Rewarding Educator Collaboration

Punita Dani-Thurman – Fort Worth Independent School District







District Strategic Interest

- Promote the retention of highly effective teachers some campuses had a long history of teacher turnover and poor academic performance
- Provide recruiting incentive to attract highly effective teachers to work at economically disadvantage campus especially around critical shortage areas of secondary math/science
- Encourage collaboration and cooperation between teachers, especially new teachers with more experienced/effective teachers
- Recognize and reward exceptional student academic <u>progress</u> at the campus and classroom level
- Tightly compressed salary schedule provided limited opportunity to differentiate high performers



Program Overview: Rewards and Incentives

Incentives

Financial and Working Condition Improvements to attract educators

- Market aligned incentives annually for each of year of the pilot to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools
- Improved working conditions focused on supporting teachers and improving climate:
 - 5 additional days paid at daily rate
 - Dedicated Beginning teacher advisers
 - Dedicated campus data analyst
 - Dedicated content experts
 - Deans of Instruction (Secondary)
 - Full-time parent liaisons funded
 - Teacher assistants for every elementary classroom, K-2.

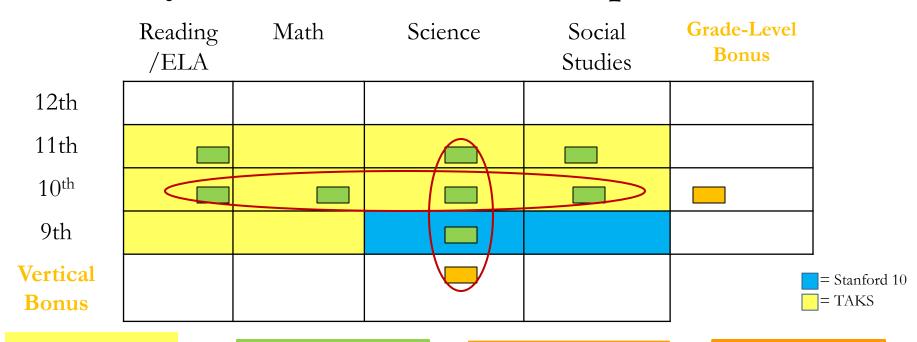
Rewards

Rewarding teams of educators who accelerate student growth

- Rewards for four types of teams on a campus using a campus scorecard template
 - Whole campus
 - Grade Content
 - Vertical Synergy
 - Horizontal Synergy



Four ways to earn rewards: Campus Scorecard



Campus Reward

If 6 or more of the 12 total cells (50%) show significant growth

ALL teachers, campus-based certified instructional support, counselors, librarians

Principal & AP participate

Individual
Grade/ Content
Area Team Reward

Tested content teacher teams to earn if significant growth for individual gradecontent Grade Level Synergy Bonus (Horizontal)

All tested-content teachers who teach a grade level that shows significant growth *across academic areas*

Content Area
Synergy Bonus
(Vertical)

All tested-content teachers who teach a content area that shows significant growth *across grade levels*

Plus an additional bonus for Advanced Placement

Lessons Learned

- Identify what's important first. What is measured says a lot about what is important, be clear that you understand what's important than think about how to measure it.
- **Teacher buy-in is essential.** The specific words and positioning will send huge messages about what you think is important. Ask teachers for their opinions and then show them that you listened.
- Tell 'em, tell 'em, and tell 'em again. Say the same thing in multiple ways, multiple times and then do it again
- Communicate broadly. Not only did we share information with the campuses impacted, but everyone needed to be aware of what was happening.
- **Be transparent and honest.** Trust is built through actions let people hear about your missteps and solutions.
- **Be willing to adjust, just not too much.** There was a lot that was not known and couldn't be known. Be flexible but firm on the things that are nonnegotiable.

