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RAISING THE BAR: HOW ARE SCHOOLS MEASURING TEACHER PERFORMANCE?

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, ELEMENTARY, AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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RAISING THE BAR: HOW ARE SCHOOLS MEASURING TEACHER PERFORMANCE?

Thursday, February 28, 2013
U.S. House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education
Committee on Education and the Workforce
Washington, DC

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 9:04 a.m., in room 2175, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Todd Rokita [chairman of the subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Rokita, Kline, Petri, Foxx, Roe, Thompson, McCarthy, Scott, Davis, Polis, and Sablan.

Staff present: Heather Couri, Deputy Director of Education and Human Services Policy; Lindsay Fryer, Professional Staff Member; Nancy Locke, Chief Clerk/Assistant to the General Counsel; Krisann Pearce, General Counsel; Dan Shorts, Legislative Assistant; Nicole Sizemore, Deputy Press Secretary; Alex Sollberger, Communications Director; Alissa Strawcutter, Deputy Clerk; Brad Thomas, Senior Education Policy Advisor; Tylease Alli, Minority Clerk/Intern and Fellow Coordinator; Jeremy Ayers, Minority Education Policy Advisor; Meg Benner, Minority Education Policy Advisor; Kelly Broughan, Minority Education Policy Associate; Jamie Fasteau, Minority Director of Education Policy; Brian Levin, Minority Deputy Press Secretary/New Media Coordinator; Megan O'Reilly, Minority General Counsel; and Michael Zola, Minority Senior Counsel.

Chairman ROKITA. A quorum being present, the subcommittee will come to order.

Good morning and welcome to our subcommittee hearing on teacher performance measurements. I would like to thank our witnesses for joining us today to share their valuable insight on ways states and local school districts are working to ensure effective educators in our classrooms.

Teachers are one of the most influential factors on a student's academic success. I don't think I even need to say that. I am sure I am not the only one in this room that can remember the teachers who inspired and motivated us as children. And now that I am a father of two boys I am again seeing firsthand the difference an engaging teacher can make on a child's desire and ability to learn.

Over the next few months we will renew our efforts to address the challenges facing K-12 schools, and what better place to start

than to discuss how states, school districts, and schools are evaluating teachers and exploring more innovative strategies that can help improve the academic success of children?

We all agree No Child Left Behind helped the nation take enormous steps toward a better education system, but we now recognize the law's shortfalls. One primary concern for many of us in this room is the way the law defined, quote-unquote—"good teachers."

No Child Left Behind's rigid "Highly Qualified Teacher" provisions require educators to have a bachelor's degree, hold a state certification or license, and be able to demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter they plan to teach. That all sounds reasonable and great in theory, but in reality it meant schools were forced to value an educator's credentials over his or her ability to effectively and successfully teach children. And we all want qualified teachers in the classroom but we must also recognize that a teacher's excellence cannot be measured simply by degrees and diplomas alone.

Recognizing the antiquated "Highly Qualified Teacher" requirements alone weren't helping schools attract the most promising teachers to the classroom, some states and school districts have been working to implement alternative methods to better evaluate the effectiveness of their teachers. In recent years a growing number of states and school districts have started developing new teacher evaluation systems that incorporate multiple measures and student performance data. Not only does this data help measure a teacher's success in the classroom, it also provides educators with valuable feedback to analyze and refine their methods.

As a representative from the great state of Indiana, I am particularly pleased to welcome one of our Hoosier educators as a witness today and look forward to hearing his insights about the importance of teacher evaluation at the local level.

In addition, in 2011 Tennessee became one of the first states in the country to implement a comprehensive student-outcomes-based evaluation system. This system uses traditional measures, such as teacher observations and personal conferences, but places significant emphasis on student achievement data. Additionally, the new system prevents ineffective educators from staying in the classroom by directly addressing teacher tenure laws and the "last in, first out" policies that seem prevalent.

Within 1 year of implementing its new evaluation system, Tennessee students made the biggest single-year jump in achievement ever recorded in that state.

In my home state of Indiana, the general assembly approved legislation that calls upon school districts to create their own plans for annual performance evaluations or adopt one recommended by the state. The law sets requirements that every school must meet but provides districts with resources and flexibility to find the methods that will help them meet those requirements.

This is similar to a proposal based—passed out of this committee last Congress as part of our ESEA reform efforts, and I hope we will again consider such innovative policies in the 113th Congress.

I am looking forward to a productive conversation this morning very similar, I hope, to our last committee hearing here with my colleagues and our witness panel about the way states and school districts are continuing to think outside of the box when it comes

to recruiting, retaining, measuring, and supporting the most effective educators in the classroom.

And now I will recognize my distinguished colleague, Carolyn McCarthy, for her opening remarks.

[The statement of Chairman Rokita follows:]

Prepared Statement of Hon. Todd Rokita, Chairman, Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education

Good morning and welcome to our subcommittee hearing on teacher performance measurements. I'd like to thank our witnesses for joining us today to share their valuable insight on ways states and local school districts are working to ensure effective educators are in the classroom.

Teachers are one of the most influential factors on a student's academic success. I'm sure I'm not the only one in this room that can remember the teachers who inspired and motivated me as a child. And now that I'm a father of two boys, I am again seeing firsthand the difference an engaging teacher can make on a child's desire and ability to learn.

Over the next few months, we will renew our efforts to address the challenges facing K-12 schools.

What better place to start than to discuss how states, school districts, and schools are evaluating teachers and exploring more innovative strategies that can help improve the academic success of children.

We all agree No Child Left Behind helped the nation take enormous steps toward a better education system, but we now recognize the law's shortfalls. One primary concern for many of us in this room is the way the law defined "good" teachers.

No Child Left Behind's rigid "Highly Qualified Teacher" provisions require educators to have a bachelor's degree, hold a state certification or license, and be able to demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter they plan to teach. That all sounds great in theory, but in reality it meant schools were forced to value an educator's credentials over his or her ability to effectively and successfully teach our children.

We all want well-qualified teachers in the classroom, but we must also recognize that a teacher's excellence cannot be measured by degrees and diplomas.

Recognizing the antiquated "Highly Qualified Teacher" requirements alone weren't helping schools attract the most promising teachers to the classroom, some states and school districts have been working to implement alternative methods to better evaluate the effectiveness of their teachers.

In recent years, a growing number of states and school districts have started developing new teacher evaluation systems that incorporate multiple measures and student performance data.Not only does this data help measure a teacher's success in the classroom, it also provides educators with valuable feedback to analyze and refine their methods. As a representative from the great state of Indiana, I am particularly pleased to welcome one of our Hoosier educators as a witness today, and look forward to hearing his insights about the importance of teacher evaluation at the local level.

In 2011, Tennessee became one of the first states in the country to implement a comprehensive student-outcomes based evaluation system. This system uses traditional measures such as teacher observations and personal conferences, but places significant emphasis on student achievement data.

Mrs. McCARTHY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I want to thank you again for calling this hearing. It is very important as we go forward.

So, I also want to thank our panel of witnesses, especially bright and early. Usually we start around 10 and that difference one of—1 hour is appreciated by all of us on the last day.

I do want to make a note that even before we dive into teacher performance and evaluation we have a duty to revisit teacher standards in general to ensure the best and the brightest are educating our children. This commitment begins at a very early age, and I am currently working on legislation that will encourage states to follow best practices in early education and commit to hiring teachers with at least a bachelor's degree.

With that being said, it goes without saying that evaluating teacher performance is a tricky issue. There are many factors aside from student achievement that come into play when judging a teacher's performance. These factors include but not are limited to: classroom environment, classroom resources, or school leader involvement. Let me break down what I mean by each of these.

Classroom environment: Where schools are located and the make-up of the class all play important factors when we discuss teachers' performance. Classroom resources: How much funding local schools are getting, both federally and locally, affect how teachers are able to do their work.

Last but not least, school leader involvement, too: Too often our school leadership gets off the hook in underperforming schools. We need to take a look at how teachers are being supported by their school boards and administrators when conducting any evaluation of performance.

While taking these three factors into consideration we must also recognize several important points about evaluation. Evaluations must be done frequently, with discretion, and with the input and corroboration of teachers. Evaluation systems must allow for teacher improvement and they must be refreshed periodically to ensure their effectiveness.

Additionally, evaluators should be familiar with the localities they are working in. As with most issues involving school performance and standards, there must be a reasonable level of flexibility for states and localities to provide effective services.

The other week, when this subcommittee, as the chairman had mentioned, addressing the issue of technology and innovation in the classrooms, we heard testimony from Mr. Smith from Rocketship Education. He noted that in his classroom, teachers receive real-time feedback through the headset. I am not suggesting that this is the solution for every classroom, but it is precisely that kind of outside-of-the-box thinking that needs to be explored when it comes to teacher evaluation.

Any legislation that this committee endorses should provide a measure of flexibility. One bill I plan on reintroducing this Congress that provides such flexibility is the Teacher and the Principal Improvement Act. The bill provides grants to localities for the purpose of professional development and evaluation.

We, as members of Congress, do not have all the answers. We rely on testimony, our own professional experiences, and our beliefs to guide us through this process.

I look forward to hearing from the panel and thank you, again.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

[The statement of Mrs. McCarthy follows:]

Prepared Statement of Hon. Carolyn McCarthy, Ranking Minority Member, Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education

Thank you Mr. Chairman for holding another important hearing geared toward improving our schools nationwide.

I also want to thank our panel of witnesses for joining us bright and early today—we all appreciate your time.

I do want to make a note that even before we dive into teacher performance and evaluation, we have a duty to revisit teacher standards in general to ensure the best and brightest are educating our children.

This commitment begins at an early age and I am currently working on legislation that will encourage states to follow best practices in early education and commit to hiring teachers with at least a bachelor's degree.

With that said, it goes without saying that evaluating teacher performance is a tricky issue.

There are many factors aside from student achievement that come into play when judging a teacher's performance.

These factors include, but are not limited to:

- Classroom Environment;
- Classroom Resources;
- and School Leader Involvement.

Let me breakdown what I mean by each of these.

Classroom Environment: where schools are located and the makeup of the class all play important factors when we discuss teacher performance.

Classroom Resources: how much funding local schools are getting both federally and locally effect how teachers are able to do their work.

Last but not least, School Leader Involvement: too often our school leadership gets off the hook in underperforming schools.

We need to take a look at how teachers are being supported by their school boards and administrators when conducting any evaluation of performance.

While taking these three factors into consideration, we must also recognize several important points about evaluation.

Evaluation systems must be done frequently, with discretion and with the input and collaboration of teachers.

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The bill provides grants to localities for the purposes of professional development and evaluation.

We, as Members of Congress, do not have all the answers.

We rely on testimony, our own professional experiences and our beliefs to guide us through this process.

I look forward to hearing from the panel.

I yield back, thank you.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you, Mrs. McCarthy.

Pursuant to committee rule 7(c), all subcommittee members will be permitted to submit written statements to be included in the permanent hearing record. And without objection, the hearing record will remain open for 14 days to allow statements, questions for the record, and other extraneous material referenced during the hearing to be submitted in the official hearing record.

And now it is my pleasure to introduce our distinguished panel of witnesses. First, Dr. Steve Cantrell is the chief resource officer for research and evaluation at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, where he manages grants and contracts focused on teaching effectiveness, including the Measures of Effective Teaching, the MET project.

Thank you for being here.

And I will turn to Dr. Roe to introduce our next witness.

Mr. ROE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And appropriately dressed in his orange tie from Knoxville, Tennessee, would be Dr. Jim McIntyre, superintendent of the Knoxville County School System. Dr. McIntyre served as the superintendent of the Knox County Schools—does serve.

Prior to his appointment in 2008 Dr. McIntyre served as the budget director and chief operating officer for the Boston Public School System. During Dr. McIntyre's tenure the Boston Public Schools were named one of the top-performing urban school systems in the nation.

Earlier in his career he taught English, anatomy, and physical education at the Vincent Gray Alternative High School in East St. Louis, Illinois. Dr. McIntyre has served on numerous state-level working groups aimed at enhancing public education and was selected as a fellow in the Broad Foundation Superintendents Academy, an intensive 10-month fellowship in urban public school superintendency.

Welcome, Dr. McIntyre.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you, Dr. Roe.

We also have with us Dr. Rodney Watson. He is the chief of human resources for the Houston Independent School District. He has served in several positions related to juvenile corrections and student support services.

Welcome.

And finally, Mr. Emanuel Harper is a French teacher at the Herron High School, a public charter school in downtown Indianapolis that I am familiar with. He is also an adjunct faculty member at Marian University and a Teach Plus Policy fellow.

Welcome.

Before I recognize each of you to provide your testimony let me briefly explain our lighting system. You will each have 5 minutes to present your testimony, and when you begin the light in front of you, as you might expect, will turn green. When there is 1 minute left it will be yellow, and then when your time is expired the light will be red.

Sounds simple. Not necessarily always for us.

At that point I ask you to wrap up your remarks as best as you are able, and after everyone has testified, members, of course, will each have 5 minutes to ask questions of the panel.

So without further ado, I would like to recognize Dr. Cantrell for 5 minutes, sir?

STATEMENT OF STEVE CANTRELL, CHIEF RESEARCH OFFICER, BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION

Mr. CANTRELL. Chairman Rokita, Ranking Member McCarthy, and committee members, I am Steve Cantrell, chief research officer at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and co-director of the Measures of Effective Teaching project. Thank you for inviting me to testify about the MET project.

