MEMORANDUM   June 29, 2017

TO: Audrey Gomez
            General Manager, Compensation and Human Capital Management

FROM: Carla Stevens
            Assistant Superintendent, Research and Accountability

SUBJECT: **2015–2016 ASPIRE AWARD SURVEY, SPRING 2017**

The purpose of the ASPIRE Award Survey was to gain insight regarding the level of knowledge and perceptions of the Houston Independent School District (HISD) teachers and staff after eleven years of implementation of growth-based performance pay in HISD, as well as their perceptions regarding the overall concept of teacher performance pay. As the ASPIRE Award is being phased out, participants had the opportunity to list one positive aspect of the award model that impacted them as educators.

Key findings include:
- Of the 17,207 Houston Independent School District (HISD) campus-based employees surveyed, there were 2,598 participants who responded to the survey (15.1 percent) administered in February 2017. **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 eleven-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 eleven-year period has ranged from 35.1 percent to 53.3 percent, and is currently at 48.5 percent.
- Administrators, such as principals and assistant principals/deans of instruction, indicate *high* to *very high* levels of understanding about the ASPIRE Award program.
- Elective/ancillary teachers rate their level of knowledge of the ASPIRE Award program higher than core foundation teachers (Groups 1–3).

Further distribution of this report is at your discretion. Should you have any further questions, please contact me at 713-556-6700.

_____ CJS

Attachment

cc: Sam Sarabia
    Grenita Lathan
    Cynthia Wilson
    Gloria Cavazos
    Chief School Officers

HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

RESEARCH
Educational Program Report

2015-2016 ASPIRE AWARD SURVEY RESULTS, SPRING 2017

HISD | Research and Accountability
ANALYZING DATA, MEASURING PERFORMANCE.

2015–2016 ASPIRE Award Survey Results, Spring 2017

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 completed its tenth year of payout, on February 15, 2017 (the eleventh payout for performance pay in the district).

This report provides the results of an annual survey administered February 2017 designed to collect perceptions and input from HISD teachers and staff after eleven 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; 2014–2015 ASPIRE Award Survey, Spring 2016* 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

- Perceptions of respondents regarding their level of agreement with 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

- Effectiveness of communicating information about the ASPIRE Award;

- Perceptions of respondents regarding their level of compensation and the ASPIRE Award model; and,

- Feedback on the 2015–2016 ASPIRE Award suggested by respondents.

Highlights

- Of the 17,207 Houston Independent School District (HISD) campus-based employees invited to participate, 2,598 participants (15.1 percent) responded to the survey administered in February 2017.

Of the 2,126 respondents who indicated an award category, 59.3 percent were core teachers (Groups 1–3), 9.3 percent were elective/ancillary teachers, 7.1 percent were instructional support staff, 7.5 percent were teaching assistants, 7.2 percent were operational support staff, 4.1 percent were either principals or assistant principals/deans of instruction, and 5.5 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 eleven years, the majority of respondents were ***in favor*** or ***somewhat in favor*** of the concept of teacher performance pay, with the 2017 rate of 57.9 percent being the highest in the last five years.

- Based on survey data collected in February 2017, the largest percentage of respondents (76.0 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 48.5 percent which is the highest rate in the last five years.

- Administrators, such as principals and assistant principals/deans of instruction indicated **very high or high levels of knowledge** concerning the ASPIRE Award program.

- Elective/ancillary teachers had higher levels of knowledge about the ASPIRE Award program than core foundation teachers, instructional support staff, teaching assistants, operational support staff, other, and respondents that indicated they were not eligibile.

- When respondents were asked to list at least one positive aspect of the award model that made the most impact on them as educators, 1,096 or 42.2 percent provided at least one response on the February 2017 survey. The four highest emergent categories based on the percentage of the responses centered on the following:
    - No impact on them as an educator (15.1 percent),

    - Recognition (12.3 percent),

    - Incentive (12.1 percent), and

    - Motivate/Encourage (9.8 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 comparative growth data 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 comparative growth data 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: (comparative growth core teacher progress);

- Indicator II–Group Performance: Teachers (department comparative growth); and,

- Indicator III–Group Performance: Campus-Wide (campus growth). Indicator III is based on the campus-wide comparative growth across subjects, Index 3 distinction for elementary and middle 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 2015–2016 ASPIRE Award Survey was administered on-line from Wednesday, January 4, 2017, through Wednesday, February 15, 2017, with follow-up reminders on Tuesday, January 17, 2017, Tuesday, January 31, 2017, and Thursday, February 9, 2017. 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.

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 2017 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 17,207 Houston Independent School District (HISD) campus-based employees invited to complete the survey, there were 2,598 participants who responded to the survey (15.1 percent) administered in February 2017. Any conclusions drawn from this survey should be made with caution given the low response rate (**Appendix A**, **Table A–1**, p. 21).

- Of the 2,598 respondents, 2,126 indicated their ASPIRE Award categorization for the 2015–2016 school year. Core teachers (Group 1, 2, and 3) represented the highest percentage of respondents with 59.3 percent, followed by elective/ancillary teachers with 9.3 percent (**Table A–2**, p. 21).

- Approximately two-thirds of respondents reported holding either a Bachelor's Degree (35.0 percent) or a Master's Degree (34.2 percent). The average experience in HISD was 11.6 years with the average experience at the current campus being 8.0 years (**Table A–3**, p. 21).

- Approximately 90 percent of the respondents were employed in HISD for the 2015–2016 school year, and approximately 78 percent were eligible to receive an award. Sixty percent of the respondents indicated that they will receive an ASPIRE Award (**Table A–4**, p. 22).

- 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 a two-year increase of 6.7 percentage points, and then a decrease of 1.1 percentage points in February 2017 (**Figure 1**, p. 5). The majority of survey respondents over the past eleven years reflect ASPIRE Award recipients.

- On the February 2017 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 2,168 responses, 61.7 percent did not teach in a critical shortage area (N/A), 14.3 percent indicated they taught bilingual education, 11.3 percent indicated special education, 6.2 percent indicated secondary mathematics, 5.3 percent indicated secondary science, and 1.2 percent indicated secondary Spanish (**Table A–5**, p. 22).

Figure 1. Percentage of Respondents Receiving an Award Based on Results of Eleven Survey Administrations
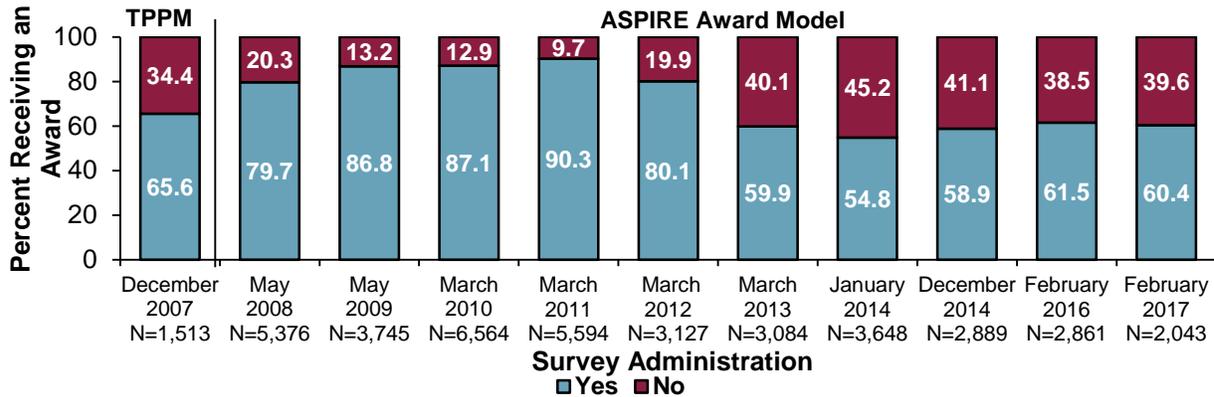
Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; TPPM Results, 2005–2006; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2014–2015

Notes: TPPM=Teacher Performance-Pay Model; over the 11-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?

- When comparing survey results over the last eleven 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 57.9 percent in February 2017, the highest percentage in the last five years (**Figure 2**).

Figure 2. Percentage of Respondents Indicating Favorability Toward the Concept of Performance Pay over Eleven Years
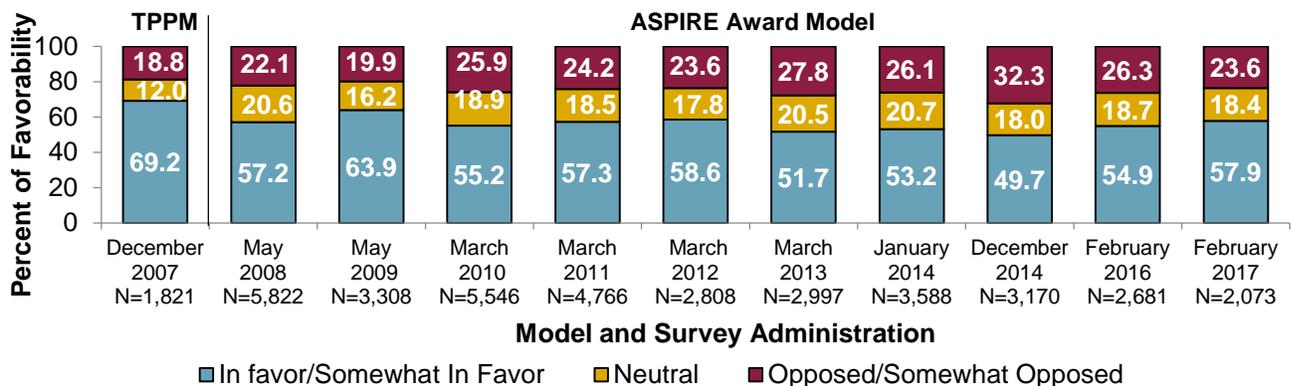

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; TPPM Results, 2005–2006; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2014–2015

Notes: TPPM=Teacher Performance-Pay Model; over the 11-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model, and policy changes.

- 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 and decreasing to 23.6 percent in February 2017 (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 48.5 percent of respondents in February 2017, which was an increase of 3.4 percentage points from the previous year and the highest rate in the last eight years (**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 11-year period with an overall increase from 24.5 percent in 2007 to 33.0 percent in 2017 (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Percentage of Respondents Indicating Favorability Toward the Concept of Teacher Performance Pay Based on Individual Student Growth over Eleven Years
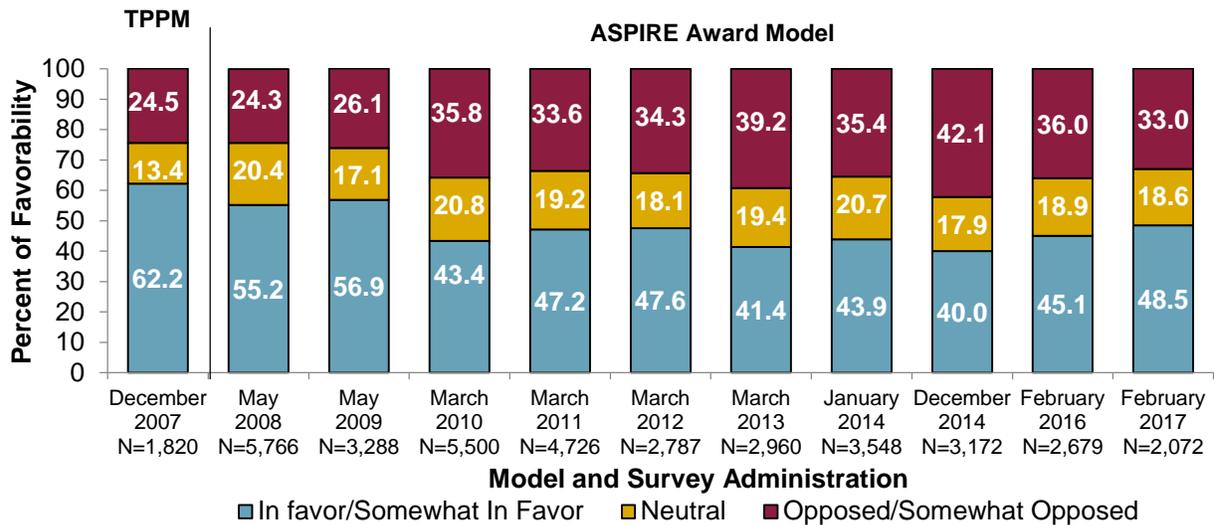

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; TPPM Results, 2005–2006; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2014–2015
Notes: TPPM=Teacher Performance-Pay Model; over the 11-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model, and policy changes.

