

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT IN INCENTIVE GRANT
SCHOOLS

by

William J. Crowder, Jr.

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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APPROVED BY:

Russell L. Claxton, Ed.D., Committee Chair

Craig B. Bailey, Ed.D., Committee Member

Wendy C. Krickovic, Ed.D., Committee Member

Scott B. Watson, Ph.D., Associate Dean of Advanced Programs

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate teachers' perceptions of administrative support in incentive grant schools. The primary objective of this study is to determine the effect of participation in an incentive grant on the perceived level of administrative support. The research questions were as follows: 1. Do teachers who are participating in an incentive grant program perceive they have greater support from their supervising administrator than the teachers who are not participating in the incentive grant program within the same secondary schools? 2. Do teachers who have 10 or more years of experience who are participating in an incentive grant program perceive they have greater support from their supervising administrator than teachers who have less than 10 years of experience who are also participating in the incentive grant program within the same secondary schools? 3. Do teachers who have 10 or more years of experience who are participating in an incentive grant program perceive they have greater support from their supervising administrator than teachers who have less than 10 years of experience who are not participating in the incentive grant program within the same secondary schools? The study employed a causal-comparative design, which was measured by using a survey titled *Teachers' Perceptions of Administrative Support*, in which 175 teachers were surveyed at secondary schools in a school district in Central Virginia; non-incentive grant teachers being the control group. The study showed that there was not a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of administrative support between incentive and non-incentive grant teachers. Furthermore, there were significant statistical differences in relation to longevity of teachers in the study schools.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this manuscript in memory of my dad, William (Bill) J. Crowder, Sr., who passed away during the middle of my dissertation process. He taught me to always work hard and to persevere. He has made me into the person I am today and continues to push me each and every day in spirit.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Community Training and Assistance Center	(CTAC)
Department of Education	(DOE)
Individual Education Plans	(IEP)
Institutional Review Board	(IRB)
Northwest Evaluation Association	(NWEA)
Professional Growth Evaluation Process	(PGEP)
Professional Qualities & Responsibilities	(PQR)
Virginia Department of Education	(VDOE)
Virginia Performance Pay Incentives	(VPPI)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background

Human success in any field is difficult to predict through theories and models; however, theories and models can serve as a framework to explain the relationship between various issues. The framework that has been utilized over the years in teacher incentive grants was woven from several motivational theories, which extend to either content or process theories. Lunenburg and Ornstein (2004) state that content theories focus on the precepts that stimulate human behavior. In addition, process theories are concerned with the conditions under which motivation occurs (Hodge, 2003).

The motivational models that are used for teacher incentive grants can be used for administrators as well. This theoretical framework would be similar in nature where teachers and administrators work in the same setting and ultimately share the same goals in regards to student achievement. In addition, administrator efforts are motivated by the academic success of students. Motivational theory is a theory that relies on a humanistic approach. Therefore, in terms of compensation or rewards, administrators are identical to teachers in reaching goals based on certain criteria set forward.

Three motivational concepts to identify growth in the clinical observation process will be used as the theoretical framework for this study. Each theory is addressed below, in the discussion of different philosophers' theories in the areas of expectancy, goal setting, and agency. While these theories are similar, there are also distinctions that allow for unique perspectives in the educational arena. Motivation is not a new concept in the area of academia or any other business or enterprise. Vroom developed the expectancy theory in 1964. Using his expectancy theory, Vroom tries to explain why individuals choose certain courses of action in

the leadership field. His theory is based upon valence, expectancy, and instrumentality (Lee, 2007). “Though expectancy theory has its critics, it has generally developed results that indicate it is currently the clearest and most accurate explanation of individual motivation” (Robbins, 1983, p.152).

Within an education system, the state departments of education are continuously setting goals for teachers as well as students. Locke’s and Latham’s goal setting theory states that individuals who set goals can better discern how best to reach those goals and are inclined to strive harder to do so (Eikenberg, 2007). Goal setting theory postulates that individuals will receive compensation for reaching the goals or targets for which they are striving. Additionally, Locke and Latham discuss five components of their motivational model, which include self-efficacy, moderators, mediators, performance, and satisfaction. Self-efficacy is the relationship between how a leader feels about him or herself and that leader’s confidence that he or she will achieve the goal at hand. Moderation entails analyzing the strength of the relationship between goals and performance. Mediators serve as the task strategy to support the achievement goals. Performance has the potential to be high when challenging goals have been set and moderators and mediators are present. It is of the utmost importance to set goals that are attainable so that employees may enjoy the satisfaction of their performance. Setting goals too high can result in an employee having little to no satisfaction, which is the final component of Locke’s and Latham’s theory (Eikenberg, 2007).

In a teacher incentive grant program, the agency theory is a useful theoretical framework in relation to pay-performance relationships. Ross originally developed the theory with businesses and industry in mind and explained how to best organize relationships in which the manager determined and delegated the work. According to Eikenberg’s application of the

agency theory to the academic realm, "...adverse selection would emerge if the superintendent could not determine if the school principal had accurately represented his or her ability to successfully lead the campus" (Eikenberg, 2007, p.18). Moral hazard could then exist if the superintendent was not able to identify whether the principal had put forth maximum effort (Eikenberg, 2007).

Problem Statement

With the recent influx of school systems employing an incentive-based approach, more research is needed to analyze perceived support in regards to administrator performance in an incentive based school. Effective schools are characterized by effective administrators (Deckard, 1986). "The desire, then, of local school boards to improve administrator performance has emerged, based upon the assumption that as building principal performance improves, so does teacher performance, and ultimately, student performance" (Deckard, 1986, p.4). While there is empirical data available related to teacher incentive grants and merit pay, there is a lack of data and research concerning effectiveness of administrators within an incentive based school. Within the scope of incentive grants, data was collected to determine the effect of participation in an incentive grant on the perceived level of support provided by a teachers' supervising administrator.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to examine whether teachers perceive more administrative support while participating in an incentive grant program. The incentive program, the LLIGP, is a newly enacted incentive grant program. While incentive pay is frequently employed in corporate and industrial positions, the concept in the field of educational administration is relatively new. However, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Board of Education is currently

considering incentive pay for all employees, not just administrators. If this were to happen, the change in how teachers are compensated could change education throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

While incentive pay programs are new to Virginia, there have been several incentive grant programs that have been explored. While these programs are not identical to incentive pay systems, they are very similar. One example comes from a large school system in Central Virginia that was recently awarded a \$16.5 million grant starting in the 2010-2011 school year. The LLIGP implements Charlotte Danielson's framework in regard to the teacher observation process. Danielson's framework focuses on several different domains including: classroom environment, communicating with students, using questioning and discussion techniques, discussion techniques, and engaging students in learning (Danielson, 2011). Each domain is measured by a rubric in which teachers are rated by their observing administrator. The "observable" domain is obtained through a self-assessment by the teacher at the beginning of the school year and a meeting with his/her observing administrator. At this time, multiple domains may be selected for the current school year. The grant, in accordance with Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC) guidelines, was awarded on the basis of rewarding teachers and administrators at schools in which teacher and administrator retention is difficult and where such schools are generally labeled, "hard-to-staff." Before this program was enacted, research had been conducted to see what types of programs could be successfully implemented at such schools in order to improve staff retention. Based on the data collected, officials decided that the incentive grant would be disseminated over a five year period. During this time, teachers would have the opportunity to earn an extra \$8,000 annually, and administrators could earn an extra \$10,000 annually.

Similar to other incentive pay designs, participating teachers and administrators must show that their students have reached specific student performance levels in order to receive all or a portion of the incentive grant. Teachers are scored and rated by their administrators based on student performance and by classroom observation data collected during the school year. Administrators are scored and rated by central office personnel according to similar standards. Administrators are rated by the success of the teachers they supervise to assist their students in reaching target goals, as well as their performance on observing teachers.

The LLIGP implementation began with funding from both the federal government as well as the local school system. The school district paid \$327,024 through the first two years of the grant for funds and in-kind services.

In addition the district is committing to increasing funding for the initiative. In years one and two, 100% of the incentive compensation will be requested from grant funds. In year three, the school district will commit funds in the budget to pay for 25% of the incentive compensation with the grant award paying for 75%. In year four, the school division will pay 50% of the incentive compensation with 50% being requested from grant funding. In the fifth and final year of the grant, the school district will pay 75 % of the incentive compensation with 25% being requested from the grant award (Virginia Department of Education, 2011b, p. 47).

This shifting of financial responsibility to the school district will initiate the expansion and sustainment of the performance-based compensation plan in the district. Over the five year period, the school district will spend \$5,620,650 towards the program for their teachers and administrators; with the federal government funding \$16,502,222 for a total of \$22,128,873.

The theory behind the LLIGP and similar programs is that motivating teachers and administrators with financial rewards based on individual performance will improve the quality of students' educational experience. The ultimate goal of the LLIGP is to improve student achievement through performance accountability systems for teachers and administrators. The LLIGP provides a unique opportunity to analyze administrators' support in incentive grant schools for all teachers (incentive grant and non-incentive grant), based upon perceptions of teachers as measured by Weiss' (2001) perception survey.

Significance of the Study

Merit pay and incentive pay has been implemented for years in the areas of business and industry, and has been studied extensively. However, there is little research concerning the effect of merit pay or incentive pay in educational administration. "...Although there is considerable interest in merit pay for public school administrators, the knowledge about this process is limited (Schroeder, 1989, p. 1). Very few reports or studies have indicated a significant difference between teacher performance in a teacher incentive grant school system or district, though several studies have been conducted. Additionally, there is less research concerning the effect of administrator support, which is ironic, given that "...if the principal plays such an important role in the quality of each school, then the evaluation of the principal is of the utmost importance" (Krompasky, 1995). Within administrator grant programs, additional research is needed to determine if teachers receive more support from administrators as a result of participation in an incentive grant. The administrators who are not part of the grant program will continue to use the school system's Professional Growth and Evaluation Plan (PGEP) and Professional Qualities & Responsibilities (PQR) expectations. With the increasing popularity of

incentive grants, it is important to determine whether the incentive grant process is improving administrators' effectiveness in regards to teacher support.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The primary objective of this study is to examine the effect that participation in an incentive grant has on the perceived level of support provided to teachers by a supervising administrator. In order to study the primary question, several research questions have been developed in relation to secondary schools that are participating in the grant.

Research Question 1: Do teachers who are participating in an incentive grant program perceive they have greater support from their supervising administrator than the teachers who are not participating in the incentive grant program within the same secondary schools?

Null Hypothesis 1: There will be no statistically significant difference between the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of an incentive grant teacher and the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of a non-incentive grant teacher within the same secondary schools.

Research Question 2: Do teachers who have 10 or more years of experience who are participating in an incentive grant program perceive they have greater support from their supervising administrator than teachers who have less than 10 years of experience who are also participating in the incentive grant program within the same secondary schools?

Null Hypothesis 2: There will be no statistically significant difference between the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of an incentive grant teacher who has 10 or more years of experience and the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of an incentive grant teacher who has less than 10 years of experience within the same secondary schools.

Research Question 3: Do teachers who have 10 or more years of experience who are participating in an incentive grant program perceive they have greater support from their supervising administrator than teachers who have less than 10 years of experience who are not participating in the incentive grant program within the same secondary schools?

Null Hypothesis 3: There will be no statistically significant difference between the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of an incentive grant teacher who has 10 or more years of experience and the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of a non-incentive grant teacher who has less than 10 years of experience within the same secondary schools.

Overview of the Methodology

The subjects in this study were core content teachers, special education teachers, and elective teachers (one middle school and one high school) in a school system in Central Virginia, that are incentive based schools. The teachers surveyed were from two schools within a 10 mile radius. Both schools in the study have demographically similar student populations to include socioeconomic status as measured by free and reduced lunch participants.

The teachers who were surveyed in the study had varying backgrounds and various years of experience teaching. In addition, teachers were selected from the following content areas: English, science, social studies, mathematics, special education, and all elective categories. The teachers may or may not have previously worked in an incentive grant school. Furthermore, all teachers were certified in their respective contents, and taught in similar environments with respect to student demographics and dynamics. The same rationale exists with respect to the administrators who supervise the teachers. The variety of experiences, both

on the part of teachers and administrators, must necessarily exist in all school systems, and therefore, that variety is not likely to have had a disproportionate impact on this study.

The groups of teachers were compiled based on whether they were an incentive grant teacher or a non-incentive grant teacher. The study included approximately 100 teachers in Central Virginia schools that participated in an incentive grant program and approximately 75 teachers in the same schools that were not eligible to participate in an incentive grant program.

This study employed a non-experimental causal-comparative design involving a non-experimental investigation seeking to determine whether a distinction exists between the perceptions of two groups of teachers (teachers who are eligible for an incentive grant versus teachers who are not eligible for an incentive grant within the same schools) in relation to administrative support of their supervising administrator. Further information regarding the research methodology is discussed and analyzed in Chapter Three.

Definitions

Agency Theory: Ross' theory (1973) alludes to a business management context concerning employer-employee interactions. This theory is clearly implicated when employees are on a fixed salary scale that does little to encourage productivity.

Clinical Observation Cycle (Formal): A full observation cycle of a teacher, which includes a pre-conference meeting to discuss the Professional Qualities & Instructional Responsibilities (PQR) guidelines or rubric focus, a 45-60 minute observation, and a post-observation conference to discuss the observation, commendations, and recommendations for improvement.

Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC): The organization that assisted in writing the LLIGP application for the school system in this study.

Continuing Contract Teacher: A continuing contract teacher is a teacher who has successfully completed a three year probationary period and is now considered a tenured teacher in his/her particular district.

Danielson Framework: A framework created by Charlotte Danielson in which the active teacher incentive grant administrators score teachers based on the domains and rubrics created therein (Danielson, 2011).

Expectancy Theory: Vroom postulated the expectancy theory (1964), which discussed individuals' tendencies to strive to achieve more in their work if there was a goal or reward attainable as a result of the work performed.

Goal Setting Theory: Locke and Latham proposed the goal setting theory (1995), which was rooted in the notion that goals motivate workers to reach higher levels of commitment and job satisfaction. Under this theory, educators are more likely to achieve the goals set with a reward involved.

Informal Observation: An observation that does not require a pre-conference or post-conference. An informal observation is normally shorter than a formal observation (about 30-45 minutes) and focuses on predetermined criteria discussed at the beginning of the school year. These criteria can also be modified throughout the school year to change the focus.

LLIGP: The official name of the incentive grant program in which a school system in Central Virginia is participating. The goal of the LLIGP is to improve teacher and administrator retention by providing additional guidance and oversight, and by encouraging and rewarding teachers' and administrators' professional growth using a merit-based financial incentive and student success.

Merit Pay: Merit pay describes the compensation an employee earns based on his or her performance. Those who perform better obtain more compensation than those employees who do not achieve acceptable results.

PGEP: Professional Growth & Evaluation Process set forward by a school system in Central Virginia. The PGEP process is the evaluation process in which all teachers are rated based on their clinical observations, observational reports, walkthrough data, and all other professional responsibilities.

