

Behind the Data: A Tool for States to Dig Deeper

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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 Grades 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).

The Inequitable Distribution of Teachers: Some Statistics From the Literature

- Nationwide, 22 percent of teachers in high-minority schools had three or fewer years of **experience** versus 13 percent 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 in low-poverty schools (Goldhaber, 2008).

More Stats

- 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 the 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

Source: Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2007

More Stats

- 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”?
- Central office turnover/dysfunction?
- Misunderstandings of state or local regulations?
- Lack of direct oversight?
- Institutionalization of traditional practices?

Delaware's Story

- Delaware Department of Education Revised State HQT Plan
- Leveraged the federal system of support
 - 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 teachers?
 - Leadership, climate, pay, benefits, student population, facilities

Delaware's Research Questions

- What are some SEA and LEA policies (perceived and real) that support and impede equitable distribution?
 - Bargaining agreements, pay differentials, hiring dates

Delaware's Research Approach

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

The EDT Protocols

- 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?
 - PROMPTS
 - 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?
 - Are there standard district selection criteria that all schools are to use?
 - How long does this process take?
 - Do late budget timelines sometimes hinder or restrict hiring in this district? How so?

Sample District Interview Questions

➤ What policies or practices help or hinder the placement of highly qualified teachers in each school in the district?

- PROMPTS

- Late enrollment counts?
- Transfer policies?
- Inability to begin hiring process until a vacancy is officially posted?

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) in which you thought he or she did not necessarily belong? Why?
 - PROMPT
 - What were the circumstances? Can you think of another example?

Principal Survey Protocol

- Number the top three factors from 1 to 3 for 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)
 - Assigned to classes based on their race or ethnicity

Principal Survey Protocol

- What components of a high-quality induction program are provided to 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 by a mentor in the same subject area
 - One-on-one mentoring 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

Teacher Survey: Item Categories

➤ 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 indicate 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.

Delaware Department of Education Protocols in Practice

- Spent approximately \$32,000 for the data collection using Title II dollars
- Hired three data collectors
- Experienced difficulty gaining access to some schools
 - Need for a strong advocate in the SEA
 - Need for more formal/official initial invitation letters
- Ultimately collected data in 15 schools
 - Seven low equity
 - Eight high equity
- Study will be completed in August 2009.

Using the Protocols in Your State

- Contact the TQ Center.
- Target particular districts.
- Adapt the protocols (with TQ Center assistance) to use in focus group interviews and/or use questions for monitoring visits.
- Read the TQ Center's second biennial report (October 2009).

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