The Measures of Effective Teaching project set out to answer one question: Is it possible to measure teaching effectiveness? The answer is yes.

Drawing upon data collected from over 3,000 teachers at 300 schools in six urban school districts, MET researchers, using a design that included randomly assigning students to teachers, demonstrated that effective teaching causes better learning. There are teachers whose students consistently learn more and teachers whose students consistently learn less.

MET proved that these results are due to differences in teaching ability, not differences in student characteristics, and that more and less effective teachers can be identified through a combination of classroom observation, student surveys, and student assessments. Indeed, the combination of these measures does a far better job predicting teaching effectiveness in raising student performance than master's degrees or years of experience.

Furthermore, these measures have the potential to provide teachers with much better feedback and more tailored supports. Given these results, it is now time for school systems to put into practice feedback and evaluation using multiple measures that teachers can trust.

Alongside its findings, the MET project issued a second report entitled "Feedback for Better Teaching." In it are nine principles to guide those who develop feedback and evaluations systems. We organized the nine principles into three categories: measure effective teaching, ensure high-quality data, and invest in improvement.

As school systems set out to measure effective teaching there are three important considerations. First, the measures should emerge from and help establish expectations for what constitutes effective teaching. Second, since no single measure can fully capture the complexity of teaching, states and districts should use multiple measures. And third, our research demonstrated that balance is best when deciding how much emphasis to place on any single measure.

As school systems collect effectiveness data there are three important considerations for establishing and maintaining trust in the data. First, the measures should be valid predictors of student learning; second, the measurement should be reliable; and third, when data are used for accountability there should be a good match between the teacher's data and the students' data.

As systems use effectiveness data it is important to understand and communicate that improvement is the goal. Relatively few teachers in the MET sample exhibited uniformly poor or uniformly great practice. We found that most teachers scored average, and yet they displayed different strengths and different weaknesses.

Still, we know that average teaching is not good enough to get all of our students career and college ready, and so improvement is necessary. That most teachers are in the middle means that school systems need to share the responsibility to improve teaching by providing targeted and high-quality support.

If teachers are to believe that the feedback and evaluation system is designed to help them improve then these three principles should be evident: First, a system built for improvement will not exaggerate small differences, but the performance categories will make meaningful distinctions between teachers. Teachers in adjacent categories should have demonstrably different impacts on student learning.

Second, a system built for feedback and improvement will prioritize that in all its communications. And third, the measures of effective teaching naturally focus on classrooms; that information should be used at all levels of the system.

How else would a school system know what professional development to offer which teachers and whether the professional development investments make a difference to improving teaching practice?

In closing, I want to reiterate one important point: Better feedback and evaluation systems are essential to improving teaching and learning. If done well, in ways that teachers can trust, school systems can use this information to provide better supports which, in turn, will lead to better performance for students.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present.

[The statement of Dr. Cantrell follows:]

Prepared Statement of Steve Cantrell, Chief Research Officer, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Chairman Rokita, Ranking Member McCarthy, and committee members, I am Steve Cantrell, Chief Research Officer at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and co-Director of the Measures of Effective Teaching project. Thank you for inviting me to testify about the MET project, a research study with great relevance for those who design and implement teacher evaluation and feedback systems.

Overview

The Measures of Effective Teaching project set out to test if it is possible to measure teaching effectiveness using multiple measures of a teacher's performance. The answer is yes. Drawing upon data collected from nearly 3,000 teachers from over 300 schools across six urban school districts, MET researchers demonstrated that effective teaching causes better learning. There are teachers whose students consistently outperform their peers and teachers whose students consistently underperform their peers. MET proved that these results are due to differences in teaching ability rather than differences in student characteristics, and that more and less effective teachers can be identified through a combination of classroom observations, student surveys, and evidence of student learning. These measures have the potential to provide teachers with much better feedback and more tailored supports to improve their practice and to help their students succeed.

Data Collection and Findings

The study looked at several dimensions of teaching. This is important because, as you know, teaching is complex and any single measure cannot fully reflect all important aspects of teaching. We measured four distinct aspects of teaching practice. We used two different student assessments to measure student learning. We used five different classroom observation protocols to assess the quality of classroom teaching (we are, of course, not recommending that districts adopt five different protocols). We tested teachers' ability to represent, identify, and increase students' conceptual understandings. Finally, we surveyed students themselves to assess how they experience the instructional environment.

This work was conducted by some of the nation's finest researchers and technical assistance providers using state-of-the-art methods and technology. The researchers used a value-added model (VAM) to calculate the differences between the actual and predicted performance of a teacher's students on both state tests in math and ELA in grades 4 through 9 and an additional more cognitively challenging assessment in the same grades and subjects. Classroom lessons were observed using panoramic video cameras and scored by highly trained and certified raters. The test of teacher knowledge and the student perception of the instructional environment survey both built upon more than a decade of prior research.

Preliminary MET findings demonstrated that three measures—student assessments, classroom observations, and student surveys—helped predict whether teachers would raise the performance of future groups of students. Indeed, the combination of these measures does a far better job predicting which teachers will succeed in raising student performance than master's degrees and years of teaching experience.

In the study's second year, researchers took the unusual step to randomly assign classes of students to teachers. We did this to see if teachers previously identified as more effective based on these measures actually caused students to learn more. Random assignment allowed researchers to isolate teaching effectiveness from any unmeasured student characteristics. Furthermore, the researchers detected no bias in the teacher effectiveness estimates, as long as the estimates were adjusted to account for differences in measured students' characteristics, such as prior performance and demographics.

Final MET findings literally proved that effective teachers cause their students to learn more. Furthermore, the final findings showed that when combining measures into a single composite index, balanced weights are best. Composites that weigh state test results between 33% and 50% are more stable from year to year and better predict student performance on higher order assessments than composites that place more than 50% of the emphasis on state tests.

Nine Principles for Feedback and Evaluation Systems

It is now time for school systems to put into practice MET's research findings by building and implementing feedback and evaluation systems using multiple measures that teachers can trust. The MET project's final report, Feedback for Better Teaching, provides 9 principles to guide school systems as they develop feedback and evaluation systems. These 9 principles fall into three categories: Measure Effective Teaching, Ensure High Quality Data, and Invest in Improvement.

As school systems set out to measure effective teaching, there are three important considerations. First, the measures should emerge from and help establish expectations for what constitutes effective teaching practice. Second, since no single measure of effectiveness can capture the full complexity of teaching, states and districts should use multiple measures. Third, our research demonstrated that balance is best when considering how much emphasis to place upon any one measure within a set of multiple measures.

As school systems collect effectiveness data, there are three important considerations for establishing and maintaining trust in the data. First, the measures should be valid predictors of increased student learning. A school system enters into a bargain with its teachers when it adopts a measure within an evaluation system. The bargain states that if teachers work hard to improve on this measure, then their students will be better learners. It is this bargain that animates the feedback promise of multiple measures. By annually validating each measure, the school system guarantees that effort toward improving practice will not be wasted. Second, the measurement process should be reliable. Teachers have been especially wary of classroom observation processes because they perceive the process as potentially subjective. MET project research discovered three ways to increase reliability of classroom observation: test and certify raters, have at least two raters observe each teacher, and observe at least two lessons. Third, when data are used for accountability, it is essential that the data match the right teachers with the right students. If the data are mismatched then one could easily draw the wrong conclusion about the effectiveness of a given teacher or school.

As school systems use effectiveness data, it is important to understand and communicate that improvement is the goal. Relatively few teachers in the MET sample exhibited uniformly poor or great practice across all measures. The data led us to conclude that most teachers are average, but for different reasons. Indeed, the majority of teachers scored very close to the mean on both the classroom observation instruments and on the survey of students' perceptions of the instructional environment. Yet, we know that average teaching is not good enough to help students achieve college and career success, so improvement is necessary. The realization that most teachers are in the middle means that school systems need to share the responsibility to improve teaching by providing targeted, high quality support.

As school systems begin this work, there are three important considerations for signaling an improvement-focused feedback and evaluation system. First, a system built for improvement will not exaggerate small differences, but will use performance categories to make meaningful distinctions among teachers. Teachers in adjacent categories should have demonstrably different impacts on student learning. Otherwise, there is no need for the additional category. Second, a system built for improvement will prioritize feedback and support in all communications with stakeholders. Third, though measures of effective teaching naturally focus on classrooms, the data from these measures should be used for decision-making at all levels of the school system. The measures will indicate areas where teachers need better support and this data should be used to determine which professional development to offer to which teachers and whether the professional development investments in place are making a difference to improve teaching practice. Furthermore, the meas-

ures will indicate the schools where teaching is getting better over time. This seems like a natural indicator of the quality of instructional leadership.

In closing, I want to reiterate one important point: Better evaluation and feedback systems are essential to improving teaching and learning. If done well, in ways that teachers can trust, these systems will enable better teacher supports which, in turn, will lead to better student performance.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present.

REPORTS TO ACCOMPANY THE WRITTEN TESTIMONY

"Ensuring Fair and Reliable Measures of Effective Teaching: Culminating Findings from the MET Project's Three-Year Study," may be accessed at the following internet address:

http://metproject.org/downloads/MET_Ensuring_Fair_and_Reliable_Measures_Practitioner_Brief.pdf

"Feedback for Better Teaching: Nine Principles for Using Measures of Effective Teaching," may be accessed at the following Internet address:

http://metproject.org/downloads/MET_Feedback%20for%20Better%20Teaching_Principles%20Paper.pdf

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Chairman ROKITA. Thank you, Doctor.

Dr. McIntyre, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF DR. JAMES P. MCINTYRE, JR., SUPERINTENDENT, KNOX COUNTY SCHOOLS

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you, Chairman Rokita, Ranking Member McCarthy, members of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education. Good morning. My name is Jim McIntyre and I have the privilege of serving as the superintendent of the Knox County Schools in the great state of Tennessee. I appreciate the opportunity to be here this morning to talk about this important issue.

Over the last 5 years Tennessee has embarked on a remarkable journey of education reform and improvement. Radically higher academic standards, support for performance-based pay, fundamentally restructured teacher tenure, and the introduction of an interest-based labor dialogue called "collaborative conferencing" are but a few of the significant policy initiatives that have been put in place to enhance schooling for our children.

But perhaps no other recent change has greater potential to improve the quality of education in our state than the adoption of a new teacher performance evaluation system.

Tennessee law requires, now, a performance evaluation of every teacher every year, and at least 50 percent of that evaluation must be based on student academic outcomes. The Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model, or TEAM, as the standard evaluation model is called, is based on multiple measures of teacher effectiveness, incorporating elements of student academic results, multiple observations of classroom practice, and indicators of teacher professionalism.

The TEAM evaluation system features an excellent classroom observation instrument, or rubric, as it is called, which begins with a detailed and research-based definition of good teaching and allows educators to understand how their instruction measures up against a very rigorous standard. The classroom observation protocol requires an objective assessment based solely on the evidence an evaluator observes in the classroom or during lesson-planning activities.

Our new teacher evaluation system, now in its second year, has several important strengths. First, requiring every teacher to be evaluated every year based on multiple classroom observations connects the performance of our—the performance evaluation of our teachers to the day-to-day work of teaching students. This was not the case in the past, where performance evaluation was an isolated and infrequent event which had, at best, a marginal impact on student—excuse me, on instructional practice.

Second, Tennessee's teacher performance evaluation system incorporates both student achievement results—and student achievement meaning measuring student learning at a point in time—as well as value added growth outcomes, which is measuring learning over a period of time, providing for a reasonable picture of teacher effectiveness.

Third, I appreciate that a significant proportion of the teacher evaluation is now based on student outcomes. This makes sure that our focus is not just on teaching the material but ensuring that students actually learn it.

Fourth, the approach we have taken in Knoxville, and generally taken across the state of Tennessee, has been to ensure that our evaluation system is a developmental process rather than a punitive one. That is, the evaluation system primarily is focused on helping our teachers to improve their instructional practice.

Finally, I believe that our new evaluation system is well aligned to the more in-depth and rigorous academic standards that Tennessee has adopted and will better prepare our students for success in today's increasingly complex and competitive world.

I believe the power of TEAM and any strong performance evaluation system is that it provides consistent and useful information regarding teacher effectiveness that can be utilized in human capital decisions, such as retention, termination, promotion, tenure, appointment to teacher leadership roles, and even compensation. In Knoxville we use the data from teacher evaluations to support all of these critical personnel decisions.

TEAM data is used to identify teachers who might need additional assistance or teachers who could potentially be effective peer evaluators, what we call lead teachers. Evaluation information is an important factor in the decision to terminate chronically ineffectual teachers and it is used to discover potential candidates for consideration in school leadership roles.

As I mentioned earlier, the state of Tennessee has significantly restructured teacher tenure. In the past, teachers were automatically granted tenure if they were on the job for 3 years and 1 day. Now, new teachers in Tennessee are not eligible for tenure until after 5 years of service and only if they perform at one of the highest two levels on the new evaluation system for 2 consecutive years.

In the Knox County Schools we have also developed a strategic compensation, or performance-based pay, initiative that relies heavily on the data from the teacher evaluation system.

In the Knox County—and our outcomes have been very good, and Chairman Rokita made reference to that. In the interest of time I will leave that to the questioning, but our outcomes have been very good for students, but our outcomes certainly aren't where we

would like them to be yet. But I do believe that our teacher evaluation system is an important strategy in our efforts to improve the quality of public education in Knoxville and across the state of Tennessee.

