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CENTRAL FLORIDA EDUCATIONAL LEADERS' PROFESSIONAL OPINIONS
OF THE RACE TO THE TOP GRANT COMPONENTS CONCERNING
TEACHER EVALUATION AND COMPENSATION PRIOR TO IMPLEMENTATION

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education
in the School of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership
in the College of Education
at the University of Central Florida
Orlando, Florida

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2012

Major Professor: Rosemarye Taylor

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ABSTRACT

This mixed-methods study was conducted to explore the professional opinions of educational leaders regarding selected components in the Race to the Top (RTTT) grant concerning teacher evaluation and compensation and the potential impact on student achievement. A target university was selected that had students who were professionals in the field of education in either instructional or administrative jobs and were pursuing their doctorates in both Education and Educational Leadership. A researcher created survey and follow-up interview were utilized to gather both quantitative and qualitative data for analysis.

Quantitative findings revealed that statistically significant differences in the opinions of educational leaders about the potential impact of the RTTT grant teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement existed between two types of professional classification (instructional or administrative). No statistically significant relationship was found between self-reported knowledge of the RTTT and opinions of the fairness of the RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components. Also, no statistically significant difference was found in the professional opinions about the potential impact of the RTTT grant teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement when self-reported school poverty percentage was considered. From qualitative findings, themes emerged surrounding the uncertainty and lack of understanding about the RTTT grant's implementation. Though this study provided baseline data on the opinions of educational leaders on the RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components, there is still much to be learned about the RTTT grant.

Accomplishments like this are only significant if you have loved ones to share them with.

My inspiration to persevere was the following:

My family--the knowledgeable Dad, the caring Mom, and the cool Katie;

My children--the determined Leana, the easy-going Lauryn, and the Brave little Sadie;

And my wife--the beautiful, loving, and incredible Shana.

I love you!

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Accomplishments like this also do not come without the assistance of others. How do you acknowledge the people that have meant so much to your professional, academic, and personal life? I am not really sure, but I will start by saying, “Thank You.”

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Thank you to my Leadership 2010 Cohort. I may be one of the last to finish, but I may be the most proud to have been part of the group. I hope to keep in touch with all of them. I would also like to acknowledge my mini-cohort Janet Kearney and Michelle Robinson. It is their turn now.

Thank you to the students I have ever had the privilege of teaching. Because of them, I keep hopping and I keep moving forward. Thank you to the principals and supervisors that have made a difference in my professional life. They include: Dr. Norma

Masterson who believed in me, Nancy Schroeder who believed in second chances, and Debbie Warner who believed in making a difference.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	x
CHAPTER 1 THE PROBLEM AND ITS CLARIFYING COMPONENTS.....	11
Introduction.....	11
Purpose of the Study	13
Statement of the Problem.....	14
Definition of Terms.....	15
Conceptual Framework.....	21
Teacher Compensation and Evaluation	21
Reform Initiatives	21
High-Poverty Schools	23
Need for Student Achievement at High Poverty/Title I Schools	25
Research Questions.....	26
Methodology	27
Population and Sample	27
Instrumentation	28
Data Collection	28
Data Analysis	29
Delimitations.....	29
Significance of the Study	31
Summary	31
CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE	33
Introduction.....	33
Improving Student Achievement	34
Achievement and Socioeconomic Status	35
Teacher Quality.....	43
Major Federal Reforms to Public Education	46
Title I.....	47
No Child Left Behind.....	51
Race to the Top (RTTT)	52
Florida’s Race to the Top.....	57
Teacher Evaluation and Compensation	60
The Evolution of Teacher Evaluation	60
Purposes and Perceptions of Teacher Evaluation	62
The Evolution of Teacher Compensation	65
Purposes and Perceptions of Teacher Compensation	69
Recent Reforms to Teacher Evaluation and Compensation	72
Summary	85

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY	86
Introduction.....	86
Sample.....	88
Instrumentation	89
Survey of the Implementation and Impact of Teacher Evaluation and Compensation Components from the Race to the Top Grant (STECC- RTTT)	89
Follow-up Telephone Interviews	94
Data Collection Procedures.....	94
Collection of Quantitative Data	94
Collection of Qualitative Data	95
Data Analysis	97
Analysis of Quantitative Data.....	97
Analysis of Qualitative Data.....	99
Summary.....	102
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS	103
Introduction.....	103
Descriptive Statistics.....	103
Categorical Variables.....	104
Continuous Variables.....	104
Data Analysis for Research Question 1	109
Quantitative Analysis for Research Question 1	109
Qualitative Analysis for Research Question 1	110
Data Analysis for Research Question 2	112
Quantitative Analysis for Research Question 2	112
Qualitative Analysis for Research Question 2	117
Data Analysis for Research Question 3	120
Quantitative Analysis for Research Question 3	120
Qualitative Analysis for Research Question 3	123
Data Analysis for Research Question 4	126
Quantitative Analysis for Research Question 4	126
Qualitative Analysis for Research Question 4	128
Additional Analyses.....	130
Summary.....	135
CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	137
Introduction.....	137
Purpose of the Study	137
Population, Research Design, and Instrumentation	137
Summary and Discussion of the Findings	138
Research Question 1	139
Research Question 2	140

Research Question 3	143
Research Question 4	145
Implications for Policy and Practice	146
Recommendations for Further Research.....	149
Limitations of the Study.....	151
Conclusion	151
APPENDIX A ELECTRONIC SURVEY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT OF TEACHER EVALUATION AND COMPENSATION ELEMENTS FROM THE RACE TO THE TOP GRANT	153
APPENDIX B COLLEGE OF EDUCATION PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH.....	159
APPENDIX C INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL.....	162
APPENDIX D INFORMED CONSENT.....	164
APPENDIX E INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.....	168
APPENDIX F ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DATA.....	175
LIST OF REFERENCES	180

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Research Questions, Data Sources, and Statistical Tests.....	30
Table 2	Summary of Literature Reviewed: Improving Student Achievement	46
Table 3	Summary of Literature Reviewed: Major Federal Reforms to Public Education	59
Table 4	Summary of Literature Reviewed: Teacher Evaluation and Compensation.....	84
Table 5	Research Questions and Follow-up Interview Questions	101
Table 6	Research Questions, Independent Variables, and Dependent Variables	105
Table 7	Descriptive Statistics for Selected RTTT Components: Impact on Student Achievement	107
Table 8	Descriptive Statistics for Selected RTTT Components: Impact on Student Achievement at High-Poverty Schools	108
Table 9	Group Statistics for T-Tests: Potential Impact of RTTT Components by Professional Classification.....	115
Table 10	Independent Samples T-Test: Potential Impact of RTTT Components by Professional Classification.....	116
Table 11	Potential Impact of Components on Student Achievement by School Poverty Level	122
Table 12	Potential Impact of Components on Student Achievement at High Poverty Schools by School Poverty Level	127
Table 13	RTTT Components' Potential Impact on Student Achievement by Ed. D. Program.....	132
Table 14	Independent Samples T-Test: Potential Impact of RTTT Components by Ed. D. Program.....	133

CHAPTER 1 THE PROBLEM AND ITS CLARIFYING COMPONENTS

Introduction

To the National Urban League and to the nation, President Obama said:

“So, even as we applaud teachers for their hard work, we’ve got to make sure we’re seeing results in the classroom. If we’re not seeing results in the classroom, then let’s work with teachers to help them become more effective. If that doesn’t work, let’s find the right teacher for that classroom” (Obama, 2010).

School reform can come from many sources, such as legislators and politicians.

When these groups initiate reform, it can be met with a very mixed reception as evidenced in the 2010 proposed legislation, Senate Bill 6 (SB 6), in the Florida legislature. Senate Bill 6 brought merit pay and the elimination of teacher tenure into the consciousness of educators across the state and garnered tremendous opposition (Sampson & Silva, 2010).

The veto of the SB 6 by then Governor Charlie Crist would have ended this debate if Florida had not secured \$700 million in the federal Race to the Top (RTTT) grant competition. In part, the funds were to be used to develop merit-pay plans and other elements that would tie teacher evaluations to test scores (Postal, 2010).

In addition, under the provisions of RTTT, participating schools were required to design and implement new performance evaluation systems for teachers and to utilize the evaluations to determine compensation, promotion and retention of teachers. Student achievement and growth data needed to account for 50% of the combined teacher evaluation. In addition, school districts were to include in the evaluation principals’

observations of the teachers' use of effective practices as well as one additional metric of the school district's choosing (Florida Department of Education, 2010b). Through the requirements of this grant, school districts would link student achievement and student growth data along with effectiveness demonstrated by annual evaluations to salaries. Also, school districts would offer differentiated pay based on job performance difficulties such as working in high-poverty, high minority, or persistently lowest-achieving schools according to the Florida Department of Education's list of schools. (Florida Department of Education, 2010a).

All school reform, including legislation like SB 6 and federal grants like RTTT, had the improvement of student learning and achievement at their core. Evaluation and compensation reforms may have a different impact on teachers in Title I schools (schools which have a high percentage of students who are economically disadvantaged). This emphasis is due to extensive research related to the catastrophic results that being economically disadvantaged may have on a student's educational achievement and life choices (Berliner, 2006; Sirin, 2005).

Because of the relationship between economic status and student achievement, a moral obligation exists to address the needs of students from poverty (Fullan, 2006). The field of education has recognized the plight of high-poverty/Title I schools for decades (Berliner, 2006; Borman, 2003; Caldas & Bankston, 1997; Sirin, 2005). Schools with higher percentages of economically disadvantaged students are eligible to receive additional funding from the federal government (Borman, 2003). If teacher evaluation and compensation are to be based on student achievement scores, a concern of educational leaders, both administrative and instructional, could be staffing highly

effective teachers at schools that have these higher percentages of economically disadvantaged students.

How new policies developed to improve student achievement by changing compensation for teachers will affect consistent student growth is yet to be determined. Compensating teachers in alternative ways to the commonly used scale based on years of experience and educational degrees has been common practice (Buddin, McCaffrey, Kirby, & Xia, 2007; Goldhaber, DeArmond, Player, & Choi, 2008; Odden, 2000). However, more study is needed on how the changes to evaluation and compensation would affect the continuity of instruction of students at schools with higher percentages of economically deprived students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the professional opinions of educational leaders (instructional and administrative) regarding selected components in the Race to the Top grant concerning teacher evaluation and compensation and the performance of students at schools with a percentage of economically disadvantaged students of 75% or higher. Opinions of central Florida school leaders pursuing advanced degrees were sought as to whether the changes anticipated to be implemented as a part of the RTTT grant would help in improving the learning or academic growth of students at schools. The professional opinions of educators at different types of schools were sought to help understand the different challenges the new elements found in the RTTT grant would have in helping to improve student achievement. By conducting this study, the researcher intended to add to the field of knowledge concerning the types of policy and

reform that can lead to increased student learning at all schools, and in particular, high-poverty schools.

Statement of the Problem

The effects of being economically disadvantaged on student achievement are well documented (Berliner, 2006; Borman, 2003; Sirin, 2005). With quality instruction from teachers, students from schools with higher percentages of economically disadvantaged students can reach higher levels of academic success and achievement gaps can be closed (Borman, 2003). The increasing demands of accountability to improve teaching and to turnaround the lowest performing schools found in the Florida's RTTT grant created the need to understand the professional opinions related to the required components of teacher evaluation and teacher compensation.

Because Florida educators are responsible for both increased accountability in student achievement and evaluating teachers, their input into how reform elements found in the changes required by the RTTT grant were perceived to affect instruction is important. More research was needed to learn of educators' professional opinions on policy components that they believed would truly impact student learning positively. Comparing and contrasting the opinions of both instructional and administrative educational leaders from schools with different poverty rates regarding the RTTT components was intended to provide much needed insight for the direction of educational reform policy in the future.

Definition of Terms

The following terms and phrases were defined for the purposes of this research and to aid in conducting the study.

Administrative. For purposes of this study, administrative pertains to non-instructional positions such as principal, assistant principal, director, and district-level administrator.

Compensation. For purposes of this study, compensation refers to the teacher pay and the benefits.

Common set of K-12 standards. “A set of content standards that define what students must know and be able to do and that are substantially identical across all States in a consortium. A State may supplement the common standards with additional standards, provided that the additional standards do not exceed 15 percent of the State's total standards for that content area” (Florida Department of Education, n.d.).

Economically disadvantaged students. “All students eligible for free or reduced price lunch prior to testing are considered to be economically disadvantaged” (Florida Department of Education, 2010c).

Effective principal. “A principal whose students, overall and for each subgroup, achieve acceptable rates (e.g., at least one grade level in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that principal effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, high school graduation rates and college enrollment rates, as well as evidence of providing supportive teaching and learning conditions, strong instructional leadership,

and positive family and community engagement” (Florida Department of Education, n.d.).

Effective teacher. “A teacher whose students achieve acceptable rates (e.g., at least one grade level in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance” (Florida Department of Education, n.d.)

Evaluation. For purposes of meeting state requirements for evaluation systems, “evaluation means an assessment of an individual’s performance over a period of time based on evidence from multiple measures that reflect the performance level of the individual’s work on student learning, practice, and job responsibilities” (Florida Department of Education, 2012).

Formative assessment. “Assessment questions, tools, and processes that are embedded in instruction and are used by teachers and students to provide timely feedback for purposes of adjusting instruction to improve learning” (Florida Department of Education, n.d.).

Highly effective principal. “A principal whose students, overall and for each subgroup, achieve high rates (e.g., one and one-half grade levels in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that principal effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, high school graduation rates; college enrollment rates; evidence of providing supportive

teaching and learning conditions, strong instructional leadership, and positive family and community engagement; or evidence of attracting, developing, and retaining high numbers of effective teachers” (Florida Department of Education, n.d.).

Highly effective teacher. “A teacher whose students achieve high rates (e.g., one and one-half grade levels in an academic year) of student growth (as defined in this notice). States, LEAs, or schools must include multiple measures, provided that teacher effectiveness is evaluated, in significant part, by student growth (as defined in this notice). Supplemental measures may include, for example, multiple observation-based assessments of teacher performance or evidence of leadership roles (which may include mentoring or leading professional learning communities) that increase the effectiveness of other teachers in the school or LEA” (Florida Department of Education, n.d.).

High-need students. “Students at risk of educational failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who are living in poverty, who attend high-minority schools (as defined in this notice), who are far below grade level, who have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma, who are at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time, who are homeless, who are in foster care, who have been incarcerated, who have disabilities, or who are English language learners” (Florida Department of Education, n.d.).

High-poverty school. “Consistent with section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii) of the ESEA, a school in the highest quartile of schools in the State with respect to poverty level, using a measure of poverty determined by the State” (Florida Department of Education, n.d.). For this study, a high-poverty school was defined as a school with a percentage of economically disadvantaged students of 75% or more.

High-quality assessment. “An assessment designed to measure a student’s knowledge, understanding of, and ability to apply, critical concepts through the use of a variety of item types and formats (e.g., open-ended responses, performance-based tasks). Such assessments should enable measurement of student achievement (as defined in this notice) and student growth (as defined in this notice); be of high technical quality (e.g., be valid, reliable, fair, and aligned to standards); incorporate technology where appropriate; include the assessment of students with disabilities and English language learners; and to the extent feasible, use universal design principles (as defined in section 3 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998, as amended, 29 U.S.C. 3002) in development and administration” (Florida Department of Education, n.d.).

Instructional. For purposes of this study, this term refers to any teacher, academic coach, resource, or other non-administrative position.

Instructional improvement systems. “Technology-based tools and other strategies that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with meaningful support and actionable data to systemically manage continuous instructional improvement, including such activities as: instructional planning; gathering information (e.g., through formative assessments (as defined in this notice), interim assessments (as defined in this notice), summative assessments, and looking at student work and other student data); analyzing information with the support of rapid-time (as defined in this notice) reporting; using this information to inform decisions on appropriate next instructional steps; and evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken. Such systems promote collaborative problem-solving and action planning; they may also integrate instructional data with student-level data such as attendance, discipline, grades, credit accumulation, and student survey

results to provide early warning indicators of a student’s risk of educational failure” (Florida Department of Education, n.d.).

Performance levels. For purposes of meeting state requirements for evaluation systems, “performance levels means the summative ratings of performance over the evaluation period based on accumulated evidence of proficiency in each of the criteria of the evaluation system. There are four performance levels: highly effective; effective; needs improvement, or, for teachers in the first three years of employment, developing; and unsatisfactory” (Florida Department of Education, 2012).

Persistently lowest-achieving schools. As determined by the State: (i) Any Title I school in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring that (a) Is among the lowest-achieving five percent of Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring or the lowest-achieving five Title I schools in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring in the State, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) Is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years; and (ii) Any secondary school that is eligible for, but does not receive, Title I funds that (a) Is among the lowest-achieving five percent of secondary schools or the lowest-achieving five secondary schools in the State that are eligible for, but do not receive, Title I funds, whichever number of schools is greater; or (b) Is a high school that has had a graduation rate as defined in 34 CFR 200.19(b) that is less than 60 percent over a number of years. To identify the lowest-achieving schools, a State must take into account both (i) The academic achievement of the “all students” group in a school in terms of proficiency on the State’s assessments under section 1111(b)(3) of the ESEA in reading/language arts and mathematics combined; and (ii) The

school's lack of progress on those assessments over a number of years in the 'all students' group" (Florida Department of Education, n.d.).

Professional Classification. For this study, participants self-reported their classification as either instructional or administrative. An instructional position is one that has no evaluation duties and can include academic and subject area coaches.

Student achievement. "(a) For tested grades and subjects: (1) a student's score on the State's assessments under the ESEA; and, as appropriate, (2) other measures of student learning, such as those described in paragraph (b) of this definition, provided they are rigorous and comparable across classrooms. (b) For non-tested grades and subjects: alternative measures of student learning and performance such as student scores on pre-tests and end-of-course tests; student performance on English language proficiency assessments; and other measures of student achievement that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms" (Florida Department of Education, n.d.).

Student growth. "The change in student achievement (as defined in this notice) for an individual student between two or more points in time. A State may also include other measures that are rigorous and comparable across classrooms" (Florida Department of Education, n.d.).

Student proficiency. Students that score a level 3 or higher in reading or mathematics on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test in reading are considered proficient (Florida Department of Education, 2012).

Conceptual Framework

Teacher Compensation and Evaluation

Teachers' pay, unlike pay in other professions, is not necessarily tied to performance. Buddin et al. (2007) wrote, "Traditionally, teachers have been paid using a fixed salary schedule that takes into account years of experience and education—a system that has come under frequent attack" (p. 1).

Often coupled with teacher pay is the concept informally known as tenure which grants teachers property rights to their jobs after a fixed amount of time. Hess and Maranto (2000) defined this in the following way:

Tenure, seniority-based pay scales, strict working conditions regulations, and similar restrictions are a central part of the nation's public school systems, designed to protect teachers from the whims of their superiors and political influence. In most school systems, once teachers serve two or three school years, they are, within certain parameters, largely assured of lifetime employment (p. 51).

Alternatives, or reforms, to this seniority and degree-based compensation system exist and will be described in the next section.

Reform Initiatives

Compensating teachers differently based on student performance and teacher evaluations has been experimented with, but not often used by many school districts. Goldhaber et al. (2008) found two possible reasons for the lack of consistent use. The

first possibility was that many believe teaching is not conducive for rewarding due to the subjective nature of what constitutes performance. Another possibility is that there is too much political cost as many teacher unions hold political power. Unions have been very much opposed to the idea, and policy makers have not often been willing to risk the political fall-out from supporting the idea (Goldhaber et al., 2008).

Much of the existing research conducted on performance pay scales takes place at school district levels. State level policies are even more of a rarity. In fact, Florida had been the only state to attempt state policies as recently as 2007 (Buddin et al., 2007).

Buddin et al. wrote,

Because Florida is the only state to implement a state-wide pay for performance plan, it offers a unique opportunity to examine both theoretical and practical issues related to design, implementation, and eventual impacts of such a system on teacher performance, recruitment, retention, and distribution across different types of schools and districts (pp. 2-3).

Odden (2000), argued that it was time to change salary schedules. His work with the Teacher Compensation Group of the Consortium for Policy Research Education (CPRE) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison resulted in recommendations that changes should be made with care. Odden (2000) reported that his organization's research has moved "beyond the rhetorical criticism made by people who are ideologically opposed to such programs, as well as beyond the notion that just dangling any incentive in front of teachers will improve performance" (p. 366).

Teachers have often traded comparatively low pay for the job security that tenure provides. However, tenure has been challenged along with the conventional pay scales as

protecting ineffective teachers. One example occurred when then Governor Barnes of Georgia enacted the *A+ Education Reform Act of 2000* that eliminated tenure throughout that state. Grubbs (2005) found that Barnes did not justify his policy and that this ultimately led to his defeat in the next election and the eventual restoration of tenure throughout the state in 2004. Turning potential teacher evaluation and compensation reform initiatives that cover large districts, regions, and states into policy has proven difficult. There are many reasons these types of reforms have proven difficult. Goldhaber (2010) wrote, “Still, major hurdles to implementing pay reforms remain, including significant union opposition, the dynamic of local school district politics, and the institutional inertia of public school systems” (pp. 2-3).

High-Poverty Schools

Studies and analyses have displayed the catastrophic effects of poverty on student achievement (Berliner, 2006; Sirin, 2005). Sirin reported in his meta-analysis that the definitions used in research of low-socioeconomic status or poverty can differ from study to study. There is more to poverty than family income. There are neighborhood characteristics, education level, and parents’ occupations, minority status, and location of the schools (Sirin, 2005).

Within the U.S. Department of Education’s Planning and Evaluation Service (2001), researchers also examined national level assessments in order to evaluate progress of students from poverty. The researchers studied the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and reported that “In contrast to the recent state assessment data, longer-term trends in NAEP scores depict widening achievement gap between high-

and low-poverty schools from the late 1980s to 1999” (p. 17). This achievement gap was found to be the equivalent of several grade levels.

Economically disadvantaged students are defined by federal guidelines from the Department of Agriculture. Free and reduced price lunches are given to students based on the comparison of the household income and household size to the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Those making an annual income of less than 30% more than the set Federal Poverty Guidelines are eligible for free lunch, while those making an annual income of 31% to 85% more than the Federal Poverty Guidelines qualify for reduced price lunch (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2011).

According to Sirin (2005), “Socioeconomic status (SES) is probably the most widely used contextual variable in education research” (p. 417). He reported that school poverty rates are often calculated using the number of students on free/reduced price lunch programs because it is easiest to obtain. Despite the availability and easy access, “the use of participation in school lunch programs as a measure of SES, though common, is conceptually problematic” (p. 444). It does not include information on the other characteristics, such as parents’ occupation, neighborhood conditions, and physical location of the school.

Although flawed, identifying poverty stricken or economically disadvantaged students through the participation in free and reduced price school lunch programs has been a practice that dates back to the original Title I found in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). Title I of the ESEA provided funding for local and state education agencies for programs that would benefit students from disadvantaged backgrounds. The ESEA has been reauthorized over the decades and so

has Title I. For a period, Title I became Chapter I. In the mid-1990s, it was reauthorized in the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 as Title I and again in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. Title I funding was also configured within the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. With these acts, the government recognized a need for quality education as a life-line out of poverty for economically disadvantaged students and their families.

Need for Student Achievement at High Poverty/Title I Schools

There are examples of teachers, schools, and school districts that have found ways to beat the odds and record some impressive results in regards to the achievement of their economically disadvantaged students (Borman, 2003). Economically disadvantaged students do have a chance to close the achievement gap. Borman found examples of Title I funds making a difference for economically disadvantaged students. "Whenever an inner-city or poor rural school produces an exemplary program that helps their students achieve notable results, Title I funding almost invariably made it possible" (p. 50). Closing the achievement gap between affluent and economically disadvantaged students is the clear goal of much of the reform movements and initiatives from legislative and governmental agencies (Walsh & Tracy, 2004). In order to close the achievement gap, one must improve the quality of instruction (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Wagner, 2005).