Post-Observation Conference: A conference held between a teacher and an administrator after a formal observation has been completed. This conference is a time for reflection and discussion based upon the observation data that was collected. Future steps for professional growth during the school year are also discussed at this time.

PQR: Professional Qualities & Instructional Responsibilities are the criteria set forth within the PGEP process. Teachers select one or more PQR foci for the school year, and their administrators may select an additional a focus for the teacher. Each PQR relates to a specific aspect of professional responsibilities. All teachers are required to meet all PQRs, but select a particular focus each year.

Pre-Observation Conference: A conference held between a teacher and an administrator prior to a formal observation. This conference includes a discussion of the data to be gathered during the observation process.

Probationary Teachers: A probationary teacher is a new teacher who has fewer than three years of teaching experience. A veteran teacher who is new to a school division is also considered probationary for the initial year of teaching in that division. Upon positive evaluations, a

probationary teacher will become a continuing contracted teacher at the start of his/her fourth year.

Self-Efficacy: An individual's belief in his or her ability to succeed in any specific situation.

Self-efficacy affects how one approaches situations and sets goals.

Teacher Incentive Grant: A teacher incentive grant is a form of merit pay in the educational system. Teachers and administrators can earn additional compensation based on goals that they reach throughout the school year.

Walkthrough Observation: A walkthrough observation typically is a 5-10 minute observation in which the observer takes away a brief "snapshot" of the classroom environment.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Financial gain in a workplace is the single most important factor for attracting and retaining successful employees (Sessions, 1996). An increasing number of college students choose to pursue degrees in the realm of business and industry, in lieu of education, because they believe degrees in business and industry will yield more financially lucrative career options (Sessions, 1996). From 1998-2009, the number of bachelor's degrees awarded in the field of business was continually on the rise, whereas there was a slight decrease in the number of bachelor's degrees awarded in education during the same period of time (United States Department of Education, 2010). This is an alarming statistic, especially in light of the rapid growth of bachelor's degrees awarded in recent years.

In a study completed by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Educational Statistics, there was a vast discrepancy in the salaries of education and business majors. The study compared the salaries of students one year after graduating in the spring of 2000. Overall, business majors took less time to complete their degrees and earned more money. 28.2% of business majors completed their bachelor's degrees in four years or less, while only 25.6% of education majors accomplished the same feat (Snyder & Dillow, 2011). In addition, the average salary of business majors that year was \$41,008, whereas education majors earned on average \$27,634. The average annual salary for all fields in that year was \$35,408. Only 10.9% of all education majors made more than \$35,000 in 2001, whereas 61.9% of business majors made more than \$35,000 (Snyder & Dillow, 2011). From 1991 – 2001, the salaries of educators increased by 11.2%. During the same time period, the salaries of business and management

personnel increased by 27.6%. Within all fields, there was a 15.4% increase in salary (Snyder & Dillow, 2011).

Although many individuals who have careers in education may claim that they did not choose to pursue careers in education based upon their anticipated financial gain, financial gain plays a vital role in employee satisfaction and commitment (Snyder & Dillow, 2011). In Central Virginia, the LLIGP initiative is a pilot grant that is underway in eight (8) schools that have been deemed “hard-to-staff” as outlined in Chapter One. With this particular initiative, eighty-seven (87) teachers and principals gathered in July, 2009 to discuss the details of an incentive plan that would attract and retain teachers and administrators at the most challenging schools (U.S. DOE, 2010).

Within the discussion, three themes evolved, which were aimed at developing an appropriate measure for student growth, an enriching environment, and teachers’ personal ownership over the instructional process. Specifically, teachers wanted a measure that showed student growth beyond the state-mandated test. Teachers did not believe their grants should be based on one standardized test (U.S. DOE, 2010). Further, teachers felt that the incentive should be based on instructional expertise and the model they set forth within their individual classrooms. Teachers who created an environment suitable for teaching and learning would be rewarded under this particular theme (U.S. DOE, 2010). Finally, teachers wanted to be able to be a part of the leadership role, taking an active part in developing the instructional program (U.S. DOE, 2010).

This review of literature encompasses several different scenarios within the scope of the study, and focuses on the following themes: theoretical framework; historical compensation development and incentive pay evolution; performance pay for public schools in Virginia;

performance pay for public schools outside of Virginia; performance pay for principals; performance pay in business and industry; and deficiencies of the body of literature available.

Theoretical Framework

Eikenberg (2007) analyzes a theoretical framework in relation to administrator incentive grants in her 2007 study. The following discussion summarizes relevant information from that study. Human success in any field is difficult to predict through theories and models; however, preconceived theories and models can serve as a framework for exploring the relationships between different facts, situations, and circumstances. One such framework that has been utilized over the years in teacher incentive grant programs has been that of motivational theories, which extends to either content or process theories. Lunenburg and Ornstein (2004) stated that content theories focus on the precepts that stimulate human behavior. Process theories, however, are concerned with the conditions under which motivation occurs (Hodge, 2003).

The motivational models that have been used for studies concerning teacher incentive grants also lend themselves to the study of the effectiveness and effects of administrator incentive grants. The theoretical framework would be similar in nature in that teachers and administrators work in the same setting and ultimately have the same goals as related to student achievement and their own professional development. The enrichment and improvement of students' educational experiences would be an underlying goal of any educator or educational administrator. Motivational theory is a theory that relies on a humanistic approach. Therefore, in terms of compensation or rewards, administrators are no different than teachers (or members of any other profession) when it comes to reaching goals based on certain enumerated criteria.

Three motivational concepts to identify growth in the clinical observation process will be used as the theoretical framework for this study. Expectancy theory, postulated by Vroom

(1964), indicates that there is a positive correlation between individuals' efforts and striving in their work and their anticipation of a desirable reward. In order to effectively employ the expectancy theory in the realm of teacher incentives, educators must be cognizant of the effect of their actions on the possible future receipt of rewards and/or bonuses. Also relevant to an analysis of the role that motivation plays in educational concepts is the goal setting theory set forth by Locke and Latham (1995), which states that individuals are inspired and motivated by attainable goals to which they are committed, and as related to educators, teachers are more likely to perform better if they are rewarded for achieving specific, predetermined curriculum and instructional goals. Finally, Ross' agency theory could be used to support the notion that teachers' performance may improve if teachers' motivation is aligned with administrator/school division motivation. Each of the three aforementioned theories is summarized below.

Individual Motivation

Motivation is not a new concept in the realm of academia or any other business or enterprise. Concerning motivation, Vroom developed the expectancy theory in 1964. In his expectancy theory, Vroom attempted to explain why individuals choose certain courses of action in the leadership field. His theory is based upon valence, expectancy, and instrumentality (Lee, 2007). "Though expectancy theory has its critics, it has generally developed results that indicate it is currently the clearest and most accurate explanation of individual motivation" (Robbins, 1983, p.152).

Self-Efficacy in relation to Incentive Grants

Within any given education system, administrators and central office personnel are continuously setting goals for teachers as well as students. Locke and Latham, as part of their goal setting theory, believed that setting goals helps individuals strive to do their best, which

naturally helps them anticipate reaching their goals, and increases the likelihood that they achieve those goals (Eikenberg, 2007). At the heart of the goal setting theory is the notion that individuals expect and receive compensation or gratification upon reaching the goals or ambitions for which they strive. Within their theory, Locke and Latham discussed five components of their motivational model, which include self-efficacy, moderators, mediators, performance, and satisfaction (Eikenberg, 2007). Self-efficacy is the relationship between how a leader feels about him or herself and the leader's confidence concerning the achievement of the goal at hand. Moderating involves examining the strength of the relationship between goals and performance. Mediators serve as the task strategy to support the achievement goals. One's performance has the potential to excel when challenging goals are set and moderators and mediators are present. In any setting, educational or otherwise, it is enormously important to set goals that are attainable so that employees may enjoy the satisfaction of their performance. Setting goals too high can result in an employee having little to no satisfaction (Eikenberg, 2007).

Historical Compensation Development and Performance Pay Evolution

As described in Eikenberg's (2007) study, the history of compensation is vast and enormously relevant to our present day performance pay systems. Compensation in education has a history largely different than other professions across the world. Podgursky (as cited in Eikenberg, 2007) noted that there were three phases in the development of pay for teachers. The first of these phases involved the teacher negotiating his/her salary with the local school board, with compensation rewarded in the form of low wages and room and board. This phase lasted until about the beginning of the 20th century. The low pay that teachers were awarded reflected the status quo of teachers during that time period. Free public schooling became the norm

throughout the United States, which resulted in a high demand for a large supply of teachers. In this particular historical period, teaching was regarded as “women’s work,” while the men had jobs that typically required manual labor or some type of work that was physical in nature. The typical teacher during this time period was a single woman, whose salary would often be kept at a minimum. English (as cited in Eikenberg, 2007, p.26) cited the following statement made by J.P. Wickersham, state superintendent of Pennsylvania from 1866:

The inducement of longer terms and better salaries must be held out to teachers. Well qualified teachers are constantly leaving the profession and the inexperienced ones are constantly taking their places, and in this state of things no rapid rise in the general standard of qualifications is possible.

English (as cited in Eikenberg, 2007, p.26) found the following statement by Superintendent Aaron Sheeley, of Adams County, Pennsylvania in his report to the state in 1967.

I cannot but condemn the practice, prevailing to some extent, of paying all teachers the same wages, the merest tyro in the art as much as the well qualified, experienced teacher. It seems to me that by this course directors actually offer a premium to mediocrity, if not to positive ignorance and incompetency. Inducements should always be held out to teachers to duly qualify themselves for their work; and it seems to me that this can best be done by means of salaries increasing progressively in proportion to the amount and value of the services performed. This would excite the emulation of teachers, and thus could be established a system of promotion advantageous to the schools.

Once salary development began, school districts grew in size and consolidated. This began the second stage of salary development. Negotiated salaries became more and more uncommon as those who claimed favoritism was taking place became more common. Within the educational

system, officials in each state adopted a starting minimum salary. During the early years, compensation was based on the position with secondary teachers making more money than elementary teachers. Many viewed this as unfair, considering that most elementary school teachers were women. Cubberly (as cited in Eikenberg, 2007) did not believe in the pay schedules as initially adopted, and believed them to promote self-seeking principals since the salary structure forced individuals to consider the salary attached to a position instead of the performance of an individual holding that position.

The third phase of the compensation system began in the 1920's, and was called the "single salary schedule" to eliminate the disparity between pay of elementary and secondary teachers. This single salary schedule plan was aimed at revising compensation so as to base it on training and experience as opposed to position and experience. The single salary schedule has remained the top compensation model across the United States since that time according to Dee and Keys (as cited in Eikenberg, 2007).

Within a discussion of the history of compensation, the historical perspective of merit pay should be included. The President's National Commission on Excellence in Education revitalized the interest in the concept of merit pay with its report, which was titled "A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform" (1983). This particular report suggested that merit pay may be a way of compensating educators for excellence in their field, as well as a way to attract new graduates into the field. "The idea of rewarding people on the basis of how much or how well they produce has been around for a long time." (Kienappel, 1984, p.87). In Biblical times, Christ used the illustration of stewardship regarding investment of talents. Within this context, various forms of merit pay have been implemented (Kienappel, 1984).

Concerning education, merit pay is more of a recent phenomenon, but not as recent as some might think. Cubberly (as cited in Deckard, 1986, p.12) stated that a merit pay plan:

...would provide a much better distribution of rewards; would offer more opportunity for the efficient to rise; would retain the best teachers in the service; and would give the school district better returns in efficiency to the money spent than does the present salary schedule.

Such encouragement would be the baseline of school districts adopting merit pay plans in the future (Johnson, 1984).

With all of the attention given to the potential benefits of merit pay in the 1920's, very few efforts were recorded in literature from 1935-1950 (Johnson, 1984). Little information is available to ascertain why merit pay plans received little attention; one may assume that the results were less than desirable in the districts where merit pay was instituted. However, in the 1950's, merit pay once again received public interest, partly due to "teacher demands for higher salaries, manpower shortages, and fear that the quality of education was low" (Ovard, 1959, p.59). Districts were set on learning from their earlier errors in merit pay adoption and attempted to develop more "sophisticated plans" (Johnson, 1984, p.179). However, once again, the merit pay system died out. In the 1960's 10% of school districts were using merit plans, which reduced to 5.5% percent by the end of 1972 according to Porwoll (as cited in Deckard, 1986).

In the 1980's, the use of merit pay was on the rise again, largely in response to the national reports such as "A Nation at Risk." Merit pay for teachers has been a popular topic since the 1980's, becoming progressively more popular over time. Kienappel mentioned that "the most important factor upon which the plan's success or failure will depend, is the person(s) who administer the system" (1984, p.92). In addition, "...the very best conceived merit pay

system cannot withstand being administered by someone who is not committed to the concept of merit pay...and who is not committed to building trust in the system” (Kiennapel, 1984, p.92).

Performance Pay for Public Schools in Virginia

Commonwealth of Virginia

While many states have had some type of performance pay for teachers for years, the Commonwealth of Virginia has made more recent forays in this realm. Governor Robert McDonnell recently introduced the Virginia Performance Pay Initiatives (VPPI), which commenced in the 2011-2012 school year. The initiative was “...to establish and pilot performance pay models that will recognize and reward highly qualified and effective teachers who have improved student achievement in hard-to-staff schools” (Virginia Department of Education, 2011a, p. 2). McDonnell’s initiative awards \$3 million in compensation funds to schools within all eight (8) regions of Virginia. The pilot schools will in turn develop an evaluation system that can be used to make decisions based on teacher performance (VDOE, 2011a). Teachers who work in hard-to-staff schools who are licensed by the Virginia Department of Education are eligible for the compensation.

The Virginia Department of Education Briefing (2011a) states:

For purposes of this initiative, a hard-to-staff school in a Virginia school division

has been identified as one that meets at least four of the following eight criteria:

Accredited with warning; Average daily attendance rate is two percentage points below the statewide average; Percent of special education students exceeds 150 percent of the statewide average; Percent of limited English proficient (LEP) students exceeds 150 percent of the statewide average; Percent of teachers with provisional licenses exceeds 150 percent of the statewide average; Percent of special education teachers with

provisional special education licenses exceeds one hundred and fifty percent (150%) of the statewide average; Percent of inexperienced teachers (0 years of teaching experience) hired to total teachers exceeds one hundred and fifty percent (150%) of the statewide average; and School has one or more inexperienced teachers (0 years of teaching experience) in a critical shortage area. (VDOE, 2011a, p.3)

As part of Governor McDonnell's plan, the school division must administer performance-based teacher evaluations. This evaluation process addresses professional knowledge, instructional planning and delivery, assessment, learning environment, professionalism, and progress in student achievement. Progress, as measured by the Virginia Standards of Learning tests, must account for at least 40% of the evaluation review. Teachers who teach content areas that do not have a Virginia Standards of Learning test will be evaluated based on alternate testing such as certification testing, national assessments or other approved assessments. Under Governor McDonnell's initiative, teachers could earn a maximum of an additional \$5,000 per year (VDOE, 2011a).

