MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS & PLANNING, INC.

Evaluation of Butler County's PayPLUS Salary Augmentation System

Submitted to the
Butler County School District

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides final evaluation findings of Butler County School District's (BCSD) PayPLUS Salary Augmentation System. The purpose of this report is to provide BCSD with a summary of information about PayPLUS and the experiences of school personnel and students during the first year of program implementation. This evaluation uses both school personnel and student surveys along with school personnel interviews to provide BCSD officials with this useful information.

Overall, these evaluation activities allowed us to address the following questions:

- What are the opinions of school personnel about performance pay in general, and specifically, various means to measure teacher performance?

- What are the perceptions of school personnel about performance pay policy outcomes?

- Do school personnel understand the components of PayPLUS?

- What are the perceptions of school personnel about the fairness and efficacy of PayPLUS?

- What are the beliefs of school personnel about the impact of PayPLUS in their schools?

- How have the professional behavior and satisfaction of school personnel changed during the first year of PayPLUS implementation?

- How have the organizational dynamics and culture within schools changed during the first year of PayPLUS implementation?

- What do school personnel believe to be the strengths of PayPLUS and in which ways do they believe the program might improve over time?

Management Analysis & Planning, Inc. (MAP) reports the following findings.

- BCSD employed an effective approach to design and implement PayPLUS. By involving a broad representation of school personnel with the plan's development, the district gained employee input and buy-in.

- Two primary concerns did arise about PayPLUS implementation. First, the implementation process was rushed in its January 2008 roll-out, and second, the future of PayPLUS is unknown given the uncertainty of continued funding.

- The nature of PayPLUS guidelines played an important role in school personnel's decisions to enroll in the program. The majority of enrolled school personnel agreed that they were encouraged by the eligibility of all full-time school personnel to

participate in PayPLUS. Personnel also reported that the voluntary nature of PayPLUS encouraged them to enroll.

- The majority of school personnel understood the criteria needed to achieve a PayPLUS bonus, what PayPLUS measures, and how PayPLUS rewards are determined. There was widespread understanding of the requirements for AYP and Attendance criteria, but lingering uncertainty about expectations for Leadership and School Culture components.

- BCSD employees believed PayPLUS was equitable in terms of the breadth of school personnel eligible to receive payment. However, school personnel were less confident that the program could effectively identify high quality professional practice or motivate a change in professional behavior.

- The majority of teachers, principals, and other personnel reported that PayPLUS would have a beneficial effect at their school. There was no widespread evidence that they believed the program would deteriorate the collaborative culture of schools.

- When asked about program outcomes, personnel had mixed reactions. Some reported an increase in extracurricular offerings and participation within schools, while many also noted better attendance among personnel. Principals felt very positively about the AYP component, with some going as far as to recommend that program funds associated with Leadership and School Culture components be redirected to supplement bonus awards for meeting AYP criteria.

- During the first year of PayPLUS implementation, teachers in BCSD reported the frequent use of desirable instructional practices and an overall increase in the use of such practices as well. Most indicators of school climate were favorable, with the majority of school personnel believing that principals displayed traits of instructional leadership, viewing teacher interactions positively, and feeling satisfied working in BCSD.

- The majority of both elementary and secondary students felt safe at school, and elementary students consistently reported positive views of interactions with their peers and teachers. Secondary students, however, had less favorable views of such interactions, but there was some evidence of improvements over the first year of PayPLUS implementation.

While more program evaluation would permit further analysis of PayPLUS outcomes, such as its impact on the quality of teaching and student learning in schools, these findings do offer significant information about personnel attitudes towards the program and evidence about school climate indicators. Many of these findings should be understood as emanating from a program that has a pre-determined and relatively short-lived funding guarantee, which has a likely impact on the level of employees' motivation to change in response to bonus awards. Policymakers and district officials should carefully consider the findings presented in this report to better understand how the nature of program design and implementation influences the attitudes and experiences of school personnel and students.

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This report provides a final review of an evaluation of the Butler County School District's (BCSD) PayPLUS Salary Augmentation System. The purpose of this report is to provide BCSD with a summary of information about the PayPLUS implementation experience during the first year of the program's operation. This evaluation uses both school personnel and student surveys along with school personnel interviews to provide BCSD officials with this useful information.

Overall, these evaluation activities address the following questions.

- What are the opinions of school personnel about performance pay in general and various means to measure teacher performance?

- What are the perceptions of school personnel about performance pay policy outcomes?

- Do school personnel understand the components of PayPLUS?

- What are the perceptions of school personnel about the fairness and efficacy of PayPLUS?

- What are the beliefs of school personnel about the impact of PayPLUS in their schools?

- How have the professional behavior and satisfaction of school personnel changed during the first year of PayPLUS implementation?

- How have the organizational dynamics and culture within schools changed during the first year of PayPLUS implementation?

- What do school personnel believe to be the strengths of PayPLUS and in which ways do they believe the program might improve over time?

Evaluation of PayPLUS was conducted by Peter J. Witham, Jessica L. Lewis, Matthew G. Springer, and James W. Guthrie of Management Analysis & Planning, Inc. (MAP), during the 2007-08 school year and into the Fall 2008 semester.
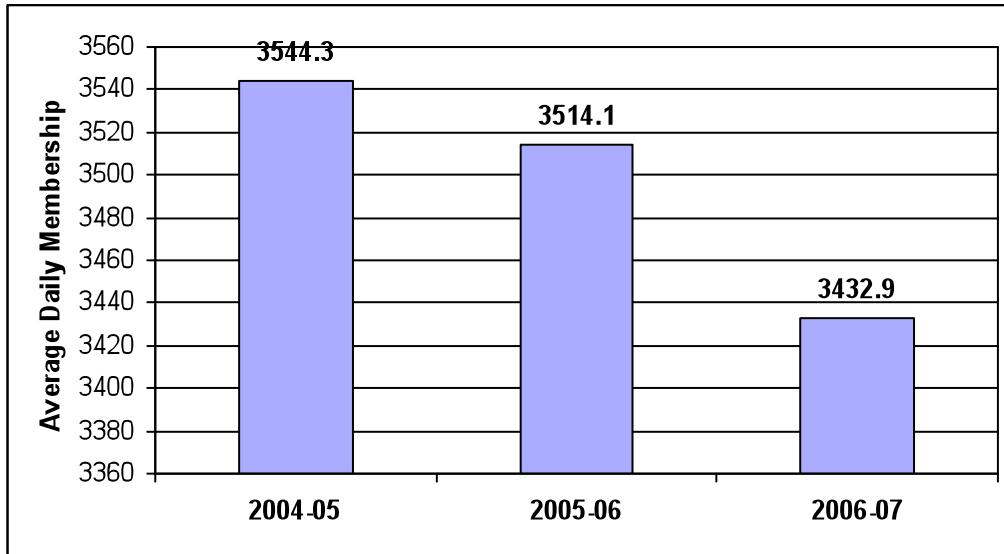
The remainder of this introductory chapter is divided into three sections: (1) the context of BCSD, (2) the history of PayPLUS, and (3) the main components of PayPLUS. Understanding the district's context and nature of program development allows for a more complete interpretation of the findings presented in subsequent chapters.

Context of Butler County School District

BCSD resides in Butler County, Alabama, which is located in the southern region of the state. The county is composed of 778 square miles, 21, 399 people, and includes the towns of Georgiana, Greenville, and McKenzie. The racial makeup of the county is primarily white (58.4%), but also has a significant African-American population (40.8%). There are very few Native Americans, Asians, Hispanics, or those from other races (i.e., less than one percent represented in each category). According to the 2000 census, the median income for a household in the county is $24,791, and the median income for a family is $30,915.

BCSD includes eight schools: Georgiana High School, Greeneville Elementary School, Greenville Middle School, Greeneville High School, McKenzie School, R.L. Austin Elementary School, W.O Parmer Elementary School, and Butler County Education and Community Learning Center. According to the district's report card, compiled by the Alabama Department of Education, average daily membership is 3,432 students. Figure 1.1 illustrates that the average daily membership in BCSD has been declining since the 2004-05 school year.

Figure 1.1: BCSD Average Daily Membership Since 2004-05 School Year

Source: State Board of Education School Report Card Years 2004-2005, 2005-2006, and 2006-2007

The makeup of the student body in Butler County is representative of the larger population, with the three largest racial groups among students being white, African American, and Hispanic. Table 1.1 displays the racial breakdown of students in BCSD during the 2006-07 school year.
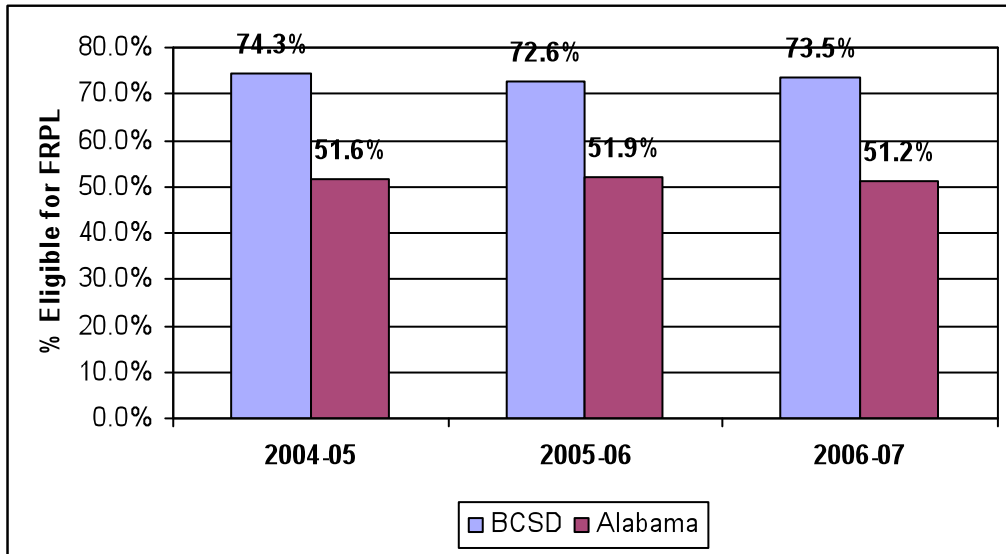
Table 1.1: BCSD Racial Makeup of Student Population, 2006-07 School Year

Race/Ethnicity	Number of Students	Percent of Students
White	1,291	38.0%
African American	2,081	61.0%
Hispanic	17	0.5%
Asian	14	0.4%
Indian/Native American	3	0.1%

Source: State Board of Education School Report Card 2006-2007

Figure 1.2 illustrates that the BCSD student body has a higher percentage of students eligible for free and reduced-priced lunch (FRPL) than public school students throughout Alabama. This has been a consistent pattern since the 2004-05 school year.

Figure 1.2: Percent of Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch, BCSD and Statewide Since 2004-05 School Year

Source: State Board of Education School Report Card Years 2004-2005, 2005-2006, and 2006-2007

Tables 1.2 to 1.4 illustrate how BCSD has faired on state accountability measures inspired by the No Child Left Behind Act, specifically if the district has made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in reading, mathematics, and on other additional indicators (e.g., attendance rate and graduation rate). BCSD has made improvements in AYP status since the 2005-06 school year, at which time the district only met five of the 12 AYP targets. In the following school year, BCSD met 10 of 12 targets and achieved all but one AYP target in the 2007-08 school year. Most notable has been the district's improved AYP status on reading achievement. BCSD met none of the AYP targets in reading in the 2005-06 school year, but met three of the four targets by the 2007-08 school year.

Table 1.2 AYP Status in 2005-06 School Year
(Based on Performance from 2004-05 School Year)

	Grades 3-5	Grades 6-8	High School	District AYP
Reading AYP	No	No	No	No
Mathematics AYP	No	No	Yes	Yes
Additional AYP Indicators	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

Source: State Board of Education School Report Card 2004-2005

Table 1.3 AYP Status in 2006-07 School Year
(Based on Performance from 2005-06 School Year)

	Grades 3-5	Grades 6-8	High School	District AYP
Reading AYP	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Mathematics AYP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Additional AYP Indicators	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

Source: State Board of Education School Report Card 2005-2006

Table 1.4 AYP Status in 2007-08 School Year
(Based on Performance from 2006-07 School Year)

	Grades 3-5	Grades 6-8	High School	District AYP
Reading AYP	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mathematics AYP	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Additional AYP Indicators	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: State Board of Education School Report Card 2006-2007

History of Butler County School District's PayPLUS

During the 2006-07 school year, BCSD sought funding from the Alabama Legislature to develop a performance pay plan for their employees. Governor Bob Riley's budget included $750,000 designated for performance pay. Since no other public school districts in Alabama sought these funds, BCSD was able to secure this money for a year of planning a pilot program called PayPLUS. BCSD received an additional $750,000 in May 2008 to be spent on PayPLUS, bringing total program funding to $1.5 million to be dispersed over the 2008 and 2009 fiscal years. The stipulations for use of funds are that it be used for teacher performance incentives, that there be an individual responsible for overseeing the project, and that there be an external evaluation of the project.

BCSD officials established a district-wide committee to decide how to design PayPLUS, educate school personnel about its components, and implement the program. This 31-member committee was comprised of three representatives from each school along with central office staff members. Committee members included both certified and classified personnel representing a variety of grade levels and subject areas.

The committee met on multiple occasions, and gradually came to agreement about the key design program components of PayPLUS. Committee members returned to their respective schools to gather additional feedback from a broader pool of school personnel, gain broader district consensus, and refine the program components as needed. Throughout these

deliberations, PayPLUS committee gathered information about other performance pay programs across the country, and worked to determine how PayPLUS could support the goals of the district and best reward employees for their performance. PayPLUS was officially approved by each school faculty and the board's Policy Advisory Committee in May 2007.

PayPLUS is an optional program for all full-time employees of BCSD. In January 2008, employees were gathered for an information session. At that time, all were given the opportunity to opt in or out of the program. Those who opted into the program completed their first semester of participation during Spring 2008. The first round of performance bonuses were disbursed in June (Attendance and School Culture) and August (Leadership and AYP) of 2008. The second round of performance bonuses will be disbursed in December 2008 and May 2009 (Attendance and Leadership) and August 2009 (AYP and School Culture).

Main Components of PayPLUS

As a result of the district's deliberations, PayPLUS is composed of four main components. The district's overall objective in designing these components is to align employee behavior with teaching and learning goals of the district. PayPLUS components include:

- Promoting employee attendance (i.e., Attendance)
- Leading others (i.e., Leadership)
- Unity of effort to achieve AYP (i.e., Adequate Yearly Progress)
- Supporting a climate for success (i.e., School Culture)

The first two components measure the performance of an individual employee, while the latter components measure performance at the school level.

Promoting employee attendance

The goal of the first PayPLUS component is to improve employee attendance by providing bonus awards for achieving perfect attendance. The committee deemed this an essential component due to past patterns of employee absenteeism. This evidence was supplemented further by the rationale that if employees are not at school, there is a negative impact on school culture and, consequently, on student learning.

Employee attendance is calculated every nine weeks, at which time employees can earn $125 for achieving perfect attendance. Accordingly, school personnel can potentially accrue up to $500 during the course of the year, with payouts disbursed at the end of each semester (i.e., December and May of each school year). Allocated personal days, professional development days, jury duty, answering subpoenas, and poll duty are exempt from the ultimate calculation of attendance.

