

This report is embargoed until 8 a.m. Central Daylight Time on Friday, April 8, 2011.



Workplaces That Support High-Performing Teaching and Learning

Insights From Generation Y Teachers

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Insights From Generation Y Teachers

A Report From the American Federation of Teachers
and American Institutes for Research

April 2011

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Foreword

All teachers, from the day they enter the profession to the day they leave, want their students to be successful. But they need the tools, time, and trust to achieve this goal. This report on Generation Y teachers confirms for us that our young teachers enter the profession full of hope and eager to make a difference in the lives of students. They want time to collaborate with their peers, receive feedback on their teaching practice from experienced educators and administrators so they can improve, and have access to technology and resources that help them facilitate student learning. And contrary to conventional wisdom, the majority want to make teaching a career. Gen Y teachers have high expectations for themselves and for their students.

Gen Y teachers, just like other teachers, want effective teacher development and evaluation systems and processes in place that can assist them in developing their practice throughout their careers. They want frequent feedback; they want to regularly share their successes and setbacks with colleagues; and they want professional development that is targeted to their needs. Unfortunately, most districts do not have teacher development and evaluation systems in place that can do this. Too often, teachers enter the profession with no formal induction or professional development programs and are left to sink or swim. Not surprisingly, many new teachers struggle and grow frustrated, and large percentages leave in their first few years.

Gen Y teachers want opportunities to be leaders in their schools and in their profession. Structures such as career ladders, teacher leadership positions, and alternative compensation are met with enthusiasm by young teachers as a way to grow in the profession and are often cited as reasons teachers stay in the profession.

We owe it to this next generation of teachers to fully support them, ensure they have opportunities to grow in the profession, and provide them with the tools to help *all* of their students succeed. This report tells the story of Gen Y teachers. Let's listen to them and work together to create workplaces that support high-performing teaching and learning.

—Randi Weingarten

Introduction

Generation Y public school teachers—those born between 1977 and 1995—have been serving students for nearly a decade now, represent an increasingly large proportion of the teaching workforce, and, with concerted support, promise to help bring needed transformation to schools that too often remain stuck in an earlier age. Members of this incoming and up-and-coming generation of teachers want to make a difference for their students and, somewhat counter to expectations, intend to make the teaching profession theirs for the long haul. They are also, however, entering the workforce during a time of significant uncertainty and transition.

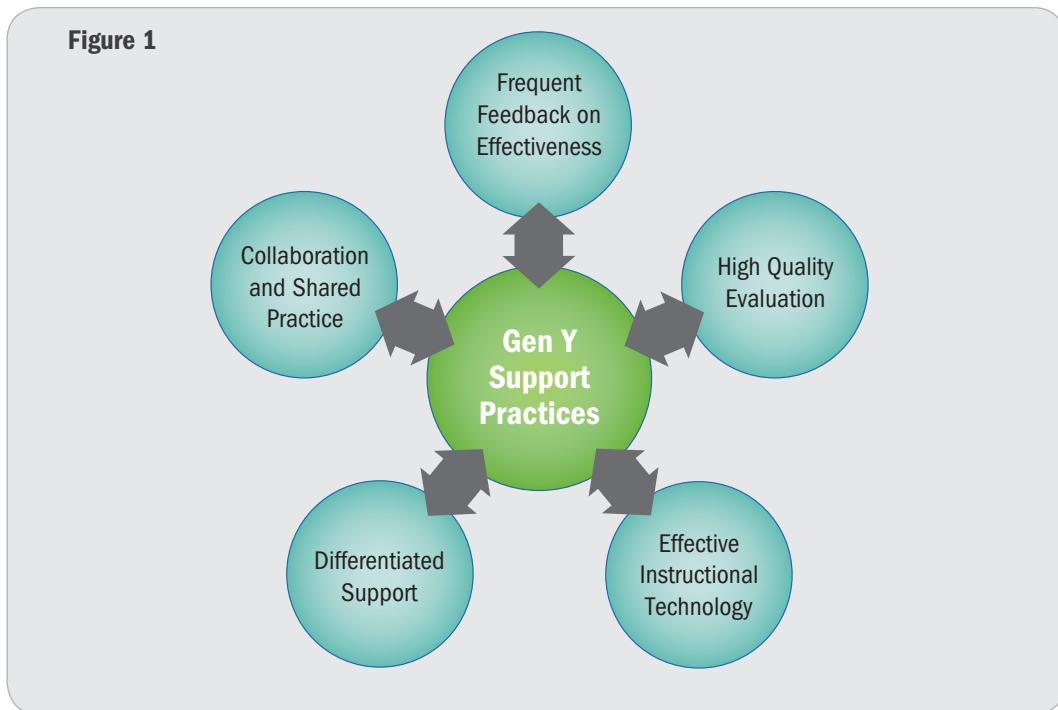
Just in the last decade, a series of widely cited research studies convinced policy leaders and the public of the profound importance of teachers to the advancement of student learning, and simultaneously of the wide differences among teachers' ability to evoke such advancement. This has led to sweeping and often hasty policy changes meant to increase accountability for teachers—including more rigorous teacher evaluation based on student outcomes, performance-based compensation, and stricter tenure eligibility rules. Meanwhile, students are coming to school with a greater diversity of needs and assets, requiring teachers to personalize learning at the same time that economic factors are driving class sizes higher and constraining the resources available to help teachers reach each student. Advances in technology and pedagogy have given teachers more tools to manage these challenges and students more ways to access knowledge. These advances promise to change the role of teachers in student learning.

Unfortunately, teachers—both young and less so—are often left to negotiate these changes alone in workplaces that lack shared responsibility among teachers and management for teaching and learning and thus are troublingly slow to keep pace. This causes too many promising teachers to leave the profession and too many others to struggle along with their students. This report from the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), which presents the results of a study of this new generation of teachers, demonstrates that school and union leaders at every level can and must work together to transform schools into the kinds of organizations that are well fitted to Generation Y.

The AFT partnered with the Ford Foundation and American Institutes for Research, to conduct a study of the workplace needs of this new generation of teachers. Through an analytic review of 11 existing, nationally representative teacher surveys, seven scenario-based focus groups with Gen Y teachers around the country, and three case studies of local AFT affiliates, researchers identified five key insights that together point to the need for transforming schools into high-performing workplaces that

- Ensure teachers receive regular feedback on their effectiveness
- Support peer learning and shared practice
- Recognize (and reward) high performance
- Have fair, rigorous, and meaningful evaluation systems
- Leverage technology intelligently to enhance performance

Such workplaces will support Gen Y teachers, indeed all teachers, to advance teaching and learning, and actively prepare them to competently lead the profession. These facets of a high-performing workplace are illustrated in Figure 1 and will be described in greater depth throughout this report.



Why Gen Y Matters to Us

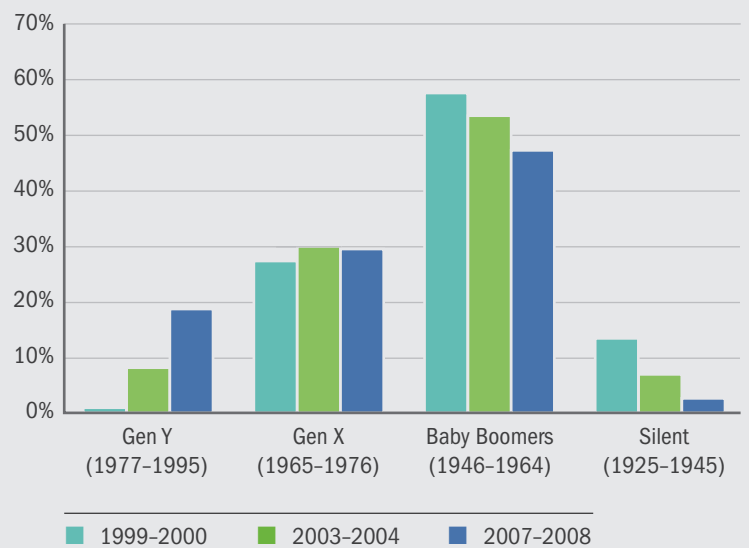
Defining a generation is an awkward enterprise. Although most Gen Yers were surfing the Internet not long after they learned to walk, a few have stayed off the grid. Although Gen Y is the most educated generation to date, some of its number never finished high school. While most Gen Yers are idealistic and pragmatic, a few others are cynical dreamers. Teachers of this generation, like their peers in other industries, also vary in their attitudes, preferences, and influences. This report seeks to avoid sweeping generalizations while focusing on the *trends* in workplace expectations among the cohort of teachers born since 1977 as well as the implications of these trends for school policy and practice.

One sweeping claim can be made with confidence: Gen Y teachers are about to put the “force” in America’s teaching workforce. As Figure 2 shows, they accounted for nearly one in five teachers in America’s classrooms in 2008, more than doubling in proportion since 2004. They surely comprise a larger percentage today and Gen Y workers across all industries are projected to make up nearly half of the workforce in 2020 (Shaffer, 2008). This increase will continue as Baby Boomers and their Silent Generation colleagues inexorably, though more slowly of late, retire.

These generational shifts may have significant implications for teacher workforce development. For example, another apparent trend among Gen Y workers is that they will have multiple careers over their lifetimes, in contrast with their Boomer forebears. As Carroll and Foster (2010) have noted, starting in the late 1960s through the 1970s, fresh from college and facing limited opportunities in other fields, Baby Boomer workers, mostly women, entered the teaching profession in droves. Many of this generation made teaching their lifelong career, and by the 1999–2000 school year, Baby Boomers made up nearly 60 percent of the workforce (see Figure 2), with about 16 years of teaching experience on average (reanalysis of Schools and Staffing Survey, NCES, multiple years). Conventional wisdom holds that the days of the lifelong career are over, and the incoming generation of teachers will present new obstacles to maintaining a stable workforce.

