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Introduction and summary

Of all school factors—from extended learning opportunities to family and community engagement to smaller class sizes—teachers exert the largest impact on student achievement.[1] What was once fervently believed by practitioners and parents but questioned by researchers is now a well-established fact: Teachers make a crucial difference in students' academic performance. Despite this reality, efforts to improve teacher quality through performance evaluation have made little ground. The consequences of evaluation have generally been negligible in terms of teachers' instructional improvement or continued employment. There is scant evidence that evaluation has improved the quality of teachers' classroom instruction or led to the dismissal of underperforming teachers.[2]

Despite its less than stellar track record, teacher evaluation has taken center stage in recent efforts to reform public schools in the United States. In the Obama administration's 2009 Race to the Top competitive grant program, for example, the federal government favored states that permitted the use of student test scores in teacher evaluations. In short order, 17 states changed their laws to permit or require the inclusion of such data in 2009 or 2010, with eight more following suit in 2011.[3] In addition to trying to increase teacher accountability within teacher evaluation, policymakers have tried to bolster the instructional improvement aspect of teacher evaluation. It is clear that many districts and states will incorporate not only student achievement but also increased coaching in teacher evaluation in the coming years.

Despite growing momentum to reform teacher evaluation in order to increase its impact on teachers' practice and persistence in the profession, very little research examines how current reforms influence teachers' attitudes or reported instructional practices. Do the new evaluation systems lead to enhancements in teachers' instruction overall? And are there real consequences—penalties—for persistently underperforming teachers? Are there rewards for those whose instruction is consistently outstanding?

To answer these and other questions related to teacher evaluation, we conducted a small-scale study that sought to provide evidence to inform the debate among policymakers on how teacher evaluation should be changed to yield the greatest impact.

This report provides findings based on a study conducted in one northeastern, urban, and medium-sized school district, which we will call Studyville to maintain confidentiality. A leader in teacher-evaluation reform, Studyville[4] implemented a new system in 2010—the Teacher Evaluation Program, or TEP, which evaluates teachers based on their students' growth on academic performance measures and more conventional observation-based data. This report presents the views of teachers on the district's evaluation reform and the extent to which it has affected their instructional practice. It is based on interviews conducted with 92 educators, including teachers and school leaders during the 2011–2012 school year, which was the evaluation program's second year of existence. This report focuses on how the experiences and views of teachers differed according to their evaluation rating—ratings which ranged from a low of 1 (needs improvement) to a high of 5 (exemplary).

In general the teachers in this study viewed the district's new teacher-evaluation program more positively than negatively, although a substantial minority of teachers said that they would not recommend the evaluation program to other school districts, citing concerns ranging from fairness to feedback. The main findings from this study include the following:

- Teachers were most positive about the opportunity to set their own goals and work toward them
- Teachers asserted that evaluation reform was necessary
- Teachers preferred creating their own evaluation system rather than having one imposed on them
- Teachers expressed mixed views about whether the district's teacher evaluation program is fair
- Teachers expressed mixed views about whether the evaluation program is objective
- Teachers with the highest performance rating based on the new evaluation system tended to express positive or neutral opinions about the program

- Teachers with the lowest performance rating were more likely to express negative opinions about the teacher evaluation program

The study also found that a large majority of teachers said the teacher-evaluation program did not generally affect their pedagogy but that many said it did affect their planning and overall approach to teaching. The most consistently reported impacts of the evaluation program were related to its goal-setting component and, in particular, the use of student performance data in the goals.

There is much less reported impact related to feedback on instructional practice. Teachers did not report changing their instructional practices as a result of evaluations. In general teachers noted that they did not receive targeted feedback, more observations, or suggestions on how to teach differently through the program.

Teachers with lower performance ratings were more likely to say that the evaluation program affected their instruction. They were also more likely to say that it affected their approach to planning and preparation.

