

## Key Issue: Financial Incentives

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## SCENARIO

Principal Brown is frazzled. It is only September 10, but her teaching staff is incomplete. She lacks teachers – not to mention certified teachers – again. Just like last year, her school, low-performing and on academic watch, has scared away three more teachers within two months of the school year. She feels bad for her new teachers, who seem to be dazed and sometimes frustrated, but she is too busy putting out fires: student discipline issues, poor attendance (already!), constantly looking for substitutes to watch over those untaught classes, begging teachers to take lunch duty, even making sure the bathrooms are working.

Dr. Alvarez, the director of human resources for Principal Brown's district, knows of Ms. Brown's problems. She wants to help, but she spends so much time trying to staff that school, to no avail. Teachers who could help the students' achievement won't go there; and new teachers don't last. The teachers who hang on are valiant heroes, islands of strength; or have mentally checked out of the school. Dr. Alvarez wishes she had money to pay teachers more to go to that school – and enough to pay them to stay. But she used to be a teacher. She knows sometimes you can't pay a teacher enough to go to a school like Principal Brown's.

What will help these leaders get their high-risk students the teachers they need? How can you use financial and other incentives to improve the quality of teaching and the school culture in an at-risk school?

## BENEFITS

### **Financial incentives for highly qualified teachers who work in at-risk schools can:**

1. **Improve teacher retention.** Financial incentives – bonuses, housing assistance, enhanced retirement plans, etc. – can attract highly qualified new teachers or experienced teachers. For retention, the financial incentives must be propped up by other supports (e.g., increase in amount after several years, organization of teacher teams, reimbursement of professional development expenses). The financial incentives must also be large enough to reward the teachers for working with students with community, family and personal disadvantages.

In order to work, financial incentives must be applied toward building a strong professional team in the school, supplying resources for mentors/new teachers, and professional development. Highly professional teachers and most new teachers leave high-risk schools because of poor working conditions – lack of support, weak leadership, and a feeling of isolation – not only because of salary.

2. **Bring experienced teachers with proven effectiveness into schools with high-need students.** Financial incentives can support the extra effort, time, and skill that students in at-risk schools require.

“For every point increase in the percentage of classes taught by highly qualified teachers, there is a three to six point increase in high school [Standards of Learning] pass rates, and a three to five point increase in core subject pass rates for 8th grade. For every 400 students, a one point increase in the percentage of highly qualified teachers would be associated with 9-20 more children passing their 8th grade writing test.” (Governor Mark Warner of Virginia, 2004 Milken National Education Conference keynote address.)

3. **Create learning communities of teachers, and change the professional culture of the at-risk school.** Incentives can bring in successful teachers under the leadership of a supportive principal. Furthermore, new teachers (disproportionately assigned to at-risk schools) can learn skills for teaching and classroom management at a quicker pace when they have support and information from experienced colleagues.

At-risk schools can become successful learning communities if highly effective teachers are paid for and given resources to support their work (in their own classrooms and with other teachers). High achieving teachers and principals can change the working culture in the school and boost morale of students and other staff. Enhance diversity of the teaching staff. Minority students and professionals have been shown to respond to recruitment incentives. Financial

incentives can help recruit talented professionals from other fields, from other schools in the region, and from pools of college students.

4. **Enhance diversity of the teaching staff.** Minority students and professionals have been shown to respond to recruitment incentives. Financial incentives can help recruit talented professionals from other fields, from other schools in the region, and from pools of college students.
5. **Draw positive attention to the public image of an at-risk school.** Incentives to attract successful and qualified teachers to at-risk schools delivers a message of commitment to excellent teaching for all children. Public commitment of funds can encourage teachers to see the at-risk school as a place where highly qualified and successful teachers and leaders will be supported.

Former Mayor Bob Corker stated his overarching goal for improving the nine lowest-performing schools in Chattanooga, Tennessee: that they would become “the most prestigious places to teach.” Because of the attention given to improving the schools’ professional atmosphere, financial incentives, and career development, the nine schools have experienced a “reverse flow” of experienced teachers moving from suburban schools to the nine urban, high-need schools. They have also made large gains in student achievement.

## References

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<http://www.nctaf.org/article/index.php?g=0&c=5&sc=41&ssc=&a=212&navS=>.

Warner, M. (2004, May 5). Improving student achievement reforms that work. Speech delivered at the Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference. Retrieved 8/29/05 from [www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/51/31/5131.doc](http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/51/31/5131.doc).

