



CHANGE TYPE OF SUPPORT FOR HIGH-QUALITY TEACHERS IN HIGH-NEED SCHOOLS

The 52,000 members of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) support the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) along with the principles of educational equity that it represents, and NCTE makes the following research-based recommendations for changes in the support for teachers in high-need schools.

High teacher quality is the best way to help students in high-need schools.

- A growing body of research suggests that recruiting and sustaining high-quality teachers is the most effective way to increase student achievement in underresourced schools.
- At least 7 percent of variance in improved student test scores is due to teacher quality.
- However, qualified teachers show higher rates of attrition in high-need schools. Higher salaries can help lower attrition but do not ensure or develop teacher quality.
- Salary is only the basic starting point in the *comprehensive investments* that districts should make in developing *ongoing support for teachers and schools* in underresourced schools.¹

A commitment to sustained professional development is the best way to recruit and support high-quality teachers.

- School districts can help students in high-need schools by directing focused, targeted attention to improving and stabilizing teaching staffs through sustained professional development opportunities.
- After a Tennessee district implemented a plan for professional development, the targeted inner-city schools made greater gains within five years than 90 percent of the other schools in the state.²

Schools should commit to flexible scheduling and collaborative programs that allow and encourage teachers to work and plan together.

- When greater collaboration takes place not only between teachers but also between teachers and administrators, students benefit because teacher efficacy—a factor closely linked with gains in student test performance—increases.
- Collaborative and “co-teaching” instructional models have been shown to substantially increase both retention and satisfaction of high-quality teachers as well as student achievement in underresourced schools.
- Schools that provide greater levels of mentoring, induction programs, and collegial support to teachers show lower rates of turnover.³

Schools should attend to other “environmental” factors as well: reduced class size, access to technology and quality instructional materials, hiring of qualified supplemental instructors and support staff, and commitment to school safety.

- A broader view of teacher professional development that responds to teacher perceptions of support from administrators (on issues such as class size), focuses on quality instructional materials (including technology), and strengthens school safety and behavioral protocols can have a powerful impact on teacher improvement.
- Schools that provide teachers with more autonomy, administrative support, and well-qualified support staff (such as after-school tutors) exhibit lower levels of quality teacher attrition.⁴

Endnotes

- ¹ Figlio, D. (2002). Can public schools buy better-qualified teachers? *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 55(4), 686–97.
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- ³ Guarino, C., Santibañez, L., & Daley, G. (2006). Teacher recruitment and retention: A review of the recent empirical literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 76(2), 173–208.
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- ⁴ Guarino, C., Santibañez, L., & Daley, G. (2006). Teacher recruitment and retention: A review of the recent empirical literature. *Review of Educational Research*, 76(2), 173–208.
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