Fairfax, Virginia

In the 1980's, Fairfax County was considered the 10th largest school district in the nation. 25% of its population is made up of non-white minorities (Zhang, 2002). In addition, Fairfax is one of the wealthiest areas in the nation, and the wealthiest in the Metropolitan D.C. area. Fairfax initiated a merit pay system in the 1980's for its teachers, which consisted of teacher ratings in four categories. By the early 1990's, the merit pay system flat-lined, and the school board decided to suspend the system (Zhang, 2002). When given the opportunity to participate in Governor McDonnell's initiative for this school year, Fairfax County declined the invitation, even though nine of their schools qualified (VDOE, 2011a).

Central Region, Virginia

In 2010-2011, a school system in Central Virginia in partnership with the Community Training and Assistance Center (“CTAC”) was awarded an incentive grant called the LLIGP. The school system agreed to pilot the program with eight (8) initial schools involved in the process. These schools were chosen based on schools their identification of being hard-to-staff. The schools chosen as a part of the pilot program all had similar demographics, low standardized test scores, high teacher turnover, and high free and reduced lunch rates.

The LLIGP has nine (9) different components involved in the reward system of the grant according to the U.S. Department of Education:

- 1. Effective Teaching to Ensure High Levels of Student Achievement.** Effective teaching to ensure high levels of student achievement will be built upon a set of professional teaching standards for instruction. Teachers will receive support in assessing their strengths and areas for growth in relation to the professional standards.
- 2. Identification of Teacher Leaders in LLIGP Schools.** A data-driven classroom protocol will be pursued to identify teacher leaders with expertise in the professional standards and the demonstrated ability to create effective learning environments. These teachers will become LLIGP Coaches and assist their colleagues to perfect their pedagogy through ongoing observation and reflection/feedback cycles.
- 3. Differentiated Professional Development.** An on-going LLIGP Professional Development Academy will provide teachers with training in concepts and skills needed to implement the professional teaching standards for effective instruction. The Academy sessions will be differentiated based on individual teacher needs and include a classroom embedded learning component supported by the LLIGP Coaches in the school.

4. School Principals Building a Collegial Culture of Effective Teaching for High

Student Achievement. School principals will facilitate teachers' instructional development and will build structures to ensure teachers have opportunities to reflect on their practices through formative observation and reflection/feedback cycles.

5. Summative Evaluation on Implementation of the Teaching Standards to

Participating Teacher. School principals and school division staff will provide summative evaluation to teachers on their implementation of the professional standards.

6. Teachers and Principals Receiving Differentiated Financial Incentive.

Teachers and principals will receive compensation on a differentiated incentive scale based on their implementation of the professional teaching standards in the classroom to ensure high student achievement.

7. Specific Goals for Student Learning and Professional Teaching.

Teachers and principals will set specific goals for student learning to drive their work to implement the professional teaching standards.

8. Teacher and Principal Differentiated Incentive Compensation for Meeting

Student Learning Goals. Teachers and principals will receive compensation with a differentiated financial incentive based on significant attainment of the student learning goals.

9. Incentive Compensation for Hard-to-Staff Content Areas.

There is a pattern of math, science and special education teachers having higher teacher attrition rates than other subject areas. These are also the areas that have the highest numbers of inexperienced teachers assigned. LLIGP will provide extra compensation for teachers in these content areas (U.S. DOE, 2010, p.8-10).

Within the context of the grant, teachers may use alternate standardized testing in lieu of the Virginia Standards of Learning test, should their content not offer the Standards of Learning test. Teachers may earn an additional \$8,000 per year based on the criteria mentioned above. Administrators may earn an additional \$10,000 per year based on supporting teacher growth, meeting school wide targets, and if their teachers meet the requirements set forth by the student learning targets (U.S. DOE, 2010).

Performance Pay for Public Schools Outside of Virginia

Eikenberg's 2007 work analyzed multiple school districts in various states. Following is a summary of Eikenberg's description of several of these studies.

Denver, Colorado

In Denver, Colorado, a system was designed to pay teachers based on performance results using various criteria. The Professional Compensation System, known as ProComp, was to replace the traditional salary schedule that was based on experience and education. The capped system was replaced with an uncapped system of earned increases – the ProComp system (Texas Public Policy Foundation, 2005). The program was carefully planned out, with a six-year development period, and was evaluated through pilot projects within the district. Under the ProComp system, which is currently ongoing, teachers have seven (7) years to decide whether or not they want to participate in the system. They may also choose to remain under their current salary until they retire. The current pay schedule is based on experience and education, and will remain in effect until every teacher on the old schedule leaves or opts to join the ProComp system.

A proposal to increase funds for the new plan was approved in Denver on November 1, 2005, and took effect in January, 2006. Eligible teachers received bonuses that were retroactive

to the beginning of that school year. All of the components were integrated in the 2006-2007 school year, with all new teachers hired in 2006 automatically being enrolled according to the Texas Association of School Boards (as cited in Eikenberg, 2007),

ProComp's system provided a plethora of avenues to increase teacher pay. The following criteria were used: (a) obtaining a graduate degree, obtaining National Board Teacher Certification, completing coursework, and improving knowledge through approved professional development; (b) obtaining a satisfactory evaluation, which includes satisfactory performance on the annual evaluation; (c) working in hard-to-staff schools or working in a hard-to-staff content area; (d) meeting student targets based on achievement tests and working in a distinguished school based on those same tests, according to TASB (as cited in Eikenberg, 2007). The ProComp system was exclusively designed for teachers in the educational system; administrators, other professionals, and paraprofessionals were not eligible for additional compensation.

Douglas County, Colorado

Douglas County, Colorado established a performance pay system in 1994, which was ratified by 90% of teachers as stated by the Educational Research Service (as cited in Eikenberg, 2007). Within this system, a base salary was set for all teachers, and bonus incentives were available to teachers who elected to participate in the system. The incentives were broad in nature, with the opportunities for individuals, groups, and schools to earn grants. In alignment with the nature of the pay system, compensation was awarded for skills-based pay, outstanding teacher award, and a group incentive element according to the ERS (as cited in Eikenberg, 2007).

By 1995, Douglas County had revised its performance pay system so that options were available for administrative, professional, and technical employees. By integrating these

positions into the grant, the county hoped to lessen competitiveness and animosity. The ERS (as cited in Eikenberg, 2007) states that the pay options that were added by 1995 included: (a) committee work based on district responsibility pay, which included the amount of time contributed; (b) group incentive based on continuous school improvement plan; (c) district training completed by campus administrators; and (d) evaluation pay for administrators that received a satisfactory year-end evaluation.

North Carolina

In 1996, North Carolina established a school-based performance award system (Hodge, 2003). Within this system, accountability goals for schools were set based on the then current performance on state-mandated tests. The basis of the award system was to reward student growth on the basis of achievement. The amounts of compensation were rewarded based on added growth, and recognition levels were based on schools receiving a satisfactory number of students at or above grade level (Hodge, 2003).

Schools that exhibited growth of at least 10% above standards awarded staff members with a \$1,500 bonus, while teacher assistants earned \$500 in additional compensation (Hruz, 2001). There were several schools that reached their student growth goals, but did not exceed them by 10%. The teachers in these particular schools earned an additional \$750, with assistants earning \$375 (WPRI, 2001).

The North Carolina incentive system was based on school performance, not individual performance. Therefore, the system promoted continuity and cohesiveness in the team approach. The schools were challenged to meet expectations as a school, not based on individual teacher or student performances. In addition, growth was measured on improvement, not necessarily passing or failing rates. This allowed schools who were struggling with low student performance

to be eligible for the compensation based on student growth in terms of improvement, which did not necessarily coincide with a pass or fail mark (Hodge, 2003).

Iowa

Iowa became the first state in the nation to initiate a state-wide plan for compensating teachers based on their performance in 2001. The state-wide plan was integrated into a system that was mandated in 2003 and was based on a four-step path (Blair, 2001). The various school districts were given a choice in whether they wanted to participate in one of the compensation programs, or all of them. New teachers participated in a two- to three-year transition period and were assigned mentors. After the introduction period, all teachers were given a permanent teaching license. Teachers then completed the three stages, and each stage was evaluated through a comprehensive review process (Blair, 2001). The supplementary programs that were part of the program included mentoring programs, induction programs, career path programs, or variable pay programs (Iowa Department of Education, 2012).

Texas

The Houston Independent School District (HISD) developed a salary plan designed to improve low-performing schools. The plan, developed in June, 2005, focused on offering teachers \$3,000 bonuses annually for meeting various goals, which were aligned with state goals based on student achievement. According to the Texas Association of School Boards (as cited in Eikenberg, 2007), the HISD Board of Trustees unanimously voted to approve a performance-based compensation plan on performance on January 12, 2006. The plan included a multifaceted approach in that it included three components. Teachers were rewarded based on the schools' TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) scores, which were compared to forty (40) other schools around the state with similar demographics. Teachers were also rewarded for

improved scores on the Stanford Achievement Test. Lastly, according to TASB (as cited in Eikenberg, 2007), teachers were rewarded for year-to-year progress on reading and math tests, based on TAKS.

Originally, \$14.5 million was funded for the initial program, lasting five (5) years. The annual bonuses would rise to \$10,000 per year (Texas Public Policy Foundation, 2005). An extra incentive was added into the system, which was based on attendance. The plan drew some criticism from non-core subject teachers who were not eligible for the same amount as core teachers. In addition, many felt that test scores were over-analyzed and limited the baseline and diversity of the funding according to TASB (as cited in Eikenberg, 2007).

Performance Pay for Principals

Building principals hold a position within a school that is vital to the success of the school. The position evolved over time – ranging from being regarded as managers, to becoming effective leaders, while continuing to manage their school. The principal is involved in every aspect of the school, including, but not limited to, managing the building, instructional support, and staff development. With the expanding role of principals, districts have sought to recognize superior performance to encourage administrators to become more effective. Merit pay for administrators not only improves performance, but sets an example for other employees such as teachers (Schneider, 1983).

Burkett and McElrath, along with Ginsberg, state that school systems that have experimented with merit pay for principals are having difficulty developing an evaluation plan (as cited in Frase, 1992). Part of the problem is deciding what should be evaluated and what measures to use (Frase, 1992). Principals' workdays are fragmented and varied, depending on day-to-day developments and situations that occur. A principal's workday can be punctuated

with constant interruptions, non-instructional needs that must be met, and student discipline, stated Ginsberg (as cited in Frase, 1992). Principals are responsible for a litany of other activities, including student achievement, parent involvement, professionalism, communication, leadership, school climate, and organizational management. Many of these are theoretical beliefs, and can be difficult to observe and measure, according to Ginsberg (as cited in Frase, 1992).

Performance Pay for Business and Industry

With an administrator incentive grant program, the agency theory is a useful theoretical framework for analyzing pay-performance relationships. Ross originally developed the theory with intended application being in the areas of businesses and industry, and he explained how to best organize relationships in which the manager determined and delegated the work. According to Eikenberg, "...adverse selection would emerge if the superintendent could not determine if the school principal had accurately represented his or her ability to successfully lead the campus" (Eikenberg, 2007, p.18). Moral hazard could then exist if a school's superintendent is unable to identify whether or not the principal had put forth maximum effort (Eikenberg, 2007).

Performance pay plays a much larger role in business and industry. In business and industry, thirty-seven (37) out of fifty (50) states reported to have merit pay plans in 1989. In addition, three different studies in the 1980's reported over 80% of private-sector employees had a performance pay system for at least some of their employees (Heneman, 1992).

In the education realm, group incentive pay plans were reported to be in general use by 2.5% of schools who responded, and in partial use by 3.6%. Only 0.8% planned to implement a system for the next school year according to the Educational Research Service (as cited in Eikenberg, 2007).

Teacher Evaluations – Statewide Mandated

Incentive grant programs throughout the country have many differences; however, the one main constant is they all have some type of evaluation program. The evaluation programs vary from state to state and division to division. Historically, local school divisions have had relative autonomy when it comes to teacher evaluation and are able to develop their own criteria to evaluate teacher performance. However, with NCLB (No Child Left Behind) and the pressure of state-wide testing, many states are now employing mandated teacher evaluations statewide. While such mandates may yield continuity in the area of teacher evaluation for a state, they also may leave some educators in local school divisions feeling as if they have lost their voice, as if there is no room for individuality or situational variance. Over the last several years, many states have promulgated statewide mandated teacher evaluations. The following discussion illustrates evaluation programs, some of which are detailed, while others allow discretion among the local school divisions.

Virginia

As was reflected in the aforementioned literature discussion, incentive and merit pay is not a new concept; however, the presentation of incentive and merit pay has varied throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia and throughout the country. An incentive grant program is only as effective as the evaluation system utilized to monitor performance and growth. On July 1, 2012, the Commonwealth of Virginia introduced a statewide teacher evaluation program. The evaluation protocols are set forth in the Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers (VDOE, 2011b). The Commonwealth of Virginia determined that the current teacher evaluation system needed to be modified significantly in order to have an accurate evaluation system for its employees throughout the Commonwealth. Westberg, Sexton,

Mulhern, & Keeling (2009) completed a study that showed that 99% of teachers were rated as “satisfactory” in their schools based upon the results of a scale in which teachers’ performance in various areas was labeled as either “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory.” Therefore, the structure of the measure that was used implied that all teachers were satisfactory or better. Within the current system, researchers identified several inherent flaws for deficits, including: lack of recognition of excellent; inadequacy of professional development; lack of special attention for novice teachers; and failure to address poor performance (Weisberg et al., 2009). The Virginia Department of Education findings further conclude that little has been done to develop and retain teachers, and that almost all teachers become tenured or gain continuing contract status, even the marginal teachers (VDOE, 2011b).

As a result of the findings, the Virginia Department of Education has implemented the aforementioned statewide performance evaluation system. Teachers will now be evaluated based on performance indicators. There will be seven performance indicators, with the recommendation of the following weight: Performance indicators 1-6 count as 10% each, performance indicator 7 count as 40% (VDOE, 2011b). The performance indicators put forth by the Virginia Department of Education (2011b) in Table 1.

