

**What's New?**

**NCCTQ Launches Two Expanded and Revised Databases: Preparation and Recruitment and Retention**

The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (NCCTQ) announces the newly updated and expanded *Teacher Preparation* and *Teacher Recruitment and Retention* databases.

The *Teacher Preparation* database houses information and links to state-level policy on a variety of elements related to undergraduate, graduate, and alternative teacher preparation. It is available at [www.tqsource.org/prep/policy/index.asp](http://www.tqsource.org/prep/policy/index.asp).

The *Teacher Recruitment and Retention* database includes information on state-level policy designed to address recruitment and retention issues such as recruitment in at-risk schools, salaries, and induction/mentoring. It is available at [www.tqsource.org/randr/policy/index.asp](http://www.tqsource.org/randr/policy/index.asp).

Both databases are part of the *TQ Source* ([www.tqsource.org](http://www.tqsource.org)), a premier online resource for information on teacher quality, teacher effectiveness, educational leadership, and more.

**Live Webcast: Paying for Teachers' Performance—Strategies and Conditions for Success**

NCCTQ will host a live, interactive webcast on May 10, at 3 p.m. EST, to examine the policy, research, and practice of performance-based compensation, specifically focusing on valid, reliable, and ethical ways to evaluate teachers' instructional performance. Experts will discuss the promise and pitfalls of value-added and other statistical measures of student achievement growth, as well as teaching portfolios and professional administrator evaluations. Additional information will be forthcoming via e-mail. Please register online at <https://comp17.eventcenterlive.com/cfm/ec/register/reg.cfm?BID=1&RegID=4BCCD353>. There is no registration fee, and early registration is recommended because space is limited.

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## Prospects for the Profession: Public Opinion Research on Teachers

NCCTQ has compiled a comprehensive review of 16 nationally representative public opinion polls conducted between 2000 and 2006. *Prospects for the Profession: Public Opinion Research on Teachers* provides insight into how teachers, school administrators, parents, and the general public view the teaching profession. Download an Adobe® Reader® PDF version of the report at [www.ncctq.org/tqbrief.php](http://www.ncctq.org/tqbrief.php).

## Washington, D.C., Mayor Urged to Prepare Teachers for At-Risk Schools

Sabrina Laine, Ph.D., urged Adrian Fenty, the newly elected mayor of Washington, D.C., to focus on hiring and retaining quality teachers for District of Columbia Public Schools in an opinion piece recently published in the Commentary section of *The Examiner* newspaper. Dr. Laine, director of NCCTQ and a chief program officer at Learning Point Associates, has advised Mayor Fenty that improving teacher preparation is an imperative starting point to helping a school system “fraught with daunting challenges.”

Dr. Laine offers several suggestions, including creating collaborative partnerships between the school system and teacher preparation programs and requiring teacher candidates to have field experience in at-risk schools beyond the typical six to eight weeks in one classroom. View the entire article online at [www.examiner.com/articlePDF.cfm?articleID=509109](http://www.examiner.com/articlePDF.cfm?articleID=509109).

## Increasing Student Achievement in High-Need Schools Through Teacher Quality

On November 8–9, 2006, NCCTQ hosted its inaugural What Works Conference, “Increasing Student Achievement in High-Need Schools Through Teacher Quality.”

To read the meeting summary and other information about the two-day event including presenter bios, presentations, and topical resources, visit [www.ncctq.org/whatworks/studentAchievement/](http://www.ncctq.org/whatworks/studentAchievement/).

## Stories From the Field

### Mid-Continent Comprehensive Center Hosts Summit to Assist States in Revising Highly Qualified Teacher Plans



With three states in its region identified by the U.S. Department of Education as needing to revise or resubmit their state highly qualified teacher (HQT) plans, the Mid-Continent Comprehensive Center (MC3) quickly began planning a summit to provide those states with the technical assistance they needed.

MC3 partnered with NCCTQ as staff from both organizations began thoroughly studying pertinent records: (1) the states’ plans, (2) the comments each state received during the U.S. Department of Education review process, and (3) information derived from the states during a survey-of-needs process.

On September 15, 2006, representatives from Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Missouri gathered in Norman, Oklahoma, for a day-long working session. Amy Jackson and Courtney Rowland, NCCTQ, and Melody Schopp,

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South Dakota Department of Education, were on hand to provide content expertise, suggestions, tools, and one-on-one assistance to states as they worked on their revisions.

The event was viewed by participants as extremely helpful, relevant, useful, and timely—further emphasized with comments such as “[the meeting] greatly exceeded my expectations” and “the information we take back will go a long way in helping us to rewrite our plans.”

After the rewrite and resubmission of their plans, all three states had their plans approved by the U.S. Department of Education. NCCTQ and MC3 will continue to work collaboratively to assist states in the mid-continent region with implementation of the HQT plans.

## Teacher Quality Questions From the Field

Each month, the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality responds to numerous questions and requests for information from the field, including policymakers, practitioners, technical assistance providers, and researchers. The following are a few of the recent requests for information, and the responses provided by NCCTQ. The requests are received from a variety of education organizations and practitioners, and they range from general policy or practice questions to requests that are more state or district specific. The four questions chosen to share in this newsletter have general applicability.

