

**MEMORANDUM**

July 5, 2016

TO: Audrey Gomez

FROM: Carla Stevens  
Assistant Superintendent, Research and Accountability

SUBJECT: **2014–2015 ASPIRE Award Survey, Spring 2016**

The purpose of the ASPIRE Award Survey was to gain insight regarding the level of knowledge and perceptions of Houston Independent School District (HISD) teachers and staff after ten years of implementation of growth-based performance pay in HISD, as well as their perceptions regarding the overall concept of teacher performance pay. Additionally, participants had the opportunity to provide recommendations to improve the ASPIRE Award program.

Key findings include:

- Of the 17,109 Houston Independent School District (HISD) campus-based employees surveyed, there were 3,409 participants who responded to the survey (19.9 percent) administered in February 2016. **The response rate is fairly low and the results, while informative, may not be generalized to the population.**
- Support for the program has shown **mixed results** over the ten-year period.
- Although the majority of respondents were ***in favor*** or ***somewhat in favor*** of the concept of teacher performance pay overall, the percentage of respondents ***in favor*** or ***somewhat in favor*** toward the specific award model for that year when comparing results over the ten-year period has ranged from 35.1 percent to 53.3 percent, and is currently at 45.3 percent.
- Administrators, such as principals and assistant principals/deans of instruction indicate **favorable perceptions** concerning performance pay and their level of knowledge.
- Core foundation teachers have **more positive perceptions** than elective/ancillary teachers concerning performance pay and their level of knowledge with two exceptions. Elective/ancillary teachers indicated they had **higher levels of knowledge** regarding the ASPIRE Award program than core foundation teachers (Groups 1–3), and they had more positive perceptions about their efforts to *increase student progress* than core foundation teachers (specifically, Group 3).

Should you have any further questions, please contact me at 713-556-6700.

 CJS

Attachment

cc: Andrew Houlihan  
Gloria Cavazos



# RESEARCH

Educational Program Report

2014-2015 ASPIRE  
AWARD SURVEY

DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH AND ACCOUNTABILITY  
HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT



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# ASPIRE AWARD SURVEY RESULTS, Spring 2016

## FINDINGS RELATED TO TEACHER PERCEPTIONS, KNOWLEDGE, AND INPUT, 2014–2015 AWARD MODEL PAYOUT

### Executive Summary

#### Program Description

On January 12, 2006, the Houston Independent School District (HISD) Board of Education approved the Teacher Performance-Pay Program (TPPM) awarding teachers financial incentives based on three strands of performance pay. These strands involved campus-level performance on the state accountability rating and individual teacher performance on the basis of student progress on state and district assessment programs. The awards were paid out in January, 2007. The experience gained in the first year and consultations with national experts and teachers provided the impetus for recommending the improvement and enhancement of the model which then became the award program for the district's school improvement framework, "Accelerating Student Progress: Increasing Results and Expectations" (ASPIRE). The ASPIRE Award program has completed its ninth year of payout, occurring on February 3, 2016 (the tenth payout for performance pay in the district).

This report provides the results of an annual survey administered February 2016 designed to collect perceptions and input from HISD teachers and staff after ten years of implementation of growth-based performance pay (see the *2005–2006 Teacher Performance-Pay and 2006–2007 ASPIRE Award Survey*; *2007–2008 ASPIRE Award Survey, Spring 2009*; *2008–2009 ASPIRE Award Survey, Spring 2010*; *2009–2010 ASPIRE Award Survey, Spring 2011*; *2010–2011 ASPIRE Award Survey, Spring 2012*; *2011–2012 ASPIRE Award Survey, Spring 2013*; *2012–2013 ASPIRE Award Survey, Spring 2014*, *2013–2014 ASPIRE Award Survey, Spring 2015* for previous results). This report addresses the district's strategic plan of providing an effective teacher in every classroom. Survey data focused on eight areas of interest that include:

- Background characteristics of survey respondents;
- Perceptions of respondents regarding the concept of teacher performance pay and the teacher appraisal system;
- Perceptions of respondents regarding their level of agreement to specific instructional practices or behaviors encouraged by the ASPIRE Award program;
- Perceptions of respondents and level of understanding of respondents regarding the Teacher Performance-Pay Model (TPPM) and the ASPIRE Award program;
- Percent of respondents that watched the learning modules on value-added;
- Effectiveness of communicating information about the ASPIRE Award;
- Perceptions of respondents regarding their level of compensation and the ASPIRE Award model; and,
- Recommendations for changing the 2014–2015 ASPIRE Award suggested by respondents.

#### Highlights

- Of the 17,109 Houston Independent School District (HISD) campus-based employees invited to participate, 3,409 participants (19.9 percent) responded to the survey administered in February 2016. Of the 2,747 respondents who indicated an award category, 55.3 percent were core teachers (Groups 1–3),

10.3 percent were elective/ancillary teachers, 7.5 percent were instructional support staff, 8.3 percent were teaching assistants, 7.4 percent were operational support staff, 4.0 percent were either principals or assistant principals/deans of instruction, and 7.3 percent indicated *Other*. **Any conclusions drawn from this survey should be made with caution given the low response rate.**

- When comparing survey results over the last ten years, the majority of respondents were ***in favor*** or ***somewhat in favor*** of the concept of teacher performance pay, with the 2016 rate being the highest in the last four years.
- Based on survey data collected in February 2016, the largest percentage of respondents (72.9 percent) indicated that over the past several years for classroom instructional strategies, ***they always collaborated with their colleagues***.
- The percentage of respondents that have been *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* of the performance-pay model has ranged from 35.1 percent to 53.3 percent, currently at 45.3 percent.
- Administrators, such as principals and assistant principals/deans of instruction indicate **favorable perceptions** concerning performance pay and their level of knowledge.
- Core foundation teachers have **more positive perceptions** concerning performance pay and their level of knowledge than elective/ancillary teachers with two exceptions. Elective/ancillary teachers indicated they had higher levels of knowledge regarding the ASPIRE Award program than core foundation teachers (Groups 1–3), and they had more positive perceptions about their efforts to *increase student progress* than core foundation teachers (specifically, Group 3).
- Out of a total of 3,409 respondents on the February 2016 survey, 1,520 or 44.6 percent of the respondents provided at least one response for improving the 2014–2015 ASPIRE Award model. The six highest emergent categories based on the percentage of the responses centered on the following:
  - Same earning opportunity as highest award category/award not commensurate with professional contribution (14.6 percent),
  - Change the eligibility and categorization rules (11.9 percent),
  - Make the model equitable, fair, transparent, and inclusive with clear expectations (10.9 percent);
  - Suggestions for measuring growth/achievement (7.3 percent),
  - How the money should be allocated/reallocated (6.7 percent);
  - Other performance measures or criteria (6.5 percent).

## Introduction

The purpose of the ASPIRE Award Model is to reward teachers for their efforts in improving the academic growth of their students. The ASPIRE Award employs a value-added methodology that provides teachers with the information that they need to facilitate and measure student progress at the student, classroom, and campus levels. The ASPIRE Award is dedicated to achieving the following goals:

- Encourage cooperation in Professional Learning Communities;
- Be aligned with the district's other school-improvement initiatives;
- Use value-added data based on a national expert's methodology to reward teachers reliably and consistently for student progress; and
- Include core teachers at all grade levels, early childhood through grade 12.

The ASPIRE Award is based on the following principles:

- Performance pay drives academic performance;
- Good teaching occurs in all schools;
- Teamwork is valuable;
- Performance pay does not replace a competitive base salary, and
- Performance pay systems are dynamic and evolve over time.

Given these goals and principles, the ASPIRE Award involves three different indicators of academic performance:

- Indicator I—Individual Performance: (value-added core teacher progress);
- Indicator II—Group Performance: Teachers (department value-added or comparative growth); and,
- Indicator III—Group Performance: Campus-Wide (campus value-added and campus growth or achievement). Indicator III is based on the EVAAS campus composite cumulative gain index and the Iowa or Logramos reading and mathematics performance (percent of all students at/above 50<sup>th</sup> national percentile rank, across all grades) for middle and elementary schools, and Advanced Placement (AP)/International Baccalaureate (IB) participation and performance for high schools. Under the model, every HISD teacher has the opportunity to participate in at least Indicator III.

## Methods

### Data Collection and Analysis

- The ASPIRE award survey items were developed from previous surveys, reviewed, and approved by members of the ASPIRE Award Executive Committee with input from the Department of Human Resources and Professional Educator Compensation and Support (PECAS) Committee. The 2014–2015 ASPIRE Award Survey was administered on-line from Wednesday, December 2, 2015, through Wednesday, February 3, 2016, with follow-up reminders on Tuesday, December 15, 2015, Tuesday, January 5, 2016, and Wednesday, January 27, 2016. The survey responses were completely anonymous through SurveyMonkey with no IP addresses collected. The survey instructions with the embedded link to access the survey were sent directly to campus-based employees by HISD partner Battelle for Kids.
- The data obtained from the completed surveys were downloaded from SurveyMonkey and analyzed using SPSS and Microsoft Access. Items that were skipped or for which respondents answered "N/A" were coded as missing data and not included in the analysis. The text analysis tool in SurveyMonkey was used to identify emergent categories for the open-ended questions.

## Data Limitations

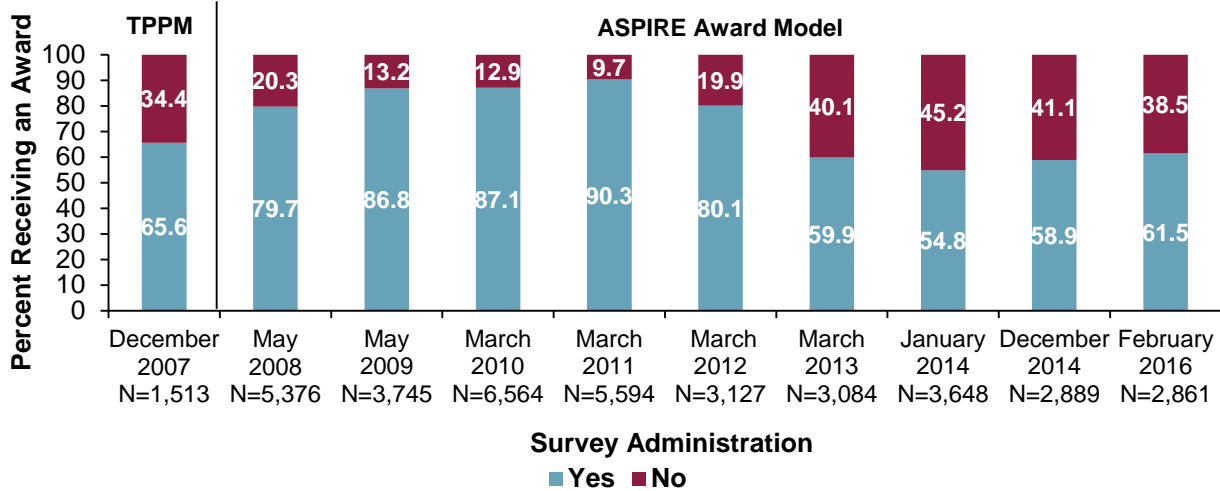
- Changes in the structure of the survey and coding practices limited comparisons to the results of previously developed survey instruments. For the February 2016 survey administration, data quality checks were conducted and corrections made regarding skip patterns. Any conclusions from these results should be made with caution due to the low response rate. The responses may not be generalizable to the population of campus-based staff who were initially invited to participate.

## Results

### What were the background characteristics of survey respondents?

- Of the 17,109 Houston Independent School District (HISD) campus-based employees invited to complete the survey, there were 3,409 participants who responded to the survey (19.9 percent) administered in December 2015. Any conclusions drawn from this survey should be made with caution given the low response rate (**Table 1**, p. 24).
- Of the 3,409 respondents, 2,747 indicated their ASPIRE Award categorization for the 2014–2015 school year. Core teachers (Group 1, 2, and 3) represented the highest percentage of respondents with 55.3 percent, followed by elective/ancillary teachers with 10.3 percent (**Table 2**, p. 24).
- Approximately one-third of respondents reported holding either a Bachelor's Degree (34.5 percent) or a Master's Degree (34.7 percent). The average experience in HISD was 12.1 years with the average experience at the current campus being 8.2 years (**Table 3**, p. 24).
- Approximately 90 percent of the respondents were employed in HISD for the 2014–2015 school year, and approximately 75 percent were eligible to receive an award. Sixty-two percent of the respondents indicated that they will receive an ASPIRE Award, and 35.7 percent of core foundation teachers who responded received an individual performance award, an award based on student progress for the 2014–2015 school year (**Table 4**, p. 25).
- Of the 1,513 December 2007 survey respondents, 65.6 percent indicated that they received an award. The percentage continued to increase through the March 2011 survey, where 90.3 percent of respondents received an award. There was a decline of 35.5 percentage points from March 2011 to January 2014, followed by an increase of 6.7 percentage points (**Figure 1**, p. 5). The majority of survey respondents over the past ten years reflect ASPIRE Award recipients.
- On the February 2016 survey, respondents were asked to indicate if they taught in a critical shortage area. Since respondents may have taught in more than one critical shortage area, percentages are based on the total number of responses. Of the 2,890 responses, 61.3 percent did not teach in a critical shortage area (N/A), 12.7 percent indicated they taught bilingual education, 12.6 percent indicated special education, 6.6 percent indicated secondary mathematics, 5.3 percent indicated secondary science, and 1.5 percent indicated secondary Spanish (**Table 5**, p. 25).

**Figure 1. Percent of respondents receiving an award based on results of ten survey administrations**



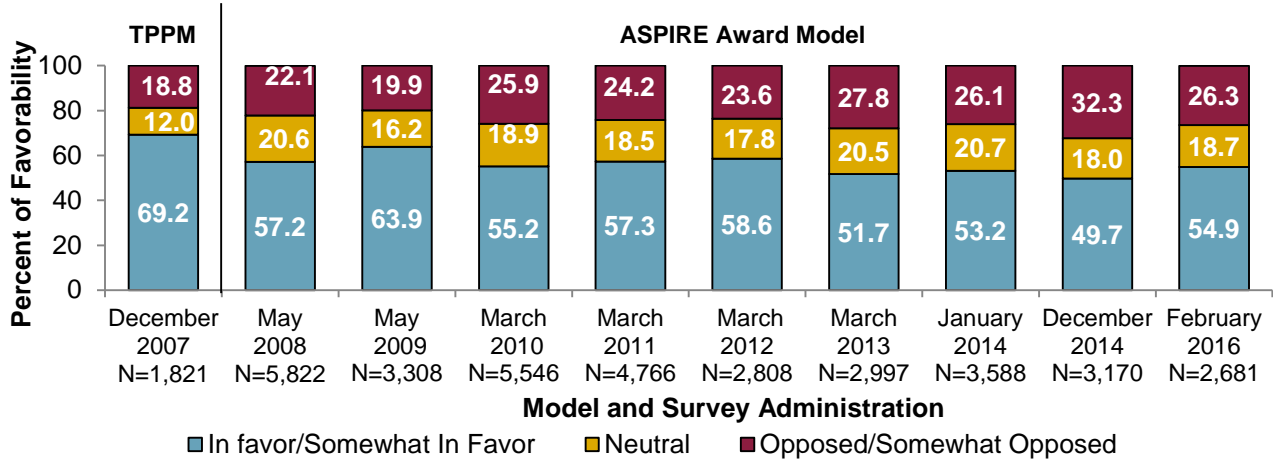
Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; TPPM Results, 2005–2006; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2013–2014

TPPM=Teacher Performance-Pay Model; Note: Over the 10-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model, and policy changes

**What were the perceptions of respondents regarding the concept of teacher performance pay overall and the teacher appraisal system?**

- When comparing survey results over the last ten years, there was an overall decrease in the percent of respondents who were *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* of the concept of teacher performance pay from 69.2 percent in December 2007 to 49.7 percent in December 2014 to 54.9 percent in February 2016, the highest percentage in the last four years (**Figure 2**).