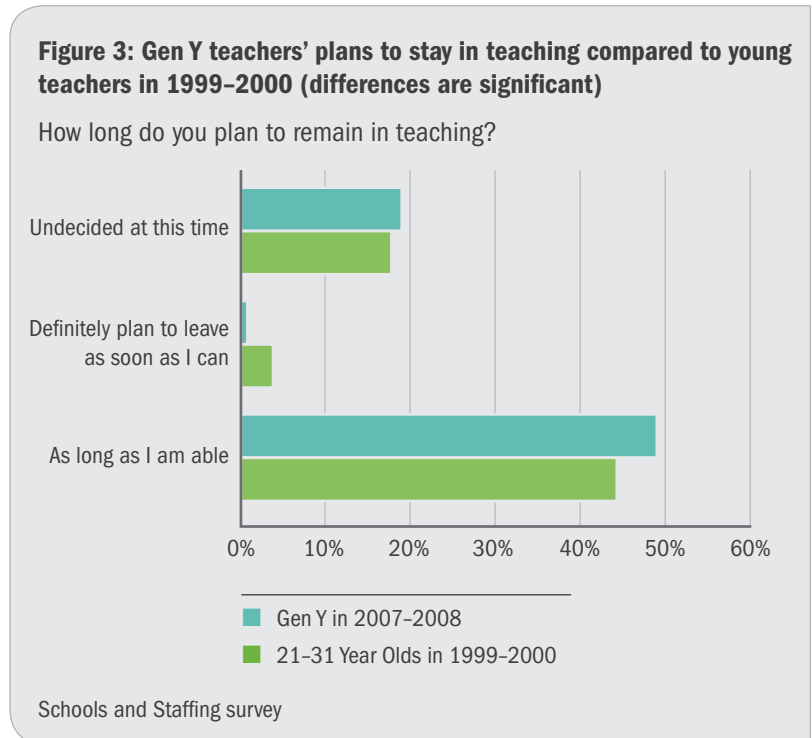
Figure 2: Gen Y teachers make up an increasing proportion of the workforce

Generational Shifts in the Teacher Workforce from 1999–2000 to 2007–2008



Schools and Staffing survey

This wisdom is challenged, however, by recent survey research showing that many Gen Yers actually *intend* to make the teaching profession theirs for the long run. In a nationwide survey called the Retaining Teacher Talent survey conducted in spring 2009, some 56 percent of Gen Y teachers said they plan to make teaching a “lifelong career,” and most of the rest indicated that they wanted a career in the field of education, if not as a teacher (Coggshall, Ott, Behrstock, & Lasagna, 2009). Moreover, as shown in Figure 3, the national Schools and Staffing Survey asked two different cohorts of teachers a similar question about their intentions to remain in teaching in 1999–2000 and then again in 2007–08. Young teachers who were 21 to 31 in 1999–2000 (the same age Gen Y teachers were in 2007–08) were actually less likely to say they intended to “stay in teaching for as long as I am able” than Gen Y teachers are today. Gen Y teachers were also less likely to say that they were undecided about their career intentions.



This trend is a hopeful one for the future of the profession, and given the existing literature on Gen Y workers as a whole, this trend makes sense. Gen Y is known for its “education-mindedness,” a quality that may drive them to teaching as a profession (Wong & Wong, 2007a, 2007b). They are not only the most educated generation to date, but Gen Yers tend to attribute their successes to the educational opportunities they have received; tend to be creative and tech savvy; are committed to creating a better world around them, and are confident and idealistic that they can make this happen (Carter & Carter, 2001; Shaffer, 2008; Wong & Wong, 2007a, 2007b; Yuva, 2007). Indeed, when Public Agenda conducted a cluster analysis¹ on the Retaining Teacher Talent survey data, grouping teachers into three categories—“idealists,” the “contented,” and the “disheartened”—more than half of idealist teachers came from Generation Y (Yarrow, 2009).

Despite this promising picture of today’s young teachers, it is often the case that an individual’s intentions are not always realized. In fact, in an analysis of the 2008–09 Teacher Follow-up Survey, Keigher and Cross (2010) found that between the 2007–08 and the 2008–09 school years,

¹ A cluster analysis is a series of statistical tests to group data based on response patterns. Rather than using predetermined definitions, the technique explored how the teachers group naturally. Nearly every variable of the study was included in the analysis, utilizing all questions that were asked of the total sample and also the teacher’s demographic characteristics. For more information, see <http://www.publicagenda.org/pages/teaching-for-a-living-full-survey-results>.

teachers under 30 left the profession at a rate that was 51 percent higher than older teachers, including retirees, and left their school to work at another one at a rate that was 91 percent higher than their older colleagues (these rates are up from the 2003–04/2004–05 school years as reported in Marvel, Lyter, Peltola, Strizek, Morton, et al. [2007]). Moreover, turnover among beginning teachers has been increasing since the late 1980s (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2010).

Something about teachers’ workplaces is failing Gen Y teachers particularly in high-needs schools, causing them to leave the profession sooner than they perhaps intended. Through focus groups, survey reviews, and case studies, researchers identified the expectations that Gen Y teachers bring with them to the profession in order to provide clues to the best ways to support them and help them be effective for as long as they are there. The following key insights emerged from this research:

- Gen Y teachers tend to desire more frequent feedback on their teaching and impact from peers, mentors, and principals than do their more veteran colleagues.
- Gen Y teachers tend to be more open to, and have more experience with, shared practice than do their more experienced colleagues.
- Gen Y teachers tend to desire differentiation in rewards and sanctions for themselves and their colleagues based on effort and performance.
- Gen Y teachers want to be evaluated, but tend to be very concerned about equity and validity in teacher evaluation.
- Gen Y teachers tend to be very enthusiastic about instructional and social networking technology, but expect more from technology than what many schools can deliver.

The following sections describe the evidence for these findings and the practices that will help Gen Yers meet their intentions as well as help them be effective for as long as they are in the classroom.

Generational definitions used in this report

| Generation | Generation Y | Generation X | Baby Boomers | Silent Generation |
|----------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Also Known As | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Millennials • Echo Boomers • GenNext • Boomerangs • Gen Y-erless | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baby Bust Generation • 13th Generation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Younger Boomers are also known as Gen Jones • Boomers who have retired have been called “Golden Boomers” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mature Generation |
| Birth Years* | 1977-1995** | 1965-1976 | 1946-1964 | 1925-1945 |

* These vary somewhat depending on the study or author. The dates listed here are the ones we used for purposes of all analyses contained in this report.

** None of the Gen Y teachers in this study were born after 1989.

Frequent Feedback for High-Performing Workplaces

Whether or not Gen Y teachers will make PK–12 teaching their careers, as many of their Boomer colleagues did, their desire to persist and to make a difference is clear. Literature from the private sector suggests that Gen Y workers do not want to be kept guessing whether they are doing a good job; they seek constant feedback on their progress and praise when appropriate (NAS Recruitment Communications, 2006). Gen Y teachers seem to express many of these same tendencies as their corporate peers. They want to know they are on track, and if they are not, how they can be better. Indeed the report, *The View From Gen Y*, based on data collected for the Retaining Teacher Talent study, concluded that to retain more Gen Y teachers, “the most powerful thing that policymakers and others can do is to support teachers’ ability to be effective with their students” (Coggshall et al., 2009, p. 19).

Central to this support seems to be frequent feedback on the quality and effectiveness of their instruction. Three of every four Gen Y teachers (75 percent) say that they prefer having a principal who “frequently observes my classroom and gives me detailed feedback on how I’m doing” as opposed to having a principal who “conducts formal observations of my teaching only once a year and gives me only general feedback” (reanalysis of Retaining Teacher Talent survey). Their Gen X and Baby Boomer colleagues were significantly less likely to agree (70 percent and 59 percent respectively).²

This tendency to desire frequent feedback was demonstrated as well in the regional focus groups in which American Institutes for Research (AIR) researchers asked Gen Y teachers to respond to three hypothetical but realistic scenarios. The first introduced a fictional sixth-year Gen Y teacher named Amanda whose school had switched to a new comprehensive evaluation system, where teachers are evaluated four times throughout the year by teams consisting of the principal and two fellow teachers). The teams take into account the impact that teachers have on student achievement test scores as well as other measures of student learning. In the scenario, Amanda did not receive a positive evaluation in the new system and so was not eligible to progress up the district’s career ladder.

Researchers were a bit surprised at how negatively the Gen Y teachers in the groups reacted to the notion that Amanda did not receive feedback on her teaching prior to the decision (even though the scenario was silent on the issue, the Gen Y teachers just assumed that she was not given feedback prior to the decision). As a high school history teacher said, “They should have given Amanda an opportunity for her to change so if she did something wrong she could go back into the classroom, fix it and then if she doesn’t fix it then,...consider giving her a low score [on her] evaluation.”

² The desire for feedback may be related to this generation’s relative inexperience and for the lack of certainty that many novices experience; however, it is important to note that many of the Gen Y teachers in our focus groups had more than a few years under their belts—the average was 4.5 years, with two teachers having 10 years experience. Also, roughly 67 percent of non-Gen Y teachers with 10 or fewer years of experience agreed that they preferred more frequent feedback (compared with 74.4 percent of Gen Y teachers who had 10 or fewer years in the classroom). Nevertheless, experience and generation effects are inextricably conflated, and so in this report we don’t attempt to separate the two. We encourage future researchers to check in again with Gen Y teachers as they move through their career to determine if their attitudes toward feedback and other issues change as they gain more experience in schools.

An elementary school special education teacher echoed this sentiment: “My issue is that [Amanda] was never given feedback, immediate feedback; we give our students immediate feedback to help them learn.... But this is never done with this teacher.” Teachers in another focus group thought the review team should have been more proactive and given Amanda feedback more informally throughout the year.

In sum, Gen Y teachers’ desire for frequent feedback on the effectiveness of their instruction signals that they hold high aspirations for their students’ learning, a confidence that they can learn and improve, and a fair amount of uncertainty about the practice of teaching. Their reaction to the scenario should also signal to school and district leaders that feedback cannot come simply in the form of an end-of-the-year summative evaluation or without reference to teachers’ actual impact on student learning.

