Performance-Pay for Teachers

Designing a System that Students Deserve

A TeacherSolutions report by 18 of the nation's best teachers

Center for Teaching Quality

The Center for Teaching Quality launched the TeacherSolutions[SM] model in February 2006 when a select team of 18 highly accomplished teachers from throughout the nation was assembled in a first-of-its-kind approach to begin to study and unpack the research literature on professional compensation. Through ongoing virtual conversations and a series of virtual Webinars, these expert practitioners have assessed and debated the issues with researchers well versed in value-added methods. They also have engaged in structured dialogue with policy analysts, community activists, teacher union leaders and practitioners who have been involved in a variety of performance-pay plans across the nation. This report represents the first of what we hope will be many policy discussions to use TeacherSolutions — calling on the true experts in the field to address policy issues. These experts experience the impact of policy where it matters most: in America's classrooms, where these accomplished teachers make a difference every day.
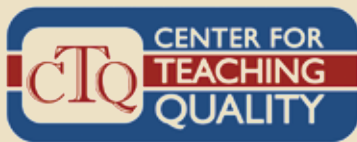
The Center for Teaching Quality seeks to improve student learning through developing teacher leadership, conducting practical research and raising public awareness about what must be done to ensure that every student in America has a qualified, well-supported and effective teacher. Over the past eight years, the Center's work, rooted in the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996) landmark report, has sought to promote a coherent system of teacher recruitment, preparation, induction, professional development, compensation and school-design policies that could dramatically close the student achievement gap. As a small nonprofit with big ideas and ambitions to promote a true teaching profession, the Center has worked on a large range of research studies and policy development initiatives designed with the goals of cultivating leadership, spreading expertise and elevating the voices of accomplished teachers so that their knowledge of students and schools can inform the next generation of teaching policies and practices.

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It's Time

More than half a century ago, the teacher single-salary schedule was designed with good reasons in mind — to promote gender and racial pay equity, to protect teachers from administrators who might make capricious employment and pay decisions, and to encourage teachers to pursue advanced academic degrees.

Like the dusty blackboards still found in some school classrooms, the single-salary schedule has served its purposes and outlived its usefulness.

In a new era, with challenges and opportunities before us that were unimaginable in post-World War II America, our public schools need a far more nuanced approach to professional compensation — an approach that acknowledges teaching quality as our best guarantee of student achievement.

We have come together as a TeacherSolutions team because we are united in our belief that teachers need to be paid differently. We agree that a carefully crafted performance-pay system has huge potential to transform the

What Is New and Compelling about This Report?

This unique report showcases the authentic voices of educators who have been successful with every kind of student, in every kind of school. We are national, state and district teachers of the year; Presidential Award winners; Milken honorees; and National Board Certified Teachers. We are not here as representatives of any professional organization or political party. Our team members are Republicans, Democrats and Independents; members of union and nonunion teacher associations; and teachers who work in school systems with and without collective bargaining. But we share these three things in common:

1. We know how teachers think and what will motivate them.

2. We are convinced that well-designed compensation plans can rapidly improve teaching quality and student achievement.

3. We believe that teachers must be welcomed as full partners in the process of restructuring their own compensation.

teaching profession in ways that can help all students learn more. We do not shy away from the principle that teachers who perform at high levels and spread their expertise deserve extra compensation for their performance and accomplishments. And we do not agonize over the fact that teacher salaries may be less predictable. But we worry that many of the performance-pay blueprints now on the table will not translate into the high-achieving schools imagined by their architects.

A Performance-Pay Plan That's Fair, Strategic and Likely to Win Teacher Support

1. Get the base-pay system right. If you don't have a career ladder that encourages teachers to advance in their profession — and be paid accordingly as they advance — tinkering around the edges by providing $2,000 bonuses for a handful of teachers will not secure the stable, high-quality professional workforce we need. We are encouraged by reports from blue-ribbon, business-led groups such as the Teaching Commission and the *New* Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, which recommend increasing investments in teacher pay by $25–30 billion. To flesh out ideas such as these, we propose a new base-pay system with at least three tiers: novice, professional and expert. Under our sample framework for Wake County, NC, for example, base salaries would range from $30,000 for a novice to $70,000 for an expert. But, an expert teacher with many skills and accomplishments who also leads school improvement in multiple ways could earn up to $130,000 a year.

2. Supplement the base-pay system with a performance-pay system that is open to **all** ***teachers.*** Singling out only a small proportion of educators for special rewards will never produce the large workforce we need to staff every public school with high-quality teachers. Such plans show little understanding of how teachers become accomplished and how schools become effective. In particular:

■ Don't place an artificial cap on the number or percentage of teachers who are eligible for performance incentives or rewards. In Florida's disputed Special Teachers Are Rewarded (STAR) plan, for instance, only one in four teachers is eligible for any performance bonuses.

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■ Don't limit rewards only to teachers who teach tested subjects, such as reading and math. If we want excellence across the entire school, we need to create incentive systems that encourage every teacher in every subject to excel. How can we say we want every student to have a great teacher, but then say that we will reward only some predetermined smaller percentage of teachers for their greatness?

3. *Reward teachers who help their students make significant academic gains.* Student achievement is the bottom line, and some teachers are more effective than others — and should be compensated accordingly. We favor plans that measure student gains over time (not just a single test score on a standardized test) — plans that recognize both individual and "small team" performance, and that allow credible data from classroom assessments (such as the Nebraska model) to be used.

4. *Provide additional pay for additional degrees and professional development, but only if the training is relevant.* Make sure that the additional courses, credits or degrees are actually tied to the school's and/or district's strategic goals for boosting student achievement. A master's degree in educational administration may not deserve extra compensation if the local educational priority is for teachers to boost student achievement among its second-language learners.

5. *Allow local flexibility.* Different schools and districts need the flexibility to distribute incentive funds in ways that advance their specific student-learning goals. For example, although math, science and special education might be the highest-needs subjects nationally, it makes no sense for an individual community to pay more for a math teacher if it actually needs more art or history teachers.

6. *Encourage collaboration.* Highly competitive compensation plans discourage the teamwork and sharing of successful strategies that research has shown, time and again, to be a hallmark of high-performing schools. Performance-pay plans should encourage more teachers to document effective classroom practices and share them with their colleagues. Incentives should also be used to promote close collaboration among small teams at the department or grade level, where "team effects" are most likely to produce better results for students.

7. Offer incentives to teachers who want to teach in high-needs, low-performing schools, but only if they're qualified. Limit these incentives to teachers who can demonstrate that they are effective with high-needs students and will be able to address the school's specific learning needs. Sending a willing but unqualified or underprepared teacher to such a school could do more harm than good.

8. Reward leadership, not seniority. Qualified teachers who take on additional responsibilities — mentoring novices and peers and preparing new teachers, creating family- and community-outreach programs, serving on advisory councils and the like — should be paid for their time outside the classroom. The number of years on the job should not determine who gets tapped for these leadership opportunities; demonstrated ability should.

9. Be brave, be bold. We realize our ideas will not be easily implemented. For many school systems, the changes we recommend will require nothing less than a total overhaul of the compensation system now in place. These ideas represent a radical departure from the traditional ways in which our society has compensated K–12 teachers, even the best of whom rarely, if ever, make as much as the least effective principal or administrator in a school district. But we have to look no further than the local university to see that entrepreneurial faculty are able to negotiate their own salaries and that a full professor, through his or her credentials and performance, can earn more money than the college dean. In this day and age, is there any reason why districts should be prevented from paying a great teacher more than a mediocre administrator?

10. Finally, make sure to include accomplished teachers in any efforts to overhaul your teacher compensation plans. Seek out teachers with a track record of accomplishment in their classrooms, schools and communities to become partners in compensation redesign. They have the experience and credibility to ensure that your pay plan will win the necessary public support, starting with support from their peers.

We do not present the ideas in this report as the only solution or even the best solution. But they are *teacher solutions*. We hope they will inspire, and even challenge, other teachers to do as we have done: to accept ownership of the compensation issue and begin to make their voices heard in what we believe — without exaggeration — is a defining moment in the history of the teacher.

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More than half a century ago, the teacher single-salary schedule was designed with good reasons in mind — to promote gender and racial pay equity, to protect teachers from administrators who might make capricious employment and pay decisions, and to encourage teachers to pursue advanced academic degrees.

Like the dusty blackboards still found in some school classrooms, the single-salary schedule has served its purposes, met its goals and outlived its usefulness.

In a new era, with challenges and opportunities before us that were unimaginable in post-World War II America, our public schools need a far more nuanced approach to professional compensation — an approach that acknowledges teaching quality as our best guarantee of student achievement.

Business and community leaders, education reformers and policymakers expect every child of the Millennial Generation to reach high academic standards, contribute to the 21st-century global economy, and participate in our nation's democratic and civic society. Never before have America's public schools been asked to meet such ambitious goals for all of our students.

And teachers must lead the way.

What will it take to make that happen? Foremost, it will require a comprehensive teacher development and compensation system, supported by the dollars and tools needed to recruit, prepare and retain good teachers for every school. Teachers must receive pay and incentives that attract the best talent, reward their success with students, encourage new learning, develop leadership, spread effective teaching practices, promote school improvement and change, and otherwise advance the profession.

Many of our nation's best teachers recognize that the time has come for compensation programs that differentiate among levels of effort and performance. If they hesitate to embrace most of the current plans being proposed by political and business leaders, it should be read as understandable caution born of long experience. The checkered history of differentiated pay has been characterized by administrators who did not have the tools to judge good teaching, by makeshift student and teacher information systems that yielded

untrustworthy data and by implementation goals that far-outstripped the dollars and technical know-how available to support them.

To increase productivity, today's management experts tell us you must listen carefully to the advice of high performers in your workforce. Yet in education, the insights of our most successful teachers are rarely solicited when school and teaching policies are under development.

Are policymakers deliberately ignoring the opinions of teachers? We don't think so. But the cacophony of opinion from policy gurus, union leaders, school administrators, labor economists and education researchers often drowns out the voices of classroom experts. Our best teachers are busy serving students and families, and they have few venues to translate all they know about what works for students into insights and ideas that can help shape effective policy. We have seen all too often that educational policy organizations with the word "teacher" or "teaching" in their monikers do not draw on the wisdom of accomplished teachers in proposing new ideas or critiquing the current system. There is no substitute for hearing from the horse's mouth — especially if the horse is a thoroughbred.

Listening to the Real Experts — Teachers

We believe this report, written by a team of accomplished American teachers, can help bridge the long-standing communication gap between the makers of school policy and the teaching professionals who put that policy into action. Above all, this report makes it clear that teacher leaders not only understand the need for school reform — including well-crafted incentive pay plans — but have the much-needed insider knowledge that can help prevent well-intentioned reforms from going awry.

This report is the first to emerge from a new initiative — TeacherSolutions — created and supported by the Center for Teaching Quality and the Teacher Leaders Network, a virtual professional community that includes teachers of proven excellence from around the nation.

The idea behind TeacherSolutions, we believe, is brilliantly simple: Identify a representative cross-section of America's best teachers and support them as they undertake an in-depth study of a pressing educational issue, examining it through the lens of their own professional experiences. Continue that support as they distill their collective understanding and then disseminate the

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results through reports, policy briefs, interactive Web sites and consultations with policymakers, the public and their peers.