**Figure 2. Percent of respondents indicating favorability toward the concept of performance pay over ten years**



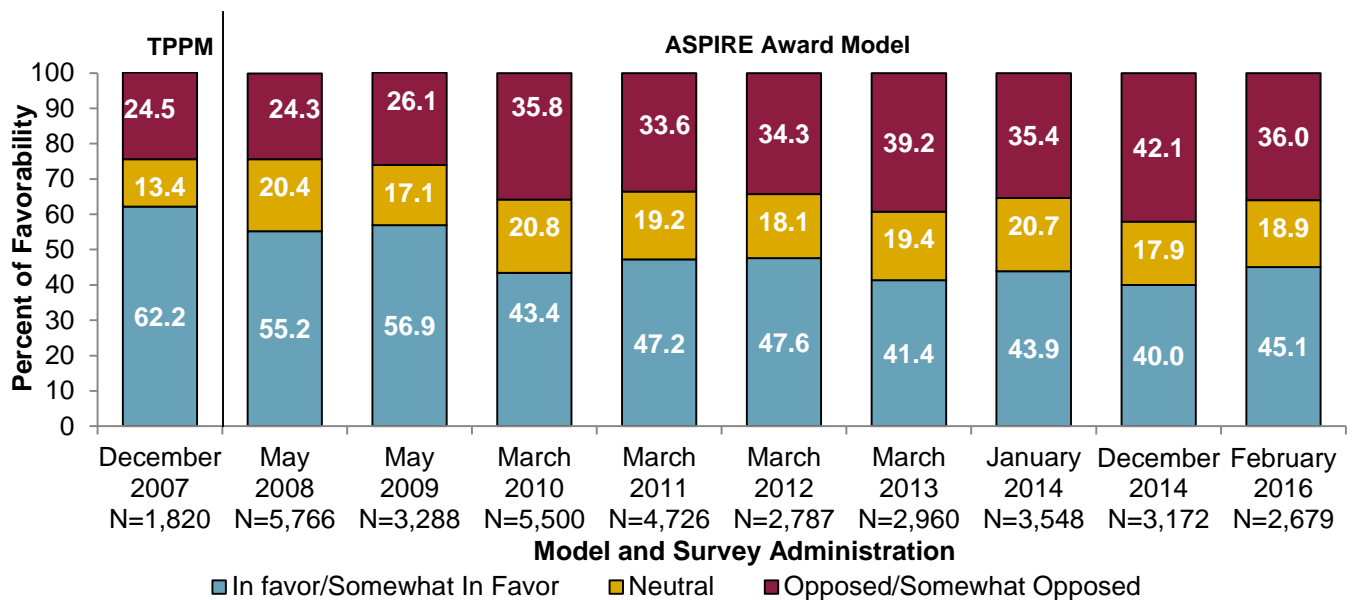
Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; TPPM Results, 2005–2006; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2013–2014

TPPM=Teacher Performance-Pay Model; Note: Over the 10-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model, and policy changes.



- When comparing survey results over the last ten years, there was an overall increase in the percent of respondents who were *somewhat opposed* or *opposed* to the concept of teacher performance pay from 18.8 percent in December 2007 to 32.3 percent in December 2014 to 26.3 percent in February 2016 (Figure 2, p. 5).
- When respondents on the December 2007 survey administration were asked how favorable they were toward the concept of teacher performance pay based on individual student growth, 62.2 percent indicated they were *in favor* or *somewhat in favor*, compared to 45.1 percent of respondents in February 2016, reflecting an increase of 5.1 percentage points from the previous year (Figure 3).
- The percentage of survey respondents indicating that they were *somewhat opposed* or *opposed* toward the concept of teacher performance pay based on individual student growth varied over the 10-year period with an overall increase from 24.5 percent in 2007 to 36.0 percent in 2016 (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Percent of respondents indicating favorability toward the concept of teacher performance pay based on individual student growth over ten years**



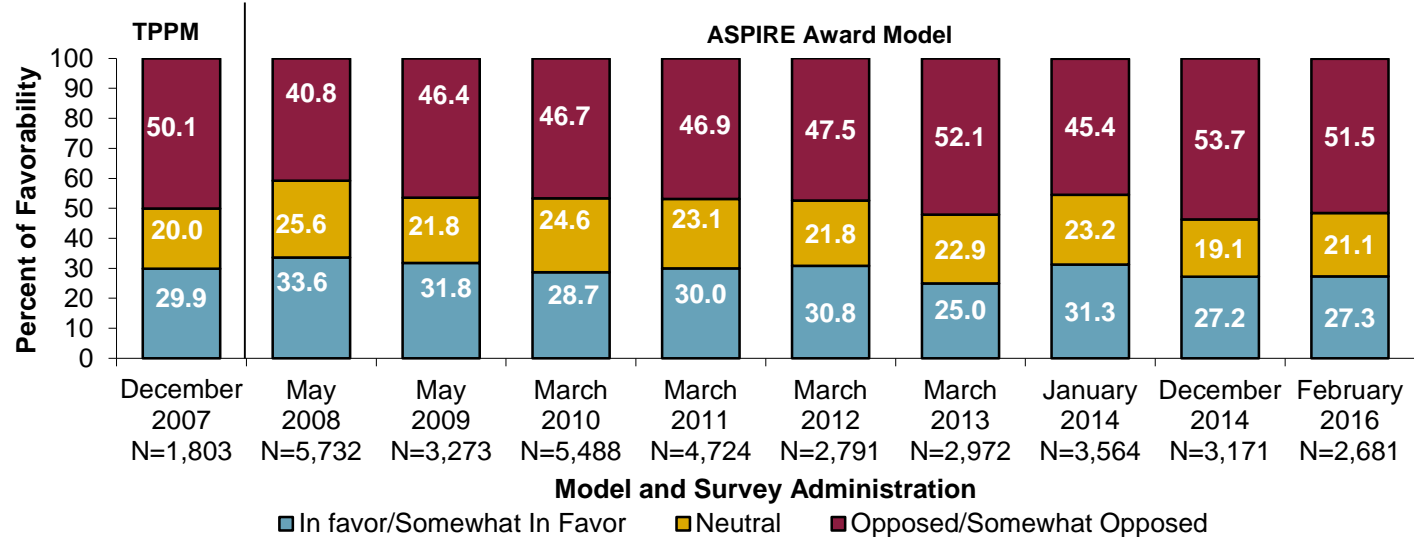
Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016 TPPM Results, 2005–2006; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2013–2014

TPPM=Teacher Performance-Pay Model; Note: Over the 10-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model, and policy changes.

- Over the past ten years, survey respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions about the concept of performance pay based on passing rates. When comparing overall survey results from December 2007 to February 2016, there was an increase in the percent of respondents indicating that they were *somewhat opposed* or *opposed* to teacher performance pay based on passing rates by 1.4 percentage points, and the majority of respondents consistently remains **opposed** to using passing rates for performance pay (Figure 4, p. 7).
- Over the past eight years, survey respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions about the concept of receiving differentiated pay as seen in Figure 5 (p. 7). The percentage of campus-based staff *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* of the concept of differentiated pay varied. Overall there was a decrease from 55.5 percent after the 2009 payout to 51.9 percent in February 2016.

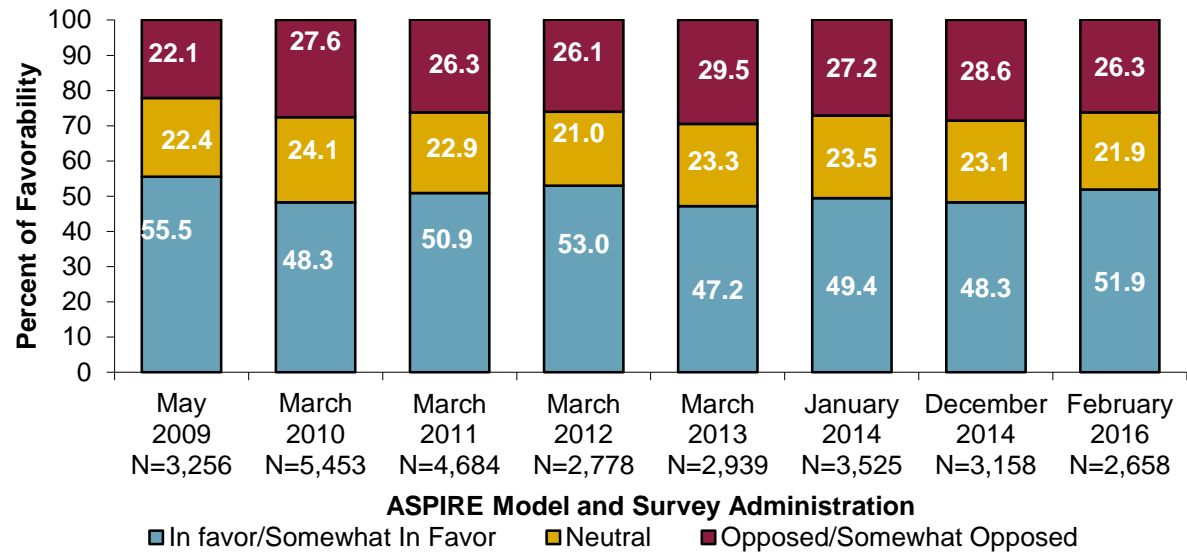
- Over the past eight years, the percent of respondents indicating that they were *opposed* or *somewhat opposed* to differentiated pay varied. Overall, there was an increase from 22.1 percent in 2009 to 26.3 percent in February 2016 which does reflect the lowest level of opposition over the last four years (Figure 5).

**Figure 4. Percent of respondents indicating favorability toward the concept of teacher performance pay based on passing rates over ten years**



Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016 TPPM Results, 2005–2006; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2013–2014  
 TPPM=Teacher Performance-Pay Model; Note: Over the 10-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model, and policy changes.

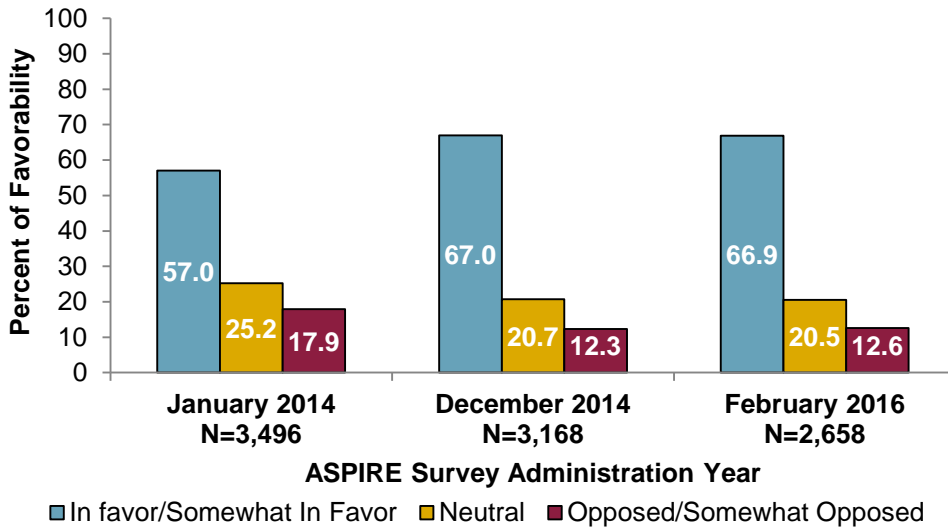
**Figure 5. Percent of respondents indicating favorability toward the concept of differentiated pay for the past eight years**



Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2007–2008 to 2013–2014  
 Note: Over the 8-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model, and policy changes.

- When comparing survey results from January 2014 to February 2016, data were collected on the favorability of respondents towards the concept of an award for educators in hard-to-staff buildings. The majority of respondents (57.0 percent, 67.0 percent, and 66.9 percent ) indicated that they were *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* of awarding an incentive to educators in hard-to-staff buildings. This item has increased in favorability by 10.0 percentage points, from 57.0 percent in January 2014 to 67.0 percent in December 2014 with essentially no change in February 2016 (**Figure 6**).

**Figure 6. Percent of respondents indicating favorability toward the concept of an award for educators in hard-to-staff building**

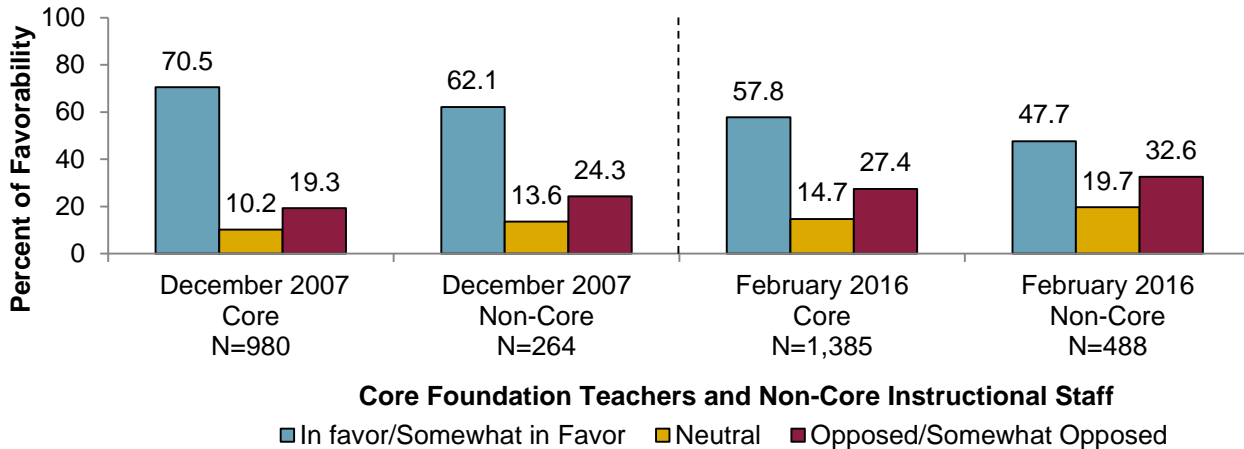


Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2013–2014 and 2014–2015  
 Note: For 2012–2013 to 2014–2015, hard-to-staff schools refer to those schools that were TEA-rated as *Improvement Required (IR)*.