## TIPS & CAUTIONS

### **DON'T BOTHER Offering Financial Incentives If You Don't:**

- Direct at least a portion of them to *skilled* teachers who teach in or move to at-risk schools.
- Offer *specialized training* for teachers who teach in disadvantaged schools (even if they have taught effectively elsewhere).
- *Support* teachers in at-risk schools with mentoring, a team of strong teachers, and charismatic and collaborative leadership.
- Have a *budgetary plan*. Reallocate resources to sustain funding for financial incentives; Plan out a sustained budget that includes paying the bonuses/incentives; and, as necessary, Find additional support in local, state, and federal sources.
- *Publicize* the availability and importance of the incentives.

## STRATEGY 1

Before you start, know your data. In order to design an effective incentive program, states must know in detail what the state's and district's needs are and where they are greatest. For example, state policymakers and district administrators will need to know:

- How many teachers in which subject areas are needed each year by the state and where they are prepared vs. how many of those teachers are actually prepared each year and from what institutions.
- Teacher turnover (including retirements) by school, subject area, geographic location, student demographics and achievement, and years of experience.
- Distribution of teachers and teaching quality/experience within school districts.

### Resource 1: Quality teachers

Cornett, L.M., and Gaines, G.F. (2002). *Quality teachers: Can incentive policies make a difference?* Atlanta, GA: Southern Regional Education Board. Retrieved 9/9/05 from [http://www.sreb.org/main/HigherEd/leadership/Quality\\_Teachers.pdf](http://www.sreb.org/main/HigherEd/leadership/Quality_Teachers.pdf).

“Questions to help policymakers determine what’s working—and what’s not.” This list guides an understanding of states’ needs and problems. (p. 18,)

## STRATEGY 2

Talk directly to experienced and aspiring teachers and administrators about their ideas for creating incentives that will support teachers' needs to work in at-risk schools.

- Ask highly credentialed teachers in your state what professional supports would help them succeed in a low-performing, at-risk school.
- Include successful, experienced teachers in policy planning and resource reallocation for high-need schools.

### Resource 2: Summit on Supporting and Staffing High-Needs Schools

North Carolina Policy Summit on Supporting and Staffing High-Needs Schools: A Conversation Among North Carolina's National Board Certified Teachers. (August 17, 2005, The Koury Center, Greensboro, NC). Meeting materials retrieved 9/12/05 from <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/nbpts/resourcecenter.html>.

Keller, B. (2005, August 31). N.C. teachers offer ways to draw NBPTS teachers into poor schools. *Education Week* 25(1): 18. Retrieved 9/12/05 from <http://www.edweek.org/agentk-12/teacher-recruiter/2005/08/31/01nbptsnc.h25.html>.

Teachers in North Carolina with National Board certification met with policy makers at a policy summit on "Supporting and Staffing High-Needs Schools." They made recommendations on what might encourage National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) to move to low-performing schools. In addition to working conditions and financial incentives, they stressed the need for skilled principals to lead at-risk schools if NBCTs were to move to them.

### Resource 3: Teacher Leaders Network

Teacher Leaders Network. (undated). Assuring teaching quality in high poverty, low performing, and hard to staff schools: What do accomplished teachers believe about quality teaching and high-need schools?: 12 Insights from the front lines. *TLN Voices* special feature [web discussion]. Retrieved 8/29/05 from <http://www.teacherleaders.org/Conversations/HTS/summary HTS.html>.

In this example of an online discussion with teacher leaders across the nation, many of whom are NBCTs, two major points became clear: excellent teachers appreciate financial incentives and are willing to work in at-risk schools; but they demand strong, collaborative leadership and good working conditions. For example, one teacher wrote, "... Teamwork, the

feeling that you make a difference, the certainty that your work is valued — those are the things that will attract teachers to any school.”

### STRATEGY 3

Design incentives for experienced, successful teachers as well as for first-time teachers. “New blood” is important for school staffs, but experienced teachers generally offer more by way of teaching skill, stability, and classroom management.

- Experience has shown that opening incentive programs only to first-time teachers does not reduce teacher turnover rates in at-risk schools.

#### Resource 4: Osborne Fellows Initiative

Osborne Fellows Initiative (part of the Chattanooga, Tennessee, Benwood Initiative). Website:

[http://www.pefchattanooga.org/www/docs/2/osbourne\\_fellows/](http://www.pefchattanooga.org/www/docs/2/osbourne_fellows/).

The Osborne Fellows Initiative was created to provide 100 committed teachers in Benwood schools with a free master’s degree focused on reading, instructional strategies for urban learners, and other topics relevant to the needs of their students. The program is also open to tenured teachers who want to move to Benwood schools. Principals report that Fellows are already sharing their learning with their faculties, and other teachers are inquiring about joining the program.

#### Resource 5: Where They Are Needed Most

Hill, T.L. & Coble, C.R. Where They Are Needed Most: Recruiting and Retaining High-Quality Teachers in North Carolina’s Hard-to-Staff and Low-Performing Schools. Education Commission of the States, March. 2003.