- Over the past eleven 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 2017, there was essentially no change, with the majority of respondents over the last three years consistently opposed to using passing rates for performance pay (**Figure 4**, p. 7).

- Over the past nine 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 54.3 percent in February 2017.

- Over the past nine 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 23.0 percent in February 2017 which does reflect the lowest level of opposition over the last eight years (Figure 5).

Figure 4. **Percentage of Respondents Indicating Favorability Toward the Concept of Teacher Performance Pay Based on Passing Rates over Eleven Years**
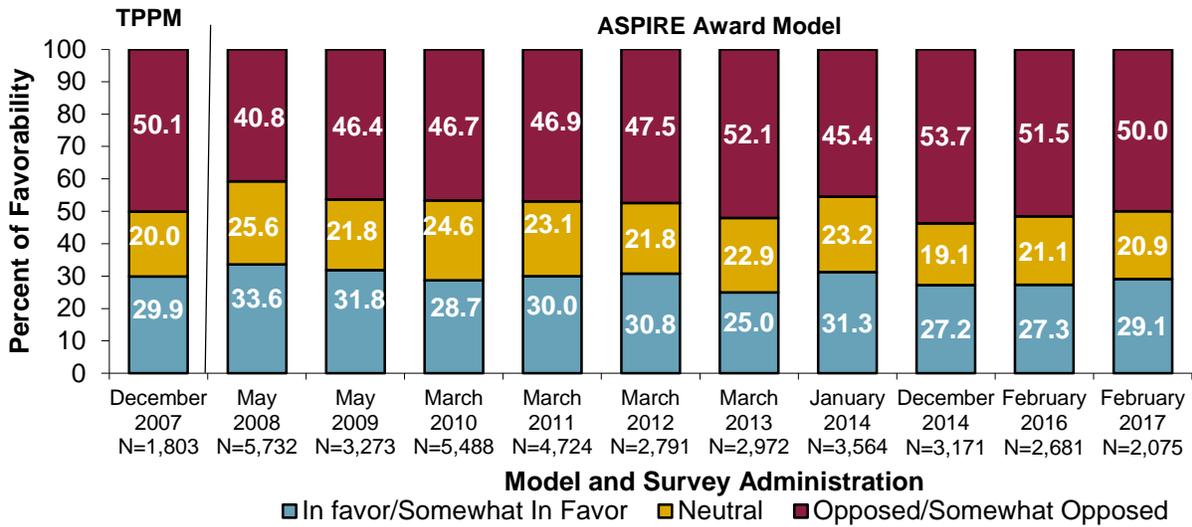

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; TPPM Results, 2005–2006; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2014–2015
Notes: TPPM=Teacher Performance-Pay Model; over the 11-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model, and policy changes.

Figure 5. **Percentage of Respondents Indicating Favorability Toward the Concept of Differentiated Pay for the Past Nine Years**
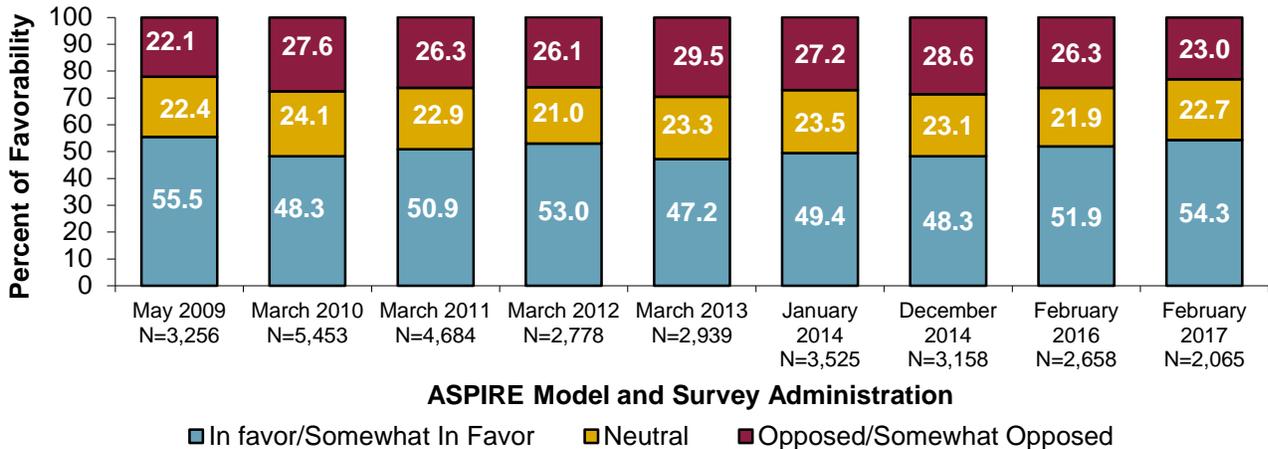
Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2007–2008 to 2014–2015
Note: Over the 9-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model, and policy changes.

- When comparing survey results from January 2014 to February 2017, 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 over the last four years indicated that they were *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* of awarding an incentive to educators in hard-to-staff buildings. This item has inceased in favorability by 10.8 percentage points, from 57.0 percent in January 2014 to 67.8 February 2017 (**Figure 6**).

Figure 6. Percentage of Respondents Indicating Favorability Toward the Concept of an Award for Educators in Hard-to-Staff Buildings
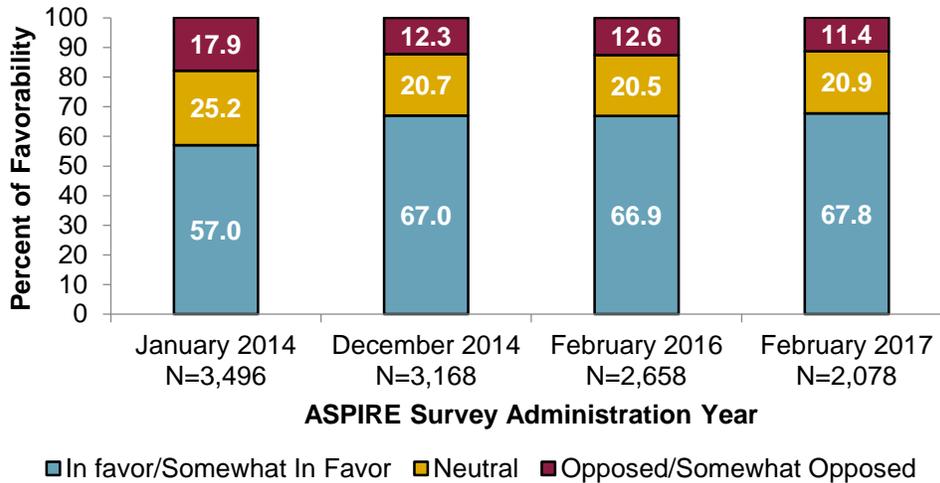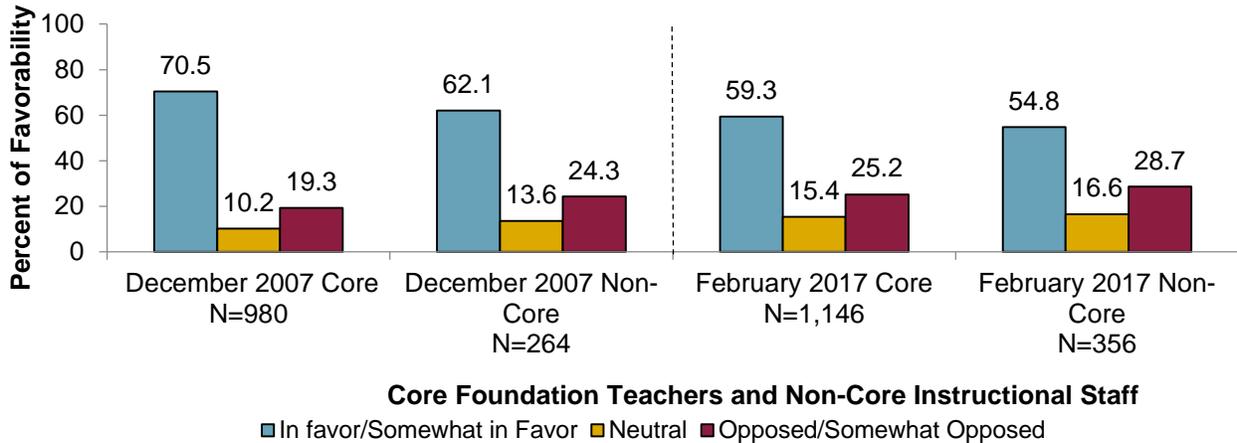

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2013–2014 and 2014–2015
Note: For 2012–2013 to 2014–2015, hard-to-staff schools refer to those schools that were TEA-rated as *Improvement Required (IR)*.

- 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 2017) 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; However, February 2017 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 only 4.5 percentage points. Favorable responses have decreased overall for both groups over the last ten years, but the gap between core and non-core has diminished.

- 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 2017). **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 6.2 percentage points based on February 2017 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 5.1 percentage points based on February 2017 results (Figure 8).

Figure 7. Percentage of Respondents Indicating Favorability Toward the Concept of Teacher Performance Pay Overall by Core Foundation and Non-Core Instructional Staff, December 2007 and February 2017

Core Foundation Teachers and Non-Core Instructional Staff

■ In favor/Somewhat in Favor ■ Neutral ■ Opposed/Somewhat Opposed

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; TPPM Results, 2005–2006
Note: To make 2017 comparable to the 2007 survey administration data, non-instructional employees (ASPIRE Award Group 6 and 7) (N=227), principals (ASPIRE Award Group 1L) (N=43), and Other (N=89) were not included in this analysis.

Figure 8. Percentage 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 2017

Core Foundation Teachers and Non-Core Instructional Staff

■ In favor/Somewhat in Favor   ■ Neutral   ■ Opposed/Somewhat Opposed

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; TPPM Results, 2005–2006
Note: To make 2017 comparable to the 2007 survey administration data, non-instructional employees (ASPIRE Award Groups 6 and 7) (N=264) and principals (ASPIRE Award Group 1L) (N=43) and Other (N=90) 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 2017 survey administration. **Figure 9** 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 decreasing to a difference of 2.8 percentage points in February 2017.