We are grateful to our funders for believing in the "big idea" that teachers have solutions to offer and can help solve vexing educational problems. Much of the work of our far-flung TeacherSolutions team was accomplished in virtual space, taking advantage of the Internet and a package of Web-based conferencing tools. It required a leap of faith on the part of John Luczak and Gretchen Crosby Sims of the Joyce Foundation, Ann Mullin of the Gund Foundation, and Don Ernst of the Stuart Foundation to support this still-novel approach to networking a busy group of our best and brightest teachers. We owe a special debt to John and Gretchen who took the plunge first and whose wise counsel helped us chart our course.

It is difficult to imagine a more challenging first topic for TeacherSolutions than professional compensation and pay-for-performance. But it was chosen for good reason. No other policy reform, if done right, can do more to transform teaching into a real profession in which accomplished teachers are identified, utilized and paid more for spreading their teaching know-how among students, other teachers, administrators, parents and the policy community.

The outstanding members of our first TeacherSolutions team — and many thousands of teachers like them in public schools across America — hunger for the day when teachers are respected not only for their labors but for their expertise. This is their report, filled with their voices and insights. Listen carefully. They are the real experts.

Barnett Berry

Barnett Berry
Founder and President
Center for Teaching Quality
March 2007

Who We Are

We are your children's teachers. We come from the inner city and the suburbs, from small towns and rural communities across the nation's heartland. If we could gather all of our students past and present into a single auditorium, the resulting mosaic would mirror the many millions of students who attend America's public schools. (Note: Mini-profiles of the participating teachers can be found on pages 46–48.)

We have been recognized for our accomplishments, but we are far from unique. We are a small sample of the many classroom professionals who go to work each day with student success foremost on our minds. Like so many of the teachers in your own community's schools, we are learning experts who have refined our craft in busy classrooms, working with many hundreds of children. We are restless to improve, constantly adding to our understanding through careful observation, reflection and professional development.

We also are teacher leaders. We have pushed past the boundaries of our own classroom walls and accepted a full share of responsibility for the success of all the young people in our schools. We are mentors for novice and preservice teachers. We coach and learn from our professional colleagues, and we relish collaborations that produce better results for students.

As teacher leaders, we also feel an obligation to serve and represent the teaching profession. We are members of district, state and national advisory groups where we share our insights about effective schooling. We are active in our professional associations and in online communities that support important conversations among teachers from around the nation and the world. At every opportunity, we reach out to education policymakers and urge them to consider our unique classroom perspectives on school reform.

We have come together as a TeacherSolutions team because we are united in our belief that teachers need to be paid differently. We agree that a carefully crafted professional-compensation system has huge potential to transform the teaching profession in ways that can help all students learn more. We do not shy away from the principle that teachers who perform at high levels deserve extra compensation for their performance. But we worry that many of the pay-for-performance blueprints now on the table will not translate into the high-achieving schools imagined by their architects.

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We urge policymakers to think of us as a preproduction review panel — as experts gathered to critique an initial design and offer informed advice to ensure the final product works as intended. It is not our intention to usurp the decisionmaker's role but to become trusted partners who share the same vision of teacher effectiveness and student success.

We do not claim that all of our ideas and suggestions are original. Many components of a transformational model of professional compensation are already in play in Denver and Minneapolis, in some schools involved in the Milken-sponsored Teacher Advancement Program (TAP), and in other school systems across the country. We have spent months studying these plans. We have talked with their authors, interviewed other local and national experts, and led in-depth conversations on pay-for-performance among accomplished educators in the Teacher Leaders Network. We interviewed knowledgeable union leaders in Denver, Minneapolis, and Montgomery County, MD, who have created and implemented new pay- and peer-review systems. As part of our literature review, we also have researched merit pay plans from the 1980s and 1990s and have analyzed why they failed to achieve their goals. Finally, we have examined recently proposed or enacted state programs, including Florida's Special Teachers Are Rewarded (STAR) plan, which has come under criticism from policy analysts across the political spectrum. We believe plans like STAR are fatally flawed for reasons we will carefully delineate.

Since we began our work, the U.S. Department of Education has begun rolling out a new program, the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF), which promises to provide tens of millions of federal dollars to encourage states and districts to pay teachers differently. The stated goal of this program is to focus teacher-compensation systems on what really matters: *student learning.* While we are hopeful about the potential of the TIF program, we also are concerned that some policymakers and administrators will not learn from the hard lessons of history and will choose to invest these new incentive funds in compensation approaches that repeat the mistakes of the past (see sidebar, *What Not To Do,* pages 40–41).

Our own investigation into performance-based compensation plans, past and present — all viewed through the lens of our own classroom successes and struggles — will provide fresh insights into how best to use these and other incentive funds to produce the greatest results for students, families and communities.

What is new and compelling about this report? This unique report show-cases the authentic voices of educators who have been successful with every kind of student, in every kind of school. We are not here as representatives of any professional organization or political party. Our team members are Republicans, Democrats and Independents; members of union and nonunion teacher associations; and teachers who work in school systems with and without collective bargaining. But we share these three things in common:

1. We know how teachers think and what will motivate them.

2. We are convinced that well-designed compensation plans can rapidly improve teaching quality and student achievement.

3. We believe that teachers must be welcomed as full partners in the process of restructuring their own compensation.

In this report, we have infused the best current thinking about teacher compensation with fresh insights of our own. We hope what we say here will spark fresh conversations not only between teachers and policymakers but among teachers themselves. For too long, teachers have waited in the anteroom while others sat at the policy table and made decisions that shaped our futures. One way or another, teachers are going to be held accountable for results. That is appropriate. As professionals who understand the complex work of teaching better than anyone else, we must step into the room and up to the table. We must become leaders in creating our own accountability.

What We See: Why Students Deserve a New Teacher-Compensation System

The single-salary schedule is fast becoming a relic of the industrial age. We need new teacher-compensation systems that will attract dedicated individuals, recognize high standards, reward initiative, encourage enterprise and collaboration, and keep successful teachers in our classrooms and schools throughout their careers. We need compensation systems that will make teaching a true profession.

As they grow in understanding and experience, teachers — like other professionals — crave new challenges. In most school systems today, this requires them to leave the classroom and become administrators or abandon education for other careers. Well-designed compensation systems, we believe, can improve teacher retention, help teachers avoid professional inertia and exploit

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educators' hard-won knowledge and skills on behalf of school improvement. To accomplish this, we believe education policymakers will need to abandon "nine-month thinking." By offering year-round positions, creating hybrid roles (teaching part of the day, week or year and also leading outside the classroom) and encouraging entrepreneurial thinking, policymakers can stop the brain drain that makes it much more difficult to sustain educational progress.

We boldly state that *our students deserve* a new teacher-compensation system. And the compensation system they deserve will be driven by eight core beliefs (see sidebar below).

We accept it as a given that teacher-compensation systems must and will change. The question is how. We recognize that when teachers enter into a discussion about their own salaries and incentives, there is a risk that we will appear to be more interested in our pay than our work. We state forthrightly that this is not the case. *But there is no way for us to share what we believe are unique and valuable insights about effective teacher-compensation plans without talking about teacher pay.*

We Believe ...

With our students in mind, we call for a performance-pay system that:

1. Focuses on the goal that every student deserves a quality teacher;

2. Builds on a strong and equitable base-pay structure;

3. Attracts talented individuals to teaching and supports all of them on the path from "novice" to "expert";

4. Encourages *every* teacher to grow professionally and offers all of them opportunities to lead;

5. Rewards teachers based on their ability to help students make significant academic gains as well as their willingness to work together and achieve success for all students in a school;

6. Recognizes that individual student learning is significantly influenced by more than just individual teachers;

7. Acknowledges that teachers cannot help students learn more if they do not have sufficient resources, quality training, access to data and the necessary time to learn from each other; and

8. Appreciates that teachers bring different levels of skills, knowledge and ability to their work and that some teachers outperform others.

A Special Message to Teachers

In reviewing a draft of the principles and proposals embedded in this report, Wyk McGowan, a teacher leader in Columbus, OH, eloquently expressed his concern "with the vision needed to make these 'We believe' statements come to fruition." He has given us permission to respond to some of his comments here. Wyk said, in part:

> *The problem with compensating teachers for the success of their students or for their qualifications or continuing education or for their community involvement is that these solutions rely upon data and paper and statistics — all of which, as anyone in education can tell you, can be manipulated … . Nowhere in this formula for solving the professional compensation of teachers are the words love and caring and passion written.*

We will write them now. The best teachers in America are filled with love and caring for their students and a passion for teaching and learning that may be impossible to quantify. McGowan argues that, "We can't weigh a teacher's soul to find out how much of it she leaves in the school everyday — her passion flowing into the minds of her students like the lifeblood of education."

We certainly agree. Where we disagree is his contention that "until we can measure passion, we are stuck with a compensation system which pays teachers based upon their educational level and their time served." Our purpose in this report is to provoke a conversation not only among policymakers and the public but among teachers themselves about whether we can, in fact, build a new compensation system that recognizes the importance of

passion and caring and also hastens the transformation of teaching into a true profession in which dedication, collaboration, and individual initiative and accomplishment are all highly valued.

This is a huge challenge, to be sure, in part because *teaching is work unlike any other.* One reason that we and many other accomplished teachers have resisted new ideas about professional compensation is because we understand that good teaching is fundamentally different from good accounting or good dentistry or even good nursing or doctoring. The question is: *Can a unique profession devise for itself a unique compensation system that maximizes our potential to excel?*

Teachers in Denver and Minneapolis, to take only two examples, are trying to answer that question. The teacher leaders who have served as trailblazers in those two education communities understand that our profession has reached a critical threshold. We must either move forward and take more control of our own destiny or continue to fight a rearguard action while others who have little understanding of our unique work determine not only how we will be compensated but how our quality and our worth will be measured.

We do not present the ideas in this report as the only solution or even the best solution. But they are *teacher solutions.* We hope they will inspire, and even challenge, other teachers to do as we have done: to accept ownership of the compensation issue and begin to make their voices heard in what we believe — without exaggeration — is a defining moment in the history of the teacher.

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The TeacherSolutions Framework: How To Pay Teachers More and Differently

In our review of the research and debate about teacher compensation, we found that most policymakers, education economists, business leaders and school reform strategists — whatever their ideological leanings — agree with our contention that the average American teacher is under-compensated and that to ensure a stable, high-quality workforce, teachers need to be paid both *more* and *differently*.

The average salary of today's teacher ($46,597 per year) is far less than the average salary of a full professor ($94,606), engineer ($78,023), computer systems analyst ($73,269), retail buyer ($64,813) or accountant ($56,102). Over the past decade, the purchasing power of teachers has lost ground as well. For example, between 1994 and 2004, for every real $1 increase in average accountant pay, teacher pay rose only 19 cents.[1]

Additional Investments Needed

In their 2004 report *Teaching at Risk,* members of The Teaching Commission, chaired by former IBM chief executive Louis V. Gerstner Jr., recommended that the nation invest an additional $30 billion per year in teacher compensation, giving *every* teacher a 10 percent increase and providing a 30 percent increase to the "top half."[2] More recently, the *New* Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce called for an additional $25 billion investment in teacher salaries, with an average starting salary of $45,000 and a top salary of $110,000 for the most experienced and effective teachers who work a 12-month schedule.[3]

Although they left no doubt about their support for professionalizing the compensation of teachers, neither of these blue-ribbon panels offered a clear definition of top-half teachers or attempted to define the *specific* skills they must possess or accomplishments they must achieve to advance. The Gerstner-led Teaching Commission did suggest that bonuses and incentives "should ultimately be based on performance" tied to teacher evaluations that include student-achievement gains measured by state tests. The Commission also proposed that additional compensation be awarded to those who teach in high-need areas and take on "increasing levels of responsibility."

