

Key Issue:

Recruiting Teachers for Urban and Rural Schools

All resources contained within the TQ Tips & Tools documents have been reviewed for their quality, relevance, and utility by TQ Center staff and three content-area experts. These experts usually have a policy, practice or research background. The strategies and resources are provided to help regional comprehensive center and state education agency staff to be aware of the initiatives, programs or activities taking place in other settings. Our provision of the links to these resources should not be considered an endorsement but a qualified suggestion that they be considered as an option to study and/or pursue given the needs and context of the inquiring region, state, or district. Evidence of the impact of initiatives, programs or activities is provided where available or appropriate.

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Scenario

Superintendent Luis Castro sits with his four colleagues on the advisory board for their state's New Teacher Collaborative. The collaborative was formed to create a teacher mentoring and induction program to be piloted in high schools in the five districts that the superintendents oversee. The superintendents are meeting today with the director of the collaborative.

Castro oversees a large urban system in the state's only major metropolitan area. The mentoring and induction program will be implemented in two of his district's hardest-to-staff high schools. Two of the other superintendents are in charge of districts in small, rural communities; the other two are from midsized districts.

"We have finally received the funds we've been seeking to support mentor teacher training," says Teresa Dunn, director of the collaborative. "High school mentor teachers will get a two-week summer training and monthly follow-up training and support throughout the school year. This is the opportunity we've been looking for to get our teachers the support they need—especially the new teachers."

"That's great," Castro says, "but I don't know how that's going to work for my schools."

"Why?" Dunn asks, stunned. "We've been planning this for a long time, and you were one of the superintendents who asked to be a part of this collaborative."

"I know," Castro replies. "The problem is that we've got teachers quitting left and right in these high schools. A lot of the positions are filled by substitutes, and what candidates I do have for the open positions inevitably take jobs in the suburbs because those offers come faster than ours."

"I understand," says Emily O'Brien, who oversees a small rural district located about an hour outside of the city where Castro's district is located.

"You do?" Castro asks, incredulous. "How does a rural school have problems filling teaching positions?"

"Oh, you'd be amazed," O'Brien tells him. "I lost nearly half the teachers in my high school last year. I still haven't been able to replace them all with certified teachers. A few of them retired, but there were others—mostly young teachers in their 20s. I did exit interviews with as many of them as I could, and most of them told me they felt too socially isolated in our town. They're headed toward the suburbs. And I think that's why I can't seem to find applicants."

"Our teachers are headed to the suburbs, too," Castro says, "but from what I can gather, they're leaving either because the leadership in these schools is weak or there's too much disruptive student behavior, or both. And then when we do get teacher applicants for those schools, we have a hard time hiring the good ones because the suburbs hire faster."

"Have you contacted the colleges?" asks another superintendent. "Students are graduating now and looking for jobs."

“Definitely,” O’Brien says as Castro nods. “But it hasn’t helped much. I don’t know what else we can do at this point.”

The resources and strategies in this Key Issue are intended to help state education agencies and others choose recruitment strategies that best fit the needs of the urban and rural districts and schools in their states, particularly in hard-to-staff areas; to understand what the related research says about those strategies; and then to use this information to design recruitment and preparation programs that will help hard-to-staff urban and rural districts and schools recruit the highest quality, best-prepared teachers.

Benefits

Overview

Teacher shortages are essentially a problem of distribution (Darling-Hammond, 2001; Ingersoll, 2001; National Association of State Boards of Education, 1998; Olson, 2000; Reeves, 2003; Voke, 2002). According to recent studies, hardest to find are teachers who are both qualified and willing to teach in hard-to-staff schools, which include those in highly urban and rural areas—especially schools serving minority or low-income students.

In addition, recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers are intertwined; it's not enough to attract these teachers if concurrent steps are not taken to keep them (Liu, Johnson, & Peske, 2004). Schools need help in building their capacity to attract and maintain a highly qualified teaching staff. Recruitment challenges become evident when one considers the following:

- Forty-three percent of U.S. public schools are located in rural communities or small towns (McClure, Redfield, & Hammer, 2003).
- Nonwhite, low-income, low-performing schools, particularly those in urban areas, have lesser qualified teachers (Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002).
- Schools in isolated rural areas and inner cities are the hardest to staff (Reeves, 2003).

Although not all urban and rural schools are hard to staff, those with high numbers of inexperienced and out-of-field teachers, special-needs or English-language-learner students, and poor, minority, and highly mobile students face the toughest recruitment and retention challenges (Jacob, 2007; Monk, 2007; Reeves, 2003; Southeast Center for Teaching Quality, 2002). Also, social and geographic isolation and lower-than-average pay make these schools unattractive to many teachers—leading to an inequitable distribution of teachers as more head to midsized and suburban districts (Levin & Quinn, 2003; Reeves, 2003).

Benefits of Better Recruitment Practices

Policymakers should keep in mind that no silver bullet exists for solving the problem of teacher recruitment in urban and rural schools. Nevertheless, combining strong recruitment strategies and incentives with measures aimed at retaining teachers can help urban and rural schools and districts in the following ways:

- Urban and rural districts and schools will be more competitive when it comes to recruiting high-quality teachers.
- High-quality teachers will be attracted to the neediest schools; those schools, in turn, will be able to retain them.
- Students and the school culture will benefit from having a well-qualified and more stable teaching force.

Tips and Cautions

The needs of hard-to-staff urban schools are often very different from those of their rural counterparts, and teacher recruitment is no exception. Therefore, recruitment strategies must be targeted to meet the needs of individual districts and schools. Several tips and cautions for policymakers and school leaders to keep in mind are listed as follows.