These findings point to the following policy and practice recommendations:[5]

Hold teachers accountable for student performance. Holding teachers accountable for growth in student performance, with real consequences for achieving or failing to achieve their student performance goals, seemed to produce demonstrable changes in teacher behavior. Policymakers have in many cases made student performance a central aspect of teacher evaluation. This study suggests that weighting student performance heavily in teacher evaluation and specifying real consequences tied to how students achieve on performance measures focuses teachers' attention on these outcomes.

Include goal setting in teacher evaluation. The teacher-evaluation program's reported impact on teacher practice was achieved almost entirely through the goal-setting portion of this reform. Teachers said that setting goals generally made their teaching more coherent and forced them to be more organized and mindful of how they used time. Policymakers should consider goal setting as a promising strategy to focus teachers on key outcomes, thus shaping their work inside and outside the classroom.

Include teachers as partners in teacher evaluation. The generally positive view of this reform held by teachers stemmed in large measure from their ongoing

involvement with the program. This suggests that policymakers should consider ways in which to craft teacher-evaluation policy to enable teachers to join as partners in their own assessment and improvement. This seems particularly important to higher-performing teachers.

Invest in building the capacity of administrators as instructional leaders. The teacher-evaluation program seemed to be much more successful in its effort to increase teacher accountability than it was in its effort to increase the instructional capabilities of all its teachers. Bolstering the professional learning aspect of a teacher-evaluation program requires increased attention to developing the skill and willingness of school leaders to go into classrooms and offer high-quality, ongoing feedback. It also requires that schools structure opportunities for leaders to offer such feedback. To increase the probability that teacher-evaluation reform will improve teachers' instruction, policymakers should consider ways to increase the capacity of administrators to act as instructional leaders and provide administrators with opportunities to exercise these skills. This includes having administrators offer more targeted professional development on identifying effective instruction and having them coach teachers on how to develop skills in line with this vision. It includes putting in place structures that allow school leaders to get into classrooms and work with teachers on instructional matters more frequently.

Provide opportunities for qualified teachers to exercise instructional leadership. To dramatically intensify the consequences of teacher-evaluation programs, states and districts may need to enlist expert teachers. Policymakers should consider permitting individuals other than school leaders to evaluate teachers. Given the demands on administrators' time and the fact that some teachers possess a deep knowledge of instruction, broadening the term "evaluator" to include these teachers makes sense.

Devote more consideration to how teacher evaluation can benefit high-performing teachers. In recent years policymakers have focused on reforming teacher evaluation to sharpen the consequences for persistently low-performing teachers. It is now time to start thinking more broadly about how teacher evaluation can enhance the practice of teachers across the performance spectrum. Maximizing the effects of teacher-evaluation reform by considering the supports and rewards that allow middle- to high-performing teachers to improve their practice is imperative.

This paper briefly reviews what is known about teacher evaluation and pays particular attention to findings that inform current reforms. The paper describes in detail the setting in which this study took place and the specific teacher-evaluation reform that was the subject of this inquiry. It also describes the methods used to collect and analyze data. Finally, it details the findings, concluding with a number of specific recommendations for policymakers.

Teacher evaluation: An overview

Teacher-evaluation systems generally have two main purposes: to provide feedback to teachers to improve their practice and to identify underperforming teachers for remediation and, if necessary, dismissal.[6] Evidence on the success of these systems in achieving these ends is not encouraging. Although certain evaluation systems improve teacher performance, most teachers report that evaluation does little to improve their teaching.[7] Only 26 percent of teachers in a recent study by Education Sector, an independent education policy think tank, reported that evaluation was "useful and effective."[8] To underscore the point, a recent study conducted in 12 large urban districts indicated that the vast majority of teachers received the highest evaluation rating possible.[9] This is problematic because it means that teachers are receiving inaccurate signals about their performance. Highly skilled teachers get the signal that their instruction is no better than that of the great majority of their peers. Poorly performing teachers think there is nothing wrong with their teaching.[10]

