

**ESEA REAUTHORIZATION:  
TEACHERS AND LEADERS**

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**HEARING**  
OF THE  
**COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION,  
LABOR, AND PENSIONS**  
**UNITED STATES SENATE**  
**ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS**  
SECOND SESSION

ON  
EXAMINING THE ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT  
(ESEA) REAUTHORIZATION, FOCUSING ON TEACHERS AND LEADERS

APRIL 15, 2010

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## **ESEA REAUTHORIZATION: TEACHERS AND LEADERS**

THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 2010

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:08 a.m. in Room SD-430, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Tom Harkin, Chairman of the Committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Harkin, Dodd, Bingaman, Murray, Reed, Brown, Casey, Hagan, Franken, Bennet, Enzi, Alexander, Isakson, and Murkowski.

### OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR HARKIN

The CHAIRMAN. The Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions will come to order.

I would like to thank all of you for being here today for the fourth in a series of hearings focused on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

In our committee hearing on Tuesday, we focused on the challenge of turning around under-performing schools. Today we turn our attention to the professionals who are on the front line in our public schools: our teachers and our principals. We will explore some of the key challenges to be tackled in this reauthorization.

How do we attract and retain a highly qualified teacher for every classroom, as well as talented leaders for every school? How do we best prepare them to be successful in the classroom and as leaders? How do we support them in their work and continually increase their effectiveness as practitioners. Lastly, how do we evaluate the skills and strategies that lead to student achievement?

These questions are so central and multifaceted that we have chosen to use a roundtable format for today's hearing. I hope this will allow for more voices and discussion, as well as a more robust exchange of ideas.

While many factors are important to a student's success in school, to state the obvious, when it comes to learning, a good teacher matters the most. And when we look at chronically under-performing schools across America, there are pervasive problems that these schools have too many teachers with inadequate training and skills. It is a cruel fact of life that too often our most needy and at-risk students are being taught by our least prepared and least able teachers. In core academic classes nationwide, teachers with neither certification nor a major in the subject they teach are

twice as common in high-poverty schools as they are in high-income schools. A key challenge is to identify strategies for ensuring that students who need the most help are being educated by our most effective teachers and principals.

The only way to know for sure whether students have effective teachers and principals is by having in place a reliable evaluation system that takes into account student achievement, along with other important measures of success. That would allow us to identify educators who need help, to reward those who are doing a great job at improving student achievement. Because this is so important, today's roundtable includes leading experts on teacher evaluation. I look forward to hearing their views because it is something that has bedeviled me for a long time. How do you evaluate a teacher? Is it by the test scores of the students? Well, that could be just rote memory. Is that all we want to do is to impart rote memory on kids? Or do we want to really teach them how to learn and how to ask probing questions, how to analyze? Sometimes these are harder questions to get at the core of than just a simple answer on a test.

Another key challenge is to increase the quality and relevance of teacher preparation programs and ongoing professional development. It is a dismal fact that nearly 50 percent of our teachers leave within the first 5 years. I was asking Ms. Moir about that just before we started here. Who are these 50 percent? Who are they and why are they leaving in the first 5 years? Are these the best and the brightest going out or are these the ones that cannot hack it at all? Who are they? I tend to think it is the former just from my own anecdotal experience. It is those that are the most aggressive, the brightest who want to really see a career ladder, but they do not see it in the first 5 years and they are out because they have other choices.

I think one big reason for the attrition rate is we are failing to adequately train teachers for the tough realities of the job and to ensure that they have a strong grasp of the content areas they are teaching.

Of course, we cannot talk about support for teachers without emphasizing the importance of excellent instructional leadership. Teachers can be at their best when they have a principal who fosters a school culture where student learning is the common goal and where educators have ample time for collaboration.

Again, anecdotally I remember one school in a city in Iowa had a lot of problems, truancy. It was in terrible shape. They got a new principal and literally within 2 years that school turned around. And the only change was the principal. That was the only change. I remembered that and I thought, boy, there is something here about leadership at that level.

Finally, it is important to note that while teachers and principals on the front line are the most important factors helping our kids to succeed, they cannot do it by themselves. We must all be partners in the education and success of our children. Here I would emphasize our parents and how they are involved in this process.

Well, these are tough questions. There are no simple answers. If there were, we would have done it a long time ago. But simply because it is tough does not mean that we cannot do something about

it, and I think with the reauthorization of this bill, if nothing else, we have got to focus in this area of qualified teachers, professional development, career development, leadership training qualities for our teachers, and for our principals and getting those into our most under-performing schools.

Well, with that, I will now invite my colleague, Senator Enzi to share his opening remarks.

#### OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR ENZI

Senator ENZI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for doing the roundtable format. We get a little bit more information that way and in a little different manner that I think helps to bring out some of the problems.

And teachers, principals, and administrators are the people we rely on to provide our children with a quality education in a safe school environment, and their roles cannot be overlooked or diminished as we work on fixing and improving the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

I believe that the underlying purpose we had in No Child Left Behind regarding highly qualified teachers was a good one. Of course, every parent in America wants their child to be taught by an educator that is considered highly qualified. However, there is a vast disconnect between a teacher who meets certain requirements on paper and one whose teaching has a true impact on students in the classroom and increases academic achievement.

It is also important that the leadership in our schools supports good teaching and student achievement, encourages innovation with results, and creates a safe learning environment.

I am part of a family of educators. I hear daily what life is like in the classroom. Some of the people who had the largest impact on my life were teachers and principals.

I believe that teachers are provided with a toolbox of sorts when they walk into the front door of their school. However, that toolbox may not be fully stocked. Sometimes it takes years to practice, get professional development, collaborate with other veteran teachers in order to fill that toolbox.

Similarly, school teachers bring certain experience and skills with them when they move into the leadership roles. These skills could be considered tools as well. As with teachers, these skills need to be encouraged, fine-tuned and advanced so that their toolbox is fully stocked to meet the needs of the students and teachers in the school.

The reauthorization of ESEA provides us with an opportunity to do just that. However, we have moved beyond just looking at the qualifications of teachers and school leaders. We are now beginning to focus on the effectiveness of teachers, leaders, and school districts. Let me emphasize our ultimate goal has not changed. It continues to be improving student achievement. I support measuring teacher effectiveness, but we need to have the wherewithal to move as smartly as we do quickly. These systems need to be developed in an open and transparent method and they need to be developed with the people that they will affect. That would be the students, the parents, the teachers, and the school administrators. This should not be a top-down directive solely from Washington far re-

moved from local school districts, teachers, and students. Teachers, principals, and parents need to understand and define what is meant by an effective teacher and principal, how that differs from qualified and how those measures will be used in teacher and principal evaluation systems, and we need to listen. There is no doubt that we are moving in the right direction, but this will take time and hard work in order to get it right. To rush in without thinking it all the way through would be reckless and endanger the momentum we enjoy today to shift policy and practice to the measures of effectiveness.

I am so pleased that we have a person from Wyoming testifying this morning, that he could join us today and share some of his experiences as a principal in Wyoming. He has provided great leadership in the State and can talk to us about the needs of principals in rural schools, and that is often different from those in urban and suburban counterparts. He also plans to discuss some of the changes proposed by ESEA and the impact they would have on rural schools and districts across the country. And I thank you for making the journey out here. I know how far it is. I know how far removed a lot of our communities are from the major transportation.

I want to thank all the participants for being here today and sharing their perspectives. While we will not all get a chance to ask each of you a question, we may have questions that we need you to answer anyway. So I hope that you realize that you volunteered to answer written questions that we might submit as well.

And I look forward to this morning's conversation and listening and learning. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Enzi, and thanks for proposing this roundtable format. I am beginning to like it more and more.

What we are going to do here is introduce our witnesses with brief introductions, and I have asked our staff to set the clock for 2 minutes. That is not much time, but we want to get more into a discussion with you. So you have just a couple of minutes. Tell us what the bullet point is that you really want to drive home to us on those two questions that we sent out to you? And then we will leave the record open for 10 days for other questions that we might want to submit to you.

Senator ENZI. And their whole statement and anything they want to add will also be put in the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, yes, you are right. I went through some of the statements last evening and all of your statements will be made a part of the record in their entirety, without objection.

I would like to start then with a brief introduction of our witnesses, and I will now turn to Senator Enzi for purposes of an introduction.

Senator ENZI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, because it is my pleasure to introduce Layne Parmenter, the Principal of the Urie Elementary School in Lyman, Wyoming.

The CHAIRMAN. Where is that?

Senator ENZI. For those of you not familiar with Wyoming—I was hoping you would ask—Lyman is in the southwest portion of the State. It has a population of 1,938. We are able to keep track

of it that way. And of course, today since Mr. Parmenter is here, it is 1,937.

[Laughter.]

He is the Principal at the Urie Elementary School. He has been for the last 10 years, and prior to becoming a principal, he taught high school English, Spanish, and Italian.

A former President of the Wyoming Association of Elementary and Middle School Principals, Layne currently serves as the Federal relations coordinator. He did a lot of jobs in Wyoming.

Welcome to the HELP committee. All of us are looking forward to hearing from you today, and thank you for presenting your testimony too.

The CHAIRMAN. Since I spent a part of my early life in Rock Springs, Wyoming, I thought that is the center of the universe. Where is Lyman from the center of the universe?

Senator ENZI. It is about 90 miles the other side of Green River.

The CHAIRMAN. West of Green River.

Senator ENZI. Yes. Oh, yes, far west.

The CHAIRMAN. Down by Little America.

Senator ENZI. It is past Little America.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, you are out in the middle of nowhere.

[Laughter.]

Mr. PARMENTER. I am.

The CHAIRMAN. Next, I would turn to Senator Alexander for purposes of an introduction.

#### SENATOR ALEXANDER

Senator ALEXANDER. I would be delighted to. I did not know I would have that privilege, but I am delighted especially to welcome Dean Camilla Benbow from Vanderbilt University who has a distinguished career in her own right. Peabody College. Peabody, those of us from Tennessee say, is the leading college of education in the United States. And some other people outside of Tennessee think that as well. So we are glad that she is here today.

The CHAIRMAN. However, my notes tell me that Ms. Benbow spent 12 years at Iowa State University.

[Laughter.]

Senator Bingaman.

#### SENATOR BINGAMAN

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to introduce Diana Fesmire who is one of New Mexico's very best teachers and one of the country's very best teachers. She is the recipient of the 2008 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. She began teaching in 1987 and has taught at the Sierra Elementary School in Alamogordo, New Mexico since 1996. She continues to challenge herself and her students and works tirelessly to improve opportunities and outcomes for those students. I want to particularly thank her for agreeing to participate in the hearing today, and the committee will benefit greatly from her perspective and the perspective of teachers like her who have demonstrated skills and dedication and have ac-

quired the experience that is needed to really understand this set of issues.

Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Bingaman.

I would like to just briefly introduce the rest of our guests. Then, we will start with our conversation.

First, we have Timothy Daly who serves as President of The New Teacher Project.

Stephanie Hirsh is the Executive Director of the National Staff Development Council.

We have Thomas Kane, Professor of Education and Economics at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and Faculty Director of the Center for Education Policy Research.

Ellen Moir, Executive Director of the New Teacher Center.

Jon Schnur is the Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder of New Leaders for New Schools.

And we have José Valenzuela—not the baseball player—that is who I thought it was.

[Laughter.]

A teacher at TechBoston Academy and a graduate of the Boston Teacher Residency Program, a nontraditional prep program.

We are grateful to have Randi Weingarten, President of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, representing over 1.4 million teachers, paraprofessionals, and school personnel.

I do not think I missed anyone. Did I? No. I think we got everybody.

Well, with that, the two questions that we provided to all of you was, number one, what support and leverage can the Federal Government provide to States and school districts to allow them to implement policies that ensure that all students have high quality teachers and leaders? Number two, how have you used evaluations and other data within your strategies, programs, or policies to improve teacher and leader success?

Again, I am just going to go from left to right. I will start with Randi over here, and if you would just take a couple of minutes, and then we will hear from the rest of our witnesses. Then we would like to get into an open discussion.

**STATEMENT OF RANDI WEINGARTEN, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN  
FEDERATION OF TEACHERS, WASHINGTON, DC**

Ms. WEINGARTEN. Thank you, Chairman Harkin, and thank you, Ranking Member Enzi, and thank you, committee members, for allowing us the opportunity to testify on the ESEA reauthorization, particularly as it relates to teachers, but I also want to thank you, Chairman Harkin, for introducing the Keep Our Educators Working Act yesterday to help preserve jobs for educators and maintain core academic programs because nothing we are going to say today is going to be actually helpful if the rug is pulled out from under kids, as is happening because of the budgets.

So what I want to focus on is the critical role that teachers play in educating our students and to challenge the notion that teachers alone can provide our children with all they need to succeed in schools.

Students will not do well in school if they are not taught by a well prepared and engaged teacher. But at the same time, neither can they succeed if teachers are not supported by competent administrators who understand the value and necessity of collaboration and support, have an environment in which they are asked to learn and teach, where that environment is safe, appropriately staffed and equipped, and there is shared accountability, not top down, not bottom up, but 360-degree accountability.

It is often said that great teachers are not born, they are made. However, our Nation's approach to teacher quality suggests that we believe that the converse is actually true, that great teachers are born fully prepared for that role. The truth of the matter is that good teaching is an art built around a firm foundation. We must begin by making sure teachers receive good preparation in the schools that they attend. New teachers also need time to develop the skills and experience necessary for their initial assignments. High quality induction programs for new teachers should be required for all districts, and once the teacher is in the classroom, she or he should receive ongoing, embedded professional development that is part and parcel of a valid evaluation system. As you all know, we have proposed the overhaul of evaluation systems that do not simply provide snapshots but can be used to continuously develop and inform teaching and learning.

Let me just say two other things and then I will stop.

These requirements are not divorced from what students need to succeed. They are an integral part, along with the out-of-classroom factors, in determining how well our students perform, which is part of the reason we are pushing so hard for the wraparound program so that we can actually compete with poverty because we know kids or teachers cannot do it alone.

This reauthorization of ESEA presents an opportunity to improve teacher development and evaluation programs, to appropriately address school environment issues that limit the efforts to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools, and to help narrow the achievement gap, and to ensure—and this is probably the two most important things that I will say—that teachers have the tools, trust, and time they need to succeed. We need to create a school environment that allows students to be supported by a team of teachers and administrators, not just the one teacher standing in front of a classroom, which is why collaboration not confrontation is key in our profession.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Weingarten follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RANDI WEINGARTEN

Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Enzi and committee members, I am Randi Weingarten, president of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). Thank you for inviting me to testify on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), particularly as it relates to teachers.

Before I begin, I would like to thank Chairman Harkin for his leadership in introducing legislation to help local communities preserve jobs for educators and maintain core academic programs. The Keep Our Educators Working Act provides critical resources to State and local governments for these purposes in the face of severe fiscal crises.

I welcome the opportunity both to shine a light on the critical role that teachers play in educating our students, 90 percent of whom attend our public schools, and

to challenge the notion that teachers alone (as wonderful as they are) can provide our children with all they need to succeed in school.

Students will not do well in school if they are not taught by well-prepared and engaged teachers. At the same time, neither students nor their teachers can succeed unless (a) the teachers are supported by competent administrators who understand not simply the value but also the necessity of collaboration; (b) the environment in which they are asked to learn and teach is safe, appropriately staffed and equipped; and (c) there is shared responsibility—not top-down accountability.

The AFT firmly believes in and is committed to the proposition that high standards and expectations must be set for students and teachers. We know, however, that it makes no sense to simply set standards. We have to provide students and teachers with the tools they need to help meet those standards.

It is often said that great teachers are not born, they are made. Despite the frequency with which it is said, our Nation's approach to teacher quality suggests that we believe the converse is true—that great teachers are born fully prepared for the role. The truth of the matter is that good teaching is an art built around a firm foundation. We must begin by making sure teachers receive good preparation in the schools that *they* attend. This is something the AFT addressed more than 12 years ago in our report, "Building a Profession." Graduation from teacher education or alternative certification programs should not be considered the end of training for teachers. New teachers need time to develop the skills and experience necessary for independent practice in their initial teaching assignments, including the skills necessary to work effectively with paraprofessionals and other support staff. To do this, high-quality induction programs for new teachers should be required for all districts.

These induction programs should provide for a reduced load, to allow time for professional development activities—activities such as observing master teachers, talking with colleagues about teaching and learning, and responding to the guidance offered by mentors who review the novice teachers' practice and recommend strategies to improve their classroom performance. Such programs should include a high-quality selection process to identify and train mentor teachers; adequate training and compensation for these mentors; and time for them to genuinely teach, support and evaluate beginning teachers. Induction programs should be developed collaboratively by teachers and administrators.

And, once a teacher is in the classroom, she or he should receive ongoing, embedded professional development that is part and parcel of a valid evaluation system. We have proposed the overhaul of existing systems so they don't simply provide snapshots but can be used to inform teaching and learning.

These requirements are not divorced from what students need to succeed: They are an integral part—along with out-of-classroom factors—in determining how well our students perform.

This reauthorization of ESEA presents an opportunity to improve teacher development and evaluation programs; to appropriately address school environment issues that limit efforts to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools and impede teaching and learning; and to help narrow the achievement gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students. ESEA should also help ensure that teachers have the tools, time and trust they need to succeed, including offering teachers and students an environment that sets everyone up for success. Professional learning environments should include small classes, solid curriculum, healthy and adequate facilities (including the most current technology), and opportunities for parental involvement—these are components that school systems should be held accountable for providing teachers and students so they can succeed.

It is also critically important that teachers have the time to share, grow and work together so they can resolve student issues, share lesson plans, analyze student work, discuss and replicate what works, and avoid replicating what isn't working. We need to create a school environment that allows students to be supported by a team of teachers and administrators, not just the one teacher standing in front of the classroom.

One AFT priority (others are included in our formal recommendations), is to establish through ESEA a discretionary grant program for teacher centers that provide comprehensive professional development, information on research and curricula, and assistance for new and veteran teachers. Teacher centers also would provide an opportunity for teachers to direct their own professional growth, as well as to collaborate with their colleagues, community groups, foundations and universities on school improvement efforts. Programs would be funded through local education agencies (LEAs) and developed in collaboration with teachers unions. In New York City, teacher centers were a critical part of the Chancellor's District, a program that resulted in significant gains in student achievement.

The reauthorization should also refocus the law on improving the quality of instruction by incorporating research-based professional development as well as curricular supports for teachers and paraprofessionals. In addition, a separate class-size reduction program with a concentrated formula for sending funds to high-poverty schools should be restored. This is important to students and their parents—as well as to teachers. Teachers will tell you this is critical to help them differentiate instruction for students and, in general, to help them know their students and their needs.

Much has been written about how to staff schools that struggle. Attracting and retaining qualified teachers for low-performing schools cannot be accomplished simply by forcing teachers to transfer or offering to pay them more. Report after report—including those that survey teachers, such as the recent Gates study—makes this point abundantly clear. Instead, ESEA should provide Federal funding to help districts make the schools attractive places for students to learn and for teachers to teach. How can this be accomplished? First, physical plant and other working conditions need to be addressed, including creating a safe environment for employees and students. Second, meaningful professional development with ongoing instructional supports must be in place. Finally, ESEA should guarantee that teachers have a voice and an established role in developing and implementing policies that affect their students, profession and schools.

In addition to supporting efforts to attract and retain qualified teachers, the AFT believes we need to take a serious look at how to improve teacher evaluation systems. There is general and widespread agreement that these systems do not work as currently constructed. The AFT has spent a great deal of time on this, working with a task force of our members and local and State leaders. We were helped in this effort by an advisory group of top teacher-evaluation experts. The AFT task force concluded, as outlined in a speech I gave earlier this year, that the common ground on teacher quality is to create systems that continuously develop and accurately evaluate teachers on an ongoing basis. Unfortunately, poorly constructed evaluation systems miss a prime opportunity to systematically improve teacher practice and advance student learning. In addition, the current systems, despite their deficiencies, too often form the basis for many consequential decisions, such as whether a teacher is deemed to be performing satisfactorily, receives tenure, or is dismissed for what is determined to be poor performance.

To begin to develop adequate teacher development and evaluation systems, the ESEA reauthorization should establish a pilot program for LEAs that allows for the collaborative development and implementation of transparent and fair teacher development and evaluation systems. These models should aim to continuously advance and inform teaching as a means to improve student learning. The focus of such systems should be on developing and supporting great teachers, not simply on evaluating them. Investing in teachers and providing them with requisite supports must go hand in hand with the development and implementation of evaluation systems. These systems should be negotiated with the collective bargaining representatives or exclusive recognized representatives of teachers, and should include multiple measures of teaching practice as well as multiple measures of student learning. And these systems should drive support for teachers throughout their careers by including induction, mentoring, ongoing professional development and career opportunities.

The goal of such a pilot is to develop more dynamic evaluation systems and learn from them. Instead of relying on inadequate measures like a single student test score, the goal must be to develop systems to help promising teachers improve, enable good teachers to become great, and identify those teachers who shouldn't be in the classroom at all. To adequately do this, we must take the time, with teachers, to develop a system of professional growth and evaluation that reflects the sophistication and importance of their work. Any valid evaluation pilot will consider both outputs (test data, student work) and inputs (school environment, resources, professional development). And it must deconstruct what is working and should be replicated, as well as what isn't working and should be abandoned.

ESEA should also provide a clearinghouse so that best practices gleaned and implemented in the pilot projects can be disseminated broadly, with the goal of widespread replication throughout America's public schools.

We know that a natural outgrowth of teacher evaluation systems will be differentiated compensation systems. We know from the first-hand experience of our affiliates that differentiated compensation systems developed and implemented with the full support and collaboration of teachers can succeed. We have seen too many top-down plans fail because they lacked teacher buy-in and collaboration.

If the goal of differentiated compensation systems is simply to compensate teachers differently, systems can be easily developed that sort teachers into "effective"

and “ineffective” categories and compensate them accordingly. But if the goal is to improve teaching and learning, compensation systems must be one component of comprehensive teacher development and evaluation that supports and nurtures educators’ growth as well as evaluates their performance and affects their compensation.

As president of a labor union, it is my job to represent our members, and I succeed in that job only when I help them do their jobs well. They make it easy because of their extraordinary commitment to providing their students with the best education possible. Last summer, we asked our members the following question: When your union deals with issues affecting both teaching quality and teachers’ rights, which of these should be the higher priority—working for professional teaching standards and good teaching, or defending the job rights of teachers who face disciplinary action? By a margin of 4 to 1 (69 percent to 16 percent), AFT members chose working for professional standards and good teaching as the higher priority.

No one should ever doubt that teachers want to do what’s best for their students, and they want to be treated as professionals. No teacher—myself included—wants ineffective teachers working alongside them. Schools are communities where we build on each other’s work. When a teacher is floundering, there are not only repercussions for the students, but also for the teachers down the hall. When it comes to those teachers who shouldn’t be in the classroom, it is other teachers who are the first to speak up.

They—and the AFT—want a fair, transparent and expedient process to evaluate teachers so that those who need help receive it, and those who don’t improve after being provided with help can be counseled out of the profession. Simply talking about “bad teachers” may give comfort to some, but it does nothing to build a teacher development and evaluation system that will support and strengthen good teaching and great teachers. And that is why we will continue to speak out against those who believe that simply subjectively removing teachers is the answer, while they ignore the tough but important work required to develop a more comprehensive teacher development and evaluation system.

Imagine a system in which teachers have time to work together to tackle issues around student learning, share lesson plans, analyze student work, discuss successes and failures, and learn through high-quality professional development. Imagine a system in which students can’t fall through the cracks—because they’re backed by a team of teachers, not just the one at the front of the room. I just saw that this week at a school in Albuquerque, NM—Ernie Pyle Middle School—which is turning around through collaboration among not just teachers but all stakeholders.

In addition to tools and time, we must also foster a climate of trust. Teachers must be treated as partners in reform, with a real voice. Trust isn’t something that you can write into a contract or lobby into law. Trust is the natural outgrowth of collaboration and communication, and it’s the common denominator among schools, districts and cities that have achieved success.

Teaching isn’t magic. It’s hard, rewarding work that requires skill, patience, experience, love of children and support from others. It can’t be done well without all of the things I’ve talked about here, nor can it be done well if students don’t have their needs met outside the classroom. We can’t wish our way to quality teaching and an education system that gives every child, no matter her ZIP code, a great education. We have to legislate, implement and support our way to those goals. This reauthorization is an opportunity to do just that.

Thank you again for this opportunity to present the views of the AFT and our 1.4 million members on this important matter.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Randi, very much.  
Now we will go to Diana Fesmire.

**STATEMENT OF DIANA S. FESMIRE, TEACHER, SIERRA  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, ALAMOGORDO, NM**

Ms. FESMIRE. We are here today to examine how we can support the work of States and school districts to get a great teacher in every classroom and a great leader in every school. The good news is there are already many great teachers and great leaders in our schools, and most of America’s 3 million teachers strongly desire to be great. They are spread throughout a continuum on their journey to greatness.

My district's 6,800 students are highly mobile and linguistically, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse. Yet, I often say it is a great day to be a student in Alamogordo public schools. Why? Our students are excelling because of good decisions and hard work. Over the past 23 years, I have seen the teaching profession transformed. We have moved from a content-centered practice to a student-centered framework of instruction. I have seen standards developed for reasoning and sense-making in mathematics and new assessments generate data to support and improve my instruction.

While we still have a long way to go to ensure all students graduate high school ready for college or high-skilled work, the teaching profession and my teaching practice has significantly improved.

Becoming a great teacher is a journey that requires ongoing support at the State, district, and school level. Thoughtful decision-making directly impacts my classroom, well-crafted and appropriate content and process standards, and assessments that reveal what students have learned inform my instruction. Great teachers are lifelong learners. The best support you can give a teacher is outstanding and effective professional development, paired with district and building level instructional support.

Efforts like these are more effective with ample resources. Federal funds make a significant difference when fitted to a district's own journey.

While the current Elementary and Secondary Education Act has its flaws, it is moving in the right direction, improving education for every child in America's schools. Like most of the teachers in America, ESEA is on a journey to becoming great. With the right support and a lot of hard work, we will soon be able to say it is a great day to be a student in America's public schools.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Fesmire follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DIANA S. FESMIRE

The invitation letter to this hearing stated, "The purpose of the roundtable is to examine how we can support the work of States and school districts to get a great teacher in every classroom and a great leader in every school." The good news is that there are already many great teachers and great leaders in our schools. I am honored to be here today to represent them. Most of America's 3 million teachers strongly desire to be great and are spread throughout a continuum on their journey to reaching that goal. I'd like to share with the committee today some of the details of my own career path, focusing on how the support of my State, district, school and colleagues has helped me improve my practice.

I teach in Alamogordo Public Schools, in Southern New Mexico, the proud home of Holloman Air Force Base. Our 6,800 students are highly mobile and linguistically, ethnically, and socio-economically diverse. We are facing the economic struggles challenging the rest of the country. Yet I often end conversations with, "It's a great day to be a student in Alamogordo." Why? Our students are excelling because of the hard work and good decisions of the New Mexico Public Education Department, Alamogordo Public School District, and Sierra Elementary School teachers and leaders in response to Federal requirements to improve K-12 education.

Becoming a great teacher is a journey that requires ongoing support at the Federal, State, district, and school level. That support takes the form of thoughtful decisionmaking that directly impacts my work in the classroom—well-crafted and appropriate content standards, and assessments that not only reveal what students have learned but inform my instruction so that I can help students meet the standards expected of them.

Teaching is a commitment to one's own learning and to the learning of students in one's care. Great teachers are life-long learners. The best support you can give

a teacher is outstanding and effective professional development paired with district and building level instructional support.

Efforts like these are made more effective when there are ample resources to support them. My experience in my district has been that Federal funds can make a significant difference when fitted to a district's own journey.

And finally, teaching and learning is hard work, but work that can be accomplished when the goals for students, teachers, districts and States are realistic. That hard work deserves celebrations of success.

#### *My Early Years in the Classroom*

During my entire career there have been expectations for teacher performance. When I began teaching 23 years ago, I worked hard to understand and analyze the mathematics I taught. I started on the first page of my math textbook and followed a pacing guide so that I could finish the book by the end of the year. I created chants and mnemonic devices to help students memorize procedures for computation. "Dividing fractions, don't ask why, flip the second number and multiply." I would do a few examples and call on students who raised their hands to supply one word answers as I explained the traditional algorithm or procedure. Then the students worked individually at their desks on a set of similar exercises attempting to replicate my procedure as I circulated and answered questions.

In the first half of my teaching career, our State assessments were norm-referenced and the multiple-choice questions covered topics several grade levels below and several grade levels above the student's grade. This was necessary to compare students and determine an accurate percentile rank. These comparisons were used to tell parents, "Your child did better than 95 out of 100 others who took this test. We are going to place him in the top math class next year." My classroom assessments and communication with parents indicated a comparative, overall level of success for each student. I would say to a parent, "Your child is a B math student who consistently turns in all her homework." In these early years of my career, I had limited information about what my students knew or where I needed to focus my instruction.

I was evaluated primarily on whether I had covered the curriculum, not whether my students actually learned it. Teacher evaluations were an isolated event. My principal would schedule my annual evaluation—a visit to one 45 minute class. I would extensively prepare for this lesson. She would come in and sit in the back with her clipboard checking off the 65 indicators on the triplicate form. The results would be placed in my mailbox and my personnel file. These results did not improve my instruction or my students' learning.

My teaching, my testing, and my evaluation are all very different today and my students are the initial beneficiaries of these changes. My teaching colleagues need similar opportunities to grow, to reflect and to change and it is these opportunities that will result in "great teachers in every classroom." The long term beneficiary is our country as we strive to ensure all our students graduate high school—ready for college or high-skill work.

#### *Rigorous Standards and Assessments*

New Mexico teachers and leaders have developed and adopted rigorous academic standards in core academic content areas. Our math standards, recognized by the National Math Panel, focus on the "doing of math" as well as the content of math at age appropriate levels. Students solve problems, evaluate the reasonableness and justify the answers. The New Mexico Standards Based Assessment (SBA) items are carefully developed to assess student knowledge on grade level standards using a hybrid of multiple choice and open-ended questions.

For students to be able to write about their thinking and answer the open-ended items on our State assessment, they need consistent experiences talking about their thinking during math instruction. Leading class discussions and helping students refine their understanding through communication is an important part of how I have improved my teaching. New Mexico's high-quality assessment appropriately measures my students' depth of knowledge of our process and content math standards.

The New Mexico State academic assessments provide data at the standard level for individual students. In the initial years of the assessment, my colleagues and I spent hours hand-calculating this data before we could use it to impact instruction. Now, Alamogordo Public Schools uses Federal funding to provide access to a technology system called Alpine Achievement, which analyzes the data and presents it to teachers and administrators in a usable format, so we can use our collaborative time more effectively using the data to impact instruction.

Teachers in my school use the results from the NMSBA in three main ways. First, we analyze school-wide data for strengths and weaknesses. For instance, we discovered that our students performed poorly in one area of Data Analysis. Students need to be able to “formulate questions that can be addressed with data; and collect, organize, and display relevant data to answer those questions”—a critical skill for 21st century citizens bombarded by data. Careful research showed us our curriculum was weak in this area. We then developed mathematical tasks appropriate to each grade level. Teachers used these tasks in their classroom on a biweekly basis and discussed results in grade level meetings. Our average score on this Benchmark has steadily improved since this intervention, so we now have evidence that our students are becoming more proficient in this important skill. Secondly, individual teachers look at the data from the prior year’s class for strengths and weaknesses in instruction. Personally, I have reflected on my practice; searched out professional development, books, and resources; and utilized my colleague’s expertise to make improvements. Finally, with the support of an instructional coach, the teacher can carefully analyze the individual results for current students. This data helps the classroom teacher make instructional decisions, work with students individually, and focus small group work to strengthen understanding.

My school also uses benchmark (or “formative”) testing throughout the year to make instructional decisions. This benchmark testing is also part of each teacher’s professional development plan as we set goals to raise student achievement as measured by these quarterly assessments. These assessments gauge student growth and allow teachers the most benefit from analyzing results. Comparing this year’s students with last year’s students tells us nothing about student learning. I have to know my students’ level of understanding when they enter my classroom, and it is my responsibility to move them along in their learning. If there is a desire to link teacher evaluation in some way with student results, we must use authentic assessment and a “growth model.” I view assessment data as an essential tool in my teacher toolkit to improve instruction. A thorough understanding of the Standards required of my students and analyzing data in the context of those standards has helped to focus my practice upon my students’ academic needs instead of the sequence of a curriculum pacing guide. This instructional shift has shown positive results in the classrooms of Alamogordo Public Schools. Data (knowing our students as learners) can help us become better teachers.