- 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 compares to 51.1 percent of core foundation teachers and 54.8 percent of non-core instructional staff based on survey results from the February 2017 administration (Figure 9).
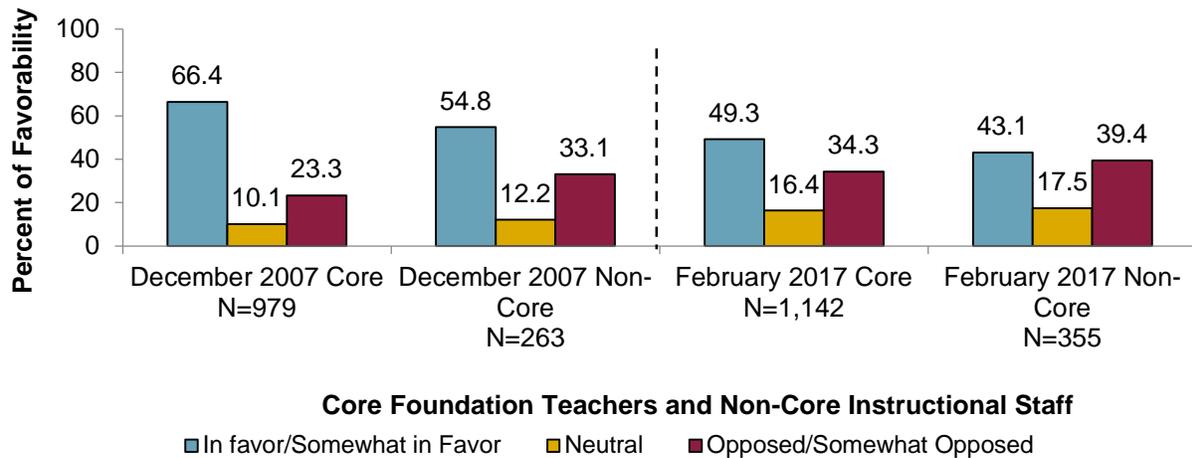
Figure 9. **Percentage of Respondents Indicating Favorability Toward the Concept of Teacher Performance Pay Based on Passing Rates by Core Foundation and Non-Core Instructional Staff, December 2007 and February 2017**
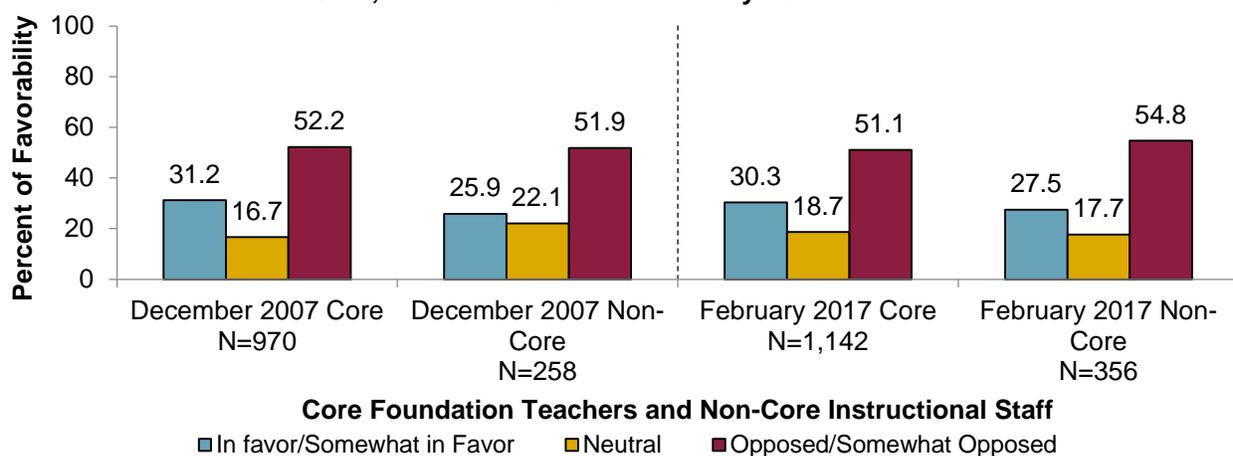

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017
Note: To make 2017 comparable to the 2007 survey administration data, non-instructional employees (ASPIRE Award Groups 6 and 7) (N=231) and Principals (ASPIRE Award Group 1L) (N=42) and Other (N=89) were not included in this analysis.

- **Appendix B** (p. 28) compares differences in perceptions toward the concept of teacher performance pay overall by eligibility category (February 2017). Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 82.1 percent of assistant principals/deans of instruction 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 principals at 72.1 percent, and Group 1 Teachers with a STAAR Comparative Growth Report at 64.9 percent.

- Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 30.9 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 (Appendix B).

- For those respondents that reported they were not eligible to receive an ASPIRE award, 49.2 percent were *somewhat in favor* or *in favor* and 33.9 percent were *somewhat opposed* or *opposed* toward the concept of teacher performance pay, reflecting less positive perceptions than eligible core foundation teachers (Appendix B).

- **Appendix C** (p. 29) summarizes the results by eligibility category regarding perceptions towards the concept of teacher performance pay based on individual student growth, **Appendix D** (p. 30) summarizes the results by eligibility category regarding perceptions towards the concept of teacher performance pay based on passing rates only, and **Appendix E** (p. 31) summarizes the results by eligibility category regarding perceptions towards the concept of differentiated pay based on the February 2017 survey administration.

- Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 72.5 percent of assistant principals/deans of instruction and 72.1 percent of principals 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 C).

- Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 43.3 percent of elective/ancillary teachers and 42.9 percent of core teachers, grades 3–12 without a STAAR Comparative Growth Report, indicated that they were *opposed* or *somewhat opposed* toward the concept of teacher performance pay based on individual student growth (Appendix C).

- Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 47.5 percent of assistant principals/deans and 19.0 percent of principals 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 2017 results (Appendix D).

- Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 59.4 percent of elective/ancillary teachers and 29.4 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 D).

- Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 79.5 percent of assistant principals/deans of instruction 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 principals at 70.7 percent. Operational support staff and instructional support staff had the lowest levels of agreement with only 44.1 percent and 44.7 percent, respectively, *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* (Appendix E).

- Of the respondents that indicated that they were eligible to receive an award and who indicated a particular eligibility category, 34.8 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 E).

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

- Over the past eight years, respondents were asked whether the ASPIRE Award encouraged specific behaviors. **Table A–6** (p. 22) 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), encouraged them to *come to work on a daily basis* (47.0 percent), and *innovate in the classroom* (39.2 percent) (baseline year is 2014). These percentages decreased to 44.8 percent, 42.1 percent, and 42.1 percent, and increased to 43.9 percent, respectively in February 2017 survey data.

- Based on survey data collected in February 2017, the largest percentage of respondents indicated that over the past several years, they "Always" collaborated with their colleagues (76.0 percent*)* (**Table A–7**, p. 23).

- Based on survey data collected in February 2017, 4.2 percent of respondents indicated that they *never used data from district formative assessments to make instructional decisions*, compared to 58.0 percent who *always used data from district formative assessments to make instructional decisions* (Table A–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. In December 2007, 44.4 percent of respondents indicated they were *in favor* or *somewhat in favor* toward the 2005–2006 Teacher-Performance Pay Model. The percentage reached a peak of 53.3 percent in 2009, and was most recently reported at 48.5 percent which is the highest rate in the last five years (February 2017 survey administration). Although performance has varied over the eleven-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.

- 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 17.0 percentage points over an eleven-year period, from 39.2 percent to 22.2 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 ten years.

- When comparing survey results from May 2008 to February 2017, 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, 79.0 percent of respondents indicated at least a sufficient level of understanding of the ASPIRE Award program.

Figure 10. Percentage of Survey Respondents' Favorability Toward the Performance-Pay Model Paid Out that Year
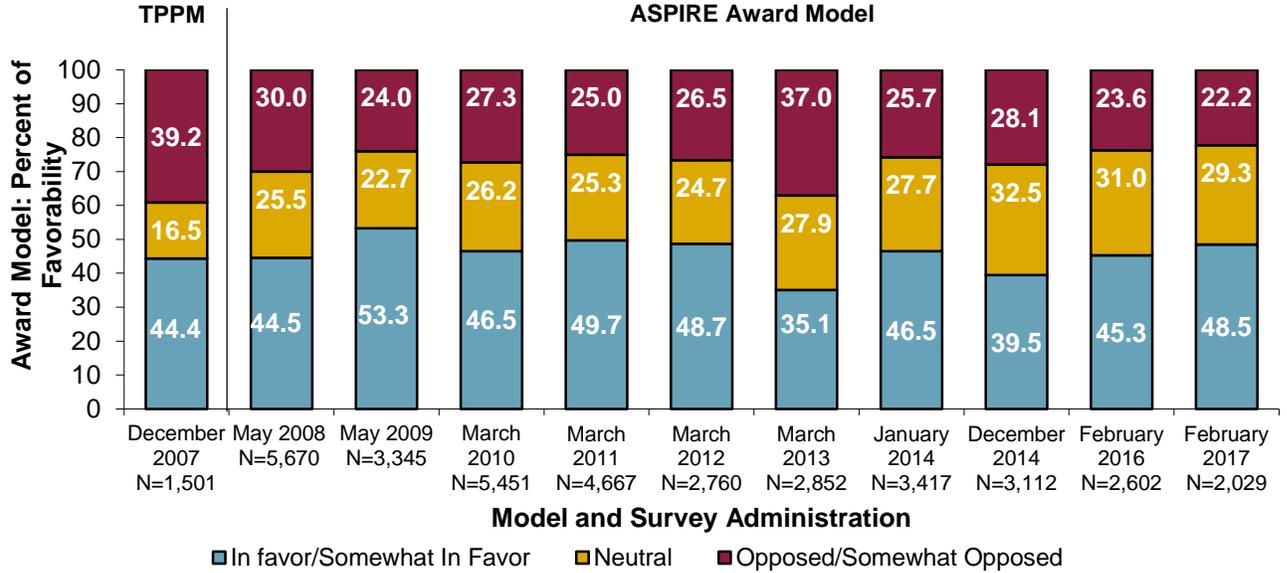
Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; TPPM Results, 2005–2006; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2014–2015
TPPM=Teacher Performance-Pay Model; Note: Over the 11-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model and policy changes.
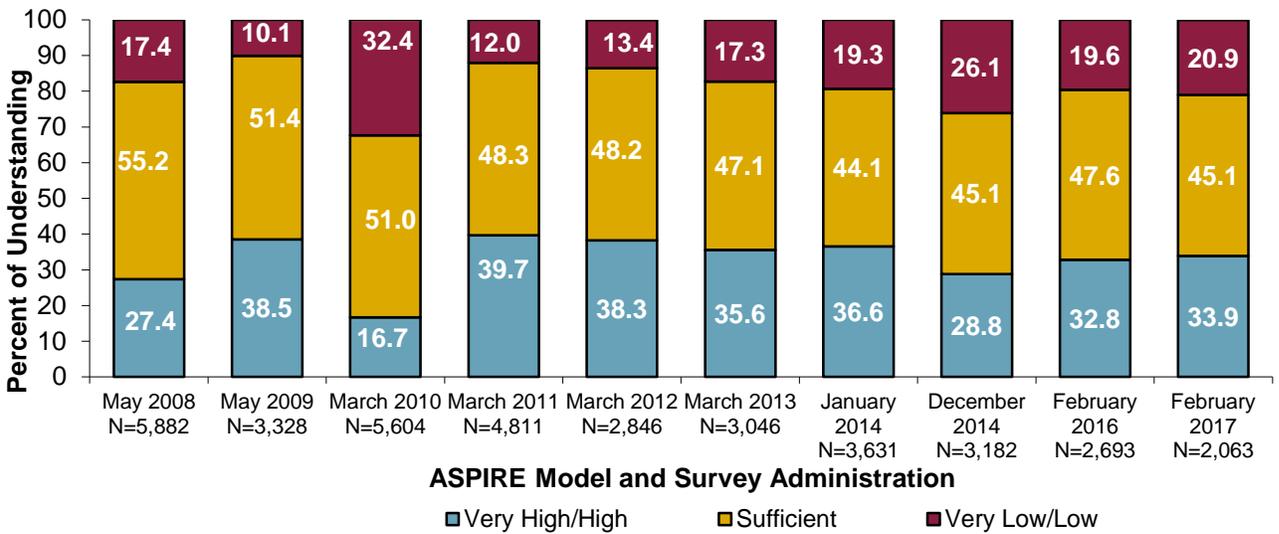
Figure 11. Percentage of Survey Respondents' Level of Understanding of the Performance-Pay Model Paid Out that Year

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2014–2015
Note: Over the 10-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 2017 respondents are summarized in **Appendix F** (p. 32). Based on respondent data from the nine eligibility categories, assistant principals/dean of instruction and principals indicated having a *very high/high* level of understanding (59.5 percent and 58.1 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 26.1 percent for Operational Support Staff to 53.1 percent for elective/ancillary teachers.