- **Consider both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for teachers when designing recruitment programs and policies.** Financial incentives such as signing bonuses alone are not enough to keep teachers in the profession (Liu et al., 2004). A study on the experiences of teachers who received Massachusetts’s \$20,000 signing bonus, a recruitment strategy instituted in 1998, showed that the majority left teaching within four years. Inducements (such as signing bonuses) are most effective when coupled with long-term capacity-building measures (such as quality professional development, a strong induction program for new teachers, and a professional learning community that nurtures teachers’ professional growth) (Liu et al., 2004; McDonnell & Elmore, 1987).
- **Ensure that recruits are the right fit for a school.** Discussions about teacher shortages and attrition in urban and rural schools center around recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers. But not every high-quality teacher is the most appropriate or effective teacher for every student population (Goe, 2006; Liu, 2005). As Liu (2005) pointed out, “The skills, knowledge, and dispositions needed to be effective teaching Advanced Placement chemistry in an affluent, suburban, and homogeneous high school are different from those needed to teach untracked general science in a working-class, urban, and heterogeneous middle school” (p. 4). Teachers must understand not only their students’ academic needs but also their social and emotional needs (Goe, Bell, & Little, 2008). Hard-to-staff urban and rural districts and schools should take measures to ensure that they hire not only highly qualified teachers but also those who know the student population and demonstrate a passion for and a commitment to their academic success and social and emotional development. Goe (2006) suggests that districts and schools consider the following criteria when hiring teachers, depending on local factors such as school setting, ethnicity/race of the student population, or heritage language of many or most students:
 - Second-language fluency
 - Quality of being a role model in mostly minority schools (e.g., teachers who are from the communities in which they will be teaching and/or share an ethnic or cultural background with the students they will be teaching)
 - Contribution to the diversity of mostly white schools
 - Coursework or professional development that has prepared them to work with students with disabilities
 - Coursework or professional development that has prepared them to teach in specific settings, such as urban schools or Native American communities

Strategies

1. Provide incentives and policies to redistribute the teacher workforce.
 - 1.1. Restructure teacher pay to encourage the voluntary redistribution of the teacher workforce.
 - 1.2. Provide scholarships and forgivable loans for teachers who teach in geographical shortage areas.
 - 1.3. Combine pay incentives with cohort assignments.
 - 1.4. Combine pay incentives with improved working conditions.
2. Improve working conditions for teachers in urban and rural schools.
 - 2.1. Support new teachers.
 - 2.2. Support school leaders so they can support teachers.
 - 2.3. Create professional learning communities and career ladders for teachers.
3. Partner with institutions of higher education to prepare teachers for urban and rural school settings.
4. Develop high-quality alternative certification programs.
5. Grow your own.
6. Improve hiring practices.
7. Create partnerships to address out-of-school issues that affect recruitment and retention.
 - 7.1. Provide housing assistance.
 - 7.2. Provide reimbursement for moving expenses.
 - 7.3. Promote business partnerships.

Strategy 1: Provide Incentives and Policies to Redistribute the Teacher Workforce

Teachers rarely list salary as the reason for entering the teaching profession (Farkus, Johnson, & Foleno, 2000; Feistritzer & Shankar, 2005). However, research suggests that teachers respond positively to financial incentives when making decisions about where to teach (DeAngelis, Peddle, & Trott, 2002; Imazeki, 2005). Teacher pay should be structured to encourage the natural distribution of highly qualified teachers across districts, schools, and content areas. It is important to note, however, that financial incentives must be combined with measures aimed at improving working conditions (Ingersoll, 2001; Liu et al., 2004), such as programs that provide support for new teachers and school leaders.

Resource 1: *The Challenge of Attracting Good Teachers*

Prince, C. D. (2002). *The challenge of attracting good teachers and principals to struggling schools*. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators. Retrieved June 15, 2009, from http://www.aasa.org/files/challenges_teachers_principals.pdf

This report discusses the historically permissible practice of reserving the best teachers and principals for those schools serving high-achieving, affluent, college-bound students. The author asserts that holding school systems accountable for improving the performance of *all* schools and *all* students might well require that resources—both human and financial—be allocated according to greatest need. She adds that the problem requires superintendents who are unafraid of conflict: “Changing these kinds of dysfunctional policies and procedures will require politically astute superintendents who are willing to take risks that will inevitably create conflict” (p. 15). The report also offers strategies for overcoming the political, managerial, and instructional dilemmas involved in making changes that will lead to more equitable distribution of effective teachers.

Substrategy 1.1: Restructure Teacher Pay to Encourage the Voluntary Redistribution of the Teacher Workforce

Resource 2: *Regulation Versus Markets*

Podgursky, M. (2001). Regulation versus markets: The case for greater flexibility in the market for public school teachers. In M. C. Wang & H. J. Walberg (Eds.), *Tomorrow's teachers* (pp. 117–148). Richmond, CA: McCutchan.

Economist Michael Podgursky argues that the single-salary scale, even with higher pay, cannot be adjusted to compensate for differing working conditions. Given equal pay, teachers will use their seniority to transfer to preferred schools and new teachers will look for better conditions with which to begin. Consequently, troubled schools—including hard-to-staff rural and urban schools—end up with the least experienced teachers. Podgursky concludes that “if schools differ in terms of nonpecuniary conditions (e.g., safety, student rowdiness [and ruralness]), then equalizing teacher pay will disequalize teacher quality. On the other hand, if districts wish to equalize quality they will need to disequalize pay” (pp. 137–138).

Resource 3: Shaw (Mississippi) School District’s Local Incentive Pay Plan

Contact: Shaw School District, P. O. Box 510, Shaw, MS 38773

Incentive pay may take the form of a signing bonus, often a single payment made at the time of contract signing. In contrast, the impoverished Shaw School District, which is located in the rural Mississippi Delta, provides locally funded teacher pay bonuses spread over a three-year period and paid at critical points in the year—at contract signing, just before Christmas, and at the end of the school year as teachers enter the summer months of unemployment. This mutually beneficial plan gives the teachers cash when they need it most and gives the school the opportunity to pay in increments without depleting its funds. It is important to note that this local incentive fills a gap in the state’s teacher recruitment plan, which provides housing assistance, moving expenses, scholarships and loan forgiveness, opportunities for master’s level study, and sabbaticals for teachers in critical teacher shortage areas.

For a summary of these efforts in Shaw School District, please see Chapter 5 of the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality report *America’s Challenge: Effective Teachers for At-Risk Schools and Students* (http://www.tqsource.org/publications/NCCTQBiennialChapters/NCCTQ%20Biennial%20Report_Ch5.pdf).