- To determine whether there were differences in perceptions toward the concept of performance pay overall, comparisons were made between core foundation teachers and non-core instructional staff (December 2007 and February 2016) as summarized in **Figure 7** (p. 9). Based on results of the December 2007 survey administration, the percentage of core foundation teachers who were *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* of teacher performance pay exceeded that of non-core instructional staff by 8.4 percentage points; similarly, February 2016 survey results indicated that the percentage of core foundation teachers who were *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* of teacher performance pay exceeded that of non-core instructional staff by 10.1 percentage points. Favorable responses have decreased overall for both groups over the last nine years.
- To determine whether there were differences in perceptions toward the concept of teacher performance pay based on individual student growth, comparisons were made between core foundation teachers and non-core instructional staff through time (December 2007 and February 2016). **Figure 8** (p. 9) summarizes the results. The percentage of core foundation teachers who were *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* of teacher performance pay based on individual student growth exceeded that of non-core instructional staff by 11.6 percentage points based on December 2007 results and 10.3 percentage points based on February 2016 results.
- The percentage of non-core instructional staff that indicated they were *somewhat opposed* or *opposed* toward the concept of teacher performance pay based on individual student growth exceeded that of core

foundation teachers by 9.8 percentage points in December 2007 compared to the percentage of non-core instructional staff that exceeded core teachers by 9.3 percentage points based on February 2016 results (Figure 8).

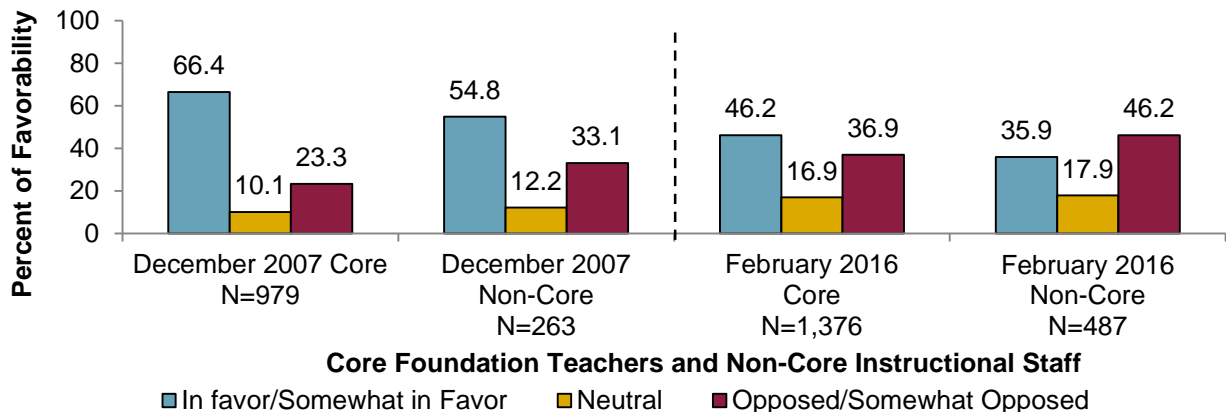
**Figure 7. Percent of respondents indicating favorability toward the concept of teacher performance pay overall by core foundation and non-core instructional staff, December 2007 and February 2016**



Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; TPPM Results, 2005–2006

Note: To make 2016 comparable to the 2007 survey administration data, non-instructional employees (ASPIRE Award Group 6 and 7) (N=322), principals (ASPIRE Award Group 1L) (N=57), and *Other* (N=155) were not included in this analysis.

**Figure 8. Percent of respondents indicating favorability toward the concept of teacher performance pay based on individual student growth by core foundation and non-core instructional staff, December 2007 and February 2016**



Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; TPPM Results, 2005–2006

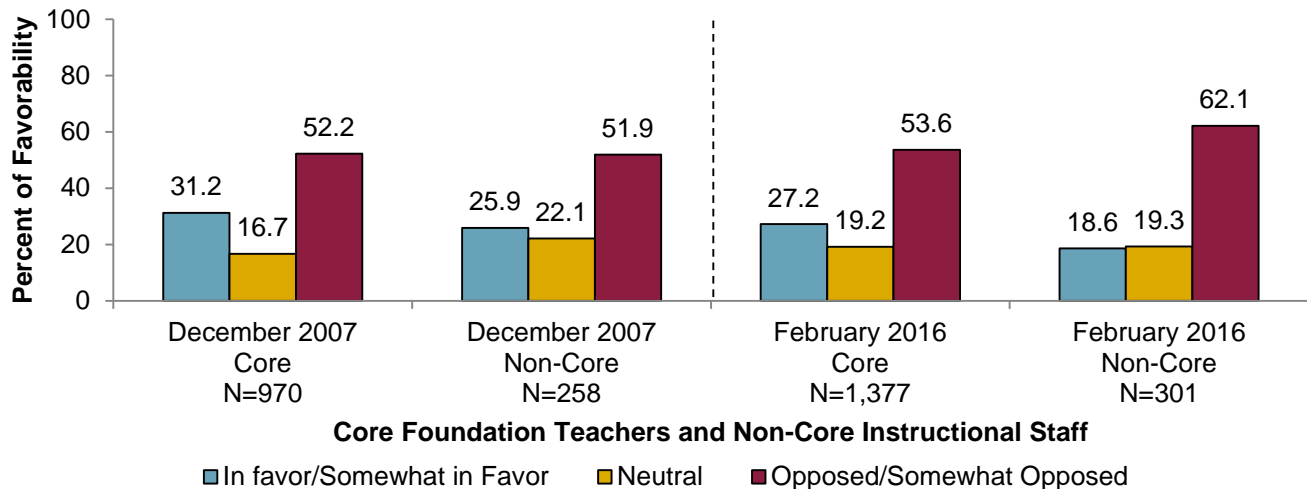
Note: To make 2014 comparable to the 2007 survey administration data, non-instructional employees (ASPIRE Award Groups 6 and 7) (N=326) and principals (ASPIRE Award Group 1L) (N=56) and *Other* (N=342) were not included in this analysis.

- To determine whether there were differences in perceptions between core foundation teachers and non-core instructional staff over time regarding favorability toward the concept of teacher performance pay based on passing rates, comparisons were made using results from the December 2007 survey administration and the February 2016 survey administration. **Figure 9** (p. 10) summarizes the results.

The percent of core foundation teachers who were *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* of teacher performance pay based on passing rates only exceeded that of non-core instructional staff by 5.3 percentage points in December 2007 increasing to a difference of 8.6 percentage points in February 2016 (Figure 9).

- Approximately 52 percent of core foundation teachers and non-core instructional staff indicated that they were *somewhat opposed* or *opposed* toward the concept of teacher performance pay based on passing rates for the December 2007 survey administration which increased to 53.6 percent of core foundation teachers and 62.1 percent of non-core instructional staff based on survey results from the February 2016 administration (Figure 9).

**Figure 9. Percent of respondents indicating favorability toward the concept of teacher performance pay based on passing rates by core foundation and non-core instructional staff, December 2007 and February 2016**



Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

Note: To make 2014 comparable to the 2007 survey administration data, non-instructional employees (ASPIRE Award Groups 6 and 7) (N=328 and Principals (ASPIRE Award Group 1L) (N=56) and *Other* (N=158) were not included in this analysis.

- Appendix A** (p. 30) compares differences in perceptions toward the concept of teacher performance pay overall by eligibility category (February 2016). Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 71.9 percent of principals indicated they were *somewhat in favor* or *in favor* toward the concept of teacher performance pay, reflecting the highest level of agreement of all the eligibility categories. This was followed by assistant principals/deans at 61.9 percent, and Group 1 Teachers with an EVAAS® Report at 60.4 percent.
- Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 37.4 percent of elective/ancillary teachers indicated that they were *somewhat opposed* or *opposed* toward the concept of teacher performance pay, reflecting the highest level of disagreement to the statement.
- For those respondents that reported they were Not Eligible to receive an ASPIRE award, 44.2 percent were *somewhat in favor* or *in favor* and 35.2 percent were *somewhat opposed* or *opposed* toward the concept of teacher performance pay, reflecting less positive perceptions than eligible core foundation teachers.
- Appendix B** (p. 31) summarizes the results by eligibility category regarding perceptions towards the concept of teacher performance pay based on individual student growth, **Appendix C** (p. 32) summarizes

the results by eligibility category regarding perceptions towards the concept of teacher performance pay based on passing rates only, and **Appendix D** (p. 33) summarizes the results by eligibility category regarding perceptions towards the concept of differentiated pay based on the February 2016 survey administration.

- Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 71.4 percent of principals and 52.5 percent of assistant principals/deans of instruction indicated they were *somewhat in favor* or *in favor* toward the concept of teacher performance pay based on individual student growth, reflecting the highest levels of agreement of all the eligibility categories (Appendix B, p. 31).
- Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 52.9 percent of elective/ancillary teachers and 43.0 percent of core teachers, grades 3–12 without an EVAAS®, indicated that they were *opposed* or *somewhat opposed* toward the concept of teacher performance pay based on individual student growth (Appendix B).
- Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 33.9 percent of principals and 18.5 percent of elective/ancillary teachers indicated they were *somewhat in favor* or *in favor* toward the concept of teacher performance pay based on individual passing rates, reflecting the highest and lowest levels of agreement, respectively, of all the eligibility categories based on February 2016 results (Appendix C, p. 32).
- Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 64.3 percent of assistant principals/deans of instruction and 31.9 percent of operational support staff indicated that they were *opposed* or *somewhat opposed* toward the concept of teacher performance pay based on passing rates, reflecting the highest and lowest levels of disagreement, respectively, of all of the eligibility categories (Appendix C).
- Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 70.9 percent of principals indicated they were *somewhat in favor* or *in favor* toward the concept of differentiated pay, reflecting the highest level of agreement of all the eligibility categories. This was followed by assistant principals/deans of instruction at 58.5 percent. Operational support staff and elective/ancillary teachers had the lowest levels of agreement with only 38.9 percent and 39.8 percent, respectively, *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* (Appendix D).
- Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 43.7 percent of elective/ancillary teachers indicated that they were *somewhat opposed* or *opposed* toward the concept of differentiated pay, reflecting the highest level of disagreement to the statement (Appendix D).

#### What were the perceptions of respondents regarding their level of agreement to specific instructional practices or behaviors encouraged by the ASPIRE Award program or practiced over the past several years?

- Over the past six years, respondents were asked whether the ASPIRE Award encouraged specific behaviors. **Table 6** (p. 25) compares the responses for four items to the baseline year. The largest percentage of respondents in 2009 indicated that they *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that the ASPIRE Award encouraged them to *continue teaching in the classroom* (47.9 percent), *remain working in HISD* (44.0 percent) (baseline year is 2012), and that the ASPIRE Award encouraged them to *come to work on a daily basis* (47.0 percent). These percentages decreased to 42.0 percent, 42.1 percent, and 42.1 percent, respectively in February 2016 survey data.

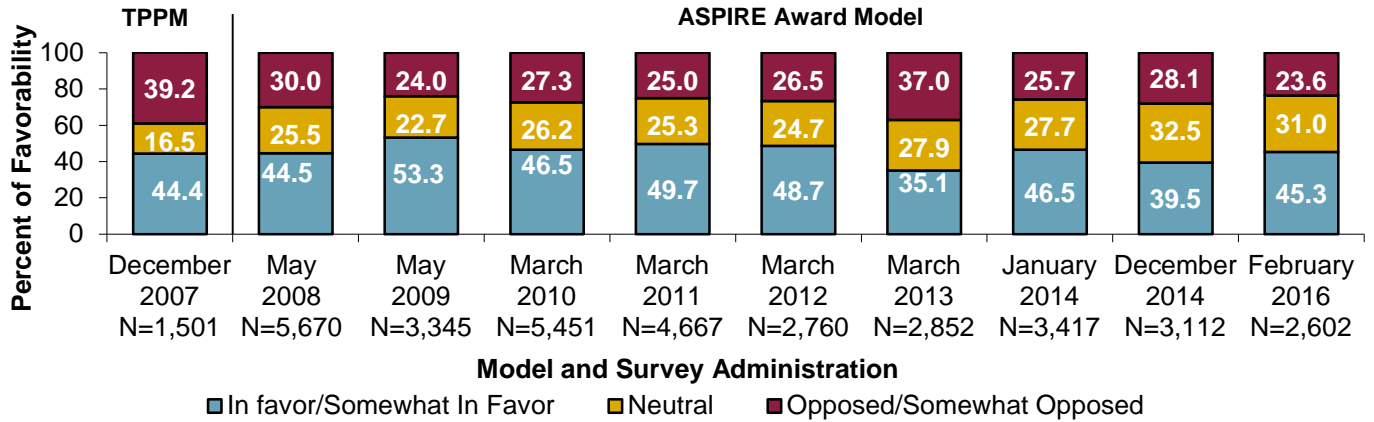
- Based on survey data collected in February 2016, the largest percentage of respondents indicated that over the past several years, they *collaborated with my colleagues* (72.9 percent) *Always* (Table 7, p. 26).
- Based on survey data collected in February 2016, 7.3 percent of respondents indicated that they *never used value-added data to make instructional decisions*, compared to 41.3 percent who *always used value-added data to make instructional decisions* (Table 7).

#### What were the perceptions and level of understanding of respondents regarding the Teacher Performance-Pay Model (TPPM) and ASPIRE Award program?

- **Figure 10** (p. 13) summarizes the perceptions of respondents towards the respective performance-pay models through time. When comparing the percentage of respondents that indicated they were *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* toward the 2005–2006 Teacher-Performance Pay Model and to the specific ASPIRE Award program for that year, it was first reported at 44.4 percent (December 2007 survey administration), reached a peak of 53.3 percent in 2009, and was most recently reported at 45.3 percent (February 2016 survey administration). Although performance has varied over the ten-year period, the percentage of respondents *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* of the performance-pay model has been less than 50 percent with the exception of the May 2009 survey administration.
- When comparing survey results which occurred after each payout with the exception of the last three years, the percentage of respondents that indicated they were *somewhat opposed* or *opposed* toward the 2005–2006 Teacher Performance-Pay Model and/or to the ASPIRE Award program paid out that year decreased by 15.6 percentage points over a ten-year period, from 39.2 percent to 23.6 percent for the most current program (Figure 10).
- **Figure 11** (p. 13) summarizes the results regarding the level of understanding respondents indicated toward the ASPIRE award models for each of the last eight years.
- When comparing survey results from May 2008 to February 2016, the percentage of respondents that indicated their level of understanding of the ASPIRE Award program was *very low* or *low*, varied over time. Approximately 32 percent of respondents reported their level of understanding as *very low* or *low* in March 2010, reflecting the lowest levels of understanding. On the other hand, in March 2011, 39.7 percent of respondents reported having a *very high* or *high* level of understanding of the ASPIRE Award program (Figure 11). With the latest survey administration, 80.4 percent of respondents indicated at least a sufficient level of understanding of the ASPIRE Award program.

