

# Performance Management and Citizen Induced Financial Sanctions and Incentives in Education: Is There Public Support?

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*Widespread political support has expanded the use of market driven performance reforms. A growing number of these reforms aim to increase democratic accountability and enhance performance by including citizens in the evaluation phase of the administrative process. However, citizen support for market themes is unclear. Do they share elected officials enthusiasm or are there limitations on their support? This research assesses these questions by examining the demographics of support for financial sanctions and performance pay in education. The results reveal targeted demographic groups are generally less supportive of organizational sanctions and employee incentives than untargeted groups. Targeted parents, including racial minorities, urban, poorly educated, and economically disadvantaged parents were the most opposed to market reforms designed to enhance of the quality of educational services provided in their communities.*

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The mounting support for New Public Management (NPM) principles among policymakers has been duly noted (Ho and Ni, 2005; Berman and Wang, 2000; Willoughby, 2004). However, literature assessing citizens' support or lack thereof has not been as forthcoming. Do citizens share elected officials enthusiasm and optimism about NPM principles? Or are there limitations on their support? If so, are there demographic and socioeconomic trends that help explain variations in levels of support for NPM themes among citizen groups? This research undertakes the task of assessing these issues by examining the following research questions: 1) is there public support for the use of performance incentives and sanctions that link teacher salary and school funding to student performance and 2) does this support vary significantly among demographic groups?

The analysis will allow the study to add to the discussion of Light's (2006) macro and Kelly's (2005) micro concerns about the usefulness of public sector performance management reforms and their ability to adequately appease citizens. It will also allow for an assessment of policymakers' assumption that target groups such as parents, urban

residents and the economically disadvantaged exhibit high levels of support for the use performance incentives and sanctions in education. A lack of support among the aforementioned groups could provide evidence that assist in efforts to understand why the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) student transfers provisions, targeting citizens in underperforming school, have been underutilized (Kahlenberg, 2010; Brown et al, 2005). Additionally, the research will allow for a determination of whether citizens view the use of incentives and sanctions along different continuums. The perception of positive performance incentives through teacher performance pay may elicit a different response from negative school sanctions, especially among those with different levels of involvement and sophistication (Chingos and Henderson, 2010; Schnieder et al, 1998).

The demographic variables understudy includes income, neighborhood type, parental status, education, party identification, and political ideology. Several of these variables have been included in previous studies (Howell et al, 2007; Chew, 1992; Cooper, 2005). This research expands on their efforts by not only conducting a comparative analysis of the views of targeted citizen groups but also performing a more specialized assessment of parents within each group. By examining the views of low income, urban, and poorly educated parents we can begin to make more accurate determinations about how best to appease and engage them.

The research begins with a brief review of performance reforms in public education and the importance of citizens' views and support. I then explain the method of data collection for the study's national population sample and continue with a discussion the findings. I conclude with implications for the future of performance and market reforms in education.

### **Underserved Populations and Performance Accountability**

Efforts to promote performance management and include citizens in the administrative process are often rooted in the economic principal agent theory. The theory posits that the principal, who is often limited by time and expertise, hires an agent to perform a task on his behalf. The agent is expected to take reasonable care of the principal's business and complete the task in the most efficient and effective manner.

Theoretically agents that fail to uphold their contractual obligations to the principal are subjected to sanctions. In the private sector, the sanctions often include a loss of business due to the customer's ability to seek the services of similar providers. In the public sector such remedies are often lacking, leaving employees with the ability to exploit the principal agent relationship and citizens with inadequate remedy for poor service quality (Mosher, 1982). Several scholars have raised concerns about this exploitation as it relates to racially and economically vulnerable members of society. Stiver's (2007) posited that bureaucrats' racism and classism influenced the poor quality of services economically disadvantaged minority residents received after Hurricane Katrina. Shelby (2002) noted that racial minorities often suffer due to racialized policy and administrative decision making that impacts their life chances and opportunities. Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2003) contribute that minorities suffer at the hands of public educators, counselors, and other public employees who place citizens into 3 categories: those worthy of extraordinary help, those who get what the rules say and no more, and those who get no help (Stiver, 2007).

