Center for American Progress

Ensuring Effective Teachers for All Students

Six state strategies for attracting and retaining effective teachers in high-poverty and high-minority schools

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Introduction and summary

Effective teachers matter a great deal for all students, but particularly for those in schools with large concentrations of low-income and minority students. Education experts of all political persuasions, policymakers, and the general public recognize this truth, yet federal education policy is only just beginning to address it in a vigorous way.

The recent passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, in which Congress and the Obama administration authorized more than $100 billion to be spent on education as part of the $767 billion economic stimulus package, sent a clear signal about the importance of an effective teacher for every student. In order for the states to receive a second installment of their share of $48.6 billion in state fiscal stabilization funding, states are required to report on four assurances that they are advancing core reforms: adopting rigorous college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments; establishing data systems and using data for improvement; increasing teacher effectiveness and the equitable distribution of effective teachers; and turning around the lowest-performing schools.

Our interest in this paper in particular is that states must assure the Secretary of Education that they will take steps to improve teacher effectiveness and ensure "the equitable distribution of qualified teachers for all students, particularly students who are most in need."[1] Although federal policy has focused on the equitable distribution of teachers before, requirements were barely enforced until 2006, which means the states haven't done much yet to tackle this issue. Both President Barack Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan have made statements indicating that this time is different, and they plan to focus on "creating new pathways to teaching and new incentives to bring teachers to schools where they are needed most."[2]

This report will outline why states should work to ensure that every student has an effective teacher, what that means, and what the federal role has been until now. It then highlights six strategies that states can undertake to work toward ensuring every student has access to an effective teacher. These strategies are:

- Analyze and report on the distribution of teachers between schools using value-added estimates and other measures.
- Design a model evaluation system for measuring teacher effectiveness and improving teacher performance.

- Support programs that offer financial incentives to effective teachers in high-poverty schools.
- Provide funding and models for recruitment and preparation programs that are specifically targeted to high needs schools.
- Provide an induction and mentoring program for new teachers in high-poverty schools.
- Require schools to report their budgets by actual expenditures, rather than positions.

The six strategies have all been tested in select school districts around the country—as this report demonstrates in a series of examples. These strategies are research-based, but most have not been tested on a widespread basis in many states. This report, then, is not intended to be a comprehensive plan, but rather a series of sign posts indicating critical leverage points where states can begin to tackle this issue.

Getting serious about the shortage of effective teachers in high-poverty schools does, of course, take resources. Fortunately, one-time funds stemming from American Recovery and Reinvestment Act can support planning and initial investments in these strategies. The states, however, will need to identify more stable sources of funding to support them in the long term. This paper will help the states make the judgments necessary to ensure this future funding supports strategies that work to give all students access to effective teachers so they can learn successfully and consistently in grade school, middle school and high school.

What is teacher effectiveness and why does it matter?

In this report I define teacher effectiveness as the demonstrated ability of a teacher to help students learn to high levels. This ability is complex and consists of content knowledge, pedagogical skills, attitudes, and behaviors. Clearly, no single indicator can adequately capture teacher effectiveness, but a combination of indicators can portray it fairly.

These indicators include student achievement results, especially in the form of value-added estimates, and measures of observed teacher performance.[3] Value-added estimation refers to a statistical approach to measuring teacher effectiveness in promoting students' learning in specific content areas. The statistical methodology accounts for students' academic experiences prior to entering a teacher's classroom.

Observed teacher performance entails the rigorous documentation of skills, knowledge, and behaviors associated with effective teaching.[4] Such documentation can be labor intensive, involving repeated observations by trained principals, teacher leaders, and/or peer evaluators, usually with the aid of detailed rubrics tied to standards describing effective practices.[5]

Effective teachers matter because there is a significant body of evidence indicating that among all school resources, teachers have the greatest impact on student achievement, and that teachers vary a great deal in their ability to improve student learning. In fact, the difference between the most effective and least effective teachers can be up to a year's difference in learning growth for students.[6]

While there is little research on the distribution of teachers based on their effectiveness, a Tennessee study documents that high-poverty and high-minority schools have a greater percentage of the least effective teachers.[7] Nor has there been much research on the distribution of effective teachers as measured by classroom performance observations.

Yet a recent study that assessed classroom quality using an observation protocol called the CLASS—developed for the early primary grades—found that "children whose preschool achievement scores were lowest, who were from poor or working-poor families, and whose ethnicity was nonwhite were about twice as likely to be in the low overall quality classrooms than they were to be in the high overall quality classrooms."[8]

There is much more research on the distribution of teachers by their qualifications, such as years of experience, test scores, and the competitiveness of their undergraduate institution. The two qualifications that are consistently found to have a significant impact on student achievement are teacher experience for the first few years of teaching and subject matter knowledge—at least in mathematics and science.[9] Yet teachers in high-poverty schools are less experienced and more likely to teach subjects for which they are unprepared.[10]

Inequity in access to effective teachers is a great contributor to the large gap in achievement between poor and minority students and other students. On the National Assessment of Educational Progress, for example, 43 percent of white fourth graders achieve at or above the proficient level in reading, while 14 percent of black students achieve at that level. And research suggests that providing low-income and minority students with more effective teachers can significantly boost their learning and narrow achievement gaps.

"On average, students with a teacher in the top quartile of the talent pool achieve at levels corresponding to an additional two or three months of instruction per year, compared with peers who have a teacher in the bottom quartile," we noted in a recent CAP report titled "Teacher Turnover, Tenure Policies, and the Distribution of Teacher Quality, Can High Poverty Schools Catch a Break." This quality differential represents over a third of the "achievement gap" between students from low-income families and those from families with higher incomes."[11]

Thus it seems that if low-income and minority students were assigned to top teachers for three years in a row, they could close the achievement gap with their peers. This is where federal education policy comes into play.

The role of federal policy

Federal policy began to address the challenge of providing a qualified teacher for every student through law, guidance, and monitoring as part of the No Child Left Behind Act. NCLB is the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, the primary federal education law supporting elementary and secondary students. Its main goal is to "close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind."[12]

The authors of the law understood that improving teacher quality was essential to achieving that goal. This education statute requires states to make certain that "low-income and minority students are not taught at higher rates than other students" by teachers who were not highly qualified or experienced, although this provision was not even minimally enforced until 2006.

