



*A Center Brief Report**

Improving Teacher Retention, Performance, and Student Outcomes

(February, 2012)

Abstract

This report briefly highlights seven fundamental matters that require much greater policy attention in all discussions about improving teacher performance, student outcomes, and reduced rates of teacher and student dropout. Discussed are (1) salaries, (2) recruitment, (3) preservice professional preparation, (4) induction into the profession, (5) personalized on-the-job (inservice) learning, (6) student and learning supports, and (7) a career ladder.

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Improving Teacher Retention, Performance, and Student Outcomes

Should teacher evaluation be improved? *Without a doubt!* Are there teachers who are not doing a good enough job? *Sure.* Will improved teacher accountability be sufficient to ensure equity of opportunity for students to succeed at school and beyond? *Certainly not!* Can evaluation be used to improve teacher performance? – *to a relatively small degree and only with significant negative side effects.*

The reality is that the *overemphasis* on the topic of evaluating teachers has pulled attention away from major policy and system shortcomings that must be addressed to fundamentally improve and transform schools. And the rhetoric surrounding the topic has exacerbated an unfortunate atmosphere of blame to the point where *public school* teachers categorically and disproportionately are viewed as the primary cause of the deficiencies in the educational enterprise.

One apparent side effect of all this is the loss of a significant number of potentially good teachers. For years, the nation has been losing too many teachers and at considerable cost both economically and to efforts to improve public education. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES): “Of the teachers who began teaching in public schools in 2007 or 2008, about 10 percent were not teaching in 2008–09, and 12 percent were not teaching in 2009–10” (Kaiser, 2011). Previous reports from the NCES indicated that about 30 percent had left after three years, and more than 45 percent left after five, with schools in rural and low-income areas having higher teacher dropout rates. Those reports also indicate that the rate of teacher departure in schools serving low-income families is over 20% every year. According to the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (2007), this turnover rate costs school districts \$7 billion annually.

While reasons for leaving vary, most experts agree about basic elements for retaining teachers and improving their performance (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, 2009a). Such elements, however, have been relatively neglected as teacher accountability arguments rage on. It is time to face up to matters that can immediately and directly improve teaching and result in more positive teacher evaluation findings and higher rates of retention of teachers *and* students.

Seven Factors to Enhance Teacher and Student Performance and Retention

Our focus here is on briefly highlighting the following fundamental matters that require much greater policy attention in all discussions about improving teacher performance, student outcomes, and reduced rates of teacher and student dropout:

- (1) Salaries
- (2) Recruitment
- (3) Preservice professional preparation
- (4) Induction into the profession
- (5) Personalized on-the-job (inservice) learning
- (6) System of student and learning supports
- (7) A career ladder

Salaries

Debates rage about whether teachers are under- or overpaid. Probably the more fruitful discussion is whether current salaries are attracting the best and brightest to the field.

When the data become available on teacher retention over the next few years, it is anticipated that the leaving rates may drop just a bit because of the difficult job market. Over the long run, however, teachers' salaries will continue to be a major factor in the field's ability to *recruit and retain* the best and the brightest. This especially will continue to be the case in economically distressed urban, rural, and geographically isolated locales. As stressed in various respected reports on closing the talent gap in teaching, higher base salaries (along with better working conditions) could significantly increase recruitment of top-tier personnel into teaching in public schools, as well as aiding retention (e.g., Auguste, Kihn, & Miller, 2010; Dolton & Oscar Marcenaro, 2011; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2007).

Higher base salaries (along with better working conditions) could significantly increase recruitment of top-tier personnel into teaching in public schools, as well as aiding retention.

Besides higher base salaries, one set of prominent policy recommendations for redressing recruitment and retention problems is to offer financial incentives. These include pay differentials and signing bonuses; scholarships, tuition reimbursement, and loan forgiveness; housing assistance, moving expenses, and free utility hook-ups; state income tax credits; multi-year bonuses; tuition for pursuing continuing education and advanced degrees; college tuition for the professionals' children.