Union leaders in one school district helped district leaders make tremendous strides in ensuring that young teachers receive frequent feedback on their instruction, as well as implementing many of the other aspects of a high-performing workplace that promise to support teacher performance. Local AFT leaders worked with the St. Francis, Minnesota, school district leaders to ensure that all new teachers are assigned a mentor as well as a performance review team that observes their practice five times a year. These conditions and others in St. Francis help teachers commit to the profession for the long haul (see page 9). As one Gen Y elementary school teacher in St. Francis said, “I’ll stay here as long as they let me.... We have great teachers and a great environment. I can’t see myself doing anything else.” Another said, “I want to stay here as long as I can.... The climate and atmosphere are great—everyone is here to better the kids.”

AFT Local 1977: High-Performing Workplaces That Support High-Performing Teaching and Learning in St. Francis, Minnesota

A typical Gen Y teacher taking a new position in a public school in St. Francis, Minnesota, would encounter a more high-performing workplace, thanks in significant part to the union. From her first day on the job, she would be provided numerous supports, including a trained mentor in her subject area who will work with her for the next three years. Early in the school year, the Gen Y teacher will be assigned to a performance review team that also includes an administrator and two teacher leaders. This committee will hold an initial meeting to set her performance goals for the year.

Her goals are based in part on the Teacher Academy class she and her committee chose from a list of 15 different topics. Throughout the year, she will receive frequent feedback from members of her performance review team. They will conduct five formal observations of her teaching, and at the end of the year a performance review meeting will be held to discuss performance issues that affect the teacher's progression on the career ladder, which will influence her pay.

In addition to these formal observations, there are regular opportunities for this Gen Y teacher to collaborate with colleagues, seek their support, and in turn support them. These include meetings among departments, grade levels, fellow new teachers, and mixed groups of teacher representing different subject areas, as well as opportunities to observe her more experienced peers teach.

Background

Education Minnesota St. Francis, the local AFT affiliate in the rural mid-sized town of St. Francis, Minnesota, has taken an unprecedented lead in reforming the talent-development policies and practices for its 300-plus teacher members, including its growing population of Gen Y teachers (Center for Applied Research & Educational Improvement, 2008). Entrepreneurial union leaders became visionary teacher leaders, facilitating the enactment of a transformative career ladder program with alternative compensation elements, called the Student Performance Improvement Program (SPIP). The SPIP formalized and expanded existing district innovations with teacher professional development and collaboration and created a new career ladder and accompanying pay scale.

What Is SPIP?

The SPIP aims to improve teachers' effectiveness through:

- The Teacher Academy—Teacher-led, research-based, ongoing, job-embedded, required professional development.

- Performance Review Teams—Teams consist of an administrator, teacher leaders, and the teacher being evaluated; teams observe and rate teachers twice per year (and five times per year for new teachers) on how well they meet their performance goals.
- Mentorship—Mentors who teach similar subjects but do not participate in the teachers' performance evaluation are assigned for all teachers during their first three years or during any within-district transfer.
- Career Ladder—A system of formal teacher leadership positions (e.g., mentor, instructional specialist, who participate in the above program components in official capacities).
- Alternative Salary Schedule—a pay scale that offers teachers higher salaries as well as advancement up the scale based on performance levels and leadership positions rather than on years of experience and degrees alone.

Although the program was not designed with the needs of Gen Y teachers specifically in mind, in many ways it caters to what this new generation is looking for in a job. The mentorship program and performance review teams provide Gen Y teachers with regular detailed feedback on how they are doing. The career ladder allows for differentiation and career staging as well as recognition of exceptional performance, while also providing teachers an opportunity for continual growth and leadership without leaving the classroom. Meanwhile, the salary schedule raises new teachers' pay the most and provides talented Gen Y teachers with the possibility of increasing their pay more quickly than if their salaries were based on years of experience alone.

The Process of Moving Toward a High-Performance Workplace in St. Francis

This union-initiated teacher recruitment, retention, and development program was the culmination of more than a decade of union reform, sparked initially by teachers' frustration with the quality of the professional development they were receiving. Meanwhile, the St. Francis school board was eager to spend district resources more efficiently, and welcomed the union's help in doing so. In 2002, after several years contemplating how to strengthen professional development at the same or a lower cost, several active union leaders attended the AFT Educational Research and Dissemination (ER&D) professional development program, which trains teachers to teach their colleagues to incorporate research-based practices into their instruction. The teacher leaders brought the ER&D program back to St. Francis and started the district's new professional development program called Teacher Academy. It grew over the years to include more classes,

mentoring, and performance review teams that conduct evaluations of teachers, which provide formative feedback as well as inform career ladder decisions, as well as other features that are focused on enhancing teachers' performance.

Given the political climate in Minnesota in which bipartisan support was developing to change the way teachers are paid, the union's executive council decided that the best way to achieve the goal of increasing teacher pay—especially for beginning teachers—was to begin developing an alternative compensation plan. A joint standing committee composed of union, district, and school board officials spent a year developing a plan for reform, communicating it to teachers and soliciting their feedback, and redesigning its components. In March 2005, the union presented the planned reforms to St. Francis teachers; 70 percent of them voted to allow the negotiating team to continue to develop and incorporate these reforms into the contract.

When the state-level Quality Compensation for Teachers (Q Comp)³ program came into effect in July 2005, it seemed the Teacher Academy program was a natural fit, and the union took a leadership role in learning about how St. Francis could apply for resources to expand the existing Teacher Academy, mentorship, career ladder, and performance review programs to incorporate a higher alternative pay scale for new teachers that existing staff could opt into if they chose.

Upon receiving the Q Comp award, the SPIP was formally launched for all new teachers and gradually rolled out to all veteran teachers who chose to participate. Leaders from within the teachers union led informational sessions and responded to e-mail and phone calls from colleagues who had questions. Q Comp funds allowed the district to provide stipends for mentors, a salary scale that rewarded teachers

³ Q Comp is a line item in the Minnesota state budget for new forms of teacher compensation. It has five components: career ladder/advancement options, job-embedded professional development, teacher evaluation, performance pay, and an alternative salary schedule.

who took on formal teacher leadership positions or advanced through the career ladder based on their annual evaluations, and other features that the district otherwise would not have been able to afford. There were mutual gains for teachers and the school board: Teachers were glad to benefit from funding that enhanced a program they already valued, and the district and school board appreciated the union's effort in securing additional sources of funding to support the program.

Initial Outcomes

Compared with the previous performance assessment system, teachers say the feedback they receive from their evaluations under the SPIP is more frequent, more constructive, more specific, more objective, more detailed, less threatening, more relevant, and more credible. In the words of a veteran school board member: "The excitement level [with which teachers talk about the program] makes your hair stand... because it's exciting to hear people be enthused about their job. This program revitalizes people to do the best they can at their job every day.... It's teachers teaching teachers how to become better at their job."

Gen Y teachers were found to appreciate the various components of the program. With regard to being frequently observed, one Gen Y teacher stated, "It kind of justifies if there's ever a question about what's going on in your room, [for example] if there's an issue with a parent. [An administrator and other teachers have] seen what you're doing in your classroom and so they have your back." With regard to the pay system, a Gen Y teacher who taught in another district before moving to St. Francis says, "I like [the pay policy]. It was frustrating [in my previous district]; I was working my butt off compared to other teachers who were earning more. Here, you're accountable for being a better teacher."

Meanwhile, a school principal with experience in several other districts noted, "This district is unique in that teachers feel empowered [because of the SPIP]." In interviews with Gen Y and older teachers alike there was a unanimous desire to remain in the district until retirement. A study by the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement at the University of Minnesota found that 88 percent of administrators and teacher leaders believed new teachers were more interested in remaining in St. Francis (43 percent strongly agreed) than they were before the the SPIP was introduced.

Those involved with the program's development and implementation attribute its success to the highly collaborative relationship among the union, the district, and the school board. Another success factor was the charismatic nature, competence, commitment, and trust among teachers for the teacher leaders at the helm. Their ability to introduce the program gently, intelligently, and persuasively also were seen as contributing to teacher buy-in. However, despite the union's central role in initiating and leading all design aspects of the SPIP, many teachers (particularly among the younger generation) were unaware that the union played any role in the SPIP, and some in fact insisted that the union had nothing to do with this program.

Summary

Although the impact of SPIP on student learning is currently unclear, the interviews conducted for this study and research by the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement both lend preliminary evidence of its success in terms of improving teachers' workplaces, including enhancing professional learning opportunities, feedback, collaboration, shared practice, and teacher evaluation—and in turn improving teacher recruitment and teacher retention. Together, these transformative changes to teachers' work would not have been possible if union and district officials had not joined forces.

Collaboration and Shared Practice for High-Performing Workplaces

Surveys of teachers indicate that large majorities of all teachers desire meaningful collaboration with their colleagues, but as the Survey of the American Teacher (MetLife, 2009) as well as the Teacher Working Conditions Survey (Hirsch & Emerick, 2007) find, the structures existing in schools to support collaboration vary widely. Whereas 12 percent of teachers report spending less than 30 minutes per week in structured collaboration with other teachers and school leaders, 41 percent say they spend more than two hours, with the rest falling somewhere in between (MetLife, 2009). A 2008 poll of AFT members found that only slightly more than one in four teachers (28 percent) are very satisfied with having adequate opportunities to discuss teaching ideas and student work with other teachers; and nearly half were either somewhat or not that satisfied (20 and 23 percent respectively). There do not seem to be significant generational differences in how teachers experience existing collaboration opportunities, nor in their desire to have such opportunities.

Recent research has shown that in schools where there are high levels of teacher collaboration and strong professional communities, student achievement is higher (Goddard, Goddard, & Tschannen-Moran, 2007). Ronald Gallimore and his colleagues found that when grade-level teams of teachers, led by a trained peer facilitator, work together to assess student needs and solve real instructional problems, teachers learn more profoundly how their practice affects student learning (Gallimore, Ermeling, Saunders, & Goldenberg, 2009). As a result of such supported collaboration, the researchers found that student achievement improves (Saunders, Goldenberg, & Gallimore, 2009). Several Gen Y teachers in the focus groups said that they liked collaborating with their colleagues because they had no desire to “reinvent the wheel” and were eager to learn from their more experienced and skilled colleagues about “what works.”