#### *Supporting Effective Teachers Through Professional Development*

During my teaching career, cognitive science has made important discoveries about how people learn. The National Council for Teachers of Mathematics has developed and refined standards for math instruction for Kindergarten through Grade 12 students. The Federal Government, through the National Science Foundation, provided funding to develop Standards-Based Mathematics Curricula for elementary and middle school students. This research and these resources have strengthened our understanding of the art and science of teaching. They are only useful, though, if they impact the daily instruction of America’s classrooms. My experience is that the best support you can give a teacher is world class professional development, paired with district and building level instructional support. The pivotal experience in my own professional development came from Math Solutions. My district sent me to a 5-day summer course, *About Teaching Math*. That course changed my instructional practice more than any other single event in my career. When taking the About Teaching Math course, I realized students needed to make sense of the math, not just repeat exercises. The instructors helped me see my role as a facilitator of understanding. In subsequent courses and through the study of instructional resources, I have learned specific strategies for classroom discussion to help students communicate their understanding and, as importantly, their confusion. I continually strive to improve my teaching strategies, my understanding of how children learn, and my content knowledge. All good teachers strive to become better teachers, and I urge the Senate to support us in these efforts by funding effective professional development.

What I have learned is that great teachers understand the direct link between their own learning to their students’ success and that great teachers never stop learning. One thing I know for certain is that I will never “know it all.” I find myself, like my students, using technology to connect with colleagues and experts across the country and around the world. My current focus is on assessment: How do I find out what students know, how do I keep track and communicate this information, and how does it impact continuing instruction in my classroom?

*Locally Supporting Change and Raising Quality*

In the last few years, Alamogordo Public Schools has developed a very supportive environment for reflective teaching. Wisely using Federal funding, we established best literacy practices and a local elementary math initiative. We have established instructional coaches to guide teachers and allowed classroom teachers many professional development opportunities. These included attending professional conferences and week-long summer programs, bringing experts to our district both live and through web-based interactions, and creating time for teachers to collaborate. At grade-level meetings, classroom teachers, the instructional coach, and the principal analyze student data and adjust our goals and plans using the Plan, Do, Study, Act model. We have monthly Continuous Improvement/Advisory days to collaborate within our school and with our partner schools through the Professional Learning Community model as we refine our Best Teaching Practices and implement a standards-based math curriculum. Through vertical articulation meetings, we determine how prepared the students are, identify gaps in prerequisite knowledge, and plan how to address those gaps. We utilize collaborative coaching, videotaping, and journaling, and we discuss professional resources to strengthen our practice. Alamogordo Public Schools is implementing Standards-Based Report Cards, annually adding one grade level. We are asking hard questions and taking steps toward increasing student achievement and accurately reflecting that achievement. Today my classroom assessments and conversations with parents focus in depth on what each individual student knows. "Your child is great at computation. We are working on building his geometry skills. At home you might encourage him to play with building toys or try a game for his video system like Tetris."

Finally, the evaluation of teachers has also evolved over the years in which I have taught. Alamogordo Public Schools has worked to help principals understand their roles as instructional leaders in their building. My principal, Paul Sena, is a master at balancing the many roles of an effective elementary school principal. He often visits my classroom during instruction in a non-interruptive way. He visits with students and has a clear picture of the instruction happening in our building. Mr. Sena supports instructional changes as I work toward being a great teacher, in part because; he is an informed and active participant in this reform. My instructional coach observes my teaching and together we reflect on ways to increase my effectiveness. I believe the current evaluation process in my district allows me to be reflective and continually improve my practice.

In other words, my colleagues and I are given opportunities to share, to grow and to interact about key issues of curriculum, instruction and student achievement. We make effective use of data, we focus on pedagogical practices, and we hold ourselves accountable for every student's success. Because our district has high expectations, we rise to and above those expectations and our students are the winners.

*Engaging and Empowering Students*

If you walked into my classroom today and asked, "Where's the mathematician in this room?" all of my students would raise their hands. I believe that is the greatest evidence of the effectiveness of my teaching: my students see themselves as doers of math, as readers, writers, and members of a community working together towards a common goal of learning. They share ideas, listen to each other, and together build understanding. In my classroom, math is explored using worthwhile, engaging, and authentic mathematical tasks. I use explicit instruction and modeling to help students communicate understanding, clearly represent thinking, and justify reasoning using appropriate math vocabulary.

My students have very diverse backgrounds. We celebrate the contributions of all students, but I am also careful to explicitly teach and reinforce mathematical and situational vocabulary. I employ a variety of concrete and technology tools to introduce and build concepts and allow the students continued access to those tools. I facilitate student work as individuals, partner pairs, cooperative learning groups, whole group, and homogeneous intervention groups.

## CONCLUSION

Several years ago, as my class prepared for the State assessment, I reminded my students that the test was a chance for them to show how much math they had learned this year. A student interrupted stating, "And we know a lot of math!" I chuckled, the class giggled, and we all relaxed as I began to read the directions. Although the student had interrupted me, she was right, and the reminder to everyone was well-timed. Starting the year new to our school with skills below her grade level, this student had worked hard to rise to the level of expectations in my classroom. Now as the State test arrived, she felt confident and prepared. When results

arrived, she earned a proficient score for the first time. School-wide, our students' scores in Alamogordo continue to rise each year. Our school is doing a great job of teaching the diverse children of our community. However, as 2014 and the 100 percent proficient requirements of the current legislation loom, even a highly successful school like mine begins to worry. As a mathematician and an educator, I believe that 100 percent proficiency is not only unrealistic but also counter-productive. On any assessment, no matter how well designed; there will be anecdotal reasons why a few students' performance does not realistically represent their understanding.

While the current Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind) has its flaws, it is moving in the right direction of improving education for every child in America's schools. Like most of our teachers, ESEA is on that journey to becoming great. And with the right support and a lot of hard work, we will soon be able to say, "It's a great day to be a student in America's Public Schools."

I am grateful for the opportunity you've given me to address the committee. I took time out of my classroom this week because I think it is critical for the leaders of our Nation to hear from the leaders of our future. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Ms. Fesmire.  
And now we will turn to Timothy Daly.

**STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY DALY, PRESIDENT, THE NEW  
TEACHER PROJECT, BROOKLYN, NY**

Mr. DALY. Thank you.

I suspect we can all agree that our Nation's education system is not fully doing its job. Instead of opening doors of opportunity, too often we are slamming those doors in the faces of our students, especially poor and minority students. And this, I think we can agree, is shameful.

I am the President of The New Teacher Project, a nonprofit organization dedicated to ending the injustice of educational inequality. We were founded by teachers, and we believe strongly that great teachers hold incredible power to solve this crisis.

Why do we put so much faith in teachers? Because 2 decades of research has shown that nothing schools can do for students matters more than giving them great teachers, not reducing class size, not improving curricula, not anything else. Having excellent teachers instead of ineffective teachers can quite simply change a student's life.

But as we documented in study last year called The Widget Effect, most school districts treat teachers like interchangeable parts, even though we know that they are the furthest from it. In the districts that we studied, less than 1 percent of the teachers—less than 1 percent—were rated as unsatisfactory even in schools that had been failing students for years.

To be clear, as Randi pointed out, teachers are not solely responsible for their students' success. All professionals that are working with schools must be accountable for this goal. For example, we should absolutely hold principals accountable for providing the feedback and support that teachers need to do their best work. But ignoring the differences between teachers disrespects the teaching profession and gambles with the lives of students.

Today great teaching goes unrewarded. Poor teaching goes unaddressed, and tragically the most at-risk students are consistently and systematically denied access to the greatest teachers.

Fortunately, the education community is increasingly united in its commitment to reverse the widget effect. Secretary Duncan and some of my fellow panelists, including Randi Weingarten, are

among those calling for more rigorous evaluation systems that recognize these differences.

Congress can do three things.

First, require districts in the near term to have more legitimate evaluation systems. Evaluation should occur annually, place significant weight on student achievement, and have multiple rating levels.

Secondly, demand progress on equitable distribution of effective nonqualified teachers.

And third, fund strategically. Strategic funding means supplementing a base or formula funding with competitive funding that encourages districts and States to accelerate progress. The Race to the Top is a good example. While people of reasonable faith can disagree about aspects of the contest, it created an urgency that was sorely lacking for decades.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Daly follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TIMOTHY DALY

SUMMARY

Thank you Chairman Harkin, Senator Enzi, and members of the committee. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today.

I suspect we can all agree that our Nation's education system isn't fully doing its job. Instead of opening doors of opportunity, too often we are slamming those doors in the faces of our students—especially poor and minority students. This is shameful.

I'm president of The New Teacher Project (TNTP), a nonprofit organization dedicated to ending the injustice of educational inequality. TNTP was founded by teachers, and we believe strongly that great teachers hold incredible power to solve this crisis.

Why do we put so much faith in teachers? Because two decades of research has shown that *nothing* schools can do for students matters more than giving them great teachers—not reducing class size, not improving curricula, not anything else. Having excellent teachers instead of ineffective teachers can change a student's life.

But as we documented in our 2009 study, *The Widget Effect*, most school districts treat teachers like interchangeable parts, as if they were all the same—even though we all know that's not true. In the districts we studied, less than 1 percent of teachers—1 percent!—were rated “unsatisfactory,” even in schools that have been failing students for years.

To be clear, teachers are not solely responsible for their students' success. All professionals working with schools must be accountable for this common goal. For example, we should absolutely hold principals accountable for providing the feedback and support teachers need to do their best work. But ignoring the differences between teachers disrespects the teaching profession and gambles with the lives of students. Today, great teaching goes unrewarded, poor teaching goes unaddressed, and, tragically, the most at-risk students are consistently and systematically denied great teachers.

Fortunately, the education community is increasingly united in its commitment to reverse the widget effect. Secretary Duncan and some of my fellow panelists, including Randi Weingarten, are among the many leaders calling for more rigorous evaluation systems that recognize differences between teachers and help them do their jobs better. I will quickly highlight three ways Congress can improve Federal policy when it reauthorizes ESEA:

- First, require districts to implement more legitimate teacher evaluation systems in the near term. Credible evaluations have multiple rating levels, occur annually, and place significant weight on evidence of student academic growth. We cannot provide students with equitable access to effective teachers if we don't know how effective our teachers are. While it may be necessary to phase in better evaluations over a few years, the difficulty of the task cannot become an excuse.

- Second, demand progress on equitable distribution of effective—not “qualified”—teachers. Once we have better ways to measure performance, that informa-

tion must be used to ensure that children living in poverty no longer are the last in line for getting great teachers.

- Third, fund strategically. Strategic funding means supplementing a base of formula funding with competitive funding that encourages districts and States to accelerate progress. Race to the Top is an excellent example. While reasonable people can disagree about aspects of the contest, it generated urgency that was sorely lacking in most States for decades.

With your help, we can take a giant step toward providing all our students the teachers they deserve.

Thank you again for inviting me, and I look forward to your questions.

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Thank you Chairman Harkin, Senator Enzi, and members of the committee. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today about how the Elementary and Secondary Education Act can focus our schools on giving all students excellent teachers and a world-class education.

As president of The New Teacher Project, a nonprofit organization founded by teachers, I am reminded daily of the incredible impact that great teachers have on their students, and how important it is that we find, develop and keep the very best.

The New Teacher Project's mission is to end the injustice of educational inequality by providing excellent teachers to the students who need them most and by advancing policies and practices that ensure effective teaching in every classroom. Since 1997, we have recruited or trained approximately 37,000 teachers for over two dozen high-need urban and rural districts across the country using rigorous selection and training methods, and published a series of studies on the policy barriers that keep our public schools from building a thriving teacher workforce. In the past 4 years, we have surveyed more than 30,000 teachers across almost 25 districts on matters ranging from hiring timelines to evaluation systems; their opinions are the basis for many of our research findings and policy recommendations.

In our organization's work with high-poverty school systems across the country, we face stark reminders of the urgency of this effort. America's public schools should function as equalizers, giving poor and minority students a chance to overcome disadvantages and prepare for the future. Yet in districts across the country, our schools have often done little more than systematize failure.

Our education system offers universal access, but falls far short of universal quality—especially when it comes to providing our young people with access to the one resource that makes all the difference: effective teachers. Decades of research prove beyond any doubt that teachers have a greater impact on student academic outcomes than any other school factor. Yet students in urban and high-poverty schools are less likely to have highly effective teachers than their more affluent peers. As a result, extraordinary numbers of students are effectively denied a quality education.

The ramifications are dire. By the end of high school, African-American and Hispanic students read and do math at virtually the same level as 8th grade White students. In the Nation's largest cities, where poor and minority students are most concentrated, the chance of graduating high school amounts to little more than a coin toss. And make no mistake—as the recession warps communities and shifts demographic patterns across America, the challenges our cities and rural areas face today will confront our inner-ring suburbs tomorrow.

This shameful achievement gap is, we believe, the greatest civil rights issue of our generation. But, in addition to the tragic moral dimension to this problem, there is an equally compelling economic dimension: a recent study by the leading consulting firm McKinsey & Company found that the economic impact of our failure to properly educate millions of our students is akin to the economic value lost to our Nation during the Great Depression.

Yes, it is true that students living in poverty face unique challenges, and it is foolish to ignore the broader needs of all children and their families. But we should not fall prey to the comforting fallacy that we are holding up our end of the bargain when it comes to providing good classroom instruction. We can do far more. We can get dramatically better results despite the obstacles we confront. How can I be so sure of this? Because there are literally thousands of schools and teachers helping their students achieve at high levels year after year in spite of the challenges of poverty. Failing to demand these results for *all* of our children is an insult to the dignity of poor and working families.

It has become increasingly clear that effective teachers are the best and most practical solution to this quiet crisis. Nothing our schools can do for students matters more than giving them great teachers—not reducing class sizes, not improving curricula, not modernizing classrooms. Nothing. Give the same group of students

three excellent teachers in a row instead of three low-performing teachers in a row, and you will put them on a wildly different path—one that leads to the doors of college or a career rather than the hard road of a dropout.

#### OUR CHALLENGE: THE WIDGET EFFECT

Tragically, while we all recognize that different teachers achieve very different results, we treat teachers as if they were all the same—as if one teacher were interchangeable with any other. Our 2009 study, *The Widget Effect: Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act on Differences in Teacher Effectiveness*, documents this widespread problem and its grave implications for teachers and students.

The study examines 12 school districts across four States—districts as diverse as Chicago, Illinois and El Dorado, Arkansas—and incorporates feedback from over 15,000 teachers and 1,300 principals. It describes how teacher evaluation systems fail to recognize either outstanding or poor teaching, instead lumping all teachers into the same category. Collectively, in the districts studied, less than 1 percent of teachers were officially identified as “unsatisfactory,” even in schools that have been failing students for years.

As the study shows, ignoring the differences between teachers has real consequences. If we don’t know which teachers are doing a great job moving their students ahead academically, which teachers are doing a good job, and which are only doing a fair or poor job, then we have no way of holding on to our best teachers, giving all our teachers the feedback they need to improve, or addressing those few teachers who are actually pulling their students backwards with every class.

And in fact, our study revealed that districts do not use teacher evaluations for decisions about pay, tenure, promotion or development and support. Instead, they tend to use evaluations only to determine whether a teacher is incompetent and should be fired—and they do a poor job even of that. At least half of the 12 districts studied have not dismissed a single tenured teacher for poor performance in the past 5 years.

These challenges and their repercussions extend to cities and school districts in many of the States represented by members of this committee. For example:

- In **Colorado**, 99 percent of Denver teachers earned a “Satisfactory” rating on their most recent evaluation and areas of improvement were identified for only 40 percent of teachers. The feedback given to the few teachers who have areas of performance identified as in need of improvement is so vague that the most common response when asked which area they were asked to improve was “don’t know.”

- In **Minnesota**, the absence of credible information about teacher performance and the inability to use it in critical decisions means that 98 percent of Minneapolis principals reported having lost a teacher to layoff whom they wanted to keep, almost double the rate in other urban school districts.

- In **Ohio**, not a single teacher in Cincinnati has been rated unsatisfactory in the “Teaching and Learning” category of the district’s evaluation system over the past 5 years. In Akron, where over 90 percent of continuing contract teachers received one of the top two evaluation ratings during the last 3 years, only 38 percent of teachers and 25 percent of principals believe the evaluation process helps teachers improve their instructional performance. Even in Toledo, home to one of the most heralded teacher evaluation and support systems, the Peer Assistance and Review program, just 3 out of 1,105 teachers received an “Unsatisfactory” evaluation rating over a 5-year period.

- In **Oregon**, staffing policies that ignore the differences between teachers in Portland Public Schools until recently caused widespread forced-placement and bumping of teachers into and out of their positions. This in turn led to sky-high attrition, with almost 2 in 5 new teachers leaving the district within 2 years—not because they did not like their jobs, but because they had more control over their school placement by leaving Portland than by staying.

- In **Washington**, less than half of the more than 100 administrators surveyed across three school districts are satisfied with the quality of math and science instruction in their schools; in high-poverty schools, that number drops to less than a quarter. Meanwhile, less than a third of the more than 1,000 teachers surveyed in the same districts agree or strongly agree that the evaluation process accurately differentiates teachers based on their effectiveness.

How can this be happening in 2010? And what would lead us to believe that we can improve educational outcomes without changing these unacceptable trends?

The education community is unanimous that the “widget effect”—this tendency to view and treat teachers as interchangeable parts—must become a thing of the past. It disrespects teachers and gambles with the lives of students. Upon the release of our report, both Dennis Van Roekel, President of the National Education Associa-

tion, and Randi Weingarten, President of the American Federation of Teachers, joined Secretary Duncan, governors Bredesen and Ritter, Congressman George Miller, and many others calling for more rigorous evaluation systems that recognize the differences between teachers.

#### THE ROLE OF FEDERAL POLICY IN REVERSING THE WIDGET EFFECT

Discussions about school reform are filled with talk about delivering on the promise of public education. But treating teachers as interchangeable parts not only devalues the teaching profession; it fulfills the wrong promise. The job of school districts is not simply to put teachers in every classroom, regardless of their effectiveness. It is to deliver an education. What matters is that students learn.

Over the last several years, it has become clear that Federal policy plays a huge role in helping districts focus on the right promise. Regardless of its shortcomings, No Child Left Behind changed what it means to be a successful school. For years, a "successful school" in the eyes of State and Federal Governments was one that complied with the right regulations and checked the right boxes on the right forms. Today, it is almost universally accepted that a successful school is one that actually helps its students learn. The focus now is on educational outcomes, not inputs.

This was a huge conceptual shift. Unfortunately, while it is now a matter of Federal policy to define a good school as one that helps children learn, it is not yet a matter of Federal policy to define a good teacher in the same way. When it comes to teachers, NCLB continued the focus on qualifications instead of effectiveness—inputs instead of outputs.

For that reason, another conceptual shift is underway. To build a top teaching force, we believe that it is imperative that districts actively manage teacher effectiveness, and make it a focus of policies on recruitment, development, compensation, promotion, and dismissal. To be truly effective, these reforms cannot be incremental and tentative. They must be comprehensive and seismic. They must be transformative. We need to make a dramatic shift from essentially ignoring a teacher's impact on student academic growth to making accurate assessments of that impact the driving factor in every decision that affects the teacher workforce.

Above all, success in the teaching profession must be defined largely in terms of student performance. Student achievement data, though imperfect, can provide strong objective evidence of teachers' abilities to help their students learn. Great teaching means more than a test score, yet even the most inspiring teacher cannot be deemed effective if his or her students show no measurable evidence of growth. So how do we realize this shift, and stop treating teachers like widgets?

First and foremost, we must demand better teacher evaluation systems. We need multi-dimensional teacher evaluation systems that fairly, accurately and credibly measure how well teachers increase student achievement, and we need to use this information as a core factor in decisions about hiring, compensating, developing and dismissing teachers.

It is a disgrace that more has not been done on this issue already. For decades, our teacher evaluation systems have relied on rote observations and checklists of teacher behaviors and other factors—such as classroom neatness—that have little or nothing to do with student outcomes. But what makes teachers great is not the orderliness of their bulletin boards, the impressiveness of their credentials, or even their years of experience; it is their consistent ability to advance student learning.

How we measure a teacher's impact on student academic growth will vary. For some teachers, value-added models based on standardized test scores will provide one useful source of information, particularly when multiple years of data show consistently outstanding or poor performance. For most teachers, however, we have to create other measures of their impact on academic growth, such as periodic examinations of student work according to standard rubrics and district- or school-designed assessment results.

But no matter which tools we use, we must move beyond the tired arguments about whether teachers need more accountability or more support. We know that they need both, and we can only provide what teachers need if we can genuinely assess their performance and put this information to use.

As a nation, we are poised at a unique moment of opportunity for real education reform. National policies that place a sharp focus on teacher effectiveness have the potential to reverse the "widget effect" crippling our school systems. We envision a future in which the institutions, policies and systems that are chiefly responsible for putting a quality teacher into every classroom are tightly aligned to just that objective.

Now more than ever, we have evidence that this evolution is possible. In fact, we have made more progress over the last year than we have in decades.

In the **Race to the Top** competition—arguably one of the most visionary education reform initiatives in our Nation’s history—we have a powerful example of how carefully leveraged funding can jump start the engines of change. Even before a single dollar was awarded, 16 States had enacted legislative or regulatory reforms to better align themselves with the administration’s priorities. Top-scoring States, including the winners, did well in part because they successfully overhauled their outdated teacher evaluation policies, moving to new systems that allow schools to measure and respond to differences in teacher effectiveness more accurately than ever. These States are reversing the widget effect before our very eyes. It is worth noting that though this program is relatively modest in size, the fact that it is a competitive grant program with rigorous criteria focused on teacher and school leader effectiveness is producing the kind of deep reform that an incremental increase in formula funding never will.

In the schools just beyond these chambers, we have another powerful example of the possibility of change. Last week, following more than 2 years of difficult negotiations, the **DC Public Schools** and the Washington Teachers Union signed what is arguably the most progressive collective bargaining agreement in the country. This contract would not only make DC teachers among the highest-paid in the Nation, it would also empower schools to use evaluation data to assemble strong instructional teams, help all teachers do their best work, retain the best teachers, and remove persistently ineffective teachers. Chancellor Michelle Rhee, WTU President George Parker, and AFT President Randi Weingarten together demonstrated that bold reforms are possible, and that they can benefit both students and teachers. We commend them all for their vision and perseverance.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ESEA REAUTHORIZATION

Today, we find ourselves at a tipping point. We have broad agreement that doing more of the same will not suffice. We have models and momentum in the form of real changes that affect real schools and students. And now, as we look ahead to the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), we have a rare opportunity to align Federal policy and spending with the goal of providing every child with effective teachers.

Put simply, ESEA can have the greatest impact if it is focused sharply on supporting effective teaching. In the past, States and school districts have largely failed to acknowledge or act on differences in teacher effectiveness. Federal policy should spur them to develop policies that reflect the variation in teacher effectiveness and to use targeted strategies to recognize and reward outstanding teachers, provide useful support and development to all teachers, and take action when it becomes clear that a teacher is simply not up to the job. This is especially important for high-poverty schools, which historically have faced greater challenges in attracting and keeping excellent teachers for students who start out at a disadvantage.

More nuanced and accurate teacher evaluation systems will not only help teachers do their jobs better; they will also enable us to map the geographies of teacher effectiveness in our schools. These data will expose where our most and least effective teachers are working, so that we can redress inequities in teacher distribution. They will shine a light on districts and schools that are not doing anything about poor performance, or that are not doing enough to keep their best teachers. We will begin to see where our most effective teachers are coming from, so that we can build on best practices in teacher preparation, and what professional development seems to make good teachers better, so that districts stop wasting millions on one-size-fits-all support that teachers find irrelevant. This information is fundamentally empowering, and urgently needed.

Congress can help reverse the widget effect through the ESEA reauthorization process. Specifically, we recommend the following:

**(1) Support competitive funding programs:** The Administration’s blueprint for ESEA reauthorization funds bedrock formula programs such as Title I and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) at healthy levels, but it also calls for new funding to support competitive grant programs such as Race to the Top and the Investing in Innovation fund. Competitive programs allow the Department of Education to leverage Federal funding for maximum impact, to power innovation, and to focus Federal dollars on the highest-need schools and students. We believe that these initiatives are essential if we want to do more than stay on the same path we find ourselves on today.

As we have already discussed, the Race to the Top competition provides an excellent case study in how competitive funding can catalyze change for the benefit of students and teachers nationwide. In only about a year’s time, the competition has sparked a national dialogue on education reform, provided the impetus for States

to resolve contentious disputes and untangle legislative logjams, and unleashed a torrent of new ideas about how to improve our schools.

Moreover, it is undeniable that Race to the Top has already produced significant results, with many States having lifted charter school caps that have stifled innovation, or adopted teacher evaluation systems that align with student outcomes so we can begin to differentiate great teachers from good, good from fair, and fair from poor, and take action based on this critical information. The first-round winners, Delaware and Tennessee, will enter the coming school year with an improved policy infrastructure. So too will a number of other States vying for funding in the second round, among them Louisiana, Florida, Rhode Island, Illinois, Georgia, and California. The ramifications for students are vast.

Race to the Top is not perfect; just last week, our organization published an analysis criticizing elements of its scoring process. But it is well within the Administration's power to correct the deficiencies we have identified before the second round of winners are selected and announced, and overall the competition is admirably focused, transparent and thoughtfully structured. It would be a great shame if this initiative, which has already achieved so much in so little time, were not sustained.

Likewise, it would be folly to require that all new funding be routed into formula programs, where its impact would inevitably be diluted. To accelerate change and put our students back on track to lead the world academically, we need an education policy with more than just one gear. It is essential that Race to the Top and competitive grant programs like it are continued as a supplement to robust Title I and IDEA funding so that districts have both the stability in formula funding and the encouragement and support for the dramatic reform efforts that we desperately need.

**(2) Use strategic preconditions to advance reform:** Existing formula programs allocate billions of dollars to school districts and States nationwide. By tying this funding to reasonable reform preconditions or eligibility requirements, Congress could ensure that it not only meets the needs of school districts that have come to count on it, but also drives change.

For example, States might be required to institute more rigorous and outcomes-based teacher evaluation systems in order to receive title II funding, as the Administration's budget proposes. Such a requirement would spur States to take action where they would not otherwise. A similar result could be achieved by requiring clear reporting of specific information as a precondition for funding; for instance, mandating that States and school districts report the number and percentage of teachers rated "highly effective," "effective," "developing" and "ineffective" each year, or the percentage of high-need students taught by highly effective and effective teachers, compared to other students.

In many cases, greater outcomes will result from mandating the public reporting of teacher effectiveness data rather than mandating specific strategies that States or districts must employ. Thoughtfully structured preconditions can bring this information to the surface.

**(3) Focus on student academic outcomes:** Taxpayer money goes to waste when it funds programs that have little or no impact on student learning. Especially in the current economic climate, it is crucial that Federal funding is spent wisely. For this reason, Congress should hold States and school districts accountable for demonstrating the effectiveness of their strategies.

Funding through programs like title II, which is explicitly intended to increase student achievement by improving teacher and principal quality, should not be spent on strategies that do not have a demonstrably positive impact on teacher effectiveness or student academic growth. For instance, more than a third of all title II funding (39 percent) is spent on professional development for teachers—a massive outlay of this funding. However, there is no requirement that professional development provided through title II funds be linked to any assessment of a teacher's skills, or that districts show evidence of improvement after a teacher has received development.

In short, there is almost no way of showing that these investments of hundreds of millions of dollars have any positive outcomes for teachers or students. It should come as no surprise that the professional development that school districts are able to offer is notoriously unhelpful, and empirical evidence of its effectiveness improving student achievement is scant. This use of funding perpetuates the widget effect by treating teachers as interchangeable components whose individual professional needs are not relevant, not considered and not met. By establishing accountability structures that focus States and school districts on the results of their strategies on student achievement, Congress can facilitate the continuing shift from inputs to outcomes and encourage schools to seek out and redirect funding to proven programs and strategies.

## DOING THE RIGHT THING AT A DIFFICULT TIME

Now, some will claim that the changes I have urged you to consider today are too risky, too untimely, too fast.

You are sure to hear that now is not the time to dedicate funding to competitive grant programs, for example, when the Nation's economy is so fragile. Yet never has the need for innovation been greater. The recession that continues to send shockwaves throughout the country is only a harbinger of difficult times to come if we keep failing to prepare our students to be successful in the 21st century and the global economy.

Furthermore, your leadership and that of the Obama administration has already resulted in an unprecedented infusion of resources for our school districts in the past fiscal year. The \$100 billion in stimulus funding provided to States and districts saved literally hundreds of thousands of jobs in education and cushioned the blow of the recession on our schools—and it was allocated to States primarily in formula grants. Title I funding received a \$10 billion boost. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act got \$12.2 billion, and \$3 billion went to school improvement grants. Fully \$39.8 billion came in the form of State Fiscal Stabilization Fund education dollars.

The reality is that Federal funding will not and cannot replace State and local resources over the long term. But Federal funding of Title I and IDEA can provide stability while Race to the Top and other competitive grant programs provide the impetus for change in States and districts that are willing to undertake reform. Events over the past 6 months tell us that, even in the midst of the worst fiscal crisis since the Great Depression, there are States and districts that are willing to undertake dramatic change even as they deal with painful budget reductions. Just look at the legislation passed on teacher evaluation in States like California, Washington, Michigan, Tennessee and Illinois, and the new policies on teacher layoffs in Indianapolis and Arizona. Now more than ever we have to ensure we spend smart and on high-impact strategies by supporting the important work going on at the State and local levels.

Let me be clear: we cannot expect different outcomes if we continue doing the same thing. Over the last 40 years, formula spending has nearly doubled in inflation-adjusted dollars, yet student achievement in reading, math and science has been flat. Competitive funding programs offer us a way to incentivize States and school districts to do things differently, and to get different results.

You are also sure to hear that focusing so intently on teacher effectiveness blames teachers for our schools' failures. But this is not about assigning blame; it is about finding a new way forward.

Decades of research tell us that teachers matter most. Encouraging States and school districts to align their policies and practices with the prime objective of maximizing teacher effectiveness is about restoring the primacy of teaching in our education system, and giving teachers the information and support they need to grow and improve as professionals. It's about holding teachers accountable, but also holding everyone around teachers accountable for giving them the support they need to do their jobs, from principals to Human Resources staff to superintendents. The Administration's blueprint for ESEA reauthorization makes clear that all educators must be accountable for performance—not just teachers.

What we need are school systems that no longer take teachers for granted, but that recognize teachers' singularly important role in improving student achievement and do everything possible to ensure they can fulfill this role effectively. Our goal is not to blame teachers but to elevate them.

Finally, you are sure to hear that these strategies are unproven and should be undertaken only in cautious, limited ways, if at all. We believe, however, that our Nation's shameful legacy of failure should shift the burden of proof. Supporters of the status quo should be asked to make the case that their approach should prevail over new ideas and strategies that promise better outcomes for our children. The most irresponsible gamble in education is not trying new and unproven strategies, but continuing to do more of what has resulted in our Nation being leapfrogged by our international competitors in Asia and Europe, and suffering from the achievement gap that robs so many children of a fair shot at success in life.

In closing, at this time of unprecedented challenges, we have an unprecedented opportunity and a moral obligation to finally make the difficult choices that will ensure that all of our children have great teachers. This is no time for incremental changes or half measures; it's time to make teacher effectiveness matter. We must come together to recognize that the key to providing all our children with the education they need is to provide them with the teachers they deserve. And we must commit ourselves to the hard work that this task requires.

Thank you very much for your attention to this extraordinarily important issue, and for your time today. I look forward to your questions.