We agree with the authors of these reports on the need both to increase the base pay for the entire teaching profession and to provide extra incentives and rewards for teachers who demonstrate superior performance. However, we would go a step beyond their broad recommendations and argue that carefully defining an "excellent" teacher — and the path that leads to excellence — is the critical first stage in designing new compensation systems that will earn the widespread support of teachers, advance the teaching profession and serve as a catalyst for school transformation.

The members of both blue-ribbon panels were openly critical of current teacher-compensation systems — often called "single-salary schedules" — which "[do] nothing to reward excellence because all teachers, regardless of effort or performance, get the same automatic pay increases." Again, we agree. Most teacher-pay systems in use today have 24 or more *columns* for years of experience and four to six *lanes* (or rows) for additional college coursework and degrees. Teachers slowly move through these columns and lanes year after year, with no opportunity or encouragement to accelerate their careers through superior performance and personal dedication. To break free of this lockstep compensation system, many accomplished teachers leave for administrative positions or entirely new careers.

Although they give little attention to the details, both reports propose that districts and states should increase a teacher's compensation as he or she moves up a career ladder from novice to master teacher and should establish "compensation bands" within each level to reflect a teacher's experience and demonstrated ability. We believe that by fully recognizing and describing the attributes of an excellent teacher, policymakers can add muscle and sinew to this bare-bones description of a career path for teachers.

In our own deliberations, we have imagined several career designations — much like what is found in higher education and in corporations such as IBM. We call for at least three career levels: ***novice, professional*** and ***expert*** teacher. We know that many states and school districts have used similar designations in the past, often as part of failed merit-pay programs. Most of these unworkable programs offered base compensation plans that did not distinguish adequately among the different skills that novices or veteran teachers possessed — nor were they flexible enough to respond to market demands and other changing realities. Teacher evaluation tools were simplistic, overly reliant on the judgments of individuals who were not themselves expert teachers and ultimately unable to measure what they promised to measure.

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These failed merit-pay systems did not tie compensation tightly to meaningful measures of student and teacher productivity. They did little to improve and spread good teaching practices. In addition, past merit-pay programs rarely offered meaningful financial rewards. Roles for teacher leaders did not really change much, and if they did, it was because teachers became administrators — not "teachers leading teachers."

Here's What Is New in Our Re-Conception:

We imagine a comprehensive teacher-compensation system that takes into account the widely accepted notion that all teacher salaries need to be higher and that teachers who demonstrate superior performance should be paid more. We believe these two goals can be accomplished by creating parallel compensation tracks — a **base** plan and a **career** plan, focused on performance pay.

We believe **base-compensation plans** should recognize that teachers come to the education workplace with varying levels of experience and qualifications. Teachers should be able to negotiate their base compensation with these factors in play. For example, we imagine that a school district might pay considerably more for a new teacher from IBM's Transition to Teaching program, with its requirement for subject-matter knowledge and demonstrated teaching performance, than for a quick-entry recruit who may have a bachelor's degree in math or science but who has little pedagogical skill and only intends to teach for a few years. A newly minted graduate of a well-respected teacher education program, who has passed a rigorous performance assessment and is specifically trained to work with high-needs students, would be able to demand a higher starting salary than another teacher-education graduate with no special training and no interest in working in a high-poverty neighborhood. If the well-prepared recruit is willing to commit to teaching for at least five years, then he or she should be paid even more. Indeed some new teachers might command the $45,000 beginning salary proposed by the *New* Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce when they are well prepared to teach in high-needs schools and have demonstrated their capacity to be effective in them.

As discussed in detail in the following chapter, we believe **career-compensation plans** should build on the base and offer salary supplements in four areas of professional performance: *Student Learning, Knowledge and Skills, Market Needs,* and *Leadership.* As teachers progress from novice to professional to expert

(see grid, page 19), these supplements would reward teacher accomplishments that are commensurate with each level of career development. These supplements would be designed to encourage and reward best-teaching practices; bolster and accelerate the achievement of local, state and national school improvement goals; and ensure enough career flexibility to keep our best teachers in the profession.

The degree to which teachers earn rewards at each level and in each category would vary according to the quality and quantity of their contributions. Some teachers might earn only a share of the available percentage increases or bonuses. Others might earn the maximum by making dramatic improvements in student learning by spreading their expertise beyond the walls of their own classroom or school, by fulfilling local labor-market needs, or by providing a level of teacher leadership that dramatically improves schools and school systems. At the highest levels of service and reward, hybrid teaching positions — that expand the teacher's work day, week and year — will have to be developed. The bottom line: Successful schools and districts will want to buy more of the time of capable teachers to accomplish important school and district goals.

Most important, every teacher within a school system must have the opportunity and support to progress through this latticework of professional compensation and demonstrate that he or she deserves the maximum salary, incentives and rewards. Placing caps on the percentage of teachers who are rewarded for strong performance runs counter to the idea that every student should have a great teacher.

We acknowledge that these ideas represent a radical departure from the traditional ways in which our society has compensated K–12 teachers, even the best of whom rarely if ever make as much as the least effective principal or administrator in a school district. But we have to look no further than the local university to see that a full professor, through his or her credentials, accomplishments and performances, can earn more money than the dean of the college where he or she is employed. We are bold enough to suggest that the very best teachers should be among the highest-paid professionals in a school district.

Of course, not all teachers can or will be expected to achieve and perform at the highest levels. But for such a system to work, there must be an expectation that all teachers will strive to achieve and function at their own peak

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performance level — and be paid accordingly. To ensure that all teachers earn and deserve their basic compensation packages, peer-review systems should be in place to dismiss teachers who do not meet minimum standards of quality. We acknowledge that this will require teachers to make professional accountability a paramount concern.

It is time for administrators and teacher unions to come to an agreement on how to fairly compensate novices, professionals and experts — with flexible base salaries that mirror similarly prepared professionals, such as accountants and engineers — and with career supplements that encourage and recognize superior performance and stimulate continuous school improvement. We believe it is time for policymakers to put into place the financial underpinnings that will support such a system and to create the expectation that school districts will compensate and support teachers as professionals.

For Example …

This sample grid suggests how our proposals *might play out* in one school system — Wake County, NC. A sample grid for Oakland, CA; Chicago, IL; or Cleveland, MS, would look much different, of course, and we will offer samples of other representative school systems as our work progresses, taking into account financial resources, community demographics, collective-bargaining agreements and other factors.

The Wake County Public School System serves the affluent but diverse metropolis of Raleigh and includes the Research Triangle Park (RTP) area of North Carolina. In Wake County, where TeacherSolutions team member Bill Ferriter teaches, a beginning teacher with a bachelor's degree currently earns $32,287, and after 30 years of teaching, he or she will make only $57,915. By earning a master's degree and National Board Certification, a teacher can earn $71,661 in his or her 30th year. The Raleigh school system is located near three major research universities and many high-tech industries. Full professors in education on nine-month contracts can earn university salaries of more than $100,000 a year, while a typical engineer in an RTP industry can earn well over $125,000 annually.

Under our framework for Wake County, teacher salaries would range from $30,000 for a novice with few special skills and accomplishments to $130,000 for an expert with many skills and accomplishments who also leads school improvement in multiple ways.

A Professional-Compensation Framework: Designed for a Competitive Metropolis such as Research Triangle Park Area, North Carolina

Base-Salary Range *Negotiable based on credentials, experience, performance*		Career Salary Supplements				
		Student Learning	*Knowledge and Skills*	*Market Needs*	*Leadership*	*Base and Career Pay*
Novice (year 1–4)	**$30,000–$45,000**	**Up to 5%:** Individual with evidence of impact	**Up to 5%:** Research-based professional development based on induction-program improvements in teaching and assessment	**Up to $5,000** for teaching in high-needs schools, subjects, and assignments (Teachers need to demonstrate potential in specific context)	Not ready for role and reward	Can earn **up to $55,000**
Advanced (year 5–10)	**$46,000–55,000**	**Up to 10%:** With evidence of impact beyond own classroom; plus $2,000–$3,500 bonus for building and using new assessments	**Up to 10%:** National Board Certification can earn stipend; research-based professional development; mentoring new teachers; plus demonstrations of how professional development improves student learning	**Up to $10,000** for teaching in high-needs schools, subjects, etc. (Teachers need to demonstrate potential and effectiveness in specific context)	**Up to 10%** for coaching and mentoring; supporting community development	Can earn **up to $85,000**
Expert (year 10+)	**$56,000–$70,000**	**Up to 15%:** With higher rewards for using test scores and other measures to improve student learning beyond own classroom and demonstrate how own skills help other teachers enhance student learning; plus $2,000–$3,500 bonus for building and using new assessments	**Up to 15%:** Same as advanced teacher but 5% more when evidence of knowledge and skills spread through district and state	**Up to $15,000** for teaching in high-needs schools, subjects, etc. (Teachers need to demonstrate potential and effectiveness in specific context)	**Up to 15%** for coaching and community development; plus $10,000 for state and national leadership in developing new products and informing new policies	Can earn **up to $130,000**

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A Closer Look at Performance-Pay Plans

Why are policymakers and school-reform advocates increasingly attracted to teacher performance-pay plans? Clearly, they believe an incentives-based compensation system will encourage professional behaviors that result in better teaching and greater student achievement. If this reasoning is sound — and we believe it is — it follows that the development of an effective professional-compensation system must begin with the end in mind. What are the results we expect incentive programs to achieve? What professional behaviors should be encouraged? What does research tell us about school and teaching practices that produce the greatest gains for students?

Our recommended framework for a new system of teacher compensation is designed around the following core beliefs.

We believe that performance-pay programs should reward teachers when they:

1. Help students learn more;

2. Develop and use *relevant* new knowledge and skills;

3. Meet special needs in the *local* labor market; and

4. Provide school and community leadership for student success.

We argue that — to be effective — any new professional performance-pay system must include each of these four interlocking components. Taken together, we believe they promote the kinds of professional behaviors that produce excellent schools. Focusing on one or two components and excluding others will not give teachers the incentives and tools needed to deepen and spread their knowledge and ensure that all students are prepared for success in the 21st century.

We recognize that some teachers may be more capable than others. We also know from experience that, at various stages in their professional lives, teachers are able to devote more time to their profession and the students, families and communities they serve. We seek to create a professional compensation system that values all teachers while recognizing those who, for whatever reason, are able to accomplish more.

Student learning is our top priority — this is why we teach. We concur with policymakers who call for new teacher-compensation systems that reward improvements in student learning. At the same time, we know from experience that our pay systems also must focus on the conditions necessary to improve academic achievement. Teacher incentives must be meaningful *in the context of the communities where they are offered.* They must support high levels of teacher engagement not only with students but with colleagues, families and communities. They must be tailored to the particular conditions of each school and district in our nation. America's 3.4 million teachers live and work in a wide variety of urban, suburban and rural school jurisdictions. A compensation and support plan that makes sense for our colleague Anthony Cody in inner-city Oakland, CA, may not make sense for Sarah Applegate in the middle-class communities around Lacey, WA, or for Renee Moore in the rural Mississippi Delta. Oakland needs more bilingual teachers who also can teach math and science; Lacey needs more high school content specialists; and Cleveland, MS, needs more teachers who deeply understand African-American culture and the linguistics that undergird the teaching of English in the rural South.