Leading others

The goal of the second PayPLUS component is to motivate and reward teachers and staff who assume leadership positions in their respective schools. The district believes it is critical to offer its employees opportunities to develop leadership skills and grow in their professional practice. School personnel can receive bonus awards by demonstrating leadership while serving as (1) a grade-level, department, or committee chair, (2) a teacher mentor, or (3) a sponsor of extracurricular activities. The maximum award than can be received by any employee from this component is $2,000, which can be accumulated in one or more of the following ways.

- Grade-level, department, or committee chair: $200 for each position held

- Teacher mentor: $1,000 for each mentee new to the teaching profession; $500 for each mentee new to BCSD or in second year of teaching

- Extra-curricular activities sponsor: $300 for each activity sponsored

Unity of effort to achieve AYP

The goal of the third PayPLUS component is to encourage BCSD employees, both in schools and at the central office, to work together to achieve No Child Left Behind benchmarks for AYP. The committee decided to include both certified and classified personnel in this component, believing that each employee has an impact upon some element of schooling, whether it be school culture or classroom instruction. Both school-level and district-level employees are eligible for bonus awards under this PayPLUS component.

- If a school makes AYP: All employees participating in PayPLUS at that school are eligible for the bonus award.

- If the district makes AYP: All employees participating in PayPLUS at the district level are eligible for the bonus award.

The money that remains after rewarding the first and second components (i.e., Attendance and Leadership) is split between the two components of AYP and School Culture. Individual payouts are determined by the number of employees participating in PayPLUS, and the number of schools making AYP. Classified staff members participating in PayPLUS are eligible for pay at 50 percent of the certified employee rate.

Supporting a climate for success

The goal of the fourth PayPLUS component is to support positive school culture in order to promote students' growth academically, socially, and emotionally. Schools must attain four of the five following indicators for school personnel to receive a PayPLUS award.

- Reduction of discipline referrals: A school must show an overall reduction in discipline referrals over the previous year to receive credit.

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- Improvement of student satisfaction: Through results of student satisfaction surveys, a school must show either 80 percent overall satisfaction among its students, or improvement in the percentage of students expressing satisfaction.

- Increase in extra-curricular activities: A school must show evidence of either providing one activity for every 50 students in grades K-4 or for every 30 students in grades 5-12, or increasing the number of students participating in activities over the previous school year.

- Evidence of students' academic growth: A school must show an increase over the previous school year's scores on any two standardized tests, which may include SAT10, ADAW, AP Test, ACT, DIBELS, or PSAT.

- Expansion of celebration and recognition activities: A school must conduct a minimum of two faculty/staff activities and four student-centered activities promoting celebration and recognition of goal attainment.

As with the AYP component, the money that is left after rewarding Attendance and Leadership is split between the AYP and School Culture components.

The remaining chapters of this report provide an overview of (1) the methods used to conduct the evaluation of PayPLUS, (2) evaluation findings, and (3) policy implications.

CHAPTER 2
EVALUATION METHODS

In order to evaluate the first year of PayPLUS implementation, MAP conducted surveys and interviews with school personnel and examined results from student surveys as well. School personnel were surveyed at multiple points in time between January and November 2008, as were elementary and secondary students. Principals and teachers were interviewed during the first semester of PayPLUS implementation and principals were again interviewed late in the Fall 2008 semester.

Survey Methodology and Sample

School personnel surveys

In January 2008, soon after implementation of PayPLUS, all BCSD personnel were given an anonymous paper and pencil survey asking them about their attitudes toward performance pay in general, as well as their early reactions to PayPLUS. The survey questions cover background information in addition to (1) perceptions of performance pay as a general policy and preferred models for implementing performance pay, (2) understanding of the PayPLUS program, (3) beliefs about the fairness, efficacy, and impact of PayPLUS, (4) professional satisfaction, and (5) perceptions of school climate including the quality of principal leadership and teacher interactions. The same survey again was administered online to all BCSD personnel during the Fall 2008 semester (October/November 2008).

A total of 238 school personnel completed the survey in January. To use the most relevant responses for the purpose of this evaluation, we focused our analysis on the 183 responses of teachers (n=156), principals (n=8), and other professional school personnel (n=19).[1] Given those responses, there was a total response rate of 66 percent among all teachers, principals, and other professional school personnel. Looking individually at each personnel type, the response rates varied from 67 percent of all district teachers responding, 100 percent of district principals, and 56 percent of all other professional school personnel in the district. (See Table 2.1)

Table 2.1: Survey Response Rate, Spring 2008 Personnel Survey

Position	Responses	Total	Response Rate
Teachers	156	234	66.7%
Principals	8	8	100%
Other Personnel	19	34	55.9%
Overall	183	276	66.3%

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[1] By "other professional school personnel," we refer to specialists or professional staff, including curriculum coordinators, mentor teachers, literacy or math coaches, library media specialists, librarians, counselors, or social workers. For this evaluation, we did not use responses of substitute teachers, teacher aides, or support staff (e.g., administrative assistants or custodians).

A total of 176 school personnel completed the Fall 2008 survey, which included 144 responses from teachers, 11 responses from principals or assistant principals, and 21 responses from other professional school personnel. There was an overall response rate of 64 percent for the Fall 2008 school personnel survey. All personnel types had a response rate of at least 60 percent (see Table 2.2).

Table 2.2: Survey Response Rate, Fall 2008 Personnel Survey

Position	Responses	Total	Response Rate
Teachers	144	234	61.5%
Principals	11	8	137.5%
Other Personnel	21	34	61.8%
Overall	176	276	63.8%

Note: It is unclear why the principal response rate is greater than 100 percent. The survey asks respondents to indicate if they serve as a school administrator, which can include principals and assistant principals. Unfortunately, we are unable to decipher how many of the 11 respondents are principals as opposed to assistant principals.

MAP also examined results from a teacher survey administered at the end of the Spring 2008 semester, which focused primarily on their use of instructional practices and how they had changed since the previous school year. A total of 145 BCSD teachers, (62 percent of all 234 district teachers) responded to April 2008 survey.

Appendix A provides an overview of survey respondent characteristics including their overall years of professional experience in education, level of education, annual salary, gender, tenure status, union membership status, and whether or not they are assigned to a high-stakes teaching assignment.

Student surveys

MAP evaluated results from student satisfaction surveys administered in BCSD during the Spring and Fall 2008 semesters. Surveys were administered to both elementary (K-4) and secondary (Grades 5-12) students and addressed similar concepts in an age-appropriate manner. Survey items inquired about students' feelings of safety, their perceptions of interactions with peers, their beliefs about the quality of interactions with teachers, as well as their overall level of satisfaction at school.

The Spring 2008 survey was administered to 1,133 elementary students and 1,849 secondary students, representing responses from approximately 88 percent of all elementary students and 90 percent of all secondary students.

The Fall 2008 student survey was administered to 1,176 elementary students and 1,688 secondary students, representing responses from approximately 91 percent of all elementary students and 82 percent of all secondary students.

Interview Methodology and Sample

In April 2008, MAP spent two days in BCSD interviewing school personnel to learn more about their perceptions of PayPLUS. Interviews focused on the following issues: (1) general understanding of the purpose and goals of PayPLUS, (2) understanding of the specific components of PayPLUS, (3) perceptions about the fairness and efficacy of the plan's components, (4) perceptions about the potential impact of each component, and (5) ideas as to how PayPLUS might be strengthened or improved over time. These Spring semester interviews were conducted with all district principals, 30 teachers, and 18 non-certified staff. Teachers and non-certified staff were interviewed through a discussion group format, while principals were interviewed individually.

In November 2008, MAP conducted follow-up phone interviews with BCSD principals. Interviews were successfully completed with all but one principal who did not respond to our efforts to schedule a discussion. These interviews again inquired about the level of understanding of PayPLUS held by principals and their school staff and perceptions of the program's impact during its first year of implementation. These interviews also addressed unintended consequences of the program and recommendations for PayPLUS.

All interview discussions were audio recorded and lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Interviews were transcribed and reviewed to identify recurring themes and other noteworthy findings. This analysis involved multiple stages of reviewing recorded interviews, identifying emerging patterns, re-evaluating interviews for accuracy and completeness of interpretation, and synthesizing the main findings.

CHAPTER 3
OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

This chapter provides an overview of findings that emerged from school personnel and student surveys, as well as interviews with school personnel in BCSD. PayPLUS officially began in January 2008, so we used the first semester of data collection to gather baseline information about the attitudes and behaviors of school personnel and students in the district. During the Fall 2008 semester, we collected this information again to identify how attitudes and behaviors may have changed during the first year of PayPLUS implementation. Finally, we incorporated results from a late-Spring 2008 survey that focused primarily on the professional practices of classroom teachers.

This chapter presents findings related to (1) attitudes towards performance pay policies in general, (2) decisions whether or not to enroll in the PayPLUS program, (3) attitudes towards the PayPLUS program and perceptions of its impact in schools, (4) school personnel behavior, and (5) school climate and organizational dynamics. Discussion focuses primarily on changes over time.

Survey responses are reported in the aggregate at different points in time rather than discreetly reported for teachers, principals, and other personnel at the school level. Responses across these position types were markedly similar, but when any notable differences do exist, they are discussed in the text. The following findings are explained in greater detail in the remainder of this chapter.

- BCSD employed an effective approach to design and implement PayPLUS. By involving a broad representation of school personnel with the plan's development, the district gained employee input and buy-in.

- Two primary concerns did arise about PayPLUS implementation. First, the implementation process was rushed in its January 2008 roll-out, and second, the future of PayPLUS is unknown given the uncertainty of continued funding.

- The nature of PayPLUS guidelines played an important role in school personnel's decisions to enroll in the program. The majority of enrolled school personnel agree that they were encouraged by the eligibility of all full-time school personnel to participate in PayPLUS. Personnel also reported that the voluntary nature of PayPLUS encouraged them to enroll.

- The majority of school personnel understood the criteria needed to achieve a PayPLUS bonus, what PayPLUS measures, and how PayPLUS rewards are determined. There was widespread understanding of the requirements for AYP and attendance criteria, but lingering uncertainty about expectations for leadership and school culture components.

- BCSD employees believed PayPLUS was equitable in terms of the breadth of school personnel eligible to receive payment. However, school personnel were less

confident that the program could effectively identify high quality professional practice or incite behavior to attain all the established goals of PayPLUS.

- The majority of teachers, principals, and other personnel reported that PayPLUS could have a beneficial effect at their schools. There was no widespread evidence that they believed the program would deteriorate the collaborative culture of schools.

- When asked about program outcomes, personnel had mixed reactions. Some reported an increase in extracurricular offerings and participation within schools, while many also noted better attendance among personnel. Principals felt very positively about the AYP component, with some going as far as to recommend that program funds associated with leadership and school culture components be redirected to supplement bonus awards for meeting AYP criteria.

- During the first year of PayPLUS implementation, teachers in BCSD reported frequent use of desirable instructional practices and an overall increase in the use of such practices as well. Most indicators of school climate were favorable, with the majority of school personnel believing that principals displayed traits of instructional leadership, viewing teacher interactions positively, and feeling satisfied working in BCSD.

- The majority of both elementary and secondary students felt safe at school, and elementary students consistently reported positive views of interactions with their peers and teachers. Secondary students, however, had less favorable views of such interactions, but there was some evidence of improvements over the first year of PayPLUS implementation.

Attitudes about Performance Pay

Both the January 2008 and Fall 2008 school personnel surveys asked respondents to address several questions about the appeal of various performance pay models. In policy debate, performance pay is often discussed in the abstract, but in reality, one performance pay program can be markedly different from another depending on a number of design features such as (1) who is held accountable for performance (e.g., overall school performance, grade/subject team performance, or individual performance), (2) how performance is measured, and (3) how much money is at stake.

Previous research finds that school personnel's attitudes towards performance pay differ depending on a number of design characteristics. For example, national data suggest that teachers feel more favorably towards pay for working in a hard-to-staff school or taking on extra responsibilities, and are less inclined to support pay for student performance or working in a hard-to-staff field.[2] However, results from specific states vary somewhat. In Texas, teachers favor the use of students' test score gains, which is inconsistent with
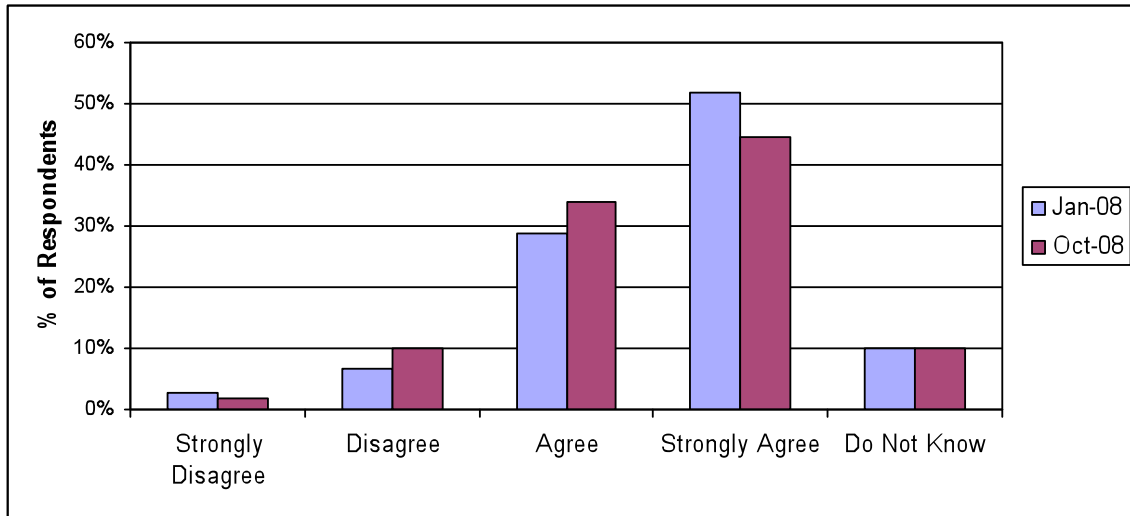
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[2] See Ballou and Podgursky (1993), Goldhaber, DeArmon, and Deburgomaster (2007), Jacob and Springer (2007), and Springer et al (2008).

teachers' attitudes in a Florida study. Many of these differences can likely be attributed to differences in teacher characteristics or the other features of performance pay programs (e.g., the process of program implementation). This section addresses several of these design features and how BCSD school personnel felt about them during the first year of PayPLUS implementation.

Preferences related to performance pay policies

The January 2008 and Fall 2008 surveys asked how important school personnel believed performance pay to be as a policy initiative compared to the alternative of simply raising base salary. Figure 3.1 reports the degree to which respondents agreed that district and state officials should be more concerned with increasing base pay rather than devising a performance pay program. Approximately 80 percent of respondents in both the January 2008 and Fall 2008 surveys agreed that policymakers should be more concerned with increasing base pay. However, fewer respondents strongly agreed with this statement in the latter survey. More than one-third of principals actually disagreed with the statement in January and 30 percent disagreed again in Fall 2008.

