

SUGGESTIVE STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

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It is generally believed that a teacher is the nation builder. It is the teacher in the classroom who shapes the destiny of a country as he has manifold capacity to influence his pupils. Teaching is the noblest profession for, it involves the cultivation of selfless love and sharing and showering that love. He is the architect of happy homes, prosperous communities and peaceful nations. He has not only equipped himself with knowledge and skills to inform and instruct, but also the vision and insight, to inspire and transform. Teachers are the second parents to every child and play a significant role in the over all growth of children. It is believed that only a teacher can make tremendous positive changes among his students. In this paper, a systematic attempt has been made to focus on various methods of teacher effectiveness, challenges faced and role of state for improving teacher effectiveness.

KEYWORDS: Teacher Effectiveness, Quality Teaching Measures, State's Role.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The most accepted criterion for measuring good teaching is the amount of student learning that occurs. A teacher's effectiveness is about student learning. However, all teachers realize that what a student learns is not always within the teachers' control. The literature on teaching is full of well researched ways that teachers can present content and skills that will enhance the opportunities for students to learn. It is equally filled with suggestions of

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what not to do in the classroom. Students often have little expertise in knowing if the method selected by an individual instructor was the best teaching method or just “a method” or simply the method with which the teacher was most comfortable.

Teachers also have limited control over many of the most important factors that impact students' learning, including students' attitudes, background knowledge of the course content, study and learning skills, time students will spend on their learning, their emotional readiness to learn, and so on. Since there is clearly a shared responsibility between the teacher and the student as to what that student learns, and because many students are able to learn in spite of the teacher, while others fail despite all of the best efforts of a skilled practitioner, the definition of “teacher effectiveness appears to be “an act of faith” on the part of students and teachers to do their best.

To bring improvement in any civilization, efforts are always on by intellectuals. In this process to educate the subjects is utmost aspect. To provide education three interwoven elements are involved – subject matter, student and teacher. Out of these, teacher is equally important because he is the one who induces the desired knowledge in students. Some teachers are by birth and others can be trained to desired skills because psychologists claim that behaviour is modifiable. Therefore, required type of behaviour is must for affective and efficient teacher. Behavioural technology is contributing significantly. Thus teaching process can be developed and improved to prepare effective teachers. There are various feedback devices to be used to modify the teacher behaviour. Following are few commonly used techniques for improving teacher effectiveness.

Simulated Social Skill Training: The simulation technique is to induce certain behaviour in artificial situation. Pupil teacher has to play several roles as a teacher, as a student and as a supervisor. It's a feedback mechanism. It is a socio-drama related to practice and gives control over teaching variables. Important point is that the pupil teacher is teaching in a non-stressful condition.

Microteaching: Microteaching provides teachers with a practice setting or instruction in which the normal complexities of classroom are reduced and in which the teacher gets feedback on performance.

Programmed Instruction: The method is an individualized instruction in which students are active and proceed at their own pace and are provided with immediate knowledge of results. The programmed learning is a strategy in which various kinds of intellectual, emotional and motor experiences are provided to learner in a controlled situation through a variety of devices like book, teaching machines, teacher, radio, television etc.

Team Teaching: It is an instructional situation where two or more teachers possessing complementary teaching skills cooperatively plan and implement

the instructions for a single group of students using flexible scheduling and grouping techniques to meet the particular instruction.

Interaction Analysis: It is a technique for analysing and observing the classroom behaviour. It provides the structure, component and flow of behaviour of classroom activities. It is a feedback device.

T-Group Training: It is also a feedback device. It is leaderless group of trainees numbering eight to twelve, discuss their own problems of teaching without any agenda and suggest some solutions on basis of their experiences.

CHALLENGES FACED IN IMPROVING TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

To make dramatic improvements in all students' preparations for college and careers, States need thoughtful, intentional human capital strategies that get the right teachers in the right places in the right subjects. The need is especially acute in states that have or plan to adopt colleges and career ready academic standards and graduation requirements. They should need highly effective teachers – particularly in upper level mathematics and science courses – capable of teaching rigorous content to all students. The policymakers are well aware that the quality of teaching is the most critical school based factor contributing to student learning, especially for low income and minority students. The states should be encouraged to adopt policies to measure the effectiveness of individual teachers and hence should use those measures to inform a range of human capital systems and decisions, ensure an equitable distribution of effective teachers, and provide high quality support for educators and principals. If enacted, all of these policies could help a state advance its college and career readiness agenda, since that agenda should require higher and higher levels of teaching quality in order to succeed. But meeting these criteria presents special challenges in the college and career readiness context, especially when it comes to identifying, developing and deploying effective teachers at the high school level. The challenge is particularly great in high school mathematics and science, where research suggests that subject matter expertise is vital for effective teaching. The following quality concerns focus on those special challenges.