<http://www.ecs.org/teachingquality/>

North Carolina’s progressive policies and programs that support the recruitment, preparation, development and retention of high-quality teachers serve as models for the rest of the country. However, this Education Commission of the States study (at the request of the state superintendent) examined if the state’s policies and programs were adequately benefiting the state’s low-performing and hard-to-staff schools—those which the shortage of qualified teachers impacts the most. ECS found, all too frequently, that the policies NC had adopted to improve the overall quality and supply of their teacher workforce has done little to improve the plight of hard-to-staff and low-performing schools. The recommendations of the report are a useful resource for others to examine in developing state and local policies to improve teaching and leadership in at-risk schools.

#### Resource 6: Virginia Department of Education

Virginia Department of Education. Incentive program to attract and retain teachers in Virginia’s hard-to-staff schools: A teacher retention & support component of Governor Mark Warner’s Education for a Lifetime [website].

Retrieved 8/29/05 from <http://141.104.22.210/VDOE/Instruction/OCP/hard-to-staff.html>.

A two-year pilot program began in fall 2004 in two school districts that traditionally have difficulty hiring and retaining highly qualified teachers. During the pilot, Virginia will provide a one-time hiring incentive of \$15,000 to teachers who meet the highly qualified criteria and agree to move to a hard-to-staff middle or high school in one of the participating school divisions. Relocating teachers must agree to teach in the hard-to-staff school for at least three years and to participate in training (during the first year of the program) and a formal support network (during year two). The state will provide \$500 stipends each year of the pilot to cover expenses related to training and professional development for working in a hard-to-staff school. Highly qualified teachers already teaching in the selected hard-to-staff schools will receive annual \$3,000 bonuses and \$500 stipends for training and professional development. All other teachers in the schools will receive a \$500 stipend for participating in training and will benefit from the funding provided to the school.

#### **Resource 7: Virginia middle school teacher corps**

Virginia Department of Education. Virginia middle school teacher corps: A component of Governor Warner's Education for a Lifetime [website]. Retrieved 9/13/05 from <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Instruction/OCP/teachercorps.html>.

The Virginia Middle School Teacher Corps provides the structure and incentives for school districts to hire experienced mathematics teachers for middle schools that are at-risk in mathematics. Teachers selected as members of the Teacher Corps will be dynamic well-qualified teachers who have demonstrated success in teaching mathematics in challenging environments. While their top priority will be teaching, they may also work to help less experienced or struggling teachers.

## STRATEGY 4

Define “**high-need**” or “**at-risk**” **school** so that incentives truly direct high caliber teachers to the neediest students.

- Broad definitions of low performance do not draw teachers to the *most* at-risk schools (e.g., those in the bottom third or quartile of school performance).
- At-risk schools need excellent teachers in order to accelerate student learning beyond one year of growth and to improve the culture in the school.

### Resource 8: Qualified teachers for at-risk schools

National Partnership for Teaching in At-Risk Schools. (2005). *Qualified teachers for at-risk schools: A national imperative*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved 9/30/05 from <http://www.ncrel.org/quality/partnership.pdf>.

**At-Risk Schools.** A salient characteristic of at-risk schools is that they generally have relatively few well-qualified teachers. Overwhelmingly, the teachers in at-risk schools tend to have temporary or emergency certification, teach in fields for which they lack strong subject-matter preparation (“out-of-field”), or are in their first year or two of their teaching careers. Such schools generally have a difficult time attracting teachers with strong qualifications, especially in core subject areas, and often are unable to keep teachers for more than a few years. Similarly, these schools typically have difficulty attracting and retaining capable and experienced principals and other leaders. (p. 6)

“At-risk schools are likely to serve a high proportion of minority and low-income students, have poor student achievement, and, if they are high schools, have lower graduation rates. Such schools often are found in core urban areas, but rural schools also may have many of these characteristics. Finally, while individual at-risk schools with these characteristics may beat the odds from time to time and may significantly exceed the average for student achievement among schools with their profile, we believe these schools are likely to fall back into a pattern of low achievement over time.”

## STRATEGY 5

Reward the voluntary movement and sustained placement of National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) – preferably in teams – in at-risk schools.

### Resource 9: Miami’s board-certified teachers advance agenda

Keller, B. (2005, August 31). Miami’s board-certified teachers advance agenda. *Education Week* 25(1): 3, 19. Retrieved 9/12/05 from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2005/08/31/01nbpts.h25.html>.

NBCTs in the Miami-Dade school district have organized themselves with a non-profit organization. Recognized for its members’ excellence in teaching, the group is now active in action research, hosting conferences for new teachers, and developing professional development programs for schools in the district. When the Miami superintendent, Rudy Crew, asked high quality teachers to move to low-performing schools, few did so – except when they went in teams to schools with “simpatico principal.”