- [How can districts address teacher compensation reform in innovative ways?](#)
- [What are districts and states doing to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools and subject areas?](#)
- [What information exists about noncompensation-focused strategies for increasing the number of highly qualified and effective teachers in poor and/or urban or rural districts?](#)
- [What are the attributes of teachers who have improved student achievement in mathematics and reading, and how can those attributes be identified in the hiring process?](#)

### How can districts address teacher compensation reform in innovative ways?

Innovative reforms in teacher compensation are increasingly being introduced at the district level as an attempt to address disparity in teacher pay. The following publications that discuss some examples:

- *The Varieties of Knowledge and Skill-based Pay Design: A Comparison of Seven New Pay Systems for K–12 Teachers* (CPRE Research Report Series RR-050), Consortium for Policy Research in Education, October 2002. [www.cpre.org/Publications/rr50.pdf](http://www.cpre.org/Publications/rr50.pdf)
- *Reforming Teacher Pay: The Search for a Workable Goal-Driven Compensation System* (Policy Trends), WestEd Policy Center, 2005. [www.wested.org/online\\_pubs/pt-06-01.pdf](http://www.wested.org/online_pubs/pt-06-01.pdf)
- *Rewarding Teachers for Students’ Performance: Improving Teaching through Alternative Teacher Compensation Programs* (Education Policy Brief), Center for Evaluation and Education Policy, Spring 2005. [http://ceep.indiana.edu/projects/PDF/PB\\_V3N5\\_Spring\\_2005\\_Teacher\\_Compensation.pdf](http://ceep.indiana.edu/projects/PDF/PB_V3N5_Spring_2005_Teacher_Compensation.pdf)

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- **“Rural Districts Using Unique Incentives to Lure Teachers,”** *The Arizona Republic*, February 7, 2006. [www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/local/articles/0207teacherincentives0207.html](http://www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic/local/articles/0207teacherincentives0207.html)
- **“Florida to Link Teacher Pay to Students’ Test Scores: Critics Worry About Fairness,”** *Washington Post*, March 22, 2006. [www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/03/21/AR2006032101545.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/03/21/AR2006032101545.html)
- **“Successful Strategies: Attracting Teachers with Child Care Incentives,”** *Rural Policy Matters*, The Rural School and Community Trust, November 2001. <http://files.ruraledu.org/rpm/rpm310d.htm>

There are also many programs at the local level that can provide information on compensation programs. Here are two examples:

- **Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools** (North Carolina) incentive programs [www.cms.k12.nc.us/departments/HR/recruitment.asp](http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/departments/HR/recruitment.asp)
- The **Governor’s Educator Excellence Award** program that grants funds to Texas teachers who succeed in economically disadvantaged schools [www.tcta.org/capital/sboe/incentivepayunderway.htm](http://www.tcta.org/capital/sboe/incentivepayunderway.htm)

## What are districts and states doing to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools and subject areas?

Currently, many states are applying for Teacher Incentive Fund grants. Information about the program can be found at [www.ed.gov/programs/teacherincentive/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/programs/teacherincentive/index.html). The fund provides \$450 million in state formula grants to reward effective teachers and to offer incentives for highly qualified teachers to teach in high-poverty schools. Alongside the state program, an additional \$50 million is provided for competitive grants to state education agencies, local education agencies, and nonprofit organizations for the design and implementation of performance-based compensation systems to develop effective models that other districts could adopt to improve teacher compensation systems.

In addition, many alternative certification programs focus specifically on recruiting teachers into hard-to-staff schools in both urban and rural areas.

- **Community Teachers Institute (CTI)—Washington, D.C.**  
Focuses especially on urban schools and supports the development of “home-grown” teachers who are rooted in communities of color. CTI administers the Transition to Teaching alternative program. [www.tqsource.org/randr/int/results.asp](http://www.tqsource.org/randr/int/results.asp)
- **Recruiting New Teachers, Inc. (RNT)—Concord, Massachusetts**  
A national nonprofit organization that strives to raise esteem for teaching, expand the pool of qualified teachers, and improve policies and practices related to teacher recruitment, development and diversity. [www.tqsource.org/randr/int/results.asp](http://www.tqsource.org/randr/int/results.asp)
- **Teach for America (TFA)—New York**  
A national teacher recruitment program aimed at eliminating educational inequality by recruiting outstanding recent college graduates to teach in low-income rural and urban communities for two years. [www.tqsource.org/randr/int/results.asp](http://www.tqsource.org/randr/int/results.asp)

