

INDIANA EDUCATOR EVALUATION: SHORT TERM CHALLENGES, LONG TERM RESILIENCY

A RESEARCH PAPER

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF ARTS

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MUNCIE, INDIANA

JULY 2013

Indiana educator evaluation: Short term challenges, long term resiliency**Introduction**

For far too long, definitions of high-quality teaching have been local, variable, and superficial—and often focused heavily on matters other than instruction itself. District evaluation criteria often list dozens of elements, yet only a handful of those elements cover classroom work with students. And many of those lean heavily on superficial aspects of teaching quality, such as whether the teacher recorded the lesson objective on the board or asked three open-ended questions... Reforming the evaluation system will bring about the greatest success not through carrots and sticks but through resources to help teachers improve their craft. (Stokes, K., 2011)

It has been a long time coming. Whispers about an evaluation system that will directly affect the amount of money teachers bring home every other week. A system that some professionals fear is not ready to be utilized in the capacity it is designed for, determine professional competency and career worth. It is a system that has teachers, administrators and superintendents concerned about the future of their own jobs and those of their colleagues (faculty and staff). This main question emerges, "Are Indiana teaching professionals ready for a change in how they are evaluated as educators?"

The 2011 Education Agenda put students first by focusing on the individuals who most strongly influence student learning every day – teachers (IN.gov, 2011). Public Law 90 (PL 90) was put in to affect in hopes of rewarding the great teachers in Indiana for the hard work they do and showcase the devotion that they have to their students.

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Over the past two decades a growing body of evidence has established that the teacher is the most important school-based influence on student achievement. (Berry, Eckert & Bauries, 2012) It is through these types of findings that our nation is feeling more and more pressure to make sure that we have highly qualified teachers in our schools. It is believed that a new evaluation system is a right step in that direction. In 2010, not long after President Obama's Race to the Top (R2T) program was implemented, a dozen states won approximately four billion dollars in R2T funds. The program pushed states to evaluate teachers more rigorously and offered rewards for generating higher student test scores and for opening alternative pathways into the profession as a way of filling empty classrooms in high-need schools. (Berry et al., 2012). The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 defines a high-needs school as within the top quartile of elementary and secondary schools statewide, as ranked by the number of unfilled, available teacher positions; or is located in an area where at least 30 percent of students come from families with incomes below the poverty line; or an area with a high percentage of out-of-field-teachers, high teacher turnover rate, or a high percentage of teachers who are not certified or licensed (Teach: Make A Difference, n.d.).

Research on the effects of merit pay is not very promising. States like Texas, New York and Florida have all made attempts at a merit-pay program. Texas, who had one of the country's largest merit-pay programs, scaled their funding back from \$392 million to \$40 million in the summer of 2011, blaming the state's deficit. New York City wiped out its \$56 million school-wide merit-pay program, citing disappointing research results (Fleming, 2011). In July of 2011, the Santa Monica, California based RAND Corporation released a study of New York City's merit-pay program that found no substantial impact on teacher, student or school performance

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(Fleming, 2011). New York City's district later announced it would discontinue the three-year program. And they are not the only ones! Alaska's three-year program ended mainly due to friction with local unions. Iowa's program was also eliminated.

So why are states continuing to jump on board when other states are finding the merit-pay system to be so troublesome? Fleming (2011) suggests that schools are always pushing data-based improvement yet there is no proof of a significant, statistical impact when it comes to merit-pay systems. One reason is a provision in the R2T program that requires states and districts to change their teacher-evaluation practices and encourages them to be tied to salary.

In Texas, both state and district teachers' union members worry that the merit-pay programs themselves are a waste of money and do little to improve teacher performance. Rita Haecker, the president of the Texas State Teachers Association, tends to disagree that people perform better with a reward. Haecker believes people perform better when they feel supported in their job and are paid a living salary (Fleming, 2011).

