

## The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act: Opportunities and Strategies to Advance Teacher Effectiveness, Part 2

The American Recover and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) provides unprecedented funding for education reform. Through multiple funding streams and competitive grant opportunities, states are urged to think systemically and strategically about their education systems; the quality and effectiveness of their teachers and leaders; and how to best prepare, support, and develop these educators. In March 2009, the TQ Center published its first TQ Research & Policy Update Special Edition, which examined the funding available to support teachers and leaders in schools. Since that time, the U.S. Department of Education released its guidance for most of the programs funded by the ARRA.<sup>1</sup> From that, much has been learned about the administration's education reform agenda. This TQ Research & Policy Update Special Edition provides further information and resources for use by regional comprehensive centers and state education policymakers and stakeholders on how to systemically and strategically use these funding opportunities to advance education reform. In addition, it provides information on how states could use ARRA funding to address rural education challenges.

### Understanding the Funding Streams

By now, most education leaders and stakeholders are familiar with the four “assurances” that are the key building blocks of the new education agenda:

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

The Race to the Top materials provide the best insight into key areas around which the administration will build its reform agenda. With specific regard to teachers and leaders, there are four overarching areas for state focus:

- Teacher preparation
- Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance
- Providing effective support to teachers and principals
- Equitable distribution of effective teachers

<sup>1</sup> To date, the remaining program for which no details have been released is the Teacher Incentive Fund. The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and is a collaborative effort of ETS, Learning Point Associates, and Vanderbilt University.

The purpose of this special Research & Policy Update is to help education policymakers and stakeholders better understand the federal funding opportunities and how to best use them strategically to address the above key areas of reform for teachers and leaders. These funding opportunities include the following:

- Race to the Top
- Teacher Quality Partnership Grants
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) Grants
- Enhancing Education Through Technology (Ed Tech)
- School Improvement 1003(g) Grants
- Teacher Incentive Fund
- Title I State Grants

## Teacher Preparation

**Race to the Top.** In the area of teacher preparation, Secretary Duncan has been clear that he is dissatisfied with traditional teacher preparation programs. The Race to the Top competition requires states to focus significant effort on improving these programs and expanding alternative certification programs for teachers and leaders.

The Education Department also is looking for states to develop plans and mechanisms for assessing the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs on the basis of the effectiveness of their graduates. This requires states to build data systems that link student and teacher data and that also capture information on the preparation programs of teachers. In addition, there is a requirement that teachers and leaders gain access to data that can be used to improve instruction. These individuals will need training to better understand the data provided to them and how to use those data to effectuate improvements.

**State Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) Grants.** The purpose of this program is to provide grants to state education agencies (SEAs) to enable them to design, develop, and implement effective statewide longitudinal data systems. Although this is a competitive grant, a significant amount of money has been invested to support state progress and expand the investment beyond the current 27 recipients. The program began in 2005 with a \$52 million investment that increased to \$60 million in 2007 and then to \$150 million in 2009. Under the ARRA, an additional \$250 million will be available to states.

High-quality, comprehensive data systems are able to link student achievement or growth to the students' teachers and principals. These data, in turn, can be linked to the in-state preparation programs at which the teaches and principals were prepared. The Race to the Top program requires states to create and implement a plan whereby these data are used to determine the quality of preparation programs so the state can expand those programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals.

**Teacher Quality Partnership Grants.** Funds under this program can be used to increase student achievement by improving the preparation of teachers and recruiting talented individuals, including minorities and individuals from other occupations, into teaching by reforming traditional university teacher preparation and teacher residency programs. The teaching residency programs follow a medical model in which residents are

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placed in schools with extensive induction and support. All programs include rigorous candidate selection criteria, a commitment to recruiting candidates from diverse populations, and extensive and ongoing support for teacher candidates. Teaching residents are paid a living wage and expected to teach for three years in the partnering high-needs schools.