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- Good Neighbor Next Door**  
 An initiative run by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) aimed at strengthening American communities by encouraging teachers to buy homes in moderate- to low-income neighborhoods.  
[www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/reo/goodn/tnd.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/reo/goodn/tnd.cfm)
- Transition to Teaching**  
 A U.S. Department of Education program that provides five-year grants to state or local education agencies for teacher recruitment and induction activities. Participants in Transition to Teaching programs must teach in high-need schools and must teach for at least three years.  
[www.ed.gov/programs/transitionteach/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/programs/transitionteach/index.html)  
[www.tqsource.org/randr/int/results.asp](http://www.tqsource.org/randr/int/results.asp)
- Troops to Teachers (TTT)**  
 A program run jointly by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Defense that assists eligible military personnel in transitioning to a new career in teaching, with a particular focus on recruiting qualified teachers for schools serving low-income families and on relieving teacher shortages.  
[www.proudtoserveagain.com/pages/808014/index.htm](http://www.proudtoserveagain.com/pages/808014/index.htm)  
[www.tqsource.org/randr/int/results.asp](http://www.tqsource.org/randr/int/results.asp)

## What information exists about noncompensation-focused strategies for increasing the number of highly qualified and effective teachers in poor and/or urban or rural districts?

Research indicates that teachers may be encouraged to apply to a high-poverty, high-minority school if it has (1) a reputation for strong leadership and continuous administrative support and (2) consistent school discipline policies that create a safe and pleasant learning environment for both students and teachers. Some teachers indicate they would be willing to move to a school with these characteristics, and teachers who have left schools indicated that it was because of a lack of these things. For further examination of the issue, look to these studies:

- Prospects for the Profession: Public Opinion Research on Teachers***, National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, October 2006. [www.ncctq.org/publications/October2006Brief.pdf](http://www.ncctq.org/publications/October2006Brief.pdf)
- MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Expectations and Experience***, MetLife, Inc., 2006. [www.metlife.com/WPSAssets/81821402701160505871V1F2006MetLifeTeacherSurvey.pdf](http://www.metlife.com/WPSAssets/81821402701160505871V1F2006MetLifeTeacherSurvey.pdf)
- A Sense of Calling: Who Teaches and Why***, Public Agenda, 2000. [www.publicagenda.org/research/pdfs/sense\\_of\\_calling.pdf](http://www.publicagenda.org/research/pdfs/sense_of_calling.pdf)
- Teaching Interrupted: Do Discipline Policies in Today's Public Schools Foster the Common Good?*** Public Agenda, May 2004 [www.publicagenda.org/research/research\\_reports\\_details.cfm?list=3](http://www.publicagenda.org/research/research_reports_details.cfm?list=3)

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Teacher induction programs also have shown great promise in keeping beginning teachers in classrooms. One reason is that they provide a sense of collegiality and collective problem solving. One study that could be used as strong evidence for the usefulness of teacher induction programs is **“What Are the Effects of Induction and Mentoring on Beginning Teacher Turnover?”** by Thomas M. Smith and Richard M. Ingersoll, which appeared in the Fall 2004 issue of *American Educational Research Journal* (Vol. 41, No. 3, pp. 681–714). It is online at [www.gse.upenn.edu/faculty\\_research/Effects-of-Induction-and-Mentoring-RMI-Fall-2004.pdf](http://www.gse.upenn.edu/faculty_research/Effects-of-Induction-and-Mentoring-RMI-Fall-2004.pdf).

The following are examples of induction programs currently in place:

- **GOLDEN Teachers Induction & Mentoring Program (Chicago)**  
[http://goldenteachers.cps.k12.il.us/ProgramGuidelines-FINAL\\_8-30-06.pdf](http://goldenteachers.cps.k12.il.us/ProgramGuidelines-FINAL_8-30-06.pdf)
- **The New Teacher Project**  
[www.tntp.org/](http://www.tntp.org/)
- **Project SITE SUPPORT alternative certification program (Baltimore)**  
[www.sitesupport.org/index.cfm](http://www.sitesupport.org/index.cfm)
- **New Teacher Center at the University of California, Santa Cruz**  
[www.newteachercenter.org/](http://www.newteachercenter.org/)

## **What are the attributes of teachers who have improved student achievement in mathematics and reading, and how can those attributes be identified in the hiring process?**

A small base of research on measurable teacher characteristics and student achievement indicates that the following four attributes are solid guiding factors:

- Content knowledge
- Pedagogical content knowledge
- Teacher experience
- Verbal ability

These attributes have also been shown to influence student achievement, but some seem to matter more in some contexts than in others. For example, having an advanced degree in mathematics has an affect on the achievement of high-level secondary school students, but not so much for elementary students. Here are two helpful reviews of the literature on the relationship of teacher attributes and student achievement:

- ***Teacher Quality and Student Achievement*** (Urban Diversity Series), ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education, 2003.  
[http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content\\_storage\\_01/0000000b/80/22/11/4c.pdf](http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2/content_storage_01/0000000b/80/22/11/4c.pdf)
- **“Teacher Characteristics and Student Achievement Gains: A Review,”** by Andrew J. Wayne and Peter Youngs, *Review of Educational Research*, Spring 2003 (Vol. 73, No. 1, pp. 89–122).

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For more information on this topic, see *TQ Tips and Tools* at [www.tqsource.org/strategies/atrisk.asp](http://www.tqsource.org/strategies/atrisk.asp), which includes a wealth of information regarding practical strategies for improving teacher quality at both the state and district levels. See the document titled “Hiring and Placement Practices” in particular.

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