THE NEW TEACHER PROJECT POLICY BRIEF (FEBRUARY 2010)

HOW FEDERAL EDUCATION POLICY CAN REVERSE THE WIDGET EFFECT

TRANSFORMING ESEA TITLE II TO IMPROVE TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS AND STUDENT OUTCOMES

Background: The Widget Effect

[widget effect: The tendency to treat teachers like interchangeable parts rather than individual professionals, based on the false assumption that one teacher is the same as another. [www.widgeteffect.org](http://www.widgeteffect.org)]

In June 2009, The New Teacher Project's study, *The Widget Effect: Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act on Differences in Teacher Effectiveness*, drew national attention to the issue of ineffective teacher evaluation systems. The study documents how teacher evaluation systems ignore variations in performance, giving virtually all teachers positive ratings despite the fact that teachers and principals both say poor performance is common. As a result, excellence goes unrecognized, poor performance goes unaddressed, and a teacher's instructional effectiveness almost never factors into critical decisions such as how teachers are hired, developed or retained. To reverse the "widget effect," the study recommends that States and school districts:

1. **Adopt a comprehensive performance evaluation system** that fairly, accurately and credibly differentiates teachers based on their effectiveness in promoting student achievement and provides targeted professional development to help them improve.
2. **Train administrators and other evaluators** in the teacher evaluation system and hold them accountable for using it fairly and effectively.
3. **Integrate the performance evaluation system** with critical human capital policies and functions such as teacher assignment, professional development, compensation, retention and dismissal.
4. **Address consistently ineffective teaching** through dismissal policies that provide lower-stakes options for ineffective teachers to exit the district and a system of due process that is fair but efficient.

Based on survey data from over 16,000 teachers and administrators across 12 districts in four States, as well as the insights of nearly 80 district, State and teachers union representatives, *The Widget Effect* drew widespread support. Among others joining in the call for change were Secretary of Education Arne Duncan; Congressman George Miller, Chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee; and the presidents of both national teacher unions. The study's findings and recommendations have since been reflected in the Federal Race to the Top initiative's focus on effective teacher evaluation systems and appear in numerous States' applications for Race to the Top funding. Its push for including evidence of student achievement in teacher evaluations has been echoed by American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten.

**The New Teacher Project believes that the widget effect represents the single greatest challenge to improving teacher effectiveness and eliminating educational inequality.** Until a teacher's effectiveness is accurately measured and matters in decisionmaking, the Nation's schools will never be able to build a thriving teacher workforce capable of realizing sustainable improvement or closing the achievement gap. Shifting Federal education policy to focus on measuring and responding strategically to differences in teacher effectiveness is essential, and the upcoming reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) creates an opportunity to realize this shift.

ESEA TITLE II: RIPE FOR RETHINKING

Title II(A) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is expressly intended to fund school district and State efforts to increase student achievement by improving teacher and principal quality. This is a critical objective, particularly in light of the unacceptable gap in achievement that has put poor and minority students at a disadvantage for decades. Unfortunately, the bulk of title II funding is currently being expended in ways that do little to advance this worthy goal.

Approximately \$3 billion is allocated for title II, which amounts to about 5 percent of Federal education spending. Nearly all school districts are recipients. Used as general funding to supplement district budgets, title II is too modest to have a sig-

nificant impact. However, if used strategically to fund innovative teacher effectiveness initiatives or improvement efforts that districts might otherwise be unable to undertake, title II could become a powerful lever for addressing issues of teacher effectiveness highlighted in *The Widget Effect* and more meaningfully advance the goal of improving student achievement. The upcoming reauthorization of ESEA offers policymakers a valuable opportunity to transform title II in this way.

Currently, nearly 80 percent of title II funding is used by districts for reducing class sizes (38 percent) or providing professional development (39 percent). Both uses are problematic, as described below.

#### *Class Size Reduction: Popular but Impractical*

The debate over class size is one manifestation of the widget effect in that it ignores teacher effectiveness as the most critical school-level variable in student success. Schools should not have unmanageable class sizes, but initiatives solely intended to limit class sizes are generally high-cost and low-impact.

Though drastic class size reductions may produce meaningful gains for students, especially in the early grades,<sup>1</sup> title II funding is not nearly sufficient for this purpose. Researchers have estimated that reducing class sizes to 18 students in grades 1–3 nationwide, for instance, would cost up to \$6 billion annually and necessitate the hiring of 100,000 new teachers.<sup>2</sup> At current funding levels, title II affords only insignificant class size reductions—far below what would be required to change student outcomes nationally.

Moreover, mounting research suggests that we have far more powerful tools at our disposal. The academic impact of reducing class sizes pales in comparison to the impact of providing students with highly effective teachers. For example, increasing the effectiveness of the teacher by one standard deviation (e.g., from “average” to “very good”) would have approximately the same impact on a fifth grade classroom as reducing the class size by 13 students.<sup>3</sup> As University of Washington professor Dan Goldhaber notes, “A very good teacher as opposed to a very bad one can make as much as a full year’s difference in learning growth for students. Indeed, the effect of increases in teacher quality swamps the impact of any other educational investment, such as reductions in class size.”<sup>4</sup>

An outsized focus on class size reduction perpetuates the widget effect by overlooking and failing to act upon the differences in effectiveness among teachers. Such an approach presumes that teacher effectiveness is fixed, not variable, and that the solution to low student achievement is *more* teachers, not more *effective* teachers. A stronger Federal policy would couple manageable class sizes with a deeper emphasis on teacher performance.

#### *Professional Development: An Opportunity for Greater Impact*

Similarly, high-quality professional development is a worthy expenditure that could help teachers and principals improve, as *The Widget Effect* makes clear. In practice, however, today’s offerings are largely undifferentiated and unhelpful.

Without fair and accurate evaluation systems, it is impossible for school districts to provide effective professional development, because they cannot discern teachers’ individual strengths or weaknesses. As documented in *The Widget Effect*, just 26 percent of teachers surveyed across 12 districts were told that any aspect of their performance was unsatisfactory or in need of improvement. The remainder reported receiving what were essentially perfect evaluations. An overwhelming majority of teachers studied were awarded the highest possible rating on their district’s performance evaluation system, even those working in chronically failing schools.

Consequently, the professional development that school districts are able to offer is notoriously one-size-fits-all, and empirical evidence of its effectiveness improving student achievement is scant.<sup>5</sup> Of the teachers surveyed for *The Widget Effect* who

<sup>1</sup>Tennessee Department of Education (1990). The State of Tennessee’s Student/Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) Project: Summary Report. <http://www.heros-inc.org/star.htm>.

<sup>2</sup>Brewer, Dominic J.; Cathy Krop, Brian P. Gill and Robert Reichardt (1999). “Estimating the Cost of National Class Size Reductions Under Different Policy Alternatives.” *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 179–192.

<sup>3</sup>Rivkin, Steven G.; Eric A. Hanushek, and John F. Kain (2005). “Teachers, Schools, and Academic Achievement.” *Econometrica*, Vol. 73, No. 2 (March, 2005), 417–458.

<sup>4</sup>Goldhaber, Dan (2009). “*Teacher Pay Reforms: The Political Implications of Recent Research.*” Center for American Progress.

<sup>5</sup>As Chait and Miller note in “*Ineffective Uses of ESEA Title II Funds*” (Center for American Progress, 2009), A recent review of 1,300 studies conducted by researchers at the Southwest Regional Educational Laboratory found only nine studies that were sufficiently rigorous to include in their analysis. These nine studies did find positive effects, but they also found that “no professional development training lasting 14 or fewer hours had a positive impact on student achieve-

had development areas identified on their most recent evaluations, less than half (45 percent) agreed or strongly agreed that they received useful support to improve.

Currently, there is no requirement that professional development provided through title II funds be linked to any assessment of a teacher's skills, or that districts show evidence of improvement after a teacher has received development. In short, there is almost no way of showing that these investments of hundreds of millions of dollars have any positive outcomes for teachers or students. This use of professional development funding perpetuates the widget effect by treating teachers as interchangeable components whose individual professional needs are not relevant, not considered and not met.

REFOCUSING TITLE II ON TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

The research is clear: No school factor has a greater impact on student achievement than teacher effectiveness. While the purpose of title II is to increase student achievement by improving teacher and principal quality, it inadvertently reinforces the notion that teachers are interchangeable. The impact of title II could be increased dramatically if it were focused far more sharply on the prime objective of ensuring all children are taught by effective teachers.

Therefore, we propose a new vision for title II. As part of the reauthorization of ESEA, Title II should be restructured as an **Equity Fund** specifically disbursed to help States and districts reverse the widget effect. By ensuring that teachers are properly evaluated and developed, and that poor and minority students have fair access to the most effective teachers, the Nation's schools stand to make tremendous progress toward increasing educational equity.

*Equity Fund Goals and Metrics*

The Equity Fund should be structured around four overarching goals that school systems need to meet in order to improve student academic outcomes and close the achievement gap:

| Equity fund goal  | Metric  |
|---|---|
| 1. Enhanced supply of effective new teachers .....                | Number and percentage of new teachers who meet an effectiveness standard based predominantly on student growth. |
| 2. Differential retention of top-performing teachers .....        | Retention rate of highly effective and effective teachers compared to retention rate of ineffective teachers.   |
| 3. Improved effectiveness of retained teachers over time .....    | Average improvement in teachers' effectiveness from year to year.   |
| 4. Equitable access to effective teachers for high-need children. | Percentage of high-need students taught by highly effective and effective teachers, compared to peer groups.    |

We recommend that districts and States be required to set specific objectives for each of the four Equity Fund goals—with particular attention to the Equitable Access goal. Funding should be awarded according to formulas and recipients should be free to select specific uses from a broad list, as long as they lead to measurable progress against all four Equity Fund metrics.

Each of the goals depends on strong systems for assessing teacher effectiveness. Districts and States that do not adopt and faithfully implement effective teacher evaluation systems, with multiple rating categories and significant weight placed on student academic growth, should not be eligible for Equity Fund grants. This requirement is in keeping with the recommendations from *The Widget Effect*, which pointed to credible, accurate evaluation systems as a prerequisite for improving teacher effectiveness; it also aligns with recent Federal initiatives such as the Race to the Top competition.

Qualifying districts should be required to show progress on the four Equity Fund metrics or have their funding reduced over time. It is simply not enough to pay lip service to overcoming the widget effect; we must focus resources to demand change. Additionally, to ensure that States and districts place sufficient focus on improving equity, many current purposes for title II funding, including insignificant class size reductions, should be prohibited or capped far below current spending levels.

ment; in contrast, professional development of extended duration (an average of 49 hours) boosted student achievement by about 21 percentile points.”

What kinds of expenditures would align with the recommendations from *The Widget Effect* and the four Equity Fund goals listed above? The following list provides several examples:

- **Professional development**, but only in instances where it is aligned to needs identified in individual teacher evaluations and where the particular strategy results in demonstrable improvements in teacher effectiveness. Spending on professional development should be capped at approximately 20 percent of expenditures to ensure that districts focus on the entire range of Equity Fund goals.
- **Teacher recruitment**, especially from programs with a demonstrated record of producing effective teachers (as measured by student academic growth). These new teachers should be required to demonstrate their effectiveness in order to continue in the classroom.
- **Training** for administrators on how to conduct high-quality evaluations of teachers, as measured by the ability of administrators to differentiate teachers based on effectiveness.
- **Design** of objective, reliable student achievement measures for subjects and grade levels not currently subject to State tests.
- **Integration** of evaluation outcome data into major personnel decisions, such as tenure conferral and compensation.
- **Research and program evaluation** to track and report relative effectiveness of teachers from local teacher preparation pathways (similar to the existing Louisiana system).
- **Incentive systems**, such as recognition programs to identify and reward the most effective teachers; salary differentials for highly effective teachers who make a multi-year commitment to transfer to or remain in a high-need school; or group incentives for clusters of highly effective teachers who commit to turning around a failing school.
- **Peer evaluators** to observe and monitor struggling performers, with an expedited dismissal process when performance does not improve to standards.

#### CONCLUSION

Federal policy plays a unique and critical role in promoting equity in education. Title II has the potential to serve as one of the most powerful tools for this purpose, driving \$3 billion annually—more than the Obama administration’s Race to the Top initiative—to the cause of improving student achievement. Yet today, much of title II funding is squandered on expenditures that do little to improve teachers’ practice or students’ outcomes. That can change with the reauthorization of ESEA, which offers policymakers the chance to realign title II with the research base on teacher effectiveness and support school district and State efforts to make long overdue reforms. It’s time to modernize title II by transforming it into an Equity Fund that improves educational equality for millions of American students while bolstering the foundations of the teaching profession.

#### About The New Teacher Project

The New Teacher Project (TNTP) helps school districts and States fulfill the promise of public education by ensuring that all students—especially those from high-need communities—get excellent teachers. A national nonprofit organization founded by teachers, TNTP is driven by the knowledge that although great teachers are the best solution to educational inequality, the Nation’s education systems do not sufficiently prioritize the goal of effective teachers for all. In response, TNTP develops customized programs and policy interventions that enable education leaders to find, develop and keep great teachers and achieve reforms that promote effective teaching in every classroom. Since its inception in 1997, TNTP has recruited or trained approximately 37,000 teachers—mainly through its highly selective Teaching Fellows™ programs—benefiting an estimated 5.9 million students. TNTP has also released a series of acclaimed studies of the policies and practices that affect the quality of the Nation’s teacher workforce, most recently including *The Widget Effect: Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act on Differences in Teacher Effectiveness* (2009). Today TNTP is active in more than 40 cities, including Baltimore, Chicago, Denver, New Orleans, New York, and Oakland, among others. For more information, please visit [www.tntp.org](http://www.tntp.org).

**[Editor’s Note: Due to the high cost of printing, previously published material is not reprinted. To view “The New Teacher Project: The Widget Effect,” in its entirety go to: <http://widgeteffect.org>. To view “The Real Race Begins. Lessons From the First Round of Race to the Top (April 2010) go to: <http://tntp.org/files/RealRaceBegins.pdf>.]**

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Daly.  
And now we turn to Thomas Kane.

**STATEMENT OF THOMAS KANE, PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION  
AND ECONOMICS, HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF  
EDUCATION, CAMBRIDGE, MA**

Mr. KANE. Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Enzi, members of the committee, my name is Tom Kane. I am a professor of education and economics at Harvard, and I am also working with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation directing the Measures of Effective Teaching Project that I will describe here in a second.

With the help of the NEA and the AFT and local union leadership, we have recruited almost 3,000 teacher volunteers in six school districts around the country to reinvent the process of teacher evaluation. Randi Weingarten deserves a lot of credit for supporting that effort, even when it was not easy.

In each of these teacher's classrooms, we are measuring student achievement gains both on the State test, as well as on some supplemental assessments that are intended to measure the open-ended constructive response type items that, Chairman Harkin, you were mentioning in the opening comments.

Second, in each of these classrooms, we are trying to reinvent the way classroom observations are done. Rather than have your old buddy or, as the case may be, your old enemy, the principal, standing in the back to the classroom going through a checklist, we are asking trained experts who are not from the school who have no particular personal axe to grind—many of them are teachers elsewhere—to provide feedback on what they are seeing in the classroom. We are trying to do that with digital video.

Finally, we are having students provide feedback on specific aspects of a teacher's practice. This is the way I get evaluated in higher education every semester. So we are asking students questions like do you agree/disagree. We use time well in this class. We never waste time. When I am confused, my teacher always has multiple ways of explaining things. When I turn in homework, my teacher gives me useful feedback that helps me improve. In the end, we will be asking how each of these things help identify the classrooms with big student achievement gains.

Now, at this point, I do not think it makes sense for the Federal Government to be specifying exactly how States evaluate teachers. However, remember, this is a sector that has always resisted differentiation. So it is important to bear two principles in mind. First, in those tested grades and subjects where it is feasible, evaluations should include student achievement growth as part of it, but then second, any non-test-based measure needs to be shown to be related to student achievement growth or else it cannot be part of the measure. And that ought to be verified annually as States implement these systems.

So teachers have a huge impact on student achievement. Yet, for years, we have designed systems to ignore that fact. And until we start to acknowledge the role that individual teachers play in student achievement, we could waste a lot of taxpayers' money.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Kane follows:]

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF THOMAS KANE

Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Enzi, members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to address the committee today. My name is Tom Kane. I am a Professor of Education and Economics at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. I am currently on leave from Harvard, working with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation on the Measures of Effective Teaching project, which I will be describing today. My testimony will emphasize the importance of better teacher evaluation systems, which everyone agrees are perfunctory and meaningless. These days, we all say “teachers matter.” If we began acting like we believed that, we would be telling teachers how they are doing, what they can do to improve and giving principals the objective data they need to make better personnel decisions.

## SUMMARY

Analysis of student achievement data over the last four decades has repeatedly confirmed what we all know: Without the right people standing in front of the classroom, school reform is a futile exercise. Everything else—educational standards, testing, class size, greater accountability—is background, intended to support the crucial interactions between teachers and their students.

And, yet, almost everywhere, teacher evaluations are meaningless and perfunctory. From the moment they are assigned their first classroom, teachers receive almost no feedback on their performance. The failure to meaningfully differentiate among teachers and their teaching practices has enormous costs: teacher performance plateaus after just 2 or 3 years on the job; principals grant tenure to virtually any teacher willing to remain after just 2 or 3 years; many of the best and brightest teachers abandon the classroom for other occupations and industries with better opportunities for growth. Meanwhile, we all lose: student learning is stunted; effective teachers are saddled with ineffective colleagues; the profession loses status; and the Nation continues to slowly bleed economic productivity and competitiveness.

We need to begin building a teacher performance evaluation system that allows teachers to grow and allows principals to make better decisions. Given the complexity of teaching, there is no single statistic which will tell the whole story. Rather, we need to assemble a small package of indicators—student achievement gains on State tests, objective feedback on classroom practice by trained external observers, student feedback on specific aspects of a teacher’s practice (e.g. were their comments on homework assignments helpful?, do they have multiple ways of explaining a given topic?, was time managed well in class?)—and put it in the hands of teachers and principals.

Of course, there needs to be some discipline to the search for “multiple measures of teacher effectiveness,” lest that system become “multiple excuses for teacher ineffectiveness.” To guide our own efforts at tool development, we have adopted the following two principles:

1. Whenever feasible, the measure should include student achievement growth for all the students for whom a teacher is responsible;
2. Any other measures—for instance, those based on classroom observations, supervisor ratings, student evaluations, teacher assessments—must be demonstrated to help identify the teachers with the strongest student achievement growth. That evidence needs to be updated annually, based on the latest student achievement growth data, to guard against grade inflation and gaming.

Although a few States have the key ingredients to start, most States would need to build the infrastructure to support such a system: creating a workable definition of “teacher of record” for each tested student; ensuring accurate data on teacher-student links at the State level; calculating student achievement growth for students and linking those to teachers; piloting new classroom observations and other non-test-based tools to be validated against student growth. States choosing to go down that path could do so within 3 years.

## INTRODUCTION

Throughout four decades of education research, researchers have repeatedly confirmed three findings: First, there are huge differences in student achievement gains in different teachers’ classrooms. Year after year, some teachers lead their students to remarkable gains in academic achievement, while others lag behind. Second, the data suggest these teachers can be found throughout our education system, not just in wealthy suburban schools. Most schools—public and private, urban and suburban (and rural), high- and low-income—have such teachers sprinkled within their ranks. Third, a teacher’s effectiveness has only a weak relationship with his or her paper qualifications. Despite the focus on teaching credentials in State and Federal law,

a “highly qualified” teacher is little more likely to produce exemplary gains in student achievement than others.

And yet, almost everywhere, teachers receive meaningless and perfunctory feedback on their performance on the job. A recent survey of teacher evaluation systems in 12 school districts across 4 States found that most systems provide for only 2 possible ratings (“satisfactory” and “unsatisfactory”). In those districts, more than 98 percent of teachers received the same rating of “satisfactory”.<sup>1</sup>

The failure to meaningfully differentiate among teachers and teaching practices has enormous costs: in the absence of feedback, teachers plateau after just 2 or 3 years on the job<sup>2</sup>; without objective evidence to support their decisions, principals grant tenure to virtually any teacher willing to remain after just 2 or 3 years<sup>3</sup>; without the feedback to help them learn, many of the best and brightest teachers abandon the classroom for other occupations and industries with better opportunities for growth. Meanwhile, we all lose: student learning is stunted; effective teachers are saddled with ineffective colleagues; the profession loses status; and the Nation continues to slowly bleed economic productivity and competitiveness.

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) required States to track performance and provide feedback to students and their parents, as well as to schools and districts. Regrettably, teachers were left behind. Teachers were simply obliged to have the right credentials.

The phrase, “teachers matter,” now appears frequently in the public discourse. Despite its popularity, the statement glosses over the truth—teachers (and teaching practices) not only matter, they *differ*. Teachers deserve to know how their students’ growth in achievement compares to the students assigned to their peers. Moreover, they deserve to know what they could be doing to *improve* their practice. To do so, they need professional feedback from objective experts observing them in their own classrooms. They deserve feedback on how students perceive their classrooms. Obviously, they need to understand the concepts they teach. However, we also need to be sure teachers recognize the most common ways in which students will *misunderstand* the content they will teach, and have specific strategies for responding.

#### DEFINING “EFFECTIVE TEACHING”: AN EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH

Over the years, educators have proposed a number of alternative approaches to defining and recognizing effective teaching practice. For instance, the National Board for Professional Teaching Practices (NBPTS) has developed an application process and set of rubrics for scoring videos and essays submitted by teachers. In 1996, Charlotte Danielson published her *Framework for Teaching*, a general framework for evaluating teaching. Many States already publish their own set of standards for evaluating teachers.

Rather than choose one view of effective teaching as “the standard” against which all teaching everywhere is measured, we adopt a practical, evidence-based approach. A measure of effective teaching should be a summary of what we know about a teacher’s impact on children. Whenever a teacher is working in a grade or subject where it is possible to track their students’ achievement growth, then past performance should be helpful in identifying those teachers most likely to have a positive impact on children in the future. *But other, non-test-based measures of a teacher’s practice and skills may also help identify the teachers producing student achievement gains.* For instance, classroom observations may identify specific practices linked to student achievement gains. Student feedback on the quality of teacher comments on their submitted work, the pace of classroom lectures, a teacher’s ability to provide multiple explanations for any given topic may also help identify those teachers. Therefore, a measure of effective teaching should be limited to the combination of two categories of measures:

**1. Direct evidence of student growth on an objective measure of student achievement,** whether on a State’s end-of-year or end-of-grade assessment or some

<sup>1</sup>Weisberg, Daniel, Susan Sexton, Jennifer Mulhern and David Keeling. *The Widget Effect: Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act on Differences in Teacher Effectiveness*. The New Teacher Project, 2009.

<sup>2</sup>Kane, Thomas J., Jonah Rockoff and Douglas O. Staiger “What Does Certification Tell us about Teacher Effectiveness? Evidence from New York City,” *Economics of Education Review*, December 2008. Many other studies report similar findings.

<sup>3</sup>Less than 3 percent of new teachers (with 1–3 years of teaching) report having involuntarily moved between schools or out of teaching. Luekens, Michael T., Deanna M. Lyter, and Erin E. Fox. *Teacher attrition and mobility: Results from the teacher follow-up survey, 2000–2001*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, Department of Education, 2004. Deanna Lyter provided some additional tabulations from the School and Staffing Survey generate these estimates.

other externally scored measure of student work (such as a benchmark assessment). Such measures are often referred to as “value added” measures.

And

2. **Other non-test-based measures** (such as classroom observations, student feedback, assessments of teacher content knowledge or pedagogical content knowledge) **which have been shown to identify those teachers with exemplary student achievement growth.**

Under the above principles, teacher effectiveness would be measured by direct measures of student achievement gains and any other measure which can be shown to identify those teachers most likely to produce student achievement gains.

When measures of effective teaching have been proposed in the past, skeptics on various sides of the debate have raised the following concerns:

**“How will this work in the non-tested grades and subjects?”** Many grades and subjects are not currently subject to mandatory State testing. By some estimates, only about a quarter of teachers currently work in grades and subjects where value-added estimation is feasible. The above framework suggests a way to incorporate those non-tested grades and subjects in the evaluation system. A district could supplement the testing currently required under NCLB with additional externally scored measures of student work and extend to additional grades and subjects. Moreover, if a State or district can provide evidence that a particular classroom observation protocol, or a particular student evaluation form helps identify teachers in the tested grades and subjects with demonstrable gains in student achievement, then that same protocol or form could be used in the non-tested grades and subjects to provide feedback to teachers. In other words, one could assume that the process of student learning is similar in the tested and non-tested grades and subjects.

**“Aren’t value-added measures too volatile to be used?”** Because elementary school teachers may have only 15 to 25 students per year and middle and high school teachers 40 to 150 students per year, the value-added measures can fluctuate. Especially for sample sizes typically seen for elementary school teachers, a few particularly rowdy or attentive students can lead to changes in student achievement gains. However, to the extent that the non-test-based measures (such as feedback from classroom observations or student evaluations) are less subject to volatility or where those fluctuations are independent of the volatility in student test performance, the inclusion of these other measures will dampen the volatility and lead to more stable measures.

**“Aren’t ‘multiple measures’ just a dodge, a way to avoid holding teachers accountable for student results?”** Because of the long history of perfunctory teacher evaluations in education, many are skeptical of any measure which does not include student achievement directly. This is understandable. However, the above framework would provide some discipline to the search for non-test-based evaluation tools: if a teacher evaluation tool (as implemented in a particular locale, and not based on one unrelated study in the research literature) cannot be shown to identify those teachers producing exemplary student achievement gains, that measure could not be a part of the teacher evaluation system.

**“If teacher evaluation is limited to student gains on tests and those factors related to student gains on tests, isn’t the logic circular? Won’t we end up just encouraging ‘teaching to the test’?”** No. Virtually every rubric which external raters would use to score their classroom observation emphasizes the importance of teaching concepts, and the ideas underlying course material. The teaching of “rote skills” and simple procedures leads to poor scores on those rubrics. There’s good reason for that, since research in cognitive science suggest that without conceptual understanding, students find it difficult to remember their lessons and extend and generalize what they have learned. As long as the State test includes some items requiring conceptual understanding, a teacher’s scores from the classroom observations will remain “predictive” of their students’ achievement gains. Moreover, the juxtaposition of respectable test-based scores and poor non-test-based measures raises a possible red flag. Thus, the teacher evaluation system provides an opening for a frank discussion between the teacher and the supervisor about the nature of their instruction—highlighting possible “teaching to the test”, not disguising it.

Similarly, student evaluation forms, such as that developed by The Tripod Project (see the Appendix), can ask students to agree or disagree with statements such as: “My teacher tells us what we are learning and why”, “My teacher wants us to use our thinking skills, not just memorize things”, “My teacher has several good ways to explain each topic that we cover in this class.” Poor student responses on such items, especially when contrasted with moderate or high student achievement gains, would flag possible instances of “teaching to the test”, rather than hiding them.

## THE MEASURES OF EFFECTIVE TEACHING PROJECT

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is supporting the rapid testing of new and existing tools for providing feedback to teachers. The *Measures of Effective Teaching* (MET) project involves nearly 3,000 teacher volunteers in 6 school districts around the country (NYC, Charlotte-Mecklenburg in NC, Hillsborough County (Tampa) in FL, Memphis in TN, Dallas TX, Denver CO). The national offices and local affiliates of both the AFT and NEA actively helped recruit teachers for the project.

Research partners include the RAND Corporation, Harvard University, Stanford University, University of Michigan, Dartmouth College, Educational Testing Service, the Danielson Group and the University of Virginia. Private contractors, such as Teachscape, Westat and Cambridge Education are providing vital logistical support. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is providing the scores of any sample members who applied to them for certification.

The study is currently focusing on grades 4–8 (math and English language arts) and Algebra I, ninth grade ELA and biology at the high school level. The findings of the project (and many of the tools) will be shared widely and made available to States and districts who want to use them. Data collection is under way and initial results will be available in Fall 2010.

A *Teacher Advisory Panel* (20+ practicing teachers, grades 4–9, from across the United States) has been convened to provide feedback on the project design, to ensure that it captures what is most important to excellent teachers, is feasible in the classroom, and provides opportunities for teachers to improve their practice.

The project is collecting a variety of data:

- Student achievement gains;
  - Classroom observations using innovative, low-cost digital video collection tools;
  - Teacher reflections on their videotaped lessons;
  - Student feedback;
  - Teachers' perceptions of the quality of instructional support in their schools;
- and
- Teachers' ability to recognize and diagnose student misperceptions.

I discuss each in somewhat more detail below:

*Student achievement gains:* Student achievement will be measured two ways—using the mandated State tests as well as supplemental tests (the latter made up of open-ended, constructed response items to probe higher order conceptual understanding). The goal is to evaluate the widespread concern that those teachers posting large gains on the State tests are merely teaching test-taking skills at the expense of higher-order conceptual understanding.

*An innovative approach to classroom observation:* Meaningful observations require input from external observers. The project is exploring new ways to drive down the cost of having external observers provide feedback on instruction using digital video. Digital video will be used to record four lessons per year in each teacher's classroom. Scorers will be trained via a web-based certification regimen to score those videos using rubrics designed for classroom observations. (Several commonly used rubrics, such as Charlotte Danielson's Frameworks for Teaching, the CLASS measure from the University of Virginia will be used, as well as content-based rubrics for observing math, English language arts, and science classrooms). The goal is not simply to test whether a select panel of experts can identify effective teaching, but whether qualified scorers could do so after a finite course of training.

*Teacher reflections on their videotaped lessons:* Teachers will provide audio commentary and any relevant supporting materials to provide context about the videotaped lessons, and to share their self-reflections.

*Confidential Student Feedback:* Students will also provide feedback on their experiences in each classroom, their level of engagement, their perception of teachers' expectations of them, their perception of the quality of the feedback they receive from their teacher, etc. (An example of the questions on the student evaluation form developed by Professor Ron Ferguson at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government are in the appendix.)

*Teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge:* ETS is developing a new assessment to measure teachers' ability to recognize and diagnose common student misperceptions in their grade level and subject. That assessment, which builds on work started at the University of Michigan for assessing teacher's pedagogical content knowledge in mathematics, will be ready in the spring of 2011. (An example of several items from such a test are included in the appendix.)

*Teacher surveys of the school environment:* Teachers will complete a survey about working conditions and the instructional support they receive in school. (Representative items from the survey are included in the attached appendix.)

## HOW COULD A STATE BUILD ITS OWN SYSTEM FOR EVALUATING TEACHERS?

Below, I sketch out a 3-year process by which a State could develop a new teacher evaluation system. This is merely intended as illustrative of the hurdles to be cleared. Some States could move faster; some slower.

*Year 1:*

*Planning:* The first task is to agree upon an approach to assigning a “teacher(s) of record” for each tested student by subject. A number of large school districts—such as Houston and Dallas in Texas, Hillsborough County in Florida—have shown that it’s possible to get accurate data on which students are assigned to specific teachers and to resolve the thorny issues which arise when students are taught by teams of teachers or when students receive special help in certain subjects. Indeed, the many districts that are using “benchmark” or “interim” assessments during the school year already have such links in place—that is how they know which teachers should receive the results for which students. Therefore, States and districts would need to plan how they would transfer such data from districts to States.

*Choosing a Value-Added Model:* There have been a number of different approaches proposed for estimating the impact of a given teacher on students’ achievement growth. For example, William Sanders of SAS has provided scores using the proprietary Education Value-Added Assessment System (EVAAS) to hundreds of school districts, including Houston in Texas and Hillsborough County in Florida. The Wisconsin Center for Education Research provides value-added reports to principals in Chicago Public Schools and New York City. Massachusetts, Colorado and New Haven, Connecticut have adopted an approach to measuring student growth proposed by Damian Betebenner at the Center for Assessment, which can be calculated for individual teachers. Each of these approaches involves a different trade-off between transparency and statistical reliability, which States and districts will have to weigh on their own.

*Year 2:*

*Piloting Some Non-Test-Based Approaches to Teacher Evaluation:* During the second year, any State intending to build its own measure of teacher effectiveness would begin to pilot some non-test-based measures, such as having external observers provide feedback on instructional practice in schools, or having students provide feedback on their own experiences. In order to test the predictive power of these measures for identifying teachers with exemplary student achievement growth, such piloting should include teachers in the grades and subjects where value-added estimates could be generated.

*Calculate Value-Added and Test Predictive Power:* The State would spend the second year implementing the definition of “teacher of record” developed during the first year and creating teacher-student links at the State level. It would be important in that process to provide each teacher with the list of their students for whom they are responsible so that they could correct any errors in the data. Then, once student achievement data become available, a State could identify the subset of teachers for whom both value-added estimates and the other teacher evaluation data are available, and then identify which of the non-test-based measures are demonstrably correlated with value-added. A State might adopt a minimum acceptable level of correlation in order to be accepted as a predictor of teacher effectiveness.