### **Improving Teacher and Principal Effectiveness Based on Performance**

During the summer of 2009, Secretary Duncan delivered a series of speeches on the four core reform areas of the new administration. In his speech on teachers and leaders, he acknowledged the critical role that data plays in identifying effective teachers and finding supports for those who are not. He stressed the importance of using student achievement as an indicator of teacher performance but also the role that evaluation plays and the important role of principals in fostering and identifying effective teachers.

**Race to the Top.** In the Race to the Top competition, the administration identifies the following actions that states should take:

1. Determine an approach to measuring student growth.
2. Employ rigorous, transparent, and equitable processes for differentiating the effectiveness of teachers and principals, using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth as a significant factor.
3. Provide to each teacher and principal his or her own data and rating.
4. Use this information when making decisions regarding evaluations, professional development, compensation, promotion, tenure, and dismissals.

States are required to submit a plan for implementing these actions as part of their application.

**Ed Tech.** The recent guidance permits these funds to be used for developing and implementing activities that are being carried out with other ARRA funds as well as other federal, state, and local sources in order to effectively integrate the use of technology as part of an overall education reform strategy. More specific uses of these funds include collecting and managing school improvement data; developing advanced technology systems to collect, manage, and analyze data; preparing one or more teachers in schools as technology leaders who will assist other teachers; and providing bonus payments to the technology leaders.

**IDEA.** The recently released ARRA guidance indicates that these funds may be used for teacher evaluation.

**School Improvement Grants.** Districts receiving these funds and selecting turnaround models must use evaluations based on student growth to improve teacher and principal performance, promote the continuous use of student data to inform, and differentiate instruction to meet the needs of individual students.

**SLDS Grants.** This 2009 application package specifies that implementation activities should include, among other things, training, technical assistance, analysis, and feedback reporting to promote effective use of data by teachers, administrators, and others to monitor progress and make changes to improve student achievement. The application calls for states to identify concrete strategies and steps to ensure that the data will be used to support continuous improvement, especially instructional improvement, and to ensure informed decision making by school and district leaders as well as by state officials.

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**Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF).** To date, the proposed guidance for the ARRA-funded grants has not been released. TIF grants, however, are specifically designed to accomplish the following objectives:

- Encourage school systems to establish performance-based teacher and principal compensation systems that sustain student achievement gains and provide teachers and principals in high-needs schools with differentiated levels of compensation based on student achievement gains.
- Examine and develop best practices for conducting classroom evaluations and incorporating them into compensation systems.
- Reward teachers and principals in high-needs schools for increases in student achievement, and increase the number of instructors who teach hard-to-staff subjects (math, science, special education, and English as a second language) in high-needs schools.

**Title I.** The ARRA guidance specifically addresses how Title I funds can be used to develop fair and reliable teacher and principal evaluations that provide ongoing feedback and guidance for improving instructional practice. The guidance suggests that piloting such a program in a Title I school prior to its implementation in the district would be an allowable use of funds. Funds also may be used to implement performance-based compensation programs designed to raise student achievement.

### **Providing Effective Support to Teachers and Principals**

The administration is committed to improving the effectiveness of the teachers and leaders that run our nation's schools. The purpose of building longitudinal data systems is not simply to identify and reward effective teachers and leaders and dismiss those who are not. The administration is placing equal emphasis on providing effective supports that will improve the effectiveness of those who are struggling to have a positive impact in their schools. In addition, officials are looking for states to continuously measure and improve these supports. The ARRA-funded programs can provide supports to teachers and leaders in a variety of ways, including the following.

**Race to the Top.** This competition includes a requirement that student data be made available to teachers and leaders to support their efforts to improve instruction. The appropriate interpretation and use of data for this purpose will require both preservice and inservice training and support of teachers and leaders. In addition, evaluation systems by which teacher and leader effectiveness is determined also are to be used to inform decisions regarding teacher and leader development, compensation, promotion, tenure decisions, and removal.

