

# APPENDIX 3 – Deliberation and Input

## Washington State Public School Employees Survey

In order to gather preliminary input from public school employees about their compensation preferences and to provide them with additional information about the Compensation Technical Working Group (TWG), the Washington State Public School Employee Survey was created and administered to public school employees.

The survey was created using questions utilized in other research regarding compensation preferences, as well as questions developed by the Compensation TWG. A SurveyGizmo link was distributed to all public school employees reported in the S275 Personnel Report, with a three week response window in November of 2011. In order to ensure a representative response rate, school district superintendents, business managers and technology personnel were contacted to ensure the delivery of the email. Additionally, the Washington Education Association (WEA), the Public School Employees of Washington (PSE), the Washington State School Directors Association (WSSDA), the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) and the Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) supported the survey and encouraged their members to participate. As a result, the survey yield a response rate of approximately 11 percent of employees (approximately 16,000 respondents), with a sample very representative of the public school employee demographics as represented in the S275 Personnel Report.

Among certificated instructional staff, the most favored elements in compensation are “status quo” options that are currently recognized in the salary allocation model or are bonuses funded through the state:

- Years of experience
- Educational levels
- Credits and clock hours
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification

However, other elements were strongly favored, some of which the Compensation Technical Working Group recognized have been paid for by state, federal or private grants or through local levy funds:

- Professional certification and additional levels of certification
- Leadership roles
- Mentoring novice teachers
- Serving in a low performing, challenging school assignment

Moderately favored compensation elements included:

- Hard to fill subjects, schools and positions

The least favored compensation elements among certificated staff were:

- Individual classroom gains in student achievement
- School wide classroom gains in student achievement
- Successful evaluations by principal
- Successful evaluations by principal and peer reviewers

Additional statistical analysis broke certificated instructional staff responses down further by their demographic data, with notable differences in preferences for different compensation elements by race and ethnicity, age, years of experience and levels of education.

Classified employees were asked similar questions as certificated employees with some appropriate rewording and with exceptions for questions related to individual student achievement gains. Currently classified employees are not included on the salary allocation model, but are paid through a single allocation from the state. Some local school districts have developed salary allocation models for certain classified employee groups which recognize longevity, educational levels, additional certifications and leadership roles.

Among classified employees, all compensation elements were strongly favored including:

- Occupational expertise
- Years of Experience
- School wide gains in student achievement
- Credits and clock hours
- Additional college credits or degrees
- Successful annual performance evaluations
- Leadership roles

## Stakeholder Panels and Presentations

The Compensation Technical Working Group convened several stakeholder panels in order to gather more feedback. The human resource professional's panel included business and human resource officers from school districts regionally distributed around the state. The community and family panel included representatives from the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, the WA PTA, the Commissions on African-American, Asian Pacific American and Hispanic Affairs and the Office of the Education Ombudsman.

### Human Resource Professionals in Public Education Panel

#### Hard to Fill Definition:

Teacher shortage areas have been identified by the Professional Educator Standards Board through survey and self-reported data from school districts. The PESB recognizes this isn't the most reliable data. Some of the data may be due to poor recruitment and retention practices, as well as some out-of-field placements due to the recession.

Shortage areas are identified by supply and demand and regional markets around the state, which can be defined both geographically and through the proximity of other school districts that compete for teachers (based on levy funding, grandfathered salary allocations, professional development and other benefits offered by competing districts).

### **Hard to Fill Positions:**

There was consensus from the panel that some Educational Staff Associate positions, including psychologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech language pathologists/audiologists and nurses are hard to fill. This is due in part to only receiving credit for 2 years of prior private sector experience, as well as the working conditions, lack of competitive wages with private sector positions and schedule flexibility. Classified positions that are hard to fill include HVAC technicians, instructional technology supervisors, and HR administrators.