Resource 4: The Cost of Hiring a Rural Teacher

Prince, C. D. (2002). *Higher pay in hard-to-staff schools: The case for financial incentives*. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators. Retrieved June 15, 2009, from http://www.aasa.org/files/PDFs/Publications/higher_pay.pdf

The author notes that rural areas are generally viewed as having a lower cost of living and thus requiring lower teacher pay than other areas. Policymakers need to consider the hidden costs of living in rural places, where the lack of public transportation, suitable housing, and necessary services require expenditures for home ownership and automobile operation. For this reason, more money will be needed to attract teachers to rural areas.

Resource 5: Incentive Bonuses That High-Needs School Can Use to Attract and Retain Academically Talented Teachers

Steele, J. L., Murnane, R. J., & Willett, J. B. (2009). *Do financial incentives help low-performing schools attract and keep academically talented teachers? Evidence from California*. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

This paper explores the impact of a California teacher incentive program called the Governor’s Teaching Fellowship. The program extended a \$20,000 bonus to academically successful teaching candidates who agreed to teach in high-needs schools. Recipients had to pay back \$5,000 per year for four years if they did not teach in a high-needs school. Although the program lasted only two years because of budget shortfalls, it was successful in recruiting teachers who

graduated from selective colleges and universities as well as those who received higher composite licensure test scores (even though that was not part of the selection criteria).

Substrategy 1.2: Provide Scholarships and Forgivable Loans for Teachers Who Teach in Geographical Shortage Areas

Resource 6: Incentives to Teach in Mississippi

Website: <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/mtc/teach.htm> (refer to No. 1 and No. 2)

Contact: State Student Financial Aid at 800-327-2980 or 601-432-6997

Mississippi's Teacher Shortage Act of 1998 provides incentives for teachers to teach in the rural Mississippi Delta and other hard-to-staff school districts. The initiative has several components, including the following scholarship and loan programs:

- **Critical Needs Teacher Scholarship Program**—Provides college tuition, fees, books, and the average cost of room and meals for full-time and part-time undergraduates. Four-year awards are given to students in exchange for teaching three years in a designated critical-shortage area. Other awards are given year-for-year. Scholarship recipients who do not teach in a critical shortage area must pay back the amount awarded with interest.
- **William F. Winter Scholarship Loan Program**—Provides up to \$4,000 for juniors and seniors in teacher education programs. One year of loan forgiveness is given for one year of teaching in Mississippi, and four years of forgiveness are given for three years of teaching in a critical shortage area.

Substrategy 1.3: Combine Pay Incentives With Cohort Assignments

Resource 7: Teacher Rewards for Poor Kids

Contact: Hillsborough County Public Schools, 901 E. Kennedy Blvd., Tampa, FL 33619 (or call 813-272-4000)

Ave, M. (2006, April 16). Do teacher rewards pay off for poor kids? *St. Petersburg Times*.

Retrieved June 15, 2009, from

http://www.sptimes.com/2006/04/16/Hillsborough/Do_teacher_rewards_pa.shtml

Hillsborough County schools in Florida attracted five nationally certified teachers to Clair-Mel Elementary School through a salary incentive plan to get good teachers in poor schools. Teachers representing multiple disciplines were all friends, held master's degrees, and came as a cohort. They received a \$10,000 bonus plus \$4,500 for board certification. Teachers reported a high level of satisfaction in the school (where 90 percent of students are poor) and planned to return for a second year.

Substrategy 1.4: Combine Pay Incentives With Improved Working Conditions

Resource 8: *Identifying Professional Contexts to Support Highly Effective Teachers*

Hirsch, E. (2008). *Identifying professional contexts to support highly effective teachers* (Key Issue). Washington, DC: National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. Retrieved June 15, 2009, from <http://www2.tqsource.org/strategies/het/ProfessionalContexts.pdf>

This resource outlines strategies that districts and schools can use to assess, analyze, and improve the professional context within which teachers work. Resources accompany each strategy.

Resource 9: *Attracting Well-Qualified Teachers to Struggling Schools*

Prince, C. D. (2002). Attracting well-qualified teachers to struggling schools. *American Educator*, 26(4). Retrieved June 15, 2009, from http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/american_educator/winter2002/AttractingTeachers.html

This article, published by the American Federation of Teachers, examines the issue of pay incentives as a means of attracting highly qualified teachers to high-needs schools and districts. The author notes that differentiated pay is a relatively new intervention with little information available on its effectiveness. The author recommends monetary incentives *along with* improved conditions as a means of recruiting and retaining teachers in high-needs areas:

Salary matters less when other characteristics of the workplace are personally and professionally satisfying. When they are not, or if the work itself is significantly more demanding, salary matters more and can be the tipping point that determines whether teachers stay or leave. Adjusting salaries upward can compensate for less appealing aspects of jobs; conversely, improving the relative attractiveness of jobs can compensate for lower salaries.

Resource 10: *Benchmarks to Assess the Financial Attractiveness of Teaching*

Goldhaber, D., & Player, D. (2005). What different benchmarks suggest about how financially attractive it is to teach in public schools. *Journal of Education Finance*, 30(3), 211–230.

The authors use multiple national data sets on occupations and salaries to compare teaching salaries with those in other occupations. The research indicates that starting teaching salaries remain lower than starting salaries in other occupations; however, the differences have shrunk since the early '80s. When differences in salaries between teaching and competing occupations are examined, high-skill teachers and secondary teachers have more high-paying opportunities outside of the profession than low-skill or elementary teachers do. The authors argue that because of these competing opportunities, districts using single-salary schedules will have trouble recruiting teachers in high-demand areas or will have to settle for teachers with lower skill levels. The authors recommend that districts explore salary systems to address the labor market reality that people with different skills have different opportunities for higher salaries outside of teaching.

Resource 11: *Would Higher Salaries Keep Teachers in High-Poverty Schools?*

Clotfelter, C., Glennie, E., Ladd, H., & Vigdor, J. (2008). Would higher salaries keep teachers in high-poverty schools? Evidence from a policy intervention in North Carolina. *Journal of Public Economics*, 92, 1352–1370.