Most of the Gen Y teachers we talked with seemed to expect this collaboration to go beyond talking and sharing ideas about instruction, to opening their classroom doors to share their practice with one another. They seem to want frequent opportunities to observe other teachers so they can learn from their fellow teachers’ practice, as well as be observed themselves so they can both receive targeted feedback as well as share what they are doing. In other words, they do not want to work individually, in private, or in isolation from their colleagues. As a middle school teacher said, “If you’re just sitting in your classroom doing your thing, you don’t know what’s out there. You have no reference point.” And as a Gen Y high school special education teacher reiterated:

A long time ago someone said to me that teaching is very personal, and now I see why some people do shut their doors and do their own things because that’s what they love to do.... But I think most of my peers are very open. They’re sort of humbled by the fact that yeah, it’s very

personal but let me know what you're doing.... How can we help each other? They're more open to that versus that shutting of the door.... They're into change, they're into bettering themselves, and I think collaboration is a big part of that no matter how personal teaching can be.

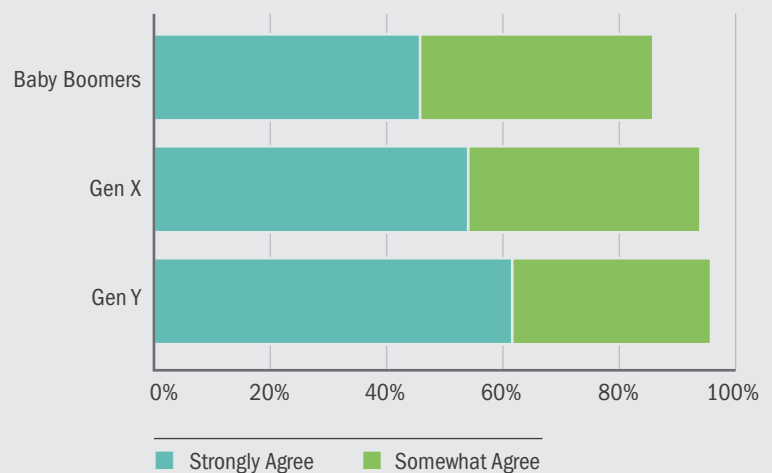
A second-year Gen Y middle school teacher said, "When I observe other teachers, I realize my own faults, or things that I overlook in myself." And an AFT Gen Y building representative in Texas said, "I don't really mind [being observed], because I think it's helping other teachers.... I think it's important for young teachers to see other classrooms." And a fourth-grade Gen Y teacher from a large suburban district said that getting to go to other districts to see what other fourth-grade teachers were doing would be "super effective."

Gen Y teachers' openness to shared practice may stem in part from the fact that beginning teachers are more accustomed to having their mentors and teacher education faculty in their classrooms. It may also stem from the fact that younger teachers seem to feel more keenly the impact of other teachers on how well they perform, both in terms of what they learn from their colleagues and how well other teachers instill positive learning habits in the students they share. For example, 62 percent of Gen Y teachers in the 2009 MetLife Survey of the American Teacher strongly agreed with the statement that "Other teachers contribute to my success in the classroom" compared with only 46 percent of Baby Boomer teachers (see Figure 4). A groundbreaking study by Jackson and Bruegmann (2009) showed that teachers—especially less experienced teachers—are indeed more effective in terms of producing student learning gains when their colleagues are more effective.

Stephen Raudenbush, a professor of sociology at the University of Chicago, argues that shared practice is a critical part of a powerful instructional system wherein there are "shared aims, shared assessment tools, shared instructional strategies, active collaboration, routine public inspection of practice, and accountability to peers" (Raudenbush, 2009, p. 172). In such a system, the variability in the performance of different

Figure 4: Most teachers feel that their colleagues influence their success in the classroom, though there are some generational differences

How much do you agree with the statement: Other teachers contribute to my success in the classroom?



Survey of the American Teacher; reanalysis courtesy of MetLife

teachers in a school is more visible and more readily addressed without resorting to administrative action. Ensuring that there are more opportunities for observation and peer learning will maximize the effect that Jackson and Bruegmann observed and that Raudenbush advocates. Two Gen Y teachers seem instinctively to agree:

Gen Y elementary teacher: Collaboration is so important, and it's something that falls to the wayside.... Our whole objective is to benefit the kids, and you would think that it would be top priority.

Gen Y high school teacher: Exactly. Especially with state standards and those tests. I think if the departments were doing the same things and the assessment was the same, I think it would increase test scores.

In sum, high-performance workplaces promote and support teacher collaboration and shared practice. As the next sections of this report document, however, supporting teacher development through collaboration and shared practice does not mean treating all teachers the same.

Recognizing and Addressing Performance Differences in High-Performing Workplaces

There is quite a bit of survey data showing that Gen Y teachers are slightly more in favor of differentiated pay than are their older colleagues, whether it consists of additional pay based on effort, National Board Certification status, type of assignment, principal evaluations, or impact on student learning (Chait, 2009; Coggshall et al., 2009). They are less in favor, however, of having their impact on student learning measured with standardized achievement test scores—50 percent of Gen Y teachers say student standardized test scores are an “excellent” or “good” indicator of their success as a teacher, compared with 63 percent of Baby Boomers (Coggshall et al., 2009).

Nevertheless, when asked about recognizing teachers based on performance more generally, Gen Y teachers tend to be much more positive. For example, Gen Y teachers were more likely to support an effort by their union to take the lead in negotiating a way to add performance as a consideration in salary decisions (75 percent versus 53 percent of Baby Boomers) (reanalysis of *Waiting to Be Won Over*). Gen Y teachers are also most likely to say that the fact that teachers do not get rewarded for superior effort and performance is a major or minor drawback to the teaching profession (see Figure 5). Both Gen Y and Gen X teachers are also more likely to agree that there are “outstanding teachers who deserve to be especially rewarded because they do a stellar job” (see Figure 6).

Figure 5: Gen Y teachers desire differentiation in rewards (differences are significant)

Based on your personal experience, please tell us whether this is a major drawback, a minor drawback or not a drawback for you: Teachers do not get rewarded for superior effort and performance.

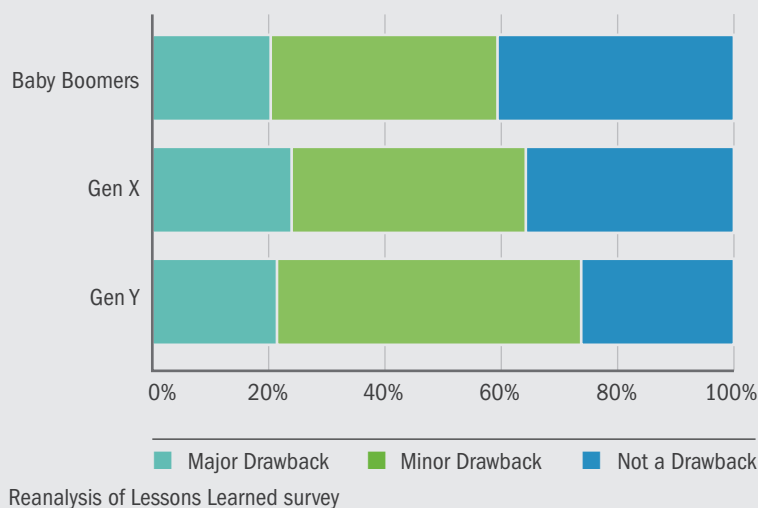
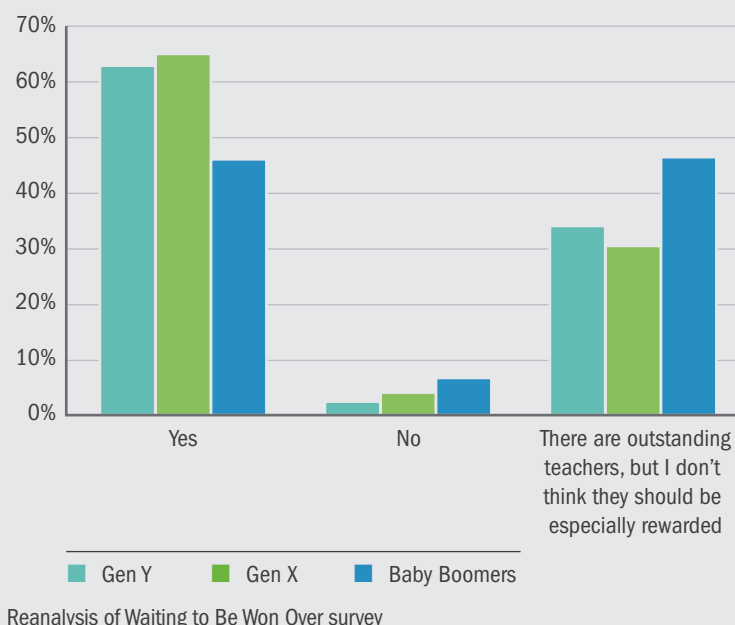


Figure 6: Gen Y and Gen X teachers are less likely to say that teachers who do a “stellar job” shouldn’t be rewarded (differences are significant)

At your school, do you think there are outstanding teachers who deserve to be especially rewarded because they do a stellar job?



In the focus groups, Gen Y teachers expressed frustration with their colleagues who are not working hard, meeting expectations, or influencing student learning and seemed to want poor performance to be addressed more effectively. For example, we heard the following from teachers during the regional focus groups:

- Who's going above and beyond for their kids? I do think that that is sometimes overlooked and I get frustrated.... I don't think that we [teachers] should be looked at equitably.—First-year preschool teacher
- I think it is important to know who's doing well and who's not. —Second-year high school mathematics teacher
- It's very frustrating to watch professional teachers not do their job and...not do what's supposed to be done...and yet they still get hired every year and keep their job—it's very frustrating to watch.”— Gen Y physical education teacher who has been working as a permanent substitute

The Retaining Teacher Talent survey showed that more than half of all Gen Y teachers (54 percent) believe that they work with “a few” teachers who are failing to do a good job and are just going through the motions; more than a quarter (28 percent) say there are “more than a few” such teachers; and 3 percent say that there is “quite a large number” (Coggshall et al., 2009). If their focus group responses are any indication, treating those teachers the same as teachers who are doing a good job is likely to be particularly demoralizing for Gen Y teachers. In the words of Randy Keillor, a recently retired AFT union leader in St. Francis, Minnesota:

A system that is indifferent to the performance of its employees and rewards them alike regardless of effort or effectiveness is based on an assumption that what those employees do really isn't very important or difficult.

