 4 compare the existing plan and the new plan.

Ultimately, CMS must select definable and measurable variables of teacher performance. A failure to operationalize key constructs of performance may result in terrible calculation errors of teacher salaries. It is crucially important that CMS treats the issue of teacher pay with

significant caution. Teachers have often complained about being asked to do too much but receiving too little in return. Before handing a pink slip or a decent check to a teacher, the district must be prepared to provide a plausible explanation about the summation that went into the aggregated salary. Otherwise, the whole pay system may be perceived as based on arbitrariness.

Figure 3 Current Salary Scheme

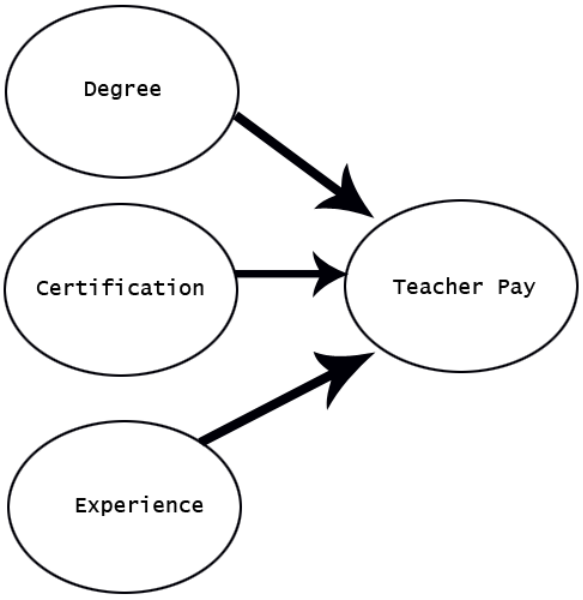
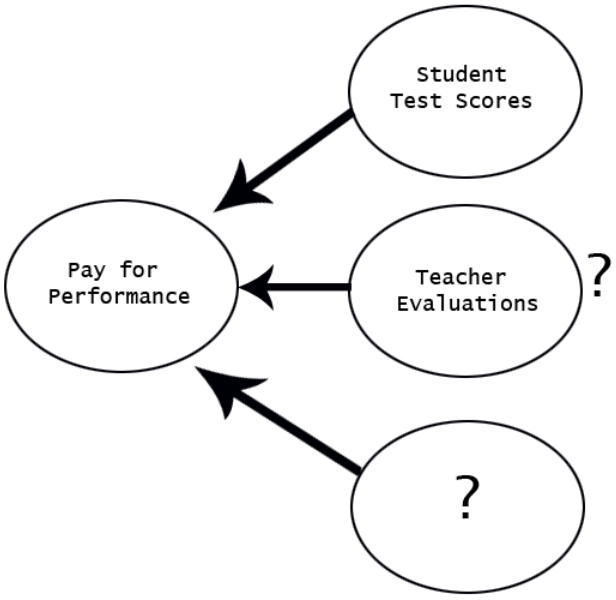


Figure 4 New Salary Scheme



Assuming that student "academic growth" is one of the indicators of teacher performance, how is "academic growth" defined? Is it an increase in student grade point average over a period of time? Is it an increase in EOC, EOG, or AYP test scores? Is it an increase in SAT scores? Is it an increase in student reasoning? Is it an increase in student awareness of consequences of academic failure? Or is it an increase in student participation in class activities? Once an operational definition is agreed upon, it is now important to formulate measurement

methods. What increase qualifies a teacher for a pink slip? Is it student test scores and student academic growth? Is it student test scores, academic growth, and other variables such as continuing professional development, instructional artifacts, evidence of professional growth, and evidence of increased commitment? What increase will earn a teacher a decent pay? Another important question is about the frequency of the measurement. Is academic growth measured monthly, weekly, or annually?

Essentially, all the rubrics of the 5 standards in the new teacher evaluation tool are not easily measurable, although some may be observable. For example, "*Standard I: Teachers demonstrate leadership*" includes rubrics such as "Encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning", "Displays awareness of the goals of the school improvement plan", "Communicates to students the vision of being prepared for life in the 21st century", and "Empowers and encourages students to create and maintain a safe and supportive school and community environment". In all fairness to school leaders who cannot be in every classroom every day with a teacher and students, how can they determine accurately without reviewing instructional artifacts that a teacher is "developing", "proficient", "accomplished", or "distinguished"? In the absence of measurable and operational evaluation criteria that teachers know and understand, there is no conclusive evidence that an evaluation is not subjective. Similarly, local, state, or federal educational leaders who evaluate school principals using clearly defined standards will not see various managerial and instructional leadership roles they perform.

Although the new North Carolina teacher evaluation tool is an improvement on the tool that was in place the last few years that was based on eight categories, it still has some rubrics that are vague and thereby open to alternative and subjective interpretation. Rubrics such as

"Displays global awareness", "Recognizes that students have a variety of learning needs", "Holds high expectations of students" are subjective by default. The evaluator's judgment is the only assessment reference.

Impact of Pay for Performance on Teacher Performance

There are arguments for and against teacher pay for performance. Arguing against PFP, the National Center for Fair and Open Testing (2010) lists its pitfalls:

1. Paying for higher test scores results in score inflation, not genuine learning;
2. Payment for "performance" will exacerbate damage to the curriculum caused by NCLB;
3. It is unfair and ineffective to pay teachers for test results often marred by scoring and other errors;
4. Payment for gains in student scores does not solve the problem of test-induced educational damage;
5. Payment for test scores may not even raise student scores;
6. Most teachers' primary motivation is not high pay;
7. Paying individual teachers for student scores encourages unhealthy competition;
8. Pay for "performance" causes goal distortion in other occupations in both public and private sectors;

This study concludes that "Overall, research on pay for performance finds that it rests on dubious assumptions and lacks evidence, while there is good evidence it often fails" (National Center for Fair and Open Testing, 2010). Furthermore, Performance pay systems "effectively motivate the wrong behavior," and the resulting increased pay differentiation "lowers performance" making

everybody unhappy (Pfeffer, 2007). Muralidharan & Sundararaman (2010) note that "Teachers may feel that test scores are only one component of a good education and that being evaluated solely on test scores would limit their functioning as teachers and induce activities such as "teaching to the test" that may be detrimental to long-term learning outcomes" (p. 3). Thus, pay for performance systems may have negative effects on education. They can demotivate teachers by widening disparities through differential compensation. Basing teacher salary on results of multiple choice questions is indeed unethical and counterproductive, given the complexity of the work a teacher does.