- On the February 2017 survey, 24.5 percent of respondents that indicated they were teaching assistants as well as 24.7 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 F).

- When comparing the perceptions of respondents from May 2008 to February 2017, there was a 2.2 percentage point increase (44.5 percent to 46.7 percent) regarding respondents that rated their level of understanding of the difference between student achievement and academic progress as *very high* or *high* (**Figure 12**). Eighty-nine percent indicated their level of understanding was at least sufficient, up from 87 percent in the prior year.

- Over the past ten 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, and most recently reported as 11.3 percent (Figure 12).

Figure 12.   Percentage of Survey Respondents' Indicating their Level of Understanding of the Difference Between Student Achievement and Academic Progress over Ten Years
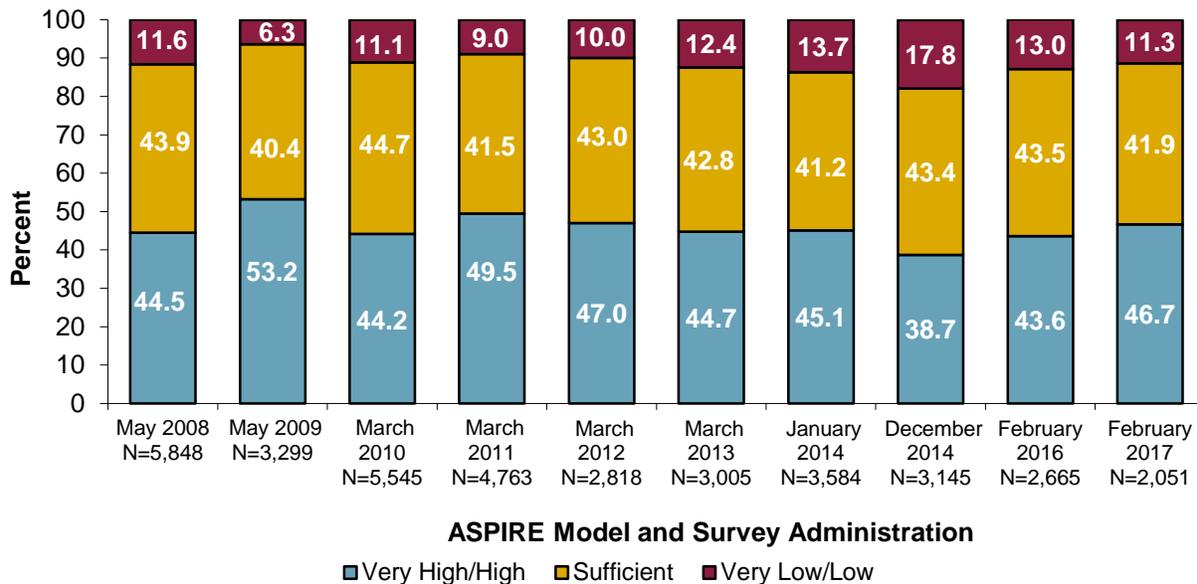

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2014–2015
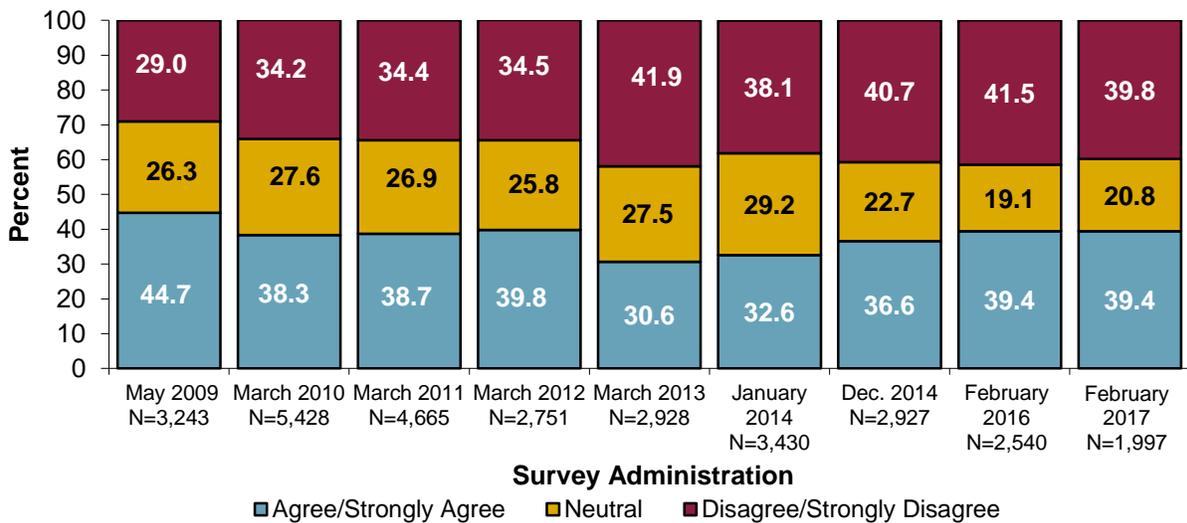Note: Over the 10-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model and policy changes

- On the May 2008 ASPIRE Award survey, there were seven items designed to determine the level of understanding for different components related to the ASPIRE Award. **Table A–8** (p. 23) depicts the comparison of the baseline data collected in May 2008 with data collected in February 2017.

- The percentage of respondents indicating a *high/very high* level of understanding increased for six of the seven components. However, February 2017 had less than half of the number of respondents compared to 2008 (Table A–8).

- Based on survey data collected in May 2008 and February 2017, the 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 39.1 percent, respectively) (Table A–8).

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

- There were seven items designed to examine the perceptions of respondents regarding the amount of money awarded and the ASPIRE model. The results from 2010 and 2017 (most recent) are summarized in **Table A–9** (p. 24).

- One question asked respondents whether they perceived a connection between classroom instruction and performance-pay results. **Figure 13** compares the percent of respondents from the past nine years' surveys. Based on the May 2009 and Februrary 2017 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 to 39.4 percent).

Figure 13. Percentage of Respondents Indicating a Connection Between Classroom Instruction and ASPIRE Award Results over Nine Years

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2007–2008 to 2014–2015
Note: Over the 9-year period, there have been budgetary cut-backs, model and policy changes

- 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 39.8 percent on the February 2017 survey (Figure 13). Nevertheless, these results showed slight improvements from the March 2013 responses.

- On the 2017 survey administration, the statement for which the largest percentage of respondents indicated *strongly agree* or *agree* centered on *the formal inquiry process allowed me the opportunity to question the accuracy of my award* (44.8 percent) (Table A–9, p. 24).

- On the February 2017 administration, a higher percentage of respondents *strongly disagreed* or *disagreed* that their *maximum award amount was commensurate with their professional contribution* (50.0 percent) compared to 20.6 percent who were *neutral* and 29.4 percent who *agreed* or *strongly agreed* (Table A–9). It should be noted that due to budget cuts the maximum award amounts have decreased over the last three years.

- Perceptions on the money awarded and the ASPIRE Award model from 2010 to 2017 became more positive on all six items for which previous years' data were available (Table A–9).

- The newest item, *an ASPIRE bonus is attainable for me*, received the highest level of agreement (54.2 percent) from the majority of respondents (Table A–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 G** (p. 33).

- For February 2017, the percentage of assistant principals/deans of instruction who *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that there was a connection between classroom instruction and the ASPIRE Award results (64.1 percent) exceeded employees in all other categories (Appendix G).

- The highest percentage of eligible respondents that *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* that there was a connection between classroom instruction and the ASPIRE Award results was from elective/ancillary teachers (55.2 percent) (Appendix G).

- 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 H** (p. 34).

- For February 2017, 48.8 percent of teaching assistants, *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that their maximum ASPIRE Award adequately recognized their efforts to increase student progress, reflecting the highest level of agreement compared to the remaining eligibility categories and for those respondents indicating they were not eligible to receive an award or *Other* (Appendix H).

- For February 2017, 66.7 percent of principals, 63.8 percent of elective/ancillary teachers, and 59.4 percent of respondents who indicated they were not eligible to receive an award stated that they *strongly disagreed* or *disagreed* that their maximum ASPIRE Award adequately recognized their efforts to increase student progress (Appendix H).

- 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 I** (p. 35) summarizes the results.

- For February 2017, 45.0 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 I).

- On the February 2017 survey administration, 70.7 percent of principals and 69.5 percent of elective/ancillary teachers 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 I).

- 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 J** (p. 36).

- On the February 2017 survey administration, with the exception of Operational Support Staff, 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. Assistant principals/deans of instruction had the highest percentage with 80.0 percent (Appendix J).

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

- For the May 2009 and subsequent survey administrations, there were nine items for which respondents rated the level of effectiveness regarding communication about the ASPIRE Award. Two of the nine 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 A–10** (p. 25) using the item development as the baseline year.

- When comparing results from baseline to February 2017, eight of the nine areas of communication showed increases in *very effective* ratings. *Knowing where to find information about the ASPIRE Award in general* reflected the area of communication for which respondents indicated the highest increase for effectiveness, increasing from 31.6 percent *very effective* in 2009 to 38.3 percent in 2017 (Table A–10).

- The areas for which the highest percentage of respondents perceived communications to be *not effective* focused on *providing clear explanations about comparative growth calculations* (22.4 percent), and *providing clear explanations about the award model* (20.7 percent) (Table A–10).

- On the February 2017 survey, five questions were designed to determine how the respondents received specific types of communication. The results are summarized in **Table A–11** (p. 25).

- Based on the results of the February 2017 survey, 90.2 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* (70.2 percent) (Table A–11, p. 25).

- When comparing whether respondents received/used any of the five different methods for communicating information about the ASPIRE Award program, 17.1 percent of respondents indicated *Not Sure* regarding *Academic Services Memos*, the highest percentage for this category (Table A–11).

What feedback was provided by respondents for the 2015–2016 ASPIRE Award Model?

- Out of a total of 2,598 respondents on the February 2017 survey, 1,096 or 42.2 percent of the respondents provided at least one response for providing one positive aspect of the ASPIRE Award, whereas 57.8 percent of respondents did not provide any responses. **Table A–12** (pp. 26–27) summarizes the frequency and percent of responses.

- A total of 7.6 percent of the 1,199 responses was simply, *No Comment*. The top four emergent categories reflected 49.3 percent of the responses (Table A–12).

- Approximately fifteen percent of the responses stated that the ASPIRE Award had no impact on them as an educator (Table A–12).

- Approximately twelve percent of the responses focused on recognition (Table A–12). Teachers indicated that receiving an ASPIRE Award recognized highly effective teachers, made teachers feel appreciated, and rewarded teachers who go the extra mile.

- Approximately twelve percent of responses centered on the receiving an incentive to supplement their salary.

- Approximately ten percent of responses indicated that they were motivated or encouraged by the ASPIRE Award. For example, one respondent stated, "Aspire encourages teachers to do their best every year" (Table A–12).

Discussion

The purpose of the 2015–2016 ASPIRE Award Survey was to gain insight regarding the level of knowledge and perceptions of Houston Independent School District (HISD) teachers and staff after eleven 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 feedback on the model.

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 and 2017 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 with respondents aware that the 2015–2016 award would be the last districtwide payout under ASPIRE.

There have been four key areas that have shown mixed results over the past four to eleven years. First, the response rates have varied over time, but over the past four years they have declined from 25.7 percent in January 2014 to 15.1 percent in February 2017. 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 eleven-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, with the exception of the 2009 survey administration, 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 eleven-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 54.3 percent on the most recent survey.

