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Dear Educators:

Today, we are sharing with you the report of the Design Team for Compensation and Career Pathways. This working group comprised of teachers and principals was selected by the Denver Public Schools (DPS) and the Denver Classroom Teachers Association (DCTA) to consider potential changes to the incentive compensation system for teachers and other professionals in the DPS, known as the Professional Compensation System for Teachers, or ProComp.

The group met nine times over four months to review both Denver's current system as well as compensation systems in other public service and non-profit sectors. This process and the report were funded by a grant from the Rose Community Foundation, a Denver-based foundation that funds work around systemic change in education and other areas, including health care, aging, child and family services, and Jewish life and community. Rose Community Foundation was a key partner to DPS and DCTA in the initial development of ProComp.

The principles and ideas contained in the report that we are sharing with you today are the starting point for a broader conversation about how ProComp should function going forward. A full copy of the report is attached, and can be accessed [here](#).

As you read the report, you will see the eight design principles the group agreed upon:

- Opportunities for leadership and increased compensation, including base-building opportunities and bonuses, should be available to teachers throughout their career.
- The compensation system should be easy for teachers to understand. It should also be easy for administrators to understand and support.
- The compensation system should attract and retain, with real incentives, effective and distinguished teachers in hard-to-serve schools.
- The compensation system should allow effective/distinguished teachers to increase earnings substantially without leaving the classroom.
- The compensation system should attract, retain and reward effective and distinguished teachers.
- The compensation system should value professional learning.
- The compensation system should provide a formal and explicit structure for career progression and opportunities.
- The design of the system should be sensitive to whether the requirements placed on teachers and school and district leaders are reasonable. The district must have systems/ practices in place to support the compensation system and to support teachers in pursuing available opportunities.

The design team also created a compensation and career progression framework to serve as a starting place for further conversation about how these design principles might be applied to potential changes to ProComp.

The original ProComp compensation system was designed over a seven-year period and eventually implemented starting in 2005. It was approved by a vote of DCTA members, funded by a voter-approved \$25 million tax increase, and its development was supported by a number of community organizations and foundations. It was created to attract and retain great teachers, particularly in high-poverty schools and high-needs subject areas, and to provide teachers with meaningful rewards for their real contributions to student progress. That system has been closely studied and examined to determine its effectiveness in terms of teacher retention and development, and student

and school outcomes over time. Those results were part of the design group's study and discussion.

The release of this report marks the beginning of discussions around ProComp in anticipation of the renewal and renegotiation of the ProComp agreement. We are all hopeful that this report will serve as a rich resource for broader conversations about potential changes to ProComp within the broader DPS community. We look forward to a series of discussions with teachers over the coming months to hear in depth from you on your thoughts, ideas and suggestions for how we can make ProComp as effective as possible.

All of us who have been engaged with this process so far find it both challenging and promising, and we look forward to having the opportunity to continue to improve Denver's groundbreaking ProComp system.

Best,

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