Terry Moe adds to the plausibility that vulnerable citizens suffer at the discretion of uninterested or disconnected public agents by providing an example of exploitation in the

public school arena. He argues that the lack of accountability mechanisms in the public school system has led to an increased attraction of the wrong type employees. These employees are self-interested, unmotivated, job security conscious, and concerned only with maintaining the status quo (Moe, 2003). It is believed that their prevalence has decreased the quality of education and increased citizens' demands for policies that are cognizant of the needed reforms (Hurst et al, 2003; Rudalevige, 2003).

Recent federal policies have attempted to accommodate this belief by adopting a paternalistic approach that significantly limited citizen input in policies fostering a shift from policies that promote the use of autonomy and professional accountability as effective tools to meet the needs of the citizens to policies that incorporate neoliberal reforms such as performance accountability, incentives, and more open citizen inclusion in performance evaluation (Little and Bartlett, 2010; Wong, 2008). The shift to accommodate the reforms is best captured in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).

### **No Child Left Behind**

NCLB sought to improve the quality of education through the use of market principles (Tabb, 2002). Central among these principles are the beliefs that performance accountability, competition, and choices for citizens will not only lead to a higher quality of services but also appease and empower concerned parents by offering them more control (Hurst, 2007). The legislation began by requiring all 50 states to develop a performance system outlining incremental increases in student performance that ultimately would result in 100 percent of students demonstrating a proficient understanding of selected subject areas by the end of the 2014 school term. Advancement toward performance goals were to be measured and recorded through the public release of student test results. Teachers in schools demonstrating competence, defined as the achievement of legislated performance goals, would enjoy job security and public accolades. Those operating in schools that failed to achieve performance goals would potentially encounter sanctions (Fusarelli, 2004; McGuinn, 2006).

### **NCLB Performance Sanctions**

The sanctions were outlined in a five year school improvement plan. The first year a school failed to meet state performance targets, it was to be placed on a watch list and required to develop an improvement plan. The second consecutive year a school failed to meet performance goals, the district was required to provide any student attending that school the option to attend another school that met performance expectations. The option to transfer was accompanied by a provision which inflicted a financial sanction on the underperforming school by requiring the district to pay the cost of transportation. The third year of sanctions expanded on years one and two by also requiring the district to offer supplemental educational services to any student qualifying for a free or reduced lunch. The supplemental services imposed a second round of financial sanctions on poorly performing schools by requiring the district to finance the cost of services that were to be provided by an outside entity (Burch, 2007). Sanctions for years four and five allowed for the dismissal of staff, a state takeover, the introduction of private sector control, or a conversion to a charter school.

### **Concerns for Citizen Support for Sanctions & Market Reforms**

The sanctions of years two and three cater to assumptions that citizens believe educators are primarily responsible for educational outcome and should be sanctioned in a manner similar

to those of unsatisfactory private sector businesses that are forced to better appease customers or confront grave financial losses as clients seek the services of their competitors. Widespread support for such assumptions could significantly alter the way Americans engage in the educational process while simultaneously addressing desires for democratic accountability (Mosher, 1982). However it is unclear if citizens agree with financial sanctions that are linked to performance. Budgetary evidence suggests that many of the citizens poised to benefit the most from publically induced finance sanctions have neglected to exercise their right to do so. Less than 7 percent of the estimated \$1.8 billion reserved for transfers out of poorly performing school and supplemental services have been activated by students and parents attending academically vulnerable Title I schools (Kahlenberg, 2010).