### Resource 10: National Board on Professional Teaching Standards

National Board on Professional Teaching Standards. (2005, March). Business, education leaders work to increase number of NBCTs in urban schools. *NBPTS Online News* 4(3). Retrieved 8/31/05 from <http://www.nbpts.org/news/200503news.cfm>.

“Approximately 200 teachers, principals and civic leaders gathered in mid-March in Chicago for a first-of-its-kind summit dedicated to increasing the number of National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) in low-income, low-performing schools.... Participants from Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami and Charlotte met for the all-day summit....”

### Resource 11: Teachers: recruitment and incentives

CA S.B. 1666, Alarcon, Teachers: recruitment and incentives, Section 3 (2000). Full text of bill retrieved 9/13/05 from [http://info.sen.ca.gov/pub/99-00/bill/sen/sb\\_1651-1700/sb\\_1666\\_bill\\_20000705\\_chaptered.html](http://info.sen.ca.gov/pub/99-00/bill/sen/sb_1651-1700/sb_1666_bill_20000705_chaptered.html). See also, EdSource. (undated). Selected Teacher Quality Laws and Policies. Mountain View, CA: Author. Retrieved 9/13/05 from [http://www.edsource.org/edu\\_tea\\_law.cfm](http://www.edsource.org/edu_tea_law.cfm).

California NBCTs receive \$20,000 over four years for teaching consecutive years in low-performing schools (defined as the bottom 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of performance in the state).

### Resource 12: New York State Teachers of Tomorrow Program

New York State Teachers of Tomorrow Program  
[http://www.highered.nysed.gov/kiap/TEACHING/TOT/teachers\\_of\\_tomorro](http://www.highered.nysed.gov/kiap/TEACHING/TOT/teachers_of_tomorro)

[w\\_introductio.htm](#)

New York State NBCTs receive annual stipends of \$10,000 for teaching in a low-performing school for at least three years.

### **Resource 13: National Board for Professional Teaching Standards**

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. (undated). About NBPTS: State & Local Support & Incentives: Virginia. Arlington, VA: Author. Retrieved 9/8/05 from <http://www.nbpts.org/about/stateinfo.cfm?state=Virginia>.

Fairfax County Public Schools supplements the portion of the application process fee that is not paid by the state. The county also provides a pre-candidacy course (required) and support through the NBC process. Credit courses, taught by NBCTs, are offered without cost through the school system's Academy Course Program. A stipend for NBCTs has been funded for 2002-03 by the School Board. NBCTs who teach in high-risk schools will receive \$3,500.

## STRATEGY 6

Survey teachers and administrators to determine an adequate amount for bonuses. This bonus must make a significant difference in salary from working in an advantaged school in the region.

- The pay bonus may be scaled to level of experience.
- The bonus may also grow depending on the teacher's skill or performance and/or years served at the same at-risk school.
- Negotiate with teachers' associations. If you need help, look into interest-based bargaining through the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Board ([www.fmcb.gov](http://www.fmcb.gov)).

### Resource 14: Meeting the challenges of recruitment and retention

National Education Association. (2003). *Meeting the challenges of recruitment and retention: A guidebook on promising strategies to recruit and retain qualified and diverse teachers*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved 9/9/05 from <http://www.nea.org/teachershortage/images/rrg-full.pdf>.

Presents NEA's stance on financial incentives. NEA opposes financial incentives for teachers in hard-to-staff subject areas. NEA supports financial incentives for teachers in priority schools provided that *all* teachers in those schools receive bonuses. (p. 17)

### Resource 15: Sharing the wealth

Humphrey, D. C., Koppich, J. E., & Hough, H. J. (2005, March 3). Sharing the wealth: National Board Certified Teachers and the students who need them most. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 13(18). Retrieved 9/7/05 from <http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v13n18/>.

While many large cities have increased their first-year salaries, which has raised new teacher recruitment, the salaries of these teachers are not sustained after their third or fourth years of teaching, which leads to teachers leaving the high-need district for higher salaries or different careers in wealthier areas. High-need districts need to find ways to make their salaries significantly higher in a sustained way if they want to keep teachers beyond their first few years or beyond a signing bonus.

### Resource 16: Virginia middle school teacher corps

Virginia Department of Education. Virginia middle school teacher corps: A component of Governor Warner's Education for a Lifetime [website]. Retrieved 9/13/05 from <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/VDOE/Instruction/OCP/teacher corps.html>.

Warner, M. (2004, May 5). Improving student achievement reforms that work.

Speech delivered at the Milken Family Foundation National Education Conference. Retrieved 8/29/05 from [www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/51/31/5131.doc](http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/51/31/5131.doc).

“Teachers are selected for this effort on the basis of their content knowledge, teaching skills, and the achievement of their students. We are providing the training these teachers need to be successful in high-poverty schools and incentives, such as enhanced retirement benefits, to reward them for their willingness to take on this challenging assignment.”