This study examines the outcome of a North Carolina program that provided an annual bonus to certified mathematics, science, and special education teachers in high-poverty, low-performing schools. Using longitudinal teacher data, the authors compared teacher turnover patterns before and after the bonus program was implemented. The research indicates that the bonus payment reduced teacher turnover rates by 17 percent.

Strategy 2: Improve Working Conditions for Teachers in Urban and Rural Schools

Teachers are professionals. They want to work in environments that foster good teaching and that support them and their professional growth (Ingersoll, 2001; Johnson et al., 2001). Yet poor working conditions and a lack of substantive professional development and support are primary reasons that large numbers of teachers leave the profession within five years (Ingersoll, 2001).

Resource 12: *Increasing Teacher Retention to Facilitate the Equitable Distribution of Effective Teachers*

Lasagna, M. (2009). *Increasing teacher retention to facilitate the equitable distribution of effective teachers* (Key Issue). Washington, DC: National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. Retrieved June 15, 2009, from http://www.tqsource.org/publications/KeyIssue_TeacherRetention.pdf

This publication provides information about strategies, programs, and resources to improve the retention and equitable distribution of teachers. Strategies discussed include enhancing teacher induction and mentoring, improving working conditions, reforming teacher compensation systems, and providing teachers with advancement and leadership opportunities. The publication also includes four real-life examples of promising initiatives designed in part to stem teacher turnover.

Resource 13: *A Different Approach to Solving the Teacher Shortage Problem*

Ingersoll, R. M. (2001). *A different approach to solving the teacher shortage problem* (Teaching Quality Policy Brief No. 3). Seattle, WA: Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy. Retrieved June 15, 2009, from http://depts.washington.edu/ctpmail/PDFs/Brief_three.pdf

Teachers who migrate from school to school or district to district account for more than half of the turnover in schools and districts. These teachers have not abandoned the profession but are looking for better conditions under which to practice—conditions that include access to basic resources, collaborative relationships with colleagues, reasonable and appropriate teaching assignments, supportive leadership and infrastructures, connections with parents and the community, and opportunities to grow and lead. Addressing the reasons that teachers migrate between schools and districts can help to stem the tide of migration and attrition.

Substrategy 2.1: Support New Teachers

Resource 14: *Learning the Ropes*

Fideler, L., & Haselkorn, D. (1999). *Learning the ropes: Urban teacher-induction programs and practices in the United States*. Belmont, MA: Recruiting New Teachers.

This national study of induction programs describes efforts undertaken at 10 urban school districts and highlights their successes in helping new teachers become masters of their craft. The report also provides a comprehensive review of induction literature published from 1980 to the present.

Resource 15: The New Teacher Center at the University of California, Santa Cruz

Website: <http://www.newteachercenter.org/>

A product of more than two decades of research, the New Teacher Center model is designed to serve as a catalyst for educational reform and professionalism in teaching. The organization offers an Induction Institute for educators who have responsibility for developing and implementing policies and programs to support beginning teachers. The institute also is designed for those who oversee and conduct professional development for the mentors of beginning teachers.

Resource 16: Connecticut’s Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST) Program

Website: <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2607&Q=319186&sdePNavCtr=#45440>

This two-year induction and assessment program for new teachers in Connecticut uses a portfolio review process to assess a new teacher’s readiness for professional certification beyond initial certification. The program is mandatory for all new Connecticut teachers regardless of certification status.

Resource 17: California Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment

Website: http://www.btsa.ca.gov/BTSA_basics.html

This state-funded program is designed to support the professional development of new teachers.

Resource 18: Louisiana Framework for Inducting, Retaining, and Supporting Teachers

Website: <http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/pd/625.html>

This website outlines the components of the Louisiana Framework for Inducting, Retaining, and Supporting Teachers (La FIRST) Online, a program designed to equip Louisiana school districts with resources to better meet the needs of new teachers. Resources include the La FIRST Teacher Induction Partnership (TIP), a program that pairs high-needs school districts with high-performing La FIRST districts and participating universities, and E-Mentoring, which consists of both face-to-face and online mentoring.

Resource 19: Connecting School and Community

Contact: The Rural School and Community Trust Capacity Building Program, 1775 Graham Avenue, Suite 204, Henderson, NC 27553

The Rural School and Community Trust’s professional development initiative is aimed at building and sustaining collaborations between schools and communities by bringing together diverse players (teachers, students, administrators, community members) for a series of conversations and exercises. This process can lead to place-based strategies for accomplishing a community’s vision and is very effective in connecting educators to community resources. Such collaborations can also help to integrate educators and their work into the larger community.

Substrategy 2.2: Support School Leaders so They Can Support Teachers

Resource 20: *Rural School Leadership: The Legacy of Desegregation*

Williams, D. T., & King, J. (2002). *Rural school leadership in the Deep South: The double-edged legacy of school desegregation*. Washington, DC: The Rural School and Community Trust. Retrieved June 15, 2009, from http://www.ruraledu.org/user_uploads/file/Double-Edged_Legacy.pdf

The Rural School and Community Trust, with funding from the Wallace Readers Digest Fund and the Hearst Foundation, convened rural school leaders from the Deep South to give voice to the challenges they face in leading whole-school and community reform. Participants from Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Arkansas explained the unique issues related to spearheading change and supporting high achievement within the context of the rural South and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

Resource 21: *Rural School Leadership: A Framework for Professional Development*

Williams, D. T., & King, J. (2003). *Rural school leadership in the Deep South: A framework for professional development*. Washington, DC: The Rural School and Community Trust. Retrieved June 15, 2009, from http://www.ruraledu.org/user_uploads/file/Framework_for_Profes.pdf

Rural superintendents from the Deep South have designed a framework for the professional development of rural school leaders. The program is intended to create a climate of professionalism, high expectations, and shared leadership in the context of the NCLB and the rural South.

Resource 22: The New Teacher Center at the University of California, Santa Cruz

Website: <http://www.newteachercenter.org/>

Best known for its teacher induction program, The New Teacher Center also offers expertise in the development of effective instructional leadership for America's schools through its School Leadership Development Division. The division provides direct coaching support to new and veteran administrators, trains and supports leadership coaches, and trains and supports site and central office administrators in instructional leadership skills.