Conversely, there is no dearth of arguments amongst proponents of pay for performance. Chait (2007, p. 2) reports that "Pay-for-performance policies are designed to improve teacher performance and attract and retain higher quality teacher candidates". Subsequently, teachers are paid in part for improvements in student achievement and for demonstrations of knowledge, skills, or instructional performance. Several educational researchers have supported the idea that performance pay systems have a significant positive impact on teacher performance and on school effectiveness. It has been reported compensation systems that reward teacher quality and teacher effectiveness also have broad-based support among many teachers.

On the other hand, wage compression due to performance-linked pay programs may have adverse consequences. Hoxby and Leige (2004) argue that compression of teacher wages in the United States is an important reason for the decline in teacher quality, with higher-ability teachers exiting the teacher labor market. In fact, salary and work conditions are two reasons among others why teachers leave the profession. In a 2004 study conducted by University of Pennsylvania researcher Richard Ingersoll from the U.S. Department of Education's Teacher Follow-Up Survey, it was reported that for teachers who left high-poverty schools because of job dissatisfaction, poor salaries were a primary reason for leaving. Chait and Miller (2009, p. 5)

noted that “Among teachers in rural high-poverty schools, it was the reason cited more frequently than any other (56 percent). Yet among teachers in urban high-poverty schools, other factors were more frequently cited, such as poor administrative support (50.1 percent) and lack of faculty influence (42.5 percent)”. Hence, teacher retention rate is high-poverty school is relatively low.

Another adverse effect is absence or little collegiality among teachers. Muralidharan and Sundararaman (2010), who studied the effectiveness of a pay for performance plan in India, found that “The incentive for teachers to cooperate among themselves may be affected, which in turn may reduce collegiality in the workplace” (p. 4). In other words, a poorly-designed pay for performance plan may force teachers to underperform. The mistrust between teachers and educational leaders may widen.

It is generally accepted that teachers who remain in the profession despite considerable decrease in their wages may exhibit burnout syndrome behaviors. Huarng (2001) defines burnout as “syndrome of physical and emotional exhaustion involving the development of negative job attitudes and loss of concern and feeling for others” (p. 15). He conceptualizes the burnout syndrome with three components: (1) emotional exhaustion, (2) depersonalization, and (3) reduced personal accomplishment. As a result of a pay for performance program, the burnout may have direct impacts on teachers. This may lead to absenteeism, tardiness, unpreparedness, and subsequently to underperformance. This is particularly true for teachers whose students display outstanding content mastery in the classroom but fail to realize significant gains in standardized tests.

A pay for performance plan may affect students in a number of ways. In the early days of merit pay, British teachers focused excessively on memorization. Responding to pressure to

produce results, Gratz (2009) observes that many teachers resolved that "drill and rote repetition produced the best results" (p. 48). He further points out that "Increasingly, teachers felt 'overpressured' by the system and its enforcers and they 'overpressured' students to cram to meet the standards" (p. 50). Teachers in contemporary American public schools have a unique opportunity to voice their opinions and to partake in the adoption process of any pay system that affects their teaching practices.

Students' Views of Pay-for-Performance Plan

Initially, a decision was made not to include students in this study. However, the five students surveyed had strong opinions that they wanted to share when the topic of the new CMS plan was brought up in a class on March 9, 2011. These five students offered their insights and perspectives about the possible effects of the new Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools pay for performance plan. Four concentrated on the inadequacy of the pay for performance plan due to lack of a student's desire or willingness to learn. They find it unproductive to link teacher pay to student academic achievement. One student viewed both a teacher and a student as two important elements for improved student learning.

Student 1, a 12th grader, stated: "I feel that it is unfair because some students may not be willing to learn, and may not care about their grades or success." Her view is that learning is in part a student's responsibility and if a student does not value learning, a teacher should not be punished for a student's lack of academic resiliency.

Student 2, a 12th grader, believes the bulk of the responsibility lies on a student. He said: "It depends on how lazy the person (student) is. If they want to get good grades for their resume, it is up to them. But if they just want to graduate, then, they probably want just to be in a hurry to finish high school." In other words, the main goal is to have enough credits to graduate from

high school. Students may not be willing to do more than the bare minimum.

Student 3, a 10th grader, disagreed with CMS decision to adopt a PFP plan. She said: "I disagree with teachers being judged by their students' performance. I have literally sat in classes with students who did not care to learn. Teachers have families to support; therefore, if they have a lazy student, his or her pay will not be as high as it could be. Teachers should be paid based on their credentials, amount of education, and experience, not by his or her students' performance." Student C thinks that teacher compensation should take into consideration teacher's education, teacher's credentials, and teacher's experience.

Student 4, a 10th grader, laid the blame for student academic failure on the student. He contends that parent, student, and teacher need to work in tandem. The parent's early involvement in developing a child's predisposition to learn should come first. The teacher should capitalize on what the parent sowed. Then, the student needs to take control of his or her learning by going to the library, finding help, and studying. He said:

> "Most of the time, if a student is struggling, is not performing academically, it is the student's fault. You did not take the initiative to better yourself. There is not such a thing as lack of knowledge; there is lack of trying. The true secret to academic success is initial development by the parents. Spending time with their child to help them, and maybe even themselves, learn at a young age. The teacher must then utilize the skills the child already has by integrating them into a collaborative learning environment".

According to this student, many students in high school graduate "without really knowing their stuff". He believes that high school must be more like college. Additionally, teachers must develop an unorthodox way of teaching. They must keep the class exciting, "not just with boring worksheets."

Student 5, a 12th grader, provided a longer response. He held both the teacher and the student responsible. He noted that the teachers should aim to motivate student by all means. He acknowledged a student's part in the learning process but recommended that the teacher works tirelessly to engage students in productive learning activities. He said:

> "I believe that it is the lack of motivation and lack of getting students more involved into the subject that makes a lazy student. But it is not us who hold responsibility for our actions; it is the environment in which we learn and that teachers should not only be satisfied by a successful student but with knowing that the students enjoyed it. Not that the student came a few times to class and passed (the test). Get them to interact as they do outside of school without bringing outside problems to school. So I think teachers should be paid based on credentials, percentage of students (who) passed in their field, and their performance."