Measuring Effectiveness: States need viable approaches to measure the effectiveness of teachers. State should provide an effectiveness rating to each individual teacher, and should use those ratings to inform professional development, compensation, promotion, tenure, and dismissal. A state's measure must include multiple inputs, but must include “student growth.” The experts and education leaders have increasingly come to see current teacher evaluation methods as inadequate, largely because they fail to differentiate between teachers with varying levels of effectiveness. Utilizing data about student growth as part of teacher performance measurement presents technical and political challenges even at the elementary and middle

school levels, where states increasingly have assessment and data systems that enable year to year tracking of individual student progress. At the high school level, the challenges are more daunting because, by and large, state assessment systems do not enable this kind of longitudinal tracking of individual student progress from one year to the next. The high school students are assessed through a series of end of course exams where there is not a clear progression of content from course to course (such as end of course exams in Biology and Chemistry). While these assessments may provide valuable information about student achievement, the structure and sequence of high school assessment systems may prohibit or make it more challenging to obtain meaningful growth measures. Each of these presents significant and insurmountable challenges to states. But some options are available and these options include:

Building Student Level Growth Measurement into Revised High School Assessment Systems: Many states should revise their high school assessment systems as they advance the college and career ready agenda. As they do so, states can design their new systems to measure high school students' progress toward college and career standards from year to year. The challenge should be to create a system of assessments with the right sequence and relationship. States pursuing this option would need to design assessments aligned to college and career ready end-of-high-school standards, and then design a sequence of assessments taken earlier in high school that share sufficiently related content with the end-of-high-school tests. School systems would need to report growth results using a metric that allows for meaningful and straightforward interpretations of student progress over time, which could include approaches using common scales, value tables, or growth percentiles. It is also important to note that this option does limit the proportion of teachers within a high school for whom measures of effectiveness could be calculated, since it may not be possible for states to develop an appropriate sequence of related assessments for teachers of all content areas.

Introducing Pre Tests or Interim Assessments Aligned to College and Career Ready Standards: States with end of course or end of grade assessments should design beginning of the year pre tests to assess students' incoming knowledge, and then generate individual growth scores by comparing pre test and post test results. This might seem like an additional burden, but in fact pre assessment of individual students is likely essential for excellent teaching. States should also consider using interim assessments aligned to college and career ready standards and assessments as a method for evaluating individual students' growth towards standards throughout the year. Such approaches may allow states to develop measures of teacher effectiveness for content areas in which year-to-year growth measures are not feasible.

Preparation: States should rate the quality of their teacher preparation programmes based on the effectiveness of the teachers that graduate from the programmes. There is also a real risk that preparation programme ratings

should be based exclusively on elementary and middle school results. Yet, states need to strengthen their preparation programmes at the high school level in particular in order to meet the demands of college and career readiness. Even if high school teacher effectiveness measures are under development for the future, states need to find shorter-term ways of rating high school teacher preparation as well, such as audits of the rigor of subject matter training with reference to college and career ready content standards and measures of teacher content knowledge.

Recruitment, Hiring, and Placement: The demands are two fold such as pressing for effective teachers to be placed both at high poverty schools and in hard to staff subjects. Both are priorities for the college and career readiness agenda as well. High poverty schools face the biggest challenges in meeting new standards; and the higher level demands of new standards and graduation course requirements, particularly in mathematics and science, make these subjects even harder to staff than previously. At the same time, new, more challenging standards also present a recruitment opportunity, a chance to appeal through vigorous recruitment to achievement oriented mathematics and science college graduates who may find the more ambitious expectations attractive. States can launch their own recruitment plans or partner with organizations such as SSA (Sarv Shiksha Abhiyaan) Project and RMSSA (Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyaan Authority) Project to reach these new candidates. Still, in light of these graduates' higher paying career alternatives, it is difficult to imagine state' greatly improving their ability to fill hard to staff slots without substantial changes in the compensation and career advancement opportunities offered to teachers who take these assignments and then perform at high levels. In addition, standard teacher certification processes present a barrier to enticing non education graduates or mid career professionals with, for example, mathematics and science backgrounds. States should be encouraged to adopt policies that offer alternative routes into teaching for these people.