Table 1

Virginia Department of Education Performance Indicators for Teachers

<p>Performance Standard 1: Professional Knowledge</p> <p><i>The teacher demonstrates an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, and the developmental needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.</i></p>
<p>Performance Standard 2: Instructional Planning</p> <p><i>The teacher plans using the Virginia Standards of Learning, the school’s curriculum, effective strategies, resources, and data to meet the needs of all students.</i></p>

<p>Performance Standard 3: Instructional Delivery</p> <p><i>The teacher effectively engages students in learning by using a variety of instructional strategies in order to meet individual learning needs.</i></p>
<p>Performance Standard 4: Assessment of and for Student Learning</p> <p><i>The teacher systematically gathers, analyzes, and uses all relevant data to measure student academic progress, guide instructional content and delivery methods, and provide timely feedback to both students and parents throughout the school year.</i></p>
<p>Performance Standard 5: Learning Environment</p> <p><i>The teacher uses resources, routines, and procedures to provide a respectful, positive, safe, student-centered environment that is conducive to learning.</i></p>
<p>Performance Standard 6: Professionalism</p> <p><i>The teacher maintains a commitment to professional ethics, communicates effectively, and takes responsibility for and participates in professional growth that results in enhanced student learning.</i></p>
<p>Performance Standard 7: Student Academic Progress</p> <p><i>The work of the teacher results in acceptable, measurable, and appropriate student academic progress.</i></p>

Table 1 (VDOE, 2011b, pp.7-8)

The performance indicators are opinion, and create a benchmark by which one may determine whether teachers are meeting each particular standard. The Virginia Department of Education has created the performance indicators such that they are not exhaustive; additionally, teachers are not expected to fulfill every indicator that is identified (VDOE, 2011b). The performance indicators are intended to create a plethora of options, which allow administrators and teachers to work together to determine the appropriate indicators for each individual teacher. As students have individual plans set forth for them in regards to Individual Education Plans

(IEPs), the same can be done for teachers in regards to their performance indicators (VDOE, 2011b). In Table 2, included is a sample list of performance indicators created by the Virginia Department of Education. This list is identified as a suggested list and may be supplemented based on different teachers' performance growth as determined by the teachers and their administrators (VDOE, 2011b).

Table 2

Sample List of Performance Indicators from Virginia Department of Education

<p>Performance Standard 1: Professional Knowledge</p> <p><i>The teacher demonstrates an understanding of the curriculum, subject content, and the developmental needs of students by providing relevant learning experiences.</i></p>
<p>Performance Standard 1 Sample Performance Indicators</p> <p><i>Examples of teacher work conducted in the performance of the standard may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Effectively addresses appropriate curriculum standards. 1.2 Integrates key content elements and facilitates students' use of higher level thinking skills in instruction. 1.3 Demonstrates ability to link present content with past and future learning experiences, other subject areas, and real world experiences and applications. 1.4 Demonstrates an accurate knowledge of the subject matter. 1.5 Demonstrates skills relevant to the subject area(s) taught. 1.6 Bases instruction on goals that reflect high expectations and an understanding of the subject. 1.7 Demonstrates an understanding of the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development of the age group. 1.8 Communicates clearly and checks for understanding.
<p>Performance Standard 2: Instructional Planning</p> <p><i>The teacher plans using the Virginia Standards of Learning, the school's curriculum, effective strategies, resources, and data to meet the needs of all students.</i></p>
<p>Performance Standard 2 Sample Performance Indicators</p> <p><i>Examples of teacher work conducted in the performance of the standard may include, but are not limited to:</i></p>

- 2.1 Uses student learning data to guide planning.
- 2.2 Plans time realistically for pacing, content mastery, and transitions.
- 2.3 Plans for differentiated instruction.
- 2.4 Aligns lesson objectives to the school's curriculum and student learning needs.
- 2.5 Develops appropriate long- and short-range plans and adapts plans when needed.

Performance Standard 3: Instructional Delivery

The teacher effectively engages students in learning by using a variety of instructional strategies in order to meet individual learning needs.

Performance Standard 3: Sample Performance Indicators

Examples of teacher work conducted in the performance of the standard may include, but are not limited to:

- 3.1 Engages and maintains students in active learning.
- 3.2 Builds upon students' existing knowledge and skills.
- 3.3 Differentiates instruction to meet the students' needs.
- 3.4 Reinforces learning goals consistently throughout lessons.
- 3.5 Uses a variety of effective instructional strategies and resources.
- 3.6 Uses instructional technology to enhance student learning.
- 3.7 Communicates clearly and checks for understanding.

Performance Standard 4: Assessment of and for Student Learning

The teacher systematically gathers, analyzes, and uses all relevant data to measure student academic progress, guide instructional content and delivery methods, and provide timely feedback to both students and parents throughout the school year.

Performance Standard 4 Sample Performance Indicators

Examples of teacher work conducted in the performance of the standard may include, but are not limited to:

- 4.1 Uses pre-assessment data to develop expectations for students, to differentiate instruction, and to document learning.
- 4.2 Involves students in setting learning goals and monitoring their own progress.
- 4.3 Uses a variety of assessment strategies and instruments that are valid and appropriate for the content and for the student population.
- 4.4 Aligns student assessment with established curriculum standards and benchmarks.
- 4.5 Uses assessment tools for both formative and summative purposes and uses grading practices that report final mastery in relationship to content goals and objectives.
- 4.6 Uses assessment tools for both formative and summative purposes to inform, guide, and adjust students' learning.
- 4.7 Gives constructive and frequent feedback to students on their learning.

Performance Standard 5: Learning Environment

The teacher uses resources, routines, and procedures to provide a respectful, positive, safe, student-centered environment that is conducive to learning.

Performance Standard 5 Sample Performance Indicators

Examples of teacher work conducted in the performance of the standard may include, but are not limited to:

- 5.1 Arranges the classroom to maximize learning while providing a safe environment.
- 5.2 Establishes clear expectations, with student input, for classroom rules and procedures early in the school year, and enforces them consistently and fairly.
- 5.3 Maximizes instructional time and minimizes disruptions.
- 5.4 Establishes a climate of trust and teamwork by being fair, caring, respectful, and enthusiastic.
- 5.5 Promotes cultural sensitivity.
- 5.6 Respects students' diversity, including language, culture, race, gender, and special needs.
- 5.7 Actively listens and pays attention to students' needs and responses.
- 5.8 Maximizes instructional learning time by working with students individually as well as in small groups or whole groups.

Performance Standard 6: Professionalism

The teacher maintains a commitment to professional ethics, communicates effectively, and takes responsibility for and participates in professional growth that results in enhanced student learning.

Performance Standard: Sample Performance Indicators

Examples of teacher work conducted in the performance of the standard may include, but are not limited to:

- 6.1 Collaborates and communicates effectively within the school community to promote students' well-being and success.
- 6.2 Adheres to federal and state laws, school and division policies, and ethical guidelines.
- 6.3 Incorporates learning from professional growth opportunities into instructional practice.
- 6.4 Sets goals for improvement of knowledge and skills.
- 6.5 Engages in activities outside the classroom intended for school and student enhancement.
- 6.6 Works in a collegial and collaborative manner with administrators, other school personnel, and the community.
- 6.7 Builds positive and professional relationships with parents/guardians through frequent and effective communication concerning students' progress.

<p>6.8 Serves as a contributing member of the school’s professional learning community through collaboration with teaching colleagues.</p> <p>6.9 Demonstrates consistent mastery of standard oral and written English in all communication.</p>
<p>Performance Standard 7: Student Academic Progress</p> <p><i>The work of the teacher results in acceptable, measurable, and appropriate student academic progress.</i></p>
<p>Performance Standard 7 Sample Performance Indicators</p> <p><i>Examples of teacher work conducted in the performance of the standard may include, but are not limited to:</i></p> <p>7.1 Sets acceptable, measurable, and appropriate achievement goals for student learning progress based on baseline data.</p> <p>7.2 Documents the progress of each student throughout the year.</p> <p>7.3 Provides evidence that achievement goals have been met, including the state provided growth measure when available as well as other multiple measures of student growth.</p> <p>7.4 Uses available performance outcome data to continually document and communicate student academic progress and develop interim learning targets.</p> <p>Note: Performance Standard 7: If a teacher effectively fulfills all previous standards, it is likely that the results of teaching -- as documented in Standard 7: Student Academic Progress -- would be positive. The Virginia teacher evaluation system includes the documentation of student growth as indicated within Standard 7 and recommends that the evidence of progress be reviewed and considered throughout the year.</p>

Table 2, VDOE (2011b, pp. 9-12).

The final aspect that is paramount to the success of Virginia’s teacher evaluation system is the documentation generated in evaluating teacher performance. Table 3, provided by the Virginia Department of Education (2011b), details a brief synopsis of the documentation suggested for use with the current teacher evaluation system.

Table 3.

Suggested Documentation for Evaluating Teacher Performance

Data Source	Definition
Formal Observations	Observations are an important source of performance information. Formal observations focus directly on the seven teacher performance standards. Classroom observations also may include a review of teacher products or artifacts, and review of student data.
Informal Observations	Informal observations are intended to provide more frequent information on a wider variety of contributions made by the teacher. Evaluators are encouraged to conduct observations by visiting classrooms, observing instruction, and observing work in non-classroom settings.
Student Surveys	Student surveys provide information to the teacher about students' perceptions of how the professional is performing. The actual survey responses are seen <i>only</i> by the teacher who prepares a survey summary for inclusion in the portfolio. <i>The surveys provided in this document are designed to be used in grades 1 – 12 (e.g., not with pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students).</i>
Portfolios/ Document Logs	Portfolios/document logs provide documentation generated by the teacher for the seven performance standards.
Self-Evaluation	Self-evaluations reveal the teachers' perceptions of their job performance.

Table 3, VDOE (2011b, p. 13).

The teacher documentation as listed above is not an exhaustive list of evaluation tools. Once the evaluation cycle is complete (annually for probationary teachers and tri-annually for continuing contract teachers), an evaluation is completed to include documentation of his/her performance in relation to the performance standards and data collected using the aforementioned documentation and how well those standards are met or performed. The evaluation is performed based on all seven performance standards and can range from

“exemplary” to “proficient” or “needs improvement” with “unacceptable” as the lowest point of the range. For the summative evaluation, administrators will use the sample performance indicators and the performance rubric (VDOE, 2011b).

Individual school divisions have the discretion to determine how the final summative evaluation will be calculated. A particular average score may be targeted in order to determine what is qualified as “exemplary” for all seven standards. Also, school divisions may implement particular procedures to individualize their evaluation system (e.g. if a teacher receives any marks below “proficient,” he or she could not be categorized as an “exemplary” teacher). Length of time teaching may be a consideration as well for schools, in that schools may elect to hold more experienced teachers to a more rigorous standard (VDOE, 2011b).

The statewide teacher evaluation system in Virginia provides continuity across the Commonwealth, while also allowing individual school systems to make decisions that are in the school’s best interests. It also allows administrators and teachers to work together and target particular areas of teacher growth, based on the individual educator’s needs. The system provides for the collection and analysis of numerous data to be reviewed. With the transition to a statewide teacher evaluation system, the focus of merit pay and incentive pay schools will be predicated to some extent on evaluation. However, incentive and merit pay schools could potentially choose to set standards that surpass the standards that the Virginia Department of Education has set forth for the schools within the Commonwealth (VDOE, 2011b).

North Carolina

In the state of North Carolina a local board must use the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards in conjunction with the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation Process, unless it develops an alternative evaluation that includes similar standards and criteria. In 2008, North

Carolina adopted the Rubric for Evaluating North Carolina Teachers and the Teacher Evaluation Process. From the teacher standpoint, teachers must know and understand the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards, understand the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation Process, prepare and participate in each part of the evaluation process, gather data and artifacts to support performance in relation to setting goals, and develop and implement strategies on improving personal performance (North Carolina State Board of Education, 2009).

As part of the evaluation process, all stakeholders must complete the following components related to the evaluation process.

- As part of the first component, training in the mechanics of the evaluation process must be completed.
- The second component consists of the requirement that, within the first two weeks of work, the principal must provide the teacher with the Rubric for Evaluating North Carolina Teachers, the Teacher Evaluation Policy, as well as a schedule for completing all of the components of the evaluation process.
- The third component consists of the teacher completing a self-assessment based on his or her own perceived strengths and weaknesses in various instructional arenas.
- The fourth component involves a pre-observation conference
- The fifth component consists of the actual observation.
- The sixth component consists of a Post-Observation Conference.
- The seventh component is a Summary Evaluation in which the teacher is rated and scored.
- The eighth component includes professional development plans, in which the administrator and teacher meet to discuss their individualized plan. At this point it is

decided if the teacher will be placed on an individual plan, monitored plan, or directed plan. This decision is based upon the collection of data, observations, and various other aspects of the aforementioned components.

- The ninth component is based upon effective dates and effect on licensing and career status (NCSBE, 2009).

North Carolina also has implemented criteria in relation to beginning and probationary teachers. Effective 2010-2011, all beginning teachers must score “proficient” on all five teaching standards in order to be eligible for a Standard Professional 2 License. In addition, all probationary teachers must score “proficient” on all five teaching standards in order to be recommended for career status. The levels of attainability are as follows for teachers in North Carolina: developing, proficient, accomplished, distinguished, and not demonstrated (NCSBE).

Iowa

Iowa, with regard to its statewide mandated teacher evaluation, allows local school divisions more autonomy and customization than Virginia and North Carolina. Iowa’s criteria statewide include the following: (1) use of the Iowa teaching standards and criteria; (2) comprehensive evaluation of beginning teachers based on progress on Iowa teaching standards and the DOE’s comprehensive evaluation instrument; and (3) performance reviews of career teachers must be conducted every three years and include observations, a review of progress on the Iowa teaching standards and additional standards and criteria, a review of implementation of teachers individual development plan, and supporting documentation from other evaluators, teachers, parents, and students (Iowa Department of Education, 2012).

Pitfalls of Performance Pay

The aforementioned states all use financial incentives to motivate teachers to higher levels of performance. Generally, the goals of performance pay for teachers are to entice more teachers to join or remain in the teaching profession. In addition, teachers' behaviors and interests with institutional goals would be aligned. However, many are opposed to modifying the single salary schedule that most school systems currently implement. Those who are opposed to a performance based pay system generally cite that there is little evidence that the system itself improves school efficacy. These opponents also refer to the notion that these schools are less effective as a result of crowding out intrinsic awards (Springer, 2009).

Andrabi (2008) argues that introducing individual performance awards might reduce incentives for teachers to cooperate and collaborate with one another, which would in turn reduce school performance rather than increase it. This may also hold true if the compensation system is designed as a rank-ordered tournament where teachers or teams of teachers are competing for a fixed bonus.

Other critics of teacher performance pay systems argue that the system is destined for failure because teacher performance is immeasurable in comparison to other professions. Unlike professions who are measured on sales or billable hours, a teachers output is not measured readily in a reliable, valid, and fair manner. The performance goals that are set and the evaluation system may not be agreed upon by the teacher, which could lack transparency and the teachers will have no real idea of how they are being evaluated. "Given these problems, it is argued, the services provided by an individual teacher or group of teachers should not be linked to schooling outcomes, particularly if measures of teacher performance cannot account for the

many factors beyond the teacher's control that influence student achievement" (Springer, 2009, p.7).

