

**TEACHERS' ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS ALTERNATIVE  
COMPENSATION SYSTEMS IN K-12 EDUCATION**

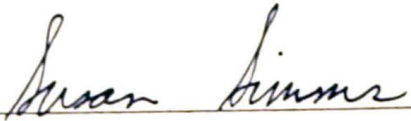
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**DENNIS L. THOMPSON**



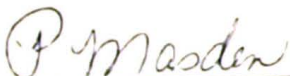
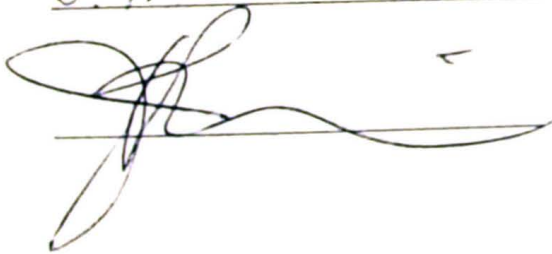
To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a field study written by Dennis Louis Thompson entitled "Teachers' Attitudes and Perceptions Towards Alternative Compensation Systems in K-12 Education." I have examined the final copy of this field study for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Education Specialist.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Susan Simms", written over a horizontal line.

Susan Simms, Major Professor

We have read this field study  
and recommend its acceptance.

  
A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "P. Masden", written over a horizontal line. Below this line is a large, stylized, and somewhat illegible signature that extends across the width of the line.

Accepted for the Council:

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Dean of the Graduate School

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Signature: Dennis L. Thompson

Date: April 24, 2001

**Teachers' Attitudes and Perceptions Towards Alternative  
Compensation Systems in K-12 Education**

**A Field Study**

**Presented to the  
Graduate and Research Council of  
Austin Peay State University**

**In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Education Specialist**

**by**

**Dennis L. Thompson**

**May, 2001**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer expresses his appreciation to everyone who provided information, assistance, advice and direction during the course and completion of this study. He also wishes to express his special thanks to Dr. Susan Simms, director of this study, Dr. Penelope Masden, committee member, Dr. Ron Groseclose, Chair of the Department of Education at Austin Peay State University and Dr. Chris Winters, New Providence Middle School. Their insightful comments and suggestions not only helped guide this work, but the writer as well in his transition to a new career field.

## ABSTRACT

The major purpose of this study was to identify and analyze teachers' attitudes and perceptions about working under alternative compensation systems that are not solely based on years of experience and education level. The survey instrument used for this study was an author-designed questionnaire and short demographic survey. The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions related to accountability in education and various types of alternative teacher compensation systems that have been implemented in different parts of the nation. The survey was administered to approximately 50 licensed teachers attending graduate school at Austin Peay State University during the fall and spring semesters of academic year 2000-2001. The comparisons of teacher responses on the questionnaire, using a Likert scale, to their years of experience under the current system of compensation were investigated using a Pearson Product-Moment Correlation with a .05 significance level. One comparison was found to have a significant difference.



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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Purpose of the Study

The 1983 report, A Nation at Risk, served as a catalyst for critical reviews of the character and performance of America's educational system. The outcome of this increased scrutiny has been the establishment of rigorous educational standards, a new focus on educator performance and effectiveness, increased student testing, and voucher and charter school proposals (Studies in Education Reform, 1997). The American public is clearly expecting public school leaders to move the educational system from mediocrity to world class excellence.

In 1999, Richard F. Elmore, a professor at Harvard University's graduate school of education, stated that accountability for student performance is now one of the three most prominent issues at state and local policy levels (Olson, 1999). According to Boser and Jerauld (1999) the involvement of the business community in education and the growing proportion of state resources devoted to schooling are responsible for helping shift the focus to results. They found that 36 states now issue report cards on the performance of individual schools, and that 19 states reward successful schools in some way. Additionally, 16 states have the power to close, take over, or overhaul continually failing schools in a process known as reconstitution. Under this process all or most of a schools' staff may be replaced. Two states have even attempted to link the evaluation of individual teachers to how well their students perform on standardized tests. These actions and the possible threat of sanctions have focused educators more sharply on



student achievement than ever before.

While many policymakers, business professionals, educators and parents agree that lack of student achievement is a problem that needs to be addressed, there is a diversity of opinions about the cause and how to remedy this issue. Research findings from the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVASS), a statistical method of determining the effectiveness of school systems, schools and teachers in sustaining academic growth for student populations, provides critical insight into this matter. Sanders and Horn (1998) state that their longitudinal research using TVASS has shown that race, socioeconomic level, class size, and classroom heterogeneity are poor predictors of student academic growth. The TVASS findings indicate that teacher effectiveness is, by a significant margin, the main determinant of student academic progress.