Tennessee's teacher evaluation system is not perfect but it is a vast improvement over our previous evaluation process, and I think it will prove to be a very valuable professional growth and instructional improvement tool.

[The statement of Dr. McIntyre follows:]

Prepared Statement of Dr. James P. McIntyre, Jr., Superintendent, Knox County Schools, Knoxville, TN

Chairman Rokita, Members of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education, distinguished guests: My name is Jim McIntyre, and I have the privilege of serving as the Superintendent of the Knox County Schools in the great state of Tennessee. As the public school system for Knoxville and its surrounding area, the Knox County Schools is approximately the 75th largest school system in America, serving more than 55,000 students from urban, suburban and rural environments in 88 schools. I want to thank you for the opportunity to be here this morning to discuss the important topic of teacher performance evaluation.

Over the past five years, Tennessee has embarked on a remarkable journey of education reform and improvement. Radically higher academic standards, support for performance-based pay, fundamentally restructured teacher tenure, and the introduction of an interest-based labor dialogue called "collaborative conferencing" are but a few of the significant policy initiatives that have been put in place to enhance schooling for our children. But perhaps no other recent change has greater potential to improve the quality of education in our state than the adoption of a new teacher performance evaluation system.

Tennessee law now requires a performance evaluation of every teacher, every year; and at least fifty percent of that evaluation must be based on student academic outcomes. While district-specific plans that meet these parameters can be approved in Tennessee, the standard evaluation system is called the Tennessee Educator Acceleration Model or TEAM. The TEAM evaluation system is based on multiple measures of teacher effectiveness, incorporating elements of student academic results, multiple observations of classroom practice, and indicators of teacher professionalism. This year we will even pilot using some student feedback on a limited basis.

The TEAM evaluation system features an excellent classroom observation instrument (or "rubric" as it is called), which begins with a detailed and research-based definition of good teaching, and allows educators to understand how their instruction measures up against a very rigorous standard. The rubric incorporates specific instructional practices that have been demonstrated to increase student achievement. The classroom observation protocol requires an objective assessment based solely on the evidence that an evaluator observes in the classroom or during lesson-planning activities.

Our new teacher evaluation system, now in its second year, has several important strengths:

First, requiring every teacher to be evaluated every year connects the performance evaluation to the day-to-day work of teaching students. In the past, teacher evaluations took place only twice every ten years in Tennessee, and teachers felt this process was oddly separate from their daily efforts in the classroom. Because it occurred so infrequently, the previous evaluation system had, at best, a marginal impact on instructional practice. With evaluation happening for every teacher each year, it is now part of the daily work of the school. Evaluation visits are routine and frequent, professional conversations center around the instructional strategies in the rubric, and the evaluation process can actually have a significant impact on improving the quality of teaching in our schools.

Second, Tennessee's teacher performance evaluation system incorporates both student achievement and academic growth outcome measures. We are all familiar with student achievement data, which gauges where a student measures against a particular standard at a point in time, and is typically expressed as to whether the student is deemed "proficient" in the subject matter for a particular grade level.

But Tennessee also includes "value-added" growth measures as a significant proportion of its evaluation system. Value-added growth, as the name implies, measures student learning over time, and whether the student exceeds or falls below the

expected level of academic progress over a specified period of time, usually a school year. It therefore measures the amount of "value" added by the teacher (or the "effect" of the teacher) over and above the expected academic growth. The Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) is a well-regarded statistical model, refined over the past 20 years, that calculates the growth measures used in the TEAM evaluation system.

Value—added growth is a useful measure to include in a teacher evaluation model, as it quantifies each student's learning over the period that the educator has taught them, but does not disadvantage the teacher if a student came to him or her behind academically. Value-added growth, therefore, provides useful information regarding the effectiveness of the teacher. As quantitative measures of student academic success are increasingly integrated into teacher evaluation systems across the country, academic growth models will be critical in helping to ensure a fair, appropriate measurement of teacher effectiveness.

Third, I appreciate that a significant proportion of the teacher's evaluation is now based on student outcomes. Our new performance evaluation system puts a premium not only on good teaching, but also on student learning. No longer is it acceptable for a teacher to say, "Well, I taught a great lesson, but my students just didn't learn it." The new evaluation system reinforces the urgency we all must feel in ensuring that our students meet the much more rigorous academic standards that we have put in place in Tennessee—and higher expectations for our teachers will help us get there.

Fourth, the approach we have taken in Knoxville, and generally across the state of Tennessee has been to ensure that our evaluation system is a developmental process. That is, it is focused on helping our teachers to improve their instructional practice.

I believe we must view teacher performance evaluation primarily as a professional growth tool, rather than purely as an accountability mechanism. Don't get me wrong, there will be teachers who will fail to secure tenure or who will be terminated because of issues surfaced through their performance evaluation. But for the overwhelming majority of our teachers, those who are solid performers to truly extraordinary educators, our evaluation system will be about continually improving and enhancing their instruction.

Finally, I believe that our evaluation system is well aligned to the new Common Core academic standards that Tennessee and 44 other states have adopted. As a state-led initiative, Common Core will require our teachers to explore curricular topics in greater depth, and to facilitate important 21st century skills such as critical thinking, applying knowledge, and identifying creative solutions. Accordingly, the instructional rubric includes indicators that evaluate in-depth questioning, teaching different modes of thinking, and problem-solving—exactly the types of skills that will prepare our students for success in today's rapidly changing world.

The TEAM evaluation system, like any system, is not without challenges. Because our state assessments only cover grades 3-8 and certain subjects in high school, close to half of the teachers in Tennessee are without individual value-added growth data. Our state has committed to increasing the number of grades and subjects with such assessments, but this remains an important concern. For the most part, non-tested teachers share in the growth data for their whole school or particular discipline. I think this is a very appropriate short-term solution, as music and art teachers do influence the learning of all students in their elementary school, and certainly a great physics teacher will bolster the academic growth of her students in mathematics.

The other challenge to highlight is ensuring that there is consistency of implementation of the evaluation system, and that we attain inter-rater reliability within schools, districts, and across the state. Our new evaluation system has significantly raised the bar for expectations of teacher effectiveness. If our evaluators are true to their training and consistently rigorous, then TEAM will provide an excellent assessment of teacher performance and an outstanding professional growth tool. If they are not, TEAM will be an expensive and time-consuming failure.

Allow me to outline some of the ways that TEAM data is used. The power of TEAM, and any strong performance evaluation system, is that it provides consistent and useful information regarding teacher effectiveness that can be utilized in human capital decisions, such as retention, termination, promotion, tenure, appointment to teacher leadership roles, and even compensation. In Knoxville, we use the data from teacher evaluations to support all of those critical decisions.

TEAM data is used to identify teachers who may need additional assistance, or those who could potentially be effective peer evaluators (Lead Teachers). Evaluation information is an important factor in the decision to terminate chronically ineffec-

tual teachers, and it is used to discover potential candidates for consideration in school leadership roles.

As I mentioned earlier, the state of Tennessee has significantly restructured teacher tenure. In the past, teachers were automatically granted tenure if they were on the job for three years and one day. It was a sometimes difficult structure because about two and a half years into a teacher's career, a principal had to decide whether to give a teacher tenure, essentially for the rest of their professional career, or fire them.

Now, new teachers in Tennessee are not eligible for tenure until after five years of service, and only if they perform at one of the two highest levels (on a five point scale) on the evaluation system for two consecutive years. This is obviously a very different perspective on teacher tenure, but a worthy experiment in exploring if a radically different conceptualization of tenure will make a difference in teacher effectiveness.

In the Knox County Schools, we have developed a strategic compensation (performance-based pay) initiative that relies heavily on the data from the teacher evaluation system. APEX (Achieve, Perform, EXcel), provides either $1,500 or $2,000 to our teachers based on great instruction, strong student academic results, teacher leadership and/or providing consistent high-quality instruction in our high needs schools. Data from the TEAM evaluation system determines 70% of the eligibility for this $3.6 million incentive pay program (funded in part through Race to the Top funding).

One important but somewhat unique aspect of our implementation of the teacher evaluation system in Knoxville has been the development of a Lead Teacher role. Lead teachers are some of our most outstanding and respected classroom teachers who are paid an additional stipend to be observers and evaluators of their fellow educators.

Our Lead Teachers are able to play an important leadership role while remaining as classroom teachers, and they lend credibility, instructional expertise, and much needed support to the teacher evaluation process. Utilizing peer evaluators can be a tricky business, but when done right—with the right people, training, and structure—it can be an incredibly powerful asset in the effective evaluation and development of teachers.

One more important note on teacher evaluation systems: they are not, by themselves, a panacea. Rigorous, developmental teacher evaluation systems can be an important instructional improvement tool, but must be implemented in the context of a larger education reform and improvement effort.

In the Knox County Schools, we have certainly embraced the TEAM teacher evaluation system, but we have also crafted a detailed five-year strategic plan, invested in professional development and teacher support, embraced research-based instructional practices, focused on school leadership, initiated performance-based compensation, facilitated professional learning communities, and built the capacity to utilize data to support great instruction. These strategies all support and compliment the centerpiece teacher evaluation system, and these strategies are collectively indispensable to our educational success.

Finally, you may be wondering how the new teacher evaluation system in Tennessee is impacting teaching and learning. So, I will leave you with just a few perspectives on outcomes:

In 2011-12, Tennessee saw some of the highest gains in student achievement on state assessments in recent history. Likewise, this past year in the Knox County Schools we have seen strong academic progress by virtually every quantifiable measure of student learning and success. Proficiency for our students increased overall in grades 3-8 in all four tested subject areas: English/language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Graduation rates, academic growth, and ACT scores also posted strong results.

In our school system, we have experienced substantial gains in teacher value-added scores in the last two years. Our district experienced a significant decrease in the number of teachers performing at the two lowest effectiveness levels from 2011 to 2012, declining from 18% to 9%.

Over that same time period, the percentage of our teachers scoring in the highest category of teacher value-added performance, those making the greatest impact on student learning, increased from 27% to 36%.

TABLE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF KNOX COUNTY SCHOOLS TENNESSEE VALUE–ADDED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM (TVAAS) TEACHER EFFECT SCORES 2010–2012

[Teachers with individual TVAAS scores]

Year	1	2	3	4	5	Count
2012	4%	5%	32%	23%	36%	2,050
2011	9%	9%	38%	16%	27%	2,417
2010	13%	13%	34%	16%	24%	1,738

In the Knox County Schools, our student outcomes are not nearly where we want them to be yet—and we are certainly not declaring victory—but I believe that our teacher evaluation system is an important strategy in improving the quality of public education in Knoxville and across our state. Tennessee's teacher evaluation system is not perfect, but it is a vast improvement over our previous evaluation process, and I think it will prove to be a very valuable professional growth and instructional improvement tool.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you, Dr. McIntyre.

Dr. Watson, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF DR. RODNEY WATSON, CHIEF OF HUMAN RESOURCES, HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Mr. WATSON. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Rodney Watson. I am the chief human resources officer for the Houston Independent School District.

Under the leadership of Superintendent Terry Grier and our board of trustees, we have been working to improve teacher evaluation and professional development for the past 3 years. This work, or the impetus for this work, stemmed from a major disconnect between our old teacher and evaluation system and student achievement.

In Houston our old system gave teachers acceptable performance ratings, so we had about 97 percent of our teachers who received acceptable ratings when, in fact, we have over 70,000 students that could not read at grade level. As a result, two-thirds of Houston ISD teachers are now aware of at least one specific area in which they need to improve.

I would like to spend my time sharing with you a few of the most important lessons we have learned over the past few years, which I think will help you as you make key and critical decisions as we tackle these issues.

First, we have learned that better teacher evaluations are not the end goal; they are one part of a solution to one of the most critical challenges that most school districts face today. Nothing we can do for our students matters more.

In Houston, our work on evaluations and professional development is just one part of our Effective Teacher Initiative, which we launched in 2009. Specifically, we have made human capital acquisition a focus as a district to recruit and select teachers earlier because research shows the earlier we are able to attract and retain good teachers, the more likely they are to have success in the classrooms.

We are also offering potential trips to campuses that are also likely to yield high-performing teachers. Steps like these allow us to be able to compete with other districts and charter networks

who have historically sought out and hired the best candidates earlier.

In addition, as part of our Effective Teacher Initiative, we are thinking how we can use compensation and career pathways to retain and reward our best teachers. Using data from our evaluation system, we are able to identify our best teachers and use a multi-pronged approach to retain them in HISD. For years our district has been a leader in the field of performance pay by rewarding our top-performing staff with significant bonuses through our ASPIRE program.

Second, we have learned that rigorous evaluations and better professional development go hand in hand. Some people suggest that these two things are mutually exclusive—that better evaluations undermine professional development, for example—but what we have found is that nothing could be farther from the truth.

We expect a lot from our teachers, and for our new evaluation system, our processes reflect that providing them with specific expectations for their classroom practice, we are able to help them and support them as they reach their goals. But we also designed the evaluation system to give teachers more and better development opportunities than they ever had in our old system.

In addition, all of our teachers have the opportunity to work with one of 130 teacher development specialists, which are master teachers in specific subject areas whose job it is—which is their only job—is to offer advice and connect teachers with resources that can help them improve. This is a position that was created and staffed as part of our Effective Teaching Initiative.

Setting a high bar for excellence is critical to good professional development because we can't help teachers reach their full potential unless we are honest about what they need and how they are going to improve, and it is our responsibility to provide them with the necessary resources and also with a picture of what excellence looks like.