Resource 23: Institute for Educational Leadership's e-Lead

Website: <http://www.iel.org/programs/elead.html>

State and district staff can access this free online resource for information on providing better professional development for principals.

Substrategy 2.3: Create Professional Learning Communities and Career Ladders for Teachers

Resource 24: *From Isolation to Collaboration*

Rasberry, M. A., & Mahajan, G. (2008). *From isolation to collaboration: Promoting teacher leadership through PLCs*. Hillsborough, NC: The Center for Teaching Quality. Retrieved June 15, 2009, from <http://catalog.proemags.com/showmag.php?mid=wqdqrr#/page0/>

This report captures the Center for Teaching Quality's project aimed at addressing the culture of isolation experienced by so many teachers. This work involved initiating professional learning communities, groups committed to continuous improvement through shared values and reflection. Be sure to check out the embedded podcasts included in the report.

Resource 25: Mississippi School Administrator Sabbatical Program

Website: <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/mtc/teach.htm> (refer to No. 4)

Rural communities often do not have the resources to support administrator growth and thus need assistance from the state. Experienced teachers in Mississippi's designated critical shortage areas are given the opportunity to take on school leadership positions through a state-sponsored sabbatical program. Teachers with three years of experience and a school district recommendation can receive their regular salary and fringe benefits while participating in an administrator sabbatical program. In exchange, participants must spend five years in administration in the sponsoring district or repay the award with interest.

Strategy 3: Partner With Institutions of Higher Education to Prepare Teachers for Urban and Rural School Settings

Strong collaboration between teacher preparation programs and urban and rural districts can build relationships (American Federation of Teachers, 1994; Gross, 1988) that may, in turn, give hard-to-staff schools early access to prospective teachers and strengthen Grades K–12 education. Districts can work with the universities to ensure that these teachers are prepared to meet the challenges of their hard-to-staff schools. Field experiences in high-needs schools should be extensive and of high quality. In addition, many alternative routes to certification are offered at local universities and allow paraprofessionals, military personnel, and other professionals to transition into teaching. Strong partnerships can help districts evaluate the quality of university graduates and give them a voice in reforming teacher preparation programs.

Resource 26: University-School Teacher Education Partnerships

Website: <http://www.northcarolina.edu/academics/usp/index.htm>

Contact: University of North Carolina General Administration, Division of University-School Programs, 140 Friday Center Drive, Chapel Hill, NC 27515; or call 919-843-4792

At the urging of the University of North Carolina Deans' Council on Teacher Education, the North Carolina General Assembly provided funding to establish university-school teacher education partnerships at the 16 constituent institutions of the state university system. Partnerships are intended to improve teacher education and professional development and increase enrollment in teacher education programs in high-needs content areas such as mathematics and science. The move by the General Assembly was the impetus for many of the professional development school partnerships started around the state as well as for the professional development networks that reached out to rural districts.

Resource 27: Education Renewal Zones

Website: <http://files.ruraledu.org/misc/erz.htm>

Contact: The Rural School and Community Trust Capacity Building Program, 1775 Graham Avenue, Suite 204, Henderson, NC 27536, or call 252-433-8844

The Rural School and Community Trust's Education Renewal Zone (ERZ) is a collaborative effort by schools and institutions of higher education to connect schools in high-needs communities with resources that can help improve and sustain them. According to the Rural School and Community Trust, higher education plays the following role in the ERZ initiative:

Each ERZ centers on a teacher education institution that assumes the lead in identifying 10–15 rural school or district partners; selecting and forming an ERZ Advisory Committee with school, community, and higher education representation; developing and implementing an ERZ needs analysis pertaining to teacher quality, recruitment, and retention; and designing a specific focus and plan of work to meet the needs of partnership schools and communities.

Resource 28: Urban Teacher Education Partnership in St. Paul, Minnesota

Website: <http://www.teachercenter.mnscu.edu/featuredactivity.html>

Six Minnesota state colleges and universities have joined with six St. Paul public schools to form the Urban Teacher Education Partnership (UTEP). The program prepares students to teach in hard-to-staff schools and provides experience in the diverse city schools that increasingly will resemble Minnesota's classrooms of tomorrow.

Resource 29: The Partnership for Teacher Excellence in New York City

Website:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/FundForPublicSchools/AboutUs/KeyInitiatives/TeacherExcellence/default.htm>

In 2006, the New York City Department of Education formed the Partnership for Teacher Excellence with New York University and City University of New York. The partnership is dedicated to developing and implementing a new model for teacher education that addresses the city's need for highly qualified, well-trained teachers in high-needs areas such as mathematics, science, and special education.

Resource 30: Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants

Website: <http://www.ed.gov/programs/heatqp/index.html>

Authorized by Title II, the Teacher Quality Enhancement (TQE) program aims to reduce shortages of qualified teachers in high-needs school districts by better preparing and recruiting teachers. The program offers three types of discretionary grants: state grants, partnership grants, and recruitment grants. The TQE website offers details on the grants.

Resource 31: *Ahead of the Class*

Clewell, B. C., & Villegas, A. M. (2001). *Ahead of the class: A handbook for preparing new teachers from new sources*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute. Retrieved June 15, 2009, from http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/ahead_of_the_class.pdf

Section 1 of this handbook outlines and describes the steps necessary to create a successful institutional partnership, including establishing a planning team, assessing a district's needs for qualified teachers, setting goals, choosing a recruitment pool, and designing the program. The handbook also includes sections on program implementation and modification and barriers to overcome.

Resource 32: The Benedum Collaborative

Website: <http://www.hre.wvu.edu/benedum/>

This website provides an in-depth look at one of the United States' oldest and most successful school-university collaborative efforts. Benedum involves 28 public schools, five school districts, West Virginia University's College of Human Resources and Education, and the Eberly College of Arts and Science. The collaborative has redesigned West Virginia University's teacher education program and established professional development schools. Public school teachers collaborate continuously with university faculty to provide learning experiences for education students.