Similarly survey research has failed to demonstrate support for school funding sanctions because researchers have largely chosen to forgo its examination and focus on other elements of modern performance reforms such as the transfer provision, mandatory testing, charter schools, and vouchers. These accountability provisions are important and warrant examination. However, their successful use is linked to the assertion that citizens support the use the financial sanctions for underperforming schools. If the assumption is incorrect, citizens will not use mandatory test results in a manner that compels the school of exit to finance the cost of student transfers or supplemental services. They will also be less inclined to support performance provisions that extract funds from academically weak public schools to support charter school and voucher programs. A lack of support for such provisions would also raise concern for applications of coproduction theory to current education reforms. Coproduction theory asserts that policymakers and citizens must act as equal partners or co producers of education policy reforms (Marschall, 2004; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993). Education policies that fail to align with citizens ideas and preferences demonstrate a lack of consider for citizens role as co-producers of policy outcomes. Citizens may then respond to such policies with inactivity. When this occurs performance provisions that aim to enhance educational outcomes by allowing citizens to sanction underperforming schools are unlikely to receive public support and success.

Given the implications of funding sanction assumptions, this research examines citizens' view on sanctions for poorly performing schools as well as their views of performance pay in education. Adding performance pay to the analysis allows for an assessment of views on two essential components of market and performance models, incentives and sanctions. Like funding sanctions, if citizens do not support performance pay, its long term use is jeopardized. Examples of such occurrences are found in the State of Oregon's Department of Transportation where Broom (1995) noted that its employee incentive program saved the state millions of dollars. However the program was discontinued when citizens expressed resentment toward the use of financial incentives. Assessing views on incentives will also allow for determinations regarding whether citizens view rewards and sanctions differently. If there is substantial support for reward but minimal support for sanctions, then future education performance policies may gain more traction with citizens by emphasizing rewards, not sanctions.

Six hypotheses are created to assess varying levels of support for school funding sanctions and teacher performance pay among different demographic groups. The hypotheses propose that the individuals from whom support is most needed and desired are the least likely to concur. Their position in society, via interaction with school administrators and educators, commitment to their community institutions, and fears of the inequalities associated with market tradeoffs render them more leery of market reforms than

their more affluent and less involved counterparts. The six variables included are income, education, political ideology, political party, parent status, and residency. Further analysis is undertaken to determine whether uneducated and economically vulnerable parents are more or less supportive of provisions targeting their children than their counterparts.

### **Hypotheses and Measurement**

Hypothesis one proposes parents are less likely to support educational performance reform policies than nonparents. Parents are among the primary targets of education reforms. Federal legislation has sought to better inform and engage them by requiring states to publically report performance results to parents after which parents are allowed to remove their child from underperforming schools with the school of exit financing transfer cost. The plausibility of successful provision enforcement is linked to parents' support for the belief that educators are responsible for performance outcomes and should be sanctioned for dismal test results. Bushaw and Lopez's (2010) documentation of Gallop Poll results question this assertion by highlighting parent's positive perceptions of their education system. Approximately 71 percent of parents had confidence in the men and women teaching their children. Sixty three percent of parents believed schools had a positive impact on their oldest child and inspired them to learn, and 76 percent identified parents as the key determinant in whether children would learn in school (Bushaw and Lopez, 2010). Such perceptions among parents should decrease the likelihood that they will support school sanctions and teacher performance pay that is linked to student outcomes. Parental status is measured by asking respondents whether they had school aged children living with them.

Hypothesis two proposes low income individuals are less likely to support educational performance reform policies than those with higher incomes. Low income individuals are likely to attend underfunded and underperforming schools. Their awareness of the challenges of impoverished schools should decrease support for policies that diminish the funds of an already financially stressed school and complicate efforts to recruit quality teachers. Low income individuals are also less likely to have accurate information about performance policies and how they might positively impact the quality of their child's education (Schneider et al, 1998). The lack of information can lead to negative evaluations of performance reforms. They are also less likely to have the knowledge, skills, and contact to understand and navigate the choice system in education (Apple, 2004; Ball, Bowe, and Gewirtz, 1994). The same arguments can be applied to hypothesis three which states individuals with low levels of education are less likely to support performance reform policies than those with higher levels of education. Income was measured by asking "Last year what was your total family income before taxes: below \$20,000, \$20-40,000, \$40-60,000, \$60-80,000, \$80-100,000, or \$100,000 and above." Education was measured by asking "What was the highest grade of school you completed: less than 12<sup>th</sup> grade, 12<sup>th</sup> grade, some college, college graduate, graduate work."