Essentially, the teacher must play a role in student class attendance. A teacher's role should go beyond helping a student pass standardized tests. He concluded that teacher performance, teacher credentials, and student achievement needed to be considered in the PFP plan.

It is worth noting that students who participated in this study were referred to as "Student A", "Student B", "Student C", "Student D", and "Student E". "Student D" had a chance to read the draft of this paper and wondered why he had to be referred to as "Student D". He implied that "D" meant failure and he did not want to be associated with failure. Therefore, the reference was changed from "Student A-E" to "Student 1-5".

The paradox of teacher Effectiveness

Teacher effectiveness evaluation is often subject to controversy. The paradox of teacher effectiveness can be best illustrated in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Department of

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools where students are expected to develop technological literacy. The ITEA's (2002) Standards of Technological Literacy defines "Technological literacy" as "the ability to use, manage, assess, and understand technology" (p. 9). In some CTE classes, students meet and even exceed these standards but fail to score at proficiency level in state tests for different reasons (test design, attitudes towards test, and preparedness). Their teacher (A) is rated ineffective. Yet, some students do not produce core CTE learning outcomes but pass the state test. The former are better prepared for college or for employment than the latter. Although they passed the state test, the latter are unprepared for college or for employment. Their teacher (B) is judged effective by state standards.

A typical case stems from a Business Education course (Programming). A teacher A had been involved in training other teachers and in developing a curriculum for another course. She was known to be very experienced and knowledgeable. Her students were able to perform high level programming operations. Teacher B had no initial computer programming background but was asked to teach the course. He attended a two-day workshop and taught the course with much discomfort. At the end of the semester, less than 50% of students in teacher A class in West Learning Community passed the state test. Surprisingly, more than 80% of students in teacher B class in North Learning Community passed the test. Who is the most effective teacher? Teacher A or teacher B? This anecdotal tale supports the idea that teacher effectiveness improves with years of experience.

One teacher once observed that it is important for teachers to teach students technical skills and teach them how to take a test. Focusing on technical skills or on how to pass a test only will not do justice to the teacher. Rarely do teachers focus on the two. Pay for performance forces teachers to focus on test taking skills.

The CMS PFP plan does not incentivize teachers to seek advanced degrees. This was ascertained by the plan coordinator in response to our question "How will CMS incentivize advanced degrees or academic elevation for its teachers?" He stated that "I think it's likely that we won't incentive degree attainment directly. Instead, we'll incentive results in the classroom. That way, if someone sees an advanced degree as a way to improve their results, they should do it and they can get rewarded financially for their results. But they won't have to get an advance degree just to jump through a hoop." Yet research has shown that students find it reassuring to know that their teacher clearly knows, and can do, a lot (Brookfield, 2006, p. 59). Woolfolk (2004) backs up this idea. She posits that "Teachers who know more facts about their subject do not necessarily have students who learn more. But teachers who know more may make clearer presentations and recognize student difficulties more readily. They are ready for any student questions and do not have to be evasive or vague in their answers" (p. 440). Moreover, Woolfolk (2004) contends that "Teachers who provide clear presentations and explanations tend to have students who learn more and who rate their teachers more positively" (p. 440). One teacher commented that she believed that she did not waste her time working on her Master's degree. She could have joined the teaching profession with her Bachelor's degree but she felt that she would be better prepared and would have more to offer if she furthered her education.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg School district plans to measure the quality of teaching through student performance is not unrealistic. But research reveals that the quality of teachers—as measured by whether the teachers were fully certified and had a major in their teaching field—is related to student performance (Darling-Hammond, 2000). CMS educational leaders agree with the idea that quality teaching is positively associated with student performance but disagree with the way to measure the quality of teachers. They stress student performance in lieu of

certification or major in teaching field.

Conceptual Framework for Improving Teacher Effectiveness

The North Carolina State Board of Education approved the policy adopting the *Rubric for Evaluating North Carolina Teachers and the Teacher Evaluation Process* on October 2, 2008 (McREL, 2009). The new teacher evaluation tool was adopted and implemented during 2010-2011 school year in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. It replaces the TPAI evaluation tool.

It should be noted that the old TPAI evaluation tool had eight components: (1) Management of Instructional time, (2) Management of Student Behavior, (3) Instructional presentation, (4) Instructional monitoring, (5) Instructional feedback, (6) Facilitating instruction, (7) Communicating within the educational environment, and (8) Performing non-instructional duties. The four-scale rating system consisted of "Not observed", "Below standard", "At standard", and "Above". To say that this system was not perfect is an understatement because anytime a teacher was rated "below standard" in one category, the teacher was placed on an "action plan". One would wonder whether superior performance reviews often translated into elevated student performance and whether poor performance reports often translated into poor student performance or ineffective teaching practices. This is a research opportunity for evaluators. They may review, and analyze observation reports along with student performance data. They can then draw conclusions on the correlation between observation reports and student performance.

The new teacher evaluation tool is standards-based and places particular emphasis on instructional artifacts defined as "natural by-products of a teacher's work and are not created for the purpose of satisfying evaluation requirements" (MeREL, 2009, p. 2). With this evaluation

tool, the North Carolina Department of Public Education and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School district are moving towards the professionalization of teacher evaluation. However, this tool still needs to be revamped structurally and procedurally to make it more cost-effective. Whereas the artifacts encompassing lesson plans, North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey, Professional development, Student dropout data, School Improvement Plan, and School Improvement Team may be critically important, allowing teachers the opportunity to partake in their own evaluation process by reviewing the instructional evidences they present against operational constructs would augment their levels of satisfaction with the new tool. With a portfolio-based evaluation, it would be incumbent on a teacher to present instructional artifacts. There must be a system in place that allows teachers to upload these artifacts to the district or state teacher portfolio databases. The system must be able to automatically compress files to avoid system overload. Size requirements and file formats must be clearly specified.

Arguably, performance-based programs alone cannot lead to teacher effectiveness. However, it can be argued that more than one factor motivates teachers. Odden and Kelley (2002) note that "In terms of structure of compensation, research is clear that individual merit and incentive pay programs do not work and, in fact, are detrimental" (p. 93). They further observe that the primary teacher motivator is improved student achievement. Hence, student performance may not be solely the result of a pay for performance plan. Writing for the Vanderbilt News, Melanie Moran reports that the major findings of the POINT Experiment by the National Center on Performance Incentives at Vanderbilt University's Peabody College of education and human development in partnership with the RAND Corporation mentioned earlier in this paper. One of the conclusions of the study is that "Rewarding teachers with bonus pay, in the absence of any other support programs, does not raise student test scores," (Moran, 2010).