Additional concerns arise when the performance of a worker comprises multiple dimensions, only some of which are measured and incentivized (Muralidharan & Sundararaman, 2009). Within an organization, if a disconnect exists between the mission of the school and the activities tied to incentives, employees may shift their work towards the rewarded activity and away from other mission-focused tasks. Several studies have documented minimum competency accountability programs. The results show that poorly designed incentive schemes create greater opportunity over time for cheating or related opportunistic behavior (Banerjee, Banerji, Duflo, Glennerster, & Khemani, 2006).

Poorly designed reward systems may create an environment in which teachers attempt to move away from low-performing schools in order to maximize their chances of earning additional pay at a higher-performing school. North Carolina's school accountability system inhibited the recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers at low-performing schools (Banerjee, Banerji, Duflo, Glennerster, & Khemani, 2008). "Potential unintended consequences related to the teacher labor market are critically important for policymakers and others to consider because proponents of pay-for-performance programs contend a positive compositional effect on the teacher workforce" (Springer, 2009, p.7).

Some argue that individuals could potentially lose interest in an activity as they are rewarded increasingly for that activity (Springer, 2009). Many claim that sufficient incentives already exist in the profession of teaching. The "primary attraction of teaching...continues to be the prospect of achieving success with children" (de Laat, Kremer, & Vermeersch, 2008, p. 7). Introducing external rewards will discourage risk taking, damage the cooperative nature of

teaching, and negatively affect teacher perceptions of their own ability (de Laat et al., 2008). de Laat et al., (2008) further claim that even if a pay-for-performance program initially elicits a positive behavioral response, the crowding out of intrinsic motivation will eventually reduce effort, self-esteem, and originality to the point of negatively effecting the school over time.

Lastly, many of the recent compensation reforms are criticized for the excessive focus on standardized assessments when determining whether a teacher earns a bonus. Duflo, Dupas, and Kremer (2008), suggest that test scores are “noisy and volatile” performance measures. They also stipulate that it would be ineffective to place an inordinate amount of value on a student test score because almost two-thirds of teachers do not teach a single grade or a single subject. The typical student exceeds the number of classes and activities that are tested by a state’s NCLB accountability program (Chaudhury, Hammer, Kremer, Muralidharan, & Rogers). Therefore, a pay-for-performance program that focuses solely on student test scores does not adequately capture the school’s overall mission (Springer, 2009).

Shortcomings of the Literature

The aforementioned literature describes the divisive views and data surrounding the concept of incentive pay for teachers. Many school divisions made unsuccessful attempts to implement incentive or merit pay, which resulted in the discontinuation of those systems. Various factors may have caused these programs to be unsuccessful, ranging from a lack of funding, the competitive nature of employees, lack of an organized system in place, etc. Incentive pay has been an invaluable tool in the areas of business and industry, and research into the effect of incentive pay has been conducted fairly regularly as related to teacher incentives. Very few studies, however, indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the performance of teachers who are eligible for a grant within a particular school and those teachers

who are not eligible within the same school. While research exists regarding the effects of incentive grants on the performance of teachers, there is little research available that extends the investigation of incentive grant effectiveness to the realm of educational administration.

“...Although there is considerable interest in merit pay for public school administrators, the knowledge about this process is limited” (Schroeder, 1989, p. 1). The lack of studies concerning the effect of administrator incentive grants is ironic, given that “...if the principal plays such an important role in the quality of each school, then the evaluation of the principal is of the utmost importance” (Krompasky, 1995). Administrators are intimately involved with data collection, evaluation, and other vital components of merit pay systems; therefore it is important to further research their perspectives.

The purpose of this study is to contribute to the body of literature focusing on incentive pay for teachers and to successfully complete an empirical study that investigates teacher perceptions of administrative support in schools with incentive grant programs. Participants in the study are teachers who participate in a teacher incentive grant program and teachers within the same school who do not participate in the grant program. The results of this study will assist school systems considering incorporating an incentive grant program into their existing compensation systems.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Within this chapter, the participants, setting, instrumentation, procedures, research design, and data analysis are discussed. Additionally, the independent and dependent variables are defined and content validity and reliability are addressed. The hereinafter described study employed a non-experimental causal-comparative design involving a non-experimental investigation seeking to determine whether a relationship exists between the perceptions of two groups of individuals (teachers who were eligible for an incentive grant vs. teachers who were not eligible for an incentive grant within the same schools) in relation to administrative support by their supervising administrator. Individuals were chosen from the involved schools and each study participant was necessarily in only one group. The selected teachers were assigned to groups based upon whether they taught a subject that was eligible in which the LLIGP is present. This type of research design was the most logical choice for the present study, which involved groups of participants' predetermination by the presence or absence of the LLIGP. (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007).

Research Design

A causal-comparative design was used in this particular study in which the researcher evaluated teachers' perceptions of administrator support within two different groups. Comparative research is a research methodology comparing two or more things with a view to discovering something about one or all of the things being compared. This study measured the effect of participation in an incentive grant on the perceived level of support provided by a teachers' supervising administrator. The study measured perceptions by using a survey titled *Teachers' Perceptions of Administrative Support*, a survey developed from Weiss' (2001) survey

called *Special Education Teachers' Perceptions of Administrative Support*. The survey that was used is discussed further in the instrumentation section.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research questions and the null hypotheses that have been postulated for this study are listed below.

Research Question 1: Do teachers who are participating in an incentive grant program perceive they have greater support from their supervising administrator than the teachers who are not participating in the incentive grant program within the same secondary schools?

Null Hypothesis 1: There will be no statistically significant difference between the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of an incentive grant teacher and the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of a non-incentive grant teacher within the same secondary schools.

Research Question 2: Do teachers who have 10 or more years of experience who are participating in an incentive grant program perceive they have greater support from their supervising administrator than teachers who have less than 10 years of experience who are also participating in the incentive grant program within the same secondary schools?

Null Hypothesis 2: There will be no statistically significant difference between the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of an incentive grant teacher who has 10 or more years of experience and the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of an incentive grant teacher who has less than 10 years of experience within the same secondary schools.

Research Question 3: Do teachers who have 10 or more years of experience who are participating in an incentive grant program perceive they have greater support from their

supervising administrator than teachers who have less than 10 years of experience who are not participating in the incentive grant program within the same secondary schools?

Null Hypothesis 3: There will be no statistically significant difference between the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of an incentive grant teacher who has 10 or more years of experience and the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of a non-incentive grant teacher who has less than 10 years of experience within the same secondary schools.

Participants

The population studied was a group of teachers from secondary schools of a large school district in Central Virginia. The middle school and high school teachers that were selected were core content teachers (English, math, science, and social studies), special education teachers, and elective teachers. As part of the LLIGP, only core teachers and special education teachers are eligible for the grant. The middle school identified for this study houses 895 students, whereas the high school identified for this study houses 1,765 students.

Teachers. The teachers involved in this study had a broad spectrum of backgrounds and teaching experiences. Many of them had varying years of experience, as well as varying content specialty. The incentive grant secondary teachers who participated in this study were content specialists in English, mathematics, science, social studies, and special education. The remainder of the teachers who were surveyed was elective teachers within the same schools. Within the main core content areas, specialty areas include Math 6, Geometry, Physical Science, Chemistry, etc. Despite the teachers' varying experiences and expertise, several commonalities were identified. For example, at the time of this study, all teachers were certified by the Commonwealth of Virginia to teach grades 6-12. In addition, all teachers had an observing

administrator who was certified through the Commonwealth of Virginia and who had a current license endorsement in Supervision and Administration at the time of the study. The teachers involved in this study who had the treatment were those who were participants in the LLIGP.

Administrators. The administrators of the two schools in this study were indirectly involved in this study in that the teachers completed a questionnaire based on the perceived support they received from their observing administrator. The administrators at the schools had varying backgrounds and experiences. The administrators who were a part of this study had taught various subjects in their teaching careers and had been administrators for different periods of time. As was also the case with the participant teachers, there were several commonalities among the administrators - including administrators' endorsement in Administration and Supervision as licensed through the Virginia Department of Education. In addition, all of the administrators taught for a minimum of three (3) years in the classroom prior to becoming an administrator. The administrators involved in this study were a part of the treatment group will be involved in the LLIGP.

Treatment Group Training. Teachers and administrators who were a part of the treatment group experienced factors different than teachers who were not a part of the incentive grant. As part of the treatment group, teachers were trained on the Charlotte Danielson Framework as related to classroom management, communicating with students, questioning and discussion techniques, student participation, and engaging students in learning. Furthermore, teachers in the treatment group were required to set standardized testing target goals for every student that they taught. The standardized test used was the Virginia Standards of Learning End of Course exam. However, the teachers who taught a core content that does not have a Virginia Standards of Learning test associated with their content set targets based on Northwest

Evaluation Association (NWEA) testing or another approved benchmark test. The control group, the non-incentive teachers, was trained in the school division professional growth and evaluation plan, not the Danielson Framework. Therefore, training in the Charlotte Danielson Framework was the treatment that differentiates the treatment group from the control group.

Setting

Both schools in the study are located in a large school system in Central Virginia that was a grant recipient in a pilot study of the LLIGP. Additionally, the schools chosen for this particular study were chosen from the eastern part of the county, which is identified as having a high percentage of students identified as low socio-economic status with rapid growth in population. Many of the students that attend the schools identified reside in government-subsidized housing or lower income apartment complexes. In addition, both of the schools are in close proximity to one another (less than 10 miles apart) - the goal serving to create a population of similar students, teachers, socioeconomic status, etc. and to exclude extraneous variables to the extent possible.

Pseudonyms were assigned to the participating schools within the study. With assistance from the Virginia Department of Education demographics information, one middle school and one high school were identified for this study. Middle School A (MSA) and High School A (HSA) are the two identified schools for this particular study.

Middle School A and High School A. The Virginia Department of Education (2013) reports that MSA had 895 students enrolled at the time of the study. Within MSA, the ethnic distribution was as follows in approximate percentages: 93.9% African American, 3.1% Hispanic, 2.2% Caucasian, and 0.8% Asian (VDOE, 2013). The population in regards to gender was approximately 50% male and 50% female. The VDOE (2013) reports that, at the time of

this study, HSA had 1,765 students enrolled. Within HSA, the ethnic distribution of students was as follows in approximate percentages: 80.1% African American, 12.1% Caucasian, 3.9% Hispanic, and 3.9% other (VDOE, 2013). The gender distribution of the population was approximately 50% male and 50% female. Additionally, teachers and administrators in these two schools are approximately 50% African American and 50% Caucasian. The same can be said concerning teachers' and administrators' gender.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study was a survey titled *Teachers' Perceptions of Administrative Support*. This survey was developed from Weiss' (2001) survey called *Special Education Teachers' Perceptions of Administrative Support*. Weiss created his survey, after exploring prior research, to develop an instrument which would ascertain special education teachers' perceptions of administrative support and to establish their intent on remaining in the profession. Weiss piloted the survey with a group of special education teachers, and allowed input from the pilot group, thus providing external validity to the survey. Weiss conducted his study in 2001 using information provided from 320 different respondents. Showers (2008) also used Weiss' instrument in a study to determine whether there was a relationship between administrative support and teacher retention. Showers' was similar to Weiss' study in that Showers also used teachers from different levels in public school systems. The scale's reliability was tested using an alpha-scale analysis on each of the 20 items of the survey. Reliability was established with an overall alpha score of .9649 (Showers, 2008; Weiss, 2001).

The researcher was granted written permission from Dr. Weiss to use the instrument *Special Education Teachers' Perceptions of Administrative Support*. Furthermore, Dr. Weiss granted permission to modify the following language within the instrument: "Special Education"

was removed from the title; “My principal...” was replaced with “...My observing administrator.” Content validity was established through reviewing current research in the area of administrative support. The Likert-scale survey consists of twenty (20) items, each of which describes positive administrative support. The survey originally created by Weiss was deemed appropriate for this study by the investigator, as the survey questions were relevant to all certified teachers in public education, not just special education teachers.

Within this study, special education and regular education teachers participated in the survey process. Lastly, no items on this survey were directed specifically towards special education teachers’, therefore, each item was relevant to all public school teachers K-12.

The participating teachers were given a survey in June, 2013 near the completion of the school year. The survey asked for responses related to perceived administrative support, including: decision making; professional collaboration; financial support needed to complete work assignments; feedback about teaching; help with solving problems; assistance with student behavior; and encouragement of new ideas.

The difference between the teachers’ responses of who were involved in the LLIGP and those of teachers who were not involved were compared and analyzed.

Procedures

Upon approval of the proposed research topic, an application was submitted for approval to the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB), as well as the local school division’s IRB. Once approval from both Institutional Review Boards was received, the dissertation process moved forward with data collection and analysis of the data presented. The researcher administered the survey in the June, 2013, near the end of the 2012-2013 school year. Surveys were sent to the participating teachers at each schools involved in the study.

Data gathering. Data was gathered through an online survey. Each participating teacher received a consent form, which did not require a signature, as well as a survey to complete. The survey was a twenty-question survey in which the teachers identified their satisfaction or dissatisfaction of their observing administrator using a Likert scale.

Sampling procedures. Teachers were chosen at the individual schools based on their content and through convenience sampling. In the secondary schools, all teachers were eligible for the study. The teachers at MSA and HSA who taught the core classes (English, math, social studies, and science) and special education were the treatment groups that are participating in a pilot program for the LLIGP, which means those teachers received training focused on the Charlotte Danielson Framework. The teachers at MSA and HSA who were elective teachers who were not eligible for the LLIGP were the control group. A total of 175 teachers were surveyed.

Survey. The survey *Teachers' Perceptions of Administrative Support* was administered in June, 2013 to analyze teacher perceptions of administrative support for the 2012-2013 school year. The results were used to determine whether there is any difference in the perceptions of teachers in regards to administrative support by their supervising administrator. Independent samples *t*-tests allowed the comparison between two groups for the three different research questions of the study.

Data Analysis

The goal of an empirical study is to control for as many extraneous variables as possible (Gall et al., 2007), with the exception of the treatment, which in this study is the LLIGP. The goal of this survey design was to effectively control the eight threats to internal validity. The research participants were first selected, then divided into groups based upon whether they teach

a subject that is eligible for the LLIGP or not. The data collection was performed by conducting a survey with the two groups of participants. The teachers' scores represent their perceived administrative support in the aforementioned areas.

Once the survey was completed and data were collected, the data were analyzed using independent samples *t*-tests. The independent samples *t*-test is used when two separate sets of independent and identically distributed samples are obtained. The two samples are from each of the two populations being compared (Gall, et al., 2007). McMillan (2010) states the *t*-test for independent samples "is used to determine whether the mean value of a variable on one group of subjects is different from the mean value on the same variable on a different group of subjects" (p. 478). When a *t*-test for independence is administered, it is important to meet three statistical assumptions: "(1) that the frequency distributions of scores for both populations of each group are normal, (2) that the variances in each population are equal, and (3) that the observation of scores in one group is independent of the other group" (McMillan, 2010, p. 478). A non-parametric alternative to the independent samples *t*-test is the Mann-Whitney test. This nonparametric test would be implemented if there were violations of assumptions within the study (Urduan, 2010).