Third, we have learned that better evaluations can help us hold on to our best teachers. A lot of people worry that more rigorous evaluations will push good teachers out the door. That hasn't been our experience. In fact, we see teacher evaluation systems as a critical tool that helps us keep even more of our best teachers. After all, we can't retain our best teachers if we don't know who they are.

As we began to look at retaining our "highly effective" teachers, our goal this year is to retain at least 95 percent of them after retaining 92 percent last year. We are also taking steps to attract more promising teachers to our schools by offering sign-on bonuses up to $5,000 in our hardest-to-staff subject areas and our schools.

During the first year of implementation we made it a priority to gather feedback from our teachers and appraisers on their experience with the new system at several checkpoints throughout the year. We found that teachers who reported that their system—that their appraiser consistently applied the expectations articulated in our rubric and who received useful feedback about their practice from their appraiser were 10 times more likely to report that the evaluation system was fair and believed that their rating to be accurate—an accurate reflection of their performance.

I conclude with you the obvious point: This is extremely hard work. Getting the logistics of a teacher evaluation system right is hard enough, but on top of that you are really asking schools across the nation to embrace an entirely new paradigm, a new culture of honest feedback and accountability for results in the classroom.

No school system can hope to get this exactly right on the first try, but perfection shouldn't be the standard. Our experience in Houston shows that it is possible to make big strides in teacher evaluation and development right away, at the same time, keeping improvements going as you go along.

Thank you very much.

[The statement of Dr. Watson follows:]

Prepared Statement of Dr. Rodney E. Watson, Chief Human Resources Officer, Houston Independent School District, Houston, TX

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Rodney Watson, and I'm the Chief Human Resources Officer for the Houston Independent School District. Under the leadership of Superintendent Terry Grier and our Board of Trustees, we have been working to improve teacher evaluation and professional development in our district for the last three years.

This is work we undertook because we saw a major disconnect between our old traditional teacher evaluation system and student achievement. This was a system not unlike those in effect in most districts across America. In Houston, this old system gave acceptable performance ratings to 97 percent of teachers, despite the fact that 70,000 Houston students were reading below grade level. To their credit, Houston teachers told us they wanted a useful evaluation system that treats them like the professionals they are.

As a result, thousands of teachers joined with other educators, parents, and community members to help design a new teacher evaluation and development system that is now in its second full year of implementation. Today, two-thirds of Houston ISD teachers are aware of at least one specific area in which they need to improve. More importantly, they are getting the guidance and tools to make it happen. We think it's one of the most innovative approaches to teacher evaluation in the country, and I would be happy to address some of the specifics during the question and answer period.

I would like to spend my time sharing a few of the most important lessons we have learned so far, which I think will help you and especially education leaders in your states and districts who are tackling these issues.

First, we have learned that better teacher evaluations are not an end goal. They are one part of a solution to the most critical challenge our schools face today: how to find and keep teachers who can prepare our students for success in today's ultra-competitive economy. Nothing we can do for our student's matters more.

In Houston, our work on evaluations and professional development is just one part of our Effective Teachers Initiative, which we launched in 2009. This initiative is a commitment to refocus nearly every aspect of our human resources operation on putting great teachers in every classroom. That commitment has led us to reexamine everything from the way we recruit teachers to the way we pay them to the way we encourage our best teachers to stay in HISD.

Specifically, we have made human capital acquisition a focus as a district to recruit and select teachers earlier because research has shown that teachers who are hired earlier have high student achievement results in the classroom. We kick off our recruitment season as early as October to ensure our recruiting trips to campuses that are likely to yield high performing teachers. We also offer potential teaching candidates early contracts which support our ability to hire teachers in the winter and spring instead of late in the summer. Steps like these allow us to finally compete with many of our surrounding suburban districts and charter networks, who have historically sought out and hired the best candidates far earlier than we ever could in the past.

In addition, as part of the Effective Teachers Initiative, we are rethinking how we can use compensation and career pathways to retain and reward our best teachers. Using data from our evaluation system, we are able to identify our best teachers and use a multi-pronged approach to retain them in HISD. For years, our district has been a leader in the field of performance pay by rewarding top performing staff with significant bonuses through the ASPIRE award program. And this past

year, we engaged teachers and principals from around the district to develop teacher leader roles and a career pathway framework that is currently being piloted in 23 schools. These opportunities allow our best teachers to specialize and extend their reach to more students and colleagues, without having to leave the classroom.

Second, we have learned that rigorous evaluations and better professional development go hand in hand. Some people suggest that these two things are mutually exclusive—that better evaluations undermine professional development, for example—but nothing could be further from the truth. We expect a lot from our teachers, and our new evaluation process reflects that by providing them with specific expectations for their classroom practice. But we also designed the evaluation system to give teachers more and better development opportunities than they ever had under the old system. We've raised the bar, but we are also helping our teachers meet those expectations. For example, as part of the evaluation process, our teachers meet regularly with their administrators to discuss their performance and create an Individualized Professional Development Plan. This plan not only connects teachers to development opportunities that fit their needs and interests but is also matched directly to the specific instructional practice criteria that make up the observation part of their evaluation—a far cry from the one-size-fits-all workshop approach to professional development that prevails in most districts.

In addition, all teachers have the opportunity to work with one of 130 Teacher Development Specialists, master teachers in specific subject areas whose only job it is to offer advice and connect teachers with resources that can help them improve. This is a position we created and staffed as part of Effective Teaching Initiative using existing funds. We have also created a library of exemplar videos that showcase some of our best teachers engaging in best practice around each of the 13 instructional practice criteria found in our teacher appraisal and development rubric. Our evaluation system has helped us create a roadmap for our teachers to know and meet the expectations we have for the quality of instruction they deliver to our students on a daily basis.

None of this means we've lost sight of our high standards: Under our old evaluation process, about 97 percent of our teachers were told they were essentially perfect and had absolutely nothing to work on. Now, nearly two-thirds of teachers have a development area identified on their evaluation.

Setting a high bar for excellence is critical to good professional development, because we can't help teachers reach their full potential unless we are honest about what they need to improve, and provide examples of what excellence looks like.

Third, we have learned that better evaluations can help us hold on to our best teachers. A lot of people worry that more rigorous evaluations will push good teachers out the door. That hasn't been our experience. In fact, we see our teacher evaluation system as a crucial tool that helps us keep even more of our best teachers—after all, we can't work to retain great teachers unless we can identify them in the first place. Thanks to our evaluation system, we know who our best teachers are, and we're aiming to keep at least 95 percent of them this year after retaining 92 percent of teachers rated "highly effective" last year. We are also taking steps to attract more promising teachers to our schools by offering signing bonuses of up to $5000.00 in the hardest-to-staff subject areas and schools.

Our research and experience suggests, more rigorous evaluations are actually directly related to higher levels of teacher satisfaction with the evaluation process. During the first year of implementation, we made it a priority to gather feedback from teachers and appraisers on their experience with the new system at several checkpoints throughout the year. We found that teachers who reported that their appraiser consistently applied the expectations articulated in the rubric and who received useful feedback about their practice from their appraiser were 10 times more likely to report that the evaluation system was "fair" and believed their rating to be an accurate reflection of their performance. Likewise, teachers who saw and received feedback about their performance from their Teacher Development Specialist more frequently during the year were more satisfied with the evaluation process as a whole. What this tells us is that our teachers welcome and embrace high standards and high quality feedback, which ultimately supports their overall improvement.

I'll conclude with an obvious but important point: This is hard work. Getting the logistics of a new teacher evaluation system right is hard enough, but on top of that you are really asking schools to embrace an entirely new culture of honest feedback and accountability for results in the classroom. No school system can hope to get this exactly right on the first try, but perfection shouldn't be the standard. Our experience in Houston shows that it's possible to make big strides in teacher evaluation and development right away—and keep making improvements as you go along.

Thank you and I look forward to answering your questions.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you, Doctor.

Mr. Harper, you are recognized for 5 minutes?

STATEMENT OF EMANUEL HARPER, FRENCH TEACHER, HERRON HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. HARPER. Thank you.

Chairman Rokita, Ranking Member McCarthy, and members of the committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this important subject. As a French teacher at Herron High School in Indianapolis it is my priority to expose students to different cultures as we become a more globalized society. I am also an adjunct faculty member at Marian University for transition-to-teach candidates and also a Teach Plus Policy fellow.

So at my core I am a teacher, and while there is no oath teachers take before entering into the classroom, for all of us there is an abiding promise that we do and must make, one that has to transcend the rancor of socioeconomic conditions and decades of preconceived conclusions. This promise we make as teachers is that every day we go into the classroom working towards ending the achievement gap that has and continues to jeopardize our students' futures.

Unfortunately, we are here today because this promise has not been kept. Fortunately, there are at least two remedies: One, implementing stronger evaluative tools for teachers, appropriately weighing student performance and student voice; and giving more local flexibility in gathering a culture that drives student growth.

I know this because as I began my first year teaching at my first school I recognized that enthusiasm was the benchmark by which teachers were deemed effective. No longer was the focus on how you taught but how the administration thought you taught. It created a stagnant environment where students sat in their desks numb.

And in this system I knew that there were areas of growth for me that simply were not being addressed, even despite my hard work. Without having an objective account of my practice with substantive measurements and indicators, I was left to tease out my performance based on what I felt. It was unsustainable and I decided to leave the school.

And so I spoke out against this ineffective practice by testifying before the Indiana House Education Committee in favor of the newly implemented Senate Act 1, which strengthens teacher evaluations. This new act bases effectiveness not on degrees and years in the classroom, but on composites like student outcomes and observations. And it is schools like Herron High School, where I currently teach, that are leading the way in this regard.

Herron High School, which is a public charter school located in the heart of downtown Indianapolis, has a mission to create world-class citizens of the 21st century. In fact, US News & World Report ranked Herron in the top 30 best high schools in the United States.

This is possible due to a rigorous evaluation tool used to measure our impact on students. With announced and unannounced visits we are continually assessed on our effectiveness. This maintains a constant loop of evaluation, critical feedback, and actionable next steps.

In the evaluation process, non-tested subjects, such as French, undergo the same amount of scrutiny as tested subjects, with curriculum and assessments analyzed for their fidelity to A.P. exams. Thus, with end-of-year performance conversations, teachers who continually meet our high instructional bar are rewarded with leadership opportunities and salary increases. Those who do not are either placed on a targeted and demanding teacher assistance plan or removed from the classroom. Retaining and recruiting top talent translates to educating and preparing all students for college, which is our singular and overriding objective.

But if the system at large inhibits the cultivation and retention of great teachers, a more rigorous evaluative tool will be for naught. Local flexibility in staffing will ensure that only the highest-qualified teachers are selected to enter into the classroom, and at Herron our professional development is built around using our teachers as experts to increase student performance. We generate targeted cross-curricular interventions for at-risk students and reinforce the vertical alignment of our disciplines to challenge all students.

No one finishes their crosswords in this space. It is eagerly anticipated and an opportunity to hone our mission of closing the achievement gap.

And this is why I know that I don't make the promise to close the achievement gap in vain. It is possible and is happening as we speak at Herron and hundreds of other schools across the United States. But action has to be taken now for our students to properly inherit what we all aspire to, which is the American dream, and it starts with me.

It starts with me testifying here on the importance of stronger evaluative tools for teachers. It starts with us allowing local schools and school districts the flexibility to innovate and retain talent to drive student success. And it starts with reaffirming the right of every student to a high-quality and rigorous education.

And it must end with student achievement, because despite a student's surroundings or background, graduating from high school and college empowered to do anything they choose will be their destiny, but only when we do everything we can, starting today, to ensure effective teachers in every classroom.

Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Harper follows:]

Prepared Statement of Emanuel F. Harper IV, French Teacher, Herron High School, Indianapolis, IN

Chairman Rokita and Ranking Member McCarthy: Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this important subject.

As a French teacher at Herron High School, It's my priority to expose students to different cultures as we become a more globalized society. I am also an adjunct faculty member for Best Practices in World Language for Marian University's Master of Arts in Teaching program. It's here where I prepare the next generation of transition-to-teach candidates on how to most effectively teach world languages. The community is also an important stakeholder as I am a founding member of the Indianapolis chapter of Stand For Children—a grassroots parent and student advocacy non-profit. And, as a policy fellow for Teach Plus, it is important that I help shape the policies that will affect my students.

Of all the great professions, there is no oath teachers take before entering the classroom. But deep within us is an abiding promise we do and must make. It is one that must transcend the rancor of socio-economic conditions and decades of pre-

conceived conclusions, one we are entrusted to perform and must faithfully execute. It is one that if broken stunts our nation's prosperity and (more critically) a student's access to the American Dream. This promise we as teachers must make is that every day we go into the classroom working towards ending the achievement gap that has and continues to jeopardize our students' futures.

Unfortunately we are here because this promise has not been kept. Fortunately there are at least two remedies—1) implementing stronger evaluative tools for teachers, appropriately weighing student performance and student voice and 2) giving more local flexibility in generating a culture that drives student growth.

I have a deep abiding love and respect for the teaching profession and my content. But as I began my first year teaching at my first school, I recognized that enthusiasm was the benchmark by which teachers were deemed effective. No longer was the focus on how you taught but how the administration thought you taught. It created a stagnant environment where students sat in their desks numb. Matt, a former student, exemplified this tendency until he realized that I wasn't going to let him give up. With a lot of effort on both of our parts, he became one of the best students in my class, pleading with me to Skype with him over Spring Break to work on more French. I assure you I obliged.