Thus, it is important to examine thoroughly performance incentive plans before implementing them. Moran (2010) notes that test scores do not improve if teachers know they will be rewarded for an increase in their students' test scores.

There are several scenarios concerning the part that motivation plays in the teaching-learning process. Ultimately, the best case scenario is a highly motivated teacher working with highly motivated students. The outcome is quite unquestionably high student achievement in most cases. Students of highly motivated teachers are more likely to attain results at or above the level expected, regardless of school context. There are other scenarios, however. A motivated teacher working with unmotivated students does not presage a positive outcome. In this situation, it is the teacher's primary job to motivate students. Another scenario is a situation in which an unmotivated teacher works with highly motivated students. The result might be that students lose motivation or there is constant clash between learners and educator. The worst case scenario is a situation in which an unmotivated teacher finds herself or himself working with a group of unmotivated students. The outcome of this unpleasant mix may be chaos or poor performance.

In addition to motivation, poverty does affect student learning. The role that poverty plays in student learning should never be overlooked. There is a vast body of research that shows that poverty directly correlates with student academic achievement. There is general agreement among researchers that low socioeconomic status students are often at risk for academic failure. Many of these students are eligible for free or reduced price lunch. Teachers and schools need to have support mechanisms in place to provide much needed assistance to these students. The nature of challenges that teachers face in schools with high level and low level of poverty rates are different. One teacher wondered how CMS would judge teachers from Ardrey Kell the same

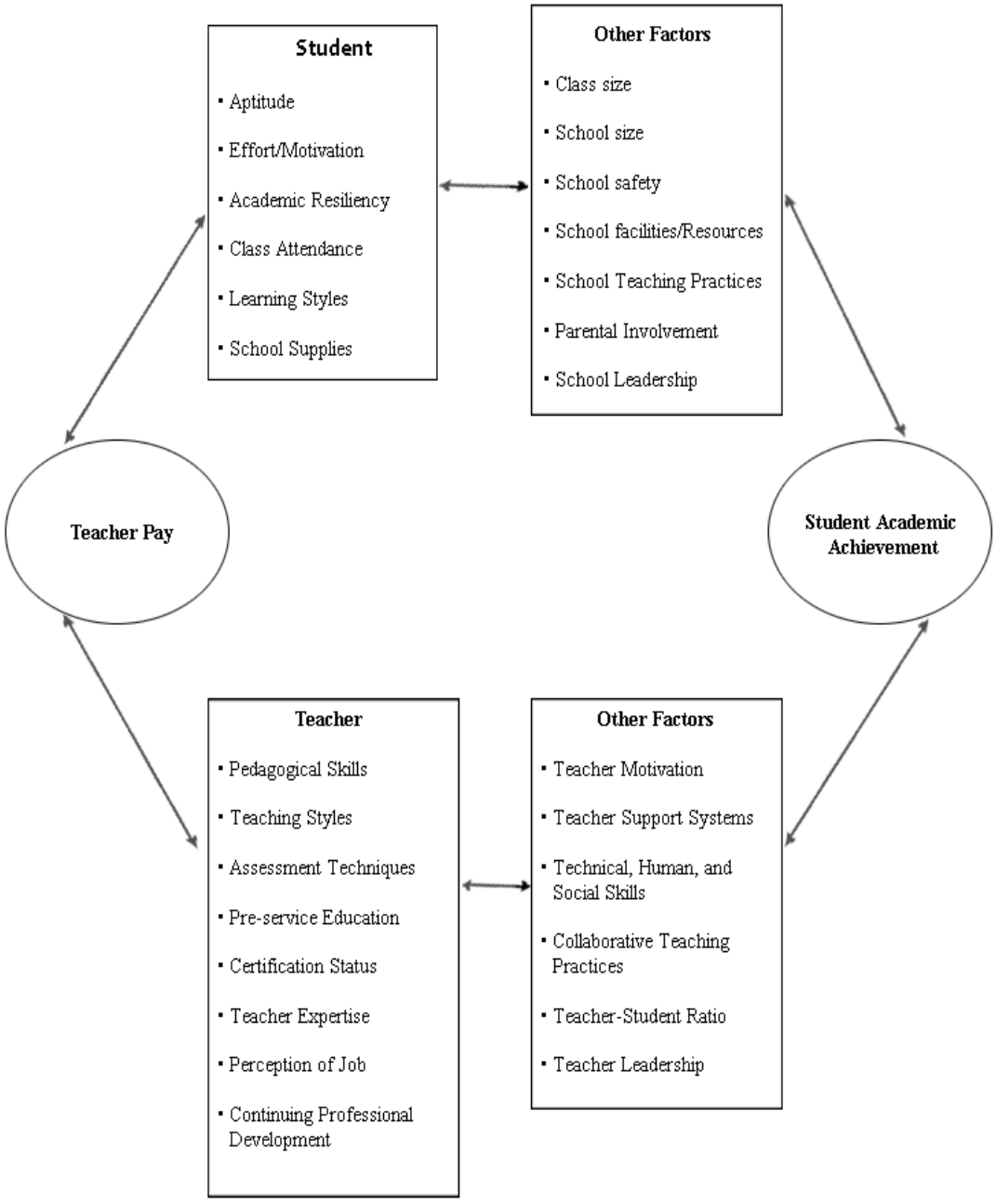
way as teachers from West Charlotte, for example. “Those students from Ardrey Kell do not have to cook for their five or six brothers and sisters when they get home. They may have to go to work. These poor kids have a different lifestyle. They may not care that they have homework. So paying teachers across the board may not be fair,” she noted. The extent to which the CMS Strategic Plan 2014 will take poverty disparities among students and schools into consideration is unclear at this point.

The new PFP plan seeks to be an improvement on the old single salary system. However, while the old system had specific components to be considered for teacher pay, the new CMS plan is short on specifics. This was evident in the interview with the CMS PFP plan. He stated that “Maybe student test scores with some measures of teacher performance including observations and value-added models.” Identifying the type of measurement variables for teacher pay is critical to the success of a pay for performance plan. If measurement variables are identified incorrectly or if elements of subjectivity are included in the determination of teacher pay, the likelihood of drawing invalid conclusions or of paying teachers undue salaries is significant.