Information gathered from the survey was entered into Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) in order to perform the aforementioned statistical analyses. Inferential and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data to evaluate the null hypotheses.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Participant Demographics

Ninety-one teachers participated in the study. The descriptive statistics for the teachers' demographics and incentive grant variables are listed in Tables 4 and 5, respectively. Fifty-nine (64.8%) participants were female, and 32 were male. The participants' ages were reported as follows: 20 (22.0%) 21 – 30 years, 31 (34.1%) 31 – 40 years, 18 (19.8%) 41 – 50 years, 17 (18.7%) 51 – 60 years and 5 (5.5%) 60+ years. Approximately half (43, 47.3%) the respondents had less than 10 years of teaching experience. Twenty-eight (30.8%) participants had 10 – 15 years of experience, 8 (8.8%) had 16 – 20 years of experience, and 12 (14.2%) had more than 20 years of experience.

Fifty-six (61.5%) participants were incentive grant teachers, and 35 (38.5%) were non-incentive grant teachers. The teachers' years of teaching experience at an incentive grant school were reported as follows: 9 (9.9%) 1 year, 22 (24.2%) 2 years, and 60 (65.9%) 2 or more years. A majority (35, 61.4%) of incentive grant teachers indicated they did not have the same incentive grant supervisor for the entirety of the grant.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Participant Demographics

Variable	n	%
Gender		
Female	59	64.8
Male	32	35.2
Age		
21 – 30	20	22.0
31 – 40	31	34.1
41 – 50	18	19.8
51 – 60	17	18.7
60 +	5	5.5
Years Teaching Experience		
1 – 5	22	24.2
6 – 9	21	23.1
10 – 15	28	30.8
16 – 20	8	8.8
21 – 25	3	3.3
26 – 30	4	4.4
31 – 35	4	4.4
35+	1	1.1

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Incentive Grant Eligibility

Variable	N	%
Eligible for the Incentive Grant		
Yes	56	61.5
No	35	38.5
Years of Experience at an Incentive Grant School		
1 year	9	9.9
2 years	22	24.2
3+ years	60	65.9
Same Incentive Grant Teacher Administrator		
Yes	22	38.6
No	35	61.4

Teachers' Perceptions of Administrative Support Scale

The teachers responded to the 20-item *Teachers' Perceptions of Administrative Support* scale. The 20 items were presented on a five-point Likert-type scale. The following anchor points were used for each item: (1) Agree, (2) Tend to Agree, (3) No Opinion, (4) Tend to Disagree, and (5) Disagree.

A mean composite score was created as a measure of the teachers' overall perceptions of administrative support. The items were reverse coded prior to calculating the composite score. Each item was re-coded such that higher values represented higher levels of administrative support. Thus, the items were re-coded with the following scheme: 1 = 5, 2 = 4, 3 = 3, 4 = 2, and

5 = 1. The descriptive statistics for the teachers' responses to the individual items of the scale are listed in Table 13.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question 1: Do teachers who are participating in an incentive grant program believe they have greater support from their supervising administrator than the teachers who are not participating in the incentive grant program within the same secondary schools?

H₀: There will be no statistically significant difference between the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of an incentive grant teacher and the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of a non-incentive grant teacher within the same secondary schools.

Results

An independent samples *t*-test (Howell, 2010) was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between incentive grant teachers and non-incentive grant teachers on their perceived level of support from the supervising administrator. Incentive grant status (incentive grant vs. non-incentive grant) was the between-subjects independent variable, and teachers' perceived support from the supervising administrator was the dependent variable.

The data were screened for outliers prior to testing the statistical assumptions. The participants' dependent variable scores were standardized by group, and the resulting *z*-scores were utilized to identify outliers in the data. A data point was removed if $|\text{standardized score}|$ was greater than 3. This process did not reveal any outliers in the data.

The next step involved testing of the independent samples *t*-test assumptions. Levene's test was utilized to assess the equal error variances assumption. Levene's test was not significant, indicating the two groups had equal error variances, $F = 2.72, p = .103$.

The means and standard deviations are listed in Table 6. The *t*-test (Table 7) failed to reveal a significant difference between incentive grant teachers and non-incentive grant teachers on their perceived level of administrative support, $t(89) = 0.90, p = .373$. The incentive grant teachers ($M = 3.99, SD = 1.00$) did not significantly differ from the non-incentive grant teachers ($M = 3.81, SD = 0.80$) on their perceived level of administrative support. Thus, the researcher fails to reject null hypothesis 1.

Table 6

Mean & Standard Deviations for Research Question 1

Incentive Grant Group	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE Mean</i>
Yes	56	3.99	1.00	0.13
No	35	3.81	0.80	0.13

Table 7

Test Statistics for Research Question 1

<i>t</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Mean Difference</i>	<i>SE Difference</i>	<i>95% CI of the Difference</i>	
					<i>Lower Bound</i>	<i>Upper Bound</i>
0.90	89	.373	0.18	0.20	-0.22	0.58

Research Question 2: Do teachers who have 10 or more years of experience who are participating in an incentive grant program believe they have greater support from their supervising administrator than teachers who have less than 10 years of experience who are also participating in the incentive grant program within the same secondary schools?

H_0 : There will be no statistically significant difference between the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of an incentive grant teacher who has 10 or more years of experience and the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of an incentive grant teacher who has less than 10 years of experience within the same secondary schools.

An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between incentive grant teachers who have 10 or more years of experience and incentive grant teachers who have less than 10 years of experience on their perceived level of support from the supervising administrator. Years of teaching experience (less than 10 years vs. 10 or more years) was the between-subjects independent variable, and incentive grant teachers' perceived support from the supervising administrator was the dependent variable.

The data were screened for outliers prior to testing the statistical assumptions in the same manner described in research question 1. The participants' dependent variable scores were standardized by group, and the resulting *z*-scores were utilized to identify outliers in the data. This process did not reveal any outliers in the data.

The independent samples *t*-test assumptions were assessed in the same manner described in research question 1. Levene's test was significant, indicating the two groups had unequal error variances, $F = 8.13, p = .006$. The degrees of freedom were adjusted to compensate for the heterogeneity of variances.

The means and standard deviations are listed in Table 8. The *t*-test (Table 9) revealed a significant difference between incentive grant teachers with less than 10 years of experience and incentive grant teachers with 10 or more years of experience on their perceived level of administrative support, $t(47.31) = -2.06, p = .045$. The incentive grant teachers with less than 10

years of experience ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 1.16$) scored significantly lower than the incentive grant teachers with 10 or more years of experience ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 0.72$) on their perceived level of administrative support.

A Mann-Whitney test was also conducted to assess hypothesis 2 because of the failed normality assumption. The Mann-Whitney test is the non-parametric (i.e., distribution-free) equivalent of the independent samples t -test. The test is appropriate when comparing two groups on an ordinal scaled dependent variable or as a secondary analysis for the t -test when the assumptions are not met. The Mann-Whitney (Table 10) was used as a secondary analysis for the t -test because the assumptions were not met. The Mann-Whitney test did not confirm the results of the t -test and just failed to reach conventional levels of statistical significance, $U = 289.50$, $z = -1.68$, $p = .094$. However, the p -value indicated a trend effect (i.e., p between .05 and .10). In other words, the effect was not technically significant, but was very close to reaching conventional levels of statistical significance. This is of particular concern when the sample size is small for the test as determined by an a-priori power analysis (i.e., less than 128). Sample size is a key component of the t -test and Mann-Whitney test calculations. As the sample size decreases the critical value of the test statistics (i.e., t or U) increases. Small sample sizes can alleviate the potential of finding a significant result. Caution should be taken when interpreting these results because of the relatively small sample size. The researcher partially rejects the null hypothesis.

Table 8

Mean & Standard Deviations for Research Question 2

Teaching Experience	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE Mean</i>
Less than 10 Years	29	3.73	1.16	0.22
10 or More Years	27	4.26	0.72	0.14

Table 9

Test Statistics for Research Question 2

<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Mean Difference</i>	<i>SE Difference</i>	<i>95% CI of the Difference</i>	
					<i>Lower Bound</i>	<i>Upper Bound</i>
-2.06	47.31	.045	-0.53	0.26	-1.05	-0.01

Table 10

Mann-Whitney Test Statistics for Research Question 2

<i>Mann-Whitney U</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
289.50	-1.68	.094

Research Question 3: Do teachers who have 10 or more years of experience who are participating in an incentive grant program believe they have greater support from their supervising administrator than teachers who have less than 10 years of experience who are not participating in the incentive grant program within the same secondary schools?

H₀: There will be no statistically significant difference between the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of an incentive grant teacher who

has 10 or more years of experience and the perception of the level of support provided by the supervising administrator of a non-incentive grant teacher who has less than 10 years of experience within the same secondary schools.

An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between incentive grant teachers who have 10 or more years of experience and non-incentive grant teachers who have less than 10 years of experience on their perceived level of support from the supervising administrator. Teacher group (non-incentive grant teachers with less than 10 years of experience vs. incentive grant teachers with 10 or more years of experience) was the between-subjects independent variable, and teachers' perceived support from the supervising administrator was the dependent variable. The data screening process did not reveal any outliers in the data. Levene's test was not significant, indicating the two groups had equal error variances, $F = 0.65$, $p = .426$.

The means and standard deviations are listed in Table 11. The *t*-test (Table 12) failed to reveal a significant difference between incentive grant teachers with 10 or more years of experience and non-incentive grant teachers with less than 10 years of experience on their perceived level of administrative support, $t(39) = -1.49$, $p = .144$. The incentive grant teachers with 10 or more years of experience ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 0.72$) did not significantly differ than the non-incentive grant teachers with less than 10 years of experience ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 4.26$) on their perceived level of administrative support. Thus, the researcher fails to reject the null hypothesis. Caution should be taken when making interpretations from these results due to the low sample size.

Table 11

Mean & Standard Deviations for Research Question 3

Teacher Group	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE Mean</i>
Non-Incentive Grant with Less than 10 Years of Experience	14	3.92	0.64	0.17
Incentive Grant with 10 or More Years of Experience	27	4.26	0.72	0.14

Table 12

Test Statistics for Research Question 3

<i>T</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Mean Difference</i>	<i>SE Difference</i>	<i>95% CI of the Difference</i>	
					<i>Lower Bound</i>	<i>Upper Bound</i>
-1.49	39	.144	-0.34	0.23	-0.81	0.12

Table 13

Descriptive Statistics for Administrative Support Scale Items

Item	<i>n</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
My Advising Supervisor...					
provides me with the materials I need to do my job properly.	91	1.00	5.00	3.98	1.14
provides me with the equipment I need to do my job.	91	1.00	5.00	3.84	1.26
provides me with the financial support I need to do my job.	91	1.00	5.00	2.97	1.23
involves me in decisions related to me and my job.	91	1.00	5.00	3.81	1.24
provides opportunities for professional collaboration.	91	1.00	5.00	3.91	1.06
has my respect and trust.	91	1.00	5.00	4.02	1.22
interacts with me frequently.	91	1.00	5.00	3.91	1.16
attends to my feelings and needs.	91	1.00	5.00	3.77	1.21
recognizes and appreciates the work I do.	91	1.00	5.00	4.03	1.26
provides current information about teaching learning.	91	1.00	5.00	3.76	1.12
provides helpful feedback about my teaching.	91	1.00	5.00	4.00	1.15
informs me about agency and/or school policies.	91	1.00	5.00	4.22	0.92
supports my actions and ideas.	91	1.00	5.00	4.02	1.12
explains reasons behind programs and practices.	91	1.00	5.00	4.05	1.08
helps me solve problems.	91	1.00	5.00	4.00	1.11
supports me with my interactions and practices.	91	1.00	5.00	3.99	1.10
understands my program and what I do.	91	1.00	5.00	3.96	1.24
provides leadership about what we are trying to achieve.	91	1.00	5.00	4.10	1.08
provides appropriate assistance when a student's behavior requires it.	91	1.00	5.00	4.02	1.01

encourages me to try new ideas.	91	1.00	5.00	4.04	1.05
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CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

The intent of Chapter Five is to summarize and provide an overview of the results of this quantitative research study. This will include a review of the findings, the relevance of the study to current literature, and recommendations for future studies in this area. This chapter will include the following: purpose of the study, statement of the problem, summary of the results, limitations of the study, discussion of the findings, and recommendations for future research.

Purpose and Problem Statement

The purpose of this study was to examine whether teachers perceive more administrative support while participating in an incentive grant program. It is critical to examine this issue to determine whether the process of the incentive grant and all of what it consists of, makes a difference on how teachers perceive administrative support. There is a lack of research and a lack of evidence that show a correlation between teachers' perceptions of administrative support in relation to an incentive grant program. With incentive grant programs being implemented worldwide into businesses and educational facilities, it is necessary to complete further research in the area of perceived administrative support from teachers.

Research Questions

The following are the research questions for this study:

Research Question 1: Do teachers who are participating in an incentive grant program perceive they have greater support from their supervising administrator than the teachers who are not participating in the incentive grant program within the same secondary schools?

Research Question 2: Do teachers who have 10 or more years of experience who are participating in an incentive grant program perceive they have greater support from their

supervising administrator than teachers who have less than 10 years of experience who are also participating in the incentive grant program within the same secondary schools?

Research Question 3: Do teachers who have 10 or more years of experience who are participating in an incentive grant program perceive they have greater support from their supervising administrator than teachers who have less than 10 years of experience who are not participating in the incentive grant program within the same secondary schools?

Summary of Results

This study focused on the level of support from supervising administrators as perceived by their teachers in incentive grant schools. Incentive grant status (incentive grant vs. non-incentive grant) was the between-subjects independent variable. Teachers' perceived support from the supervising administrator was the dependent variable. An independent samples *t*-test (Howell, 2010) was conducted to determine if a statistically significant difference existed between incentive grant teachers and non-incentive grant teachers on their perceived level of support from the supervising administrator.

The *t*-test failed to reveal a significant difference between incentive grant teachers and non-incentive grant teachers on their perceived level of administrative support, $t(89) = 0.90, p = .373$. The incentive grant teachers ($M = 3.99, SD = 1.00$) did not significantly differ from the non-incentive grant teachers ($M = 3.81, SD = 0.80$) on their perceived level of administrative support.

Levene's test was utilized to assess the equal error variances assumption. The results of Levene's test were not statistically significant $F = 2.72, p = .103$. Thus, the researcher failed to reject null hypothesis one.

For the second research question, an independent samples *t*-test (Howell, 2010) was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between incentive grant teachers who have more than 10 years of experience and incentive grant teachers who have less than 10 years of experience on their perceived level of support from the supervising administrator. The data were screened for outliers prior to testing the statistical assumptions in the same manner described in research question one. This process did not reveal any outliers in the data.

The independent samples *t*-test assumptions were assessed in the same manner described in research question one. Levene's test was significant, indicating the two groups had unequal error variances, $F = 8.13$, $p = .006$. The degrees of freedom were adjusted to compensate for the heterogeneity of variances.

