Strengthening Title II of ESEA and HEA

Aspen Institute, Senior Congressional Education Staff
Daniel Weisberg, The New Teacher Project
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To realize sustainable improvement, effective teaching must be the guiding concern behind all elements of a district’s human capital system.

Effectiveness Management
Optimize effectiveness of teacher workforce.

CORE METRIC
Retention rate of top-quartile teachers
Retention rate of bottom-quartile teachers

School-Level Human Cap. Mgmt.

Recruitment

Selection

Training/Certification

Placement

Evaluation/Prof. Dev.

On-Boarding

Compensation

Retention/Dismissal

Working Conditions

An effective teacher in every classroom

Talent Pipeline
Create supply of effective teachers to fill all vacancies.

CORE METRIC
Number and percentage of teachers trained or hired who demonstrate effectiveness

Measures of student learning
To make effective teaching the center piece of districts’ human capital efforts, districts must address the Widget Effect.

“When it comes to measuring instructional performance, current policies and systems overlook significant differences between teachers. There is little or no differentiation of excellent teaching from good, good from fair, or fair from poor. This is the Widget Effect: a tendency to treat all teachers as roughly interchangeable, even when their teaching is quite variable. Consequently, teachers are not developed as professionals with individual strengths and capabilities, and poor performance is rarely identified or addressed.”

The New Teacher Project, 2009
Characteristics of The Widget Effect

- Performance evaluations are perfunctory and infrequent
- Primary use of evaluations is to identify incompetence
- Teachers expect to receive the highest possible rating, even during their first years in the classroom
- Evaluations do not yield meaningful feedback for teachers, and professional development is not aligned to evaluations
- Administrators are poorly trained to evaluate and do not prioritize the process
- Teachers who get feedback for improvement tend to feel singled out, often unfairly
In districts that use a binary teacher performance evaluation system—most commonly “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory”—the “unsatisfactory” rating is rarely used.

Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory Evaluation Ratings Assigned Between 2003-2008*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District 1</td>
<td>99.1%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 2</td>
<td>98.9%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 3</td>
<td>99.1%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: District evaluation data collected by TNTP for SY 2003-2004 through SY 2007-2008
* District 1 includes only non-probationary evaluation records and Districts 2 and 3 include both probationary and non-probationary evaluations.
Even in districts with more than two possible ratings, evaluation fails to differentiate performance since the majority of teachers receive the highest rating while very few teachers receive the lowest rating.

### Evaluation Ratings Assigned Between 2003-2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Highest Rating</th>
<th>Middle Ratings</th>
<th>Lowest Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District 4</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 5</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 6</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 7</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 8</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the five districts with more than two possible ratings, only 0.6% of all evaluations collected between 2003 and 2008 gave the lowest rating.

Source: District evaluation data collected by TNTP for SY 2003-2004 through SY 2007-2008
District 5 and 8 includes only non-probationary evaluation records and Districts 4, 6, and 7 include both probationary and non-probationary evaluations.

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Even in low performing schools, few teachers are given unsatisfactory evaluation ratings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Number of Schools Not Meeting Overall Annual Yearly Progress (AYP)</th>
<th>Number of Schools Not Meeting AYP That Did Not Assign a Single Unsatisfactory Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>82 (93%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>75 (94%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>79 (95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>80 (94%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-2004</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On average, only one in twenty-one schools that did not meet AYP assigned at least one unsatisfactory rating.

Source: District evaluation data collected by TNTP for SY 2003-2004 through SY 2007-2008
Figure includes only non-probationary evaluation records

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Given the weak evaluation practices and systems, many teachers report that they receive little meaningful feedback on their performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of teachers indicating they had development areas identified on their most recent evaluation.</th>
<th>Tenured/non-probationary teachers</th>
<th>Probationary teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: TNTP survey of 9,631 teachers across 10 sites conducted May 2008 to March 2009
Even when teachers receive feedback on their performance, resources and support are inconsistent.

Teachers with improvement area(s) identified on their most recent evaluation who indicated they were provided with resources and support to help them improve their teaching performance. 50% of teachers replied “Agree” or Strongly Agree.”

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Source: TNTP survey of 9,631 teachers across 10 sites conducted May 2008 to March 2009
Teacher evaluations often represent a snapshot in time, and are short.

Number of classroom observations by evaluator, prior to evaluator assigning final evaluation rating(s).

- 3% of evaluators observed no classrooms.
- 32% of evaluators observed one classroom.
- 26% of evaluators observed two classrooms.
- 22% of evaluators observed three classrooms.
- 8% of evaluators observed four classrooms.
- 6% of evaluators observed five classrooms.
- 3% of evaluators observed more than five classrooms.

Average minutes of a classroom observation, prior to a teacher being assigned a final evaluation rating(s).

- 10% of observations were less than 15 minutes.
- 35% of observations were between 15-30 minutes.
- 37% of observations were between 31-45 minutes.
- 17% of observations were between 46-60 minutes.
- 1% of observations were more than 60 minutes.

Source: TNTP survey of 9,631 teachers across 10 sites conducted May 2008 to March 2009
A Better Way

Comprehensive evaluations provide real information about instructional effectiveness to teachers throughout their careers.
  o Teachers are aware of their development areas and receive the support they need to succeed.
  o Teachers constantly strive toward greater instructional effectiveness.

Districts and teachers work together to make effectiveness matter.
  o Professional development is targeted and appropriate.
  o Performance evaluations inform more than dismissal.

Teachers are treated like professionals, not widgets.
  o The best teachers are recognized, retained and rewarded.
  o Outstanding individuals are attracted to the profession.
  o Acceptance of poor instruction in the classroom ends.