Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers and Principals

Harry K. Wong, Ed.D. and Rosemary T. Wong, Ed.D.

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Harry K. Wong, Ed.D.
Rosemary T. Wong, Ed.D.

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The Race to the Top initiative, although well-intended, is misnamed.

Education is not a race. A race implies someone is a winner and the rest are losers.

Effective school districts are ones where all teachers are winners. They train and nurture every teacher to reach great heights.

Children deserve nothing less.

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Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers and Principals

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Executive Summary

The Race to the Top Mandate: Improve Teacher and Principal Effectiveness

Race to the Top mandates that funds are to be used to support and improve teacher and principal effectiveness followed by providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals.

The single largest factor in improving the educational outcome of a student is the effectiveness of that student’s teacher. The difference in teacher effectiveness is the single largest factor affecting academic growth of populations of students. Thus, the priority in a school should be to create a culture of effective teachers.

Race to the Top funds will be given to those districts that submit the most creditable and convincing “scope of the work” plan that shows how they will produce effective teachers and principals. The key word is “effective.”

Very simply, an effective teacher and principal can produce student learning, growth, and achievement. The result can be measured, either qualitatively or quantitatively.

The Three Characteristics of Effective Teachers

Over 30 years of research have identified the three characteristics of effective teachers and school leaders have used these characteristics to show how a teacher can improve student learning.

These are the three most important characteristics of effective teachers:

1. They are extremely good CLASSROOM MANAGERS.
2. They know how to teach a lesson for student LEARNING and MASTERY.
3. They have POSITIVE EXPECTATIONS for student success.

A district can use the three characteristics of effective teachers to form the framework of an effective professional development program to train teachers to be effective.

Assessment and Data

Assessment and data will not improve student learning and achievement. All assessment and data do is inform. Effective teaching drives and determines the data to show improvement in the quality of student learning and achievement.

The district’s responsibility is to have a comprehensive and coherent professional development plan to teach teachers how to use the data. How a school district trains
its teachers and principals to be effective is what will drive assessment and data to greater heights.

The Only Strategy for Improving Teacher Effectiveness

Professional development is the only strategy school districts have to strengthen the effectiveness of their teachers and principals. Professional development is also the only way teachers and principals can learn so that they are able to improve their effectiveness.

Effective school districts have a carefully thought out professional development program that is comprehensive, coherent, and sustained. The professional development program begins with new teacher induction where new teachers are acculturated to the responsibilities, missions, academic standards, and vision of the district.

Induction is an organized, sustained program structured by a school or district to develop effective teachers. Today the best districts have coaches, not mentors, as part of their induction program. The coaches meet with the principal on a regular basis to assess the progress of every teacher and student.

What Keeps Effective Teachers

Collaboration is the most effective way for teachers to learn. Teachers learn more in sustained teacher networks and study groups than with individual mentors. In high performing schools, teachers are more likely to work in a collegial approach to decision-making and are willing to share with one another the needed knowledge and skills to help their students reach high academic standards.

The era of isolated teaching is over. Good teaching thrives in a collaborative learning environment created by teachers and school leaders working together to improve learning in strong professional learning communities.

What keeps effective teachers is a structured, focused, and sustained professional development program that allows new teachers to observe others, to be observed by others, and to be part of networks or study groups where all teachers share together, grow together, and learn to respect each other’s work.

Effective school districts train and nurture all teachers to reach great heights. Every moment of each day is an opportunity for teachers to grow and learn and reach the top of their profession.

Effective teachers and principals—children deserve nothing less.
What Race to the Top Mandates

Race to the Top (RTT) is a $4.35 billion United States Department of Education program designed to spur reforms in state and local district K-12 education. The RTT money is mandated to be spent on improving teacher and principal effectiveness.

Criteria for Funding

The applications were scored on selection criteria worth an assigned point value:

- **Effective Teachers and Leaders (138 total points)**
  - Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance (58 points)
  - Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals (25 points)
  - Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals (21 points)
  - Providing effective support to teachers and principals (20 points)
  - Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs (14 points)

The sub-category of attracting and keeping effective teachers and leaders (58 points) is the major criteria, surpassing all of the other criteria.

To meet the criteria, RTT mandates states have comprehensive, coherent, statewide, educational reform across four areas:

- Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most
- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace
- Building data systems that measure student growth and success and inform teachers and principals how to improve instruction
- Turning around lowest-performing schools

Recruiting, developing, and retaining effective teachers and principals supersede and drive the success of the other three areas. The effective district recruits and trains teachers and principals in how to use the standards, assessments, and data to improve student learning and achievement.

The RTT money is mandated to be spent on training teachers and principals who know how to deliver instruction and can assess for student achievement.
What Race to the Top Does Not Mandate

RTT money is not to be used for another round of programs and school structural changes. The money is to be spent on training for effectiveness.

John Goodlad studied 40 years of educational innovations while he was at UCLA. He did not find a single innovation that substantially increased student achievement. He discovered that the only factor that substantially increases student achievement is the effectiveness of a dedicated teacher.

Instead of training teachers how to become effective, so as to improve student learning and academic achievement, school leaders and policy makers have spent the past 75 years jumping from one fad or ideology to another, recycling the same programs decade after decade.