The assumption therefore is, that if student achievement is a significant problem and teacher effectiveness is a major solution, then the right combination of incentives to improve teacher effectiveness could help raise student achievement. According to Chaddock (2000) a major theme of the 1999 National Education Summit, attended by 114 governors, corporate executives and educators was the need to introduce market-based incentives and rewards for teachers, and to treat them more like professionals in other fields. At the summit, ten states agreed to incorporate pay for performance incentive plans for teachers into their salary structures. The American Association of School Administrators (2000) recently released a year-long study that identified 16 characteristics of successful school systems. One of those characteristics

was paying teachers based on performance. Editorials from across the country continue to urge states and local school districts to incorporate teacher compensation tied to performance (Tayman, 2000). Despite this the National Education Association, at its' July 2000 national convention, rejected a resolution that included a set of conditions under which the organization would accept compensation plans based on more than a teacher's education and length of service. Opposition to the plan was so strong that national leaders not only refused to support such a plan, but would also not help local unions negotiate any such efforts with local school districts (Tayman, 2000). At the same time Chaddock (2000) states that a 1998 Gallup poll shows support for performance based pay has risen among teachers, from 32% in 1984 to 40% in 1998.

The purpose of this study is to analyze teachers' attitudes and perceptions about working under alternative compensation systems that are not solely based on years of experience and education level. The study will be conducted in two phases. The first phase will focus on teacher attitudes and perceptions towards the current accountability movement in education and increasing student achievement under the current compensation system. The second will explore teacher attitudes and perceptions about working under different systems of compensation.

### Statement of the Problem

Teacher compensation systems today remain much as they have been for the past half-century. Set salary schedules automatically reward teachers for years of experience and for completing additional college coursework. While this type of



compensation system provides an element of objectivity that protects against favoritism, it offers little incentive for improvement, and additional formal education courses often fail to translate into better teaching and increased student achievement. Is there a difference between teacher attitudes and perceptions towards the current system of compensation and alternative compensation systems? Analyzing teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards various compensation systems can help a school system determine which compensation system is appropriate for its needs and what obstacles may have to be overcome in implementing it.

### Hypothesis

There will be no difference between teachers' attitudes towards alternative compensation systems and their years of experience under the current system of compensation (based on education level and years of experience).

### Importance of the Problem

Kelley (1999) stated that in today's tight labor markets teacher unions are pressuring school systems to raise salaries, but policymakers in many cases are unwilling to allocate more money without ensuring a return on the investment. Attracting and retaining effective teachers are a key component in raising student achievement. Organizations frequently use a variety of compensation strategies to attract and retain employees necessary to accomplish the goals of the organization. Understanding how to align compensation strategies with the educational needs and organizational goals of public education today will benefit teachers, students and all stakeholders in education.

## Definition of Terms

The following terms are used throughout this study:

Merit Pay- a system by which teachers are financially rewarded based on their performance reviews by administrators or peers.

Knowledge and Skills Based Pay- under this compensation structure teachers earn increases in pay on the basis of demonstrated acquisition and use of relevant knowledge, skill, and professional expertise. Direct measures of knowledge and skills replace ( or augment) such proxies as years of experience and credits/degrees.

Group-Based Performance Awards- this system recognizes that student outcomes are the joint product of many teachers working together in a school. Some portion of a teacher's pay is tied to school performance, largely student performance. This type of program provides all individuals in a group/school a pay bonus when the group/school as a whole meets or exceeds its' preset targets for performance improvement.

Principal/agent Theory- accountability systems express different relationships between principals and agents. Principals are those who establish an expectation (regarding a task to be accomplished) and to whom an account is owed; agents are those of whom performance is expected (in accomplishing the task).

Risk Theory- designed to describe organizations operating in competitive markets. This theory suggests that organizational change is triggered when organizational performance drops below a generally agreed upon standard. For each organization, the standard, or satisficing level, shifts up or down depending on the level of risk that the organization faces.



### Limitations

This study contains one limitation. Only teachers from a small geographical area were surveyed.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Frustrated by over 25 years of failed school reforms, many state and local policymakers have made several well-publicized efforts to reform teacher pay. Reformers have tried to use salary structure to encourage and reward good teaching, but many of these efforts proved ineffective (Odden,1995). As a result, teacher compensation structures today look pretty much as they did a half-century ago. Most teachers are paid according to a single salary schedule that provides pay increases for differences in years of experience and university degrees or education credits.

Kelley (1997) stated that the history of successful change in teacher compensation can serve as a guide for examining proposed changes to teacher compensation today. Pay practices that have endured are those that are well-aligned with broader changes in the economic and social climate, the strategic needs of the school system and the needs of the individual.

