

Indicator: The LEA has a plan and process in place to recruit and retain highly-qualified teachers to support the transformation. (5167)

Explanation: The evidence review indicates that high-performing LEAs utilize a thoughtful plan and process to attract the most qualified teachers and principals. Those LEAs are active and strategic in advertising their most desirable attributes such as attractive compensation/benefits as well as favorable working conditions. Once recruited and placed, successful LEAs utilize thoughtful and meaningful incentives to retain those they have hired and in which the district has invested mentoring, training and time.

Questions: How will the LEA determine which strengths to market to potential candidates? How will the LEA create and utilize an information-rich systems approach to recruit the most qualified teachers and principals? In what manner might the LEA consider retooling its current hiring timelines to ensure desirable candidates do not accept positions elsewhere? What financial and satisfaction incentives might the LEA offer to retain those in which they have invested mentoring, training and time?

Evidence Review:

Recruiting Staff and Attracting High-Quality Staff to Hard-to-Staff Schools

Many schools, particularly hard-to-staff schools, continually face difficulties in recruiting enough effective teachers and school leaders for all students. Attracting high-quality staff has traditionally been especially problematic for rural and urban schools and for certain subject areas (e.g., mathematics, science, foreign languages, and special education). These subject- and geographic-specific recruitment problems result in less rigorous educational experiences for all students affected. These shortages also contribute to an inequitable distribution of teachers between high- and low-need student populations; research consistently finds that students from poor and minority backgrounds have less access to highly qualified and experienced teachers than do their peers from low-poverty, non-minority backgrounds (Imazeki & Goe, 2009).

To more successfully recruit effective educators for all students, districts must actively and strategically market their strengths (e.g., attractive compensation packages or working conditions), develop high and unyielding standards for the identification and selection of candidates, and aggressively reach out to all possible candidate pools when recruiting for difficult-to-staff positions (Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006; Simmons et al., 2007; Spradlin & Prendergast, 2006). Districts must address some of the hidden costs of teaching in hard-to-staff areas; for example, although the cost of living in rural areas tends to be comparatively low, the lack of public transportation, suitable housing, and other services may require teachers to spend more than they would otherwise have to on an automobile, home ownership, and other expenses. In addition, the recruitment and hiring phases should be information-rich. An information-rich recruitment and hiring process allows employers and applicants to collect detailed information over time through interviews and exchanges, so as to form accurate impressions of one another. This enhances the likelihood that both the employer and teachers' expectations will be met, thereby minimizing the risk of premature attrition (Liu & Johnson, 2003).

Action Principles

For District

1. Identify the characteristics of the district and its schools that are attractive to teachers and seek to both market and build upon them to recruit new staff.
2. Identify schools within the district that have challenges in teacher recruitment.
3. Establish recruitment goals in terms of teacher quality for the district as a whole.
4. Establish recruitment goals in terms of teacher quality and quantity for high-poverty and high-minority schools to ensure that students in those schools do not have unequal access to high-quality teachers.
5. Develop and sustain partnerships with universities and community colleges that deliver teacher preparation, particularly for the recruitment of teachers in high-need areas, such as teachers of students with disabilities and English language learners.
6. Create programs to recruit former teachers, including those recently retired, and ensure that policies related to teacher retirement do not prohibit these actions.
7. Establish “grow-your-own” programs to recruit future educators from the pool of current high school students, paraprofessionals, teacher aides, and community members.
8. Provide financial incentives (e.g., salary increases, bonuses, housing assistance, etc.) for educators willing to work in high-need schools or subject areas. This strategy might include incentives for general education teachers to switch to special education, teaching English language learners, or becoming certified in other high-need subjects.
9. Altering hiring procedures and budget timelines to ensure that the appropriate number and types of teachers can be recruited and hired before they seek employment elsewhere.

(Perlman & Redding, 2011, p. 89)

In its initial *Educator Retention and Recruitment Report* released in January 2015, the Arizona Department of Education listed a series of recommendations for policymakers.
Recommendations for Policymakers: (legislators, State Board of Education, Superintendent of Public Instruction, local governing boards)

- Elevate positive reinforcement for the role our educators play in ensuring success for all students
- Publicly acknowledge the value of the teaching profession and the critical need for effective teachers in all Arizona classrooms
- Acknowledge the critical need for improved educator retention in Arizona
- Become knowledgeable regarding the current situation and the predicted trends in teacher retention
- Participate in ongoing discussions designed to develop solutions to improve teacher retention
- Help to improve the respect afforded educators
- Publicly acknowledge the value of the teaching profession
- Share stories of effective teachers across Arizona
- Support policies that acknowledge the professionalism of teachers
- Review and act on recommendations to streamline teacher certification
- Support evidence-based best practices in educator evaluation
- Become knowledgeable regarding evidence-based best practices in educator evaluation