The Case for Building Effective Teachers

In 1991 Ron Ferguson, senior lecturer on Education and Public Policy at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, reported, "A large scale study found that every additional dollar spent on raising teacher quality netted greater student achievement gains than did any other use of school resources."

To demonstrate how research has been ignored, in 1993 Walter Annenberg gave $500 million towards education reform to the largest urban school systems. Known as the Annenberg Challenge, the goal was to positively influence student learning.

- Boston tried whole-school change.
- Chicago tried small learning communities.
- Houston tried class size reduction.
- Los Angeles tried improving literacy.
- New York tried creating small schools of choice.
- Philadelphia tried citywide learning standards.

In 1998, after spending $500 million, the Annenberg Foundation reported:

The only factor that positively impacted student achievement was when money was invested in providing teachers with sustained opportunities to improve their classroom skills.
The **Gates Foundation** spent $2 billion to create smaller high schools. The money caused school people to become so caught up in tinkering with the small schools’ structure that they didn’t pay enough attention to the effectiveness of teaching. In 2009 **Bill Gates** admitted, "Many of the small schools that we invested in did not improve students’ achievement in any significant way."

For decades, the fix for trying to improve student learning has been flavor-of-the-month fads such as block scheduling, outcome-based instruction, looping, constructivism, full inclusion, and interdisciplinary instruction. These are isolated theories and do not speak to the overall task of effective teaching.

**Programs and ideologies do not produce student achievement. Teachers produce student achievement.**

**Teachers, Not Programs, Produce Student Achievement**

**Richard Elmore** of Harvard University says, "To improve student learning, you do not change the structure (i.e., block scheduling, smaller class size, small school size, etc.), you change the instructional practices of the teachers. The schools that seem to do best are those that have a clear idea of what kind of **instructional practice** they want to produce, and who then design a structure to go with it."

**It is the teachers and their instructional practices—not curriculum programs or a change in the school structure—that improves student learning.**

This is the major difference between successful and unsuccessful schools:

- **Unsuccessful schools stress programs.** They spend millions of dollars adopting programs and bandwagon fads in constant pursuit of the quick fix.

- **Successful schools stress effective practices.** They wisely invest in their teachers and the effectiveness of their teachers. They don’t teach programs; they teach basic, traditional academic content, prioritizing the instructional practices of their teachers because that is the major factor in improving student achievement.

Funds spent developing teachers in the skills to guide children to achievement are better spent than money used to buy a package of neatly presented quick fixes for academic woes. Educational leaders know that an effective teacher can never be replaced by a program. Effective teachers raise the achievement level of children.

**To begin with the end in mind means to start with a clear understanding of your destination.** – **Stephen Covey**

Start by defining what an effective teacher is and instructing teachers in that direction, not by buying and adopting a program in the hopes that something good will occur.
RTT mandates that monies are to be used by a state to take steps to improve teacher and principal effectiveness, not to adopt programs. RTT says, "Improve Teacher and Principal Effectiveness."

**Teacher and Principal Effectiveness**

Effective is a concrete, research-based term. Effectiveness is measureable. Educational leaders know the attributes of being effective and use that information to teach and produce effective teachers and principals.

**If You Cannot Define It, You Cannot Implement It**

The RTT initiative states what effective educators have known for decades: Effective teachers hold the key to improving student learning, achievement, and success.

The irony is that the U. S. government, the philanthropic foundations, and the many commissions and groups that have jumped on the campaign have found that defining what it means to be an effective teacher remains a major hurdle for all of them.

The people, press, critics, and politicians who degrade the teaching profession by stating all would be solved if the ineffective teachers were fired, themselves cannot define what is an ineffective teacher.

Few can

- define the term "effective,"
- describe the characteristics of an effective teacher, or
- even know how to train a teacher to be effective.

**Very simply, an effective teacher and principal can produce results—student learning, growth, and achievement.**

**Learning:** Learning is acquiring basic knowledge and skills. Learning can also include acquiring behaviors, values, and understandings.

**Growth:** Growth indicates quantity or progress over time, such as acquiring more information and skills and being able to synthesize and apply the information and skills.

**Achievement:** Achievement is when a student is able to demonstrate an act of accomplishment or attainment, such as producing a report, writing a poem, performing a weld, singing a song, or solving a problem.
If You Can Measure It, You Can Implement It

People who are effective produce a desired result. A result can be measured either qualitatively or quantitatively.

When using the services of a stylist, carpenter, dentist, or other professional, expectations are based on results produced. Continued use of the service provider is determined by the quality of the result produced.

Likewise, effective teachers produce student learning that can be accurately measured and properly documented. Students learn from teachers who can consistently produce the desired academic results.

Certified, Qualified, and Effective

“Certified,” “qualified,” and “effective” are commonly misused words when describing teachers and assessing student learning and achievement. Only one of these terms, effective, will produce student learning and close the achievement gap. Schools that are effective hire certified, qualified teachers and then train them to be effective.

Certified

A driver’s license allows a person to drive legally, but it does not make them a good driver. Similarly, teacher certification is only a license to teach. Certified teachers do not always produce effective student learning. A teacher should be certified, but this does not necessarily mean the teacher is qualified or effective. In fact, teacher experience and certification accounts for only about 2 percent of a teacher’s contribution to a student’s test-score gains.