Figure 3.1: More Concerned about Increasing Base Pay than Performance Pay, January 2008 and Fall 2008
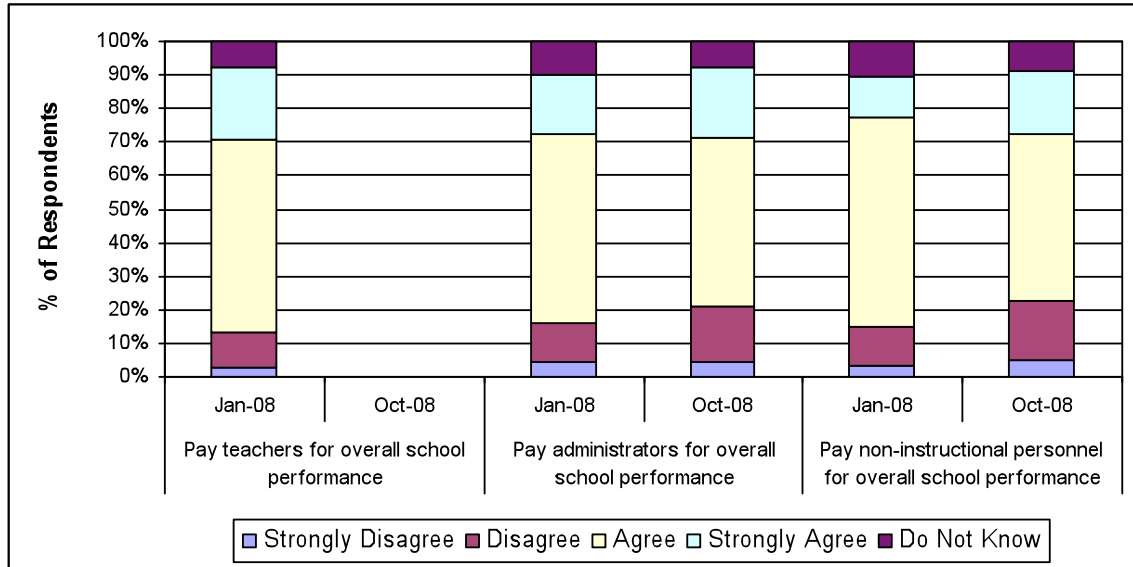

Source: January 2008 (n=183) and Fall 2008 (n=176) surveys to BCSD school personnel

However, in response to survey questions inquiring about attitudes towards several different performance pay models, a significant share of respondents in both surveys felt favorably towards them. We first asked them if paying school personnel based on the overall performance at a school is a positive change to current pay practices. Questions asked specifically about paying teachers, administrators, and other non-instructional personnel on the basis of school performance.

As Figure 3.2 reveals, there was general agreement that pay for teachers, administrators, and other non-instructional personnel based on a school's overall performance is a positive change. Well over half of all respondents felt favorably towards these policies in both

surveys, but this agreement slightly dropped in the Fall 2008 survey, primarily because more respondents indicated moderate disagreement with the performance pay models.

Figure 3.2: Pay for Overall School Performance is a Positive Change, January 2008 and Fall 2008
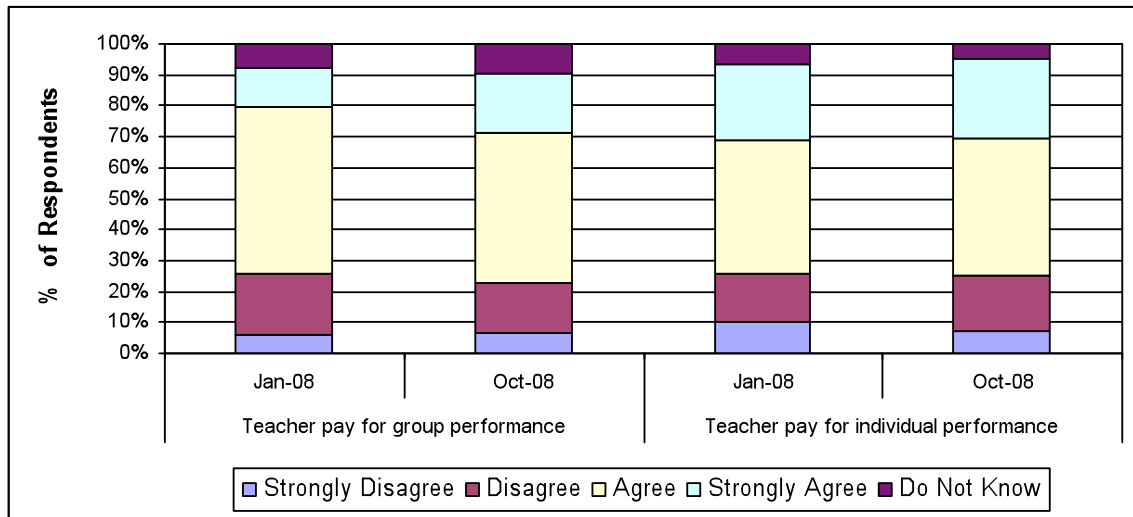

Source: January 2008 (n=183) and Fall 2008 (n=176) surveys to BCSD school personnel
Note: The Fall 2008 survey did not include the item about paying teachers for overall school performance.

At first glance, the findings in Figures 3.1 and 3.2 seem contradictory. However, it could be that when speaking of "performance pay" in the abstract, most respondents imagined something other than pay based on school performance. That is, they could have been thinking of pay based on an individual's performance or the performance of a team of individuals at the grade or subject level.

Survey responses from January and Fall 2008 also reveal overall agreement that paying teachers based on team or individual performance is also a positive change to pay practice. The level of agreement was slightly less than that reported for pay based on overall school performance. Results are reported in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3: Teacher Pay for Group or Individual Performance is a Positive Change, January 2008 and Fall 2008

Source: January 2008 (n=183) and Fall 2008 (n=176) surveys to BCSD school personnel

Given the findings reported in Figures 3.2 and 3.3, perhaps the most logical explanation for why BCSD school personnel believed that policymakers should be more concerned with increasing base pay than creating performance pay is that respondents felt that performance pay is a positive change, but a salary increase is even more positive. Theoretically, increasing base pay elevates the most significant portion of their income and also tends to be permanent.

Findings from the Spring 2008 interviews with teachers and principals generally support this pattern. There was very little mention of outright opposition to performance pay in those discussions. In fact, interviewees expressed noteworthy approval for paying school personnel based on school performance (e.g., AYP) and certainly welcomed the idea of paying teachers based on group or individual performance. However, interviewees did express some concerns about the most appropriate ways to measure performance at the group or individual teacher level. One teacher captured this concern quite well.

> If the children are issues to teachers equally, if the teachers have the same children across the board, then it would be something to work with. If a teacher has all high kids, they don't have to do as much to make those kids grow as a teacher who has all low kids.

This quote embodies a more general feeling that the characteristics of a teacher's students (e.g., demographics, past academic performance) would bias who could be eligible to receive performance pay. Many interviewees were either unaware of, or uncomfortable with, methods to account for these student characteristics when measuring a teacher's contribution to student learning.

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Preferred measures of performance

This section reports findings from the January 2008 survey about the appeal of various performance measures that could *potentially* be used to determine bonus awards for individual teachers. Performance pay programs across the nation use a variety of performance measures, some of which include indicators of teacher behavior, knowledge, and skills. Others focus on the academic performance of students, while even others pay based on a teacher's special assignment in a hard-to-staff field or school. Finally, many performance pay programs use a combination of these measures to pay teachers.

MAP personnel first examined January 2008 survey responses regarding the importance of using measures of teacher behavior, knowledge, and skills (i.e., how important it is that performance pay eligibility be determined by teacher inputs). Table 3.1 shows that, overall, respondents supported the use of these teacher input measures. Specifically, survey responses indicate that over half believed these eight measures to be of moderate or high importance. The measures believed to be of highest importance were earning an advanced degree and time spent in professional development, with approximately 85 percent of all respondents indicating these as being of moderate or high importance.[3]

Performance pay for working with students outside of class time or for having National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification received the lowest overall support.

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[3] There remains a lack of research evidence supporting these inputs as measures highly associated with student achievement gains.

Table 3.1: Pay for Teacher Behavior, Knowledge, and Skills, January 2008

Type of Measure	Respondent	Not Important	Low Importance	Moderate Importance	High Importance
Earning advanced degree	Teachers	3.9%	12.9%	38.1%	45.2%
	Principals	0.0%	0.0%	28.6%	71.4%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	5.3%	31.6%	63.2%
	Overall	3.3%	11.6%	37.0%	48.1%
Professional development	Teachers	2.6%	12.3%	53.5%	31.6%
	Principals	0.0%	14.3%	57.1%	28.6%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	10.5%	63.2%	26.3%
	Overall	2.2%	12.2%	54.7%	30.9%
Collaboration with peers	Teachers	3.9%	18.8%	55.2%	22.1%
	Principals	0.0%	28.6%	42.9%	28.6%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	26.3%	63.2%	10.5%
	Overall	3.3%	20.0%	55.6%	21.1%
After-school work with students	Teachers	7.9%	26.3%	50.7%	15.1%
	Principals	0.0%	28.6%	28.6%	42.9%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	26.3%	52.6%	21.1%
	Overall	6.7%	26.4%	50.0%	16.9%
Parent involvement	Teachers	1.3%	19.7%	46.7%	32.2%
	Principals	0.0%	14.3%	28.6%	57.1%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	21.1%	36.8%	42.1%
	Overall	1.1%	19.7%	44.9%	34.3%
Master/mentor teacher	Teachers	2.0%	25.5%	46.4%	26.1%
	Principals	0.0%	14.3%	57.1%	28.6%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	26.3%	57.9%	15.8%
	Overall	1.7%	25.1%	48.0%	25.1%
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification	Teachers	10.6%	28.5%	43.7%	17.2%
	Principals	14.3%	14.3%	42.9%	28.6%
	Other Personnel	15.8%	26.3%	36.8%	21.1%
	Overall	11.3%	27.7%	42.9%	18.1%
Improve teacher absenteeism	Teachers	4.0%	23.3%	46.0%	26.7%
	Principals	0.0%	0.0%	71.4%	28.6%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	11.1%	61.1%	27.8%
	Overall	3.4%	21.1%	48.6%	26.9%

Source: January 2008 (n=183) survey to BCSD school personnel

Table 3.2 provides results about the perceived importance of measures focused on the academic performance of students at a school. The majority of respondents believed these measures of academic performance to be of importance for determining performance pay.

Among all types of academic performance measures, the use of high student test scores on standardized assessments had the least support.

Table 3.2: Pay for Academic Performance, January 2008

Type of Measure	Respondent	Not Important	Low Importance	Moderate Importance	High Importance
High test scores on standardized assessment	Teachers	7.3%	33.1%	39.7%	19.9%
	Principals	0.0%	28.6%	71.4%	0.0%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	47.4%	42.1%	10.5%
	Overall	6.2%	34.5%	41.2%	18.1%
Student gains on high-stakes state assessment	Teachers	3.4%	17.6%	53.4%	25.7%
	Principals	0.0%	16.7%	16.7%	66.7%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	31.6%	42.1%	26.3%
	Overall	2.9%	19.1%	50.9%	27.2%
Student gains on non-state standardized assessment	Teachers	3.4%	24.2%	52.3%	20.1%
	Principals	28.6%	0.0%	71.4%	0.0%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	36.8%	36.8%	26.3%
	Overall	4.0%	24.6%	51.4%	20.0%
School makes Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP)	Teachers	2.6%	19.6%	43.1%	34.6%
	Principals	14.3%	14.3%	28.6%	42.9%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	15.8%	52.6%	31.6%
	Overall	2.8%	19.0%	43.6%	34.6%

Source: January 2008 (n=183) survey to BCSD school personnel

A majority of survey respondents indicated that subjective measures of teacher performance are important for the determination of performance pay (see Table 3.3). However, there was less overall belief in the importance of these measures as compared to measures of teacher behavior, knowledge, and skills or measures of students' academic performance.

Table 3.3: Pay for Subjective Evaluations of Teacher Performance, January 2008

Type of Measure	Respondent	Not Important	Low Importance	Moderate Importance	High Importance
Supervisor evaluations	Teachers	6.0%	21.9%	49.7%	22.5%
	Principals	14.3%	0.0%	57.1%	28.6%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	31.6%	52.6%	15.8%
	Overall	5.6%	22.0%	50.3%	22.0%
Peer evaluations	Teachers	16.0%	32.7%	33.3%	18.0%
	Principals	14.3%	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%
	Other Personnel	10.5%	26.3%	63.2%	0.0%
	Overall	15.3%	31.8%	36.4%	16.5%
Student evaluations	Teachers	21.2%	37.1%	31.8%	9.9%
	Principals	14.3%	57.1%	14.3%	14.3%
	Other Personnel	15.8%	47.4%	36.8%	0.0%
	Overall	20.3%	39.0%	31.6%	9.1%
Independent portfolio evaluations	Teachers	9.9%	35.8%	45.7%	8.6%
	Principals	14.3%	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%
	Other Personnel	5.3%	36.8%	57.9%	0.0%
	Overall	9.6%	35.6%	46.3%	8.5%
Student satisfaction with school	Teachers	8.7%	37.6%	36.2%	17.4%
	Principals	0.0%	28.6%	42.9%	28.6%
	Other Personnel	10.5%	36.8%	47.4%	5.3%
	Overall	8.6%	37.1%	37.7%	16.6%
Parent satisfaction with teacher	Teachers	8.8%	35.1%	43.9%	12.2%
	Principals	0.0%	28.6%	57.1%	14.3%
	Other Personnel	10.5%	31.6%	57.9%	0.0%
	Overall	8.6%	34.5%	46.0%	10.9%

Source: January 2008 (n=183) survey to BCSD school personnel

There are two exceptions in Table 3.3. Pay based on supervisor evaluations was deemed of moderate or high importance by nearly 75 percent of respondents, and most respondents (59.3%) felt that pay based on students' evaluations is of low or no importance. This is not too surprising given how previous research and past efforts at performance pay in earlier

decades revealed a tendency for teachers to have reservations about the reliability of using non-objective performance measures for high-stakes decisions, such as performance pay.[4]

Finally, MAP inquired about the importance of using market-based pay for teachers (i.e., paying them for assignment in a hard-to-staff field or school). Table 3.4 reveals that approximately 75 percent of respondents believed these measures to be of moderate or high importance. Attitudes about pay for teaching in a hard-to-staff school are not too surprising, but the level of support for teaching in a hard-to-staff field is somewhat unexpected. Previous research on market-based pay indicates that teachers often times hold less positive attitudes towards pay for teaching based on field assignment.[5]

Table 3.4: Market-Based Pay for Teachers, January 2008

Survey Item	Respondent	Not Important	Low Importance	Moderate Importance	High Importance
Teaching in hard-to-staff fields	Teachers	4.6%	19.9%	50.3%	25.2%
	Principals	0.0%	14.3%	42.9%	42.9%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	26.3%	52.6%	21.1%
	Overall	4.0%	20.3%	50.3%	25.4%
Teaching in hard-to-staff schools	Teachers	3.3%	21.3%	52.7%	22.7%
	Principals	0.0%	14.3%	42.9%	42.9%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	21.1%	47.4%	31.6%
	Overall	2.8%	21.0%	51.7%	24.4%

Source: January 2008 (n=183) survey to BCSD school personnel

Perceived impact of performance pay on professional practice

In both the January 2008 and Fall 2008 surveys, we asked school personnel in BCSD about the ways in which performance pay might impact professional practice in school. Theoretical debate on performance pay often introduces two assumptions about its impact on educator practice. First, proponents often argue that performance pay will encourage educators to put forth greater effort or change their professional practice. Opponents, on the other hand, frequently contend that it will deteriorate the collaborative culture of schools by introducing a business mentality of competition into the education system.[6]
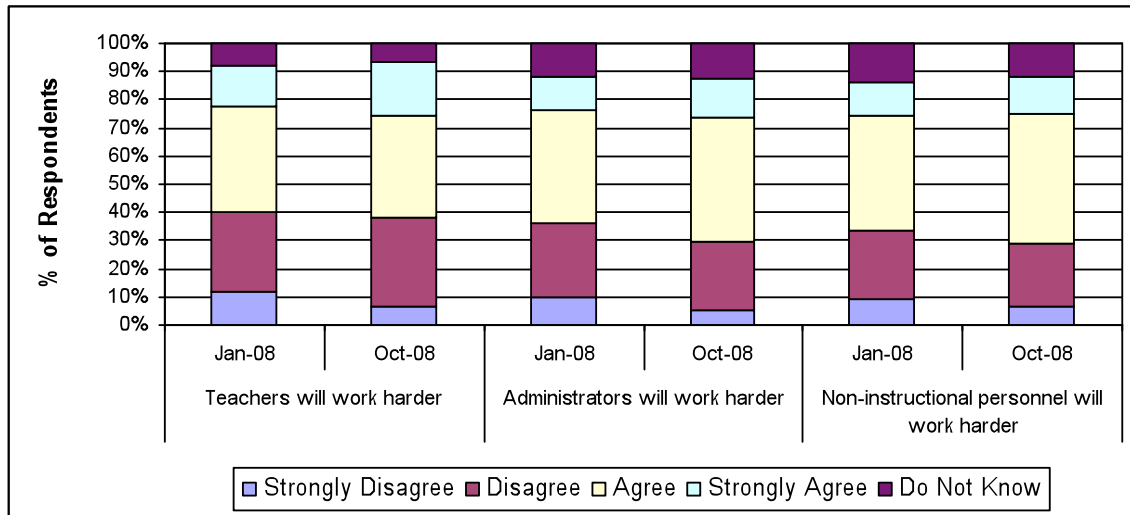
With regard to the former issue of effort, survey responses in both January and Fall 2008 reveal a bit of uncertainty (see Figure 3.4). Respondents were asked whether performance pay, in general, might encourage teachers, administrators, and other non-instructional personnel to work harder. Responses were somewhat split, with close to 50 percent agreeing that personnel will work harder. Agreement was slightly higher in Fall 2008 than in the earlier January 2008 survey.