- Support policies that respect local control, embed best practices
- Provide ongoing support and resources for the refinement of educator evaluation models
- Support accountability policies that acknowledge the need for multiple measures of teacher effectiveness
- Support and fund evidence-based structured induction programs for new teachers and effective professional development for all teachers and leaders
- Support the identification and sharing of evidence-based best practices in mentoring and structured induction
- Support policies and budgets that ensure the ongoing support for teachers and leaders
- Ensure that professional development for teachers and leaders is job-embedded, relevant, timely, ongoing and supported through effective feedback and follow up
- Ensure that teachers are involved in identifying the topics and skills to be addressed
- Increase funding to address compensation issues - make Arizona competitive in the marketplace
- Acknowledge that the teacher retention crisis cannot be effectively curtailed without additional funding dedicated to teacher compensation
- Support a statewide increase in funding for K-12 schools to address teacher compensation issues
- Understand the competitive marketplace and the variety of other professions with which schools must compete for teachers

(Arizona Department of Education, 2015, p. 10)

The initial *Educator Retention and Recruitment Report* recommended a series of LEA recruitment strategies:

- Actively engage with higher education to recruit prospective teachers during pre-service training
- Develop high school programs such as Future Educators to encourage students to evaluate the field of education as they review their options for post-secondary studies
- Include education in school-based career fairs for students
- Support pre-service field-based experiences – host interns & student teachers
- Increase advertising of openings on state and national websites – ADE hosts the Arizona Employment in Education website at no cost to schools and districts
- Attend local, regional, national job fairs – provide quality materials describing educator openings
- Form regional consortiums to support recruitment efforts
- Develop/increase/distribute marketing materials – print & online
- Review your current salary/benefits packages – understand your competition and identify your advantages
- Utilize the incentive of federal loan forgiveness for Title 1 districts
- Describe how you support educators throughout their career and what advancement opportunities you provide
- Expand partnerships with community organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, churches, local media who can help share information about your needs
- Utilize the Arizona Commerce Authority template to help entice educators to Arizona – use similar strategies to entice educators as those used to attract and retain valued employers
- Develop/expand an internal system to "grow your own", partner with higher education – encourage instructional aides to investigate what would be needed for certification
- Leverage federal funding available for teacher recruitment

(Arizona Department of Education, 2015, p. 13)

And the initial *Educator Retention and Recruitment Report* recommended a series of LEA retention strategies:

- Work to build the best possible work environment for educators
- Share the successes of your school/district in order to build the positive reputation of your teachers and administrators
- Regularly survey your teachers and administrators regarding support needed
- Develop and fund high-quality structured induction (sustained, multi-year mentoring) programs for new educators
- Develop a strategic plan for professional development of all educators
- Arrange budget priorities to provide job-embedded, on-going, focused, relevant professional development for all educators
- Utilize local, regional and state professional development resources
- Leverage federal funding approved for professional development
- Involve educators in the refinement of local evaluation system
- Provide support within educator evaluations for improved performance
- Utilize 301 funds to acknowledge and reward effective performance
- Provide opportunities for advancement - describe leadership development activities at the school and district levels, leadership opportunities for teachers without leaving teaching, connections to National Board Certification
- Identify/enhance educator recognition opportunities
- Provide time, support and recognition for ongoing, job-embedded, effective collaboration
- Conduct exit interviews with educators leaving to determine reasons for leaving
- Use the results of exit interviews to address internal issues
- Review/revise current salary/benefit package
- Utilize federal loan forgiveness incentives for Title 1 schools

(Arizona Department of Education, 2015, p. 11)

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Evidence Review:

Differentiating Roles, Re-assigning Staff, and Aligning Staff Competencies with School/Student Needs

It is important that teachers and other staff be assigned to classes and to schools whose needs are appropriately aligned with their professional competencies. Doing this serves two purposes. First, it makes teachers more content in their profession, lowering mobility and attrition. According to the 2000–2001 Teacher Follow-up Survey, 40% of public school teachers who moved to a new school did so for an opportunity for a better teaching assignment (Luekens, Lyter, Fox, & Chandler, 2004). Second, it helps to ensure that all students, regardless of their background, have equal access to experienced, high-qualified teachers, a situation that currently is often not the case (Clotfelter, Ladd, Vigdor, & Wheeler, 2006; Imazeki & Goe, 2009).