Hard to fill subjects were identified to include special education, science and math, career and technical education, and ELL/Bilingual endorsed teachers. Hard to fill schools were discussed with agreement that schools that qualify for Title I funding and have higher percentages of poverty are often hard to fill within a school district.

### **TRI Contracts:**

The panel discussed the implications of TRI (time, responsibility and incentive) contracts for attracting and retaining employees. Due to the different abilities to pay additional contracts due to levies, neighboring school districts can compete for teachers through salaries along with non-monetary factors. The inequitable ability to pay TRI contracts results in regional labor markets based on the levy funding of school districts.

Supplemental contracts also pay for many functions and responsibilities that are part of basic education, including serving in leadership and mentoring roles. Some school districts are using TRI to make up the cost of living adjustments (COLA) that were cut, as well to backfill the lack of state funding. The group discussed that local levy dollars should be used for locally determined outcomes and purposes, not basic education functions. The regional variations in pay are amplified with TRI contracts that are added on top of the base salary, leading to wide distributions of pay levels regionally for the same work.

### **Regional Markets:**

Regional labor markets within the state were discussed, defined by geographic areas, school district levy levels and cultural/social amenities. While the cost of living in metropolitan areas is high, rural areas have increased transportation costs to access services, such as medical care. The panel does not see much movement from Eastern to Western Washington, but more movement in easily commutable areas, such as from Seattle to Everett.

### **Recruitment and Retention:**

Another area of concern was the recruitment and retention of educators of color, with consensus that the staff in schools does not usually mirror the demographics of the students. The panel discussed strategies to address this issue, including recruiting from other states, trying to provide community supports and other supports within the school district.

### **Salary Allocation Model Recommendations:**

The panel discussed several options for the salary allocation model, including the creation of a career ladder, with job enlargement elements that recognize the role of mentoring or leadership roles and assuming additional responsibilities. Additionally, the expectation of continued professional development was discussed, with references to the Teacher and Principal Evaluation Pilot (TPEP) and the expectations for continuing professional development, evaluation and reflection.

For ESA positions, putting different positions at different funding levels was discussed in order to address shortage areas, although the panel felt that it would be difficult to manage it at district levels in local bargaining and through a model.

## **Community and Family Panel**

The Community and Family Panel discussed how to attract and retain high-quality educators, particularly diverse educators who mirror the ethnic and racial demographics of our state. Several concerns about the retention of educators of color were expressed, including the difficulty of being a minority in a school of white educators, especially when the community surrounding the school may not be culturally responsive, and the obstacles encountered when the school environment may not be culturally competent. Additionally, the educational opportunity gap (also referred to as the achievement gap) affects the pipeline of college students of color and the supply of educators of color. The panel voiced that many potential educators are not attracted to the profession due to low levels of pay, lack of respect and prestige for the profession, and the need for first generation college graduates to be financially successful. The panel agreed that compensation was only one aspect of the attraction and retention of educators of color.

### **Human Resources and Recruitment Issues:**

The panel discussed the interview process, suggesting that partnering with community organizations might help educators of color feel more supported. The panel also suggested that screening tools that give points for bicultural experiences or other aspects of an applicant's experience that are not traditionally accounted for in an interview be used. The panel also discussed pre-service issues, including the need for evening classes for working professionals and that the endorsement and basic skills test

requirements (WEST B and WEST E) may serve as potential barriers for some educators of color entering the profession.

**Compensation Strategies:**

A competitive comparable salary was offered as the first priority for educators. Several other options for compensation were proposed by the panel, including providing stipends for educators who:

- 1) provide needed bilingual services;
- 2) participate on behalf of the school in community groups; or
- 3) serve as advisors for clubs that increase academic achievement.

Additionally, resources for professional development, professional collaboration, mentoring for beginning educators, and increased leadership opportunities were discussed. The panel also recommended grants or scholarships to cultivate more qualified applicants, as well as loan forgiveness for teaching in Title I schools. Housing allowances and additional resources for the classroom were also suggested as alternative educator compensation.