While the current discussions about bonuses for teacher performance mainly are steeped in behavior modification thinking, the trend also reflects some recognition that teacher salaries are inadequate given the demands and responsibilities of the work and the limited career ladder. Unfortunately, discussions of school finance and the continuing debate over teacher salaries suggest that higher base salaries will not come about soon.

At the same time, the field has always attracted some very good professionals. And despite the controversies surrounding the *Teach for America* program, it demonstrates that an exceptional group of young people can be recruited into teaching. The problem is how to make their experience positive enough to keep more of them in public school classrooms beyond a few years.

Recruitment

Key recruitment questions are:

- *How can education compete better with other career options in recruiting the “best and the brightest”?*
- *How can a higher proportion of personnel with the greatest promise and those with proven effectiveness be attracted to the challenge of working in economically distressed locales?*

High rates of leaving the field exacerbate the challenge of recruiting newcomers. It is clear that the recruitment problem can be ameliorated by increasing personnel retention. The aim, of course, is to retain effective professionals. Several factors, however, make both recruitment and retention of top-tier people difficult. These include:

- *Education as a field is often demeaned.* The constant drone of criticism aimed at public schools makes a long-term career in education a hard sell to a large segment of the “best and brightest” college graduates across the country. The problem is compounded by the higher status placed on other career choices open to them. Beyond concerns about professional status, the instability and sparse nature of public education financing also makes the field less than attractive to many when they are deciding on a career.
- *Concern about working in low performing schools.* Policy stresses timelines and consequences for schools and school professionals where student performance continues not to meet specified standards. As more and more consequences are administered, recruitment to schools designated as “failing” can be expected to be more difficult.
- *Concern about working with the most difficult students and families.* It is clear that entrants into the field are likely to be assigned to schools in economically distressed locales. The image surrounding such schools is that they are unsafe, with the majority of students hard to handle and not highly motivated to learn what the school wants to teach. And, a common impression is that families are unsupportive and also angry at the schools.

Given public education’s negative image, policy makers need to pay much greater attention to the recruitment problem.

Given the widespread negatives generated about public education, it is not surprising that recruiting a higher proportion of college graduates is difficult. As noted, programs such as *Teach for America* demonstrate that high quality university students can be

attracted to the field. As with so many concerns in public education, the problem is how to replicate on a large scale what a small demonstration program can do. And, as increasingly is evident, the focus cannot just be on recruitment, programs also must attend to retaining those who turn out to be good at their job. The number needed can be significantly reduced if fewer personnel leave for reasons other than retirement.

As highlighted above, policy recommendations for redressing the recruitment problem have included ideas for offering financial incentives. In addition, a variety of non-financial incentives have been proposed such as alternative credentialing pathways and initial reductions in job demands, and mentoring and other job supports. Also, recommended are marketing campaigns, recruitment fairs, “priming the pipeline” by reaching into middle and high schools to “groom” future recruits for education, and ensuring certification/credentialing reciprocity across states (Balter, & Duncombe, 2008; Guarino, Santibanez, Daley, & Brewer, 2004; Southwest Center for Teacher Quality, n.d.).

Unfortunately, as with so many recommendations for improving the development of education professionals, policy and practice related to the most promising recruitment ideas remains sparse, piecemeal, and marginalized.

Preservice Professional Preparation

Some key questions here are:

- *What knowledge, skills, and attitudes need to be taught to future education personnel in keeping with diversity and social justice?*
- *What else needs to be taught to future education personnel about*
 - >maintaining and enhancing engagement for classroom learning?*
 - >re-engaging students who have become disengaged from school and classroom learning?*
- *What are the best ways to facilitate such preservice preparation?*

Most teacher evaluations assume that all have benefitted from effective job preparation. As the U. S. Department of Education (2011) has noted: “After admission, too many programs do not provide teachers with a rigorous, clinical experience that prepares them for the schools in which they will work. Only 50% of current teacher candidates receive supervised clinical training. More than three in five education school alumni report that their education school did not prepare them for ‘classroom realities.’”