Qualified

To borrow a redundant phrase from the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act of the Bush administration, a “highly qualified” teacher must

1. possess at least a bachelor’s degree;
2. have full state certification; and
3. show demonstrated competency in the core academic subjects assigned.

Being certified and qualified are necessary; however, being qualified does not necessarily produce excellence. The world is full of qualified plumbers, mechanics, and lawyers who produce undesirable results. Likewise, there are teachers who are qualified, but who cannot produce effective student learning.

Effective

Effective teachers have an effect on their students and can produce a positive result. Classrooms of effective teachers have students who are engaged, enjoy the challenge of learning, respect their teachers, and produce the work that has been assigned to them.

When you have measurements, you have performance. When you have no measurements, you have excuses. – Peter Drucker
The students in an effective teacher’s classroom have higher measurable test scores, just as effective football coaches produce winning records.

A race car driver and a hair stylist may be qualified and certified, but the effective driver wins races, just as the coveted hair stylist makes clients look great when they leave the salon. Customers return to those professionals who are consistently effective, just as every child must be placed in a classroom with a teacher who is consistently effective.

The Three Characteristics of Effective Teachers

Educational leaders who know the characteristics of effective teachers are able to teach teachers and principals how to be effective.

Thomas Good and Jere Brophy published their book, *Looking in Classrooms*, in 1973. They identified the three characteristics of effective teachers and used these characteristics to show how teachers can foster student learning.

The book is in its 10th edition and the authors’ research remains valid after nearly four decades. These are three most important characteristics of effective teachers:

1. They are extremely good CLASSROOM MANAGERS.
2. They know how to teach a lesson for student LEARNING and MASTERY.
3. They have POSITIVE EXPECTATIONS for student success.

Robert Pianta, University of Virginia’s Curry School of Education, made the same observations in 2007 that matched those of Good and Brophy. After examining more than 3,000 classrooms, Pianta concluded that the three most important domains of effective teachers are

1. organizational support,
2. instructional support, and
3. emotional support.

Pianta developed an observation instrument to assess classroom quality and help teachers become more effective. He called it a “Classroom Assessment Scoring Guide” (CLASS). The CLASS examines effective teacher–student interactions that impact learning, just as Good and Brophy emphasized classroom communication.
The National Center for Mental Health at UCLA studied classroom success among students with social-emotional issues. Published in 2008, the report found that the three major barriers to learning and school improvement are

1. management component,
2. instructional component, and
3. enabling component.

These match the same three characteristics that Good and Brophy reported in their research and Robert Pianta confirmed in his work a year earlier.

Charlotte Danielson, in her *Framework for Teaching*, lists four domains of professional practice. After combining her first two overlapping domains, the result is the same characteristics previously enumerated.

- Domain 1 – Planning and Preparing the Classroom Environment
- Domain 2 – Instruction
- Domain 3 – Professional Responsibilities

Kate Walsh, president of the National Council on Teacher Quality, lists these characteristics of a really good teacher:

1. Skilled at handling a classroom.
2. Knows effective strategies for delivering instruction.

These are the same three findings reported by Good and Brophy and others.

Bruce Torff, Hofstra University, surveyed principals in high-achieving and under-performing schools. Torff found these deficiencies as the most common causes of teacher ineffectiveness:

1. classroom management skills,
2. lesson implementation skills, and
3. ability to establish rapport with students.

Again, the same three characteristics reported by Good and Brophy.

Katy Hayes, a Teach for America teacher, shares that her training had courses that mainly focused on:

1. classroom management and classroom culture,
2. how to plan effective lessons with strong daily objectives, executing effective lessons, and
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3. diversity sessions to help with communicating with the staff, parents, and navigating in a new school.

Again, the same consistent domains as mentioned before.

The three characteristics have been researched, defined, and are known.

The Three Characteristics of Effective Teaching

1. **Classroom Management**
   Classroom management consists of the practices and procedures that a teacher uses to maintain an environment in which instruction and learning can occur.

2. **Lesson Mastery**
   Lesson mastery refers to how well a teacher provides instruction so students will comprehend and master a concept or skill to a level of proficiency as determined by the lesson objective and assessment.

3. **Positive Expectations**
   The expectation of students, whether positive or negative, is what the teacher believes will or will not happen and will greatly influence the achievement and success of students.

A district can use the three characteristics of effective teachers to form the framework of an effective professional development program to train teachers to be effective.

The Research on Effective Teachers

The single largest factor in improving the educational outcome of a student is the effectiveness of that student’s teacher. This statement has been known for years.

The RTT funding mandates implementing the obvious. It’s the teacher. The following about teachers has been known for decades:

- Teacher expertise accounts for more difference in student performance—40 percent—than any other factor. *Ferguson (2001)*

- The importance of having an effective teacher for four or five years in a row could essentially close the gap in math performance between students from low-income and high-income households. *Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin (2001)*

- The difference in teacher effectiveness is the single largest factor affecting academic growth of populations of students. *Sanders (2000)*

“More can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor.”