Yet, I knew there were areas of growth that were simply not being addressed. Without having an objective account of my practice with substantive measurements and indicators, I was left to tease out my performance based on what I "felt". It was unsustainable. I had to leave the school.

I spoke out against this ineffective practice by testifying before the Indiana House Education Committee in favor of a newly implemented Senate Act 1 which strengthens teacher evaluations. This new act establishes higher standards for teacher performance, basing effectiveness not on degrees and years in a classroom, but on composites like student outcomes and observations. And it is schools like Herron High School, unlike the school I was formally at, where I currently work that are leading the way in this regard.

A public charter school located in the heart of downtown Indianapolis, Herron's mission is to create world class citizens of the 21st century. US News and World Report ranked Herron in the Top 30 Best High Schools in the United States. This was possible due to a rigorous evaluation tool that our Dean of Faculty Greg Lineweaver uses to measure our impact on students. With unannounced visits, we are continually assessed on our effectiveness. This maintains a constant loop of evaluation, critical feedback, and actionable next steps. In the evaluative process, non-tested subjects (such as French) undergo the same amount of scrutiny as tested subjects with curriculum and assessments analyzed for their fidelity to AP exams. Thus, with end-of-the-year performance conversations, teachers who continually meet our high instructional bar are rewarded with leadership opportunities and salary increases. Teachers who do not are removed from the classroom. Recruiting and retaining top talent translates to educating and preparing all students for college—our singular and overriding objective.

But if the system at large inhibits the cultivation and retention of great teachers, a more rigorous evaluative tool will be for not. Local flexibility in staffing will ensure that only the highest qualified teachers are selected to enter into the classroom. And at Herron, our Professional Development is built around using our teachers as experts to increase student performance. In-housed, every Friday we dive into data about our students. We generate targeted cross-curricular interventions for at-risk students and re-enforce the vertical alignment of our disciplines to challenge all students. No one finishes their crosswords in this space. It's eagerly anticipated, an opportunity to hone our mission of closing the achievement gap.

And this is why I know that I do not make the promise to close the achievement gap in vain. It is possible and is happening as we speak at Herron and hundreds of schools across the country. But action has to be taken now for our students to properly inherit what we all aspire to—the American Dream. And it starts with me. It starts with me testifying here and now on the importance of stronger evaluative tools for teachers. It starts with us allowing local schools and school districts the flexibility to innovate and retain talent to drive student success. It starts with affirming the right of every student to a high quality and rigorous education. And it must end with students like Matt. He is why closing the gap is important. Because despite his surroundings and background, graduating from high school and college empowered to do anything he chooses will be his destiny, but only when we do everything we can to ensure effective teachers in the classroom.

Thank you.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you, Mr. Harper.

I am going to reserve my question time for a little bit later and recognize, instead, Mr. Thompson for 5 minutes?

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you, Chairman, and thank you for putting together this subcommittee hearing. My experience is as a—you know, an accurate, appropriate, thoughtful employee evaluation really is a baseline of, you know, of—for proficiency improvement towards high performance, and whether we are talking about teachers or whatever field, it is extremely important tool and sometimes we don't do that so well.

And so I really appreciate expertise. I want to thank the experience that all the panelists bring in coming here today.

And I want to start with Mr. Harper. Mr. Harper, how is—in your opinion, how is professional development at your school related to the information gleaned from the evaluation? Can you give an example of how it specifically targeted to meet your professional needs and professional development?

Mr. HARPER. Thank you for the question. At Herron High School we collect data from assessments and from evaluations that we take from our students, and Friday, when we have our meetings an hour and a half before school, we look over that data to make sure that the students who are coming up short are assisted by their teachers.

So we make sure that we target students who need office hours, so those are reserved periods for teachers to help students individually, and we also have structured academic supports for one-on-one meetings with students before and after school. So it is really a time for us to analyze what we need to do as a school to make sure that we are encouraging growth for all of our students.

Mr. THOMPSON. I know in my time I served—I am a recovering school board member, and, you know, frequently we would get those requests during those monthly, or bimonthly, or—they told me it was only going to be 1 hour a month, which was a bit of a lie, when I went on the board—you know, we would get those requests for continuing education, but they were—sometimes I didn't find they were really related, in any data sense, to kind of gaps or proficiency issues that our teachers had. I am hoping that whatever models are developed on school districts or states, you know, tie in so that we are always looking to increase the performance level, you know, to—you know, because no matter what you do there is always an opportunity to improve and to be better.

Dr. McIntyre, have your local teachers brought in and responded to the district's teacher evaluation system, and do they feel that it helps improve their practice in the classroom?

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you, Mr. Thompson.

You know, if you had asked me that question about 18 months ago I would probably give you a very different answer. I think at the beginning there was a lot of uncertainty and maybe even some anxiety about this new evaluation system, and what it looked like, and how it was going to be implemented.

But I will tell you, over time, having worked through it and lived with it last year and half way through this year, I think the vast majority of our teachers have begun to see the value of this evaluation system. Having lived through it, they see that it is fair. Having lived through it, they see that it actually—we really do mean

that it is developmental and meant to help enhance their practice, and that they have learned a few things from it.

I think that the experience of—and I say this half in jest—you know, we didn't fire half our teachers this summer probably, you know, helps. They realize that we really do mean for this to be a developmental process. And I think that we saw some very strong outcomes for student learning last year, and I think we have—we are very fortunate at Knox County Schools to have extraordinary teachers, and if something is going to—if they see that something is going help them enhance student learning they are going to be game for it.

So I think I see, you know, the vast majority of our teachers, I think, have come to realize that there is value in this evaluation system.

Mr. THOMPSON. Any time we implement change, I mean, that is hard, because it is just in the nature of it. Were there barriers or problems that you ran into in implementation of this, and how did you address those?

Mr. MCINTYRE. I think there always are, and I think that what we tried to do was try to be as thoughtful as we could about the implementation. And I think that is one of the most important things, as we think about teacher evaluation nationally, and think about how we implement it well in schools systems, is to do it thoughtfully.

I think you have to have buy-in from leadership and make sure that this is something that is important to, you know, district leadership, but also our school principals. They are key to making sure that this is a process that is going to be valuable and helpful.

I think communication is incredibly important and making sure that there is information available to teachers, that there is training available to teachers, as Mr. Harper said, that there is professional development that actually is really rationally related to the evaluation that is going to occur.

We have done a couple of things that I think have been very helpful. We had a, what we called a——

Chairman ROKITA. Gentleman's time is expired.

Mr. MCINTYRE. Oh, I am sorry.

Chairman ROKITA. It is all right.

Mr. THOMPSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Dr. McIntyre.

Chairman ROKITA. See, it is not that easy.

Mr. MCINTYRE. No.

Chairman ROKITA. Mrs. McCarthy is recognized for 5 minutes?

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Thank you.

Dr. Watson, I want to thank you for your testimony and I appreciate your emphasis on teacher retention as well as the inclusion process your school district embarked on when reexamining teacher evaluation. You mentioned in your testimony that two-thirds of the teachers were aware of at least one area in which they needed to improve.

Can you go into that a little bit deeper on how you basically were able to improve on those certain skills once the evaluation had been made?

And also, with evaluations—a number of you had said, you know, at the end of the year you look at everything. I think that is one of the biggest problems, trying to get the information to the teachers sooner than at the end of the year. I don't know how we do that. The hearing we had last week, that was using high technology to do a weekly evaluation, which is obviously better for the student. But if you could answer my first question.

Mr. WATSON. Sure. We have taken great strides in being able to provide our teachers with the necessary information they need to be successful. Paramount to that is our development of individualized professional development plans.

So at the very beginning of the year our teachers go through a goal-setting process——

[Audio gap.]

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Nope.

Chairman ROKITA. Is the green light on?

Can you share?

Mr. WATSON. Thank you—at which time they sit down with their administrator and they go through and develop specific goals. Now, those goals can be related to the actual performance areas that they have shown they need development in as well as other areas that they want to be successful with.

Also, with our school principals and our school support officers we sit down once a year at the very beginning of the year as well as at the middle of the year and we do what we call a "fall check-in" or "staff review." During this time, we go through every single teacher's data within that particular building and we are able to talk about those development areas that teachers need.

Now, in my testimony I specifically talk about, it is not only our ability to be able to identify those areas of need but also our ability to be able to provide specific support. So we have developed a litany of exemplar videos based upon all 13 exemplar areas on our—in our effectual ratings, where teachers are able to go through and watch videos of best practices as it relates to instruction.

Mrs. MCCARTHY. You know, when you talked about your program ASPIRE——

Mr. WATSON. Yes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY [continuing]. Where do you find the funding for that? Because that seems to be the biggest problem on—when we are talking about any school developing programs for the teachers. Money is always an issue.

And recruiting early, too. Tell me how that plays into such an important part.

Mr. WATSON. Recruiting early is extremely important. As I said earlier, when we go out and select teachers the earliest we can we are able to find the best teachers. As we know, the best teachers are out looking for jobs right now, versus teachers that sometimes wait a week or 2 or a month before school starts. And so by looking at how we recreate—how we go out and recruit teachers as well as what we do to recruit teachers, we have been able to change our processes to free up budgets—campus budgets—where principals are early to go through and look at who exactly—what positions they need to fill as well as those positions that they may not be filling on their campuses.

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Thank you.

Just one quick question, and I know this is, you know, for early education that we are working on, but the—you all mentioned about getting the best teachers from the schools. How prepared are the teachers when they graduate? Have they had enough training?

Mr. WATSON. Well, I don't think you could ever have enough training. I don't think any college or private education can ever provide enough, but one of the things that we have done is we have begun to be proactive and go out and network with area colleges and universities in our area, and we have let them know specifically what we need teachers to be able to do. And so we have infused that and actually have had them go back and redevelop their programs to meet the needs that we have within our district.

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Dr. Harper—very quickly, because my time is running out—when you went to your first school, how soon was it that you were into it that you saw that the school was not functioning well? Was it the atmosphere of the teachers or was it more on the principal and the superintendent's part?

Mr. HARPER. Thank you for the question. For me, I thrive on feedback, and so the MET study and actually the Teach Plus Policy study, "Great Expectations," found that teachers like myself need feedback—effective feedback for—and actionable next steps to be able to perform well.

So when I was at my first school I didn't have anyone come into my room until the second semester, and they came in with a checklist and then went out and that was all of 5 minutes, and I realized that that would be great if I was simply going into teaching as a secondary job, but teaching is what I love and I want to make an impact on the next generation, and so I knew I needed to be in a place that would provide me with structural support so that I can get better, and having a continued dialogue and being able to be effective for my teachers—or for my students was something of priority to me, so that is when I knew.

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Thank you.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you, Mrs. McCarthy.

Mrs. Foxx is recognized for 5 minutes?

Mrs. FOXX. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I want to thank our witnesses here today.

Dr. Cantrell, in your opinion and using your knowledge of the MET study findings, can we trust the results of teacher evaluation systems if implemented using multiple measures with balanced weight? Is it fair to use the results of teacher evaluation systems to make decisions about personnel, both positive and negative, to improve the teaching profession?

Mr. CANTRELL. Absolutely. Where the measures agree, we can have the confidence to act. One of the benefits of having multiple measures is the error is actually uncorrelated. So you know that any single measure isn't going to be perfect, but when you have several measures the mistakes that they make correct one another, and so the average from multiple measures is much more reliable than any single measure could provide alone.

Mrs. FOXX. Thank you.

Dr. McIntyre, how does the Knox County teacher evaluation system interact with the state evaluation system of Tennessee, and

were you given flexibility to implement specifics in a way best suited to your local needs?

Mr. MCINTYRE. Yes, ma'am. Thank you.

The Knox County Schools' evaluation system is actually the standard or default system for the state of Tennessee, the TEAM model. Tennessee actually allows for different districts to define an alternative model as long as it meets the basic criteria of evaluating every teacher every year and at least 50 percent being based on student outcomes. So there are a few different models, actually, in the state of Tennessee, but the vast majority of districts use the TEAM model.

We have been given some flexibility in terms of how we implement, in terms of some of the measures that we look at. We have been given flexibility, for example, as to there is an opportunity to do fewer observations of teachers who are on the higher end of the scale. But that is an option; you can do that or you can not do that.

And because we believe that the evaluation process is developmental, we have chosen to continue with the number—the same number of observations even for teachers on the higher end of the scale because we think it is beneficial. Even great teachers can become even better.

Mrs. FOXX. Thank you very much.

Mr. Harper, I am so glad that we have a teacher here today and I want to say to you, when I taught—I taught for 15 years at Appalachian State University—we were only required to do an evaluation every 2 years or 3 years but I did one every semester, so I identify with you. I liked to get the feedback from the students—the student evaluation, and so I am glad to hear you saying you like to get that feedback.

Talk a little bit, if you would, on your thoughts on teacher tenure and policies such as the "last in, first out." How have you observed those, and what do you think about those as the way to operate in the school systems?

Mr. HARPER. Thank you. I think teacher tenure is great only if the teachers that are retained are really effective teachers. And unfortunately, "last in, first out" has negatively impacted a lot of school districts because you see really motivated candidates who go into the classroom let go because of tenure. I think it is important that we don't necessarily look at how long a teacher has been in the classroom, but more so, look at what impact they are making and allow that to be a really strong and driving force for how we evaluate whether or not they stay in the classroom, because all of us are here because we want to make sure that students make the appropriate gains, particularly if they come into the classroom lagging in certain categories, and so that is why it is really important that we look not necessarily at how long they have been in the classroom but how effective they are inside the classroom.

