Tying Teacher Compensation to A Career Ladder: The Baltimore Experience
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Expert Presenters:

Julie Oxenhandler, teacher, Baltimore public schools

Anthony Milanowski, senior study director, Westat

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CLIMBING THE LADDER

Baltimore teachers can advance up the pay ladder by collecting achievement units, or by completing specific, peer-reviewed projects.

ACHIEVEMENTS

1-3 achievement units can be obtained by:
- Attending professional development
- Contributing to student learning, such as running after-school programs
- Contributing to the district, such as writing curricula
- Contributing to colleagues, such as mentoring or coaching them

3-12 achievement units can be obtained through:
- Earning an evaluation score of “developing” or higher.

Moving 1 interval = 12 achievement units
JULIE OXENHANDLER
TEACHER, BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Career Ladders the Second Time Around

Anthony Milanowski
Westat
Career Ladders in the 80’s and 90’s

• “The largest pay reform since the creation of [state] minimum salary schedules”
  – Reward high performing teachers with increased responsibility, status, and pay
  – Provide career advancement without having to leave the classroom

• At one time 8 states in the South and West supported career ladders
Interest Receded by the Late 90’s

• State funding issues
• Evolution from performance to PD
• Little or no evidence of positive effects
  – Retention
  – Instruction
  – Student achievement
• A new agenda: standards-based reform, school-based accountability, and emphasis on results
Why Career Ladders Now?

Renewed Interest in Teacher Leadership

Recognize & Reward Performance

Guide & Reward Skill Development

Dissatisfaction with Experience/ Credits as the Basis for Pay Progression
What’s Different About Career Ladders Today?

• More levels

• More varied bases of progression
  – Responsibilities
  – Performance
  – Skill progression
  – Experience

• Integrated into a new salary schedule rather than overlaid on the traditional schedule
Career Ladder Theory of Action

Career Ladder
• Teacher leader roles & opportunities
• Defined skill progression
• Recognition
• Compensation

Intermediate Outcomes
• Highly effective teachers take leader roles
• Retention of highly effective teachers
• Teacher leaders work on instruction with peers
• Teachers motivated to develop skills
• Promising new teachers attracted & retained

Long Term Outcomes
• Improved Instruction
• Improved student achievement
Questions to Ask About Career Ladders

• Are highly effective teachers:
  – Applying for leader positions?
  – Being retained?
  – Working with colleagues on instruction or related activities?

• Are other teachers pursuing PD opportunities related to skill progressions?

• Do job candidates perceive the career ladder as a reason to join the district?

• Are effective new teachers being attracted & retained?

• Are schools with more upward movement and more teacher leaders improving faster?
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