Student achievement has been positively correlated with the effectiveness of the teacher- the more effective the teacher, the greater the student achievement. Sanders and Rivers (1996) found in their study that teacher effectiveness was the factor with the greatest impact on student achievement. The researchers also found that as teacher

effectiveness increases, the lowest achieving students gain the most. Unfortunately, the impact of students having ineffective teachers can lead to years of struggle which can be compounded over time (Sanders and Rivers).

Good teachers do make a difference. Darling-Hammond (2000) found both quantitative and qualitative evidence that improvements in student achievement can be related to policy investments in the quality of teachers. According to Darling-Hammond (2000), advanced teacher preparation and rigorous certification were found to increase student achievement in the subjects of reading and mathematics.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to guide the study:

1. To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between the self-reported knowledge of the RTTT grant and the perceived fairness of the RTTT grant concerning teacher evaluation and compensation?
2. To what extent, if any, is there a difference between the two professional classification groups' opinions about the perceived potential impact of the RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement/growth?
3. To what extent, if any, is there a difference in the opinions of educational leaders who have different self-reported school poverty percentages about the perceived potential impact of RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement/growth?

4. To what extent, if any, is there a difference in the opinions of educational leaders who have different self-reported school poverty percentages about the perceived potential impact of RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement/growth at high-poverty schools?

Methodology

A mixed-methods study was conducted to analyze the professional opinions of educational leaders in central Florida in regards to RTTT grant components regarding ease of implementation and effectiveness on student achievement. An examination of both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics was completed to define and describe similarities and differences of opinions through the use of a researcher-created electronic survey. A follow-up interview was conducted with selected survey participants which generated qualitative data for further analysis.

Population and Sample

The population for this study consisted of educational leaders (instructional and administrative) in central Florida. This population included teacher leaders as well as school and district administrators. A sample made up of educational leaders pursuing advanced degrees at a target university was selected to represent the population in this study. The sample was comprised of 29 teacher leaders, 19 school administrators, and six school district administrators.

Instrumentation

An electronic survey entitled Survey of the Potential Implementation and Impact of Teacher Evaluation and Compensation Elements from the Race to the Top grant was created by the researcher to determine professional opinions of educational leaders of RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components (Appendix A). Content validity was determined by knowledgeable leadership professors at the target university. The professors had an extensive understanding of the surveys and a comprehensive knowledge of the RTTT grant. Reliability tests were conducted on different parts of the instrument. School and district demographic data were gathered that included self-reporting by participants of the free/reduced lunch percentages of their schools. Participants' professional and graduate program demographic data were also gathered.

Data Collection

Permission was sought from the target university's professors to survey educational leaders pursuing advanced degrees in Educational Leadership and Education (Appendix B) and subsequently to the target university's Institutional Review Board (Appendix C). After obtaining informed consent (Appendix D), the survey was electronically submitted to those educational leaders at the target university who volunteered to participate in the study. A follow-up interview to gather qualitative data was also conducted with selected survey participants that indicated that they would be open to the interview. An interview protocol was developed by the researcher and reviewed by knowledgeable university professors who determined content validity for the protocol (Appendix E).

Data Analysis

Appropriate statistical analysis such as descriptive statistics and analysis of variance were used to answer the research questions. Data were inputted into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), and appropriate statistical tests were completed to determine significance of the findings. Table 1 outlines the Research Questions, the sources of data, and the statistical tests used in the analysis of each question.

Delimitations

This study was restricted to examining the relationship of professional opinions of educational doctoral students at the target university in regard to selected components of the Race to the Top grant. Although the students included in the sample came from several districts and institutions, most were employees at school districts and institutions in the Central Florida area.

The selected components of the Race to the Top grant deal only with teacher evaluation and compensation. This study was particularly focused on how these components would affect student achievement at high-poverty schools.

In addition, the responses to the survey were gathered during the summer term of 2011. This was before the full implementation of RTTT and the components concerning teacher evaluation and compensation.

Table 1

Research Questions, Data Sources, and Statistical Tests

Research Questions	Data Sources	Statistical Tests
1. To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between the self-reported knowledge of the RTTT grant and the perceived fairness of the RTTT grant concerning teacher evaluation and compensation?	Survey items from Part B of Survey	Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Independent variable: self-reported knowledge score Dependent variable: perceived fairness score
2. To what extent, if any, is there a difference between the two professional classification groups' opinions about the perceived potential impact of the RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement/growth?	Survey items from Part C of Survey and reported classification from Part A	Independent samples t-tests Independent variable: reported professional classification Dependent variable: perceived potential impact score
3. To what extent, if any, is there a difference in the opinions of educational leaders who have different self-reported school poverty percentages about the perceived potential impact of RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement/growth?	Survey items from Part C of Survey and reported poverty percentage from Part A	One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) Independent variable: self-reported school poverty percentage Dependent variable: perceived potential impact total score
4. To what extent, if any, is there a difference in the opinions of educational leaders who have different self-reported school poverty percentages about the perceived potential impact of RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement/growth at high-poverty schools?	Survey Items from Part D of Survey and Reported Poverty Percentage from Part A	One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) Independent variable: self-reported school poverty percentage Dependent variable: perceived potential impact on high poverty schools total score

Significance of the Study

By conducting this study, it was the researcher's intent to add to the field of knowledge on teacher evaluation and compensation. The research was specifically focused on reforms initiated by the U.S. Department of Education and their potential effect on the student achievement of students at all schools and in particular, high-poverty schools. At the time of this study, the components selected by the researcher were under development in Florida districts. Knowledge found through exploring the professional opinions of educational leaders concerning RTTT components could aid in the future development of the technical aspects of the implementation of the components.

Summary

This study was conducted to add to the field of knowledge that exists for policy-making practices for improving student achievement and students in poverty. Studying the professional opinions of educational leaders (instructional and administrative) on RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components can then lead to recommendations for policy-makers for future implementations.

An overview of the problem and its clarifying components has been presented in this chapter. The purpose of the study, the conceptual framework, the population and sample and the methodology have been introduced. Also discussed were data collection and analysis procedures, limitations and delimitations, and significance of the study. Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature and research related to the problem. Chapter 3 details the methods and procedures used in conducting the study. The results are

presented in Chapter 4. Concluding the dissertation is Chapter 5 in which implications and recommendations for practice and future research are offered.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Accountability measures of the last decade have put an emphasis on increasing student achievement for all students. For decades, educational researchers have studied factors that impact student achievement such as socioeconomics, school climate, student engagement, and teacher effectiveness (Berliner, 2006; Borman, 2003; Caldas & Bankston, 1997; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Fullan, 2006; Lane, Behrstock-Sheratt & Lasagna, 2011; Marzano, Frontier, & Livingston, 2011; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983; Office of Education, 1969; Sanders & Rivers, 1996). Federal reform measures have resulted in actions increasing student achievement in different ways. Federal reforms ranged from Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 which increased funding for schools with larger numbers of economically disadvantaged students, to the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. NCLB required schools to show “adequate yearly progress” in increasing the percentages of all groups of students at proficiency on a year-to-year to basis. The most recent initiative, Race to the Top (RTTT), was a federal grant that was part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (H.R. 111th Congress, 2009) that required states to apply to receive funding to put into effect common core standards and teacher evaluation and compensation changes that utilize student achievement as a primary factor. Other changes to teacher evaluation and compensation have been implemented in varying degrees.

In this chapter, a foundation for studying the professional opinions of professional educators on the teacher evaluation and compensation components of the RTTT grant will be presented. Since a significant portion of the grant was intended to impact the way in which teachers are evaluated and compensated, this study was conducted to add to the body of research on how teacher evaluation and compensation reforms impact student achievement of all students by examining the opinions of educational leaders. It is the educational leaders, both administrative and instructional, who have been charged with implementing the components of the RTTT grant.

This review of literature includes relevant and pertinent information regarding the improvement of student achievement, the major federal reforms to public school education, and, finally, teacher evaluation and compensation. Teacher evaluation and compensation history and purposes were examined along with recent reform components studied and discussed in the literature. Empirical research, journal articles, dissertations, government reports, foundation reports and other contemporary and relevant literature were sought and found through online searches of databases and research at a university library. The research was noted as empirical and non-empirical literature and organized into sections based upon content. More specifically, this review of literature has been organized into three major sections: (a) improving student achievement, (b) major federal reforms to public education, and (c) teacher evaluation and compensation.

Improving Student Achievement

Student achievement, and the measure of student achievement, has been the focus of many reform policies in education. Since 1983, when *A Nation at Risk: The*

Imperative for Education Reform (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) was published, the education profession in the United States has been in the business of getting students to not just learn but achieve in order to fight “the rising tide of mediocrity” (p. 1).

Achievement has generally been defined as that which educators are held accountable in terms of accomplishment. Because of this, it is important to note the difference between accountability and the assessment of students. The Rennie Center (2008) spelled out the difference: “Assessments such as statewide standardized tests are often considered to be synonymous with accountability systems. While student assessments are part of most accountability systems, they are only one component in a comprehensive system” (p. 2).

This section of the review of literature was used to establish a basis for further investigation of improvement of student achievement through compensation and evaluation reform. Literature related to educational achievement for low socioeconomic students and the improvement of teacher quality was reviewed.

Achievement and Socioeconomic Status

In reviewing the literature, it was evident that researchers have documented the connection between poverty and student achievement. Sirin (2005), in his review of the impact of socioeconomic status (SES), reported the effects of low SES on student achievement:

As the main finding of this review shows, school success is greatly influenced by students’ family SES. This finding indicates that our society may be failing in

one of the greatest commitments of every modern society, that is the responsibility to provide educational opportunities for each student regardless of social and economic background. Unfortunately, many poor students come to schools without the social and economic benefits held by many middle- to high-SES students (p. 445).

For educators, poverty is difficult opponent to overcome. Okpala's (2002) research of public schools was to find the factors that were most prominent in the achievement outcomes of students. The researcher looked at many factors including, but not limited to, the educational level of teachers, teaching experience of the staff, and school spending. The results can be summed up as follows:

The results from this paper do show that some of the major factors that are theoretically under the control of a school, such as educational level and teaching experience of staff, and school spending, have little if anything to do with student performance. Family socioeconomic factors prevailing in schools appear to contribute significantly to students' achievement. (Okpala, 2002, p. 907)

Schools that have higher percentages of economically disadvantaged lunch students can be classified and protected under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act which was reauthorized in 1994. Research on Title I has yielded insight into the state of student achievement for students with low socioeconomic status and will be discussed further in a later section in this review.

In January of 2001, the Department of Education Planning and Evaluation Service released "High Standards for All Students: A Report from the National Assessment of Title I on Progress and Challenges since the 1994 Reauthorization." Researchers

conducting this study considered, among other things, both state and national trends of students who attended high-poverty schools. They found contradictions in state reported data and student performance nationally. At the time of that study, only nine states were able to show trend data for their state assessments. From these assessments, the researchers concluded, “Three-year trends reported by nine states show progress in the percentage of students in the highest-poverty schools meeting state standards for proficiency in reading and mathematics” (U.S. Department of Education Planning and Evaluation Service, 2001, p. 15).

The researchers then looked at national level assessments in order to evaluate progress of Title I students. Results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) showed that “In contrast to the recent state assessment data, longer-term trends in NAEP scores depict widening achievement gap between high- and low-poverty schools from the late 1980’s to 1999” (p. 17). This achievement gap was found to be the equivalent of several grade levels.

This contradiction on the achievement of students in poverty revealed the following inconsistent findings and raised concerns about the use of data from multiple sources:

Student achievement on national tests (NAEP) has shown little academic progress for children in high-poverty schools. Student scores have remained flat in reading but are slightly improved in mathematics. In addition, the increased gap between students in high- and low-poverty schools is troubling. These findings are perplexing in that states are reporting significantly more progress in student achievement as measured by state assessments. These inconsistent findings raise

questions about the rigor of the content and performance standards and assessments that states have adopted. Perhaps an independent body such as the National Academy of Sciences should examine how we can best interpret these data from multiple sources (Department of Education Planning and Evaluation Service, 2001, p. 52).

In 2006, the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation examined the results of the NAEP. Each state was considered in this report for student achievement, achievement trends, and reform efforts. Although each state was studied separately, national trends and anomalies were found. It was found that, overall, not much progress had been made with historically disadvantaged students, i.e., those who live in high-poverty situations. The following is an excerpt from the 2006 Fordham report:

No state made ‘widespread’ progress over the past decade and a half, but 31 states have made some progress and eight- California, Delaware, Florida, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New York, Texas, and Washington- showed moderate gains during that time for poor and minority students. Their diversity is striking: big and small, urban and rural, red and blue, and geographically dispersed. Seventeen states made limited progress and another six states made minimal progress. However, thirteen states made no significant progress with these populations. Five of them- Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Wisconsin- are also found in the bottom half of achievement rankings, meaning that their lack of progress is all the more disappointing (p. 14).

Other factors that have generally been regarded by researchers to have an effect on student achievement have proven to be related to the combined elements of being

economically disadvantaged. Wright (1999) examined student mobility. Mobility was initially found to affect more negatively students who moved in district or region than those who moved out of region or state. A comparison of mobility with the lunch program found that “no mobility or mobility into or out of the district was associated with higher economic status, whereas mobility within the district was associated with lower economic status” (Wright, 1999, p. 350).

It appeared that mobility was not as significant a factor in student achievement as was SES. Wright (1999) explained this in discussing the results of his study:

The results also provide an explanation for the somewhat counterintuitive observation that lower achievement often precedes mobility rather than following it; lower achievement is associated with other more powerful predictors than temporal mobility. Students who are likely to become mobile, especially within the school district, do show preexisting achievement deficits. Location mobility, although a significant predictor of achievement, is confounded with other, stronger predictors and adds little incremental power to prediction. The broad conclusion that may be drawn from the results is that student mobility is subordinate in its effects on achievement to the risk factors for ethnic minority status and low family income (p. 351).

Other researchers have also conducted studies on how other factors associated with being economically disadvantaged impacted student achievement. For example, Caldas and Bankston (1997) investigated how student SES makeup of the entire school impacted the achievement of students in poverty. These researchers posed a question as to whether it matters if a poor student attends a school with many other poor students or a

school with many students who have family backgrounds of higher socioeconomic status.

Their results suggested:

. . .that if a young person is from a disadvantaged socioeconomic background, has parents with low social status, and belongs to a minority race, then diversity would be an advantage. The students would benefit from the resources that the more advantaged students would bring to the social context of the school. On the other hand, our findings indicate that if a young person comes from a relatively privileged background, then diversity could be a disadvantage, at least in terms of academic achievement. The issue, in other words, may not be one so much of diversity versus homogeneity, but rather of the contributions of student backgrounds to a social environment that exists independently of any individual student background (p. 275).

There is little doubt that student poverty affects student achievement and success at school. Berliner (2006) compared poverty to the “600-pound gorilla in the room” that is being ignored by many of the reform movements but is seriously affecting American education. In his analysis, Berliner (2006) found the data from studies to support five points about poverty and student achievement which have been paraphrased as follows:

1. Poverty in the United States is greater and of longer duration than in other rich nations.
2. Poverty, especially among minorities from urban areas, can be associated with academic performance well below international means on many assessments.
3. Poverty restricts the amount that genetic talent can be used to overcome disadvantages and achieve academically.

4. Poverty increases the effect of health problems on students which affects life chances and achievement.
5. Reductions, even small reductions, in family poverty lead to better academic achievement for students.

Berliner believed that his research has clarified the next steps for educators. He indicated that there is a need for schools to strive for better teachers and curriculum and that communities should also be held accountable for helping families reduce poverty. “Reducing poverty to improve schooling is evidenced based. . .” (Berliner, 2006, p. 986).

His research findings suggest that there should be a two-sided system of accountability.

The obligation that we educators have accepted to be accountable to our communities must become reciprocal. Our communities must also be accountable to those of us who work in the schools, and they can do this by creating social conditions for our nation that allow us to do our jobs well. Accountability is a two-way process; it requires a principal and an agent. For too long schools have thought of themselves only as agents who must meet the demands of the principal, often the local community, state, or federal government. It is time for principals (and other school leaders) to become principals. That is, school people need to see communities as agents as well as principals and hold communities to standards that ensure all our children are accorded the opportunities necessary for growing well (Berliner, 2006, p. 988).

To find the types of instruction that work best with high-poverty students, researchers have compared the practices of teachers of both low SES and higher SES

schools. Ralph, Frase, Crouse and Thompson (1998) used data from the National Center for Educational Statistics to analyze the achievement of top and bottom schools.

If the top schools have higher achievement than the bottom schools only because they have more privileged educational and economic inputs, and not because the top schools are “better” than the bottom ones, then the wide achievement differences between top and bottom schools reflect educational and economic differences in students’ backgrounds even before the end of the first grade. (p. 2)

Solomon, Battistich, and Hom (1996) studied the attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and classroom practices of teachers in both settings. In their study of 24 urban and suburban elementary schools, they found that “students in poor communities generally receive less engaging kinds of education (such as cooperative learning) and that teachers in such schools see the school climate as less positive and stimulating and themselves as having less influence” (p. 340). Essentially, students in low SES schools were lacking in the type of instruction that would benefit them the most.

Strong instruction and the right sequence of good teachers is the best chance students in high-poverty situations have of achieving. Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain (2005) conducted extensive empirical research of the Texas data system to determine correlations between teacher effectiveness and student achievement. They summarized their results in the following way: “The results revealed large differences among teachers in their impacts on achievement and show that high quality instruction throughout primary school could substantially offset disadvantages associated with low socioeconomic background” (p. 419). Understanding the importance of high quality instruction, it was important to consider in the following section of the literature review

the literature on teacher quality and the factors that lead to instructional excellence in the classroom.

Teacher Quality

It has generally been assumed that teachers can make a difference in the lives of individual students. Laine, Behrstock-Sherratt, and Lasagna (2011) wrote that, “There is consensus among researchers and education leaders at every level of the education system that teachers are the most important school-level factor affecting student achievement” (p. 3). Goldhaber (2010) wrote, “Education research convincingly shows that teacher quality is the most important schooling factor influencing student achievement” (p. 1).

Study has been done on the types of characteristics teachers possess that make them successful in influencing student achievement. Swanson-Gehrke (2005) reviewed research on successful teachers and reported that there were three characteristics that these teachers had in common that appeared to relate to being successful with all students including those of low socioeconomic status. According to Swanson-Gehrke (2005), “These characteristics are: knowing themselves, knowing the environment in which they teach, and maintaining high expectations” (p. 15).

In their report, Walsh and Tracy (2004) empirically researched attributes that could affect teacher quality to help inform better policies. These authors looked at seven components: master’s degrees, experience, education courses, traditional certification, teacher’s race, subject area knowledge, teacher’s level of literacy, selectivity of college, and soft attributes. Of those attributes, the ones that were found to have the most impact

on teacher effectiveness were (a) subject area knowledge, (b) level of the teacher's literacy, (c) college selectivity, and (d) soft attributes. Soft attributes are explained as the intangibles needed like work ethic, determination, and perseverance. Advanced degrees, education courses, and traditional certification were not determined to be advantageous, and teachers' years of experience made a difference only in the first few years.

Traditional certification and coursework as attributes that affect student achievement have also been found to have little to no impact (Walsh & Tracy, 2004; Rivkin et al., 2005). Walsh and Tracy elaborated: "Although tests and transcripts offer useful tools with which to begin a careful consideration of a candidate, none of these tools will ever outweigh the critical but largely subjective judgments that can only be formed at a personal level" (p. 11).

The intangibles that define a good teacher are often difficult to identify on resumes and, therefore, make human resource practices from hiring through retirement of teachers all the more important. "Rather the substantial differences in quality among those with similar observable backgrounds highlight the importance of effective hiring, firing, mentoring, and promotion practices" (Rivkin et al., 2005, p. 450).

Qualities of negative or ineffective teachers have also been studied. Collins (2001), found five qualities of the low-performing teacher. Those qualities included (a) poor quality of instruction of students, (b) lack of content knowledge, (c) poor classroom management, (d) lack of caring for the students, and (e) poor organization and planning.

Poor performing teachers can have a consequential effect on students of all levels. That is why, according to Rivkin et al., (2005),

It is clear that school policy can be an important tool for raising the achievement of low income students and that a succession of good teachers could, by our estimates, go a long way toward closing existing achievement gaps across income groups. (p. 449)

Sanders and Rivers (1996), in their statistical analysis, found effective teachers benefit those students who struggle the most to achieve. “As the teacher effectiveness quintile increased, lower achieving students were first to benefit, followed by average students and, lastly, by students considerably above average” (p. 7).

Quality instruction and teacher quality will continue to be a part of the discussion on how to improve schools. There are some advocates who believe the better the human resource policies, the better the chance becomes of improving the quality of instruction. “Not only would improved personnel policies likely raise the performance level of existing teachers, there is strong reason to believe that a closer link between rewards and performance would improve the stock of teachers” (Rivkin et al., 2005, p. 451).

The literature regarding some of the major federal reforms to education and an examination of literature concerning teacher evaluation and compensation practices may provide further insight into whether the types of policies mandated in the RTTT grant can affect teacher quality and help bolster student achievement. Laine et al. (2011) summarized the debate on teacher quality,

It appears, then, that teacher quality may remain at the forefront of ongoing national policy conversations not because education leaders have been unable to pinpoint a solution, but because they identified too many uncoordinated solutions, each with the most passionate of advocates backing it as the most important

solution. The result is a confused and incoherent policy agenda, along with conflict at the expense of collaboration in moving teacher quality policies; hence the quality of education that children receive suffers (pp. 6-7).

Table 2 presents a summary of the literature reviewed related to the improvement of student achievement. The table contains a summary of the literature related to each of the subsections and the related authors and researchers.

Table 2

Summary of Literature Reviewed: Improving Student Achievement

Subsection Summary of Findings	Authors
<i>Achievement and Socioeconomic Status.</i> Socioeconomics plays a strong role in student achievement. However, high quality instruction and teachers can make an impact on the achievement of economically disadvantaged students.	Sirin (2005); Okpala (2002); U.S. Department of Education Planning and Evaluation Service (2001); Fordham Foundation (2006); Wright (1999); Caldas & Bankston (1997); Berliner (2006); Solomon, Battistich, & Hom (1996); Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain (2005)
<i>Teacher Quality.</i> Teacher quality impacts student achievement. Certification and years of experience beyond three do not make a difference in teacher quality. Policies on improving teacher quality are needed.	Goldhaber (2010); Walsh & Tracy (2004); Rivkin et al. (2005); Sanders and Rivers (1996); Laine et al. (2011);

Major Federal Reforms to Public Education

Race to the Top (RTTP) is the latest in a series of educational reform initiatives that have been implemented from the federal level in order to improve student achievement for all students. It represents a three-part shift in the reform policies of the

federal government: (a) aid and financial assistance, (b) sanctions and penalties, and (c) competition for financial assistance to the states.

In reviewing the literature concerning both Title I and No Child Left Behind initiatives, one learns that federal reform initiatives have had mixed results in making a difference in student achievement. This section of the review has been structured to start with information about the earliest of these federal reform initiatives- Title I, then progress to provide information concerning the No Child Left Behind act and conclude with the most recent federal reform initiative, the Race to the Top grant.