Hypothesis four posits Republicans are more likely to support performance reform policies than Democrats. The Republican Party's proactive support of market based education reforms has been documented in the literature (Chubb and Moe, 1990; Savas, 1987). Some examples of those reforms include the use of performance measures, school choice programs, vouchers, contracting out school services, and the proliferation and expansion of private and charter schools (Patrick, 2007; Gittel and McKenna, 1999; Himmelstein, 1990). Democrats have supported performance reforms (Gore, 1993; Thompson, 2003) but they tend to gravitate toward voluntary efforts that do not require voucher programs and other neoliberal efforts that reduce or remove funding from public

schools (Patrick, 2007). Party identification is measured by asking respondents whether they considered themselves to be Democrat, Republican, or some other party affiliate. This analysis limits responses to Democrat and Republican identifiers.

Hypothesis five posits that liberal ideologues are less likely to support performance reform policies than conservatives. Elliot and MacLennan (1994) noted that conservatives argue that the use of market techniques such as options for parents who wish to choose among schools of varying levels of performance and quality can serve as a remedy to underperforming schools. Apple (2004) also noted that conservatives support for educational reform elements such as competition, markets, choice, performance accountability, and national testing have heavily influenced modern day education reforms. Furthermore, he adds that conservatives view the traditional school system as one of market failure, disappointment and loss (Apple, 2004). Beliefs systems such as these increase conservatives' support for financial sanctions (Schneider et al, 1997) while liberals tend to remain unsupportive of school funding and pay for performance provisions that results in decreased funding to underprivileged schools and threaten their ability to attract quality educators. Political ideology was assessed by respondents self-identifying themselves as liberal, moderate, or conservative.

Hypothesis six posits urban residents are less likely to support performance reform policies than rural residents. Stephen (2007) noted that NCLB performance reforms were designed to accommodate diverse urban populations. Unlike rural residents who live in sparsely populated areas, urban residents have access to more education service providers. However, their frustration with poorly funded inner city schools that cannot attract and retain quality teachers should diminish their support for funding sanction (Ainsworth, 2002). Residency was measure by asking "Which of the following best describe the place where you live: rural area, urban subdivision or suburb, or urban area not a suburb?"

### **Research Methods and Variables**

Data used in this analysis were taken from a national public opinion survey conducted by the Survey Research Laboratory of the Mississippi State University Social Science Research Center during the fall of 2008. The survey was designed to provide a snapshot of citizens' views on education performance reforms as well as other social and economic policy areas. The time point of data collection is of particular importance because of the high visibility of the issue and citizens' ability to actively utilize market techniques in education. Prior to 2008 citizens in some states were unable to utilize the transfer provision because state legislation did not provide for its implementation until the 2008 school term. The 2008 school term also served as the midpoint of the federal NCLB timeline for states to demonstrate that 100 percent of students were proficient in selected subject areas. Additionally, the 2008 presidential election year placed education reforms at the forefront of the national agenda. Both candidates highlighted the usefulness of performance and market techniques, such as teacher performance pay, as means to enhance educational outcomes. These combined elements heightened awareness of market reforms in education and make 2008 an optimal time point to assess citizens' views on the issue.

Approximately 1210 adult across the United States were interviewed through a computer assisted telephone interviewing system (CATI). The CATI system is among the oldest and most accepted forms of computer assisted interviewing. It allows the researcher to collect large amounts of data in a short amount of time while simultaneously decreasing selection bias by utilizing a stratified random digit dialing technique to select households to

contact. Upon initial contact, trained interviewers then further randomize and diversify the sample population by asking to speak with the adult who has had the most recent birthday. Once this individual is identified and agrees to participate in the study, the computer will prompt the interviewer to read a series of multiple choice questions from the computer monitor and enter the appropriate responses. The multiple choice format allows the interviewer to point and click on the right answer. The answer is then converted into a code by the CATI system and uploaded into a database.