According to Protsik (1995), teacher compensation in the latter part of the 1800s consisted primarily of room and board provided by the local community. This type of pay system was a strong incentive for teachers to maintain a high moral character and positive relations with community members. It also reflected the barter economy of the time. This system was replaced by the position-based salary system early in the 20th century, in response to further social and educational changes. Teacher preparation became more uniform, requiring higher levels of education and schools began to reflect the bureaucratic organizational structures of the developing cash economy. The single

salary schedule emerged in 1921 in response to opposition to overt discrimination in pay between male and female teachers and demand for greater teaching skills. The single salary schedule paid the same salary to teachers with the same qualifications regardless of grade level taught, gender or race. Differentials were provided based on objective measures of years of experience and educational degrees.

Odden and Kelley (1997) found that the single salary system was appropriate for the bureaucratic, hierarchically organized school of the last 50 years, because it aligned with the strategic aspects of the economy and school systems. Administrators were responsible for goals, objectives and school success. And teachers were responsible for conducting a basic skills-focused standardized curriculum. New teachers were required to have a beginning set of skills for initial licensure, but once in the system they were paid more for each year of experience. This was a practice typical of bureaucracies, and the way most workers were paid in the broader economy.

Lawler (1990) stated that the broader economy is undergoing dramatic change in the organization of the workplace and the manner in which employees are paid. The globalized economy has forced companies to drastically improve product and service quality to stay competitive, and often within a short period of time and with limited resources. These same procedures are affecting government and public agencies such as schools. Lawler found that many companies were restructuring in response to these pressures. Companies were decentralizing their management systems and streamlining their organizational structures to produce the improvements necessary to stay competitive. They were creating multi-functional work teams and giving them the



power and authority to accomplish organizational and team goals, while holding these teams accountable for results. He also stated that this new strategy for organizing and completing work requires companies to invest in the ongoing training of its members. Team members throughout the organization are trained in new functional areas, and in the skills needed to engage in self-management. Lawler called these changes the “new logic” of organization. He found many companies following this new logic have also designed new forms of compensation to encourage and reward the skills needed for team-based leadership and management skills, technical and analytical skills to support continuous improvement, and skills needed to work across traditional functional lines. Building on this research Firestone (1994) found private companies have developed such concepts as skills-based pay, competency-based pay, pay for knowledge, pay for professional expertise, collective rewards for adding value to performance, and gainsharing to meet the economic challenges of globalization and the strategic needs of their particular organization. Under these compensation strategies, employees are not paid on the basis of seniority or for doing a specific job. They are paid based on the skills and competencies they develop to do the many tasks they perform as part of a work-team. Additionally, a portion of each team member’s pay can depend on the results of the teams’ efforts. In short, compensation has been changed to align organizational incentives and rewards with the strategic needs of the workplace.

Educational researchers have also examined these private sector compensation strategies for possible application in public education. Odden and Kelley (1997) compared earlier efforts to reform the single salary schedule with the new compensation

strategies used in the private sector today. In the 1980s merit pay, designed to recognize and reward the best teachers based on performance reviews, and career ladder programs, designed to reward their willingness to take on additional responsibilities, were tried in several states and districts. The authors contended that both efforts failed for the same reason. They were not linked to the organizational needs and working processes of effective schools and were poorly designed. Merit pay usually required teachers to compete against each other for a limited pool of funds. This type of competition among teachers works against the collaborative culture found in most schools and fails to improve school performance. Career ladder programs provided non-teaching jobs for a limited number of excellent teachers. This strategy took many outstanding teachers out of the classroom, just the opposite of how a high-performance school should utilize its best workers. The authors also explored the specific new strategies of knowledge and skills-based pay and group-based performance awards. They concluded that these strategies may be an effective way to improve school, teacher, and student performance because they closely align teachers' pay to school organizational goals.

Mohrman, Mohrman and Odden (1996) stated that the current method of paying teachers is viewed as a failure in that it does not directly influence teacher and school improvement. The authors discussed high involvement management strategies and compensation strategies used in the private sector and explored how these can be transferred to public schools, both school wide and for smaller school teams. The article also examined the advantages and disadvantages of pay for the job versus skill based pay and organization-based performance pay. They concluded that schools should pay



for directly demonstrated skills and knowledge, rather than education and experience. They found the most effective teachers value professional development, and the most effective schools have high levels of teacher involvement in decision-making and high levels of collaboration among teachers and administrators.

Kelley and Taylor (1995) examined the compensation systems of four different professions to identify potential models for public education. After analyzing the professions of law, higher education, actuarial science and financial analysis, they concluded that compensation systems which link an employees' pay to development of knowledge and skills, and provide collective incentives for the pursuit of organizational goals can be used as alternatives to the current teacher compensation system.

