

East Tennessee State University

Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University

ETSU Faculty Works

Faculty Works

2013

Race to the Paycheck: Merit Pay and Theories of Teacher Motivation

Bethany Flora

East Tennessee State University, florab@etsu.edu

Virginia P. Foley

East Tennessee State University, foleyv@etsu.edu

Jason Horne

Tennessee Online Public School

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.etsu.edu/etsu-works>



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#)

Citation Information

Flora, Bethany; Foley, Virginia P.; and Horne, Jason. 2013. Race to the Paycheck: Merit Pay and Theories of Teacher Motivation. *Proceedings of the Joint Meeting of the Academic Business World International Conference & International Conference on Learning and Administration in Higher Education*, Nashville, TN. 116.

This Conference Proceeding is brought to you for free and open access by the Faculty Works at Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in ETSU Faculty Works by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. For more information, please contact digilib@etsu.edu.

Race to the Paycheck: Merit Pay and Theories of Teacher Motivation

Copyright Statement

This document was published with permission from the publisher. It was originally published in the Proceedings of the Joint Meeting of th [Academic Business World International Conference](#) and [International Conference on Learning and Administration in Higher Education](#).

Race to the Paycheck: Merit Pay and Theories of Teacher Motivation

Bethany Flora

East Tennessee State University

Virginia P. Foley

East Tennessee State University

Jason Horne

Tennessee Online Public School

ABSTRACT

Recent reforms in teacher evaluation tie these evaluations to student performance as measured by test scores and merit pay has been offered as a way to reward high test scores and improve teacher performance. Thus, the federal Race to the Top program has led several states toward teacher evaluation instruments that incorporate outcome data in the form of student achievement. In most states, this is the first step in the plan to institute a pay for performance program for teachers, also known as merit pay. This paper analyzes the concept of merit pay through the lens of equity theory. Equity theory provides a framework to organize a workplace that is equitable, consistent, and free of self-interest. Readers are challenged to consider the implications of merit pay in light of equity theory and resultant issues for educational policy and practice