All calls were made between the hours of 5 pm and 9 pm during the week, from 10 am to 6 pm on Saturday, and 1 pm to 9 pm on Sunday. The overall response rate was 54.9% and the sample error was 3.5% thereby indicating that if every adult US resident was interviewed the results could differ up to 3.5% from the reported results. In an effort to address bias and present a representative sample, characteristics of the survey respondents were compared to 2007 U.S. Census Bureau data. A weighting scheme was created and applied to adjust the data by selected demographic characteristics including age, race, gender, and education (Holmes and Goodman, 2010).

### *Dependent Variables*

Citizen's support for consequential performance policies, the dependent variable, was measured by responses to two questions. The first variable, support for the organizational sanction provision, was measured by asking respondents: "It is alright for a school that is not meeting academic standards to lose money." This statement allows for the assessment of citizens' views of school funding sanctions such as those identified by the NCLB citizen induced sanctioning provision. The provision seeks to remove funds from underperforming schools by allowing students to transfer out of schools that consecutively fail to meet performance goals and attend a higher performing school with the failing school covering student transportation expenses. The second dependent variable, teacher performance pay, was measured by asking respondents: "Public school teachers' salaries should be based on student performance." This variable assesses support for Race to the Top and other performance policy provisions that seek to link student performance to teachers' financial compensation. Respondents could strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree, or neither agree or disagree with each statement. Those who strongly agreed were code with the number one. Those who agreed were codes as two. Those who neither agreed nor disagreed were coded with the number three. While those who disagreed were coded as four and those who strongly disagreed was coded as five. Higher values of the dependent variable indicate less support for the performance reforms under study. A means analysis is performed to assess variations in citizens' views. The means analysis allows for a bivariate comparison of citizens' views in each demographic group.

Additional analysis is performed by conducting a multivariate assessment of the elements influencing school sanction and teacher performance pay attitudes. The assessment allows the research to determine whether sanctions and pay incentives are viewed along a different continuum. It also explores whether the impact of important variables such as parental status, race, and economic class are mediated by other variables.

### **Findings**

Table 1 includes the assessment of school sanction and teacher performance pay views. Its higher school sanctions values for parents, urban, low income, liberal, and Democrat respondents reveals support for the research hypotheses that these individuals are less supportive of performance sanctions in education than their counterparts in the general

population. Notable among the bivariate assessments is the wide margin of difference between the mean level of school sanctioning support for liberals (3.43) and conservatives (2.89) in the general population. Liberals were much less supportive of sanctioning schools that fail to meet performance expectations. The finding aligns with those of previous studies and is important to this analysis because ideological views are largely informed by one's life experiences, i.e. position in society. Social class, family practices and upbringing, exposure to discriminatory treatment, quality of education received, access to education advancement and economic opportunities, and a host of other variables influencing life chances all culminate in one's ideological perspective and often result in several vulnerable groups that have experienced limited opportunities and discriminatory practices to adopt liberal philosophies. These individuals, who are particularly targeted by policy reforms, exhibited a lack of support for policy assertions that sanctioning poorly performing schools may invoke the desired change in outcomes. Their lack of support for school funding sanction highlight the need to more meaningfully consider coproduction theory's call for increased venues and measures to allow a larger variety of targeted citizens to function as active coproducers or partners in the creation of public policies. Without such considerations, policies like the NCLB transfer provisions are likely to remain unsuccessful because they do not capture the sentiment of targeted citizens. A point that is further supported by the assessment of parents, minorities, and urban residents views.

Parents (3.28) were less supportive of performance funding sanctions for poorly performing schools than nonparents (3.07,  $p < .01$ ). Lower levels of support among parents is consistent with the belief that parents' knowledge of the school funding debate decreases the likelihood that they will support efforts that link funding to performance (Bushaw and Lopez, 2010; Buckley and Schneider, 2003). The finding also aligns with Brown's (2005) notation that parents in the states of Mississippi, Connecticut, Utah, Maryland, and Virginia exercised caution in their request to utilize the transfer provision. Less than 3 percent of transfer eligible student in these states requested and followed through with a transfer under NCLB (Brown et al, 2005). Though lack of options may partially explain the dismal transfer numbers in some districts it may not be the only variable accounting for the underutilization of the transfer provision. Clearly parents' lack of support for financial sanctions may be a determining factor.