Strategy 4: Develop High-Quality Alternative Certification Programs

After candidates become interested in teaching and schools identify staffing needs, alternative routes to certification provide a path for moving certified teachers into the classroom. These programs can take a variety of forms: Teach for America, Troops to Teachers, the New Teacher Project Teaching Fellows, Transition to Teaching grants, and partnerships between school districts and local universities. States and districts can tap into existing alternative certification programs or create grow-your-own certification partnerships (for more on grow-your-own programs, please see Strategy 5). Alternative routes often are attractive to midcareer transitioners and other nontraditional prospective teachers. A flexible program allows teacher candidates to complete coursework and training toward certification while continuing to earn a living as a teacher of record, a paraprofessional, or other professional. Through collaborative efforts, states, districts, and institutions of higher education can develop alternative routes to attract and prepare teachers to fill shortages in urban and rural schools.

Resource 33: *Preparing High-Quality Teachers for Urbanized Schools*

Masci, F. J., & Stotko, E. M. (2006). Preparing high-quality teachers for urbanized schools: A program evaluation of a partnership model. *Education and Urban Society, 39*(1), 46–68.

The authors evaluate the Professional Immersion Master of Arts in Teaching (ProMAT) program, which is a partnership between Johns Hopkins University and Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland. The graduate-level preparation program provides candidates with internship experiences, supervisory support, and financial assistance. When the authors compared Praxis II pedagogy examination scores with state minimum passing scores, the candidates performed higher than the state’s required scores in two thirds of ProMAT certification areas.

Resource 34: How States Seek to Balance Incentives and Quality in Alternative Teacher Certification Programs

Johnson, S. M., Birkeland, S. E., & Peske, H. G. (2005). Life in the fast track: How states seek to balance incentives and quality in alternative teacher certification programs. *Educational Policy, 19*(1), 63–89.

This study examined alternative teacher certification programs at 11 sites in three states: Connecticut, Louisiana, and Massachusetts. The authors found that participants were attracted to the programs as a way of making career changes. The programs also are more affordable than traditional certification programs, providing an attractive opportunity for entering the field. Overall, the advantages and disadvantages of the programs can be used to fine-tune alternative certification programs. The researchers discuss the quality of the programs and the centralized or decentralized approaches of the states. They report that candidates wanted more in-depth pedagogical content training and that locally run programs were more effective in recruiting people to fill local needs.

Resource 35: Teach for America: Making a Difference in High Schools?

Xu, Z., Hannaway, J., & Taylor, C. (2007). *Making a difference? The effects of Teach for America in high school* (Working Paper 17). Washington, DC: National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research.

The authors analyzed the Teach for America program at the high school level. The program has grown significantly since it was created in 1990, providing placement for more than 2,000 teachers in 2005. The authors' goal was to provide data on the effectiveness of the teachers in the program. The results indicate that Teach for America teachers have been effective in raising student achievement scores; in addition, their students' achievement scores—particularly in mathematics and science—have been higher than the scores of students with traditionally certified teachers.

Resource 36: Career Choices and Experiences of American Board Certified Teachers

Glazerman, S., Seif, E., & Baxter, G. (2008). *Passport to teaching: Career choices and experiences of American Board certified teachers*. Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research.

This study provides insight into the careers choices and experiences of teachers who participated in the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) Passport to Teaching program. By surveying recipients of Passport to Teaching certification, the researchers found that 59 percent of its alumni obtained a teaching position in Grades K–12. There is a strong presence of ABCTE teachers in Idaho and Florida. ABCTE also is actively pursuing the recruitment of minority candidates in Mississippi and Florida.

Strategy 5: Grow Your Own

One teacher recruitment strategy that has taken root is the grow-your-own approach, wherein districts encourage members of the community to consider teaching by creating programs that prepare them for certification. Local recruits likely are well acquainted with the needs and challenges of their neighborhood or region, may represent cultural and racial groups that exist within a district, and are already committed to the area. Recruitment efforts should begin early, in middle school classrooms and through extracurricular activities that encourage young students to pursue a teaching career. By the time students reach high school, formal recruitment programs should be in place to provide encouragement, mentoring, training, and financial assistance toward certification. In addition, districts should recruit paraprofessionals who already are working in the classroom as well as parents and community leaders who are looking to change careers.

Resource 37: Illinois’s “Grow Your Own” Teacher Education Initiative

Website: <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/rules/archive/pdfs/60ARK.pdf>

In 2004, the Illinois Legislature enacted the teacher education initiative to prepare highly skilled teachers for hard-to-staff subjects such as mathematics and science in hard-to-staff schools. The goal is to recruit 1,000 teachers by 2016 and retain them for seven years. For more information, see the Real-Life Example at the end of this Key Issue.

Resource 38: Future Educators Association

Website: <http://www.futureeducators.org/>

Future Educators Association is a national program for middle school and high school students interested in exploring careers in education. Chapters exist around the country, and Phi Delta Kappa International provides support and ideas for getting a program started. An advisor’s handbook is provided when a school or district joins the association.

Resource 39: Aurora (Colorado) Public Schools’ “Grow Your Own” Program

Website: <http://www.aps.k12.co.us/hr/growyourown.html>

Aurora, Colorado, has instituted in its urban school district a program that encourages paraprofessionals who are already working with mathematics, science, and special education students to become certified teachers for those classrooms. The district provides qualified candidates with a stipend for tuition, books, and fees.

Resource 40: Prezell R. Robinson Scholars Program

Website: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/recruitment/scholarships/robinson/>

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's Prezell R. Robinson Scholars Program is designed to encourage high school students to pursue careers in teaching. The program is available only in low-wealth school systems with documented difficulty in recruiting qualified teachers. Robinson Scholars participate in system-sponsored activities designed to foster their commitment to teaching and enhance the likelihood they will be accepted to and complete an approved teacher education program. Upon graduation from high school, Robinson Scholars are awarded a Prospective Teacher Scholarship Loan to pursue a program of study leading to teacher licensure in North Carolina.

Resource 41: *Urban Teacher Academy Project Toolkit*

Berrigan, A., & Schwartz, S. (2000). *Urban teacher academy project toolkit: A guide to developing high school teaching career academies*. Belmont, MA: Recruiting New Teachers.