Multiple factors, often working in tandem, hinder teacher evaluation. External constraints such as vague district standards, poor evaluation instruments, overly restrictive collective bargaining agreements, and a lack of time decrease evaluators' opportunity and inclination to evaluate rigorously.[11] Also impeding evaluation are internal constraints such as lack of evaluator skill in assessing teachers, the absence of high-quality professional development for evaluators, a school culture that discourages critical feedback and negative evaluation ratings, and a district culture that offers little oversight and few incentives for administrators to evaluate accurately.[12]

Additionally, teacher evaluation has few consequences, either negative or positive. This reduces the willingness of evaluators to evaluate accurately and thoroughly, which in turn reduces the motivation of teachers to take evaluation seriously.[13]

Two other failings of teacher evaluation have drawn particular criticism:[14] First, teacher evaluation has generally focused on teachers' actions, rather than on student learning.[15] Second, the evaluation process has typically provided teachers with scant feedback.[16]

It was against this backdrop that this study of teacher-evaluation reform was undertaken.

Study setting

The Studyville School District is a medium-sized district in a northeastern urban center. More than 70 percent of Studyville's approximately 20,000 students receive free- or reduced-price lunches, and fewer than 30 percent of students perform at the expected level on state achievement tests. The district's new teacher-evaluation program seeks to increase the instructional quality of its approximately 1,600 teachers. Implemented in the fall of 2010, Studyville's evaluation program requires school leaders to evaluate teachers annually and provide more frequent and informal coaching. The district's evaluation program also requires that teachers be evaluated based on the extent to which their students meet performance goals that are developed collaboratively by teachers and their evaluators. Teachers' ratings are based largely on student performance, but they are also based on standards-based observations and teachers' professional conduct.

Each fall the district's teachers begin the school year by meeting with their evaluator to set at least two student-performance goals for the academic year. Each goal is based on student growth in key skills and knowledge related to the subject or grade taught. Elementary teachers in grades four through eight, for example, must create at least one goal based on their students' performance on the state standardized test. Teachers and evaluators meet again at the midpoint of the school year to discuss teachers' progress toward meeting their goals. At that time goals may be modified slightly if both parties agree to the change.

Also during the fall start of the school year, district evaluators are required to identify potential exemplary and underperforming teachers. At the end of the academics year, teachers receive an annual summative rating—which can range from needs improvement (1) to exemplary (5) and is based on whether their students meet their performance goals as well as a subjective assessment by their evaluator. In November, however, based on their observations in the first two months of the school year, evaluators must identify teachers who could potentially receive a needs improvement rating of 1 or an exemplary rating of 5. These preliminary ratings will be compared to observations made by third-party evaluators (valida-

Examples of goal setting

Example 1: High school media arts teacher. Students in arts and technology classes often develop portfolios of work showcasing their mastery of various skills. A media arts teacher might therefore set one goal of having 90 percent of his or her students complete a portfolio. For the second goal the teacher might use the district's 21st century skills standards and assessments and establish that 90 percent of students should advance one performance level from their fall baseline score on the rubric of essential skills in the strand of communication and collaboration by the end of the school year.

Example 2: Elementary teacher. In the elementary grades administering the state test, it is possible to set performance goals that measure student growth on the test. But since these test results aren't published until July, many teachers use district assessments, which are based on the state test, to set their goals. In the fall teachers in tested grades administer pre-tests to their students and then set goals. A teacher could, for example, set a goal of moving students' average score on the state English language arts standardized test from 50 percent to 70 percent "correct" over the course of the academic year.

tors) external to the district. These trained outside observers evaluate teachers concurrently but independently of district evaluators. No communication passes to the external evaluator regarding whether a teacher was identified as a potential high performer or low performer, nor do the two observers communicate regarding their assessment of the observed lesson. In this way, the third-party evaluators provide an impartial assessment of the highest- and lowest-performing teachers.

Teachers scored as exemplary (5) by both the district evaluator and the external evaluator are eligible for leadership positions. Those teachers scored as needs improvement (1) by internal and external evaluators receive intensive support and could be dismissed prior to the end of the school year if they fail to improve.