Fortunately, examples of ways to fairly differentiate among teachers—as part of a systemic approach to improving teaching and learning by building workplaces that support high performing teaching and learning—are beginning to emerge. For example, high-quality career ladder approaches that do not rely solely on seniority or education credits for advancement such as that found in St. Francis, Minnesota, or strategic compensation programs such as the one being implemented in Austin, Texas. As described in the case summary beginning on page 17, Austin district officials in close collaboration with the Austin teachers union created a program to reward teachers for working in more challenging schools as well as for demonstrating that they meet student learning objectives.

Appropriately differentiating among teachers for recognition, advancement, compensation, or dismissal, of course, requires high-quality teacher evaluation systems that meaningfully account for differences in performance and contributions to the school and profession. Gen Y teachers have strong feelings about the design and impact of teacher evaluation, to which this report now turns.

Education Austin: Toward Workplaces That Support High-Performing Teaching and Learning in Austin, Texas

In Austin, shortly after being matched with a trained and experienced mentor, one of the first things a new Gen Y teacher in a high-needs REACH pilot school will do is to develop student learning objectives (SLOs) in consultation with his principal. These objectives will be based on evidence of student needs and the goals laid out in his school's Campus Improvement Plan. SLOs often will use common assessments, developed in collaboration with fellow teachers, which support peer learning around student assessment data.

If the teacher meets his SLOs at the end of the year, he will be given a monetary bonus; the teacher will receive additional compensation if his schoolwide student achievement targets are met on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) exam.

Background

Education Austin and the Austin Independent School District (AISD) are taking a leading role in rewriting how teachers are compensated and in turn how teachers work together in their schools. Through deliberate consideration and learning from others' missteps, Education Austin and district leaders are helping to ensure that the design and implementation of Austin's strategic compensation program, called REACH,⁴ not only ties teachers' compensation to student learning, but also provides new teachers with professional development opportunities to support their success.

What Is REACH?

REACH aims to support teacher retention and effectiveness by providing incentives for all teachers as well as professional development and mentoring for new teachers, many of whom are members of Gen Y. REACH provides additional compensation for teachers who do one or more of the following:

- Meet individual teacher-developed and principal-approved student learning objectives (SLOs) based on common assessments

- Work in a school that achieves in the top quartile of campuswide growth in the district on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
- Work in a high-needs school
- Participate in particular professional development opportunities
- Work as a mentor to new teachers in a high-needs school

Teachers can earn up to \$10,400 per year in addition to their regular salary. REACH is being piloted in 14 Austin schools, each of which opted into the program by a staff vote.

The Process of Moving Toward High-Performing Workplaces

In 2004, as a result of rising concerns about teacher turnover and unsatisfactory student achievement, the AISD board of trustees issued a directive to then-Superintendent Pat Forgione to create a long-term teacher compensation and support framework to recruit, develop, and retain high-quality teachers at every AISD campus. This directive also was spurred along by the governor's Texas Educator Excellence Grant (TEEG) program, which offered Austin the funds to create such a framework.

⁴ REACH is not an acronym.

Acting in part on the advice of Rob Weil from the AFT and others, the board initially turned down the monies because it wanted to have the time to create a sustainable program, and the TEEG grants did not allow for such time. As Weil advised the board in a presentation in May 2004: “Don’t just get it done, get it done right.”

To garner support for the program as well as make sure they “got it right,” the board quickly appointed a teacher compensation task force to consider possible teacher compensation arrangements, and the superintendent asked the president of Education Austin, Louis Malfaro, to be co-chair. The task force also included teachers, principals, district administrators, parents, and community members,

The task force spent nearly two years researching other districts in Texas and around the country that had already been implementing pay-for-performance programs. After learning about what had worked in other districts, the task force wanted to design a program that engaged practitioners in the process. As one district official noted, teachers often respond to pay-for-performance initiatives with a “great deal of skepticism” and because of that, “we knew that [even] with a good plan, we would still have an uphill battle.”

REACH grew out of the task force’s recommendations. One recommendation that Education Austin representatives insisted on was to build in a high-quality mentoring program for new teachers, at least in the high-needs schools. Ultimately, the recommendations were supported by both Education Austin and the AFT.

In 2007, nine schools were invited to become REACH pilot schools; all nine accepted. The pilot has expanded to 14 schools since then and is currently overseen by a steering committee that includes the Education Austin president and vice president, as well as other stakeholders.

The committee continues to meet monthly with the AISD “core team” that manages the REACH pilot.

This significant input from stakeholders was important for the success of the initiative, as one district administrator stated, Education Austin and AISD “were open to exploring the conversation jointly. Having those people in the chairs was enormous.” From the Education Austin perspective, some members were initially skeptical about alternative compensation, but once the details and parameters were defined, more members came on board. Still, some members did resign because the union supported the initiative, and those who did may have been influenced by old ideas about merit pay, according to one Education Austin official.

Initial Outcomes

So far, REACH has been generally well received by teachers and administrators in the pilot schools. One non-Gen Y teacher who was interviewed for this study commented on how developing SLOs has made her more “cognizant of the evaluations that I’m giving my students.” A Gen Y teacher noted, REACH “really gave me a clear focus and direction on what my kids need and how I can help them. [It’s] made me more aware of my instruction and whether I’m really, really meeting my students’ needs.” In addition to increasing the focus on student needs and assessment, creating SLOs with other classroom teachers has increased collaboration and peer learning in some schools. As one principal said:

For my campus, that has been the most gigantic benefit: forcing the teachers to sit with each other, analyze the data, and come up with common assessments. That opened the door to those conversations happening beyond the student learning objectives. We’re moving away from that singular teacher in a singular classroom.

⁵ It should be noted that collective bargaining is illegal in Texas. However, Education Austin, an affiliate of both the AFT and NEA, is elected by AISD employees to be the “exclusive consultant” to the district. Thus, AISD is not legally bound to negotiate with Education Austin; however, Education Austin does represent the collective voice of Austin teachers and other school employees.

Access to full-release mentors has also been one of the most well received components of REACH and was the aspect that Education Austin stood firmly behind. As one veteran teacher stated:

The greatest strength I can tell you about, far and above everything else, is that REACH has provided mentor teachers for all the teachers of zero to three [years] experience [in high-needs schools]. And what they do is kind of all encompassing. They provide some vision and structure on a weekly basis during the teacher meetings. They also provide a one-on-one support, help with photocopying, help for planning lessons, and help with grading. They also provide direct feedback as well as a comfort, if you will, that colleagues can't provide because they don't have time for it.

A Gen Y teacher who received such mentoring agreed:

Our mentors are phenomenal. They are either veteran teachers, or they've been administrators, so they have a very strong background. Not just [in terms of] observing what works in a classroom and what doesn't, but also providing that one-on-one component and helping you evaluate your own practices. So it provides a strong, strong component for new teachers.

Summary

Although the comprehensive internal evaluations⁶ of the REACH pilot have documented that the program is not yet producing the improvements in teacher retention and student achievement that its designers had hoped for, the participants we spoke to suggest that it holds tremendous promise. Transforming long-established structures and norms in teacher support systems and compensation will take time, but the broad involvement of the school community, including teachers and their union, was shown in Austin to be a critical first step toward lowering resistance and providing the foundation for long-term success in advancing teacher effectiveness.

⁶ REACH program evaluations are posted here: <http://www.austinisd.org/inside/initiatives/compensation/index.phtml>

Fair and Valid Teacher Evaluation for High-Performing Workplaces

Even though most Gen Y teachers want to know whether they are on track, have a strong desire for frequent and meaningful feedback on their performance, and are open to shared practice, they have serious concerns both about how they are evaluated and how administrators use those evaluations. A reanalysis of the Waiting to Be Won Over survey by the FDR Group for Education Sector showed that only about a third of Gen Y teachers and fewer than a quarter of Baby Boomer teachers thought that their most recent formal evaluation was useful and effective in helping them be a better teacher, whereas more than four in 10 of all teachers agreed that it was “merely a formality.”

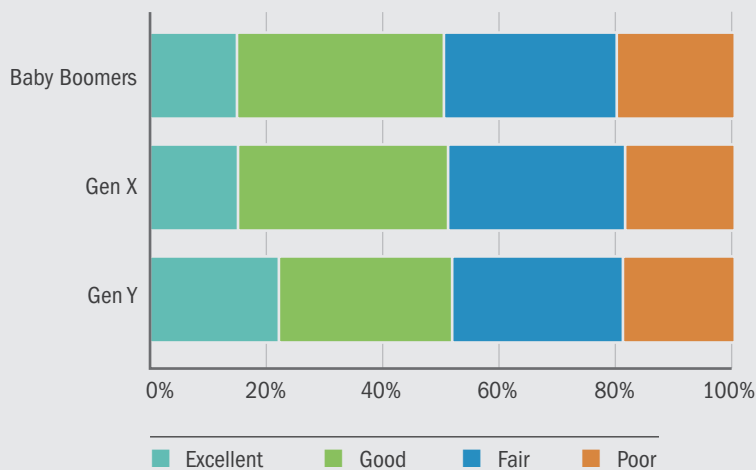
In terms of changing the way teachers are evaluated, surveys of teachers suggest that those in Gen Y are somewhat *less* favorable than their Baby Boomer colleagues toward using student learning as a way to evaluate their performance, and they are very skeptical about using standardized achievement tests as a measure of that learning (Coggshall et al., 2009). When asked specifically about measuring students’ skills and knowledge before they work with a teacher and then again after they do, there were no significant generational differences in whether teachers felt favorable toward that approach, with about half saying it was an excellent or good approach (see Figure 7).

Teachers’ skepticism toward relying on test scores in evaluation may be related to a lack of experience with using high-quality student assessment data to understand the impact of their instruction. Usable data are nevertheless critical for providing teachers meaningful feedback on their effectiveness and for supporting excellent teaching and learning.