Teachers should be rewarded when they *help other teachers* become more effective. And we believe that teachers who emerge as true *leaders of school improvement* deserve an extra measure of incentive pay. In his trailblazing book *The World is Flat,* Thomas Friedman reminds us that collaboration is the new coin of the realm. We believe this is true not only for our 21st-century global economy but for our 21st-century public schools. Consequently, our professional compensation systems *must promote collaborative behaviors* that break down the traditional isolationist structure of schools and reward teachers who work with and learn from each other.

We are ready to move forward as partners in building new teacher-compensation models, not for personal financial gain but because we agree that schools — like everything else in our culture — must change to meet the demands of the new millennium.

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1. Reward Teachers Who Help Students Learn More

We believe performance-pay systems should reward teachers who:

Help their students make significant academic gains.

As accomplished teachers, we put student learning ahead of every other priority in our professional lives. Individual teachers should be held responsible for moving specific students forward from where they started. Target goals are important, but they should not be arbitrary. *States and districts need to focus on the starting line — not just the finish line — when they take a measure of teacher performance.* Some students enter a teacher's classroom for the first time far behind their peers. Dedicated, expert teachers can help these students make significant gains in a single year. Even so, it may take more than a year to overcome major academic shortfalls.

We all see the wisdom in rewarding teachers who have the skills and persistence to accelerate the learning of these struggling students. But states and districts actually punish these teachers when they judge teacher performance solely with standardized tests that cannot accurately and reliably measure

Benefits and Limitations of Value-Added Measures

We understand that value-added methodologies (VAM) represent an important statistical breakthrough in analyzing standardized test results for signs of student progress and teacher performance. But both VAM and the tests themselves have many limitations and must not be used carelessly. For example, to get a stable measure of teacher effects, most researchers call for at least three years of test data to identify more or less effective teachers. Even when data are available, the tests themselves must be designed and scaled so teachers can be assessed fairly on how much they help students learn content in the same subject area over time. Finally, to judge a teacher's value-added effects, test data must be available for sufficient numbers of students for entire years, but in low-income urban schools with highly mobile student populations, this is not possible. We believe a robust array of achievement and performance measures is needed — tools that ensure every teacher is rewarded when he or she helps students learn more and that no students or subjects are overlooked by the accountability process.

student-achievement gains. It just doesn't make good sense. For example, Susan Bischoff in Manatee County, FL, routinely helps her 5th-grade students — mostly new immigrants who enter her classroom with 2nd-grade reading and math skills — make large academic gains, well over a year's worth of progress. However, the Florida test is not "scaled" in a way to capture her students' improvement. Despite her expertise and her success, Susan would not qualify as a STAR teacher under the state's merit-pay plan. We need accountability systems that are sophisticated enough to measure and reward significant progress — no matter where students enter the game.

Value-added methods (VAM), made well-known by statistician William Sanders, are much-improved approaches to assessing student academic growth and teaching effectiveness. We studied these methods and interviewed several experts who use them. While value-added methods have utility and could be part of a new performance-pay system, they have serious limitations. Our colleague Becky Malone, a Chattanooga teacher who has achieved one of the highest value-added gain scores in Tennessee, contends that the tests are "too imprecise and unstable" and should not be used as the sole arbiter of teacher effectiveness or student achievement. In addition, Becky knows all too well that VAM does not always accurately capture the "effects" of teachers who primarily teach higher-achieving students.

We believe performance-pay systems should reward teachers who:

Effectively assess student progress and use data to tailor instruction to individual student needs.

We agree that standardized test scores have a place in our educational accountability systems, and we believe they can be part of a comprehensive framework for paying teachers more and differently. But they do not, in and of themselves, provide a fully accurate measure of teacher effectiveness. Large-scale standardized tests are designed to give a snapshot of student performance at one moment in time, and testmakers remind us that no one test is broad enough to measure the full extent of student knowledge in any area. The problem is compounded when we consider that most teachers cannot be evaluated using the high-stakes standardized tests required by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) because their subject areas or grade levels are not tested. (NCLB requires annual testing in reading and math in grades 3–8 and one high school grade but not in other grades or subjects.)

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We believe teachers should be paid more not only when they produce student-achievement gains on standardized tests but *when they can demonstrate individual student progress through credible data from their own classroom assessments.* In fact, we believe teachers need to be paid more for using a wide range of assessment data to improve student learning throughout their schools rather than rewarding them for raising student scores on one standardized test in their own classes.

For proof that such a system is workable, consider Nebraska, where student learning is measured through continuous classroom assessments developed and implemented by teachers. To ensure consistency and reliability, every teacher receives in-depth training in a process that is validated and statistically sound.

Teachers who become classroom-assessment experts — like our colleagues Jennifer Morrison in Charlotte-Mecklenburg, NC, and Susan Bischoff in Manatee County, FL — not only open the door to an important new measure of teacher effectiveness, they improve their practice by drawing on a constant stream of student performance data to tailor instruction to individual needs. Such a system also ensures that all teachers — not just those whose students take standardized tests — are eligible for performance rewards.

We believe performance-pay systems should reward teachers who:

Work in teams — especially small ones — to accelerate student achievement.

We know from our daily work in schools that a team effort is necessary to maximize student learning. *Performance incentives should target both the individual and group contributions of all professional staff.* Under Denver's ProComp plan, individual teachers partner with administrators to create meaningful performance goals tied to specific learning outcomes. Teacher specialists who work directly with groups of students in other teachers' classrooms might use a similar approach. Guidance counselors, librarians and other specialists who have schoolwide roles also could devise performance targets for their work (like in Denver), based on how it intersects with teachers of math, reading, science and social studies.

Assess Student Learning More Deeply

As teacher leaders who pride ourselves on our professionalism, we believe the key to the development of teaching as a profession is our individual and collective support for high standards of teaching quality. Our performance should be assessed, and we are willing to be held accountable.

We also know that high-stakes tests cannot be the sole determinant of what students have learned — or what they need to learn. Yet in the current atmosphere of high-stakes testing, there is a tendency to expect more from these tests than they can deliver. As a consequence, policymakers and the public may be waiting for something to happen that simply will not happen until we expand our vision of student and teacher assessment.

The best once-a-year, paper-and-pencil test imaginable will tell us only a small part of what we need to know about student learning. As professional educators, we are most interested in assessments that track children's growth and development over time — and in considerable detail. We also believe that multiple measures of teaching practices and performances, as well as student outcomes, must be used.

We are intrigued, for example, by the work of the Performance Standards Consortium, a network of 40 New York schools that have agreed to use common performance-assessment measures. Students demonstrate knowledge and in-depth understanding through written work, performance, oral presentation, discussion, scientific experimentation, mathematical applications and social science research. Students complete four common tasks to graduate — a research paper, a science experiment, a mathematical analysis and a literary analysis. Teachers at each school use the same criteria to judge the quality of student work. Based on their common standards, these schools received a waiver from several New York State Regents Exams that are normally required for graduation.

These kinds of assessments, based on a systematic and constant review of data on student progress and achievement, are more useful than the results of high-stakes tests administered at the end of the school year, which are not much help to the teacher who needs to know whether a student has gained the skills necessary to tackle the next, more challenging lesson. We need to place a much higher value on helping teachers become adept at everyday assessments that tell both students and teachers how they're doing — while they're doing it.

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While many accountability systems reward whole schools for overall student achievement gains (North Carolina is one example), we believe that in most instances, *collective rewards should focus on small groups of educators who work together in a departmental, grade-level or interdisciplinary team.* In our experience, this is where "team effects" are most likely to produce better results for students and least likely to reward group members who do not make a significant contribution to student learning. Thus, our recommendation falls somewhere between the whole-school approach of systems like North Carolina's and the individual-teacher approach of systems like Florida's.

How might effective teacher leaders be compensated for their efforts to improve student learning? We imagine teachers earning anywhere from 5–15 percent bonuses, depending on the kinds of student achievement gains they generate and how extensively they share their teaching skills with other teachers — who in turn help their own students learn more. We also believe that additional bonuses should be paid to the most effective teachers who help their school systems and states develop and implement the kinds of more authentic assessments required of 21st-century public education.

2. Reward Teachers Who Develop and Use Relevant New Knowledge and Skills

We believe performance-pay systems should reward teachers who:

Increase their knowledge and skills to meet the specific, identified needs of the students they currently serve.

The current system of paying teachers more for years of experience and any college credit, advanced degree or workshop is outdated and runs counter to the vision of continuous school improvement we all share. Increases in teacher compensation must be tied more directly to professional development activities that *help teachers expand their knowledge and skills to meet the specific learning needs of the students they currently serve.*

Most people do not realize how challenging teaching has become. The successful teacher of today must be a constant learner. Growing numbers of second-language learners and special-needs students are entering our schools. In many subject areas, the knowledge base is expanding exponentially, pressing us to keep up at a pace unlike anything teachers have experienced before. And we have to know more than content. We must be prepared to apply new research on how to teach each learner in our increasingly diverse classrooms. We must determine how our students think, what they already know and what is holding them back. As we teach from day to day, we must be ready to adapt and adjust — often at a moment's notice.

Our students live in a rapid-fire, entertainment-oriented culture, which affects how they learn. We must create engaging, student-centered lessons that address both basic and higher-order knowledge and skills, including 21st-century skills — such as teamwork, interactive communication and global awareness — now being identified as priorities by business and industry groups. New technologies are creating new opportunities for us to accelerate student learning, but we need time and resources to learn how to use them.

We are not complaining. We accept these tasks as part of the professional teacher's work. We are simply pointing out that these are the realities of successful teaching today. In a fast-paced world, where life might be compared to an unending ride down a whitewater river, teachers — just like students — must constantly learn, unlearn and relearn to be successful.

But we don't mean just any old learning. Every decision a teacher (or a school system) makes about professional development should be customized toward the specific needs of the learning communities they serve. Blanket rewards for *any* degree or *any* continuing education activity can lead to professional stagnation and an inability to respond effectively to changing student populations and learning styles. Imagine financial incentives and rewards as the trellises that guide a teacher's professional growth in the right directions.

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Good Teachers of Today and Tomorrow Are Different From the Good Teachers of Yesterday

As policymakers set about reinventing teacher compensation, misperceptions about teaching today represent a major barrier that must be overcome if performance-pay plans are to have any real staying power. The designers of new compensation systems must understand that *good teachers of today and tomorrow are not like those of yesterday*. The expectations are higher (all children, not just some, will be learning at high levels), students are different and teaching technologies are different. The matrix below compares and contrasts two very different instructional worlds.