*Year 3:*

Year 3 would represent the first full year of implementation. In tested grades and subjects, teachers would be evaluated on the basis of *both* value-added and non-test-based predictors of student achievement growth. In non-tested grades and subjects, teachers would be evaluated on the basis of the validated predictors of value-added from the tested grades and subjects.

*Year 4+:*

As teachers and principals adapt to the new evaluation system, there may be the equivalent of “grade inflation”, with teacher evaluations becoming more compressed or rampant gaming of the system. Moreover, once an evaluation system has been scaled statewide, the new tools may not be implemented with the same fidelity as observed during the pilot phase. In those cases, the predictive power of some teacher evaluation tools may degrade over time. Moreover, new approaches to assessment student achievement may become available—particularly if States adopt new assessments to accompany the new common standards. As a result, the predictive power of the non-test-based approaches will need to be re-evaluated at regular intervals (e.g. annually) in order to ensure that the evaluation system continues to improve and evolve.

*Bang for the Buck*

How large are the potential payoffs to investing in teacher evaluation systems? Gordon, Kane and Staiger (2006) studied elementary teachers in Los Angeles Unified District, calculating value-added scores for a set of teachers who remained teaching for at least 3 years.<sup>4</sup> They first sorted teachers into quartiles using their value-added during their first 2 years of teaching. They then observed the student achievement gains for the new crop of students they were assigned during their third year. They found that the average student assigned to a teacher whose value-added was in the bottom quartile of new teachers lost on average 5 percentile points relative to students with similar baseline scores and demographics.

In contrast, the average student assigned to a top-quartile teacher gained 5 percentile points relative to students with similar baseline scores and demographics.

They then simulated the effect of a new tenure review system, in which those in the bottom quartile of effectiveness during their first 2 years of teaching would not receive tenure and would have to leave teaching. Even taking into account the need to hire more novice teachers, they estimated that such a policy would raise student achievement by the time of high school graduation by roughly 14 percentile points.

Still, that figure may understate the potential impact of an improved teacher evaluation system. For instance, it assumed *no improvement* in the effectiveness of any teacher in response to the feedback. The gains resulted from better selection at tenure time alone. If teachers were to use the feedback to improve their practice, the impacts could be larger.

In contrast, a random assignment evaluation of a classroom size reduction in Tennessee found that schools could improve achievement by half as much—5 percentile points—by shrinking class size in early grades.<sup>5</sup> (As a cautionary note, these impacts were considerably larger than the impacts that were experienced following California's classroom size reduction policy beginning in 1997. They may substantially overstate the actual impact of such a policy.) But class size reduction of the magnitude tried in Tennessee would be extraordinarily expensive: shrinking average class size from 22 to 16 students per class would require nearly a 40 percent in the number of teachers and the amount of classroom space in those early grades! In other words, a policy of tenure reform is estimated to generate an improvement in student achievement three times as large as class size reduction—and would almost surely cost less than a 40 percent increase in instructional salaries in the early grades.

*Conclusion*

Ultimately, the success of education reform depends upon the skills of the 3.1 million teachers managing classrooms in elementary and secondary schools around the country. Everything else—educational standards, testing, class size, greater accountability—is background, intended to support the crucial interactions between teachers and their students. Without the right people standing in front of the classroom, school reform is a futile exercise.

Our educational system has never acknowledged that fact. If it did, we would be rigorously evaluating teachers during their first few years of teaching, and ensuring that only the most effective are granted tenure. We would be providing feedback to teachers on the specific areas where they are falling short, so that they could improve. We would be identifying the most effective teachers and making every effort to retain them. We would be ensuring that the students who are most far behind have the teachers they need to catch up.

Successful education reform requires having the right people with the right skills in the classroom. We will never do so without a robust system for evaluating and providing feedback to teachers.

Thank you again for this opportunity to discuss this important issue with the committee. I would be pleased to serve as an ongoing resource to the committee as the results from the Measures of Effective Teaching project begin to emerge this summer and fall. I look forward to your questions.

<sup>4</sup>Gordon, Robert, Thomas J. Kane and Douglas O. Staiger, *Identifying Effective Teachers Using Performance on the Job*, Hamilton Project White Paper 2006-01, Brookings Institution, April 2006.

<sup>5</sup>Krueger, Alan B. "Experimental estimates of education production functions". *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (1999) Vol. 114, No. 2, PP. 497-532.

## APPENDIX

## SAMPLE ITEMS FROM STUDENT EVALUATIONS

SOURCE: TRIPOD PROJECT &amp; CAMBRIDGE EDUCATION

## Sample Items: Elementary Student Survey

The teacher in this class encourages me to do my best.  
 Our class stays busy and does not waste time.  
 My teacher has several good ways to explain each topic that we cover in this class.  
 In this class, we learn to correct our mistakes.  
 My teacher pushes us to think hard about things we read.  
 My teacher wants me to explain my answers—why I think what I think.  
 In this class, you must pay attention all the time in order to keep up.  
 My teacher gives us time to explain our ideas.  
 My teacher tells us what we are learning and why.  
 My teacher asks questions to be sure we are following along when s/he is teaching.  
 In this class, I stop trying when the work gets hard.  
 I have done my best quality work in this class.

## Sample Items: Secondary Student Survey

The teacher in this class encourages me to do my best.  
 My classmates behave the way my teacher wants them to.  
 If you don't understand something, my teacher explains it another way.  
 My teacher explains difficult things clearly.  
 My teacher wants us to use our thinking skills, not just memorize things.  
 My teacher makes us think first, before he/she answers our questions.  
 In this class, my teacher accepts nothing less than our full effort.  
 My teacher makes lessons interesting.  
 I understand what I am supposed to be learning in this class.  
 My teacher knows when the class understands, and when we do not.  
 In this class, students take it easy, and do not try very hard to do their best.  
 In this class we have to think hard about the writing we do.  
 This class makes me a better thinker.

## SAMPLE ITEMS FROM TEACHER WORKING CONDITIONS SURVEY

SOURCE: THE NEW TEACHER CENTER

Teachers have time available to collaborate with colleagues.  
 Teachers are allowed to focus on educating students with minimal interruptions.  
 Teachers are protected from duties that interfere with their essential role of educating students.  
 Teachers\* have sufficient access to appropriate instructional materials.  
 Teachers have access to reliable communication technology, including phones, faxes and e-mail.  
 The school environment is clean and well maintained.  
 Teachers have adequate space to work productively.  
 The physical environment of classrooms in this school supports teaching and learning.  
 This school maintains clear, two-way communication with the community.  
 This school does a good job of encouraging parent/guardian involvement.  
 Parents/guardians know what is going on in this school.  
 The community we serve is supportive of this school.  
 Students at this school follow rules of conduct.  
 Administrators support teachers' efforts to maintain discipline in the classroom.  
 The faculty works in a school environment that is safe.  
 Teachers are recognized as educational experts.  
 Teachers are trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction.  
 The faculty and leadership have a shared vision.  
 Teachers feel comfortable raising issues and concerns that are important to them.  
 Teachers are held to high professional standards for delivering instruction.  
 Teacher performance is assessed objectively.  
 The procedures for teacher evaluation are consistent.  
 An appropriate amount of time is provided for professional development.  
 Professional development deepens teachers content knowledge.  
 Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their own practice.  
 State and local assessment data are available in time to impact instructional practices.

Teachers at my school are assigned classes that maximize their likelihood of success with students.

**Sample Items from Test of Pedagogical Content Knowledge**

Source: University of Michigan

**Study of Instructional Improvement/Learning Mathematics for Teaching**

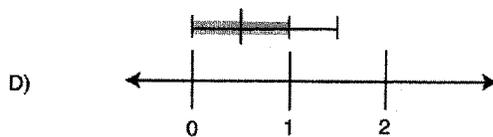
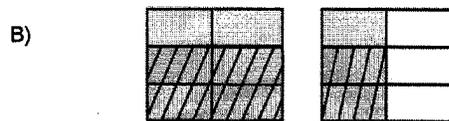
Content Knowledge for Teaching Mathematics Measures (MKT measures)

Released Items, 2008

**ELEMENTARY CONTENT KNOWLEDGE ITEMS**

6. At a professional development workshop, teachers were learning about different ways to represent multiplication of fractions problems. The leader also helped them to become aware of examples that do not represent multiplication of fractions appropriately.

Which model below cannot be used to show that  $1\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{2}{3} = 1$ ? (Mark ONE answer.)

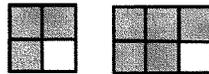


7. Which of the following story problems could be used to illustrate  $1\frac{1}{4}$  divided by  $\frac{1}{2}$ ? (Mark YES, NO, or I'M NOT SURE for each possibility.)

|   | Yes | No | I'm not<br>sure |
|---|-----|----|-----------------|
| a) You want to split $1\frac{1}{4}$ pies evenly between two families. How much should each family get?  | 1   | 2  | 3               |
| b) You have \$1.25 and may soon double your money. How much money would you end up with?  | 1   | 2  | 3               |
| c) You are making some homemade taffy and the recipe calls for $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups of butter. How many sticks of butter (each stick = $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) will you need? | 1   | 2  | 3               |

## ELEMENTARY KNOWLEDGE OF STUDENTS AND CONTENT ITEMS

15. Takeem's teacher asks him to make a drawing to compare  $\frac{3}{4}$  and  $\frac{5}{6}$ . He draws the following:

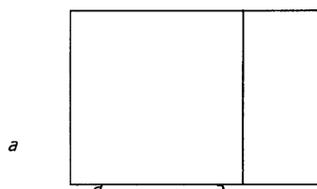


and claims that  $\frac{3}{4}$  and  $\frac{5}{6}$  are the same amount. What is the most likely explanation for Takeem's answer? (Mark ONE answer.)

- a) Takeem is noticing that each figure leaves one square unshaded.
- b) Takeem has not yet learned the procedure for finding common denominators.
- c) Takeem is adding 2 to both the numerator and denominator of  $\frac{3}{4}$ , and he sees that that equals  $\frac{5}{6}$ .
- d) All of the above are equally likely.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL CONTENT KNOWLEDGE ITEMS

20. Ms. Whitley was surprised when her students wrote many different expressions to represent the area of the figure below. She wanted to make sure that she did not mark as incorrect any that were actually right. For each of the following expressions, decide whether the expression correctly represents or does not correctly represent the area of the figure. (Mark REPRESENTS, DOES NOT REPRESENT, or I'M NOT SURE for each.)



|    |                      | Does not correctly |              |   |
|----|----------------------|--------------------|--------------|---|
|    | Correctly represents | represent          | I'm not sure |   |
| a) | $a^2 + 5$            | 1                  | 2            | 3 |
| b) | $(a + 5)^2$          | 1                  | 2            | 3 |
| c) | $a^2 + 5a$           | 1                  | 2            | 3 |
| d) | $(a + 5)a$           | 1                  | 2            | 3 |
| e) | $2a + 5$             | 1                  | 2            | 3 |
| f) | $4a + 10$            | 1                  | 2            | 3 |

26. Mrs. Davies' class has learned how to tessellate the plane with any triangle. She knows that students often have a hard time seeing that any quadrilateral can tessellate the plane as well. She wants to plan a lesson that will help her students develop intuitions for how to tessellate the plane with any quadrilateral.

Which of the following activities would best serve her purpose? (Circle ONE answer.)

(a) Have students cut along the diagonal of various quadrilaterals to show that each can be broken into two triangles, which students know will tessellate.

(b) Provide students with multiple copies of a non-convex kite and have them explore which transformations lead to a tessellation of the plane.

(c) Provide students with pattern blocks so that they can explore which of the pattern block shapes tessellate the plane.

(d) These activities would serve her purpose equally well.

27. Ms. Abdul is preparing a unit to introduce her students to proportional reasoning. She is considering three versions of a problem that are the same except for the numbers used. Which version of the Mr. Short and Mr. Tall problem below is likely to be the most *challenging* for students? (Circle ONE answer.)

(a) A picture depicts Mr. Short's height as 4 paper clips and as 6 buttons. The height of Mr. Tall (not shown) is given as 6 paper clips. How many buttons in height is Mr. Tall?

(b) A picture depicts Mr. Short's height as 4 paper clips and as 7 buttons. The height of Mr. Tall (not shown) is given as 5 paper clips. How many buttons in height is Mr. Tall?

(c) A picture depicts Mr. Short's height as 2 paper clips and as 9 buttons. The height of Mr. Tall (not shown) is given as 5 paper clips. How many buttons in height is Mr. Tall?

(d) All three of the problems are equally challenging.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Kane.  
Ms. Hirsh.

**STATEMENT OF STEPHANIE HIRSH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,  
NATIONAL STAFF DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, DALLAS, TX**

Ms. HIRSH. Good morning, Senators.

For over 30 years, NSDC's more than 12,000 members have kept a laser-like focus on improving the quality of professional development (PD) and its impact on teaching and student learning. Professional development is truly the only strategy to improve teacher effectiveness that, in one way or another, touches every educator, involves every school district in every year.

I know that the Federal Government also understands the importance of professional development (PD) because it has appropriated more than \$20 billion to support professional development and effective teacher activities since the enactment of NCLB. Sustained school-wide, team-based, and job-embedded professional development is the most powerful strategy available to ensure that the teachers in the current workforce have the knowledge and skills necessary to increase student achievement. And unfortunately, too often school systems fail to use PD to its potential.

Therefore, I propose three actions that Congress may take to increase the availability, as well as the impact of effective professional development.

Congress can begin by establishing a new definition for professional development by replacing the current one in section 9101. A more compelling Federal definition of professional development begins with principals and teachers using their own student and teacher performance data to establish the school's learning agenda. From their learning teams focused on addressing the specific student needs, work together to apply more effective practices in their classrooms, and they share responsibility for student achievement. As a result, all teachers within a school are engaged in a continuous cycle of improvement that informs and strengthens teaching and learning.

Through this approach, we will transform the role of teacher from sole practitioner to collaborative partner, leveraging the expertise of all teachers to address the needs of all students. Innovation will spread from classroom to classroom and school to school. Superintendents in Duvall County, Florida; Long Beach, California; and Montgomery County, Maryland would attribute their districts' success to this professional development approach. And Senator Reed has provided leadership in Congress in advancing it as well.

Secondly, I ask Congress to require that States and districts conduct regular evaluations on the impact of federally funded professional development, specifically on teacher practice and student

achievement. This information is essential to revealing where there are problems that require attention, as well as successes that can be shared and replicated. By requiring an evaluation, you will be asking many States and schools to do something that they may say is difficult. Do not be dissuaded by individuals that say it is too challenging. There are a few States that can provide guidance to other States on how to accomplish this, including the chairman's Iowa, Maryland, Florida, and Georgia.

And finally, I ask Congress to ensure that States and districts use an adequate portion of existing Federal funding to implement more effective PD and evaluate its impact. Blue Valley, Kansas; College Community School District in Iowa; Johnson County, Tennessee—these are just a few of the school systems that have already taken steps to implement this new definition for professional development. This year you can make possible for teachers and students everywhere what these districts have already discovered is key to great teaching.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Hirsh follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STEPHANIE HIRSH

For over 30 years, NSDC's more than 12,000 members have kept a laser-like focus on improving the quality of professional development and its impact on teaching and student learning. Professional development is truly the only strategy to improve teacher effectiveness that, in one way or another, involves every educator, every year, in every school system. I also know that the Federal Government understands that investing in professional development is so important that it has appropriated over \$20 billion to support professional development and teacher effectiveness activities since the enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act.

Sustained, school and team-based, and job embedded professional development is the most powerful way available to ensure that all teachers in the current workforce acquire and apply the knowledge and skills necessary to increase student achievement. Unfortunately, too often school systems and schools fail to use professional development in a way that fulfills its potential.

Therefore, I propose that the Congress take three specific actions to increase the availability as well as the impact of effective professional development for every teacher in this country.

The Congress can begin by establishing a new framework for professional development for educators in Federal law by replacing the current definition of professional development in Section 9101.

Senator Reed is a leader in this conversation and will soon introduce a more powerful definition of professional development in an upcoming bill. A compelling Federal definition of professional development focuses on engaging educators at the school level. Principals and teachers will use their students' performance data to establish the school's learning agenda. It will promote collective responsibility for student achievement by establishing teams of teachers who regularly learn and work together to apply more effective practices in all classrooms. Through this approach, we will transform the education profession from a solitary job to one that leverages the combined expertise of all teachers to overcome persistent barriers that exist in reaching students. Innovation will spread from classroom to classroom and school to school.

Successful superintendents in Duval County, Florida; Johnson County, Tennessee; Long Beach, California; and Montgomery County, Maryland, attribute their increases in student achievement and closing achievement gaps to professional development systems like the one I am proposing. This more tightly focused definition of professional development ensures that every teacher improves and every student benefits.

Secondly, I ask the committee to require that States and districts using Federal funds for professional development conduct regular evaluations of the impact on student achievement. This will ensure that districts and States are regularly examining the effects of professional development on teacher practice and student

achievement. It will reveal where there are problems that require attention as well as successes to be recognized and shared.

By requiring an evaluation of professional development you will be asking many States and school systems to do something new and challenging. Do not be dissuaded by individuals that say it is too challenging. There are a few States that have taken this step and provide direction for others. Among these States are the chairman's own State of Iowa as well as Florida, Maryland, Missouri, and Georgia.

Finally, I ask the committee to ensure that States and districts use an adequate portion of existing Federal funding to implement more effective professional development and document the impact of the investment. By establishing an investment baseline you can ensure that the resources necessary are allocated so every student experiences great teaching every day.

Thank you for your attention and your invaluable service to our Nation's children.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Ms. Hirsh.  
Now we go to Ellen Moir.

**STATEMENT OF ELLEN MOIR, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,  
NEW TEACHER CENTER, SANTA CRUZ, CA**

Ms. MOIR. Good morning, Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Enzi and members of the committee. Thank you very much for this opportunity.

Let me begin by saying that our Nation must dramatically change the way we bring our newest educators into our schools and into the teaching profession. The traditional sink-or-swim approach to new teacher induction exacts a high price on new teachers, their students, and the entire education community.

Our philosophy on teacher effectiveness is much like what you heard from Randi Weingarten, that we believe that great teachers are made and not born.

A Federal policy on new teachers is critical for demographic reasons. By most estimates nationally we will replace more than 50 percent of our teaching working force over the next 7 years. This means over 1.5 million new teachers in our schools.

And a focus on new teachers is also important from an equity standpoint. New teachers are disproportionately assigned to classrooms serving the most disadvantaged students and to schools more likely to be low-performing with rampant staff turnover and poor working conditions.

An up-front investment in these new teachers is far more cost effective to ensure that not only do they stay in teaching, but that they get on that path to excellence early on.

Our data from States like California and Alaska and urban school districts including Boston, Chicago, and Durham, show that if new teachers receive the right support, they will be successful in the classroom and be more likely to remain in teaching.

But all too often, even when States have policies that require new teachers are supported, they are implemented sporadically and too many educators are not given support that they need to be effective.

At the New Teacher Center, we have collected data on over 300,000 teachers across 10 States in just the past 3 years through our Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey, and I can tell you that many, many first- and second-year teachers report that they were not assigned a mentor. And even those that did have a mentor, they were often reporting that the mentor never planned instruction with them, they never once were observed in their class-

room, and they never once received support analyzing student work. These results actually come from a State that is consistently one of the country's top in teacher quality and which has existing mentoring legislation in place.

I want to move to say that the recommendations that are in President Obama's Blueprint for Reform are well on the way to making a difference for America's students. The three areas that I want to emphasize that we would like to see written in would be that ESEA would ensure that States establish standards for induction and mentoring programs. Program standards should include rigorous selection of mentors, professional development, ongoing learning for mentors, and dedicated time for mentoring new teacher interactions.

Number two, ESEA should provide dedicated funding for induction and mentoring for all new teachers across this country. And the funding stream should require accountability from States to ensure mentor program standards are being met.

And the third recommendation and final one is that ESEA should hold States and districts accountable for giving new teachers the mentoring, support, and teaching conditions they need to be successful.

Let me just close by saying that America's teachers and students are counting on us, and I would be eager to help in any way that we can to build a better profession so that kids can have the greatest opportunities in life.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Moir follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ELLEN MOIR

SUMMARY

- I believe our Nation must dramatically change the way we bring our newest educators into our schools and into the teaching profession. The traditional "sink or swim" approach to new teacher induction exacts a high price on new teachers, their students, and the entire educational system.
- NTC philosophy: Great teachers are made—not born.
- (1) Changes in the demographics of the teacher workforce and (2) ensuring equity for students demands a renewed Federal policy focus on how new teachers are supported.
  - 1.5 million new teachers will enter the Nation's schools in the next 7 years which means by 2017, 50 percent of the teaching workforce will be replaced.
  - New teachers are disproportionately assigned to classrooms and schools that serve the most disadvantaged students.
- Even the best prepared teachers need intensive, instructionally-focused, on-the-job support. That is why national leaders must raise standards and expectations for new teacher induction including:
  - Carefully-selected, trained and supported mentors who receive adequate time to regularly interact with and observe new teachers; and
  - State-level teacher evaluation systems that *not only* assess classroom effectiveness, *but also* capture the complexity of teaching and ensure that *all* teachers are provided the regular feedback, learning opportunities, and supportive environments they need to maximize their effectiveness and impact on student learning.
- Research shows that new teachers must receive quality support if they are to be effective and remain in the profession. Unfortunately, it appears that this type of support is not reaching all novices.
  - NTC research reveals that too few States have comprehensive policies that require new teacher support—and the State policies that do exist are implemented only sporadically.
  - Among 300,000 teachers NTC has surveyed across the country through our statewide Teaching & Learning Conditions Surveys in the past 2 years, many first- and second-year teachers report that they were not even assigned a mentor.

- Many who *were* assigned a mentor never planned instruction with them, observed them or received support analyzing student work from them.
- The *Blueprint for Reform* already includes an impressive and important focus on teaching. To ensure new teacher success, the NTC believes the ESEA also should:
  - Require States establish standards for induction and mentoring programs that include rigorous mentor selection requirements, foundational mentor training, on-going support for mentors, and dedicated time for mentor-new teacher interactions.
  - Provide dedicated funding for the induction and mentoring of all new teachers for at least their first 2 years and require accountability from States to ensure mentoring program standards are being met; and
  - Include provisions that hold States and districts accountable for giving new teachers the mentoring, professional support, and teaching conditions they need to be successful.
- Senator Jack Reed's *Teacher and Principal Improvement Act* addresses many of these recommendations and is a necessary ingredient to strengthen the *ESEA Blueprint* and ensure new teacher success.
- In conclusion, with the Federal funding commitment, the appropriate focus on teachers and school leaders and the provision of the conditions, development opportunities and tools they need to be successful, the ESEA reauthorization will be on track for success.

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, for this opportunity to provide input to inform reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

The New Teacher Center (NTC) is a national non-profit organization whose mission is to provide all new teachers in the Nation with the type of high-quality induction and mentoring, instructional support and collaborative learning opportunities that will allow them to thrive as professionals and maximize their classroom effectiveness on behalf of their students.

*Our philosophy on teacher effectiveness rests on an understanding that great teachers are made—not born.* Regardless of the quality or source of their preparation, teachers in their first classroom face an overwhelming number of distinct challenges. Too many new teachers in each of your States struggle in isolation and navigate a steep learning curve as a result of a “sink or swim” approach to induction. It exacts a high price on new teachers, their students, and the entire school community.

A Federal policy focus on new teachers is critical for demographic reasons.

- By some estimates, nationally, we will replace more than 50 percent of our teaching workforce over the next 7 years. This means over 1.5 million new teachers in our schools.

A focus of new teachers also is important from an equity standpoint.

- New teachers are disproportionately assigned to classrooms serving the most disadvantaged students and to schools more likely to be low performing, with rampant staff turnover, and poor working conditions.
- An up-front investment in these new teachers is far more cost effective to ensure they stay in teaching and receive induction support to accelerate their effectiveness in the classroom from day one.

Our Nation must dramatically change the way we bring our newest educators into our schools and the teaching profession. Our data from work in States like California and Alaska and in urban school districts including Boston, Chicago and Durham show that if new teachers receive the right support that we know makes them better, they will be more successful in the classroom and be more likely to remain in teaching.

But too often, even when States have policies that require new teachers are supported, they are implemented sporadically and too many educators are not given the support they need to be effective. At NTC we have collected data from over 300,000 teachers across 10 States in just the past 3 years alone. As just one example:

We have data from one of our statewide administrations of our Teacher & Learning Conditions Survey in 2009—to which over 42,000 educators responded—that shows:

- One third of the States' first- and second-year teachers report that they were not assigned a mentor; and
- Of those that were officially assigned a mentor, approximately one third report that they:

- *Never once planned instruction with their mentor,*
- *Never once were observed in their classroom, and*
- *Never once received support analyzing student work.*

These results are from a State which is consistently one of the top in the country on teacher quality . . . and which has *existing State laws and policies* on teacher mentoring!

Our research on these results consistently demonstrates that new teachers receiving more frequent and higher quality induction and mentoring support are significantly more likely to report wanting to remain in their current teaching position. Although Secretary Duncan has publicly stated his interest in being “tight on ends, and loose on means,” new teacher support is an area where the means are critically important. Lesser approaches do not achieve the desired results.

What does high-quality support for new teachers look like?

First, we are not talking about a “buddy system”. We are talking about concerted, targeted mentoring that advances teaching practice and accelerates new teacher effectiveness.

- Mentors should be experienced and effective teachers.
- Mentors should receive training and on-going support to help new teachers:
  - Plan daily instruction,
  - Analyze student work to assess learning,
  - Manage their classrooms, and
  - Differentiate instruction to individual learners.
- Mentors and new teachers should be provided *adequate time to work together* so that the new teacher continually develops.
- School and district leaders should be trained in what it takes to support a mentoring program and in understanding its overall benefits and cost effectiveness.

Second, States need to have systems in place that not only *identify* more effective and less effective teachers, but also *support and guide* all teachers—*especially new teachers—giving them feedback and learning opportunities* for professional growth.

A good example of a State that has recently done this is North Carolina. It requires all principals and teachers to be evaluated with a new instrument which is based on using data to improve their effectiveness and provides them with specific feedback for continuous improvement.

The current national policy conversation about teacher effectiveness is too narrowly defined, because focusing only on the so-called “best” or “worst” teachers will be a missed opportunity to strengthen the effectiveness of the vast majority in the middle who can achieve greater success if provided the right support.

At the New Teacher Center, we are pleased with President Obama’s recently released *Blueprint for Reform* for ESEA reauthorization.

1. The *Blueprint* finally puts the Federal Government’s “money where its mouth is.” With unprecedented funding to support States in their efforts to continually improve education, *each State will now be required not only to focus on improving student test scores, but also take a broader lens to the multiple factors that impact student achievement—the classroom teacher, chief among them.* And rightly so: Research and the experience of millions of educators prove that teachers are the most powerful school-based influence on student learning.

2. The new focus on teacher effectiveness and principal leadership will help strengthen the building blocks of school improvement—world-class educators. The teacher and principal evaluation tools being used in the States are in dire need of revision to reflect 21st century education and practices. At NTC, we believe teachers and principals should be evaluated with *multiple measures*, one of which should be growth in student learning.

3. Supportive working conditions: It is important to remember that what works to attract new teachers also works to retain experienced teachers. We are pleased that President Obama’s *Blueprint* requires States and districts to collect and report teacher survey data on working conditions in schools. This is a key data set for school improvement that policymakers previously have never had. That, too, is why the NTC is proud to be part of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation “Measures of Effective Teaching” project. As part of the MET project, NTC is administering a teacher working conditions survey in identified large urban schools and districts.

The *Blueprint* is a good start and sets us on the right path toward reauthorization. However, I want to share THREE recommendations for what I believe the ESEA reauthorization should also include in order to help new teachers become quality career professional educators.

1. ESEA should ensure that States establish standards for induction and mentoring programs.

Program standards should include:

- Rigorous requirements about who is selected to mentor.
  - Foundational training and on-going support for mentors.
  - Dedicated time for mentor-new teacher interactions.
2. ESEA should provide dedicated funding for the induction and mentoring of all new teachers for at least their first 2 years.

This funding stream should require accountability from States to ensure mentor program standards are being met.

3. ESEA should hold States and districts accountable for giving new teachers the mentoring, support and teaching conditions they need to be successful.

One legislative proposal that would address several of our recommendations is Senator Jack Reed's Teacher and Principal Improvement Act. NTC is proud to support this legislation and we believe it is a necessary ingredient to strengthen the ESEA blueprint. We commend Senator Reed for his support of and dedication to America's teachers.

I want to end my comments with a sincere "thank you" for this opportunity to strengthen and support America's teachers and chart a course for excellence in teaching. With the funding commitment, the appropriate focus on teachers and school leaders, and the provision of the conditions, development opportunities and tools they need to be successful, I believe ESEA reauthorization is on the right track for success.

America's teachers—and students—are counting on us. Please let me know if there is anything that NTC can do to assist this committee in its efforts. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.  
Now Mr. Valenzuela.

**STATEMENT OF JOSÉ VALENZUELA, TEACHER, TECHBOSTON  
ACADEMY AND BOSTON TEACHER RESIDENCY PROGRAM  
GRADUATE, BOSTON, MA**

Mr. VALENZUELA. I am humbled to be in attendance here as the simple first-year teacher. I knew it was important to not only come to Washington to share my experiences, but also to represent my students in room 204. They have learned to not just see the world as it is, but as it should be. So I thank the entire HELP Committee for affording me this tremendous opportunity.

I would just like to give some talking points.

So where I come from—I was born in the Dominican Republic, but I have lived in Boston most of my life. I am a product of the Boston public schools.

My first experience with teaching was as a teaching assistant between my junior and senior year of high school. I taught summer school math to English language learners at UMass Boston.

I decided that I wanted to teach, partly because my mother says I like to explain things, and also because I felt I needed to return to my community. I felt when I came back to Boston in 2007, the high murder rate and the sort of separation and segregation I saw in my community was not how I left it in 2003.

So I am here to speak about my experiences in the Boston Teacher Residency Program. There are some things that I think make it unique and important to note in this hearing.

So the first is the strong mentorship and mentor-resident relationship in the first year. I had the fortune of having an excellent mentor who was not only young but had 9 years of veteran experience. I got to work alongside her. She afforded me many opportunities to experiment and try new things that I had learned in my graduate coursework that I could just try out in the classroom. So that experimentation gave me a lot of chances to see what worked and what did not.

I also had an excellent methods instructor in history.

I think one of the things that makes the residency experience extremely unique is the opportunity to spend an entire year with students. As a teacher in the Boston public schools today, I can say that I have been prepared for what I can expect my students to experience throughout a whole school year because I remember what it was like last year. So when my ninth graders started acting a little crazy in January, I knew to tighten up my routines and make sure my structures were in place because I knew it was just part of going through what ninth graders all go through.

So at school this year, I know I am prepared because of what BTR taught me. One of the things is what we call “pockets of change” where teachers are part of making the change inside of school communities to make them better. Part of my efforts have been as eighth grade team leader. Some might say there is a lot of bravado in a first-year teacher taking on that role, but I have been fortunate enough to have a great team of mostly first-year teachers in fact, and we have done a great job.

I have also started a wrestling team. It is only the third middle school wrestling team in the entire Boston public schools. It was not easy, but I had one kid place fourth in the State overall.

And the cohort model that BTR espouses is another great thing.

So having other residents in my school building—we had eight total—makes it an easy year, and I think the transition has been great.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Valenzuela follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOSÉ VALENZUELA

My name is José Eduardo Valenzuela. I was born in the Dominican Republic, but moved with my mother and father to the United States at a young age, and have been living in Boston ever since. I am a product of the Boston Public Schools, having graduated from Boston Latin School in 2003. Following high school, I attended Williams College and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in History and Latina/o Studies in 2007. Prior to applying to the Boston Teacher Residency, I had no formal education training, but I had spent three summers as teacher's assistant in the Talented and Gifted, an enrichment program for Latino, Cape Verdean, and Brazilian students. I taught summer school math to English Language Learners, many of whom had just arrived from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, and Guatemala, among other places. These students faced significant challenges in learning a new culture, language, and spending time in a formal education system.

I learned a lot about myself in those summers, and not just about how I would teach math in Spanish, a discipline I had learned in English. I also learned to see a group of kids that were eager to spend their summer learning Algebra in a setting that valued their culture, background, and language, something many of them had confided to me had been lacking in their Boston public high schools. This made me sad, but I knew all too well the lack of respect my Latinidad received in my own experience at Boston Latin School, outside of my group of friends and several dedicated and conscientious teachers. I know several of those students that have gone on to graduate from college after spending time in the summer school program offered at TAG (through UMass Boston).