### **Resource 17: Consortium for Policy Research in Education**

Consortium for Policy Research in Education. (undated). Emerging findings in teacher compensation [website]. Retrieved 10/3/05 from <http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/cpre/tcomp/research/findings.php>

“The bonus needs to be of sufficient size to be motivating. In our research, a bonus of \$2000 appears to be sufficient to motivate. Teachers in districts with very low base pay expressed a preference for adequate base pay prior to the creation of a bonus program.” (Finding 5)

## **STRATEGY 7**

Offer assistance with housing.

### **Resource 18: A plan for attracting and retaining quality teachers**

Rice, George Ann. (2004 July 12). A plan for attracting and retaining quality teachers in at-risk schools. Remarks delivered at 2004 National Commission on Teaching and America's Future Partner States' Symposium. Retrieved 8/30/05 from <http://www.nctaf.org/article/index.php?q=0&c=5&sc=41&ssc=&a=212&navs=>.

A property management company in the community offers free rent for one month during extra training sessions for new teachers who move to Clark County, Nevada, to teach in one of 13 target schools.

### **Resource 19: Teacher Next Door**

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2004, December 23). Teacher Next Door [website]. Retrieved 9/12/05 from <http://www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/reo/tnd/tnd.cfm>.

The Teacher Next Door program is open to any person "employed full-time by a public school, private school, or federal, state, county, or municipal educational agency as a state-certified classroom teacher or administrator in grades K-12." Participants must certify that they are buying a home in the jurisdiction of the school district where they are employed. The program is limited to designated "Revitalization Areas" – which tend to be low-income areas working on community development.

### **Resource 20: Extra credit teacher home purchase program**

California Housing Finance Agency. (2005). Extra credit teacher home purchase program [website]. Retrieved 9/12/05 from <http://www.calhfa.ca.gov/homeownership/programs/ectp.htm>.

The Extra Credit Teacher Home Purchase Program is directed to teachers, administrators, staff members, and classified employees in "high-priority schools" and requires a service commitment of three consecutive years in the same school. The program provides a below-market interest rate on a CalHFA first loan and a forgivable-interest CalHFA junior loan to assist eligible school staff in purchasing their first homes. It is designed to provide up to 100% of the financing needed for the purchase of a home.

### **Resource 21: Mayor's Community Education Alliance**

Womack, T. (2003, February 7). Mayor's Community Education Alliance teacher recruitment effort underway [press release]. Chattanooga, TN: Mayor's Office. Retrieved 9/8/05 from

[http://www.chattanooga.gov/general\\_government/1758.asp](http://www.chattanooga.gov/general_government/1758.asp).

In Chattanooga, a community effort brings together multiple financial incentives that have been provided to attract high-performing teachers to a focus group of nine low-performing schools. Eligible teachers who move to the “Benwood schools” can receive pro bono legal services and multiple housing incentives – low-interest loans, a gift of up to \$10,000 in equity, and a special variance allowing the qualifying teachers to forgo any down payment.

## STRATEGY 8

Create tuition incentives for professional advancement. You might also consider allowing some of these professional credits to advance teachers along the salary schedule.

- Partner with universities and other professional development providers to offer special courses and tuition rates to teachers in at-risk schools.
- Reimburse professional development that directly improves teaching skills and/or student achievement.

### Resource 22: A plan for attracting and retaining quality teachers in at-risk schools

Rice, George Ann. (2004 July 12). A plan for attracting and retaining quality teachers in at-risk schools. Remarks delivered at 2004 National Commission on Teaching and America's Future Partner States' Symposium. Retrieved online 8/30/05 from <http://www.nctaf.org/article/index.php?g=0&c=5&sc=41&ssc=&a=212&navs>

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The district now trains new hires in 13 high-priority schools specifically on teaching in at-risk schools (even though the hires are already highly qualified). For example, seminars are taught by teacher leaders who have experience in such schools. The classes are part of the district's induction program for new teachers.

### Resource 23: Critical Teacher Shortage Tuition Reimbursement Program

Florida Department of Education. (2005). 2005-2006 Critical Teacher Shortage Tuition Reimbursement Program [website]. Retrieved 8/29/05 from <http://firn.edu/doe/osfa/ctstrfactsheet.htm>.

This program is designed to improve the skills and knowledge of certified, full-time, publicly funded school employees who currently teach or are preparing to teach in a Pre K-12 critical teacher shortage area as approved by the State Board of Education. Reimbursement for tuition requires earning a grade of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

### Resource 24: Osborne Fellows Initiative

Osborne Fellows Initiative (part of the Chattanooga, Tennessee, Benwood Initiative). Website: [http://www.pefchattanooga.org/www/docs/2/osbourne\\_fellows/](http://www.pefchattanooga.org/www/docs/2/osbourne_fellows/).