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[4] See Murnane and Cohen (1986).
[5] See Ballou and Podgursky (1993), Goldhaber, DeArmon, and Deburgomaster, and Jacob and Springer (2007).
[6] See Lazear (2002) and Murnane and Cohen (1986).

**Figure 3.4: Perceived Impact of Performance Pay on Professional Effort,
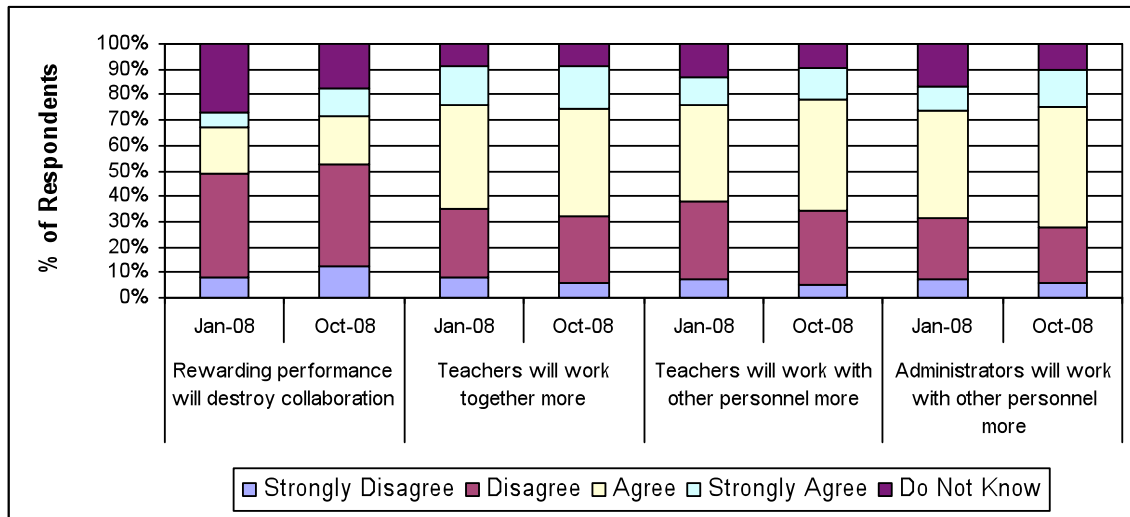January 2008 and Fall 2008**

Interestingly, among all respondents, principals responded with the highest agreement that performance pay would encourage teachers and non-instructional personnel to work harder. Results from January 2008 reveal that 75 percent and 63 percent of principals agreed that performance pay will incite teachers and other personnel to work harder, respectively. Similar responses are evident from the Fall 2008 survey. Seventy percent of principals agreed that performance pay will cause teachers and non-instructional personnel to work harder. However, when asked if performance pay would encourage administrators to work harder, only half of principals agreed in January. However, a full 80 percent agreed that it will make administrators work harder by the Fall 2008 survey (i.e., a noticeably higher share of respondents agreeing than seen in overall responses or the responses of teachers exclusively).

Both survey respondents and interviewees indicated that at least a slight majority of school personnel in BCSD did not believe deterioration of collaborative culture to be a foregone conclusion of a performance pay program. For example, in the Spring 2008 interviews, on only one occasion did an interview actually mention concern that performance pay might result in too much competition among school personnel, thereby compromising the school's collaborative culture.

Both the January 2008 and Fall 2008 survey asked school personnel a series of questions about the impact performance pay might have on professional collaboration within schools, including if (1) rewarding performance will destroy collaboration, (2) teachers will work together more, (3) teachers will work with other personnel more, and (4) administrators will work with other personnel more. Results are provided in Figure 3.5.

Figure 3.5: Perceived Impact of Performance Pay on Professional Collaboration, January 2008 and Fall 2008

Source: January 2008 (n=183) and Fall 2008 (n=176) surveys to BCSD school personnel

Overall, respondents' beliefs were slightly more favorable towards performance pay in the Fall 2008 survey results. As compared to results from the January 2008 survey, BCSD school personnel in Fall 2008 were more likely to disagree that rewarding performance will destroy collaboration. They were also more likely to agree that it will cause teachers to work together and with other personnel more, and that administrators will work with other personnel more.

Principals in January 2008 were noticeably more likely to believe that performance pay will cause teachers to work together and with other personnel with greater frequency than were other survey respondents (nearly 90% agreed compared to 55% or less of teachers). In Fall 2008, 70 percent of principals believed that performance pay will cause teachers to work together and with other personnel more often. This is slightly higher than the roughly 55 percent of teachers agreeing with these statements.

Decisions to Participate in PayPLUS

In January 2008, teachers, principals, and other personnel indicated that prior to the district-wide information session, they had a high probability of participating in PayPLUS (see Table 3.5). On average, each personnel type said they were going to enroll with slightly more than 75 percent probability; however, the most common response was 100 percent probability.

At the close of the information session, the average enrollment probability did increase slightly, with teachers, principals, and other personnel indicating they would participate with 92 percent, 84 percent, and 82 percent probability, respectively. It should be noted that for both questions, respondents' stated probability is marked by noticeable variation (as is evident by the mean scores' standard deviations).

Table 3.5: Likelihood of Participating in PayPLUS, January 2008

Survey Item	Respondent	Minimum Probability	Maximum Probability	Mode Probability	Average Probability	Standard Deviation
Likelihood prior to information session	Teachers	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	78.5%	28.5
	Principals	25.0%	100.0%	100.0%	78.0%	32.5
	Other Personnel	30.0%	100.0%	100.0%	76.3%	24.4
	Overall	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	78.2%	28.0
Likelihood at close of information session	Teachers	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	92.0%	17.4
	Principals	25.0%	100.0%	100.0%	84.2%	30.1
	Other Personnel	50.0%	100.0%	100.0%	82.8%	22.4
	Overall	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%	90.6%	18.7

Source: January 2008 (n=183) survey to BCSD school personnel

When asked in the survey if they actually enrolled in PayPLUS, nearly all respondents indicated that they had done so. All principals enrolled, just under 100 percent of teachers enrolled (96%), and nearly 90 percent of other personnel (89%) did so.

Important factors for enrolling in PayPLUS

We also asked survey respondents how important several factors were to their decision to enroll in PayPLUS, including (1) the appeal of performance pay in general, (2) the importance of PayPLUS guidelines, and (3) the burden of peer pressure.

Approximately two-thirds of all those enrolling in PayPLUS believed that an important factor in their enrollment decision was that they were in favor of performance pay policies in general. As seen in Table 3.6, an even higher percent of principals (88%) indicated that this was an important factor in their decision. There was even greater importance attributed to the chance of earning a bonus. Eighty-one percent of teachers, 88 percent of principals, and 81 percent of other personnel believed that the good chance of earning a bonus was of moderate or high importance to their decision.

Table 3.6: The Appeal of Performance Pay, January 2008

Survey Item	Respondent	Not Important	Low Importance	Moderate Importance	High Importance
I am in favor of pay for performance policies	Teachers	10.3%	22.8%	46.2%	20.7%
	Principals	12.5%	0.0%	50.0%	37.5%
	Other Personnel	6.3%	31.3%	50.0%	12.5%
	Overall	10.1%	22.5%	46.7%	20.7%
I have a good chance of earning a bonus	Teachers	5.6%	13.2%	52.1%	29.2%
	Principals	12.5%	0.0%	50.0%	37.5%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	18.8%	62.5%	18.8%
	Overall	5.4%	13.1%	53.0%	28.6%

Source: January 2008 (n=172) survey to BCSD school personnel

The nature of PayPLUS guidelines seemed to have played an important role in school personnel's decisions to enroll, as well (see Table 3.7).

<p align="center">**Table 3.7: Importance of PayPLUS Guidelines, January 2008**</p>

Survey Item	Respondent	Not Important	Low Importance	Moderate Importance	High Importance
All full-time school personnel are eligible to participate	Teachers	7.7%	12.0%	39.4%	40.8%
	Principals	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	85.7%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	12.5%	37.5%	50.0%
	Overall	7.3%	11.5%	37.6%	43.6%
PayPLUS is voluntary	Teachers	12.5%	8.3%	31.3%	47.9%
	Principals	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%	14.3%
	Other Personnel	6.3%	12.5%	31.3%	50.0%
	Overall	12.6%	9.6%	31.1%	46.7%
PayPLUS emphasizes important goals for compensating school personnel	Teachers	11.4%	16.4%	53.6%	18.6%
	Principals	0.0%	0.0%	71.4%	28.6%
	Other Personnel	6.3%	18.8%	50.0%	25.0%
	Overall	10.4%	16.0%	54.0%	19.6%

Source: January 2008 (n=172) survey to BCSD school personnel

- Eighty percent or more of enrolled teachers, principals, and other personnel found the fact that all full-time school personnel were eligible for PayPLUS to be an important deciding factor.

- Approximately 75 percent of respondents identified the voluntary nature of PayPLUS and its emphasis on important goals to be of moderate or high importance for their enrollment decision.

- Principals' responses were somewhat different from these overall patterns. For example, fewer principals (43%) believed that the voluntary nature of the program was an important factor, while all principals felt that the emphasis on important goals was important.

What was not deemed an important factor in the enrollment decision was the pressure of school and district peers, as is evident in Table 3.8. Approximately 90 percent or more of teachers, principals, and other personnel who enrolled in PayPLUS believed that issues of peer pressure were of no or low importance in determining their decision to participate. This pattern remains when asked about pressure from personnel within their own school, school personnel throughout the district, or from district officials.

Table 3.8: Importance of Peer Pressure, January 2008

Survey Item	Respondent	Not Important	Low Importance	Moderate Importance	High Importance
Worried what other personnel in my school would think	Teachers	74.5%	16.6%	5.5%	3.4%
	Principals	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Other Personnel	75.0%	18.8%	0.0%	6.3%
	Overall	75.7%	16.0%	4.7%	3.6%
Worried what other personnel in my district would think	Teachers	73.8%	15.9%	6.9%	3.4%
	Principals	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Other Personnel	68.8%	31.3%	0.0%	0.0%
	Overall	74.6%	16.6%	5.9%	3.0%
Worried what district personnel would think	Teachers	69.7%	17.9%	8.3%	4.1%
	Principals	87.5%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%
	Other Personnel	68.8%	25.0%	6.3%	0.0%
	Overall	70.4%	18.3%	7.7%	3.6%

Source: January 2008 (n=172) survey to BCSD school personnel

Attitudes about PayPLUS

This section discusses perceptions of PayPLUS as expressed by BCSD school personnel in both surveys and interviews conducted during the Spring and Fall 2008 semesters. When possible, we compared survey responses between January 2008 and Fall 2008 providing evidence of attitudes at the start of PayPLUS implementation and nearly a year after implementation. Through surveys and interviews, we asked BCSD personnel about (1) the PayPLUS implementation process, (2) their understanding of PayPLUS components, (3) the fairness and efficacy of PayPLUS, (4) the motivational power of PayPLUS, and (5) the program's possible impact on professional practice and other school outcomes.

Implementation of PayPLUS

Past experiences with performance pay programs across the country during recent decades emphasize how critical the process of implementation can be for the life of a program. Some of these important considerations include how well a broad representation of school stakeholders is involved in the process of program design; how many resources (e.g., administrative, technical) are available to design a program; when the program is rolled out; and, how much time schools and personnel have to design and implement the program.[7]

Involving a broad representation of school personnel with the development of a performance pay program can improve the ease of its implementation and attitudes toward the program. It is, therefore, encouraging that the majority of all survey respondents indicated that they were involved in the development of PayPLUS (see Table 3.9). Their

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[7] See Bloom and Milkovich (1998), Springer, Podgursky, et al, (2007), Streib and Nigro, (1993), and Wise (1999).

responses suggest that teachers were the most highly involved personnel, followed by principals and other school personnel.

Table 3.9: Personnel Involvement in PayPLUS Development, January 2008

Survey Item	Respondent	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Do Not Know
Teachers at my school were involved	Teachers	2.0%	2.0%	62.7%	23.5%	9.8%
	Principals	12.5%	12.5%	37.5%	25.0%	12.5%
	Other Personnel	5.3%	0.0%	57.9%	36.8%	0.0%
	Overall	2.8%	2.2%	61.1%	25.0%	8.9%
Principal at my school was involved	Teachers	1.9%	4.5%	52.6%	20.1%	20.8%
	Principals	12.5%	0.0%	50.0%	25.0%	12.5%
	Other Personnel	0.0%	5.3%	47.4%	36.8%	10.5%
	Overall	2.2%	4.4%	51.9%	22.1%	19.3%
Non-instructional personnel at my school were involved	Teachers	2.7%	6.0%	47.3%	17.3%	26.7%
	Principals	12.5%	12.5%	37.5%	25.0%	12.5%
	Other Personnel	5.3%	0.0%	57.9%	21.1%	15.8%
	Overall	3.4%	5.6%	48.0%	18.1%	24.9%

Source: January 2008 (n=183) survey to BCSD school personnel

A similar sentiment was markedly apparent among interviewees as well. Many praised the district planning for so deliberately involving school personnel in the design of PayPLUS. As one principal expressed:

> I do think it was a good process, for the fact that no one knew what they were doing, so we had a chance to start at the grassroots and work up. We were using bits and pieces of what everyone said.