Good Teachers of Yesterday	What Good Teachers Must Know and Do	Good Teachers of Today and Tomorrow
Has subject-matter knowledge as defined by traditional college major or minor.	**Knowledge**	Has knowledge of subject areas as well as *how* diverse students learn different content.
Uses textbook-based teaching designed to help students know facts, figures and procedures. Holds whole-class lectures designed to keep the teacher at the center of attention.	**Skills**	Uses multimedia-based teaching to help students, in small and large groups, and in and out of school, learn facts as well as apply and create knowledge relevant to the 21st-century economy and democratic society.
Teaches to the *average* student and expects students who have special needs to meet lower academic standards.	**Standards**	Teaches to the whole range of students, and expects *all* students to meet high academic standards, including those who have special-education needs or language differences.
Gives regular quizzes designed only to assess knowledge acquisition, not instructional effectiveness or students' ability to apply learning. Grades on a curve based on percentage of correct answers. Interprets standardized test results and informs students of their national standing based on data that changes only every five years.	**Testing**	Uses different tools and strategies, calibrated to international standards, to assess student learning and adjust teaching. Assesses students' abilities to research, manage information, create and communicate as they solve real-world problems. Provides constant feedback that helps students improve as they continuously revise their work toward meeting ever-higher standards.
Sends report cards home with extensive narrative assessments while also making periodic phone calls home to parents.	**Working with Parents**	Works with parents and extended families, school support staff, social service networks, and cultural and neighborhood organizations to offer all students more support.
Serves on committees and in formal roles such as department- or grade-level chair. Supports student development as athletic coach and club sponsor.	**Leadership**	Serves as peer reviewer, teacher educator, mentor of novices and coach for less-effective colleagues. Leads by developing new curriculum and assessments and informs the creation of new programs and more-effective educational policy at the local, state, national and international levels.

We believe performance-pay systems should reward teachers who:

Document and share the impact that new knowledge and skills have on student learning.

Our most successful teachers are thoughtful and self-motivated, driven by the desire to examine and perfect their craft. They are constantly working to identify the instructional practices that make the greatest difference for children in their classrooms. To encourage this level of reflection in all of our teachers, new compensation systems should reward teachers who work through a process of formally documenting the impact of their professional learning on students and sharing those lessons with others. (Among the methods to accomplish this task are teacher-designed lesson study, classroom-action research and the portfolio process developed by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.) This approach is already in play in Minneapolis, where teachers can earn additional pay ($1,000–$2,000) by implementing new teaching strategies and analyzing their effects on student achievement.

While we see significant value in encouraging teacher experimentation and reflection, even when that reflection uncovers less-than-effective practices, we also recommend that teachers receive additional rewards when they can demonstrate *how changes in their teaching have increased student achievement.*

Such documentation also will add to the common body of knowledge about instruction at the school level, helping to pinpoint practices that are successful and eliminate those that fail to produce measurable student gains.

We believe performance-pay systems should reward teachers who:

Acquire new knowledge and skills that meet the needs and strategic goals of local schools.

Schools and districts have legitimate long-range professional-development needs that reach beyond the current needs of the individual teacher working with a specific population of students. Well-crafted compensation systems can support the effective pursuit of school and district professional-development goals.

The first steps in redesigning compensation plans to reward professional learning that supports school and district goals are to (1) identify current organizational strengths and weaknesses and (2) project future needs based

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on demographic trends, skills likely to be valued in the marketplace, and community aspirations. This process should be a collaborative effort that engages all stakeholders, including parents, teachers, school leaders, and business and community partners.

After examining multiple sources of information about current and future student-learning needs (test scores, teacher reports and formative class-room assessments; student, parent and community surveys; curriculum review committees; and futures studies), measurable three- to five-year learning goals can be set at both the district and school levels. School-level goals should be based on practices and results at the building level but con-textualized by progress made toward meeting district-level goals.

For example, a district-level goal might be that "95 percent of all students will be on grade level in reading and math by the year 20--." A school-level goal might be: "Using team-level data and formative assessments, each subject-area team will identify and apply three instructional practices that effectively support reading and math instruction in their classrooms." Small- and large-group incentives can then be established to encourage teacher professional growth in the right directions.

Encourage the Best Professional Learning

When policymakers attach compensation to pro-fessional learning that increases student learning, teachers will be more selective about their own professional development choices, districts will be more deliberate about the learning opportunities they offer, and teachers will have an important incentive to document the impact of their work.

We are optimistic about the developments in Denver and Minneapolis — where teacher unions have led the way — and in several Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) districts where teachers are paid more when they learn something that benefits the students they teach. In particu-lar, we find the inventiveness of the Minneapolis reward system for professional growth worthy of emulation. Driven largely by progressive union leaders, the Minneapolis program expands on and improves traditional teacher evaluation systems, moving beyond the one-size-fits-all observations of the past. Key elements include peer and video coaching, professional portfolios, and classroom-action research, built on a philosophy that pro-motes both personal growth and collegiality (see http://atpps.mpls.k12.mn.us/).

How might effective teachers be compensated for their efforts to advance their knowledge and skills? We imagine teachers earning anywhere from 5–15 percent bonuses, demonstrating what they have learned as well as the impact their learning has had on their teaching practice. We believe strongly that the assessments of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards be used as one measure of advanced teaching. Valdine McLean, one of 14 TeacherSolutioners who is certified by the National Board, attests to how much the process helped her grow as a teacher. However, we would like to see more rewards for teachers using their newly developed knowledge and skills. And the more a teacher spreads his or her expertise, with proven impact, the more he or she should be compensated.

3. Reward Teachers Who Fulfill Special Needs in the Local Labor Market

We believe performance-pay systems should reward teachers who:

Agree to teach in high-needs schools, when they have demonstrated the necessary qualities and skills to be successful.
Many states and school districts are considering (or have implemented) programs designed to increase the percentage of expert teachers in high-needs schools by offering higher base salaries or bonus pay. While we support such programs in principle, we also are convinced that simply paying teachers more money to work in high-needs schools will not improve teaching and learning. In fact, research shows that money alone is insufficient to attract and retain the right teachers for high-needs students.

High-needs schools are characterized by a mixture of interrelated student, teacher and community factors, such as disproportionate numbers of students performing below grade level and those who move frequently from school to school. Other factors include large percentages of students who are second-language learners or who come from single-parent or low-income families. Often, high-needs schools are located in low-wealth communities that cannot afford to provide up-to-date school facilities and technologies that ensure students and teachers equitable access to teaching and learning resources. Still more factors include disproportionate numbers of new, inexperienced or lateral-entry teachers; high teacher-turnover rates;

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and low percentages of well-prepared, experienced teachers. Schools need to identify and reward promising teaching assistants to encourage them to teach in the high-needs schools. Our colleague Lisa Suarez-Caraballo of Cleveland is proof positive. Beginning her career as an instructional aide, Lisa is now an outstanding middle school math teacher who is Board Certified and has been recognized as a Milken Award winner.

To be successful in high-needs schools, teachers must be fully prepared with the special skills needed to teach our most challenged and challenging students. As our colleagues Lori Nazareno and Amy Treadwell — who both sought transfers so they could work in low-performing schools — can testify, any incentive plan designed to attract teachers to high-needs schools should include (1) screening to determine whether candidates possess the special skills and dispositions associated with teacher and student success in such schools and (2) a professional-development program designed to strengthen such skills in teachers who are motivated to serve high-needs populations but require additional special training. Staffing plans that force teachers to work in high-needs schools are counterproductive. Teachers must identify a personal disposition and demonstrate specific skills for this work.

If school policymakers hope to establish high-quality teaching staffs in our most challenging schools, one other success factor must be addressed: *school working conditions*. Research by working conditions expert Richard Ingersoll has revealed that proficient teachers are reluctant to accept positions in schools with weak administrative leadership or where they will have little influence over decisionmaking. And Center for Teaching Quality research has shown strong links between certain teacher working conditions and student achievement. When we asked members of the Teacher Leaders Network to identify their own prerequisites for teaching in a high-needs school, these were their top priorities: a talented and supportive principal, the freedom to use professional judgment, and the opportunity to teach and work with colleagues who share similar values and skills.

We believe performance-pay systems should reward teachers who:

Have the qualifications and experience to fulfill high-demand positions in the local labor market — including but not limited to specific subjects, grade levels and specialty areas.

Many school systems already offer bonuses to attract teachers who are qualified to teach in certain high-demand areas. Most current plans focus on traditional shortage areas like mathematics, science, foreign language and special education. *We recommend expanding this recruitment strategy to attract teachers with proven expertise in other areas of critical importance to local schools and districts.*

For example, a school or system that has identified early literacy skills as a top priority might offer a premium to teachers with demonstrated proficiency in developing strong readers and writers. Another school system might decide to recruit and offer higher salaries to teachers who have been successful in remediating struggling high school math students. Yet another school committed to developing a robust arts program might supplement the salaries of music, drama and graphic arts teachers who have been successful at integrating their subjects into the core curriculum.

What we are suggesting is a gradual shift away from the traditional standardization of teacher compensation toward more market-driven models. We realize that some will view this idea as radical in the extreme. America's teaching force is enormous, and the sheer number of teachers makes it difficult to imagine. We would argue, however, that standardization has suppressed individual accomplished teachers and removed a prime motivator for continuous professional growth and improvement.

Teachers are seldom able to negotiate their own hours, calendars or compensation — or even determine their own "deliverables" of teaching and learning. This lack of clear goals and teacher entrepreneurship and empowerment can lead to mediocre outcomes for students and schools. And while employment flexibility is a highly desirable option in many sectors of the contemporary workplace, including the university, teaching is seldom seen as a career where there are work-life options, which ultimately limits the pool of bright and motivated prospective teachers. There are precedents, of course, for differentiated compensation in our public schools. Consider that many high schools routinely pay some basketball and football coaches more based on qualifications, experience and a proven record of success. And now National Board Certified Teachers, much like practitioners in medicine, engineering and architecture, can be identified as "highly accomplished" for meeting the advanced standards of practice established by their professional colleagues.

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We know that when it comes to market incentives around teaching, one size does not fit all. Market-incentive plans and packages will necessarily vary with differing school situations, changing conditions in the local employment markets for teachers and the strategic goals of individual schools. Meeting the needs of the school and its students cannot happen without attention to the community context.

How might teachers be compensated for fulfilling local labor market needs? We imagine teachers earning anywhere from $5,000–$10,000 more when they teach in high-needs schools, subjects and assignments. However, these bonuses should be allotted only to those who have the necessary knowledge and skills to serve the targeted students, not just those who are willing to teach them. In addition, the qualified teachers who remain in these assignments for at least five years should be compensated more than those who remain there for one or two years.

Strengthen Teaching in High-Needs Schools by Investing in Stronger Community Ties

Teachers and schools often are isolated from the communities they serve, and no more so than in high-poverty areas. As they develop policies to strengthen the faculties of high-needs schools, education leaders might consider incentives that can build positive interactions and greater understanding between school and community — and ultimately attract and retain quality teachers who feel vested in the communities they serve. Here are several suggestions:

- Housing supplements that encourage teachers to live in or close to the communities where they teach;

- Extra compensation for teachers who organize and operate afterschool, evening or weekend programs for students and families, including programs that help adults gain literacy and technology skills;

- Extra compensation for teachers who create new programs that can bridge the school-home-community divide;

- Incentives for teachers who participate in community immersion programs that educate teachers about the background, strengths and leadership within a community; and

- Incentives of money and time for teachers to develop curriculum units that integrate cultural aspects of a particular community and involve key community members in learning activities.

4. Reward Teachers Who Provide School and Community Leadership for Student Success

We believe performance-pay systems should reward teachers who:

Improve instruction by providing guidance and support to their colleagues through mentoring and coaching.