Avoiding the mistakes made in some school districts that adopted PFP plans is reportedly a major goal for the PFP Design Team. CMS intends to conduct research on successes and pitfalls of PFP plans across the country. It was revealed that the PFP Design Team would continue to speak with schools that have implemented the plan to find out what worked and what did not. One of the lessons CMS has learned is that some schools adopted pay for performance plans too fast. In light of this lesson, the PFP plan coordinator posits that the pace of the PFP plan implementation in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools is relatively slow.

The framework presented in figure 5 summarizes a number of factors that lead to teacher effectiveness and, subsequently, to student academic attainment. These factors include student motivation, student resiliency, student aptitude, student class attendance, on the one hand; teacher expertise, teacher motivation, teacher preparedness, teaching styles, assessment techniques, licensure status, continuing professional development, and perception of job, on the other. Other factors include class size, school size, school safety, school leadership, school resources, teacher-student ratio, teacher technical, human, and social skills, teacher support systems, and teacher leadership.

Figure 5: Ngoma's Multilevel Model of Student Performance



This conceptual model (figure 5) shows that there are several mediating variables to be considered in order for teacher pay for performance to result in improved academic achievement. In other words, the pay for performance as an independent variable is unlikely to generate

student academic achievement as dependent variable (the outcome) without student motivation, student resiliency, parental involvement, teacher expertise, teacher pedagogical skills, and other variables listed above. A teacher can control some of these variables but cannot control all the variables. For example, whereas a teacher may have control over student extrinsic motivation and course content, he or she has no control over student class attendance, student academic resiliency, student socio-economic situation, and class size. It is, therefore, comprehensible that some teachers would have some apprehension about linking their salaries to student performance, which is, the result of interplay of several constructs (student, teacher, parent, school leadership, school, and community).

Ideally, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School district could have a control group and an experimental group of teachers to test the effects of the pay for performance. The control group would be paid with the traditional single salary system and the experiment group would be paid based on student performance. Unfortunately, such experiments are rarely carried out in K-12 schools.

With all the controversy about the failure of merit pay in education and the relative success of pay for performance, moving hastily into such unchartered territory without a clear compass may be perilous. Responding to the question "As CMS embarks on this rather uncharted territory, how does the *Design Team* ensure that it avoids mistakes made elsewhere?" the CMS pay for performance plan coordinator replied: "We can't guarantee we won't make mistakes, but we'll try to learn from people in other districts and continually assess how we are doing. We're going to need to avoid any tendencies toward group-think." Making mistakes is one thing but not paying teachers for they are worth is a disservice to students, to teachers, and to the school as a whole. It is suggested here that an effective pay for performance plan must

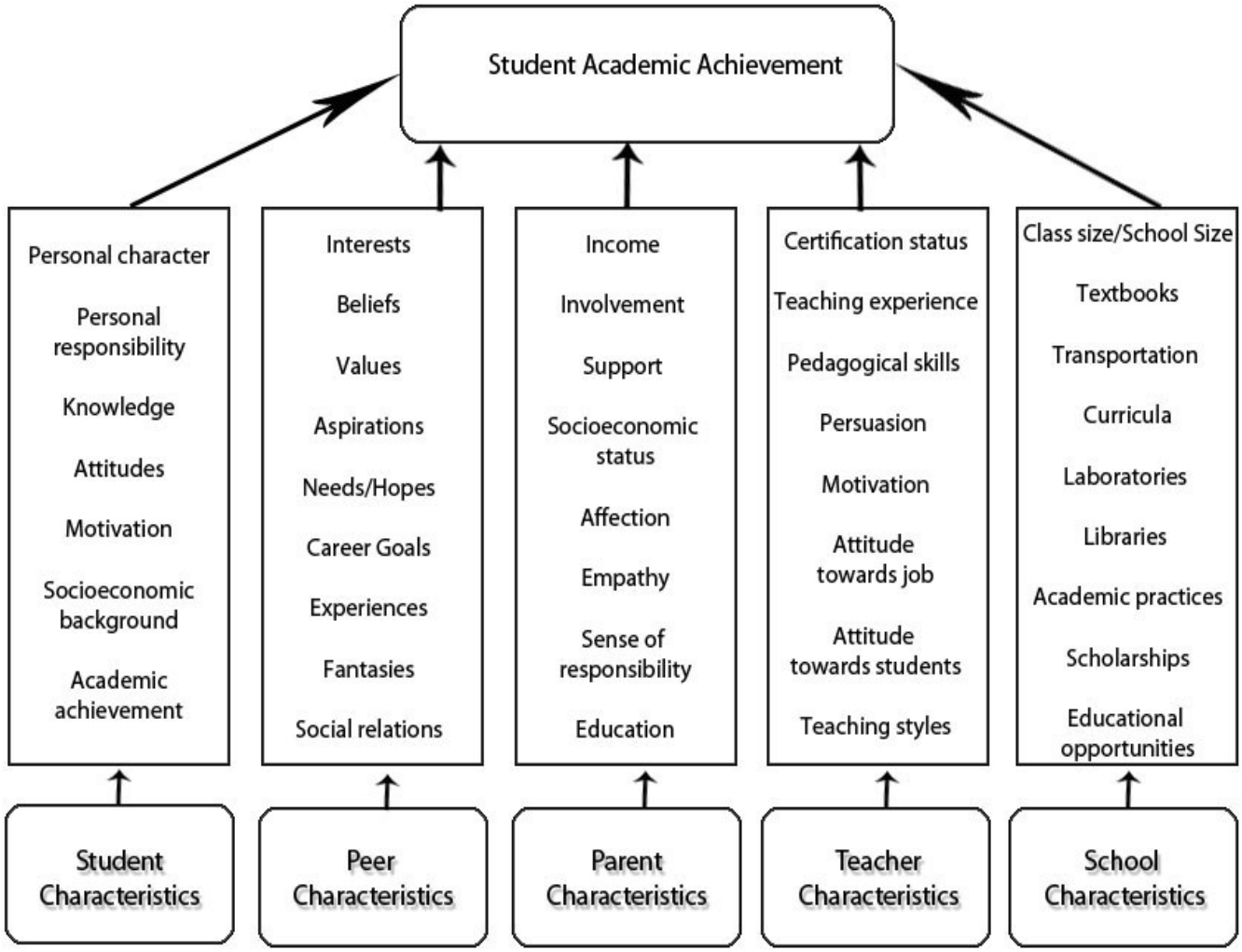
accurately represent a teacher's value and take into account his or her education, certification, years of experience, professional development, and performance.