Wilms and Chapleau (1999) presented dissenting arguments for adopting group-based or school-based performance awards. They stated that these types of compensation strategies present powerful incentives for educators to first consider what is best for them instead of what is best for the student. They cited examples showing that shifting the focus of education from the student to the pocketbook has led to dishonest behavior and falsifying records. The authors believed that it is up to policy leaders, such as school board members, superintendents and union leaders to eliminate obstacles to make innovation in the schoolhouse possible, and provided the necessary resources to improve the systems by which teachers teach and students learn.

Other researchers have attempted to assess the impact of these new compensation strategies on teacher attitudes and motivation and subsequently organizational performance. In one of the earliest studies on merit pay and career ladder programs,



Johnson (1986) examined the intrinsic (pride in work, efficacy) and extrinsic rewards and how successful each is in motivating teachers. She found that money was important in attracting teachers to join and remain in the profession, but intrinsic rewards were far more important in improving teachers' job performance and effectiveness in the classroom. She concluded that merit pay and career ladder programs would be unsuccessful in motivating teachers and improving organizational performance because they were not aligned with the qualities of successful schools. Successful schools placed a high value on collegiality and continuous improvement, not competition between teachers.

Kelley (1998) studied the implementation of the Kentucky school-based performance award program in 16 elementary, middle and high schools in the fall of 1996. The findings revealed distinct differences between award and non-award winning schools. The data suggested that teachers and administrators in the award-winning schools were motivated by the potential rewards of the programs. It helped focus their efforts to align school goals and resources in order to achieve the pre-determined criteria necessary to win the award.

Heneman and Milannowski (1999) examined the attitudes of teachers working under school-based performance award programs in Kentucky and North Carolina. Under these programs teachers received monetary bonuses if their school met or exceeded measurable student achievement goals. The teachers were asked to rate the desirability of receiving a bonus and sixteen other extrinsic and intrinsic outcomes. The teachers reported high levels of intrinsic rewards associated with the accountability

program, including personal satisfaction from meeting goals, personal satisfaction from seeing student performance improve, opportunities to work collaboratively with other teachers on curriculum and instruction, opportunities to work towards clearly identified schoolwide goals, public recognition from meeting the goals, and opportunities for professional development related to the accountability goals. Factors related to potential sanctions if goals were not met and the stress incurred in working under the program were rated negatively. The authors concluded that while bonuses for goal attainment have high motivational potential under school or group based performance award programs, these could be offset by the occurrence of several undesirable outcomes.

Koretz, Barron, Mitchell & Stecher (1996) studied school based performance pay strategies in schools, in which all teachers in the school received salary bonuses if the school met predetermined student achievement improvement targets. They stated that teachers working under this type of compensation plan typically indicate they are not primarily motivated by the potential salary bonus, but their findings suggest that teachers operating under such systems do make significant modifications in their behaviors to achieve the targeted goals. They offered two explanations for this. First, teachers as professionals will strive to meet mutually agreed upon organizational goals. School or group based performance pay plans provide a mechanism for goal clarification, and teachers respond by aligning practices to these goals. Second, teachers reported that they experienced a number of outcomes associated with participating in a school based performance award program that are intrinsically motivating. This suggests that external accountability systems can facilitate the creation of important intrinsic rewards.



Eric A. Hanushek, professor of Economics and Public Policy at the University of Rochester, stated that a major problem in education is that there are not any incentives to increase student performance. No educator's career is really dependant upon students performing well. Pay, hiring and most other functions in a school system are essentially independent of how well a teacher does teaching and how well a school does at increasing student performance. His research corroborates that of Sanders and Horn (1998) in that he believes the most important factor for improving student performance is the quality of teacher that students experience in the classroom. He stated that the best way to get high-quality teachers in all classrooms is to have incentives in the system that relate to student performance. He indicated that many policymakers and educators are incorrectly focusing on issues, such as class size, that are not as directly correlated with student achievement as is the quality of each individual teacher (Clowes, 2000).

Elmore, Abelman and Fuhrman (1996) stated that the current educational accountability movement represents a significant shift in policy focus from accountability for resource use to accountability for outcomes produced. This shift in focus creates numerous challenges that need to be overcome. Among the most important are designing effective incentive structures to motivate complex behavioral changes in educators. Some current educational researchers have examined the issue through a theoretical lens to illustrate the complexity of this challenge.

Adams and Kirst (1999) examined the issue of educational accountability using the lens of principal/agent theory. Under the traditional application of the theory, teachers were viewed as problematic elements of the system that needed to be convinced or



coerced to change their behaviors to implement the policies of the educational hierarchy. According to the authors, a major problem with this application to education is that the specification of principals and agents is sometimes difficult to determine. Administrators at the state, district or site level and teachers are all simultaneously principals directing behavior and agents being directed by those further up the hierarchical chain. The authors cited new research on educational accountability systems that suggests an important role of accountability is to create incentives for teachers to provide feedback to school and district level administrators to improve system performance. Agents working under high-stakes accountability may be more likely to voice objections to being held accountable for performance when principals dictate numerous and conflicting goals and allocate resources in ways that indicate a lack of commitment to the accountability goals. For example, teachers working under specific accountability systems may be more likely to demand high quality, focused professional development, and to voice objections over concerns about being required to participate in meaningless activities that divert time and attention from the espoused educational objectives.