The Osborne Fellows Initiative was created to provide 100 teachers in Benwood schools with a free master's degree focused on reading,

instructional strategies for urban learners, and other topics relevant to the needs of their students. The program is open to tenured teachers who want to move to Benwood schools. Courses are team taught by faculty from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (partner in the Osborne Initiative), outside experts, and Hamilton County master teachers and administrators. Osborne Fellows work together for two years in seminars and study groups held in Benwood classrooms. Each Fellow designs a dynamic action research project that addresses a teaching issue relevant to his or her school and is intended to be shared with the entire faculty.

## **STRATEGY 9**

Modify the traditional pay scale for teachers who are in at-risk schools; and/or include performance on the pay scale.

- Allow new teachers high-priority schools or high-need subject areas to start their salaries higher on the traditional pay scale.
- Allow experienced teachers who move to at-risk schools to advance quickly to the top of the pay scale and, if possible, beyond.
- Consider making financial and other incentives performance-based.

### **...SUBSTRATEGY 9.1**

**Structure incentives that reward success, not failure.**

- Reward and recognize teachers for raising schools out of the risk zone with financial rewards and public recognition. Perverse systems give teachers bonuses for working in low-performing schools, but take away bonuses and supports when the schools improve in achievement.

#### **Resource 25: Performance-based Pay**

See [Performance-based Pay](#).

#### **Resource 26: Mayor's Community Education Alliance**

Womack, T. (2003, February 7). Mayor's Community Education Alliance teacher recruitment effort underway [press release]. Chattanooga, TN: Mayor's Office. Retrieved 9/8/05 from [http://www.chattanooga.gov/general\\_government/1758.asp](http://www.chattanooga.gov/general_government/1758.asp).

In Chattanooga, a community effort brings together multiple financial incentives that have been provided to attract high-performing teachers to a focus group of nine low-performing schools. Eligible teachers who move to the "Benwood schools" can receive performance pay.

#### **Resource 27: A plan for attracting and retaining quality teachers**

Rice, George Ann. (2004 July 12). A plan for attracting and retaining quality teachers in at-risk schools. Remarks delivered at 2004 National

Commission on Teaching and America's Future Partner States' Symposium. Retrieved online 8/30/05 from <http://www.nctaf.org/article/index.php?q=0&c=5&sc=41&ssc=&a=212&navs=>.

After mediated interest-based bargaining with the teachers' union, the school district can offer new teachers in 13 high-priority schools accelerated movement across the pay scale via credits for professional development on teaching in at-risk schools.

### **Resource 28: U.S. Department of Education**

U.S. Department of Education. (2004, February 12). Attracting highly qualified teachers to underachieving schools with cash bonuses from federal funds. *Extra Credit* [newsletter]. Retrieved 9/26/05 from <http://www.ed.gov/news/newsletters/extracredit/2004/02/0212.html>.

U.S. Department of Education. (undated). State Efforts: Recruitment and Retention [website]. Retrieved 9/8/05 from <http://www.teacherquality.us/Public/PromisingPractices.asp?PPCategoryID=3>.

Through the Alabama Incentive Program, highly qualified teachers can earn up to \$40,000 (and at least \$20,000) in bonuses over five years by working at one of five low-performing schools in Mobile County. Principals can earn up to \$60,000 extra at the selected schools. The schools were chosen based on low SAT scores. The program is supported by \$1.8 million in federal funding for the first five years. If test scores improve, employees can get more bonuses at the end of the year.

The Mobile County Public School System is also giving the five schools an extra \$3.4 million for textbooks and other materials and to provide extra teacher training and other support for the selected schools.

Before moving to the high-need schools, teachers must complete applications that include an essay detailing what they have done to improve student achievement at their current schools. They also must pass a standardized test in the subject area or have taken the required number of college courses in the subject, and must have taught for at least one year.

## STRATEGY 10

Take advantage of alternative sources of money in order to provide incentives.

### Resource 29: New Orleans soliciting businesses for bonuses

Hoff, D.J. (2002, May 1). New Orleans soliciting businesses for bonuses. *Education Week* 21(33): 11. Retrieved 9/12/05 from <http://edweek.org/ew/articles/2002/05/01/33recruit.h21.html>.

The school district in New Orleans asked community businesses to donate money for bonuses for certified teachers. Money donated for teacher bonuses would be matched by the district. The district had more than 700 uncertified teachers at the time, with a teaching staff of 5,700. The bonuses were intended to encourage certified teachers in order to replace uncertified ones. Certified teachers who were new or experienced could earn the signing bonus.