– Wright, Horn, and Sanders (1997)
A study of the Denver Public Schools found that teachers accounted for more than twice the total variation in student test score change than did the schools. *Meyer (2001)*

The differences in impact by the most effective teachers, the top one-sixth of teachers, can be nine months or more, essentially a full year of learning. *Rowen, Correnti, and Miller (2002)*

Years of research have proven that nothing schools can do for their students matters more than giving them effective teachers. A few years with effective teachers can put even the most disadvantaged students on the path to college. A few years with ineffective teachers can deal students an academic blow from which they may never recover. *Jordan, Mendro, and Weerasinghe (1997)*

The achievement gap facing poor and minority students is due not to poverty or family conditions, but to systematic differences in teacher effectiveness. A student who is taught by an ineffective teacher for two years in a row can never recover the learning lost during those years. As a teacher’s effectiveness increases, the first students to benefit from this improvement are those from lower-achieving groups.

**The priority of a district should be to create schools with a cadre of effective teachers.**

**Begin with the Average Teacher**

Imagine a child performing at the 50th percentile and placed in one of the situations shown in the table. After two years, Robert Marzano’s research says the following will happen to your child:

- **The ineffective teacher**, even in an effective school, affects little and is even detrimental to student learning and growth.

- **The effective teacher**, even in an ineffective school, produces improved student learning and increased student achievement.

Start with an average school with average teachers and from there, increase the percentile growth each year and there will be monumental student improvement over the years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School and Teacher Effectiveness</th>
<th>Impact on Learning</th>
<th>Entering School at 50th Percentile</th>
<th>Percentile After Two Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ineffective school and Ineffective teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective school and Ineffective teacher</td>
<td></td>
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<td>37th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average school and Average teacher</td>
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<td></td>
<td>50th</td>
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<td>78th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective school and Effective teacher</td>
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<td>96th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Marzano (2003)*
Therefore, effective teachers and effective schools are the most critical means by which to improve student achievement and close achievement gaps.

Teachers, Not Programs

It is the teachers and their instructional practices, not curriculum programs or a change in the school structure, that improves student learning.

“Good instruction is 15 to 20 times more powerful than family background and income, race, gender, and other explanatory variables.” — Hershberg (2005)

Since it is known that teacher effectiveness is directly proportional to student success, why isn’t it the driving force in decision making by all levels of policy makers?

It’s because the great majority of legislators, school board members, and administrators believe that student success comes from adopting programs, fads, and ideologies, such as smaller school size, smaller class size, block scheduling, mentoring for reflection, cognitive inquiry, million dollar reading programs, project-based instruction, school uniforms, single-gender schools, and hundreds of other trends.

Monies are best spent training and developing teachers rather than spent buying one program after another. Effective leaders know that what matters is whether schools can offer their neediest students good teachers trained in effective strategies to teach strong academic knowledge and skills.

Why Teachers Are Treated as Widgets

In 2009 The New Teacher Project published a document, “The Widget Effect,” suggesting that administrators and policy makers treat teachers as widgets, people who are interchangeable without regard to their effectiveness. Teachers were treated as movable and removable widgets without any assessment for effective teaching. The New Teacher Project found that “our nation’s failure to acknowledge and act on differences in teacher effectiveness” is why our students are not learning and achieving.

The RTT act mandates that a school district is to recruit certified and qualified teachers and then train them to be effective.

Why Teachers Are Treated as Widgets

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The RTT act mandates that a school district is to recruit certified and qualified teachers and then train them to be effective.

Teachers: Our Greatest Asset

Hall of Fame football coach Joe Gibbs is to the point, “You win with people.” Translated for schools, “You win with teachers.” Programs, ideologies, or structural changes do not increase student achievement. An effective teacher increases student achievement.
Effective educational leaders do not treat teachers as widgets; they treat teachers as the greatest asset of a school district.

Peter Drucker, the famed business guru, says if you ask any business person to name their greatest asset, they will tell you it’s their PEOPLE. An asset is like money or property that gets invested to make it grow into greater assets. Businesses spend $53 billion dollars each year training their people, their assets, to make them worth more and more to a company. Businesses consider their people their human capital. The better their people, their assets, the more successful the company.

Drucker coined the term human capital and considered people assets. Human capital refers to what people know and can do. Human capital, a Nobel Prize winning concept, is not measured by accumulated physical assets, but by knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

However, ask a policy maker or a school administrator to name their greatest asset and the response will be money or programs.

Yet the research says over and over again:

Teacher effectiveness is the most critical factor by which to improve student achievement or close the achievement gap.

The Greatest Asset of a School

Effective schools and effective teachers have been documented in the articles that appear in the Gazette of the Internet resource www.teachers.net. The stories affirm that effective teachers and effective schools are responsible for student achievement.

- November 2010 - The principal had to take a leave from school and could not tell anyone where she was going, yet the school effectively ran itself.
- October 2010 - Two administrators show how they effectively lead a school in Harlem with teacher training to produce improved test scores.
- May 2010 – A principal of a Title I school taught his teachers how to operate their first day of school like they had been together the entire year. The school that year had some of the highest performing test scores in the district.

