

# Great Teachers and Leaders: Identifying and Supporting Effective Teachers for High-Need Schools

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# The goal of teacher evaluation

*The **ultimate** goal of all teacher evaluation should be...*

**TO IMPROVE  
TEACHING AND  
LEARNING**

# The goal of identifying and retaining effective teachers

- What the goal is NOT: simply identifying and retaining effective teachers
- **The “real” goal is to improve student learning and educational opportunities**
- Effective teachers in schools where they are most needed is key

# Chicago Study (Sartain et al., 2011)

- “The work in Chicago and across the country to improve evaluation was motivated by two main factors. **First, evaluation systems were failing to give teachers either meaningful feedback on their instructional practices or guidance about what is expected of them in the classroom. Second, traditional teacher evaluation systems were not differentiating among the best teachers, good teachers, and poor teachers.**” (p. 1)

# A succinct definition of teacher effectiveness

- Hunt (2009) stated that, "...the term 'teacher effectiveness' is used broadly, to mean the collection of characteristics, competencies, and behaviors of teachers at all educational levels that enable students to reach desired outcomes, which may include the attainment of specific learning objectives as well as broader goals such as being able to solve problems, think critically, work collaboratively, and become effective citizens." (p. 1)

# Evaluation for accountability and instructional improvement

- Effective evaluation relies on:
  - Clearly defined and communicated standards for performance
  - Quality tools for measuring and differentiating performance
  - Quality training on standards and tools
    - Evaluators should agree on what constitutes evidence of performance on standards
    - Evaluators should agree on what the evidence means in terms of a score

# Evaluating evaluation systems (Herlihy et al, 2013)

- Examined issues that arise in observational systems (generalizability of teacher scores, training, certification, reliability of observers, sampling and number of lessons observed per teacher)
- States are inconsistent in attending to the reliability and validity of scores
- Only a few states seem to have a coherent strategy for examining reliability and validity of results from observations



# Teacher assignment is not random (Kalgorides et al., 2012)

- Minority teachers and female teachers are assigned lower achieving students than their white and male counterparts
- Propensity to assign minority and poor students to minority teachers
- Years of teaching experience, particularly years of experience at a teacher's current school, is positively related to the average prior achievement of students in a teacher's classroom
- Teachers who have held leadership positions are assigned higher achieving students
- Teachers who attended more selective undergraduate institutions are assigned higher achieving students than their colleagues. (p. 104)

# Match between teachers & schools (Jackson, 2010)

- Investigated the contribution of “match between teachers and schools” to student achievement
- Showed that teacher effectiveness is higher *after* a move to a different school
- 25% of what is typically considered to be a teacher effect may actually be a teacher-school (match) effect

# More experience matters, even beyond first 5 years (Papay & Kraft, 2013)

- Consistent with past research: teachers experience rapid productivity improvement early in their careers
- New findings: evidence of returns to experience later in the career shows teachers continue to build human capital beyond these first years

# Teacher effectiveness in high poverty schools (Sass et al. 2012)

- Average effectiveness of teachers in high poverty schools is less than teachers in other schools
- Significantly greater variation in teacher quality among high poverty schools
  - Driven by less productive teachers at the bottom of the teacher effectiveness distribution in high-poverty schools
  - Due to differences in the unmeasured characteristics of teachers
- Measures that induce highly effective teachers to move to high-poverty schools and which promote an environment in which teachers' skills will improve over time are more likely to be successful

# Are those who leave more effective? (Hanushek and Rivkin, 2010)

- Research suggests that those who leave (whether the school, the district, or the profession) tend to be *less effective* than those who stay in schools
- The exception is first year teachers who leave—they tend to be *more effective* than those who stay

# Math & science teacher turnover (Ingersoll & May, 2012)

- Used data from national Schools & Staffing Survey and saw large school-to-school differences in math/science turnover
- High-poverty, high-minority, and urban public are highest turnover
- Math & science teachers move schools as follows:
  - from poor to not-poor schools
  - from high-minority to low-minority schools
  - from urban to suburban schools
- Key school-based reasons for turnover
  - Degree of individual classroom autonomy (strong for math)
  - Salary (strongest for science)

# Importance of African American teachers (Irvine and Fenwick, 2011)

- African American teachers are more likely than their White colleagues to remain in schools with high concentrations of students of color even after controlling for school size, poverty level, etc.
- African American teachers were more likely to remain in a school as the population of African American students increased
- Greater numbers of African American teachers could reduce the acute shortage and high turnover of teachers in urban schools that enroll mostly low-income African-American students

# Teacher/student race matching (Goldhaber & Hansen, 2010)

- "...Black teachers have more consistent success than White teachers in teaching minority students, and this matching effect is greatest in magnitude for Black teachers at the lower end of the [Praxis] licensure performance distribution" (p. 244)



# Effectiveness can be improved!

- Most teachers are doing the best they can
  - Help them do better with feedback, support, coaching, and a focus on classroom environment and relationships with students
- Teachers who are discouraged may need to see successful teachers with their kids
- Teachers who are consistently effective should be encouraged to model and teach specific practices to less effective teachers

# Why you should keep them

- With the right instructional strategies, most teachers can improve student outcomes
- By creating and maintaining a better learning environment, students and teachers can collaborate successfully
- The teachers you hire to replace them are not necessarily going to be more effective
- **You may not be able to find highly effective replacements!**

# Recruitment strategies

- Provide incentives and policies to redistribute the teacher workforce
  - Make challenging schools more attractive
- Improve working conditions for teachers in urban and rural schools
  - Ask new teachers what they want/need
- Partner with institutions of higher education to better prepare teachers for urban and rural school settings
  - Create a feedback loop with IHEs

# Partner with teacher preparation programs

- Work with universities to ensure their teachers are prepared to meet the challenges they will encounter in hard-to-staff schools
- Field experiences in high-needs schools should be extensive and high quality
- Consider a cohort placement model, bringing in teachers from one program

# More recruitment strategies

- Develop/support high-quality alternative certification programs
- Grow your own
  - Early school success is key
- Improve hiring practices
- Create partnerships to address out-of-school issues that affect recruitment and retention

# Provide incentives and policies to redistribute the teacher workforce

- Consider ways to promote the voluntary redistribution of the teacher workforce
  - Signing bonus? Differential pay?
  - Over time, not a one time incentive
- Provide scholarships and forgivable loans for teachers who teach in geographical shortage areas
- Combine pay incentives with cohort assignments
- Combine pay incentives with improved working conditions

# Intrinsic & extrinsic rewards

- Consider both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for teachers when designing recruitment programs and policies
  - **Signing bonuses aren't enough to keep teachers in the profession**
- Ensure that recruits are the right fit for the school
  - **Ensure candidates know the student population and demonstrate a passion and commitment to their success**

# Improve working conditions for teachers in urban and rural schools

- Provide support to new teachers by ensuring a comprehensive, intensive induction program is in place
- Support school leaders so that they can support teachers
- Create professional learning communities and career ladders for teachers



# Next steps

- Ensure that evaluation systems allow you to differentiate between effective and less effective teachers
- Focus on improving effectiveness of teachers you already have
- Develop strategies for retaining effective and potentially effective teachers
- Recruit effective teachers through multiple, coordinated strategies (not one time bonuses)
- Improve working conditions (ask teachers!)
- (YOUR GREAT IDEAS HERE)

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# Questions?