Title I

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) was a first step in providing federal funding or financial assistance to states from the national level for the purposes of increasing the student achievement of all students and, in particular, students with low socioeconomic status. As stated by Murray and Murray (2007), the ESEA was noteworthy in that this represents the first time the federal government provided direct funding to the states to support educational programs for certain defined groups of children. The purpose of the act was to ensure that improved educational services were available for disadvantaged students including some students with disabilities. (p. 167)

Title I of the ESEA provided funding for local and state education agencies for programs that would benefit students from disadvantaged backgrounds including those students from poverty-stricken homes. The ESEA has been reauthorized over the decades, and so has Title I. For a period, Title I became Chapter I. In the early 1990s, it

was reauthorized in the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 as Title I and again in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. Title I funding was also made a piece of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009.

According to the U.S. Department of Education Funding (2009), Title I Part A of the ESEA distributed \$656,225,294 to local educational agencies (LEA) in Florida for the fiscal year of 2008. The same source lists a grand total of \$1,014,802,213 of authorized funds that include the Title I Part A allocation grants of \$656,225,294 and other, additional grants that were up for application for programs such as: (a) School Improvement, (b) Title I Early Childhood grants, (c) Reading First grants, (d) Even Start, and (e) State Agency Programs. Almost \$400 million was up to individual LEA application in 2008.

Further examination of U.S. Department of Education Funding (2009) state funding tables showed that in addition to the \$14 billion dollars assigned nationally for distribution through Title I for the fiscal 2009 year, the ARRA also included an additional \$10 billion for distribution. In Florida, the expected initial allocation was for \$674,793,892 allocated using the standard allocation formula for Title I plus an additional \$490,575,352 from the ARRA. The grand totals for the Title I contribution were close to \$1.7 billion in funds for Florida with over \$400 million available for individual LEA application for special programs such as those listed above.

With these large amounts of federal dollars used for educational funding, the effectiveness of Title I programs have been the subject of many broad-based federal and academic studies over the years. A 1969 report by the then U.S. Office of Education was conducted on the history of Title I programs. Programs were found to have a positive

impact. However, it was reported that Title I programs needed to be planned and carefully designed in order to achieve the greatest impact on the children that need the most help.

Kiesling (1972) investigated how Title I funds affected the reading gains of students on the Stanford Reading test. He found evidence to support the claim that the amount of instruction given by trained reading specialists contributed to gains on the standardized test. Kiesling also found evidence that additional planning time and additional personnel were related to student gains. Kiesling (1972) followed up the initial report with continued evidence to support that increasing the number of trained personnel and instructional time at schools can increase the reading achievement of students in Title I schools.

The earlier investigations of Title I effectiveness revolved around cost analysis. After the 1994 Improving America's Schools Act, the focus of Title I effectiveness shifted toward the following of procedures and the development or adjustments of state standards. Wang, Wong, and Kim (1999a, 1999b), noted in their series of reports on Title I programs that the new law had developed a new trend called procedural accountability. Federal governments and state governments were now focused on making sure students were meeting a set of criteria.

Anderson and Welsh (2000) took this shift one step further by researching state administrators who were responsible for federal funds. They wanted to determine if state administrators had developed new procedures for distributing funds to LEAs and if their actions and state guidelines for distributing funds changed due to the new focus on standards. These researchers found that the collective group was not fully ready to

embrace the standards. There was evidence found, however, to support a movement towards standards-based, data-driven reform by the state administrators (Anderson & Welsh, 2000).

More recently, a shift in Title I effectiveness studies has coincided with the NCLB's emphasis on holding schools accountable for the performance of all groups of students. Borman (2003) provided examples of Title I schools making a difference for students in poverty and narrowing the achievement gap and explained, "Whenever an inner-city or poor rural school produces an exemplary program that helps their students achieve notable results, Title I funding almost invariably made it possible" (p. 50).

Borman (2003) discerned that four elements were critical for Title I to make a difference. Those elements were (a) early intervention by starting students off to school earlier, (b) extending school learning into the summer, (c) accelerating school-year learning by decreasing class size, and (d) revitalizing the school with comprehensive or whole-school reform models.

The National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance (2007) released a report on its assessment of Title I since the reauthorization from NCLB. In this report, several significant findings were cited. Over the past decade, the number of students participating in Title I programs tripled to 20 million participants. Title I at the time of this report accounted for \$12.8 billion in funding. Most of these funds were used to support instruction such as additional staffing. A total of 27% of the funds were utilized for other instructional supports and program administration.

No Child Left Behind

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) represented a shift in federal educational policy reforms. Schools were mandated to meet student achievement requirements for all groups of students or face penalties and sanctions that could have resulted in the loss of funding.

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). . . continues to expand the role of the federal government in the education of all students. All students, including students with disabilities, are included within the requirements of NCLB. NCLB requirements affect every public school in America. The primary purpose of the act is to ensure that every public school student achieve proficiency on identified academic standards and to close achievement gaps that exist between various subgroups of students. Further, all students are to be educated in safe learning environments by well-qualified teachers (Murray & Murray, 2007, pp. 170-171).

With annual measurable objectives (AMOs), states were required to show that schools were meeting adequate yearly progress (AYP). Schools that met those goals were either rewarded depending on the states or, at least, not penalized. Schools that did not make those objectives, however, were given many different sanctions which may have resulted in the loss of some funding.

NCLB also had a provision that attempted to address teacher quality, by controlling the quality of those entering the teaching profession.

In 2001, a minimum standard for what constituted a “highly qualified teacher” was established through the No Child Left Behind Act. According to this legislation, all teachers hired had to meet the minimum standards set forth in the

law: hold a bachelor's degree, have full state certification and demonstrate knowledge of the content they would be teaching. (Education Commission of the States, 2007, p. 1)

Race to the Top (RTTT)

A new shift in federal educational reform policy occurred with the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). “Included within the ARRA's nearly \$800 billion in spending was the largest competitive grant program in U.S. Department of Education history, the \$4.35 billion Race to the Top” (Smarick, 2011, p. 60).

RTTT can be considered a major shift away from many of the policies of the last decade. “In many ways, RTT is an attempt to circumvent the perceived failings of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and in particular the law's reliance on coercive federal mandates and the compliance culture it fostered at the state level” (McGuinn, 2010a, p. 2).

Phase one of RTTT concluded with Tennessee and Delaware declared the winners in March of 2010. “In July, eighteen states along with D.C. were chosen as round-two finalists, and in August ten states were announced as winners: Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, and Rhode Island, along with Washington, D.C.” (McGuinn, 2010a, p.5).

McGuinn (2010a) agreed that

While the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and other traditional federal formula grant programs direct funds on the basis of demographics or

educational need without regard to reform or achievement, RTT supports only those states that have strong track records and plans for innovation and can demonstrate key stakeholder commitment to reform. (p. 1)

RTTT also provided states in need of additional funding for education some “cover” for policies and reforms that may not have been able to navigate through the politics involved. According to McGuinn (2010a), “The program is fundamentally about two things: creating political cover for state education reformers to innovate and helping states construct the administrative capacity to implement these innovations effectively” (p. 1).

In some ways, RTTT has spurred changes to teacher evaluation and compensation by providing political cover to those states wishing to enact major reforms. However, Teacher evaluation thus demonstrates both the potential and the limitations of using a competitive grant program to drive state reform. Even on an issue that was widely seen as in need of major overhaul—and received both the most points in the competition and probably the greatest media coverage—RTT was unable to push the majority of states to enact reform. (McGuinn, 2010a, p. 11)

McGuinn continued,

The Obama administration is, most significantly, leveraging the \$4.4 billion “Race to the Top” Fund to spur improvements in state teacher data collection and evaluation systems teacher effectiveness policies constitute the single biggest category of possible points, or 28 percent, in the competitive grant process. (McGuinn, 2010b, p. 28)

The strategy on increasing teacher quality also represents a change from past policies. “RTT also contains a significant shift in focus from “highly qualified” to “highly effective” teachers in federal education policy and proposes the first-ever federal definition of teacher effectiveness” (McGuinn, 2010b, p. 28.)

Smarick (2011) reported on RTTT’s focus on teacher evaluation and compensation:

It asks states to measure student growth and to tie these results to individual teachers. It also asks states to develop annual teacher evaluations and include student growth as a component of each teacher's official assessment. Finally, it asks them to use these evaluations to inform a number of personnel decisions, such as tenure, removal, and compensation. (p. 61)

The granting of Title I funds to states and LEAs has been the most influential method that the Federal government has had in affecting school policies and reforms. The intention of RTTT was to encourage changes and reforms not through mandates but by creating motivation to receive funding for creating the opportunity for reforms (Kolbe & King Rice, 2012; Smarick, 2011).

The winning states’ plans were diverse in many ways starting with the amount of money that each winner received.

In the end, across two rounds of competition, 11 states and the District of Columbia were awarded federal RTT grants ranging between US\$75 and US\$700 million. Over a 4-year period, awardees will spend US\$4.35 billion in federal funds on reform initiatives outlined in their grant proposals (Kolbe & Rice King, 2012, p. 191).

Nicholson-Crotty and Staley (2012) found that states applied for political motivations as opposed to monetary need or improvement of student achievement.

States that needed the money most, either because they were not producing high performing kids or because they struggled to fund education, were not consistently more likely to seek and secure federal funding. This raises the possibility that the states where a competitive grant for education reform might do the most good are not necessarily the ones that will receive money from that program (Nicholson-Crotty & Staley, 2012, p. 181).

Nicholson-Crotty and Staley (2012) further concluded that states with weaker teacher unions were more likely to receive the aid from RTTT, meaning those states with the weaker unions were more likely ready and willing to make reforms. They stated, in this regard: “Instead, our results suggest that the money will flow to states where constituents have high demand for education and where teachers’ unions are weak” (p. 181).

Kolbe and King Rice (2012) completed a study that analyzed the applications of the states that were awarded Race to the Top funds in both Phase 1 and Phase 2 to determine how the money was being spent.

Looking across states, projects related to ‘improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance’ were a top priority for investing RTT grant funds. In three states—Georgia, New York, and Rhode Island—about one quarter of all state-level spending from the federal RTT grant will be dedicated to establishing approaches to measuring student growth, designing and implementing new teacher and principal evaluation systems, reforming teacher

compensation systems, and using teacher evaluations to inform teacher retention, promotion, and retention decisions (pp. 196-197).

The RTTT grant funds have been judged to be of great importance in building the capacity to sustain a reformed teacher evaluation and compensation fund.

To some extent states' relative emphasis on improving teacher and leader evaluation systems, which is at the heart of the federal approach to improving teacher and leader effectiveness, makes sense. For most states, establishing such systems is a new priority that will require considerable investment of new resources to build the capacity necessary to implement these reforms (Kolbe & King Rice, 2012, p. 198).

Compensation reforms varied across the winning states as did the budgeted amounts to make these reforms happen using RTTT funds. Many of the projects for RTTT were to be paid for with the RTTT awards.

Teacher compensation reforms, however, pose an important exception. Some state plans include new initiatives for teacher performance pay as well as recruitment and retention bonuses for teachers in difficult-to-staff schools and subject areas. Such reforms will require a sustained and, in some cases, sizable financial commitment on the part of states and localities post-RTT (Kolbe & King Rice, 2012, p. 204).

All in all, RTTT included many items that will require a lot of work and revenue long after the grant awards have been spent, and much of the burden will fall to local school districts to maintain.

RTT grantees will make sizable investments in developing and implementing new standards and assessments, longitudinal data systems, teacher evaluation systems and professional development, and turning around struggling schools. But if RTT succeeds, states and localities will be left with a new education program and infrastructure that will require an ongoing maintenance of effort on their parts (Kolbe & King Rice, 2012, p. 207).

Florida's Race to the Top

Florida's RTTT plans include significant differences from those of the other winning states. Florida's grant application, for example, suggests that 18 FTE (full-time equivalent) employees will be employed by the state to implement and administer its RTTT grant. However, the application also suggests that "the state will largely rely on independent contractors to assist with implementing its reform plans" (Kolbe & King Rice, 2012, p. 201).

Florida's plans on compensation emphasized a shift for the entire state. "Notably, Florida required all LEAs (local educational agencies) participating in the state's application to make student achievement growth the most significant component of compensation, ahead of years of experience and academic degrees" (Smarick, 2011, p. 62). This difference probably highlights why political and union support from the state of Florida has been extremely low. "In Florida and Arizona, 8 and 21 percent of local teachers unions', respectively, supported the state's plan" (Smarick, 2011, p. 63).

Aside from teacher evaluation and compensation, Florida expressed its intent to utilize a large portion of its funds for standards and assessments. This may be explained

by the significant emphasis placed on utilizing student achievement as a large percentage of teacher evaluations.

Florida allocated a substantially larger share of its state-level RTT budget to improving the state's standards and assessments. The state plans to spend nearly US\$82 million to develop and implement new formative assessments in reading and math and interim assessments in all core content areas (and Spanish) to support instruction and measure student and teacher progress in all Florida schools. Another US \$46 million was budgeted for developing new curricular tools to implement the Common Core, including a new Instructional Tools database and a textbook demand study of common core and science textbooks. (Kolbe & King Rice, 2012, pp. 198-199)

McGuinn (2012) concluded his report on RTTT with this warning,

However, we should remain realistic in our expectations of what RTTT can accomplish; although the program's approach may be different from that of earlier federal education programs, many of the political and institutional obstacles to sustaining meaningful reform at the federal and state levels remain largely the same (p. 153).

Table 3 presents a summary of the literature reviewed related to major federal reforms to public education. Included are the titles of major legislation, a summary of important facts regarding the legislation and major authors and researchers associated with the literature.

Table 3

Summary of Literature Reviewed: Major Federal Reforms to Public Education

Subsection Summary of Findings	Authors
<p><i>Title I.</i> Title I studies initially focused on cost analysis then transitioned to procedural accountability in the 1990's. More recently, the shift has moved towards studying the impact of Title I on student achievement. Some improvement has been found in the literature, but there is still much to be done in bridging the gap between the economically disadvantaged and their peers.</p>	<p>Murray & Murray (2007); U.S. Department of Education Funding (2009); U.S. Office of Education (1969); Kiesling (1972); Wang, Wong, & Kim (1999a/b); Anderson Welsh (2000); Borman (2003); National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance (2007);</p>
<p><i>No Child Left Behind.</i> Overlap in the studies between Title I and NCLB; NCLB's provision on teacher quality was to mandate that teachers teaching at Title I schools be highly qualified.</p>	<p>Murray & Murray (2007); Education Commission of the States (2007)</p>
<p><i>Race to the Top (RTTT).</i> RTTT has four focal points: 1. Adopting standards; 2. Data systems development; 3. Teacher and principal effectiveness; 4. Turnaround of low-performing schools. A focus of RTTT is a shift from highly qualified to highly effective. It has provided political cover for reforms to teacher evaluation and compensation.</p>	<p>Smarick (2011); McGuinn, (2010a/b); Kolbe & King Rice (2012); Nicholson-Crotty & Staley (2012);</p>
<p><i>Florida's RTTT.</i> Florida spending majority of money on independent contractors. Also, a large percentage on testing. Union support low in Florida.</p>	<p>Smarick (2011); Kolbe & King Rice (2012); McGuinn (2012);</p>

Teacher Evaluation and Compensation

A major component of Race to the Top consists of teacher evaluation and compensation reform. The premise is that teachers who are evaluated and compensated correctly will be more effective in raising student achievement. Donaldson (2009) wrote that ,“Meanwhile, researchers have noted that a well-designed and implemented teacher evaluation system may be the most effective way to raise student achievement” (p. 1).

To understand these components of RTTT and to set the basis for the present research study, it was important to review current and traditional teacher evaluation and compensation methods, the purposes and perceptions of both evaluation and compensation, and to examine reforms that have taken place to teacher evaluation and compensation. These reforms have been the focus of many studies in recent years and will help to establish a purpose for studying the professional opinions of current educational leaders concerning the teacher evaluation and compensation reforms required in the RTTT grant. Odden and Kelley (2002) wrote that, “Because teacher compensation is the largest portion of the education budget, how teachers are paid is key to effective use of educational resources” (p. 2).

The Evolution of Teacher Evaluation

Early teacher evaluation relied primarily on religious leaders and clergy for direction. The purpose was to determine compensation and to make retention and firing decisions. Around the turn of the 20th century, a period of supervision occurred that had its foundation in the scientific management (Marzano, Frontier & Livingston, 2011).

This approach was common until World War II when the emphasis shifted to developing the individual teacher. Clinical supervision was the basis for the next shift in evaluation during which observations and discussions drove teacher evaluation. Developmental and reflective models were then used to evaluate teachers. These models were much less prescriptive (Marzano et al., 2011).

A Nation at Risk and the Rand Corporation study in the 1980s helped to shape evaluation models that resembled those currently used. These models have placed the emphasis on classroom teaching and all the dynamics involved (Marzano et al., 2011). Despite this, in tough economic times the focus is placed elsewhere. As Donaldson (2009) stated, “However, when the economy contracted and lay-offs occurred in many schools, seniority, rather than evaluation results, general drove decisions about who would receive pink slips” (p. 4).

Considered with teacher evaluation, tenure is a concept that has received much attention over the years. Baratz-Snowden (2009) reported that “State laws enunciate processes both for granting tenure and revoking it. Tenure laws are designed to do two things: (1) assure a high quality veteran teaching force; and (2) protect that force from arbitrary dismissal” (p. 7).

As the 21st century began and interest in standards based achievement grew, evaluation practices have come under increasing scrutiny (Marzano et al., 2011). This scrutiny has continued with the emphasis that the RTTT grants have put in place to address evaluation.

Purposes and Perceptions of Teacher Evaluation

In addition to understanding the historical context of teacher evaluation, it is important to understand the purposes of teacher evaluation and various stakeholders' perceptions of these systems. Purposes of teacher evaluation range from selecting, hiring, retaining and dismissing teachers to setting a basis for compensating them.

Bent (1993) found that teachers, principals, superintendents, and school board members all believed that teacher professional development was a major purpose of teacher evaluation. Bent (1993) also found that teachers as a group tended to believe the evaluation process was adversarial and that principals were not competent to fairly evaluate their teaching. On the other hand, principals believed there was not enough time to complete the evaluations in a way that met their intended purpose (Bent, 1993).

Donaldson (2009) found that approaches to the teacher evaluation process such as observation, performance-based assessments, portfolios, and value-added analysis all had strengths and weaknesses. The best approach would combine these systems in a way that would emphasize the strengths of each. Donaldson (2009) noted that all teachers generally receive satisfactory summative evaluations and dubbed this "the Lake Wobegon effect." According to Donaldson, many instruments used for evaluation do not accurately reflect the intricacies of teaching. External and internal constraints affect the differentiation of evaluations and lead to the Lake Wobegon effect. Without specific feedback, evaluations do not improve instruction at schools. In addition, evaluation has few consequences, positive or negative on student achievement.

Donaldson (2009) noted signs that a change in teacher evaluation was coming. Public pressure, union backing, changes in attitudes of teachers, generational changes,

increased knowledge of good instruction, and data collection to track student performance, in her view, all contributed to the changes that may eventually occur. A good evaluation system, as envisioned by Donaldson, must have an extended development phase, use valid, reliable instruments, multiple measures, robust professional development, accountability and incentives, and integration into the human capital systems.

Greene, Huerta, and Richards (2007) also found implications for teacher evaluation in their study.

This research also suggests that personnel evaluation must become more relevant to improving teacher performance by using multiple indicators such as reflective portfolios, student performance data, and perhaps stakeholder satisfaction surveys to enhance the value of the employee appraisal process (p. 64).

The public perception of bad practices can be attributed to so few teachers being terminated each year. The Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) from the National Center for Education Statistics analyzed school district data from around the country in 2007-2008. The average district had 211.4 teachers. The average number of teacher dismissals for each district was 4.4. The average district only dismissed 1.4 teachers who had tenure and three without tenure (Aritomi & Coopersmith, 2009).

Robinson (2009) reported that Texas principals' perceptions of the purpose of formal appraisal or evaluation could be summed up with four themes: (a) ensure quality teaching, (b) ensure the curriculum to be taught, (c) provide support or professional development to teachers, and (d) quality control to eradicate poor teaching. Of the four, quality control was mentioned less than 1% of the time.

Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, and Bernstein (1984) reached five conclusions about effective teacher evaluation: (a) teacher evaluation must suit the education goals, style, conceptions and values of the school district; (b) commitment and resources outweigh checklists and procedures; (c) match the process to the purpose; (d) stakeholders must believe in its utility; and (e) include teachers in involvement and responsibility.

Bastarache (2000) studied the perceptions of teachers and principals in three urban districts in Massachusetts with regard to the purposes of teacher evaluation. He found that there was a significant difference between the two groups. Teachers tended to be much more negative than were principals in regard to evaluation being able to help improve their instruction.

Mobley (2002) studied principal perceptions concerning the state model for teacher evaluation in Tennessee called the Tennessee Model for Local Evaluation. She found that principals believed in the purpose of the model. However, the principals' perceptions of the utilization of the model were found to be negative as the process was deemed too time consuming.

The public has been found to be negative in thinking about teacher evaluation, especially when concerning tenure. In fact, the general public has reported opposed the idea of tenure by a margin of two to one. (Howell, Peterson, & West, 2011)

As generational changes take place in the workplace, teacher evaluation changes typically reflect those changes. Generational differences account for differences in perceptions among teachers.

As Baby Boomers exit, members of Generation X and the Millennial Generation will form a larger portion of the teacher workforce. These people expect to be assessed based on their performance and receive rewards, if they perform well, or sanctions, if they do not (Donaldson, 2009, p. 15).

In order to reach all students, including students with low socioeconomic status, teacher evaluation reform may be the best way to ensure that all students receive quality instruction. “If we are committed to expanding learning and increasing achievement, especially for low-income children and those who are under-performing, we must improve teachers’ instruction. Teacher evaluation holds great promise for achieving this aim” (Donaldson, 2009, p. 21).

The literature reviewed generally indicated that a strong evaluation process will enable many school systems to improve the quality of instruction. And, with the improvement of quality of instruction, the improvement of student achievement will occur. Donaldson (2009) suggested that a strong evaluation system has the following components: (a) an extended development phase; (b) valid, reliable instruments; (c) multiple measures; (d) robust professional development for evaluators and teachers; (e) accountability, incentives, and support for evaluators; and (f) integration within a human capital system. Incentives, and therefore compensation, leads to the clear connection between compensation and evaluation.

The Evolution of Teacher Compensation

In order to better understand the reforms to teacher compensation, one needs to understand its history. Protsik (1995) studied teacher pay and incentive reforms. His

report was a rich resource in documenting changes in compensation for teachers over the years. The compensation of teachers can be documented by many major shifts starting from the boarding 'round system of the 1800s which matched the agrarian society of that time period. Teachers negotiated their salaries on an individual level. The societal shifts of the industrial revolution eventually brought about graded schools, and salaries became more uniform with minimum salaries established. Ranges for compensation were set for different grade levels and teachers' gender and race. Where teachers were placed in the salary range depended on experience and administrator discretion.

Beginning in the 1920s, single salary schedules were introduced and by the 1950s, 97% of all schools had adopted the single salary schedule. This system paid teachers' salaries based on their education level and years of teaching experience. A national call for improving teacher performance through compensation came about in the 1980s after the report, *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education (1983) was released. Experiments with merit pay, career ladders, and other incentive programs have been implemented across the nation. Most of these have been abandoned or deemed unsuccessful (Protsik, 1995).