The teaching profession may be in trouble when it comes to recruiting new teachers. The Obama administration's approach to creating incentives to attract qualified teachers to high-need schools thus remains rooted in the questionable assumption that, according to Susan Moore Johnson, "teachers who are confident they can earn rewards will enter and remain in the profession, while low-performing teachers with little hope of winning rewards will leave." (Berry et al., 2012, p.1) But is this the case? Will it be rewards and money that will bring new teachers to the profession and get current teachers to work harder towards student achievement? In a 2011 RAND study of New York City's \$56 million bonus pay system, even

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schools where individual teachers were rewarded did not demonstrate higher student achievement. Survey results indicated that teachers were motivated less by a financial incentive and more by helping their students learn. Berry and colleagues (2012) reveal that at best, teachers reported that the bonus was “a reward for their usual efforts, not as an incentive for changing their behavior” (p.4).

So what is it that really matters to teachers? What is going to inspire teachers to work harder everyday to improve student achievement? One part of that answer may come as a surprise. Researchers at the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, an initiative housed at Harvard University, point to the specific working conditions that clearly matter to teachers. These conditions include the school culture, the principal’s leadership, and the relationship among colleagues. Additionally, and perhaps most important to policymakers, students who attend schools with better working conditions also achieve greater academic growth (Berry et al., 2012). Berry and colleagues also point out that one essential support-*collaboration*-seems to matter most for effective teaching. One such example is that students achieve more in mathematics and reading when they attend schools characterized by higher levels of teacher collaboration for school improvement.

RISE Indiana

So what will this new evaluation system look like for teachers in Indiana? Well, the specifics depend on the individual district. The Indiana Department of Education, along with teachers and leaders throughout the state has developed a model evaluation system named RISE (RISE Evaluation and Development System, 2011). School corporations have the option to

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implement the RISE system or adopt their own model that complies with PL 90. According to www.riseindiana.org, regardless of model or system, evaluations must:

- **Be annual:** Every teacher, no matter their experience, deserves to receive meaningful feedback on their performance annually.
- **Include Student Growth Data:** Evaluations must be student-focused. An effective teacher helps students make academic progress. A thorough evaluation system includes multiple measures of teacher performance, and growth data must be one of the key measures.
- **Include Four Rating Categories:** In order to keep the best teachers around, there needs to be a process that can differentiate between those who are the best and give them the recognition they deserve. In order to get all teachers to perform and the highest level, we must find the teachers who are struggling and give them support. Based on teacher evaluations they will be placed in one of four categories; highly effective, effective, improvement necessary and ineffective. Scoring improvement necessary or ineffective basically gives the district the option to get rid of a teacher. Evaluations may be done by administration, districts can choose to contract outside agencies or they may be done by other teachers that have evaluation duties written in their contract and hold “effective” ratings. (StateImpact, 2011)

Every staff member in the school who needs to hold a state license to hold their position will be evaluated. (StateImpact, 2011) Before this statewide change, once a teacher received tenure, they no longer were required to be evaluated on a yearly basis. That is no longer the

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case. Each teacher will receive a rating in one of the four performance levels: (as stated on IN.gov)

- **Highly Effective:** A *highly effective* teacher consistently exceeds expectations. This is a teacher who has demonstrated excellence, as determined by a trained evaluator, in locally selected competencies reasonably believed to be highly correlated with positive student learning outcomes. The *highly effective* teacher's students, in aggregate, have generally exceeded expectations for academic growth and achievement based on guidelines suggested by the Indiana Department of Education.
- **Effective:** An *effective* teacher consistently meets expectations. This is a teacher who has consistently met expectations, as determined by a trained evaluator, in locally selected competencies reasonably believed to be highly correlated with positive student learning outcomes. The *effective* teacher's students, in aggregate, have generally achieved an acceptable rate of academic growth and achievement based on guidelines suggested by the Indiana Department of Education.
- **Improvement Necessary:** A teacher who is rated as *improvement necessary* requires a change in performance before he/she meets expectations. This is a teacher who a trained evaluator has determined to require improvement in locally selected competencies reasonably believed to be highly correlated with positive student learning outcomes. In aggregate, the students of a teacher rated *improvement necessary* have generally achieved a below acceptable rate of academic growth and achievement based on guidelines suggested by the Indiana Department of Education.