Donaldson (1999) examined the dynamics of educational accountability through the lens of risk theory. According to this theory, schools generally face low levels of risk and modest declines in performance will not trigger organizational change. However, accountability systems increase risk to schools by providing a clear yardstick for measuring organizational performance and by focusing on a few specific outcomes. This in turn reduces educators tendencies to diversify goals in order to reduce risk to the organization from failing to meet any one particular goal. He concluded the increased

risk associated with working under an accountability policy may need to be balanced with better organizational supports to achieve accountability goals, new compensation strategies, job security and ongoing professional development for teachers and administrators.

### Summary of the Literature Review

The literature reviewed on the subject of teachers attitudes towards alternative compensation systems can be categorized into three areas: the history of change in teacher compensation; the application of private sector compensation strategies for teachers; and the focus of some current educational accountability research using a theoretical lens.

Wortman and Loftus define an attitude as an association between some person, thing, event, idea or situation and an evaluation of it. How people think, feel and act is not simply the result of their personalities and predispositions. Behavior is also shaped by situations in which they find themselves and what others around them are doing, thinking and feeling. The scope of the literature done directly on teacher attitudes towards alternative compensation systems is very limited. However several things can be inferred from the literature that was reviewed. The current teacher compensation system, based on years of experience and educator level, has been in place largely since the 1920s and teachers are likely to be resistant to changing it. At the same time external factors are creating the conditions for attitude change. Public pressure and the political will to hold schools accountable for high levels of student performance continues unabated. And compensation for professionals in other fields is changing dramatically. The collision of

these external factors and the historical trend in teacher compensation has prompted some researchers to use various theoretical approaches to more closely examine the prospects and challenges of educational accountability. Because teacher compensation represents such a large portion of the educational budget, there is an opportunity to better leverage this significant resource for school improvement. This appears to be a promising area for future exploration.



## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

This research was conducted to analyze teacher attitudes and perceptions about working under alternative compensation systems. The methods and procedures used to obtain the information will be explained in this chapter.

#### Description of the Subjects

A survey was administered to approximately 50 licensed teachers who attended graduate school at Austin Peay State University during the fall and spring semesters of the academic year 2000-2001. These were teachers of various academic subjects in elementary, middle, and high school in both public and private schools in Kentucky and Tennessee. The subjects were selected based upon their willingness to participate in the study and the school system to which they belonged was not considered a factor in selection. All surveys were completed anonymously.

#### Research Instruments

The survey instrument used for this study was an author-designed questionnaire and a short demographic survey. The questionnaire consisted of 14 questions related to accountability in education and various types of alternative teacher compensation systems that have been implemented in various parts of the nation. It was designed to measure teacher attitudes and perceptions about these factors. The format of the questionnaire included four yes/no questions and ten questions that required the participants to rate how they relate their experience, attitudes and perceptions towards accountability in education and the characteristics of some alternative compensation

systems as a teacher. The first ten questions required the participants to respond using a Likert Scale. The scoring of the scale was as follows: SA-strongly agree; A-agree; U-undecided; D-disagree; SD-strongly disagree.

The demographic survey was composed of several questions relating to education level and years of teaching experience. None of the information required the subject's name or school system. The information from the survey was considered in the evaluation of this study and how it related to teacher's attitudes and perceptions about working under alternative compensation systems.

### Procedures

Permission to administer the survey was first obtained from Austin Peay's Institutional Research Board in November 2000. The examiner then requested permission from several professors in the Education Department at Austin Peay State University to use teachers in their graduate classes in the late fall semester of 2000 and the spring semester of 2001 as volunteer subjects to participate in this research. Once permission was granted the examiner gave a brief discussion of the study and its purpose to those who volunteered to participate. Each participant was asked to complete the survey questionnaire for collecting data for the study. All subjects were given an option to participate or not, and received both written and verbal instructions. There was no penalty for those who chose not to participate and those who did participate were instructed that they could stop at any time if they felt uncomfortable about the survey. The examiner answered questions at any time before, during or after the survey was given. Once all subjects had completed the requested information the survey was placed

in a separate box to ensure confidentiality.

To tabulate the data for analysis, the returned surveys were scored by a computer program to determine the mean scores and percent of subjects' responses to each question. The data was then compared using a Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. Responses to the questions were compared to total teaching experience. The results were presented by showing the tabulated responses from each participant to the questions asked. The participants answers illustrated their attitudes and responses towards various teacher compensation systems. This is shown by using the mean scores, percent of responses to each question, and the coorelation coefficient.



## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this study was to identify the attitudes and perceptions of teachers towards alternative compensation systems and compare that with their years of teaching experience. The study required the participants to answer questions using the questionnaire described in chapter three of this study. The results of the survey are complied and reported as followed.

<u>Key</u>	<u>Scores</u>
SA- strongly agree	(5)
A - agree	(4)
U - undecided	(3)
D - disagree	(2)
SD- strongly disagree	(1)

#### 1. Accountability for student performance is an important issue in educational policy today.

Years of Experience	<u>1-3</u>	<u>4-6</u>	<u>7-15</u>	<u>16+</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
SA:	5	4	8	4	46	21
A:	6	6	7	3	48	22
U:	1	0	1	0	4	2
D:	1	0	0	0	2	1
SD:	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	13	10	16	7	100	46
Mean	4.2	4.4	4.4	4.6		4.4

**Pearson Correlation Coefficient: .207 ( not significant )**

2. A portion of each teacher's compensation should be based on their student's achievement.

Years of Experience	<u>1-3</u>	<u>4-6</u>	<u>7-15</u>	<u>16+</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
SA:	1	1	0	0	4	2
A:	0	2	3	1	13	6
U:	8	4	5	0	37	17
D:	2	2	6	4	30	14
SD:	2	1	2	2	16	7
Total	13	10	16	7	100	46
Mean	2.7	3.1	2.6	2.0		2.6
<b>Pearson Correlation Coefficient: -.101 ( not significant )</b>						

3. Teacher effectiveness is the most important factor in student achievement.

Years of Experience	<u>1-3</u>	<u>4-6</u>	<u>7-15</u>	<u>16+</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
SA:	2	0	3	0	11	5
A:	2	6	6	2	35	16
U:	3	1	1	0	11	5
D:	6	2	5	5	39	18
SD:	0	1	1	0	4	2
Total	13	10	16	7	100	46
Mean	3.0	3.1	3.4	2.6		3.1
<b>Pearson Correlation Coefficient: -.044 ( not significant )</b>						

4. I am adequately compensated for the work I currently do as a teacher.

Years of Experience	<u>1-3</u>	<u>4-6</u>	<u>7-15</u>	<u>16+</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
SA:	0	0	0	0	0	0
A:	3	1	2	1	16	7
U:	2	1	2	0	11	5
D:	3	6	6	5	43	20
SD:	5	2	6	1	30	14
Total	13	10	16	7	100	46
Mean	2.2	2.1	1.8	2.1		1.8

**Pearson Correlation Coefficient: -.059 ( not significant )**

5. Standardized tests are the best objective measure of student academic performance.

Years of Experience	<u>1-3</u>	<u>4-6</u>	<u>7-15</u>	<u>16+</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
SA:	0	0	1	0	2	1
A:	1	0	1	2	9	4
U:	1	0	1	0	4	2
D:	7	6	8	4	55	25
SD:	4	4	5	1	30	14
Total	13	10	16	7	100	46
Mean	1.9	1.6	2.1	2.4		1.8

**Pearson Correlation Coefficient: .184 ( not significant )**



6. Teachers should be paid based on what they know and can do.

Years of Experience	<u>1-3</u>	<u>4-6</u>	<u>7-15</u>	<u>16+</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
SA:	1	2	2	0	11	5
A:	9	5	8	5	59	27
U:	2	2	2	0	13	6
D:	0	1	4	2	15	7
SD:	1	0	0	0	2	1
Total	13	10	16	7	100	46
Mean	3.7	3.8	3.5	3.4		3.6

**Pearson Correlation Coefficient: -.005 ( not significant )**

7. Completing college coursework beyond the bachelor's degree helps teachers raise student achievement.

Years of Experience	<u>1-3</u>	<u>4-6</u>	<u>7-15</u>	<u>16+</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
SA:	1	1	3	0	11	5
A:	6	7	7	2	48	22
U:	3	2	0	2	16	7
D:	3	0	6	2	24	11
SD:	0	0	0	1	1	1
Total	13	10	16	7	100	46
Mean	3.8	3.9	3.4	2.7		3.4

**Pearson Correlation Coefficient: -.181 ( not significant )**

8. A portion of each teacher's compensation should be based on how well their school does in improving student achievement.