The research is clear: New teachers who are better prepared and supported stay in teaching longer and are more effective in helping students learn. The financial impact of losing a new teacher is considerable; some researchers have estimated that for every novice teacher who leaves, a district must spend an additional $15,000 or more on recruitment, professional development and other replacement costs.[4]

Successful, experienced teachers understand the challenges faced by their newest colleagues and can work with them so they grow and meet those challenges. Well-designed mentoring programs provide financial incentives for teacher leaders to invest extra time and effort in new-teacher development and create the system supports necessary for mentors and novices to collaborate on a regular basis. Such investments will reduce ineffective teaching, retain promising entry-level teachers and prove financially advantageous in the long run.

Our best teachers also can improve schoolwide teaching and learning through incentive programs that reward them for coaching colleagues across the entire faculty, not just the novices. On-the-job professional development via a teacher-coaching model not only encourages the spread of successful strategies but challenges good teachers to expand their own instructional and leadership expertise as they work beyond the confines of a single classroom. Professional development among peers is a critical component of the professional learning community and a source of sustained student growth and continuous innovation. It is particularly effective when designed around the analysis of classroom data, student products and teacher lessons.

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We believe performance-pay systems should reward teachers who:

Lead innovations in teaching and learning at the school and district level.

While many school-system leaders surely recognize the wealth of knowledge and understanding that resides in the minds of our best teachers, more often than not the traditional school hierarchy has retarded progress in tapping this deep resource and turning it to the advantage of our students.

We live in a time when enterprise and innovation are greatly valued — when American entrepreneurship is seen as one of our culture's greatest assets. Imagination and creative collaboration rank high on the checklists of important 21st-century skills, and successful companies are encouraging their professional workers to think out of the box as they search for fresh solutions to persistent problems.

If policymakers and school reform advocates are truly committed to the creation of high-performing schools, they will encourage the professionals in our school enterprise to become innovators and entrepreneurs by building incentives into teacher-compensation systems that stimulate such activity.

How will teacher leaders find the time to be innovators? The first step in encouraging innovation is to abandon nine-month thinking and develop year-round hybrid teaching positions that make it possible for expert teachers both to remain in the classroom and to have the time and financial support to translate their expertise into "products" that advance teaching and learning. (We discuss this in more detail in the sidebar *Promote Innovation through Hybrid Teaching Roles* on page 39.)

School systems also might consider incentive funds set up specifically to serve as launching pads for teachers who wish to build new education enterprises. As examples of the potential of teacher entrepreneurship in this regard, consider the Chicago school system's 400-student Best Practice High School, begun by a team of teachers and university faculty, or the public San Francisco Community School, where teachers operate a small K–8 program serving a diverse population of 300 students and share school-leadership responsibilities.

Growing numbers of teachers are starting their own public charter schools — and this has the potential to be a very good thing. Some of the most promising efforts are now being forged with leading universities. For

example, teachers and education school faculty at Stanford University, led by noted teaching scholar Linda Darling-Hammond, have created a new nonprofit corporation to reinvent schools in underserved Bay Area communities that also serve as "teaching hospitals" for teacher-education students.

Our goal here is not to detail all of the ways that teacher leaders might stimulate new ideas and innovations for schools and districts but to make the argument that — given sufficient time, incentives and support — their energy, knowledge and expertise can be channeled in ways that produce a more robust educational program.

We believe performance-pay systems should reward teachers who:

Work with parents, community members and colleagues to bridge the gap between home and school.

The potential of teachers to strengthen the connections between school and home — and to advance student learning through powerful partnerships with parents, employers and community organizations that serve youth — remains largely unexploited. While it is certainly true that many teachers volunteer time to expand their professional reach beyond the boundaries of their school buildings, in most schools and systems it is a hit-or-miss proposition, without comprehensive planning, organization or the kinds of investments that ensure quality and continuity. Our proposal goes well beyond the biannual parent-teacher conferences or back-to-school nights that typically compose a school district's parent-involvement commitment.

We believe that, given the right incentives, many teachers will be eager to pursue this kind of leadership, not only to supplement their livelihoods but because they understand that weak relationships between schools and communities are major barriers to student success. We can imagine many ways that teachers can serve to strengthen these bonds. For example, they might organize regular home visits to work more closely with both students and their families. Others will lead by providing one-on-one tutoring outside of regular school hours, consulting with after-school programs and social-service agencies, teaching in adult-education programs, collaborating with local businesses to organize a program of internships, and offering student-parent technology workshops, as well as developing, leading and evaluating seminars that help parents understand how to support their children's education.

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These leadership examples reflect our on-the-ground knowledge of the pre-conditions — prevalent from rural Nevada and Mississippi to inner-city Miami, Chicago and Oakland — that are so often necessary for teachers to raise student achievement. The common denominator for all these activities is teacher leadership — teachers actively involved in conceiving and implementing the programs. To jump-start a system of teacher-community service, decisionmakers might solicit proposals from teachers based on needs they have identified among themselves or in consultation with parent and community groups. We also recommend — especially in diverse communities — that policies governing such a system require teachers to participate in immersion programs that educate them about the background, strengths and leadership within the community.

We believe performance-pay systems should reward teachers who:

Provide leadership and guidance on educational policy at all levels.

To secure lasting and effective change in our schools, and the closing of the achievement gap, the voice of accomplished teachers must be heard, understood and embraced. Accomplished teachers know what works for all of the students we teach. Teachers have a unique understanding of school culture and context, and that understanding can make for better programs and policy.

We need to reward teachers who lead well beyond their classrooms, offering policymakers and the public new insights and solutions on how to improve teaching and learning — in their communities, in their states and across the nation.

We challenge all policymakers at every level to establish a sound framework for teacher leadership in the policy arena, with a funding structure that supports meaningful stipends for teachers who take on significant roles as advisers and developers of education policies aimed at improving teaching quality and student achievement.

One promising model, employed by several of the nation's governors, is to include an accomplished teacher as a full-time, professionally paid staff member and adviser. In North Carolina, Governor Mike Easley also has created a teacher-advisory committee with which he regularly confers about

important matters of educational policy. We recognize that to be most effective, teacher leaders who advise about policy will need special training in research, policy analysis and government relations. But we believe these investments can have an enormous return when they lead to more workable and effective school-improvement strategies.

Typically, teacher leadership around education policy might develop along a continuum, beginning by advising local superintendents and school boards and progressing to state and even national levels. During his time as U.S. Secretary of Education, Richard Riley included a former National Teacher

Promote Innovation through Hybrid Teaching Roles

How can school systems draw more deeply on the knowledge and experience of their best teachers? We propose that they look beyond the nine-month thinking embedded in traditional teacher-salary schedules and create opportunities for some teachers to work year-round in multilayered or hybrid positions that make room for teacher innovation and entrepreneurship.

One common rationale for low teacher salaries and limited teacher involvement in program development is the teacher work calendar. Offering year-round hybrid positions with comparable pay would help retain strong teachers who want to remain in the classroom but also are eager for new professional challenges. Year-long contracts could be built with innovation in mind. For example, there might be options for teachers to collaboratively organize their own work; to design and pilot small educational initiatives under district sponsorship; or to build, align and implement curriculum in ways that make sense for diverse students they teach.

As entrepreneurial leaders, teachers selected for these hybrid positions would also have a role in propagating the fruits of their own innovation and increased expertise. Imagine, for example, a cadre of hybrid teachers who specialize in helping all teachers become more adept at analyzing student-work products and performance data and using that information to improve instruction. Or imagine a team of hybrid teachers who create and implement an academically rigorous, project-based learning experience that cuts across several disciplines.

To maximize the contributions of year-round hybrid teachers, districts could support modular calendars that allow schools and teachers to build more flexible work schedules, providing both student-free time for professional development and larger blocks of time for innovative learning projects with students.

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of the Year on his senior-policy staff. The federal government, which has become a driving force in school reform with the advent of NCLB, might sponsor and support a national network of teacher leaders to offer formal advice and analyses to researchers and policymakers on matters related to our profession and the students we serve. As our colleague Nancy Flanagan aptly notes, "Making substantive connections between policymakers and teachers is the holy grail of teacher leadership." We believe it can be a worthy quest for policymakers as well.

What *Not* To Do

While our focus has been to develop a proactive and constructive framework for rethinking teacher compensation plans, we also feel a need to warn policymakers of the multiple pitfalls to avoid. Hence, our top 10 don'ts:

1. **Don't place an artificial cap on the number or percentage of teachers who are eligible for performance incentives or rewards.** In Florida's STAR plan, for instance, only one in four teachers is eligible for any performance bonuses. Singling out only a small proportion of educators for special rewards will pit teachers against each other and never produce the large workforce we need to staff every public school with high-quality teachers. Such plans show little understanding of how teachers *become* accomplished and how schools *become* effective.

2. **Don't limit rewards only to teachers who teach tested subjects, such as reading and math.** If we want excellence across the entire school, we need to create incentive systems that encourage every teacher in every subject to excel. We also question the wisdom of tying student performance in reading to teacher rewards in all non-tested content areas, as some districts have proposed.

3. **Don't tie rewards *only* to gains in student test scores.** Even value-added measures, which measure gains in student performance over time, are too imprecise to be the sole arbiter of accomplished teaching.

4. **Don't provide additional pay for just any kind of professional development.** Make sure that the additional courses, credits or degrees are actually tied to the school's and/or district's strategic goals for boosting student achievement. A master's degree in educational administration may not deserve extra compensation if the local educational priority is for teachers to boost student achievement among its second-language learners.

5. **Don't make a *blanket offer* of extra pay only to teachers of math, science and special education.** Although nationally these might be the highest-need subjects, it makes no sense for an individual community to pay more for a math teacher if it actually needs more art or history teachers.

How might effective teachers be compensated for their leadership efforts? We imagine teachers earning up to 10 percent bonuses for mentoring and coaching as well as creating and leading new community support programs. And how might teacher leaders be compensated for their work in the policy arena? We imagine stipends ranging from $3,000 to $10,000, determined by the time and effort required and the degree of responsibility associated with the work. We call for states and the federal government to create teacher-leadership funds to spread the policy expertise of its most accomplished teachers.

6. **Don't use test scores in ways that produce unintended consequences.** Too many of today's high-stakes tests are focused on the last century and are not able to measure the skills and knowledge required for the 21st-century global economy. Improperly attaching performance rewards to these tests will encourage teachers to prepare students for yesterday's workforce, not tomorrow's. Also, simply paying teachers for higher test scores is akin to simply paying doctors for lower mortality rates. They only encourage teachers and doctors to serve the easiest students and patients.

7. **Don't focus on performance incentives and bonuses at the expense of improving your base-pay system.** If you don't have a career ladder that encourages teachers to advance in their profession — and be paid accordingly as they advance — tinkering around the edges by providing $2,000 bonuses for a handful of teachers will not secure the stable, high-quality professional workforce you need.

8. **Don't offer incentives to just any teacher who wants to teach in a high-needs, low-performing school.** Limit these incentives to teachers who can demonstrate that they are effective with high-needs students and will be able to address the school's specific learning needs. Sending a willing but unqualified or underprepared teacher to such a school could do more harm than good.

9. **Don't create a one-size-fits-all performance-pay system.** Different schools and districts need the flexibility to distribute incentive funds in ways that advance the specific student learning goals they have established.

10. **Finally, don't try to overhaul your own teacher compensation plan without the expert assistance of those who know best what will work and what won't — your teachers.** But not just any teachers: Rely on those with a track record of accomplishment in their classrooms, schools and/or communities.