In the summer of 2006, states were required to submit data on the distribution of teachers and their plans to address inequities. Most of the plans were weak and many had to be revised and resubmitted. According to an analysis of the plans by the Education Trust:

> Most states failed to follow instructions and analyze inequity in a way that tells the public whether both groups of children—those of color and those living in poverty— get their fair share of teaching talent. Most failed to propose strong plans for addressing inequities. And almost no states submitted "equity plans" that proposed meaningful, measurable goals for achieving fairness in the distribution of teacher talent.[13]

The weakness of these plans was a clear indication that many states were doing little on the policy front to ensure poor and minority students had access to effective teachers— or even to report on whether such students are disproportionately assigned to inexperienced or out-of-field teachers.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act is currently poised to strengthen the federal role in ensuring an effective teacher for every student, particularly those in schools with large concentrations of low income and minority students. The new law requires the states to take steps to improve teacher effectiveness and "to address inequities in the distribution of highly qualified teachers between high- and low-poverty schools, and to ensure that low-income and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers" as a condition of receiving the second allotment of state fiscal stabilization funds.

Federal law is likely to maintain this increased focus on this issue when the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is reauthorized. Therefore, states would be wise to initiate serious action to attract and retain effective teachers in high-poverty schools. I now turn to how they can do so.

Six state strategies for attracting and retaining effective teachers in high-poverty and high-minority schools

The six state strategies described in the report offer high-leverage opportunities for state action to attract and retain effective teachers in high-poverty and high-minority schools. The strategies focus on getting better data on teacher distribution, performance, and expenditures; supporting new and veteran teachers to help them improve their practice and encourage the retention of effective teachers; and expanding the pool of effective teachers for high-poverty and high-minority schools through high-quality recruitment, training, and incentive programs.

This section of the paper describes each strategy, explains why it is needed, and then outlines some additional considerations for implementing the policy. Each of these strategic presentations also includes some additional considerations, which generally describe what we know from research and practice about how to implement the strategy successfully.

Analyze and report on the distribution of teachers between schools using value added estimates and other measures

The strategy

States should analyze and report on the distribution of teachers between schools using value-added estimates and other measures, which may include a proportion of novice teachers and measures of in-field teaching. States should provide individual and school level value-added estimates to every school and district annually and report the value-added estimates and other data publicly by school poverty and minority quartiles.

States can use federal economic stimulus funds to invest in developing these measurement and reporting systems and putting processes in place to ensure the systems are collecting accurate data. They could also use these stimulus funds to provide professional development to staff at the state and district level to help them interpret and use these data. States will need to provide funds for the long term costs of managing these measurement and reporting systems.

Why it is needed

States need a number of data sources on the distribution of effective teachers in order to identify inequities and to target districts for technical assistance. Accurate targeting ensures that districts that need assistance receive it and that states are spending their dollars where they can do the most good—an important consideration in an era of tight budgets.

Few states track a variety of measures of teacher quality by school poverty status. While 21 states currently have the ability to link teachers and students,[14] far fewer actually use these data to compute value-added estimates and provide them to schools annually so they can use the information. The data will also help states and districts develop strategies that meet the specific needs of their hard-to-staff schools.

Additional considerations for policy

Why are other measures besides value-added estimates needed? First, value-added estimates are not available for teachers who teach untested subjects. Second, value-added estimates—like other measures of teacher performance—provide an important but incomplete picture of student achievement and are not always stable for a variety of reasons.[15]

Value-added estimates are based on states' standardized assessments, which vary in quality and may not measure higher order thinking skills such as problem-solving and analysis. States and districts should use several years of data to inform high-stake decisions, and should use value-added estimates in combination with other measures to inform a variety of policies, including teacher evaluations, compensation, and tenure decisions.

Other measures states might use in analyzing the distribution of teaching talent include: the proportions of novice teachers; teachers who are teaching in field or have a major, minor, or certification in their subject area; and evaluations of teacher performance.

Tennessee provides a great example of a state that is analyzing data on the distribution of teachers within the state and then targeting specific strategies to districts that need additional support (see page 8).

Tennessee's use of value-added data[16]

Tennessee is one of the earlier developers and users of value-added data at the school and teacher level. In Tennessee, teacher-effect scores are developed using value-added data—teachers are scored as "no different" than the average teacher in improving student achievement, below or above the mean.

The Tennessee Department of Education provides all schools with teacher-effect scores for the year and also provides three-year averages for all teachers for which these data are available. The department provides hard copies of the data to teachers, principals, and school boards. Principals are encouraged to use the data to inform professional development and are asked to consider the information as part of teacher evaluations.

State legislation requires that schools have three years of data on teachers in order to use them for evaluation purposes. The Tennessee Department of Education also provides training to districts on how to interpret their value-added and teacher-effect data.

Tennessee's first venture in using these effect data was to use them to indicate whether veteran teachers are highly qualified through the High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation, established by NCLB. If teachers receive the "above the mean" rating, they may be considered highly qualified.

The state also has used teacher-effect scores to analyze the distribution of teachers. After developing the teacher equity plan required by NCLB, the Tennessee Department of Education conducted an analysis to look at the distribution of teachers across districts and schools using teacher-effect scores, teacher experience, and teachers with master's degrees. What they found was that distribution was in fact inequitable.

Case in point: in high-poverty, high-minority schools, teachers who fell into the "least effective" category made up 23.8 percent of the teaching staff. In low-poverty, low-minority schools, these teachers comprised 16 percent of the teaching staffs.

Tennessee also assessed the distribution of novice teachers and teachers with master's degrees and found that high-poverty schools and high-minority schools have a larger percentage of beginning teachers and a smaller percentage of teachers with master's degrees than low-poverty schools and low-minority schools. Interestingly, Tennessee observed that high-poverty, high-minority schools employ an equitable share of the most effective *new* teachers, but had fewer of these teachers in the prime of their careers. This suggests that initial recruitment is not the biggest challenge for these schools, but that support and retention strategies should be the first priority.

As a follow-up to this analysis, the Tennessee Department of Education convened teams from the six largest districts in the state—Memphis, Nashville, Hamilton, Knox, Jackson-Madison, and Shelby—to discuss strategies to address teacher equity. These were districts that together accounted for almost 40 percent of students in the state, and they also had significant disparities. The department provided technical assistance, information about the current research on strategies to address teacher equity, advice on how to use the so-called Title II Part A funds dedicated to improving teacher and principal quality, and how to use school improvement funds, and provided time for the teams to learn from each other.

Each district was then required to develop an individual teacher equity plan. The state's Department of Education has been monitoring the plans and will reconvene the districts to assess their progress and provide them with an opportunity to share lessons learned. The Governor's Office and State Department of Education are also thinking about how to expand this work to the rest of the state.