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- **Ineffective:** An *ineffective* teacher consistently fails to meet expectations. This is a teacher who has failed to meet expectations, as determined by a trained evaluator, in locally selected competencies reasonably believed to be highly correlated with positive student learning outcomes. The *ineffective* teacher's students, in aggregate, have generally achieved unacceptable levels of academic growth and achievement based on guidelines suggested by the Indiana Department of Education.

Not only will teachers be evaluated on student learning, they will also be evaluated on their professional practice. This includes the domains of Planning, Instruction, Leadership, and Core Professionalism. An example of a competency under the Planning domain would be a teacher's ability to set ambitious and measurable achievement goals. There are five specific competencies under the domain of Planning. The Instruction domain has nine specific competencies. An example of a competency in this domain would be modifying instruction as needed and creating a culture of respect and collaboration. The Leadership domain is comprised of five competencies. An example would be collaborating with peers. The Core Professionalism domain has four criteria. These are the non-negotiable aspects of a teacher's job. They are attendance, on-time arrival, policies and procedures, and respect. Again, each district decides how much each domain contributes to a total score of the overall evaluation, as long as they fit within the standards of PL 90.

Anytime there is a change or something new is implemented it's unsettling. Tony Bennett stated that anyone who disagrees with the new law needs to look at evaluations as a way to provide feedback to good teachers, not a method for weeding out bad ones (Moxley,

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2012). However, teachers and administrators are still feeling the heat and voicing concerns about the new system.

The growing body of literature on teacher incentives, both financial and otherwise indicates that there are no simple solutions. We must reward expertise in ways that move beyond recruitment bonuses or pay for improved student test scores. The evidence suggests that teacher bonuses in isolation will not increase student learning. In addition, not all incentives matter the same for all teachers (Berry et al., 2012).

The new merit-pay system is currently up and running in the state of Indiana. In most districts around the state, this is the first year. How this new evaluation process will impact teachers and students in Indiana and how long this evaluation system can or will be sustained as a fair and viable system remains unknown. Therefore the purpose of this research project is to highlight the adoption and implementation of the new teacher evaluation system, the RISE, Indiana's model evaluation and development system.

Methods

Participants

Participants were three individuals currently working in different school systems in Indiana. No two participants were secured from the same school district in order to diversify the findings. Participants were between the ages of 25-50 and were all of different experience levels. One participant was an administrator with 13 years of experience in that role and had five years of teaching experience prior to securing the role as an administrator, a second

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participant was a novice teacher with one year of teaching experience, and the third participant was an expert teacher with 10 years of teaching experience.

Procedure

Participants were recruited through email. The research study information was sent in an email message to qualified school personnel (e.g., administrators, teachers) via school email addresses that were obtained from school websites. The investigator determined the qualifications of the individuals who responded to the recruitment email to ensure the administrator and two educators (i.e., novice, expert) met the project criteria for inclusion. The inclusion criteria required that participants have less than two years of experience to be a novice teacher, more than 10 years of experience to be qualified as an expert teacher and at least five years of experience as an administrator. All subjects were given the details about the study and their rights as participants in the project. Subjects were informed that no names would be used throughout the interview or data analyses process. Subjects would be referred to as "administrator", "expert", and "novice". Only the primary investigator and advisor had access to any of the subjects' names during the study. All participants were interviewed for 30-45 minutes ($M = 33$ mins.) and were instructed that they could cease and/or withdraw from participation with no negative consequences from the researcher.

Results

All three subjects were asked a series of questions in relation to the new teacher evaluation system (Appendix A). Since each school district had the option to adopt their own system that fell within the means of PL 90, each subject was asked to explain evaluation

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procedures in his or her building. This information helped get a better understanding of the way that their pay was tied to evaluations.

