

Evaluating the Values of the Incentive Funding Application for Agricultural Education in Illinois

A research study conducted by:

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This project was funded through the FCAE Mini-Research Grant from the
“2002” Fiscal Year Budget

The purpose of the research grant was to evaluate the incentive grant application used by secondary agriculture instructors in the State of Illinois. The research study conducted a regression analysis on the incentive grant to determine which subheadings possessed the most direct correlation with dollars received and which subheadings possessed the most direct impact on dollars received. It is important to note that common sense prevailed in the outcomes of this study.

Data Collection:

The first stage of this study began with retrieving the incentive grant applications from all of the agriculture programs in Illinois (N=316) that were used to determine incentive funding for the Fiscal Year 2002. These applications were completed in the spring of 2001. Once retrieved, a database was constructed for analysis. There were 10 schools eliminated from the study, because of various reasons. The 5 Chicago schools were eliminated because of the skew of funding. The 5 start-up programs were also eliminated, because of the \$5000 used to start the program. A total of 306 programs were used in the analysis.

Results:

Table A:

Table A outlines the regression coefficients for each of the 8 subheadings used in the incentive grant application. In short, the subheading that had the highest regression coefficient possessed the greatest impact on dollars received through incentive funding. The subheading that had the greatest impact was subheading F, which is “Facilities, Equipment, and Supplies”. The next greatest impact was felt in subheading B, which is “Student Services”. Now, you may ask yourself, “why are these two subheadings possessing the greatest impact on incentive dollars?” If you look at Table C, you will see that Illinois programs possessed the greatest percentage of X values in these subheadings. Facilities, Equipment, and Supplies possessed an overall percentage of 79% of the X values were obtained by secondary agriculture programs. Students Services received an overall percentage of 72% of the X values obtained by secondary agriculture programs. This means that 79% and 72% of the X values in these two subheadings were obtained by agriculture programs across the state, which are the highest of any of the other subheadings.

Table B:

Table B outlines the correlation table for each of the 8 subheadings. A correlation means that there is a direct relationship between two variables. The variables being analyzed are dollars received and each of the subheadings. Table 2 indicates that each subheading had a positive relationship (the more X’s received the more \$’s received) with dollars received, which is a good thing. None of the subheadings had a negative relationship (the more the X’s received the less \$’s received) on dollars received, which is a good thing as well. The subheading that had the highest correlation with dollars received was “Agricultural Student Organizations”, which possessed a positive .84 correlation. The higher the correlation number, the more the two variables will parallel each other. The next two subheadings with the greatest correlation are “Qualified Teachers” and

“Instructional Programs”. Both of these subheadings possessed positive high correlations with dollars received. Once again, you may ask yourself, “why are these subheadings possessing the greatest correlations?” Again you have to go to the last page of the incentive grant to see that these subheadings possess the greatest number of X’s. The more X’s you can accumulate in these three subheadings, the more dollars you will receive through incentive funding. This means if you are a qualified teacher that teaches the correct curriculum and submits a POA, you are bound to do pretty well when it comes to incentive funding.

Table C:

Table C breaks down each subheading within each district. The important things to look at on this table are the means, standard deviation, and percentage of points. The mean indicates the average of the number of X values received in that district out of the number of X values possible. The standard deviation just indicates the variability among programs within that district. The higher the standard deviation indicates a greater range of responses. The lower the standard deviation indicates a tighter range of responses. Finally, the percentage of points indicates the percentage of X values received within that district. The subheadings possessing the lowest percentage of X values are “Agriculture Literacy” and “Advisory Councils”. If you are looking to improve existing programs with the existing incentive application, look to these two areas to improve agriculture programs. This document also illustrates the average \$ amounts (hand written on the left side of the paper) received in each district. The district receiving the highest average in \$’s received per program is District 3 with an average of \$2707.73. The district receiving the lowest average in \$’s received per program is District 2 with an average of \$2259.52.