Glazerman (2004) also completed a study on teacher compensation. He reported, "Since the early part of the 20th century, most public school teachers have been paid according to a uniform salary schedule, a district formula that takes into account only the number of years teaching and the highest degree or certificate received." (p. 9)

According to the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) from the National Center of Education Statistics in 2007-2008, 92.4% of the school districts in the U.S. had salary schedules. The average starting base salary in the U.S. was \$33,600. After 10 years, the average salary in the U.S. was \$43,000. A master's degree increased the salary figures to \$36,700 base and \$47,500 after 10 years of experience. The average highest step on the salary schedule was \$62,200. City and suburban school districts averages were slightly above the overall averages while town and rural school district averages were slightly below those averages (Aritomi & Coopersmith, 2009).

In a similar examination of incentive programs in 1984-1985, Bobbitt (1989) found that 38% of all schools had some type of incentive program. That represented an increase from the 1983-1984 school year when only 18% of schools had a teacher incentive program of some type. One can speculate that this was in response to the 1983 report, *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education).

In some instances, school systems have attempted to change some of the details of their compensation programs but have kept the same basic structure. "On occasion, school districts have used signing bonuses, scholarships, and loan repayment to lure teachers to schools or subject areas experiencing shortages. Otherwise differential pay has been rare in the last 50 years" (Glazerman, 2004, p. 9).

Goldhaber (2010) explained that some traditional compensation have not been effective because the fact that some teaching positions are more difficult and some pay plans do not “admit that some schools and classrooms will be tougher to staff because of the nature of the particular teaching job” (p. 4).

The general public has been generally receptive in the early 21st century to the suggestion that it is the time for change in both evaluation and compensation. A survey of the public found that although approximately 25% of respondents opposed the idea of basing teacher evaluation on student scores on tests, almost half (49%) were supportive (Howell et al., 2011).

Reform to the traditional salary schedule is not necessarily new. In fact, “The recent history of teacher pay reform can be divided into two periods, a reform wave in the 1980s and more recent round of reform” (Glazerman, 2004, p. 9). Ellerson (2009) reported that the focus on salaries has shifted to what’s best for the students and not necessarily for the adults. She explains,

Coming into the 21st century, the shift in public thinking around teacher salaries has kept in line with a broader paradigm shift towards focusing on what happens to children. In this instance, it means that rather than adjusting pay schedules to compensate for inequalities among adults, current dialogue focuses on how the pay model impacts children (p. 4).

Given that, in the opinion of researchers, a shift has taken place in the views of many educational stakeholders in public education in regards to compensation strategies for educators, it is appropriate to give further attention to the purposes behind some of the strategies and perceptions of stakeholders.

Purposes and Perceptions of Teacher Compensation

The complexities of teacher compensation are myriad, and there are many dimensions that can be studied. Literature related to the purposes of teacher compensation and the ways in which plans are regarded was reviewed to provide a firm context for this study.

Greene and Winters (2007) used data from the National Compensation Survey by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2005 and compared the hourly rate of teachers with those of other workers. Teachers were found to make 36% more per hour than non-sales, white collar workers and 11% more per hour than professional specialty workers. Editors, reporters, psychologists, mechanical engineers, and architects were among those professions that averaged less than public school teachers per hour. Pilots, physicians, lawyers, and physicists were examples of professions that averaged more per hour. The researchers also found that public school teachers earned 61% more than private school teachers. Interestingly, common thought among the general public has been that teachers are underpaid.

Reforms are taking place, and Glazerman (2004) discussed their purpose:

Historically, many pay reform programs began with the intent to reward superior performance in the classroom but over time faced pressure to shift the emphasis to more pay for more work or more pay for more skills and knowledge demonstrated by activities outside of the classroom. (p. 5)

Glazerman (2004) identified three different purposes for teacher pay reform. Those three purposes included (a) school climate improvement, (b) recruitment of teachers, and (c) retention of the teachers. He explained that each of these goals can

contribute to the overall teaching performance and that, “Increasing performance can be defined in terms of raising student achievement but also perhaps in terms of improving other student outcomes (related to attendance, dropout rates, and disciplinary incidents, for example) or parent satisfaction” (p. 4).

Goldhaber (2010) explains that merit pay or paying for performance helps to lead the push to reform.

The desire to link teacher pay to performance is but one argument for moving away from the predominant structure of compensation in teaching: the single-salary schedule whereby a teacher’s salary is determined by his or her degree and experience level alone (p. 3).

Goldhaber further explained,

In the absence of pay adjustments for differences in job amenities or difficulty, to the extent that they are able, teachers will gravitate toward positions that are more desirable. Teachers with more labor market bargaining power—those who are highly experienced, credentialed, or judged to be better—will therefore tend to be teaching in nicer settings with lighter workloads (p. 11).

Because the traditional compensation system does not include any link to student performance, many researchers have suggested there should be that link. In their study on resources, Greene et al. (2007) found that “An implication of this study is that employee compensation should be more directly tied to the correlates of improved student performance, if not to the improved performance itself” (p. 4).

One component of the traditional system is rewarding for additional education.

Walsh and Tracy (2004) found that “In fact, the evidence strongly suggests that

rewarding teachers for these degrees is an inefficient use of limited public resources” (p.

2). Walsh and Tracey (2004) explained in more detail:

Policies based on a simple linear growth over time in teacher effectiveness should be reexamined. If student achievement gains are a school district’s primary focus, little evidence supports compensation packages that raise salaries equally for each year of service without regard to other considerations (p. 3).

Perceptions of educators about teacher pay have been mixed and generally divided along positional lines. School administrator opinions regarding pay for performance were studied by the American Association of School Administrators. Not quite half of those surveyed expressed interest in exploring the possibilities of such programs. More than 20% expressed no interest at all (Ellerson, 2009). Ellerson (2009) stated, “Not surprisingly, the number-one motivation to implement a pay-for-performance program is improving student achievement, followed by improving teacher effectiveness” (p. 7). These administrators had opinions on what a good compensation system should take into account. Of all the indicators that a pay-for-performance plan could take into account, school administrators believed that student achievement and teacher evaluations were the top two (Ellerson, 2009).

Stepp (2010), in his dissertation, compared the views of teachers to superintendents on teacher salary components. Superintendents, in general, preferred salary schedules that included among other items, performance-based pay, a link to student achievement, and incentives for teachers working at low-performing schools. In contrast, teachers were found to prefer pay schedules based on years of experience, certification (such as National Board), and formal trainings.

Glazerman (2004) researched the types of reforms that were being used in teacher compensation plans. He cited four different types of pay reforms: extra work, skills or knowledge, filling a need, and measured teacher performance.

Mathematica Policy Research Inc. (2006) revised Glazerman's (2004) categories. The researchers combined extra work with extra skills or knowledge. Thus, the different types of reform discussed in the next subsection dealing with pay reform can be classified into three categories: (a) pay for performance, (b) pay for knowledge, skills and (c) extra work, and filling a need.

Recent Reforms to Teacher Evaluation and Compensation

President Barack Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan adopted pay for performance or merit pay as one component to improving public schools. "Support for this initiative is based on the conviction that we must improve teaching and this can be done in part by rewarding excellence" (Hayes, 2010, p. 79). The literature on teacher evaluation and compensation reforms, however, predate Obama and Duncan. In 2002, Odden and Kelley wrote about significant advances in standards, assessment, evaluation technology, performance knowledge, and a willingness to explore new ideas, stating, "For the first time in over 50 years, there is a window of opportunity for meaningful and lasting compensation reform" (p. 38).

A report based on data obtained from the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) (Aritomi & Coopersmith, 2009) indicated that districts in the U.S. used pay incentives for teachers for the following four reasons: (a) National Board Certification; (b) excellence in teaching; (c) recruitment or retention of teachers in a less desirable location;

recruitment or retention of teachers in fields of shortage. Almost one quarter (24.5%) of school districts paid for National Board Certification, but only 10.2% of districts rewarded excellence in teaching. A higher percentage of districts use financial incentives in field shortage areas than use financial incentives for less desirable locations (15.4% to 5.7%).

City or urban school districts were more likely to reward excellence in teaching than were suburban, town, or rural districts. In 2007-2008, 35.3% of city school districts had financial incentives for rewarding excellence in teaching. The percentages of other types of districts that rewarded for that same reason were far less and not more than 7.5% (Aritomi & Coopersmith, 2009).

One key element too many of the evaluation and compensation reforms are the value-added models initiated at the University of Tennessee as the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System.

This method requires three key components: a testing process which produces scales that have a strong relationship to the curriculum and which produces measurement that extends above and below grade level; the construction and ongoing expansion of a longitudinal data base; and a statistical process that enables a multivariate, longitudinal analysis to produce unbiased and efficient estimates of the desired effects. (Sanders & Rivers, 1996, p. 1)

One outcome of studying teachers with value-added analysis was finding the statistical impact on students assigned to either good teachers or poor-performing teachers. “Groups of students with comparable abilities and initial achievement levels

may have vastly different academic outcomes as a result of the sequence of teachers to which they are assigned” (Sanders & Rivers, 1996, p. 6).

Value-added models (VAMs) have detractors as well. Wainer (2011), “Value-added assessment may yet help us in this task, but there are many challenges yet to overcome before these models are likely to help us with the very difficult questions VAM was formulated to answer” (p. 136).

Finding the right elements and giving them the correct weight was found to be key in creating evaluation and compensation reform. Ellerson (2009) explained that

Successful implementation of pay-for-performance models will require an ongoing dialogue that involves all members of the education community to answer tough questions, covering everything from who is involved and what the model will look like to how the model will be evaluated and sustained (p. 3).

The federal government has also experimented with reform to teacher compensation. One program, the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) was reported on by Smarick (2011), “Since 2006, the federal government has funded a small program to support differentiated compensation, the Teacher Incentive Fund” (p. 59). Smarick (2011) went on to report that, “TIF provides funding on a competitive basis to states and districts that implement performance-pay programs for teachers and/or principals in high-need schools” (p. 59).

These reforms to traditional compensation seem to have support across the political spectrum. Rather than cutting this Bush-era program, President Obama included it in the Teacher and Leader Innovation Fund. Smarick (2011) reported on this as follows:

Though differentiated pay would be a core component of the program, TLIF would also support efforts to increase the number of effective teachers, more fairly distribute high-quality teachers among differently resourced schools, improve educator-preparation programs, develop additional professional opportunities for effective teachers, strengthen evaluation systems, remove ineffective teachers from the classroom, improve professional development, and support school turnaround efforts (p. 60).

Five TIF grants were awarded to an organization called New Leaders for New Schools (NLNS) to implement a reform program entitled Effective Practice Incentive Community (EPIC). NLNS implemented EPIC in Memphis City Schools, District of Columbia Public Schools, Denver Public Schools, Prince Georges County Public Schools, and a consortium of charter schools (Chaplin et al., 2009).

There was variation in the types of awards given through EPIC, the criteria for receiving awards, and the amount of the awards. Most awards were given to entire schools although there were plans to give individual teacher awards as well. Some used a Value-Added Model to determine student achievement while others used different measures. NLNS contracted an organization entitled Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (2006) to evaluate the EPIC program (Chaplin et al., 2009). The evaluation indicated that in regard to compensation of teachers,

Far less than half [of the principals studied] are satisfied with the current system, and most principals in all three partners convey support for linking a portion of teacher compensation, in some fashion, to principals' evaluations of teachers and to student scores from state assessments (p. 108).

In the same evaluation, the researchers found that most survey respondents favored school awards rather than individual awards. The reasoning for this was not very complex. “This orientation toward an emphasis on school-level awards is consistent within principals’ perceptions that awarding selected teachers within schools leads to counterproductive teacher competition” (Chaplin et al., 2009, p. 108). Principals want to encourage a community of cooperation at their schools as opposed to having adversarial relationships.

Springer and Winters (2009) conducted a preliminary investigation of an incentive program in the New York City public schools.

The School-Wide Performance Bonus Program (SPBP) was implemented midway into the 2007–08 school year and was designed to provide financial rewards to educators in schools serving disadvantaged students. The SPBP sets expected incentive payments as a fixed performance standard, meaning that schools participating in the program are not competing against one another for a fixed sum of money (p. 2).

Overall, their results were similar to the results of many studies on merit pay, “We found that the SPBP had no discernible effect on overall student achievement in mathematics during the first year of the program’s implementation” (p. 3).

The Education Commission of the States (2010) identified four current merit pay systems that have been the subject of study. These four were the Iowa Pay for Performance Pilot, the Governor’s Education Excellence Grants in Texas, the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) in Chicago, and the Professional Compensation for Teachers (ProgComp) in Denver. To summarize in regards to effectiveness of the

programs, “Each of the studies of the four pay-for-performance systems found no conclusive evidence to link the new merit pay system with higher student achievement” (p. 3).

There were five plausible; potential reasons as to why there was no link to higher student achievement in the merit pay plans studied by the Education Commission of the States (2010). First, the programs were new at the time of the evaluation. Secondly, implementation of the programs was limited. Also, funding levels may be insufficient, making the awards too small to encourage changes in practice. Finally, these programs may not improve student achievement “because these programs failed to positively impact the way that students learn” (p. 3).

Goldhaber (2010) wrote,

Today, there are a number of major school systems, among them Denver and Houston, and states, such as Florida, Idaho, Minnesota, Mississippi, and Texas, all of which are either currently experimenting with a merit pay program, or about to launch one (p. 13).

Changes in evaluation systems do not seem to be publicized as much as changes to compensation. Nonetheless, there have been reforms. Amendt (2004) found that a majority of teachers believe that teacher evaluation has improved with the passage of the teacher quality law in Iowa. However, that researcher found that only a little more than one-third of Iowa administrators surveyed believed it would improve student achievement. Goldhaber (2010) noted the state level may be the best option for making these reforms. “From a practical standpoint, it is much more likely that the state will have the capacity to develop data and analysis systems that can credibly be used to assess

significant areas of shortage, track teacher performance, and/or administer a differentiated pay system” (p. 34).

Glazerman (2004) has reviewed the programs that have received much publicity. He continues, “Merit pay programs that have received a great deal of attention include the Cincinnati Teacher Evaluation and Compensation System, the Douglas County, Colorado, and Denver Pay for Performance Programs, and the Teacher Advancement Program, which was developed by the Milken Foundation and implemented in many settings around the country” (p. 14). However, “The impact of any differential pay strategy on student achievement remains largely unknown” (p. 18).

Mathematica Policy Research Inc. (2006), extensively looked all over the country to find examples of pay reform to find “the seven most promising candidates from our list of 20 so as to glean important insights into the effectiveness of teacher pay reform” (p. 4). The seven that Mathematic Policy Research Inc. found represented each of the three types of pay reform: pay for performance, pay for knowledge, skills or extra work, and pay for filling a need.

Mathematica Policy Research Inc.(2006) chose the following programs representing the pay for performance type of reform: Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), Charlotte-Mecklenburg Performance Based Pay Plan, and California’s Certificated Staff Performance Incentive Award Program. The Cincinnati Teacher Evaluation and Compensation System and the Missouri Career Ladder Program were chosen to represent the Pay for Knowledge, Skills, or Extra Work types of reform. Finally, the Arkansas High Priority District Bonus Program and the Palm Beach County Title I Sign-on Bonus Program were chosen to illustrate paying for filling a need.

Earlier research on TAP was found to be promising. The authors at Mathematica Policy Research Inc. (2006) wrote,

Both studies found that the majority of TAP schools posted significantly greater student achievement gains than their matched comparison schools. The studies also found that the majority of teachers in TAP schools supported most aspects of TAP. Support for the performance pay element tended to be low; however, the authors noted that the lack of endorsement for this principle did not appear to diminish the sense of collegiality and teamwork among teachers. (p.10)

Mathematica Policy Research Inc. (2006) found no evaluations of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Performance Based Pay Plan. Further research was conducted by Ngoma (2011) who concluded, “Based on the literature that has been reviewed and teachers’ surveys, it appears that a pay for performance is not necessarily the ultimate solution to improving teacher effectiveness and student learning” (p. 68).

The research on California’s Certificated Staff Performance Incentive Award Program of Bacolod, DiNardo, and Jacobson (2009) resulted in the following observations: “Despite the increase, we found little measurable improvement in standard metrics of achievement, such as exam performance, for those schools that received the award compared to those schools that did not receive the award” (p. 34).

Milanowski (2004) found a small to moderate association between differences in test score results and the teacher evaluations developed for the Cincinnati Teacher Evaluation and Compensation System. Although this did not mean that the new evaluation and compensation system led to higher student achievement results, it did establish the reliability of the evaluation instrument. The Cincinnati model included

similar reforms to evaluation and to compensation as being implemented under the RTTT grant.

Kellor (2005) studied The Vaughn Next Century Learning Center, a conversion charter school in Los Angeles, that piloted a new evaluation system that used (loosely) Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* and included a value-added model of student achievement which provided the researcher with six years of information. The finding was positive for those on the side of reform to current teacher evaluation and compensation.

The evidence of the predictive ability of its teacher evaluation system on student achievement (that the higher the evaluation score, the higher the learning gains produced in that teacher's classroom) is exciting and the fact that the standards based evaluation system was introduced to meet the needs of the knowledge and skill-based pay program lends credence to the recommendation to aligning internal systems and resources so they support the same goals. (Kellor, 2005, p. 20)

Teacher evaluation and compensation has also received the backing of private funders. "The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation also recently announced that it is distributing \$335 million of its own money to fund experiments in tenure, evaluation, compensation, training, and mentoring in three large school systems and some charter school groups" (McGuinn, 2010b, p. 28).

The privately funded programs have been found to have some of the same elements and some of the same results of similar publicly financed projects. "These proposals have generally sought to do one or more of the following: lengthen the

probation period for new teachers, strengthen the teacher evaluation process, streamline the teacher dismissal process, or “end tenure” by moving to renewable contracts” (McGuinn, 2010b, p. 1).

Attempts at reforming and changing the element of tenure which is so closely tied to evaluation and compensation have been controversial at best. McGuinn (2010b) cited case studies in California, Florida, Georgia, Wisconsin, New York, Ohio, and Washington D.C. All original reforms to tenure were defeated, watered down, or repealed in a short period of time. For example, Georgia’s then Governor Barnes, a Democrat, eliminated tenure for new hires in 2000. This provision failed to earn him the endorsement of the Georgia Association of Educators. He lost his bid for re-election in 2002, and his successor restored tenure shortly after his election.

In 2008, a high-profile attempt to replace and reform tenure occurred in Washington, D.C. Mayor Adrian Fenty appointed Michelle Rhee to take over the school system in that city.

Rhee proposed a two-tier system for compensating teachers in the 2008 Washington Teacher’s Union contract negotiations. New teachers' and existing teachers who voluntarily opt in would give up tenure protections in exchange for significantly higher, but performance-based, pay. Rhee’s proposed contract would establish two different pay tiers red and green for D.C. teachers (McGuinn, 2010b, p. 28).

This proposal met with much controversy, and in a short period of time, both Fenty and Rhee were both no longer in their positions.

In their review of teacher performance pay literature, Podgursky and Springer (2007) examined the case for performance pay in economic terms.

While the literature is not sufficiently robust to prescribe how systems should be designed—for example, optimal size of bonuses, mix of individual versus group incentives—it is sufficiently positive to suggest that further experiments and pilot programs by districts and states are very much in order (p. 943).

Greene and Forster (2008) reviewed studies concerning merit pay. Of note, they discounted school-wide incentive programs which were not truly merit pay programs.

They found,

The evidence that is available. . . provides some grounds for moderate optimism about merit pay. But it also suggests that when teachers are evaluated based on subjective judgment rather than on objective test scores, this invites systematic problems of bias that we could expect to undermine the incentives that merit pay is supposed to provide (p. 4).

Since merit pay has become such a large part of educational reform debate, Adams, Heywood, and Rothstein (2009) studied the private sector to determine any correlations that might be beneficial to considering and developing pay in the educational field. One misconception about the private sector that was clarified in their study was related to the private sector work force: “The suggestion that large shares of the private sector workforce have a tight formulaic relationship between earnings and performance is wrong” (p. 57).

Adams et al., (2009) addressed the use of quantitative evaluations.

In education, most policy makers who now promote performance incentives and accountability, and scholars who analyze them, seem mostly oblivious to the extensive literature in economics and management theory documenting the inevitable corruption of quantitative indicators and the perverse consequences of performance incentives that rely on such indicators (p. 97).

They also suggested that there were several questions that were not being posed regarding the benefits of the use of quantitative measures such as value-added models.

How much gain in reading and math scores is necessary to offset the goal distortion—less art, music, physical education, science, history, character building— that inevitably results from rewarding teachers or schools for score gains only in math and reading? Will the gain in teacher quality from a performance incentive system be sufficient to justify the loss to the profession of intrinsic motivation as a driving force? How much misidentification of high- or low-performing teachers or schools is tolerable in order to improve the average performance of teachers or schools? (p. 98).

Table 4 contains a summary of the literature reviewed related to teacher evaluation and compensation. The table displays the literature related to each of the subsections discussed in this chapter along with the major authors and researchers associated with each topic.

Table 4

Summary of Literature Reviewed: Teacher Evaluation and Compensation

Subsection Summary of Findings	Authors
<i>Evolution of Teacher Evaluation.</i> Despite a shift towards evaluation models focused on all the dynamics of teaching, years of experience trumps evaluation for lay-off decisions.	Marzano, Frontier, & Livingston (2011); Donaldson (2009); Baratz-Snowden (2009)
<i>Purposes and Perceptions of Teacher Evaluation.</i> Professional development is a shared purpose, but teachers are more cynical. Younger teachers more receptive to changes. Observation, performance-based assessments, portfolios, and VAM should be combined for best approach.	Bent (1993); Donaldson (2009); Greene, Huerta, & Richards (2007); Aritomi & Coopersmith (2009); Robinson (2009); Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, & Bernstein (1984); Bastarache (2000); Mobley (2002); Howell, Peterson, & West (2011);
<i>Evolution of Teacher Compensation.</i> Some experiments with incentives and signing bonuses; but most districts have similar pay scales. Public thinking has moved to what is best for students, not the adults.	Protsik (1995); Aritomi & Coopersmith (2009); Glazerman (2004); National Commision on Excellence in Education (1983); Bobbitt (1989); Goldhaber (2010); Howell et al. (2011);
<i>Purposes and Perceptions of Teacher Compensation.</i> Push to reform due to change in perceptions to correlate pay to improved student achievement. Administrator opinions different than teacher opinions. Three types of reform exist: pay for performance; pay for knowledge/skills; extra work.	Greene & Winters (2007); Glazerman (2004); Goldhaber (2010); Walsh & Tracey (2004); Ellerson (2009); Stepp (2010); Mathematica Policy Research Inc. (2006);
<i>Recent Reforms to Teacher Evaluation and Compensation.</i> Reforms found to have limited success, if any, on student achievement. Earlier research not enough to make sound policy research.	Hayes (2010); Odden & Kelley (2002); Aritomi & Coopersmith (2009); Sanders & Rivers (1996); Wainer (2011); Ellerson (2009); Smarick (2011); Chaplin et al. (2009); Spring & Winters (2009); Golhaber (2010); Glazerman (2004); Mathematica (2006); Bacolod, DiNardo, & Jacobson (2009); Milanowski (2004); Kellor (2005); McGuinn (2010a/b); Podgursky & Springer (2007); Adams et al. (2009);

Summary

The literature reviewed for this study has established a basis for further study. Springer and Winters (2009) cautioned that preliminary research was not enough to make sound policy decisions.

Furthermore, readers should not lose sight of the fact that additional experimental and quasi-experimental evaluations of various forms of teacher compensation reform are needed. Pay-for-performance programs can exhibit various design components, including the unit of accountability, performance measurement, incentive structure, and bonus distribution (p. 30).

At the time of the present study, RTTT was very new and not fully implemented. New policies were being created on a regular basis that affected educational leaders. Because an emphasis has been placed on reforming the teacher evaluation system and traditional compensation, it was important, and will continue to be so, to elicit views and opinions of educational leaders who will implement these new reforms. A better understanding of these perceptions could make a difference in creating policies that will truly impact student achievement in a positive way. It was this rationale on which the present study was based.