Type of Evaluation System

Each school district in Indiana was given the freedom to adopt all or some of the RISE model or adapt their own system as long as it fit within the realms of PL 90. When each participant was asked to provide information about the model their school system had adopted, it was found that none of the three districts chose to adopt the same model. The administrator's school district elected to adapt their own system using RISE as their template and adapting it to fit their needs. "We use iObservation, Bob Marzano's 41 indicators of a successful classroom for our observation tool, and hold our teachers to a standard of one year's growth." (iObservation a division of Learning Sciences International, 2013). The expert teacher explained that their school district chose to use the RISE model exactly as given by the State Superintendent's office. Teachers in that school district receive an annual bonus check if they fall within the category of a "highly effective teacher" or an "expert teacher". The novice teacher's school district chose to create a system of their own. With the RISE rubric at hand their committee created their own system that fell within the boundaries of PL 90. This district's evaluation system utilizes a point system. Once teachers receive 18 points they are moved into the next pay bracket.

Linking Pay to Student Performance

The subjects were asked to describe how they felt to have their pay linked to student performance on a test like the Indiana Statewide Testing for Educational Progress (ISTEP). The

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reactions to that question were quite different. There was a broad range of feelings from anger and frustration to acceptance. The expert teacher expressed the most anger about merit pay. “It’s ridiculous! It makes me so angry and makes you understand why some schools cheat. Too much pressure for something that the state couldn’t even administer correctly!” The novice teacher spoke on the other end of the spectrum when asked the same question. The novice teacher admitted that it was scary to have one’s pay linked to the student’s performance, however,

If we do our jobs the way we were trained we will be fine. If we use research-based lessons that are effective, our students should be able to perform well. I also think growth is more important than meeting a certain score.

Classroom teachers may only be linked to 25-35 students when it comes to evaluating their performance, but what about administrators? When the administrator was asked how they were evaluated it was stated that administrators had goals just like teachers do. However, administrators are evaluated on the entire school’s growth. The administrator shared:

In the RISE model administrators are also evaluated on district growth. Our school district did not choose to do it that way. I am evaluated on school growth and on my ability to evaluate. Five of my evaluation packages are drawn at random to see how effective I am at evaluating teachers on all components of their evaluations.

Reaction to Changes

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Anytime a big change happens, people become uneasy. However, when talking about a change that could ultimately affect individual and family livelihood, the term “uneasy” is not really an adequate description. When word got out that Indiana would be changing the way it evaluated teachers and basing pay on student achievement, there was a concern about how this might affect the atmosphere in schools. Would teachers continue to be willing to collaborate with each other? Would teachers be willing to share great lesson ideas?

Subjects were asked if the atmosphere in their buildings had changed since the implementation of the new evaluation system and if the relationship between their colleagues had changed. The administrator admits that everyone is nervous about their “final number/score”. With this being the first year, everyone is pretty unsure as to how their final evaluation will turn out. The administrator admits that there are still some kinks in the system. “This is the first year. While we use multiple measures, we convert everything to Lexile. There have been some issues. Additionally, there has been some variance in accountability from administrator to administrator.” While the administrator admits “we are not *“up in arms”* due to the increased accountability, as I’ve met quarterly with each teacher for the last two years, we are still nervous!”

The novice teacher discusses how teachers in the building were upset at first, and they were not fond of the evaluation system at all. “There was so much confusion!” Nobody really understood the model that the district had adopted. This caused some major anxiety. Staff was telling their versions of how the new rubric worked and it turned out to be completely wrong. It took a good two weeks after the system was released to staff to really get the details

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ironed out. “Administration had to make several announcements, emails, and carry-out meetings to discuss the evaluation system to appease their anxiety on the matter. People still have questions, but it seems some people will just “go with the flow.”” When asked if the relationship between colleagues has changed at all, the novice teacher reports “not at all!” Teachers are still sharing resources and lessons when asked by others. “However, I have a feeling if one teacher has an issue they may skip the step to talk it out and go straight to administration.”