To address teachers’ and others’ concerns about relying on student test scores in their evaluation, most education leaders believe that multiple measures of student learning as well as multiple performance measurement instruments should be used to determine a teacher’s evaluation rating.

Figure 7: Teachers do not differ by generation in their ratings of using student learning progress in measuring teacher effectiveness (differences not significant)

Some suggest that the best way to measure teacher effectiveness is to assess students’ skills and knowledge when they first come to a teacher and to measure them again when students leave to see what progress was made. How would you rate this as a way of measuring teacher effectiveness?



Reanalysis of Waiting to Be Won Over survey

In the scenario presented to the focus group participants, a new teacher evaluation system was being implemented to make decisions about teachers' promotion on the career ladder as well as the kinds of professional development they might be required to take. Their rating might also be used in transfer decisions. In this hypothetical evaluation system, teachers are rated based on a profile of teacher effectiveness that consisted of (1) classroom observations conducted using a standards-based rubric, (2) district-created parent surveys, (3) gains in student test scores, and (4) other evidence of student learning, such as examples of student work. Teachers are evaluated by a team consisting of their principal and two teachers, and classroom observations (two of which were unannounced) are conducted four times for about 25 minutes.

Taken as a whole, most focus group participants thought that the approach outlined in the scenario, although not ideal, represented an improvement on the way they are currently evaluated. As a fourth-year high school history teacher said,

You know there are some absolutely unbelievable teachers out there, and this type of evaluation would highlight the ones who are doing what they're supposed to be doing. It would make... teachers altogether seem more professional.

Having more than one evaluator was seen as a positive part of the system, as was using a standards-based rubric for classroom observations, developed with input from teachers, especially if it is provided ahead of time so teachers know what is expected of them.

Despite their generally positive reaction, Gen Y teachers in the focus groups expressed various concerns about several aspects of this hypothetical system. First, teachers in four of the focus groups worried that the composition of their class might negatively influence their evaluation rating. As one teacher stated,

But you can't compare, you can't judge me on my kids when my neighbor has all scholars all day and I have all mainstream kids. They're bouncing off the walls; these parents don't want to deal with them at home; they don't do homework. You can't create a system like this and judge us when we are all seeing a different set of kids. It's really unfair.

In addition, music and special education teachers in two of the focus groups felt that they should not be evaluated the same way as general education content-area teachers, given that the nature of their jobs was so different. They could not visualize how student learning outcomes would be measured fairly in comparison to their colleagues and were doubtful that administrators would take the time to develop differentiated observation and outcome measures for their particular situations.

Second, focus group teachers believed that the characteristics of individuals who conducted classroom observations as part of the evaluation were extremely important. They wanted to be sure that the evaluators were unbiased as well as knowledgeable about the realities of their classrooms, in addition to the subject matter. One Gen Y elementary school teacher thought that the evaluators

themselves need to be held accountable for actually doing the reviews (and doing them well). Additionally, Gen Y teachers in three of the focus groups were concerned that a bad evaluation by a principal who just didn't like them would mean they would be blacklisted if the evaluations were used in transfer decisions. Teachers in three of the focus groups were dubious about whether parent surveys constituted valid evidence of their effectiveness because parents very often do not see what goes on inside classrooms; they may hear only what their children have to say, which may not be accurate or complete.

As for the use of student achievement in teacher evaluation, several of the teachers thought that using a measure of student learning growth was better than using only the level of student achievement. Generally, focus group participants' responses echoed survey results in terms of their skepticism in the use of standardized tests. As a Gen Y second-grade teacher said, "Assessment is important, but just standardized assessment is really where we're going wrong here." Another teacher thought that using student test scores in teacher evaluation is "always a tool to use to beat a teacher in the head with," despite the fact that he believed test scores are "the product, that's the outcome we want, and we all want it, and we wouldn't have been teachers if we didn't want students to succeed." This suggests that many teachers have had negative experiences with the use of student assessment data. Whether better measures of student learning growth would alleviate those concerns remains to be seen.

In sum, Gen Y teachers want to be evaluated fairly and are very concerned about the details of how the evaluation is designed and put into practice. Those seeking to build high-quality workplaces will need to create enhanced evaluation systems that not only meaningfully differentiate between teacher performances and provide useful feedback to teachers on their effectiveness, but are also professionally credible. A model for such an evaluation system has been developed by the AFT with the support of nationally recognized experts. A brief description of the Teacher Development and Evaluation Framework is presented on page 23.

Such high-quality evaluation systems are not simple to design or implement. Teachers and evaluators will need time to learn the details as well as practice using the instruments, organizing and providing feedback, and deciding the most effective way to address the results. Involving Gen Y teachers and others in the design of the details of an evaluation system will help ensure credibility and understanding as well as alleviate the concerns that teachers of all generations have.

In recognition of the need to develop a more rigorous, valid, and fair evaluation system, the School District of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers recently ratified a contract that promises, among other things, to transform the way teachers are selected into schools and subsequently evaluated and supported to ensure that they are doing a good job. For more details on these changes, see the case summary that begins on page 24.

AFT's Continuous Improvement Model for Teacher Development and Evaluation

The central purpose of a comprehensive teacher evaluation system should be to assist teachers to develop professionally throughout the school year and their careers in order to improve student learning. With this purpose as a guiding principle, the members of the AFT adopted a framework for teacher development and evaluation at their 2010 convention that is standards- and research-based. Many AFT affiliates are using the framework as the basis for their efforts to improve their teacher development and evaluation systems. The AFT framework identifies five essential components:

- **Professional teaching standards** that advance a common vision of the profession and communicate a shared belief about what is important for teachers to know and be able to do.
- **Standards for assessing teacher practice** that are based on evidence of both good teaching practice and student learning.
- **Implementation standards** that address the important details of evaluation, such as how teachers are involved, who evaluates them, how often evaluation takes place, how the results of the evaluation will be used, and how the results are communicated to teachers.
- **Standards for professional contexts** that identify the teaching and learning conditions necessary for student and teacher success. These conditions include both physical and structural elements of schools as well as elements that influence a school's culture and climate.
- **Standards for systems of support** that advocate for a continuum of teacher support based on a teacher's ability to meet professional teaching standards as well as the career stage of a teacher (from novice to mid-career to veteran).

AFT Local 3: Toward Workplaces That Support High-Performing Teaching and Learning in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Before even accepting a job in Philadelphia, a new Gen Y teacher will experience aspects of the district's new workplace during the hiring process. She will be interviewed by the building principal, a parent, and teachers in the school. In contrast with district-level hiring, this will likely result in a good match between the teacher's own skills and interests and those of the school.

Once hired, the teacher will participate in the union-created Strong Beginnings program, which provides comprehensive teacher induction. In the summer before school begins, she will learn research-based approaches to improving her performance in the classroom, including (1) establishing rules and routines, (2) building relationships with students and motivating them to achieve, and (3) learning the most "effective instructional strategies based on the best available research." Throughout the year, she will be required to turn in reflection papers to help reinforce the concepts learned.

If the teacher is selected into one of the peer-assistance-and-review pilot schools, she will learn from her colleagues, working closely with a consulting teacher to improve her practice and ensure that she is on track to be successful with her students.

Introduction

In January 2010, the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT) and the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) made a historic first step toward overcoming a decades-long legacy of mistrust and broken promises. Together, PFT and SDP signed a new teacher contract that can significantly advance teaching and learning in the district's roughly 280 schools. Among its provisions, the new contract paves the way for

- Establishment of a peer-assistance-and-review system (PAR) to better evaluate new, nontenured, and struggling tenured teachers
- Increased implementation of a site-based selection process for hiring, assignment, and transfer decisions
- Improved mentoring for new teachers
- Implementation of professional development plans for tenured teachers
- Increased incentives for achieving National Board Certification

- Establishment of a schoolwide value-added compensation program
- Improved opportunities for professional development

In addition to negotiating for many of these changes, the PFT has worked for the past two years to create and implement a comprehensive new teacher induction program called Strong Beginnings, which is now mandatory for all incoming Philadelphia teachers.

The Process of Reform in Philadelphia

Negotiations for the new contract took more than eight months. Nevertheless, officials on both sides expressed satisfaction with the result and a tempered hope for the future.

Peer Assistance and Review. Despite conflicting perspectives in some cases and a somewhat chilly foundation, union and district officials sought solutions together. The two groups traveled to Toledo, Ohio, and Montgomery County, Maryland, to examine those districts'

PAR programs. What came out of those visits is an agreement that a PAR program⁷ will be designed and implemented over the next three years; it will have the primary responsibility for coaching, reviewing, and evaluating all new teachers as well as all veteran teachers who received an unsatisfactory rating the previous year. Beginning in the 2010–11 school year, the PAR program is being piloted in Philadelphia in 45 schools. The details of how teachers will be reviewed and by whom will be determined by a design and an implementation team composed of individuals from both the district and the union. The PAR program will be implemented in all district schools by 2012–13.

Site-Based Selection. According to a district official, the PFT made “a leap of faith” to allow building administrators and teachers more flexibility in hiring and placing the teachers they want in their schools. Under the previous decades-old system, transferring senior teachers were assigned to school vacancies first; then new teachers chose schools from a central list of vacancies. New teachers were not interviewed by personnel at the school to which they would be assigned, often leading to mismatches in teachers’ skills and interests and a school’s needs (Farley, Offenberg, & Useem, 2007).

Under the new contract, each school building will now form a staff selection committee that will interview new and transferring teachers and make school-based hiring decisions. The committees are composed of the principal, a parent, and teachers selected by the school council or union building committee; in high

schools, an assistant principal or a student also will serve on the selection committee. These committees establish criteria and procedures to identify qualified candidates for open positions and then come to consensus about which candidates to recommend for hire. If the committee cannot reach consensus, the principal makes the final decision. All new teachers in the hiring pool are first screened by the district Office of Talent Acquisition, a branch of the human resources department, but hiring decisions are ultimately made at the school level.⁸

These new procedures do not completely eliminate the role of seniority in hiring and transfer. In cases where there is a decline in school enrollment, the least senior teachers in the school are transferred first regardless of their performance, after all substitute, apprentice, and provisional teachers are transferred. These transferred teachers are then placed in the pool from which the staff selection committees make their decisions. The committees must attempt to fill vacancies with this pool before moving on to considering teachers new to the district. Nevertheless, expanded site selection may help new and Gen Y teachers become employed in schools where they are a good fit and where their skills and knowledge are valued.