### Resource 30: An Overview of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001: Title II, Part A

North Central Regional Educational Laboratory. (undated). An Overview of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001: Title II, Part A [website]. Naperville, IL: Learning Point Associates. Retrieved 10/3/05 from <http://www.ncrel.org/policy/curve/part2a.htm>.

Excerpt from “District Money Authorization”:

... A district is authorized to use the funds to carry out one or more of the following activities:

- Developing ways to assist schools in effectively recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers, principals, and pupil-services personnel.
- Recruiting and hiring highly qualified teachers through scholarships, signing bonuses, or other financial incentives, such as differential pay.
- Creating initiatives to address tenure reform, merit pay, and testing of elementary and secondary school teachers in their subject areas....
- Providing professional development programs on how to teach children with different learning styles, particularly children with disabilities and children with special learning needs....
- Developing teacher advancement initiatives that emphasize multiple career paths and pay differentiation.

### Resource 31: Mayor’s Community Education Alliance

Womack, T. (2003, February 7). Mayor’s Community Education Alliance teacher recruitment effort underway [press release]. Chattanooga, TN: Mayor’s Office. Retrieved 9/8/05 from [http://www.chattanooga.gov/general\\_government/1758.asp](http://www.chattanooga.gov/general_government/1758.asp).

In Chattanooga, a community effort brings together multiple financial incentives that have been provided to attract high-performing teachers to a focus group of nine low-performing schools. The incentives are supported by Community Education Alliance, the Benwood Foundation, Lyndhurst Foundation, the Osborne Foundation, Chattanooga Neighborhood Enterprise (CNE), the Public Education Foundation, the Hamilton County School System, and Fannie Mae.

**Resource 32: Education Commission of the States**

Kansas S.B. 138, Sec. 1 (2005), as cited in Education Commission of the States. (undated). Recent State Policies/Activities: Teacher Recruitment/Retention—Incentives. Denver, CO: Author. Retrieved 9/6/05 from <http://www.ecs.org/ecs/ecscat.nsf/WebTopicView?OpenView&RestrictToCategory=Teacher+Recruitment/Retention--Incentives>. Full text of S.B. 138 retrieved 9/13/05 from <http://www.kslegislature.org/bills/2006/138.pdf>.

Allows the board of education of any school district, any teacher of mathematics, science, physics, chemistry or biology, and a business firm to enter a partnership agreement under which such business firm agrees to employ such teacher in a position that requires mathematics or science skills commensurate with the classes that the teacher regularly teaches when school is not regularly in session. Provides the business with a state income tax credit of 25%, or 30% for a teacher teaching in a school district in a rural community, underserved area, or underperforming urban area. Limits the total amount of credits for the program per fiscal year to \$500,000. Limits the total amount of credits per congressional district to \$125,000.

## STRATEGY 11

Clarify and publicize eligibility criteria and inclusion in the program:

- For teachers. Communicate often with the teachers' associations, administrators, teachers, and community to make sure they understand who can receive financial incentives and why the incentives are important.
- For schools. Prepare the list of eligible schools well in advance of the beginning of the incentive program, and double check that the right schools are included.

### ...SUBSTRATEGY 11.1

**Notify everyone who could be affected by the incentive program, and make sure school districts' human resources departments have information in time to use the incentive program in recruitment.**

#### Resource 33: North Carolina math/science/special education (MSSE)

Clotfelter, C., Glennie, E., Ladd, H., and Vigdor, J. (2005, May). *North Carolina math/science/special education (MSSE) \$1,800 teacher bonus program: An initial evaluation*. Durham, NC: Center for Child and Family Policy, Duke University. Retrieved 9/9/05 from <http://www.pubpol.duke.edu/centers/child/Publications/TeacherBonusProgram2.pdf>.

Program evaluation discovered that “because of the complexity of these various requirements, the program was neither cleanly implemented nor well understood.” (17% of principals of eligible schools did not know their schools had been eligible, and 13% of eligible teachers did not know they were eligible. Almost half of teachers who knew they were eligible did not know why they were receiving a bonus!) (p. 3)

#### Resource 34: Professional Compensation

Gonring, P., Jupp, B., Ursetta, K., and Woodward, L. (2005, July 11). Building a coalition for professional teacher compensation in Denver. Presentation at 2005 NCTAF Partners' Symposium.

Jupp, B. (2004, November 14). Denver's professional compensation system for teachers. Presentation at NCTAF regional meeting, “Building a Professionally Rewarding Career Path for Teachers.”

ProComp website: <http://www.denverprocomp.org/>

The ProComp transition team experienced an intense process of publicizing and garnering support for a professional compensation system

for Denver Public Schools teachers. Transition team staff went door-to-door in some neighborhoods, visited schools in the district, held information sessions, and printed pamphlets to ensure that teachers and administrators knew about the program and what it entailed. Contact: Brad Jupp, Coordinator, ProComp Program.