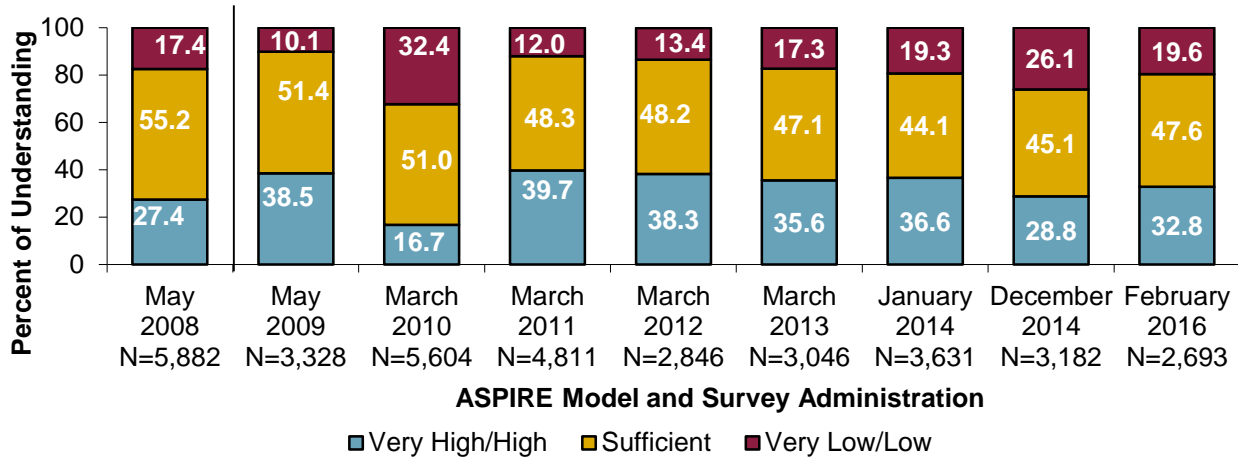


**Figure 10. Percent of survey respondents' favorability toward the performance-pay model paid out that year**



Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; TPPM Results, 2005–2006; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2013–2014  
 TPPM=Teacher Performance-Pay Model; Note: Over the 10-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model and policy changes.

**Figure 11. Percent of survey respondents' level of understanding of the performance-pay model paid out that year**



Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2013–2014  
 Note: Over the 9-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model and policy changes.

- To determine whether there were differences in perceptions regarding the level of understanding toward ASPIRE, comparisons by eligibility category for ASPIRE February 2016 respondents are summarized in **Appendix E** (p. 34). Based on respondent data from the nine eligibility categories, principals and assistant principals indicated having a *very high/high* level of understanding (64.9 percent and 57.1 percent, respectively) compared to core teachers, elective/ancillary teachers, instructional support staff, teaching assistants, operational support staff, and those indicating *Other* or that they were Not Eligible to receive an ASPIRE award (ranging from 21.2 percent for Operational Support Staff to 40.9 percent for Elective/Ancillary teachers).
- On the February 2016 survey, 27.2 percent of respondents that indicated they were *Other* as well as 24.3 percent of respondents that indicated they were Not Eligible to receive an award perceived their level of

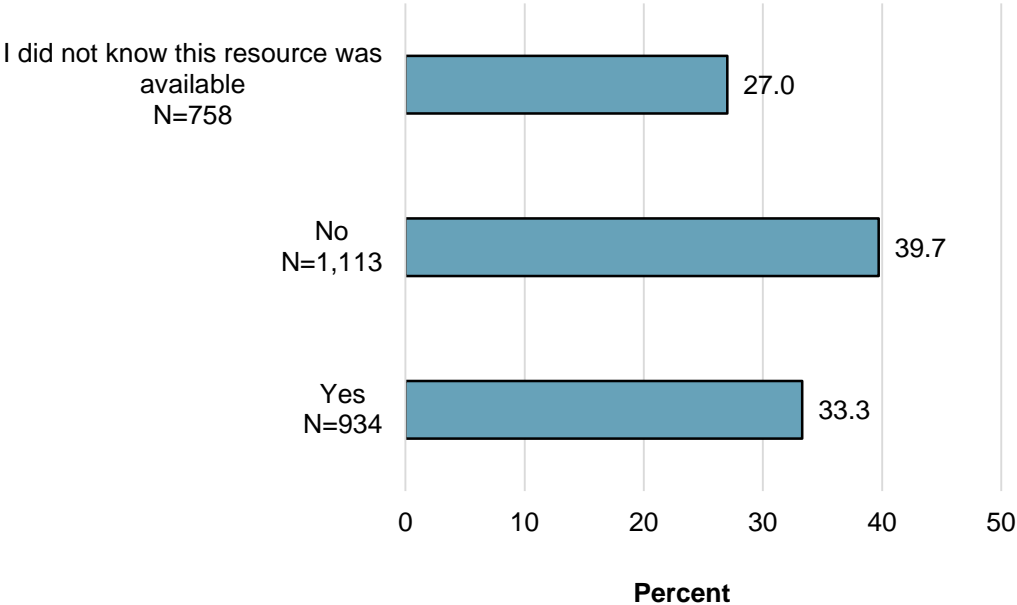


understanding of the ASPIRE Award program as *very low* or *low*, reflecting the greatest lack of understanding for ASPIRE survey respondents (Appendix E, p. 34).

**What percentage of respondents watched Value-Added/EVAAS learning modules, and what was the level of understanding?**

- A major component of the ASPIRE Award is the value-added metric, EVAAS, measuring student growth using standardized assessments. **Figure 12** provides a comparison of the percent of respondents who watched at least one Value-Added/EVAAS Learning Module in the past 12 months. Out of 2,805 respondents, 33.3 indicated *Yes*, 39.7 percent responded *No*, and 27.0 percent indicated that *they did not know this resource was available*.

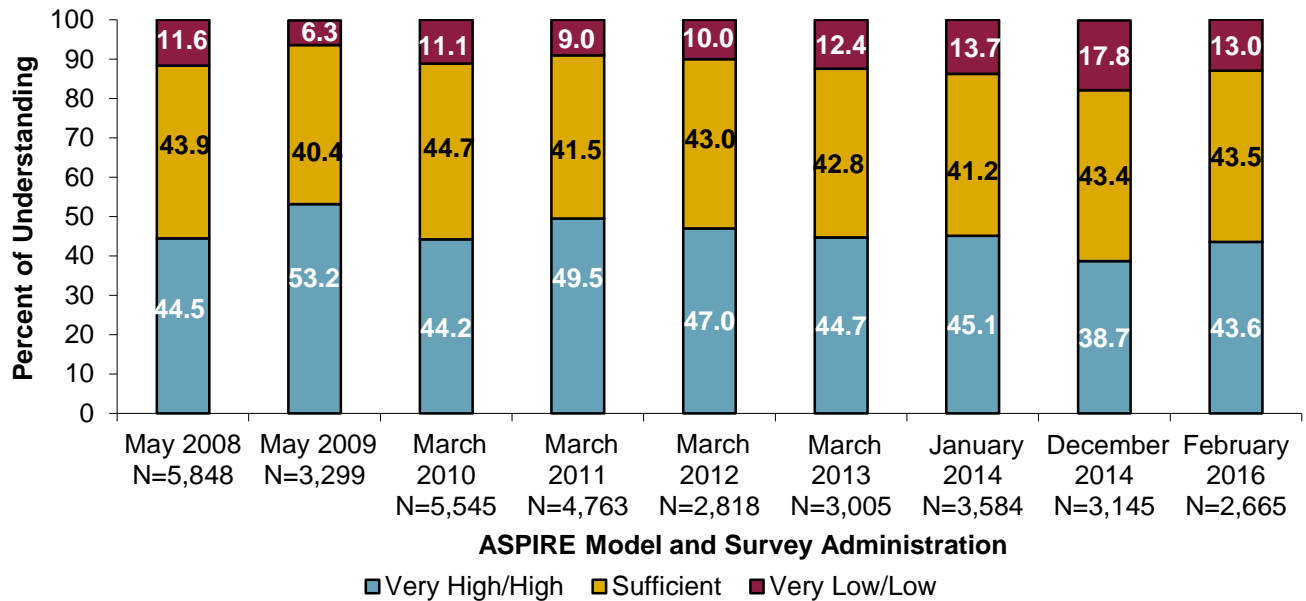
**Figure 12. Percent of survey respondents watching value-added learning modules, February 2016**



Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016:

- When comparing the perceptions of respondents from May 2008 to February 2016, there was less than one percentage point decrease (44.5 percent and 43.6 percent) regarding respondents that rated their level of understanding of the difference between student achievement and academic progress as *very high* or *high*. (**Figure 13**, p. 15). Eighty-seven percent indicated their level of understanding was at least sufficient, up from 82 percent in the prior year.
- Over the past nine years, the percent of respondents who rated their level of understanding of the difference between student achievement and academic progress as *very low* or *low* has varied over time, ranging from 6.3 percent in May 2009 to 17.8 percent in December 2014 (Figure 13).

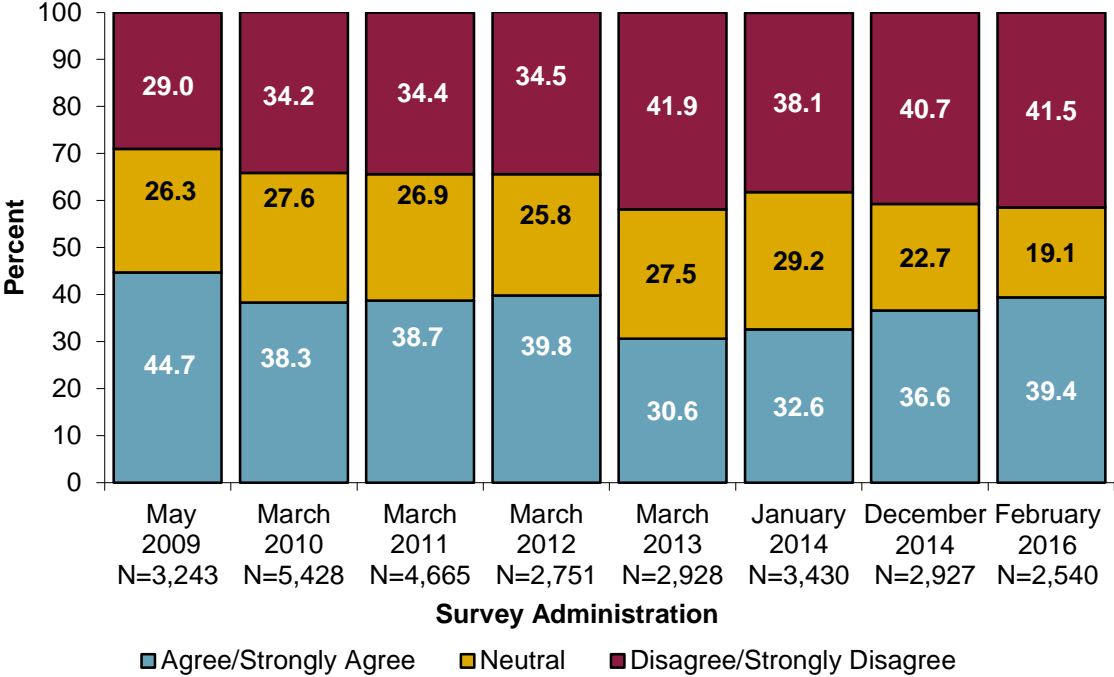
**Figure 13. Percent of respondents indicating their level of understanding of the difference between student achievement and academic progress over nine years**



Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2013–2014  
 Note: Over the 9-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model and policy changes

- On the May 2008 ASPIRE Award survey, there were seven items that were designed to determine the level of understanding for different training components related to the ASPIRE Award. **Table 8** (p. 26) depicts the comparison of the baseline data collected in May 2008 with data collected in February 2016.
- The percentage of respondents indicating a *high/very high* level of understanding increased for three of the seven components. However, February 2016 had less than half of the number of respondents compared to 2008 (Table 8).
- Based on survey data collected in May 2008 and February 2016, the training component for which the largest percentage of respondents indicated, in both years, a *very low* or *low* level of understanding focused on *how the ASPIRE Awards were calculated/determined* (33.9 percent and 40.3 percent, respectively) (Table 8).
- One question asked respondents whether they perceived a connection between classroom instruction and performance-pay results. **Figure 14** (p. 16) compares the percent of respondents from the past eight years' surveys. Based on the May 2009 and December 2014 survey results, there was a decrease in the percentage of survey respondents who *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that there was a connection between classroom instruction and ASPIRE Award results (44.7 percent and 39.4 percent, respectively), although the 2016 rate is the highest in the last four years.
- For the 2009 survey, 29.0 percent of the respondents *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* with the statement that there was a connection between classroom instruction and ASPIRE Award results; however, this increased to 41.5 percent on the February 2016 survey (Figure 14). Nevertheless, these results showed slight improvements from the March 2013 responses.

**Figure 14. Percent of respondents indicating a connection between classroom instruction and ASPIRE Award results over eight years**

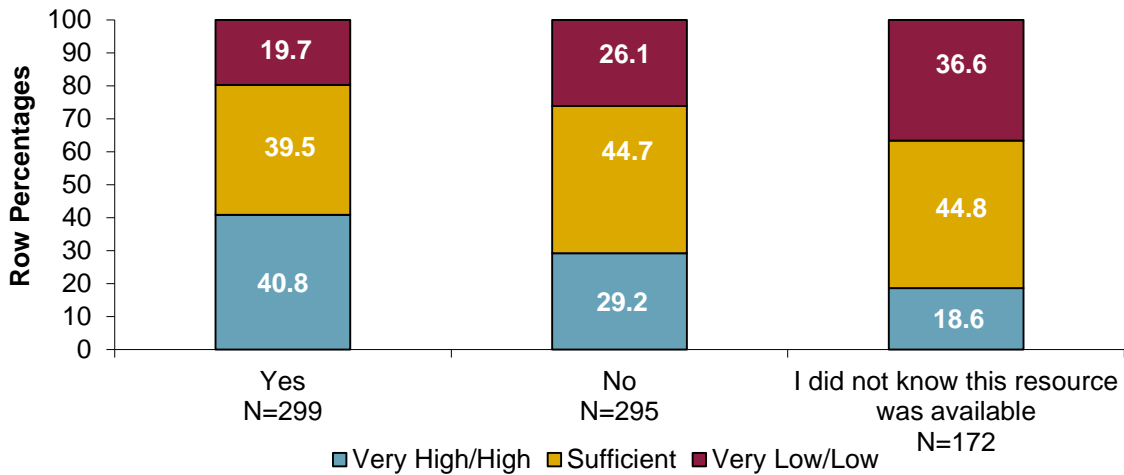


Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2007–2008 to 2013–2014

Note: Over the 8-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model and policy changes

- A cross tabulation was conducted to determine whether there were differences in the level of understanding of value-added analysis who reported they were Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–10 with EVAAS® who reported watching value-added analysis learning modules and those that reported not watching or not aware of the resource. **Figure 15** (p. 17) summarizes the results.
- For the February 2016 survey administration, a higher percentage of respondents who watched the value-added analysis learning modules training reported a *high* or *very high* understanding of value-added analysis compared to those who did not watch the value-added learning modules or who were unaware of the resource (40.8 percent, 29.2 percent, and 18.6, respectively) (Figure 15).
- For February 2016 administration, 80.3 percent of respondents who watched the value-added analysis learning modules reported a *sufficient* or higher understanding of value-added analysis compared to those who did not watch the value-added training at 73.9 or who were unaware of the resource at 63.4 percent (Figure 15).