Design a model evaluation system for measuring teacher effectiveness and improving teacher performance

The strategy

States should develop a model evaluation system in cooperation with teachers and their unions, administrators, and experts in the field. The evaluation system should be rigorous, valid, reliable, and fair and should be a system that all districts could use. Districts would have the option to adopt the state's evaluation system whole sale, adapt it slightly for their needs, or propose one that is similarly rigorous that the state would approve.

The state should also provide districts with funding and resources for training evaluators. In districts that have career ladders, master or mentor teachers could be trained as evaluators. States could use stimulus funds to develop and test the model system to ensure that it is valid and reliable. They can also use stimulus funds to develop training for evaluators. They will then need a longer term source of funding for districts to provide ongoing training to new evaluators and to monitor and refine the system.

Why it is needed

Unfortunately, most districts' teacher evaluation systems are not of high quality and most do not differentiate among teachers or provide useful information to teachers to help them improve their practice.[17] Most teachers receive outstanding or satisfactory ratings, but there are no consequences or rewards tied to their ratings.

Moreover, most evaluation systems don't treat teachers as individuals working within specific contexts.[18] For instance, an evaluation system that evaluates a kindergarten teacher and a high school physics teacher by the same criteria is unlikely to help either teacher improve their practice.[19]

Many states have created a variety of rules and regulations that govern teacher evaluations, but most stop short of creating model systems that districts can use.[20] There are eight states that mandate the use of a state-developed evaluation instrument (Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina and South Carolina), four states that allow districts to use a state-developed instrument or a local equivalent approved by the state (Alabama, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Texas), and two states that approve locally-developed instruments (Kentucky and Nebraska).[21] Other states have developed frameworks or criteria that districts are instructed to use in evaluating teachers.[22] Twenty-two states, however, have no role in the evaluation instrument at all.[23]

A meaningful evaluation system would improve teacher effectiveness and help in addressing the distribution of teaching talent in a number of ways. First, it would help to identify teachers' areas of strength and weakness so that districts could better target professional

development to improve teacher effectiveness. A rigorous system would also provide a more valid measure of teacher effectiveness that states and districts could use in answering questions about teacher equity, for instance, if high-poverty schools are inordinately staffed by the least effective teachers.

Finally, evaluation information should then be used to inform a variety of policies related to teachers, such as compensation, retention and tenure. Currently, many of these policies are not tied to teachers' performance in any way. States could even use the evaluation system to develop a multi-tiered licensure system such as New Mexico's. States would have to test the system to ensure it's valid and reliable and may need to make mid-course corrections.

Additional considerations for policy

Research suggests a number of best practices for the design of state evaluation systems. They should be based upon a set of explicit standards for what teachers should know and be able to do, should be centered on evidence of student learning, and should include multiple measures of teacher performance.[24] They should also incorporate evaluations from multiple, trained evaluators who are knowledgeable about the curriculum and pedagogy.[25]

Moreover, they should incorporate an understanding of professional growth—what should be expected of new teachers and what skills and practices should they demonstrate as they grow professionally.[26] Evaluators should also communicate with teachers before, during, and after the evaluation process[27] so teachers understand the process and receive feedback.

States should design the model systems and prepare training resources for evaluators, but they would likely have to be administered at the district level. While this high-quality process can be very expensive, it might be a wise way to reallocate professional development dollars since it's an integral part of improving teacher practice. In states that have the data systems and ability to compute high-quality value-added estimates, they should be an important criterion in evaluation systems.

Both the Teacher Advancement Program and the Connecticut Beginning Educator Support and Training program contain some elements of high-quality evaluation systems that states could learn from in designing their own systems. The TAP evaluation system uses multiple classroom evaluations by trained evaluators (see box on page 11 for insights into this program). The Connecticut Beginning Educator Support and Training program offers another potential approach—a portfolio-based model. However, Connecticut will be revising its system beginning in July (see box on page 12 a description of this program).

Evaluation within the Teacher Advancement Program[28]

The Teacher Advancement Program was created by the Milken Family Foundation and is now operated by the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching. TAP is a comprehensive school reform intended to restructure and revitalize the teaching profession while improving student achievement. TAP provides teachers with opportunities for career advancement, ongoing professional development, a performance-based evaluation system, and performance pay.

TAP's evaluation system is a core part of the program. The system was developed based on Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching, which assesses the quality of teaching practice.[29] The TAP evaluation framework consists of three major categories with subcategories: designing and planning instruction, the learning environment, and instruction.[30] TAP schools use an evaluation rubric that rates performance as "unsatisfactory," "proficient," or "exemplary."[31]

Evaluators are trained extensively and certified. TAP evaluators must be able to accurately rate teachers according to TAP's three performance levels in order to be allowed to serve as an evaluator.[32] TAP evaluators evaluate teachers four to six times a year using TAP's Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibilities Performance Standards. These performance standards comprise a research-based framework for assessing teacher performance that has been found to be correlated with student learning gains.

Evaluators measure teachers' ability to meet these standards by using 26 indicators, which are operationalized using a five-point scale rubric. Evaluators meet with teachers before and after evaluations to offer guidance, provide feedback, and develop strategies to improve teachers' practice.

Every teacher that has an assessment for his or her subject area is also "evaluated individually based on how much learning growth the students in his or her classroom have achieved during the school year. Further, all teachers in the school are evaluated collectively based on the learning growth of all students in the school. Through this structure, TAP makes it possible to consider multiple measures of teacher effectiveness."

Finally, TAP provides teachers with training and mentoring during the school day to help them meet the performance standards.

Support programs that offer financial incentives to effective teachers in high poverty schools

The strategy

States should develop and experiment with a variety of models for incentive programs targeted to high-needs districts and schools. These models may include recruitment incentives, performance incentives, and career ladders or pay for additional responsibilities. States should provide guidelines to districts in awarding grants, but allow them flexibility to experiment with different types of incentives.

States can use stimulus funds to design and pilot model incentive programs and to build their capacity to implement a high-quality incentive program through investments in a rigorous evaluation system, a comprehensive data system, and a communications and engagement strategy. They would need a more stable source of funding to support the incentive programs in the long term.

Why it is needed

Most teachers in the United States are paid according to a single-salary schedule, which pays all teachers in the district according to the same schedule, and is usually based on years of experience and educational credits. According to data from the U.S. Department of Education, 92.7 percent of districts said they used a salary schedule.[33]

There is a good deal of evidence that this type of compensation system shortchanges high-poverty schools. High-poverty schools typically receive fewer applicants for each teaching position, indicating that there are working conditions or other factors that make these schools less desirable to teachers. So the laws of supply and demand would indicate that teachers need to be paid more to take or remain in these positions.