I decided to teach partly because my mother likes to say that I enjoy explaining things to other people. The other part comes from a (growing) conviction to work in my community and make it better than when I attended school. I chose to work in the Boston Public Schools because I felt that I had been disconnected from the community that I had called home for over 20 years. When I returned to Boston in 2007, it did not feel like home, with a growing murder rate, and with many of my friends working in consulting and finance, it was like there were two separate cities, and I wanted to get back to the one I remembered from my elementary school days, when being Dominican in my classroom wasn't peculiar or odd, it was an asset. I thought that working in public schools would give me my humanity back.

I am here to speak about my experiences in the Boston Teacher Residency, both in my training year, last year, and my first year out of the program as a full-time teacher in the Boston Public Schools. I chose BTR over other programs, including an acceptance to the New York City Teaching Fellows, for one simple reason: I would have the opportunity to work closely with an experienced veteran teacher. After completing my residency year and nearly completing my first year teaching on my own, I am still convinced that I made the correct decision. I am really fortunate to have had a terrific match with my mentor, who guided me through a 10-month school year experience that allowed me to grow, mature, and become comfortable with the idea of being "Mr. V." Although not all matches with mentors were perfect, all residents would agree that the mentor-resident relationship was the single most critical factor to the experience of BTR. Some of those experiences were negative, but most were positive.

In my case, I had a mentor who was young, energetic, but had spent 9 years teaching in urban settings, including Malden, Cambridge, and Boston. She had also extensive knowledge of her content, from all of the years teaching multiple subjects, ranging from ELA to history to electives like Global Issues. It was not all luck though. I had sought this out when I chose BTR. I wanted the mentor experience. I had the chance of working alongside a mentor professor at Williams College, when back then my dream had been to be a college professor. I enjoyed the experience of working closely with knowledgeable individuals. I knew that it would be important to learn more from just my assigned mentor, and BTR gave me opportunities to learn from others as well. One of the strongest mentoring relationships I had was with my History Methods instructor. I really gravitated to her style of teaching, her social activism bend, and above all, her commitment to the students of Boston. She truly loves her children, and works tirelessly to making them better students, better citizens, and better people. Now that she and I teach the same subject, Civics, we have continued to work even more closely, as I work through the challenges of prepping for two different subjects (9th grade U.S. History and 8th grade Civics). BTR has made these relationships the cornerstone of their program, and my experience this year has shown that effectiveness increases with the successes that are built upon these mentor-resident connections.

My experience in my residency year allowed me to experiment as well. When I came upon the concept of differentiating instruction in one of my courses in BTR, I had a breakthrough. I became inspired by this concept, and I approached my mentor to discuss my hopes of implementing some of these strategies right away. By the beginning of June, my mentor and I had reorganized the classroom into something of a laboratory of differentiated experimentation, and I was given the keys to try whatever I wanted. I do not believe that this would have happened in a traditional teaching program setting.

Above all, the most important quality of BTR, the one that I preach to the current cohort of residents (especially when they ask me the question, "Do you feel prepared in your first year?") is that spending an *entire year* with actual Boston Public School students is an unmatched experience offered by any traditional route to teaching. This alone would make BTR stand out above the rest. And it truly does prepare you. When I taught ninth grade history last year, I watched as my students began to unwind in January, their behavior becoming increasingly more disruptive than it had been in September. I teach ninth grade this year, and I was prepared for what I expected would happen in January. I knew that my routines and structures needed to be tight in order to meet the particular challenges that ninth grade poses. I knew this, though, because I had spent an entire year with a group of students very similar to the ones I currently have this year. You learn a lot from spending so much time with kids, how they think, what they might react to. It's a tremendous confidence boost in a year with very few of them.

My experience at TechBoston Academy has continued to give me hope for my ongoing development in the years ahead, as well as reinforced my argument that BTR has successfully prepared me for my first year. Of course, no program can prepare you for every challenge that one might face in that year. No two experiences are alike, and no two students are exactly alike either. I do feel confident that BTR has helped me in two ways in my first year. First, it has given me the confidence, the bravado even, to take on leadership opportunities in the building. The program taught us to create "pockets of change" within our community, wherever we might end up, and I took that to heart. That is why I said yes when asked if I would take on the role of 8th grade team leader. Even despite all of the extra responsibilities and challenges of the job, I am happy with the work that our team has been able to do, and the chances to learn and grow from doing some administrative work. I also started the first wrestling program at the school, one of only three middle school wrestling programs in the entire district. This had been a goal of mine since

graduating from college. Wrestling for 12 years had a positive influence on my life, and I knew that creating more wrestling opportunities in the city was a common sense decision.

Although I had a limited operating budget and no equipment, I was able to take wrestlers to several competitions and tournaments, including the Massachusetts State Youth Championships, where one of my wrestlers placed 4th overall (the only Boston resident to do so, I might add). This accomplishment would not have happened without significant contributions from other area coaches, all of who assisted me in my first year as head coach. These are just a couple of examples, but BTR residents in my school have all taken on leadership roles, whether it was organizing Black History Month, the school Spring Dance, or acting as 6th grade team leader (yes, of the six team leaders, two are BTR/first year teachers).

BTR has also been helpful in another aspect at TBA. The program has always dreamed of placing graduating residents in cohorts at schools. My school decided to take on 8 total BTR graduates this school year (7 from my cohort). This critical mass of like-minded teachers has had a tremendous impact for me. Not only do I work with individuals who share the same values that I do, but also remember what it was like to experience the program. I am grateful that just across the whole, I can share my thoughts and feelings about my day, a lesson, or even a particular student with a colleague who also graduated from BTR. I know that in time, BTR will be able to work with more schools to create these cohorts. I do not believe this shuts out teachers that have taken a traditional route because all residents must go through the same hiring process. Even outside of my school, the BTR connection is strong, whether it is speaking to current residents, gathering with my cohort for graduate courses in Special Education, working with graduates from all years on the concept of turnaround schools, or just hanging out, I know that I am part of a strong and active network, one that works tirelessly for the students and families of Boston.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Valenzuela.  
And now Ms. Benbow.

**STATEMENT OF CAMILLA P. BENBOW, DEAN OF EDUCATION  
AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT, VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY'S  
PEABODY COLLEGE, NASHVILLE, TN**

Ms. BENBOW. Chairman Harkin, Senator Enzi, members of the committee, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss how the Federal Government can support States and districts in ensuring that all students have great teachers and have great school leaders.

I would point to the critical role of higher education. There can be no great teaching without great teacher preparation, and we prepare more than 85 percent of the teachers.

To demonstrate that we are part of the solution, consider special education. Thanks to schools of education, since P.L. 94-142 was passed in 1975, teachers trained in special education have enabled students to make strides once unimaginable.

Our challenge now is to apply the same intensive effort to transform teaching and learning for all students. At Vanderbilt, our teacher candidates gain hundreds of hours of clinical experience beginning in their first year, including in hard-to-staff schools. They become expert at collecting and using data to tailor instruction. They double-major.

To determine their readiness, we are working on a national teacher assessment. Our National Centers on School Choice and Performance Incentives conduct experiments to evaluate reform efforts, while numerous other researchers work to improve instruction in reading, math, and science and to pioneer strategies like response to intervention.

We just announced a partnership with Nashville schools to improve middle school teaching in math, science, and literacy. This

highly selective program provides a free customized master's degree for teachers in high-needs schools. The program will help attract and retain great teachers, strengthen instruction and assessment, improve student outcomes, and foster systemic change.

To strengthen school leadership, we devised VAL-ED, a performance evaluation for school leaders, developed a Principals Leadership Academy, and trained more than 1,800 superintendents and leaders across Tennessee.

I offer these examples to illustrate what ed schools can do if empowered by strong Federal policy. The Higher Ed Task Force on Teacher Preparation has made recommendations to strengthen our ability to provide highly effective teachers such as keeping the Teacher Quality Partnerships Grant under Title II of HEA and investing in teacher preparation reforms under ESEA. Both are needed. Higher ed wants to be and should be a valued partner in transforming learning for all students.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Benbow follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CAMILLA P. BENBOW

SUMMARY

This document containing the written testimony of Dean Camilla P. Benbow includes the following elements:

- A transcript of opening remarks (current as of April 13, 2010) prepared for delivery on the date of the hearing.
- A brief description of Peabody College's National Center on Performance Incentives.
- A brief description of Peabody College's National Center on School Choice.
- A program description of a joint effort developed by Peabody and the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools to prepare highly skilled middle school teachers in mathematics, science and literacy.
- A description of the Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education (VALED), a performance assessment tool for school leaders.
- Recommendations regarding funding from the Higher Education Task Force on Teacher Preparation.

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Chairman Harkin, Senator Enzi, members of the committee, I am very appreciative of this opportunity to discuss teaching and leadership in American schools.

You asked that we be prepared to address the question of how the Federal Government can support States and districts in ensuring that all students have great teachers and great school leaders. I would add to this question the critical role that institutions of higher education play in producing these teachers and leaders. Colleges and universities prepare more than 85 percent of teachers; there can be no great teaching without great teacher preparation, just as there can be no great principals without great principal preparation.

Schools of education are and must be part of the solution. To demonstrate that we can be, permit me to point to special education. Thanks to schools of education, since Public Law 94-142 was originally passed in 1975, teachers trained intensively to work with students with special needs have enabled such students to make strides that were unimaginable 35 years ago. The challenge we now face is how to apply the same intensive effort to transform teaching and learning in high-need, urban schools.

To this end, our teacher candidates gain hundreds of hours of clinical experience beginning in their first year of study, including in hard to staff schools. They become expert at collecting and using data to tailor instruction. They double major. And, to determine their readiness, we are among those institutions working to develop a national teacher assessment.

Other strategies include incentives for teachers, school choice and charter schools, improved teacher training and evaluation, and new roles for school leaders. In each instance, my own institution—Vanderbilt University's Peabody College—is proud to play a role in the transformation of education. Our National Centers on School

Choice and Performance Incentives, for example, conduct research to assess the effectiveness of various reform strategies.

We also work with partners to strengthen practice by current teachers. We recently announced a partnership with the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools to improve middle school teaching in mathematics, science and literacy. This highly selective program provides master's degree training to early career teachers in high-needs schools, with tuition underwritten by Vanderbilt and the public schools. The program promises to attract and retain great teachers, to strengthen instruction (and assessment), to improve student outcomes, and to help foster systemic change.

To strengthen school leadership, we have devised and disseminated the Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education (VAL-ED), a performance evaluation for school leaders. Our Principals Leadership Academy of Nashville annually prepares aspiring leaders for service in local schools. We have provided leadership training to more than 1,800 superintendents and school leaders across Tennessee.

I offer these examples to illustrate what more schools of education could do if empowered by strong Federal policy. The Higher Education Task Force on Teacher Preparation has offered recommendations which I believe can strengthen the contributions of our institutions to meet the critical need for highly effective teachers. These include full funding of the Teacher Quality Partnership grants in the Higher Education Act at \$300 million and increasing the set-aside for higher education in Title II of ESEA to 5 percent. Both are needed. Institutions of higher education want to be, and should be, valued partners in the effort to transform learning for all students. Thank you.

#### NATIONAL CENTER ON PERFORMANCE INCENTIVES

Policymakers have grown increasingly interested in innovative compensation plans, including performance-based pay for K–12 educators. Yet, efforts to reform pay have lacked grounding in a scholarly base of knowledge regarding the effectiveness of such plans. Educators, policymakers, and the greater public should know whether altering traditional compensation practices is an effective path to improving teaching and learning. The National Center on Performance Incentives was established to examine such questions as: does pay-for-performance work, what makes an effective teacher, what are the unintended consequences of performance pay, and how cost effective is performance pay? The signature research initiative of NCPI is a randomized field trial in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) in which student achievement-related bonuses are being offered to teachers.

To Learn More: <http://www.performanceincentives.org>.

#### NATIONAL CENTER ON SCHOOL CHOICE

Since 2004, the National Center on School Choice (NCSC) has been doing research on how school choice affects individuals, communities, and systems. The Center's work takes place across multiple disciplines and methodologies, and its aim is simple: to provide national intellectual leadership on the study of school choice in all its forms.

Policymakers, educators and families need to know: Does school choice raise student achievement or improve school quality? Stratify students along racial, class, or ability lines? Spur traditional public school districts to change their behavior? Face limitations from political and legal constraints?

To answer these questions, the Center has assembled an expert team of scholars—sociologists, economists, psychologists, political scientists, curriculum experts, psychometricians, statisticians—from some of the Nation's top research organizations. This collaboration partners the center's lead institution, Vanderbilt University's Peabody College, with the Brookings Institution, Brown University, the Center for Evaluation and Education Policy at Indiana University, Harvard University, the National Bureau of Economic Research, the Northwest Evaluation Association, and Stanford University.

The Center is conducting major experimental and quasi-experimental studies of charter and magnet schools, voucher programs, parent involvement and satisfaction, student achievement, and what makes schools work. Scholars are also considering school transfer options under No Child Left Behind, supplemental education services, and home schooling. And they are examining school leadership, governance, laws, and policies.

To Learn More: <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/schoolchoice/>.

MASTER'S IN TEACHING AND LEARNING IN URBAN SCHOOLS  
PEABODY COLLEGE IN COLLABORATION WITH METRO NASHVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

#### Curriculum Overview

Peabody College is collaborating with the Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools to offer a set of innovative, customized Master's degree programs focusing on improving teaching in urban school settings and designed expressly for Metro teachers. Drawing on the rich intellectual resources available at Vanderbilt University's Peabody College of Education and Human Development and using the Metro schools as an applied laboratory setting, this 2-year program will work with cohorts of teachers in the upper elementary grades through grade 8 to deepen their knowledge and refine their instructional skills in one of three areas: literacy, mathematics or science. Admission to the program is highly selective.

The Master's in Teaching and Learning in Urban Schools (TLUS) program provides capability for enhanced instructional effectiveness, improved student learning, and increased retention of excellent teachers within Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools.

#### The Program Vision

The new Master's program is designed to achieve the following outcomes:

1. *Retain and attract excellent teachers.* The program will recruit and retain outstanding new teachers. Teachers will want to remain in the Metro schools because the program will enable them to become more fully intellectually engaged and more professionally adept, and will promote networking among teacher colleagues who also attended the program and who may share the program's vision of learning and goals for continued improvement.

2. *Improve instruction.* Teachers will deepen their disciplinary knowledge and understanding of learning and refine instructional methods as they experiment with new practices in their classrooms and discuss their experiences and best practices with colleagues.

3. *Improve student outcomes and change assessment practices.* The definitive evidence that more effective instruction is being provided must come from assessments of student learning, but assessments used must align with skills and concepts being fostered. Students will be helped to learn to employ new assessments and assessment practices, to understand the proper conditions under which those practices may be deployed, and to use them to track student learning and make needed adjustments in their instructional methods to improve instruction and student outcomes.

4. *Foster systemic improvement.* This Masters program must do more than educate and retain a few stellar teachers. It is designed to support development of communities of reflective practitioners in participating middle schools.

Achieving this vision requires that Peabody College design a program tailored to the needs of working teachers and the school district to create conditions that facilitate teachers' efforts to deepen their knowledge, employ new instructional methods, assess children's learning and create nurturing professional learning communities.

#### Program Design Strategies

Peabody College's Department of Teaching and Learning will deliver a 30-hour program that also draws on resources in the Department of Special Education and the Department of Leadership, Policy and Organizations. The TLUS program will be organized around the following core design elements:

1. *Cohort structure.* Groups of 24 students enter the program simultaneously, with the cohort being divided into those specializing in literacy, mathematics or science. The three tracks have some classes in common as well as domain-specific classes. All students in a track take the same classes at the same time thereby ensuring intellectual cohesiveness that fosters communication among participants.

2. *Integration of content with practice.* Classes are created with the intention of providing intellectually rigorous content instruction and realistic, research-based instructional methods. Students are taught by leading researchers and classes integrate research with practice. Each class includes classroom-based applications and supports teachers as they grow to understand how the things they are learning apply in their classrooms.

3. *Field-based learning.* When students take courses specific to their instructional specialization they have on-site supervision from Peabody faculty who assist teachers in learning methods and reflecting on practice. Teachers also are supported as they begin to engage in discussions with colleagues about teaching and learning.

4. *Urban focus.* The program is designed to assist students in understanding and experiencing instructional success working in urban classrooms. Every semester stu-

dents participate in a seminar designed specifically for the program that addresses urban issues and provides a setting for discussing classroom instruction. Also, depending on the program specialization, students take one or more classes that address the needs of English Language learners and discuss how to work with children who use nonstandard varieties of English in their home.

5. *Reflective practice.* The entire program is designed to assist teachers in becoming reflective practitioners by enabling them to grasp underlying principles governing learning and teaching and guiding them in learning how to reflect on their own practice. The ultimate realization of these experiences is the students' Capstone that serves as the culmination of their Masters program. Students complete the Capstone (also bearing 5-credit hours) in the second summer of their study, the program's final term.

6. *Create communities of practice.* The program supports development of sustained reflection on practice at the building level by allocating an hour of course credit each semester to on-site discussions. When the TLUS students are prepared, these discussions are opened to other teachers in the building with interest in participating.

The following elements are necessary for our vision to be maximally realized:

1. *Protected spaces for innovation.* Teachers are expected to adopt instructional and assessment practices that in many cases are different from those currently being used. Teachers need to be in buildings where their principals not only allow but support such efforts.

2. *Communities of practice.* For teachers to adopt instructional innovations that result in sustained improvements they need to be part of a community of practitioners who share their vision and understand their approach. These communities need to include several teachers who are in the same building. The Peabody-Metro cohort program can provide teachers settings for professional conversations while they are enrolled, but if these conversations and the novel practices are to be sustained there need to be several teachers in the same building who have participated in the program.

3. *Pathways of innovation.* A single effective teacher can make a significant difference in a child's skills and knowledge and enthusiasm for learning, but for these effects to be retained and fully realized children need to experience superior teaching for several years. This could occur if the program enrolled teachers who were in the same feeder system from elementary into middle school. Having teachers across grades involved in the program would also make possible rich discussions across grade levels.

If the vision we have for this program is fully realized we believe the result will be schools where teachers are engaged in cutting edge instruction that results in exceptional levels of student learning. We also believe the Peabody-MNPS partnership could become an exemplar of an effective and sustained university-school partnership nationally.

#### Program Evaluation

In the program's formative stage, we seek to understand the degree to which the program is delivered successfully and its impact on helping the teachers establish themselves in their classrooms. Drawing on resources in the Department of Teaching and Learning and the Peabody Research Institute, we will keep records of what happens in Vanderbilt classes, we will intermittently debrief coaches about classroom instruction, and through interviews and surveys find teachers' reactions to the program. If resources permit, we also will develop and use a tool to guide observation of classrooms. We also will work with MNPS to track our teachers' success using material the schools routinely use to track the performance of middle school teachers.

The evaluation will help us document the initial start up phase of the program, collect formative assessment data that will help to improve it, and gain insight into how the program is affecting teachers and communication among faculty. One goal is to understand in some detail how the program was created so that others can learn from our experience and to document effects in hopes that we find effects that will encourage others to replicate our program. Once the program is established we hope to seek funding from the Institute for Education Sciences to conduct an even more rigorous evaluation of its impact on teachers' instructional practices and children's learning.

For additional information:

[http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/Teaching\\_and\\_Learning/Graduate\\_Programs/Masters\\_Program\\_\(MEd\)/MNPS\\_Teachers\\_Masters.xml](http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/Teaching_and_Learning/Graduate_Programs/Masters_Program_(MEd)/MNPS_Teachers_Masters.xml).

## VANDERBILT ASSESSMENT OF LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION (VAL-ED)

## About the Program

The Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education (VAL-ED) utilizes a 360-degree, evidence-based approach to measure the effectiveness of school leadership behaviors known to influence teacher performance and student learning.

## Questions Being Addressed

Raising student achievement and closing the achievement gaps in America's schools depends on school leaders who effectively guide instructional improvement. However, the identification and development of effective school leaders has been significantly hampered by the lack of technically sound tools for assessing and monitoring leadership performance.

## Funding Sources

VAL-ED was developed with \$1.5 million in funding from the Wallace Foundation.

## Research to Practice

- VAL-ED measures performance in six core components (high standards for student learning, rigorous curriculum, quality instruction, culture of learning and professional behavior, connections to external communities, and performance accountability) and six key process (planning, implementing, supporting, advocating, communicating, and monitoring).
- VAL-ED is aligned with the national leadership standards set by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium.
- Results are reported as comparisons to normative national profiles as well as proficiency standards (basic, proficient or distinguished).
- The assessment was field tested in 100 elementary schools, 100 middle schools and 100 high schools in 53 districts and 27 States.
- The assessment incorporates psychometric properties typically unavailable in other evaluation instruments.
- A review by Learning Point Associates concluded that "VAL-ED comes closest to measuring the leadership attributes and behaviors that research finds to be associated with how well students perform." (*Education Week, January 6, 2010*)

## For Additional Information:

[http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/Faculty\\_and\\_Research/Peabody\\_Research\\_Office/About\\_Peabody\\_Research/Funded\\_Projects/VAL-ED\\_Project\\_Home.xm](http://peabody.vanderbilt.edu/Faculty_and_Research/Peabody_Research_Office/About_Peabody_Research/Funded_Projects/VAL-ED_Project_Home.xm).

## HIGHER EDUCATION TASK FORCE ON TEACHER PREPARATION\*

## THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION'S FISCAL YEAR 2011 BUDGET FOR TEACHER PREPARATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

## BACKGROUND

**• Taken together, the President's proposals would eliminate all targeted Federal support for teacher preparation in higher education.**

- The President's fiscal year 2011 budget eliminates the one program in higher education that supports the university-based preparation of teachers—the Title II Teacher Quality Partnership Grants, currently funded at \$43 million (plus an additional \$100 million added as part of the stimulus).
- The budget proposes moving these funds into a new authority in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) called the "Teachers and Leaders Pathway" program, under which \$405 million would be available for competitive grants to support the creation or expansion of high-quality pathways to becoming a teacher or principal. The role of institutions of higher education is not clear.
- In addition, the prior requirement of a 2.5 percent set-aside for higher education (equal to \$72.5 million) in the Title II ESEA Improving Teacher Quality State Grant is proposed for elimination.
- These eliminations would mean that the sector that produces over 85 percent of all new teachers (higher education institutions) would not necessarily be receiving any funding for preparation of teachers. However, the demanding accountability and data-collection requirements in Title II of the Higher Education Act would remain in place.
- The Teacher Quality Partnership Grants are a new comprehensive reform program, just designed in the 2008 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. It was unanimously endorsed by both Republicans and Democrats. Only in September 2009 were the first grants awarded. While 179 proposals were submitted, funding was only available for 28. This program has not had a chance to prove its effectiveness.

- Higher education supports competition for funding, as is currently required by the Teacher Quality Partnership Grants. Institutions of higher education also match Federal funding for teacher preparation at 100 percent. This contribution would be lost in the Obama administration's proposal.
- The purpose of Title II of the Higher Education Act is to support reform of teacher preparation in higher education; this purpose would apparently become unfunded, while accountability requirements would remain.

## OUR POSITION

- We oppose the elimination/consolidation of the Teacher Quality Partnership Grants in the Higher Education Act and the elimination of the 2.5 percent set-aside for higher education in Title II of ESEA in the fiscal year 2011 budget. We recommend full funding of the Teacher Quality Partnership Grants at the authorized level of \$300 million. We recommend that the set-aside for higher education in Title II of ESEA be increased to 5 percent in order to meet the critical need for high quality effective teachers.
- Higher education is committed to innovative evidence-based educator preparation. The research demands that we invest in clinically based programs.
- Our colleges and universities have changed significantly in the last decade to respond to the needs of today's diverse K-12 classrooms by expanding partnerships with K-12 schools, strengthening partnerships with arts and sciences, and recruiting career changers into teacher preparation.
- Higher education continues to be in a unique and unparalleled position to deliver effective teacher preparation, bringing together the expertise of the arts and sciences and research-based pedagogy to ensure highly effective K-12 teachers.
- Removing funds that strengthen teacher preparation programs from institutions that supply 85 percent of teachers entering the field will undermine progress toward moving us forward to the President's goal of having a highly effective teacher in every K-12 classroom.

**\*Text in this section is from a document prepared by the Higher Education Task Force on Teacher Education in March 2010. Members of the Task Force include:**

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The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Ms. Benbow.  
And now we will go to Mr. Parmenter.

**STATEMENT OF LAYNE PARMENTER, PRINCIPAL, URIE  
ELEMENTARY, LYMAN, WY**

Mr. PARMENTER. Thank you, Senator Harkin and Senator Enzi. I appreciate the invitation to be here and address this committee.

There are a couple of points I would like to just talk about briefly this morning to consider for rural schools.

Well, first of all, let me back up a little. I would like to say that I acknowledge that teachers are absolutely the key to our education system. They are the first priority and always have been and always need to be in my view.

I would argue that second to them, that a good principal is really key. If you find a good school, you definitely have good teachers, but I would argue that you will have a good principal in there organizing the efforts. So I think we have an important role to play in the whole process.

To move a little bit to the rural idea, one of the proposals, as I understand it, for the reauthorization of ESEA is to be competitive for grants. One of the things—that sounds good on the surface. We are competitive in America. We are a capitalist society. But I think that will disadvantage our rural schools. We do not have a grant writer on staff in our district. Again, many of our population are here today and have kind of depleted the population out in Wyoming. So for us to have to compete for those grants is going to be difficult. It will not be a level playing field and we just ask that it be.

The second thing—and I agree. We need to do better at evaluation both for teachers and principals. I would say on the end for principals, we really need to have more autonomy. I understand that to turn the low-performing schools around, that there are four proposals. All of them include getting rid of the principals. I would say give the principal a little bit more autonomy up front because if you just fire them and then you bring somebody else in and then let them restructure the school however they want—just do that up front. Give the principal the autonomy up front, and then if they are not cutting it at a certain point, no problem. Then we will find a new principal. We need to. We need to have good people both for teachers and principals.

I think we need a little bit better professional development for our principals. Almost all of the staff development I have seen has been oriented toward teachers. I think we have got to train these principals. I did a little bit of digging, and 61 percent of our principals in Wyoming have been in the job 5 years or fewer. So the demographics are we are a fairly young group. We need some good professional development, particularly I think in early childhood literacy and in how to turn low-performing schools around.

With that, I need to summarize real quickly. Three ideas I think that are important.

The common core standards I really like. Out there, if we do curriculum work, we pull somebody out of the classroom or from the office, and those folks have to work on curriculum. So a common core of standards, wherever they originate, I think is very important.

Vertical data systems. Those are going to be very, very helpful to us to keep track of how we are performing at the school district level, ET cetera.

Finally, I think we need to take a serious look at our evaluation systems both for teachers and principals. I believe we can improve them drastically.

Thank you. I appreciate the chance to make these comments.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Parmenter follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LAYNE PARMENTER

Good morning. My name is Layne Parmenter and I am the principal of Urie Elementary School in Lyman, Wyoming. I would like to begin by thanking Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Enzi and the members of the committee for your leader-

ship and taking up the monumental task of reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). As the sole principal representative before you today, I am honored to share the perspective of our Nation's elementary principals, especially those serving in rural areas. As you work to improve policies that will strengthen the ability of principals and teachers to lead schools to excellence, please know that principals wholeheartedly share your commitment to give every child a well-rounded education that will prepare them for college and successful careers. We know that next to good teachers in the classroom, principals are the driving force behind improved student achievement and learning outcomes.

In today's era of accountability, principals are no longer just building managers—they are responsible for setting a vision of school excellence that centers on teaching and learning. They must work tirelessly to gain the support of teachers, parents, and the entire school community to take part in a collective responsibility that will ensure the academic success of every child. They must devote their time day in and day out to improving school conditions. Successful school principals know their vision of excellence depends on the ability to provide high-quality professional learning opportunities so that all teachers are able to improve their knowledge and skills in the classroom. They also know school culture must sustain a cycle of continuous improvement so that every teacher and student can be their best. The job of a principal is not easy—it is complex and demanding, but is also rewarding and it **brings me** great pride to know that the strength of school leadership can make a difference in the lives of students each and every day.

For rural schools similar to Urie, the responsibilities of a principal are compounded by extreme poverty and the unique needs of the students that can rob them of their ability to learn well. Children come to school having had many different experiences: oftentimes unfed, clothed poorly, and lacking the social and emotional support essential for learning. Six out of ten Wyoming public schools are rural, and serve one-quarter of the State's public school enrollment. The rate of rural students qualifying for special education services is above the national average, and the household mobility rate in Wyoming is staggering, much higher than all but 8 other States across the Nation.

These are challenging circumstances in times of dwindling resources that inhibit the ability of principals to meet the needs of all teachers and students. My school, one of several elementary schools in Uinta County School District, spans hundreds of square miles and serves 280 students in grades K–4, with nearly 30 percent of the students eligible for free or reduced priced lunch. We are one of the State's concentrated areas of poverty and face challenges similar to other rural districts. In spite of this, better than 90 percent of the students in my district graduate from high school each year.

In Wyoming, the correlation between high poverty rates and lower performance in high stakes testing, NAEP scores, and graduation rates is unmistakable. Despite these circumstances, I am proud to share that over 80 percent of the Urie Elementary School children in the third grade have met or exceeded State expectations in math, reading, and writing. Our students in fourth grade have met their learning goals, but we have much more work to do in developing reading and literacy skills. As the principal, it is my job to make sure that these learning needs do not go unrecognized. Comprehensive and on-going professional development opportunities for teachers in effective literacy instruction must be an integral part of our teachers' daily jobs. In spite of the fact that we work to achieve this goal with fewer resources and an increasing number of students come to school far from being eager or ready to learn, Urie has been able to make significant educational gains. We are proud of what we have been able to accomplish and proudly look forward to the work ahead.

I am here to tell you that rural schools are making great progress despite the economic adversity. But we agree with Secretary Duncan—the Federal Government has traditionally under-invested in the role of the principal, and as a nation, we need to do much more to support and empower the leaders of our Nation's schools, no matter the circumstances they face.

School progress, which in no small part is made possible through excellent teachers and the contributions of the entire school community, however, depends on giving the principal greater authority, autonomy, and resources to make key decisions in their schools, especially in rural communities. As you consider the many options and reforms to ESEA, I respectfully urge you to remember the complex and important job of the principal and the unique challenges of those serving in rural areas. The Administration has put forward goals in the "Blueprint for Reform" that I believe principals agree with, and am happy to note that we are already working to fulfill the vision of many of the goals each day. But this work must be supported, especially for those in rural areas facing unique circumstances. In many rural and

frontier areas, principals serve not only as the principal, but superintendent, curriculum director, counselor, math and special education teacher, facilities coordinator, and football coach. Where there is need for school improvement, we are the sole catalysts for change in our schools, and this depends on our capacity to best meet the needs of the teachers and students.

Low pay and tough conditions, just like low student performance, are by-products of poverty. These problems are compounded in high-poverty rural districts, which are often isolated and offer few other amenities such as good housing or job opportunities for spouses. Teachers tend to go where working conditions are easier, pay is better, and students face fewer challenges. But what I can tell you is that, where there is an excellent school, there is a great school principal.

Principals currently in the field are responsible for identifying and developing leadership to fill the pipeline and next generation of our Nation's powerful school leaders. But they need more support helping aspiring leaders into the field. Approximately 50 percent of elementary school principals nationally have had 5—or fewer—years of experience at their current jobs. In Wyoming that number is 61 percent. Turning around a low-performing school is an exceptionally daunting task. I don't think there's a secret stash of principals out there with the experience and expertise to turn around the lowest-performing schools, particularly for rural areas.

As we strive to improve our Nation's education system, the role of the school principal has been questioned. We know that school leadership matters, and I can tell you that it is unlike any other job in the school community. It requires tenacity and a commitment to lead a learning community with unwavering standards of excellence, a profound understanding of effective instruction, student needs and obstacles to their learning, and, in the end, the ability to get the job of teaching and learning done. They must be afforded the resources, tools, and time to make great things happen, no matter the challenges they face. Principals and teachers alike must have access to on-going and job-embedded professional development opportunities. For principals, this means high-quality standards-based mentoring programs that will support them in the profession. Mentoring and on-the-job professional development programs could help fill a number of gaps in the current models of principal preparation and training, and help those new to the field advance, especially in the case where relationships change and a teacher moves from supervisor of students to supervisor of adults.

