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WWC QUICK Review

“Transfer Incentives for High-Performing Teachers: Final Results from a Multisite Experiment”

What is the study about?

This study examined the impact of the Talent Transfer Initiative (TTI) on both student achievement and teacher retention in 10 school districts across seven states. The initiative gave bonuses to high-performing teachers for them to transfer to and stay in low-performing schools. Transfer teachers could receive up to \$20,000 over 2 academic years. They were eligible to volunteer to participate if they taught a class in grades 3–8 and were in the top 20% in their district on student test score growth. The researchers matched schools in the same district with teacher vacancies at the same grade level and subject into “teams.” They then randomly assigned the 165 matched teams to one of two conditions: either the principal was allowed to hire a high-performing teacher through the TTI program (“TTI team”) to fill the vacancy, or the principal could only hire through normal approaches (“comparison team”).

What did the study report?

At the end of the first academic year, the study authors found no statistically significant differences in student math or reading test scores between TTI teams and comparison teams at the elementary or middle school level. However, at the end of the second academic year, elementary students from TTI teams had higher student standardized test scores, by a statistically significant margin, than those from comparison teams. The estimated effect sizes were 0.08 for math and 0.07 for reading. There were no statistically significant differences in test scores between students from the TTI and comparison teams in middle schools at the end of the second academic year. With regard to retention, teachers in TTI teams were 7 percentage

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Handy Definitions

- ▼ *quick review*
- ▼ *study rating*
- ▼ *meets WWC evidence standards without reservations*
- ▼ *meets WWC evidence standards with reservations*
- ▼ *does not meet WWC evidence standards*

See the *full glossary* ►

points more likely than teachers in comparison teams to remain in their schools 1 year after the study began, a statistically significant difference. After 2 years, the study found no statistically significant differences in teacher retention rates between TTI and comparison teams at the elementary or middle school level.

How does the WWC rate this study?

The study authors used a randomized controlled trial design and, therefore, this study could *meet WWC evidence standards without reservations*. However, additional information related to the composition of the analysis sample and attrition is needed from the authors before a study rating can be determined. A more thorough review (forthcoming) will determine the rating for the study and report more fully on its results.

Citation

Glazerman, S., Protik, A., Teh, B., Bruch, J., & Max, J. (2013). *Transfer incentives for high-performing teachers: Final results from a multisite experiment* (NCEE 2014-4003). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

This study was conducted by staff from Mathematica Policy Research. Because Mathematica is one of the contractors that administers the WWC, this study was reviewed by staff from other organizations.

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