

Responses to Questions Raised During and After the
November 19 Special Called Meeting

In response to questions raised during and after the November 19th special called meeting, we have provided some clarifying information. The questions are in bold below with answers immediately following.

With direct pay, how does that work for the employee? Does the employee receive the check from Mathematica?

Teachers will receive a check directly from Mathematica. Prior to the beginning of the school year, we will obtain a mailing address for participating teachers. The incentive checks will be sent to the mailing address provided by each teacher.

Are we sure that there will be no tax liabilities for the employee?

The incentive check is treated as income for purposes of taxes, so teachers will be responsible for paying taxes on the incentive amount.

Is this paid in one lump sum? Is it paid incrementally throughout the year?

Teachers receive their incentive payments in increments at various points during the two-year period. Below is an approximate timeline for distributing incentives to teachers who agree to transfer to a low-performing school (recruitment incentive) and to teachers who are already teaching in a low-performing school (retention incentive):

Approximate Timeline	Recruitment Incentive	Retention Incentive
September 2009	\$2,500	-
Mid-December 2009	\$2,500	\$2,500
May 2010	\$5,000	\$2,500
Mid-December 2010	\$5,000	\$2,500
May 2011	\$5,000	\$2,500
Total	\$20,000	\$10,000

Since this is “Mathematica” and the focus is on math scores, why does the material speak to reading and math in the identification of teachers?

Although its name sounds as if its focused on math, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) is a public policy research organization that conducts program evaluations in education and other areas and is not connected in any way to a math program or intervention. To clarify, the Moving Teachers program is an initiative of the U.S. Department of Education, and MPR is under contract to evaluate the program and is teamed with The New Teacher Project (www.tntp.org) based in New York to assist districts with implementing the program. The program is focused on student achievement in both reading and math.

Since elementary teachers are more generalists, should we be looking at both reading and math scores for identifying the teachers? Or should this focus on the middle grades only?

The program can include three groups of teachers: (1) elementary teachers, (2) middle school math teachers, and (3) middle school language arts/reading teachers. Since elementary teachers in self-contained classrooms teach reading and math, we will use both reading and math scores to identify high-performing teachers at the elementary level. At the middle school level, assuming teachers are not in self-contained classrooms, will use math scores to identify high-performing math teachers, and reading/language arts scores to identify high-performing reading/language arts teachers.

What will be done to support these teachers? Will they have a mentor or some support system?

The New Teacher Project (TNTP) will provide support to teachers participating in the program. TNTP has extensive experience working with teachers in low-performing schools and can access a range of valuable resources for teachers. A site manager from TNTP will implement the program in Guilford County, and this person will be responsible for supporting teachers during the year.

TNTP will provide two types of support for teachers who participate in the program. First, participating teachers will attend an orientation session at the beginning of the school year conducted by TNTP. The session will prepare teachers for their transition to a low-performing school by facilitating discussions about the challenges of teaching in a low-performing school, effective teaching practices in low-performing schools, and strategies for integrating into their new schools. Second, the TNTP site manager will be available for teachers who are struggling or need assistance in their teaching placements. Participating teachers can contact the staff person by phone or email to raise any concerns. The New Teacher Project will support these teachers by linking them with resources to address their issue. If several teachers need support with a particular aspect of teaching, TNTP will hold a training session or workshop that covers this topic. Since participating teachers will have at least three years of experience, the program is designed to provide support that is responsive to their needs.

What has the Mathematica organization done prior to this project? What other research has been accomplished and what were the results?

Mathematica Policy Research (MPR) provided the following response: MPR is a nationally recognized research and data collection firm with more than 40 years of experience conducting large-scale, rigorous evaluation studies. Our expertise is in designing demonstrations and experiments, evaluating the impacts of programs, assessing implementation, and effectively communicating research findings. MPR's portfolio includes a variety of rigorous studies for the U.S. Department of Education that measure the impact of educational interventions such as comprehensive teacher induction, alternative teacher preparation routes, math curricula, reading comprehension strategies, 21st Century Community Learning Centers (afterschool programs), dropout prevention, and educational technology. For example, we are

conducting an evaluation of teacher induction models in over 400 schools in 17 large, high-poverty districts, and a study of four elementary math curricula in more than 100 schools across the country.

Mathematica has also conducted national studies of Teach for America, Job Corps, Early Head Start, and Early Reading First. MPR is also spearheading the What Works Clearinghouse for the U.S. Department of Education (ED), a project housed in MPR's Center for the Improvement of Research in Education (CIRE), and is the technical assistance provider to ED's regional education laboratories.

Our work in the area of teacher incentives includes evaluations of Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) programs in three urban districts (Memphis, Chicago, and DC) and a statewide career ladder program in Missouri, as well as an exploratory study of existing teacher compensation programs across the country. We are currently piloting the Moving Teachers program in Charlotte, NC, where participating teachers are in their first year of the program, teaching at low-performing schools. The website for this pilot, called Project RISE, is www.cmsprojectrise.org. To learn more about our work conducting research in the field of education, you can visit our website at www.mathematica-mpr.com/education. MPR's many research publications can also be accessed at that website, demonstrating the results of our work in education and other fields over the years.