Connecticut Beginning Educator Support and Training program

The Connecticut Beginning Educator Support and Training program is a comprehensive, two-year induction program that provides both assessment and support to all new teachers in Connecticut. The program has been in operation since 1989, although it will be revised this summer. The program's current structure combines mentoring, training, evaluation and support for new teachers as its goal is to "ensure that all beginning teachers have opportunities to strengthen their knowledge of subject matter and instructional strategies, enhance their understanding of students as learners and begin a process of lifelong learning and professional growth."[34] Teachers must earn a satisfactory rating on the evaluation in order to receive the state's Provisional Educator Certificate, or initial teacher's license.

The programs require school districts to assign a mentor or support team to all new teachers.[35] These individuals are accomplished classroom teachers who have participated in the program's training for supporting new teachers. The state specifies the amount and type of support new teachers must receive from the mentor or support team. Teachers must have eight half days to observe or be observed by their mentors or support teams and 30 hours of support throughout the year between a beginning teacher and his or her mentor, support team members, other colleagues, the principal and/or a district facilitator.[36] The state also provides online and regional seminars to new teachers on a variety of topics, including planning, instruction and assessment.[37]

Teachers are evaluated based on a portfolio they prepare that reflects their teaching during an instructional unit and a videotape of at least 20 minutes of instruction.[38]

The portfolios are scored by three state-trained evaluators who are experienced classroom teachers, too.[39] Teachers are rated in four areas that reflect the state's professional standards for teachers, including instructional design; instructional implementation; assessment of learning; and ability to analyze teaching and learning.[40] Teachers are rated on a 1-to-4 scale (one being the lowest score) and receive feedback on their portfolio that describes their performance in each of the four areas.[41] Teachers must earn a score of two or above to be licensed, although teachers who perform poorly are able to participate in the program for a third year, receive additional mentoring, and submit another portfolio.[42] Those who don't pass after the third year are not eligible to teach in Connecticut Public Schools.[43]

University of California-Berkeley's Researcher Mark Wilson and three co-authors studied the correlation between teachers' evaluations using the BEST portfolio and gains in student achievement and found a modest association.[44] They found that students whose teachers earned the top scores were about three months ahead of those whose students earned low scores.

A single-salary schedule also dissuades talented teaching candidates from entering the teaching profession, since they could be paid more for their skills and talents in other fields. Moreover, there are few opportunities for advancement within the teaching profession that don't involve leaving the classroom. This flat career progression reduces the retention of effective teachers within the profession.

While there is a limited body of rigorous research on pay-for-performance programs and those offering other financial incentives, the studies that exist suggest these strategies are promising as a tool for recruitment, retention, and improving student achievement.[45] Moreover, there is abundant research from other public-sector and public-service sectors documenting that financial incentives can be powerful tools for meeting human capital needs. In civil service, the military, the medical field, and private industry, paying more for hard-to-staff positions is common practice and is often used to attract applicants, increase retention, and improve staff performance.[46]

Additional considerations for policy

The research isn't fine grained enough to specify optimal program designs, so it makes sense for states and districts to experiment with a variety of program models.[47] But there are some principles for designing compensation reforms that can be gleaned from research and practice.

First, teachers and other stakeholders such as teacher's union representatives, principals, and other school staff should be involved in the design of the program.[48] Without the buy-in of important stakeholders, a program is not likely to be successful. The purpose and goals of compensation reforms should be clear—are they to improve student achievement, increase retention, or attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools?[49]

A clear purpose will help states and school districts design programs that align with their goals and will also help them assess progress. And compensation reforms should be part of a systemic effort to build the capacity of a district and improve teachers' skills[50] in order to maximize both their effectiveness and their support from teachers and school staff. States and school districts also should continuously evaluate and improve their programs so they can learn from data and experience.[51]

Other important principles for the design of pay-for-performance programs in particular include "awarding teachers and school staff incentives based on a variety of measures of teacher performance, including both student growth on standardized assessments and rigorous evaluations of teacher performance."[52] States and districts should also consider incorporating school-level measures of student achievement, to foster collaboration and camaraderie among teachers.

South Carolina Teacher Advancement Program

A primary goal of the South Carolina Teacher Advancement Program, or SCTAP, is to "develop policies, practices, and procedures regarding evaluation, certification, and teacher quality, which will be implemented in South Carolina's public schools."[53] The SCTAP is based on the Teacher Advancement Program model (see page 11 for details), although the state has made some slight modifications to the program.

In South Carolina, 45 schools currently participate in SCTAP and many are high-needs schools. Through SCTAP, teachers can pursue a number of career paths with increased responsibilities and compensation—they may be career, mentor, lead, or master teachers depending on their interests and skills. According to Executive Director, Jason Culbertson, master and mentor positions are an effective recruitment tool for attracting highly qualified teachers into hard to staff schools.[54]

Teachers may also earn performance-based bonus compensation based upon the following allocation:

- 40 percent is based on teacher evaluations.
- 30 percent is based on classroom, value-added achievement growth on the state assessment in tested grades and on the Measures of Academic Progress and end-of-course tests in other grades.
- 30 percent is based on school-wide, value-added achievement growth on the state assessment in tested grades and on the Measures of Academic Progress, a state-aligned computerized adaptive test developed by the Northwest Evaluation Association, and end-of-course tests in other grades.

These percentages are slightly different than the national TAP model, which suggests that 50 percent of performance rewards be based on teacher evaluations, 30 percent based on individual classroom achievement growth, and 20 percent based on school-wide achievement growth.

In SCTAP schools, specialist teachers are given the option to reinforce either math or reading and be evaluated based on student gains in one of those subject areas or to be evaluated based on a 50-50 split of teacher observations and school-wide growth.[55] Rewards vary by district but range from $500 to $9,000. Reduced-rate housing is another incentive that is available to participating teachers.

Teachers also participate in ongoing, applied professional growth during the school day, meet in cluster groups with other teachers who have similar assignments, and develop individual growth plans. Principals and school leaders evaluate teachers several times each year using a research-based framework. The program is supported by federal funds, including the Teacher Incentive Fund and Title II of the No Child Left Behind Act, district funds, and foundation grants.