**Ed Tech.** Funds may be used for activities directly related to the training of teachers and leaders to effectively use data for instruction, and to training administrators to use data for program evaluation, as follows:

- Measuring and tracking the impact of research-based professional development on teachers' ability to increase students' technology literacy and their reading, writing, and communication skills.
- Developing performance measurement systems to evaluate the effectiveness of Ed Tech in order to inform action to strengthen, modify, or discontinue programs based on evaluation results.
- Acquiring and training teachers to use instructional software, technology-enabled white boards, and other interactive technologies that have been shown to be effective aids for instruction, particularly for English language learners, students with disabilities, and both struggling and advanced learners.

- Using school-based technology coordinators and coaches to provide support, technical assistance, and professional development for teachers implementing and integrating technology into classrooms and instruction.
- Developing online formative assessment systems to provide teachers with data that can inform instruction on an ongoing basis as well as drive decisions related to curriculum development, instruction, and professional development.
- Creating or expanding components of SLDS to inform areas such as curriculum development, professional development, and instruction.
- Using technologies to collect, manage, and analyze data to inform and enhance teaching and school improvement efforts.

**IDEA.** Funds can be used for teacher advancement, time for collaboration, structured induction programs, and providing ongoing professional development, as follows:

- Professional development for special education teachers as well as general classroom teachers to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to teach these students effectively
- Supporting the costs of teachers of students with disabilities participating in high-quality certification programs that increase teachers' effectiveness in improving outcomes for students with disabilities, including funding site-based, job-embedded professional development for special educators that leads to certification in content area(s) through partnerships with institutions of higher education (IHEs) and/or recognized alternative certification programs
- Funding site-based, job-embedded professional development for general educators that leads to certification in special education through partnerships with IHEs and/or recognized alternative certification programs

**School Improvement Grants.** Districts receiving these funds and selecting turnaround models must provide the following:

- Ongoing, high-quality, job-embedded professional development to staff to ensure that they are equipped to facilitate effective teaching and learning
- Established schedules and strategies that increase time for collaboration and professional development for staff.

Funds also may be used to institute a system for measuring changes in instructional practices resulting from professional development.

**SLDS Grants.** This 2009 application package specifies that implementation activities should include, among other things, training, technical assistance, analysis, and feedback reporting to promote effective use of data by teachers, administrators, and others to monitor progress and make changes to improve student achievement. The application calls for states to identify concrete strategies and steps to ensure that the data will be used to support continuous improvement, especially instructional improvement, and informed decision making by school and district leaders as well as by state officials.

**Teacher Quality Partnership Grants.** Funds under this program can be used to increase student achievement by improving the professional development of teachers.

**Title I.** The recent guidance affirms schools’ ability to use these funds to hire data experts to help Title I schools build their capacity to analyze student data more effectively and identify interventions likely to be effective in these settings. Funds also may be used to pilot a data system designed to help teachers and staff identify and analyze data to improve instruction. Finally, for professional development for teachers, principals, other staff defined in the guidance, funds may be used for such purposes as the following:

- Implementing job-embedded professional development by increasing the per-pupil allocation so Title I schools have additional resources, or reserving some of the Title I funds “off the top.”
- Paying stipends for teachers in Title I schools to participate in professional development, and paying for substitute teachers in order to release teachers for professional development activities.
- Establishing intensive, yearlong teacher training for all teachers and principals in Title I elementary schools in corrective action or restructuring status in order to train teachers to use a new reading curriculum.
- Providing professional development to Title I teachers regarding how to prepare low-achieving students to participate successfully in advanced coursework such as AP or IB courses.
- Improving school climate by providing professional development to help staff address bullying, harassment, and social isolation and to help foster a greater sense of belonging and connectedness to the school among Title I students and families.
- Creating a pilot two-year program of professional development to increase principal effectiveness in improving achievement in the lowest achieving Title I schools.

### **Equitable Distribution of Teachers and Leaders**

While working to improve teachers’ and leaders’ effectiveness, the administration is eager to ensure that the neediest students are assigned to the most effective teachers in order to provide immediate improvements to those in need.