Urban residents were also significantly less supportive of school funding sanctions than rural residents, average score of 2.62 to 2.30 ( $p < .01$ ). Lower levels of support among these individuals are explained by Payne (2008) who posits that unlike federal policymakers who have a limited view of the issues in urban communities, urban residents' experiences with cultural, social, and economic issues that plague their schools provides them with a multidimensional view of educational problems that financial sanctions and transfers are not equip to address (Ainsworth, 2002). Utilizing these techniques might only serve to further damage struggling urban schools (Stephen, 2007). Urban residents limited support further demonstrate the need to more meaningfully engage citizens in policy development as advocated by proponents of coproduction theory. The residential differences in opinion might also be linked to ideological differences of rural and urban residents. School funding sanctions, vouchers, and other financial reforms are often promoted and supported by conservative ideologues. Rural residents have historically been more conservative while urban residents have largely identified with liberal ideologues.

Democrats were also notably more opposed than Republicans. Lower levels of support among Democrats support the study's hypotheses and align with the last three



decades of federal education legislation under Presidents George HW Bush, Bill Clinton, and George W Bush. The Republican Presidential Administrations of both George H.W. Bush and George W. Bush introduced legislation that promoted market reforms and competition. The Clinton Administration pushed for the development of uniform performance standards and evidence of outcomes (Hurst et al., 2003; Rudalevige, 2003; Ziebarth, 2001).

**Table 1.** Demographic Variables and Support for Performance Policies

<b>Ideology</b>	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Policies
Conservative	2.89	3.04
Moderate	3.21	3.18
Liberal	3.43	3.37
N Size	1145	1148
Significance	p=.000	p=.001
<b>Party Identification</b>	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Policies
Republican	2.91	3.19
Independent	3.15	3.15
Democrat	3.28	3.16
N Size	1160	1162
Significance	p=.000	p=.884
<b>Education</b>	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Policies
High School Dropout	3.07	2.95
High School Graduate	3.15	3.00
Some College	3.15	3.39
College Grade or Higher	3.18	3.35
N Size	1206	1208
Significance	p=.874	p=.000
<b>Race</b>	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Policies
White	3.09	3.15
Minority	3.43	3.29
N Size	1206	1208
Significance	p=.000	p=.146
<b>Income</b>	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Policies
Under \$20,000	3.22	2.66
\$20-40,000	3.26	3.29
\$40-60,000	3.05	3.22
\$60-80,000	3.30	3.29
\$80,000+	3.11	3.27

N Size	885	887
Significance	p=.286	p=.000
<b>Parent</b>	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Policies
No	3.07	3.08
Yes	3.28	3.33
N Size	1205	1207
Significance	p=.004	p=.001
<b>Residency</b>	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Policies
Rural	3.07	3.15
Suburb	3.07	3.20
Urban	3.34	3.13
N Size	1189	1193
Significance	p=.005	p=.685

The bivariate assessment of teacher performance pay views offer support for the parental and ideological hypotheses. Parents (3.33) were less supportive of linking teachers' salaries to student outcomes than nonparents (3.08). Liberals (3.37) were also less supportive than conservatives (3.04). Similar to the discussion of funding sanctioning attitudes, liberals' ideological stance and modest support for the use of competitive measures in education reform may be driven by their awareness of and sensitivity to the negative drawbacks to vulnerable schools who seek to recruit top candidates. Policies linking salaries to student performance in historically poorly performing school districts may further diminish recruitment efforts. Likewise parents are more informed about the challenges educators encounter. Their increases in knowledge leads to respect and admiration for educator which in turn leads to opposition to policy reforms that carry implications for teachers' salaries based on student outcomes (Bushaw and Lopez, 2010).