Staff at the State Department of Education are currently thinking about how to expand some of the tenets of SCTAP to other schools throughout the state.[56] They are currently considering offering a voluntary alternative salary schedule to all teachers that would place less emphasis on teacher's education and years of experience and would reward teachers for positive evaluations, teaching in hard-to-staff subject areas and schools, for being a mentor or lead teacher, and for improving student achievement.[57]

In addition, using school-level measures will help to balance the volatility of measures of effectiveness for individual teachers, and include teachers in non-tested subjects.[58] Finally, if states are designing statewide incentive programs they should be designed to ensure that there aren't unintended consequences that push teachers out of high-poverty schools.[59]

Several evaluations of the North Carolina ABC program found that the program likely encouraged teachers to leave schools serving low-performing students.[60] This was because it was harder for their students to achieve gains, and thus harder for them to earn bonuses in these schools. Programs should be designed to ensure that teachers have a greater incen-

tive to stay in a high-poverty school than a low-poverty school, either through greater incentives, greater support, or targeting specific incentives only to high-poverty schools.

Texas's incentive programs are targeted to high-poverty, high-performing schools. In the Texas programs, rewards are primarily based on improving student achievement but also may include criteria such as collaboration, commitment, and professionalism. South Carolina's Teacher Advancement Program provides another approach—a comprehensive reform effort that includes performance pay and career ladders and serves many high poverty schools (see boxes on pages 14 and 15).

Incentive programs in Texas[61]

Texas has developed a group of three performance pay programs comprising the largest state investment in performance pay in the country. Two of the state's programs, the Governor's Educator Excellence Grants and the Texas Educator Excellence Grants are described here. The National Center on Performance Incentives is evaluating both programs using randomized designs.

The TEEG and GEEG programs are similar in design, although the TEEG program provides $100 million per year in funding for annual grants that range from $40,000 to $295,000 to all eligible schools, while the GEEG program (a pilot program for the TEEG) provided $10 million in non-competitive, three-year grants to 99 schools ranging from $60,000 to $220,000 per year.

Both programs are targeted to schools that enroll high percentages of economically disadvantaged students. The GEEG targeted the top third, while the TEEG targets the top half.

Schools must also be high performing. They must either receive an exemplary or recognized state accountability rating or rank within the top quartile of performance in improvement in mathematics, reading or both.

Both the GEEG and TEEG programs separate funding into two parts: Part I funding, which comprises at least 75 percent of a school's award, is used to provide incentives to classroom teachers, and Part II funding, which comprises 25 percent or less of a school's award, may be used for bonuses for other school personnel, professional development, teacher mentoring and induction and other purposes. Part I funding must be made based on

improved student performance using objective, quantifiable measures and collaboration with faculty and staff that contributes to improved overall student performance. Schools may also incorporate other criteria in determining Part I funding, such as initiative, commitment, and professionalism.

The first year evaluation of the GEEG program found that the performance incentive programs appeared to be having "an encouraging impact on schools' organizational dynamics, teachers' perceptions of performance incentives, and teachers' instructional practice."[62] Teachers viewed the program favorably.

Case in point: 66.8 percent of teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that the program was having beneficial effects on their school.[63] A majority of teachers (53 percent) also reported making specific changes to their instructional practices in response to GEEG.[64] But the authors felt it was too soon to attribute these outcomes to the programs. It was also too soon to look at the program's impact on student achievement and other outcomes.

The second-year evaluation of the TEEG program found that the relationship between the program and student achievement was inconclusive, but the authors were hopeful that they would be able to determine such a relationship in future years of the evaluation. Another interesting finding was that the receipt of bonuses reduced teacher turnover in TEEG schools. Specifically, "the receipt and size of actual Cycle 1 bonus awards had a strong impact on teacher turnover, and the probability of turnover fell as the TEEG bonus award grew."[65]

Provide funding and models for recruitment and preparation programs that are specifically targeted to high needs schools

The strategy

States should provide funding for rigorous recruitment and training programs targeted to high-needs schools, evaluate them, and help replicate the more successful models or even aspects of the more successful programs. Or a state might create its own "Teach for (state) program" modeled after some of the more successful alternate route programs.[66]

The state could then recruit top students from the best colleges and universities in the state to teach in high-poverty schools throughout the state. States could use stimulus funds to design the programs or to invest in the initial replication of a successful model, but would need long term funding to sustain the programs.

Why it is needed

An important strategy for ensuring every student has access to an effective teacher is to expand the pipeline of effective teachers. Teacher recruitment and education programs have not supplied sufficient numbers of effective teachers for high-poverty schools and subject shortage areas, such as mathematics, science and special education.

Programs such as Teach for America and the New Teacher Project have had a significant impact on teacher recruitment in many large urban districts. In a number of these districts these programs have helped to reduce the gap in teacher qualifications between high and low poverty schools by increasing the supply of more qualified teachers. University of Albany's Researcher Donald Boyd and others, for example, found that between 2000 and 2005 New York City significantly narrowed the gap in teacher qualifications between high- and low-poverty schools by improving the qualifications of new teachers through a variety of programs and policies including use of Teach for America, New York Teaching Fellows—a program operated by the New Teacher Project—and an increase in starting teacher salaries. This change in the teaching force appears to have improved student achievement in the high-poverty schools without harming student achievement in low-poverty schools.

Another promising model is the urban teacher residency program, now in operation in Boston and Chicago. Urban teacher residency programs provide master's level education course work and a year-long apprenticeship in an urban school where apprentice teachers learn alongside more experienced educators. While there aren't yet rigorous evaluations of these programs, there is evidence that they retain teachers at higher rates than some of the other high-quality alternative certification programs and even than traditional programs.[67] About 90 percent of the graduates of the Boston Teacher Residency and 95 percent of the graduates of Chicago's Academy for Urban School Leadership are still teaching after three years.[68]

Louisiana Practitioner Teacher Program[69]

In Louisiana, the Board of Regents and Department of Education have set high standards for all teacher preparation programs and are holding all providers accountable for the performance of their graduates. Teacher preparation programs get annual feedback from the state on how their graduates are faring based on value-added measures of their students' performance in five content areas. According to Sarah Heine, vice president of training and certification with The New Teacher Project, these annual reports create a culture of accountability and continuous improvement for teacher preparation programs in the state.

The Louisiana Practitioner Teacher Program, or LPTP, is one of the independent providers operating in the state and is managed by The New Teacher Project. TNTP designed the program in response to the recommendations of The Blue Ribbon Commission on Teacher Quality in Louisiana, which included 31 state, university, district, school, and community leaders. The program is a partnership between The New Teacher Project, Teach For America, and East Baton Rouge Parish Schools that has been in operation since 2002.