**Race to the Top.** In the Race to the Top, emphasis is placed on increasing the number and percentage of highly effective teachers and principals in high-poverty schools and hard-to-staff subjects including mathematics, science, special education, English language proficiency, and other hard-to-staff subjects. The administration is looking for states to implement incentives and strategies in areas such as recruitment, compensation, career development, and human resources practices and processes.

**Ed Tech.** These funds can be used to address inequities in the distribution of effective teachers through high-quality professional development and teacher incentive programs designed to attract and keep effective teachers in hard-to-staff schools in rural and urban areas.

**IDEA.** In addition to using these funds to recruit and hire special education teachers, these funds also can be used for the following:

- Teacher compensation

- Activities for the strategic placement and distribution of teacher
- Recruitment of highly qualified general education teachers (who often teach special education students)

**School Improvement Grants.** Districts receiving these funds and selecting turnaround models must implement strategies designed to recruit, place, and retain effective staff. They may provide additional compensation to attract and retain high-quality educators.

**Title I.** These funds may be used to do the following:

- Provide financial incentives and rewards to attract and retain qualified and effective teachers and principals in Title I schools and hard-to-staff subject areas.
- Pilot induction programs for new teachers in Title I schools operating schoolwide programs.
- Implement principal academics or other strategies designed to increase the supply of principals with the skills needed to improve low-achieving Title I schools.

As should be evident from the preceding review, a wide range of funds can be used to make progress in improving the effectiveness and distribution of teachers in our nation’s schools. Although this update reflects the latest guidance from the Education Department on the use of ARRA funds, materials continue to be released on an ongoing basis and can be easily located on the TQ Center’s ARRA resources Web page (described below). States and districts are encouraged to review new guidance as it is released.

The TQ Center offers a variety of resources that offer more specific guidance and concrete examples to help states rethink their activities related to teachers and leaders as well as improve existing programs and services. Of particular note is the interactive mapping tool, *Using ARRA Funds to Improve Teacher Effectiveness and Equitable Distribution*. The mapping tool and TQ Center resources available are discussed in further detail in the final section of this update.

For further information on any of the funding streams mentioned above, please visit the [TQ Center ARRA resources Web page](#) or the [U.S. Department of Education website](#).

## Rethinking Rural Education With ARRA Funding

While states and districts are being challenged by federal funding opportunities to invest in programs that build capacity and strengthen possibilities, rural schools and districts are searching for their path on the ARRA journey. This section offers states, districts, and nonprofits some guidance around the ARRA funds as they relate to rural education.

### Race to the Top

The Race to the Top funds focus at the state level. States can emphasize rural education by acknowledging the challenges rural schools and districts face, particularly those that relate to the proposed selection criteria for “Great Teachers and Leaders.” This section is intended to help state- and district-level education leaders think strategically about rural school issues as they develop proposals for the Race to the Top competition.

## Rural Teacher Recruitment

Many rural areas have a difficult time recruiting and retaining teachers in science, math, foreign languages, special education and for the instruction of English language learners. And while some states have developed strategies for combating these challenges, more can be done to address the issue. Notably, some 42 percent of rural schools reported that it was difficult or impossible to fill an English-as-a-second-language vacancy, compared with 28 percent to 30 percent of schools in other locations (Provasnik et al., 2007). Noting that similar results have been found in other subjects and fields, states would do well to consider using Race to the Top funds to combat both recruitment and retention issues by building comprehensive systems that acknowledge and address the particular needs of rural communities to have effective teachers in all classrooms. The following paragraphs include ideas for developing a more comprehensive system for combating rural recruitment challenges.

