# Responses to Reviewer Feedback

Thank you for the additional comments and for the “accept with revisions”! Notes on how I addressed the remaining revisions are below.

## Editor Notes

* I accepted all tracked changes.
* I interpreted the comment that “The second appendix will go in the supplemental material online” to imply that the first appendix would go with the rest of the manuscript. I’ve separated them out accordingly, with Appendix A in the main manuscript and Appendix B as supplementary material. I hope that was right.
* The manuscript has been unblinded.
* I’ve slightly added to and reorganized the introduction so that directly before launching into my discussion of the data’s features I 1) introduce my research questions and 2) mention my data before launching into my discussion of the data’s features. In the revised introduction, I \*first\* discuss the salience of these issues in public school contexts: “Public school districts are perhaps the public agencies where issues of deferred compensation, personnel monitoring, and union influence are most hotly contested…”. \*Then\* I transition into explaining that “It is in this context that I empirically test the theories that deferred public sector compensation reflects either union influence or difficulties associated with monitoring workers.” And preview the data/approach/results. I think this flows better, rather than jumping into the data discussion suddenly, as you noted.

## Reviewer: 1

**The author has effectively addressed each of the concerns raised in the previous review. However, there is one minor editorial issue that should be addressed prior to publication. The following sentences on p. 2, lines 28-40 are cumbersome and unclear: “I do not find that unions prefer deferred compensation on average. However, I find evidence that unions’ behavior is moderated by the experience levels of their members: it is only when teachers are relatively veteran that union strength is associated with higher later-career salaries and the availability of health benefits for retirees. I find no evidence that administrators backload compensation due to imperfect information about workers; compensation deferral is unrelated to administrator:teacher ratios and restrictions on the evaluation process.”**

I’ve reworked this passage for clarity, and it now reads:

*“I do not find that unions prefer deferred compensation on average. However, I find evidence that unions’ behavior is moderated by the experience levels of their members. In particular, when teachers in the district are more experienced, union influence predicts more deferred compensation in the form of later-career salaries and health benefits for retirees. I find no evidence that administrators backload compensation due to imperfect information about workers. Neither administrator/teacher ratios nor restrictions on the teacher evaluation process predict deferred compensation.”*

## Reviewer: 2

**I have taken the opportunity to review the revised manuscript. In my opinion, the author(s) have taken substantial steps to revise the manuscript, which was already quite good, in line with the reviewers' comments. At this point, I do not have any additional comments that would require added revision.

I also appreciate that the author(s) found my comments regarding Williamson's insights valuable. I agree with the author that space limitations prohibit a detailed discussion of many of the comments I initially offered. As such, I appreciate the sincere attempt to address both the psychological and the transaction cost arguments. In my view, the wide diversity of perspectives makes a sustained research agenda on unions challenging. Challenging as it may be, it is also necessary. Well done in that regard.

I do have one final comment that the author(s) may be able to quickly add to highlight the practical importance of unionization for organization studies. As I collected my thoughts on this paper, I learned that railroad workers were on the precipice of strike. As I draft this review, it appears that a strike may have been averted (pending a vote from the members). To my knowledge the full details of this agreement have not been released, but early reports seem to indicate immediate salary increases as one primary bargaining point (i.e., an emphasis on frontloaded compensation as opposed to backloaded). I assume the skills of railway workers are highly specific, which would bolster the points made on page 16, where the author(s) argue that monitoring is a lower priority than retention for highly skilled workers (last paragraph before the discussion).

I hope the authors find my comments useful. Overall, this is a well-constructed paper with interesting findings.**

This is another suggestion I really like, but I haven’t been able to find a clear breakdown of the distribution of the compensation increases that the parties are bargaining over at this point re: the railroad worker negotiations. I also worry a little that the connection becomes trickier to articulate both because there are actually a constellation of unions involved that seem to have somewhat different preferences, and the bargaining is being mediated in a very heavy-handed way by the federal government. So I haven’t incorporated this suggestion, though I acknowledge the connection of current events to the manuscript.

## Reviewer: 3

**I am good with this revision as submitted. Thank you for taking all my comments to heart. Everyone was either addresses empirically, or explained in the manuscript. Well done.**

Response N/A