Elementary principals must now expand their knowledge base in early childhood education to better understand high-quality early learning activities and teaching practices, developmentally appropriate assessments and evaluating data to inform instruction, and forging new relationships within the community to build successful partnerships. Principals must learn how to best align programs that create a seamless continuum of learning that recognizes the social, emotional, and academic needs of children from disadvantaged backgrounds. Federal policies must reflect and support the research and practice that has redefined what elementary principals must know and be able to lead early childhood learning communities.

This calls for greater Federal investment in professional development opportunities for principals to learn about the value of comprehensive systems that will support the work of early learning programs in their schools and communities, and provide them the tools and resources to drive instructional leadership.

Now more than ever, it is clear that principals must be provided with resources to do their jobs. Rather than feeding into the cycle of depleting resources, schools that have the greatest needs must continue to receive targeted assistance to improve. While it may be unintentional, current Federal policies direct much needed resources to urban areas with high concentrations of poverty and leave rural areas behind. We must redistribute the weight of title I and other sorely needed Federal aid to school districts that have the greatest needs in rural and frontier areas.

Finally, student and school performance in rural areas can be better gauged by an accountability system that shows the variety of ways in which children learn and succeed academically through the use of growth models. Student, teacher, and principal performance must be accurately measured and reflect the social and emotional development, language fluency and comprehension, creativity, adaptability, critical thinking and problem-solving skills of students—in addition to their proficiency in core academic content areas.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to share the principal perspective and the needs of schools in rural and frontier America. On behalf of all principals, I applaud the great work that you have begun to improve our Nation's education system and how we can better meet the learning needs of our children. I look forward to the discussion today and answering any questions you may have for me.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Parmenter.

And now to close up, Mr. Schnur.

**STATEMENT OF JON SCHNUR, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,  
AND CO-FOUNDER, NEW LEADERS FOR NEW SCHOOLS,  
WASHINGTON, DC**

Mr. SCHNUR. Thank you, Senator Harkin and Senator Enzi, members of the committee.

I was joking with a member of your team before this got started, and she said that school leadership was on the agenda, although we are eighth and ninth out of nine. And I said that that is—well, last but not least, and that is significant progress over the focus that has often been placed on school leadership at the principal level and below the principal level for a long time. So thank you so much for your leadership on education, for this hearing, and for incorporating a focus on school leadership.

I have some specific policy points in my written documents and will follow up with but a few points just about our lens about what we have learned in the country about effective principals and implications for policy.

First of all, point number one, kind of an obvious point, but focusing on school leadership as part of a focus on the profession is crucial. And it really has not been done. One study came out a year or 2 ago showing \$3 billion in title II funding, for example, that only 2 percent of Federal title II funds are spent on professional development for school leadership. It is called the Teacher and Principal Recruitment and Training Fund, but only 2 percent is even going to school leadership. In most of the school system efforts on teacher quality, most but not all forget the point that Mr. Parmenter just made, that you cannot get great teachers—there are a lot of factors, but you cannot get them without great principals who are focused on achievement, focused on instruction, attracting, retaining, developing, and holding accountable effective teachers. So the focus on it is crucial.

The research shows that 60 percent of the in-school improvement in the school is related to the quality of the principal and the quality of the teacher. The teacher is number one at a third, but the quality of the principal is number two at 25 percent.

And you cannot keep great teachers per your great points on retention without great principals. The Gates Foundation has a new study showing that 96 percent of teachers say that good leadership is the most important factor to retain teachers. So even as a teacher retention strategy, the investment is key.

So number one, focus on it.

Number two, it is a hard job. I was speaking with Donald Finoy a principal from Charlotte, North Carolina who is here, who is one of the best principals in the country. He has made dramatic improvements in Charlotte schools. I asked him just before the hearing what is the most important advice he would give to Senators here about this issue. He said remember it is a hard job and it has big implications for policy.

We used to be number one in the world in education in America. We have slipped to the middle of the pack, not because we have gone down, but because the rest of the countries have gone ahead. Our task is to make dramatic improvements to catch up and sur-

pass the rest of the world, and what our kids need, especially kids in poverty—the job of doing that is so hard that the need for both investments, accountability, and support from the Federal Government to do a much harder job than it used to be for school leadership and teachers is key.

Third, my final point is the focus on performance and achievement and learning about what works is just crucial. I would say our data in our organization has been absolutely indispensable to creating a good training program and learning from that for principals. The most important thing we have seen is that we actually have school principals that are driving spectacular gains in student achievement. We have got some who do not. And we have tracked the difference. We are out-performing the school systems we are in, but of our own principals, we are transparent. Three years ago, only fifteen percent of our very well trained principals were making breakthrough gains in achievement. We studied the patterns of what those principals were doing. They are so consistent. We used a process of continuous improvement based on the data and we have gone from 15 percent to 32 percent of our schools making breakthrough gains. That does not sound very good, but it is double the percentage of schools in our school systems making breakthrough gains. The most important lever I would close with to improve principal quality is not a laundry list of requirements, but is significant funding and a focus on transparency and data on achievement to ensure improvement of all the institutions that are supporting the principals.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Schnur follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN SCHNUR

SUMMARY

PRIORITIZING EFFECTIVE TEACHERS AND LEADERS IN ESEA REAUTHORIZATION

Research has shown that nearly 60 percent of a school's impact on student achievement is attributable to principal and teacher effectiveness, 25 percent being directly attributable to principals. Effective principals ensure a high quality teaching staff through human capital management and instructional leadership, including the critical work of retaining the best teachers. In one recent survey of 40,000 teachers, "96 percent rated supportive leadership as absolutely essential or very important to retaining good teachers, more than any other factor." Therefore, whole-school change led by an effective principal is a crucial component of any effort to promote improved student learning and teacher effectiveness.

New Leaders for New Schools has analyzed the practices of principals making breakthrough gains in student achievement, the kind that will be required to close the achievement gap and change the trajectory of students' lives. This analysis of proof point schools has re-affirmed that: (1) all students can achieve at high levels, and (2) the patterns found in these schools can be scaled.

Given this data on the vital impact principals have on student achievement and teacher effectiveness, we recommend that ESEA:

- (1) Place a critical focus on school leadership both in terms of investments and accountability in effective school leadership. Currently, only a tiny portion of the title II funds which make up the largest single vehicle for addressing this need and opportunity goes to school leadership. Senator Franken and Senator Hatch's proposed *School Principal Recruitment and Training Act of 2009*, which creates a competitive funding stream devoted to school leadership, serves as an important foundation on which Congress can build to ensure truly effective leadership in every school.
- (2) Create a child- and performance-oriented approach to school leadership, including tracking outcomes and strategies for developing leaders to use as a means of accountability and continuous improvement. ESEA can focus on principal performance by:

a. Incentivizing States and school systems to measure principal effectiveness in a meaningful way that includes but is not limited to looking at student achievement impact and the practices correlating to those gains.

b. Investing in professional development for principals and other school leaders and tying that professional development to data and results. As instructional leaders, principals are a major driver of professional development for teachers, they play a major role in teacher evaluations, and they are also the number one factor for teacher retention. Investment in the ongoing professional development of principals is crucial to promote teacher effectiveness and student achievement gains, especially in high-need schools and school systems.

c. Requiring teacher and principal preparation programs to track their graduates and ensure results—including their placement in and impact on high-need schools and districts—and base future investments upon those results, irrespective of their status as traditional or alternative routes to certification.

d. Investing in research and evaluation of human capital initiatives that are tied to student achievement, so that we can effectively identify what works and doesn't work, what explains the difference and incorporate those lessons into our work at scale.

(3) Be used as a vehicle to drive innovation and improvement through a much greater focus on competitive and performance-based grants. While formula-based funds are critical to ensuring more widespread reforms and results, it is essential that we incent all education stakeholders to drive dramatic change by focusing on quality and results in a competitive system. Building on this direction, we would recommend ensuring clear alignment of all the teacher and leader funding streams, both formula and competitive-based.

(4) Limit and even reduce the number of compliance-oriented requirements for schools and schools systems. School change does not happen by mandating a laundry list of prescribed regulations; rather, we should be clear around the non-negotiable expectations, but still be flexible enough to enable educators to spend more time focusing on student achievement.

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#### PRIORITIZING EFFECTIVE TEACHERS AND LEADERS IN ESEA REAUTHORIZATION

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee today on the critical topic of reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in order to reach the goal of ensuring that every student in every classroom achieves at the highest levels.

Since the 2002 reauthorization of ESEA, the Nation has learned many lessons on what has and what has not worked. There are pockets of excellence that prove beyond a doubt that all children, irrespective of their social and economic status, can excel. An opportunity now exists to scale these pockets of excellence into systems of excellence. I would like to thank Chairman Harkin and Senator Enzi and the members of this committee for their great efforts to take advantage of this opportunity and reauthorize ESEA in a bipartisan and effective manner.

Research has shown that nearly 60 percent of a school's impact on student achievement is attributable to principal and teacher effectiveness, 25 percent being directly attributable to principals. This statistic is not surprising given that principals are responsible for hiring teachers, developing school culture, and serving as instructional leaders.

With the other 33 percent of a school's impact being attributable to teachers, the principal's role in attracting and retaining effective teachers is key to making substantial achievement gains that are sustained over time. Effective principals ensure a high quality teaching staff through human capital management and instructional leadership, including the critical work of retaining the best teachers. In one recent survey of 40,000 teachers, "96 percent rated supportive leadership as absolutely essential or very important to retaining good teachers, more than any other factor." Therefore, whole-school change led by an effective principal is a crucial component of any effort to promote improved student learning and teacher effectiveness.

As the Chief Executive Officer and co-founder of New Leaders for New Schools, I am pleased to provide some information about our learnings so far on improving teacher and leader success from our current principal training work in over 400 schools serving 220,000 mostly low-income students in high-poverty communities in nine States across the United States—including: California, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Tennessee and Wisconsin—as well as the District of Columbia.

Just as important as our direct work and impact on leaders and children, New Leaders has become an innovative action tank blending the power of a think tank

with the results of and lessons learned from dozens of schools and school systems, including documenting and sharing practices through our Effective Practices Incentive Community (EPIC) across 26 States along with Washington, DC. In addition to our internal analyses, we have partnered with RAND, which has designed a longitudinal research project that provides critical learning to our organization. Using the results of these analyses, we are learning what's working and what's not so that we can not only improve our principal training program but also share out our learnings to inform education policy at all levels.

Our data show that New Leaders principals are outperforming their peers by statistically significant margins. The percent of New Leaders K–8 principals beyond their first year making breakthrough gains in their schools increased from 15 percent in 2007 to 31 percent in 2009, even as our community has increased in size. And New Leaders-led high schools are also graduating students at higher rates and increasing the percent of graduates by wider margins than other schools.

Our analysis of the principals that have made breakthrough gains reveal that the patterns of what is happening in these schools, particularly as it pertains to phases of school improvement and school culture, are incredibly consistent. The schools these principals are leading serve as proof points that: (1) all students can achieve at high levels, and (2) the patterns found in these schools can be scaled. It is the data and insights that we have gained from our work in these high-need schools that form the foundation of the following recommendations for ESEA reauthorization:

(1) First, the reauthorization must place a critical focus on school leadership both in terms of investments and accountability in effective school leadership. Currently, only a tiny portion of the title II funds which make up the largest single vehicle for addressing this need and opportunity goes to school leadership. Senator Franken and Senator Hatch's proposed *School Principal Recruitment and Training Act of 2009*, which creates a competitive funding stream devoted to school leadership, serves as an important foundation on which Congress can build to ensure truly effective leadership in every school.

(2) Second, the reauthorization should create a child- and performance-oriented approach to school leadership, including tracking outcomes and strategies for developing leaders to use as a means of accountability and continuous improvement. ESEA can focus on principal performance by:

a. Incentivizing States and school systems to measure principal effectiveness in a meaningful way that includes but is not limited to looking at student achievement impact and the practices correlating to those gains.

b. Investing in professional development for principals and other school leaders and tying that professional development to data and results. As instructional leaders, principals are a major driver of professional development for teachers, they play a major role in teacher evaluations, and they are also the number one factor for teacher retention. Investment in the ongoing professional development of principals is crucial to promote teacher effectiveness and student achievement gains, especially in high-need schools and school systems.

c. Requiring teacher and principal preparation programs to track their graduates and ensure results—including their placement in and impact on high-need schools and districts—and base future investments upon those results, irrespective of their status as traditional or alternative routes to certification.

d. Investing in research and evaluation of human capital initiatives that are tied to student achievement, so that we can effectively identify what works and doesn't work, what explains the difference and incorporate those lessons into our work at scale.

(3) Third, ESEA should be used as a vehicle to drive innovation and improvement through a much greater focus on competitive and performance-based grants. While formula-based funds are critical to ensuring more widespread reforms and results, it is essential that we incent all education stakeholders to drive dramatic change by focusing on quality and results in a competitive system. Building on this direction, we would recommend ensuring clear alignment of all the teacher and leader funding streams, both formula and competitive-based.

(4) Fourth, ESEA should limit and even reduce the number of compliance-oriented requirements for schools and schools systems. School change does not happen by mandating a laundry list of prescribed regulations; rather, we should be clear around the non-negotiable expectations, but still be flexible enough to enable educators to spend more time focusing on student achievement.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share our recommendations, which are based on New Leaders' 10 years of working in high-need schools. I appreciate your

continued leadership on these issues and I would be happy to discuss these issues in further detail to help inform your work to strengthen the ESEA to realize its full potential in making major strides in student achievement outcomes for our Nation's children.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Schnur.

Now, a couple of guidelines to help run this smoothly. If anyone wants to answer questions being asked or respond to a comment, take your nameplate and stand it like that. And I have got someone here who is going to try to keep track of the order so I can keep it moving. The same goes for Senators who are here. If you want to ask a question, just put your nameplate up like that and I will call on you and in no particular order.

[Laughter.]

And if any of you—are we also going to talk about discipline in schools?

[Laughter.]

Ms. FESMIRE. I tell people all the time that teaching is like driving a dog sled pulled by cats.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. If any of you want to leap in or say something, just turn your nameplate up or hold it up and I will call on you too.

Senator Franken.

#### SENATOR FRANKEN

Senator FRANKEN. Thank you.

Mr. Schnur, thank you for talking about principals. Senator Hatch and I have a bill we have introduced for recruitment and training of principals. I just want to talk to you or ask you about—obviously, the teachers are the most important thing, but you are talking about how principals basically recruit teachers themselves and create the ethos in the school and are responsible for leading in the school. And yet, we really have put very, very, very little focus on the training of principals.

Part of what our bill does is create a kind of a residency where you spend a year, if you are an aspiring principal or a principal who wants to become a better principal, with a principal who has successfully turned a school around. Is that a model that you have seen that has worked? And this is open to anybody, obviously, but I just thought I would go with you.

Mr. SCHNUR. Yes, Senator Franken. Thank you for your leadership. The legislation that you have introduced and Senator Hatch has introduced on school leadership I think is an exemplar of what can be done in school leadership. New Leaders for New Schools runs residency-based principal training programs in 10 States across the country. We select 7 percent of applicants. We invest in a year of training as a residency with a great principal, several years of coaching on the job. So we have studied very carefully as an action tank. At New Leaders, we say it is not a think tank but an action tank of lots of schools, lots of data. What have we learned?

The big message I would give you is I think the results from the training programs with residencies are—the principals are getting better results than the school systems they are in. I think it is a

wise investment. I think your legislation's focus on performance and tracking that data on achievement, on retention, and using that to determine whether on an ongoing basis you would fund programs in a performance-based way is great not only for accountability but driving the continuous improvement that we are seeing in our programs. So thank you.

Senator FRANKEN. This all comes down to, in every aspect of this, in teachers and everything, on evaluation and how you evaluate. And I think that is something other Senators are going to want to get into. But what I heard as a common theme was to use the evaluation of teachers and principals as a part of the development, just as the evaluation that we are talking about in terms of growth models for kids, that the students—the evaluation of how the kids are doing be used as a way of teaching, be used diagnostically, be able to be used by teachers so that the assessment process and the evaluation process are part of the learning process. That is not a question.

The CHAIRMAN. I assume that all the people who have their nameplates up want to respond on point to Senator Franken. I will try to keep these in order. We will start with Ms. Weingarten, and then Benbow, Moir, Parmenter, Kane, and Fesmire. All on this point. Is it a question or a statement?

Ms. WEINGARTEN. I think Senator Franken is absolutely right. We have spent a bunch of time looking at this issue as has Senator Bennet and Senator Reed. Both of them have put together incredibly powerful bills on how to focus on teacher evaluation. They do it a little bit differently, but both of them should be commended for the bills that they have put in in terms of looking at this.

But the issue, though, is it has to be teacher development and evaluation and it has to be done in a continuous model, in some ways just like the speaker all the way to the left, Jon, has said because if you just simply look at evaluation, then it becomes a got 'cha, and it becomes the end of the road not at the beginning of the road.

But the continuous model that Tom Kane was talking about is also important because if you are only looking at data, particularly data on what is still very flawed tests—the testing systems that we have these days are still quite flawed. We have to look at multiple measures. We have to look at teacher practice. We have to inform that practice, and then we have to look at evidence of student learning.

So what we are actually trying to get districts to do is to see if we can get 25 to 50 districts this year with their unions like Douglas County in Colorado to actually start building and developing those kind of continuous development and improvement evaluation systems and ultimately, if we get that, it will work.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. Ms. Benbow, could you weigh in on this?

Ms. BENBOW. The Principal Leadership Academy of Nashville does exactly what you are describing. We take aspiring principals and sitting principals. In the summer, they have an intensive experience with us where they learn about learning because principals should be leaders of learning. They learn about how to create change and, of course, other aspects too. It is very intensive. Then it is a yearlong program where they are attached to a mentor, an

experienced principal who has been effective. They also have a project. The program continues throughout the year. They meet monthly to reflect on their practice, that they are learning. And then it continues for 1 more year beyond that.

We have been doing this with Nashville in a cohort fashion for over 10 years. We have trained almost all principals coming through. But it has been extremely effective. It has been done in partnership with the Nashville schools. So they were part of the design team, and I mentioned this in my comments because I think it is an example of effective practice. So I encourage you to push forward with your efforts. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Moir?

Ms. MOIR. Yes. I wanted to just add. I think we have underestimated for all these years the critical importance of principals. Principal development, principal recruitment, selection, support, and development is hugely important. I think your bill and that of Senator Reed are just so incredibly important to not forget principal development.

Linking teacher evaluation, just as you just heard, around this continuous improvement, not just as an end in its own, but as a way for teachers and principals to learn how to become better faster.

The last point I want to make—and it is really tied also to your comment and question, Senator Harkin—is who leaves teaching within the first 3 to 5 years and why are they leaving. Well, we are not exactly sure who is leaving, but I would hazard a guess that it is some of your top candidates. They are the ones who are leaving because they are very frustrated with the system.

But our teaching and learning conditions indicate that the top three reasons why teachers are leaving are, number one, because of a principal, lack of solid leadership in the school. The second reason they are leaving is because there are not good leadership opportunities for them. And third, they are leaving because of a lack of mentoring and induction.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Parmenter.

Mr. PARMENTER. Yes. I would just certainly agree with that last statement. As principals, we definitely need to step up and make sure that we are doing a good job in teacher evaluation systems, giving teachers feedback so that they can improve. There is no question about that.

But I would also argue that we are a fairly young group demographically nationally, and we are going to need some training. I thought about if I had to go to a really high-poverty school—we have some poverty, but say, for example, you said to me I have to go to a high-poverty school, not great parent support—you can imagine all the different demographics you can get and how difficult it would be. That would be a terribly daunting thing to do. So I think we need training in how to turn schools around, especially if they are low.

And the other place I mentioned is early literacy.

We are going to have to find our way a little bit on this one, but the total number of days of staff development I have had provided to me in my district over 10 years of being a principal is about 2. I go out and I get staff development. It is not like I do not. And

it is kind of a rural school thing. We have three principals in our entire school district. So I have to go out to get it. It is expensive. It is time-consuming. I am away from the building. So we do need to provide in my mind a funding source that will help us be better at what we do. I think there is no lack of desire on the part of teachers or principals to do a great job. I think we do about the best we know how to do, all of us. So a little bit more training I think. A lot more training.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, now, let us see. I want to move ahead to other Senators. Mr. Kane and Ms. Fesmire, on this point?

Mr. KANE. The most important decision a principal makes is whether or not to tenure a teacher, and yet today, without any objective information, principals tenure pretty much anybody who is willing to stick around the classroom 2 or 3 years. They punt. So actually I think the most powerful thing we could do to help principals do their job is to give them better objective data on the performance of their teachers and to empower them to make the tough decisions that we are expecting them to make.

Ms. FESMIRE. I am really going to be quick.

The reason I think that we have had such success in my district is because our principals have been expected to be a part of curricular reform that we have in our district. So our principals attend all of the professional development that their staff attends. We have continuous improvement and advisory days built into our school calendar that our principals are a part of grade level meetings. They work with instructional coaches. You know, I have been teaching a long time, and I will be a long time more.

But what I have seen about principal effectiveness is my principal no longer sees himself as a CEO, as a manager. He sees himself as the instructional leader in my building. And I think that is what has made a huge difference in our school district is having those principals part of the professional development that is happening.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, Ms. Hirsh.

Ms. HIRSH. Thank you. I just want to follow up on that comment to say in addition to a great preparation program, great school systems ensure that there is professional development for principals as a leadership group and then great school districts expect principals to participate in their school professional development with their teachers. Teachers need to see that principals prioritize what they expect to see happen in classrooms.

The CHAIRMAN. Again, I am inviting Senators who are here, if you have comments on this point that you wanted to give, jump in, go ahead and interrupt. I do not need to even call on you if you have something on this point. My card is telling me there was Senator Murkowski, Senator Bennet, and Senator Alexander, in that order. But again, I did not know if anybody had a specific—

#### SENATOR MURKOWSKI

Senator MURKOWSKI. I was going to follow up on the mentoring aspect specifically, and I appreciate your comments, Ms. Moir, because we have seen in Alaska some really very promising results with the teacher mentoring program. It has been really exciting because we are struggling with some issues as they relate to recruit-

ment and retention, and we are really seeing those gains within the mentoring.

But I am curious because not everybody is a good teacher and not everybody is a good mentor. Mr. Valenzuela, I was interested. You said you were very fortunate you had a good mentor, and the two attributes that you listed were that they were young and they had 9 years of experience, not necessarily indicators that it is going to be a good match.

Tell me how we make sure that we really have good mentors, whether it is for the teachers or the mentors or the principals. I think that that has to be an aspect of what we are doing to provide for these training opportunities and for the professional development. So I throw that out to the group.

The CHAIRMAN. Before you answer, is this sort of on your point?

SENATOR REED

Senator REED. My point was to say that Ms. Fesmire made a point more eloquently than I have made in a long, long time, which is principals have to be educational leaders not bus monitors, milk fund trustees. We all know of principals that have to look out in poor schools to make sure kids have coats. This ties into accountability too. If we are going to hold principals truly accountable—I mean, we say they are instructional leaders, but what really gets them fired is if the buses do not run on time or the buildings leak—then they are going to have to be educational leaders. We have to orient our accountability systems and our evaluation systems so that at the end of the day principals survive or fail based upon their interaction with teachers and the development of teachers. And if we do that, I think we will be in good shape. You made the point better, and I thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Weingarten and Ms. Benbow.

Ms. WEINGARTEN. Senator, you can do this in terms of residency programs and some career ladder programs that some of the districts are doing, some are not. But if you create career ladder programs and some of these kind of residency programs that some of the speakers are talking about—Ellen has created them. Others I am sure have created them. We have created them in New York City when I was there.

But a career ladder program would be one where you identify great teachers. I am always leery about using one point of data. Through a multiple measure process, you create lead teachers. We did that in the South Bronx. We then had them work intensively with new teachers, and we saw the South Bronx scores soar in the next year. So there are ways of doing that in terms of both growing your own in residency programs as well as career ladders.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Benbow.

Ms. BENBOW. Yes. We have actually developed an instrument to measure the effectiveness of school leadership, and if you want to have a mentor, you want an effective school leader. Through the research, we have identified several components of what makes a good leader. There are high standards for student learning. They promote rigorous curriculum. They themselves can demonstrate quality instruction. They promote a culture of learning and profes-

sional behavior. They are strong connections to the community, and they believe in performance accountability. There are other things like planning, implementing, and supporting, but yes, there are ways of identifying who are the effective principals, and those are the ones that you want to be mentors. Of course, there are other attributes of being a mentor, to being able to be a coach, and so on that goes beyond that, but I think that is the first stop that you need to get to.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Valenzuela, did have a point on this?

Mr. VALENZUELA. Yes. I just wanted to say that it is not just that my mentor was young. She was 31 at the time but had spent 9 years teaching across different districts. So it was not just that, but I think her open-mindedness about allowing another individual into the classroom—I know other teachers can speak to this, but there is something territorial about a classroom that you want to run your show in the way that you are comfortable. And I think good mentors allow experimentation. They allow teachers who are learning the craft to try different things. So I think it is not that a resident is your assistant and photocopier and gets coffee. It is that you are really trying things that you are learning in graduate courses.

And mentors definitely need training. I know our program spends a lot of time giving mentors opportunities to learn about how to include teachers in the process of planning, instruction, all the things that have been mentioned here.

So I think on the very fundamental level, mentor-resident relationships are just that. They are a relationship that requires teacher collaboration at the most essential level because you are with a mentor for an entire year. You spend a lot of hours with that person. So those are the things that I could say make a strong relationship.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Moir, then Mr. Schnur. Then we will go to Senator Bennet.

Ms. MOIR. I will just tie into what José just said. I think historically we sort of think of a mentor or a coach as the buddy next door who has time on their timetable. We are talking about something very rigorous, about careful selection. And so the criteria we think about is that the teacher him or herself has to be an expert teacher and you have to use, as Randi just said, multiple measures, multiple ways of assessing through interview, through looking at student achievement test score data, by looking at the kind of literacy approach a teacher has in their classroom, by just making sure they are meeting school benchmark assessments, that these teachers themselves or even principal coaches are outstanding in the work they do. It could be a terrible waste of money if we just had the status quo and people that are not very good are teaching people how to be not very good. So again, it is stepping up that level of rigor.

The final point I want to make is tying this into a career lattice or a career ladder is critically important. It gives teachers a chance to see a pathway for a career that includes teaching kids but also includes the best and the brightest teaching other teachers or other principals how to teach or be principals.

Mr. SCHNUR. I would just add 10 years ago when New Leaders for New Schools began a principal mentoring residency-based program—and we sort of pioneered and many think of us as the leading national example of this kind of approach for school leadership. What I would tell you is I wish we had known 10 years ago what we know now because we learned a lot about what works and does not work. And I think the implications are very direct for the Federal Government.

Just very briefly. One is there are a set of qualities that we have seen, a set of behaviors and qualities for school leaders that are very consistent for the school leaders that are getting big gains and for whether people are becoming principals or principal mentors or teacher leaders who are moving into other leadership positions. There are very consistent qualities that essentially boil down to people who understand how to drive instructional improvement with data, how to create cultures of high expectations and personal responsibility among adults in the school for student outcomes, the code of conduct in the school that allows there to be discipline, focus on learning with a caring environment, a focus on talent, finding great talent, developing great talent, evaluating talent well, and being willing to counsel people out and dismiss people when they have had support and had fair measures, but nonetheless should not be in the school anymore.

And finally, the personal leadership that they need. There are certain values. The blend of both having a spine to stand up for what is right, but having the interpersonal skills, the leadership to understand how to bring many, not everybody, but many people along. And those qualities I think have been the—most program selecting principals or mentors for principals have not looked at those qualities.

The other point I would make is no matter how good a program it is—and our program I think is considered quite good, and I do think there is a role for external organizations like New Leaders for New Schools and partnering with school systems and others. In the end, I think the way this gets done on scale is through school systems that are both holding people accountable but then have the dollars to really invest day in/day out in people's leadership so that your mentor is not just your mentor, but your associate superintendent who is managing the principal understands how to play that role. If they are held accountable in exchange for investments at all levels in the school system from the time you are a third-year teacher, the time you are a master principal or what Ellen was saying, having a career ladder and lattice—the opportunity to do competitive grants in my view for programs in districts creating examples that could be documented and evaluated for how school systems could take what is learned and take it to scale is a big opportunity for the Senate.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Bennet.

#### STATEMENT OF SENATOR BENNET

Senator BENNET. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it. I wish I could be here all day. I am running out for a Holocaust remembrance. My mom and her parents survived the war, the Holo-

caust in Warsaw, and then my mom was a proud product of the New York City public schools. So it is nice to see you here.

I want to remind us for a moment why we are here. I think there are roughly about 100 people sitting around this table today. If these 100 people were children in poverty in our country, eighth graders, 15 of them would be proficient in math, and if they were ninth graders, roughly 9 of them would graduate from a 4-year college. So that is where we are today in terms of our outcomes.

I admire everybody that is up here and actually agree with everything that has been said. My own personal view is that as long as we have a system that was largely designed in colonial America and we have a human capital system that was designed in the labor market that discriminated against women, our chances of changing those odds no matter what we do are very unlikely.

I wonder if any of you that feel a response to anything that I just said—and take it in the spirit in which I am saying it as a supporter of the work that all of you are doing—how important it is for people in this town to understand what value we attach to innovation versus keeping the system the way that it is and what implications that has for the way we should think about the very underpinnings of how the Federal Government approaches the funding of public education in this country.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, you know, can I raise mine? Where is mine?

[Laughter.]

I have said for many years, can someone show me in the Constitution of the United States where it says that elementary and secondary education is to be funded by property taxes? Where is that? Why do we do that?

What first got me onto this is in the 1980s when I read Jonathan Kozol's book, *Savage Inequalities*.

Why are there poor schools in poor areas and nicer schools in nice areas? Well, look at your property tax system. Now that started in colonial times.

Senator BENNET. Right.

The CHAIRMAN. Now, it started in colonial times because that is the only taxing system they had at the time, property taxes and some excise import. They had some tariffs and stuff that they used at that time to fund education.

And in pre-colonial times, they wanted to have a free public education in America. They wanted free public education, well, for white males. But then that extended on and we kept having that system of funding through property taxes.

And then later on, it morphed into a system of what I call subtle segregation. If you lived in a better area of town, you had your property taxes. You had your school system. You did not have to let those other people into your schools. I am not just talking about racial segregation. I am talking about economic segregation. And so we continued that whole policy all the way through.

The Federal Government never got involved in elementary and secondary education. Never. It never really got involved in education until—the first was the land grant colleges. Mostly it was in higher education. Not until the Elementary and Secondary Edu-

cation Act of 1965. It was the first time the Federal Government ever got involved in trying to level that field a little bit.

Now, some States have had equalization formulas. Our State has one. They work somewhat. Some States do it better than others, but it is a hodgepodge around there.

So I think Senator Bennet has raised the essential question. If we do not change this underpinning of how this is all funded and how this is all paid for—I do not know if that is the essence of your question, Senator Bennet, but it is sort of the underpinning of how this is structured.

I have often said that the genius of the American education system is its diversity, the experimentation, the innovations that go on in Wyoming or in Tennessee or Alaska because you do not have this top-down, everybody learns the same thing kind of structure that I have seen in other countries that they tout as a good education system. Nuts. It is not a good education system. The diversity and the innovation we have in this country has been an inspiration for other countries. That is the genius of the American system.

The failure of the American system is how we pay for it. And we always pay for it through a screwed-up system called property taxes. And it seems to me the essential question is how do we keep that genius part, the diversity, the experimentation, the innovation type but pay for it in a different way that equalizes it. And let us make sure that these under-performing schools have the wherewithal to hire the best teachers, get the best technology, the equipment, the new kinds of technologies that kids will need to be able to work in the future.

Well, anyway, I did not mean to go off on that, but you triggered that.

Senator BENNET. Well, if you do not mind, I just want to jump off and add a couple things, and then I want to hear from the panelists.

I actually did not have that in mind, but it is also a huge part of the issue. In an America where everyone lived in town, using the property tax was actually a pretty progressive way of funding education because you had wealthy people living in the town. You had poor people living in town. Everybody made a contribution to the system. And that, of course, has not been true in this country for many, many, many years. We do not live that way anymore. We have suburbs and we have spread out from our towns.

