Creating Conditions for Student and Teacher Success

Eric Hirsch

New Teacher Center at the University of California at Santa Cruz

NCSL Annual Meeting
August 7, 2007
Finally, our analysis of teacher mobility showed that salary affects mobility patterns less than do working conditions, such as facilities, safety, and quality of leadership. Compensation alone, it seems clear, is but a partial measure of the returns to work. But school policy discussions give remarkably little attention to working conditions. Research has linked teachers’ negative perceptions of working conditions with their exit from schools, but it has not closely tied poor working conditions to the quality of teachers in the classroom. An important agenda item, both for research and for policy, is to learn which working conditions are most important for teachers.

Reasons for Teacher Dissatisfaction

Gathering Customized Data to Understand Schools

• Full population survey of every educator in order to gather school data as each is unique in their issues as well as in investments and commitment toward improvement

• Online survey with individual access codes to ensure valid process with backing of broad coalition

• About 30 core questions asked identically across all states to allow for cross-state analyses

• Data put up on the web and public to educators, the community and policymakers (varies by location)
Surveys in 2006 and 2007

- **Kansas** – 53% response rate statewide with over 21,000 educators and data available for about 1,000 schools
- **Mississippi** – 67% response rate statewide with data from more than 25,000 educators
- **Nevada** – 49% response rate for Clark County (over 8,000 educators) done annually as part of CCSD/CCEA interest-based agreement. Similar response rate in 2007
- **Ohio** – pilot in 2005 and voluntary survey in 2006 and 2007. Data from 2007 for over 15,000 (44% response rate) educators in 310 schools across 65 districts
- **Arizona** – 70% response rate in 7,500 educator phase-in 2006 and 53% response rate with more than 32,000 educators statewide in 2007
- **North Carolina** – 66% response rate statewide with over 75,000 educators and data for 1,985 of 2,200 schools. Survey conducted in 2002 (38% response rate) and 2004 (38% response rate)
- **More than 250,000 respondents to the survey in the past 3 years**
Governor's Teacher Working Conditions Initiative

Home
Letter from Governor Easley (.pdf)
FAQ
View Reports
2006 NC TWC Survey Report
Weekly Drawing
Learn & Earn
Gov. Easley picks Weekly Winner!

Governor Easley announces 2006 Real D.E.A.L. Schools!

Learn more about schools that are great places to teach and learn, from demographics to leadership by clicking here!

First Lady Mary Easley Selects Grand Prize Winner!

Resources
Summary of NC TWC Initiative (.ppt)
Preview the 2006 TWC Survey Questions
Governor’s Teacher Working Conditions Initiative

Please select a report from the list below. Schools with reports available are listed in blue font.

Select District:  
---Select Organization---  
View District

* For an individual school report, the school must have at least a 40% response rate and a minimum of 5 faculty members responding.

**Schools and Districts - data in Excel format will be available upon written request to NC Professional Teaching Standards Commission or the Office of the Governor after June 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District/Site Name</th>
<th># completed</th>
<th>% completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>75653</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alamance-Burlington</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alexander Wilson EL</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altabaghaw Osigee</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Everett Jordan ELM</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadview Middle</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E M Yoder Elementary</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Alamance HI</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastlawn ELM</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwin M Holt ELM</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elon Elementary</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Leadership
Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

a. There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within the school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree Nor Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>school: 0%</td>
<td>school: 7%</td>
<td>school: 12%</td>
<td>school: 67%</td>
<td>school: 14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>district: 7%</td>
<td>district: 15%</td>
<td>district: 14%</td>
<td>district: 49%</td>
<td>district: 16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state: 7%</td>
<td>state: 16%</td>
<td>state: 14%</td>
<td>state: 47%</td>
<td>state: 17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. The faculty are committed to helping every student learn.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Disagree Nor Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>school: 0%</td>
<td>school: 0%</td>
<td>school: 2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>district: 0%</td>
<td>district: 4%</td>
<td>district: 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>state: 1%</td>
<td>state: 6%</td>
<td>state: 8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teacher Working Conditions are Student Learning Conditions
Teachers on Which Working Condition is Most Necessary to Improve Student Learning

- **Professional Development**
  - OH: 7
  - KS: 10
  - NV: 7
  - AZ: 10
  - NC: 9

- **Empowerment**
  - OH: 23
  - KS: 26
  - NV: 34
  - AZ: 30
  - NC: 34

- **Leadership**
  - OH: 11
  - KS: 14
  - NV: 12
  - AZ: 15
  - NC: 14

- **Facilities & Resources**
  - OH: 21
  - KS: 22
  - NV: 19
  - AZ: 23
  - NC: 22

- **Time**
  - OH: 28
  - KS: 28
  - NV: 28
  - AZ: 25
  - NC: 29
“If I am allowed to utilize my teaching expertise—to draw from what I know will engage and stimulate my students—then students will achieve at levels no one could dream of. If I am hampered...then I can’t do what I do best.”