**Figure 15. Cross tabulation summarizing the percent of respondents indicating their level of understanding of value-added analysis and attending value-added training, February 2016**



Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

Note: Items that were skipped were coded as missing data and not included in the analysis.

**What were the perceptions of respondents regarding their level of compensation and the ASPIRE Award Model?**

- There were seven items that were designed to examine the perceptions of respondents regarding the amount of money awarded and the ASPIRE model. The results from 2010 and 2016 (most recent) are summarized in **Table 9** (p. 27).
- On the 2010 and 2016 survey administrations, the statement for which the largest percentage of respondents indicated *strongly agree* or *agree* centered on *continuing the ASPIRE Award and modifying the model on an annual basis* (48.7 percent and 56.8 percent, respectively) (Table 9).
- For the February 2016 administration, a higher percentage of respondents *strongly disagreed* or *disagreed* that their *maximum award amount was commensurate with their professional contribution* (50.5 percent) compared to 19.5 percent who were *neutral* and 30.1 percent who *agreed* or *strongly agreed* (Table 9). It should be noted that due to budget cuts the maximum award amounts have decreased over the last two years.
- Perceptions on the money awarded and the ASPIRE Award model from 2010 to 2016 became more positive on all seven items (Table 9).
- To determine whether there were differences in perceptions about the connection between classroom instruction and performance pay results, comparisons were made by eligibility category and respondents who indicated they were not eligible as summarized in **Appendix F** (p. 35).
- For February 2016, the percentage of teaching assistants who *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that there was a connection between classroom instruction and the ASPIRE Award results (60.5 percent) exceeded employees in all other categories (Appendix F).

- The highest percentage of respondents that *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* that there was a connection between classroom instruction and the ASPIRE Award results was from elective/ancillary teachers (59.6 percent) (Appendix F, p. 35).
- To determine whether there were differences in perceptions regarding the maximum award amount reflecting adequate recognition for efforts to increase student progress, comparisons were made by eligibility category and respondents who indicated they were not eligible or *Other* as summarized in **Appendix G** (p. 36).
- For February 2016, 55.2 percent of teaching assistants, *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that their maximum ASPIRE Award adequately recognized their efforts to increase student progress, reflecting the highest levels of agreement compared to the remaining eligibility categories and for those respondents indicating they were not eligible to receive an award or *Other* (Appendix G).
- For February 2016, 64.5 percent of elective/ancillary teachers and 63.5 percent of instructional support staff and core teachers, grades 3–12 without EVAAS, indicated that they *strongly disagreed* or *disagreed* that their maximum ASPIRE Award adequately recognized their efforts to increase student progress (Appendix G).
- To determine whether differences existed with regard to the statement, *the maximum award amount for my ASPIRE Award category is commensurate with my professional contribution*, comparisons were made by eligibility category and for those respondents that indicated they were not eligible to receive an award or *Other*. **Appendix H** (p. 37) summarizes the results.
- For February 2016, 53.8 percent of teaching assistants *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that their maximum ASPIRE Award was commensurate with their professional contribution, reflecting the highest levels of agreement compared to the remaining eligibility categories and those respondents indicating they were not eligible to receive an award or *Other* (Appendix H).
- On the February 2016 survey administration, 70.4 percent of principals and 70.3 percent of instructional support staff indicated that they *strongly disagreed* or *disagreed* that their maximum ASPIRE Award was commensurate with their professional contribution, reflecting the highest levels of disagreement compared to the remaining eligibility categories and those respondents indicating they were not eligible to receive an award or *Other* (Appendix H).
- To determine whether there were differences in perceptions indicating favorability toward the concept of an award for educators in hard-to-staff buildings, comparisons were made by eligibility category and respondents who indicated they were not eligible or *Other* as summarized in **Appendix I** (p. 38).
- On the February 2016 survey administration, the majority of all eligibility categories as well as those that indicated they were not eligible to receive an award or *Other* indicated that they *strongly agreed* or *agreed* toward the concept of an award for educators in hard-to-staff buildings. Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 with EVAAS® had the highest percentage with 70.4 percent (Appendix I).

#### What was the level of effectiveness for communicating information about the ASPIRE Award?

- For the May 2009 and subsequent survey administrations, there were ten items for which respondents rated the level of effectiveness regarding communication about the ASPIRE Award. Two of the ten items were added to the 2012 survey, and one item was added to the 2013 survey regarding effective communication. The responses are summarized in **Table 10** (p. 28) using the item development as the baseline year.

- When comparing results from baseline to February 2016, nine of the ten areas of communication showed increases. *Knowing when specific information about my ASPIRE Award was available* reflected the area of communication for which respondents indicated the highest increase for effectiveness, increasing from 32.7 percent very effective in 2009 to 41.8 percent in 2016 (Table 10, p. 28).
- The areas for which the highest percentage of respondents perceived communications to be *not effective* focused on *providing clear explanations about comparative growth calculations* (22.1 percent), and *providing clear explanations about value-added calculations* (23.5 percent). There was a decrease in *very effective communication* for *providing clear explanations about value-added calculations* by 0.5 percentage point when comparing it to baseline data, but an increase of 5.1 percentage points for comparative growth communications (Table 10).
- On the February 2016 survey, five questions were designed to determine how the respondents received specific types of communication. The results are summarized in **Table 11** (p. 28).
- Based on the results of the February 2016 survey, 90.5 percent of respondents reported the *ASPIRE e-mail* as reflecting the highest percentage when compared to the other four methods used to communicate information about the ASPIRE Award program. This was followed by the *ASPIRE eNEWS* (74.5 percent) (Table 11).
- When comparing whether respondents received/used any of the five different methods for communicating information about the ASPIRE Award program, 19.0 percent of respondents indicated *Not Sure* regarding *Academic Services Memos*, the highest percentage for this category (Table 11).

### What were the recommendations for changing the 2014–2015 ASPIRE Award suggested by respondents?

- Out of a total of 3,049 respondents on the February 2016 survey, 1,520 or 49.8 percent of the respondents provided at least one response for recommending changes to the 2014–2015 ASPIRE Award, whereas 50.2 percent of respondents did not provide any responses. **Table 12** (p. 29) summarizes the frequency and percent of responses.
- A total of 3.0 percent and 3.8 percent of the 2,529 responses reflected that no changes were needed to the model or the response was simply, *No Comment*. The top six emergent categories reflected 57.6 percent of the responses (Table 12).
- Approximately 15 percent of the respondents wanted to have the same earning opportunity as a core teacher with EVAAS®, or stated that their maximum award wasn't commensurate with their professional contribution (Table 12).
- Twelve percent of respondents indicated that they would like changes in the eligibility and categorization rules (i.e. food service and custodial personnel should be eligible; change absence rules, and reinstitute the attendance bonus) (Table 12).
- Eleven percent of respondents suggested making the model equitable, fair, transparent, inclusive, with clear expectations so that all employees were treated equally, compensated equally, and/or had the opportunity to receive the same amount of award as the top dollar earners. Elective/ancillary teachers, special education teachers, early childhood through grade 2, instructional support (i.e. counselors, librarians, and literacy coach), teaching assistants, and operational support staff (i.e. registrars, computer network specialists, and attendance specialists) were not eligible to receive the same level of compensation as core teachers with an EVAAS report. They felt "de-valued" by the way the model was designed. Some respondents indicated that the differences in eligibility and compensation were divisive

for campuses. Moreover, respondents indicated that student success was a team effort, but the contribution of the team was not being equally valued for all members (Table 12, p. 29).

- Seven percent of respondents indicated how they wanted to measure growth or achievement for the award. For example, one respondent stated, “I would give grade level or schoolwide incentives rather than individual incentives (Table 12).”
- Approximately seven percent of the responses focused on the allocation of money. Respondents indicated that the money should be reallocated for student scholarships, smaller classes, better equipment, more tutors, school materials for students, clothes for students, attendance incentives for students, and to increase the base pay. Some respondents indicated that STAAR teachers or teachers in tested grade levels, teachers working in hard-to-staff schools and teachers providing instruction to low-income students and/or at-risk students should receive more money. Alternatively, respondents indicated that elective/ancillary teachers, special education teachers, Career and Technology teachers, librarians, nurses, early childhood teachers to grade 2 teachers (Group 2) should receive more money. Some respondents indicated that administrators should not receive any performance-pay money, their performance pay should be capped, or indicated that payouts for administrators were disproportionate in comparison to payouts for teachers. (Table 12).
- A total of 156 responses or 6.2 percent of respondents were concerned about using other performance measures or criteria. These included those teachers working in hard-to-staff buildings (state-rated Improvement Required), the number of highly effective teachers on a campus, home visits, working with students with special needs, advanced degrees, and years of experience, time given for tutoring, and sponsoring a club (Table 12).

## Discussion

The purpose of the 2014–2015 ASPIRE Award Survey was to gain insight regarding the level of knowledge and perceptions of Houston Independent School District (HISD) teachers and staff after ten years of implementation of growth-based performance pay in HISD, as well as their perceptions regarding the overall concept of performance pay. Additionally, participants had the opportunity to provide recommendations for making changes to the current model. This annual survey serves as a mechanism to gather valuable feedback from program participants.

External factors, such as policy decisions, roll-out of a new model, or roll-out of any new model component, budget cuts, and changes in senior leadership, may have influenced perceptions of growth-based performance pay since its inception. Although survey administrations typically followed the ASPIRE Award payout with the exception of the December 2014 survey administration when it was concurrent with the inquiry period, and February 2016 when it was simultaneous with payout, it is important to understand that eleven months had elapsed from the time of payout until the first survey administration (December 2007). Changes were instituted in the pay for performance model, communication about the model was enhanced, and training on the new model had commenced. Therefore, perceptions about the 2005–2006 Teacher Performance-Pay Model (TPPM) may have been influenced by anticipating these positive changes.

On February 12, 2010 the Board of Education approved using value-added data as the 34th criterion to evaluate teacher effectiveness. Questions and uncertainties arose regarding the impact of this policy for teachers. When the 2008–2009 ASPIRE Award Survey was launched on February 23, 2010, amid this policy change, sufficient time had not elapsed to fully address questions or correct misconceptions. It is highly likely that the climate of concern that was evident among teachers during that time impacted their responses to the survey items. This is apparent in the decreases across the board in almost all items from 2009 to 2010.



During the spring of 2011, budgetary shortfalls at the state level may have impacted perceptions and response rates during survey administration. Campuses were required to develop different budgetary plans, depending on the estimated shortfall in state funding that would result in the reduction in campus staff. Although final announcements were not made until April, an environment of speculation and uncertainty developed throughout all levels of the district. Moreover, budget shortfalls have again occurred during the most current survey administration.

There have been four key areas that have shown mixed results over the past four to ten years. First, the response rates have varied over time, but over the past three years it has declined from 25.7 percent in January 2014 to 19.9 percent in February 2016. The response rate is low and caution is warranted in interpreting the data.

Another key area, support for the program, showed mixed results over the ten-year period. Although the majority of campus based staff indicated they were *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* of the concept of teacher performance pay overall, less than half of respondents have been *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* of the specific award model for that year when comparing results over the ten-year period.

A related measure, support for the concept of differentiated pay, showed mixed results. Baseline data were collected during the May 2009 survey administration. Approximately 56.0 percent of respondents indicated they were *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* of differentiated pay in 2009. This rate fluctuated from 47.2 percent to 53.0 percent and most recently at 51.9 percent.

The final key area centered on training sessions for value-added analysis. Historically, training courses have been offered on-line so that staff could complete the modules at their own pace. In addition, face-to-face training sessions were held around the district, and video tutorials were offered to help teachers avoid travel and to be archived for future use. For the 2014–2015 school year, 33.3 percent of respondents indicated that they watched at least one of the Learning Modules on the SAS EVAAS® site in the last twelve months.

Collecting feedback about effective communications was undertaken over the past seven years to identify areas for improvement as well as areas that were effective. Based on survey results from 2009 to 2016, there was an increase in effectiveness in nine of the ten areas for which data were available, including two of the three newly added items, *providing clear explanations about the award model*, and *providing clear explanations about comparative growth calculations*. As value-added data will now factor into all core teachers' appraisals, clear communication as well as effective training concerning them is a priority.

When looking at the respondents by eligibility category, differences exist regarding how the ASPIRE Award program is perceived and the level of knowledge concerning the program. Administrators, such as principals and assistant principals/deans of instruction, indicate favorable perceptions concerning performance pay and their level of knowledge.

Core foundation teachers have more positive perceptions than elective/ancillary teachers with two exceptions. Elective/ancillary teachers indicated that they had higher levels of knowledge regarding the ASPIRE Award program than core foundation teachers (Groups 1–3) and elective/ancillary teachers had more positive perceptions about their efforts to increase student progress than core foundation teachers, group 3. The differences in perceptions between core foundation teachers and non-core instructional staff have declined through time when looking at favorability in performance pay, student growth, and passing rates.

For a performance pay system to be sustainable, the incentive amount has to be meaningful to all participants. Participants were asked whether their maximum award amount was commensurate with their professional contribution and teaching assistants indicated the highest percent for any category at 53.8 percent. Of the nine eligibility categories, instructional support staff and elective/ancillary teachers had the lowest level of agreement with regard to their maximum award amounts being commensurate with their professional contribution at 16.6 percent and 14.1 percent, respectively. For those respondents that indicated they were



not eligible to receive an award, only 22.4 percent *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that their maximum ASPIRE Award amount was commensurate with their professional contribution. On the 2016 survey, allocation of funding reflected one of the top emergent categories and one of the recommended changes to the ASPIRE Award model included responses about increasing the award amount.

The survey administered after each payout has served as a vehicle for respondents to recommend changes to the current model. Feedback is particularly valued to improve the ASPIRE Award program. Input varied from comments such as: "Get rid of EVAAS and value-added component of the program. It is confusing and unfair!" "Changes to the program: Distribute equally the same amount of award to all teachers at the same campus. One teacher cannot do this work alone in the time span of one school year." "Currently, I think the ASPIRE Award Program model is excellent. At this particular time, I would not change anything. However, I would like the maximum amount to be \$13,000 like it was initially."