Collecting feedback about effective communications was undertaken over the past eight years to identify areas for improvement as well as areas that were effective. Based on survey results from 2009 to 2017, there was an increase in items rated *very effective* in eight of the nine areas for which data were available, including one of the newly added items, *providing clear explanations about comparative growth calculations.*

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.

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 negative perceptions about their efforts to increase student progress being adequately recognized by the maximum award amount than core foundation teachers (Groups 1–3). 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 45.0 percent. Of the nine eligibility categories, elective/ancillary teachers had the lowest level of agreement with regard to their maximum award amounts being commensurate with their professional contribution at 16.1 percent, followed by principals at 17.1 percent. For those respondents that indicated they were not eligible to receive an award, only 21.7 percent *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that their maximum ASPIRE Award amount was commensurate with their professional contribution.

The survey administered after each payout has served as a vehicle for respondents to recommend changes to the current model. Since the 2015–2016 ASPIRE Award represents the last districtwide payout of the program, feedback on the most positive aspect of the award that impacted educators was collected. The most frequent response, with 15.1 percent, indicated that the ASPIRE award did not impact them.

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Appendix A

Table A–1. Eleven Year Summary of Survey Response Rates by Pay for Performance Model

Model and Year	Date of Survey Administration	Population	Sample	# of Respondents	Response Rate
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
2015–2016 ASPIRE Award	February 2017	17,207	-	2,598	15.1

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; TPPM Results, 2005–2006; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007 to 2014–2015

Table A–2. Number and Percentage of ASPIRE Award Survey Respondents by Categorization and Program Year

Category	2014–2015		2015–2016	
	N	%	N	%
Group 1, Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/EVAAS or w/STAAR Comparative Growth	846	30.8	672	31.6
Group 2, Core Teacher PK–2	448	16.3	360	16.9
Group 3, Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o EVAAS or w/o STAAR Comparative Growth	225	8.2	230	10.8
Group 4, Elective/Ancillary Teacher	283	10.3	197	9.3
Group 5, Instructional Support	206	7.5	152	7.1
Group 6, Teaching Assistant	227	8.3	159	7.5
Group 7, Operational Support	204	7.4	154	7.2
Group 1L, Principals	62	2.3	44	2.1
Group 2L, Assistant Principals/Deans of Instruction	46	1.7	42	2.0
Other	200	7.3	116	5.5
Total	**2,747**	**100.0**	**2,126**	**100.0**

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2014–2015

Table A–3. Background Characteristics of 2015–2016 ASPIRE Award Survey Respondents

	N	%
Highest Degree Held		
High School	121	4.7
Some College	201	7.8
Associate's Degree	95	3.7
Bachelor's Degree	908	35.0
Some Graduate School	312	12.0
Master's Degree	887	34.2
Doctoral Degree	68	2.6
Total	**2,592**	**100.0**
Average years of experience in HISD	11.6	
Average years of experience at current campus	8.0	

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017

Appendix A (Continued)

Table A–4. Number and Percentage of Respondents Employed in HISD, Eligibility Status, Award Status, and Individual (Group 1) Award Status, February 2017					
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 2015–2016 school year?	2,546	89.7	10.3	-	-
Were you eligible to receive an ASPIRE Award for the 2015–2016 school year?	2,191	77.6	13.0	-	9.4
Will you receive an ASPIRE Award for the 2015–2016 school year (to be paid out in February 2017)?	2,043	60.4	39.6	-	-
If you were a core teacher with a Teacher STAAR Comparative Growth report, will you receive an individual performance ASPIRE Award?	1,210	33.9	12.6	53.5	-

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017

Table A–5. Teaching in a Critical Shortage Area: Response Count and Response Percentage, February, 2017		
Critical Shortage Area	N	%
Special Education	245	11.3
Bilingual Education	310	14.3
Mathematics (Grades 6–12)	134	6.2
Science (Grades 6–12)	114	5.3
Spanish (Grades 6–12)	27	1.2
N/A	1,338	61.7
Total	**2,168**	**100.0**

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017

Table A–6. Number and Percentage of Survey Respondents Indicating Their Level of Agreement for which the ASPIRE Award Encouraged Specific Behaviors, May 2009 and February 2017								
	N		Strongly Disagree/ Disagree %		Neutral %		Strongly Agree/Agree %	
The ASPIRE Award encourages me to:	Base-line*	2017	Base-line*	2017	Base-line*	2017	Base-line*	2017
Continue teaching in the classroom	2,750	1,385	26.3	35.8	25.7	19.4	47.9	44.8
Remain working in HISD	1,829	1,394	31.7	35.0	24.2	20.0	44.0	42.1
Come to work on a daily basis	3,222	1,382	27.3	37.2	25.7	20.7	47.0	42.1
Innovate in the classroom	2,846	1,388	37.9	36.1	22.8	19.9	39.2	43.9

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; 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.

Appendix A (Continued)

Table A–7. Number and Percentage of Survey Respondents Indicating the Frequency of Selected Instructional Practices, February 2017						
Over the past several years, I have		**Never**	**Rarely**	**Sometimes**	**Often**	**Always**
	N	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**
Collaborated with my colleagues	1,427	0.1	0.9	4.3	18.6	76.0
Used teacher-made assessments to make instructional decisions	1,418	0.6	1.6	10.7	31.4	55.7
Used data from district formative assessments (e.g. Snapshots or District Level Assessments) to make instructional decisions	1,361	4.2	5.9	10.5	21.4	58.0
Used standardized testing data to make instructional decisions	1,349	3.2	4.9	13.5	25.7	52.7
Used value-added data to make instructional decisions	1,312	7.8	7.9	16.1	24.2	44.1

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017

Table A–8. Number and Percentage of Survey Respondents Indicating Their Level of Understanding for the ASPIRE Award Program and Its Components for the 2006–2007 and 2015–2016 ASPIRE Award, May 2008 and February 2017 Survey Administrations								
Please rate your level of understanding to the following items:	**N**		**Very Low/Low %**		**Sufficient %**		**Very High/High %**	
	2008	**2017**	**2008**	**2017**	**2008**	**2017**	**2008**	**2017**
My understanding of ASPIRE is:	5,882	2,063	17.4	20.9	55.2	45.1	27.4	33.9
My understanding of value-added or comparative growth analysis is:	5,844	2,046	21.3	19.7	50.0	43.9	28.7	36.4
My understanding of the difference between student achievement and academic progress is:	5,848	2,051	11.6	11.4	43.9	41.9	44.5	46.7
My understanding of how value-added or comparative growth information can help me as an educator is:	5,832	1,991	18.3	15.9	45.1	43.3	36.6	40.8
My understanding of how to read/interpret value-added or comparative growth reports is:	5,817	2,022	23.7	18.5	47.0	44.3	29.3	37.2
My understanding of the different components of the 2015–2016 ASPIRE Award Program was:	5,835	2,024	23.2	27.5	48.7	43.6	28.1	28.9
My understanding of how the ASPIRE Awards were calculated/determined is:	5,852	2,011	33.9	39.1	43.9	38.7	22.2	22.1

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2006–2007
Note: On June 9, 2016, the HISD Board of Education voted not to continue using EVAAS (Education Value-Added Assessment System); therefore, comparative growth was used to measure campus and teacher progress.

Appendix A (Continued)

Table A–9. Number and Percentage of Survey Respondents Indicating Their Perceptions About Award Amounts and the ASPIRE Award Model, March 2010 and February 2017			Strongly Disagree/ Disagree		Neutral		Agree/ Strongly Agree	
	N		%		%		%	
	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017	2010	2017
There is a connection between classroom instruction and ASPIRE Award results.	5,428	1,997	34.2	39.8	27.6	20.8	38.3	39.4
The maximum award amount for my ASPIRE Award category adequately recognizes my efforts to increase student progress.	5,274	1,965	44.4	49.1	26.5	18.1	29.1	32.8
The maximum award amount for my ASPIRE Award category encourages me to remain in a campus-based position.	5,319	1,973	37.2	42.0	32.4	23.8	30.3	34.3
The maximum award amount for my ASPIRE Award category is commensurate with my professional contribution.	5,325	1,975	44.9	50.0	28.5	20.6	26.6	29.4
The ASPIRE Award is a fair way of acknowledging a teacher's impact on student growth.	5,417	2,011	46.6	42.6	26.6	19.7	26.7	37.7
The formal inquiry process allowed me the opportunity to question the accuracy of my award.	4,812	1,763	22.8	24.6	39.7	30.6	37.5	44.8
An ASPIRE bonus is attainable for me.*	N/A	1,964	N/A	26.4	N/A	19.3	N/A	54.2

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2008–2009
*New item added for the February 2017 administration.

Appendix A (Continued)

Table A–10.	Number and Percentage of Survey Respondents Indicating Their Perceptions About Communicating Effectively, May 2009 and February 2017								
	N		Not Effective		Somewhat/ Moderately Effective		Very Effective		
	Baseline	2017	Base-line	2017	Base-line	2017	Base-line	2017	
Knowing where to find information about the ASPIRE Award in general.	3,383	2,058	4.6	7.6	63.8	54.1	31.6	38.3	
Knowing when specific information about my ASPIRE Award was available.	3,371	2,053	5.7	9.2	61.5	52.0	32.7	38.8	
Knowing where to find information about my specific ASPIRE Award.	3,367	2,041	5.2	8.4	61.1	53.7	33.8	37.8	
Knowing how to interpret and understand my specific ASPIRE Award Notice.	3,368	2,051	8.5	15.3	66.0	56.9	25.5	27.8	
Understanding the difference between submitting a question by e-mail versus submitting a formal inquiry about your final award.	3,362	2,049	8.2	12.3	66.2	58.7	25.6	29.0	
Understanding where to find information about the inquiry process on the portal.	3,364	2,047	6.6	10.9	65.5	59.0	28.0	30.1	
Understanding that formal inquiries were required to be submitted by a specific deadline.	3,352	2,047	7.0	8.4	62.8	54.9	30.3	36.7	
Providing clear explanations about the award model.*	2,828	2,042	11.6	20.7	53.0	56.9	23.8	22.4	
Providing clear explanations about comparative growth calculations**	3,011	2,042	17.6	22.4	65.8	57.3	16.5	20.3	

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017; ASPIRE Award Survey Results, 2007–2008, 2010–2011, and 2011–2012
Note: Baseline year for the items *asterisked* was 2012, and **Baseline year was 2013; it was 2009 for all other items.