Factors Influencing Student Learning Outcomes

In light of the literature reviewed thus far, it is apparent that several external and internal factors affect student learning outcomes. When considering a plan to reward a teacher's efforts, it is supremely important to explore some of those factors that encompass parental support or involvement, student background, teacher personality, teacher instincts, teacher expertise, teacher's teaching style. From a teacher's perspective, an effective pay for performance plan should take into account teacher's education, teacher's experience, teacher's tenure, and student academic achievement. It is important that Charlotte-Mecklenburg School district PFP planners consider constructs beyond student test scores in standardized tests as measure of teacher performance. Hence, pay for performance as it relates to student learning outcomes (cognitive, attitudinal, and behavioral) must not be studied in isolation; it needs to include five key components notably student (self), peers, parents, teacher, and school.

Several factors influence student learning. Louis, Leithwood, Anderson, & Wahlstrom (2010) found that high student achievement is linked to the combined influence of educators, parents, and others. They suggest various constructs that contribute to student learning. As can be seen in figure 7, the teacher is not the only element needed for students to achieve academic success. Even school leaders are influenced by several variables. Louis et al (2010) contend that "And of course leaders are influenced by their own professional learning experiences and by student and family backgrounds" (p. 13). Essentially, the role of the school leadership is central to student learning. Increasingly, school leaders are called to play a more defining role in charting the course for public schools.

Figure 6: Factors affecting student learning



The 2001 report of The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) portrays the typical high principal as follows: "Today's principal must be a legal expert, health and social services coordinator, fundraiser, public relations consultant, parental involvement expert, and security expert, who is technologically savvy, diplomatic, with top-notch managerial skills, whose most important duty is the implementation of instructional programs, curricula, pedagogical practice, and assessment models" (The National Association of Secondary School Principals, 2001, p. 1).

Figure 7: School Leadership Model by Louis, Leithwood, Anderson, & Wahlstrom

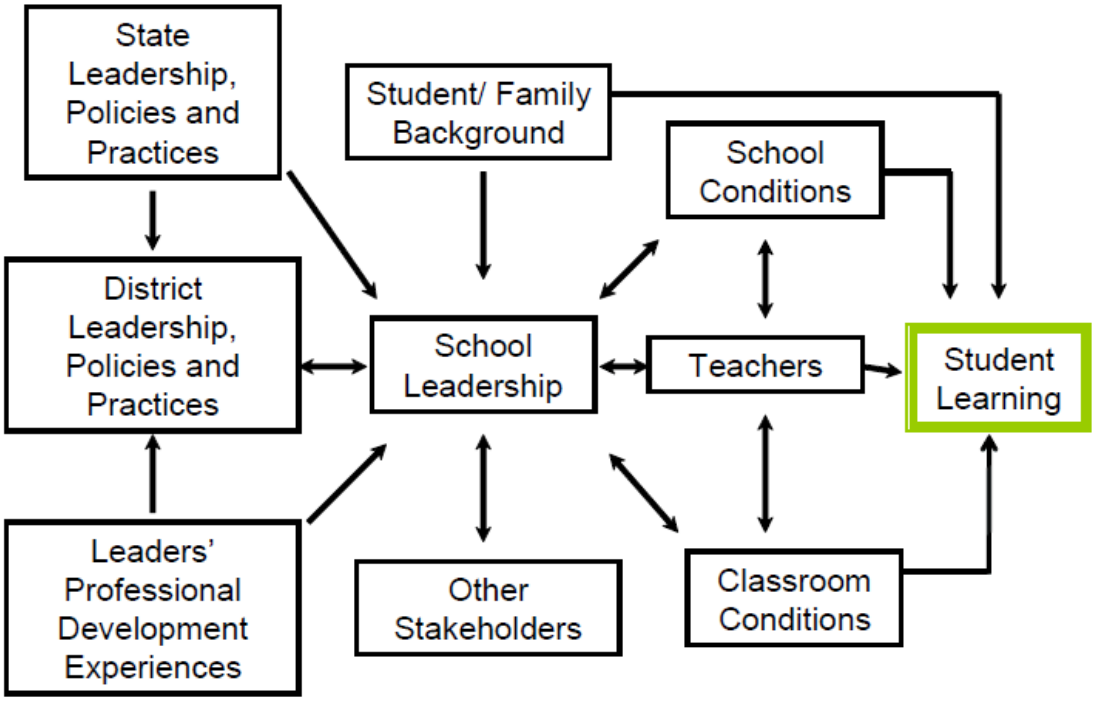
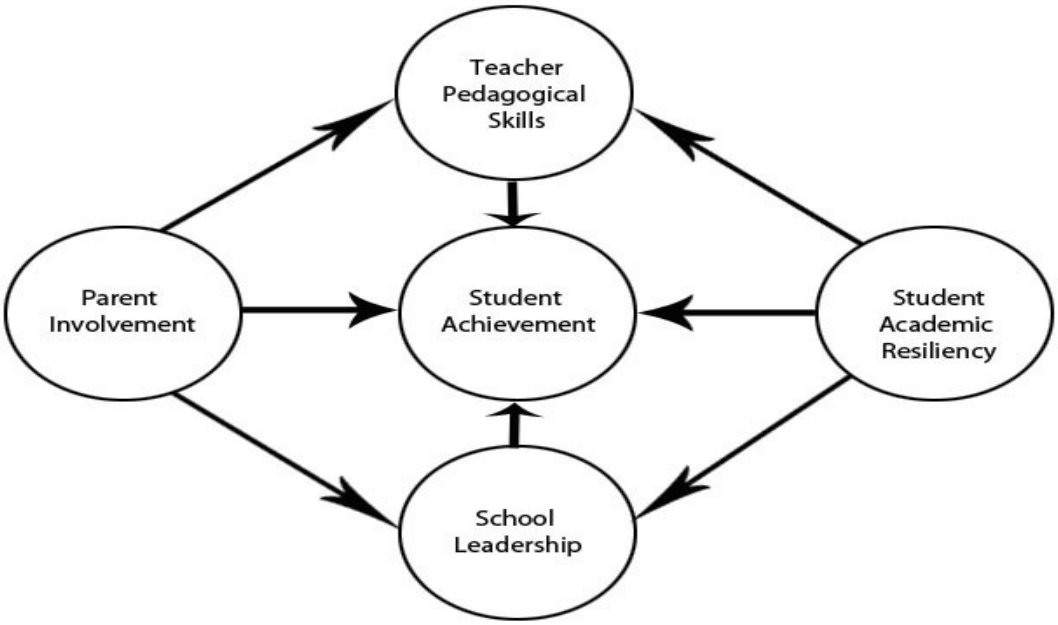