Interviews provided even greater depth of discussion about the nature of PayPLUS implementation. For example, teachers and principals alike agreed that the design of PayPLUS was well thought out and the district provided useful informational resources for school personnel to think through the objectives and guidelines of the program. Another principal explained that:

> It has been very thorough. We had presentations. We came back and met with the faculty. We had input there. We selected members of our staff that actually went to the district level and were a part of the group that met for days and mapped out different ideas because when we started it was from scratch.

One concern that did arise from interview discussions was that the implementation of PayPLUS was rushed. Some school personnel felt that beginning the program at the start of the Spring 2008 semester created a hasty start to the program's onset in the district, with particular consequences for schools' ability to implement some of the less straightforward

PayPLUS criteria (e.g., leadership, school culture). A few teachers addressed this concern, saying:

> I think if we had the summer to think about it beforehand, to get our thoughts together, if we wanted to start a club, for instance, I would have had more time to see what I would want to do.

> It has been hard this year to get clubs up and running. It was on the spur of the moment. Organization has been hard.

This concern was somewhat tempered by a general acceptance among interviewees that PayPLUS was in its early stages and the district would learn and adapt over time.

Understanding of PayPLUS

Performance pay programs are founded upon a theory of action which essentially believes that the lure of pay will incite educators to accomplish established goals. This theory rests upon several critical assumptions. For example, educators must understand the goals set before them, believe in the efficacy of those goals, and believe in their ability to achieve them. Additionally, the potential for extra pay must be significant enough to motivate change. Finally, the perceived impact of the performance pay program must be of value.[8]

MAP personnel used three survey items – asked in both January 2008 and Fall 2008 – to gauge the degree of BCSD personnel's understanding of the PayPLUS program. We asked respondents if they (1) had a clear understanding of performance criteria that must be achieved to earn a bonus award, (2) had a clear understanding of what the PayPLUS program measures, and (3) were able to explain how bonus award eligibility is determined.

Figure 3.6 shows that roughly three-quarters of respondents in both surveys agreed with these statements, indicating that a significant majority understood key features of PayPLUS.

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[8] See Kelley and Finnigan (2003) and Vroom (1964).

Figure 3.6: Understanding of PayPLUS, January 2008 and Fall 2008

Source: January 2008 (n=183) and Fall 2008 (n=176) surveys to BCSD school personnel

However, interview responses from both the Spring 2008 and Fall 2008 semesters reveal a slightly more nuanced explanation of school personnel's understanding of PayPLUS criteria. At both points in time, interviewees reported widespread understanding of the requirements for meeting AYP and Attendance criteria, but there was lingering uncertainty about expectations for the other two program components – Leadership and School Culture. Some common concerns included (1) how a school should determine a credible sponsorship of an extracurricular activity, (2) how to determine who will serve as a grade or department committee chair, and (3) how results from student surveys will accurately capture important features of school culture.

In January 2008, one principal quite clearly explained that each school's individual set-up makes the determination of Leadership criteria a bit complex.

> I think the AYP and the perfect attendance piece makes sense to teachers, but when you start talking about chairperson it gets kind of shaky. I think a prime example is the difference between a department head and a chairperson. Some schools have two or three departments, some have no departments.
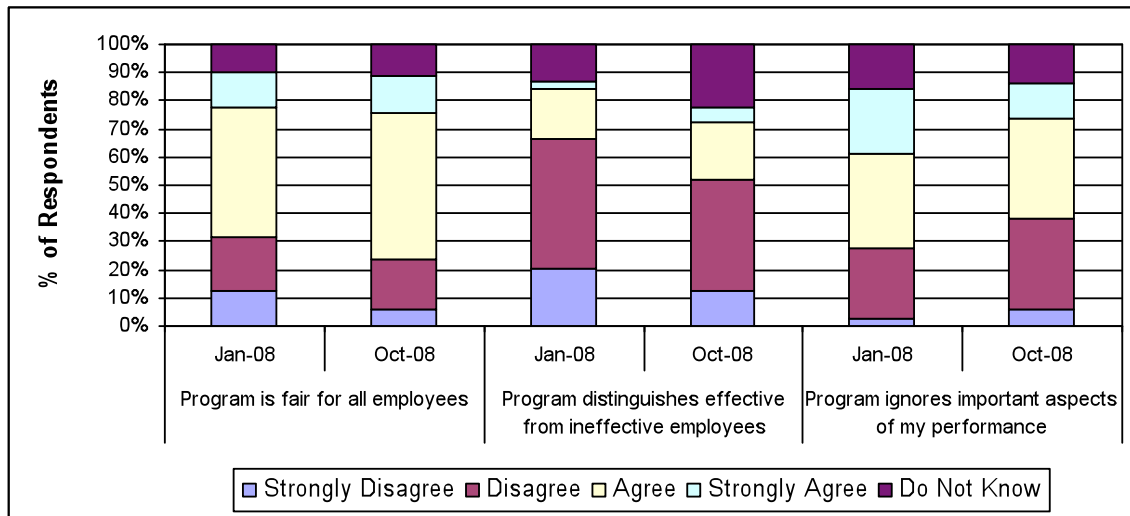
Fairness and efficacy of PayPLUS

Successful implementation of a performance pay program also assumes that employees believe in the fairness and efficacy of the program's objectives and their ability to attain them. Respondents were asked in both the January 2008 and Fall 2008 surveys the degree to which they agreed that PayPLUS (1) is fair for all employees, (2) distinguishes between effective and ineffective school employees, and (3) ignores important aspects of professional performance.

Figure 3.7 suggests that BCSD school personnel were slightly more inclined to believe that PayPLUS was fair and efficacious in the Fall 2008 semester than they did in January 2008 at the start of the program's implementation.

- In the January survey, 58 percent of respondents agreed that PayPLUS was fair to all employees compared to 65 percent in the Fall 2008 survey.

- Only 20 percent of school personnel believed that PayPLUS distinguished effective from ineffective employees in January 2008, while 26 percent agreed with this statement in Fall 2008.

- Twenty-eight percent of respondents disagreed that PayPLUS ignored important aspects of employee performance in January as compared to 38 percent in Fall 2008.

While most respondents agreed that the program was fair, a significant share believed that PayPLUS could not distinguish between effective and ineffective employees and that it ignored important aspects of professional performance. Additionally, over 20 percent were unsure about the program's ability to distinguish effective from ineffective employees.

**Figure 3.7: Perceptions about Fairness and Efficacy of PayPLUS,
January 2008 and Fall 2008**

Source: January 2008 (n=183) and Fall 2008 (n=176) surveys to BCSD school personnel

The rationale for this sentiment begins to unfold from interview responses gathered during the Spring and Fall 2008 semesters. Many interviewees agreed that the broad eligibility of school personnel able to receive bonus awards was a positive aspect of PayPLUS. However, both principal and teacher interviewees found the fairness of specific program components to be more questionable.

The vast majority of interviewees believed that pay for AYP was fair and reasonable. In fact, in the Fall 2008 interviews with principals, many recommended that PayPLUS funds be diverted from components such as School Culture to supplement bonus awards that can be distributed for attaining AYP goals. Most interviewees were also consistently in agreement

with Attendance criteria, saying that it was a behavior that was relatively within their control. The one exception was a quite commonly expressed reservation that the Attendance component was biased against women or other primary child caregivers. That is, a parent (most often the mother) cannot forego tending to an ill child and is therefore less able to meet the requirements for attendance pay.

In the Spring 2008 semester, the most frequently discussed concerns were related to PayPLUS components for Leadership and School Culture. With regard to the former, teachers and principals recognized that while many teachers were signing up to sponsor extracurricular activities, it was difficult to determine what makes for a meaningful activity and how one might hold teachers accountable to quality performance in that role.

> There is a big difference between starting and leading [extracurricular activities], between actually providing service and taking initiative. People are more eager to take leadership roles because of the pay that is part of it, not necessarily because they have a desire to better the school in that area. Which do you want!

Other interviewees in the Spring 2008 were concerned about the process of grade/department committee chair placements at their schools.

> You really can't have control over committee because you are placed on a committee, you don't head it up on your own, so you are placed there.

The PayPLUS indicators for measuring a school's culture were perceived as even more controversial by interviewees and remained a potent concern among principals interviewed in the Fall 2008. Many expressed reservations about using student satisfaction surveys to determine pay, specifically that students would either not take the survey seriously or would use it as an opportunity for teacher "pay back." As one teacher clearly explained in the Spring 2008:

> The survey, I do not like that at all. You cannot ever make the kids happy. If you are disciplining them you cannot make them happy. So I do not like that being tied to pay. It's like, 'I'll fix you. How dare you send me out of class that day.'

A principal echoed this sentiment in the Fall 2008 interviews, saying, "When you are dealing with high school students you are never going to satisfy these individuals."

Principals, and most markedly, teacher interviewees were also concerned about using discipline referral reduction as an indicator of school culture, as it might lead to purposeful under-reporting of disciplinary problems. One teacher quite candidly explained:

> I think it [school culture component] is a good thing, except for the discipline part. I think getting paid should not be determined upon a child's discipline. Children
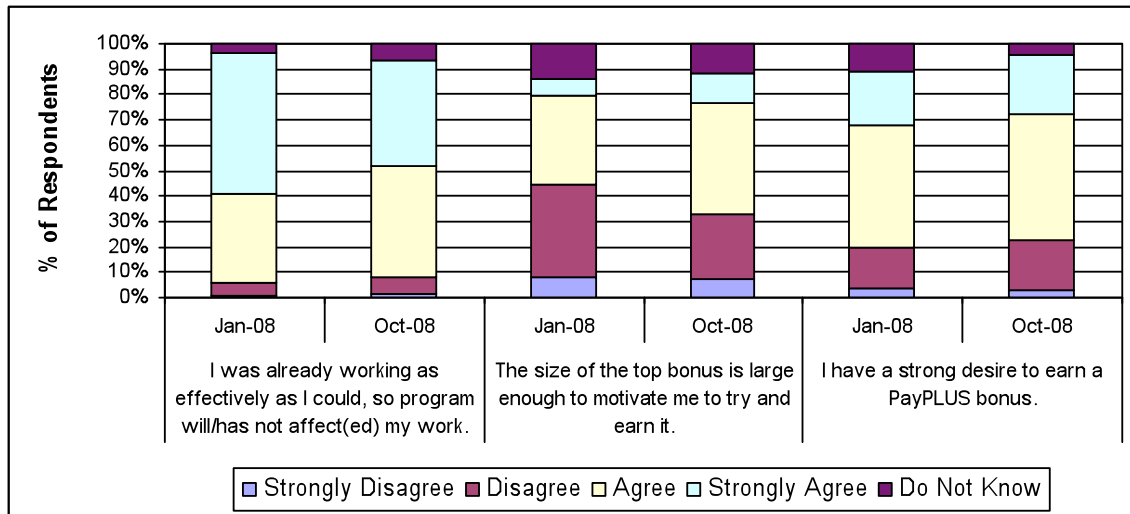
should behave and if you have to write an office referral to make them behave that it should not be, 'well, I'm not going to write that one up just so I can get some money.'

Motivational power of PayPLUS

Survey responses are mixed when it comes to the motivational power of PayPLUS, as seen in Figure 3.8. Around 70 percent of respondents in both the January 2008 and Fall 2008 survey agreed that they had a strong desire to earn a PayPLUS bonus. However, their responses to other survey items make the case for the motivational power of PayPLUS much less convincing.

- When asked if they agreed that they were already working as effectively as they could, so PayPLUS would not affect their work, 90 percent responded affirmatively in January 2008 and 86 percent responded similarly in the Fall 2008 survey.

- Less than half of respondents (41.8%) in January 2008 agreed that the size of the top bonus was large enough to motivate them, while just over 55 percent agreed with this statement by the Fall 2008 survey.

Figure 3.8: Perceptions about Motivational Power of PayPLUS, January 2008 and Fall 2008

Source: January 2008 (n=183) and Fall 2008 (n=176) surveys to BCSD school personnel

Some principal responses during Fall 2008 interviews speak to the diverging attitudes about the motivational power of PayPLUS, particular in regards to the AYP component. Some interviewees indicated that pay for making AYP inspired a change in professional practice, while others conceived it as an award for work that was already being done. The two contrasting quotes below capture these differing perceptions.
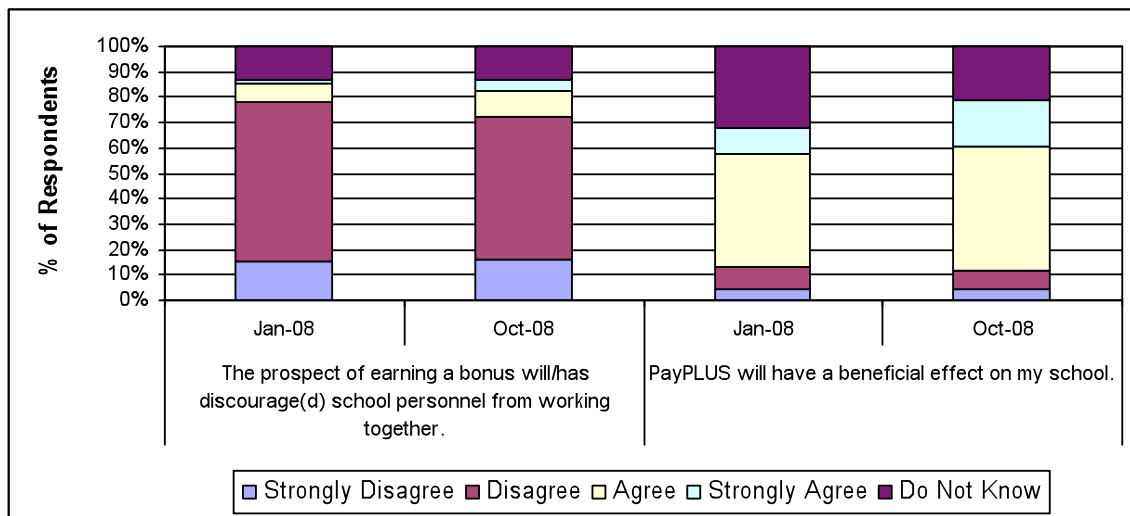
> The greatest overall improvement from PayPLUS is that teachers are making themselves that much more award – they are seeking knowledge on how we make AYP.

> I can only speak from my perspective from this school.
> We have always made tremendous effort to make AYP
> since the state began monitoring schools. It hasn't made a
> big change here, but it has in other schools. There really
> hasn't been that motivational factor here at this school.
> There is a great deal of excitement for being rewarded for
> something that is already being done – just icing on the
> cake.

Perceived impact of PayPLUS

The January and Fall 2008 surveys included two questions regarding personnel's perceptions
of PayPLUS impact in their schools. The first asked if the prospect of earning a PayPLUS
bonus had discouraged school personnel from working together, while the second asked
generally if the program will have a beneficial effect on the school. Results are provided in
Figure 3.9 below.

Figure 3.9: Perceived Impact of PayPLUS, January 2008 and Fall 2008

Source: January 2008 (n=183) and Fall 2008 (n=176) surveys to BCSD school personnel

In January, nearly 80 percent (78.4%) of respondents reported that they disagreed that the
possibility of earning a bonus would discourage personnel collaboration. Nearly 75 percent
(72.6%) did not agree in the Fall 2008 survey that the prospect of earning a bonus had
actually discouraged collaboration.

A more noticeable shift in attitude is apparent on the second survey item seen in Figure 3.9.
In January, just over half (54.7%) of BCSD respondents agreed that PayPLUS would have a
beneficial effect on their school, while 67 percent agreed with this statement in the Fall 2008
(i.e., nearly a year after PayPLUS implementation).