The new teacher-evaluation program departs from the district's prior system in its incorporation of student achievement, its effort to increase the quality and frequency of informal feedback, and its clear positive and negative consequences for teachers who perform very well or very poorly. The district's new-teacher evaluation program has led to an uptick in teacher departures for performance

reasons. In the summer of 2011 Studyville notified 34 teachers—of which 16 were tenured—that they would be dismissed/nonrenewed based on their evaluation ratings. This represented approximately 1.3 percent of tenured teachers and 2.8 percent of nontenured teachers in the district. All 34 teachers chose to leave the system voluntarily prior to the initiation of formal dismissal proceedings.

Study methodology

This paper presents findings based on teachers' views of the evaluation reform and the extent to which they report that it has changed how they teach. This inquiry was guided by the following questions:

- How do teachers view the teacher-evaluation program?
- Do teachers' views vary by performance level?
- Has the teacher-evaluation program influenced how teachers teach? If so, how?
- Does the teacher-evaluation program's influence vary by teacher performance level?

To understand how teachers respond to being evaluated based on their students' performance, an interview-based study was conducted within the Studyville School District[17]—a district that has received national attention for its teacher-evaluation reform.

Study sample

To gain insight into how teachers respond to the district's teacher-evaluation program, in-depth, semistructured interviews were conducted with a sample of 92 participants: 10 principals, 10 assistant principals, and 72 teachers. A purposive sample of 10 schools was selected. Half were schools where teachers reported the most positive assessment of the district's teacher-evaluation program based on district surveys conducted in 2011, and half were schools where teachers, on average, reported the most negative assessment of the evaluation program. Four sample schools were high schools and six were K-8 schools. Interviews were conducted with the principal, the assistant principal, and with 20 percent to 25 percent of the school's teachers. In building the teacher sample, teachers were selected based on years of teaching experience and by subject area and grade level taught in order to

maximize teacher-rating variation. The sample included both tenured and nontenured teachers.[18] School administrators were interviewed to provide data that was used to triangulate teacher reports.

Data sources

In-person, semistructured interviews were conducted with 92 participants during the 2011–2012 school year, the second year of the district's teacher-evaluation program. Interviews were 45 minutes to 60 minutes long and were audio-recorded and then transcribed. Teachers were asked a series of questions, including whether the evaluation program had altered their pedagogy, if they felt pressured to raise student test scores, and about the time they spent on planning and preparation. Interviews with school leaders provided an opportunity to triangulate data. Participants were also asked whether or not they witnessed changes in teachers' instruction, planning and preparation, and collaboration.

The interview transcripts were coded using open, axial, and selective coding in order to analyze the data.[19] Thematic summaries, categorical matrices, and analytical memos cross-case analysis were used to identify emerging themes across participant experiences.[20]

Study findings

On the whole, teachers have a generally positive view of Studyville's teacher-evaluation program but report that it has not affected their instructional practice. At the same time they say that it has changed how they plan and prepare to teach their students and how they progress through the curriculum. Teachers rated lower under the evaluation program were more likely than those rated higher to express negative views of the program, but they were also more likely to report that the program changed the way they teach and plan.

The next sections of this report describe teachers' general views of the evaluation program and their specific perspectives regarding its fairness and objectivity. Additionally, it describes the impact that teachers reported the evaluation program having on their instruction and their broader practices such as planning for the short and long term.

How teachers view the evaluation program

To gather teachers' views on the district's teacher evaluation program, they were asked to comment generally on the reform and specifically on its fairness and objectivity. Although most teachers in the sample said they welcomed the new evaluation program, the sample was split as to whether it was fair or objective.

Teachers generally supported the new evaluation program, with more than half of the teachers explicitly stating that they had a positive view of the system. When asked her first impression of the evaluation program, one teacher replied, "Thank goodness." She explained that the prior evaluation system was poorly administered, noting that the rubrics and explicit expectations of the district's new evaluation program were a great improvement. Said another teacher: "I love it … It's the way to go." Other teachers described the new evaluation program, with its assessment of teachers based on progress toward goals and more conventional observations, as "much more comprehensive" and "more thorough" than the prior system.