Performance Measurement, Feedback, and Professional Development: It is evident that most teacher evaluation systems currently do little to differentiate teachers who are performing at different levels. Further, even as states move towards rating teachers based on the growth achieved by their students, annual test score data does not tell teachers whether their teaching produced good results, or failed to produce them. As a result, even emerging systems cannot provide meaningful feedback to teachers or serve as a basis for the selection of professional development designed to address each teacher's specific challenges. As the college and career readiness agenda demands more from teachers, it becomes even more pressing to provide teachers with clear indications of the quality of their teaching – and the path to improvement. Even currently effective teachers may need to retool their approaches in order to teach effectively to students who, prior to the push for college and career

readiness for all, may not have taken advanced coursework. Supplementing student growth based measures of effectiveness with valid, reliable assessments of their practice is therefore an important component of evaluation, feedback, and professional development systems. In addition to devising better systems to assess teachers' needs, states also need to consider how to make high quality, responsive professional development available to teachers.

Compensation and Promotion Opportunities: Retooling teacher compensation and career advancement take on more pressing importance under a college and career ready agenda. Particularly in the advanced levels of subjects such as science and mathematics, prospective and current teachers typically have a plethora of other employment opportunities that offer higher pay than teaching. Yet almost all teacher salary schedules reward teachers only for accumulating additional years of experience or advanced degrees of any kind (not just in high demand subjects), neither of which appear to contribute very much to teachers' effectiveness. In a college and career ready reform context, school systems should work to shift compensation away from steps and lanes and instead provide the most significant rewards to teachers who take on oppositions in hard to staff schools or subjects and succeed with students in those jobs. Research suggests that in addition to higher pay opportunities, the chance to advance within a career is also a missing piece in the teaching profession that makes high performers seek other careers. Extending the reach of the best teachers to more students is one potential way to offer top teachers further achievement opportunity and enhanced pay from existing per pupil funding streams.

Tenure and Dismissal: The states should rethink teacher tenure and dismissal, changes in policy and practice that research suggests could have a positive impact on student performance. Making these changes would require substantial alterations to policies in most places, at both the state level and in district policies and collective bargaining agreements. Central to meeting that ambitious goal is finding ways to extend the reach of the best teachers, so that more students benefit from their excellent instruction. Reach extension can happen within a school or across a group of schools. For example, the best physics or mathematics teacher could videotape her lectures and then spend all of her work time giving customized feedback and help, in person or online, to far more students than she could teach in a traditional classroom. Another example is having one top notch teacher lead two or three classrooms, setting the standard for instructional methods and overseeing implementation through other teachers he supervises in order to reach more students. With broadband Internet access now nearly universal in public schools, the opportunity to "pipe in" effective instruction to schools is growing rapidly. And a growing array of software platforms should increasingly be able to offer students high quality, individualized instruction online. Note that many forms

of reach extension can be funded through existing per-pupil funding streams from the additional children served per excellent teacher. Moving more instruction into technology platforms holds the promise of other potential improvements in educational delivery in addition to extending the reach of the best teachers. Technology platforms should also enable all teachers to:

More Easily Access High Quality Curricula Aligned to the Common, College and Career Ready, Internationally Benchmarked Standards: Teachers should be easily able to go online and find a myriad of resources linked to the specific standards they are teaching, with high-quality resources “rising to the top” because they are downloaded and cited often and rated highly by other teachers. This includes a growing repository of open education resources – online open source instructional materials that can be modified and customized by end users.

Collaborate With and Learn from one Another Across Geographic Boundaries: The web should enable teachers to find excellent lesson plans created by others, view videos of top notch delivery, and tap the wisdom of other teachers in meeting their toughest challenges via online discussion boards and blogs, and via direct communication with other teachers.

Use Online and Software Based Tools: to assess students regularly, diagnose learning challenges, and select the best responses to the barriers students face. The more students receive instruction and do their work online, the more possible it should be to capture data from their experiences about the most effective ways to convey content, motivate students, and address students' challenges.

ROLE OF A STATE FOR IMPROVING TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

States are in a strong position to play several roles in this process:

- (1) Commitment to reaching increasing portions of students with top quintile instructors and instruction through various reach extension methods (both in person and remotely with technology);
- (2) Accelerating progress by creating demand for outstanding remote instruction where it can help most (e.g., by requiring or encouraging districts to offer it if they cannot fill teaching slots with effective instructors, and by requiring that remotely offered instruction meet a top tier learning progress standard);
- (3) Reducing state level policy barriers to the use of these mechanisms (e.g., rigid seat time requirements, upper grade class size maximums, teacher certification requirements that would block high quality out of state instructors from teaching remotely); and,
- (4) Directing the benefits to students who need them the most by providing funding or other inducements for hard to staff schools in particular to

make use of the emerging opportunities. Otherwise, the benefits of new technologies should tend to flow more naturally to advantaged schools and students first.

Teacher Effectiveness is an important field and must be taken care of. The various methods required, the challenges should be accepted and recognized. No biasness should be there. It should be carried out with utmost care. If given a right direction, it can work wonders and shape the future of our country.

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