MAP personnel gained additional insight about the perceived impact of PayPLUS from
interviews conducted with BCSD personnel. During the first semester of program
implementation (i.e., Spring 2008), principals and teachers alike agreed that attendance was

improving and the number of teachers signing up to sponsor extracurricular activities was increasing. However, as mentioned earlier, the quality of the latter was still in question.

Most held a general sentiment that school personnel were working towards the AYP goals, but they would have been doing so already even without PayPLUS in operation. PayPLUS, in their minds, was not necessarily, or at least not solely, inciting that behavior. During the Spring 2008 semester, they did not see any marked changes to school culture, but as expressed earlier, some did fear an unintended consequence of repressing student disciplinary reporting for the sake of earning a bonus award.

In the Fall 2008 semester, some of these beliefs were confirmed by principal interviewees while others offered new insights. Most principals believed that, since the implementation of PayPLUS, teacher attendance had improved. Nearly all principals believed that the provision of extracurricular activities had improved at their schools. As one principal explained:

> Finding sponsors for extracurricular activities has been very difficult – near impossible – in the past. As a result of PayPLUS, teachers are much more willing to take on additional responsibilities.

Principals also had very positive reactions to the AYP component of PayPLUS. However, as mentioned previously, not all viewed the component as a motivating force. Some believed the potential to earn a bonus for meeting AYP criteria was motivating a change in practice at their schools, while others appreciated it for being an award or recognition for work well done already.

For those couple principals not as enthusiastic about the AYP component, they expressed concerns that teachers felt defeated when not earning a bonus and had some doubt about the fairness of the AYP criteria measurement (e.g., they suggested the use of a growth or value-added model instead). This feeling of defeat is likely exaggerated in a small district in which school personnel are much more aware of their award status compared to other personnel district-wide.

For those principal interviewees doubting any impact from PayPLUS, most attributed their feelings to an insufficient dollar amount tied to bonus awards. For example, one principal did not believe PayPLUS had impacted attendance because the "entitlement of personal and mental health days" was not outweighed by the bonus award amount tied to meeting PayPLUS attendance criteria. Most interviewees did not feel that the bonus awards tied to Leadership criteria were changing behavior either. Those teachers that were already inclined to serve as a chairperson served in leadership roles, while those lacking that inclination did not seem to change their position.

The most notable concern about the distribution of PayPLUS funds across components was the belief that while the AYP component was valuable, there were not sufficient funds tied to those bonus awards. A number of interviewees during the Fall 2008 recommended that funds be diverted to the AYP component from other program areas. Two principals voiced this concern quite well.

> Honestly, I would prefer that the program would put more money towards AYP. I wish that this would have been the main component of the program. Student achievement is our ultimate goal – it is our reason for being here so anything that we put in place should be aligned with our number one goal. If we're rewarding other activities then that is going to be our focus. It's just like writing a paragraph – everything should relate to the topic sentence.
>
> I am just afraid that the AYP dollars won't get enough attention because the money is being spread out so far that it won't have enough of an impact. If it were up to me then I would go 100% AYP.

These reservations about the amount of bonus awards and their ability to incite change were multiplied by another related concern – the uncertainty of future funding for PayPLUS. Several principals discussed the disappointment that their school personnel will experience if and when there is no longer funding for the program. As one principal commented:

> I have big concerns about what is going to happen in the district when funds from the state run out – I doubt that the district is going to be able to afford the program. I believe there will be a range of detrimental effects on the districts, particularly on the extracurricular activities offered by each school site.

Finally, some principals mentioned the positive and indirect consequences of PayPLUS for BCSD. Namely, that the implementation of PayPLUS had given principals a useful tool for the recruitment and retention of desirable teachers.

> When you have conversations with principals and teachers from other districts the response is overwhelming. It is seen as something that Butler County can bring to the table. Nine out of ten times we are interviewing a teacher they are also interviewing with surrounding counties. The additional interest allows us to negotiate with teachers instead of simply settling – and I feel good about that.

Taken together, findings about perceptions of the fairness, efficacy, motivational power, and impact of PayPLUS are somewhat contradictory. Most BCSD personnel believed the program was fair during the first year of its implementation, but did not believe it was efficacious in its ability to identify highly effective employees or recognize important aspects of professional practice. Additionally, the majority of school personnel wanted to earn a PayPLUS bonus, but there were significant doubts that the dollar award was large enough to motivate change. Yet, survey and interview findings alike seem to confirm that there was little perception that PayPLUS was having a negative impact on BCSD schools, and a large share believed the program would have a beneficial impact.

Overall, it is probable that school personnel appreciated the broad scope of employees eligible for PayPLUS bonus awards and the opportunity to earn some dollar amount over

and beyond their base salary. However, if the intent of PayPLUS is to incite a noticeable change in professional practice, the existing evidence is less certain.

Employee Behavior and Instructional Practice

In an effort to address some of the uncertainty about PayPLUS impact on professional practice, MAP personnel used a late-Spring 2008 survey to ask teachers about their behavior, and specifically (1) the use of assessment data, (2) changes in their instructional practice, (3) changes in their students' learning activities, and (4) changes in the amount of attention they devote to students at various performance levels.

Table 3.10 provides an overview of the ways in which BCSD teachers reported using assessment data. Nearly 80 percent or more of teachers consistently indicated that they use assessment data for a number of instructional purposes, such as differentiating instruction for individual student needs, establishing learning goals for individual students, and identifying areas in which they personally need to strengthen content knowledge or teaching skills.

Table 3.10: Use of Assessment Data, Spring 2008

Survey Item	Never or Almost Never	Occasionally	Frequently	Always or Almost Always
Identify students in need of remedial assistance	0.8%	14.7%	38.8%	45.7%
Establish learning goals for individual students	3.1%	11.6%	43.4%	41.9%
Differentiate instruction for individual student needs	0.8%	12.4%	46.5%	40.3%
Make appropriate recommendations for tutoring or additional educational services	3.9%	18.6%	46.5%	31.0%
Make appropriate groupings of students	2.4%	15.0%	41.7%	40.9%
Identify potential gaps in the curriculum for particular students	2.3%	18.8%	45.3%	33.6%
Encourage parent involvement in student learning	1.6%	14.1%	43.8%	40.6%
Identify areas requiring strengthening of content knowledge or teaching skills	0.8%	16.1%	41.9%	41.1%
Determine areas where I need professional development	3.2%	17.6%	48.8%	30.4%

Source: Spring 2008 (n=145) survey to BCSD teachers only

We also asked teachers the extent to which they had changed their instructional practice during the 2007-08 school year compared to the previous 2006-07 school year. Table 3.11 reveals that at least half of teachers – and sometimes more – reported the use of desirable instructional practices at least a little more than in the previous school year. Most others

indicated using the practices with the same frequency. Two exceptions are evident. Roughly half of teachers reviewed student test results with other teachers and tutored students outside of class time the same amount as last year.

Table 3.11: Change in Instructional Practice, Spring 2008

Survey Item	Much less than last year	A little less than last year	The same as last year	A little more than last year	Much more than last year
Aligning instruction with standards	3.7%	3.7%	25.9%	32.4%	34.3%
Spending energies focusing on classroom content covered by standardized achievement tests	0.9%	1.9%	38.0%	31.5%	27.8%
Administering benchmark assessments or quizzes	0.0%	0.9%	32.4%	38.0%	28.7%
Re-teaching topics or skills based on students' performance on classroom tests	1.9%	3.7%	31.5%	42.6%	20.4%
Reviewing student test results with other teachers	1.9%	5.7%	49.1%	30.2%	13.2%
Seeking help from or providing help to other teachers	0.0%	1.9%	39.3%	38.3%	20.6%
Attending district- or school-sponsored professional development workshops	1.9%	5.6%	39.3%	32.7%	20.6%
Tutoring individuals or small groups of students outside of class time	7.6%	3.8%	52.4%	21.0%	15.2%

Source: Spring 2008 (n=145) survey to BCSD teachers only

Table 3.12 shows that more than half of teachers reported that students engage in various learning activities at least a little more than in the 2006-07 school year.

Table 3.12: Change in Students' Learning Activities, Spring 2008

Survey Item	Much less than last year	A little less than last year	The same as last year	A little more than last year	Much more than last year
Engaging in hands-on learning activities (e.g., working with manipulative aids)	1.8%	1.8%	33.6%	43.6%	19.1%
Working in groups	0.9%	0.9%	33.6%	39.1%	25.5%
Completing assignments at home (i.e., homework)	0.0%	9.2%	52.3%	27.5%	11.0%
Receiving direct instruction	0.0%	0.9%	42.6%	36.1%	20.4%
Engaging in inquiry-based learning (i.e., students seek out and construct knowledge for themselves)	0.0%	2.8%	40.2%	36.4%	20.6%

Source: Spring 2008 (n=145) survey to BCSD teachers only

Finally, MAP asked teachers if they had changed their focus on students performing at various levels of achievement during the 2007-08 school year compared to the previous year. Table 3.13 reveals differences in teacher responses depending upon the performance level of their students. For example, roughly 90 percent focused more effort on students at moderately low (89.9%) or very low levels (85.8%) of achievement at least frequently if not always or almost always. Fewer teachers, 56 percent, reported focusing more effort on students at high levels of achievement to the same degree.

Table 3.13: Change in Focus on Students Performing at Various Achievement Levels, Spring 2008

Survey Item	Never or Almost Never	Occasionally	Frequently	Always or Almost Always
Same effort on students at all performance levels	2.7%	22.7%	42.7%	31.8%
More effort on students at high levels of achievement	9.3%	35.2%	39.8%	15.7%
More effort on students at average levels of achievement	5.6%	24.3%	47.7%	22.4%
More effort on students at moderately low levels of achievement	2.8%	7.3%	45.9%	44.0%
More effort on students at very low levels of achievement	3.8%	10.4%	37.7%	48.1%

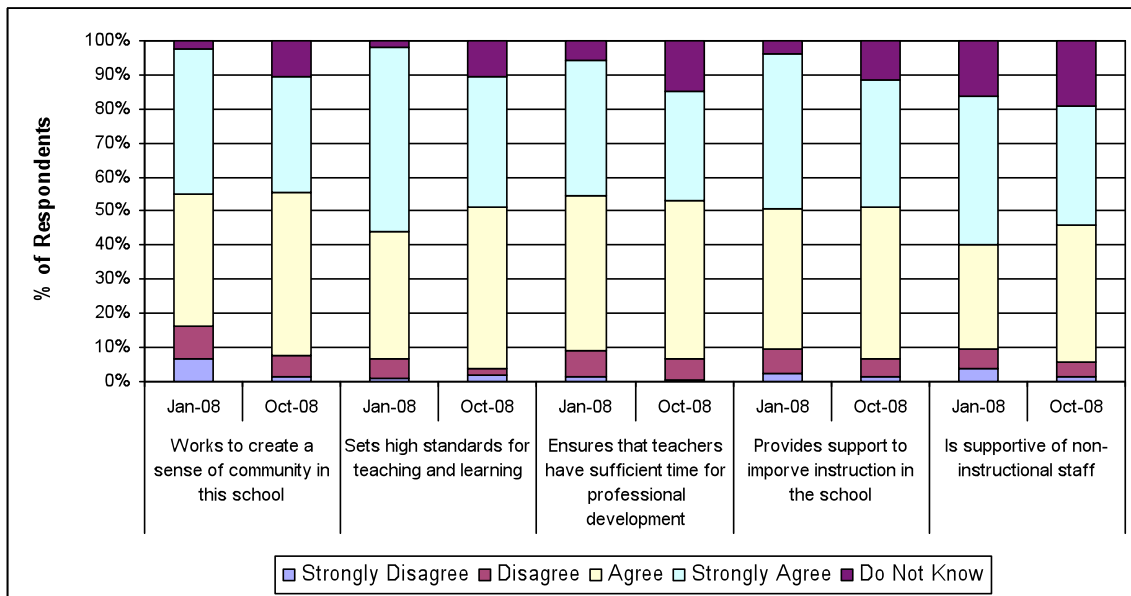*Source:* Spring 2008 (n=145) survey to BCSD teachers only

School Climate and Organizational Dynamics

Principal and teacher interviews revealed some uncertainty about the impact of PayPLUS on school culture. While the program has not been in operation long enough to determine its direct impact on school culture, MAP personnel did use results from school personnel and student satisfaction surveys to gauge ways in which school culture indicators have changed during the first year of PayPLUS implementation. This section addresses school personnel's perceptions of principal leadership, teacher interactions, and personal satisfaction. It closes with an overview of select student responses on satisfaction surveys, as well.

Perceptions of principal leadership

In January 2008 and again in the Fall 2008, BCSD school personnel were asked about the nature of principal leadership at their school and specifically the degree to which they agreed that he/she exhibits indicators of instructional leadership. Figure 3.10 reveals a general tendency that Fall 2008 responses include slightly fewer personnel disagreeing with positive statements of principal leadership and more with uncertainties about principal characteristics; the latter which could be attributed to respondents answering these questions at the start of a new school year (i.e., there has not been enough time for new personnel to get acquainted with a principal or for veteran personnel to get acquainted with a new principal). At all points in time and for all items, however, the majority of respondents agreed that their principals display characteristics of being an instructional leader.

Figure 3.10: Perceptions of Principal Leadership, January 2008 and Fall 2008

Source: January 2008 (n=183) and Fall 2008 (n=176) surveys to BCSD school personnel

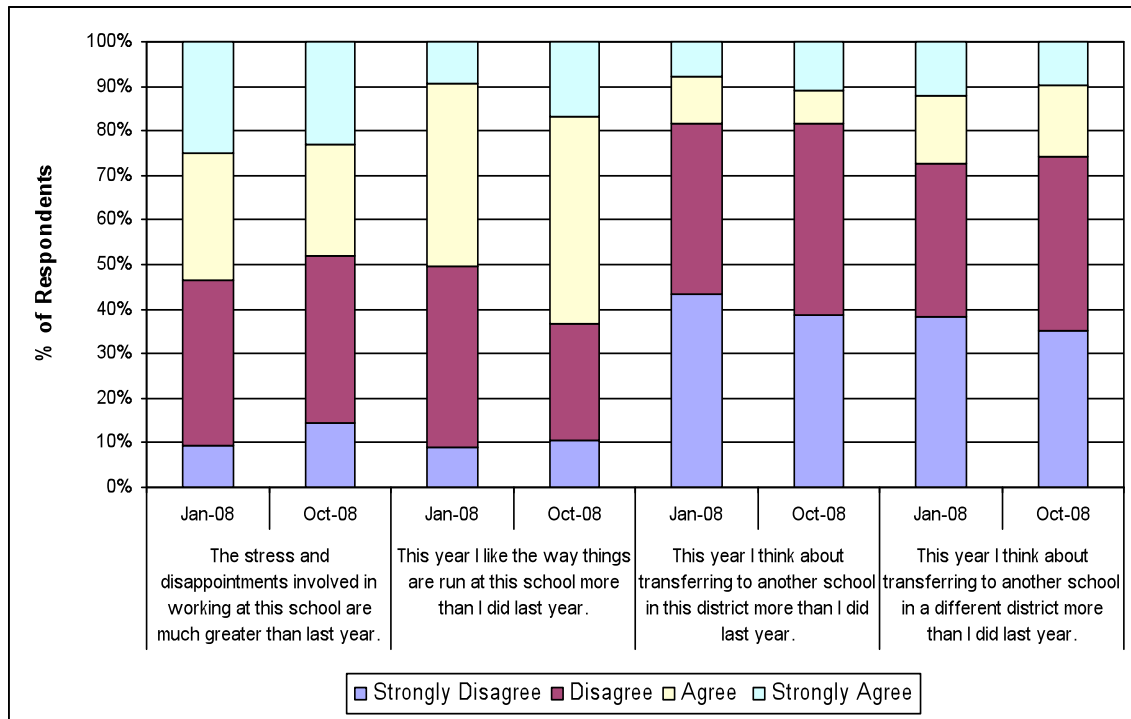### *Perceptions of teacher interactions*

Responses to questions about teacher interactions are somewhat similar to those reported about principal leadership. Most responses revealed positive perceptions of teacher interactions, and there was a general tendency for school personnel to report less

disagreement with positive statements about teacher interactions in the Fall 2008 than they did in January 20008 (see Figure 3.11 in Appendix B). For example, fewer respondents disagreed that teachers felt responsible to help each other do their best or that teachers can be counted on to help out anywhere or anytime. One exception is that fewer personnel disagreed that teachers are more competitive than cooperative. The primary explanation for these shifts seems to be the increase in respondents reporting that they did not know how to characterize teacher interactions. Perhaps this can again be attributed to respondents being asked these questions at the start of a new school year.