Of those teachers who did not express a consistently positive view of the evaluation program, half voiced a uniformly negative view and half expressed a mixed view, citing some benefits and some drawbacks to the reform. One teacher whose view was altogether negative explained: "I think it's terrible that they rate teachers … You start being viewed as a number instead of as a person." Teachers with mixed views included one teacher who said that the evaluation program made her anxious. "I kind of always feel like I'm on the defense and I have to protect myself," she said. But she also said the evaluation process "has a ton of benefits."

Overall, about three-quarters of the teacher sample said that they would recommend the district's new program as an evaluation system to other districts. On the other hand, one-quarter explicitly said that they would not recommend this model for adoption elsewhere.

What teachers say are the most positive elements of the evaluation program

Teachers identified several aspects of the evaluation program as particularly valuable. These included, in order of prevalence, its emphasis on teacher-selected goals based on growth in student performance measures; inclusion of more data points on teacher performance than in the prior evaluation system; increased accountability for teachers; safeguards against capricious treatment of teachers; and the program's status as a homegrown reform as opposed to a state-mandated change.

Almost all of the teachers said they appreciated the emphasis that the district's evaluation program placed on teacher goals. The opportunity for teachers to create goals based on student performance and their own professional needs was important to them. This gave teachers some authorship over the evaluation process, and they valued this aspect of the system above all others. One teacher called this aspect of the program "empowering." Another teacher concurred, saying, "I feel like I have more control … I get to pick my own goals." That wasn't the case with the previous iteration of the evaluation program, the teacher explained: "You would be doing your thing and then you wouldn't know until the end of the year whether or not you're good or bad."

Teachers also said that they particularly valued the opportunity to develop their own goals given that serious consequences were attached to them. Teachers felt that their input on goals helped maintain fairness in the new evaluation system. As

one teacher said, "One of the nice things [about the evaluation program] is that you get to help create your goals, so maybe for a class that's very disruptive then you have to pick an appropriate goal."

Teachers said they valued the goal-setting aspect of the teacher-evaluation program because it emphasizes not just student achievement, but also professional growth. One kindergarten teacher said, "We make the two goals for the kids in math and in literacy and then we set a goal for ourselves—a personal goal or a professional goal. I like the idea of saying, '[W]hat could I achieve this year?'" Another teacher agreed: "I like how we have to set our own goals, especially the professional goals because every year I've always tried to select a goal for myself anyway, and now I get credit for it. You get rewarded for trying to grow as a professional."

The second major benefit of the teacher-evaluation program, according to teachers, is its inclusion of multiple data points. They asserted that the program takes more aspects of teachers' work into account than the prior system. Teachers appreciated the fact that the new evaluation program, in one teacher's words, "is not just one snapshot" of a teacher's performance. Instead, she explained, "It's throughout the year. And then, it follows up with data the next year. So, it's more of the whole picture of who the teacher is rather than a small snapshot."

Many teachers identified increased accountability as another positive aspect of the evaluation program. All study participants said that teachers should be held accountable. One teacher stated that teacher evaluation "is a mirror" that forces teachers to confront their own practices and effectiveness. She added that she valued the fact that "you can't run from this." Other teachers went a step further, stating that they explicitly valued the fact that poorly performing teachers had been dismissed under the district's new teacher evaluation program. One teacher put it like this: "If somebody is not effective…you need to have a way of being able to get rid of them to keep good teachers." Another teacher voiced a similar sentiment about the program, saying, "An administrator can get rid of a teacher that is not doing their job and I like it for that. It opens up that door but with checks and balances so that it is not a personality thing where an administrator just doesn't like someone." Some teachers saw the ability to "get rid of teachers that aren't doing their job" as the primary benefit of the teacher-evaluation program.

