

What's New?

Newly Redesigned Website

We are happy to announce the launch of our redesigned website, which can be found at www.tqsource.org. The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (TQ Center) offers a variety of teacher quality news, publications, and online resources, and now we have revamped our website to better highlight these tools so they are more accessible to you—the user. The biggest changes to our website include the following:

- Restructured navigational bar and Web pages that make our resources more visible
- New content that includes two new TQ Topics—Equitable Distribution and State Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) Plans—as well as a System of Support section that highlights our national content centers and regional comprehensive centers (RCCs)
- Cross-references between TQ Topics and our available resources (Users can now search for topic-related resources by clicking on one of our TQ Topics and then selecting a resource for more information.)

The TQ Center will update website content periodically as well as add a technical assistance Web page in the near future. We encourage you to browse our new website and offer any comments or feedback to Gretchen Weber at gretchen.weber@learningpt.org or 630-649-6511.

HQT Webcast

On Wednesday, April 30, 2008, the TQ Center hosted a live, interactive webcast titled “Supporting Progress in Meeting the HQT Requirements of NCLB.” The webcast supported RCCs and state education agencies in their efforts to move from planning to action through the implementation of their state highly qualified teacher plans. Presenters included Danny Martinez from the Southeast Comprehensive Center at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, Janice Zube from the Louisiana Department of Education, and Jeffrey Max from the TQ Center, while Amy Jackson of the TQ Center served as moderator.

This webcast expanded the monitoring conversation to focus on how RCCs, their states, institutions of higher education, and other organizational partners can continue to meet the HQT requirements of NCLB through strategies identified in many state plans. These strategies included data analysis, working with local education agencies, accountability provisions, and equitable teacher distribution. The TQ Center discussed several

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technical assistance opportunities for RCCs and states, such as assisting states with the identification of educator quality challenge areas and providing feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of state plans in relation to the U.S. Department of Education's monitoring protocols.

A recording of the live webcast is available for viewing at <http://www.tqsource.org/webcasts/supportingProgress/>.

Update on the TQ Connection



The TQ Connection is available now [online](#). This new online resource provides links to research, policy, and practice within the following five special education topics: assessment, classroom management/behavior, inclusive practices, instructional strategies, and reading/literacy. Another feature includes an online discussion forum facilitated by Vanderbilt University. The goals of this discussion forum are to support educators through content-rich resources and provide space for interactive dialogue regarding the most current evidence-based strategies and policy in education—with a specific focus on general and special education teacher preparation and professional development.

New online topics are offered monthly, accompanied by a reading from the guest expert to stimulate discussion. A content expert is available throughout the week to answer questions. Since its initiation in February 2008, the following five monthly topics were offered:

- February: Effective Classroom Management; Lynn Holdheide, Vanderbilt University
- March: Response to Intervention (RTI): Multitiered Interventions; Dan Reschly, Ph.D., Vanderbilt University
- April: RTI: Critical Assessment Strategies; Kim Gibbons, Ph.D., Minnesota Response to Intervention Center
- May: RTI: Evidence-Based Instruction; Marty Hougen, Ph.D., Texas Reading First Higher Education Collaborative
- June: RTI: Prevention/Early Intervention Strategies for Challenging Behavior; Frank Gresham, Ph.D., Louisiana State University

The TQ Connection is taking a summer vacation during July and August. All materials from the previous five months will be available at www.tqsource.org/forum. Discussion will resume in September. If you have any questions or ideas for discussion topics, please contact Amy Potemski at amy.potemski@learningpt.org or 202-778-4589.

What Works Conference

The TQ Center will host its third annual What Works Conference November 10–12, 2008, at The Fairmont Washington, D.C., hotel. The proposed title is *Building Capacity for a Systems Approach to Improving Educator Quality*. More information will be available in the coming weeks. Please contact Gretchen Weber with any comments or questions at gretchen.weber@learningpt.org or 630-649-6511.