Personnel satisfaction working in BCSD

Finally, MAP personnel asked BCSD personnel about their personal satisfaction working in their current position in both January 2008 and Fall 2008. Results in Figure 3.12 suggest that in the Fall 2008 semester slightly more school personnel agreed that they like the way things are run at the school more this school year than last, and slightly less agreed that the stress and disappointments involved in working at their school are much greater. School personnel responded similarly at both points in time about transfer decisions, with the vast majority disagreeing that they think about transferring to another school in their district or in a different district. Interestingly, more respondents consistently agreed that they would transfer outside the district than they would transfer within BCSD, which is somewhat surprising given principals' earlier perceptions that PayPLUS was serving as a useful recruitment and retention tool.

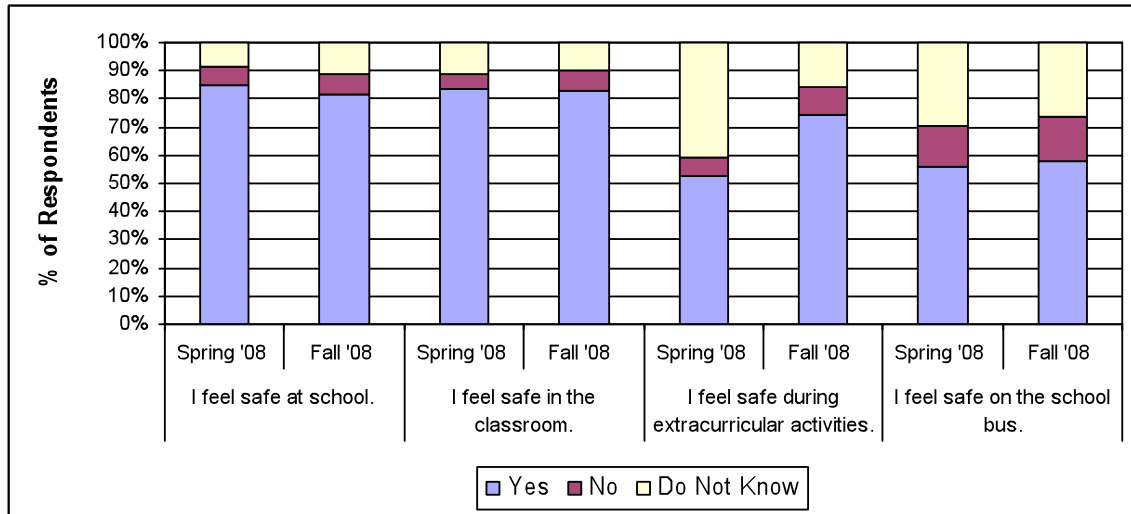**Figure 3.12: Personnel Satisfaction Working in BCSD, January 2008 and Fall 2008**

Source: January 2008 (n=183) and Fall 2008 (n=176) surveys to BCSD school personnel

Students' feelings of safety

Elementary and secondary students in BCSD participated in two surveys during the first year of PayPLUS implementation, the first during the Spring 2008 semester and the other in the Fall 2008 semester. These surveys inquired about students' feelings of safety in school, their perceptions of student peers and teachers, and their overall satisfaction with their school. Elementary and secondary students received different surveys adjusted for age-appropriate language, but they all addressed these similar concepts.

During the Spring and Fall 2008 semesters, the majority of elementary and secondary students reported feeling safe at school, in the classroom, during extracurricular activities, and on the school bus. Figures 3.13a and 3.13b reveal responses for elementary and secondary students, respectively. Reports of feeling safety are similar at both points in time, with one noticeable change – the percent of elementary students reporting that they feel safe during extracurricular activities increased by more than 20 percentage points (from 52.3% to 74.5% reporting "yes").

**Figure 3.13a: Feeling Safe at School, Elementary Students
Spring 2008 and Fall 2008**

Source: Spring 2008 (n=1,133) and Fall 2008 (n=1,176) surveys to BCSD elementary students
Note: Positive responses to survey items are marked at the bottom of each bar.

**Figure 3.13b: Feeling Safe at School, Secondary Students
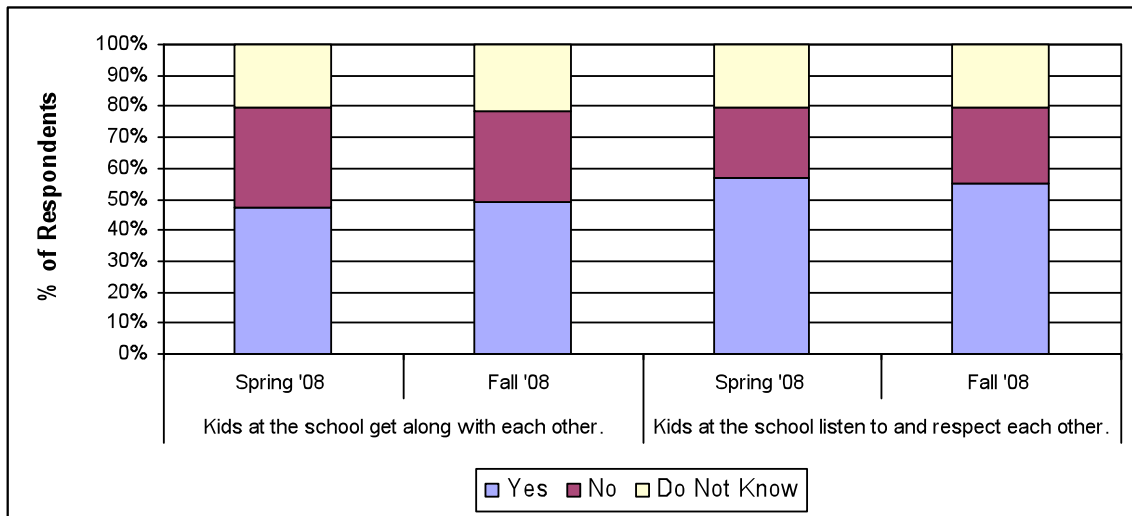Spring 2008 and Fall 2008**

Source: Spring 2008 (n=1,849) and Fall 2008 (n=1,688) surveys to BCSD secondary students

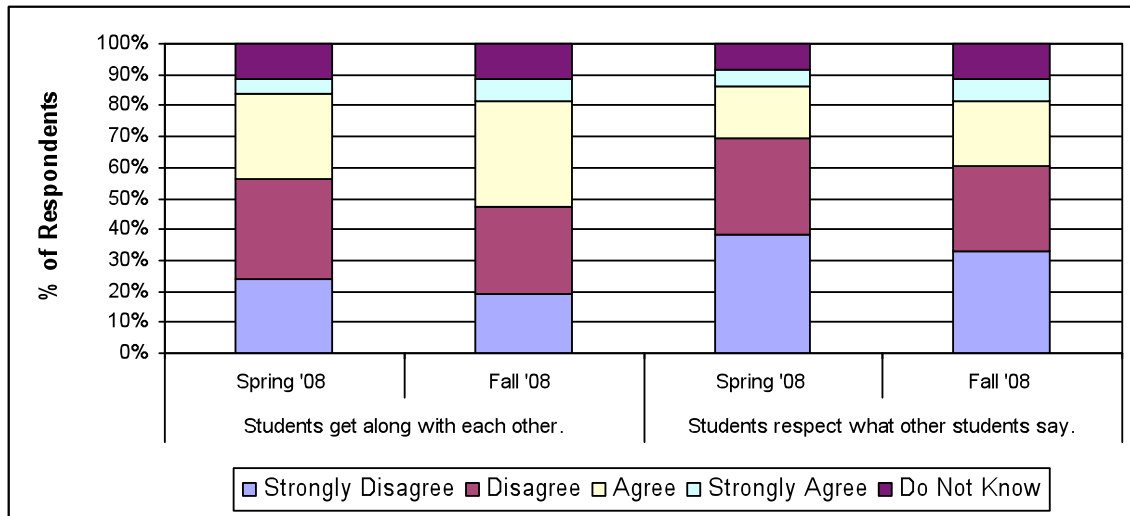### *Students' perceptions of student peers*

Student surveys also asked about students' perceptions of their interactions with peers, specifically if kids at the school get along with each other and if they listen to and respect one another. Figure 3.14a reveals that approximately half – sometimes more – of elementary students agreed with these statements. However, secondary students (see Figure 3.14b) perceived student peer interactions less positively. In both Spring and Fall 2008, over 60 percent disagreed that students respect what others say. And, over half of secondary students disagreed that students get along with one another in the Spring 2008; slightly less than 50 percent (47.0%) disagreed in the Fall 2008 survey.

**Figure 3.14a: Perceptions of Student Peers, Elementary Students
Spring 2008 and Fall 2008**

Source: Spring 2008 (n=1,133) and Fall 2008 (n=1,176) surveys to BCSD elementary students

Figure 3.14b: Perceptions of Student Peers, Secondary Students
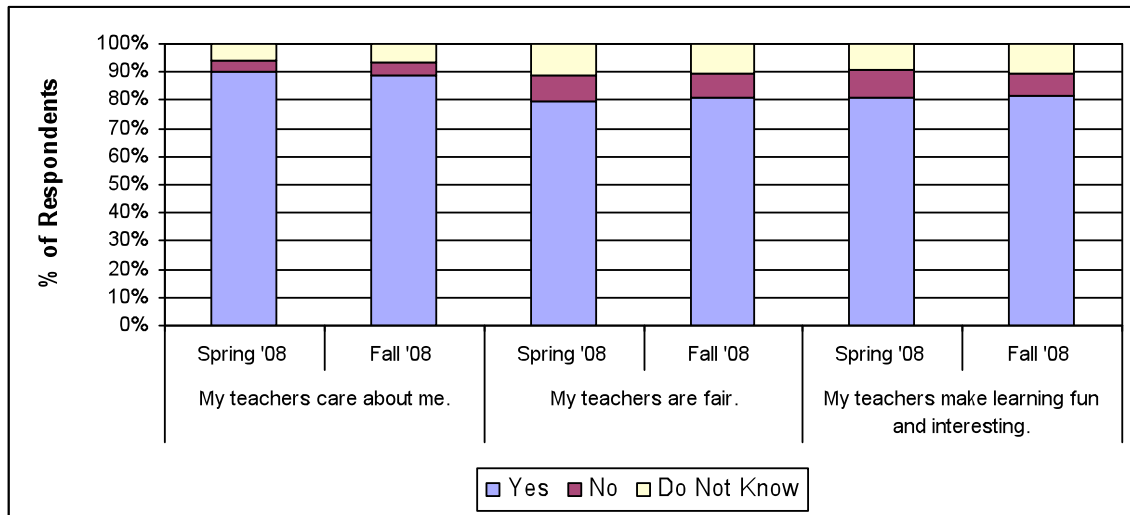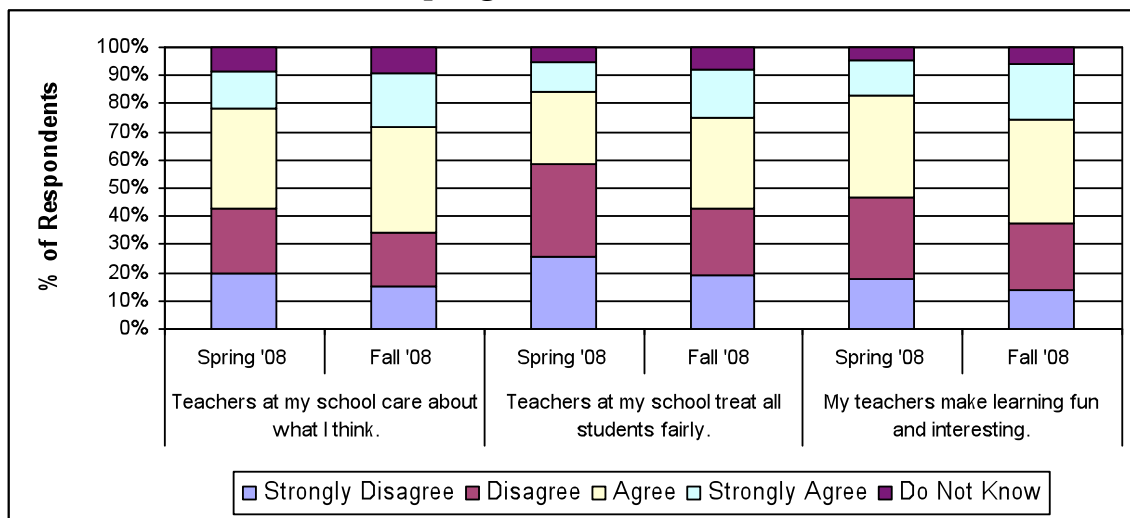**Spring 2008 and Fall 2008**

Students' perceptions of teachers

Consistently 80 percent or more of elementary students responded positively to questions about their teachers, specifically that teachers care about them, are fair, and make learning fun and interesting. These responses were similar in both the Spring and Fall 2008 surveys (see Figure 3.15a). While secondary students' responses were not as resoundingly favorable towards teachers, usually at least half of them responded positively to these items as well. Additionally, fewer secondary students indicated negative sentiments about teachers in the Fall 2008 than in the Spring 2008 survey. Most noticeably, 59 percent disagreed that teachers treat all students fairly in the Spring 2008 survey, while 43 percent disagreed with that statement in the subsequent Fall semester (see Figure 3.15b).