Teachers also appreciated the safeguards put in place under the evaluation program. One strength of the system, they noted, was its reliance on external

validators, particularly in the case of low-rated teachers at risk of losing their jobs. Teachers felt that teachers whose jobs were on the line deserved to have the evaluator's assessment of their instruction verified by an external, impartial observer.

Teachers also recognized the use of student performance growth, rather than the percentage of students attaining a benchmark with no consideration of their starting point, as a key aspect of the evaluation system that made it fairer to teachers. Students in the Studyville district perform, on average, well below the state mean on standardized tests. The fact that the new program evaluated teachers based on their students' growth made the teachers feel that the evaluation took their context into account and that achieving their student performance goals was attainable.

Some teachers further appreciated the fact that the teacher-evaluation program made the expectations for performance more explicit than did the previous system. The explicitness of the expectations—knowing what student-growth benchmarks had to be reached, for example—was not only seen as safeguarding against capricious treatment of teachers via the evaluation program, but also as informing teachers' day-to-day instruction. One teacher said, "There is a rubric that you can follow and should be following in terms of what expectations are. So I think that's more clearly stated." Teachers appreciated knowing where their performance stood, both through the goal-setting meetings and also through their own tracking of student growth.

Finally, teachers voiced pragmatic motivations for supporting this reform. With evaluation at the center of education reform efforts nationally and statewide, teachers said that they wanted to create their own system rather than have one imposed on them from outside the district. They appreciated the fact that their teacher-evaluation program is homegrown and that teachers played a pivotal role in its development. "I know it's happening all over the country. I mean this is the way things are going," commented one teacher. There was broad acknowledgement for the need to "have some accountability." But the consensus was that developing an evaluation system in-district with teacher input was preferable to a state-mandated system. One teacher said that the Studyville district's system was " better than what the governor is suggesting," referring to a proposal that teachers be evaluated solely on their students' test scores with no teacher goal setting included. The same teacher said the district's teacher-evaluation program "is a much better option because it involves conversation. It's collaborative." Another teacher voiced a similar sentiment: "It's better for us to be in charge of our own evaluation rather than letting the state do it."

What teachers say are the most negative elements of the evaluation program

Teachers also noted several negative elements of the district's revised evaluation system, which are discussed below in order of prevalence. The primary negative reported was the perception shared by a substantial number of teachers that the evaluation system increased the power of school leaders. There were several facets to this criticism.

Teachers voiced the greatest concern about what they saw as the increased ability of school leaders to fire teachers. This perception was shaped not only by the structural changes to teacher evaluation embedded in the new evaluation program but also by the consequences that the district attached to the program's teacher ratings. Teachers noted in particular the fact that 34 teachers were recommended for dismissal/nonrenewal after the first year of the evaluation program's implementation. Moreover, teachers reported witnessing increased interventions for their colleagues who had received low ratings.

Thus, while teachers appreciated that more teachers had been identified as low performing and truly underperforming teachers had been dismissed under the evaluation program, they also reported being alarmed when teachers they perceived to be relatively skilled received low ratings or were dismissed. Teachers, even those with high ratings, voiced concerns about administrators' power to influence their evaluation ratings. Despite the fact that there were safeguards (most notably, the external validators) against administrators using the evaluation process to unfairly target teachers, some teachers could not shake the fear that these protections might not be sufficient.

All schools in the sample had teachers who received needs improvement (1) ratings, and in some of these cases the teachers were dismissed. A sizeable minority believed that in some cases "good" teachers received Needs Improvement (1) ratings. In the words of one teacher, "it scared a lot of people." Another teacher put it this way:

> *[W]e've seen and heard about some people who said that they were rated 1. All of a sudden, they disappear. They go to another district. They're gotten rid of or they retire early… So it's a little scary and it suddenly makes me feel like being tenured, it means nothing...I worked so hard to get tenured and now I feel like that means absolutely nothing.*

Some teachers reported having interactions with school leaders that prompted them to worry that those leaders might use evaluation to target teachers they disliked. One teacher recounted hearing an administrator say the following: "It used to take us about three or four years to get rid of a teacher, now we can get rid someone in about three months. It just made my job a lot easier." Other teachers argued that some administrators used the evaluation program as a "punishment tool."