Figure 8: Ngoma's Model of Factors that affect student achievement



The changing nature of this school leadership implies a reexamination of traditional routines including relationships with subordinates. It is imperative that a school leader develops an acute awareness of various factors presented in figure 8 that affect student learning.

Logically, student achievement is not the result of teacher performance in a classroom alone. Teachers claim that student academic ability and discipline, student study habits, parent involvement, school leadership, and teacher pedagogical skills play a part in student academic success.

Conclusion

Based on the literature that has been reviewed and teachers' surveys, it appears that a pay for performance is not necessarily the ultimate solution to improving teacher effectiveness and student learning. A successful PFP system needs to be tailored to unique needs of teachers and students. This study suggests that attention to operationalizable variables of teacher performance is critical for maximizing student learning. The size of sample is not exhaustive but it is believed to be representative enough to yield significant insights for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools leaders to consider.

It should be noted that the majority of public school teachers enter the profession without expecting corporate pay. However, they should be compensated accurately and decently for the hard work they do. As indicated earlier, great thought should go into the various ways the new pay for performance plan may potentially affect school effectiveness before replacing the old single salary pay system with a new performance-based compensation system. A Pay for Performance plan that takes into account the dynamic and complex nature of teacher performance and student learning may be difficult to devise.

It is suggested that teacher pay be based on multiple variables including teacher education, certification, professional development, teacher evaluations, student evaluations, and performance. Student performance is not necessarily a direct result of teacher's drive to perform for pay. Strong school leadership, adequate resources, motivated students, and good working

conditions are some of the factors that motivate teachers.

The Pay for Performance plan in its current state is logically inconsistent with the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Strategic Plan 2014. CMS does not have a full-blown, comprehensive pay-for-performance plan yet. While the new tests are being tested for validity and reliability, the plan has no operationally defined variables for teacher performance, teacher effectiveness, and student performance. The value and promise of pay for performance plans are recognized in this paper. However, as Chait and Miller (2009) put it, "The state of knowledge about optimal designs of pay-for-performance programs leaves much to be desired. What is needed are careful evaluations of a variety of pay-for-performance designs" (p. 16). It is hoped that this paper will contribute to the ongoing debate about the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Strategic Plan 2014 and encourage teachers to undertake studies about policy decisions that affect them directly or indirectly.

Finally, it is important that pay for performance system planners who make important decisions that affect teachers and students have a mix of educational background and teaching experience to grasp the dynamics of what goes on in a classroom. The main architect of the current PFP plan has a Bachelor of Art in Public Administration, a Master of Art in Divinity, and is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in Public Administrator. He worked as a pastor for many years. Although he is working with a Design Team made up of several CMS teachers, it is believed that he still has the last word. School districts need to treat teacher compensation as an important problem. Decisions affecting teachers' pay must be made by professionals who fully understand what teaching entails.

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CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS
2006-2007 SALARY SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

BACHELOR "A" CERTIFICATE

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	ANNUAL STATE AMOUNT	PERCENT OF ANNUAL STATE AMOUNT	ANNUAL LOCAL SUPPLEMENT AMOUNT	TOTAL TEN MONTH ANNUAL SALARY
0	$28,510.00	13.00%	$3,706.30	$32,216.30
1	$28,930.00	13.00%	$3,760.90	$32,690.90
2	$29,370.00	13.00%	$3,818.10	$33,188.10
3	$30,930.00	13.00%	$4,020.90	$34,950.90
4	$32,330.00	13.00%	$4,202.90	$36,532.90
5	$33,670.00	13.00%	$4,377.10	$38,047.10
6	$34,960.00	13.00%	$4,544.80	$39,504.80
7	$36,000.00	13.00%	$4,680.00	$40,680.00
8	$36,480.00	13.00%	$4,742.40	$41,222.40
9	$36,970.00	13.00%	$4,806.10	$41,776.10
10	$37,470.00	13.00%	$4,871.10	$42,341.10
11	$37,960.00	13.50%	$5,124.60	$43,084.60
12	$38,470.00	13.50%	$5,193.50	$43,663.50
13	$38,980.00	13.50%	$5,262.30	$44,242.30
14	$39,510.00	13.50%	$5,333.90	$44,843.90
15	$40,050.00	13.50%	$5,406.80	$45,456.80
16	$40,600.00	13.50%	$5,481.00	$46,081.00
17	$41,150.00	13.50%	$5,555.30	$46,705.30
18	$41,740.00	14.00%	$5,843.60	$47,583.60
19	$42,320.00	14.00%	$5,924.80	$48,244.80
20	$42,900.00	14.00%	$6,006.00	$48,906.00
21	$43,520.00	14.00%	$6,092.80	$49,612.80
22	$44,130.00	14.00%	$6,178.20	$50,308.20
23	$44,790.00	14.00%	$6,270.60	$51,060.60
24	$45,430.00	14.00%	$6,360.20	$51,790.20
25	$46,080.00	15.00%	$6,912.00	$52,992.00
26	$46,740.00	15.00%	$7,011.00	$53,751.00
27	$47,420.00	15.00%	$7,113.00	$54,533.00
28	$48,130.00	15.00%	$7,219.50	$55,349.50
29	$48,840.00	15.00%	$7,326.00	$56,166.00
30+	$49,820.00	15.00%	$7,473.00	$57,293.00

CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS
2006-2007 SALARY SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