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**Table 1. Ten Year Summary of Survey Response Rates by Pay for Performance Model**

<b>Model and Year</b>	<b>Date of Survey Administration</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Sample</b>	<b># of Respondents</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>
2005–2006 TPPM	December 2007	16,296	-	1,851	11.4
2006–2007 ASPIRE Award	May 2008	16,504	-	6,383	38.7
2007–2008 ASPIRE Award	May 2009	16,907	8,073	4,102	50.8
2008–2009 ASPIRE Award	March 2010	19,312	-	7,284	37.7
2009–2010 ASPIRE Award	March 2011	20,048	-	6,083	30.3
2010–2011 ASPIRE Award	March 2012	18,747	-	3,441	18.4
2011–2012 ASPIRE Award	March 2013	19,072	-	3,603	18.9
2012–2013 ASPIRE Award	January 2014	18,269	-	4,689	25.7
2013–2014 ASPIRE Award	December 2014	18,364	-	4,031	22.0
2014–2015 ASPIRE Award	February 2016	17,109	-	3,409	19.9

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; TPPM Results, 2005–2006; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2013–2014

**Table 2. Number and Percent of ASPIRE Award Survey Respondents by Categorization and Program Year**

<b>Category</b>	<b>2013–2014</b>		<b>2014–2015</b>	
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Group 1, Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/EVAAS	881	29.6	846	30.8
Group 2, Core Teacher PK–2	535	18.0	448	16.3
Group 3, Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o EVAAS	312	10.5	225	8.2
Group 4, Elective/Ancillary Teacher	356	12.0	283	10.3
Group 5, Instructional Support	259	8.7	206	7.5
Group 6, Teaching Assistant	236	7.9	227	8.3
Group 7, Operational Support	249	8.4	204	7.4
Group 1L, Principals	74	2.5	62	2.3
Group 2L, Assistant Principals/Deans of Instruction	70	2.4	46	1.7
Other	-	-	200	7.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,972</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>2,747</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2013–2014

**Table 3. Background Characteristics of 2014–2015 ASPIRE Award Survey Respondents**

	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Highest Degree Held</b>		
High School	149	4.4
Some College	271	8.0
Associate's Degree	127	3.7
Bachelor's Degree	1,169	34.5
Some Graduate School	413	12.2
Master's Degree	1,178	34.7
Doctoral Degree	86	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,393</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Average experience in HISD		12.1
Average experience at current campus		8.2

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

**Table 4. Number and Percent of Respondents Employed in HISD, Eligibility Status, Award Status, and Individual (Group 1) Award Status**

Item	N	Yes	No	I am not a Group 1 Teacher	
				Don't Know	
Were you employed in the Houston Independent School District during the 2014–2015 school year?	3,324	89.9	10.1	-	-
Were you eligible to receive an ASPIRE Award for the 2014–2015 school year?	2,851	75.2	14.8	-	10.0
Will you receive an ASPIRE Award for the 2014–2015 school year (to be paid out in February 2016)?	2,861	61.5	38.5	-	
If you were a core teacher with an EVAAS® report, will you receive an individual performance ASPIRE Award?	1,619	35.7	11.6	52.7	

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

**Table 5. Teaching in a Critical Shortage Area: Response Count and Response Percentage, February, 2016**

Critical Shortage Area	N	%
Special Education	364	12.6
Bilingual Education	367	12.7
Mathematics (Grades 6–12)	191	6.6
Science (Grades 6–12)	152	5.3
Spanish (Grades 6–12)	43	1.5
N/A	1,773	61.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,890</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

**Table 6. Number and Percent of Survey Respondents Indicating Their Level of Agreement for which the ASPIRE Award Encouraged Specific Behaviors, May 2009 and February 2016**

The ASPIRE Award encourages me to:	N		Strongly Disagree/Disagree		Neutral		Strongly Agree/Agree	
	Base-line*	2016	%	2016	%	2016	%	2016
Continue teaching in the classroom	2,750	1,734	26.3	37.7	25.7	20.4	47.9	42.0
Remain working in HISD	1,829	1,736	31.7	37.9	24.2	20.0	44.0	42.1
Come to work on a daily basis	3,222	1,716	27.3	37.2	25.7	20.7	47.0	42.1
Innovate in the classroom		1,721		36.1		19.9		43.9

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2007–2008, 2010–2011, and 2012–2013

\*Baseline year for the items *Innovate in the classroom* was 2014 and *Remain working in HISD* was 2012; it was 2009 for all other items.

**Table 7. Number and Percent of Survey Respondents Indicating the Frequency of Selected Instructional Practices, February 2016**

Over the past several years, I have	N	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
		%	%	%	%	%
Collaborated with my colleagues	1,769	0.1	0.8	3.7	22.5	72.9
Used teacher-made assessments to make instructional decisions	1,751	0.7	1.5	9.1	33.4	55.3
Used data from district formative assessments (e.g. Snapshots or District Level Assessments) to make instructional decisions	1,684	3.9	4.5	12.1	23.2	56.3
Used standardized testing data to make instructional decisions	1,726	3.0	4.7	12.6	26.9	52.8
Used value-added data to make instructional decisions	1,635	7.3	9.7	15.3	26.4	41.3

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

**Table 8. Number and Percent of Survey Respondents Indicating Their Level of Understanding for the ASPIRE Award Program and Its Components for the 2006–2007 and 2014–2015 ASPIRE Award, May 2008 and February 2016 Survey Administrations**

Please rate your level of understanding to the following items:	N		Very Low/Low		Sufficient		Very High/High	
	2008	2016	%		%		%	
			2008	2016	2008	2016	2008	2016
My understanding of ASPIRE is:	5,882	2,693	17.4	19.6	55.2	47.6	27.4	32.8
My understanding of value-added analysis is:	5,844	2,659	21.3	25.5	50.0	45.3	28.7	29.2
My understanding of the difference between student achievement and academic progress is:	5,848	2,665	11.6	13.0	43.9	43.5	44.5	43.6
My understanding of how value-added information can help me as an educator is:	5,832	2,573	18.3	23.1	45.1	44.4	36.6	32.5
My understanding of how to read/interpret value-added reports is:	5,817	2,622	23.7	24.7	47.0	45.0	29.3	30.2
My understanding of the different components of the 2014–2015 ASPIRE Award Program was:	5,835	2,636	23.2	29.4	48.7	44.7	28.1	25.9
My understanding of how the ASPIRE Awards were calculated/determined is:	5,852	2,626	33.9	40.3	43.9	38.1	22.2	21.7

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007

**Table 9. Number and Percent of Survey Respondents Indicating Their Perceptions About Award Amounts and the ASPIRE Award Model, March 2010 and February 2016**

	N		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree		Neutral		Agree/ Strongly Agree	
			%		%		%	
	2010	2016	2010	2016	2010	2016	2010	2016
There is a connection between classroom instruction and ASPIRE Award results.	5,428	2,540	34.2	41.5	27.6	19.1	38.3	39.4
The maximum award amount for my ASPIRE Award category adequately recognizes my efforts to increase student progress.	5,274	2,490	44.4	46.9	26.5	18.7	29.1	34.4
The maximum award amount for my ASPIRE Award category encourages me to remain in a campus-based position.	5,319	2,521	37.2	41.4	32.4	23.6	30.3	35.1
The maximum award amount for my ASPIRE Award category is commensurate with my professional contribution.	5,325	2,511	44.9	50.5	28.5	19.5	26.6	30.1
The ASPIRE Award is a fair way of acknowledging a teacher’s impact on student growth.	5,417	2,580	46.6	45.0	26.6	19.1	26.7	35.9
The formal inquiry process allowed me the opportunity to question the accuracy of my award.	4,812	2,185	22.8	22.7	39.7	29.5	37.5	47.9
The ASPIRE Award should be continued with modifications incorporated on an annual basis.	5,367	2,551	18.9	23.2	32.4	20.0	48.7	56.8

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2008–2009

**Table 10. Number and Percent of Survey Respondents Indicating Their Perceptions About Communicating Effectively, May 2009 and February 2016**

	N		Somewhat/ Moderately Effective					
			Not Effective				Very Effective	
	Baseline	2016	Base- line	2016	Base- line	2016	Base- line	2016
Knowing where to find information about the ASPIRE Award in general.	3,383	2,630	4.6	7.9	63.8	53.4	31.6	38.7
Knowing when specific information about my ASPIRE Award was available.	3,371	2,631	5.7	7.8	61.5	50.4	32.7	41.8
Knowing where to find information about my specific ASPIRE Award.	3,367	2,618	5.2	8.7	61.1	52.1	33.8	39.2
Knowing how to interpret and understand my specific ASPIRE Award Notice.	3,368	2,619	8.5	14.7	66.0	57.2	25.5	28.2
Understanding the difference between submitting a question by e-mail versus submitting a formal inquiry about your final award.	3,362	2,615	8.2	13.4	66.2	58.6	25.6	28.0
Understanding where to find information about the inquiry process on the portal.	3,364	2,615	6.6	12.6	65.5	57.2	28.0	30.2
Understanding that formal inquiries were required to be submitted by a specific deadline.	3,352	2,617	7.0	10.4	62.8	53.1	30.3	36.5
Providing clear explanations about the award model.*	2,828	2,603	11.6	19.2	53.0	56.0	23.8	24.8
Providing clear explanations about value-added calculations.*	2,807	2,590	15.8	23.5	62.6	55.3	21.7	21.2
Providing clear explanations about comparative growth calculations**	3,011	2,607	17.6	22.1	65.8	56.3	16.5	21.6

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2007–2008, 2010–2011, and 2011–2012

\*Baseline year for the items *asterisked* was 2012, and \*\*Baseline year was 2013; it was 2009 for all other items.

**Table 11. Number and Percent of Survey Respondents Indicating Their Receipt for Different Types of Communication, February 2016**

	N	Yes	No	Not Sure
School Messenger (automated phone system)	2,576	69.9	21.4	8.8
ASPIRE eNews	2,551	74.5	15.4	10.1
Academic Services Memos (electronic format)	2,504	57.5	23.5	19.0
ASPIRE e-mail	2,642	90.5	5.1	4.3
ASPIRE portal	2,498	69.5	17.4	13.1

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

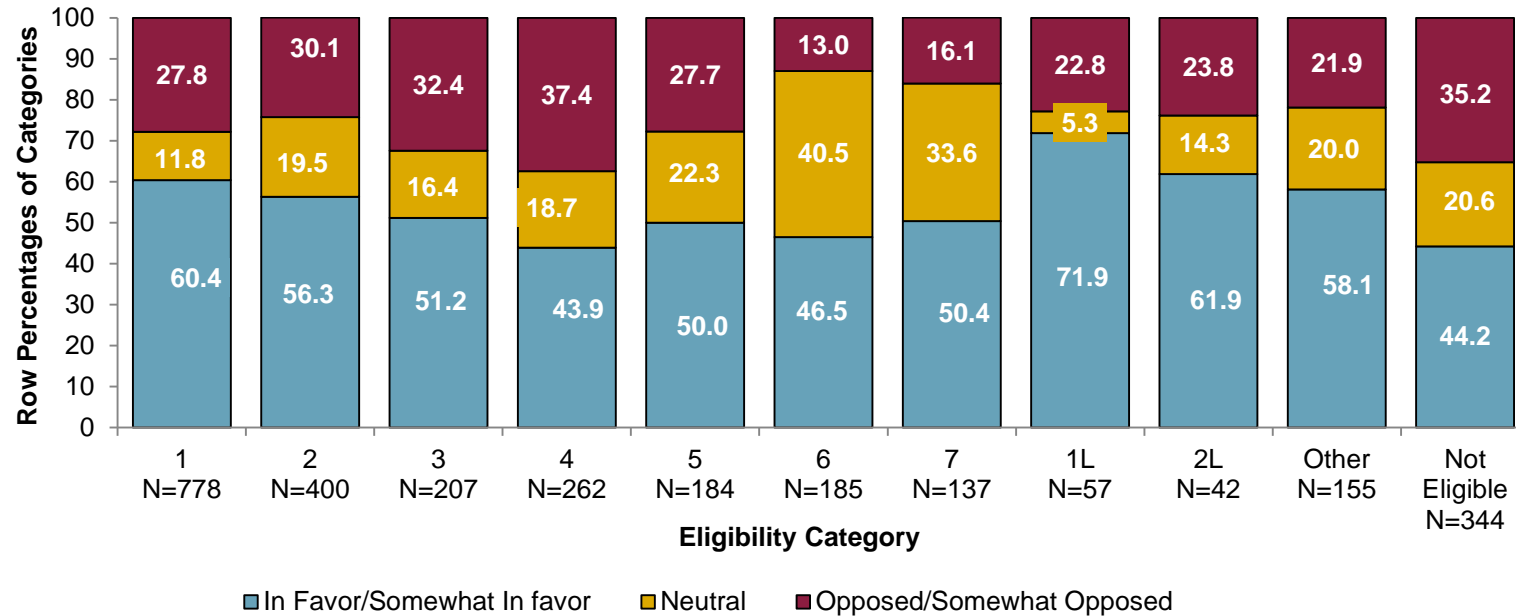
<b>Table 12. Number and Percent of Responses for Recommended Changes and Educational Impact to the 2014–2015 ASPIRE Award, February 2016</b>		
	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Same earning opportunity as highest award category/award not commensurate with professional contribution	369	14.6
Change the Eligibility and Categorization Rules and make plant operators, janitors, food service, hourly employees, and tutors eligible/Attendance Rule (more days/eliminate)/Attendance bonus (reinstitute the bonus)/Don't include Appraisal Ratings (Biased in some cases) especially Student Performance Measures	302	11.9
Make the model fair, transparent, equitable, inclusive, with clear expectations	276	10.9
Measuring growth/achievement (BOY/EOY/student growth/passing rates/campus, department, grade, subject, and/or individual award)	184	7.3
Allocate more money for awards/allocate money for specified group(s)/reallocate money so that particular groups benefit and designated groups receive no award or their award is capped/allocate funds to buying resources, scholarships for students, smaller classes, more tutors, clothes for students, attendance incentives for students	170	6.7
Performance measures or criteria (e.g. position in hard-to-staff school, number of highly effective teachers and retention of them, college readiness and college acceptance, parent's role, working with students new to the district)	156	6.2
Unintended Consequences (divisive, cheating, free-riding, highly effective/effective teachers leaving the district, negative culture)	147	5.8
Discontinue the award	135	5.3
Create a different model for non-core teachers/special education teachers	123	4.9
Calculation/Formula	111	4.4
N/A or No Comment	95	3.8
No Changes/Satisfied	77	3.0
Don't Know/Not Sure	62	2.5
Appraisal	55	2.2
Pay Raise	53	2.1
Training	51	2.0
Factors perceived as impacting growth or the calculation of growth	49	1.9
Miscellaneous	39	1.5
Improve communications about the award/provide clearer explanations about the model and value added calculations/provide feedback for teachers based on their data/more timely communications about changes in the award model/teacher input	34	1.3
Years of Experience & Advanced Degrees	20	0.8
Payout Timeline/Value-Added Timeline	16	0.6
Linkage	2	0.4
Inquiry Process	3	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,529</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016



**APPENDIX A**

CROSS TABULATION SUMMARIZING THE PERCENT OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS INDICATING THE MAXIMUM FAVORABILITY TOWARD THE CONCEPT OF TEACHER PERFORMANCE PAY BY ELIGIBILITY CATEGORY, FEBRUARY 2016