Training = Employee Effectiveness = Productivity

Teachers + Improved Instructional Practices = Effective Schools

To access the stories at www.teachers.net, go the end of the current month’s column to find the archive for all past articles.
Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers and Principals

- April 2010 - This school district has been producing award-winning effective teachers for over 25 years.
- December 2009 - Implementing the practices of effective teachers, three brand new teachers succeeded in their first year.
- November 2009 - In a district that has been under state control since 1991, this teacher is successful.
- October 2009 - Using the practices of effective teachers, all of the students in this teacher’s urban classroom passed the state math test.
- August 2007 - Overnight this urban teacher became an effective teacher.
- February 2005 - A high school teacher in Alabama succeeded in her first day of teaching and five years later is named Teacher of the Year.
- February 2002 - A high-poverty, middle school teacher explains why she has no behavioral problems, her students are successful, and she is stress-free.

These articles talk about teachers, students, and leaders. They do not talk about programs.

**Effective Professional Development**

In every aspect of the real world, people are trained. Walmart, Home Depot, and Southwest Airlines train their employees. Even local small businesses—real estate offices, dentists, and grocery stores—train their new workers. Every business does this, from the day an employee joins a company or team until that person leaves.

Compare this with many schools where training is nonexistent. Teachers want training; they want to fit in; and they want their students to achieve. For the most part, education has failed to recognize what other industries have recognized almost from the start. Formalized, sustained training matters.

Standards and assessments, although necessary and needed, do not improve student learning and achievement; teachers do. All assessment and data do is inform.

Effective teaching practices allow students to demonstrate proficiency and performance in assessments and standardized tests. Professional development to train teachers and principals in how to be effective will drive the assessment and data to greater heights.

RTT is packed with the rhetoric of performance and evaluation. Performance and evaluation are inherent in the profession. But, for a profession where teaching is the medium of the business, little time is spent teaching teachers and principals how to perform effectively.
Teachers and principals and their practices will turn around low-performing schools, not programs, structural changes, or endless tests and assessments.

- Professional development is the only strategy school districts have to strengthen the effectiveness of their teachers and principals.
- Professional development is also the only way teachers and principals can learn so that they are able to improve their effectiveness.

Effective school districts have a carefully thought out professional development program that is laser-focused on producing effective teachers who can produce student achievement results.

Six Characteristics of an Effective Professional Development Program

Effective school districts have a well-planned professional development program that formalizes training over many years.

The preeminent research on effective professional development is found in the work of Garet, Porter, Desmoine, Birman, and Kwang. Their work was published in the 2002 winter issue of the American Educational Research Journal.

Michael S. Garet, the lead researcher, says, “Professional development largely has been a voluntary activity where teachers can pick and choose from an incoherent collection of offerings, but it needs to become a more significant part of schools' and districts' plans of what teachers do. If we are serious about using professional development as a mechanism to improve teaching, we need to invest in activities that have the characteristics that research shows foster improvement in teaching.”

An effective, formal professional development program has the following six characteristics that will foster improvement in teaching:

1. **Form**
   Teachers learn more in teacher networks and study groups than with mentoring and in traditional classes and workshops.

2. **Duration**
   Longer, sustained, and intensive programs are better than shorter ones.

3. **Collective Participation**
   Activities designed for teachers in the same school, grade, or subject are better than programs that target groups of teachers who do not work together.

4. **Content**
   Courses that focus on how to teach and also what to teach—substance and matter—are more effective than courses that preach ideology and platitudes.
5. **Active Learning**  
Teachers need to be observed and supported as they plan and execute for classroom implementation.

6. **Coherence**  
Teachers need to perceive professional development as part of the coherent programs of teacher learning and development that supports the activities at their schools.

They Taught Me How to Teach

When **Yvonne Bernino** reluctantly left teaching in the **Flowing Wells School District** of Tucson, Arizona, she paid them a profound compliment. She said, “They taught me how to teach.”

Flowing Wells has a well-organized, eight-year professional development process. Their program can be described as being

1. **Comprehensive**  
   There is an organized program consisting of many activities/components and many people who are involved.

2. **Coherent**  
   The various components, activities, and people are logically connected to each other.

3. **Sustained**  
   The comprehensive and coherent components continue for many years.

The Flowing Wells School District takes a teacher through incremental stages, from novice, competent, and proficient to expert, which then seamlessly flows into a life-long professional development program called the Institute for Teacher Renewal and Growth. Their program is structured to produce effective teachers.

Their professional development program has produced more nominated and winning Teachers-of-the-Year in Arizona than any other district in Arizona.

Their mission is unmistakable—to produce effective teachers who can teach.

**Effective New Teacher Induction**

School districts that are serious about training, supporting, and retaining effective teachers have a comprehensive, coherent, and sustained new teacher induction program.
Induction is the process of preparing, supporting, and retaining new teachers. The purpose of induction is to acculturate new teachers to the responsibilities, missions, academic standards, and vision of the district.

Once on the job, all beginning teachers demonstrate the following:

1. Learn to teach to established standards.
2. Evaluate the effects of their instruction on student performance.
3. Use student achievement data for planning and curriculum.
4. Tailor instruction to address specific learning needs.
5. Learn how to thrive in the culture of the school.

This kind of learning and teaching happens when districts have a comprehensive induction program for their teachers.