Years of Experience	<u>1-3</u>	<u>4-6</u>	<u>7-15</u>	<u>16+</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
SA:	0	0	0	0	0	0
A:	4	4	5	1	30	14
U:	5	1	2	2	22	10
D:	3	3	6	4	35	16
SD:	1	2	3	0	13	6
Total	13	10	16	7	100	46
Mean	2.9	2.7	2.6	2.6		2.7
<b>Pearson Correlation Coefficient: -.135 ( not significant )</b>						

9. Education associations are best able to represent teachers in salary negotiation matters.

Years of Experience	<u>1-3</u>	<u>4-6</u>	<u>7-15</u>	<u>16+</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
SA:	0	0	2	0	4	2
A:	5	5	7	1	39	18
U:	7	4	4	2	37	17
D:	1	1	2	4	18	8
SD:	0	0	1	0	2	1
Total	13	10	16	7	100	46
Mean	3.3	3.4	2.6	2.6		3.3
<b>Pearson Correlation Coefficient: -.177 ( not significant )</b>						

10. Teacher compensation should be aligned with professional development and evaluation.

Years of Experience	<u>1-3</u>	<u>4-6</u>	<u>7-15</u>	<u>16+</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
SA:	3	1	2	0	13	6
A:	9	7	10	4	65	30
U:	1	1	2	2	13	6
D:	0	1	2	1	9	4
SD:	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	13	10	16	7	100	46
Mean	4.2	3.8	3.8	3.4		3.8

**Pearson Correlation Coefficient: -.300 ( significant at the .05 level )**

11. Have you ever worked in a school district that used a compensation system for teachers based on criteria other than years of experience and education level?

yes 0 (0%)

no 46 (100%)

12. Has anyone (school administrator, personnel director, educational association representative, etc.) ever discussed an alternative compensation system with you?

yes 0 (0%)

no 46 (100%)

13. Would you be willing to work as a teacher in a school or school district that offered you the potential to make 20% more money than you are currently making?

yes 44 (8%)

no 2 (92%)



14. Have you ever belonged to an educational association (NEA, TEA, AFT,etc.)?

yes 38 (83%)

no 8 (17%)

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

The purpose of this study was to analyze teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards alternative compensation systems and compare it to their years of experience in working under the current compensation system, based on years of experience and education level. The participants responses to the questions on the questionnaire were correlated using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation to see if the responses had a linear relationship. Nine of the ten items on the questionnaire showed no significant relationship. The last item (number 10) showed a significant negative relationship, using a significance level of .05.

#### Conclusions

The majority of questions on the questionnaire showed no significant linear relationship. However, some important information about teachers' attitudes and perceptions can be gained from examining the mean scores and responses of each group of teachers on certain questions.

On question number 1, 94% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that accountability for student performance was an important issue in educational policy today. Additionally, the mean score for each group of teachers surveyed was between agree and strongly agree.

The majority of teachers (73%) also felt strongly in question 4 that they were not

adequately compensated for the work they currently do as a teacher. However, 38% of new teachers (1-3 years of experience) were undecided or agreed that they were adequately compensated. The majority of teachers were also undecided or disagreed that education associations were best able to represent them in salary negotiations.

Questions 2 and 8 related teachers attitudes towards linking part of their compensation to how well their class or school did in raising student achievement. Both questions showed a negative relationship, although not significant. Of particular interest however was the fact that 50% or more of the teachers surveyed on each question were undecided or agreed on the issue. This could infer that teachers, especially those with less experience, are at least somewhat open to compensation systems that link their pay to their students' performance.

While teachers may appear to be open to linking their pay to their students' performance, they clearly were strongly opposed to using standardized test results as the best way to measure that performance. In question 5, 85% of teachers surveyed disagreed or strongly disagreed that this was the best way to measure student performance.

Question numbers 6 and 10 explored teacher attitudes about linking their pay to knowledge and skills they could demonstrate, and continuing professional development and regular evaluation. In both questions the majority of teachers, 70% in question number 6 and 78% in question number 10, agreed or strongly agreed with these concepts. Question number 10 had a significant negative relationship, which infers that the more experience teachers have in the current system of compensation, the



less likely they are to favor an aspect of the alternative compensation system of knowledge and skills based pay.

Question number 7 related teachers' attitudes towards completing additional college coursework beyond the bachelor's degree and its impact on student achievement. The majority of teachers (59%) agreed or strongly agreed that this helped raise student achievement. The negative correlation coefficient, although not significant, implies that the more experience teachers acquire the less likely they were to believe that additional college coursework would help raise student achievement.

### Recommendations

The conclusions indicate that there is some relationship between teachers' attitudes and perceptions towards alternative compensation systems, and their years of experience in working under the current system of compensation. In most instances their responses were too diverse to establish a linear relationship, or they demonstrated a tendency for strong agreement or disagreement with a particular issue, regardless of their years of experience.

The research in this study indicates that alternative compensation systems could have the potential to positively influence student achievement. Because the current system of compensation has largely been in place since 1921, there is likely to be resistance to changing it. Policymakers and educators may use this study as a starting point for further research in those areas in which teachers showed strong collective agreement or disagreement on issues related to alternative compensation systems.