**Key:**

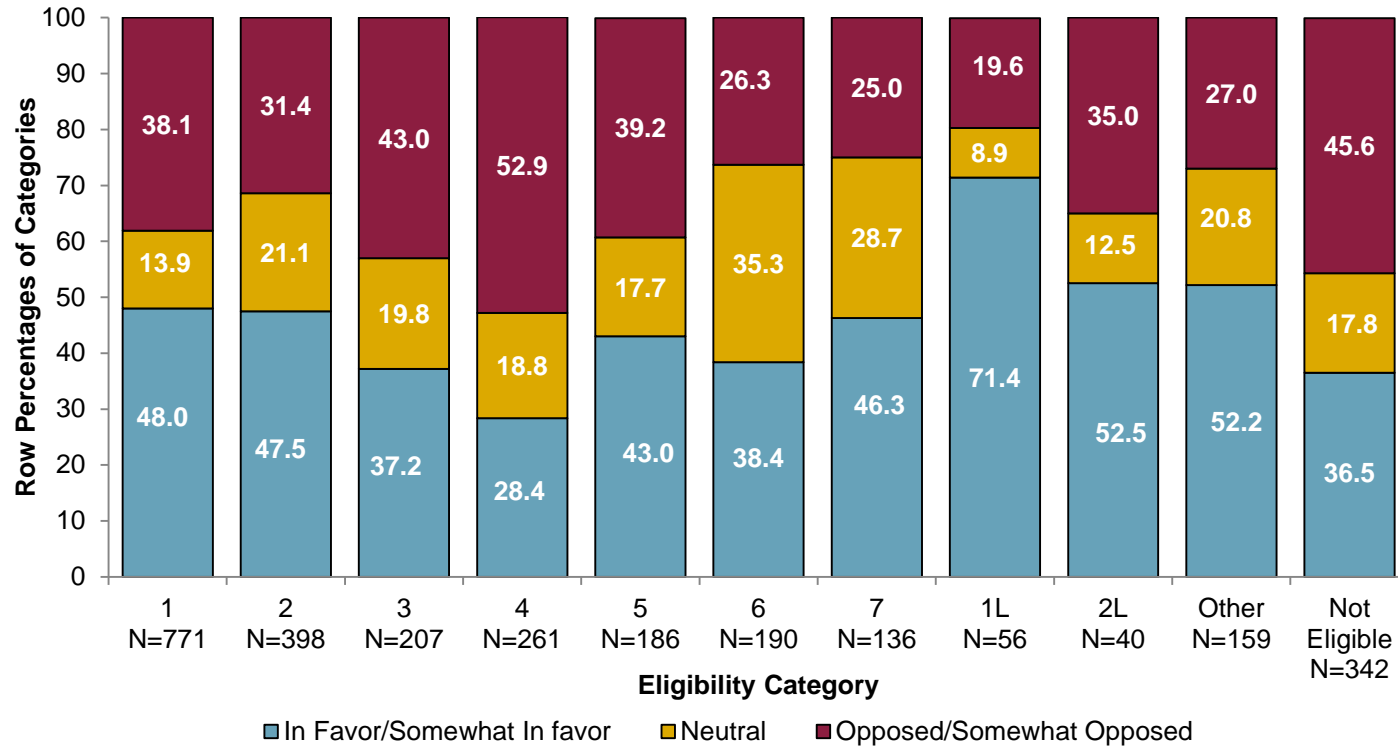
- Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/EVAAS®
- Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
- Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o EVAAS®
- Group 4: Elective/Ancillary Teacher
- Group 5: Instructional Support Staff

- Group 6: Teaching Assistant
- Group 7: Operational Support Staff
- Group 1L: Principal
- Group 2L: Assistant Principal/Deans
- Other
- Not Eligible

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

Note: Items that were skipped were coded as missing data and not included in the analysis.

**APPENDIX B**  
**CROSS TABULATION SUMMARIZING THE PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS INDICATING FAVORABILITY**  
**TOWARD THE CONCEPT OF TEACHER PERFORMANCE PAY BASED ON INDIVIDUAL STUDENT GROWTH**  
**BY ELIGIBILITY CATEGORY, FEBRUARY 2016**



**Key:**

- Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/EVAAS®
- Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
- Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o EVAAS®
- Group 4: Elective/Ancillary Teacher
- Group 5: Instructional Support Staff

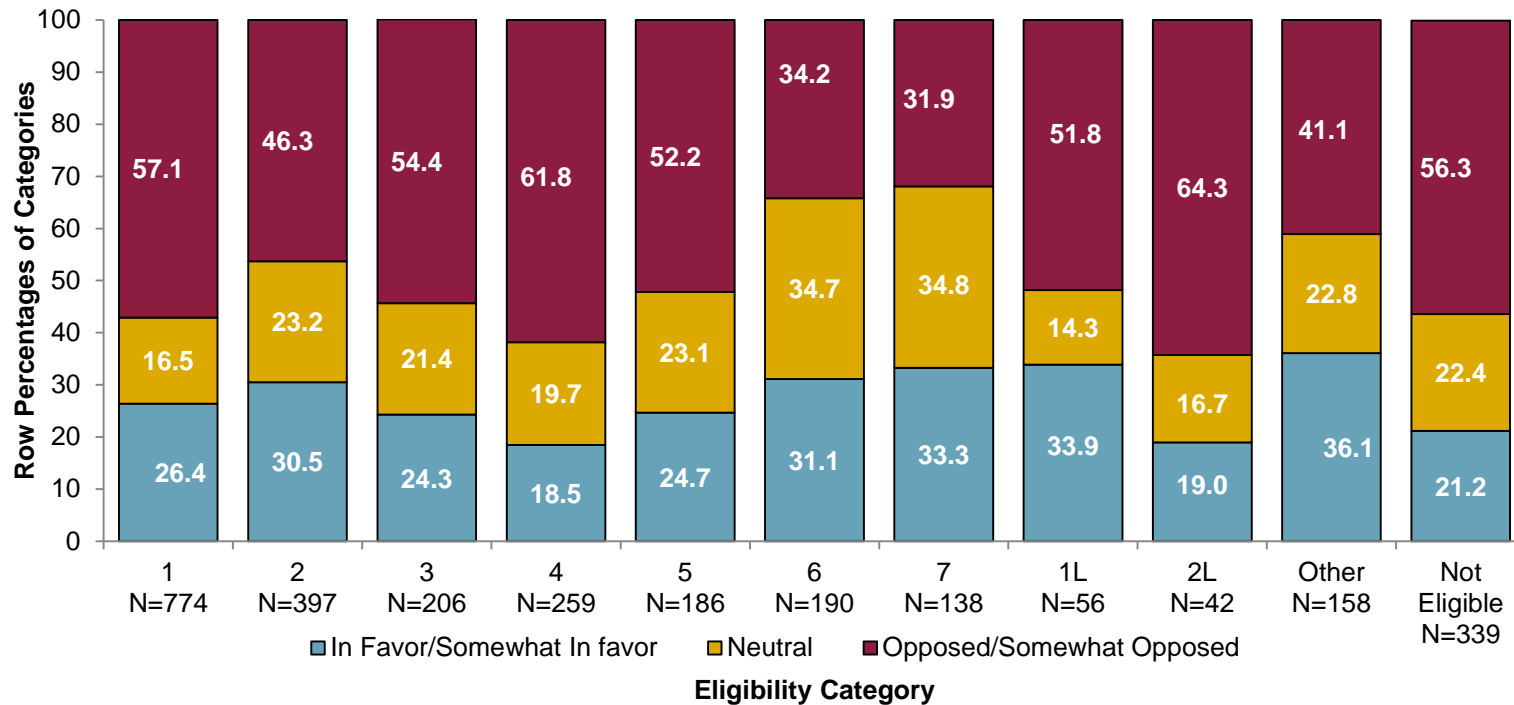
- Group 6: Teaching Assistant
- Group 7: Operational Support Staff
- Group 1L: Principal
- Group 2L: Assistant Principal/Deans
- Other
- Not Eligible

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

Note: Items that were skipped were coded as missing data and not included in the analysis.

APPENDIX C

CROSS TABULATION SUMMARIZING THE PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS INDICATING FAVORABILITY TOWARD THE CONCEPT OF TEACHER PERFORMANCE PAY BASED ON PASSING RATES ONLY BY ELIGIBILITY CATEGORY, FEBRUARY 2016



**Key:**

- Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/EVAAS®
- Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
- Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o EVAAS®
- Group 4: Elective/Ancillary Teacher
- Group 5: Instructional Support Staff

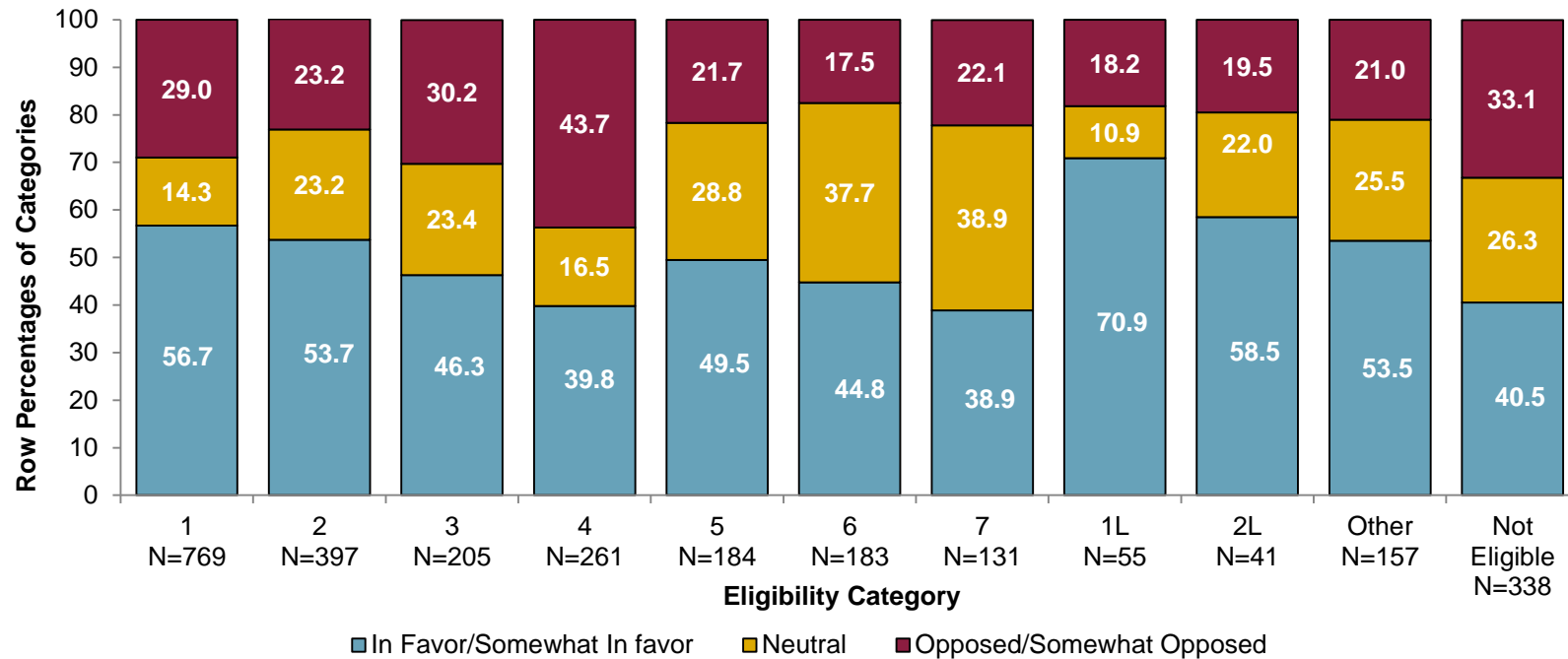
- Group 6: Teaching Assistant
- Group 7: Operational Support Staff
- Group 1L: Principal
- Group 2L: Assistant Principal/Deans
- Other
- Not Eligible

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

Note: Items that were skipped were coded as missing data and not included in the analysis.

**APPENDIX D**

CROSS TABULATION SUMMARIZING THE PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS INDICATING FAVORABILITY TOWARD THE CONCEPT OF DIFFERENTIATED PAY BY ELIGIBILITY CATEGORY, FEBRUARY 2016



**Key:**

- Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/EVAAS®
- Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
- Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o EVAAS®
- Group 4: Elective/Ancillary Teacher
- Group 5: Instructional Support Staff

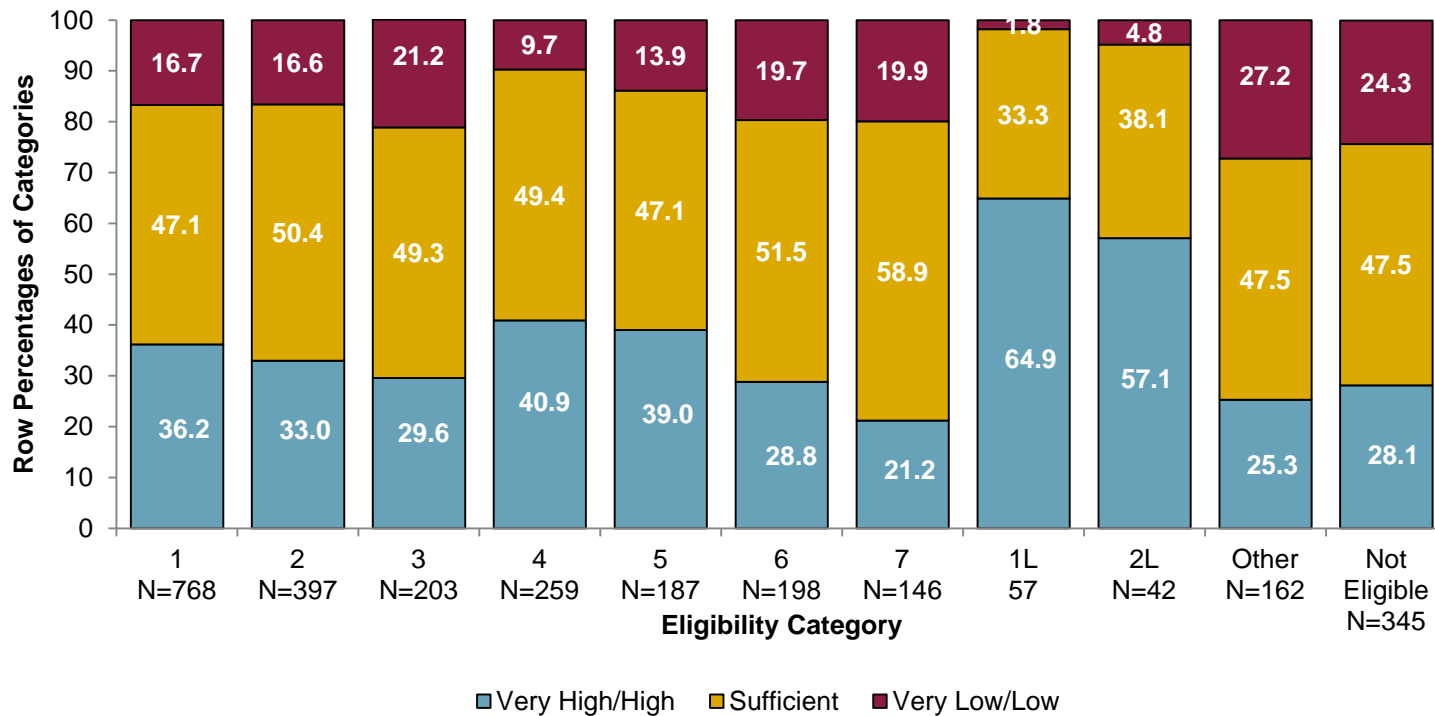
- Group 6: Teaching Assistant
- Group 7: Operational Support Staff
- Group 1L: Principal
- Group 2L: Assistant Principal/Deans
- Other
- Not Eligible

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

Note: Items that were skipped were coded as missing data and not included in the analysis.