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Highly Effective Teachers Webcast

The Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center (ARCC) hosted a webcast titled “Highly Effective Teachers: More Than Highly Qualified” on June 26. Presenters included Sabrina Laine, Ph.D., director of the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality; Heather Peske, Director of Teacher Quality, The Education Trust; and members of the Tennessee Department of Education. See <http://www.edvantia.org/publications/arccwebcast/june08/> for more information.

In addition, the following resources may provide helpful information:

- [Communication Framework for Measuring Teacher Quality and Effectiveness: Bringing Coherence to the Conversation](#). This framework was developed to promote effective dialogue about the measurement of teacher quality and effectiveness. It may be useful in conversations with states.
- [Using Value-Added Models to Identify and Support Highly Effective Teachers](#). This new TQ Source Tips & Tools key issue falls under the topic area of Identifying and Supporting Highly Effective Teachers and is available on our website under publications and online resources. The TQ Center will add another key issue for this topic area in the near future.

Stories From the Field

The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (TQ Center) and regional comprehensive centers highlight two exciting projects this quarter in this *TQ Research & Policy Update*.

New York Comprehensive Center Seminar Series: Teacher Preparation for the 21st Century

The TQ Center and New York Comprehensive Center (NYCC) hosted a spring seminar on May 9, 2008, in New York City. The seminar was the culmination of several months of collaborative planning between the two centers. NYCC first approached the TQ Center in January 2008 about the idea of hosting the seminar series. The goal of the series was to bring together representatives from higher education, the state education agency, the mayor’s office, and other education stakeholders and develop “out-of-the-box” thinking on the future of teacher preparation.

With the help of the large-group discussion leaders, participants explored the following questions:

- How can we place more teachers in the critical shortage areas in New York City?
- Can we use lessons from the medical profession, which demands commonalities in training, to inform how we prepare teachers?
- How can we improve the way that education schools and the teaching profession are often viewed?

After the large-group discussion, participants met in four small groups to delve more deeply into these topics with members of other education organizations. Two groups explored how teacher education schools can most effectively meet the challenges posed by 21st century students. The other two groups focused on how to create effective education partnerships that support teacher quality. Facilitators and recorders from NYCC and the TQ Center led the small group sessions.

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In the afternoon, participants reconvened to explore the report-out insights and focus on action steps. Participants proposed the following recommendations:

- Schedule a regularly occurring roundtable meeting that includes all key stakeholders—institutions of higher education (IHEs), New York State Education Department, and New York City Department of Education. These meetings should occur biannually or quarterly.
- Create an Office of Teacher Education that would sit in the mayor’s office. This office would be responsible for facilitating critical stakeholder collaboration.
- Establish teaching residencies in New York City. These teaching residencies, based on the Massachusetts and Illinois models, would pair academic instruction with a rigorous classroom practicum alongside an effective veteran teacher. Such residencies should cut the number of classroom credits required and give more credit for time spent as a resident.
- Examine the teacher education challenge as a human capital management issue. View the whole picture—the recruitment, preparation, and retention of teachers. Think of a cohesive structure that will support teacher talent from the moment they think about the profession as a high school student to retention of that talent in K–12 schools.
- Require all teacher candidates to work in Title I schools so they get a sense of school culture and how to employ culturally responsive pedagogy. Teacher preparation candidates should enter these schools as early as possible in their preservice education, even if it is in a different role than a student teacher.
- IHE faculty should work closely with K–12 schools so their teaching is consistent with the realities of the 21st century classroom. The tenure system should support IHE faculty as they engage in school-based work and research.

For questions or more information, please contact Jane Coggshall at jane.coggshall@learningpt.org or 202-778-4583.

The TQ Center Works With Utah on Pay for Performance

The TQ Center and Southwest Comprehensive Center (SWCC) have been providing the state of Utah with information, resources, and expertise as it works on developing plans for a new statewide alternative compensation program. The Utah State Board of Education and the state legislature each have convened committees to examine the possibility of alternative compensation at the state level. The TQ Center has assisted SWCC by providing in-depth presentations and support in identifying prereadings to the state-level working groups.