Richard Ingersoll, University of Pennsylvania, found that a comprehensive induction program must have at least seven of these components to be effective and to be able to retain new teachers:

1. Initial 4-5 days of preschool workshops
2. Continuum of professional development activities for 2 or more years
3. A strong sense of administrative support with a campus coordinator
4. A coaching component utilizing trained coaches
5. A structure for networking with new and veteran teachers
6. Opportunities to visit demonstration classrooms
7. A welcome center that provides help to settle into a new community
8. A bus tour of the community, led by the superintendent
9. A formative assessment process that helps the new teacher develop skills for student achievement

A teacher who receives only the single component of mentoring is just as susceptible to leaving after one year as a new teacher who receives no induction at all.

| Retention Rate of Teachers Involved in Different Levels of Induction Programs |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Level of Training Received    | Percent Leaving After 1 Year |
| No induction                  | 41 percent        |
| One component (mentoring)     | 39 percent        |
| Four components               | 27 percent        |
| Seven components              | 18 percent        |
A district with a comprehensive and sustained professional development program sends a message to its teachers that they are respected and cared for. A district that keeps spending money to buy programs is sending a message to its teachers and principals that programs will do better in raising student achievement than teachers and principals.

Mentoring Is Not Induction

The terms induction and mentoring are often incorrectly used interchangeably. Induction and mentoring are not the same.

Induction is an organized, sustained program structured by a school or district to develop effective teachers. Whereas, mentoring is often carried out one-on-one, in isolation, for the purpose of helping new teachers survive, not to thrive.

The mentor may not have been trained, may not teach at the same grade level or academic subject, and the mentoring relationship at times has no coherence or collaboration to any state/district/school curriculum, plan, goals, or standards. Most mentoring relationships lack any structure, are not monitored, and have no adequate follow-up procedure.

- In 1996, Sharon Feiman-Nemser reported few studies exist that show the context, content, and consequences of mentoring.
- In 2004, Ingersoll and Kralik stated the current research did not provide definitive evidence of the value of mentoring programs in keeping new teachers from leaving the profession.
- In 2008, Rockoff reported over one million new teachers received mentoring between 1993 through 2003, but we know little about the magnitude of the benefits they have received or how the impact of mentoring varied across different types of programs or its effects on teacher and student outcomes.

Coaches Have Responsibilities

Effective districts have coaches that meet with the principal on a regular basis to assess the progress of every teacher and their impact on student learning. In an effective school, everyone functions as a team with all efforts focused on student achievement.

- Mentors have Roles of being buddies.
- Coaches have well-defined Responsibilities.
Coaches are in the classrooms with the teachers and the students. The work they do is job-embedded, which is how teachers learn best to become skilled and effective.

**Tom Guskey** is an expert in evaluation design, analysis, and educational reform. His research finds that coaches focus on student learning goals, identify small measurable steps to tailor goal accomplishment, and plan professional development that differentiates for each teacher based on needs. The emphasis is on student learning with coaches coaching for learning.

While both mentors and coaches have the same goal of improving a teacher’s skill set, the coach’s path is prescribed and goal oriented. Whereas a mentor is dousing brush fires as they happen in each teacher’s classroom.

### Differences Between Mentors and Coaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentors</th>
<th>Coaches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are available for survival and support</td>
<td>Help teachers improve student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide emotional support; answer singular procedural questions</td>
<td>Coach to improve instructional skills on a sustained basis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>React to whatever arises</td>
<td>Collaborate with administration and other teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treat mentoring as an isolated activity</td>
<td>Part of job-embedded induction and staff development process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentor with reflective conversations</td>
<td>Coach to specific learning objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are a buddy</td>
<td>Have a leadership responsibility</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Examples of Effective Induction Programs

**Islip School District** – New York – More than 99 percent of the graduating senior class now receives a New York Regent’s diploma. They attribute their achievement gains to their new teacher induction program.

- Three day summer orientation for all non-tenured teachers. Orientation includes classroom management strategies, team building activities, model lessons, and how to be successful from the very first day.

- Three year program where each year an established curriculum is presented in monthly workshops.
  - In year one, new teachers work with *The Effective Teacher* video series by Harry and Rosemary Wong on classroom management and with Linda Albert’s *Cooperative Discipline* on behavior intervention.
  - In year two, teachers apply the research on instruction using *Classroom Instruction that Works* by Robert Marzano.
  - In year three, teachers learn assessment techniques from Tighe and Wiggins’ *Understanding by Design*. Cohorts also learn how teachers are change agents with Spencer Johnson’s *Who Moved My Cheese?*

- Implementation of coaching as a component of induction.

- Emergence of professional communities.
Infusion of workshops focused on lesson plan development, cooperative learning, study skills, time management, learning styles, and parent communication.

Involvement of building and central office administration.

Facilitated by the Director of Human Resources.

Supported by the teachers association and new contract language mandates attendance.

Endorsed by the Board of Education and the Superintendent.

Provides ongoing and sustained professional development which is continued with mandated staff development hours after tenure is granted.

**Lafourche Parish Schools** – Louisiana – The new teacher induction program produced results so remarkable that the state of Louisiana adopted it as the state model for other districts to emulate.