**Incentives for Teaching in Rural Schools.** Poor rural districts serving socioeconomically challenged communities are at a competitive disadvantage when recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers. At all levels of experience and training, rural teachers are paid less than teachers in other locales (Beeson & Strange, 2003). One solution is to provide multiple incentives to entice teachers to rural areas. Rural areas are challenged by social isolation, narrowness of choice (e.g., shopping, schools, entertainment, medical services), and challenging multidisciplinary and/or multiage teaching assignments required in rural schools. States can combat these challenges by developing adequate incentive programs for the recruitment and retention of rural educators. Such resources can and should be diversified to include housing incentives, relocation expenses, loans and loan forgiveness, or income tax credits (e.g., California). Some examples include South Carolina's Teacher Village ([scteachervillage.com](http://scteachervillage.com)); the Mississippi Critical Teacher Shortage Area Fund; Virginia Mathematics Teacher Corps; Tillamook, Oregon, Teacher Housing Partnership; the Pennsylvania Urban and Rural Teacher Loan Forgiveness Program; Arizona Loan Deferral Program; CalTeach Counseling Services for Prospective Rural Teachers; and Minority Access to Teacher Education at Benedict College, South Carolina.

**Recruitment Strategies for Aspiring Teachers Through Grow-Your-Own Programs.** Research suggests that new teachers tend to seek positions within their home district or in regions similar to where they grew up (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2005). Noting that the proximity to home community plays an important role in recruitment, a number of districts and states have developed programs that find potential teacher candidates within local communities before students graduate from high school. These grow-your-own programs often train young students with mentoring; tutoring positions; or elective courses on child development, effective teaching, or the organization of schools, and/or they offer scholarships or loan-forgiveness programs for students to earn a credential and teach in their home community. Examples of grow-your-own programs include Bertie County, North Carolina, Grow Your Own; Warren County, North Carolina, Summer Scholars Program; South Carolina Teacher Cadet Program; Illinois Grow Your Own Teachers; Idaho Grow Your Own Teacher Scholarship Program; and the University of Hawai'i LEI Aloha's Connections to Teaching Careers Project.

**Targeting Local Paraprofessionals and Community Members to Earn Teaching Certificates.** Paraprofessionals and community members with teaching experience often are interested in pursuing teaching certificates and can be excellent candidates for teaching programs. Their expertise and experience with the student population, their genuine interest in the community and the schools, and their ability to become local role models make paraprofessionals and community members great assets for local schools. Programs that target paraprofessionals and community members generally focus on recruiting individuals with an interest and

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an aspiration to pursue teacher education and with some exposure to the local schools through volunteering or paid work in a local school. The programs offer support for individuals through funding, assistance in navigating the complexities of the system, and through securing student-teaching placement and teaching positions within their home communities. Examples include University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Para-Educator Career Ladder; University of Nebraska–Lincoln, Indigenous Roots TEP; Southeast Missouri State University, Alternative Certification Program; Illinois State University, Chicago Teacher Education Pipeline; Louisiana Tuition Exemption and Stipend Program for Teacher Aides and Paraprofessionals.

### **Professional Development for School Leaders**

The demand for accountability and school reform has made the professional development of school leaders a top priority. And while there is increased concern that rural principals lack the necessary knowledge and skills to be effective instructional leaders (Manges & Wilcox, 1997), today’s rural school principals need opportunities to deepen their knowledge and understanding of the critical instructional leadership behaviors that support school improvement (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2004). Research on rural school principals indicates that principals want professional development in the following areas: building a team commitment, creating a learning organization, sustaining and motivating for continuous improvement, setting instructional direction, results orientation, communicating effectively, and facilitating the change process (Salazar, 2007).

**Evaluation Systems for Relevant Professional Development Systems and the Identification of Effective Teachers and Principals.** All too often, evaluations fail to address the needs of teachers and leaders to improve instruction and offer little support for decisions of tenure, promotion, or termination (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009). Quality evaluations are both formative and summative. The former assists in the creation of a professional development plan for teachers focused on how to improve performance, and the latter assists decision makers with judgments of salary, tenure, personnel assignments, transfers, and dismissals (Barrett, 1986). Formative evaluations are critically important for rural teachers and leaders who often have specific professional development needs that are different from those of their urban and suburban peers (Howley & Howley, 2004). Using Race to the Top funds, states can develop “rural-responsive” formative evaluation systems to assess the specific needs of rural teachers and leaders.