Mrs. FOXX. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you.

And Mrs. Davis is recognized for 5 minutes?

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you all for being here. I really appreciate it.

As a former school board member in San Diego Unified, this evaluation issue was something that I always felt was terribly im-

portant and I was quite frustrated that we weren't able to move forward. And, of course, a number of years have taken place.

I wanted to just mention, along with Mr. Polis, we have authored the STELLAR Act, which I hope you will all take a look at, Securing Teacher Effectiveness, Leaders, Learning, And Results Act. What I wanted to focus on quickly is—are just a few issues.

One is the federal role. In your experience—and what this bill focuses on, Title 1 schools, particularly, and putting in place over a period of time with teacher buy-in and hopefully professional development, it is a flexible idea, in terms of making certain that there is buy-in and that there is very, very active participation in terms of the creation and design, but I am wondering what you think about that. I mean, do you think that there should be a federal role in this, and should we put some guidelines out there and then hold people accountable if they are not able to follow through?

Anybody want to tackle that?

Mr. MCINTYRE. Gosh, I think that if there is a federal role to be had it is probably setting broad parameters and giving a lot of flexibility to states and localities. You know, I think that certainly we believe, in Tennessee, that, you know, having the flexibility to implement something like a teacher evaluation system that makes sense for our state and for our local school district makes a lot of sense, and that there are, you know, differences in terms of how—what that might look like. Even in Knoxville versus Memphis versus——

Mrs. DAVIS. Sure, absolutely.

Mr. MCINTYRE [continuing]. Versus Nashville. And so I think you know, perhaps either the federal level or the state level setting broad parameters, making sure that there is, you know, adequate and appropriate evaluation of teachers, but maybe leaving lots of flexibility for local school districts to do what they need to do to make it work.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you. That certainly is our intent. But I also see that sometimes school districts and states, as well, get a little tripped up along this process, and that is—you know, that is very important to be sure that you have all these elements in place.

What is it, do you think, about trying to define and develop an evaluation system that does trip up those organizations—school entities—that are trying to move forward?

Mr. WATSON. I would say one of the areas that trips up is just the mere understanding of the various methods or measures we can use to accurately evaluate teacher performance. So long teachers have not had to use student performance as a measure of their effectiveness, and so better understanding around that, the use of EVAS as one of the measures, but also the ongoing educational training that is needed to be able to support teachers—more importantly, helping them also be able to understand and link up the professional development to those areas that have been deemed to be "highly effective" or "areas of improvement."

Mrs. DAVIS. And in terms of professional development, then, I think one of the difficulties is defining, what is the best kind of professional development, and then, do you have the resources to back that up? How have you seen in your work that school districts are able to carve out the resources that they need to actually pro-

vide the kind of teacher professionalism program that they know is best?

Mr. MCINTYRE. You know, in Knoxville we just—we find that there is extraordinary capacity and expertise already in our classrooms and we seek to leverage that. A lot of our professional development is teacher-led. You know, we provide opportunities for teachers to step up and be in leadership roles, either in instructional coaching roles or providing professional development, and I think that has an enormous—it is incredibly high-quality professional development when our teachers do it because they take it extremely seriously, and it is incredibly powerful when it is teacher-to-teacher, as well, so that is one of the strategies that we use.

Mrs. DAVIS. I wonder——

Mr. CANTRELL. You know, one more thing about evaluation as professional development, I think too often we think about evaluation as something that is just about measurement rather than is about feedback and the ability to mark progress and improvement over time and to make adjustments and to see if you are actually changing the outcomes that you have for students is incredibly valuable. And so we think about professional development as something that happens to teachers rather than as a process of improvement that requires evaluation and good information.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you, Mrs. Davis.

Gentlelady's time is expired.

We will now hear from Dr. Roe for 5 minutes?

Mr. ROE. Thank the chairman, and I am sorry I had to step out but the Tennessee Department of Transportation director was out there and any time you are talking about roads you go talk to that guy.

Dr. Cantrell, I want to thank you and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for your support of the Niswonger Foundation of Distance Learning in East Tennessee. It has been a phenomenal success, and just a personal thank you.

On the evaluations—and this is Mr. Harper, or Dr. McIntyre, or any of you that have been in the classroom—let me give you a narrative here that I see and hear from former patients of mine who are teachers, many of them I know well. I went to read to a class—a second grade class—and as I got up to leave I said, "Well, how is this young fellow doing?"

And my friend who is the teacher said, "Well, he is going to be with me again next year."

And I said, "Why is that?"

She said, "Well, he missed 60 days of school."

First thing a doctor asks, "Has he been sick?"

And she said, "No. His dad is in prison and his mother won't get up and get him out of bed to get him out the door to get him to school." So he is going to be held back, and that evaluation, that student didn't make adequate yearly progress, so he didn't learn what he is supposed to learn.

And yet my teacher friend is being evaluated on someone—so how do you do that, because I hear that from teachers. There are things totally out of their control that are societal issues that they are being evaluated on.

I absolutely think—we are in medicine right now we are doing outcomes-based, meaningful use criteria. Education is doing the same thing, try to standardize what we are doing and try to see—put a metric out here and see if we have actually made progress.

Let me just throw that out to anybody. Dr. McIntyre? Anybody—Mr. Harper?

Mr. HARPER. That happens in schools across the country and I am glad you brought that up. For me personally, even if you have students who are coming from these different backgrounds, ultimately the buck stops with me and if I am not making the appropriate gains for these students I am ultimately held culpable. However, it is important to recognize that you look at the student's growth and progress and make sure that that is taken into consideration on how the teacher is evaluated.

So yes, will students come from disadvantaged backgrounds and all these extraneous situations that you can't control? Yes. But effective teachers will seek out resources inside and outside their school to make sure that there is a plan for these specific students who might need extra support.

Mr. ROE. Well, your job is a lot easier if you have got a mom and dad helping you out. I can tell you that.

Mr. HARPER. I definitely agree, sure.

Mr. ROE. It is just, what you just described was making your job of teaching French or—I think you are a French teacher or——

Mr. HARPER. Correct.

Mr. ROE [continuing]. Whatever, much harder.

Dr. McIntyre, how—when you do those evaluations, how do you——

Mr. MCINTYRE. Yes, sir. You know, I think that that certainly is an important consideration, and I think that is also why it is important that you look at multiple measures. I think it is important that you, you know, for the Tennessee system you look at classroom observation and you go in and look at instructional practice and you do that frequently. You do that at least a couple times if not—you know, for newer teachers, you know, up to four times in a year you have conversations with the teachers about that.

So I think having multiple measures certainly is important in that. And then I think, as Mr. Harper said, if you are measuring student growth over time, as well, and the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System is, you know, is said to take into account, statistically, some of those challenges of where a student starts and where they end the year, and make sure that the—that a teacher isn't penalized based on, you know, if a student starts the year below proficient. If they start the year academically behind but that teacher grows them over time that they, you know, essentially get credit for that, that that is taken into account in the measurement.

And certainly the issue that you raised around supports for students and families is incredibly important, and that shouldn't necessarily be our job, but if it impacts student learning it sort of becomes part of our job, and having to work with our students and our families to broker services or provide support is an important part of what we do in schools today.

Mr. ROE. Do you think, Dr. McIntyre, that you—we have enough data in Tennessee to recommend—I know we are—our Race to the Top is called First to the Top, but do we have enough data, now, to recommend these—this teacher evaluation system or some variant of it to the rest of the country or should we have—wait a little more time on that?

Any of you can take that on.

Mr. MCINTYRE. I believe the basics of the model in Tennessee are the right ones. I don't think the system is perfect. I think there are certainly some areas that need to be improved upon; there are some areas that need to be tightened up; there are some challenges that still need to be worked through in the system that we have in place right now, and I think, you know, one area is teachers who don't have individual growth data and how to make sure that we address that.

But I do think the basic parameters of what we have put in place in Tennessee is quite good, and I think it is something that, as we look to replicate the model elsewhere, I think it would be very valuable in terms of having support for teachers, providing an experience where they get feedback on a regular basis, where they are reflecting on their practice. And it is—I see it improving instructional practice in the Knox County Schools.

Chairman ROKITA. Gentleman's time——

Mr. ROE. Thank the chairman. I yield back.

Chairman ROKITA. The gentleman's time is expired.

We will now hear from Mr. Sablan for 5 minutes?

Mr. SABLAN. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing, and good morning, everyone.

I come from a place way out in the Pacific where, unlike many school districts where you can reach into the next county and pull teachers in, we don't have that capacity. But I would also like to say that we have some bright spots in our school system, and it is through a rough diamond, but there are bright spots and potential.

And I also notice that because of the federal mandates our schools were actually forced, in some instances, to take teachers and move them into a lower level in terms of pay and things like that. Federal mandates have required that, and actually some of my—two of my best teachers won't qualify as teachers. They happen to be my parents, and I also—but for now I would like to—Mr. Chairman, I would like to yield my time to Mr. Polis—the remainder of my time.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman. I deeply appreciate the time.

As mentioned by my colleague, Susan Davis, we are working on the STELLAR Act, and we know that teacher quality is the single most important in-school factor that affects student achievement. The STELLAR Act would require school districts to work with school staff to implement fair teacher and principal evaluation programs. It is the flexibility to do what works, and this is an intensely local discussion, of course, between teachers and principals and school boards, and we want to make sure that there is the flexibility to work as systems like the one that Dr. McIntyre has outlined.

At the same time, I think it is reasonable to say that there is nothing so special about any district that somehow they could

argue that, "Oh, in this area of the country teachers don't need to be evaluated. Teachers don't—their performance doesn't need to be tracked." So I think that that is a reasonable balance between a federal role and a local role, simply saying this needs to be done.

We also feel, again, leave it entirely open, but the STELLAR Act, that performance data, achievement data needs to be a part of the discussion. Now, that certainly doesn't mean nor should it as a best practice be 100 percent of anything, but I think in every instance where we have seen a real meaningful performance agreement and evaluation system that teachers agree to and districts have agreed to there have been multiple indicators, and certainly academic growth on student assessments has been one of the multiple measures, as Dr. Roe mentioned.

It is never statistically perfect, and surely there are, you know, situations that are beyond any teacher's control, and it affects a student here, a student there, that is why in the—these numbers need to be looked at in the—in an aggregate way, a way that is fair to teachers.

Colorado has recently implemented a teacher evaluation system. We have similar discussions at the state level about whether this should be a one-size-fits-all for the state or districts. Basically we have created a—or are creating, I guess—a default out-of-the-box state approach and then districts can, if they choose, do their own. Frankly, for many smaller districts that have a few hundred or a few thousand people it is much easier to take something that is fully formed, if it is agreeable locally. Most of the major districts will want to go through their own work.

My question for Dr. McIntyre is, what do you think we can do more of at the federal level to help ensure that more districts move in the direction that you have and to facilitate that however we can?

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you. You know, as I said, I think that if there is a role at the federal level it probably is to just, you know, to encourage and support the evaluation of teachers across the United States. I think that we have found having an evaluation system that is—that evaluates every teacher every year, that incorporates student achievement data, and is based on multiple measures is an incredibly important and powerful structure.

And you know, so again, I think that whether that comes from the federal level or whether that comes from each of the 50 states, you know, I guess I am a little bit agnostic about, but I do believe the value of ensuring that we have those important evaluation structures and evaluation conversations, because I think that is one of the most important parts, and I think Mr. Harper said as well, getting that feedback and reflecting on practice is incredibly important and powerful, and that is what really moves the dial on instructional practice and, therefore, moves the dial on student achievement.

Mr. POLIS. I thank the gentleman for his time.

I yield back.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you.

Gentleman's time is expired. The chair recognizes himself for 5 minutes.

Again, I would like to thank each of you for coming today.

Dr. Cantrell, let me start with you. If I heard your testimony correctly—I will try to paraphrase it now—you said that student characteristics are a lesser matter compared to the effectiveness of teachers in realizing high student achievement. Is that fair?

Mr. CANTRELL. Yes. Absolutely——

Chairman ROKITA. Can you go further in that?

Mr. CANTRELL. Happy to do that. Yes, irrespective of the students who came into a teacher's classroom, we could see high-and low-quality practice. So it points back to Mr. Roe's earlier question about is this fair, and we saw that there were great teachers in places where kids were really struggling and there were poor teachers in places where kids were really advantaged. And it really didn't matter where a student was starting——

Chairman ROKITA. Right. Okay. Thank you.

Does anyone else want to react to that? Agree? Disagree?

Okay. For the record, I am hearing three agreements from the other witnesses. [Laughter.]

Dr. Cantrell, you also indicated that student surveys, along with classroom observations, et cetera, do a far better job of predicting which teachers will succeed in raising student performance. So it wasn't so long ago that I haven't forgotten my high school days and what I did and didn't do during those days. I was never empowered to evaluate a teacher, I would say now for good reason.

But in all seriousness, I have heard some anecdotal stories—maybe just one or two—where teachers were said to be forging the surveys because they were fearful of certain or maybe most students in their classrooms, depending on the school or area, and that empowerment and that they were—you know, if their salaries or whatever else were dependent on this, the students knew that and, in a teacher's view, would have sabotaged that. Is that black helicopter stuff, or is that a concern, not—any of you could respond.