In the upcoming chapters, the methodology for a mixed-methods study is presented, the results of the study shared, and the results of the study are discussed. This study will add to research and literature concerning the RTTT grant, and in particular, the teacher evaluation and compensation components that the RTTT grant will require.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the professional opinions of educational leaders regarding components in the Race to the Top (RTTT) grant concerning teacher evaluation and compensation prior to its implementation in August 2011. Professional opinions of educational leaders enrolled in doctoral level courses at the target university in both the majors of Education and Educational Leadership were sought to help understand the difference in opinions of the teacher evaluation and compensation components of RTTT.

A survey instrument was designed by the researcher and utilized in order to determine the commonalities and differences in professional opinions of the participants based upon their knowledge of RTTT, professional classification, and school poverty percentage. A follow-up interview protocol was also developed that made this a mixed-methods study. The reason for a mixed-methodology is that “It recognizes the importance of traditional quantitative and qualitative research but also offers a powerful third paradigm choice that will provide the most informative, complete, balanced, and useful research results” (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007, p. 129).

Research Question 1 sought to determine whether the educational leaders believed that RTTT components were fair. Opinions concerning student achievement/growth were the primary focus of the other three of the research questions with the final two focusing on the impact on students at high-poverty schools.

By conducting this study, the researcher added to the field of knowledge concerning the types of teacher evaluation and compensation reform that can lead to increased student learning at all schools and, in particular, high-poverty schools. The methodology that was used in this study is described in this chapter. It has been organized using the following four sections: selection of participants, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis.

Population

The population for this study was comprised of administrative and instructional educational leaders in central Florida. Because this research was conducted to gain understanding of the professional opinions of educational leaders in central Florida about the RTTT components concerning teacher evaluation and compensation, it was important to find access to leaders who would be representative of the region as a whole.

Access to a variety of educational leaders in central Florida was found through a target university's Doctor of Education programs in both Education and Educational Leadership. Students in these programs represented professionals in the field of education who wished to advance their understanding of their chosen field. Students in the Ed. D. in Education program were experienced practicing educators who wish to hold positions of influence and gain advanced skills that would benefit their field. These students were described as focusing on analyzing and evaluating program effectiveness, reviewing current research, and leading change that is evidenced-based. Students enrolled in the Ed. D. Educational Leadership program were described in the university catalog as professionals who wish to advance their leadership opportunities who were currently working as administrators or teachers in elementary and secondary schools as

well as other organizations or agencies. This program was described as appropriate for those who wish to advance their leadership opportunities. As indicated in their responses, participants in both programs were found to be educational leaders that were representative of different professional classifications, i.e., administrative and instructional, and of different central Florida districts (2012).

Sample

The students enrolled in the target university's Ed. D. in Education and Ed. D. in Educational Leadership programs comprised a convenience sample of the larger population of educational leaders. Initial estimates from the professors involved in this study indicated that the number of enrolled students in the two programs would be approximately 136 (80 in Ed. D. in Education and 56 in Ed. D. in Educational Leadership). In an effort to identify all students enrolled in the two programs, an email was sent to the Advanced Graduate Coordinator in the College of Education requesting the number of actively enrolled students in both the Ed. D. in Educational Leadership and the Ed. D. in Education with a total of 158 students being the response (54 Ed. D. in Education and 104 Ed. D. in Educational Leadership). These 158 students comprised the sample in this study.

Instrumentation

Survey of the Implementation and Impact of Teacher Evaluation and Compensation Components from the Race to the Top Grant (STECC-RTTT)

At the time of this study (April-June 2011) Race to the Top (RTTT) was still in the early stages of implementation and there was no existing instrument found by this researcher that would measure the professional opinions of educational leaders or anyone on the potential impact certain components of the RTTT would have on student growth. Therefore, the Electronic Survey of the Implementation and Impact of Teacher Evaluation and Compensation Components from the Race to the Top Grant (STECC-RTTT) was developed by the researcher of this study to determine the professional opinions of educational leaders about the teacher evaluation and compensation components of the RTTT grant in regard to its potential effect on student growth. The survey was developed in Microsoft Word format, adapted, and inputted into the survey response software at www.surveymonkey.com.

It was important that the survey enable the researcher to (a) categorize the respondents, (b) determine participant knowledge about the RTTT, (c) elicit participant perceptions about RTTT in regard to student achievement/growth, and (d) provide participants with opportunities to respond to the components in an open-ended fashion. To accomplish this, the STECC-RTTT had five parts: Part A, Demographic Information; Part B, RTTT Background Information; Part C, RTTT Teacher Evaluation and Compensation Components Improvement of Student Achievement; Part D, RTTT

Teacher Evaluation and Compensation Components Improvement of Student Achievement at High Poverty Schools; and Part E, Additional Information.

Content validity was obtained with the assistance of knowledgeable professors from the target university who reviewed all parts of the survey. The survey was revised based on professors' suggestions. The five parts of the STECC-RTTT are described in detail in the following subsections. Reliability tests conducted for various parts of the instrument are also reported.

Part A: Demographic Information

Part A of the survey contained seven items related to participants' demographics. Those items were gender, position title, professional classification, school level, percentage of free/reduced lunch rate at current or last school, school district, and graduate degree program. For purposes of the research questions in this study, professional classification and the percentage of free/reduced lunch rate at current or last school were used to analyze and compare perception responses in Parts C and D. Professional classification selections included administrative (principal, assistant principal, district), instructional (teacher, coach, or resource), or other. The percentage of free/reduced lunch percentage at current or last school item had four possible responses: 0-50%, 51-74%, 75-100%, or N/A.

Part B: RTTT Knowledge

The second part of the STECC-RTTT dealt with background information related to the RTTT grant and consisted of four items. These items queried respondents as to

their knowledge about the RTTT grant. Respondents' overall opinions of the fairness of RTTT components concerning teacher evaluation and teacher compensation were sought.

The first item asked participants, "Where have you received your information on the Race to the Top Grant?" Participants were able to select all that applied from a list of sources. These sources included: district officials, district presentation, colleagues, graduate classes, guest speakers, state conferences, state conference calls, FEA (or local union) publications, media/news, education journals/publications, FL DOE website, U.S. DOE website, email communication from RTTT grant officials, or other.

Participants were then asked to rate their knowledge of the RTTT grant using a scale from 1-5 where 5 = Expert Knowledge, 4 = Great Knowledge, 3 = Moderate Knowledge, 2 = Little knowledge, and 1 = No Knowledge. To further assist, two clarifiers were used: Under the response of 1 = No Knowledge, the clarifier, "Have not heard of the Race to the Top Grant" and under the response of 5 = Expert Knowledge, the clarifier, "Can facilitate a seminar on the Race to the Top Grant" were placed.

The other two items in Part B included a chance for participants to rate, using their knowledge, the fairness of the RTTT grant concerning teacher evaluation and teacher compensation. The scale for these items included Extremely Fair, Fair, Neutral, Unfair, Extremely Unfair, and Not Enough Information to Rate ranging from 5 = Extremely Fair to 1 = Extremely Unfair. These values were used to add a numerical value to the professional opinions of the educational leaders for analysis.

In addition, the numerical values also enabled Chronbach's Alpha reliability test to be run on the two items. The value of .88 suggested very strong internal consistency. Since there were only two items using this scale, the inter-item correlation value was also

analyzed. The mean of .79 suggested that there was a strong correlation between the two items.

Part C: Impact of RTTT on Student Achievement/Growth.

In this part of the STECC-RTTT participants were asked to rate the potential impact of five teacher evaluation and compensation components on the improvement of student achievement. The five components to be rated were (a) The first 50% of Teacher Evaluation/Appraisal will be based on student performance on a Statewide Assessment Program, (b) The first 50% of Teacher Evaluation/Appraisal of those who teach a subject or level in which students are not tested will be based on school-wide or team performance, (c) the second 50% of Teacher Evaluation/Appraisal will be based on administrator observation of core effective practices and one additional metric, (d) current teachers will be able to optionally participate in a separate performance pay scale (Merit Pay), and (e) teachers at the lowest performing schools will be given a separate pay scale. The rating scale ranged from 1 to 5 where 5 = Strong Positive Impact, 4 = Positive Impact, 3 = No Impact, 2 = Negative Impact, 1 = Strong Negative Impact, and 0 = Not enough information.

The numerical values allowed for statistical analysis including Chronbach's Alpha test of reliability. In this case, the value of .88 suggests a strong internal consistency. Also, analysis was done on inter-item correlation. The mean inter-item correlation value of .60 also suggested a strong relationship among the items and reliability.

Part D: Impact of RTTT--Student Achievement/Growth at High Poverty Schools

Part D of the STECC-RTTT was identical to the Part C section and scale with one major exception. This section focused on participants perceptions of the impact of the five components on student achievement at high-poverty schools. The STECC-RTTT defined high poverty schools for participants as schools with a poverty rate of 75% or more.

The numerical values of the responses enabled statistical analysis that included Cronbach's Alpha test of reliability. A value of .90 suggested strong internal consistency. In addition, analysis was performed to determine the inter-item correlation value. The mean was .66, suggesting a strong relationship among the items.

When Parts C and Part D were combined for further analysis of reliability, Cronbach's Alpha test determined a value of .95. This value suggested even greater reliability and internal consistency. In addition, the inter-item correlation mean of .66 was suggestive of a strong relationship among the items.

Part E: Open-ended Response Section

Part E of the STECC-RTTT contained one open-ended item and a single question. Respondents were afforded the opportunity to express themselves in response to the following statement: "Please share anything else you believe would be helpful for understanding the potential impact of RTTT or assist with implementation."

Respondents were also queried as to their interest in participating in a follow-up interview. If they responded positively, they were instructed to include their contact information.

Follow-up Telephone Interviews

This study also included a qualitative component which allowed for more detailed information to be acquired from a small number of participants. The survey instrument included a chance for participants to volunteer to submit to a follow-up interview that yielded information for the qualitative data for the study. Four participants were selected for follow-up interviews and comprised another convenience sample of the population.

A protocol was developed for use in the four telephone interviews. This protocol included four open-ended questions that related to the four research questions for this study. Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured approach in order to allow flexibility in probing interviewees for detailed information regarding their perceptions of the potential impact of the RTTT grant on student achievement. The interviewees had no prior knowledge of the questions ahead of time.

Data Collection Procedures

This was a mixed-methods study that utilized both qualitative and quantitative data. Data for this study were collected during April, May, and June of 2011. Following is a description of the data collection procedures employed in collecting quantitative and qualitative data.

Collection of Quantitative Data

In April of 2011, professors in both programs assisted in the data collection by sending the 158 enrolled students email invitations that included a link to the survey using Survey Monkey ® and explained the informed consent that they acknowledged by

taking part in survey. Two follow-up reminders were sent to non-responders on May 18 and again on June 21 of 2011 in attempts to increase the participation rate. The research was also publicized by professors in their doctoral level classes. The professors used internal sources to generate the distribution list of potential participants in the study.

A total of 54 participants (34.2%) responded by completing the survey. Because the target university professors were not able to track the exact number of students who received the email, the response rate may actually have been higher than the 34.2% calculated. Of the 54 respondents, 22 respondents represented the Ed. D. in Education program, and 31 represented the Ed. D. in Educational Leadership program. There was one respondent who did not report his major. This respondent did not finish the entire survey and left most items blank. The response was not used in any statistical analysis.

Participants were found to represent several different positions in the field of education. Instructional positions reported included teacher, coach, counselor, consultant, speech language pathologist (SLP), school psychologists, and resource. Administrative positions reported included principal, assistant principal, administrative dean, and district-level administrator.

Collection of Qualitative Data

Although the number of respondents was smaller than expected, the quantitative data obtained through the survey were supplemented by qualitative data gained in follow-up telephone interviews with participants. Telephone interviews were conducted on June 30, July 1, 7, and 8 of 2011. Participants were selected and contacted using data from their responses to Part E of the STECC-RTTT. Initially, 14 participants had responded

that they would be willing to participate. The protocol for the follow-up phone interview established a choice for the participant to hold the interview at first contact or arrange for a better date and time. In eight instances, prospective participants did not respond to the three messages or emails used to contact them. The method of contact depended on the information reported in the response on the STECC-RTTT. In two cases, the follow-up phone interview was completed on the first call. The other two participants set a preferable time during the following week. Data gathered during the interviews, which were approximately 15 minutes in length, were adequate to gain necessary information for a mixed-methods study. The four participants were all females. One represented the Ed. D program in Education and the three others represented the Ed. D program in Educational Leadership. Two of the four were school-based administrators (one elementary principal and one high school assistant principal). One participant was a district level administrator and the other participant was an educational consultant with a focus on academic coaching. Participation was sufficient to permit the researcher to make generalizations to the population of students enrolled in the target university's Ed. D. programs.

Thus, of the 14 respondents who indicated a willingness to participate in follow-up telephone interviews, only four respondents were able to be contacted using the information provided in their returned survey responses. These four participants were contacted by telephone and were asked for their professional opinions regarding the RTTT grant's impact on student achievement. Using the interview protocol (Appendix E), four questions were asked that related to the four research questions of this study. Because the researcher utilized a semi-structured interview format, additional follow-up

questions leading to further clarification of the interviewees' responses were asked. Notes of the participants' answers were maintained, and some responses were written verbatim. These notes were typed and used in the analysis of data.

Data Analysis

A mixed methods approach was utilized in analyzing the data for this study. It included both quantitative and qualitative methodology.

Analysis of Quantitative Data

Responses from the STECC-RTTT were entered into SPSS Version 17.0 utilizing the numerical values assigned to the item response categories. Selected demographic responses were also entered as required to respond to the research questions.

Research Question 1

To determine to what extent, if any, there was a difference in relationship between the self-reported knowledge of the RTTT grant and the perceived fairness of the RTTT grant concerning teacher evaluation and compensation, a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was performed. This statistical analysis was used to determine the relationship, if any, to self-reported knowledge of the RTTT grant and the perceived fairness of the RTTT grant concerning teacher evaluation. The same statistical analysis was used to determine the relationship, if any, to self-reported knowledge of the RTTT grant and the perceived fairness of the grant concerning teacher compensation. The

scores of each respondent on the perceived fairness of the RTTT grant concerning teacher evaluation and concerning teacher compensation were combined for an overall fairness score. This score was then analyzed with the self-reported knowledge score using a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient to determine to what extent, if any, a relationship existed between the two.

Research Question 2

Independent-samples t-tests were performed to determine to what extent, if any, there was a difference in the perceived potential impact on student achievement of the RTTT grant teacher evaluation and compensation components of educational leaders classified as instructional or administrative. Each of the five components was analyzed individually as the dependent variable using the classification as the independent variable.

The participants' scores from the five components in Part C of the STECC-RTTT were combined to determine an overall potential impact score. This score was analyzed using an independent-samples t-test to determine if overall differences were found between instructional and administrative respondents.

Research Question 3

Three categorical groups of participants were established based on the percentage of free/reduced price lunch students at their current or previous schools. This was the independent variable. Utilizing data from Part A and Part C of the STECC-RTTT, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to determine if a difference existed

between the self-reported school poverty percentage groups and their perceptions of the potential impact of RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement.

After the five components were analyzed individually, participants' scores on the five components were combined to create an overall impact on student achievement score. An ANOVA was performed using the three poverty percentage groups as the categorical independent variable and the overall impact on student achievement score.

Research Question 4

The process used to analyze the data in Research Question 3 was repeated using data for high poverty schools collected from Part D of the STECC-RTTT. This permitted the determination of any difference between the self-reported school poverty percentage groups and their perceptions of the potential impact of RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement at high poverty schools. The participants' scores on the five components were combined to create an overall impact on student achievement at high poverty schools score. An ANOVA was performed for each of the components individually and for the combined impact on student achievement at high poverty schools score.

Analysis of Qualitative Data

Qualitative data for this study consisted of information from the follow-up telephone conversations with the four participants who agreed to be interviewed. Each interview consisted of four questions which were directly related to the four research

questions that were used to guide the study. The purpose of including qualitative data in this study was to add additional insight into the quantitative data. “One apparently common purpose for combining qualitative and quantitative methods is to use the results from one method to elaborate, enhance, or illustrate the results from the other” (Greene, Carracelli, & Graham, 1989, p. 266).

Table 2 lists the four research questions with the corresponding questions from the follow-up interview. Notes from these interviews were typed into a format that permitted the researcher to organize the data for further analysis.

In order to maintain their anonymity, participants were identified as Participant 1, 2, 3, and 4. After all telephone interviews were conducted and the researcher’s typed notes were reviewed, the responses from each of the participants were organized so that the four responses for a single research question could be reviewed using a tabular display. Categories and themes were determined by reading the multiple responses, highlighting repeating or similar phrases from the four participants for each question.

The researcher then used the identified categories and themes and summarized them in a column in a second table (Appendix F). Common phrases and important details were highlighted as seen in the table. The data in this second table, established for each of the four questions, were analyzed to add to the existing quantitative data and to determine if generalizations could be made in regard to each of the four research questions.

Table 5

Research Questions and Follow-up Interview Questions

Research Questions	Follow-up Interview Questions
1. To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between the self-reported knowledge of the RTTT grant and the perceived fairness of the RTTT grant concerning teacher evaluation and compensation?	Has your professional opinion changed about the fairness of the Race to the Top grant as you have learned more about it?
2. To what extent, if any, is there a difference between the two professional classification groups' opinions about the perceived potential impact of the RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement/growth?	Do you think professional position (instructional or administrative) would affect opinions on the success of the Race to the Top grant's impact on student achievement or growth?
3. To what extent, if any, is there a difference in the opinions of educational leaders who have different self-reported school poverty percentages about the perceived potential impact of RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement/growth?	Do you think opinions of the following components differ depending on the schools' percentage of free/reduced lunch students: basing 50% of a teacher's evaluation on student performance on an assessment program, basing the other 50% of a teacher's evaluation on administrator observations, being able to optionally participate in a separate performance pay scale, and having a separate pay scale for teachers at the lower performing schools?
4. To what extent, if any, is there a difference in the opinions of educational leaders who have different self-reported school poverty percentages about the perceived potential impact of RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement/growth at high-poverty schools?	Do you personally think that the teacher evaluation and compensation process can be used as a tool to help improve achievement at high-poverty schools?

Summary

The methods and procedures used to conduct this research study have been detailed in this chapter. The population was described along with the procedures used to arrive at the sample. The quantitative and qualitative measures used to respond to the four research question were also described. To gather quantitative data, a researcher-designed electronic survey, Survey of the Implementation and Impact of Teacher Evaluation and Compensation Components from the Race to the Top Grant (STECC-RTTT), was employed, and its validity and reliability were explained. Follow-up telephone interviews were conducted with selected participants to gather further qualitative data, and the protocol used in these interviews was discussed. Data collection and analysis procedures were described for both the quantitative and qualitative data collected in this study. This included the statistical tests used and the process used in analyzing the interview responses. The results of the data analysis are included in Chapter 4 and include quantitative results followed up by appropriate qualitative data for additional depth.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

Introduction

The intended purpose of this study was to explore the professional opinions of educational leaders (instructional and administrative) in central Florida regarding the selected teacher evaluation and compensation components of the Race to the Top grant (RTTT). Analysis was completed using a mixed-methods approach. By including data from the researcher designed survey (STECC-RTTT) and follow-up interviews, sufficient quantitative and qualitative data were found for analysis. This chapter is a presentation of the results of the data analysis for the four research questions of this study.

The data analysis included descriptive statistics of the variables used from the STECC-RTTT as well as a comprehensive description of the variables. In addition, each of the four research questions were analyzed using the previously designated statistical techniques for quantitative data complemented by qualitative data gathered in follow-up interviews to clarify and enhance the results. A comprehensive display of the results of the analysis of qualitative data is contained in Appendix F.

Descriptive Statistics

The STECC-RTTT had the potential for numerous categorical and continuous variables. Only those variables used in the analysis of the four research questions are discussed in this section. The demographic variables made up the categorical data for this study and included professional classification of the participants and the self-reported school poverty percentage. Opinion variables made up the continuous data and included

(a) the self-reported knowledge of the RTTT grant, (b) the fairness of the RTTT components concerning teacher evaluation, (c) the fairness of the RTTT components concerning teacher compensation, (d) the potential impact on student achievement of the five selected components, and (e) the potential impact on student achievement at high-poverty schools of the five selected components. Analysis of the descriptive statistics found for these variables follows.

Categorical Variables

The frequencies of the categorical variables of position classification and school poverty percentage were determined. Of the 54 respondents, 27 reported the professional classification of instructional and 27 reported the classification of administrative. Eight respondents determined that the school poverty percentage was non-applicable to their demographic information. Of the 46 participants who did share their school poverty percentages, 24 indicated 0-50%, 12 reported a percentage of 51-74%, and 10 reported a percentage of 75-100%.

Continuous Variables

The continuous variables utilized in the study included both self-reported values and values assigned to opinions of the RTTT grant components concerning teacher evaluation and compensation as defined in the STECC-RTTT. The continuous variables, along with the categorical variables, are displayed in Table 3.

Table 6

Research Questions, Independent Variables, and Dependent Variables

Research Question	Independent Variable	Dependent Variables
1	Self-reported knowledge of RTTT	Perceived fairness of the grant concerning teacher evaluation; perceived fairness of the grant concerning teacher compensation; combined perceived fairness score.
2	Position classification (categorical)	Perceived impact on student achievement of each of five selected RTTT components; total perceived impact on student achievement.
3	School poverty percentage (categorical)	Perceived impact on student achievement of each of five selected RTTT components; total perceived impact on student achievement.
4	School poverty percentage (categorical)	Perceived impact on the student achievement of each of five selected RTTT components at high poverty schools; total perceived impact on student achievement at high poverty schools.

Of the 54 participants, 53 self-reported their knowledge of the RTTT grant. No participant reported having “Expert” knowledge of the RTTT grant. The mean had the numerical value of 2.81 which would fall between “Little” and “Moderate” knowledge of the RTTT grant on the scale created for the STECC-RTTT.

A total of 46 participants reported an opinion of the overall fairness of the RTTT grant concerning teacher evaluation. Of those, the mean for the group was 3.02 which

would be only slightly above “Neutral” on the scale presented in the STECC-RTTT.

There were 41 participants that indicated their opinion of the overall fairness of the RTTT grant concerning teacher compensation. Of those, the mean for the group was 2.56 which would fall between “Neutral” and “Unfair” on the scale presented in the STECC-RTTT.

The five selected components of the RTTT grant concerning teacher evaluation and compensation and the pertinent descriptive statistics concerning the opinions of the participants are presented in Table 4. The component that had the highest mean score (3.79) was the component requiring 50% of a teacher’s evaluation to be based on observations of core effective practices. The component with the lowest mean score (2.88) was the component requiring 50% of the evaluation of a teacher who does not teach a tested subject to be based on the results of the entire school or team. The component that had the highest number of “Not Enough Information to Rate” was the RTTT component requiring a separate pay scale for teachers working at the lowest performing schools.