Strong Beginnings

Outside of negotiations, the PFT has been working steadily to develop and pilot an induction program tailored to the needs of incoming Philadelphia teachers and their

⁷ Peer-assistance-and-review (PAR) programs are jointly managed by the local teachers union and district administrators and aim to improve teacher quality by having expert teachers mentor and evaluate their peers. A joint labor-management committee, usually called the PAR panel, typically runs the program. Expert teachers, often called consulting teachers (or CTs), support and evaluate teachers in the program. The programs usually include different procedures for novice and veteran teachers. CTs write comprehensive reports, documenting each teacher’s progress in meeting the district’s standards. They then present their reports to the PAR panel and in most districts recommend whether the teachers in their caseload should be rehired or dismissed (see <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/~ngt/par/parinfo/> for more information on PAR programs).

⁸ Under the 2004 contract, school faculties could vote to become site selection schools. Only about a quarter of schools chose site-based selection, in many cases because of distrust of the principal.

schools. PFT leaders found that new teacher induction in the district was lacking in many respects and was likely causing very high rates of turnover among young and new teachers in Philadelphia.

To address this situation, Rosalind Jones-Johnson, PFT's director of education, with the support of the PFT president Jerry Jordan, wrote a proposal to the district asking that the district and union jointly provide at least a week of induction prior to the start of the school year. Jones-Johnson and her colleagues in PFT's health and welfare division designed a two-week program based on the AFT's Educational Research & Development (ER&D) courses that consisted of three main components: (1) establishing rules and routines, (2) building relationships with students and motivating them to achieve, and (3) introducing teachers to the most "effective instructional strategies based on the best available research." Jones-Johnson said she "felt that combination would provide new teachers with the kind of professional knowledge base they needed to start off and be effective classroom teachers." Incoming teachers could choose to take the two-week-long half-day summer induction course or the longer version of it during the first school year. Participants in the summer program were required to turn in reflection papers during the year to help reinforce the concepts they learned in the summer.

Nearly 500 new teachers took part in the two-week Strong Beginnings course in summer 2009. We spoke to a very small sample of these teachers, but they all reported that it was very

useful in helping them get off to a good start with their students. While some said that it primarily served as a "refresher course" on what they had learned in their preparation programs, others learned things that helped them on "day one." As one Gen Y participant put it, "One thing that was better was that the instructors were actually teachers in the Philadelphia school district. They could give us the background on what actually went on in classrooms, whereas my professors at [my preparation program] didn't have a lot of classroom experience. [The Strong Beginnings instructors] knew what we were getting into and what we should be looking for."

Summary

To ensure that these steps toward workplaces that advance teaching and learning in Philadelphia are successful, continued cooperation between union and district leaders is vital and, indeed, in many ways codified by the latest contract. Although it is too soon to tell for sure, PAR, site selection, and the Strong Beginnings program, in addition to other teacher development efforts being implemented in Philadelphia, have great potential to help new and Gen Y teachers get started on the right foot and, it is hoped, also help them to establish longer and more successful careers in Philadelphia than those of their immediate predecessors.

Effective Instructional Technology for High-Performing Workplaces

Perhaps the most defining aspect of Generation Y is its members' comfort with and dependence on technology. The first to grow up with the Internet, the generational literature is rife with examples of how members of Gen Y, as "technology natives," live and breathe all things digital compared with their older "technology immigrant" counterparts, who simply know how to use such tools when needed. In a Pew Research Center survey, 24 percent of individuals born after 1980 say that technology is what sets them apart from other generations, and 83 percent say they sleep with their cell phones right next to their beds, as opposed to just 50 percent of Baby Boomers (Pew Research Center, 2010).

Despite these trends, Gen Y teachers do not tend to endorse wholeheartedly or without reservation the use of technology to aid instruction. Although they tend to use social networking technology in their personal lives, they do not report using it to the same extent in their professional lives. Nevertheless, Gen Y's expectations for instant access to knowledge and the ready ability to connect and learn from others may be influencing Gen Yers' enthusiasm for technology, their reservations about using substandard technology in the classroom, and their desire for collaboration with or without technology—each of which are discussed in turn below.

As an example of an expression of the enthusiasm for technology, one Gen Y high school special education teacher said, "The technology stuff is fabulous and wonderful." Focus group teachers appreciate having personal access to functional computers with Internet access and certain instructional devices like Smart Boards and ELMOs because these devices engage students, teach important skills, and help students catch up more quickly after an absence. And they can save teachers time with lesson planning. Gen Y teachers also know viscerally how important it is for their students to understand and be able to use technology appropriately. In the words of another Gen Y high school teacher:

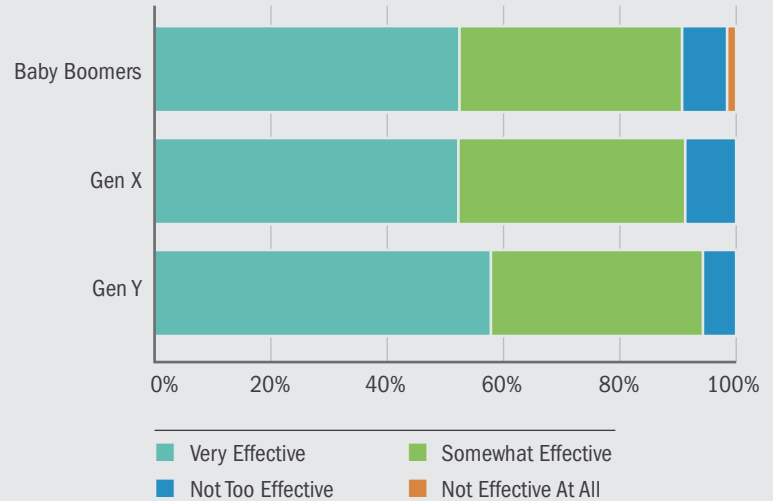
Technology is important. It's what's going on. If these kids [students] can't manipulate computers and more than just browsing Google and going on Facebook and Twitter.... They need to be able to use computers in a more professional manner and if they can't, they're not going to get anywhere. Everything is moving to computers, and the students do need a more well rounded technical, technology-based education.... Technology is important—all aspects.

Surveys by MetLife (MetLife, 2009) and Learning Point Associates and Public Agenda (Learning Point Associates & Public Agenda, 2009) found that more than 90 percent of teachers (across generations) believe technology enhances teaching, and about half of all teachers believe it is "very effective" at doing so (see Figure 8).

As Figure 8 indicates, the differences between the generations are not large in their responses to survey items on technology. This is in part due to limitations in the kinds of technology that some Gen Y teachers have experienced in their classrooms thus far. For example, more than one focus group teacher mentioned that it can malfunction, ruining a well-thought-through lesson plan. It can be costly and quickly outdated. And, particularly in classrooms with students who have behavior problems, the threat of children breaking expensive technology or misusing the Internet can outweigh the benefits to student learning. Gen Y teachers are also aware of the risks and liabilities that teachers face regarding the use of computers and the Internet, particularly in terms of social networking technology (for example, cyberbullying and privacy issues).

Figure 8: Teachers do not differ by generation in their assessments of making the latest technology available to aid classroom instruction (differences not significant)

How effective do you think ensuring that the latest technology is available in each classroom to aid instruction would be in terms of improving teacher effectiveness?



Reanalysis of Retaining Teacher Talent survey

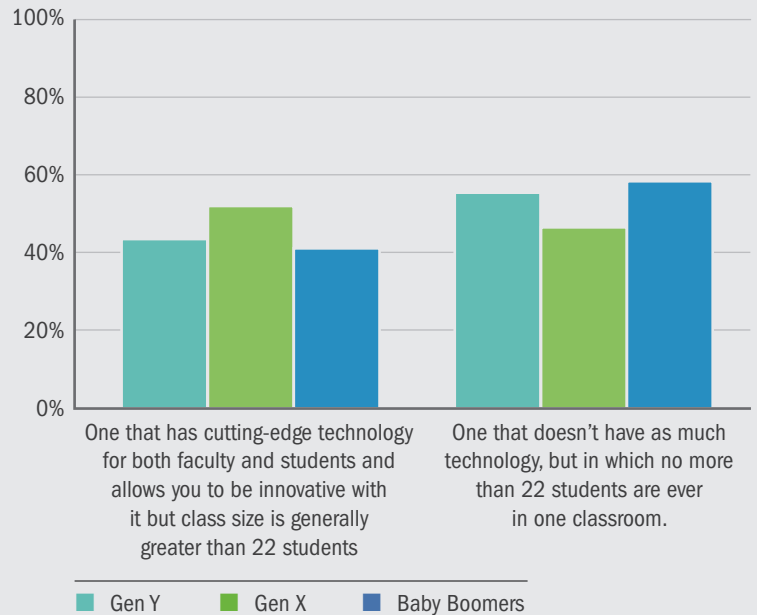
Gen Y teachers' desire for the time and technology to support collaboration and shared practice emerged in focus groups during which researchers presented a scenario about a hypothetical new magnet school that provided teachers with interactive Smart Boards, high-speed wireless Internet connections, Twitter hotlines and other professional networking opportunities to enhance instruction, technology support staff, and professional development in technology, as well as dedicated time every day for teachers to collaborate with one another. This protected time involved "sharing lesson plans and instructional strategies, watching DVDs of other teachers teaching the lessons, and networking with teachers at other magnet schools using video- and tele-conferencing." Focus group participants were asked what aspects of this school would be most appealing to them.

The Gen Y teachers overwhelmingly stated that collaboration was the most attractive aspect of the magnet school. For example, according to a high school mathematics teacher, having an hour set aside each day to collaborate, using technology, "appealed to me the most out of everything [presented in the scenario]."