- Teacher, Published in Threshold Magazine article on teacher working conditions
## Survey Questions in NC – Elementary by Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain/Question (percent that agree or strongly agree)</th>
<th>Lowest Quartile</th>
<th>2nd Quartile</th>
<th>3rd Quartile</th>
<th>Highest Quartile</th>
<th>Difference Between Highest and Lowest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The school environment is safe</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
<td>83.6%</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
<td>91.9%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
<td>62.0%</td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School leadership shields teachers from interruptions</td>
<td>52.8%</td>
<td>57.6%</td>
<td>63.3%</td>
<td>68.2%</td>
<td>15.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers have sufficient access to appropriate</td>
<td>65.4%</td>
<td>72.1%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>79.8%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instructional materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The School Improvement Team is effective</td>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
<td>60.3%</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Leaders are Critical to Creating Student Learning Conditions

• Six CTQ studies from five states demonstrate clear and significant connections between teaching conditions and student achievement and academic growth
  – In most cases, up to 20 – 25 percent of the variance in school achievement can be attributed to teaching conditions (particularly empowerment and leadership questions) at all levels
  – Creating positive and supportive school climates, clearly communicating expectations, shielding teachers from interruptions and creating collaborative decision making processes were statistically significant in at least 2 states
Examples of the Impact on Student Learning

• In Kansas, for every 10 percent of elementary teachers who agree that the faculty is committed to helping every student learn, a 2.7 percent increase in students passing the state math assessment can be estimated (1.4 percent at the high school level). A 1.1 estimated increase in the middle school performance composite was found in North Carolina.

• In North Carolina elementary schools where 60 percent or more of the staff agree that class sizes are reasonable, they are 1.3 times more likely to meet or exceed growth expectations. Middle schools where 80 percent or more of the faculty agree there is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect were 2.2 times more likely to meet or exceed growth expectations.

• For every 10 percent of Kansas middle school teachers who agree that their school is safe, a 2.3 percent increase in students passing the math assessment can be estimated.
Teacher Working Conditions Affect Teacher Retention
Teachers on Which Working Condition is Most Important to Future Employment Plans

- **Professional Development**: OH 3, KS 4, NV 3
- **Empowerment**: OH 21, KS 24, NV 19, AZ 25
- **Leadership**: OH 37, KS 41, NV 36, AZ 42
- **Facilities & Resources**: OH 20, KS 21, NV 17, AZ 12
- **Time**: OH 18, KS 17, NV 16, AZ 16

Legend:
- OH
- KS
- NV
- AZ
- NC
“Without a doubt, the principal is the number one factor in determining the desirability of being a part of a particular school community. Being respected and valued personally and professionally is something I have to have in order to stay in a school.”

- Teacher, published in *Threshold Magazine* article on teacher working conditions
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Working Conditions Survey Question</th>
<th>Percent of Teachers Who Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities are available for members of the community to contribute actively to this school’s success.</td>
<td>Stayers: 71%, Movers: 26%, Leavers: 48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within the school.</td>
<td>Stayers: 66%, Movers: 22%, Leavers: 44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school improvement team provides effective leadership at this school.</td>
<td>Stayers: 70%, Movers: 31%, Leavers: 49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school leadership support teachers’ efforts to maintain discipline in the classroom.</td>
<td>Stayers: 70%, Movers: 31%, Leavers: 48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In this school we take steps to solve problems.</td>
<td>Stayers: 67%, Movers: 28%, Leavers: 47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The school leadership shields teachers from disruptions, allowing teachers to focus on educating students.</td>
<td>Stayers: 62%, Movers: 25%, Leavers: 41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching Conditions Affect Turnover

- In Las Vegas, the presence of an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect was the most powerful predictor of any variable on whether a teacher would continue working in their current position. For every 10 percent of teachers agreeing that trust is present, a 3.1 percent increase in the percentage of teachers wanting to stay could be expected.

- If 40 percent or LESS of the faculty in a school believed that they are respected as educational experts, the school is 2.7 times more likely to have a high expected turnover rate in Kansas elementary schools.

- Atmosphere of trust, agreement that leadership is effective, a fair evaluation process, school safety, and amount of planning time were all statistically significant in at least two states.
Teachers and Administrators View Working Conditions Differently
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement on Select Working Conditions Questions</th>
<th>Teachers Agreeing</th>
<th>Principals Agreeing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The non-instructional time provided for teachers in my school is sufficient</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers and staff work in a school environment that is safe</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are centrally involved in decision-making about educational issues</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within the school</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The faculty has an effective process for making group decisions and solving problems</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development provides teachers with the knowledge and skills most needed to teach effectively</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall this school is a good place to work and learn</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School leadership makes a sustained effort to address teacher concerns about:</th>
<th>Teachers Agreeing</th>
<th>Principals Agreeing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The use of time in my school</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities and resources</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowering teachers</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership issues</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Teacher Support</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

State and District Policies to Improve Teaching and Learning Conditions
North Carolina Policies to Improve Leadership Through Working Conditions

• State Board Created 21st Century and revised leadership and teacher standards to align and incorporate working conditions
• New principal evaluation instrument being design to incorporate measures of recruitment, retention and conditions
• Revise Masters in School Administration program standards to focus on providing positive school climates, teacher support and teacher retention
• Fund and require professional development for all new principals with an emphasis on creating positive teaching and learning conditions
• Additional funding for integrating findings into school improvement team planning, identifying best practice, providing more planning time for teachers, literacy coaches and professional development in poorest districts
Other Recommendations to Address Teacher Retention Through Leadership

• Money matters, but it is insufficient to address the pipeline, distribution and retention of teachers. Policies that allow for local flexibility (through an RFP or menu of options) to use funds to enhance teaching and learning conditions in addition to or in lieu of signing bonuses will be more effective.

• Ensure both teachers and principals have well designed and sufficiently funded mentoring and induction support and are prepared to work collaboratively to create schools designed for teacher and student success.
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www.newteachercenter.org
www.teachingquality.org
www.teacherworkingconditions.org