## STRATEGY 12

Develop a sustained funding plan. If necessary, suggest how to deal with incentive programs during budget shortfalls.

### Resource 35: Teach Louisiana First Program

Teach Louisiana First Program, Act 982 (H.B. 1923), La. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 17:427.3 (2003). Retrieved 9/9/05 from <http://www.legis.state.la.us/bills/byinst.asp?sessionid=03RS&billid=HB1923&doctype=BT>.

“If at any time during the implementation of the program there is insufficient funding to provide for the payment of incentives to each eligible teacher, including those already participating in the program, first priority shall be given to the most highly qualified teachers already participating in the program and then to the most highly qualified new applicants all in accordance with rules and regulations adopted by the administering agency for such purpose pursuant to prioritization provided to the administering agency by the department.” (Page 4-5, (3))

### Resource 36: North Carolina math/science/special education (MSSE)

Clotfelter, C., Glennie, E., Ladd, H., and Vigdor, J. (2005, May). *North Carolina math/science/special education (MSSE) \$1,800 teacher bonus program: An initial evaluation*. Durham, NC: Center for Child and Family Policy, Duke University. Retrieved 9/9/05 from <http://www.pubpol.duke.edu/centers/child/Publications/TeacherBonusProgram2.pdf>.

p. 7: The state ended the incentive program. “... [S]ome school and district officials were not sure that the program would continue, so they did not actively promote it.”

## STRATEGY 13

Conduct continuous evaluation of the incentive program:

- Justify costs to the public vis-à-vis effectiveness towards student learning, especially in at-risk schools.
- Present results to state and district leaders, teachers, and administrators in order to sustain support and growth of the incentive program.

### Resource 37: Teach Louisiana First Program

Teach Louisiana First Program, Act 982 (H.B. 1923), La. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 17:427.3 (2003). Retrieved 9/9/05 from <http://www.legis.state.la.us/bills/byinst.asp?sessionid=03RS&billid=HB1923&doctype=BT>.

The bill is an example of clearly defined rules of school/teacher eligibility for incentives, and comprehensive planning of a state-level incentive.

“Cooperatively establish and cause to be conducted a periodic evaluation of the program to measure its effectiveness in promoting the program purpose specified in this Section.” (Page 3, (vii))

### Resource 38: North Carolina math/science/special education (MSSE)

Clotfelter, C., Glennie, E., Ladd, H., and Vigdor, J. (2005, May). *North Carolina math/science/special education (MSSE) \$1,800 teacher bonus program: An initial evaluation*. Durham, NC: Center for Child and Family Policy, Duke University. Retrieved 9/9/05 from <http://www.pubpol.duke.edu/centers/child/Publications/TeacherBonusProgram2.pdf>.

An example of a strong program evaluation, though only preliminary, given the short life of the incentive program.

## **REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE:**

### **Community Rallies to Support Neediest Schools and Students Efforts in Fourth Year and Growing**

Hamilton County, Tennessee, set a goal: the district's nine most challenged elementary schools, all in Chattanooga, would have every student reading at grade level by the end of third grade.

Former Chattanooga mayor Bob Corker, Hamilton County Department of Education Superintendent Jesse Register, as well as foundations, businesses, and a non-profit organization all have thrown in their resources and professional expertise to support teachers in the nine schools. Benwood schools can earn performance bonuses (for individual teachers and for entire schools). Benwood teachers also receive housing incentives and pro bono legal services.

But beyond financial and other incentives, the main focus of the Benwood initiative is providing excellent teaching. Teachers are trained in reading instruction, and Benwood schools have money for reading specialists to work with struggling readers; a wide variety of books in all classrooms; coaches for new teachers; and leadership coaches to help principals and assistant principals guide and evaluate teachers. Another major element of the initiative is the Osborne Fellows Initiative, which provides selected Benwood teachers access to a unique master's degree in urban education – for free. Osborne Fellows collaborate during their courses, but also in their schools. They are helping to lead their schools' teaching staffs toward improvement.

Other strategies in this comprehensive approach to school improvement include reorganizing the school day, after-school and summer school programs for all students, a full-time parent involvement coordinator, mentoring for new teachers, and enrichment activities for students.

The early results are highly encouraging. The percentage of third graders reading above or at grade level increased from 22.6% in 2001 to 35.9% in 2003. In 2003, the Benwood schools gained more in test scores than 90% of all elementary schools in the state. In both of the initiative's first two academic years, students at the Benwood schools have shown enormous gains in reading, as measured by the state's value-added test scores.

For more information contact:

Benwood Initiative Co-Directors Lonita Davidson, [lonita6@comcast.net](mailto:lonita6@comcast.net), or Faye Pharr, [pharr\\_f@hcde.org](mailto:pharr_f@hcde.org).

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