This toolkit for promoting teaching and early recruitment includes guidelines for establishing and evaluating teacher career academies and for identifying prospective teachers. It also provides a comprehensive array of supports for recruiting promising students to the profession.

Resource 42: South Carolina's Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement

Website: <http://www.cerra.org/>

This South Carolina center offers training to individuals who wish to become teacher cadet instructors and encourages academically able students who possess exemplary interpersonal and leadership skills to consider teaching as a career.

Resource 43: North Carolina Teachers of Excellence for All Children

Website: <http://ncteach.ga.unc.edu/>

North Carolina Teachers of Excellence for All Children (NC TEACH) is a rigorous alternative teacher preparation program designed to recruit, train, support, and retain midcareer professionals as they become licensed teachers in North Carolina. Established in 2000, the program is administered by the University of North Carolina Office of the President in collaboration with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. More than 1,300 people have become licensed teachers through the NC TEACH program; they currently serve in more than 85 counties and school districts in all regions of the state. In 2002, 16 percent were in secondary science, 6 percent in secondary mathematics, 8 percent in middle school science, and 11 percent in middle school mathematics.

Through a collaborative initiative with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, NC TEACH and [LEARN NC](#), statewide groups of teacher education faculty have developed online modules based on the original NC TEACH curriculum. These modules are a significant part of an online alternative licensure program that includes a face-to-face orientation, access to a student resource center, and support services.

Resource 44: North Carolina Model Teacher Education Consortium

Website: <http://ncmtec.northcarolina.edu/>

The North Carolina Model Teacher Education Consortium is for persons seeking a first education degree, initial licensure, or clearance of provisional, emergency, or lateral entry licensure. All full-time employees and part-time employees (substitutes with at least 30 days in the previous semester, bus drivers, clerical and nutrition workers) of the local education agencies partnering with the consortium are eligible to participate. Full-time employees of institutions of higher education and community colleges partnering with the consortium and full-time School of Education instructors and paraprofessionals at these institutions also are eligible. Participants with little or no college experience can take the first two years of study at a community college and transfer directly into an education major at a four-year institution. The consortium pays a portion of the tuition, textbooks, and student fees. Students with more college experience may take consortium-sponsored courses taught at four-year colleges and universities or on community college campuses closer to home.

Resource 45: Clark County (Nevada) School District’s “Grow Your Own” Program

Website: <http://www.ccsd.net/jobs/>

Contact: Clark County School District, 5100 W. Sahara Ave. Las Vegas, NV 89146; 702-799-5000

Clark County (Nevada) School District’s comprehensive plan for recruiting and retaining teachers includes a high school teacher education magnet program and a teacher cadet program patterned after the South Carolina Teacher Cadet Program. In addition to targeting school-aged children, the district also targets adults in the community. The target pools include substitute teachers, the Latin Chamber of Commerce, churches, stay-at-home parents, and retired firemen and policemen.

Strategy 6: Improve Hiring Practices

Hiring delays can cause school districts to lose highly qualified teacher candidates to other districts. Teachers are not likely to wait until July or August for a job offer if another district moves more quickly, and many suburban districts hire most of their teachers by May. Changing hiring practices so that districts and schools can extend job offers to teachers by the end of the previous school year would help secure highly qualified teacher candidates who are interested in working in hard-to-staff urban and rural schools (Levin & Quinn, 2003; Liu, 2003). In addition, the hiring process should be “information rich” (Liu, 2005, p. 12), providing interactions with teachers and the school principal and opportunities for a two-way exchange of information—especially important in isolated rural areas—so that teacher candidates have a comprehensive, accurate preview of the job. Information-rich hiring processes can lead to greater job satisfaction (Liu, 2005).

Resource 46: *Missed Opportunities*

Levin, J., & Quinn, M. (2003). *Missed opportunities: How we keep high-quality teachers out of urban classrooms*. Brooklyn, NY: The New Teacher Project. Retrieved June 15, 2009 from <http://tntp.org/files/MissedOpportunities.pdf>

The New Teacher Project examined urban district hiring practices and their effect on applicant attrition and teacher quality by analyzing data from four hard-to-staff urban districts: three large U.S. districts in the Southwest, the Midwest, and the East, and one midsized district in the Midwest. The analysis revealed that after waiting up to four months for a job offer, anywhere from 31 percent to almost 60 percent of applicants withdrew from the hiring process, often to accept jobs with districts that made earlier offers. Of those who withdrew, the majority (50 percent to 70 percent) cited the late hiring timeline as the major reason for taking another job. The report also offers suggestions for removing early hiring barriers.

Resource 47: *Hiring, Job Satisfaction, and Fit*

Liu, E. (2005, April). *Hiring, job satisfaction, and the fit between new teachers and their schools*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Liu found that new teachers in his study who reported that their hiring process provided a holistic, accurate preview of the position also reported higher levels of job satisfaction. Elements of these “information-rich” hiring practices include interviews with a variety of individuals across the school community, teaching demonstrations, and observations of classes and staff meetings.

Resource 48: *New Teachers’ Experiences of Hiring*

Liu, E. (2003, April). *New teachers’ experiences of hiring: Preliminary findings from a four-state study*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago.

Surveying first- and second-year teachers in California, Massachusetts, Florida, and Michigan about their hiring experiences, the author found that few study participants reported interviews with any school personnel other than the principal and the majority had no opportunities to observe classes as part of the hiring process. As a result, new teachers in these states tended to form only moderately accurate pictures of their schools before they began their teaching jobs, suggesting that their expectations for the job may not have been met.

Strategy 7: Create Partnerships to Address Out-of-School Issues That Affect Recruitment and Retention

Low beginning pay and the absence of affordable housing in many urban and rural communities make it difficult for new teachers to obtain suitable living arrangements in the districts in which they work. As a result, they often are forced to live far from the schools where they teach, thus further taxing their already low salaries with the extra cost of commuting. Hard-to-staff urban and rural schools must build partnerships to address out-of-schools factors that make teacher recruitment and retention difficult.

