

Education Center - Office of

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Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee
Cincinnati City School District
August 14, 2012

Good evening, Chairman Hayes, ranking member Lundy, members of the Primary and Secondary Education Subcommittee. My name is Pat Neal-Miller, and I am the Director of Human Resources of the Cincinnati City School District in Cincinnati, Ohio.

The Board of Education, Superintendent and I appreciate the opportunity for me to present testimony regarding performance based pay funding and managing our health care costs. During the last 3 ½ years that I have been the Director of Human Resources I have witnessed the commitment of our District to provide the best learning environment possible for our students. It is also the District's goal to ensure that they graduate from high school equipped with the necessary skills to complete college or career options, allowing them to successfully compete in the global economy.

- We are the first Ohio urban school district to earn the Effective rating on the Ohio Report Card.
- We are showing significant increases in student achievement in the lowest –performing schools targeted for turnaround assistance through the District's Elementary Initiative.
- We have nationally recognized exemplary schools, including Clark Montessori High School and National Blue Ribbon winners Taft information Technology High School, Kilgour School, Walnut Hills High School and the School for Creative and Performing Arts. We are extremely proud that The Chorale and Meridian 8 Jazz Group of the School for Creative and Performing Arts received the top Gold Diploma Honors in the Open Division of the 2012 World Choir Games on July 6th and 7th.

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In 2011 a MOU between CPS and the Cincinnati Federated Teachers union established a more rigorous evaluation that met the ODE requirement that student achievement and growth be the major emphasis in the teacher's annual evaluation. In addition to a more rigorous evaluation, The Performance Review Evaluation is tied to salary increments occurring later in a teacher's career, starting after 10 years of employment. To successfully complete the Performance Review Evaluation, there must be evidence of positively impacting student growth.

CPS is also part of the (TIF) Teacher Incentive Grant with the purpose of developing and implementing performance-based teacher and principal compensation systems in high-need schools. We are one of 25 of the districts from the eastern rural part of the state. Performance bonuses of up to \$4000 can be awarded for increased student achievement. Mathematica Research will be following these districts and 50,000 students for 4 years to determine the outcome of student progress.

We now have value added data for teachers in grades 3 through 8 and are finalizing our Board policy to include this in the teacher evaluation system for the 2012-13 school year. This is a full year before the State TES is implemented.

Cincinnati Public Schools is leading the way in establishing performance based pay for both administrators and teachers, however, we have some financial challenges. In the past teacher and administrative salary increases were predictable based on seniority and steps. As the state continues to reduce funding the District may not have the resources to support performance incentives in the future which would put a strain on the District's finances.

We have been fiscally responsible with the taxpayer's dollars to educate the more than 32,000 students in our District and have asked our employees to do more with less. Over the last 5 years the District's healthcare costs have been rising. In 2010 the Administration in collaboration with all six union organizations worked together and negotiated an agreement to reallocate funds previously set aside in a benefit bank. These funds were then used to start up a Wellness incentive program to improve employee health and reduce healthcare costs. In addition our employees now pay 20% of their health care cost.

In closing, Cincinnati City School District has been proactive in establishing a performance based pay structure with rigor for both teachers and administrators well in advance of any requirements from the State. We have included value added data for lower grades and the District's performance ranks as one of the highest among the big urban eight. Our healthcare costs have decreased since the inception of our Wellness program and we continue to strive to be the best stewards of our taxpayer's dollars.

This concludes my testimony for today. I will be happy to address any questions.

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