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## APPENDICES

# QUESTIONNAIRE

## TEACHERS' ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS

Directions: Indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement by circling the appropriate letter(s)

SA-strongly agree

A- agree

U- undecided

D- disagree

SD- strongly disagree

- |    |   |   |   |    |    |  |
|----|---|---|---|----|----|--|
| SA | A | U | D | SD | 1  | Accountability for student performance is an important issue in educational policy today.                                |
| SA | A | U | D | SD | 2  | A portion of each teacher's compensation should be based on their student's achievement                                  |
| SA | A | U | D | SD | 3  | Teacher effectiveness is the most important factor in student achievement  |
| SA | A | U | D | SD | 4  | I am adequately compensated for the work I currently do as a teacher   |
| SA | A | U | D | SD | 5  | Standardized tests are the best objective measure of student academic achievement  |
| SA | A | U | D | SD | 6  | Teachers should be paid based on what they know and can do.  |
| SA | A | U | D | SD | 7  | Completing college coursework beyond the bachelors degree helps teachers raise student achievement.                      |
| SA | A | U | D | SD | 8  | A portion of each teacher's compensation should be based on how well their school does in improving student achievement. |
| SA | A | U | D | SD | 9  | Education associations are best able to represent teachers in salary negotiation matters.                                |
| SA | A | U | D | SD | 10 | Teacher compensation should be aligned with professional development and evaluation                                      |



11. Have you ever worked in a school district that used a compensation system for teachers based on criteria other than years of experience and education level?

☐ yes

☐ no

12. Has anyone (school administrator, personnel director, educational association representative, etc.) ever discussed an alternative compensation system with you?

☐ yes

☐ no

13. Would you be willing to work as a teacher in a school or school district that offered you the potential to make 20% more money than you are currently making?

☐ yes

☐ no

14. Have you ever belonged to an educational association (NEA, TEA, AFT, etc.)?

☐ yes

☐ no

## DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

1. SEX (circle one)

Male

Female

2. AGE (circle one)

20-29

30-39

40-49

50-59

60-69

3. EDUCATION LEVEL (circle one)

BA

BA+

MA

MA+

EDS

EDD

4. YEARS TEACHING

1-3

16-20

4-6

21-30

7-15

30+

Austin Peay State University  
Institutional Review Board

November 9, 2000

Dennis Thompson  
c/o Dr. Susan Simms  
Education Dept. APSU Box 4545  
Clarksville, TN 37044

RE: Your application dated November 8, 2000 regarding study number 01-027:  
Teachers' Attitudes Towards Alternative Compensation (Austin Peay State University)

Dear Mr. Thompson:

Thank you for your recent submission. We appreciate your cooperation with the human research review process. I have reviewed your request for expedited approval of the new study listed above. This type of study qualifies for expedited review under FDA and NIH (Office for Protection from Research Risks) regulations.

Congratulations! This is to confirm that I have approved your application through one calendar year. You must obtain informed consent from all subjects; however, signed written consent is not required. This approval is subject to APSU Policies and Procedures governing human subjects research. These policies can be viewed at: [www2.apsu.edu/www/computer/policy/2002.htm](http://www2.apsu.edu/www/computer/policy/2002.htm). The full IRB will still review this protocol and reserves the right to withdraw expedited approval if unresolved issues are raised during their review.

You are granted permission to conduct your study as described in your application effective immediately. The study is subject to continuing review on or before November 9, 2001, unless closed before that date. Enclosed please find the forms to report when your study has been completed and to request an annual review of a continuing study. Please submit the appropriate form prior to November 9, 2001.

Please note that any changes to the study as approved must be promptly reported and approved. Some changes may be approved by expedited review; others require full board review. Contact Linda Freed (221-7881, fax 221-7304; email: [grants@apsu.edu](mailto:grants@apsu.edu)) if you have any questions or require further information.

Again, thank you for your cooperation with the APIRB and the human research review process. Best wishes for a successful study!

Sincerely,



Dr. Parris R. Watts  
Chair, Austin Peay Institutional Review Board

# Austin Peay State University Institutional Review Board

November 9, 2000

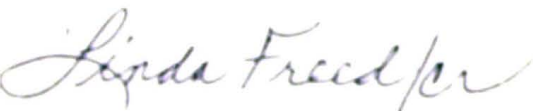
Dennis Thompson  
c/o Dr. Susan Simms  
Education Dept.  
APSU Box 4545

## **RE: Teachers' Attitudes Towards Alternative Compensation**

The Grants and Sponsored Programs Office is in receipt of your IRB research proposal titled: **"Teachers' Attitudes Towards Alternative Compensation."** For reference purposes, your proposal has been assigned the number #01027. Please reference this number in all future correspondence with the committee regarding this project.

If you have any questions, you may contact me at 7881

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Linda Freed".

Linda Freed  
Grants and Sponsored Programs

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