Surveys have also shown that teachers of all generations do not see technology as a panacea or that its implementation alone would improve teaching. For example, ensuring the latest technology was available to teachers was less likely to be rated as “very effective” in improving teacher effectiveness than reducing class size, preparing teachers to differentiate their instruction, or removing children with severe disciplinary problems from the classroom (Coggshall et al., 2009). When asked specifically whether they would prefer working in a school with cutting-edge technology or one where class sizes were kept small, the majority of Gen Y and Baby Boomer teachers chose the latter, with only Gen X showing a slight preference for technology (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: More Gen Y teachers prefer smaller classes to cutting-edge technology

If you were considering transferring to a different school in your district, which school would you prefer to move to?



Reanalysis of Retaining Teacher Talent survey

In sum, Gen Y teachers may have higher expectations for technology than do their colleagues from earlier generations and improved instructional and networking technology is one important aspect of a high-performing workplace. It can be used to enhance not only teachers’ ability to implement engaging and effective lessons, it can also enhance school leaders’ ability to provide meaningful data-based feedback; support collaboration (through conferencing technology) and shared practice (through video); and enhance teacher evaluation through improved analysis and communication tools.

Figure 10. High-Performing Workplaces Advance Gen Y Teachers' Professional Growth and Classroom Effectiveness.

This figure shows the progression of Gen Y teachers as they move from being novices to gaining experience to becoming leaders of the profession. This progression is made possible through the supports of receiving frequent feedback on instruction to reduce uncertainty (via mentoring as in Austin, Texas, or induction as in Philadelphia), shared practice through opportunities to collaborate and observe, high-quality formative and summative evaluation, and reliable instructional technology. In short, high-performance workplaces foster Gen Y teacher growth and success.



Conclusions: Shared Responsibility for High-Performing Workplaces

Taken together, the Gen Y teachers surveyed and interviewed for this study demonstrate that members of the next generation of teachers have the drive to make education their career, the eagerness to learn from their colleagues from earlier generations, and the impulse to keep a skeptical eye on the policies that affect their practice. In short, they have the necessary qualities to capably take stewardship of the changing teaching profession.

These findings also make clear that, to make the most of the next generation of teachers, to advance teaching and learning and to nurture future leaders of the profession, it's essential that policymakers and district, school, and union leaders work together to transform the way most schools in America now operate. In other words, they must create workplaces that support high-quality teaching and learning that

- Provide regular feedback to teachers on their effectiveness
- Support peer learning and shared practice
- Recognize (and reward) high performance
- Have fair, rigorous, and meaningful evaluation systems
- Leverage technology intelligently to enhance performance

These workplace qualities will support Gen Y teachers as they move from being eager but nearly overwhelmed novices to becoming highly effective teachers and eventually leaders in their schools and in the profession. Figure 10 shows this progression.

It is not, however, just the responsibility of current education leaders, whether they are union or management, to develop and sustain high-performing workplaces. Teachers themselves—AFT members and their colleagues—need to support one another and openly engage in shared practice, insist on high-quality evaluation systems and high-quality student assessment information, and hold their fellow teachers accountable for ensuring that all students learn.

Gen Y teachers and their students are fortunate in that the momentum for such workplace changes is growing. The three local AFT affiliates profiled in this report are just a few examples of the kinds of collaboration between unions and management that are beginning to build sustainable high-performing workplaces—from St. Francis, which upended the traditional ways teachers are supported, evaluated, and compensated, to Philadelphia, where the union and management together made some bold initial steps toward transformation. In all three cases, the union served as a crucial partner in reform.

Generation Y teachers want to stay in the profession and make a difference. Building humane, high-performing workplaces today will ensure that this next generation of teachers and their colleagues evoke extraordinary levels of learning among all their students and build a stronger teaching profession tomorrow.

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Appendix A: Teacher Surveys Reanalyzed

| Survey Name | Retaining Teacher Talent | Waiting to Be Won Over | Schools and Staffing Survey | Lessons Learned | MetLife Survey of the American Teacher (2009)* |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| Group(s) conducting the survey | Learning Point Associates & Public Agenda | Education Sector & FDR Group | National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) | National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality & Public Agenda | Harris Interactive |
| Funder(s) | The Joyce Foundation, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation | Joyce Foundation | U.S. Department of Education | U.S. Department of Education | MetLife Foundation |
| Month(s) and year survey was administered | April 16- June 22, 2009 | Fall 2007 | Multiple | March 12- April 23, 2007 | Teachers- October 15, 2009- November 12, 2009 Principals- October 19, 2009, and November 16, 2009 |
| Total N | 883 public school teachers including an over-sample of 241 Gen Y teachers | 1,010 K-12 public school teachers | 2007-08 administration: 47,600 2003-04 administration: 52,478 1999-2000 administration: 56,354 | 641 first-year public school teachers | 1,003 public school teachers |
| Response rate | 25% | 14% | 2007-08 administration: 84% 2003-04 administration: 84.8% 1999-2000 administration: 83.1% | 29% | N/A |
| Margin of error (if reported) | Plus or minus 4.4% | Plus or minus 3% | n/a | Plus or minus 4% | n/a |
| URLs with survey results | http://www.RetainingTeacherTalent.org | http://www.educationsector.org/usr_doc/WaitingToBeWonOver.pdf | http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/ | http://www.TQSource.org | http://www.metlife.com/about/corporate-profile/citizenship/metlife-foundation/metlife-survey-of-the-american-teacher.html?WT.mc_id=vu1101 |

| Survey Name | Retaining Teacher Talent | Waiting to Be Won Over | Schools and Staffing Survey | Lessons Learned | MetLife Survey of the American Teacher (2009)* |
|---|---|--|-----------------------------|---|---|
| <p>Citation(s) of published results (APA style)</p> | <p>Coggshall, J. G., Ott, A., Behrstock, E., & Lasagna, M. (2009). <i>Retaining Teacher Talent: The View from Gen Y</i>. Naperville, IL: Learning Point Associates & Public Agenda.</p> <p>Coggshall, J. G., & Ott, A. (2009). <i>Retaining Teacher Talent: Convergence and Contradictions in Teachers' Perceptions of Policy Reform Ideas</i>. Naperville, IL: Learning Point Associates & Public Agenda.</p> <p>Yarrow, A.L. (2009). <i>State of Mind</i>. Naperville, IL: Learning Point Associates & Public Agenda.</p> | <p>Duffett, A., Farkas, S., Rotherham, A.J., & Silva, E. (2008). <i>Waiting to Be Won Over: Teachers Speak on the Profession, Unions, and Reform</i>. Washington D.C.: Education Sector. Retrieved March 2, 2011, from http://www.educationsector.org/usr_doc/WaitingToBeWonOver.pdf</p> | | <p>National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality & Public Agenda. (2007a). <i>They're not little kids anymore: The special challenges of new teachers in high schools and middle schools</i> (Issue No. 1 of <i>Lessons learned: New teachers talk about their jobs, challenges, and long-range plans</i>). New York: Public Agenda. Retrieved March 2, 2011, from http://www.tqsource.org/publications/LessonsLearned1.pdf</p> <p>National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality & Public Agenda. (2007b). <i>Working without a net: How new teachers from three prominent alternate route programs describe their first year on the job</i> (Issue No. 2 of <i>Lessons learned: New teachers talk about their jobs, challenges, and long-range plans</i>). New York: Public Agenda. Retrieved March 2, 2011, from http://www.tqsource.org/publications/lessonslearned2.pdf</p> <p>National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality & Public Agenda. (2008). <i>Teaching in changing times</i> (Issue No. 3 of <i>Lessons learned: New teachers talk about their jobs, challenges, and long-range plans</i>). New York: Public Agenda. Retrieved March 2, 2011, from http://www.tqsource.org/publications/LessonsLearned3.pdf</p> | <p>MetLife. (2009). <i>The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Collaborating for Student Success</i>. Harris Interactive. http://www.metlife.com/assets/cao/contributions/foundation/american-teacher/MetLife_Teacher_Survey_2009.pdf</p> |

Appendix B: Teacher Surveys Reviewed

| Survey Name | A Sense of Calling | Attitudes about Teaching | AFT 2002 | AFT 2008 | Teaching Commission Survey | MetLife Survey of the American Teacher (2008) |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Group(s) conducting the survey | Public Agenda | Public Agenda | Peter D. Hart Research Associates | Peter D. Hart Research Associates | Peter D. Hart Research Associates and Harris Interactive | Harris Interactive |
| Funder(s) | Public Agenda | Public Agenda | AFT | AFT | | MetLife |
| Month(s) and year survey was administered | February 8-March 31, 2000 | August 25, 2003 (date of the report) | November 1-16, 2002 | January 29-February 1, 2008 | November 19-23, 2004 | Students= June 18-27, 2008 Teachers= May 28-June 25, 2008 Principals= May 23-June 28, 2008 |
| Total N | N = 664 K-12 Teachers N = 511 Superintendents/principals | | Total N = 755 Age 18-29 N = 109 Age 30-39 N = 126 Age 40-49 N = 185 50 and over N = 319 | Total N = 708 Age 18-39 N = 235 Age 40-49 N = 182 50 and over N = 279 | Total N = 553 18-43- 119 35-49- 251 50 and over- 177 | 1,000 teachers 502 principals 902 students |
| Response rate | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Margin of error (if reported) | Teachers public school- + or - 4 points Teachers parochial- + or - 6 points Superintendents/Principals- + or - 4 points | | | | | |
| URLs with survey results | http://www.publicagenda.org/files/pdf/sense_of_calling.pdf | http://www.publicagenda.org/files/pdf/attitudes_about_teaching.pdf | | | | http://www.metlife.com/assets/cao/contributions/foundation/american-teacher/MetLife_Teacher_Survey_2009.pdf |
| Citation(s) of published results (APA style) | Farkas, S.; Johnson, J.; Foleno, T. (2000). <i>A Sense of Calling. Who Teaches and Why.</i> New York, NY. Public Agenda. | Johnson, J.; Duffet, A. (2003). <i>Attitudes About Teaching.</i> New York, NY. Public Agenda. | | | | MetLife (2008). <i>The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Past, Present, and Future.</i> (October 2008). New York, NY. Metlife, Inc. http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED504457.pdf |

* Reanalysis of MetLife survey items for this report were conducted by Harris Interactive.

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