A number of teachers took care to point out that some evaluators were supportive, but they implied that others were not. Some teachers used the word "human" to describe their own evaluator. By "human" they meant that the evaluator listened to them and was willing to compromise or cede to a teacher's point if it was supported by ample evidence. They said that other teachers were not so fortunate to have sympathetic evaluators.

Given the increased stakes for teachers, they voiced a concern about program consistency, with different leaders conducting the teacher evaluation differently and assessing teachers with varying levels of rigor. Teachers often said that the principal and assistant principal(s) in their schools differed in the rigor with which they rated teachers and the fairness with which they carried out the process. They also said that discussions with colleagues teaching at other schools in the district suggested that there were inconsistencies in how the process was carried out across different settings.

One teacher described especially stark discrepancies between the two administrators in her building. She said one of them "does a fantastic job about literally sitting down and going through your goals with you," adding that there is real effort to guide and support. "And then the other one…just gives everybody 1s and 2s." Elaborating, she said the assignment of evaluators dictates "whether you feel the process is wonderful or whether you feel the process is awful."

In the first year of the district's evaluation program, another teacher noted, "The common denominator of the entire thing was that neither the teachers nor the administrators knew what was going on because it was brand new." Other teachers concurred. Said a union steward:

> *Nobody had any idea what the goals are really supposed to be, how detail-oriented they're supposed to be, how big a group you're going to measure, how deeply you're going to measure. So was it quantitative, qualitative? Where are we*

going with this? And everybody just kind of was guessing and they're guessing all across the school system.

Inconsistencies present in the first year had not been cleared up by the second year, according to teachers. "I still don't think that there is a uniform approach," one teacher said. Another stated, "I was talking to colleagues that I go to grad school with from other schools and their system of doing things was totally different than ours."

Related to teachers' perceptions that the program increased the stakes for them while being inconsistently implemented, they reported that the program had caused them substantial anxiety, especially in the first year. Teachers said that once they went through the process their anxiety decreased. Recalling the first year of the evaluation program, one teacher put it this way:

I felt like it was an added burden. It made me very anxious, because, before we actually saw the documents, it was all rumors of what it was and we didn't really know what it was. And slowly, it became less nerve-wracking, but last year [2010] was definitely a nerve-wracking distraction.

Even in the program's second year, some teachers still reported having these feelings. As one teacher said, "[The evaluation program] is really stressful for me because I feel like I already jumped through hoops when I did [the state-mandated certification] portfolio. And now I feel like this is just another added stressor in some ways." A few teachers reported being fearful of asking administrators for help. One teacher said, "When I talk to administrators I always worry like this is something that's going to affect my TEP (evaluation)." Lastly, a few teachers felt they could not teach as creatively because they felt their students would not obtain the skills necessary to perform well on standardized assessments embedded in the teachers' goals, thereby preventing these teachers from obtaining their goals.

How teachers' ratings affect their views

There were distinct differences between higher- and lower-rated teachers' views of the teacher-evaluation program. Teachers with ratings of needs improvement (1) were more likely to have a negative view of the program than teachers with higher ratings. They were also more likely to say that they would not recommend the model to other school districts. By contrast, teachers with high ratings—strong (4) and exemplary (5)—were more likely to have a positive overall view of the evaluation program. But even a few teachers rated as 5 stated that they would not recommend the district's teacher-evaluation program for adoption elsewhere. One such teacher, when asked if she would recommend the evaluation program to other districts, said:

> *No, not the way it is now. I think it's too test based and I think it's very unfair in our city schools with large portions of students that are already behind grade level. And I know that they'll say, 'Oh, we're looking at growth then.' But there are a whole lot of factors that can be taken into account for students' growth. And the only one they're considering is teachers. That's the only factor."*

Another highly rated teacher said that the evaluation program had a negative effect on her colleagues. She said, "The fact that people are labeled a number is not really healthy." She further explained, "Somebody's been feeling badly about themselves because they're a '2' and they kind of lose sight of the goal in the whole process."