Mr. CANTRELL. So in the MET project teachers weren't held accountable for these surveys, so it was just a study——

Chairman ROKITA. So it was just part of your feedback loop that you were talking about——

Mr. CANTRELL. What we found when talking to students is they appreciated the opportunity and took it very seriously—the opportunity to give voice. And we weren't asking students about—to make judgments that they weren't highly qualified to make. We were asking them about the quality of their instructional environment, and that is something where they are the experts.

Chairman ROKITA. And you haven't heard any stories about the likes that I have been talking about?

Mr. CANTRELL. No black helicopters.

Chairman ROKITA. Okay.

Doctor?

Mr. MCINTYRE. I think there are structures you can put in place to make sure that those surveys are done actually by the students, and we are actually piloting some student surveys this year. They won't count toward the evaluation, but we think it is—it will be interesting information, and based on the MET study, it is said to be highly reliable. So we are going to take a look at that this year.

Chairman ROKITA. Dr. Watson? I think that one is working for you if you want. It is up to you. Now you are in stereo probably.

Mr. WATSON. Yes.

We are actually going to implement student surveys this spring for the first time.

Chairman ROKITA. Okay. No worries?

Mr. WATSON. No worries yet.

Chairman ROKITA. Okay.

Mr. Harper?

Mr. HARPER. They are a powerful tool, and I use them in my classroom, and they are important for me to reflect on my own practice and see how I need to grow with my students.

Chairman ROKITA. Thanks for clearing that up.

We will stick with you, Mr. Harper, for my last question. I was intrigued when you said that teachers don't take an oath. I have never heard of a teacher taking an oath; maybe there are some out there.

Philosophical question to end out my minute or so of time left: Should there be an oath, and if so, who gets to write it?

Mr. HARPER. I think there should be a higher standard to which teachers are held accountable, because I think too often teachers don't have the supports in the classroom or teachers don't have the feedback that they need to make sure that they make appropriate gains. So, you know, I think there should be an oath but the oath that should be made should be to continue to increase student achievement in the classroom.

Who writes that? You know, that is a great question. I will have to get back to you.

Chairman ROKITA. We will expect it in 7 days.

Anyone else, really quickly? We have about 30 seconds left between the three of you on that last question.

Mr. MCINTYRE. I think most teachers are deeply committed to children and deeply committed to the work that they do. I think in a lot of senses they take an oath to themselves and perhaps to a higher power when they go in the classroom. Making that a formal, you know, opportunity might be an interesting and useful thing to do.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you, Doctor.

Dr. Cantrell, anything to add?

Mr. CANTRELL. Amen.

Chairman ROKITA. Dr. Watson?

Mr. WATSON. They should have an oath, and I think they take that oath every day when they go. We just need to make sure that the oath that they take and the professional development and support match up so they can actually do it.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you. My time is expired.

I now recognize Mr. Scott for 5 minutes?

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for this hearing. It is interesting that all of the witnesses have confirmed that the teacher's resume is a totally inadequate measure of their effectiveness, that you have to do more than just look at the resume to ascertain whether or not the teacher is a good teacher.

One of the things that concerns me is we keep trying to improve teacher quality without talking about pay scales.

Dr. McIntyre, if you had more money and could offer higher salaries could you get better teachers?

Mr. MCINTYRE. Thank you for the question. You know, I think resources, in terms of compensation, certainly is one thing that can be helpful. I don't think it is the sole criteria and I don't think it is, in and of itself, is going to make a difference.

We have put in place a strategic——

Mr. SCOTT. When you get down to the last few teachers you are trying to hire and there is a quality challenge, I mean, if you had higher salaries you could attract a better pool of candidates, couldn't you?

Mr. MCINTYRE. Yes, sir. I think that is—I think that is fair to say. I think where that would be valuable is in competing with some of the other industries that teachers have the opportunities to go into. And we do—we have had a—we have put in place a strategic compensation initiative that recognizes great performance and provides incentives and rewards for great teaching and student outcomes.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you.

Dr. Cantrell, you mentioned multiple measures for teaching and the student component would be part of it. Do you have multiple measures for the students, including, as Dr. McIntyre mentioned, a growth model rather than a pass-fail model?

Mr. CANTRELL. The MET project looked at two different student assessments—the state assessment and a supplemental higher-order thinking skills test that was characteristically different than the state test and that allowed students to demonstrate and answer more complex problems, and we saw that the results were similar, independent of which test that we used. They both were adequate for identifying teaching effectiveness.

Mr. SCOTT. One of the problems I see in—we are trying to get the best teachers in the most challenging schools. What incentive would a teacher have to go into a challenging school, because it seems to me if you are going to be based on student achievement a bad teacher at a good school would have a better chance of keeping a job than a good teacher at a bad school.

Mr. CANTRELL. So what is nice about how these growth models work is they don't privilege the status of the student; they actually reward a teacher for making progress with the student. And so there is no real advantage. It would be very hard for a teacher to figure out which student, based on their prior scores, is going to grow more, and yet growth is the coin of the realm.

Mr. SCOTT. Well, in some schools, you know, everybody is going to do all right.

Dr. Watson, do you see that same challenge?

Mr. WATSON. Yes, we have seen that as a challenge, but one of the things that we have done in Houston is not only to look at just the growth, meaning from our lowest-performing schools to our highest-performing. We have looked at our highest-performing schools and how much growth are they making above the grade level. And so when we are looking at growth it is not just looking at low student achievement, but if you are already at the level, are you 1 or 2 years above that level?

Mr. SCOTT. Well, if you have got a classroom where everybody knows everybody is going to achieve because the parents are helping and everything else in that community, any teacher is going to

be able to do okay. And so why would a good teacher want to go to a bad school where you may get—may have a lot of people not achieving?

Mr. WATSON. Well, in the recruitment process one of the things that we have found is there are those teachers that have that special mission where they do want to work with the most underserving kids. We do offer financial incentives as well, but most likely those teachers go because of the support of administrators and their ability to provide them very good feedback to grow.

Mr. SCOTT [continuing]. Time for about one more question.

Mr. Harper, some students are going to be problem students for everybody. What does evaluation do to collaboration, where a teacher across the hall may notice that a student is disruptive, "Send Johnny over to me and see if I can work with him." Why would a teacher do that if you are going to get gigged and possibly lose your job because Johnny is going to bring down your average?

Mr. HARPER. I think any effective teacher will seek out resources to make sure that they are behaving appropriately inside their own classroom as they are in the classroom across the hall, so I don't see behavior management as being something that could be detrimental to a teacher's——

Mr. SCOTT. Well, if you have a student that you know is going to be a problem, why would you invite the student into your class to help your colleague across the hall when you might be able to do better with that particular student than the teacher across the hall when that might affect your average?

Mr. HARPER. Because any time you are wanting to build a culture inside of a school where all students achieve it is incumbent upon you to make sure that all of the—your teachers are able to perform at the same level at the higher expectation, so it is incumbent upon us to make sure that we have that culture in the first place, which is why you have local flexibility in developing school performance for our teachers to be able to perform.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you.

Gentleman's time is expired.

I would like to thank, again, the witnesses for taking the time to testify before the subcommittee today. Really appreciate it. Really educational.

Mrs. McCarthy, do you have any closing remarks?

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Thank you.

And I want to thank all the witnesses. It was very informative.

I always feel like these hearings—we want another hour or 2 because there are so many questions, but some of the questions I have I hopefully I will follow up with asking you, and—get back to us.

But as I said in our opening remarks, we as members in Congress are looking for guidance from your insight. You are on the ground. You are doing the work that we need to hear about.

Each of your testimonies have common themes, and I have to say, you are all really on the same page. I didn't hear any differences whatsoever, which is always a good sign—most notably, that teacher effectiveness cannot be evaluated on the one dimension, and I think that came across very strongly.

Students' needs have evolved greatly over time and educators have an obligation to identify those needs and develop teacher evaluation standards that are frequent and diverse in time, and that is the only area that I still wish we could get better data to the teacher and to everybody else so the students aren't falling apart 3 months, 6 months. Get them as early as we can to help them.

I am looking forward to continuing to work on this issue with my colleagues, and it is my sincere hope that our panel will continue to share their progress on this issue with the subcommittee.

So, Mr. Chairman, thank you again for calling this hearing. I yield back.

Chairman ROKITA. Thank you, Ranking Member McCarthy.

I agree with the ranking member about what she just said. We are looking for guidance and you all provided it. And I am going to assume, at least in part, that you are representative of your professions in your testimony today.

And I appreciate your leadership. I think your professions—administrators and teachers alike—are unsung heroes, and it is almost cliche to say that these days but it can't be said enough, in another sense. So thank you very, very much.

Education, I think is the second biggest challenge we have as a country and culture today, second only to the disintegration of the family unit as a problem that we must address. And more and more you are being asked to do both those jobs, and I think that is unfair. But that is the reason I want to say thank you again for that kind of leadership.

We continue to learn so much about teacher evaluation in the past years and, you know, I think it is time we move forward with ESEA reauthorization. This hearing today helped us—helped me, at least, as chairman, do that. So I look forward to working on and moving such ESEA legislation this Congress.

With that and no further business being before the committee, this subcommittee stands adjourned.

[Question submitted for the record follows:]

U.S. CONGRESS,
Washington, DC, March 19, 2013.

Dr. STEVE CANTRELL, *Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, P.O. Box 23350, Seattle, WA 98102.*

DEAR DR. CANTRELL: Thank you for testifying at the February 28, 2013 hearing on "Raising the Bar: How are Schools Measuring Teacher Performance?" I appreciate your participation.

Enclosed are additional questions submitted by members of the subcommittee after the hearing. Please provide written responses no later than April 9, 2013 for inclusion in the final hearing record. Responses should be sent to Lindsay Fryer or Dan Shorts of the committee staff who can be contacted at (202) 225-6558.

Thank you again for your important contribution to the work of the committee.

Sincerely,

TODD ROKITA, *Chairman,*
Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.

CHAIRMAN TODD ROKITA (R–IN)

1. Dr. Cantrell, we've heard many researchers state that student achievement, especially state test results, should not be included in teacher evaluation systems because the state tests are "poor quality. What are your thoughts on this? Can student achievement, when weighted with multiple measures, provide an accurate picture of a teacher's ability?

REP. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT (D–VA)

2. Well-designed teaching evaluations are an important part of ensuring that our nation's children receive high-quality instruction. It is also important that we recruit the most talented individuals to become teachers in the first place, and one of the most attractive features of the teaching profession is the ability to earn tenure after years of high-quality performance on the job. Would removing tenure have an adverse effect on the process of recruiting new teachers into the profession? That is, would highly-qualified individuals be less likely to apply to become a teacher if they knew that they could be fired at any time?

U.S. CONGRESS,
Washington, DC, March 19, 2013.

Mr. EMANUEL HARPER, *Herron High School,*
7654 Woodmore Trace, Apt E7, Indianapolis, IN 46260.

DEAR MR. HARPER: Thank you for testifying at the February 28, 2013 hearing on "Raising the Bar: How are Schools Measuring Teacher Performance?" I appreciate your participation.

Enclosed are additional questions submitted by members of the subcommittee after the hearing. Please provide written responses no later than April 9, 2013 for inclusion in the final hearing record. Responses should be sent to Lindsay Fryer or Dan Shorts of the committee staff who can be contacted at (202) 225-6558.

Thank you again for your important contribution to the work of the committee.

Sincerely,

TODD ROKITA, *Chairman,*
Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.

CHAIRMAN TODD ROKITA (R–IN)

1. Mr. Harper, in your testimony, you state that we need to "give more local flexibility in generating a culture that drives student growth." Why is providing the decision-making power to those closest to students so important?

REP. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT (D–VA)

1. Well-designed teaching evaluations are an important part of ensuring that our nation's children receive high-quality instruction. It is also important that we recruit the most talented individuals to become teachers in the first place, and one of the most attractive features of the teaching profession is the ability to earn tenure after years of high-quality performance on the job. Would removing tenure have an adverse effect on the process of recruiting new teachers into the profession? That is, would highly-qualified individuals be less likely to apply to become a teacher if they knew that they could be fired at any time?

U.S. CONGRESS,
Washington, DC, March 19, 2013.

Dr. JAMES P. MCINTYRE, JR., *Knox County Schools,*
P.O. Box 2188, Knoxville, TN 37901.

DEAR DR. MCINTYRE: Thank you for testifying at the February 28, 2013 hearing on "Raising the Bar: How are Schools Measuring Teacher Performance?" I appreciate your participation.

Enclosed are additional questions submitted by members of the subcommittee after the hearing. Please provide written responses no later than April 9, 2013 for inclusion in the final hearing record. Responses should be sent to Lindsay Fryer or Dan Shorts of the committee staff who can be contacted at (202) 225-6558.

Thank you again for your important contribution to the work of the committee.

Sincerely,

TODD ROKITA, *Chairman,*
Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.

CHAIRMAN TODD ROKITA (R–IN)

1. Dr. McIntyre, in your testimony you mention that your district's teacher evaluation system serves as both an accountability mechanism and a professional growth tool. We've heard from some organizations that teacher evaluation systems are unfair, because they serve dual roles. How does your evaluation system serve

as both an accountability mechanism and a professional growth tool? Is it adequate and fair in serving both purposes?

REP. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT (D–VA)

1. Well-designed teaching evaluations are an important part of ensuring that our nation's children receive high-quality instruction. It is also important that we recruit the most talented individuals to become teachers in the first place, and one of the most attractive features of the teaching profession is the ability to earn tenure after years of high-quality performance on the job. Would removing tenure have an adverse effect on the process of recruiting new teachers into the profession? That is, would highly-qualified individuals be less likely to apply to become a teacher if they knew that they could be fired at any time?

