

Partnership for Innovation in Compensation for Charter Schools (PICCS)

Center for Educational Innovation Public Education Association

The Center for Educational Innovation-Public Education Association in partnership with 10 New York City public charter schools will develop the Partnership for Innovation in Compensation for Charter Schools (PICCS) to retain, develop, and reward educators. Public charters generally face critical educator turnover levels. Further, all 10 of these charters serve high-need students who are at risk because of poverty or learning disabilities. The PICCS schools are led by experienced and talented educators who support the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) program and goals. The PICCS will potentially affect 280 teachers, 70 teacher's aides, 17 school leaders, and 4,233 students.

Needs Assessment Results and General Information

At the median, 81 percent of the student population of the 10 charter schools are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. These schools have a low mean retention rate (69 percent); low pay is a commonly noted reason why teachers leave. The teaching population is also young: only 5 percent of teachers have more than 10 years' experience, while 33 percent have 2 or fewer years of teaching experience.

Background

None of the PICCS schools has incentive plans in place nor do any have robust data management systems. All of the participating schools have educator evaluation programs, but these are generally in need of improvement. PICCS will establish a performance-based compensation system appropriate to the needs of each particular school.

Active participation and "buy-in" of educators and other stakeholders is being treated as key to the success

of the project. Incentives will be tied to a teacher evaluation process that incorporates multiple measures that include individual-, classroom-, and school-level value-added achievement targets, allowing partner schools to customize their differentiated compensation strategy. The basic program framework comprises four components: (1) improvements in classroom- and student-level achievement, (2) school-wide improvements, (3) completion and presentation of peer-reviewed, 'suitable for replication' learning experiences, and (4) increased leadership responsibilities.

Incentives

PICCS is built on effective evaluation, professional development, and data-driven decisionmaking; all three make up the building blocks of the compensation system. Principals and instructional administrators will be able to earn up to \$7,000 if they, or their schools, meet or exceed achievement targets. They can also make a maximum of \$1,000 for meeting leadership-related benchmarks. Teachers will be able to make up to \$5,000 if they and/or their schools meet or exceed

LOCATION(S)	New York, New York
GRANT AMOUNT	Year 1: \$1,647,819 5-year total: \$10,089,999
DURATION	5 years
PARTNERS	None

achievement targets and up to \$1,000 based on additional leadership. Paraprofessionals (instructional) can make up to \$2,000, based on meeting school-wide targets. Incentives will also be available for teachers in non-tested subjects.

Evaluation

The rigorous evaluation process requires teachers to develop specific, data-driven, achievement targets for each student and classroom. Principals have similar school-level requirements. Educators are required to outline their strategy for achieving targets that have been demonstrated to be challenging and aligned with standards. PICCS has layered this evaluation process into three components: individual achievement plans, classroom achievement plans, and school-wide achievement plans. Replicable “learning experiences” will be rigorously peer reviewed.

The PICCS data-driven educator evaluation process is being designed by an advisory team comprised of representatives from the 10 charter schools and advisors in the areas of evaluation design, peer review protocols, data management and assessment. Central to the design will be the use of data to set value-added achievement targets. Educators will hold regular progress reviews to assess steps towards meeting achievement targets and identify appropriate professional development to assist them in meeting their targets.

Resources

The PICCS system will be sustained following the grant period through participating charter schools’ financial commitments. PICCS is designed to expand as the capacity of each school increases to support long-term operation of the system.

Data Systems

None of the participating charter schools has a robust data system. A primary focus in the first year is the establishment of a data management system that includes data warehousing, analysis, and user friendly presentation tools. Educators will be trained in the use of the data system to establish achievement targets and monitor their progress towards meeting those targets. The data management system will include predictive modeling software to help educators establish realistic achievement goals.

Year 1 Activities

During Year 1, the PICCS project encouraged facilitative leadership within each of the 10 participating schools and full participation of all stakeholders in grant-wide decision-making. A network of representative advisory teams was created to facilitate stakeholder involvement in developing decisions that affected the participants. Progress in our development year includes:

- Design and implementation of the “my PICCS” portal, a professional networking and collaboration website, along with the roll-out of related school intranets;
- Election Day (11/6/07) PICCS Conference, which was attended by more than 180 teachers, administrators, and school leaders;
- Professional development in research-based teacher evaluation systems based on the work of Charlotte Danielson;
- Implementation of the PICCS Peer Review Process in each of the 10 PICCS schools and the production of a peer review video;
- Update of school-wide plans in each of the schools; and
- Customized professional development, including differentiated instruction and understanding by design in each of the 10 schools.