- Four days of training in classroom management and basic instructional strategies prior to the beginning of school.
- A welcome dinner hosted by the Chamber of Commerce.
- Support of a coach for two years.
- Opportunities to visit demonstration classrooms.
- Monthly support group meetings.
- Three years of ongoing, structured training.
- Curriculum Coordinators oversee the entire three year induction process.
- School-based curriculum facilitators work with new teachers as often as needed.
- Provisions for networking among new teachers.
- "Induction Review Day" in April at end of first year.
- Separate induction training for experienced teachers new to the district.
It is better to train a teacher and lose that teacher, than to not train a teacher and keep that teacher.

- Ongoing training and support during years one and two for the Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program.

**Flowing Wells School District – Arizona –** In operation for more than 25 years, this is the mother-of-all induction programs.

- Eight day Induction Program with four days before school begins and four days during the school year (release time for new teachers).

- Classroom Demonstrations: Classrooms which model the first days of school.

- Procedures and Routines. New Teachers are given cameras so they are able to photograph the rules and procedures on the walls of master teachers.

- Bus tour conducted by superintendent which familiarizes new teachers with the culture and community of the district.

- A graduation luncheon celebration with framed certificates for each new teacher presented by the superintendent.

- Mentor in same grade level or content.

- Coaching follow-up for each new teacher with eleven classroom contacts by the full-time Staff Development Coordinator.

- Monthly support seminars for networking, support, and collaboration.

- Induction is aligned with the Arizona Teaching Standards.

- Partnership with Northern Arizona University for teachers to receive university credit for Induction.

- Comprehensive on-going staff development program which meets the needs of novice to expert level teachers.

- Complete support for teacher training for over twenty years by the Governing Board and Administration.

**Effective induction programs not only retain highly qualified new teachers, but they also ensure that these teachers are teaching effectively from the very first day of school and through their tenure in the district.**
Effective Collaboration

There are two factors that lead to teacher effectiveness:

1. A principal with instructional leadership
2. A staff that works collaboratively

To prepare students for the 21st century requires a look at the 21st century. Every successful business since the 20th century refers to its workers as associates or team members. Doors at many stores say, “Associates Only.” Restaurant checks say, “Served by Team 3.”

Students are going out into a world where everyone collaborates because businesses know what sports teams know, it’s the chemistry of people working together that brings victory to a team.

The functioning of staff and leadership as a team, as a cohesive group, will determine the success of the students. Research has shown that teachers in high performing schools are more likely to work in a collegial approach to decision-making and are willing to share with one another the needed knowledge and skills to help their students reach high academic standards.

Jackson and Bruegmann (2009) found that placing new teachers—or struggling teachers for that matter—in assignments where they are surrounded by effective teachers seems like the least expensive but perhaps most effective professional development out there.

Teachers Learn Best from Collaboration

People crave connection. New teachers want more than a job. They want to experience success. They want to contribute to a group. They want to make a difference. The most effective schools provide connections where new and veteran teachers interact and treat each other with respect and are valued for their respective contributions. Teachers remain in teaching when they belong to professional learning communities that have, at their heart, high-quality, interpersonal relationships founded on trust and respect. Collegial interchange is the desired norm for teachers, not isolation.

Johnson and Birkeland (2003) from Harvard University reported, “Our work suggests that schools would do better to rely less on one-to-one mentoring and, instead, develop school-wide structures that promote the frequent exchange of information and ideas among novice and veteran teachers.”

The Schmoker Model is an eight-step procedure to use for team meetings. The model is described in Results: The Key to Continuous School Improvement, 2nd Edition.

Under the leadership of Assistant Superintendent Linda Lippmann, Islip Public Schools New Teacher Induction Program features collaborative study group activities and networking. Study teams focus on skill-building strategies such as conducting parent conferences, managing classrooms,
crafting lesson plans, and implementing cooperative discipline programs. The groups constantly work on team-building and problem-solving techniques. They use model lessons and hold sharing sessions in which teachers learn from each other and build respect for one another.

**John Christie**, social studies teacher, says, “At Islip, the induction program allowed me to share new teacher concerns, realize I wasn't alone, and discover solutions in a collegial environment.” **Lorraine Knoblanch**, a new teacher, says, “The best part of this year was how our relationships with the other teachers developed. We really have developed into a family. We share concerns and triumphs and meet after school on many occasions. The connections are invaluable.”

**New teachers are immediately ushered into a team culture. Teacher turnover in the Islip Public Schools is negligible.**

**What Keeps Good Teachers**

The U.S. education system typically views teachers as independent operators, replaceable as widgets. Teachers are expected to do a good job behind closed doors. Collaboration is rare. Worse yet, new teachers seldom see another classroom in action. Loneliness and lack of support further exacerbate the frustrations of beginning teachers. To ask a young, new teacher to go solo in a networked world is writing that teacher’s epitaph, and it might as well read, “Doomed from the start.”

Because of the success of districts such as Islip in producing effective teachers, the following is known about the mindset of teachers:

- The era of isolated teaching is over. Good teaching thrives in a collaborative learning environment created by teachers and school leaders working together to improve learning in strong professional learning communities.

- Teachers thrive when they feel connected to their schools and colleagues. This is only possible when there is a strong professional learning community.

- Teachers want and need to belong. If they do not belong in a positive way, they will belong in a negative way.