The program's objectives are to recruit high-quality teachers to the state, certify teachers in critical shortage areas to meet the state's needs, and "develop effective teachers through relevant, rigorous, and continuous training aligned with the Louisiana Components of Effective Teaching and the Louisiana Content Standards." The LPTP makes sure that participating teachers understand it is their responsibility to ensure the success of their students and to close the achievement gap.[70]

Program participants must have a B.A. or B.S. and a minimum GPA of 2.5 to be accepted into the program, and they must pass the relevant Praxis tests (a teacher licensure exam) for their content area before they can begin teaching. Participants must also successfully complete the admissions process and pre-service training through one of the partner programs—offered by The New Teacher Project, Teach For America, or East Baton Rouge Schools.

Pre-service training consists of a practice teaching component and professional development sessions led by teachers in similar certification areas. Pre-service training focuses on two domains: instructional design and delivery, and classroom management and culture. Participants teach full time while participating in the program and earning state certification. There are four major program components that teachers participate in during their first year:

- Content seminars.
- Professional development contact hours.
- Performance assessment system portfolios, which evaluate a teacher's performance using a variety of methods, such as videotape of classroom instruction, analysis of lesson plans, and principal surveys, in order to determine whether teachers should be recommended for certification.
- The Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program provides new teachers with mentoring, and assesses their skills based on the state's standards for effective teaching. This program is implemented by school districts.

Together, these components provide training, assessment, and support to participants.

Evidence suggests that TNTP's Louisiana Practitioner Teacher Program is an effective teacher preparation program. A state evaluation of seven of the state's teacher preparation programs found that this program "prepared new teachers whose students demonstrated achievement in four content areas that was comparable or above the growth of achievement demonstrated by children taught by experienced teachers. Student achievement in one content area was comparable to the growth of learning of students taught by new teachers. "[71]

Additional considerations for policy

Another way to expand the pipeline of teachers needed for specific subjects and types of schools is for states to analyze the recruitment needs of districts and then work with teacher education programs within the state to set reasonable targets for teachers produced in particular subject areas. Setting goals for teacher recruitment has proven an effective strategy for the University of North Carolina System and the University System of Georgia.[72] These systems were able to significantly increase the number of teachers they prepared in high-need subject areas by focusing on specific targets, galvanizing action to meet them.[73]

States should also ensure that their policies support the development and expansion of high-quality alternative certification programs.[74] States should not require excessive coursework of alternate route candidates, but should allow them to demonstrate content knowledge through a test.[75] States should ensure programs are of high quality by revising state accreditation standards to encourage programs to be selective, to provide intensive support to new teachers, and to include ongoing performance assessment of teacher candidates.[76]

Finally, states should allow a variety of providers to serve as teacher preparation programs and to certify teachers, including nonprofit organizations, districts, and charter schools, while ensuring all providers meet state standards of quality.[77]

Louisiana provides a great example of a state that's opened the door to a range of providers of certification coursework while holding all providers accountable for the same high standards of quality (see box on page 17).

Provide an induction and mentoring program for new teachers in high-poverty schools

The strategy

States should provide induction and mentoring programs for teachers in high-poverty schools that are specifically tailored to the needs and challenges teachers face in these schools. States could also establish state-funded "pools" of qualified mentors and other experts in teaching to provide professional development services and programs to all teachers that need assistance, but particularly for schools that are struggling.[78]

States could use federal economic stimulus funding to design the state induction and mentoring program, including developing quality guidelines for districts. They would need long-term funding to support ongoing administration of the programs and to support the mentor and expert teacher pool.

Why it is needed

A lack of support for new teachers is a primary cause of teacher turnover, particularly in high-poverty schools where teachers face more challenging working conditions. And while not all teacher turnover is a bad thing, it is unfortunate when promising teachers are never given the support they need to be effective.

Moreover, teachers are less effective in their first few years than other teachers on average, so reducing turnover and thereby reducing the proportion of new teachers in a school will likely improve student achievement. While the national teacher turnover rate for public school teachers is 16.5 percent,[79] it is about 20 percent for schools serving a population of students where more than half of students qualify for free or reduced price lunch.[80] According to data from the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, in some districts the turnover rate is substantially higher. For example in Philadelphia, the new teacher dropout rate was 70 percent over six years (between 1999 and 2005).[81]

Induction and mentoring programs have been shown to reduce turnover rates, and are therefore particularly important in high-poverty schools that have higher proportions of new teachers. An analysis of national data from the Schools and Staffing Survey found that "beginning teachers who were provided with a mentor in the same subject field and who participated in collective induction activities, such as planning and collaboration with other teachers, were less likely to move to other schools and less likely to leave the teaching occupation after their first year of teaching."[82] Another review of 10 rigorous studies found that "assistance for new teachers—and in particular, teacher mentoring programs—have a positive impact on teachers and their retention."[83]

Additional considerations for policy

States should establish guidelines for high-quality programs. They should ensure that mentors are trained and are experienced in working with students in poverty. Mentors should have sufficient release time to provide intensive support to new teachers, and new teachers need sufficient release time to meet with their mentors and receive regular feedback. States might also consider providing additional funding to districts to enable new teachers to teach a reduced workload and have time to observe master teachers.[84]

California provides a good example of a state with an extensive state policy infrastructure to support high-quality mentoring and induction programs. It supports a statewide mentoring and induction program, the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program. Yet the state does not differentiate support for districts that have more hard-to-staff schools. Moreover, the state has recently given districts more flexibility in how they use all of their funding and therefore there is no longer specific funding targeted to the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program. It's unclear how districts will respond and how the program will be affected (see box on page 20).

Illinois has developed quality guidelines for mentoring and induction programs throughout the state, although it does not yet provide funding to all districts or require that all districts use the guidelines. A Chicago mentoring and induction program, administered by the New Teacher Center, provides a helpful example of the kinds of programs states could support in high-poverty districts. Unfortunately, the state does not fund schools equitably, so high-poverty schools have fewer resources with which to tackle issues such as mentoring and induction for new teachers (see box on page 21).

The California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program[85]

The Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program is a state-funded induction program that is co-administered by the California Department of Education and the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The program was created by state legislation in 1997 and was based on research from the California New Teacher Project, which identified the need to provide beginning teachers with intensive induction support.

Legislation passed in 1998 included a requirement that all new teachers complete a two-year induction program in order to earn a California Clear Teaching Credential. Until this year, the program had sufficient funding to serve all new teachers.

Induction programs may be offered by school districts, a consortia of school districts, county offices of education, and/or institutions of higher education. Each program collaborates with an institution of higher education. These entities (with the exception of Institutions of Higher Education) may apply for state funding, but in order to receive funds, their programs must meet the state's Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Professional Teacher Induction Programs.