Other professions (e.g., medicine, law) recognize that job situations and demands vary greatly (Neville, Sherman, & Cohen, 2005). Differences stem from (a) who chooses to pursue the profession, (b) the nature and scope of a person's education and socialization into the profession, and (c) whether there is a good fit between the person and the setting in which they work (including ongoing professional and personal support and in-depth learning opportunities). Differences require specific attention in planning professional development.

In any field, preservice preparation can only facilitate development of a limited range of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Therefore, discussion of preservice must be connected with a systematic plan for learning after employment (Neville & Robinson, 2003). But, there is disagreement in the literature about the content and design of preservice preparation; and, for the most part, continuing teacher education is narrowly focused on direct strategies for improving achievement scores in the short run.

Preservice programs must do more than provide survival skills.

Considerable disagreement exists about what preparation individuals need before they go to work in a public education worksite (Nelson, 2012). However, it is evident that new teachers must be provided with a *preservice program* that prepares them to do more than simply survive the stresses of their first year on the job (National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, 2009b).

One problem is the use of a limited apprenticeship model. The limitations stem from providing too few opportunities to see master professionals at work and paying too little attention to the socialization facets of professional development. Moreover, for the most part, preservice programs have not used school sites well, especially in preparing personnel to work in difficult locales (e.g., economically distressed areas, rural schools) and with a broad range of colleagues.

Another problem is that preservice preparation has given short shrift to working with the students who bring problems with them to school that affect their learning and often interfere with the teacher's efforts to teach. In some schools, many youngsters bring a wide range of problems stemming from restricted opportunities associated with poverty and low income, difficult and diverse family circumstances, high rates of mobility, lack of English language skills, violent neighborhoods, problems related to substance abuse, inadequate health care, and lack of enrichment opportunities. Such problems are exacerbated as youngsters internalize the frustrations of confronting barriers and the debilitating effects of performing poorly at school. In some

locales, the reality often is that over 50% of students are not doing well. And, in most schools in these locales, many teachers, new and experienced, are ill-prepared to address the problems in a potent manner.

These are all concerns for preservice programs to address. With these in mind, a synthesis of the literature suggests that teachers (and all other education professionals) need grounding in the following matters:

(1) *Specific academic subject matter*

(2) *Facilitating learning in schools in keeping with diversity and social justice*, including a focus on

- development and learning
- interpersonal/group relationships, dynamics, and problem solving
- cultural competence
- group and individual differences
- intervention theory; legal, ethical, and professional concerns
- applications of advanced technology

(3) *Learning supports*

- classroom and school-wide processes for facilitating the learning for those who are willing and able to engage in the planned curriculum
- classroom and school-wide processes for enabling and facilitating the learning of those manifesting common learning, behavior, and emotional problems
- classroom and school-wide processes for re-engaging those who have become actively disengaged from classroom instruction

(4) *Organizational and operational considerations*

(5) *How to advance the field of education.*

The last two items recognize that professional development is a socialization process. It shapes and reshapes how the next generation of professionals understands and feels about (a) the societal functions of public education, (b) what must be done to advance the field, and (c) the leadership role professional educators need to play. Despite its importance for the future of public education, this socialization agenda remains more a footnote than a central focus in most preservice programs.

About the Focus of Teacher Professional Development

Every teacher must have the ability and resources to bring a sound curriculum to life and apply strategies that make learning meaningful. At the same time, however, every teacher must learn how to *enable* learning in the classroom by addressing barriers to learning and teaching – especially factors leading to low or negative motivation for schooling. All students need instruction that is a good match for both their motivation and capabilities. Such teaching accounts for interests, strengths, weaknesses, and limitations, approaches that overcome avoidance motivation, structure that provides personalized support and guidance, and instruction designed to enhance and expand intrinsic motivation for learning and problem solving. Some students also require added support, guidance, and special accommodations.