Table 7

Descriptive Statistics for Selected RTTT Components: Impact on Student Achievement

Race to the Top (RTTT) Selected Component	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
1st 50% of evaluation based on student performance	52	1	5	3.02	1.291
1st 50% of evaluation for non-tested based on school/team performance	52	1	5	2.88	1.278
2nd 50% of evaluation based on administrative observations of core effective practices	48	1	5	3.79	1.010
Current teachers participating in a performance pay scale	46	1	5	3.15	1.192
A separate pay scale for lowest performing schools	43	1	5	2.93	1.316

In the STECC-RTTT, participants were asked to rate the potential impact on student achievement at high-poverty schools of the same five RTTT components. The pertinent descriptive statistics are displayed in Table 5. Similar to the impact on student achievement in general, the component having the highest mean score (3.49) for potential impact on student achievement at high-poverty schools was the component requiring 50% of a teacher's evaluation to be based on observations of core effective practices. The component with the lowest mean score (2.79) was the component requiring that 50% of the evaluation of teachers not teaching a test subject be based upon the results of the entire school or team.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Selected RTTT Components: Impact on Student Achievement at High-Poverty Schools

Race to the Top (RTTT) Selected Component	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
1st 50% of evaluation based on student performance	53	1	5	2.83	1.297
1st 50% of evaluation for non-tested based on school/team performance	53	1	5	2.79	1.230
2nd 50% of evaluation based on administrative observations of core effective practices	49	1	5	3.49	1.120
Current teachers participating in a performance pay scale	47	1	5	3.00	1.142
A separate pay scale for lowest performing schools	45	1	5	3.07	1.405

Data Analysis for Research Question 1

Research Question 1: To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between the self-reported knowledge of the RTTT grant and the perceived fairness of the RTTT grant concerning teacher evaluation and compensation?

Quantitative Analysis for Research Question 1

To answer Research Question 1, three Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were performed to determine if any relationships existed. No statistically significant relationship was found in any of three Pearson product-moment correlations that were performed. The lack of relationship was emphasized by the qualitative data from the follow-up interviews.

The first correlation was performed to determine if any relationship existed between the self-reported knowledge of the RTTT grant and the perceived fairness of the RTTT grant components concerning teacher evaluation. A small correlation was found between the two variables, $r = .12$, $n = 46$. However, no statistical significance was found as $p > .05$.

A second correlation was conducted to determine if any relationships existed between the self-reported knowledge of the RTTT grant and the perceived fairness of the RTTT grant components concerning teacher compensation. Virtually no correlation was found between the two variables, $r = .4$, $n = 41$. Again, no statistical significance was found as $p > .05$.

The final correlation to analyze this research question was performed to determine if any relationships existed between the self-reported knowledge of the RTTT grant and the total perceived fairness of the RTTT grant components concerning teacher evaluation

and compensation. Again, no correlation was found between the two variables, $r = .06$, $n = 46$. No statistical significance was found for this correlation as $p > .05$.

Qualitative Analysis for Research Question 1

Qualitative data were used to supplement quantitative data in answering this question by asking participants in the follow-up interview, “Has your professional opinion changed about the fairness of the Race to the Top grant as you have learned more about it?” The participants’ responses were put in a tabular display and repeated phrases were highlighted. This table can be found in Appendix F.

The qualitative data gathered in follow-up interviews supported the lack of relationship between knowledge of the RTTT grant and the opinion on the fairness of it. Participants in the follow-up interviews were asked, “Has your professional opinion changed about the fairness of the Race to the Top grant as you have learned more about it?” All interviewees indicated they had not changed their opinions of the fairness of the RTTT Grant as they learned more about it. The participants were then asked to explain why their opinions had not changed, and three themes emerged: (a) a lack of understanding or information about the RTTT grant, (b) not enough detail about the implementation of the grant, and (c) the political nature of the RTTT grant.

Lack of Understanding

For the first theme as to insufficient detail, all four of the follow-up interview participants believed that there was not enough information provided to them to change

their initial opinions. Participant 1 expressed this thought by saying, “My initial thoughts were that there wasn’t a lot of information to make a judgment on the fairness.”

Participant 2 expressed frustration at the types of influence educators have. She also stated, “We need to learn about it before we can debate it.” That supported the overall theme that there was not enough information yet given to make a determination about fairness.

Another participant, Participant 3, believed it was too early to change her initial opinion. She responded, “I’ll be better at giving an opinion of fairness later in the process of implementation.” Participant 4 expressed a similar view, stating, “I haven’t really made a judgment yet on all of it.”

Not Enough Detail

In regard to the second theme, the lack of detail about implementation, Participants 1 and 3 indicated they needed details about the implementation before a better judgment could be made about the fairness. Participant 3 explained, “We haven’t enacted a lot of the changes for the RTTT grant yet. There are many components that the fairness of will depend on how they are enacted.” Although Participant 3 spoke in generalities, Participant 1 expressed concerns about the implementation of specific components. “I still believe there is not enough information on how performance pay will be organized to make a determination on how fair it will be . . . I am curious about what the value-added formula will look like.”

The Political Nature of RTTT

The third theme was related to frustration over the political nature of the RTTT grant. Participants 2 and 4 acknowledged the political nature of the RTTT grant and believed this played a part in their lack of opinion change. Participant 2 said, “It is what it is.” When asked to expand on this response, she replied, “It’s government. We don’t have a whole lot of influence on it.” Participant 4 went further by calling the RTTT grant part of a political agenda. She expressed these sentiments, “There is a clear political agenda that accompanies these changes.”

Data Analysis for Research Question 2

Research Question 2: To what extent, if any, is there a difference between the two professional classification groups’ opinions about the perceived potential impact of the RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement/growth?

Quantitative Analysis for Research Question 2

To answer Research Question 2, six independent sample t-tests were performed to compare the mean scores associated with opinions about the potential impact of the RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement of participants classified as instructional or administrative. The results of the analyses are presented in Tables 6 and 7.

Statistical significance was found in the difference between instructional and administrative participants’ mean scores associated with opinions of the RTTT components and the potential impact on student achievement on three out of the five selected components. A significant difference was found for the component that requires

the first 50% of teachers' evaluations to be based on student performance on a statewide assessment program. The difference between the responses of instructional ($M = 2.28$, $SD = 1.06$) and administrative ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 1.10$); $t(50) = -4.74$, $p < .05$ (two tailed) participants was found to have a magnitude of the difference in means (mean difference = -1.42 , 95% CI: -2.03 to -0.82) that was very large (eta squared = $.290$).

Another RTTT component that had a significant difference was that the first 50% of evaluations of teachers of non-tested subjects be based on school-wide or team performance on a statewide assessment program. The difference between instructional ($M = 2.32$, $SD = 1.18$) and administrative ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 1.15$); $t(50) = -3.36$, $p < .05$ (two tailed) participants' responses displayed a magnitude of the difference in means (mean difference = -1.09 , 95% CI: -1.74 to $-.44$) that was large (eta squared = $.184$).

The third RTTT component for which a significant difference was found was a separate pay scale for teachers at the lowest performing schools. The difference between instructional ($M = 2.47$, $SD = 1.22$) and administrative ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 1.30$); $t(41) = -2.10$, $p < .05$ (two tailed) respondents was had a magnitude of the difference in means (mean difference = $.82$, 95% CI: -1.60 to $-.03$) that was large (eta squared = $.125$).

There were two of the selected RTTT components that were found to have no statistical significance in regard to the difference between the instructional and administrative participants' mean scores associated with the opinions on the potential impact on student achievement. No significant difference was found for the RTTT component of the second 50% of teachers' evaluations being based on observation of core effective practices by administrators between the means for instructional ($M = 3.52$, $SD = 1.12$) and for administrative ($M = 4.04$, $SD = .84$); $t(46) = -1.82$, $p > .05$ (two

tailed). The magnitude of the difference in means (mean difference = .52, 95% CI: -1.10 to .06) was moderate (eta squared = .07).

The RTTT component of giving an option for current teachers to participate in a performance pay scale was also found to have no significant difference between the means for instructional (M = 2.86, SD = 1.25) and those of administrative (M= 3.40, SD = 1.12); $t(44) = -1.56$, $p > .05$ (two tailed) respondents. The magnitude of the difference in means (mean difference = -.54, 95% CI: -1.24 to .16) was small (eta squared = .05).

Statistical significance was found in the difference between instructional and administrative participants' mean scores combining the scores that were associated with opinions of the RTTT components and the potential impact on student achievement. Participants who indicated their classification as instructional had a lower mean score than did participants who indicated their classification as administrative. The difference between instructional (M = 11.65, SD = 5.12) and administrative (M = 16.93, SD = 4.73); $t(51) = -3.90$, $p < .05$ (two tailed) was found to have a magnitude of the difference in means (mean difference= -5.27, 95% CI: -8.00 to -2.55) that was quite large (eta squared= .23).

Table 9

Group Statistics for T-Tests: Potential Impact of RTTT Components by Professional Classification

Race to the Top (RTTT) Selected Component	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
1 st 50% of evaluation based on student performance				
Instructional	25	2.28	1.060	.212
Administrative	27	3.70	1.103	.212
1st 50% of evaluation for non-tested based on school/team performance				
Instructional	25	2.32	1.180	.236
Administrative	27	3.41	1.152	.222
2nd 50% of evaluation based on administration observations of core effective practices				
Instructional	23	3.52	1.123	.234
Administrative	25	4.04	.841	.168
Current teachers participating in a performance pay scale				
Instructional	21	2.86	1.236	.270
Administrative	25	3.40	1.118	.224
A separate pay scale for lowest performing schools				
Instructional	19	2.47	1.219	.280
Administrative	24	3.29	1.301	.266
Overall opinion of five components				
Instructional	26	11.65	5.122	1.005
Administrative	27	16.93	4.731	.910

Table 10

Independent Samples T-Test: Potential Impact of RTTT Components by Professional Classification

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
	F	Sig	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
1 st 50% of evaluation based on student performance	.016	.899	-4.735	50	.000	-1.424	-2.028	-.820
1 st 50% of evaluation for non-tested based on school/team performance	.112	.740	-3.361	50	.001	-1.087	-1.737	-.437
2 nd 50% of evaluation based upon administrative observations of core effective practices	3.409	.071	-1.820	46	.075	-.518	-1.092	.055
Current teachers participating in a performance pay scale	.037	.848	-1.563	44	.125	-.543	-1.243	.157
A separate pay scale for lowest performing schools	.040	.843	-2.104	41	.042	-.818	-1.603	-.033
Opinion of 5 components Combined	.799	.375	-3.895	51	.000	-5.272	-7.990	-2.555

Qualitative Analysis for Research Question 2

In addition, qualitative data gathered from the responses of participants in follow-up interviews were analyzed to further clarify and expand on the t-test data. Interviewees were asked, “Do you think professional position (instructional or administrative) would affect opinions on the success of the Race to the Top Grant’s impact on student achievement or growth?” The participants’ responses were put in a tabular display and repeated phrases were highlighted. This table can be found in Appendix F.

The qualitative data gathered in follow-up interviews supported the statistically significant differences found regarding position classification and the opinions of the participants of the potential impact to student achievement of the RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components. Three of the four follow-up interview participants believed that position classification would affect their opinions. When participants were asked to justify their initial responses, five themes emerged. Those themes were: (a) teachers would have a more difficult time with these types of changes, (b) administrators were more likely to be in favor of these types of reforms, (c) educators would see this process through different lenses, (d) administrators would be more likely to wait for results to make judgments, and (e) interpretations of those in charge of implementing these changes have the potential to slant teachers and administrators in opposite directions.

Change Difficult for Teachers

Three participants expressed that teachers would probably be against these types of evaluation and compensation reforms or have a difficult time with them. Participant 1 expressed this by saying, “In my experience, teachers aren’t necessarily open to change.” She specifically talked about the types of evaluation and compensation changes by saying, “These types of changes, teachers will not be receptive to them.” Participant 3 continued, “It will be harder to get them (teachers) on board.”

Participant 4 believed teachers would be more negative about these types of changes. “Many teachers will be against most of these changes.” She continued, “They will see it as an attack on what they do. Other teachers might see it as just another thing they will have to wait out. Referring to fads in education.”

Positive Administrator Attitudes

Participants 1 and 2 believed administrators would be more positive towards these reforms. Participant 1 explained, “Administrators, on the other hand, have pretty much bought into doing the things necessary to doing well academically. They will be more willing to try methods to achieve that.” Participant 2 concisely expressed similar thoughts, “Administrators will think these types of reforms are a good thing.”

Different Lenses

Three participants made reference to teachers and administrators having different opinions due to the different lenses through which they would view these reforms. Participant 2 did not believe that professional classification would affect opinions. She

believed that the lenses would come from the individual's work ethic. She responded, "Not really. I could see people having a difference of opinion, but it won't have to necessarily do with the classification of their jobs." Participant 2 was asked to expand further and responded, "Some, teachers will perceive that it is something new, but tying compensation and evaluation to student achievement should be done. Good teachers should want the accountability." As for the other teachers, she said, "I think it has the potential for being more motivational to some underperforming teachers, while other teachers that do their best all the time will not be affected." Participants 3 and 4 also addressed the idea of different lenses. Participant 3 said, "This question is all about perception. People have different lenses as to how they see things." Participant 4 expressed a similar sentiment, "Although it shouldn't be different, people see things through the lens of how it affects them."

Judging the Results

Another theme was voiced by Participant 4 who believed that administrators would wait for results before making judgments on the impact on student achievement. In talking about the differences between teachers and administrators, she explained, "Administrators won't necessarily see it that way. They will see all of this as potentially, a lot more work. Generally, they'll want to know how all of this will get done and what kind of results it will bring about. Will the results come quickly?"

Grant-writing Concerns

Participant 3 voiced concern over the people who wrote the grant and people sharing information about the grant and how their particular opinions would affect others. “A key factor will be the people providing the information. Are they putting a slant on it?” She expanded, “Information trickles down and misinformation and misinterpretations are made.” This participant also talked about the writers of the RTTT grant. “Another point will be ‘Who wrote the application?’. Were they slanted one way or another on these issues?’”

Data Analysis for Research Question 3

Research Question 3: To what extent, if any, is there a difference in the opinions of educational leaders who have different self-reported school poverty percentages about the perceived potential impact of RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement/growth?

Quantitative Analysis for Research Question 3

To answer Research Question 3, a series of six one-way analyses of the variance (ANOVA) were performed. These were run to compare the mean scores that corresponded to the opinions on the five RTTT components’ potential impact on student achievement and the mean overall score on the potential impact on student achievement of the five components combined. The participants were grouped according to one of three different levels of school poverty percentage (0-50%, 51-74%, and 75-100%) as indicated by their response on the STECC-RTTT.

As indicated in Table 8, in the ANOVAs performed for this analysis, no statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) was found for any of the five RTTT teacher

evaluation and compensation components as to their potential impact on student achievement. Similarly, no statistically significant difference was found overall for the combined components. Therefore, no further analyses, i.e., post-hoc comparisons, were justified between the means of the three groups.

Table 11

Potential Impact of Components on Student Achievement by School Poverty Level

Race to the Top (RTTT) Selected Component	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 st 50% of evaluation based on student performance					
Between groups	.325	2	.162	.096	.908
Within groups	70.875	42	1.688		
Total	71.200	44			
1 st 50% of evaluation for non- tested on school/team performance					
Between groups	2.775	2	1.287	.883	.421
Within groups	66.025	42	1.572		
Total	68.800	44			
2 nd 50% of evaluation based upon administrative observations of core effective practices					
Between groups	.502	2	.251	.279	.758
Within groups	35.117	39	.900		
Total	35.619	41			
Current teachers participating in a performance pay scale					
Between groups	3.887	2	1.943	1.386	.263
Within groups	50.472	36	1.402		
Total	54.359	38			
A separate pay scale for lowest performing schools					
Between groups	3.837	2	1.918	1.105	.342
Within groups	62.522	36	1.737		
Total	66.359	38			
Opinion of five components combined					
Between groups	112.960	2	56.480	1.817	.175
Within groups	1336.975	43	31.092		
Total	1449.935	45			

Qualitative Analysis for Research Question 3

In addition, qualitative data were analyzed to supplement the information gained from the quantitative data. Qualitative data were gathered during follow-up interviews in response to the question, “Do you think opinions of the following components differ depending on the schools’ percentage of free/reduced lunch students: basing 50% of a teacher’s evaluation on student performance on an assessment program, basing the other 50% of a teacher’s evaluation on administrator observations, being able to optionally participate in a separate performance pay scale, and having a separate pay scale for teachers at the lower performing schools?” The participants’ responses were put in a tabular display and repeated phrases were highlighted. This table can be found in Appendix F.

The qualitative data for this research question indicated that the four follow-up interview participants had similar opinions when answering the question posed. All four participants responded that they did believe that opinions would differ depending on the schools’ percentage of free/reduced lunch students. Four themes emerged from the analysis of the participants responses: (a) teachers at schools with large number of economically disadvantaged students will be nervous or worried about these types of reform, (b) teachers at schools with large number of economically disadvantaged will see these reform components as punitive, (c) teachers at schools that are typically high performing may be more receptive to these changes, and (d) teachers at schools with large numbers of economically disadvantaged students have a harder job which may go unrecognized in this system.

The Concerns of High-Poverty Schools

Each of the four participants believed that teachers at high-poverty schools would be more worried or fearful about these types of reform components. Participant 1 expressed it by saying, “Teachers in the lower-performing schools may feel differently as they may be scared of a new system.”

Participant 2, a district administrator, had never worked at school with high numbers of economically disadvantaged students, but had worked with those schools in her position. She elaborated, “My answer is based on what I know now. I don’t know how all the formulas for value-added will work. So, the lack of information is probably scaring teachers at lower SES schools.” She also said, “I think teachers at these schools will worry about how free/reduced status will be factored. . . It’s definitely worrisome.”

Perceptions of Punitive Reforms

Three participants also expressed that teachers at high-poverty schools would likely feel like they were being unfairly punished or that these reforms were punitive in nature to teachers at those schools. Participant 1 expressed, “Those teachers in the lower performing schools may feel penalized by their choice to work at a school that may have them being paid less or evaluated wrongfully.” Participant 2 concurred, saying “Teachers at these schools will worry about their results being the same and being penalized.” Participant Four adamantly warned that punitive measures do not work as effective reform. “Punitive measures haven’t worked in changing the culture of the school.”

The Concerns of High-Performing Schools

Only one participant expressed a sentiment about teachers at low-poverty schools or what she termed “high-performing.” Participant 1 believed that teachers at high-performing schools would be more receptive to these types of reforms. “Teachers in high-performing schools will be more agreeable to these types of changes. Those teachers may already feel they are doing a good job and will not have a problem with a different evaluation and pay scale that reflects that.”

The Concerns for Recognition

The final theme that emerged in analyzing this research question was a concern over teachers whose worth and work may not be recognized. All four participants hinted that they believed the job of a teacher at a school with larger numbers of economically disadvantaged students was more difficult than that of a teacher with low numbers of economically disadvantaged students. Participant 3 expressed it clearly by saying, “The hardest thing to reconcile is at high-poverty schools there are other concerns than academics.” In regard to hard work going unrecognized, she said, “It will be difficult to justify a system like this to teachers at high-poverty schools without knowing how gains will be shown or measured.” Participant 4 had previously gained experience at schools with large percentages of economically disadvantaged students. A summary statement of hers was, “Teachers at high-poverty schools are mostly tired of being trampled on for their good-faith efforts to educate the students at their school.”

Data Analysis for Research Question 4

Research Question 4: To what extent, if any, is there a difference in the opinions of educational leaders who have different self-reported school poverty percentages about the perceived potential impact of RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement/growth at high-poverty schools?

Quantitative Analysis for Research Question 4

To answer Research Question 4, a series of six one-way analyses of the variance (ANOVA) were performed. These were run to compare the mean scores that corresponded to the opinions of participants on the five RTTT components' potential impact to student achievement at high-poverty schools and the mean overall score on the potential impact to student achievement at high-poverty schools of all five components combined. As with Research Question 3, participants were grouped according to one of the three different levels of school poverty percentage (0-50%, 51-74%, and 75-100%) as indicated by their response to the STECC-RTTT.

As indicated in Table 9, in the ANOVAs performed for these analyses, no statistically significant difference ($p < .05$) was found for any of the five RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components as to their potential impact on student achievement/growth at high poverty schools. Similarly, no statistically significant difference was found overall for the combined components. Therefore, no further analyses, i.e., post-hoc comparisons, were justified between the means of the three groups.

Table 12

Potential Impact of Components on Student Achievement at High Poverty Schools by School Poverty Level

Race to the Top (RTTT) Selected Component	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 st 50% of evaluation based on student performance					
Between groups	2.912	2	1.456	.893	.417
Within groups	70.067	43	1.629		
Total	72.978	45			
1 st 50% of evaluation for non-tested on school/team performance					
Between groups	1.029	2	.515	.327	.723
Within groups	67.775	43	1.576		
Total	68.804	45			
2 nd 50% of evaluation based upon administrative observations of core effective practices					
Between groups	.423	2	.211	.206	.815
Within groups	41.019	40	1.025		
Total	41.442	42			
Current teachers participating in a performance pay scale					
Between groups	1.521	2	.760	.555	.579
Within groups	52.089	38	1.371		
Total	53.610	40			
A separate pay scale for lowest performing schools					
Between groups	1.819	2	.909	.443	.646
Within groups	78.084	38	2.055		
Total	79.902	40			
Opinion of five components combined					
Between groups	58.109	2	29.054	.906	.412
Within groups	1378.500	43	32.058		
Total	1436.609	45			

Qualitative Analysis for Research Question 4

Qualitative data were analyzed to supplement the information gained from the quantitative data. This qualitative data was collected during follow-up interviews in response to the question, “Do you personally think that the teacher evaluation and compensation process can be used as a tool to help improve achievement at high-poverty schools?” The participants’ responses were put in a tabular display and repeated phrases were highlighted. This table can be found in Appendix F.

All four participants responded positively to this question, and three themes emerged to enhance the results of the quantitative analyses for this research question. Those themes were: (a) teacher evaluation and compensation reform can be used to improve achievement at high-poverty schools if the implementation is done correctly, (b) teacher evaluation and compensation reform can be used to improve achievement at high-poverty schools if it used along with other known successful reforms, and (c) an opinion exists that teachers at high-poverty schools should be paid more.

The Need for Careful Implementation

Three of the participants (Participants 1, 3, and 4) responded with hesitation to this question and used qualifiers to explain why they had responded the way they had. Participant 1’s answer was dependent on the effectiveness of the implementation of the RTTT grant components concerning teacher evaluation and compensation. In her opinion, proper implementation would have to be ensured by administrators. “If administrators provide the support, the professional development, and show the follow-through of inspecting what they expect, then these reforms can make a difference.”

Participant 1 warned, “Without giving professional development and without regular observations and feedback, these types of reforms won’t help anywhere.” She continued, “Mistakes will happen if critical steps in the change process are skipped.”

Reform Supplemented by Other Effective Practices

Participants 3 and 4 believed that teacher evaluation and compensation reform could be used along with other known effective practices to raise achievement at high-poverty schools. Participant 3 said referring to teacher evaluation and compensation reform, “It only has a chance of helping if the system is diagnostic of both student and teacher needs and then puts systems in place to help meet the needs.” She explained, “Will gaps in teacher performance and student learning be filled? That’s the important question. Figure out the needs, work to meet them, then the system will be successful.” Participant 4 also responded with a qualifier. “I say ‘Yes’ with the understanding that evaluation is only one piece of the puzzle. It won’t work alone.” She explained what some of those other components are. “Capturing the attention of the community and coordinating resources to help families of those schools is just as, if not more, important than teacher evaluation. There are many other pieces such as leadership, transforming the climate and culture, and curriculum improvements that will be required to help lower SES schools.”

Compensation at High-Poverty Schools

Participant 2 was the only participant who made direct reference to the teacher compensation components. This participant expressed that teachers at high-poverty

schools should be paid more than other teachers for the additional work and challenge that their job presented as long as there was accountability. “These teachers should be paid more as long as there is a tie to student achievement. This will ensure that better results and a challenging job are being rewarded properly.”

