

Teacher Incentive Fund Evaluation

Award Structure and Payout Data Collection

Purpose and Notes:

In order to best describe TIF programs it is essential to understand the incentive structure and payout for each grantee. Because each TIF program has a unique design to best meet the needs of the grantee, the structure and criteria as well as the actual payout can be quite complicated. In our interviews we will be discussing the specific components and their implementation and also asking about the potential as well as actual payouts. Through our pilot interviews and discussions with the TIF Program Office at the Department of Education we learned that the least burdensome and most accurate way to obtain this type of program-specific information is to request a raw datafile from each program office. A request will be sent to each grantee's program director in advance of our interviews and site visits. In the event that a grantee cannot provide a file or what they provide is insufficient, we will follow-up with the attached form.

Data Request Letter

At least one week prior to conducting interviews or site visits with TIF Project Directors, researchers will ask them to provide detailed program information in regards to the number and amount of incentives paid out in the form of a spreadsheet. This will eliminate the need for grantees themselves to compile detailed summary data on their most recent payouts while also providing us necessary data to best understand the implementation. We will request that datafiles be stripped of all identifying information. Prior to the interviews the researcher will familiarize themselves with this payout data along with other extant documentation to verify information and then use the interview time to clarify rather than duplicate previous efforts. A sample letter is attached. Researchers will customize the letter for each recipient

(Only when necessary) Award Structure and Payout Form

In the event that the grantee is unable to provide a spreadsheet or other type or raw data relating to their award payouts with sufficient detail for analysis, this form will be used. This form will need to be CUSTOMIZED for each program in advance, based on the information about the award structure that is available in existing documents (such as the grantee proposal, APR, etc.). Researchers will complete Section I (potential incentive payments) based on available documents. Researchers will then customize row headings for Section II based on the award structure as they understand it and send the customized form to the grantee project director. Project directors will verify and/or correct information in Section I to ensure an accurate description of their award structure. Project directors will then complete Section II based on their most recent award payouts.

Data Request Letter

Dear Project Director,

We are looking forward to talking with you next week about TIF. One purpose of this study is to document components of pay for performance plans in TIF supported programs. In order to make the best use of your time, we are requesting some data in advance of our discussion.

We need to capture detailed information about the structure of your TIF incentive program and about the incentives paid during your most recent round of awards. Please send us a spreadsheet or datafile reflecting your most recent payout. In preparing a datafile with this information, **please remove all identifying information for schools, principals, and teachers and assign each a unique identifier.** The file should include a record for each **eligible** individual (whether they earned an award or not or even if they opted out of the program altogether). The file should include columns for each possible award category (for some grantees, this may be a dozen or more columns) indicating the type of award and amount. The rows should list each individual **eligible** for the award and the school site with which s/he is associated. Here is a sample of what such a file may look like:

			Group Awards	Individual Awards			Total
School	Job Title	Participates In TIF	Please specify	Please specify	Please specify	Please specify	
School A	Teacher A1	Yes					
School A	Teacher A2	No					
School A	Other Staff A1	Yes					
School B	Principal	Yes					
School B	Teacher B1	No					

Once we receive this file and review the data along with the existing documentation you provided the Department of Education, we will be able to make the best use of our interview time. During our interview we may ask you clarifying questions based on the information you send us, but we have learned that simply having this information in advance leads to a much more efficient discussion. In addition, please provide us with the total number of eligible schools, principals and teachers covered by your program as well as the average teacher salary in your district(s).

The information that is collected for this study will be used only for research purposes and information will not be provided that identifies you or your district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law. Reports prepared for the Department of Education will summarize findings across the sample of TIF supported programs, schools, and districts, and will not associate responses with a specific program, district, school or individual. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Daniel Humphrey, Principal Investigator

(AS NEEDED) Award Structure and Payout Form—SAMPLE FORM

Dear Project Director,

The form below is designed to capture detailed information about the structure of your TIF incentive program and information about the incentives paid during your most recent round of awards. A researcher has completed the first section of the form, describing the structure of your incentive program, from existing documentation you provided to the Department of Education. Because your program may have changed since the most recent documents we have received and to ensure we have correctly interpreted the documents, we would like you to verify the data in Section I of the form. Then please complete Section II of the form and return the form to [researcher name] at [researcher e-mail address] prior to your interview. We have found that this will enable our conversation to be more productive and efficient.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Daniel Humphrey, Principal Investigator

Section I: Possible incentive payments

Instructions: Verify the information in the tables below to describe *potential* educator incentive payments under your TIF program.

Definitions

- **Activity/Accomplishment Rewarded**—These are the activities or accomplishments rewarded (e.g., growth in student achievement, teacher evaluation rating, becoming a mentor, being a National Board Certified Teacher).
- **Award range**—If there is one rate of incentive, we indicated that level in the award range. If the amount of the award varies, we indicated the minimum and maximum amount of the award.
- **Job title**—Lists the job title (e.g., administrator, teacher, other) eligible for this particular incentive.
- **TIF funded**—Indicates (yes/no) whether funding for this award comes from your TIF grant or matching funds (e.g., if you award incentives to paraprofessionals or non-instructional staff and do not use TIF funds to cover those incentives, we indicated “no”).

1. **One-time individual incentives**—these are incentives individuals can receive for specific actions or accomplishments (e.g., a signing incentive, an incentive for achieving a desired credential) that are awarded to a given individual one time only.

Activity/Accomplishment Rewarded	Award Range	Job Title	TIF funded? (Yes/No)

2. School wide incentives—these are incentives awarded at the school level, where every teacher participating in your TIF program gets the same amount of incentive awarded. If principals are awarded for achievement of schoolwide indicators (e.g., reaching a schoolwide student proficiency target on state tests), those incentives are listed here.

Activity/Accomplishment Rewarded	Award Range	Job Title	TIF funded? (Yes/No)

3. Individual incentives—these are incentives where participating teachers or administrators within the same school may receive different incentives or incentive amounts (e.g., if teachers receive awards based on the achievement of their students, their participation in professional development, or their scores on teacher evaluations one teacher might receive a larger incentive than another teacher).

Activity/Accomplishment Rewarded	Award Range	Job Title	TIF funded? (Yes/No)

Based on the Tables 2 and 3 above (not including one-time incentives), we calculated the minimum and maximum possible incentive educators could receive (if they received an award at all; i.e. the minimum should not be “\$0”).

	Minimum	Maximum
Principals		
Teachers		
Others (specify)		

Section II: Actual incentive payments

Use the tables in this section to report on *actual* incentive payments made in the last year for which payments have been completed.

- The first table asks you to describe the payments for each activity/accomplishment where educators can earn an incentive and the proportion of participating teachers who earned each type of incentive. (We define “participating” teachers as those who were eligible to earn a incentive. If your TIF program has a feature where teachers or schools could ‘opt out’ of participation, do not include teachers or schools that opted out in the denominator when calculating the proportion of educators who received the award.)
- The second table asks you to describe the total incentives earned by educators and the proportion of participating educators who earned a incentive of any size.

1. What school year did your most recent round of incentive payments cover?

2. Please use the table below to report actual payments in your most recent year of incentive payments. We have completed the first three columns for you.

Activity/Accomplishment Rewarded	Job Title	Award Type*	Range PAID	Average PAID	Percent Receiving**

* one-time, schoolwide, individual

** indicate the percent of eligible participants who received the award

3. Use the table below to report the total actual payments and the percent of participants receiving at least some incentive payment in your most recent year of incentive payments.

Job Title	Minimum PAID	Maximum PAID	Average PAID	Percent receiving some incentive award
Teacher				
Principal				