But I also have in mind the fact that our kids—a lot of you talked about continuous improvement. Our kids and adults are in their buildings for 9 months out of the year. Then they are interrupted for 3 months of the year. It belongs to that calendar that you are talking about. It is not very constructive for continuous improvement.

People on this panel have fought and fought and fought to get 2 days at the beginning of the year, for example, to be able to do professional development with teachers. Well, we have got 3 months in the middle of the summer when we could be using that for other things.

We once lived in a labor market where a teacher knew, because she was a woman, that nobody was ever going to ask her to be an

engineer, and therefore, she would gladly teach Julius Caesar every year for 30 years because nobody was ever going to ask her to do anything else. That has not been true, thank goodness, for 30 years.

But we are, year after year after year, losing 50 percent of the people from the profession, or whatever the number is, but that is the number the chairman used. And somebody here observed that we have got to hire 1.5 million new teachers and replace half our workforce over the next 7 years. Are we seriously going to do that with a theory of human capital that belongs to the 1950s or before?

So I will stop. Let me get off my soapbox.

The CHAIRMAN. Everybody has got their cards up on this. What the heck.

[Laughter.]

Ms. WEINGARTEN. As Senator Dodd came in—Senator Bennet and I have had these conversations privately for a very long time. But as Senator Dodd came in, I just want to say we are looking at trying to figure out how you do actually change systems. It is not just the agrarian model. It is the Industrial Revolution model. Basically our high schools and junior high schools around the country are basically factories, and in some ways, the testing has made them even more like factories because people say, okay, let us just do well on that English or that math test. And there has been a real narrowing curriculum.

So the one thing I would like to say is what is happening in New Haven, Connecticut is actually a really incredible model because the city, the mayor, the education system, the foundations, the teachers union are actually trying to change the entire system of education. They did an agreement to agree in October. I was sitting with the mayor yesterday. They have met every single one of their benchmarks. They are filing for two I-3s right now for both the wraparound services that kids need so we can compete with poverty, as well as the money to really revamp the evaluation and the training systems, as we have just discussed. I would watch what is going on in terms of New Haven because that is a city that is actually trying to change the entire system.

The CHAIRMAN. Interesting.

#### SENATOR DODD

Senator DODD. I thank you, Randi, for bringing that up. Actually we got everyone together and unfortunately Secretary Duncan could not make it, so we had him call in. He was over the top in his praise of the efforts that have been made by the mayor and others.

Michael knows New Haven well. This is not just an urban setting. There are some very, very strong neighborhoods financially in New Haven. It is a very diverse population within the city. So when you think of an urban setting, sometimes we have a tendency to think of it as being just poor. You can go down the road to Bridgeport, Connecticut. It is a different story economically, but New Haven is different.

So Randi's point here is that really is an incredible model for bringing these elements together.

What we might do, Mr. Chairman, is it might be interesting to maybe just do something on the New Haven model at some point here and have people get familiar with it.

Ms. WEINGARTEN. That would be great.

Senator DODD. But I thank you, Randi, for bringing it up.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Fesmire. We will just go on down.

Ms. FESMIRE. In my district, when we looked at curricular reform and we looked at literacy best practices and an elementary math initiative, we looked at improving all of our schools. All the schools in our district, save the one on our wonderful Air Force base, are all title I schools. We have socioeconomic challenges in my school. And we are in southern New Mexico. So we also have linguistic challenges and cultural challenges too.

But when we looked at improving our teachers and improving our education, we looked at improving everyone. My school came from a performing school with scores that met the criteria with scores in the 40s and 50s up to scores in the 80s and outranking every school in my State with mathematics mastery scores.

But the school right down the street from us that sits near the Federal housing—we brought a principal from a high-performing school to that school. We brought in new teachers from our new teacher program, and moved excellent teachers from other schools into that school. And that school went through the same training that we did and they doubled their scores. So they moved out of the not meeting into the meeting expectations.

I think we have to think about not just moving people who are not proficient, not just looking at things that are not working, but moving everyone forward, bringing change to all parts of schools. So schools that are doing well do even better. Schools that are not doing well continue to do better.

And I think something we have not mentioned today that is critically important is that we recognize the importance of technology not only the technology that is going to be needed by our students because who knows what jobs they are going to have when they graduate. Those kids that are in my elementary school are going to graduate in the 2020s. What kind of jobs are going to be available for them? I am not sure. We have to look at the technology that they need.

But we also have to utilize the technology that is available to us in education. When we did our elementary math initiative, we looked to Denver public schools who had done an elementary math initiative several years prior to that. And the reason we were able to make that connection is because they had posted on their Web site all that information about how they made that math initiative work in their school district. So our little, tiny district does not have the funds to create a math initiative like Denver did and hire all those people. But we were able to use their research on how they were able to do it because it is part of the worldwide web, because we can share with teachers all over the world. We can globally share innovations and things that are working if we use the technology that our students already know how to use.

The CHAIRMAN. And they do know how.

Yes, Mr. Daly.

Mr. DALY. I would like to thank Senator Bennet and Senator Harkin for raising this issue of equity, and I think this is something we should pause over a little bit because it was not mentioned nearly enough at the front end of the hearing.

You pointed out very accurately that we started funding education at the Federal level in 1965, which was not a mistake. It really was about equity. The purpose of funding education is equity for poor kids, equity for children with disabilities.

We had already achieved access to school without Federal intervention in education. Everyone was going to school in 1965. The reason that we have Federal funding is because they were not getting access to education.

We have, unfortunately, not made a whole lot of progress since 1965 at helping the poor and minority children. We are still getting really horrible outcomes for poor kids. What they need access to is not just equity of resources, which is important, but they also need access to excellent teachers and excellent schools. Frankly, we do not have the tools in the Federal Code right now to deliver that because we do not know who the excellent teachers are. There is no information. If you were to look and say where is this resource that we are supposed to make sure kids get equitable access to these great teachers, tell us who they are, the school districts could not tell you because every single teacher in most districts is getting a high rating. And these teachers are not assigning these to themselves. It is not the teacher's fault. It is that we have never demanded of States and districts that they have any kind of legitimate evaluation system, so you all could even know whether you are getting equitable distribution or not.

So I would urge you to think carefully about the levers that are available in the legislation to push for this finally because it has been way too long since poor kids got a fair shot at this.

The CHAIRMAN. Why, Mr. Daly, then—as I said in my opening statement, in high-poverty schools it is twice as common—that we will have teachers who are unqualified to teach in subjects? Why is that happening?

Mr. DALY. We do know about their qualifications, and that is important.

The CHAIRMAN. Does that have to do with money?

Mr. DALY. Does that have to do with money? It has something to do with money, but it does not have nearly as much to do with money as you might think.

Ms. FESMIRE. It has a lot more to do with working for a great leader and having instructional support and professional development.

The CHAIRMAN. You go to these high-poverty schools. They do not have good heating and ventilation systems. The physical structures are bad. They do not have high-tech equipment that they have in high-income schools in the suburban schools. They do not have all the niceties. They do not have a nice swimming pool. They do not have all those kinds of nice things. So teachers would say, well, if the pay is the same, I would rather teach in a really nice school.

Senator ALEXANDER. I just wanted to add something onto Senator Bennet's question because we are going down the aisle, and I just wanted to make sure I got it from all of those there.

When a Governor or a superintendent like Senator Bennet turns around and says I would like to pay good teachers more so that we can keep them in the classroom, I would like to identify the best teachers to send them over to this failing school and turn it around, I would like to offer the best teachers 10- or 11-month contracts for some extra programs that we have, the difficulty is that there is no one to answer the question about how do we figure out who the best teachers are. And I am just so pleased to see even this discussion today based on where—I mean, in 1983 I asked that question as a Governor when not one State paid one teacher 1 penny more for teaching well, and I suggested, well, I will raise taxes and we will pay teachers 70 percent more if they will go up a career ladder and be master teachers. Albert Shanker said if we can have master plumbers, we can have master teachers and helped to create an environment where we could figure that out.

But basically the response from the educational community was you cannot pay some teachers more than others. That is one. And two is there is no way to figure it out anyway what an effective teacher is. And three was we will do everything we can to kill your idea.

So we came up with a plan, after a year-and-a-half brawl, that included all of the things that have been mentioned today. Mr. Kane, you mentioned many of them. It included a student portfolio, the principal evaluation. We used a panel of teachers from outside the school district, including one who was a teacher of that particular—no teacher had to do this. This did not interfere with tenure. It was all on top. Ten thousand teachers voluntarily went through it. It was sort of the Model T of rewarding outstanding teaching. And when I left office, of course, gradually the NEA killed it in our State.

Now, what I am hearing from everyone here is that great progress has been made, and I have watched it being made. And Ms. Weingarten in her testimony says that if all we need to do is to separate effective and ineffective teachers for purpose of compensation, then we can do that.

I guess what I would like to hear from Mr. Kane and everybody else is if a Governor today or a school superintendent or anyone turns around to say can you give me some ways so that I can figure out who the effective teachers are in my district, are there multiple answers for that? And if there are not, what can we do to encourage more of that? I should say in fairness that we now have a President and an Education Secretary who have said figuring that out is sort of the holy grail of education.

The question we have here is what can we do to create more projects, for example, like the one you have at Harvard, Mr. Kane, or the one Vanderbilt has or there may be others. Specifically what can we do to encourage those of us who are elected who ask the question, how can we figure out what an effective teacher is, how can we relate effective teaching to student performance and then use it in the multiple ways that we want to use it?

The CHAIRMAN. Well, Mr. Kane, you are up.

Mr. KANE. So I think that the best thing the Federal Government can do to try to answer that question, Senator, is to say two

things, not to get too prescriptive about exactly what measures get used, but to say two things.

One, in the grades and subjects where it is possible to track student achievement gains over the course of the year because there are assessments in those grades and subjects, student achievement gains need to be part of a teacher performance evaluation.

And then second, any other non-test-based measure, whether it is a classroom observation, a rating by a principal, a rating by an external observer, whether it is student evaluations or some other approach to doing performance evaluation that we have not even thought of yet, if a State wants to use that as part of their teacher performance evaluation system, they need to show that in the grades and subjects where they have both student achievement gains and these other measures, that they are identifying the same teachers.

Senator ALEXANDER. Well, Mr. Kane, it is one thing to require it. I mean, our law required it in 1984, but there was not any way to do it.

Mr. KANE. So these days, a lot has changed, as you know, since 1984. So in 1984, it would have been really hard to track students and attach them to teachers and track gains in achievement. That is much easier these days now that States have invested in data systems. There are a few that could do it very quickly, that are already positioned. Tennessee, for instance, has a data system that would be capable of that. There are many other States that are not quite there yet. But there could be a timeline for saying, okay, if you do not have a way of establishing a teacher of record for each tested student in the tested grades, you have got to develop one within a year or within 2 years and start to track that and have that be part of the system.

The other parts—as I said, it will be—you know, we are testing a new approach to doing classroom observation using digital video. We actually think it is a cheap way. We are trying to drive down the costs of doing it. One of these cameras that we use for this is about \$2,500 per school. So that starts to get into the more affordable range. But lots of other States and districts will just decide to do it the old-fashioned way with an adult in the back of the classroom and a checklist.

Now, if they decide to do that, fine, but they are going to have to be able to show that the scores that come out of that process are related to student achievement gains. If they are just giving everybody a satisfactory, then that is not going to be predictive of student achievement gains, and as a result, that kind of evaluation would not turn out to be acceptable under this framework. So if there were some minimum relationship between these non-test-based things and an objective measure of student achievement in the grades and subjects where you can do that that would be a quality control mechanism you guys could require.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Hirsh.

Ms. HIRSH. I want to approach this maybe slightly differently. Because we do not have data in every subject area—we do not test in every subject area—and yet we do have outcomes that we expect for students in whatever subject they are taking or whatever grade

they are in at the moment. What our ultimate desire is that the students successfully achieve those outcomes.

So while we are developing new systems—and I am excited about all the investment in the new systems for evaluating principals and evaluating teachers—students are in school today. And we can ask teachers to work in collaborative teams to identify the benchmarks by which their students will be measured, if it is in art, music, PE, math, or language arts. We can say here is what our students will be able to accomplish at the end of the year and here is the evidence that we will be able to give you. And we can ask our teachers to work together collectively and share responsibility for the results of all their students, and they can pull together the portfolios, the data, the student practice, student performance data, and they can document for school leaders, for the district leaders how their students have moved this year.

We have all talked about the importance of multiple forms of data, and I think teachers are the best ones to go to to say in this particular course, this is the way students can document that they have achieved the outcomes. And at the same time, we can promote that good practices and the knowledge and skills of the best teacher in the grade level or the subject area are shared across the team. We do not want some students in a classroom where a teacher is struggling right next door to a teacher who is having great success not to have the incentive to work together.

So we can start today changing the way we organize schools, without having to think about how we blow up schools, very simply asking and setting systems where teachers are expected to collaborate. And it is what teachers say. In the most recent MetLife study of the American teacher, 67 percent of principals and teachers said collaboration was key to student success in all schools.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Moir, I just got notified we have two votes starting at 12:10. So we have got about 25 minutes to go.

Ms. MOIR. Okay. I will make just three comments on this.

The first is to Senator Bennet who is not in the room any longer. But I want to just highlight that never in the history of education, to my knowledge, have we placed teachers in such a prominent role in American education. And I want to urge us to capitalize on this opportunity. Data is important. Observation feedback. Knowing who is effective and who is not, knowing how to help people move from good to very good to excellent is key to success around issues of equity and around improving student learning in schools.

And we can blow this opportunity if we are not careful. We can blame teachers for all the problems that are happening in America's schools. I want to urge us to each think for a moment of a teacher that made a huge difference in our lives. Teachers are inspiring, engaging, thought-provoking, and incredibly important, and I want to make sure that the most underprivileged kids in America get those teachers.

The second point I want to say is that it is incredibly important to think about the New Haven model for a second. There is no way in American education, even in the finest innovations of just a school, a classroom, and teachers that we can possibly build out the kind of infrastructure and support that we need to ensure that the communities surrounding schools in high-poverty areas get the

kind of resources they need. So I would like to broaden the definition and think together about ensuring that it is not just a school, but schools are situated in the context of communities and we are bringing those supports to bear.

The third point I want to make, which is in my sweet spot in the New Teachers Center's work, is to build out standards across America so that every new teacher knows that whether they go into a low-performing school in Tennessee or in Alaska or in California, that they are going to get the kind of instructional support that they need to be on that path to excellence. We cannot leave this to chance.

The CHAIRMAN. Did you have an intervention on this point, Ms. Weingarten?

Ms. WEINGARTEN. Yes. This may be a bit controversial.

The difference, Senator Alexander, between what you were talking about and Mr. Kane, Tom, was talking about and what I am talking about is when you look at individual teachers, which is what Mr. Kane is trying to do, you actually are going to make the system worse, not better because individual teachers have always been isolated. So this is another way of, in some ways, isolating them. I am not saying that we do not do new and different evaluation systems. You know I have been out there talking about that and figuring out what the Rosetta Stone is in terms of evaluations.

But teaching is fundamentally different than business. And ultimately what we are all saying, if you look at the Gates studies, if you look at what the school practitioners are talking about, we are talking about how you change systems to make them really collaborative and collective where people are building on each other's knowledge. So the schools people on the panel will talk about support, not about accountability, will talk about how we make this real for all kids, like we are trying to do in New Haven, but we are talking about it in terms of a collective work, not individual work.

So that is why if we just look only at the data from flawed achievement tests now, achievement tests we are now throwing out and saying they have become the race to the bottom not the race to the top, then all we are doing is making the system worse not better.

So I am all for flexibility. I am all for looking at student learning, but we have to figure out how to do this thoughtfully, which is what in some ways Gates is doing with the two districts it is working on, in some ways, Senator, Benwood did. They initially did things in the way of like just looking at individual raw scores of teachers and saying, we are going to throw teachers out if their raw scores do not work. And then they decided to do a different process, a multiple-measured, collaborative process to turn around schools and that Benwood School District in Tennessee is doing outstandingly now.

Senator ALEXANDER. Mr. Chairman, I do not quite understand that. Are you saying you cannot—it is not a good idea to determine whether an individual teacher is effective?

Ms. WEINGARTEN. No. I am not saying that.

Senator ALEXANDER. It sounds like it.

Ms. WEINGARTEN. What I am saying is that we have to do individual evaluation systems.

Senator ALEXANDER. Right.

Ms. WEINGARTEN. But for individual teachers.

What I am saying is that the way in which Tom was approaching it with everything based upon the testing score and radiating out from that is not a good idea. Student learning, evidence of student learning as part of a teacher evaluation is very important, but it has to be done in a multiple-measured way.

Senator ALEXANDER. You are disagreeing with Mr. Kane.

Ms. WEINGARTEN. I am disagreeing with Mr. Kane.

Senator ALEXANDER. I got it.

Ms. WEINGARTEN. But what I am saying is that we have to figure out how to do evaluations better, more differentially, more thoughtfully. But what you have done in some ways in Tennessee in Benwood is a good exemplar. What some of the folks at Vanderbilt have done is a good exemplar. What Douglas County is starting to try to do is a good exemplar. It has to be done thoughtfully with a notion and understanding that this is a collective or collaborative venture not just individual.

Senator ALEXANDER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like 60 seconds more and then I will—

The CHAIRMAN. No. You have been very—

Senator ALEXANDER. I agree with Mr. Kane about relating the rest of the evaluation somehow to student achievement. I do not disagree with you that in the end the teaching enterprise is a collective enterprise. All I am saying is that the worst possible people to have to figure this out are people like me and even school superintendents. You really do not want Governors and Education Committee chairmen and the United States Senators to be figuring out a teacher evaluation system. You want to make it easy for a new Governor of Tennessee to turn around to someone and say I want to do all these things, I want to put my political capital on the line, raise taxes, and improve the schools, can you please give me five ways to tell me who the effective teachers are and how we can make it easy for me to do this because I am a politician not an educator. That is where I think the teachers unions and the colleges of education have, to put it constructively, done a lot better in the last 25 years than they did 25 years ago.

I understand it is hard. I do not know how to do it well, but I hate the idea that Governors and school superintendents are the ones who have to figure it out. I think the professional educators ought to figure this out and help us use these evaluations in whatever is the best way. And then I think we can get a lot more money in education. I can go sell up and down the street, paying a lot more money for Race to the Top and excellence. More money for more of the same is hard to sell politically. So that is my frustration.

Ms. WEINGARTEN. So one of the reasons—I am sorry.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Benbow, I know you have been anxious to get in on this.

Ms. BENBOW. Yes, I have because we are actually working on, right now, a national teacher performance assessment. We have partners in several States. So we are the lead institution in Ten-

nessee, and every institution in Tennessee is working on it but also with other States and also with AACTE.

We are using value-added measures. Of course, gains in student learning has to be part of the equation, but we are also looking at other factors. There are things like routines that teachers need to know and have in their quiver to be able to pull out when they need to do an intervention, and we are looking at them. We are also looking at teacher advance so they can see how are they teaching, how effective are they. What about their subject-matter knowledge? So, yes, value-add. Learning is part of it but there are many others.

What I would say is what can the Federal Government do. Help fund the research. We are doing it on our own. And I would encourage the Institute for Education Sciences to support research that can develop these instruments. So that is exactly what we are trying to do.

I would like to add one more thing while I have it. Money does make a difference. Look what happened in special education. Ever since 1975, we have invested mightily in special education and we have shown results.

I would say too that in terms of growing up the system or doing things, we are doing an experiment on performance incentives. We should have the results soon, whether performance incentives work. But I think we have to pay people more to work in hard-to-staff schools. Otherwise, why would they stay there and go there? And that is what we see. The best teachers leave those schools very, very quickly, and so we need to give them extra compensation.

The other final thing I would say is we also need to do early childhood. When students come to school, there already is an achievement gap. What teachers have to do is immediately begin remediation. Why can they not start on a level playing field?

Again, I would say money does make a difference. Sure, there are working conditions, but money is important.

The CHAIRMAN. I could not agree more. And I am going to call on Mr. Kane next.

I have a house out in Fairfax County. My two kids went to Fairfax County public schools. They have great public schools. They have all the facilities, the technologies. They have great teachers, principals. That is a rich county. A lot of rich people live out there, people like us who make a lot of money.

Go across the river right from where our house is. Go across the Potomac over to Prince George's County. Low income, poorer schools.

Take a really good teacher getting ready to go into teaching. Where is he or she going to want to go? They are going to want to go to that Fairfax County school. They have all the great money and all the great supports and everything else. Why would they want to go across the river to Prince George's?

Mr. Kane.

Mr. KANE. What I was describing before by validating these non-test-based things against value-added is, I think, essential to create some discipline on the system. Otherwise, it just becomes like my opinion of what good teaching looks like or somebody else's opinion

of what good teaching looks like, or it becomes favoritism on the part of a principal or peer group. All I am saying is we have to have these non-test-based measures. We have to have classroom observations. There has to be student evaluations, I would argue, that would be part of it.

But rather than sort of foist upon people things that are just our opinion, we ought to be able to show that the teachers who score better on whatever rubric we are using, the teachers who are using the practice that we are saying, okay, here is the practice we want you to be using in your classroom, we should be able to show that the people who do that are getting better student achievement gains because if they are not, we are wasting their time.

Now, on the State test, people may be unhappy with the State test. We are in the process of trying to improve those State tests. But also as part of the study I described—and by the way, one of the districts that is part of this is Memphis in Tennessee—we are adding on, on top of the State test, some of these open-ended, constructed response type items that probe more creative, problem-solving tasks, and we are going to be able to validate against those too.

States could do the same thing. If they are unhappy with the degree to which their assessments are incorporating those skills, they could add more items like that into the mix and still be able to, again, confirm that the folks who are doing the things that they say constitute effective teaching are actually getting bigger gains on whatever assessment you are using.

The CHAIRMAN. I do want to get to Mr. Valenzuela and Mr. Schnur, but I noticed that Senator Franken wants to say something on this point, in this area?

Senator FRANKEN. I think that growth is an important model here. Does everyone know McNamara's fallacy? Is that familiar? You mentioned, Mr. Kane, talking about results of tests of things that can be measured. And McNamara's fallacy is that things that can be easily measured will be measured and will be considered important, and things that cannot be measured easily will not be measured and will not be considered important. So what we measure is reading scores and math scores, but what we do not measure are the other things that are just hard to measure and people do not consider them important anymore. So critical thinking or creativity or all the other kinds of intelligence that the employers that I talk to want from students, from graduates, those we are not measuring.

And it is really interesting that today's discussion has talked about evaluating principals. In evaluating principals, we have to evaluate how their teachers have done. To evaluate teachers, you have to evaluate how the students have done. So it all boils down to how we make these assessments. So that is what we have gotten down to today, and that is what we are going—it a huge deal of what we are figuring out as we reauthorize ESEA.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Valenzuela.

Mr. VALENZUELA. So this is actually just a point to Senator Bennet's question or comment. I went to one of those colonial-era schools. I attended Boston Latin School, which is the oldest public school in the country, 1635.

[Laughter.]

Very old. And one of the things I remember from my experience is that with the exception of excellent teachers, my ethnicity, my background was not valued in school.

I think one of the things we have to measure as an effective teacher is what the Boston public schools calls safe and respectful communities and learning environments so that teachers have to create those as well, and that is part of what Boston and the Boston Teacher Residency is working with teachers on doing. And it is not to say that a person of color has a distinct advantage in an urban setting over their white counterparts, but it is to say that all teachers need to be cognizant of the fact that in front of them are students that have a range of backgrounds, whether it is socio-economic, whether it is their ethnicity.

In my room, it is a full range. I have kids with iPhones and kids with no cell phones at all. I have students from Jamaica, Haiti, Liberia, the Dominican Republic. I could go on. And what I know for a fact is that all of them can contribute something very special in that room. And I think that it is not enough to say that we need to get effective teachers. We need to include that diversity in the teaching force as well so that students get to see more than just the white female teacher. No offense, Ms. Fesmire. But to say that we need to definitely include a range of diverse backgrounds from the bottom to the top.

That is all I wanted to add.

The CHAIRMAN. That is one thing we have been discussing here. Only 2 percent of all teachers nationally are African-American men—2 percent. That is not right. I mean, there is something wrong with that when you have that kind of a situation.

Mr. Schnur.

Mr. SCHNUR. Just on that, I think there are exemplars that could be scaled. New Leaders is one example. We have had 10,000 applications for 700 slots. Two-thirds of our new leaders are people of color, age range, 25 to 55. We have talent everywhere. If you set a very high bar and a goal to do outreach, probably you will get excellence and diversity intertwined. It is a crucial point.

I think Senator Bennet's question earlier underscored the starting point, in my view, for this next reauthorization. We have these examples of individual schools where kids in poverty, kids with disabilities, kids who are English-language learners, kids of color, kids who have been underserved are achieving fantastic results in pockets. At scale, we have slipped from number one in the world in high school graduation rates and college completion rates to the middle of the pack. So our kids can do it. We have the examples of kids from all backgrounds. As a society and as an education system, we have not gotten worse. Actually those rates have not gotten worse. They are the same. The problem is the rest of the world is moving ahead. The demands and the expectations are moving ahead. The question is not have we failed. The question is how we make much more dramatic progress to achieve these goals. Michael Bennet as superintendent led an exemplar of this in Denver, which you can learn so much from.

I think to get there, the central question you are asking today is how do you, at the national Federal level, support school systems

supported by innovative nonprofits and research, but school systems to basically do vastly better, ensuring that kids who need it the most have access to great teachers and principals is the fundamental question. And in my view, in the short term, you can require some things. I would not do a laundry list, and I have seen some legislation on both sides of the aisle that is too much of a laundry list of requirements that I think is trying to mandate systems from the Federal level. I think you have to pick your spots about what you require.

But what you can do now, I think, 4 years from now can pay off hugely if you support high-quality, college and career assessments, and if you invest—I would argue strongly for at the national level, since Federal spending is only 10 percent of K–12, to invest in more competitive funding for school systems and innovative efforts to support them, research and nonprofits, to create exemplars of how do you evaluate teachers, how do you hold teachers accountable, how do you evaluate principals, how do you hold principals accountable, how do you develop them, and create more of an evidence base. As long as you have the evaluation, this legislation's biggest contribution in some ways to the future of our kids would be 5 years from now when systems that are tackling this, that you have created examples with evaluation that the whole country can take to scale.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Hirsh.

Ms. HIRSH. I have two sentences. One is if we want to identify effective teachers, then we need better evaluation systems, but if we want to ensure that there is effective teaching in every classroom, then what Congress can do is make sure that we have better professional development for all teachers.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Parmenter.

Mr. PARMENTER. I would like to echo that. I think we need a funding stream in the United States for training principals so we do better at evaluation. I think we can do better. There is no question in my mind. We are going to require some training.

And I think also I would really favor something systematic. I am very intrigued with what Vanderbilt is doing as far as creating evaluation systems. Something systematic would be nice. Otherwise, we end up with Alabama doing something different from Montana. It is a little hard to get a handle on all that when we are comparing apples and oranges.

I do know the National Association of Elementary School Principals is creating some language for some staff development, training sorts of legislation. So we would appreciate support on that if you could do that.

The CHAIRMAN. Any other things here?

Mr. Franken, do you have anything else?

Senator FRANKEN. I am good.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Kane, did you have something else?

Mr. KANE. I had one thing on professional development because I think more money for professional development is key. But we have to be careful there, though, because imagine if you were trying to invent Weight Watchers in a world where there were no bathroom scales and there were no bathroom mirrors. You could spend a whole lot of money creating a system, but if people do not

have any way to know whether they are getting better or whether they are moving in the right direction, it is going to be a wasted effort. And I think there is a huge amount of professional development out there now that is not having a big impact on student achievement.

The CHAIRMAN. Did you have something, Randi?

Ms. WEINGARTEN. I wanted to say part of this is—and I think Ms. Fesmire said that earlier—that when principals become instructional leaders instead of having to do so many of the other things and when there is a real focus on curriculum, a broad curriculum, not a narrow curriculum, then there is something that you then create the tools and conditions for teachers around that. I think what has happened is in the absence of that, that is why there is this struggle of looking at math and English scores and growth on math and English scores, and everything has gotten very, very narrow as opposed to broadly thinking about critical thinking, as Senator Franken has said.

I would put my bet on the teachers and principals in schools these days if we actually had good ways of evaluating them, of training them around curriculum that they should be using and giving them the tools and conditions and supports to do that. I think the Federal Government can do that by helping us with pilots on evaluations either the way Jon talked about it or other ways but ultimately in the development of other things.

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Moir?

Ms. MOIR. Great. I want to echo Senator Franken's point. The things that can be counted are easy. Let us get this ESEA reauthorization to think about how we start counting things that are more complex but ultimately have an impact on improving student learning.

And the final point I want to make is that teaching learning conditions that now is part of the Gates study and is in Tennessee and Delaware's Race to the Top applications I think is another important piece that we should be looking at that we may have forgotten along the way. It is hard to be an effective teacher if the working and teaching conditions do not allow for good learning.

The CHAIRMAN. Someone mentioned standards for induction—you mentioned that earlier in your opening comments.

I am sorry we got a little off. I am partly responsible for that, getting off a little bit on something else, but we were talking about how do we focus on—and what support can the Federal Government provide to States and school districts to allow them to implement policies that ensure that all students have high-quality teachers and leaders, principals and teachers, and how do we use evaluations?

I think Senator Franken is right. Some things are difficult to measure. You can measure some things. Some things are very difficult. And how do you evaluate—I said that at the beginning—a really good teacher? Is it on the basis of test scores of kids who remember and have rote memory drilled into them? Or can you evaluate somehow how they think abstractly, how they solve problems that are new to them? How do they apply learning to solving new problems rather than just standard problems that they have learned in class?

I do not know. I wrestle with this all the time. And I am not certain that out of all of this, there is any cookie cutter type of an approach that if we just do one, two, three, subpart A, B, and C, it is all going to be good. This is just one area where I think we are still going to wrestle with this on title II and how we use these funds in title II going forward.

I think we are all pretty good on how we are going to change the evaluation system and growth for the AYP and stuff. I think we are all pretty much there.

How do we get to this other thing, though, of the best teachers and the best principals and highly qualified? How do we turn around under-performing schools if in fact their income base is low and neighboring school districts are high? I do not know how we crack that nut. I really do not. Again, we are trying to wrestle with this.

This has been an enlightening session for me, I think for all of us.

The record will be left open. I would ask each of you—you are all extremely knowledgeable in this area—as we proceed on this, I hope that you will feel free to continue to send us your thoughts and suggestions as we develop this legislation, as we go into mark-up, hopefully next month sometime. You know how to contact our staff by e-mail, I hope. You should. And please continue to send it to us—we will be looking at it. We will take your inputs further on down later this month or next month as we proceed on this bill.

It is still my hope, for those of the press who are still here, that we will get this bill in committee sometime in the May-June timeframe and ready for the floor sometime in the late June or July timeframe. That is still my goal. Now, whether or not we can get it on the floor is another question, but I intend to get the committee's work done sometime in that May-June timeframe.

So continue to give us the benefit of your wisdom and your knowledge in this area.

The record will stay open for 10 days until April 25th, but beyond that, please give us your best thoughts.

I will close by thanking all of you for all you have done. Many of you have been involved in this for many, many years. I thank you. We rely upon you to give us guidance and direction on how we should go. But we have got to figure out a way to have better evaluations, better standards, and getting better qualified teachers into under-performing schools. We have just got to figure out better ways of doing it. You have been very helpful in moving this process forward. Thank you all very much.

The committee will stand adjourned.

[Additional material follows.]

## ADDITIONAL MATERIAL

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (NEA),  
 WASHINGTON, DC 20036,  
*April 14, 2010.*

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS,  
 U.S. Senate,  
 Washington, DC 20510.

DEAR SENATOR: The National Education Association, representing 3.2 million educators across the Nation, would like to share with you the enclosed materials in advance of tomorrow's hearing in the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions on ESEA Reauthorization: Teachers and Leaders.

Attached for your information and use are:

- NEA Backgrounder: "Elevate the Profession to Attract Great Educators and Leaders for Every Public School,"
- NEA White Paper: "Ensuring Every Child a Quality Teacher,"
- Key Findings from NEA's 2009 Report, "Children of Poverty Deserve Great Teachers," and
- Selected links to articles and stories on innovative programs to ensure great educators.

A growing body of research confirms what school-based personnel have known for years—that the skills and knowledge of teachers and education support professionals (ESPs) are the most important factors in how well students learn. In turn, the presence of strong and supportive school leaders is critical to recruiting and retaining accomplished teachers and ESPs. For too long, we have paid too little attention to ensuring that today's best and brightest choose teaching as a career. As an entire generation of educators nears retirement age, there is an urgent need to address all aspects of working in public schools. It is time to elevate the profession.