At minimum, all teachers should be assigned only to classes within their area of licensure or otherwise demonstrated area of expertise. Teachers with foreign language or other unique skills should be strategically assigned to work with students and in communities where the skills and knowledge are needed. Ideally, teachers in their first years on the job should be assigned a lighter workload in terms of numbers of classes, fewer administrative duties, lower class size or student load, and a lesser concentration of students with special needs or behavioral problems (Johnson et al., 2004). This approach will give new teachers time to hone their skills and improve their effectiveness before they are solely responsible for a large group of students. To make successful assignments, building leaders should examine the backgrounds, evaluation findings, and track records to each member of the school faculty and thoughtfully and collaboratively construct the school schedule to match teachers with the classes or course sections in which they (and their students) are most likely to be successful. Adjustments and corrections may need to be made mid-year, but these can be minimized if initial teacher assignments are conducted strategically with an eye to student learning results.

Moreover, the unique skills of all staff should be recognized and maximized through the use of collaborative teamwork that allows teachers to learn from and build off of each others' competencies. For example, the Generation Schools model rearranges teachers' assignments and incorporates team-based planning to bring shared expertise to teaching activities (Silva, 2009). As staff advance in experience and expertise, their roles should be differentiated to reflect their skills, knowledge, and career goals, and accomplished teachers should be recognized and provided with continual learning experiences. Teacher leadership positions, including mentors,

instructional coaches, and school administrators, should be available to interested and skilled educators. Where possible and when desired, these positions should provide leaders with the option of advancing their careers while also maintaining some classroom teaching responsibilities.

Finally, the needs of students should be the first priority of districts when assigning teachers. While local collective bargaining rules may require seniority-based placements as the priority, principals and district leaders should bear in mind that assigning inexperienced teachers to the most challenging classrooms or schools is likely to negatively impact student learning as well as the retention of the less experienced teaching staff. Teachers who consistently fail to help students learn should be removed from the classroom. Districts can facilitate this process by negotiating expedited performance-based dismissal processes, particularly in low-performing schools, and supporting school leaders by advising them on effective dismissal procedures and providing an intervention team to assist with the dismissal process (Kowal, Rosch, Hassel, & Hassel, 2009). In addition, districts should actively facilitate, through incentives and other measures, the assignment and re-assignment of staff to ensure that the needs of students and schools can be met by the various roles, responsibilities, and competencies of the staff employed. The success of differentiating roles and making appropriate teacher assignments should continually be evaluated for their impact on student achievement.

Action Principles

For District

1. Review alignment between teacher assignment and licensure area and ensure that, at a minimum, all assignments are within licensure areas or teachers otherwise demonstrate their expertise in the subject in which they are assigned.
 - At minimum, the essential criteria for highly qualified teacher (HQT) status must be attained: (1) a bachelor's degree or better in the subject taught; (2) full state teacher certification; and (3) knowledge in the subjects taught.
2. Assign novice teachers to classes appropriate for their experience level.
3. Provide a variety of formal teacher leadership positions that do not require leaving the classroom.
4. Actively re-assign teachers to ensure that at-risk students are not disproportionately taught by inexperienced or ineffective teachers, providing transfer incentives if needed.
5. Provide teachers an active role in the design and implementation of strong induction and mentoring programs.
6. Provide teachers opportunities to become peer coaches and/or facilitators of staff development.
7. Capitalize on the problem solving and data analysis skills of special educators/consultants to lead/facilitate team meetings.
8. Carefully consider staff's unique competencies and assign them to positions where these skills are.
9. Evaluate the success of assignment decisions.

(Perlman & Redding, 2011, pp. 95–96)

In its 2015 *Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting Fund Local Educational Agencies Report*, the Florida Department of Education listed as one of its requirements for attaining its goal

of 100% highly qualified teacher certification: “The prior superintendent moved a large number of teachers to different schools and created a larger than usual number of teachers who teach out of field; the district will be able to assess the status of each teacher during this year and plan to reassign teachers to courses where they are highly qualified in the schools with the greatest need” (Florida Department of Education, 2015, p. 18).

