

As teacher merit pay spreads, one noted voice cries, ‘It doesn’t work’

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The Washington Post:

Merit pay for teachers, an idea kicked around for decades, is suddenly gaining traction.

Fervently promoted by Michelle A. Rhee when she was chancellor of the District’s public schools, the concept is picking up steam from a growing cadre of politicians who think one way to improve the country’s troubled schools is to give fat bonuses to good teachers.

The Obama administration has encouraged states to embrace merit pay, highlighting it as one step that states could take to compete for more than \$4 billion in federal funds through the Race to the Top program. Indiana and Florida passed legislation that requires merit pay for teachers; Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal (R) announced a few weeks ago that he wants the same.

The most recent convert: New York Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg (I). “This is an idea whose time has come,” Bloomberg declared at the U.S. Conference of Mayors meeting last month. “I’m confident that if the teachers are allowed to decide the matter for themselves, they’ll support it in New York City just the way they did here in Washington, D.C.”

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