Substrategy 7.1: Provide Housing Assistance

Resource 49: Mississippi Housing Assistance for Teachers

Website: <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/mtc/teach.htm> (refer to No. 6)

Contact: Fannie Mae Partnership Office at 800-601-1194

Contact: Mississippi Home Corporation at 601-718-4629

Mississippi, in partnership with Fannie Mae and the Mississippi Home Corporation, provides loans of up to \$6,000 to pay closing costs on homes purchased by teachers in school districts designated as critical shortage areas. The home must be in the same county as the school district. The loan can be forgiven in total over three years at the rate of one year of teaching for one third the amount of the loan. Critical shortage areas are primarily in the rural Mississippi Delta. For districts with 60 or more teaching positions, designation is based on having 10 percent or more of their teaching staff not appropriately licensed. For districts with fewer than 60 teaching positions, designation is based on having 15 percent or more of the teaching staff not appropriately licensed.

Resource 50: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Good Neighbor Next Door Program

Website: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/reo/goodn/gnndabot.cfm>

The Good Neighbor Next Door program is designed to encourage teachers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and law enforcement officers to buy homes in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods. Teachers must be employed full-time by a public or private school or a federal, state, county, or municipal educational agency as a state-certified Grades K–12 teacher or administrator. In addition, they must work in the area where the home is located and agree to live in the home as their only residence for three years. According to the website, Good Neighbor Next Door properties are single-family homes located in revitalization areas and are listed and sold exclusively on the Internet. The selected bidder may purchase the property at a 50 percent discount from the list price. For example, if a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development home is listed for \$100,000, teachers can buy it for \$50,000. They also can apply for Federal Housing Administration–insured mortgages with a down payment of \$100 and finance closing costs.

Resource 51: Bank of America’s Neighborhood Champions Protected Mortgage Program

Website:

http://www.bankofamerica.com/community/index.cfm?template=cdb_specializedprofessionloans

Bank of America offers a program specifically aimed at helping teachers and other public sector employees purchase homes. The Neighborhood Champions Protected Mortgage program targets teachers, police officers, firefighters, and medical workers, particularly those without an established credit history but with a favorable 12-month payment history on four monthly bills. The program offers fixed- or adjustable-rate financing and accidental death and dismemberment insurance.

Resource 52: New York City Department of Education’s Housing Support Program

Website:

<http://schools.nyc.gov/TeachNYC/IncentiveAndScholarshipPrograms/FinancialSupportIncomingTeachers/housingsupport.htm>

This program provides nearly \$15,000 in taxable financial housing support each year for 100 certified full-time teachers with two or more years’ teaching experience in mathematics, science, special education, or bilingual education. Applicants must pass a rigorous selection process. Those accepted into the program receive \$15,000 over two years in return for a three-year commitment to teach in a high-needs school, as identified through the district’s Teachers of Tomorrow program.

Substrategy 7.2: Provide Reimbursement for Moving Expenses

Resource 53: Mississippi Moving Expense Reimbursement Plan

Website: <http://www.mde.k12.ms.us/mtc/teach.htm> (refer to No. 5)

The Mississippi program provides up to \$1,000 in reimbursements for moving expenses for teachers relocating to critical shortage areas. This one-time-only award is given on approval of the local school district.

Substrategy 7.3: Promote Business Partnerships

Resource 54: New Teacher Welcome Package

Alamance County (North Carolina) Area Chamber of Commerce

Website: <http://www.alamancechamber.com/school-to-careers/#retention>

Each spring, chamber members contribute to a New Teacher Welcome Package. Approximately 300 packages are assembled and distributed to new educators working in Alamance County in an effort to reduce the upfront money needed to relocate to the area. Each package includes flyers offering discounts or waiving deposits to local hotels, apartment complexes, Internet services,

banks, storage facilities, and moving companies. Also included are coupons and discounts from area restaurants, retail stores, and service providers.

Resource 55: Thanks for Teaching

Alamance County (North Carolina) Area Chamber of Commerce

Website: <http://www.alamancechamber.com/thanks%2Dfor%2Dteaching/>

To show appreciation to current educators, chamber members offer specials and discounts through a Thanks for Teaching website. Offers include discounts on car services, residential closing costs, tax preparation, chiropractic services, and Internet services.

Real-Life Example

In 2004, the Illinois Legislature passed the Grow Our Own Teacher Education Act. This law is intended to recruit highly skilled, committed teacher candidates from within the state and prepare them to teach in hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-staff teaching positions. It also attempts to recruit and prepare paraprofessionals as well as a diverse group of parents and community leaders to serve as educators for the state's low-income students. The ultimate goal is to add 1,000 teachers to low-income and other hard-to-staff schools by 2016 and to increase the average retention rate from 2½ to seven years. The state's goal is to assist urban schools in recruiting teachers in shortage subject areas such as mathematics, science, and special education.

The initiative does not provide a shortcut or alternative to the traditional means of attaining teacher certification. Participants attend teacher preparation programs to receive their bachelor's degree and become fully licensed by the state. Student loans will be forgiven for teachers who remain in the schools for at least five years.

Each year, the state allocates funding to the Illinois State Board of Education to make grants to a consortium of 16 providers that will carry out the preparation programs. The consortium must consist of at least one teacher preparation institution, a community-based organization, and a school district.

The Legislature approved a \$1.5 million planning grant in 2005, with awards given to 10 communities, five of which are in Chicago: North Lawndale, Auburn Gresham, Kenwood/Oakland/Little Village, Logan Square, and Chicago Lawn. Grants also were awarded to Riverdale, Rockford, East St. Louis, Moline/Quad Cities, and Springfield. Each of these communities formed cohorts of about 30 adult students to begin the program. The Legislature also approved another \$3 million to begin implementation of the program. All 16 existing Grow Our Own Teachers projects in Illinois had their funding extended for fiscal year 2009 and increased based on the \$3,500,000 appropriation passed by the Legislature in June 2008 and approved by the governor.

As of January 2009, the program included approximately 500 candidates, 100 of whom were enrolled in colleges of education.

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Grow Your Own Illinois website: <http://www.growyourownteachers.org/index.htm>

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