The *t*-test revealed a significant difference between incentive grant teachers with less than 10 years of experience and incentive grant teachers with 10 or more years of experience on their perceived level of administrative support, $t(47.31) = -2.06$, $p = .045$. The incentive grant teachers with less than 10 years of experience ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 1.16$) scored significantly lower than the incentive grant teachers with 10 or more years of experience ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 0.72$) on their perceived level of administrative support.

A Mann-Whitney test was also conducted to assess hypothesis two because of the failed normality assumption. The Mann-Whitney was used as a secondary analysis for the *t*-test because the assumptions were not met. The Mann-Whitney test did not confirm the results of the *t*-test and failed to reach conventional levels of statistical significance, $U = 289.50$, $z = -1.68$, $p = .094$. Thus, the researcher partially rejects the null hypothesis.

For the third research question, an independent samples *t*-test (Howell, 2010) was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between incentive grant teachers who have 10 or more years of experience and non-incentive grant teachers who have less than 10 years of experience on their perceived level of support from the supervising administrator. The data screening process did not reveal any outliers in the data. Levene's test was not significant, indicating the two groups had equal error variances, $F = 0.65$, $p = .426$.

The *t*-test failed to reveal a significant difference between incentive grant teachers with 10 or more years of experience and non-incentive grant teachers with less than 10 years of experience on their perceived level of administrative support, $t(39) = -1.49$, $p = .144$. The incentive grant teachers with 10 or more years of experience ($M = 4.26$, $SD = 0.72$) did not significantly differ than the non-incentive grant teachers with less than 10 years of experience ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 4.26$) on their perceived level of administrative support. Thus, the researcher fails to reject the null hypothesis.

Discussion of the Findings

The results of the study lead to various discussions and future research. Within the study, 91 of the potential 175 participants responded for a 52.0% response rate. Babbie, (1990, p. 181) suggested that "a response rate of at least 50% is generally considered adequate for analysis and reporting..." As part of the findings, it should be noted that 56 respondents were participants in the incentive grant, while 35 of the respondents were not. For the respondents who were participants in the incentive grant, there were 57 responses indicating that the teachers had been supervised by the same administrator throughout the grant. It should be noted that it is probable that one (1) respondent accidentally responded to question 25 in the survey regarding having the same administrator that was not actually a participant in the incentive grant program.

The results of the study demonstrate that overall, teachers who were a part of the incentive grant and teachers who are not part of the incentive grant view administrative support almost equally. For the incentive grant teachers, $M = 3.99$ and for the non-incentive grant teachers, $M = 3.81$. While incentive grant teachers overall had a more positive perception of administrative support, the difference was not statistically significant. Thus, the researcher failed to reject null hypothesis one.

In the second research question, the researcher narrowed the respondents significantly by comparing two groups of teachers; those who had 10 or more years of experience teaching in the incentive group and those who had 10 or more years of experience teaching who were not in the incentive group. Similar to the first research question, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted to determine statistically significant difference among the two groups of teachers. Levene's test was significant and therefore, the degrees of freedom were adjusted to compensate for the heterogeneity of variances. The incentive grant teachers with less than 10 years of experience scored significantly lower ($M = 3.73$) than the incentive grant teachers with 10 or more years of experience ($M = 4.26$). The Mann-Whitney test was used as a secondary analysis for the *t*-test because the assumptions were not met. The Mann-Whitney test did not confirm the results of the *t*-test and failed to reach conventional levels of statistical significance. Thus, the researcher partially rejects the null hypothesis.

Although the researcher partially rejects the null hypothesis, based on the trend effect, a trend towards significance exists. There is a difference of 0.53 between the two means. A trend effect occurs when the *p* value is in between .05 and 1.0. In this particular set of data, $p = .094$. The researcher believes that with a higher sample size, that the Mann-Whitney would show statistical significance, similar to the results of the independent samples *t*-test.

For the third research question, the researcher grouped teachers based on specific qualifications. Teachers were divided into two groups, those who were an incentive grant teacher and had 10 or more years of experience teaching and teachers who were non-incentive grant and had less than 10 years of experience teaching.

Similar to the previous two research questions, the researcher conducted an independent samples *t*-test. Levene's test was not significant, indicating the two groups had equal variances. The *t*-test conducted showed that there was not a statistically significant difference in the two groups. The incentive grant teachers with 10 or more years of experience ($M = 4.26$) was 0.34 higher than the non-incentive grant teachers with less than 10 years of experience ($M = 3.92$). Thus, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis.

The researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis, but firmly believes that sample size is the reason for failing to reject the null hypothesis. The differences on the surface are significant based on the previous two research questions and the trends showed based on the subjects chosen. Subjects were chosen on the polar end of the spectrum for each group. The researcher believes that if the sample group was larger, that a statistically significant difference would result. The non-incentive group with less than 10 years of experience had 14 respondents and the incentive group with more than 10 years of experience had 27 respondents.

In the literature review, it was discussed that there was a lack of research in the area of administrative support within incentive schools. With the lack of prior studies, the researcher found similar studies in the area of incentive grants from the financial perspective. The schools aforementioned in the literature review all used financial incentives to motivate teachers to higher levels of performance. It is interesting to note, that within research question one, there was not a statistically significant difference between perceived administrative support from

incentive grant teachers vs. non-incentive grant teachers. This suggests that administrative support is deemed just as important as monetary gain. Those who are opposed to performance based pay generally cite that there is little evidence that the system improves schools, also referring to the schools being less effective by crowding out intrinsic awards (Springer, 2009). Andrabi (2008) argues that individual performance awards might reduce incentives for teachers to cooperate and collaborate with one another and reduce school performance rather than increase it. Springer (2009) also suggests that the dynamic between teachers and administrators could be compromised if the evaluation process played a part in the reward system.

Based on the data in Appendix H, we can state that since the incentive grant was implemented, there has been an increase in overall perceptions of administrative support. In 2010, the National Center for School Leadership conducted a survey at both HSA and MSA. This survey had questions that were directly related to administrative support, which teachers answered. Of the 20 questions in the present study, 10 were very similar in nature to the 2009-2010 survey conducted by the National Center for School Leadership. The results show an overall increase in administrative support since the LLIGP was introduced as seen in Appendix H (National Center for School Leadership, 2010a & National Center for School Leadership, 2010b).

In Appendix H, it is evident that in nine out of the 10 similar questions, there have been positive trends since the implementation of the LLIGP at these two schools. The lone exception is a decrease in “attends to my feelings and needs.” The surveys in 2010 were mandatory of every teacher, whereas this survey in June, 2013 was voluntary in nature. Therefore, the sample size was much larger in 2010. Also, it must be considered that the teacher population in these schools is transient, with multiple teachers leaving and being replaced, which will skew the data.

However, overall, there is an upward trend, which rejects the notion of the above mentioned literature that demises incentive grant pay. As Springer (2009) stated, a pay-for-performance program must focus on a variety of variables, not just student test scores.

Limitations of the Study

As with most studies, there were limitations present in this study. The design controlled most threats to validity, although some validity concerns still existed. Threats to internal validity were reduced significantly by addressing the selection threat. This threat was addressed by selecting all teachers who taught in the incentive grant schools as part of the study.

Experimental mortality was present, which can pose a threat to studies that lack large sample sizes. Due to this potential threat to validity, the researcher surveyed the maximum number of teachers possible within the local school district. Originally, the researcher planned to use a random sampling procedure, but elected to use all teachers who taught in the incentive grant schools as participants in the study. Therefore, convenience sampling was implemented, which ultimately increased the sample size from approximately 100 potential participants to 175 potential participants.

It is important to note that the sampling for this particular study could have increased significantly, but was reduced due to the fact the researcher was employed in an incentive grant school that could be added as additional sampling for future research. By adding a third school to the study, the sampling would increase from 175 potential participants to approximately 275 potential participants.

Internal validity was also threatened based on the history of the study. It is possible that a teacher could have a bias against his/her building principal and therefore a negative skew of data could occur. To reduce this threat, the survey was administered to teachers based on their

“observing or supervising administrator.” By including this in the study, it precluded only including principals, but included all administrators, increasing the number from two principals to 10 administrators.

Lastly, it is difficult to isolate perceptions of leadership based on incentive grant teachers vs. non-incentive grant teachers based only on the existence or non-existence of the incentive grant. While it is easy to show a correlation of differences or similarities based on the survey, it is difficult to show that this correlation exists solely based on the implementation of an incentive grant.

Implications of the Study

The results of this study show that there was not a significant difference between perceived administrative support from incentive grant teachers and non-incentive grant teachers with regards to the first research question. The expected result was that incentive grant teachers would feel more supported by their administrator based on the design of the incentive grant program, which includes the rubrics of the Danielson Framework (2011). This was not the case, and the results indicate very similar levels of perceived administrative support from incentive grant teachers and non-incentive grant teachers. It is important to explore the implications of these results and reasons why the non-incentive grant teachers perceived similar levels of support as the incentive grant teachers. Within the incentive grant schools, school administrators participate in specialized training bi-annually, which arguably could improve their instructional supervision, specifically classroom observations and feedback for all teachers, not just the incentive grant teachers. This would explain the positive perceptions of administrative support from incentive grant and non-incentive grant teachers alike. Administrative support and leadership within the building has a strong impact on the success of the school overall.

According to Eikenberg's application of the agency theory to the academic realm, "...adverse selection would emerge if the superintendent could not determine if the school principal had accurately represented his or her ability to successfully lead the campus" (Eikenberg, 2007, p.18). Moral hazard could then exist if the superintendent was not able to identify whether the principal had put forth maximum effort (Eikenberg, 2007). Within a particular school, incentive or non-incentive, the maximum effort must be put forth by the administrators to show support of the faculty.

The second research question focused on only incentive grant teachers and the number of years that they have taught. In the second research question, a *t*-test showed a significant difference between the perceptions of incentive grant teachers with less than 10 years of experience and incentive grant teachers with 10 or more years of experience in regards to the level of administrative support. The Mann-Whitney test did not confirm the results of the *t*-test and just failed to reach conventional levels of statistical significance. However, the p-value indicated a trend effect. The effect was not technically significant, but was very close to reaching conventional levels of statistical significance. The expected result was incentive grant teachers who have 10 or more years of experience would have a higher level of perceived administrative support than the incentive grant teachers who have less than 10 years of experience. One could argue that a teacher becomes more comfortable in his or her settings after teaching several years and perceive higher administrative support because they do not need as much support. The trend effect of the data supports this.

The third research question focused on teachers who have 10 or more years of experience who are participating in an incentive grant program and teachers who have less than 10 years of experience who are not participating in an incentive grant program within secondary schools.

The *t*-test showed that there was not a statistical significance between the two groups. The expected results would be that teachers who were part of the incentive grant and had 10 or more years of experience would perceive higher administrative support than teachers who were not part of the incentive grant and had less than 10 years of experience. It is believed that a larger sample size may indicate statistically significant results.

The results of the current study have immediate implications for various stakeholders including teachers, administrators, and school district officials. The results of this investigation will be vitally important for school personnel when deciding on whether to implement an incentive grant into their school division.

Teachers

This study will directly affect teachers who may be seeking employment or transfers within a division to incentive grant schools. The study showed that there was not a significant difference in perceived administrative support from incentive grant teachers vs. non-incentive grant teachers. The study also showed that the overall perceived level of administrative support was high. With this acquired information, teachers would be more inclined to work in an incentive grant school whether they qualify as participants in the grant or not. A positive work environment that displays a positive perceived level of support makes it much easier to set individual goals. Locke's and Latham's goal setting theory states that individuals who set goals can better discern how best to reach those goals and are inclined to strive harder to do so (Eikenberg, 2007).

Administrators

School administrators of the schools studied may be interested in the results of this study with regards to the research questions as well as the additional data collected from the

survey. The data gathered from this study could be used for informative purposes in relation to staff development needs. The opportunity to analyze individual questions that the teachers answered about administrative support could result in opportunities for self-reflection and growth among administrators. In addition, administrators would see the overall positive correlation of administrative support and be reassured that they equally support all teachers within the school. Administrators who are preparing their staff and stakeholders for an incentive program of any type will be able to access this information to provide evidence of support for all teachers. The support of administrators and their instructional supervision is paramount in the success of a teacher. The lack of studies concerning the effect of administrator incentive grants is ironic, given that "...if the principal plays such an important role in the quality of each school, then the evaluation of the principal is of the utmost importance" (Krompasky, 1995).

School District

The most significant implication of the data would be useful to school districts that are considering employing incentive grant schools within their respective division. The data provided in this study shows an overall positive perception of administrative support from all teachers within an incentive grant school. This particular data is encouraging, as it shows that teachers who are not eligible for the grant still perceive high levels of administrative support. A school division may also consider using this study and the measurement tool to evaluate the perceptions of support of teachers participating or not participating in any initiative.

Finally, Ross' agency theory (1973) could be used to support the notion that teachers' performance may improve if teachers' motivation is aligned with administrative support. "The desire, then, of local school boards to improve administrator performance has emerged, based upon the assumption that as building principal performance improves, so does teacher

performance, and ultimately, student performance” (Deckard, 1986, p.4). The incentive grant schools in this study provided their administrators with various observation tools and training to effectively promote administrative support, which ultimately may be responsible for the high levels of perceived support of all teachers, incentive grant and non-incentive grant.

Recommendations for Further Research

The literature reviewed in preparation for this study demonstrates an ebb and flow in participation in incentive grants throughout the nation. While there are many factors that can predict or determine the success of a school, the leadership is vitally important to the success of a school. As mentioned previously, there are many shortcomings of the literature and lack of research in the area of administrative support in relationship to incentive grant schools. Further research should be conducted in several areas of administrative support including perceived support at various levels (elementary, middle, high); through various years of the grant (year one vs. year two, etc.); levels of administrative support based on test scores, and administrative support based on years of experience of the administrator. In addition, there is room for further analysis and research within the researcher’s study in relation to Table 13.

The perceived level of administrative support in incentive grant schools at various levels to include elementary, middle and high schools should also be addressed. In this particular study, this was not possible, because there was a lack of elementary schools involved, which significantly reduced the amount of administrators and teachers involved. Also a lack of an acceptable number of elective teachers existed. In addition, there was only one high school involved in the grant, so the middle and high schools were combined to make the study “secondary,” so that no one school could be identified. A larger school district that implements an incentive grant program throughout the entire division would be ideal for this type of study.

A longitudinal study of an incentive grant program in a particular district is also recommended to inform researchers on perceived administrative support. Although this researcher can compare the results of this study with a similar survey completed in 2010, a traditional longitudinal study would be appropriate. A study of this nature would also have implications in the area of teacher and administrative impermanence from year to year. With this study, the teachers could be surveyed prior to the implementation of the grant and perceptions of administrative support could be analyzed before the grant was implemented and after.