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Conclusion and Next Steps

Paying teachers for performance is not a new idea. Scholars have documented the failed efforts from years past — including those in the 1920s, 1950s and 1980s. These merit-pay initiatives floundered, in large part, because of unresolved technical and political issues. In some cases, student test scores could not validly and reliably measure teacher effectiveness. In other instances, poorly trained administrators could not produce useful and trusted teacher evaluation results, or union leaders resisted performance-pay plans that focused solely on individual performance and ignored the importance of teamwork in increasing student achievement. Teachers were seldom adequately involved in the development of the plans and often resisted the imposed system. In more than one instance, policymakers broke the faith by failing to fulfill all of their promises as the plans were implemented.

Paying teachers for performance — done right — is an idea whose time has come. We have studied the research on performance-pay, discussed and debated with researchers and reformers, and argued among ourselves. The result is a framework for professional compensation fitted and joined by our teaching knowledge and many years of experience working with students and their families in settings as diverse as urban Oakland, CA, suburban Kansas and the rural Mississippi Delta. We believe our design can accelerate the development of a true teaching profession that ensures high-quality teachers for every student.

Professional Pay for Skilled Work

We have presented a compensation framework built on a foundation of high performance, with student learning and success as its central pillar. We do not expect to be paid like doctors or venture capitalists. But we *do* expect to be paid like professionals, so the best teachers can spread their expertise and all teachers have a chance to grow, learn and lead.

We realize our ideas will not be easily implemented. For many school systems, the changes we recommend will require nothing less than a total overhaul of the compensation system now in place. We need to begin by abandoning the practice of paying teachers more for earning any advanced degree or taking any professional-development workshop. Rewards for professional growth must be tightly linked to the identified needs of students and schools.

We recognize that new analytical tools, now under refinement, may allow teachers, administrators and researchers to use value-added student-achievement data to measure some aspects of teaching effectiveness. At the same time, we see evidence that these tools can be easily misused, most notably when they become the primary means to judge individual teacher performance. Viable performance-pay systems will draw on a range of measures to produce a complete picture of teaching effectiveness. Successful systems also will ensure that every teacher has the same opportunity to grow professionally and earn the highest rewards. If we expect to serve all of our students well, we must encourage all teachers to reach their peak performance.

Some of the ideas presented in this report are already in play in Austin, Denver and Minneapolis, where partnerships between system administrators and teacher unions have produced cutting-edge approaches to performance-based compensation. We believe even these forward-thinking plans can be improved over time with additional teacher engagement and feedback. We are eager to bring more teachers into the conversation and debate about

Lessons from Singapore

We also can learn from abroad. A recent report by the Aspen Institute shows how Singapore has created a performance-pay plan encouraging teachers to work collaboratively and travel down three distinct career paths — all designed to continuously improve their skills, spread their teaching expertise and keep the best teachers in teaching. The Singapore teacher-pay system is really a teacher-development system. Better-prepared teachers and those in high-demand fields have higher starting salaries. Teachers are specially trained to work with challenging students and new curriculum and paid $10,000 retention bonuses as early as their fifth year in teaching. Schools are judged primarily by national exams, but teachers are judged primarily by external review panels that assess them on how well they support parents and community groups and advance student learning,

while also "contributing to the character development and well-being of their pupils." Career Level-2 teachers can be paid as much as vice principals and some master teachers can earn as much as a local superintendent.[5]

Granted, Singapore's public education system equitably funds its schools, and well-prepared teachers have the resources and technology needed to help their students reach world-class standards. The bottom line is that Singapore students far outperform their American counterparts on every international comparison of academic achievement. Policymakers and business leaders frequently challenge us to educate our students as well as those from Singapore. Perhaps they need to help us develop a performance-pay and teacher-development plan similar to Singapore's.

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teacher pay — and to build more consensus around an incentive system that produces maximum results for students. Next steps in moving our ideas into action might include the following:

- An economic analysis of how our proposed system could work in several targeted school systems — representative of America's diverse urban, suburban and rural communities (our framework for the Raleigh, NC, area offers one such example on page 18);

- The creation of district- and state-level TeacherSolutions teams to study, debate and lead performance-pay reforms in their own communities;

- The creation of structured dialogues that connect teachers with federal, state and local policymakers as well as the public (among whom polls indicate a strong interest in paying teachers more and differently);

- The development of a teacher leader network whose primary purpose is to build, adapt and use more authentic kinds of assessments that must be at the cornerstone of a student learning-focused pay-for-performance system; and

- The development of specific implementation plans, designed in concert with researchers and reformers currently engaged in performance-pay initiatives.

We understand the urgent need for well-designed compensation plans. We believe we are representative of many teacher leaders who can bring class-room expertise and school-community knowledge to the policy table — and help prevent well-meaning reforms from going askew. We are ready to work with those who, like us, believe that our students deserve policies that will attract and keep the best and brightest in our profession. It's about time.

Notes

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5 Olson, L. (2007). *Teaching Policy to Improve Student Learning: Lessons from Abroad.* New York: Aspen Institute.

Acknowledgments and Sources

All of us at Center for Teaching Quality have been honored to work with the 18 talented teachers who make up our inaugural TeacherSolutions team. Their professional knowledge and skills as well as their commitment to students clearly reveal why and how teachers can — and must — be central to improving schools.

We owe a huge thanks to three foundations whose financial contributions helped to make this initiative possible. Special acknowledgment is extended to Gretchen Crosby Sims and John Luczak of the Joyce Foundation. Gretchen and John took the first step in supporting the TeacherSolutions idea, and their faith in the power of elevating the voices of accomplished teachers has been unwavering. We are grateful for the additional support provided by the Gund and Stuart foundations. Both Ann Mullin and Don Ernst have been invaluable advisers and activists on behalf of teacher leadership.

As part of their virtual investigation into performance-pay, the Teacher-Solutions team gained valuable insight from a number of experts who participated in live online discussions about teacher compensation and school reform. Much thanks to Cindy Brown, Michael Charney, Dan Goldhaber, Ted Hershberg, Brad Jupp, Gayle Moller, Lynn Nordgren, Wendy Puriefoy, Mark Simon, Gary Stark and Art Wise for their time and ideas.

We also are grateful for the assistance and support of Adam Kernan-Schloss and his colleagues at KSA-Plus Communications who helped design our report and craft its important messages. Adam quickly became a trusted adviser and shared the same enthusiasm we all have for elevating the voices of accomplished teachers.

Last, I would like to extend sincere appreciation to my long-time colleague and friend, John Norton, who serves as our Teacher Leaders Network online community organizer and editor. John most often works behind the scenes, but his role in facilitating structured virtual dialogues among busy professionals and capturing the vibrant voice of accomplished teachers has been vital in the development of this inaugural TeacherSolutions report. Thank you, John, for all that you do for TLN and for advancing the teaching profession.

— Barnett Berry

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Our TeacherSolutions Team

Over the past year, 18 of the nation's best teachers took the lead in developing the analyses and recommendations detailed in the previous pages. We at the Center for Teaching Quality are proud to have worked with the following outstanding teacher leaders:

Sarah Applegate

Sarah Applegate is a teacher-librarian at River Ridge High School in Lacey, WA (North Thurston Public Schools). She is a 12-year veteran who spent three years as a humanities teacher before moving to the media center. Sarah is a National Board Certified Teacher (Library Media) and was the 2005–06 president of the Washington Library Media Association. She is a frequent trainer and instructor in state and regional programs and in higher education. Presently, Sarah also serves as the moderator for a listserv of National Board Certified Teachers in Washington state, an initiative jointly sponsored by the National Education Association, the Washington Education Association and the Center for Teaching Quality.

Susan Bischoff

Susan Bischoff is a 5th grade teacher with an inclusion classroom at Ballard Elementary, a high-performing Title I school with a diverse student population in Manatee County, FL. She also is the school data coach and serves on her school's leadership team and the district Progress Monitoring Committee. Susan is co-founder of Accomplished Teachers of Manatee (ATOM), a local teacher leadership guild and a member of the Teacher Leaders Network. She is a National Board Certified Teacher (Middle Childhood Generalist) and an 11-year teaching veteran. In 2006, Susan completed her master's in educational leadership. She spent 18 years working in the technology field before entering teaching.

Anthony Cody

Anthony Cody is a consulting teacher in the Oakland, CA, Unified School District where he coaches in the Peer Assistance and Review program. Anthony taught science and math for 18 years at Bret Harte Middle School in Oakland. He became one of Oakland's first National Board Certified Teachers (NBCT) in Early Adolescent Science in 2000 and served as a coach for National Board candidates. He also served on the board of the Chabot Space & Science Center, participated in the Apple Computer Digital Edge project, convened an NBCT leadership forum in Northern California, and served as a leader of K–12 science curriculum projects in Oakland and at Stanford University. From 1995 to 1998, Anthony was a "teacher on loan" at the University of California Berkeley/Lawrence Hall of Science and assisted in the development of the FOSS middle school science curriculum.

Bill Ferriter

Bill Ferriter teaches 6th grade language arts and social studies at Salem Middle School in the Wake County, NC, Public School System. Bill is a 14-year teaching veteran, earned his National Board Certification in 1997 (Middle Childhood Generalist) and renewed his certificate in 2006. He was Wake County and North Central North Carolina Teacher of the Year for 2005–06 and a finalist for 2006–07 North Carolina Teacher of the Year. Bill is a Senior Fellow of the Teacher Leaders Network and was summer Teacher in Residence at the Center for Teaching Quality in 2003. He co-wrote the oft-cited *Threshold* article "Creating a Culture of Excellence," which shares the views of accomplished teachers about school working conditions. Bill also

writes a regular column on teacher leadership for the National Staff Development Council and a blog for the Teacher Leaders Network Web site.

Nancy Flanagan

Nancy Flanagan is a 31-year teaching veteran (K–12 music) who recently retired from Hartland, MI, Consolidated Schools. Nancy became a National Board Certified Teacher in 1998 (Early Adolescence Generalist) and worked for two years as a Teacher in Residence with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and as a consultant with the Michigan Education Association. She was Michigan Teacher of the Year in 1993, a Danforth Teacher Leadership Fellow and a featured teacher in the Annenberg/PBS Learning Classroom series. From 1994 to 2001, Nancy moderated the State Teacher of the Year online community for the U.S. Department of Education. Nancy is an active member of the Teacher Leaders Network (TLN) through her leadership activities as a TLN blogger and mentor liaison for the University of Connecticut-Teachers for a New Era and IBM's Transition to Teaching program.

Theresa Killingsworth

Theresa Killingsworth is the Title I coordinator and collaborative peer teacher at Catalina Ventura, an urban school in Phoenix, AZ. An eighth-year teacher, Theresa also has taught 2nd and 4th grades and served as a reading specialist. In 2004, she was selected a "Rodel Exemplary Teacher" through a program sponsored by the Rodel Charitable Foundation of Arizona. The program, which recognizes outstanding teachers who work in inner-city schools, used selection criteria

that included student gains as measured by achievement tests. Although the Rodel program includes recognition for the teacher, its primary purpose is to pair "extraordinary teachers with promising student teachers as part of their teacher preparation programs" and encourage them to teach in high-poverty schools. Theresa is a presenter and liaison for the Arizona Character Education Foundation and recently agreed to be a presenter for Teach for America.