We hope the enclosed materials will be useful to you as Congress moves forward on these critical issues. Thank you for your attention to this important information.

Sincerely,

KIM ANDERSON,  
 Director of Government Relations.

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ELEVATE THE PROFESSION TO ATTRACT GREAT EDUCATORS AND LEADERS  
 FOR EVERY PUBLIC SCHOOL

A growing body of research confirms what school-based personnel have known for years—that the skills and knowledge of teachers and education support professionals (ESPs) are the most important factors in how well students learn. In turn, the presence of strong and supportive school leaders is critical to recruiting and retaining accomplished teachers and ESPs. For too long, we have paid too little attention to ensuring that today's best and brightest choose teaching as a career. As an entire generation of educators nears retirement age, there is an urgent need to address all aspects of working in public schools. It is time to elevate the profession.

How do we do that? Federal and State policies can help draw new talent to teaching careers, but that won't be enough. What we need is a bold new initiative to raise the profile and status of the teaching profession—such as creating a national education institute. Such an entity would be in a position to attract top college graduates and talented second-career professionals all over the country.

Also, we know that all teachers, even the most accomplished, are more effective when they are supported by skillful instructional leaders. We need more top-notch principals and other school leaders serving as mentors and coaches for classroom educators. Federal policies, therefore, must foster well-prepared and effective school professionals of all ranks and positions, including administrators. And it is time to recognize and truly value the work of all education professionals: administrators, classroom teachers, aides, office staff, cafeteria workers, and others. Every one who works in a school is essential to that school's success.

Finally, we must ensure that every school, whether high- or low-achieving, has access to great educators. The Federal Government must develop policies and provide funding to enable struggling schools and districts to offer incentives and conditions that will attract and retain accomplished and effective educators.

## IS THIS REALLY A PIPELINE ISSUE?

Yes. Research shows that infusing the educational system with great educators requires attention be paid to each segment of the educator pipeline—from promoting education as a career to rigorous standards for entry into the profession. It also includes induction and placement, certification and licensure, mentoring, professional development, advancement, and retaining accomplished educators. Ultimately, we must develop systems to recruit legions of top undergraduate students and professionals leaving other professions, to prepare them effectively, and to nurture and safeguard their path to careers in education.

## CAN WE FOSTER EXCELLENCE WHILE ESTABLISHING ATTAINABLE STANDARDS WITHIN THE TEACHING PROFESSION?

Teachers need more than high-quality preparation from schools of education because much of their learning comes from their real world classroom experience. We need policies that foster continuous learning in the form of high-quality, job-embedded professional development, mentoring programs, common planning and reflection time, and timely and continuous feedback from peers and school leadership.

More teachers need financial support to become certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, and those who earn this credential should be deemed highly qualified.

Federal policy also should recognize that some teachers—rural, special education, or elementary and middle school teachers—must teach multiple subjects. Therefore, teacher quality standards also must provide accommodations for teachers in special circumstances and give them reasonable, common sense opportunities to improve or increase their skills and breadth of certification.

## WHAT CAN WE DO TO IMPROVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP?

We must ensure that school principals and other administrators—as well as teachers and education support professionals—receive adequate preparation, mentoring, and continuous professional development and support to improve their craft. They must receive timely and useful feedback from school staff as well as other administrators and be evaluated fairly and comprehensively. And they must have the resources and the staff necessary to create and maintain a successful school.

We also must look for ways to promote the leadership skills of teachers and education support professionals. All staff benefit from such opportunities.

## HOW WOULD A NATIONAL EDUCATION INSTITUTE FIT IN WITH STATE AND LOCAL REFORM OF TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAMS?

Elevating the profession means ensuring that the most talented individuals in the Nation have access to world-class education preparation programs. Establishing a National Education Institute (NEI), a highly competitive public academy for the Nation's most promising K–12 teacher candidates in diverse academic disciplines, would allow the Federal Government to attract top undergraduates as well as second-career professionals and prepare them as leaders of school reform around the Nation. NEI would provide an intensive 1-year path (free tuition, room, and board in exchange for a 7-year commitment to service in select public schools) to full licensure, school placement, induction, along with lifetime professional development and mentoring opportunities from NEI faculty/ graduates/master teachers.

NEI also would partner with existing teacher preparation programs to establish a highly competitive “National Scholars” program in select universities that would foster regional and local excellence in teacher preparation, licensure and induction. Additionally, NEI would sponsor a principal or leadership development program for top candidates who have served as teachers for at least 3 years and wish to enter an intensive program to become a principal or school leader in a hard-to-staff school.

## CAN WE DO MORE TO RECOGNIZE AND SUPPORT EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS?

Education support professionals (ESPs) comprise a critical part of the education team. They include school secretaries, custodians, bus drivers, teacher aides, food service personnel, paraprofessional laboratory technicians, telephone operators, medical records personnel, bookkeepers, accountants, mail room clerks, computer programmers, library and reference assistants, audio-visual technicians, and others. Schools cannot function without top notch ESPs. The Federal Government should create incentives and provide funds to recruit certified and qualified ESPs and ensure they are included in job growth and professional development opportunities.

CAN WE RECRUIT AND CREATE INCENTIVES FOR HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATORS TO WORK  
IN HARD-TO-STAFF SCHOOLS?

The NEA supports financial and other incentives to encourage top educators to work in hard-to-staff schools. Such incentives are most effective when they are voluntary, locally agreed upon, and include non-financial incentives such as access to continuous professional development, mentoring, paraprofessional assistance, effective school leadership, sufficient resources, planning time, class-size reduction, and other factors that improve job quality and effectiveness. Inexperienced or new teachers should not automatically be placed in hard-to-staff schools because they need to be prepared to deal with the challenging environment.

NEA Recommendations to Congress

- Focus on undergraduate preparation and educator recruitment, preparation, certification and licensure, induction, professional development, mentoring, tenure, advancement, and retention.
- Foster continuous learning and rigorous yet attainable standards for all school staff.
- Develop and support school leadership at all levels and positions within schools.
- Create a prestigious national education institute and provide incentives to States to create world-class teacher preparation programs that attract the top tier of college graduates nationally.
- Recognize the contributions and achievement of education support professionals.
- Offer both financial and non-financial incentives to those who teach in hard-to-staff schools.

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ENSURING EVERY CHILD A QUALITY TEACHER

SUMMARY

The National Education Association\* believes the essential characteristics of a quality teacher include:

- Knowing his/her subject matter;
- Knowing how to teach that subject matter; and
- Understanding how students learn and what it takes to reach them.

To ensure every student the opportunity to learn from a quality teacher, we must support teachers along every point in the Teacher Quality Continuum.

*Protect and promote high standards for entry into the profession*

- Recruit talented and committed professionals to the teaching profession and develop a teacher workforce that reflects the diversity of the student population and nation as a whole.
- All teachers entering the profession must demonstrate subject matter competence, pedagogical skills, and teaching ability before entering the classroom as a teacher-of-record. Alternative route programs must maintain the same standards as other teacher preparation programs and must be equal in rigor and content.

*Support and measure new teacher performance*

- Policies and funding should focus on comprehensive new teacher induction systems that treat new teachers as “residents” or “interns.” This would mean more support and training, less demanding classroom assignments, and significantly more focused performance assessments for all beginning teachers, regardless of their preparation and routes to licensure.

*Improve teaching and learning conditions*

- Teaching and learning conditions—time, teacher empowerment, school leadership, professional development, and facilities and resources—are critical to increasing student achievement and retaining teachers.

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\*No organization in America has done more to support and promote quality teaching than the National Education Association. Throughout its long history, the NEA has advanced the profession of teaching and worked toward a goal of a qualified teacher in every classroom. From being a founding member of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, to supporting the creation of the U.S. Department of Education, to organizing over a dozen independent State teacher standards boards, to helping establish the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, NEA has been in the forefront of innovation, research, and policy to support teacher quality.

- Teachers must be intimately involved in every phase of their ongoing training, with high-quality professional development programs focusing on pedagogy and helping teachers develop the deep understanding of how students learn.
- Principals should also be provided with high-quality professional development so they can serve as instructional leaders in their schools and work collaboratively with teachers to improve student learning.

*Strengthen teacher evaluation systems*

- New policies and funding should create teacher evaluation systems based on a set of standards that measure teacher practice. Professional development and teacher learning programs should be aligned to meet the needs of both students and teachers—needs that are determined at the local level through measures of student performance and teacher evaluations.

*Enhance and reward teacher skills and knowledge*

- Provide teachers with job-embedded professional learning opportunities and create systems for regular collaboration among educators within schools and districts.
- Ensure a \$40,000 minimum salary for all teachers in every school in the country.
- Provide financial recognition to individual teachers who demonstrate superior teaching skills (such as National Board Certified Teachers) and to those who take on additional responsibilities (such as mentor teachers), and provide school-wide bonuses for improved student learning.

*Ensure that students in high-poverty and other hard-to-staff schools have access to quality teachers*

- Provide an array of incentives to attract and retain qualified teachers to such schools.
- Improve teaching and learning conditions, including by reducing class sizes and ensuring safe modern facilities.

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## I. BACKGROUND

In 1996, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future published its groundbreaking report, "What Matters Most: Teaching and America's Future" (NEA was a primary partner in the development of this report). This report offered definitive evidence on two major issues:

1. What teachers know and do is the most important influence on what students learn; and
2. Students most in need of high quality teachers are least likely to have them.

This report rekindled the now 10-year-old policy debate about what makes a quality teacher. Policymakers often look to define a quality teacher in a quick sentence or catchy phrase. In reality, however, teaching is a complex and demanding profession, and what great teaching looks like is hard to define in a single sentence or sound bite. All too often, this search for a simple definition leads to an overly simplistic concept of what it takes to be a good teacher (i.e., be really smart and know math really well). Yet, research and practice have shown that being a great mathematician is not synonymous with understanding the science of teaching math to a room with 25 to 30, 13-year-old middle school students.

NEA believes that defining a quality teacher can best be achieved using a set of principles and standards, combined with a process of preparation, licensure, support, and assessment. NEA's "Principles of Professional Practice" define the knowledge, skills, and dispositions a quality teacher should possess.

*A Quality Teacher*

- Designs and facilitates instruction that incorporates the students' developmental levels, skills, and interests with content knowledge;
- Develops collaborative relationships and partners with colleagues, families, and communities focused on meaningful and deep learning;
- Provides leadership and advocacy for students, quality education, and the education profession;
- Demonstrates in-depth content and professional knowledge;
- Participates in ongoing professional learning as an individual and within the professional learning community;
- Utilizes multiple and varied forms of assessment and student data to inform instruction, assess student learning, and drive school improvement efforts;
- Establishes environments conducive to effective teaching and learning;

- Integrates cultural competence and an understanding of the diversity of students and communities into teaching practice to enhance student learning;
- Utilizes professional practices that recognize public education as vital to strengthening our society and building respect for the worth, dignity and equality of every individual;
- Strives to overcome the internal and external barriers that impact student learning.

Attaining knowledge and skill in each of these practices is not easy and cannot be measured effectively by one snapshot in time (such as a single classroom observation or a single standardized test of teacher knowledge).

## II. THE ROLE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND STATES

To ensure a quality teacher for every child, the Federal Government and States must support a systemic approach that recognizes, supports and measures a teacher's growth and ability along the various stages of a quality continuum—a continuum that includes recruitment, preparation, licensure, hiring, induction, professional development, on-going performance assessment of teaching skills and practice, and advanced certification. Specifically, they must take affirmative steps in the following areas:

- Protecting and promoting high standards for entry into the profession;
- Supporting and measuring new teacher performance;
- Improving teaching and learning conditions;
- Improving the distribution of quality teachers in hard-to-staff schools;
- Strengthening teacher evaluation systems; and
- Recognizing and rewarding teacher skill and knowledge.

### 1. *Protecting and Promoting High Standards for Entry into the Profession*

Ensuring that new teachers enter the profession with the necessary skills, knowledge, and abilities is the most important function of Federal and State policies governing teaching. Current policies supported by ESEA allow a new generation of “trial and error teachers into classrooms—usually those with the most needy children. These policies and programs allow people with little or no preparation to “try” teaching and to learn on the job (too often without legitimate mentoring and support). The fact that teachers in alternative route programs can be considered “Highly Qualified” under ESEA is a clear example of this “trial and error” approach.

NEA believes that all teachers entering the profession should be required to demonstrate subject matter competence, pedagogical skills, and teaching ability before entering the classroom as a teacher-of-record. Alternative route programs must maintain the same standards as other teacher preparation programs and must be equal in rigor and content.

#### a. Teacher Recruitment<sup>1</sup>

We must recruit talented and committed professionals to the teaching profession and we must develop a teacher workforce that reflects the diversity of the student population and nation as a whole. There is significant evidence that these programs work but there has been little policy and financial support for these strategies.

To strengthen teacher recruitment efforts, NEA supports:

- Funding programs that provide financial incentives for qualified individuals to enter the teaching profession, and for collaboration among school districts, teacher unions, and institutions of higher education for the development of programs that facilitate the recruitment and retention of a qualified, diverse group of teacher candidates.
- Creating incentives such as loan forgiveness that encourage teachers to gain licensure in shortage subject areas.
- Developing “grow-your-own” recruitment programs for high school students, community college students, paraprofessionals, and mid-career changers.

<sup>1</sup>See, Clewell, B.C., Villegas, A.M. (2001) Evaluation of the DeWitt Wallace Reader's Digest Fund's Pathways to Teaching Careers Program. The Urban Institute. <http://www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=410601>; [www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/410601\\_Pathways.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/410601_Pathways.pdf).

b. Teacher Preparation/Licensing<sup>2</sup>

Quality teacher preparation and comprehensive performance-based state licensing systems help to ensure that candidates have the knowledge, skills, and ability to be effective beginning teachers.

NEA supports:

- Allowing multiple pathways for entrance to the teaching profession and for attaining full licensure. These pathways should provide options so that candidates may select the one that best provides a pathway to full licensure. None should be considered superior or inferior to the other.
- Requiring every teacher preparation program (alternative and otherwise) to complete a single national accrediting process. The National Commission for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) is the proven leader in teacher education accreditation and should be the sole accrediting body.
- Giving independent, teacher-led standards boards authority over developing State preparation and licensure standards for all teachers.
- Closing Federal and State loopholes that allow unlicensed and/or unprepared teachers into classrooms.
- Rejecting testing-only approaches to licensure that allow for “trial and error” teachers to enter the classroom without demonstrating they possess the necessary teaching knowledge and skill.
- Requiring that measures of actual performance be part of every State licensure system. This would require that teachers be granted an *initial* license to teach but granted a *professional* license only after demonstrating effective practice during their first few years of teaching.

## 2. SUPPORTING AND MEASURING NEW TEACHER PERFORMANCE

Teaching is the only profession in which a brand new, untested professional is asked to perform the exact same duties with equal proficiency as a seasoned and proven professional. Policies and funding should focus on comprehensive new teacher induction systems that treat new teachers as “residents” or “interns.” This would mean more training, less demanding classroom assignments, and significantly more focused performance assessments for all beginning teachers, regardless of their preparation and routes to licensure.

a. *New Teacher Support, Induction, and Retention*<sup>3</sup>

The key to helping beginning teachers improve their practice and to slowing the revolving door of teacher turnover is to support policies and funding that provide a comprehensive induction experience for every new teacher—induction experiences that are tailored specifically to individual needs and school/district/State circumstances.

To this end, NEA supports:

- Instituting formal systems of comprehensive teacher induction for at least the first 2 years of teaching, under the supervision of experienced and/or accomplished teacher-mentors.
- Creation of incentive grants to districts to develop peer assistance programs that focus on the improvement of staff knowledge and skills.
- Providing new teachers with a reduced course load and/or less demanding classroom/school assignments that permit them to participate in organized professional development, induction activities, and planning during the school day.
- Regularly assessing new teachers’ classroom performance and basing their professional learning directly on the results of this assessment.
- Increasing training, accountability, and support for school administrators, particularly in schools/districts with high teacher turnover.
- Implementing policies and providing funding to improve significantly the teaching and learning conditions in schools/districts with high teacher turnover. These conditions include class size, physical infrastructure, teacher input into school policies, and school safety.

<sup>2</sup>See, Darling-Hammond, L., Holtzman, D.J., Gatlin, S.J., & Heilig, J.V. (2005). Does teacher preparation matter? Evidence about teacher certification, Teach for America, and teacher effectiveness. Education Policy Analysis Archives, 13(42). Retrieved [date] from <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v13n42/>.

<sup>3</sup>See, Ingersoll, R., (2005). “Teacher Shortages and Educational Inequality,” National Education Association Research Brief. <http://connect.nea.org/edstats/images/Ingersoll.pdf>.

## 3. IMPROVING TEACHING AND LEARNING CONDITIONS

Emerging research from across the nation demonstrates that school teaching and learning conditions—time, teacher empowerment, school leadership, professional development, and facilities and resources—are critical to increasing student achievement and retaining teachers. A safe and supportive environment with sufficient instructional resources is a necessity if teachers are to be successful with students. Districts need to work with local teacher unions to survey principals, teachers, and other school staff about their teaching and learning conditions. Such surveys can be powerful tools to obtain information that can identify improvements needed in schools throughout the district to help spur student achievement. The New Teacher Center ([www.newteachercenter.org/tlcsurvey/#survey](http://www.newteachercenter.org/tlcsurvey/#survey)) has been a leader in using teacher working condition surveys. States working with the New Teacher Center in 2008–09 included Alabama, Colorado, Fairfax County (VA), Illinois, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Vermont, and West Virginia. Texas is slated to do this work in 2010. Other States utilizing survey tools include Arizona, Nevada, Ohio, and Mississippi.

Teachers must be intimately involved in every phase of their ongoing training, with high-quality professional development programs focusing on pedagogy and helping teachers develop the deep understanding of how students learn. The information needs to be timely, research-based, and relevant—information that one can use immediately upon returning to the classroom.

NEA supports:

- Designing professional development programs in a collaborative fashion between school districts' leaders and local teachers to ensure that teachers—and other educators—receive professional development directly linked to their and their students' needs and tied to the school's and district's curriculum and instructional needs and strategies.
- Encouraging skills- and knowledge-based staffing arrangement environments. Programs should encourage collaboration between the school administration and the local organization representing teachers and other educators, as well as increased collaboration among teachers and between teachers and other education staff, to promote innovation in the way teachers' and support professionals' roles and responsibilities are defined.
- Continuing Federal support for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to assist more teachers to obtain National Board Certification.
- Providing Federal financial incentives for board-certified teachers to go to and stay in hard-to-staff schools.
- Assessing whether teachers believe their schools are good places to teach and learn and using that information to spur data-driven reform strategies.
- Reducing class sizes to improve student learning.

## 4. IMPROVING THE DISTRIBUTION OF QUALITY TEACHERS IN HARD-TO-STAFF SCHOOLS

Greater support is needed for programs and policies that encourage quality teachers to stay in the classroom and to teach where they are needed most. To address teacher distribution in its totality, the government should work to understand the issues involved in teacher quality and to place teacher recruitment and retention at the forefront of policy agendas.

NEA supports:

- Providing financial incentives for qualified individuals to enter the teaching profession.
- Funding programs that facilitate collaboration among school districts, teacher unions, and institutions of higher education for the development of programs that would facilitate the recruitment and retention of a qualified diverse group of teacher candidates.
- Ensuring all newly hired teachers quality induction and mentoring services from trained veteran teachers.
- Funding incentive grants to districts to develop peer assistance programs that focus on the improvement of staff knowledge and skills.
- Ensuring teacher involvement in every phase of their ongoing training, with high-quality professional development programs focusing on pedagogy and helping teachers develop a deep understanding of how students learn.
- Continuing to provide support for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards to assist more teachers to obtain National Board Certification.
- Providing additional compensation for teachers who pass the demanding performance-based assessments of the National Board for Professional Teaching Stand-

ards and agree to teach in hard-to-staff schools, and/or take on additional roles such as mentoring, peer support, and other professional development activities.

- Encouraging skills- and knowledge-based staffing arrangements environments.
- Identifying and addressing teaching and learning condition issues that discourage teachers from staying in the profession or in hard-to-staff schools.

#### 5. STRENGTHENING TEACHER EVALUATION SYSTEMS<sup>4</sup>

No district-union contract in America states that “bad teachers can never be fired from their jobs.” Yet, too often, district-teacher union contracts are blamed for inadequate, ineffective, and misused teacher evaluation systems. New policies and funding should create or enhance standards-based teacher evaluation systems. Professional development and teacher learning programs should be aligned to meet the needs of both students and teachers—needs that are determined through local measures of student performance and teacher evaluations.

The most effective way to improve the quality of practicing teachers is to implement policies and funding that support standards-based teacher evaluation programs that have as their primary goal the improvement of teacher practice.

NEA supports:

- Using multiple measures to provide a full picture of teacher quality. For example, measuring teacher performance based on standards associated with student learning, and evaluation of teaching practices associated with desired student outcomes and achievement of school goals (collection of evidence about teacher planning and instruction, work with parents, etc.)
- Assessing all teachers regularly throughout their careers, for the primary purpose of improving teaching practice in ways that enhance student learning.
- Removing ineffective teachers within the context of a comprehensive assessment and support system that is developed in collaboration with teachers (via collective bargaining agreements in States that provide for such, or through the support of local teachers’ organizations where bargaining does not exist).

#### 6. RECOGNIZING AND REWARDING TEACHER SKILL AND KNOWLEDGE

Rewarding (or punishing) teachers based on student test scores is a flawed approach to improving the quality of teaching or enhancing student learning outcomes. Providing teachers with job-embedded professional learning opportunities and creating systems for regular collaboration among educators within schools and districts have been proven to improve teacher practice and student performance.

##### *a. Teacher Compensation*<sup>5</sup>

Besides a parent, no other individual has as much influence on children and young adults as a teacher. And yet, teachers’ salaries currently do not reflect the great work that they do every day to improve the lives of America’s future generation. Too many teachers have been denied professional pay for too long.<sup>6</sup> Working in public schools should not be an act of charity—and teachers should not have to sacrifice their families’ needs when they choose a career in public education. Education is complex, demanding work that extends beyond the hours spent in a classroom or working directly with students. To attract and retain more dedicated, committed professionals into the field, we need salaries that are literally “attractive.”

The intrinsic rewards of an education career are often used as a rationale to compensate for poor starting salaries. But, low teacher pay comes at a very high cost. Close to 50 percent of new teachers leave the profession during the first 5 years of teaching, and 37 percent of teachers who do not plan to teach until retirement blame low pay for their decision to leave the profession.

NEA supports:

<sup>4</sup>Milanowski, A.T., Kimball, S.M., White, B. (2004) The relationship between standards-based teacher evaluation scores and student achievement. University of Wisconsin-Madison: Consortium for Policy Research in Education.

<sup>5</sup>See, Behn, R.D. (2000). Performance, People, and Pay. Bob Behn’s Public Management Report; Harris, D.C. (2007). The promise and pitfalls of alternative teacher compensation approaches. Great Lakes Center for Education Policy & Practice; Heneman III, H.G., Milanowski, A.T., Kimball, S.M., (2007) Teacher Performance Pay: Synthesis of Plans, Research, and Guidelines for Practice (RB-46). University of Pennsylvania: Consortium for Policy Research in Education; Pfeffer, J (1998). Six dangerous myths about pay. Harvard Business Review.

<sup>6</sup>According to a recent study by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, the teaching profession has an average national starting salary of \$30,377. Meanwhile, computer programmers start at an average of \$43,635, public accounting professionals at \$44,668, and registered nurses at \$45,570.

- Ensuring a \$40,000 minimum salary for all teachers in every school in this country.
- Evaluating any proposed compensation system on whether it is designed to improve student learning through improved teacher practice rather than advancing short-term political goals. A comprehensive pay system must encourage the factors that make a difference in teaching and learning—such as skills, knowledge, and experience.
- Using creative ideas to enhance the single salary schedule, while ensuring that criteria used to determine whether education employees receive the additional compensation are clearly stated, subject to objective measurement, and related to the school district's educational objectives. Such ideas include:
  - Incentives to attract caring and qualified teachers to hard-to-staff schools. Local teachers, school boards, administrators, and communities know best how to provide those incentives.
  - Incentives for the achievement of National Board Certification.
  - Incentives for teachers to mentor newer colleagues.
  - Group incentives that offer teachers the opportunity to gain greater autonomy and discretion in all school matters and improve professional practice and student learning.
  - Incentives for accepting additional responsibilities such as peer assistance or mentoring.
  - Additional pay for extended contract years, extended days, and extra assignments.
  - Additional pay for teachers for knowledge and skills gained that are directly related to the missions of their schools and/or their assignments.
  - Additional pay for teachers who have advanced credentials/degrees directly related to their teaching assignments and/or the missions of their schools.
  - Group or school-wide salary supplements/bonuses for improved student achievement.

*b. Alternative Pathways to Professional Pay*

NEA believes that specific guidelines must be followed to enhance the successful creation, implementation, and sustainability of pay systems with alternative routes to professional pay:

- **Base Salary.** Start with a professional level base salary and salary schedule. NEA supports a starting salary of at least \$40,000 for all teachers entering the classroom.
- **Current Salary.** No teacher's current salary shall be reduced as a result of the implementation of an alternative compensation system.
- **Funding.** Alternative compensation models must have adequate funding, both initially and ongoing with a sustainable source.
- **Resources.** Time, relevant professional development, and opportunities for collaboration must be available to teachers and support staff to ensure success.
- **Accessibility.** Any alternative compensation system should be accessible to everyone who is eligible with no quotas.
- **Collaboration.** Alternative compensation should promote collaboration; not competition.
- **Size of Incentives.** Incentives must be large enough to make a difference.
- **Phased in.** The system should be implemented incrementally, with proper training.
- **Classroom Teaching is Honored.** Alternative compensation systems should be structured to attract and retain quality staff and keep them in the classroom.
- **Association Involvement.** The system must be negotiated as a collective bargaining agreement or agreed to by at least 75 percent of the members in locations where there is no collective bargaining and allow for voluntary participation.
- **There is no one plan.** Proposed plans must be flexible and structured for the context in which they will be implemented. Compensation may take many forms, including training and experience (steps and lanes), current extra compensation options, as well as other emerging pay opportunities.
- **Transparency.** The system must be understandable to educators and the public.
- **Objective Criteria.** Criteria used to evaluate professional expertise must be objective, understandable, and predictable.

• **Assessment.** There must be an annual assessment of the system to determine its effectiveness in improving teacher salaries, teacher practice, and recruitment/retention of quality staff, as well as its administrative cost-effectiveness.

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CHILDREN OF POVERTY DESERVE GREAT TEACHERS\*

*Across this country, thousands of dedicated, hardworking teachers show up to work, determined to provide the best possible education to students from some of our most poverty-stricken communities. These heroes and heroines perform amazing tasks, often with the least amount of support and resources. Our children are fortunate to have these dedicated individuals in their classrooms. However, we need to do more to support not only our students, but the teachers who show up every day, despite the odds, to help ensure that they get the best education possible, regardless of the conditions.*

*Everyone is talking about supporting our students in their "race to the top." The key to turning out great students is great teachers. Great teachers, with the right policy supports, are the ideal agents of meaningful and sustainable change in our most challenged schools.*

TEACHERS

• Teachers cannot do it alone. Every member of the community has a role and is responsible for the conditions of our schools and for providing a safe and secure learning environment for our children.

• When it comes to attracting and retaining teachers in high-needs schools, it is not about the money. Working conditions are of paramount concern when it comes to decisions about working in high-needs schools. Teachers want to be successful, and we should do what we can so that they are not set up to fail.

• Teachers, like surgeons, require a well-equipped environment in which to do their best work. We cannot expect them to be successful if we do not provide the tools and resources needed to do the job.

• It is important that we not only recruit new teachers to work in high-needs schools, but that we foster an environment that encourages professional development and continual learning opportunities for teachers within our schools and districts to help meet the needs of students. We also must "grow our own" accomplished teachers and not rely solely on new recruits for our staffing needs.

• A child's learning environment is a critical factor in his or her long-term success. We cannot hold teachers accountable for conditions beyond their control and must acknowledge that conditions of teaching and learning are key to achieving high levels of student learning.

• Too often, school district recruitment and hiring practices rest on outdated mid-20th century organizational assumptions about teaching, learning, gender roles, and the career mobility patterns of today's young adults. Few systems are developing new teachers from within their own high-needs communities.

• Additionally, few are partnering with universities and nonprofits to make strategic investments in new teacher residency programs that can both drive improved working conditions and assure a steady supply of well-prepared, "culturally competent" teachers for high-needs schools.

STRATEGIES

*Children of Poverty* describes four strategies that will move us toward research-driven policies that can transform every high-poverty school in America into a high-performing school, fully staffed by effective teachers.

• Recruit *and* prepare teachers for work in high-needs schools.

• Take a comprehensive approach to teacher incentives. Lessons from the private sector and voices of teachers indicate that performance pay makes the most difference when it focuses on "building a collaborative workplace culture" to improve practices and outcomes.

• Improve the right working conditions. We need to fully identify the school conditions most likely to serve students by attracting, developing, retaining, and inspiring effective and accomplished teachers.

• Define teacher effectiveness broadly, in terms of student learning. We need new evaluation tools and processes to measure how teachers think about their practice, as well as help students learn.

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\* (Full Report Available at: <http://www.nea.org/teacherquality>)

Effective State/school district strategies to recruit and prepare new teachers include:

- Launching a long-range campaign to recruit and prepare teachers for urban and rural high-needs schools by offering high-quality residency programs, recruiting 20,000 to 40,000 new educators per year for 10 to 20 years. These well-trained, well-supported recruits will be prepared to lead a 21st century teaching profession that works closely with the health care and community services needed by students in high-needs schools.
- Cultivating effective teachers from within the 5,000 schools targeted as highest need, “growing” National Board Certified Teachers in those schools.
- Developing compensation systems, including performance pay systems, that include financial incentives designed specifically to attract and retain, as well as grow effective teachers in high-needs schools.
- Working with teachers and teacher associations to transform teacher assessment and evaluation systems into effective instruments for helping teachers to improve their practice; and integrate these systems into individualized professional development programs based on the needs of teachers and students.

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SELECTED MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES ON EFFECTIVE TEACHERS AND LEADERS

**Teacher Talk: Weighing In on National Board Certification**

Stories from educators around the country who decided to take on this professional development challenge. <http://www.nea.org/home/18661.htm>

**Profiles in National Board Certification**

National Board Certified teachers answer questions about the certification process and how it has affected their practice. <http://www.nea.org/home/17736.htm>

**Peer Review: Colleague, Mentor—Judge? How some local unions take responsibility for improving teacher quality**

Cover story from NEA Today, NEA’s flagship publication, March/April 2010  
<http://www.nea.org/home/38150.htm>

**A Network of Sharing: As Mentors, Retired Educators Support The Next Generation Of Teachers**

Cover story from This Active Life, NEA’s publication for active retired educators, March 2007. <http://www.nea.org/home/13654.htm>

**MetLife Survey: Resources, Collaboration Key**

Article on NEA’s new daily news Web site ([www.neatoday.org](http://www.neatoday.org)) on the third and final part of the MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Collaborating for Student Success, which focuses on teaching as a career and details findings based on surveys of public school teachers, principals and students.  
<http://neatoday.org/2010/03/25/metlife-survey-resources-collaboration-key/>

**Examples of innovative strategies featured on NEA’s Priority Schools Web site ([www.neaprioritieschools.org](http://www.neaprioritieschools.org)):**

**Transforming Phoenix’s Mitchell Elementary**

<http://neaprioritieschools.org/2010/04/08/transforming-phoenixs-mitchell-elementary/>

**Collaboration Results in Transformation at Maryland School**

<http://neaprioritieschools.org/2010/03/11/collaboration-results-in-school-transformation-at-maryland-school/>

**Peer Review Begins at Teacher-Led School**

<http://neaprioritieschools.org/2010/02/17/colorado-1/>

**[Editor’s Note: Due to the high cost of printing, previously published material is not reprinted. To view: NEA’s Initial Legislative Recommendations for Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act go to: [www.nea.org/assets/docs/NEA\\_ESEA\\_Proposals.pdf](http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/NEA_ESEA_Proposals.pdf).]**

[Whereupon, at 12:14 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