To these ends, our analyses suggest that the focus throughout all preservice teacher preparation needs to be on development of content and processes emphasizing first what is generic, then adaptations for personalization and to provide accommodations and special assistance. In addition, teachers need to learn how to recruit and work with others in their classrooms (e.g., other teachers, student and learning support staff, volunteers) and how to play a significant role in a school's improvement planning and decision making and in advancing the field of education in general.

Induction

Good induction programs “extend beyond the friendly hellos, room key and badge pick-ups and buddy programs. While these are necessary ..., high-quality induction programs ... help [newcomers] survive and thrive in their new environments.”

American Federation of Teachers

Few entering a new worksite are not at least a bit anxious about how they will be received and how they will do. Moreover, each site has challenges that must be negotiated. A well-conceived and formally implemented *induction* program that provides professional and personal transition supports increases the likelihood that newcomers will function effectively in the unique culture of a particular site (Haynes, 2011).

For years, little thought was given to induction beyond cursory introductions and orientation. As a result, many newcomers were frustrated and even traumatized, especially those assigned to schools housing a great many “hard-to-reach and teach” students.

Currently, as a recent report indicates: “most districts offer some form of teacher induction or mentoring, but they often provide a limited set of services” (Glazerman, Isenberg, Dolfen, et al., 2010). The authors refer to this usual amount of induction as “informal or low-intensity teacher induction, which may include pairing each

new teacher with another full-time teacher without providing training, supplemental materials, or release time for the induction to occur.” What forms and degrees of mentoring, coaching, collaboration, and teaming are offered tends to be determined idiosyncratically and by available resources. And, too often, the lack of a formal induction program leads to socialization at a site that subverts budding positive beliefs and attitudes.

A good induction program for all education personnel should be comprehensively designed as a formal and multi-year program.

Optimally, as a fundamental socialization process that transitions individuals into an important and essential societal institution, a good induction program for all education personnel should be comprehensively designed as a formal and multi-year program. “Comprehensive teacher induction ... provides novice teachers with carefully selected and trained full-time mentors; a curriculum of intensive and structured support that includes orientation, professional development, and weekly meetings with mentors; a focus on instruction, with opportunities to observe experienced teachers; formative assessment tools that permit ongoing evaluation of practice and constructive feedback; and outreach to school-based administrators to enlist their support for the program” (Glazerman, Isenberg, Dolfin, et al., 2010). Moreover, such a process should absorb the newcomer into a community of learners, guide and integrate them into decision making structures, and avoid undermining the idealism, commitment, and new ideas and practices that are the hallmark of a new generation of education professionals and are essential to advancing the field.

Minimally, a good induction program requires infrastructure mechanisms for planning and implementation of

- *welcoming*
- *professional* (and as feasible *personal*) *support* and guidance from colleagues and administrators to enable new staff to function effectively over the initial months of employment
- *initial inservice education* (which hopefully is targeted and personalized to meet the individual needs of the newcomer)
- *ready access to learning/student supports* (personnel, resources, strategies, and practices specifically designed to *enable* all students to have an equal opportunity to succeed at school) .

Findings Reported in the Literature

“Decades of research document new teachers’ turbulent landings into their classrooms.... They are bumped about by the minute-to-minute decisions that determine whether they can maintain order among their students. They struggle deciding what to teach and which resources to use, how fast or slowly to pace their lessons, how to engage students with varied abilities and interests, and how to respond to demands for standardized test preparation.... Most new teachers confront these challenges alone, with little organized aid or assistance from their colleagues...” (Kardos & Johnson, 2010).