States also can address the needs of rural communities to effectively use summative assessments to identify effective teachers and leaders and make informed decisions. Rural schools and districts rightly have serious concerns over the use of summative evaluations for purposes of tenure, promotion, and termination. School leaders face daunting challenges in recruiting and retaining effective teachers and often face community pressures with no place of escape. As noted by Howley and Howley (2004), “In smaller schools and districts, staffing is drawn primarily from the local population, among whom school jobs are coveted, partly because they permit local people to remain in the places to which they are attached—an important and prevalent rural value” (p. 4). School leaders may use evaluations in nuanced ways that may be counter to how these evaluations are effectively used in other communities. Noting the challenges faced by rural districts, states would do well to build evaluation systems that take into account the unique and often delicate circumstances of rural communities as they develop evaluation systems.

### **Comprehensive Induction Programs for New Rural Teachers**

Teachers leave the profession at an alarming rate (one third have left the profession after three years), and small, high-poverty districts lose teachers at an even faster rate than the national average (Ingersoll, 2001). While

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salary and other remuneration factors are important, induction programs can play a key role in retaining teachers and helping new teachers become more effective (Darling-Hammond, Berry, Haselkorn, & Fideler, 1999; Fletcher, Strong, & Villar, 2008; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). New teachers are often ill-prepared to teach in rural settings where they often find themselves teaching outside of their discipline or teaching students in multiple grade levels. Some new teachers find themselves the only teacher in their discipline for miles, which makes same-subject mentoring problematic. Noting the challenges rural schools experience in recruiting new teachers, more should be done to retain the teachers who do make the leap to work in rural districts. (Electronic mentoring and induction programs have been developed to serve rural communities, and some universities have developed programs to address their local rural districts' needs.)

### **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics in Rural Schools**

Rural schools, teachers, leaders, and students need state attention as Race to the Top applications are developed. Noting the competitive preference priority of the Race to the Top application that focuses on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines, states can consider the needs of rural schools and local education agencies (LEAs) in the recruitment of STEM teachers, in their induction, and in their professional development. District-university partnerships, financial incentives, and alternative licensure can assist rural districts as they fill vacancies in STEM disciplines. Innovative programs that currently focus on rural needs in STEM include STEM Goes Rural—Woodrow Wilson Indiana Teaching Fellows Program, Robert Noyce Scholars program, Arkansas State Teacher Assistance Resource (STAR), California Assumption Program of Loans for Education (APLE), and Louisiana Critical Teacher Shortage Incentive Program.

### **Investing in Innovation**

The Investing in Innovation (i3) funds are designed to provide support for the implementation of, and investment in, innovative and evidence-based practices, programs, and strategies to improve education. Rural LEAs have some leverage in the i3 program. These funds are focused on specific, evidence-based approaches to educational innovation. Alone or in collaboration with another LEA or a nonprofit, LEAs can apply for these funds and earn extra points for having a rural school focus. While many rural communities are in the beginning stages of developing programs to fit their context, these funds can be useful for rural schools that can partner with knowledgeable nonprofits, IHEs, and willing partners who understand the specific challenges rural schools face. Any of the above strategies for promoting educator effectiveness in rural communities could be used in a proposal for the i3 funds. Rural districts with projects that have shown results may want to consider partnering with other rural districts to meet the scaling requirements of the i3 funding.

**Matching Funds.** In addition to other requirements, the i3 awards require matching funds. Thus, districts will be required to work with a foundation, business, or organization to meet the awarded amount for a funding match. Districts would do well to find funder philanthropists with a specific interest in rural issues (e.g., Annie E. Casey Foundation, The Annenberg Foundation, Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, Ford Foundation, George Gund Foundation, Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation) as well as corporate sponsors interested in rural communities (e.g., AT&T Foundation, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, John Deere, Caterpillar, Rural Mutual Insurance Company, State Farm Insurance), nonprofit agencies, and local businesses for funding matches. Local businesses have a vested interest in seeing local student success and therefore may be well suited for this matching opportunity.