While the results above seem pretty promising that teachers are settling in and taking the new changes as they come, after talking with the expert teacher it is obvious things are not smooth sailing everywhere in Indiana. Since the implementation of the new evaluation system in the expert’s building things have been rough. The atmosphere in the building has changed drastically for the worse:

Staff members are extremely stressed and second-guessing education. Many are looking for different jobs they can hold with an education degree. Some are going back to college. One fellow male teacher quit and became a stay-at-home dad. One of our veteran teachers who has been teaching for almost 40 years and was named last year as one of the top five teachers in Indiana said she would teach as long as she can. After the implementation, she is quitting next year. It has taken the joy and fun out of teaching across the board.

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The expert teacher also shared that colleagues are more competitive now and less likely to share materials. “As a whole, we don’t collaborate as much due to competitiveness and lack of time.”

Benefits of the New Evaluation System

I asked the administrator what the benefits of the new evaluation system were so far. The administrator feels like there is an increased focus on student progress, as well as increased ownership of ALL students, regardless of label. The expert teacher had a hard time listing the benefits. “I guess it would be teacher accountability, however, as I mentioned before, there is still that possibility that cheating may occur due to the pressure that teachers are feeling. So how do you really know if teachers are doing their job or cheating on the test?” The novice teacher agrees that accountability is a big benefit of the new system. Teachers are held accountable for the work they are doing with students and that is a big deal. “Those who are lazy and don’t do their job well, will see repercussions. I think that is just what we need in education since it is all about the students. They are the ones who really matter!”

Challenges So Far

When speaking with the administrator about the challenges of the evaluation system, it was brought up how hard it has been to balance the amount of evaluations that are necessary along with all the other expectations of being a school principal. Budget cuts have been a big issue in Indiana also and two auxiliary staff positions have been cut in the administrator’s building along with paraprofessional hours as a result of district funding cuts. This has placed more of a hardship on the shoulders of the leaders in the building. “My daily duties have

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increased quite a bit, aside from the increased classroom observations.” The administrator admits that besides the minor kinks and great increase of time required (on the part of administration), there are no real shortfalls in the new evaluation system. “That is if the administrator plays fair. Honestly, if an administrator has it out for you, that person could make life hell for a teacher and end his or her career quite easily.”

The expert teacher had strong feelings about the challenges of the system so far. When asked “Is there anything you really don’t like about the new evaluation system?” here was the response:

I don’t like how ISTEP is used to determine such a large percentage of our effectiveness. I was told at my last evaluation meeting, “You were highly effective in all areas of RISE but since your kids just had typical growth, you are just an effective teacher instead of highly effective.” I was given the worst class among all five classrooms and they are expecting miracles.

Another question tapped into the evaluation system impact on teacher pedagogy and organization practices in the classroom. For the expert teacher the response was,

Yes, they have definitely changed! I have moved at a faster pace so that I can keep up with the state’s curriculum maps. I have spent less time on inquiry and projects with the students as well because we have to get so much in, in such a short amount of time. Very frustrating!

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The expert teacher reports that the fun has been taken out of teaching. Projects and other fun units have been replaced with test prep and other things that the students don't enjoy as much.

The novice teacher points out some similar things as the expert teacher when asked what he/she doesn't like about the evaluation system that has been mandated and put in place. The response that was shared brought attention to the fact that ISTEP plays too much of a role in deciding a teacher's evaluation:

Scores such as ISTEP aren't always a good indicator of student growth when the state demands new methods of testing such as testing on computers. Mistakes were happening to multiple students at multiple times during their hour of testing. Given the circumstance, an evaluation on ISTEP may not be appropriate. But, as far as attendance, observations, and other student assessment: I don't think it's a terrible idea that teachers be held accountable. That being said, it's frustrating that our raises only come every three years. I also think growth is more important than meeting a certain score.

The novice teacher's school district evaluation system operates on a point system. Teachers can receive a maximum of seven points each school year. Actually only six points because the seventh point is a bonus if a teacher falls in the "highly effective" category. Once a teacher receives 18 points they are moved up to the next level on the new pay scale. So there is no yearly bonus or an annual raise due to years of experience, a teacher only receives a raise after they have accumulated those 18 points. It takes a teacher at least three years to move to the

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next level of pay. This caused some tension when teachers were first informed about how long it may take to see a pay increase. For one teacher in the building this caused much concern.