“Usually, it is the beginning teachers who are assigned to teach the lowest-performing students ... this difference in the types of students to whom beginning teachers are assigned to teach, a lack of professional support, feedback, and training on how to help their needy students succeed may play a role in the early exodus of beginning teachers from the profession. ... Because many ... schools, lose as many teachers as they hire each year, these schools are considered to be ‘revolving doors’” (Martinez-Garcia & Slate, 2012)

“While the first years of teaching are vital in terms of socializing newly qualified teachers into the profession, they are also a time of vulnerability for teachers who are in the early stages of building professional identity.... This vulnerability may be one contributor to the high rates of drop-out among new entrants to teaching.... High quality induction and early professional development can help new entrants to meet the challenges they face during the transition from student to teacher... .Novices need to be effectively supported during this period if they are to avoid what has been called ‘practice shock.’ This can arise from any one of a range of issues from practical aspects such as workload, to the emotional and psychological effects arising from a mismatch between ideals and reality, or the tendency for beginning teachers to be ‘unrealistically optimistic about their abilities.’... Early professional development which moves from a performance management approach towards a developmental approach might be preferable if a more rounded, autonomous professionalism is sought. ... Informal elements such as collegiality, good communication and a welcoming workplace environment should not be underestimated. ... Experienced teachers and new entrants have a range of experience to offer each other, thus creating more cohesive professional working which is supportive of early career teachers while encouraging reflection on practice among the more experienced professionals” (Patrick, Elliot, Hulme, & McPhee, 2010).

“Teacher participation in decision making, administrative support, and school climate are all statistically associated with teacher turnover. In deciding whether to continue or leave teaching, the school environment plays a large role. The more difficult working conditions found in hard-to-staff schools decrease the attractiveness of teaching relative to alternative occupations or activities that teachers might pursue. ... Lower levels of teacher attrition and migration have consistently been found in schools with more administrative support for teachers, fewer student discipline problems, and high level of faculty decision making, influence, and autonomy. ... Principals’ support for mentoring and induction programs, particularly those related to collegial support, appears to play a prominent role in beginning teachers’ decisions to quit or remain on the job. ... The types of induction support that had the strongest positive association with retention were having a mentor in the same field, having common planning time with other teachers in the same subject, having regularly scheduled collaboration with others teachers, and being part of an external network of teachers.” (Brown & Wynn, 2009).

**Personalized
On-the-Job
(Inservice)
Learning**

Proper placement and sound supports for [newcomers] need to be in place as they continue to hone their knowledge and skills. If they continue to work without a net, they will likely turn away from the profession or be less effective than we need them to be, regardless of the quality of their preparation.

Sabrina Laine (in Rochkind, et al, 2008)

Overlapping the induction program is the need for several mechanisms to provide *personalized on-the-job* learning. Given that preservice education generally is designed with beginning levels of functioning in mind, systematically designed programs to enhance job-related knowledge, skills, *and attitudes* are essential. This requires infrastructure mechanisms for planning and implementation of continuous learning programs, both at worksites and in other appropriate venues that foster a community of learners and higher levels of effectiveness.

In describing five high schools serving low-income families, Darling-Hammond and Friedlaender (2008) note considerable commitment to continuing learning.

On-the-job learning shapes professional socialization and influences decisions about remaining in the classroom.

“Overall, the schools allocate 7 to 15 days to shared learning time throughout the year. In addition, they organize substantial time during the week – usually several hours – for teachers to plan and problem solve together. With teachers meeting regularly in grade-level teams, the schools have venues for examining student progress, creating a more coherent curriculum, and enabling teachers to learn from one another. ... Mentoring and coaching systems for new and veteran teachers also augment professional learning. In staff meetings, teachers engage in focused inquiry about problems of practice.”

With a view to maximizing the value of job-related learning, targeted and personalized inservice education are ideals. In this respect, mentoring, coaching, collaboration, and teaming can provide an important foundation for daily on-the-job learning that goes beyond trial and error. By definition, professionals in a personalized inservice program should experience both the content and process as (a) maximizing their feelings of competence, self-determination, and connectedness to significant others and (b) minimizing threats to such feelings (Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2008a, 2009, 2011).