U.S. CONGRESS,
Washington, DC, March 19, 2013.

Dr. RODNEY WATSON, *Houston Independent School District,*
4400 West 18th St., Houston, TX 77092.

DEAR DR. WATSON: Thank you for testifying at the February 28, 2013 hearing on "Raising the Bar: How are Schools Measuring Teacher Performance?" I appreciate your participation.

Enclosed are additional questions submitted by members of the subcommittee after the hearing. Please provide written responses no later than April 9, 2013 for inclusion in the final hearing record. Responses should be sent to Lindsay Fryer or Dan Shorts of the committee staff who can be contacted at (202) 225-6558.

Thank you again for your important contribution to the work of the committee.

Sincerely,

TODD ROKITA, *Chairman,*
Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education.

REP. ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT (D–VA)

1. Well-designed teaching evaluations are an important part of ensuring that our nation's children receive high-quality instruction. It is also important that we recruit the most talented individuals to become teachers in the first place, and one of the most attractive features of the teaching profession is the ability to earn tenure after years of high-quality performance on the job. Would removing tenure have an adverse effect on the process of recruiting new teachers into the profession? That is, would highly-qualified individuals be less likely to apply to become a teacher if they knew that they could be fired at any time?

[Responses to questions submitted follow:]

Mr. Cantrell's Response to Questions Submitted for the Record

The Measures of Effective Teaching project demonstrated that states should include student assessments as one among multiple measures. Schools educate students to learn. Schools measure effective teaching for students to learn better. Ideally, each of the multiple measures supports this aim. Each measure provides, to teachers and to those who support teacher growth, feedback to indicate areas of strength and areas to develop. Without a measure of student learning, however, there would be no basis for drawing teacher attention and effort to any particular aspect of teaching. The point is to identify teaching practices that help students learn better.

Certainly, smart people disagree about the best ways to assess learning. State tests are often criticized for being overly narrow representations of what students should know and be able to do. To the extent this is true, the solution is for the tests to be supplemented, not abandoned. There are two ways to accomplish this: The Measures of Effective Teaching project did both. First, to the extent that the state assessment reflects only part of the outcomes valued by the school community, the assessment can be supplemented with other reliable assessments. MET administered a supplemental assessment designed to assess student's higher order thinking skills, a commonly referenced gap in the skills addressed by most state assessments. Second, the use of multiple measures, such as classroom observation and student surveys, provides additional indicators to augment what the state tests measure.

One important MET finding was when the multiple measures agree schools can act with confidence even though each individual measure is imperfect. Certainly, we

would not advocate using measures that have not been validated or are unreliable. But, most current state tests have been validated and their reliability is known. The new tests being designed to assess progress toward common core state standards will likely be even better. Even so, states need not wait, but can use their current tests now while the next generation of tests is developed.

Most teachers come to the profession to help their students succeed, not for the employment guarantee of tenure. The most highly-qualified individuals have many career options outside of teaching. We have no evidence that these highly-qualified individuals would find teaching less attractive if their continued employment was unrelated to their success on the job. We have some limited evidence that among the most highly-qualified teachers, those who struggle most in the classroom leave voluntarily.[1,2,3] Unfortunately, we also have evidence that many of the most talented teachers leave teaching without anyone having asked them to stay or having told them how remarkable they were. Furthermore, many of these would have remained in teaching had they known.[4] Having tenure had no impact on their decision to stay or go.

In most school districts, tenure is granted after completing two or three years of satisfactory teaching performance. In most districts, 99% of teachers are designated as satisfactory. This means that tenure has been nearly automatic, rather than a reward for high quality performance on any valid, objective measure. Tenure is not enough to signal success to the "irreplaceable" teachers whose internal sense of mission requires better indicators of success. A well-designed evaluation system does indicate success and, even more importantly, can help the most talented individuals mark their progress from novice to expert. There is no reason to leave these talented individuals guessing as to whether they are helping student learn or what they need to do to get better.

Mr. Harper's Response to Questions Submitted for the Record

Providing schools with additional flexibility facilitates decision-making opportunities that will directly and positively impact student achievement. Because teachers are the greatest agents of academic growth for students, it follows that they are also most receptive to their needs. The farther removed one is from the classroom, the harder it becomes to isolate key levers that will dramatically effect positive change.

Teacher retention is another barrier to generating quality schools. Providing administrators with flexibility in retaining and releasing teachers will ensure that the school keeps and recruits top talent. School-based decision making also affords school leaders an opportunity to cultivate staff investment in the school. This sense of ownership enhances school culture. It also builds trust with community stakeholders like parents and the wider community.

There is a definition of tenure that implies a sense of eventual immunity. It connotes protection from critical feedback for the duration of a teacher's career. Under this definition tenure becomes a race to see who can rest on his or her laurels first. In reality, tenure must become a powerful tool to incentivize the teaching profession and recognize excellent teaching in the classroom.

Under this new definition, only the highest performing teachers would earn tenure. Part of this measurement would be continually meeting high bars in instruction and management. It also recognizes that these teachers will continually be internalizing and implementing feedback from formal and informal evaluations from various stakeholders (school leaders, peers, students, etc.) to close the achievement gap. Incumbent upon such an honor would be targeted pay increases and additional instructional responsibilities tailored to the teacher's strengths. Thus, tenure is not the end-point of the teaching profession, but the beginning. Because of its coveted status, tenured teachers would strive to keep that honor and become the driving force for excellence school-wide.

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[1] Dan Goldhaber, Betheny Gross, and Daniel Player. 2007. "Are Public Schools Really Losing Their Best? Assessing the Career Transitions of Teachers and Their Implications for the Quality of the Teacher Workforce." CALDER Working Paper No. 12. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research.

[2] Eric A. Hanushek, John F. Kain, Daniel M. O'Brien, and Steven G. Rivkin. 2005. "The Market for Teacher Quality." NBER Working Paper No. 11154. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research, Inc.

[3] Donald Boyd, Pamela Grossman, Hamilton Lankford, Susanna Loeb, and James Wyckoff. 2009 "Who Leaves? Teacher Attrition and Student Achievement" CALDER Working Paper No. 23 Washington, D.C.: National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research.

[4] TNTP. 2012. The irreplaceables: Understanding the real retention crisis in American's urban schools. New York, NY: TNTP

Tenure is needed in our schools to reward excellent teachers. However, tenure must be the starting point for highly effective teachers. Tenure is a needed incentive to the teaching profession if structured correctly.

Dr. McIntyre's Response to Questions Submitted for the Record

Following are my responses to the additional questions submitted by members of the subcommittee as requested in your letter dated March 19, 2013.

Question: Dr. Mcintyre, in your testimony you mention that your district's teacher evaluation system serves as both an accountability mechanism and a professional growth tool. We've heard from some organizations that teacher evaluation systems are unfair, because they serve dual roles. How does your evaluation system serve as both an accountability mechanism and a professional growth tool? Is it adequate and fair in serving both purposes?

Accountability and professional growth seem to me to be two sides of the same coin. I think it is fair, and even important that the system serve dual roles. In that way every teacher has an opportunity to grow and get better under the rubric, but if they don't * * * that's going to surface pretty quickly.

Honestly, we're very fortunate in Knoxville, the vast majority of our teachers do a very good to truly outstanding job in teaching our kids, so most of what the evaluation system does is help teachers continuously improve. It's a great support mechanism because we don't just say "you're doing a bad job." We talk very specifically about the areas for refinement, and give specific strategies that the teacher can utilize in the classroom.

But if a teacher in unable or unwilling to grow and get better, and they are chronically ineffectual, then the evaluation system does give us the evidence that they should perhaps be invited to explore other careers.

In our experience great teachers expect to be held to high standards, and they expect their colleagues to be held to high standards as well. Tennessee's evaluation system holds all teachers to the same high standards. Isn't that the way it should be?

Some additional thoughts:

• Performance Appraisal separate from an on-going professional growth model is typically not successful and not strategically aligned to the goals of the organization. The appraisal becomes an HR compliance exercise rather than an integral part of performance management.

Performance management is "a continuous process of identifying, measuring, and developing the performance of individuals and teams and aligning performance with the strategic goals of the organization" (Aguinis, 2009b, p. 2). On the other hand, performance appraisal is the depiction of the strengths and weaknesses of employees in a non-continuous manner, typically just once a year. This process is often perceived as a bureaucratic waste of time created by the human resource department. (Aguinis, Joo, & Gottfredson, 2011, p. 504)

So, therefore, teacher evaluation for accountability purposes and as a professional growth tool must be inextricably linked in order to effectively achieve the goals of both.

• The strength of the TEAM/TAP model is the support that occurs between formal observations, utilizing instructional coaches, lead, master, and mentor teachers, as well as the professional growth plan that teachers work with their administrators to design at the conclusion of an academic year.

• Our multiple measures evaluation tool also include goals for student growth that are integrated into the on-going instructional improvement structures for the school, like professional learning communities (PLCs). This encourages teachers to work together and collaboratively plan towards increasing student outcomes.

• The administrator's role as an instructional leader should include both the evaluation of classroom instruction, in addition to providing coaching to support teachers. This is no different than a supervisor who also becomes a mentor to individuals whom he or she manages. .

• In the private sector, this notion of the duality of evaluation and professional growth is typically unchallenged. Employees have grown accustomed to the evaluation process informing and driving their professional development.

Question: Well-designed teaching evaluations are an important part of ensuring that our nation's children receive high-quality instruction. It is also important that we recruit the most talented individuals to become teachers in the first place, and one of the most attractive features of the teaching profession is the ability to earn tenure after years of high-quality performance on the job . Would removing tenure have an adverse effect on the process of recruiting new teachers into the profession?

That is, would highly qualified individuals be less likely to apply to become a teacher if they knew that they could be fired at any time?

Tenure has been redefined for new teachers in Tennessee as a privilege for truly extraordinary teachers rather than a right for all teachers, even those who are only marginally effective. Only new teachers are subject to the new tenure provisions in the Volunteer State, and those coming into the profession today generally understand the high expectations and rigorous standards that are necessary in order to ensure that our students are prepared for success in today's complex and competitive world.

A few other thoughts:

• Tenure is and has always been a mechanism to ensure due process rights for teachers in any employment decision. Tenure is not a guarantee of job security. It is not a license for unsatisfactory performance or other unprofessional behavior. As such, the notion of tenure as life-long job protection, though pervasive, is largely inaccurate.

• Today's workforce has evolved from that of 40 years ago. Many researchers say that most will work for 5-10 employers over the course of their careers with longevity averaging 5 years or less.

• Many of today's new graduates value opportunities for promotion and increased compensation (based on performance) over and above the potential for long-term service.

• In particular, high performing employees value the recognition and reward for their work rather than arbitrary tenure status.

• Moreover, the status and meaning of tenure is diluted when it is granted to every employee, without regard to their historical or continuing performance.

• Since the change of tenure laws in the state of Tennessee in 2011, our district has seen no decline in the number of applicants for our vacancies nor the number of interns and student teachers who are requesting to work in our district. Over the past three years, we have averaged about 2,500 new applications for approximately 300 open positions annually, and 2012 maintained this trend.

• Thus, there is no evidence that change in tenure laws have adversely impacted the ability of our district to attract a high quality candidate pool.

I was honored to have the opportunity to share my belief that our teacher evaluation system is an important strategy in our efforts to improve the quality of public education in Knoxville and across our state. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have additional questions or concerns.

Respectfully Submitted,

JAMES P. MCINTYRE, JR.,
Superintendent.

Reference: Aguinis, H., Joo, H., & Gottfredson, K. R. (2011). Why we hate performance management—And why we should love it. Business Horizons, 54, 503-507.

Dr. Watson's Response to Questions Submitted for the Record

In general, we have found there is not much evidence in research to support the claim that tenure is an attractive feature of the teaching profession; evidence actually suggests that removing tenure would not have an adverse effect on recruiting highly qualified individuals into the profession, especially if performance-based decisions include the ability for great teachers to earn a higher salary, faster, in lieu of using resources to provide job security. In a survey of over 6,000 teachers in Chicago, less than a quarter agreed or strongly agreed that "the protections of tenure are part of the reason I became a teacher." The majority of teachers disagreed with this statement. In a survey of teachers in Chicago and in Indianapolis, when faced with layoffs during budget cuts to their districts, three-quarters of teachers in both districts believe that additional performance-based factors should be considered ahead of seniority when making layoff decisions. While not a perfect proxy for tenure, if tenure were truly an attractive feature of the teaching profession, it would follow that these teachers would want seniority to be the primary factor of employment decisions.

Moreover, we cannot assume that the talent pool going into teaching today and in years' past will be the same talent pool going into teaching tomorrow. We know that today's generation of college graduates have a vastly different value proposition for what is important for them in a job and in a career. Tenure status is not on their list.

• Only 9% of top-third college students are planning on going into teaching.

• The most important job attributes for the other 91% include: the quality of coworkers, prestige, a challenging work environment, and high quality training.

Teaching lags far behind other professions on these attributes for this 91% of top-third college graduates.

• Of the 10 top attributes in an attractive job, compensation factors make up 4 of the 10. Again, tenure/job security is not on the list.

Overall, the removal of tenure would not adversely affect the recruitment of effective teachers if other measures of support including compensation, feedback, and support and development are in place at the school level.

[Whereupon, at 10:20 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]