Table A–11.	Number and Percentage of Survey Respondents Indicating Their Receipt for Different Types of Communication, February 2017			
	N	Yes	No	Not Sure
School Messenger (automated phone system)	2,006	64.9	24.2	11.0
ASPIRE eNews	1,970	70.2	17.8	12.0
Academic Services Memos (electronic format)	1,923	59.3	23.6	17.1
ASPIRE e-mail	2,053	90.2	5.2	4.6
ASPIRE portal	1,953	68.5	19.2	12.4

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017

Appendix A (Continued)

| Table A–12. Number and Percentage of Responses for Listing One Positive Aspect of the ASPIRE Award that has Made the Most Impact on You, February 2017			
Category	**Description**	**N**	**%**
Recognition	"Recognition is always welcome in a grade level that is very challenging. Teachers get more pressures and criticism than praise in this very competitive environment." "Being recognized for our efforts is a good motivator to continue our difficult task of preparing students academically."	148	12.3
Incentive	"HISD pays their teachers less than most school districts in Harris County; therefore, the Aspire Award is the only way that quality teachers can teach here and make up for the lack of pay." "It was nice to know that we could receive some compensation to add to our salary for all our hard work teaching every day. Our compensation does not reflect our efforts, nor the results we achieve with our students. Now that the award is gone, I'm going to have to make some tough decisions."	145	12.1
Motivate/Encourage	"Aspire encourages teachers to do their best every year." "I thought the ASPIRE Award Program was a good thing. It motivated teachers to try harder."	118	9.8
Student data, growth, performance	"Wanting my students to grow and not just pass the STAAR test has impacted my teaching. "It gave me incentive to dig deeper into the data so I can better teach my students." "It helped me realize that data must drive every instructional decision I make."	84	7.0
Improved Instruction	"The ASPIRE Award program was a way to get feedback and improve instruction. It inspired me to differentiate more and target students for intervention and instruction. It allowed me to see my weaknesses and turn them into strengths while also maintaining my strengths. I was motivated to be more innovative, knowledgeable, and ambitious in my craft."	42	3.5
Recruitment/Retention	"The retention of effective teachers in core academic areas is increased with the ASPIRE award program." "The ability to acquire and retain great educators."	38	3.2
Better attendance	"The ASPIRE award encourages teachers to come to school on a daily basis; teachers were more careful not to go over their absence maximum."	31	2.6
Collaboration/Team work	"The award made all staff want to work together to help all the grade levels achieve. It made the campus more cohesive, working toward a common goal – award for student performance."	27	2.3
No Impact	"The ASPIRE Award program had no impact on me as an educator."	181	15.1
No comment or N/A	No comment or N/A	91	7.6
Not Fair	"It is very unfair." "I always thought it was unfair because the lower grades always got very little and we are the foundation." "I teach GT population so ASPIRE will always be out of my reach."	89	7.4

Table A–12. Number and Percentage of Responses for Listing One Positive Aspect of the ASPIRE Award that has Made the Most Impact on You, February 2017			
Category	**Description**	**N**	**%**
Unintended consequences	Unhealthy competition Caused friction among co-workers Teachers were focused on the teaching to the test Free Riding–"Even when we worked together on tutorials, etc., some in the department worked like crazy while most of us (including me) benefited from their efforts." "It encourages teachers to see kids as "ones that will make you a lot of money" and it encourages our district policy to worship data -- which to collect such data means we have to test the kids CONSTANTLY."	58	4.8
Undervalued	Professionally offensive "It's great that HISD wants to recognize teachers, but all teachers should feel valued and appreciated, not just those listed in Chancery." "It is sad that a teacher who has spent 20 years in a district only makes $6,000 more than a brand new teacher who potentially didn't even go to school to be a teacher. It is downright degrading and society and HISD should be ashamed." "Made me consider another profession. Having electives clearly and openly undervalued compared to core is unfair and discouraging."	42	3.5
Not enough money	"I would prefer to just get a pay raise instead of this bonus system." "I just wish it was a higher amount of money." "The monetary incentive is not commensurate to the service I provide to my students and to my profession in general." "The $50 is really an insult."	32	2.7
No Understanding of the Model	"I do not have any understanding of how ASPIRE Award program works and how the calculations are made."	29	2.4
Eligibility aspects	"It is unfair that only teachers at TIF4 schools are eligible for additional money." "Paraprofessionals/nurses/custodians/clerks are not eligible, but we do everything." "Attendance prevented me from being eligible."	22	1.8
Allocation of money	"The money could have been better spent by raising teacher salaries." "Pay us more. We are underpaid." "The award should have been distributed equally as a stipend to everyone, or to every campus for the SDMC/administrator/principal to determine who got how much of the award."	22	1.8
Total Responses		1,199	100.0
Total Respondents		1,096	42.2

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017

Note: Green shaded categories denote positive comments, grey shaded categories denote neutral comments, and red shaded categories denote negative comments.

Appendix B
Cross Tabulation Summarizing the Percent of Survey Respondents Indicating the Maximum Favorability Toward the Concept of Teacher Performance Pay by Eligibility Category, February 2017
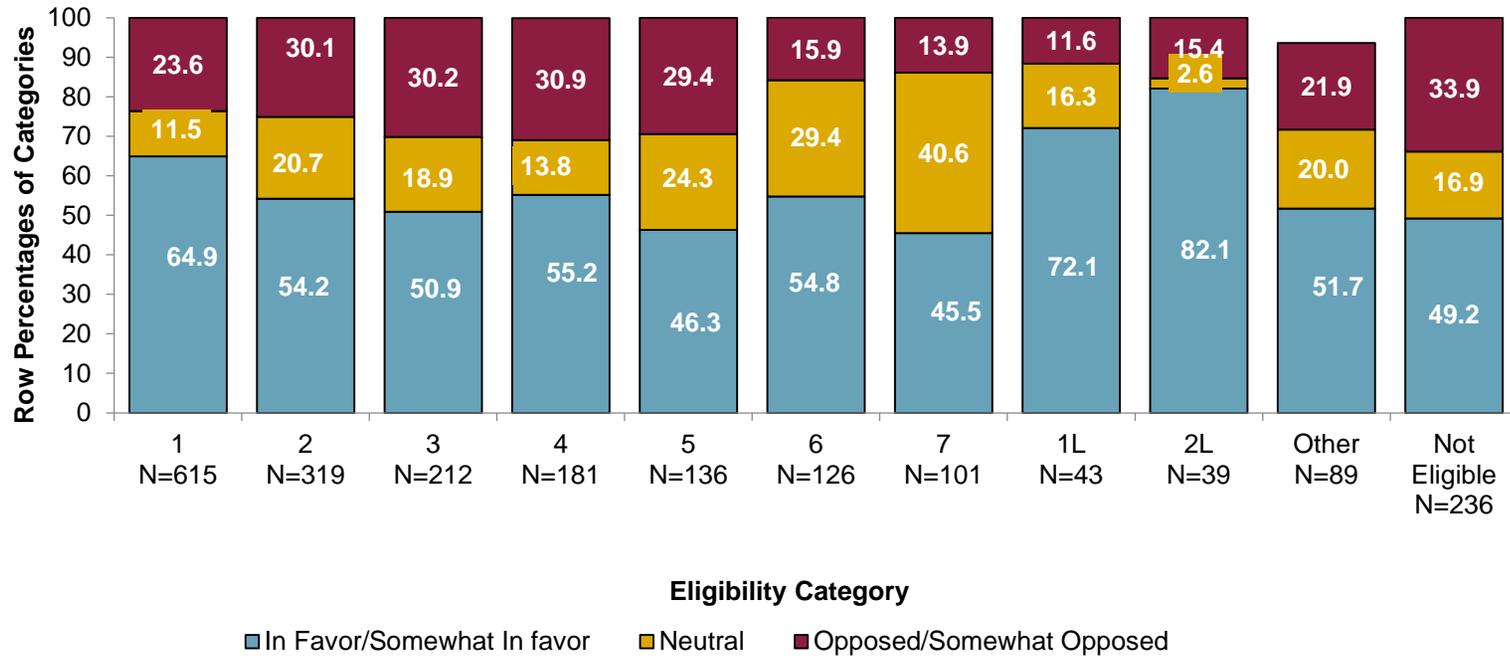
Eligibility Category

■ In Favor/Somewhat In favor   ■ Neutral   ■ Opposed/Somewhat Opposed

Key:
Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/STAAR Comparative Growth
Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o STAAR Comparative Growth
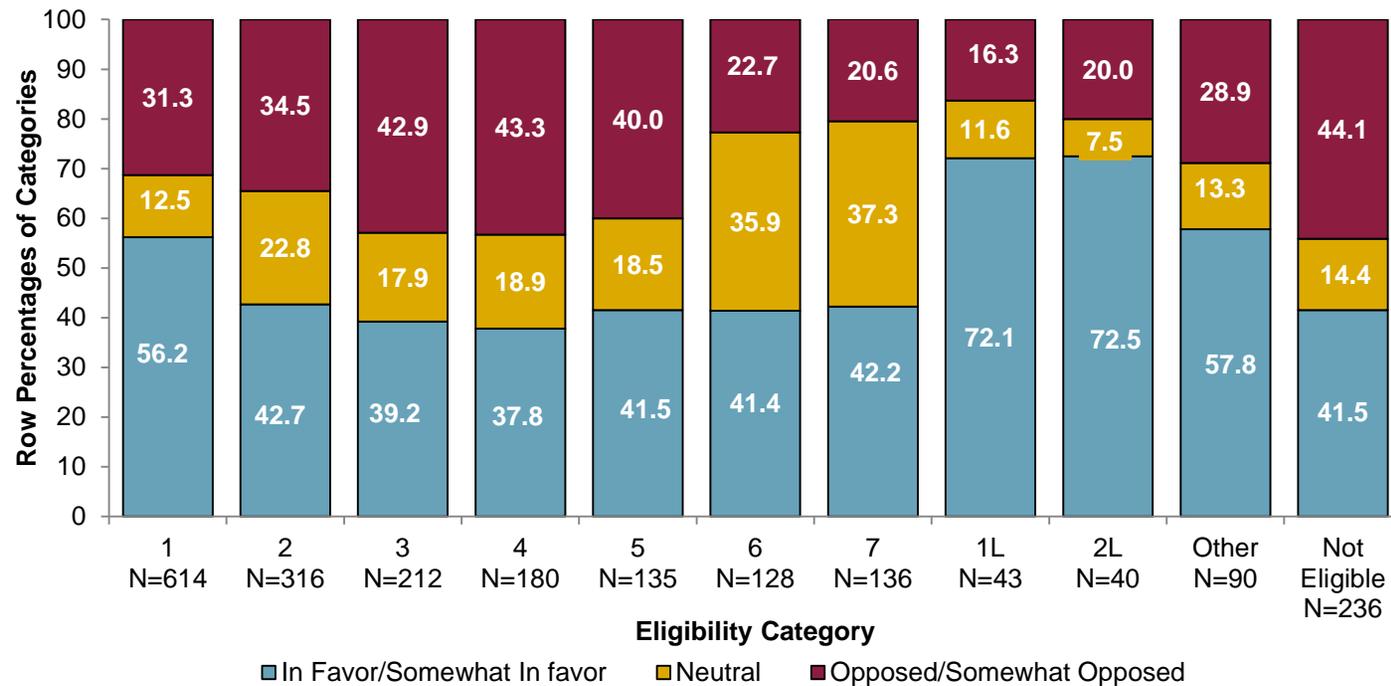Group 4: Elective/Ancillary Teacher
Group 5: Instructional Support Staff

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

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017
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 Individual Student Growth by Eligibility Category, 2017


Chart: Row Percentages of Categories (y-axis, 0–100) by Eligibility Category (x-axis)

Eligibility Category	In Favor/Somewhat In favor	Neutral	Opposed/Somewhat Opposed
1 N=614	56.2	12.5	31.3
2 N=316	42.7	22.8	34.5
3 N=212	39.2	17.9	42.9
4 N=180	37.8	18.9	43.3
5 N=135	41.5	18.5	40.0
6 N=128	41.4	35.9	22.7
7 N=136	42.2	37.3	20.6
1L N=43	72.1	11.6	16.3
2L N=40	72.5	7.5	20.0
Other N=90	57.8	13.3	28.9
Not Eligible N=236	41.5	14.4	44.1