Programs that meet the standards may recommend candidates for a California Clear Teaching Credential. Currently, the state has provided sufficient funding to serve all new teachers, but the current fiscal situation in California may affect future funding.

Induction programs currently serve more than 26,000 participating teachers in 169 local programs. They provide "formative assessment of their teaching practices, professional development to promote effective teaching practices and student learning, and the advanced content required for the California Clear Teaching Credential." The state provides support and technical assistance to local programs through a state task force and leadership team.

It is unclear whether the program will continue to operate in its current form. As part of a budget resolution in February, the state gave all districts a block grant allotment of funding rather than funding specific categorical programs. Districts will now have much more flexibility to use the funds as they would like.

Since funding will no longer be based on the numbers of new teachers districts hire, they may not have sufficient funds to offer the BTSA program for all new teachers if they have an increase in the number of new teachers. They are also no longer required to use a set amount of funding to support the BTSA program; they have flexibility to support BTSA or not. Yet the licensing standards have not changed—new teachers are still required to complete a program of mentoring and induction to receive a California Clear Teaching Credential. Therefore, at this time, it is unclear how districts will respond to these changes.

Mentoring and induction in Chicago and Illinois[86]

The state of Illinois is engaged in a number of efforts to improve the quality of mentoring and induction throughout the state. The Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Education Association, and Illinois Federation of Teachers worked with a team of experts to develop quality standards for mentoring and induction programs. Although they are currently voluntary for districts, the state board hopes to expand these quality guidelines to all mentoring and induction programs throughout the state in the future and to obtain funding to support the programs in all districts.[87]

The state has also implemented a competitive grant program, "Grants for the Beginning Teacher Induction Pilot Program," to support mentoring and induction programs in school districts throughout the state. Applicants from "hard-to-staff schools, or Illinois public schools that rank in the upper third among public schools of their type (elementary, middle, secondary) in terms of the rate of attrition among teachers," are given preference in receiving awards. In addition, districts with greater needs can request more funding. Applicants were funded for three years beginning in the 2006-07 school year and 39 grants have been awarded to date.

The state's mentoring and induction standards informed the grant guidelines and districts used them in designing their programs. Programs had to include a number of components to be funded, including:[88]

- Mentoring and support of new teachers for two years
- "Professional development specifically designed to ensure the growth of the new teacher's knowledge and skills
- Formative assessment designed to ensure feedback and reflection, which must not be used in any evaluation of the new teacher."

Programs also had to describe "the role of the mentor teachers, the criteria and process for their selection, and how they will be trained, provided that each mentor teacher must demonstrate the best practices in teaching his or her respective field of practice."

The State Board of Education is also trying to gather data and to learn about successful programs in order to inform programs throughout the state and to develop technical assistance. They are working with SRI International, an independent, nonprofit research institute; the Illinois Education Research Center; and other researchers to determine which programs are being used the most, what elements they include, how much mentoring is taking place, and which are successful.

Chicago has a comprehensive program run by the New Teacher Center and is supported by state funds, fundraising by the NTC, and district dollars. They work with schools whose student populations are 99.9 percent minority and 92 percent enrolled in free- and reduced-lunch programs. The Chicago NTC program entails four primary components.

Summer institute
The CNTC Summer Institutes provide three days of planning and training for beginning teachers. Institutes focus on topics such as planning for the beginning of the school year, learning how to create a classroom community, teaching in an urban context, and becoming a part of an adult learning community.

In-classroom induction coaches
Each induction coach is an experienced teacher who works with 16 beginning teachers and has full release time from their teaching duties. They meet with new teachers weekly and support them using the NTC formative assessment system. The assessment system is also guided by Illinois' professional teaching standards and student learning standards.

The coach and teacher work together to identify areas of need and develop an action plan for their work together. Activities might include the following: observation and feedback; guidance in classroom management, curriculum, or planning and pacing; or co-planning and co-teaching to introduce a new topic or practice.

Online support groups
Online support groups allow new teachers to share information with each other, ask questions, and provide each other with support when they encounter challenges.

Working meetings and seminars
During the school year, CNTC teachers meet monthly to acquire new knowledge and build a supportive learning community. Meetings and seminars focus on instructional strategies and problem solving, lesson planning, creating curriculum, and managing the work/life balance. Topics for meetings are based on the needs of CNTC teachers.

The Chicago NTC also has leadership coaches who work with principals—especially those who have five or more beginning teachers—to help them in supporting their new teachers.

Require schools to report their budgets by actual expenditures, rather than positions

The strategy

States should require all schools to report their budgets by actual expenditures, including actual teacher salaries, rather than categories or positions. States should provide technical assistance and budget models to school districts to help them revise their budget reporting and better understand how their funding is allocated.

The states could also help districts audit how their funds are used for specific activities, such as improving teacher effectiveness. States could use stimulus funds to support all of these activities.

Why it is needed

When schools report their budgets in terms of numbers of positions rather than actual expenditures, they mask inequities. In many districts, low-poverty schools have much higher expenditures because they have more experienced teachers who are paid higher salaries. These salary differences can result in large spending differentials. For example, "for a school with 600 students and 25 teachers, a $4,000 difference in the school's average salary (in comparison to the district-wide average) creates a difference of $100,000 per school."[89]

Results-Based Budgeting in Oakland[90]

During the early 2000s, the Oakland Unified School District embarked on a path to equity via funding and budget transparency. To accomplish this they implemented a new budgeting system called Results-Based Budgeting, which combined elements of Student-Based Budgeting and School-Based Management. SBB is a system that distributes dollars to schools on a per-pupil basis rather than allocating money in the form of staff positions, programs, and other resources. SBM is an organizational structure in which school districts allow decisions about the allocation of resources to be made at the school level, usually by a principal and a committee of teachers.

This new Results-Based Budgeting system pushed dollars out to school sites and used actual site-by-site expenditures to develop budgets. In conjunction with its other reform initiatives, the Oakland Unified School District was the most improved large, urban school district in California between 2004 and 2007. Since 2002, Oakland Unified has seen its state Academic Performance Index rise from 568 to 658.

In addition, low-poverty schools frequently have more political clout and are able to lobby effectively for special programs or electives that are costly.[91] These additional expenses may not be accounted for in the school budget.

Moreover, federal- and state-categorical funds, which are intended to address the additional needs of schools serving large numbers of students in poverty, can't serve their intended purposes if they are used to even the playing field with other schools rather than providing additional funding for high-poverty schools.