Both education and income failed to yield findings in the hypothesized direction. High school drop outs (2.95) were more supportive of teacher performance pay than college graduates (3.35). Likewise, individuals with the least amount of income were more supportive of teacher performance pay than those with higher annual incomes. The finding indicates that although vulnerable citizens may be unwilling to financially sanction schools they are supportive of holding educators accountable by linking their salary to student outcomes. This aligns with Cooper's (2005) assessment of the views of low income African American mothers and guardians. She found these individuals held high levels of distrust and frustration with their child's public school teacher. Their frustration caused them to value the use of performance mechanisms and to also seek the services of alternative service providers in the private and charter and school arenas.

Cooper (2005) neglected to assess the views of parents of greater means and education. This study's assessment of these parents' views reveals several important findings. Parents with the least amount of education (3.98) were the most opposed to teacher performance pay of all demographic groups. The contrast in findings between parents with limited education and their counterparts in the general population (nonparent mean value of 2.66) highlight the importance of a multivariate assessment of attitudes of

two important variables, education and parental status. The failure to evaluate these attitudes could misinform policymakers by giving them the impression the poorly educated parents support performance pay models in education. College educated parents were slightly more supportive of teacher performance pay when compared to parents who did not complete high school. However it should be noted that they were more opposed than college educated nonparents and high school dropout nonparents.

**Table 2. Parental Controls**

	<i>Nonparent</i>		<i>Parents Only</i>	
<b>Ideology</b>	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Performance Policies	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Policies
Conservative	2.81	2.96	3.03	3.19
Liberal	3.34	3.18	3.60	3.73
Moderate	3.14	3.16	3.35	3.21
N size	733	734	411	413
Significance	p=.000	p=.057	p=.001	p=.000
	<i>Nonparent</i>		<i>Parents Only</i>	
<b>Party Identification</b>	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Performance Policies	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Policies
Republican	2.73	3.06	3.18	3.40
Democrat	3.18	3.07	3.47	3.33
Independent	3.15	3.10	3.16	3.25
N size	743	744	416	416
Significance	p=.000	p=.939	p=.069	p=.642
	<i>Nonparent</i>		<i>Parents Only</i>	
<b>Education</b>	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Performance Policies	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Policies
High School Dropout	2.96	2.66	3.48	3.98
High School Graduate	3.11	2.93	3.21	3.13
Some College	3.08	3.36	3.29	3.43
College Grade or Higher	3.08	3.33	3.34	3.39
N size	779	780	411	426
Significance	p=.691	p=.000	p=.675	p=.004
	<i>Nonparent</i>		<i>Parents Only</i>	
<b>Race</b>	Support for	Support for	Support for	Support for

	Organization Sanctions	Teacher Pay for Performance Policies	Organization Sanctions	Teacher Pay for Policies
White	3.06	3.05	3.16	3.34
Minority	3.14	3.30	3.77	3.26
N size	779	780	426	427
Significance	p=.527	p=.040	p=.000	p=.594
	<i>Nonparent</i>		<i>Parents Only</i>	
<b>Income</b>	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Performance Policies	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Policies
Under \$20,000	3.10	2.51	3.44	2.95
\$20-40,000	3.16	3.27	3.49	3.33
\$40-60,000	2.99	3.17	3.17	3.34
\$60-80,000	3.30	3.41	3.30	3.18
\$80,000+	3.03	3.29	3.19	3.24
N Size	537	538	346	348
Significance	p=.476	p=.000	p=.472	p=.404
	<i>Nonparent</i>		<i>Parents Only</i>	
<b>Location</b>	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Performance Policies	Support for Organization Sanctions	Support for Teacher Pay for Policies
Rural	2.99	3.02	3.21	3.35
Suburb	3.07	3.20	3.09	3.21
Urban	3.19	3.02	3.65	3.39
N Size	772	774	416	416
Significance	p=.151	p=.111	p=.003	p=.506

Table 2 highlights the views of parents and nonparents. The results yield important findings that were not readily apparent in the initial analysis. For example, Table 1 indicates that high school dropouts were more supportive of school sanctions than college graduates, thus failing to offer support for the research hypothesis. After isolating the views of parents significant differences were reveal. The hypothesis was upheld. The mean value for parents who did not complete high school was 3.48, a sizable decrease in support from the means of 2.96 for high school dropout nonparents and 3.34 for college graduate parents. Clearly those most likely to be unable to academically assist their children do not support funding sanctions for poorly performing schools therefore efforts to meet their needs by allowing them to financially sanction schools may be insufficient.