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Evidence Review:

Turnaround Leader Competencies: Four Clusters of Competence

These are the competencies – or consistent patterns of thinking, feeling, acting, and speaking – needed for school turnaround leader success. They were derived by “mapping” the cross-sector research on turnaround leader actions to high-quality competency studies of successful entrepreneurs and leaders in large organizations. The competencies chosen fit the activities that turnaround leaders share with leaders in these other contexts. Validation, refinement and further customization of these competencies will be possible as the number of successful school turnarounds grows and comparisons among more and less successful school turnaround leaders are possible. These competencies are arranged into four clusters of related capabilities.

Driving for Results Cluster – This cluster of competencies is concerned with the turnaround leader’s strong desire to achieve outstanding results and the task-oriented actions required for success. Competencies in this cluster include:

- ✓ Achievement
- ✓ Initiative and Persistence
- ✓ Monitoring and Directiveness
- ✓ Planning Ahead

Influencing for Results Cluster – This cluster of competencies is concerned with motivating others and influencing their thinking and behavior to obtain results. Turnaround leaders cannot accomplish change alone, but instead must rely on the work of others. Competencies in this cluster include:

- ✓ Impact and Influence
- ✓ Team Leadership
- ✓ Developing Others

Problem Solving Cluster – This cluster of competencies is concerned with leader’s thinking applied to organization goals and challenges. It includes analysis of data to inform decisions; making clear logical plans that people can follow; and ensuring a strong connection between school learning goals and classroom activity. Competencies in this cluster include:

- ✓ Analytical Thinking
- ✓ Conceptual Thinking

Showing Confidence to Lead – This competency, essentially the public display of self-confidence, stands alone and is concerned with staying visibly focused, committed, and self-assured despite the barrage of personal and professional attacks common during turnarounds.

- ✓ Self-Confidence

(Public Impact, 2008b, Appendix A, p. 4)

In its 2013 paper *Crafting a New Generation of Leaders: A Discussion Paper on State Initiatives for Developing Effective Turnaround Principals*, the U.S. Department of Education Office of School Turnaround said, “There is no one proven way to approach the challenges of how to recruit, train, and retain high-quality school leaders. Each state has developed approaches to match its context, resources, existing leader preparation and support programs, and local

needs. While some states are moving forward with initiatives on several fronts, others are focusing on a single approach. Some are further along (based on factors such as availability of RTT [Race to the Top] funds) and have worked out many of the bugs, while others are just now embarking on ambitious plans. In this paper, the initiatives implemented by states participating in the convening are organized in the following three clusters, each including critical questions different states considered in developing principal pipelines and examples for each:

- New types of preparation structures and partnerships: How can states work with IHEs [institutions of higher education] to improve the design and relevance of principal preparation programs? Beyond IHEs, what other types of entities can prepare principals? What features are important in a preparation program to ensure successful outcomes, including retention in job placements?
- Turnaround principal competencies, knowledge, and tools: What competencies do school leaders need to be effective? How do the characteristics of turnaround principals differ from those of other principals?
- On-site and intensive coaching: What are efficient and effective ways to provide ongoing leadership coaching and support to turnaround principals? What conditions need to be in place to retain high-quality turnaround principals?"

(U.S. Department of Education Office of School Turnaround, 2013, p. 8)

“States and districts committed to using turnaround leader competencies (rather than traditional administrator requirements) will integrate desired actions and specific competencies into the candidate selection process, training and mentoring programs, and the hiring and evaluation of principals.

Behavioral event interviews. To apply competencies in candidate selection and hiring, the behavioral event interview (BEI), a particular type of selection process, can be used to measure how well principals or candidates rate. Through BEIs, candidates are asked to describe in detail their actions and thinking in past work events.

Here are examples of questions that can yield responses predictive of success for turnaround leaders:

Achievement. Think about a time when you felt very successful or proud of something you accomplished at work, and tell me the story.

Impact and influence. Think about a time when you influenced another person or people in a way that was satisfying to you, and tell me the story.

Monitoring and directiveness. Think about a time when you set a standard for someone else’s work and held that person accountable for adhering to that standard, and tell me the story.

Team leadership. Think about a time when you led a group or team of people to accomplish work that was satisfying to you, and tell me the story.

Self-confidence. Tell me about a time when you helped another person, someone whom others were not sure could improve, to achieve or succeed at a higher level. Tell me about a time when another person or people stood in your way to get something done and you addressed the situation to your satisfaction. (Steiner & Barrett 2012; Public Impact, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c)”

(U.S. Department of Education Office of School Turnaround, 2013, p. 14)

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