In stressing personalized and targeted continuing professional development, we recognize that there are also a variety of general school and district concerns requiring inservice time. Staff meetings provide one vehicle for addressing such concerns, and, increasingly, technology provides several types of delivery mechanisms.

About Mentor Teachers

“Formal mentoring, which pairs new teachers with their veteran colleagues, is currently the main strategy introduced by state and local policymakers to address new teachers’ isolation, frustration, and failure.... Although certain programs that offer training for mentors report measurable success..., it would be a mistake to assume that all mentoring programs are thoughtfully organized and that all mentors know what they are supposed to do and how they are supposed to do it. ... What might mentoring of new teachers look like in the ideal?.... Mentors help novice teachers decide what to teach and how to teach, advising them about how to choose, adapt, or create appropriate materials and instructional practices. Mentors help new teachers learn to manage their classrooms and develop strategies for succeeding with particular students. Mentors observe them in their classroom, model good teaching, and share materials and ideas. ... Mentors help new teachers learn the modes of professional practice in the school and adjust to their school and the families it serves. Mentors help new teachers understand and adjust to new reform and school change efforts, both from inside and outside the school.” (Kardos & Johnson, 2010)

System of Student and Learning Supports

Teachers ... likely to leave the profession reported feeling that the workload was unreasonable or unmanageable, that their efforts were futile, that their needs were not being met (Castro, Kelly & Shih, 2010).

Teachers must be supported by a broad-range of student and learning supports focusing on factors interfering with good instruction and productive learning (Adelman & Taylor).

A wide range of external and internal barriers to learning and teaching pose pervasive and entrenched challenges to educators across the country, particularly in chronically low performing schools. Failure to directly address such barriers ensures that (a) too many students will continue to struggle in school and (b) too many teachers will suffer the effects of having to deal with problems that stress them and the system (Adelman & Taylor, 2006; Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2008).

In keeping with prevailing demands for higher standards and achievement, the focus of school improvement and personnel development is mainly on curriculum content and instruction and management concerns (e.g., governance, resource use). Analyses indicate that implicit in most of this is a mythology that lessons are being taught to students who are motivationally ready and able to absorb the content and carry out the processes. Moreover, while it is recognized that teachers will have to deal with some behavior and learning problems, these matters are seen as readily remedied by good classroom management strategies and individualized instruction.

Given these assumptions, too little attention has been paid to what to do when students are not motivationally ready and able to respond appropriately to a lesson. And even less attention has been paid to the problem of re-engaging students who have become chronically disengaged from classroom instruction. The reality is that failure to engage students fully in classroom learning works against sustaining, over time, student involvement, good behavior, and effective learning at school.

These lapses may be less critical in schools where few students are doing poorly. In settings where large proportions of students are not doing well, however, and especially where many students are “acting out,” failure to provide a broad-range of student and learning supports is a recipe for student failure and teacher dropout.

In general, there is a major disconnect between what teachers need in the way of student and learning supports and what schools provide. And, as long as this is the case, focusing mainly on curriculum and instructional concerns and classroom management techniques is unlikely to be sufficient in meaningfully improving teacher performance and student outcomes.

There is a major disconnect between what teachers need in the way of learning supports and what schools provide.

From this perspective, fundamental to school improvement is enhancement of how the school addresses barriers to learning and teaching and re-engages disconnected students. This is a whole school responsibility that goes beyond providing a few scattered programs and services focused on school safety and greater family and community involvement. Needed is a unified and comprehensive system of student and learning supports. Properly designed, such a system brings supports into the classroom and surrounds these with a full continuum of schoolwide interventions.

One prototype for a unified and comprehensive system of student and learning supports has been designated an *enabling or learning supports component* (Adelman & Taylor, 2006). The framework encompasses both a continuum of interventions and organized content. The process involves first addressing interfering factors and then (re)engaging students in classroom instruction and includes a focus on prevention, early intervening, and use of strategies such as response to intervention.