While Springer (2009) notes that an incentive grant should not be strictly based on student achievement on high-stakes tests, it is of interest to study the perceptions of levels of administrative support based on their own students' scores. This would be another example of a longitudinal study that would identify a correlation between the test scores of students of a particular teacher and the perceived level of administrative support.

It would also prove useful to conduct a study in which the years of experience of the supervising administrator serve as an independent variable. As with any profession, it is generally accepted, that one becomes stronger in their craft based on longevity. Conducting a study that quantified the years of experience of the administrator would provide valuable feedback for the local school district regarding the types of training or staff development would be best for their administrative staff.

Lastly, based on Table 13, there is room for further analysis and research within this study. Within this study, the researcher focused on the overall perceptions of administrative support. Within the survey administered for this study, 20 various questions were asked of the respondents in relation to administrative support. These answers can be further analyzed to see the relationship between incentive grant teachers and non-incentive grant teachers. The

questions are related to factors of the job that are paramount to the success of teachers such as equipment, materials, professional collaboration, feedback, and many others. It would be interesting to isolate these factors to identify the perceptions of administrative support based on each individual factor. This data would be more specific that would assist in the consideration of implementing incentive grants in the future.

School systems throughout the country are continuously looking to improve their practice and performance. In the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Standards of Learning (SOL) tests have become increasingly more difficult as new tests are released. With this, Governor McDonnell has offered incentives to Virginia teachers based on their performance in the classroom as measured by observations and student test scores. As such, teachers and schools will increasingly depend on administrators to provide instructional leadership and support. It is of the utmost importance that researchers continue to conduct research in this field.

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APPENDIX A
Liberty University IRB Approval Letter



The Graduate School at Liberty University

April 25, 2013

William J. Crowder, Jr.
IRB Exemption 1594.042513: Teachers' Perceptions of Administrative Support in Incentive Grant Schools

Dear William,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and that no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101 (b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:

- (2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:
 - (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and
 - (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and that any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption, or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.
Professor, IRB Chair
Counseling

(434) 592-4054



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APPENDIX B
School District Research Approval

 **Department of
Research & Planning**

4/12/2013




Mr. William Crowder
10505 Oak Cottage Drive
Mechanicsville VA, 23116


Dear Mr. Crowder:

The Department of Research and Planning has reviewed and approved your research study entitled "Teacher's perceptions of administrative support". Your study was approved by the review committee with the following revisions and/or conditions:

- Minor revisions to the email inviting teachers to participate in the survey.



Although your study has been approved, participation by individuals and schools is completely voluntary. Reports and publications generated from this study should not identify the individuals, schools, or the division and all research materials should accurately represent the party conducting the study. If there are changes to the methods or materials that you plan to use, you must submit the changes to our office for review prior to proceeding. If you are affiliated with an organization with an Institutional Review Board (IRB), an IRB approval letter must be on file in our office prior to beginning the study. It is our expectation that you will submit a final report upon completion of the study to the Department of Research and Planning.

Please contact  at  or  who will assist you in the process of beginning your research studies in the schools or offices that you have requested.

Thank you for your interest in 

Sincerely,


Director of Research and Planning



Educational Specialist - Research


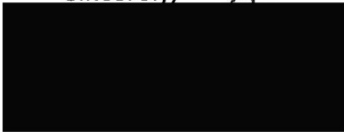
APPENDIX C
Principal Approval from High School A to Conduct Research



Dear Liberty University IRB Committee:

This letter is to inform you of my consent for William J. Crowder, Jr. to conduct his study called Teachers Perceptions Of Administrative Support In Incentive Grant Schools within my school, [REDACTED]. I realize that all teachers in my building will have the opportunity to voluntarily participate in this study. If you have any further questions, you may reach me at [REDACTED].

Sincerely, [REDACTED]



Principal



APPENDIX D
Principal Approval from Middle School A to Conduct Research



April 25, 2013

Dear Liberty University IRB Committee:

This letter is to inform you of my consent for William J. Crowder, Jr. to conduct his study called "Teachers Perceptions of Administrative Support in Incentive Grant Schools" within my school, [REDACTED]. I realize that all teachers in my building will have the opportunity to voluntarily participate in this study. If you have any further questions, you may reach me at [REDACTED].

Sincerely,



Principal



An Equal Opportunity Employer



APPENDIX E
E-Mail Approval for Instrumentation

From: William Weiss [mailto:WWeiss@pcecpc.org]
Sent: Wednesday, August 22, 2012 8:43 AM
To: William J. Crowder, Jr (wjcrowder)
Subject: RE: Permission to use your questionnaire



Sounds fine, BJ, go with the changes.

Hope it works out well.

Send me a summary of your results.

Thanks!

Dr. William G. Weiss
Executive Director
Passaic County Elks C.P. Center
1481 Main Avenue
Clifton, New Jersey 07011
(973) 772-2600 ext. 101
wweiss@pcecpc.org

From: William J. Crowder, Jr (wjcrowder)
Sent: Wednesday, August 22, 2012 7:47 AM
To: William Weiss
Subject: RE: Permission to use your questionnaire

Dr. Weiss,

I hope you are doing well. Last December you had given me permission to use your questionnaire for my dissertation. I am now in the proposal stage and getting ready to defend. My chair has asked if I

could include a couple of additional questions in your questionnaire. I would like to include a question relating to length of employment as well as whether there has been a change in the observing administrator. Please let me know if you are okay with me adding these additional questions. Thanks so much and I hope you are doing well.

BJ Crowder

From: William Weiss [<mailto:WWeiss@pcecpc.org>]
Sent: Wednesday, December 28, 2011 4:19 PM
To: William J. Crowder, Jr (wjcrowder)
Subject: RE: Permission to use your questionnaire

That's fine...go with it! Dr. Weiss

From: William J. Crowder, Jr (wjcrowder)
Sent: Wednesday, December 28, 2011 1:10 PM
To: William Weiss
Subject: RE: Permission to use your questionnaire

Dr. Weiss,

Thank you so much. I am very appreciative of your willingness to let me use this instrument. Instead of using "My Administrator..." I would actually like to use "My Observing Administrator..." Please let me know if this is acceptable to you. Thanks again.

B.J. Crowder

From: William Weiss [<mailto:WWeiss@pcecpc.org>]
Sent: Wednesday, December 28, 2011 12:26 PM
To: William J. Crowder, Jr (wjcrowder)
Subject: Re: Permission to use your questionnaire

Mr. Crowder,

You have my permission to use the questionnaire. Let me know your results.
Best wishes for your success!

Dr. William Weiss
Executive Director
Passaic County Elks C.P. Center
973-772-2600

On Dec 28, 2011, at 11:46 AM, "William J. Crowder, Jr (wjcrowder)" wrote:

Dr. Weiss,

I hope you are doing well and are hopefully enjoying your holiday season. I am a current doctoral student at Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA. As I enter the dissertation process, my topic is “Growth of Administrators as perceived by teachers in an incentive based school.” I will be comparing 2 groups of teachers (incentive based school & non-incentive based school). I came across your questionnaire in your dissertation through Seton Hall University. The questionnaire fits perfectly for what I would like to do with my dissertation, except I will be surveying all teachers; not just special education teachers. I would like to use this as a paper questionnaire or possibly a digital format. Would you allow me to use your questionnaire with a couple of revisions listed below.

- 1) Taking the words “Special Education” out of the title.
- 2) In place of “My Principal...” would change to “My Administrator...”

Thank you so much for your consideration and I hope you have a great day.

B.J. Crowder

William J. Crowder, Jr., Ed.S.

Assistant Principal

██████████ School

████████████████████

████████████████████

████████████████████

████████████████████

████████████████████ (E-Mail)

APPENDIX F

TEACHER CONSENT FORM

William J. Crowder, Jr., Ed.S.
Liberty University
Educational Leadership Department

You are invited to be in a research study of administrative support within schools. Your participation in this research would be very much appreciated. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by William J. Crowder, Jr., Ed.S. Mr. Crowder is a current doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership program at Liberty University.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to examine perceptions of teachers in regards to the administrative support that they receive at their school. The study is being conducted to investigate whether or not teachers perceive that they are being supported at their school, specifically related to the clinical observational process based on pre-observation conferences, clinical observations, data tools that are associated, and post-observation conferences.

Procedures

If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to complete a short survey that should take 5-10 minutes to complete. The survey is on administrative support overall, based on your observing administrator at your school. The survey will be completed on SurveyMonkey.com. The researcher will take precautions to make sure that participation remains anonymous. You will not be linked to the survey in any way.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study

There are no studies without potential risks. However, this particular study has very minimal risks and the risks associated with this study are no more than you would encounter on a daily basis in your profession as a teacher.

The benefit of this particular study is that participants may realize the various attributes that are related between teachers and administrators. The survey could provide participants a new way of looking at the structure of their particular school and hierarchy.

Confidentiality

The records of this study will be kept private at all times. The data reported based on the study, will remain anonymous in nature. I will maintain the data securely and confidentially until the study is complete. The data will be kept in a confidential locked cabinet in my home office.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. In addition, this study is being conducted for research within a dissertation and is not being conducted by the school division. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions

The researcher conducting this study is William J. Crowder, Jr., Ed.S. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at (804) 426-2382 or wjcrowder@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Human Subject Office, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 2400, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

You may print a copy of this information to keep for your records.

APPENDIX G
Survey Used for Research

Part I

**Teacher’s Perceptions
of Administrative Support**
Liberty University
Doctoral Dissertation Research Project

Directions: Below are statements relating to administrative support needs of teachers. Indicate your level of agreement for each statement with an “X” in the category that best describes your response.

“My Observing Administrator...”	Agree	Tend to Agree	No Opinion	Tend to Disagree	Disagree
1. provides me with the materials I need to do my job properly.					
2. provides me with the equipment I need to do my job.					
3. provides me with the financial support I need to do my job.					
4. involves me in decisions related to me and my job.					
5. provides opportunities for professional collaboration.					
6. has my respect and trust.					
7. interacts with me frequently.					
8. attends to my feelings and needs.					
9. recognizes and appreciates the work I do.					
10. provides current information about teaching learning.					
11. provides helpful feedback about my teaching.					
12. informs me about agency and/or school policies.					
13. supports my actions and ideas.					
14. explains reasons behind programs and practices.					
15. helps me solve problems.					
16. supports me with my interactions and					

practices.					
17. understands my program and what I do.					
18. provides leadership about what we are trying to achieve.					
19. provides appropriate assistance when a student's behavior requires it.					
20. encourages me to try new ideas.					
Which three of the twenty areas of support listed above do you value the most from your observing administrator? Please type the three numbers that you believe are the most valuable for administrative support.					

Part II

Directions: Fill in or check the items that describe your situation. This information will be used only to describe the responding group and to compare group responses.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

What is your gender? Circle the appropriate answer.

Male Female

What is your age level? Circle the appropriate answer.

21-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 60+

EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Are you a teacher who is eligible for the Incentive Grant?

Yes No

If you are an Incentive Grant teacher, has your observing administrator been the same since you began the grant? Circle the appropriate answer. (Non-Incentive Grant Teachers may skip this question)

Yes No

EXPERIENCE

How many years have you been at an Incentive Grant School? Select one.

1
2
3+

How many years have you been teaching total? Select one.

1-5
6-9

10-15
16-20
21-25
26-30
31-35
35+

APPENDIX H
Comparative Descriptive Statistics from Previous Study vs. Current Study

Item		n	Min.	Max.	M	SD
<hr/> My Observing Administrator... <hr/>						
2009-2010 Results						
National Center for School Leadership						
I get the information I need to perform my job effectively.	(HSA)	152	1.00	5.00	3.83	1.0
	(MSA)	97	1.00	5.00	3.91	1.0
2013 Results						
Weiss Survey						
Provides me with the materials I need to do my job properly.		91	1.00	5.00	3.98	1.14
<hr/>						
2009-2010 Results						
National Center for School Leadership						
I am involved in the decisions that affect my work.	(HSA)	151	1.00	5.00	3.37	1.1
	(MSA)	94	1.00	5.00	3.37	1.1
2013 Results						
Weiss Survey						
Involves me in decisions related to me and my job.		91	1.00	5.00	3.81	1.24
<hr/>						
2009-2010 Results						
National Center for School Leadership						
I have time during the school / workday to collaborate with my peers regarding curriculum and instruction / best practice.	(HSA)	137	1.00	5.00	3.06	1.1
	(MSA)	99	1.00	5.00	3.49	1.2
2013 Results						
Weiss Survey						
Provides opportunities for professional collaboration.		91	1.00	5.00	3.91	1.06
<hr/>						
2009-2010 Results						
National Center for School Leadership						
I have trust and confidence in our school leadership.	(HSA)	136	1.00	5.00	3.82	1.0
	(MSA)	85	1.00	5.00	3.72	1.1
2013 Results						
Weiss Survey						
Has my respect and trust.		91	1.00	5.00	4.02	1.22
<hr/>						
2009-2010 Results						
National Center for School Leadership						
Overall, my school department does a good job of meeting my needs.	(HSA)	152	1.00	5.00	3.91	1.0
	(MSA)	98	1.00	5.00	3.93	1.0
2013 Results						
Weiss Survey						
Attends to my feelings and needs.		91	1.00	5.00	3.77	1.21
<hr/>						
2009-2010 Results						
National Center for School Leadership						
I am given adequate feedback on the work I do.	(HSA)	161	1.00	5.00	3.79	1.0
	(MSA)	93	1.00	5.00	3.75	1.1

2013 Results					
Weiss Survey					
Provides helpful feedback about my teaching.	91	1.00	5.00	4.00	1.15
<hr/>					
2009-2010 Results					
National Center for School Leadership					
Overall, school/department information is communicated effectively to me.					
	(HSA) 160	1.00	5.00	3.69	1.0
	(MSA) 94	1.00	5.00	3.54	1.2
<hr/>					
2013 Results					
Weiss Survey					
Informs me about agency and/or school policies.	91	1.00	5.00	4.22	0.92
<hr/>					
2009-2010 Results					
National Center for School Leadership					
I am kept up-to-date on school/department level changes in procedure/practice.					
	(HSA) 149	1.00	5.00	3.74	1.0
	(MSA) 90	1.00	5.00	3.62	1.1
<hr/>					
2013 Results					
Weiss Survey					
Explains reasons behind programs and practices.	91	1.00	5.00	3.98	1.08
<hr/>					
2009-2010 Results					
National Center for School Leadership					
School leadership listens to my concerns.					
	(HSA) 134	1.00	5.00	3.87	0.9
	(MSA) 86	1.00	5.00	3.70	1.1
<hr/>					
2013 Results					
Weiss Survey					
Helps me solve problems.	91	1.00	5.00	4.00	1.11
<hr/>					
2009-2010 Results					
National Center for School Leadership					
I am encouraged to try new ways of doing things.					
	(HSA) 149	1.00	5.00	4.04	0.8
	(MSA) 96	1.00	5.00	3.75	1.0
<hr/>					
2013 Results					
Weiss Survey					
Encourages me to try new ideas.	91	1.00	5.00	4.04	1.05
<hr/>					