The first two presentations focused on giving both the state-level working group and the legislative committee an overview of current models and lessons learned regarding alternative compensation. The third and most recent presentation focused on measuring teacher effectiveness and teacher performance assessment models. The next presentation will take place on July 14, 2008, and will cover how student achievement data is used in pay-for-performance programs. In addition, the TQ Center and SWCC are discussing how best to make this information available on both websites.

For questions or more information, please contact Cortney Rowland at cortney.rowland@learningpt.org or 312-288-7620.

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Teacher Quality Questions From the Field

Each month, the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (TQ Center) responds to questions and requests for information from the field. The following question and response was chosen for its general applicability:

What are the most recent updates related to federal policies on highly qualified teachers? In addition, has there been any more movement around discussion about highly effective teachers?

Through TQ Center staff who closely observe the latest happenings in Washington, D.C., it appears unlikely that No Child Left Behind will be reauthorized this year; therefore, no changes will alter the highly qualified teacher definition from Congress. If any changes do occur, they will come from the U.S. Department of Education. The Secretary will post this information on its website (www.ed.gov); we will also send an alert to the regional comprehensive centers and our state contacts.

In the meantime, the TQ Center suggests that state education agencies continue to enact their Revised State Plans, which have already been approved. Elizabeth Witt, Ph.D., of the U.S. Department of Education has repeatedly encouraged states to think of their State Plans as “living documents.” She indicated that the U.S. Department of Education would support innovative ideas for ensuring that all students have access to highly qualified (as well as high-quality/highly effective) teachers.

Discussions about replacing “highly qualified” with “highly effective” definitions in federal teacher quality legislation have largely gone silent. Most states simply do not have the necessary infrastructure to track teachers and students in such a way that makes it possible in any kind of valid or reliable way. As a result, discussions regarding highly effective teachers have shifted to smaller state pilots for developing ways to measure teacher effectiveness. Pilots also have been created for experimentation with educator compensation reform through the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Grants (<http://www.ed.gov/programs/teacherincentive/index.html>).

The 1998 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) is also in the reauthorization process. The most recent House and Senate bills up for renewal made it to conference committee, but they have hit some technical snags. With U.S. Senator Edward (Ted) Kennedy’s (D-Mass.) illness, HEA reauthorization will likely be delayed longer. Nevertheless, even if HEA is reauthorized soon, it is unlikely to alter the highly qualified teacher requirements but will likely contain provisions that require institutions of higher education (IHEs) to collect data on the effectiveness of graduates from their preparation program and require states to release to IHEs any teacher effectiveness data they might collect to help them in this endeavor.

The House bill also stipulates—at least for the selection of mentor teachers—that:

Evaluation of teacher effectiveness shall be based on, but is not required to include all of, the observations of such domains of teaching, which may include the following:

- (I) Planning and preparation, including demonstrated knowledge of content, pedagogy, and assessment, including the use of formative assessments to improve student learning.
- (II) Appropriate instruction that engages students with different learning styles, including students with disabilities.

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(III) Collaboration with colleagues to improve instruction.

(IV) Analysis of gains in student learning, based on multiple measures, that, when feasible, may include valid and reliable objective measures of the influence of teachers on the rate of student academic progress.

(V) In the case of mentor candidates who will be mentoring current or future literacy and mathematics coaches or instructors, appropriate skills in the essential components of reading instruction, teacher training in literacy instructional strategies across core subject areas, and teacher training in mathematics instructional strategies, as appropriate. [H.R. 4137, § 202(e)(2)(A)iv]

It is unclear whether this language will make it out of committee, but it gives a sense of how federal lawmakers are thinking about measuring teacher effectiveness.

References

Amendments to the Higher Education Act of 1965, P.L. No. 105-244 (1998). Retrieved June 19, 2008, from <http://www.ed.gov/policy/highered/leg/hea98/index.html>

College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2008, H.R. 4137, 110th Cong. (2008). Retrieved June 19, 2008, from <http://www.govtrack.us/congress/billtext.xpd?bill=h110-4137>

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