- Effective schools have a high-performance culture, with a trademark of collaborative responsibility for the learning of all students.

- Teachers remain with a district when they feel supported by administrators, have strong bonds of connection to colleagues, and are collectively committed to pursuing a common vision for student learning in a performance-oriented culture as they build capacity and community.
Many of today's young teachers not only have access to millions of digital resources, they also have at their fingertips thousands of professional and social networks. They are receptive to working in teams, and they are good at it. Indeed, learning communities are their forté.

What keeps good teachers teaching are structured, focused, and sustained professional development programs that allow new teachers to observe others, to be observed by others, and to be part of networks or study groups where all teachers share together, grow together, and learn to respect each other's work.

The Plan for Developing Effective Teachers and Principals

Which school will see an increase in student learning and achievement?

School A: This dropout factory will extend the school day, create a career academy, join a partnership with a local community college, adopt a new technology program, and install a no-nonsense standard of raised expectations for students. No mention of teacher improvement is in the plan.

School B: A team of teachers and administrators, annually, uses the following effective teacher formula to develop their professional development needs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective Teacher Formula</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are our student education goals?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>— What are our actual student performances?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are our student learning gaps?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Homewood-Flossmoor High School District in Illinois uses this model to identify student performance gaps and then set SMART goals to improve student achievement. Data is collected to determine what kind of administrative instructional leadership and teacher instructional practice they want to promote. There is continuous monitoring of progress toward the performance goals over time.

The Five-Step Plan for Developing Effectiveness

Step 1: Establish as the goal for RTT to produce effective teachers and principals. RTT is funding creating effective educators, not adopting programs.

More information about School B's professional development plan can be found in Hassel's Professional Development: Learning from the Best. The book is a guide for designing and implementing effective professional development.
Step 2: **Appoint an effective leader to direct and monitor the plan.** The scope of the work plan is administered and monitored by a focused and competent leader. In too many schools a program is adopted or a teacher is given a mentor and the principal never assesses the development of the program or teacher.

Step 3: **Establish benchmarks and rubrics for the three characteristics of effective teachers.** A benchmark is the equivalent of a lesson objective. What does the teacher need to learn to become effective? What must a principal know to teach teachers how to become effective? This rubric can be used as a starting point to assess and see if progress is being made to reach the objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Effectiveness Rubric</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Behavior</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Learning</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classroom Management Plan</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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Step 4: **Create hands-on induction and professional workshops where teachers and principals learn the three characteristics of effective teachers and learn group work procedures.** These workshops are comprehensive, coherent, and sustained. There is a team that includes a new teacher to monitor, evaluate, and modify the professional development program based on the aforementioned effective teacher formula.

Step 5: **Purchase materials to help teach the three characteristics of effective teachers.** Ask the question: What staff skills are needed to close the student gap? Then purchase materials that will enhance your professional development program to teach these skills.

As the plan progresses, acknowledge the successes of everyone involved in the plan. Most of all, acknowledge the commitment of striving to be the best for children.
Education Is a People Business

Every Southwest Airlines aircraft has painted the following for all crew and passengers to see while boarding the plane:

_This Southwest jet is dedicated to you, our loyal customers._
_You are the reason we give Americans the Freedom to Fly._

Every school district should post a sign on the door of its professional development academy that says:

_This professional development program is dedicated to you, our greatest asset._
_By what we teach, we give you the opportunity to be effective._

Every teacher has potential and it is the responsibility of the educational leaders in districts, in states, at the national level to develop all teachers to their full potential.

**John F. Kennedy** once said, “The only reason to give a speech is to change the world.”

To paraphrase Kennedy, “The only reason teachers teach is to change the world.”

Teachers come to education certified and ready. The challenge is to put them in the classroom as effective teachers. Professional development focused on effectiveness brings out the potential of every teacher and principal.

Teachers and principals hold the hearts and minds of young people in their hands each day. They have the capacity to help children achieve their hopes, their dreams, their aspirations.

This document provides the plan for creating effective educators who will be the difference in the lives of children . . . and even change the world.

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**Selected References**


**About the Authors**

For over 25 years the Wongs have been teaching teachers, principals, and staff developers how to teach for effectiveness. Their work underscores one major point—effective teaching is identifiable, teachable, and implementable.

They have influenced the lives of hundreds of thousands of teachers and helped transform thousands of schools into effective schools.

Their body of work is laser-focused on effectiveness, as evidenced in the titles of their materials, *The First Days of School: How to be an Effective Teacher, The Effective Teacher, How to be an Effective and Successful Teacher, Classroom Management with Harry and Rosemary Wong* (the first characteristic of an Effective teacher), and their monthly column “Effective Teaching” at [www.teachers.net](http://www.teachers.net).

Both former, award-winning classroom teachers, they are best known for effecting, change overnight in teachers. With dynamic presentations to live audiences, they translate the research of how to be an effective teacher into implementable form. Authors of the best-selling book ever in education, *The First Days of School*, they are the recognized leaders in the development of effective teachers.

Contact information for the Wongs:

Harry K. Wong Publications, Inc.
943 North Shoreline Boulevard • Mountain View, CA 94043

TEL: 650-965-7896 • FAX: 650-965-7890
RWong@HarryWong.com