Sizable differences in the mean levels of support of urban and rural parents and nonparents were also revealed. Initially rural residents (3.07) were notably more supportive of school funding sanctions compared to urban residents (3.34), lower mean values indicate more support. After controlling for parental status, rural residents were still more

supportive than urban residents. However, the level of rural resident support decreased from 3.07 (all) to 3.21 (parents). The level of support for urban residents decreased from 3.34 (all) to 3.65 (parents). Like the findings for those with the least amount of education, the low levels of support among urban and rural parents raise doubt about efforts to successfully reform schools by sanctioning poor performers.

A more holistic comparison of school sanction and teacher performance pay views failed to yield consistent findings. Some groups were more supportive of school sanctions while others were more supportive of teacher performance pay. For example, rural (3.21 to 3.35) and suburban parents (3.09 to 3.21) showed higher levels of support for school sanctions than teacher performance pay. Urban parents were more favorable of teacher performance pay policies than sanctions (3.39 to 3.65). Inconsistencies were found among parents with the least and highest amounts of education. Both groups were more supportive of school sanctions than teacher performance pay. Parents' ideological philosophy produced concurrent findings. Liberals and conservatives were both more supportive of school funding sanctions than teacher performance pay. Lower levels of support could produce problems for districts that require tax increases to finance performance pay schemes. The variations in findings require additional multivariate analysis.

## Conclusion

The support of elected officials, administrators, and citizens is pivotal to the successful survival of market centered administrative reforms. While researchers have made stride in assessing support among policymakers and administrator, documentation of citizen support is somewhat scant. This research adds to the literature by assessing citizen support for two neoliberal market themes found in education legislation, organization sanctions and employee pay for performance. The findings reveal that support among targeted demographic groups failed to show promise for reforms at the grassroots level. Parents, low income, poorly educated, and urban respondents exhibited low levels of support. A lack of support among these groups is detrimental to reform success. It may help explain why less than 5 percent of eligible parents and students have requested a transfer out of schools that fail to meet performance expectations (Brown, 2005).

The potential for additional information explaining the underutilization of performance policies in education is further revealed in the dismal support found among the parents of targeted student groups. These individuals demonstrated the lowest levels of support of all demographic groups. Their lack of support indicates that current trends in education performance reforms may be ineffective in their approaches to enhance educational outcomes in a manner that engages vulnerable citizens and builds public trust. More effective policies might be developed by actively considering how position in society may impact the level of support targeted citizens harbor for neoliberal policy reforms. The life experiences, access to information, and personal interactions of parents, urban residents, the economically disadvantaged, and liberals can cause them to view market reforms unfavorably. Policies that are cognizant of how their life experiences and chances color their views are more likely to gain favor and success.

While this study's finding contribute to our understanding of citizens' views of performance management legislation it is important to acknowledge its limitation. First, the data was collected in 2008. Citizens' perceptions of performance reforms may have remained constant or shifted over time. Research incorporating more recent data is needed to assess this issue. Second, although income and education may serve as a proxy for race in this analysis, race is not included as a variable. Assessing views along racial lines will

only strengthen our understanding of the issue. Lastly, it is important to note this study is descriptive in nature. It primarily aimed to replace assumptions about citizens' support or opposition for financial sanctions and performance pay in education with evidence from a national study. It was occupied with who and what, not why. The need for research examining the "why" in citizens' performance policy perceptions and preferences is duly noted.

### Author Biography

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