In the classroom, the emphasis is on enhancing regular classroom strategies to enable learning (e.g., improving instruction for students with mild-moderate learning and behavior problems and those who have become disengaged from learning at school). The work involves

- (1) bringing in more bodies to work with the teacher. This includes recruiting and directing parents, adult and student volunteers, professionals-in-training, and by school staff teaming to work more closely with each other,

- (2) personalizing instruction and other interventions
- (3) ensuring a continuum of interventions and using a sequential approach in assessing responses to intervention
- (4) extending ways to accommodate differences and disabilities (Center for Mental Health in Schools, 2011).

These types of classroom strategies are fundamental and essential, but the work can't stop there if all students are to have an equal opportunity to succeed at school. Thus, the prototype organizes the content into five other arenas encompassing interventions to:

- Support transitions (i.e., assisting students and families negotiate school and grade changes and many other transitions)
- Increase home & school connections & engagement
- Respond to, and where feasible, prevent crises
- Increase community involvement and support (outreach to develop greater community involvement and support, including enhanced use of volunteers)
- Facilitate student and family access to effective services and special assistance as needed.

It is evident that teachers deserve to have their efforts enabled by a unified and comprehensive system of student and learning supports. For this system to emerge, however, a high priority on its development needs to be incorporated into school improvement policy and planning.

Career Ladder

Retention efforts would benefit from well-defined opportunities for career advancement and from programs that facilitate access to such opportunities.

Imagine schools where accomplished teachers routinely earn six-figure incomes and where all career-oriented teachers can look forward to a satisfying career.

Wise (2012)

As Holley (2008) notes: “Because teaching has few possibilities for career advancement, highly motivated teachers seeking more responsibility and a better salary may move into administration or leave the profession altogether. Schools do need high-quality personnel in administration, but having good teachers routinely leaving the classroom in search of a greater challenge creates classroom vacancies that may be filled with lower-caliber personnel.”

Teaching career ladders have been proposed as a potentially important way to provide opportunities for career advancement and enhanced professional status. Such ladders differentiate stages in professional development (e.g., novice to master teacher) and a broadening of responsibilities (e.g., coaching, mentoring, supervising teachers-in-training). Moving up such ladders, of course, must be accompanied by increases in salaries.

Exhibit: An Example of One District's Focus on Supporting New Teachers

Summarized from *Hiring (and keeping) urban teachers: A coordinated approach to new teacher support* by Towery, Salim, & Hom (2009)

“Boston Public Schools and its partner, the Boston Plan for Excellence, began to examine the new teacher hiring and support practices in 2002. At the time, half of BPS teachers were leaving within their first three years on the job. ... With 400-600 new teachers hired annually, or about 10% of its total teacher workforce, BPS had an enormous human capacity issue to address: how to bring the right teachers into the system and keep them long enough to have a positive impact on student learning.... [The following components] evolved over time....

(1) A customer service approach to hiring. Includes:

- >*Red Carpet Treatment for Prospective Teachers* – including answering questions and helping them to navigate the hiring process.
- >*Streamlined online application process* – allows applicants to create and store their application info online and apply to multiple positions.
- >*Logistical support.* The website includes a checklist for new teachers and weekly sessions provide assistance with hiring paperwork and other logistical support.
- >*Welcoming and connecting new hires.* New Teacher Celebrations are held during the summer at prominent public institutions (e.g., Boston Public Library, Children's Museum) which introduces newcomers to community education resources and lets new teachers meet and network with one another before the start of the school year.
- >*Follow-up support.* A new teachers' support office provides a central point of contact for new teachers throughout the school year.

(2) A district-based teacher preparation program. To recruit and retain teachers, the Boston Teacher Residency was created (based on a medical residency model). For a year, aspiring teachers, called residents, participate in a program that includes four full days a week working in a mentor teachers' classroom and graduate level course work taught by BTR instructors and tied to the district's instructional priorities. Cohorts in “host” schools learn to teach from trained and supported mentors.