Additional Analyses

As an additional statistical analysis, the researcher compared the responses of the two groups of doctoral students, Education (non-administrative preparation) and Educational Leadership (executive leadership preparation). These analyses were done as a natural follow-up to this study even though the research questions did not ask about the differences between the two groups of doctoral students. T-tests were performed to compare the mean scores of Education students with those of Educational Leadership students on each of the five RTTT components’ potential impact on student achievement at high-poverty schools and the overall mean score on the potential impact on student achievement at high-poverty schools when all five components were combined.

As indicated in Tables 10 and Table 11, there was a difference in scores for all six comparisons between educators pursuing a doctorate in education (non-administrative preparation) and educators who were pursuing a doctorate in educational leadership (executive leadership preparation). This difference was found at a significant level ($p < .05$). Equal variances were assumed in all of the RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components for this analysis with exception of the component of the second 50% of the teachers’ evaluations being based on administrative observation of

core effective practices (Levene's Sig. = .007). As similar mean scores were found, the results for these t-tests mirrored the results for Research Question 2.

Statistical significance was found in the difference between the mean scores of participants enrolled in the Ed. D. in Education and the Ed. D in Educational Leadership programs as to their opinions of the RTTT components and the potential impact on student achievement at high-poverty schools for all five of the selected components. A significant difference was found for the component requiring the first 50% of teachers' evaluations to be based on student performance on a statewide assessment program. The difference between the responses of the two groups, the Ed. D. in Education (M = 2.18, SD = 1.10) and the Ed. D. in Educational Leadership (M = 3.29, SD = 1.24); $t(51) = -3.35$, $p < .05$ (two tailed), was found to have a magnitude of the difference in means (mean difference = -1.11, 95% CI: -1.77 to -0.45) that was large (eta squared = .18).

The next RTTT component for which there was a significant difference was that the first 50% of evaluations for teachers who taught non-tested subjects be based on school-wide or team performance on a statewide assessment program. The difference between the responses of the two groups, Ed. D. in Education (M = 2.23, SD = 1.10) and the Ed. D. in Educational Leadership (M = 3.19, SD = 1.17); $t(51) = -3.03$, $p < .05$ (two tailed), was found to have a magnitude of the difference in means (mean difference = -0.97, 95% CI: -1.60 to -0.33) that was large (eta squared = .15).

Table 13

RTTT Components' Potential Impact on Student Achievement by Ed. D. Program

Race to the Top (RTTT) Selected Component	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
1 st 50% of evaluation based on student performance				
Education (non-administrators)	22	2.18	1.097	.234
Educational Leadership (administrators)	31	3.29	1.243	.223
1st 50% of evaluation for non-tested based on school/team performance				
Education (non-administrators)	22	2.23	1.110	.237
Educational Leadership (administrators)	31	3.19	1.167	.210
2nd 50% of evaluation based on administration observations of core effective practices				
Education (non-administrators)	19	2.89	1.243	.285
Educational Leadership (administrators)	30	3.87	.860	.157
Current teachers participating in a performance pay scale				
Education (non-administrators)	19	2.58	1.121	.257
Educational Leadership (administrators)	28	3.29	1.084	.205
A separate pay scale for lowest performing schools				
Education (non-administrators)	17	2.53	1.419	.344
Educational Leadership (administrators)	28	3.39	1.315	.248
Overall opinion of five components				
Education (non-administrators)	22	11.09	5.300	1.130
Educational Leadership (administrators)	31	16.26	5.285	.949

Table 14

Independent Samples T-Test: Potential Impact of RTTT Components by Ed. D. Program

Race to the Top (RTTT) Selected Component	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
	F	Sig	T	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
1 st 50% of evaluation based on student performance	2.326	.133	3.355	51	.002	-1.109	-1.772	-.445
1 st 50% of evaluation for non- tested based on school/team performance	.436	.512	-3.031	51	.004	-.966	-1.606	-.326
2 nd 50% of evaluation based upon administrative observations of core effective practices	8.041	.007	-2.986	28.936	.006	-.972	-1.638	-.306
Current teachers participating in a performance pay scale	.104	.748	-2.164	45	.036	-.707	-1.365	-.049
A separate pay scale for lowest performing schools	.250	.620	-2.073	43	.044	-.863	-1.703	-.023
Opinion of 5 components Combined	.162	.689	-3.503	51	.001	-5.167	-8.128	-2.206

The third RTTT component that was found to have a significant difference was the second 50% of teachers' evaluations based on administrative observation of core effective practices. The difference between the responses of the two groups, the Ed. D. in Education (M = 2.89, SD = 1.24) and the Ed. D. in Educational Leadership (M = 3.87, SD = .86); $t(29) = -2.99$, $p < .05$ (two tailed), was found to have a magnitude of the difference in means (mean difference = -0.97, 95% CI: -1.64 to -0.31) that was large (eta squared = .16).

The fourth RTTT component for which a significant difference was found was in giving an option for current teachers to participate in a performance pay scale. The difference between the responses of the two groups, the Ed. D in Education (M = 2.58, SD = 1.12) and the Ed. D. in Educational Leadership (M = 3.29, SD = 1.08); $t(45) = -2.16$, $p < .05$ (two tailed), was found to have a magnitude of the difference in means (mean difference = -0.71, 95% CI: -1.37 to -0.05) that was moderate (eta squared = .09).

The fifth RTTT component for which a significant difference was found was related to a separate pay scale for teachers at the lowest performing schools. The difference between the responses of the two groups, the Ed. D. in Education (M = 2.53, SD = 1.42) and the Ed. D. in Educational Leadership (M = 3.39, SD = 1.32); $t(43) = -2.07$, $p < .05$ (two tailed), was found to have a magnitude of the difference in means (mean difference = -0.86, 95% CI: -1.70 to -0.02) that was moderate (eta squared = .09).

For the RTTT component of giving an option for current teachers to participate in a performance pay scale, no significant difference was found between the means of the two groups, the Ed. D. in Education (M = 2.86, SD = 1.25) and the Ed. D. in Educational Leadership (M = 3.40, SD = 1.12); $t(44) = -1.56$, $p > .05$ (two tailed). The magnitude of

the difference in means (mean difference = $-.54$, 95% CI: -1.24 to $.16$) was small (eta squared = $.05$).

Statistical significance was found in the difference between Education and Educational Leadership doctoral students' overall mean scores that combined the scores associated with opinions of the RTTT components and the potential impact on student achievement at high-poverty schools. Participants who indicated that they were enrolled in the Ed. D. in Education program had a mean score that was lower than did participants who were enrolled in the Ed. D. in Educational Leadership program. The difference between the Ed. D in Education group ($M = 11.09$, $SD = 5.30$) and the Ed. D. in Educational Leadership group ($M = 16.26$, $SD = 5.29$); $t(51) = -3.50$, $p < .05$ (two tailed) was found to have a magnitude of the difference in means (mean difference = -5.17 , 95% CI: -8.13 to -2.21) that was large (eta squared= $.19$).

Summary

In this chapter, the mixed-methods procedures that yielded the results for the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data were described. This was followed by the presentation of the descriptive statistics for both categorical and continuous variables. The variables discussed were the variables used in the quantitative analysis of the research questions. The analysis of qualitative data served to enhance and supplement the quantitative analyses. Additional analyses were conducted to examine differences, if any, in the two groups for which data were analyzed.

Chapter 5 contains a summary and discussion of the findings of the study. The implications of this mixed-methods study and recommendations for future research are also discussed.

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter contains a restatement of the purpose of the study and a brief review of the research design, the population, and the instrumentation used to conduct the study. The remainder of the chapter is devoted to a summary and discussion of the findings organized around the four research questions, implications for policy and practice, and recommendations for future research.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the professional opinions of educational leaders (both instructional and administrative) regarding selected components in the Race to the Top (RTTT) grant concerning teacher evaluation and compensation and the performance of students at schools with a percentage of economically disadvantaged students of 75% or higher. The professional opinions of educational leaders at different types of schools were sought to help understand the different challenges the new elements found in the RTTT grant would have in improving student achievement.

Population, Research Design, and Instrumentation

For this study, a target university was selected that had Ed. D. students who were professionals in the field who were pursuing their doctorates in either Education (non-administrative) or Educational Leadership (administrative). The desire to achieve an advanced degree and to grow academically made them an ideal group of educational

leaders for study of their opinions. Using this population, a mixed-methods study involving the collection of quantitative and qualitative data was conducted to analyze the professional opinions of educational leaders in central Florida in regard to RTTT grant components.

The researcher designed a survey, the Electronic Survey of the Implementation and Impact of Teacher Evaluation and Compensation Components from the Race to the Top Grant (STECC-RTTT) which yielded the quantitative data used in the analysis. The instrument was administered to 54 participants, 27 of whom reported their professional classification as instructional. The remaining 27 participants indicated their professional classification as administrative. Of those doctoral students participating, 22 represented the Ed. D. in Education (non-administrative) program, and 31 represented the Ed. D. in Educational Leadership (administrative) program. To gather qualitative information, the researcher interviewed four participants concerning RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components. Interview questions were designed to elicit additional information to enhance the quantitative data collection regarding the four research questions.

Summary and Discussion of the Findings

The findings for each of the four research questions of this mixed-methods study are discussed in this section. Quantitative results and qualitative themes that emerged are discussed, and the agreement, or lack thereof, of the findings of this study with those of other authors and researchers are noted.

Research Question 1

To what extent, if any, is there a relationship between the self-reported knowledge of the RTTT grant and the perceived fairness of the RTTT grant concerning teacher evaluation and compensation?

The quantitative findings from a series of three Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients suggested that a statistically significant relationship did not exist between the self-reported knowledge and the fairness of the RTTT grant concerning teacher evaluation and compensation. The qualitative findings of the follow-up interviews also supported that knowledge of the RTTT grant did not influence opinions of participants about the RTTT grant components concerning teacher evaluation and compensation. Three themes emerged from the qualitative findings.

The first theme was a lack of understanding or information about the RTTT grant. This theme's emergence suggested that in the summer of 2011, there was not enough information for opinions on fairness of the RTTT grant concerning teacher evaluation and compensation to be related to the knowledge of the RTTT grant.

Similar to the first theme, the second theme indicated the details provided about the implementation of the grant were inadequate. The emergence of this theme suggested that the implementation of the RTTT grant and the details about it had either not yet been created or had suffered from insufficient communication. Without this critical information, perceptions of fairness of the RTTT grant components concerning teacher evaluation and compensation and knowledge of the RTTT grant could not be established.

The third theme that emerged from the qualitative analysis for this research question was the political nature of the RTTT grant. This theme's emergence suggested

that because of the politics involved with the RTTT grants, perceptions of the fairness of the grant components concerning teacher evaluation and compensation may have already been established regardless of knowledge of the RTTT grant. The emergence of this theme supports some of the contentions made by Nicholson-Crotty and Staley (2012) about the political nature of the RTTT grant. Their contention was that states applied for the RTTT grant due to political motivations rather than to satisfy monetary needs or improve student achievement.

It should be noted that these findings may be limited by the nature of the sample size and the lower response rate than expected. In addition, the STECC-RTTT and the follow-up interview were both conducted in summer of 2011, at which time there had been limited implementation work on the RTTT grants by school districts and the state department of education. Thus, participants may not have had sufficient time to adequately form their opinions.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2: To what extent, if any, is there a difference between the two professional classification groups' opinions about the perceived potential impact of the RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement/growth?

The quantitative findings from a series of six independent sample t-tests suggested that a significant difference existed between the opinions of participants whose professional classification was instructional and administrative about three of the RTTT components involving teacher evaluation and compensation. A significant difference was not found in the opinions of two of the components of the RTTT grant concerning teacher evaluation and compensation reform. Overall, however, a significant difference

was found between the opinions of instructional and administrative participants' as evidence by mean combined scores of the selected RTTT components. From qualitative data analysis, five different themes emerged which added further support for the quantitative results.

In the quantitative analysis, a significant difference was found between instructional and administrative participants for the component requiring that the first 50% of teachers' evaluations be based on student performance on a statewide assessment program. Instructional educators believed that this type of reform would have a negative impact on student achievement. In contrast, administrator's opinions were that this type of reform would impact student achievement in a positive way.

Similarly, a significant difference was found in the quantitative analysis for the component that requires the first 50% of evaluations of teachers of non-tested subjects be based on school-wide or team performance on a statewide assessment program. Instructionally based professionals believed that requiring the evaluation of teachers who do not teach tested subjects to have half of their evaluation based on school-wide or team performance on a statewide assessment program would have a negative impact on student achievement. However, administrative based professionals took an opposite position, believing this type of reform would have a positive impact on student achievement.

The third component for which a statistically significant difference was found in the quantitative analysis was the component that requires a separate pay scale for teachers at the lowest performing schools. The findings suggested that instructionally based educational leaders believed this would more likely have a negative impact on student

achievement, but administrators believed this would more likely have a positive impact on a student achievement.

There was no statistically significant difference between the opinions of instructional participants and administrative participants for two of the RTTT components: (a) the second 50% of teachers' evaluations being based on observation of core effective practices by administrators and (b) the component that gives an option for current teachers to participate in a performance pay scale. Prior to RTTT reforms, teacher evaluations were based upon administrator observations. Similar prior experiences of both instructional and administrative leaders could account, in part, for this non-significance. Also, the performance pay scale's implementation was still a couple of years in the future at the time of this study, and the lack of information and detail about performance pay could have influenced opinions.

A statistically significant difference was found between the two groups when their scores associated with their opinions for each of the five RTTT components were combined. This suggested that, overall; non-instructional administrators were more receptive and positive to these types of reforms than were their instructional colleagues.

The qualitative results seem to support much of the quantitative findings. For example, one of the themes that emerged from the qualitative analysis was that teachers would have a difficult time with these types of changes. This implied that teachers were more content with the status quo. In addition, the second theme that emerged was that administrators would be more likely in favor of these types of reforms.

However, there was some indication, based on the qualitative analysis, that results-oriented administrators might then to hold off opinions or judgments until more

definitive results were available. Another theme that supported the difference between instructional and administrative professional opinions was the concept of lenses. Those interviewed believed educators would see these changes through different lenses and form different opinions on them. These lenses could be influenced by position as well as other factors like work ethic. Finally, the dissemination of information and the writing of the grant could play a factor in the lenses. Different slants could be put on the reforms that could cause opinions of the grant to fall one way or another.

The quantitative and qualitative results both suggested that differences of opinions exist between instructional and administrative educators on the RTTT components concerning teacher evaluation and compensation. The opinions of instructional mirror some of the perceptions found in Bent's (1993) study and Chaplin et al.'s (2009) study. It also adds to those studies by explaining the differences between instructional and administrative personnel. These findings also mirror the results of Bastarache's (2000) study that found that teachers were more negative about the ability of evaluation to improve instruction than principals.

Research Question 3

To what extent, if any, is there a difference in the opinions of educational leaders who have different self-reported school poverty percentages about the perceived potential impact of RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement/growth?

The quantitative results from a series of six one-way analyses of the variance (ANOVA) that were performed indicated that there was not a statistically significant difference between the opinions of educational leaders who had different self-reported

school poverty percentages about the potential impact of RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement. This suggested that educators at different poverty level schools would not necessarily have a difference in opinion about these types of reforms.

However, based on qualitative analysis from the follow-up interviews, themes emerged that suggested the opposite. Those themes that emerged were: (a) teachers at schools with large number of economically disadvantaged students will be nervous or worried about these types of reform, (b) teachers at schools with large number of economically disadvantaged will see these reform components as punitive, (c) teachers at schools that are typically high performing may be more receptive to these changes, and (d) teachers at schools with large numbers of economically disadvantaged students have a harder job which may go unrecognized in this system.

The qualitative results suggested that results from the quantitative analysis may need further examination. Coupled together, the quantitative and qualitative results suggested that educational leaders at all types of poverty schools have similar opinions about these components and their opinions have more to do with other lenses than school poverty percentages.

Another possible reason for the conflict between the quantitative and qualitative analysis could be the small sample size and the poverty levels of participants' schools. Also, the instrumentation (STECC-RTTT) used in the study called for three poverty-level categories (0-50%, 51-74%, or 75-100%). Further categorization may have been helpful in identifying potential differences.

Research Question 4

Research Question 4: To what extent, if any, is there a difference in the opinions of educational leaders who have different self-reported school poverty percentages about the perceived potential impact of RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement/growth at high-poverty schools?

To answer Research Question 4, a series of six one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) were found. It was found that there was no difference in the opinions of educational leaders who had different self-reported school poverty percentages about the perceived potential impact of RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components on student achievement at high poverty schools. This suggested that educators at different poverty-level schools would not necessarily have a difference in opinion about the types of reforms and their potential impact on student achievement at high-poverty schools.

Based on the qualitative analysis of follow-up interviews, themes emerged that suggested that it may be possible for these types of reforms to be used to help improve student achievement at high-poverty schools. Those themes that emerged were: (a) teacher evaluation and compensation reform can be used to improve achievement at high-poverty schools if the implementation is executed correctly, (b) teacher evaluation and compensation reform can be used to improve achievement at high-poverty schools if it is used along with other known successful reforms, and (c) an opinion exists that teachers at high-poverty schools should be paid more. These findings supplement the contentions of Kolbe and Rice-King (2012) and Rivkin et al. (2005) that personnel policies and compensation of teachers can be used as effective tools for improving the achievement of economically disadvantaged students. In addition, these findings help to enhance the

findings of Donaldson (2009) who explained the best approaches to improve evaluation of teachers. These included an extended development phase; valid, reliable instruments; multiple measures; robust professional development for evaluators and teachers; accountability, incentives, and support for evaluators; and integration within a human capital system.

As the RTTT grant and the components concerning teacher evaluation and compensation were still in the early stages of implementation at the time of this study, details about these components were limited. This may have affected responses on the STECC-RTTT and limited the ability to find a difference of opinion between educators at different poverty leveled schools. However, the lack of a quantitative statistically significant difference should not necessarily be interpreted as a rejection of these types of reforms as a tool to increase student achievement at high-poverty schools. Nor should the themes that emerged be a clear endorsement of using these types of components. The themes that emerged from the qualitative analysis were clear that the implementation of these types of reforms must be carried out with care and be a part of the overall reforms that must be made to improve student achievement at high-poverty schools.

Implications for Policy and Practice

With the implementation of the RTTT grant, teacher evaluation and compensation reform has officially been brought to the state of the Florida. Based on the findings of this study, five basic implications that can apply to school-level educators, district-level educators, and the state-level educators in charge of the implementation of the RTTT

grant are offered. Each of the five implications will be discussed as to how they might apply to educational policy or practice.

1. More information and details about Race to the Top (RTTT) grants need to be communicated. State-level educators in charge of the implementation of the RTTT grant should realize that with these types of reforms, a high level of communication must be maintained. Since details were found to be lacking at the district and school levels, it may be advisable for state level officials to employ various methods of getting those details concerning teacher evaluation and compensation out to the districts. District-level school officials will need to communicate these upcoming reforms on a regular basis and build the capacity and structure for school-level personnel to receive their communication. School-level educators must be prepared with adequate information and resources to find the information that they may be lacking. Because the potential results of these components would be seen at the school level, getting sufficient information to both instructional and administrative educational leaders will be of the utmost importance.
2. The different lenses through which these reforms are viewed by instructional educators and administrative educators should be considered. Knowing that there are different lenses that educators will be using to process these reforms, it will be important for state level and district level personnel associated with the RTTT grant to become familiar with as many lenses as possible. Carefully considering information and being proactive about the implementation of these reforms will be well received by those responsible for implementation

and will go a long way in helping these reforms have a chance of improving student achievement. These reforms are under way and school level educators must be ready for them.

3. Teachers are nervous about how these reforms will potentially affect them. Teachers are leery of these reforms. State, district, and school-based administrators must do their best to ensure that these reforms are as transparent as possible. Negative viewpoints of these types of measures exist and must not be swept aside or ignored. Open question and answer sessions could be made available to respond to negative and positive aspects of these types of reforms. Showcasing benefits of these reforms may help in alleviating some of the worry.
4. More information is needed on how fairness to teachers at high-poverty schools will be achieved. Linking 50% of evaluation and eventually teacher compensation to student performance on a state assessment system has the potential to be troubling to many educators at high-poverty schools. These concerns must be taken into account, and reassurance needs to be provided to concerned teachers. In order for these reforms to be successful, fairness to all teachers must be ensured. When creating or adopting a value-added formula, state level officials must take into consideration the difficulty that economically disadvantaged students have on state assessments.
5. Care must be taken in implementing these reforms along with other known successful reforms to improve achievement at high-poverty schools. In this study, it has been found that the reforms to teacher compensation and

evaluation are not enough. Implementation will have to include the proper professional development, transparency, follow-through, and other components not necessarily addressed in the RTTT grant. Successful practices exist that improve student achievement at high poverty schools such as standards-based data driven reform (Anderson & Welsh, 2000) and early intervention and acceleration (Borman, 2003) Some of the effective practices that could be considered are diagnostic intervention, coordinating resources in the community, and making curriculum changes. Incorporating teacher evaluation and compensation as a piece of those practices, and not the only practice, will help improve chances of improving student achievement.

Recommendations for Further Research

The following recommendations for future research are offered in light of the findings of the present study.

1. A qualitative case study could be conducted using one or more districts and the implementation of the RTTT grant. This would help to generate data on how implementation of these teacher evaluation and compensation components could be successfully accomplished. In a few years, quantitative data could be included to show which type of implementation strategies yielded the best student achievement results.
2. The study could be replicated using a greater sample size. This would permit a reconsideration of opinions of educational leaders on the RTTT components based on different poverty leveled schools and might further explain the

contradiction between the quantitative and qualitative findings regarding these differences. A study that determines the level of poverty as either high or low instead of the STECC-RTTT's use of three levels of school poverty might yield different results and a significant difference.

3. Only three RTTT components were studied in this research. Opinions about other components could be explored to determine how they might impact student achievement.
4. This study could be replicated periodically throughout the implementation of the RTTT grant and even post-grant. This could yield valuable information in understanding teacher evaluation and compensation reform.
5. In order to increase the participation rate, a study could be conducted that did not limit itself to the university setting and solicited help from the area school districts. In addition, changes to data collection procedures could be made. A researcher could potentially increase the participation rate by visiting doctoral level classes and personally make the request for volunteer participation in addition to the request via email distribution.
6. The qualitative portion of this mixed-methods designed study yielded some results that could possibly be expanded upon. Further study could include a larger pool of potential interviewees to gather greater amounts of qualitative data.
7. Statistically significant differences were found in the opinions of instructional and administrative leaders. These differences could be further investigated in

a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods study to determine why specific differences exist.

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations which should be noted by those interpreting the results of this research. Though the researcher was careful in the design of the research, several limitations emerged during the course of the study. Inferences based on the results of the research should be made only after considering the following:

The participation rate was less than expected in both the quantitative and qualitative portions of the study. Though every attempt was made to increase the sample size in the quantitative portion of the research, email software at the target university was imprecise and made determining numbers of students contacted and final return rates difficult. The participation in the qualitative portion was also low. Although 14 participants indicated that they would be willing to take part in the follow-up interview, the researcher was only able to get in contact with four.

This study was limited to one target university and one region, and the survey responses and follow-up interviews were generated prior to the implementation of the RTTT grant in August 2011. At that time, limited information had been disseminated to educational leaders.

Conclusion

In this study, the researcher expanded the initial research on the RTTT grant and other previous research that explored teacher evaluation and compensation reform. This

study was conducted to address the impact of the teacher evaluation and compensation reform on student achievement at high-poverty schools. To accomplish this, the opinions of instructional and administrative educational leaders in central Florida were sought using a researcher-created survey to gather quantitative data and a follow-up interview protocol for qualitative information prior to implementation of the RTTT grant.