Key:
Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/STAAR Comparative Growth
Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o STAAR Comparative Growth
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, 2017
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 Teacher Performance Pay Based on Passing Rates Only by Eligibility Category, February 2017
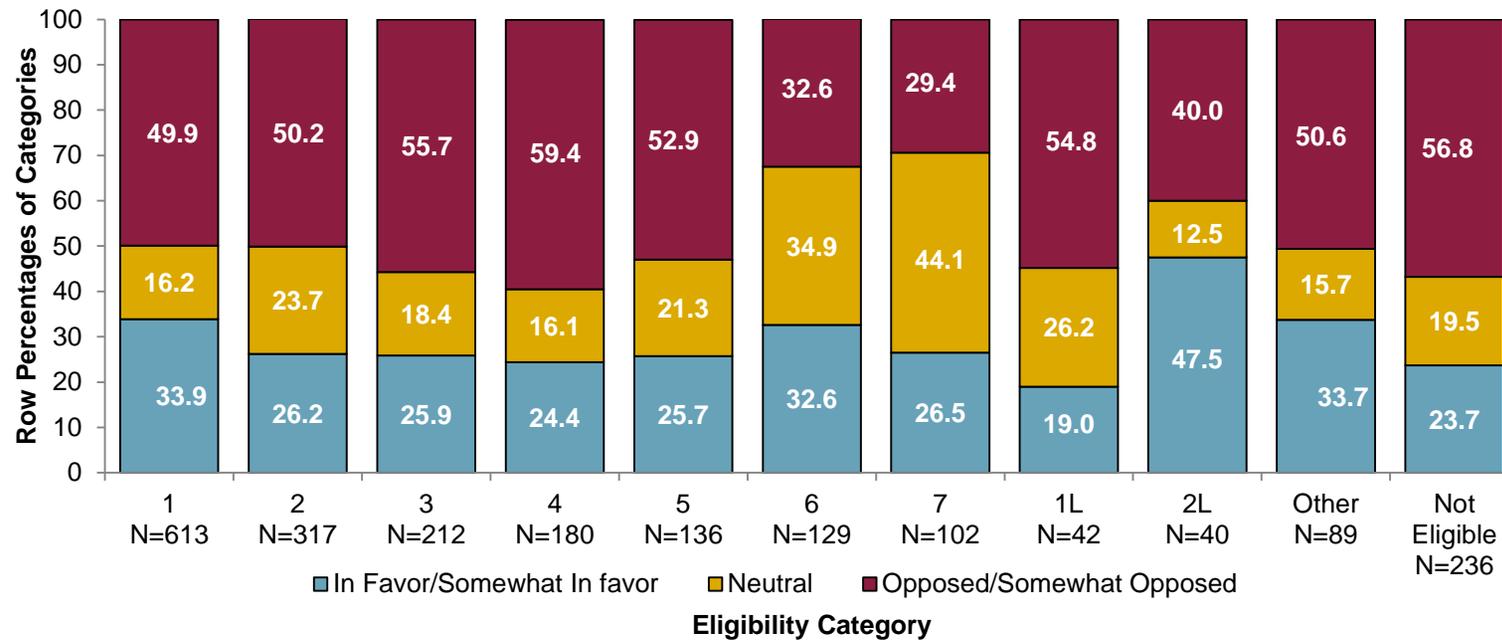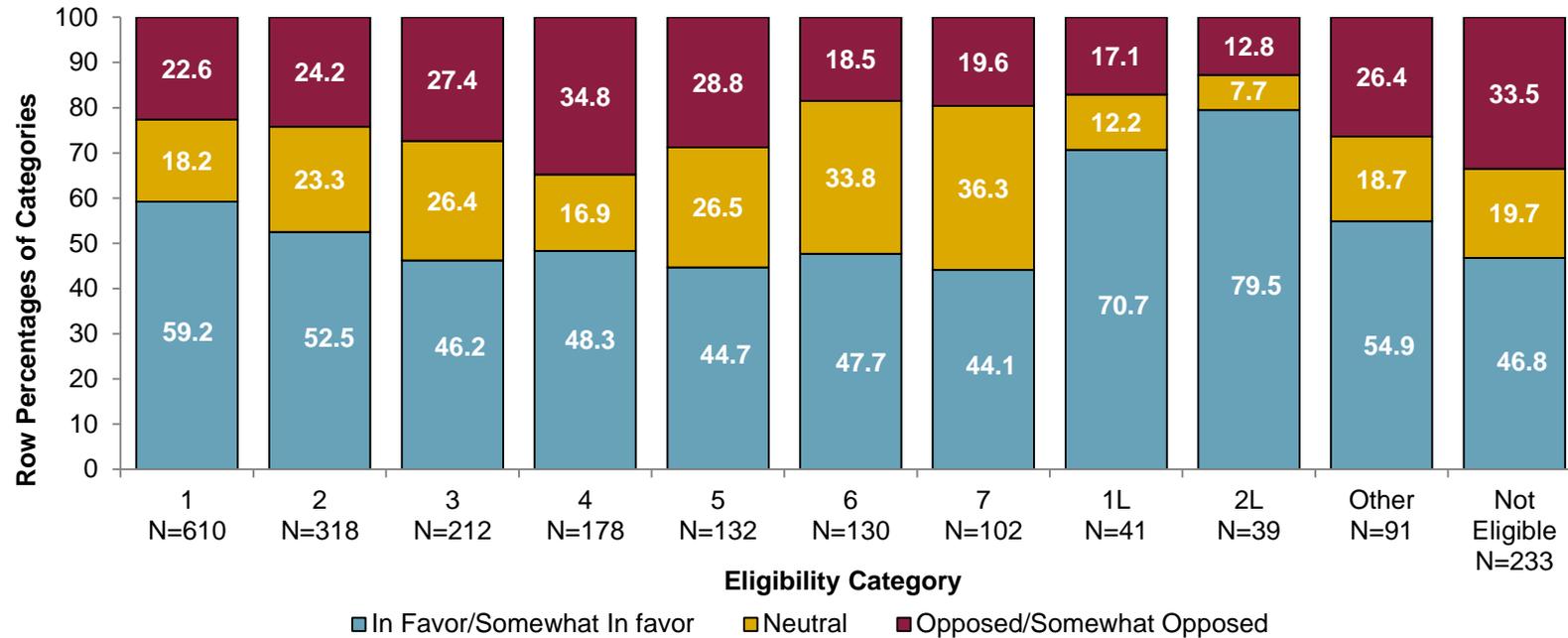

Key:

Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/STAAR Comparative Growth
Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o STAAR Comparative Growth
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, 2017
Note: Items that were skipped were coded as missing data and not included in the analysis.

Appendix E
Cross Tabulation Summarizing the Percent of Respondents Indicating Favorability
Toward the Concept of Differentiated Pay by Eligibility Category, February 2017
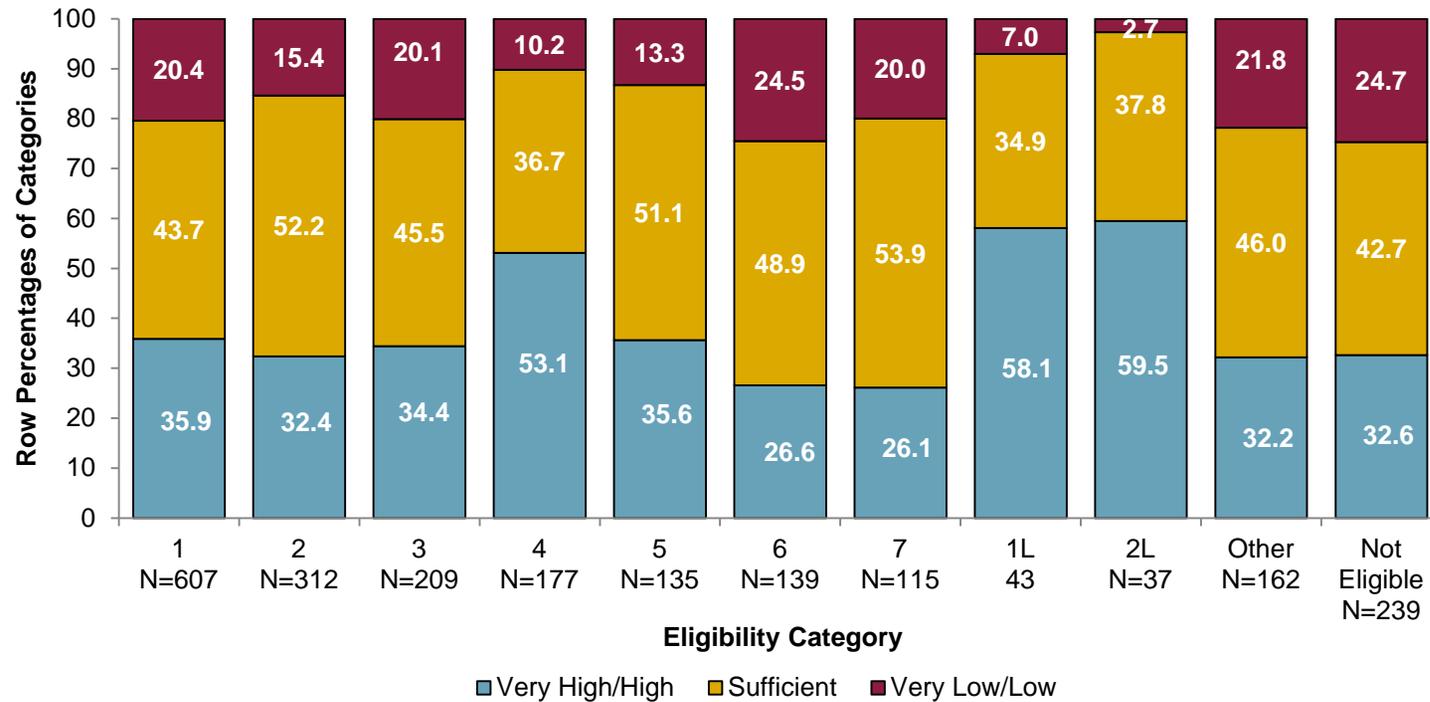

Key:

Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/STAAR Comparative Growth
Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o STAAR Comparative Growth
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, 2017
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' Level of Understanding of the 2015–2016 ASPIRE Award Program, February 2017

Key:
Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/STAAR Comparative Growth
Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o STAAR Comparative Growth
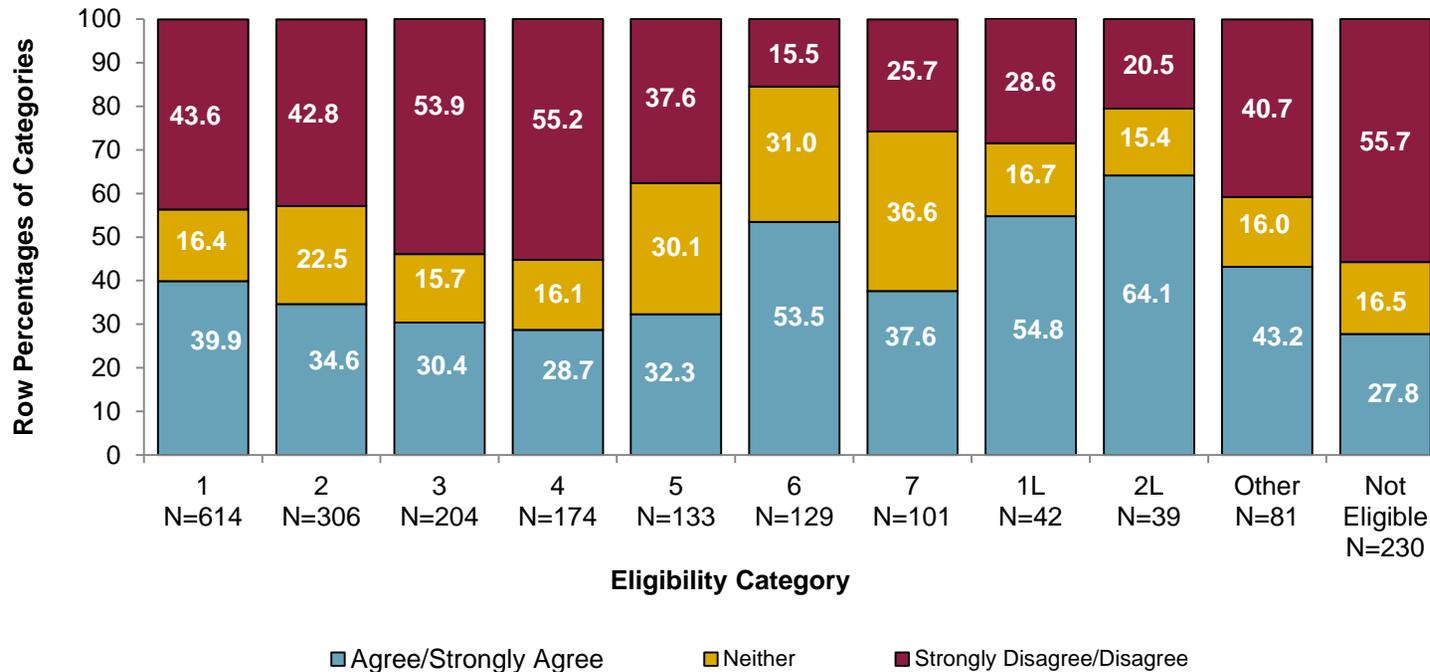Group 4: Elective/Ancillary Teacher
Group 5: Instructional Support Staff