If schools reported actual expenditures, districts would have to come to terms with funding inequities and would be more likely to address them. Districts could work to equalize funding through weighted student funding (see box below) or other systems, and then high-poverty schools would have additional funds to spend for recruitment or retention incentives, stipends for lead teachers to serve as coaches or mentors, professional development, or other strategies to increase the effectiveness of their staff.

Reporting actual expenditures would also enable schools and districts to conduct audits that help them understand how their funding is allocated and where they can make improvements. This would be instructive for districts to understand how much money they are spending on salary increments for teachers with master's degrees—a characteristic unrelated to teacher effectiveness.

The Oakland Unified School District's approach to budgeting provides one budgeting model that accounts for actual expenditures (see box page 22).

Weighted student funding[92]

In a system of weighted student funding, money is distributed based on student needs. Funding follows the child on a per-student basis to the public school that he or she attends. Weighted student funding can be used to determine how district and state dollars are allocated to schools.

Specific student needs or characteristics should be weighted at greater levels to generate additional funding. For example, states and districts should assign higher weights for students from low-income families, English language learners, students with disabilities (including different weights for different types of disabilities), and students with previously low test scores. They may also want to add other categories depending on the needs of the student population they are serving.

Prioritizing effective teachers for high-poverty schools
Ohio's Office of Educator Equity[93]

Ohio provides a helpful example of a state that has made the issue of teacher equity a priority and has targeted resources to addressing the problem in a comprehensive way. Superintendent Susan Zelman established the Office of Educator Equity in 2006 and named Wesley Williams as the office's director. The purpose of the OEE is to help every district ensure that highly qualified teachers are teaching 100 percent of core classes for students in poverty and students of color.

The office and its work were a priority for the superintendent, who met regularly with Williams to discuss the work of the office. Their work is an important step forward in devoting state resources and attention to analyzing the distribution of teaching talent and developing and implementing strategies to improve the quality of teaching in schools serving students in poverty and students of color.

Ohio's Teacher Equity Plan guides the work of OEE. It outlines nine elements related to teacher policy and a number of substrategies within each element that represent the state's comprehensive approach to improving teacher quality in all schools. These elements include:

- Data and reporting systems.
- Teacher preparation.
- Out-of- field teaching.
- Recruitment and retention of experienced teachers.
- Professional development.
- Specialized knowledge and skills.
- Working conditions, new compensation systems.
- Policy coherence.

OEE works to ensure collaboration across the Department of Education in implementing the strategies, and it communicates regularly with staff across those in the agency who are engaged in work that is related to the strategies. Director of OEE Williams says the state's strategies are intended "to support a teacher through the life cycle of the profession" in order to help them become better practitioners.

OEE has created a reporting infrastructure for every district in the state to report on the distribution of highly qualified teachers by school poverty and minority status annually. While using highly qualified status as the primary indicator of teacher quality has limitations,[94] it still does provide one important indicator of the distribution of teacher quality. In addition to reporting their data, districts are required to develop a plan to increase the percentage of HQT teachers in high-poverty and high-minority schools.

OEE works with the districts to recommend effective strategies and has prepared a number of written resources that districts can draw from in developing their strategies. OEE also conducts site visits to districts to monitor their work and provide technical assistance. Districts are required to target the most fiscal and human resources to schools with the lowest proportion of highly qualified teachers.

OEE has also created a number of pilot projects to explore other potential strategies for addressing the distribution of teachers. Through one pilot, the District Teacher Equity Project, OEE staff are working with researchers and a group of three districts to look at more detailed data on the distribution of teachers. These data include school characteristics, teacher characteristics, student characteristics, and teachers' educational attainment among other variables. They are trying to analyze the correlations between some of these factors and think about how they influence the distribution of teachers. The districts will then modify the strategies in their teacher equity plans to reflect these data.

They are also working with the Citizen's Commission on Civil Rights to conduct case studies of the teacher equity work in four urban districts in Ohio and to identify best practices in equitable teacher distribution. Finally, they are working with three districts to reengineer their human resource systems.

Conclusion

None of the strategies described in the paper are likely to be implemented without vigorous state leadership. State leaders need to speak publicly about the need for high-quality teachers in high-poverty and high-minority schools and devote specific resources to meeting this imperative. A governor's bully pulpit can be invaluable in drawing attention to this issue and generating the political will to address it.

As Cory Curl, senior research analyst with the Tennessee governor's office, stated, "it's critical for state leaders to acknowledge that there's great variation in teacher effectiveness and that teacher effectiveness is the key to student learning." State leaders also need to acknowledge that students in poverty and students of color are shortchanged when it comes to teacher quality, and that states have a moral obligation to do something about that. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds can provide a down payment toward implementing these strategies and put states on a pathway toward ensuring an effective teacher for every student.

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83 Richard Ingersoll, and Jeffrey M. Kralik, "The Impact of Mentoring on Teacher Retention: What the Research Says" (Denver: Education Commission of the States, 2004).

84 Susan Sclafani, Conversation with author, April 7, 2009.

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86 Information for this section is taken from the following sources: Lisa Vahey, director, Chicago New Teacher Center, Telephone conversation with author, April 16, 2009; Linda Tomlinson, assistant superintendent and Patrick Murphy, Illinois State Board of Education, telephone conversation with author, April 27, 2009; and Chicago New Teacher Center, "Support for Beginning Teachers in Areas 8, 13, 14, 15 and 17."

87 Tomlinson and Murphy, Illinois State Board of Education , Telephone conversation with author.

88 Illinois State Board of Education, Request for Proposals, Grants for the Beginning Teacher Pilot induction program, http://www.isbe.state.il.us/certification/pdf/beginning_teacher_RFP.PDF.

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90 Excerpted from, Matt Hill, "Funding Schools Equitably Results-Based Budgeting in the Oakland Unified School District" (Washington, D.C.: Center for American Progress, 2008).

91 Ibid.

92 Thomas B. Fordham Institute, "Fund the Child Tackling Inequity and Antiquity in School Finance" (Washington: Thomas B. Fordham Institute, 2006).

93 Wesley Williams, director of Office of Teacher Equity, Conversation and emails with author, April 6, 2009.

94 High-quality teaching relies to a significant degree on state certification, which most research finds is not strongly related to teacher effectiveness.

About the author

Robin Chait is the Associate Director for Teacher Quality at American Progress, where she focuses on teacher quality and high school reform issues, particularly as they affect disadvantaged students. In this position, Chait writes columns and papers, develops legislative proposals, and plans panel discussions and meetings.

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