MASTER "M" CERTIFICATE

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE	ANNUAL STATE AMOUNT	PERCENT OF ANNUAL STATE AMOUNT	ANNUAL LOCAL SUPPLEMENT AMOUNT	TOTAL TEN MONTH ANNUAL SALARY *
0	$31,360.00	13.00%	$4,076.80	$35,436.80
1	$31,820.00	13.00%	$4,136.60	$35,956.60
2	$32,310.00	13.00%	$4,200.30	$36,510.30
3	$34,020.00	13.00%	$4,422.60	$38,442.60
4	$35,560.00	13.50%	$4,800.60	$40,360.60
5	$37,040.00	13.50%	$5,000.40	$42,040.40
6	$38,460.00	13.50%	$5,192.10	$43,652.10
7	$39,600.00	13.50%	$5,346.00	$44,946.00
8	$40,130.00	13.50%	$5,417.60	$45,547.60
9	$40,670.00	13.50%	$5,490.50	$46,160.50
10	$41,220.00	13.50%	$5,564.70	$46,784.70
11	$41,760.00	14.50%	$6,055.20	$47,815.20
12	$42,320.00	14.50%	$6,136.40	$48,456.40
13	$42,880.00	14.50%	$6,217.60	$49,097.60
14	$43,460.00	14.50%	$6,301.70	$49,761.70
15	$44,060.00	14.50%	$6,388.70	$50,448.70
16	$44,660.00	14.50%	$6,475.70	$51,135.70
17	$45,270.00	14.50%	$6,564.20	$51,834.20
18	$45,910.00	15.50%	$7,116.10	$53,026.10
19	$46,550.00	15.50%	$7,215.30	$53,765.30
20	$47,190.00	15.50%	$7,314.50	$54,504.50
21	$47,870.00	15.50%	$7,419.90	$55,289.90
22	$48,540.00	15.50%	$7,523.70	$56,063.70
23	$49,270.00	15.50%	$7,636.90	$56,906.90
24	$49,970.00	15.50%	$7,745.40	$57,715.40
25	$50,690.00	16.50%	$8,363.90	$59,053.90
26	$51,410.00	16.50%	$8,482.70	$59,892.70
27	$52,160.00	16.50%	$8,606.40	$60,766.40
28	$52,940.00	16.50%	$8,735.10	$61,675.10
29	$53,720.00	16.50%	$8,863.80	$62,583.80
30+	$54,800.00	16.50%	$9,042.00	$63,842.00

*ADD $1,260 TO TOTAL TEN MONTH ANNUAL SALARY FOR ADVANCED TEACHING LICENSE

*ADD $2,530 TO TOTAL TEN MONTH ANNUAL SALARY FOR DOCTORATE TEACHING LICENSE

CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG SCHOOLS
2010-2011 SALARY SCHEDULE FOR TEACHERS

BACHELOR "A" CERTIFICATE

YEARS OF EXPER-IENCE	Monthly State Base Salary	Annual State Base Salary	Percent of Annual State Base Salary	Annual Locally Paid Base Salary	TOTAL TEN MONTH ANNUAL BASE SALARY
A00	$ 3,043.00	$ 30,430.00	13.00%	$3,955.90	$34,385.90
A01	$ 3,043.00	$ 30,430.00	13.00%	$3,955.90	$34,385.90
A02	$ 3,043.00	$ 30,430.00	13.00%	$3,955.90	$34,385.90
A03	$ 3,085.00	$ 30,850.00	13.00%	$4,010.50	$34,860.50
A04	$ 3,129.00	$ 31,290.00	13.00%	$4,067.70	$35,357.70
A05	$ 3,264.00	$ 32,640.00	13.00%	$4,243.20	$36,883.20
A06	$ 3,404.00	$ 34,040.00	13.00%	$4,425.20	$38,465.20
A07	$ 3,538.00	$ 35,380.00	13.00%	$4,599.40	$39,979.40
A08	$ 3,667.00	$ 36,670.00	13.00%	$4,767.10	$41,437.10
A09	$ 3,771.00	$ 37,710.00	13.00%	$4,902.30	$42,612.30
A10	$ 3,819.00	$ 38,190.00	13.00%	$4,964.70	$43,154.70
A11	$ 3,868.00	$ 38,680.00	13.00%	$5,028.40	$43,708.40
A12	$ 3,918.00	$ 39,180.00	13.00%	$5,093.40	$44,273.40
A13	$ 3,967.00	$ 39,670.00	13.50%	$5,355.50	$45,025.50
A14	$ 4,018.00	$ 40,180.00	13.50%	$5,424.30	$45,604.30
A15	$ 4,069.00	$ 40,690.00	13.50%	$5,493.20	$46,183.20
A16	$ 4,122.00	$ 41,220.00	13.50%	$5,564.70	$46,784.70
A17	$ 4,176.00	$ 41,760.00	13.50%	$5,637.60	$47,397.60
A18	$ 4,231.00	$ 42,310.00	13.50%	$5,711.90	$48,021.90
A19	$ 4,286.00	$ 42,860.00	13.50%	$5,786.10	$48,646.10
A20	$ 4,345.00	$ 43,450.00	14.00%	$6,083.00	$49,533.00
A21	$ 4,403.00	$ 44,030.00	14.00%	$6,164.20	$50,194.20
A22	$ 4,461.00	$ 44,610.00	14.00%	$6,245.40	$50,855.40
A23	$ 4,523.00	$ 45,230.00	14.00%	$6,332.20	$51,562.20
A24	$ 4,584.00	$ 45,840.00	14.00%	$6,417.60	$52,257.60
A25	$ 4,650.00	$ 46,500.00	14.00%	$6,510.00	$53,010.00
A26	$ 4,714.00	$ 47,140.00	14.00%	$6,599.60	$53,739.60
A27	$ 4,779.00	$ 47,790.00	15.00%	$7,168.50	$54,958.50
A28	$ 4,845.00	$ 48,450.00	15.00%	$7,267.50	$55,717.50
A29	$ 4,913.00	$ 49,130.00	15.00%	$7,369.50	$56,499.50
A30	$ 4,984.00	$ 49,840.00	15.00%	$7,476.00	$57,316.00
A31	$ 5,055.00	$ 50,550.00	15.00%	$7,582.50	$58,132.50
A32	$ 5,153.00	$ 51,530.00	15.00%	$7,729.50	$59,259.50
A33+	$ 5,255.00	$ 52,550.00	15.00%	$7,882.50	$60,432.50