APPENDIX E

CROSS TABULATION SUMMARIZING THE PERCENT OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS' LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE 2014–2015 ASPIRE AWARD PROGRAM, FEBRUARY 2016



**Key:**

- Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/EVAAS®
- Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
- Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o EVAAS®
- Group 4: Elective/Ancillary Teacher
- Group 5: Instructional Support Staff

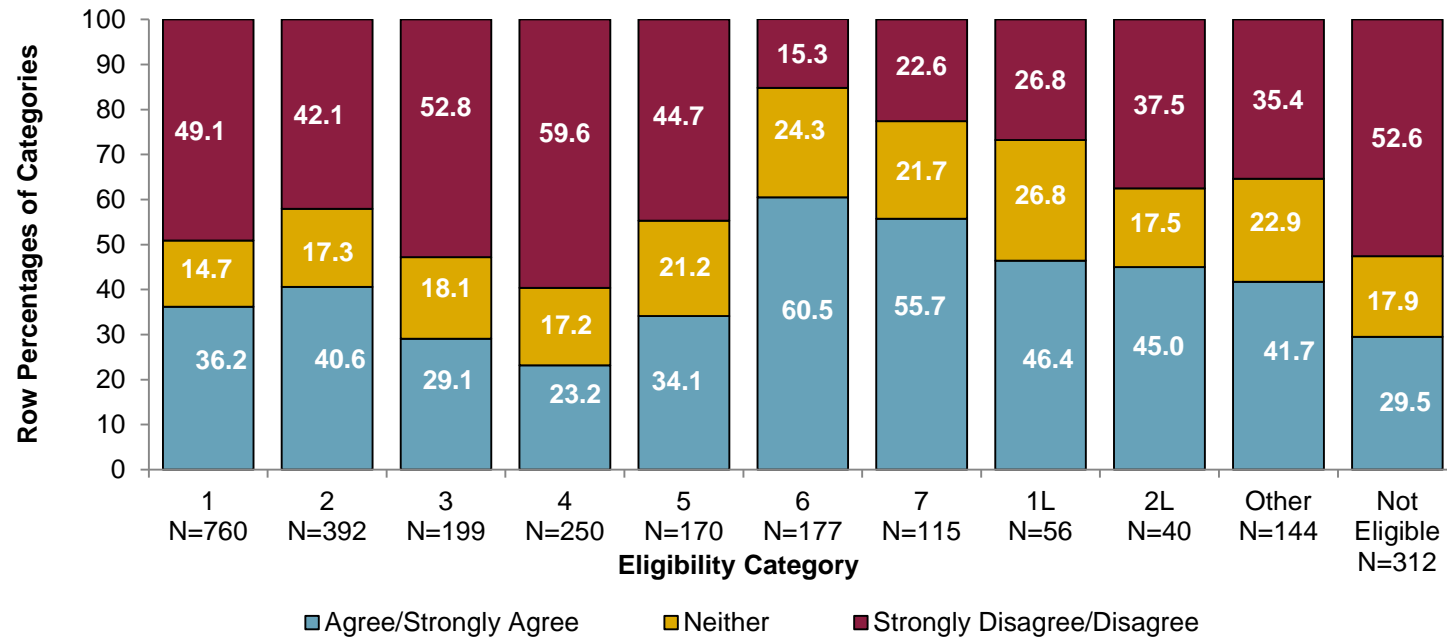
- Group 6: Teaching Assistant
- Group 7: Operational Support Staff
- Group 1L: Principal
- Group 2L: Assistant Principal/Deans
- Other
- Not Eligible

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

Note: Items that were skipped were coded as missing data and not included in the analysis.

APPENDIX F

CROSS TABULATION SUMMARIZING THE PERCENT OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS' INDICATING A CONNECTION BETWEEN CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION AND PERFORMANCE PAY RESULTS BY ELIGIBILITY CATEGORY FOR THE 2014–2015 ASPIRE AWARD PROGRAM, FEBRUARY 2016



**Key:**

- Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/EVAAS®
- Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
- Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o EVAAS®
- Group 4: Elective/Ancillary Teacher
- Group 5: Instructional Support Staff

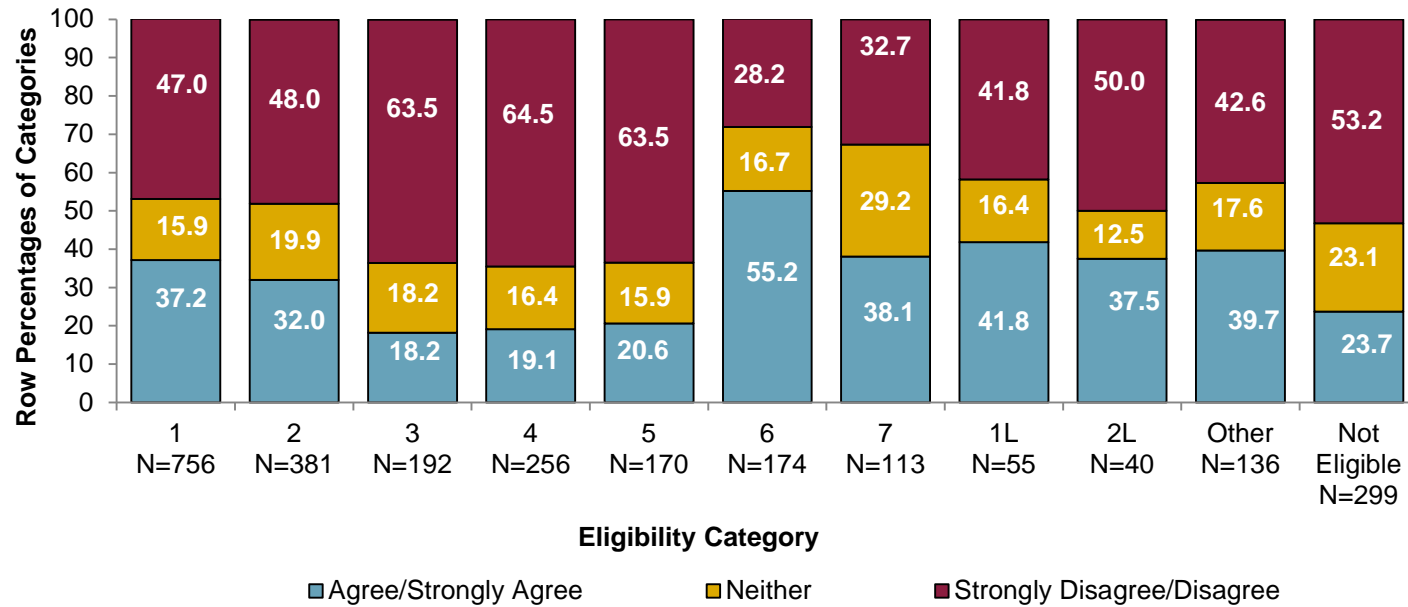
- Group 6: Teaching Assistant
- Group 7: Operational Support Staff
- Group 1L: Principal
- Group 2L: Assistant Principal/Deans
- Other
- Not Eligible

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

Note: Items that were skipped were coded as missing data and not included in the analysis.

**APPENDIX G**

CROSS TABULATION SUMMARIZING THE PERCENT OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS INDICATING THE MAXIMUM ASPIRE AWARD AMOUNT ADEQUATELY RECOGNIZED THEIR EFFORTS TO INCREASE STUDENT PROGRESS, FEBRUARY 2016



**Key:**

- Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/EVAAS®
- Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
- Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o EVAAS®
- Group 4: Elective/Ancillary Teacher
- Group 5: Instructional Support Staff

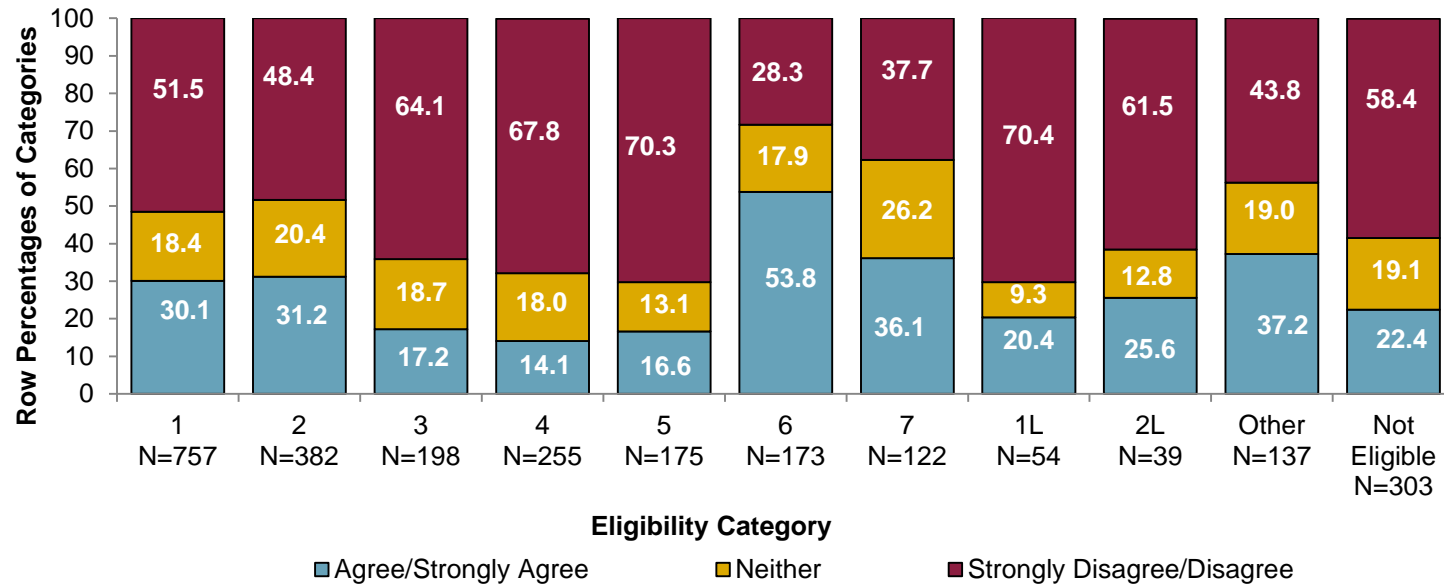
- Group 6: Teaching Assistant
- Group 7: Operational Support Staff
- Group 1L: Principal
- Group 2L: Assistant Principal/Deans
- Other
- Not Eligible

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

Note: Items that were skipped were coded as missing data and not included in the analysis.

APPENDIX H

CROSS TABULATION SUMMARIZING THE PERCENT OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS INDICATING THE MAXIMUM ASPIRE AWARD AMOUNT WAS COMMENSURATE WITH THEIR PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTION, FEBRUARY 2016



Key:

- Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/EVAAS®
- Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
- Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o EVAAS®
- Group 4: Elective/Ancillary Teacher
- Group 5: Instructional Support Staff

- Group 6: Teaching Assistant
- Group 7: Operational Support Staff
- Group 1L: Principal
- Group 2L: Assistant Principal/Deans
- Other
- Not Eligible

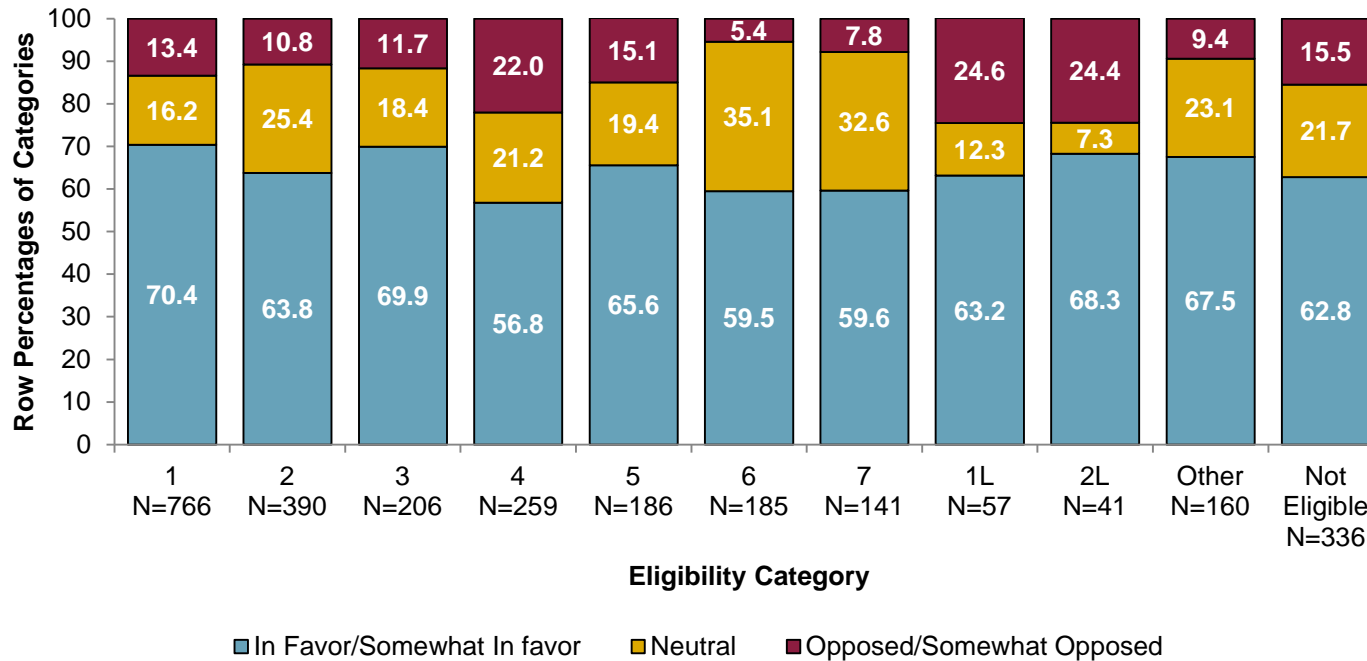
Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

Note: Items that were skipped were coded as missing data and not included in the analysis.



**APPENDIX I**

CROSS TABULATION SUMMARIZING THE PERCENT OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS INDICATING FAVORABILITY TOWARD THE CONCEPT OF AN AWARD FOR EDUCATORS IN HARD-TO-STAFF BUILDINGS, FEBRUARY 2016



**Key:**

- Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/EVAAS®
- Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
- Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o EVAAS®
- Group 4: Elective/Ancillary Teacher
- Group 5: Instructional Support Staff

- Group 6: Teaching Assistant
- Group 7: Operational Support Staff
- Group 1L: Principal
- Group 2L: Assistant Principal/Deans
- Other
- Not Eligible

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2016

Note: Items that were skipped were coded as missing data and not included in the analysis.