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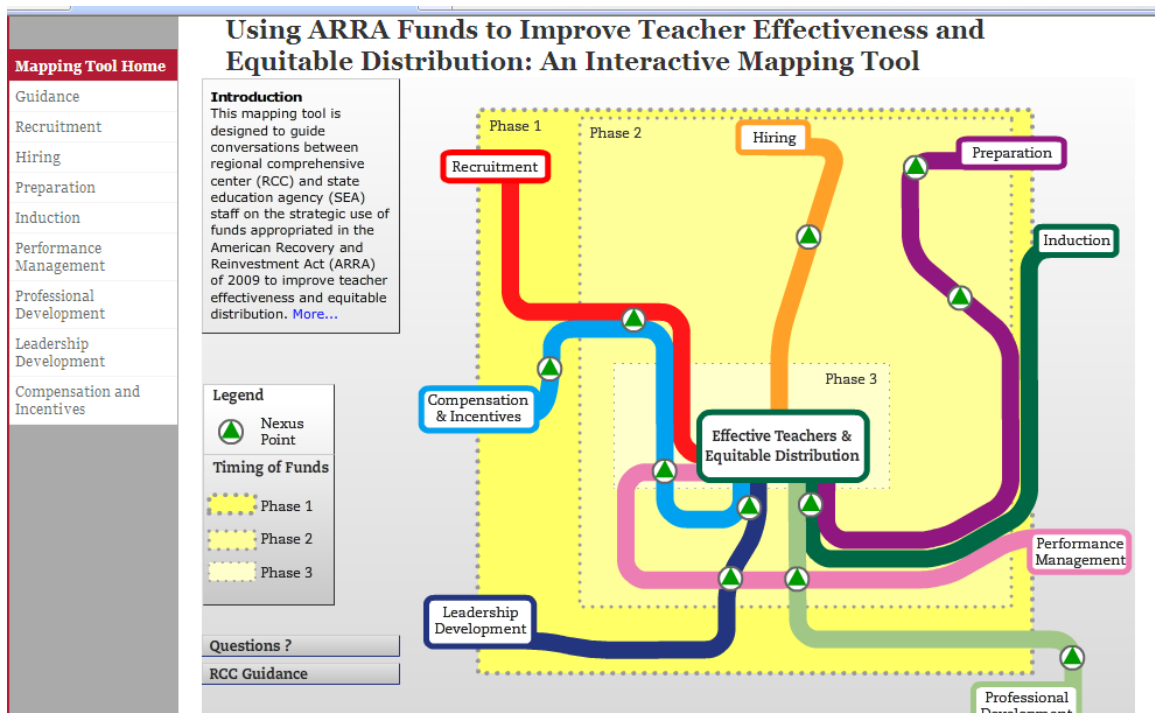
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## TQ Center Resources

The TQ Center has retained a focus on the equitable distribution of teachers, as well as defining and improving teacher effectiveness. As these areas are the focus of ARRA, the TQ Center has collected resources related to these areas and made them available online through our TQ Center [ARRA resources Web page](#). This page contains links to ARRA resources released through the U.S. Department of Education along with TQ Center resources related to the primary focus areas. In addition, the Web page contains the ARRA Interactive Mapping Tool, described below.

### Interactive Mapping Tool

The Interactive Mapping Tool was the result of collaboration among regional and content centers in the comprehensive assistance center network to develop an online tool that walks users through the different streams of funding under ARRA as they relate to the educator’s career continuum. This tool, [Using ARRA Funds to Improve Teacher Effectiveness and Equitable Distribution](#), is modeled after a subway map and is designed to guide conversations between regional comprehensive center and SEA staff—and, in turn, between SEA and LEA staff—on strategic and systemic uses of funds.