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

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017
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 a Connection Between Classroom Instruction and Performance Pay Results by Eligibility Category

Key:
Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/STAAR Comparative Growth
Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o STAAR Comparative Growth
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, 2017
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 Adequately Recognized Their Efforts to Increase Student Progress, February 2017

Key:
Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/STAAR Comparative Growth
Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o STAAR Comparative Growth
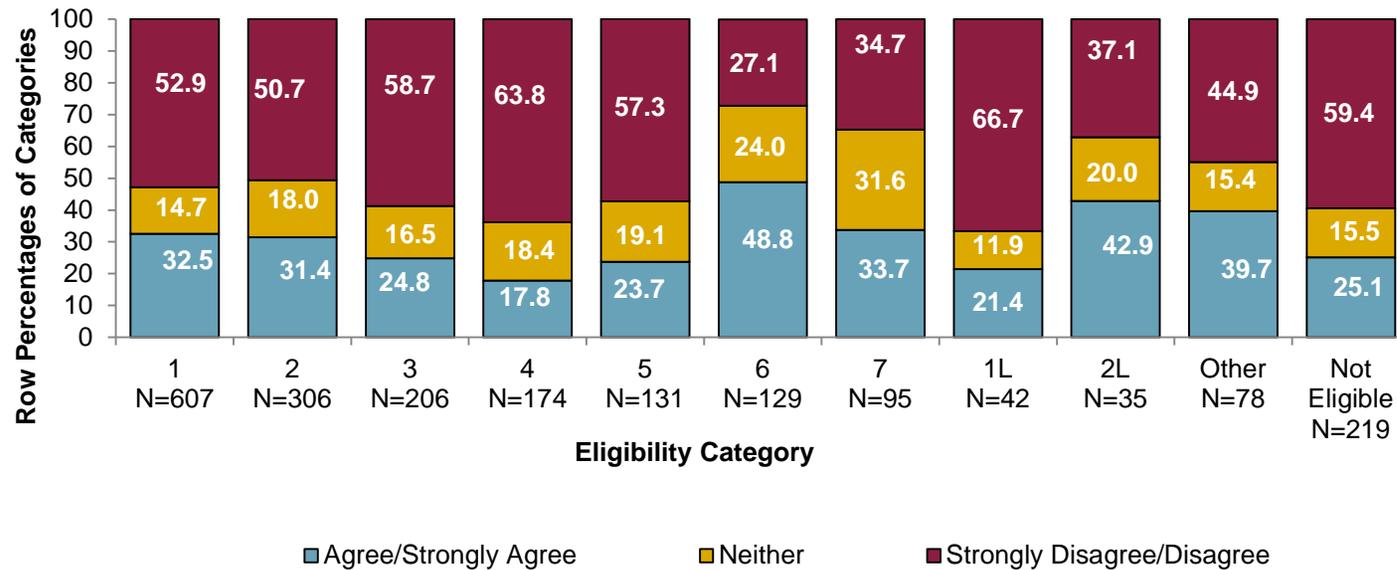Group 4: Elective/Ancillary Teacher
Group 5: Instructional Support Staff

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

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017
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 the Maximum ASPIRE Award Amount Was Commensurate with Their Professional Contribution, February 2017

■ Agree/Strongly Agree   ■ Neither   ■ Strongly Disagree/Disagree

Key:
Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/STAAR Comparative Growth
Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o STAAR Comparative Growth
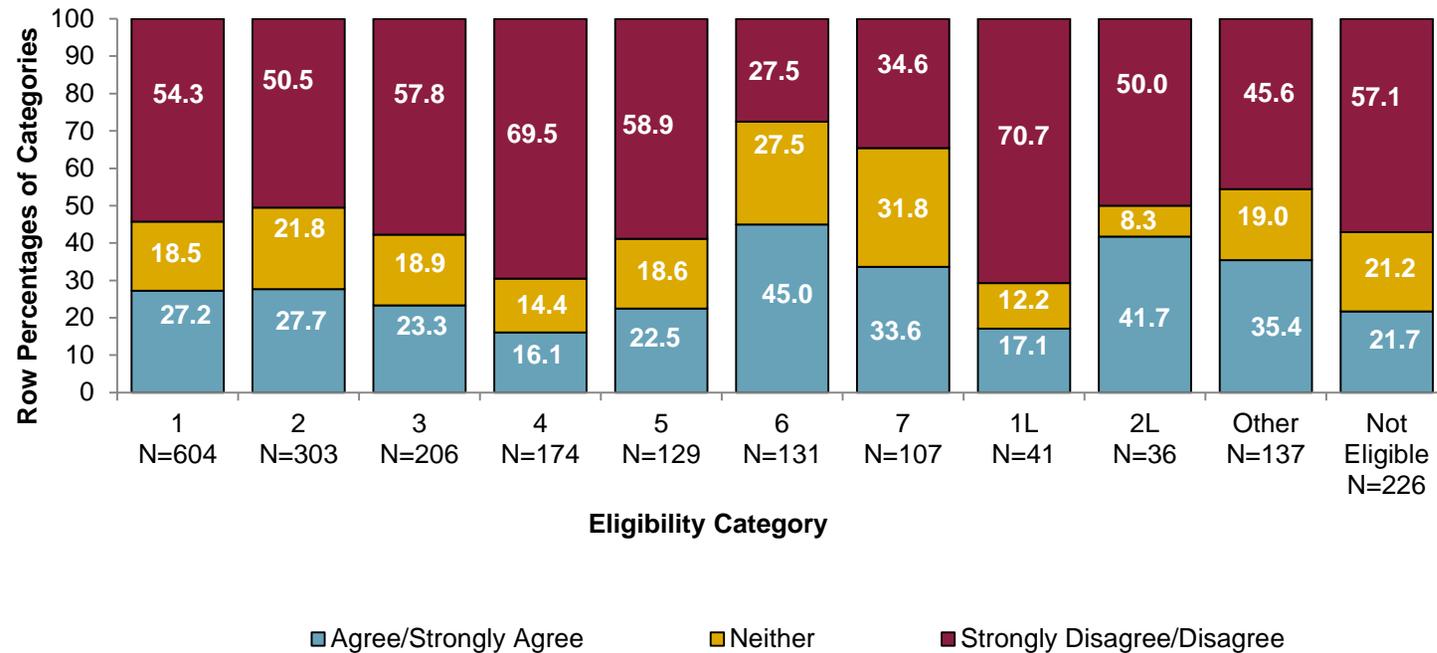Group 4: Elective/Ancillary Teacher
Group 5: Instructional Support Staff

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

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017
Note: Items that were skipped were coded as missing data and not included in the analysis.

Appendix J
Cross Tabulation Summarizing the Percent of Survey Respondents Indicating Favorability Toward the Concept of an Award for Educators in Hard-to-Staff Buildings, February 2017

Chart: Row Percentages of Categories (y-axis, 0–100) by Eligibility Category (x-axis)

Eligibility Category	In Favor/Somewhat In favor	Neutral	Opposed/Somewhat Opposed
1 N=610	71.3	16.1	12.6
2 N=314	64.3	25.2	10.5
3 N=212	68.9	17.9	13.2
4 N=178	64.0	20.2	15.7
5 N=138	63.0	25.4	11.6
6 N=134	56.7	35.8	7.5
7 N=108	48.1	43.5	8.3
1L N=42	78.6	14.3	7.1
2L N=40	80.0	2.5	17.5
Other N=89	74.2	11.2	14.6
Not Eligible N=233	67.0	18.0	15.0

Legend: ■ In Favor/Somewhat In favor ■ Neutral ■ Opposed/Somewhat Opposed

Key:
Group 1: Core Teacher Grades 3–11 w/STAAR Comparative Growth
Group 2: Core Teacher PK–2
Group 3: Core Teacher Grades 3–12 w/o STAAR Comparative Growth
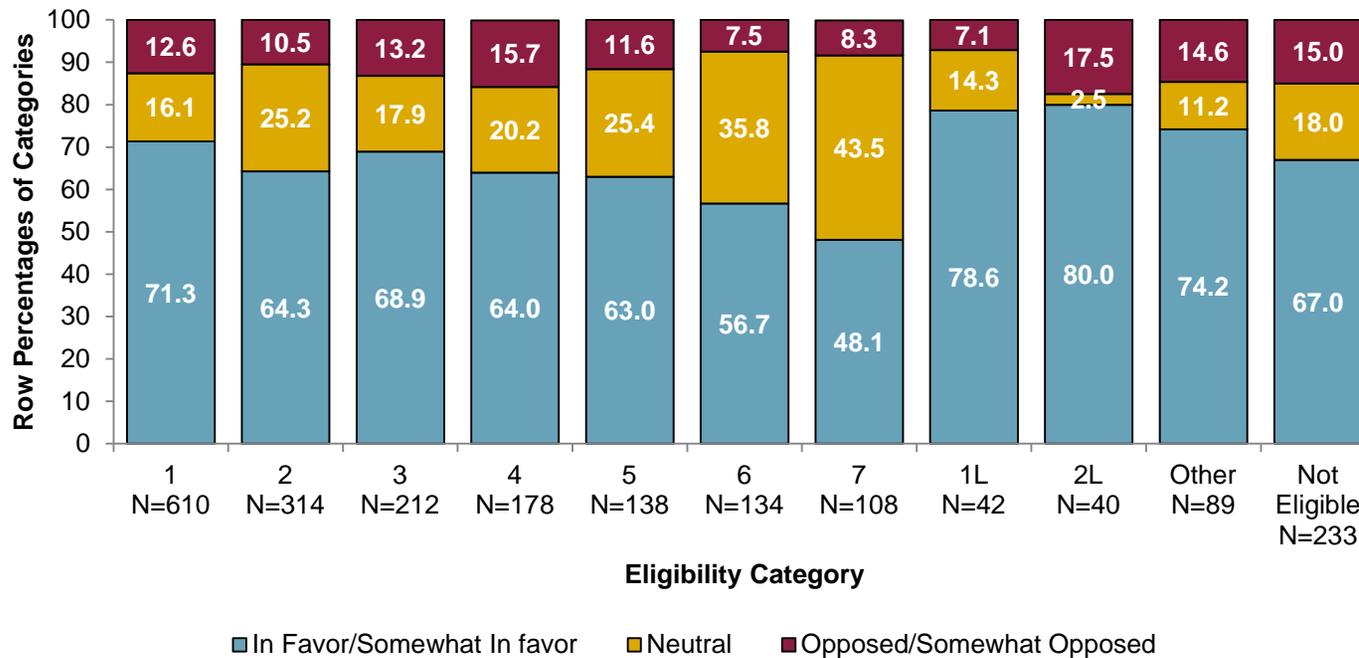Group 4: Elective/Ancillary Teacher
Group 5: Instructional Support Staff

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

Source: SurveyMonkey® Data File, 2017
Note: Items that were skipped were coded as missing data and not included in the analysis.