



Getting to the "Why" of Teacher Distribution: A Tool for States

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The Inequitable Distribution of Teachers: Some Statistics from the Literature

- In 2006–07, 88.7 percent of teachers in high-poverty schools were “highly qualified” versus 95.4 percent of teachers in low-poverty schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2008).
- Nationwide, 27 percent of Grade 6–12 classes in high-poverty schools were taught by out-of-field teachers versus 14 percent in low-poverty schools (The Education Trust, 2008).
- Nationwide, 22 percent of teachers in high-minority schools had three or fewer years of experience versus 13 percent of teachers in low-minority schools (Goldhaber, 2008).
- Nationwide, 40 percent of teachers in high-poverty schools had a master’s degree or higher versus 51 percent of teachers in low-poverty schools (Goldhaber, 2008).

More Statistics

- In North Carolina in 2002–03, the probability of being assigned:
 - A novice teacher
 - 20.2 percent for black students versus 16.8 percent for white students
 - A teacher from an uncompetitive college
 - 22 percent for black students versus 16.8 percent for white students
 - A teacher uncertified in field
 - 60.7 percent for black students versus 55 percent for white students
 - A teacher who scored <1 SD on licensure exam
 - 8.3 percent for black students versus 3.8 percent for white students

(Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2007)

- Poor children are highly unlikely (only 10 percent) to experience classrooms with high instructional climate across multiple grades.

(Pianta, Belsky, Houts, & Morrison, 2007)

Why?

- Labor market constraints?
- Teacher preferences?
- Transfer policies?
- Poor “customer service”?
- Misunderstandings of state or local regulations?
- Lack of direct oversight?
- Institutionalization of traditional practices?

The 2001 Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

- The state education agency (SEA) must report on the steps it will take to "*ensure that poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers.*" Title I, Part A, Section 1111[b]8[C].
- In the fall of 2006, states submitted their revised state highly qualified teacher (HQT) plans showing their progress on this requirement.

Delaware's Story

- Delaware Department of Education officials began to ask questions of their HQT data.
- Leveraged the federal system of support
 - The Mid-Atlantic Regional Educational Laboratory
 - The Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center
 - The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality
- Finding answers

Delaware's Research Questions

- What are some of the reasons that out-of-field teaching occurs in middle and high schools?
 - How are teachers and students assigned to classes?
- What are some of the school conditions that contribute to recruitment and retention of highly qualified and experienced teachers?
 - Leadership, climate, pay, benefits, student population, facilities
- What are some SEA and local education agency policies (perceived and real) that support and impede equitable distribution?
 - Bargaining agreements, pay differentials, hiring dates

Delaware's Research Approach

- Purposive sample
 - Ten “high-equity” schools
 - Ten “low-equity” schools
- Mixed-method design
- Protocol development
 - Collaboration
 - Research base
 - Field testing

The Protocols of Equitable Distribution of Teachers

- District-level perspective
 - District human resources director
 - Interview schedule
- School-level perspective
 - Principal or relevant assistant principal
 - Interview schedule
 - Survey protocol
- Classroom-level perspective
 - Teacher
 - Survey protocol

Sample District Interview Questions

- Can you walk me through the hiring process—from when a candidate applies and is interviewed, selected, and hired?
 - How do you identify how many vacancies you will have?
 - When in the year do you begin recruiting? What are some of your most successful recruiting strategies?
 - Is there standard district selection criteria that all schools are to use?
 - How long does this process take?
 - Do late budget timelines sometimes restrict or hinder hiring in this district? How so?
- What policies or practices help or hinder the placement of highly qualified teachers in each school in the district?
 - For example, late enrollment counts, transfer policies, or inability to begin hiring until a vacancy is officially posted or teachers officially indicate they will retire?

Sample Principal Interview Questions

- What would you have to change about this school to attract more highly qualified and experienced candidates?
- What types of pay or benefit incentives do teachers at this school have available to them?
- Did you ever have to assign a teacher to a course section (or class) where you thought he or she didn't necessarily belong? Why?
 - What were the circumstances? Can you think of another example?

Principal Survey Protocol

- Number the top three factors from 1 to 3 in how teachers are assigned to classes in your school:
- Assigned to classes based on their expertise
 - Assigned to classes based on their subject area certification
 - Assigned to classes based on their gender
 - Assigned to classes based on their seniority
 - Assigned to classes that are assessed for state and federal accountability based on their ability to produce high test scores among students
 - Assigned to classes based on their ability to work with certain student populations (e.g., English language learners, special education students, etc.)
 - Assigned to classes based on their race or ethnicity

- What components of a high-quality induction program are provided to all novice teachers at your school? (Check all that apply)
- A formal orientation to the school and community
 - Common planning time with teachers in the same subject area
 - Common planning time with teachers in the same grade level
 - One-on-one mentoring provided by a mentor in the same subject area
 - One-on-one mentoring provided by veteran teachers as available
 - Release time for classroom observations
 - Reduced teaching load
 - Reduced number of preps
 - Seminars or classes for beginning teachers
 - Regular supportive communication with principals or other administrators

Teacher Survey: Item Categories

- Teacher background, demographics, and career plans
- Teaching assignment
- Teacher assignment process
- Teaching conditions
 - Planning time
 - Safety
 - Teacher influence over school decisions
 - Trust
 - Collaboration
 - Leadership
 - Student behavior
 - Class size
- Teacher policy recommendations

Sample Teacher Survey Questions

- Please check the appropriate box according to your level of agreement with the following statements (strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree, and not applicable):
- Teachers are evaluated fairly at this school.
 - I am given the support I need to teach students with special needs.
 - Teachers at this school are trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction.
 - Inappropriate student behavior is dealt with effectively in this school.
 - I am satisfied with my opportunities for professional growth at this school.

Protocol Development

- Protocol development
 - Collaboration
 - Research base
 - Field testing
- Protocol guidance documents

Finding Out More

- The TQ Center's second biennial report (September 2009)
- Contact the TQ Center!



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