(3) Revamped induction support for new teachers. BPS created within its Office of Professional Development a New Teacher Support System to provide a fresh start to its mentoring program. This New Teacher Development program provided a 5% salary differential for new teacher developers. Beyond their work with individual teachers, the program plays a role in district wide support of new teachers (e.g., facilitates workshops, seminars, courses on teacher leadership). The BTR program strives to make teacher professional development “rich and ongoing.” In their second and third years, residents continue to receive support from BTR through additional courses and advanced offerings and induction coaches.

(4) Professional development opportunities for new teachers. Includes:

- >*New Teacher Institute* – new teachers engage in workshops in areas such as classroom management, fostering equity in the classroom, and differentiating instruction.
- >*Beginning Teacher Seminars* – recurring seminars for first year teachers differentiated by grade level (elementary, middle, and high school); content is aligned with the Dimensions of Effective Teaching.
- >*Advancing Practice Courses* – for second and third year teachers to improve specific areas of practice (e.g., differentiating instruction for ELL and students with disabilities).
- >*Online technology courses* – helps new teachers master instructional technology skills.
- >*Exemplary teaching cross-site visits* – structured visits for new teachers to observe exemplary teachers at work.

Concluding Comments

While this report has focused specifically on teachers, most of the discussion applies to all education professionals. Providing all students an equal opportunity to succeed requires *more than* higher standards and greater accountability for instruction, better teaching, increased discipline, reduced school violence, and an end to social promotion. It also requires a comprehensive approach to countering factors that interfere with learning and teaching. And so, personnel development for education must encompass a focus on enhancing the effectiveness of *all* personnel for improving how schools counter interfering factors.

Moreover, it seems evident that any transformation of education requires that all personnel preparation programs must be transformed (National Governor's Association, 2000). Institutions of higher education need to take a leadership role in clarifying overlapping considerations related to the various pre-service programs (e.g., for regular and special education teachers, student/learning support staff, administrators) and delineating connections with induction, inservice, and continuing professional education. They also need to play a role in facilitating articulation, priority setting, resource analysis, and coordination among the major facets of personnel development and among the different groups of personnel being developed. Policy makers need to encourage movement toward transformation of personnel preparation programs through the use of positive incentives and rational accountability.

At a time when public education is under concerted attack, the field must align demands for high expectations and high standards at schools with a commitment to enhancing all facets of professional development. And, the need is to do so not only with respect to directly facilitating instruction, but also with respect to learning supports that enable students to benefit from good instruction.

Education personnel deserve more credit.



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A Few Center Resources for Teacher Personnel Development

- >*RTI and classroom and schoolwide learning supports: a guide for teachers and learning supports staff* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/rtiguide.pdf>
- >*Learning supports: Enabling learning in the classroom* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/rtipract.pdf>
- >*Challenges and Opportunities in the Classroom* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/Newsletter/winter08.pdf>
- >*Welcoming and Involving New Students and Families* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/welcome/welcome.pdf>
- >*Addressing School Adjustment Problems* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/adjustmentproblems.pdf>
- >*Engaging and Re-engaging Students in Learning at School* -- <http://www.smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/engagingandre-engagingstudents.pdf>
- >*Natural Opportunities to Promote Social-Emotional Learning* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/practicenotes/naturalopportunities.pdf>
- >*Turning Big Classes into Smaller Units* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/practicenotes/smallclasses.pdf>
- >*Volunteers as an Invaluable Resource* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/practicenotes/voluntresource.pdf>
- >*Working with Disengaged Students* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/practicenotes/disengagedstudents.pdf>
- >*School Engagement, Disengagement, Learning Supports, & School Climate* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/schooleng.pdf>
- >*What Might a Fully Functioning Enabling or Learning Supports Component Look Like at a School?*– <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/summit2002/whatmightafully.pdf>
- >*Enhancing Classroom Approaches for Addressing Barriers to Learning: Classroom-Focused Enabling* – <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/contedu/cfe.pdf>