She was hired in as a new teacher even though she already had three years of teaching experience in Northern Indiana. However, they refused to start her out as a third year teacher. This meant that her pay was frozen at the two year experience pay level even though she was a five year teacher. So now because of this new system, she would not receive another pay increase for at least three years. This was a huge concern for her!

Students in Indiana had just finished taking the on-line portion of the ISTEP test about four weeks prior to the interview and everyone had been in an uproar due to the problems that occurred. All three subjects were asked how they felt about the recent testing situations and having to be evaluated based on those results since there is now a concern about test validity due to all the testing interruptions. The novice teacher believes that the state should take that piece out of the evaluations this year since teachers being evaluated on student scores from challenging test protocols will not demonstrate all teacher successes. "It would be unfair to rate a teacher based on a test whose scores could be invalid!" The expert teacher agrees. "I think the validity of the tests are [*sic*] questionable to start with, but definitely questionable now that the State couldn't even administer them correctly." The administrator has a slightly different view on the situation, "simply put, our model states that data merely informs an administrator of which category to place you in. The administrator actually makes the decision. The system still has a human element."

Evaluation Sustainability and Longevity?

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Education is a field that is ever-changing and new research is constantly evolving the field. The participants were asked how they felt about the new evaluation system and if they thought it was designed or built to have some resiliency. The administrator feels that their system is truly set up for longevity. "We are able to fine-tune our evaluation system with each contract negotiation. For the most part, it is a living document." The administrator thinks that since they are able to make changes as they go, eventually they will get it to where it needs to be and all of the kinks will get ironed out. The expert teacher is hopeful that the new system does not stick around.

I'm okay with being evaluated, but not as frequently. My husband was evaluated 15 times this past year. I was evaluated five times. It's too much pressure and too much focus on the standards. It leaves no room for creativity. I'm hoping it doesn't stay around. I don't think it should go back to how it was before, but I don't like how it is now. We were thrown into this new system head first! Nobody was ready, including the State! Because of this, I don't feel like they really thought things through and understood where they wanted to go with this! Not a good way to start something new!

The novice teacher had a hard time answering this question.

I have not been around very long. This is only my first year of teaching. So I assume that it is here to stay. I have not been around to see programs come and go so I assume this is it right? I hope that they are able to work things out and make things right with teachers. They really do need the good ones to stick around! They can't do this without us.

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Only the future will tell if the problems will get ironed out and allow the State to continue on with the new model. Teachers have mixed emotions as do administrators. The most important thing is that all invested individuals are all on the same page and work together for the betterment of Indiana's education system.

Discussion

With one year over and gone in the attempt to tie Indiana educator pay to student test scores, that outcome is still to be determined. Teachers will not see the effects of the new evaluation system until ISTEP scores are reported and added into individual teacher evaluations. Goals were written, evaluations are done, but the big component (ISTEP scores) that seems to make teachers most nervous is still under review.

Although individual pay for performance is a widespread practice among U.S. businesses, the research on its effectiveness shows it to be of limited utility, mostly because it is easy for its benefits to be swamped by unintended consequences (Quintero, 2011). A leader of the United Teachers Los Angeles union wrote "teacher unions have historically resisted merit pay proposals because they undermine one of the core principles of teaching and learning: collaboration...as teachers we understand teaching is about working together to help our students, not competition for better pay" (Jones, 2011, p.1). The outcomes of this project have revealed that there are some schools that are feeling the negative effects of the new pay based on performance system. Teachers have control of their planning, preparation and instruction; they do not have control over the students and how hard students work/study to perform well on the test. One of the potential negatives of being paid with a merit pay system is that the

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factors that are outside of a person's control need to be considered. In some cases, an employee's paycheck can be directly influenced by these factors even though it is out of his or her control. While the merit pay system is designed to reward a person for something that she/he does well, many times the performance is affected by other people and situations. This may not be fair in the eyes of employees. For example, a teacher may be paid based on the test scores of her students. In some cases, regardless of how well a teacher does, the students may not try to do better. If the students do not make adequate progress, the teacher is negatively affected (Arthur & Media, 2013). This is a big fear of the classroom teacher! Teachers cannot control the outside factors that may affect their student's performances differently from day to day.