**Figure 3.15a: Perceptions of Teachers, Elementary Students
Spring 2008 and Fall 2008**

Source: Spring 2008 (n=1,133) and Fall 2008 (n=1,176) surveys to BCSD elementary students

**Figure 3.15b: Perceptions of Teachers, Secondary Students
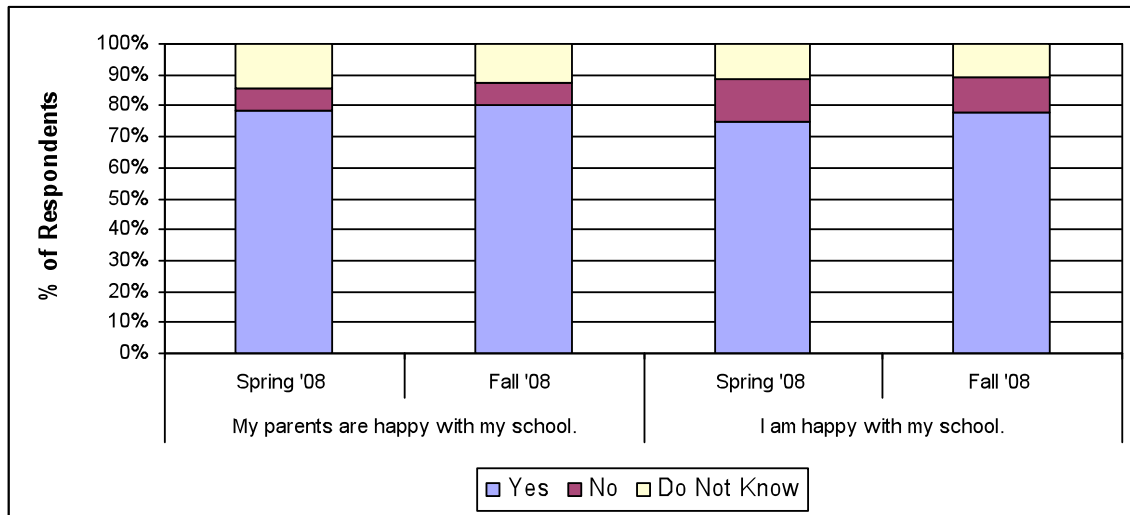Spring 2008 and Fall 2008**

Source: Spring 2008 (n=1,849) and Fall 2008 (n=1,688) surveys to BCSD secondary students
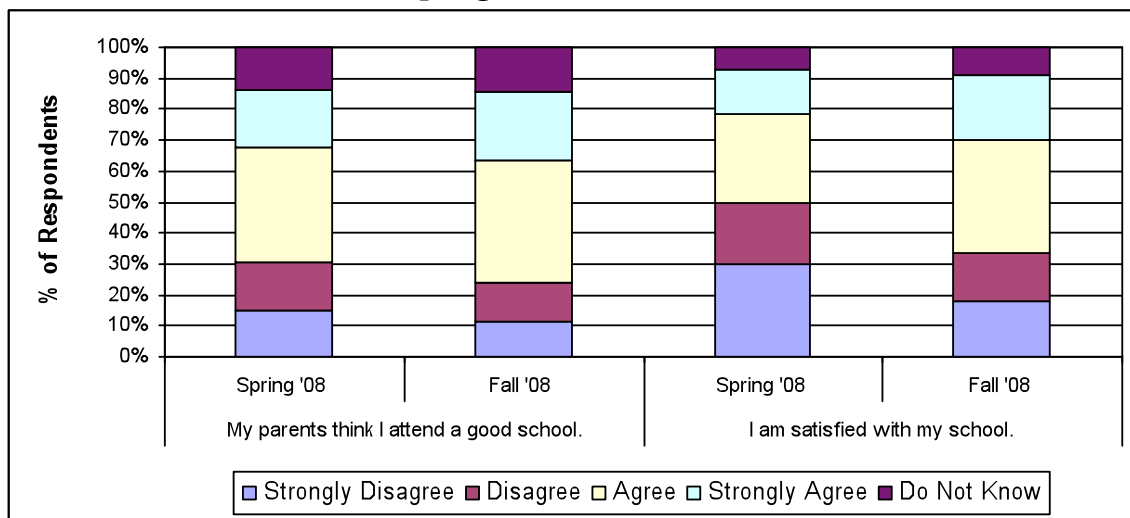
Student satisfaction with school

Finally, student surveys asked students about their overall satisfaction at school and the satisfaction of their parents (see Figures 3.16a and 3.16b). Over 70 percent of elementary students consistently reported that they and their parents were satisfied with their schools. Over half of secondary students also responded positively to survey items about satisfaction with their schools, with one exception. Only 43 percent agreed that they were satisfied with their school in Spring 2008, but that percentage jumped to 58 percent by the fall 2008 semester.

**Figure 3.16a: Overall Satisfaction with School, Elementary Students
Spring 2008 and Fall 2008**

Source: Spring 2008 (n=1,133) and Fall 2008 (n=1,176) surveys to BCSD elementary students

**Figure 3.16b: Overall Satisfaction with School, Secondary Students
Spring 2008 and Fall 2008**

Source: Spring 2008 (n=1,849) and Fall 2008 (n=1,688) surveys to BCSD secondary students

Chapter Summary

Overall, it appears that during the first year of PayPLUS implementation, school personnel in BCSD believed that performance pay policy is a worthwhile endeavor, but still held mixed attitudes about PayPLUS specifically. The vast majority of personnel found PayPLUS appealing enough to opt into the program. Most BCSD personnel believed PayPLUS was fair, but did not believe it was efficacious in its ability to identify highly effective employees or recognize important aspects of professional practice. Additionally, the majority of school personnel wanted to earn a PayPLUS bonus, but there were significant doubts that the dollar

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award was large enough to motivate change. Most uncertainties about the program resided with two of the four PayPLUS components, i.e., those related to Leadership and School Culture. Yet, survey and interview findings alike seem to confirm that there was little belief that PayPLUS was having a negative impact on BCSD schools, and a large share believed it would have a beneficial impact.

Survey responses also reveal school personnel's perceptions about their own professional practice, personal satisfaction, and the climate within their schools. While these responses cannot be directly attributed to PayPLUS, they do provide insight about the ways in which professional behavior, satisfaction, and school climate have been perceived during the first year of PayPLUS implementation. Overall, most personnel continued to use desirable instructional practices, perceived their principals as strong instructional leaders, believed in positive interactions among teachers, and were generally satisfied with their schools. There is also some evidence that these positive perceptions of school climate increased slightly between the Spring and Fall 2008 semesters. Finally, student survey results reveal generally positive findings about school culture, especially among elementary students. Responses of secondary students were mixed, with a greater tendency to perceive less positive interactions among peers and with teachers.

CHAPTER 4
CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This chapter addresses the primary strengths and areas for improvement of PayPLUS, as identified by school personnel in survey and interview responses. It specifically examines (1) the implementation process, (2) employee understanding of the program, (3) employee belief in the program's fairness and efficacy, (4) the motivational power of PayPLUS, and (5) its possible impact on professional practice and other school outcomes.

Primary Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Implementation of PayPLUS

The analysis of survey and interview data illustrates that, for the most part, BCSD employed an effective approach to design and implement PayPLUS. By involving a broad representation of school personnel with the plan's development, the district gained employee input and buy-in. Both survey and interview responses reveal that school personnel felt well represented and involved in the development of the program. The PayPLUS committee provided them the opportunity to have a voice in the development process. Additionally, both teachers and principals agreed that the program's design was well thought out and that the district provided useful informational resources for school personnel to think through the objectives and guidelines of the program. The two primary concerns that did arise were that (1) PayPLUS was rushed in its January 2008 roll-out, i.e., beginning mid-school year made some program components difficult to implement, and (2) the future of PayPLUS is unknown given the uncertainty of continued funding.

Decisions to participate in PayPLUS

The nature of PayPLUS guidelines played an important role in school personnel's decisions to participate in the program. The majority of enrolled teachers, principals, and other personnel agreed that they were encouraged by the fact that all full-time school personnel were eligible to participate in PayPLUS. This provides some support for earlier suppositions about why respondents might have believed in the program's fairness even if they felt that PayPLUS was not yet entirely efficacious in identifying or inciting professional practice related to program goals. Personnel also reported that the voluntary nature of PayPLUS encouraged them to enroll.

Understanding of PayPLUS

The BCSD central office used a variety of strategies to develop school personnel's understanding of PayPLUS. This began with the interaction of committee members with school personnel, reached its highest point with the plan's official roll-out in January 2008, and was continued in an ongoing fashion through informational sessions by central office personnel, principal announcements, and district-wide newsletters. According to Spring and Fall 2008 survey results, the majority of school personnel understood (1) the criteria needed

to achieve a PayPLUS bonus, (2) what PayPLUS measures, and (3) how PayPLUS rewards are determined. Interview responses revealed a more nuanced reaction, however, as there was widespread understanding of the requirements for AYP and Attendance criteria, but lingering uncertainty about expectations for the other two program components related to Leadership and School Culture.

Fairness and efficacy of PayPLUS

In the process of developing a performance pay plan, the PayPLUS committee worked to develop a program that would be fair and equitable to each of the individuals eligible to participate. Overall, both survey and interview results reveal that BCSD employees believed PayPLUS was equitable in terms of the breadth of school personnel eligible to receive payment. However, further examination of survey and interview responses indicate that school personnel were less confident that the program could effectively identify high quality professional practice or incite behavior to attain all the established goals of PayPLUS. Several principals specifically attributed the lack of motivational power to the insufficient dollar amount associated with PayPLUS bonus awards.

Perceived impact of PayPLUS

The majority of teachers, principals, and other personnel reported that PayPLUS could have a beneficial effect at their school. Additionally, there was no widespread evidence that they believed the program would deteriorate the collaborative culture of schools. When asked about outcomes related to each of the four PayPLUS components, personnel had mixed reactions. For example, interviewees reported an increase in extracurricular offerings and participation at each school, while many also noted better attendance among personnel. Principals felt very positively about the AYP component, with some even attributing it to improvements in professional practice among their staffs. However, other interviewees acknowledged that there was no strong evidence that the program was motivating more leadership among teachers and many were doubtful that it could truly impact school culture (at least as measured by student satisfaction surveys). Several principals went as far as to recommend that program funds associated with Leadership and School Culture components be redirected to supplement bonus awards for meeting AYP criteria.

Professional practice and school climate

During the first year of PayPLUS implementation, teachers in BCSD reported the frequent use of desirable instructional practices and an overall increase in the use of these practices as well. Additionally, most indicators of school climate were favorable. Most school personnel believed their principals displayed traits of instructional leadership, and the majority viewed teacher interactions favorably. When asked about their personal satisfaction working in BCSD, most responded positively; however, consistently more employees indicated that they thought about transferring out of the district than they did transferring within the district (which is surprising given interviewees' perceptions that PayPLUS had provided a useful tool for recruiting and retaining teachers in BCSD).

Student survey results revealed that the majority of both elementary and secondary students felt safe at school, and elementary students consistently reported positive views of

interactions with their peers and teachers. Secondary students, however, had less favorable views of such interactions, but there was some evidence of improvements over the first year of PayPLUS implementation. More secondary students agreed that teachers treat students fairly and more reported feeling satisfied with their schools in the Fall 2008 than in the Spring 2008 semester.

Policy Implications for BCSD

The one-year evaluation of PayPLUS provides an overview of the experiences of school personnel and students during the first year of program implementation. While further years of evaluation would allow for more advanced evaluation of program outcomes, such as its impact on the quality of teaching and teachers in schools and student achievement gains, these findings do offer significant information about personnel attitudes towards the program and evidence about school climate indicators. Many of these findings should be understood as emanating from a program that has a pre-determined and relatively short-lived funding guarantee, which has a likely impact on the level of employees' motivation to change in response to bonus awards. That is, school personnel may not exert the time or effort to significantly or purposefully change their practice to meet PayPLUS criteria if the promise of a bonus award is not guaranteed for any significant duration of time.

If the program does continue in future years, further evaluation activities should examine program outcomes related to the quality of teaching and student learning in schools. Whether or not that is possible, policymakers should still carefully consider the findings presented in this report to better understand how the nature of program design and implementation influences the attitudes and experiences of school personnel and students.

APPENDIX A

BCSD Survey Respondent Characteristics

January 2008 and Fall 2008 BCSD School Personnel Survey Respondents

Table 1: Respondents' Overall Years of Experience, January 2008 and Fall 2008

Overall Years of Experience	January 08	Fall 08
Missing	30% (54)	23% (41)
1 to 3 years	14 % (25)	10% (18)
4 to 9 years	15% (27)	22% (39)
10 to 14 years	9% (17)	18% (32)
15 to 19 years	10% (19)	7% (13)
20 or more years	23% (42)	19% (33)

Source: January 2008 (n=183) and Fall 2008 (n=176) surveys to BCSD school personnel

Table 2: Respondents' Level of Education, January 2008 and Fall 2008

Highest Degree	January 08	Fall 08
Missing	21 % (38)	18% (31)
GED or equivalent	0% (0)	0% (0)
High School degree	0% (0)	0% (0)
Associate's degree	2% (4)	1% (1)
Bachelor's degree	38% (68)	33% (58)
Master's degree	33% (60)	36% (64)
Master's + degree	6% (12)	11% (20)
Doctorate/Professional degree	1% (3)	1% (2)
Other	0% (0)	0% (0)

Source: January 2008 (n=183) and Fall 2008 (n=176) surveys to BCSD school personnel

Table 3: Respondents' Annual Salary, January 2008 and Fall 2008

Annual Salary	January 08	Fall 08
Missing	33% (60)	27% (37)
Less than $20,000	0% (0)	1% (1)
$20,000 to $29,999	1% (1)	1%(1)
$30,000 to $39,999	24% (44)	26% (46)
$40,000 to $49,999	30%(54)	31% (55)
$50,000 to $59,999	11%(20)	21% (29)
$60,000 to $69,999	2% (4)	216% (3)
$70,000 or more	0% (0)	2% (4)

Source: January 2008 (n=183) and Fall 2008 (n=176) surveys to BCSD school personnel

Table 4: Other Respondent Characteristics, January 2008 and Fall 2008

Response Category	January 08	Fall 08
Male	14% (22)	20% (80)
Tenured	52% (80)	71% (103)
Union member	73% (113)	91% (128)
High-stakes assignment	63% (97)	68% (98)

Source: January 2008 (n=183) and Fall 2008 (n=176) surveys to BCSD school personnel

April 2008 BCSD Teacher Survey Respondents

Table 5: Teachers' Overall Years of Experience, April 2008

Overall Years of Experience	Number of Teachers	Percent of Teachers
Missing	9	6%
1 to 3 years	17	12%
4 to 9 years	28	19%
10 to 14 years	30	21%
15 to 19 years	40	28%
20 or more years	21	14%

Source: Spring 2008 (n=145) survey to BCSD teachers only

Table 6: Teachers' Level of Education, April 2008

Highest Degree	Number of Teachers	Percent of Teachers
Missing	31	21%
GED or equivalent	0	0%
High School degree	0	0%
Associate's degree	0	0%
Bachelor's degree	53	46%
Master's degree	48	32%
Master's + degree	12	8%
Doctorate/Professional degree	1	1%
Other	0	0%

Source: Spring 2008 (n=145) survey to BCSD teachers only

Table 7: Teachers' Annual Salary, April 2008

Annual Salary	Number of Teachers	Percent of Teachers
Missing/Undefined	33	23%
Less than $20,000	1	1%
$20,000 to $29,999	3	2%
$30,000 to $39,999	38	26%
$40,000 to $49,999	56	39%
$50,000 to $59,999	13	13%
$60,000 to $69,999	1	9%
$70,000 or more	0	0%

Source: Spring 2008 (n=145) survey to BCSD teachers only

Table 8: Other Teacher Characteristics, April 2008

Response Category	Number of Teachers	Percent of Teachers
Male	15	10%
Tenured	84	72%
Union member	105	91%
High-stakes assignment	95	82%

Source: Spring 2008 (n=145) survey to BCSD teachers only

Figure 3.11: Perceptions of Teacher Interactions, January 2008 and Fall 2008

Source: January 2008 (n=183) and Fall 2008 (n=176) surveys to BCSD school personnel

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