Though this study provided baseline data on the opinions of educational leaders on the RTTT teacher evaluation and compensation components, there is still much to be learned about the RTTT grant. The initial split opinions regarding RTTT along professional classification lines have, in a sense, pitted teachers against administrators. Questions remain: Will the grant continue to be divisive once results begin to be known? Will the grant have the impact on student achievement, in particular student achievement of economically disadvantaged students, that was intended? The opinions of educational leaders (instructional and administrative) should continue to be sought in future research, as the actions of these leaders could make RTTT a successful federal program. The care with which these leaders implement teacher evaluation and compensation reforms will be essential to the program's success and should include other proven types of reforms in order to improve student achievement at high-poverty schools.

APPENDIX A
ELECTRONIC SURVEY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT OF
TEACHER EVALUATION AND COMPENSATION ELEMENTS
FROM THE RACE TO THE TOP GRANT

Electronic Survey of the Implementation and Impact of Teacher Evaluation and Compensation Components from the Race to the Top Grant

Race to the Top (RTTT) is a competitive grant awarded to the state of Florida to reform schools. Your professional opinion is needed to determine the potential effectiveness of these components on student growth and success which may influence evaluation and compensation for educators.

Directions: Please fill in or select the appropriate response for each item.

Part A: Demographic Information

Gender: Female Male

Position Title:

Professional Classification: Administrative (principal, assistant principal, district Instructional (teacher, coach)
 Other

School Level: Elementary Middle High District Other (please specify)

Percentage of Free/Reduced Lunch at Current or Last School:

0-50% 51-74% 75%-100% N/A

School District if Applicable:

Graduate Degree Program: (Drop-down selection): Ed. D. in _____, Executive Ed. D. in _____, Ed. S. in _____, M. Ed. in _____, other

Part B: Race to the Top Background Information(5 Minutes)

Where have you received your information on the Race to the Top Grant? Select all that apply.

- District Officials District Presentation Colleagues
- Graduate Classes Guest Speakers State Conferences
- State Conference Calls FEA (or local union) Publications Media/News
- Educational Journals/Publications FL DOE Website U.S. DOE Website
- Email Communication from Race to the Grant Officials Other (please specify)_____

Rate Your Knowledge of the Race to the Top Grant using the following scale.

1	2	3	4	5
No Knowledge (Have not heard of the Race to the Top Grant)	Little Knowledge	Moderate Knowledge	Great Knowledge	Expert Knowledge (Can facilitate a seminar on the Race to the Top Grant)

Based on your knowledge of the Race to the Top Grant, rate the fairness of the grant concerning the following two items.

Teacher Evaluation	Extremely Fair	Fair	Neutral	Unfair	Extremely Unfair	Not Enough Information to Rate
Teacher Compensation	Extremely Fair	Fair	Neutral	Unfair	Extremely Unfair	Not Enough Information to Rate

Part C: Race to the Top Teacher Evaluation and Compensation Components Improvement of Student Achievement (5 Minutes)

Rate the potential impact of the Race to the Top Grant components on student achievement.

Teacher Evaluation and Compensation Components from the Race to the Top Grant	Strong Positive Impact	Positive Impact	No Impact	Negative Impact	Strong Negative Impact	Not Enough Information
The first 50% of Teacher Evaluation/Appraisal will be based on student performance on a Statewide Assessment Program.						
The first 50% of Teacher Evaluation/Appraisal of those who teach a subject or level in which students are not tested will be based on school-wide or team performance						
The second 50% of Teacher Evaluation/Appraisal will be based on administrator observations of core effective practices and one additional metric.						
Teachers will be able to optionally participate in a separate performance pay scale (Merit Pay).						
Teachers at the lowest performing schools will be given a separate pay scale.						

Part D: Race to the Top Teacher Evaluation and Compensation Components Improvement of Student Achievement at High Poverty Schools(5 Minutes)

Rate the potential impact of the Race to the Top Grant components on student achievement at schools with poverty rates of 75% or more.

Teacher Evaluation and Compensation Components from the Race to the Top Grant	Strong Positive Impact	Positive Impact	No Impact	Negative Impact	Strong Negative Impact	Not Enough Information
The first 50% of Teacher Evaluation/Appraisal will be based on student performance on a Statewide Assessment Program.						
The first 50% of Teacher Evaluation/Appraisal of those who teach a subject or level in which students are not tested will be based on school-wide or team performance						
The second 50% of Teacher Evaluation/Appraisal will be based on administrator observations of core effective practices and one additional metric.						
Teachers will be able to optionally participate in a separate performance pay scale (Merit Pay).						
Teachers at the lowest performing schools will be given a separate pay scale.						

Part E: Additional Information

Please share anything else you believe would be helpful for understanding the potential impact to RTTT or assist with implementation?

Would you agree to a follow-up phone interview?

If yes, please include your contact information.

Name

Email

Phone Number

APPENDIX B
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Dan,

All surveys of grad students have to have the approval from Dr. Culp and he has approved yours.

When the proposal is approved, it would be good form to send him the final proposal and survey for his records and thank him for the approval.

Take care,
Rose

Dr. Taylor
The protocol for this project has my approval.
Best wishes for a successful project.
Rex

Rex E. Culp, PhD, JD
Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies
College of Education
P. O. Box 161250
University of Central Florida
Orlando, FL 32816-1250

TEL: 407-823-3906
FAX: 407-823-5135
rexculp@mail.ucf.edu

"Florida has a very broad public records law. As a result, any written communication created or received by the University of Central Florida employees is subject to disclosure to the public and the media, upon request, unless otherwise exempt. Under Florida law, e-mail addresses are public records. If you do not want your email address released in response to a public records request, do not send electronic mail to this entity. Instead, contact this office by phone or in writing."

Dr. Rosemarye (Rose) Taylor
rtaylor@mail.ucf.edu
Associate Professor of Educational Leadership
University of Central Florida
<http://education.ucf.edu/edleadership/>

>>> Rosemarye Taylor 2/4/2011 6:10 AM >>>

Rex,

One of my students is going to survey doctoral, Ed. S. and maybe M. Ed. students on their perception of components of Race to The Top. I've attached the draft survey for your review. I don't think there is anything controversial or revealing in it. We will have the proposal meeting in a few weeks.

After your review and approval and the committee's review he will finalize it and submit to IRB.

Many thanks,

Rose

Dr. Rosemarye (Rose) Taylor
rtaylor@mail.ucf.edu
Associate Professor of Educational Leadership
University of Central Florida
<http://education.ucf.edu/edleadership/>

[Florida has a very broad Public Records Law. Virtually all written communications to or from School District Personnel are public records available to the public and media upon request. E-mail sent or received on the School District system will be considered public and will only be withheld from disclosure if deemed confidential pursuant to State Law.]

APPENDIX C
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



University of Central Florida Institutional Review Board
Office of Research & Commercialization
12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501
Orlando, Florida 32826-3246
Telephone: 407-823-2901 or 407-882-2276
www.research.ucf.edu/compliance/irb.html

Approval of Exempt Human Research

From: **UCF Institutional Review Board #1
FWA00000351, IRB00001138**
To: **Daniel Windish**
Date: **April 05, 2011**

Dear Researcher:

On 4/5/2011, the IRB approved the following activity as human participant research that is exempt from regulation:

Type of Review: IRB Initial Review Submission Form
Project Title: CENTRAL FLORIDA EDUCATIONAL LEADERS'
PROFESSIONAL OPINIONS OF THE RACE TO THE TOP
GRANT COMPONENTS CONCERNING TEACHER
EVALUATION AND COMPENSATION
Investigator: Daniel H Windish
IRB Number: SBE-11-07549
Funding Agency: None

This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these changes affect the exempt status of the human research, please contact the IRB. When you have completed your research, please submit a Study Closure request in iRIS so that IRB records will be accurate.

In the conduct of this research, you are responsible to follow the requirements of the [Investigator Manual](#).

On behalf of Kendra Dimond Campbell, MA, JD, UCF IRB Interim Chair, this letter is signed by:

Signature applied by Janice Turchin on 04/05/2011 01:46:12 PM EDT

IRB Coordinator

APPENDIX D
INFORMED CONSENT

Date

Dear UCF Doctoral Student and Educational Leader:

You are invited to participate in a study of the professional opinions of educational leaders in Central Florida. Your professional opinion is needed on the Race to the Top Grant elements concerning teacher evaluation and compensation. This study will add to the field of knowledge of how such components can possibly impact student achievement and student growth.

Students participating in either Educational Leadership or Education graduate and doctoral programs were selected to participate. Your Knights email address was acquired through both programs. The link found in this email below will bring you to the actual electronic survey found on Survey Monkey®.

Although, asked for general demographic information, your responses will be kept anonymous. The researcher is only interested in your honest professional opinions of the Race to the Top Grant components.

I will be available explain this research study to you. Whether or not you take part is up to you. You can agree to take part now and later change your mind. Whatever you decide it will not be held against you. Viewing of any personally identifiable information will be limited to me, the researcher. There are no anticipated risks or benefits to participating in this study. Feel free to ask all the questions you want before you decide.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact me at daniel_windish@scps.k12.fl.us. My faculty advisor, Dr. Rosemarye Taylor, may be contacted by phone at (407) 823-1469 or by email at rtaylor@mail.ucf.edu. Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Questions or concerns about research participants' rights may be directed to the UCF Institutional Review Board Office at the University of Central Florida, Office of Research and Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246. The phone numbers are (407) 823-2901 or (407) 882-2276.

By clicking on the link to the survey you are giving your informed consent to participate in the survey.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to participate.

Best Regards,

Daniel H. Windish
Doctoral Candidate, University of Central Florida
Assistant Principal at Pine Crest Elementary
Seminole County Public Schools

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/KD5CBQL>

May 18, 2011

Dear UCF Doctoral Student and Educational Leader:

A few weeks back you were invited to participate in a study of the professional opinions of educational leaders in Central Florida. If you have already participated, thank you for your time. The results will be analyzed shortly.

If you have not yet participated, you are still able to. As mentioned in the prior email, whether or not you take part is entirely up to you.

Your professional opinion is needed on the Race to the Top Grant elements concerning teacher evaluation and compensation. This study will add to the field of knowledge of how such components can possibly impact student achievement and student growth.

Students participating in either Educational Leadership or Education graduate and doctoral programs were selected to participate. The researcher is only interested in your honest professional opinions of the Race to the Top Grant components. The link found in this email below will bring you to the actual electronic survey found on Survey Monkey®.

You can agree to take part now and later change your mind. Whatever you decide it will not be held against you. Viewing of any personally identifiable information will be limited to me, the researcher. There are no anticipated risks or benefits to participating in this study. Your instructor will not have any way of determining which students have participated and which have not.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact me at daniel_windish@scps.k12.fl.us. My faculty advisor, Dr. Rosemarye Taylor, may be contacted by phone at (407) 823-1469 or by email at rtaylor@mail.ucf.edu. Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Questions or concerns about research participants' rights may be directed to the UCF Institutional Review Board Office at the University of Central Florida, Office of Research and Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246. The phone numbers are (407) 823-2901 or (407) 882-2276.

By clicking on the link to the survey you are giving your informed consent to participate in this study. Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Best Regards,

Daniel H. Windish
Doctoral Candidate, University of Central Florida
Assistant Principal at Pine Crest Elementary
Seminole County Public Schools

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ProfessionalOpinionRTTT>

June 21, 2011

Dear UCF Doctoral Student and Educational Leader:

You were recently invited to participate in a study of the professional opinions of educational leaders in Central Florida. If you have already participated, thank you for your time. The results will be analyzed shortly.

If you have not yet participated, you are still able to. As mentioned in the prior email, whether or not you take part is entirely up to you.

Your professional opinion is needed on the Race to the Top Grant elements concerning teacher evaluation and compensation. This study will add to the field of knowledge of how such components can possibly impact student achievement and student growth.

Students participating in either Educational Leadership or Education graduate and doctoral programs were selected to participate. The researcher is only interested in your honest professional opinions of the Race to the Top Grant components. The link found in this email below will bring you to the actual electronic survey found on Survey Monkey®.

You can agree to take part now and later change your mind. Whatever you decide it will not be held against you. Viewing of any personally identifiable information will be limited to me, the researcher. There are no anticipated risks or benefits to participating in this study. Your instructor will not have any way of determining which students have participated and which have not.

If you have any questions about this study, please contact me at daniel_windish@scps.k12.fl.us. My faculty advisor, Dr. Rosemarye Taylor, may be contacted by phone at (407) 823-1469 or by email at rtaylor@mail.ucf.edu. Research at the University of Central Florida involving human participants is carried out under the oversight of the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Questions or concerns about research participants' rights may be directed to the UCF Institutional Review Board Office at the University of Central Florida, Office of Research and Commercialization, 12201 Research Parkway, Suite 501, Orlando, FL 32826-3246. The phone numbers are (407) 823-2901 or (407) 882-2276.

By clicking on the link to the survey you are giving your informed consent to participate in this study.

Thank you again for your time and consideration.

Best Regards,

Daniel H. Windish
Doctoral Candidate, University of Central Florida
Assistant Principal at Pine Crest Elementary
Seminole County Public Schools

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ProfessionalOpinionRTTT>

APPENDIX E
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Protocol for the Follow-up Interview to the Electronic Survey of the Implementation and Impact of Teacher Evaluation and Compensation Components from the Race to the Top Grant

Instructions and Overview:

These questions are to be asked of the selected participants that indicated at the conclusion of their Electronic Survey of the Implementation and Impact of Teacher Evaluation and Compensation Components from the Race to the Top Grant (SIITECCRTTT) that they would agree to a follow-up phone interview. The participants will be told that their answers will be kept anonymous, but may be reported as qualitative data for a dissertation on the professional opinions of educational leaders concerning the Race to the Top grant (RTTT) components concerning teacher evaluation and compensation. Participants were given the option of not participating or ending the interview at any time.

The interviewer will ask the four initial questions in order and take detailed notes of the responses. A table has been created for writing those notes and accompanies this protocol. Each of the four questions involves follow-up questions depending on the response to the initial questions. At any time, the interviewer may decide to probe the participant further for more details or responses, but make note of those questions or comments that were used for probing as well as the participants' responses.

Information and a script is provided and the interviewer will avoid deviating from the script unless noted for the probing for additional information or at points that are irrelevant to the questions. Information will be written in **bold**. The script will be written in *italics* and information about follow-up questions will be below each of the four initial questions.

The interviewer will start by calling the phone number left by the participant as a response to the item on the SIITECCRTTT.

Please say:

Hello. May I please speak with (name of participant)?

Once on the phone with the participant, please say:

My name is (name of interviewer) and I am conducting a follow-up interview to survey that you have recently taken about the Race to the Top grant components concerning teacher evaluation and compensation. In that survey, you indicated that you would be willing to take part in a follow-up phone interview. Would this be a good time to ask you four questions or can I arrange for another time that would be better? This interview will take no longer than 5-10 minutes.

If the participant needs to schedule another time, please make note of that and call back at that scheduled time.

Once at an agreed about time, please say:

Thank you for agreeing to participate. Before we begin, I would like to remind you of a few things. If at any time you no longer wish to participate, you may end this interview just by saying so.

Also, you should know that your responses will be kept anonymous. Notes will be taken on your responses and qualitative data will be reported and analyzed as part of a dissertation for the University of Central Florida. However, in no way will your responses be attributed to you as you will only be identified as a participant. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Answer any questions or address any concerns the participant may have. Once that has been done, please say:

1. *Let's begin with the first question.*

Has your professional opinion changed about the fairness of the Race to the Top grant as you have learned more about it?

Please go to the appropriate response for a follow-up.

If the participant responds “Yes,” please ask the following:

Has it been more favorable or less favorable and why?

If the participant responds “No,” please ask the following:

Why do you think your opinion has not changed?

It is important to be receptive to the response, no matter the opinion expressed.

Say:

2. *Thank you. Let's move to the second question.*

Do you think professional position (instructional or administrative) would affect opinions on the success of the Race to the Top grant's impact on student achievement or growth?

Please go the appropriate response for a follow-up.

If the participant responds, “Yes,” please ask the following:

In what ways would the position of an individual affect the opinions?

If the participant responds, “No,” please ask the following:

Why don't you think that position would affect professional opinion?

Say:

3. *Thank you. The third question is:*

Do you think opinions of the following components differ depending on the schools' percentage of free/reduced lunch students: basing 50% of a teacher's evaluation on student performance on an assessment program, basing the other 50% of a teacher's evaluation on administrator observations, being able to optionally participate in a separate performance pay scale, and having a separate pay scale for teachers at the lower performing schools?

Please go the appropriate response for a follow-up.

If the participant responds, "Yes," please ask the following:

How so?

If the participant responds, "No," please ask the following:

Why do you think that is?

Say:

4. *Thank you. That brings us to the last question:*

Do you personally think that the teacher evaluation and compensation process can be used as a tool to help improve achievement at high-poverty schools?

If the participant responds, "Yes," please ask the following:

How would those processes best be used and why?

If the participant responds, "No," please ask the following:

What are some other means that would help improve achievement at high-poverty schools?

At this time, the interview is over. Please conclude it by saying:

Thank you for your time. I appreciate your help. The information that you have provided will be helpful in the continued study of the Race to the Top grant and teacher evaluation and compensation reform.

Interview Response Notes

Participant Number	Question	Initial Yes or No	Follow-up Notes
	<u>1</u>		
	<u>2</u>		

	<u>3</u>		
	<u>4</u>		

APPENDIX F
ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DATA

Analysis of Follow-up Interview Question 1 for Research Question 1

Interview Question: Has your professional opinion changed about the fairness of the Race to the Top grant as you have learned more about it?				
Themes	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4
There was not enough information about RTTT to change opinions.	“My initial thoughts were that there wasn’t a lot of information to make a judgment on the fairness.”	“We’ll need to learn about it before we can debate it.”	“We haven’t enacted a lot of the changes for the RTTT grant yet. There are many components that the fairness of will depend on how they are enacted.”	“I haven’t really made a judgment yet on all of it.”
There is a lack of needed details on how it will be implemented before a better judgment of fairness can be made.	“I still believe there is not enough information on how performance pay will be organized to make a determination on how fair it will be.” “I am curious about what the value-added formula will look like.”		“I’ll be better at giving an opinion of fairness later in the process of implementation.”	
There are political aspects of RTTT and that was a reason for opinions not changing.		“It’s government. We don’t have a whole lot of influence on it.”		“There is a clear political agenda that accompanies these changes.”
Additional Comments Expressed	“I didn’t think it was unfair to begin with.”	“It is what it is.” “We don’t seem to have a lot of influence on these types of reforms.”		“It seems like much of what is involved is similar to what I was expecting.”

Analysis of Follow-up Interview Question 2 for Research Question 2

Interview Question: Do you think professional position (instructional or administrative) would affect opinions on the success of the Race to the Top grant's impact on student achievement or growth?				
Themes	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4
Teachers will have a difficult time with reforms.	"In my experience, teachers aren't necessarily open to change. These types of changes, teachers will not be receptive to them. It will be harder to get them (teachers) on board."	"Some, teachers will perceive that it is something new, but tying compensation and evaluation to student achievement should be done. Good teachers should want the accountability."		"Many teachers will be against most of these changes. They will see it as an attack on what they do. Other teachers might see it as just another thing they will have to wait out. Referring to fads in education."
People see through different lenses.			"This question is all about perception. People have different lenses as to how they see things."	"Although it shouldn't be different, people see things through the lens of how it affects them."
Administrators would be more receptive to these changes when compared to teachers.	"Administrators, on the other hand, have pretty much bought into doing the things necessary to doing well academically. They will be more willing to try methods to achieve that."	Administrators will think these types of reforms are a good thing."		
Administrator judgments may be reserved until results are returned				"Administrators won't necessarily see it that way. They will see all of this as potentially, a lot more work. Generally, they'll want to know how all of this will get done and what kind of results it will bring about. Will the results come quickly?"
Interpretations had the potential to slant teachers and administrators in different directions.		"I think it has the potential for being more motivational to some underperforming teachers, while other teachers that do their best all the time will not be affected."	"A key factor will be the people providing the information. Are they putting a slant on it? Information trickles down and misinformation and misinterpretations are made. Another point will be who wrote the application. Were they slanted one way or another on these issues? All of this could slant teachers one way and administrators another way."	

Analysis of Follow-up Interview Question 3 for Research Question 3

Do you think opinions of the following components differ depending on the schools' percentage of free/reduced lunch students: basing 50% of a teachers' evaluation on student performance on an assessment program, basing the other 50% of a teachers' evaluation on administrator observations, being able to optionally participate in a separate performance pay scale, and having a separate pay scale for teachers at the lower performing schools?				
Themes	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4
Teachers at schools with large economically disadvantaged populations will be nervous about reforms that link their evaluation and pay to performance or achievement.	"Teachers in the lower performing schools may feel differently as they may be scared of a new system."	My answer is based on what I know now. I don't know how all the formulas for value-added will work. So, the lack of information is probably scaring teachers at lower SES schools. I think teachers at these schools will worry about how free/reduced status will be factored."	"Teachers at high-poverty schools are nervous that hard work won't be recognized."	
Teachers at high-poverty schools have a harder job that may go unrecognized.			"The hardest thing to reconcile is at high-poverty schools there are other concerns than academics. It will be difficult to justify a system like this to teachers at high-poverty schools without knowing how gains will be shown or measured."	"Teachers at high-poverty schools are mostly tired of being trampled on for their good-faith efforts to educate the students at their school."
High performing school teachers would feel comfortable with these changes.	"Teachers in high-performing schools will be more agreeable to these types of changes. Those teachers may already feel they are doing a good job and will not have a problem with a different evaluation and pay scale that reflects that."			
There could be the feeling of punishment that could occur at high poverty schools.	"Those teachers in the lower performing schools may feel penalized by their choice to work at a school that may have them being paid less or evaluated wrongfully."	"Teachers at these schools will worry about their results being the same and being penalized."		"Punitive measures haven't worked in changing the culture of the school."

Analysis of Follow-up Interview Question 4 for Research Question 4

Do you personally think that the teacher evaluation and compensation process can be used as a tool to help improve achievement at high-poverty schools?				
Themes	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3	Participant 4
Hesitation expressed on how to answer this question. Teacher evaluation and compensation components impact at high-poverty schools could be dependent on the effectiveness of the implementation and support provided to the system. Also teacher evaluation and compensation reform could be used in conjunction with other known successful reforms in a comprehensive system.	I answered 'yes' depending on the administration of the school. If administrators provide the support, the professional development and show the follow through of inspecting what they expect, then these reforms can make a difference. Without giving professional development and without regular observations and feedback, these types of reforms won't help anywhere. Mistakes will happen if critical steps in the change process are skipped."		"My answer to this is really 'yes and no.' It only has a chance of helping if the system is diagnostic of both student and teacher needs and then puts systems in place to help meet the needs. Will gaps in teacher performance and student learning be filled? That's the important question. Figure out the needs, work to meet them, and then the system will be successful. If the system relies on punitive measures, it won't work. Of course, I come from a coaching viewpoint and not an administrative one."	"I say 'Yes' with the understanding that evaluation is only one piece of the puzzle. It won't work alone. Capturing the attention of the community and coordinating resources to help families of those schools is just as, if not, more important than teacher evaluation. There are many other pieces, such as leadership, transforming the climate and culture, and curriculum improvements that will be required to help lower SES schools."
An opinion exists that teachers at high-poverty schools should be paid more.		"All teachers should be held to high standards. From my experience, it is more academically intense at high-poverty schools. Teachers there have further to take students. These teachers should be paid more as long as there is a tie to student achievement. This will ensure that better results and a challenging job are being rewarded properly."		

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