Key features of the map are as follows:

- *Nexus points* along the different strands of the career continuum (i.e., Recruitment, Hiring, Preparation, Induction, Performance Management, Professional Development, Leadership Development, and Compensation and Incentives) represent where ARRA funds can be used to implement a particular strategy. Each nexus point provides information on which funding streams through ARRA are available for use and promising practices.

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- *Readiness to Pursue Steps* provides SEAs with suggestions about processes that should be in place before they carry out any strategies under the nexus point.
- *Promising Practices* provide examples of specific policies and practices that SEAs can enact, using the ARRA funds.

For more information on the map, and some examples of how to use the resource to think strategically, the TQ Center hosted a webcast in September. A live recording of the webcast is [available online](#).

## TQ Center Resources on Educator Effectiveness

If states are required to determine whether their policies and actions work to improve teacher effectiveness in order to receive ARRA funds under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) and Race to the Top, it is essential first to develop a definition of teacher effectiveness. This definition should highlight aspects of teacher activities and responsibilities that lead to desired outcomes. The TQ Center has developed many resources with the goal of helping states think through the definition of teacher effectiveness. The most recent resources that might be useful include the following:

- A webcast ([Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness: The What, How, and Why of Educator Evaluation](#)) and a workshop ([Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness: A Workshop Connecting Research to Policy and Practice](#)) were convened by the TQ Center and REL Midwest to provide research-based information and an opportunity to learn from colleagues and experts in the field. All resources and presentations from these events are available online.
- [A Practical Guide to Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness](#) offers a five-point definition of teacher effectiveness that can be used as a basis for state or district policy. In addition, the guide provides insight into the different types of measurement, along with information about which measures are most suitable under different circumstances. Measures discussed include value-added models, classroom observations, analysis of classroom artifacts (e.g., lesson plans and student work), and portfolios. The guide is based on the TQ Center research synthesis [Approaches to Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness: A Research Synthesis](#).
- A Research-to-Practice brief, [Methods of Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness](#), also is based on the research synthesis and provides concise advice to state policymakers and regional comprehensive centers as they consider evaluation methods to clarify policy, develop new strategies, identify effective teachers, or guide and support districts in selecting and using appropriate evaluation methods for various purposes.
- Two TQ Source Tips & Tools Key Issues, [Using Performance-Based Assessment to Identify and Support High-Quality Teachers](#) and [Using Value-Added Models to Identify and Support Highly Effective Teachers](#) provide an in-depth look at state- and district-level strategies to assess teacher effectiveness through the two different measures.

## TQ Center Resources on Equitable Distribution

An overarching area of the Race to the Top materials indicates that states must understand the issue of addressing equitable teacher distribution. It requires attention to both (1) increasing the number of teachers applying and available for hire by schools, and (2) establishing a culture of support and development in schools

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that encourages quality teachers to remain. To aid educators in achieving these goals, the TQ Center has developed the following resources:

- A webcast, [Systems and Strategies for Addressing the Inequitable Distribution of Teachers](#), and a workshop, [Addressing Inequities in the Distribution of Highly Qualified and Effective Teachers: A Workshop to Move Research and Policy Into Action](#), were convened by the TQ Center to provide opportunities to explore research and practice regarding this topic and learn about action-based planning and strategies. All resources and presentations from these events are available online.
- A TQ Research & Policy Brief, [The Distribution of Highly Qualified, Experienced Teachers: Challenges and Opportunities](#), offers a discussion of the research base relating to the equitable distribution of teachers and provides strategies for addressing this challenge. It includes a discussion of policy responses to equitable distribution challenges and their relative cost-effectiveness, ways for states to identify districts and schools needing targeted assistance with attracting and retaining these teachers, data states and districts should be collecting and analyzing to assess the effectiveness of new programs, and strategies currently being used by states to improve teacher distribution.
- A TQ Source Tips & Tools Key Issue, [Increasing Teacher Retention to Facilitate the Equitable Distribution of Effective Teachers](#), provides strategies to improve the retention of qualified and effective teachers in hard-to-staff schools.

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