Empirical studies conducted in Nashville, Chicago, New York City and elsewhere have concluded that performance pay for teachers has little or no effect on their students' test scores. So, essentially, these large and expensive experiments reveal what (inexpensive) research in other disciplines has been telling us for about forty years (Quintero, 2011). Basing teacher salaries on student test scores is grounded in the idea that teachers will work harder to make sure that each student understands concepts. However, in reality, it may not have any effect on the student's test scores. According to a study by Vanderbilt University, offering math teachers a \$15,000 bonus did not have any effect on student test scores (Arthur & Media, 2013). Indiana will see very soon if this holds true. As the State prepares for the ISTEP test results, districts will begin to see what kind of effect the new evaluation system will begin to have on teachers and their performance.

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Evaluations also play a big role in determining the effectiveness of the classroom teachers. Before any money can be paid through a merit pay system, some type of evaluation must occur. There is some fear about the objectivity of the evaluation process. The administrator touched upon the fact that it is important for administration to “*play fair*” when it comes to evaluating teachers. If a teacher and an evaluator do not see eye to eye or if they have any sort of personal or professional difference, a teacher may have some concern about the evaluator’s ability to be objective. Some teachers fear that some of the components of the evaluation system are not objective and are based on what the administrator “feels” the teacher is or is not doing well and that the measures encourage teachers to “teach to the test” (Jones, 2011, p.1).

Some big question marks are still hanging over the state of Indiana. Do teachers who are eligible for merit pay respond by working harder? How do teachers respond to each other, potential competitors vying for a limited pool of salary monies? Do teachers undermine one another’s efforts and collaborate less (Jones, 2011)? Do teachers disengage from the school community by refusing to participate in school activities which do not count towards a service unit that is a part of an evaluation? After ISTEP results are revealed these questions may be answered sooner than later. Indiana has had one full year to get accustomed to the idea of a new evaluation system, however the full effects of the inaugural year of the RISE system are yet unknown. The research is not greatly in favor of merit pay. Will Indiana be an exception to the rule?

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Appendix A**Questions for Interviews****Administrator**

1. What evaluation system is your school using? The traditional RISE model? Or did your district decide to adapt their own?
2. Has your school district been able to work out all the kinks in the system?
3. How do the staff members in your building seem to be reacting to the changes?
4. Are you finding it hard to balance the amount of evaluations that you need to do with all the other things on your plate as a principal?
5. What do you feel are the benefits of the new evaluation system?
6. What do you feel are the shortfalls of the new evaluation system?
7. The field of education is ever changing. Do you feel this evaluation system is set up for longevity?
8. We have currently just finished ISTEP testing on the computers for the first time. There were several problems that have caused people to be concerned about test validity. How do you feel about the recent testing situations and having to evaluate your teachers based on those results?

INDIANA EDUCATOR EVALUATION

Expert Teacher/Novice Teacher

1. Not every school system has adopted the same evaluation system. Can you explain to me the model that your school is using?
2. Since the implementation of the new evaluation system, has the atmosphere in your building changed at all?
3. Has the relationship between colleagues changed?
4. Is there anything you really don't like about the new evaluation system?
5. Are you hopeful that this new system will be around for a long time? Or are you hoping things will go back to the way they were before? Why?
6. Have the changes in the way you are evaluated caused you to do things differently in your classroom? How?
7. Overall, how does it make you feel to have your pay linked to the students' performance on tests like ISTEP?
8. We have currently just finished ISTEP testing on the computers for the first time. There were several problems that have caused people to be concerned about test validity. How do you feel about the recent testing situations and having to be evaluated based on those results?