Becky Malone

Rebecca (Becky) Malone is one of seven Math Lead Teachers for the Hamilton County School System in Chattanooga, TN. She coaches teachers at North Hamilton County Elementary school and teaches 4th grade math and science. Becky taught elementary grades in inner-city, rural, suburban and magnet schools during her 20-year career. She was identified as a "highly effective teacher" as part of a research study conducted by the Public Education Foundation that used data from Tennessee's Value-Added Assessment system. Throughout her career, Becky also served as a district Curriculum Support Teacher, a Hamilton County Leadership Fellow and a grade-level Team Chairperson. She is featured in an Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development professional development video exploring curriculum mapping. She and her class are featured in the Hamilton County superintendent's 2006–2007 strategic plan video.

Valdine McLean

Valdine McLean teaches Chemistry, Physics, Biology, and General Unified Science 10–12 at Pershing County High School in Nevada. An 18-year teacher, Valdine taught for four years in an urban setting before moving to this high-poverty rural school. She's a National Board Certified Teacher (AYA Science) and was Nevada's 2001 Teacher of the Year. Valdine is president of her county teacher association and received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching for Nevada in 1998. In 2001, she was named

Nevada's Milken National Educator of the Year and was the first recipient of the Horace Mann NEA Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence. Among myriad leadership activities, she is a member of the Teacher Advisory Council for the National Academy of Science, a past president of the Nevada Science Teachers Association and a local Girl Scout troop leader.

Renee Moore

Renee Moore, Mississippi Teacher of the Year in 2001, served as a classroom teacher for 17 years — and spent eight of those years as Lead Teacher at Broad Street High School in Shelby, MS. She recently accepted a full-time teaching position at Mississippi Delta Community College. Renee is a National Board Certified Teacher (Adolescent/Young Adult English Language Arts) and received the Milken National Educator Award in 2001. Renee was a Carnegie Fellow and the first practicing classroom teacher to be appointed to the board of trustees of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. She is a current member of the Mississippi Commission on Teacher and Administrator Licensure. She published a number of articles about Culturally Engaged Instruction, including "Circles of Influence," which appeared in *Going Public with Our Teaching: A Reader* (Teachers College Press, 2005).

Ford Morishita

Ford Morishita teaches biology at Clackamas High School in suburban Portland, OR. He is a 29-year classroom teacher and was the 1997 Oregon Teacher of the Year, the same year he was selected for the Milken National Educator Award. In 1994, Ford received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science and Mathematics Teaching and the Outstanding Biology Teacher Award from the National Association of Biology Teachers. He was involved in the Woodrow Wilson Leadership Program for science and was a fellow at the biotech research company, Genentech. Ford is a member of the

Teacher Advisory Council for the National Academies and the advisory board for the National Sciences Resources Center (Smithsonian). Ford served on a study committee for the National Research Council that examined the role of licensure exams in boosting teacher quality.

Jennifer Morrison

Jennifer (Jen) Morrison teaches 8th grade language arts at the Piedmont Open IB Middle School in Charlotte-Mecklenburg (NC) Schools. She is a 10th-year teacher and a National Board Certified Teacher (Early Adolescent English Language Arts). Jen was named Outstanding Young Educator of the Year in 2003 by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) and was recently named to ASCD's National Leadership Council. In 1995, she received a Fulbright grant to the University of Canterbury, New Zealand, where she earned a master's degree with distinction in 1997. She is a teacher trainer with the North Carolina Teacher Academy and a featured teacher in the ASCD video "Best Practices in Action: Using Visualization to Enhance Background Knowledge." Jen is also a national presenter on the topic, "The Power of Classroom Data."

Carole Moyer

Carole Moyer is an early childhood coordinator for the Columbus (OH) Public Schools where she trains and supervises kindergarten paraprofessionals and offers mentoring and support to early childhood teachers in the urban district's mix of high-, medium- and low-poverty schools. Carole is a 39-year teaching veteran and spent 34 of those years as a kindergarten teacher. She's a National Board Certified Teacher (Early Childhood Generalist) and received the Disney American Teacher Award as Early Childhood Educator of the Year in 1998. She was Educator of the Year for the Columbus Public Schools and has been an expert presenter, scoring director and assessment developer for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

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Lori Nazareno

Lori Nazareno is a math and science facilitator at Barnum Elementary School in Denver, CO. Previously, Lori taught at Myrtle Grove Elementary in the Miami-Dade County Public School District. While in Miami, the National Board Certified Teacher (Adolescence and Young Adulthood/Science) co-founded the National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) of Miami-Dade, an organization with an active leadership role in the urban district's teacher mentoring and professional development programs. In January 2005, Lori joined a team of NBCTs to work in one of Miami-Dade's highest need elementary schools, where she taught science. Lori was also an alternative high school science teacher in Miami-Dade and a finalist for district Teacher of the Year in 2001. Lori is a MetLife Fellow with the Teacher Leadership Network Institute and a member of the Teacher Leaders Network. She currently serves on the NBPTS Board of Directors.

Marsha Ratzel

Marsha Ratzel is a 6th grade math and science teacher at Leawood Middle School in the Blue Valley, KS, School District. Marsha returned to full-time classroom teaching last year after four years as a district coordinating teacher for technology and member of the system's school improvement team. She has taught for 13 years (nine years in middle school) and is a second-career teacher who spent 10 years as a health systems planner and administrator. She's a National Board Certified Teacher (Early Adolescence/Science) and was selected as a participating teacher in the Kansas Exemplary Educator Network in 2001. Marsha has been Master Teacher and Teacher of the Year for her school. She has published articles in the national magazines *Middle Matters* and *Meridian* and is on the teacher advisory board of Education World. She also is a member of the Teacher Leaders Network.

Betsy Rogers

Betsy Rogers is a curriculum leader and teacher coach at high-poverty Brighton School (K–8) in the outskirts of Birmingham, AL. After her term as National Teacher of the Year in 2003, Betsy sought out the assignment at the chronically low-performing school. She was recently named a School Improvement Specialist for her district and continues to be based at Brighton. She keeps a Weblog called "Brighton's Hope" about her experiences at the school and her continuing professional growth. Betsy is a National Board Certified Teacher (Early Childhood Generalist), a member of the NBPTS Board of Directors and has taught for more than 20 years in Title I schools. She also is president of Alabama's independent teacher organization, the Alabama Conference of Educators, and she chairs the Governor's Task Force on Teacher Quality. Betsy earned a doctorate in educational leadership in 2002. She is a member of the Teacher Leaders Network.

Lisa Suarez-Caraballo

Lisa Suarez-Caraballo teaches in the bilingual program (grades 6–8) at Luis Muñoz Marín School, a high-poverty urban school in the Cleveland, OH, Municipal School District. Lisa spent the first eight years of her education career as a bilingual instructional aide. For the past 14 years, she has been a mathematics classroom teacher. Lisa is a member of the Cleveland Teachers Union and became a National Board Certified Teacher in 2000 (Early Adolescence/Mathematics). She has been a NASA Educator Astronaut Teacher since 2003, and in 2005 she was named a Milken National Educator of the Year. Among other leadership projects, Lisa worked with Cleveland's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame to initiate a middle school math competition, and she led professional development sessions for other schools in the district. The Cleveland Browns recognized Lisa as a Community Hero in 2002.

Amy Treadwell

Amy Treadwell currently serves as an induction coach through a teacher-on-loan position with Chicago Public Schools. Prior to becoming a coach, she taught 2nd grade at the Newberry Math and Science Academy in Chicago. She is an 11-year teaching veteran, a member of the American Federation of Teachers and a National Board Certified Teacher (Middle Childhood Generalist). Amy chaired primary departments in several schools, served on the leadership team of the Chicago Academy for School Leadership and won numerous grants from the Chicago Foundation for Education, the Oppenheimer Family Foundation and the Rochelle Lee Foundation. She mentors in the University of Chicago New Teacher Network and for National Board Certified Teacher candidates in the Chicago Teachers Union program, "Nurturing Teacher Leadership." Prior to becoming a teacher in 1996, Amy worked for three years at the Chicago-based education publisher, Open Court.

Maria Uribe

Maria Uribe works at high-poverty Goldrick Elementary School in Denver as site coordinator for a program supported by the University of Colorado at Denver, in which she supervises and coaches teachers and teacher candidates. She began her teaching career in her native Colombia, South America, where she taught for 13 years in the private education system. After moving to Denver, Maria taught 1st grade for nine years and worked in her coaching role for the past seven years. She designed the bilingual program at Goldrick Elementary in 1997 and was Teacher of the Year for the southwest area of Denver Public Schools in 2004. She published a number of articles on bilingual education and second language learners. Maria, who earned a Ph.D. in educational leadership and innovation in 2004, is experiencing first-hand the groundbreaking Denver ProComp professional compensation plan.

Update: Teacher-Driven Compensation Reform Catches Fire

Since its publication in April 2007, *Performance-Pay for Teachers: Designing a System that Students Deserve* has helped ignite a national conversation around teacher compensation reform, further fueled by congressional debate on the reauthorization of NCLB.

In *The Doyle Report,* school reform expert Denis P. Doyle commented on the report's positive reception by both the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate education committees as they consider federal incentives to promote alternative compensation systems. "It has bipartisan practitioner clout, and it uses that to detail a framework for performance-pay that is attracting support from both liberal and conservative education advocacy groups alike. That is no small feat in Washington."
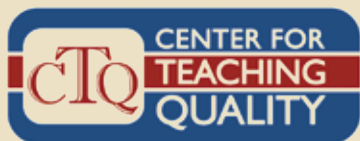
Coverage of *Performance-Pay for Teachers* also has appeared in influential national and regional media outlets, including *U.S. News and World Report, The Washington Post, Chicago Tribune, Education Week, Educational Leadership, Teacher Magazine* and National Public Radio.

Members of the TeacherSolutions professional compensation team continue to serve as important resources for national policymakers. For example:

- Award-winning Nevada science teacher Valdine McLean testified before a full House Education and Labor Committee hearing, "ESEA Reauthorization: Boosting Quality in the Teaching Profession."

- McLean returned to Washington with Cleveland colleague Lisa Suarez-Caraballo to participate in the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education's Annual Day on the Hill, during which they shared their ideas with policymakers about the best ways to address a critical shortage of accomplished science, technology, engineering and mathematics teachers.

- During a Capitol Hill briefing, North Carolina's Bill Ferriter and Mississippi's Renee Moore testified before education leaders and policymakers on strategies to attract accomplished teachers to high-need schools through improved teacher working conditions and carefully designed performance-pay plans.

- Oakland educator Anthony Cody testified before a committee of the Oklahoma Legislature considering reforms in professional compensation. Cody also was featured on a PBS *NewsHour* segment examining the impact of NCLB.

In "A Special Message to Teachers" (p. 13), we imagined this report might "inspire, and even challenge, other teachers to do as we have done: to accept ownership of the compensation issue." Amid increasing calls for change from education policymakers, teachers in a number of states and cities are using our work as a starting point in their own debates. With support from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, CTQ is currently facilitating the work of a select group of teacher leaders in Kansas to apply the report's framework to the specific local context. At the heart of these conversations is an overarching question: *Can reforms in teacher compensation accelerate student achievement and the growth of teaching as a true profession?*

We continue to say, "Yes — if teachers themselves own and advance the reforms."