In terms of specific strengths of the teacher-evaluation program, it is not surprising that teachers who were rated as strong (4) or exemplary (5) were more likely to say that the program affirmed them. One teacher who was rated as exemplary (5) last year said, "I felt very honored and it was really nice and very gratifying." Said a teacher who received a 4+ rating: "It's a confidence-builder to be acknowledged."

Teachers with the lowest scores were most likely to identify the inclusion of external validators as a key strength of the evaluation model. One teacher who had received a 1 rating initially from the administrator and then received a higher score because of the third-party evaluator's assessment expressed that the evaluation program has "a lot of potential" largely because it "takes out the subjectivity" of teacher evaluation. Another teacher who had also received an initial rating of needs improvement (1) from a school administrator said that he liked the evaluation program because "it removes subjectivity." He added that the evaluation program "is most effective for 1s or 2s because the rating has got to be proven." By this

he meant that evaluators' assessments of teachers' instruction was required to be verified by external raters. Citing the increased consequences of evaluation in the district, he believed "some people have had jobs saved" by the evaluation program.

Assessing fairness and objectivity

The question of the fairness of the teacher-evaluation program broke almost evenly, with approximately equal numbers of teachers falling into either the fair or the unfair camp. The study found a similar result for teachers' perceptions of the program's objectivity. Despite considering the same evidence, groups of teachers analyzed the evidence differently and came to divergent conclusions about the fairness and objectivity of the program.

Perceptions about fairness

In discussing the program's fairness, teachers tended to consider the evaluation process associated with the new system. Approximately half of the teachers in the sample felt that the evaluation program was fair. Teachers noted as evidence of the system's fairness the use of external validators and the fact that the evaluation program is based on multiple data points, including a series of observations and the extent to which the teacher has met his or her goal. Some of the teachers who viewed the system as fair, however, offered qualifiers. One teacher, for example, said that the teacher-evaluation program was fair "if you do your job." Another teacher said that the system was fair "with the right administrator," suggesting that the degree of fairness varied by implementer.

Other teachers viewed the district's evaluation program as unequivocally unfair. One teacher reported that the system was "biased toward experienced teachers." Another teacher said that "some people get harassed" by administrators under the program. Two highly rated teachers said that their lower-rated colleagues had not been treated well by administrators. Teachers noted that administrators sometimes rated teachers without conducting adequate observations, which they viewed as unfair. Based on her observations of administrators' treatment of her low-rated colleagues, one highly rated teacher said, "Even if I get a 5, I'd still be paranoid in the future about getting a 1 or 2 someday. I worry that it's not always fair." She added, "I don't think anyone should ever lose their job because they had a disagreement with someone [an administrator]."

Perceptions about objectivity

As with the topic of fairness, approximately half of the teachers in the sample felt that the evaluation program was objective. When discussing the concept of objectivity, teachers tended to consider the extent to which their ratings were protected from administrator bias. Some teachers who viewed the evaluation system as objective said that the prior system was "entirely subjective." According to several teachers, the new evaluation program, by contrast, "takes out subjectivity" by heavily weighing growth in student achievement and including a more explicit rubric to guide assessments of instruction. One teacher described the district's new evaluation system as "more teacher based … I have to prove what I'm doing." By contrast, she said that the prior system had not put as much effort into establishing objective evaluation criteria, meaning "it was a lot easier [for the administrator] to say, 'Oh I like you,'" and then rate the teacher highly.

Despite the inclusion of goals based on student achievement and observation rubrics in teacher evaluation, some teachers still perceived a high degree of subjectivity within the program. Some teachers, for example, said that administrators still had a high degree of latitude in rating teachers. One teacher, in describing his overall sense of the subjective nature of the evaluation program, said, "If you have an evaluator who likes you you'll be fine and get a good rating." He added that there is "too much room for personal opinion."

Another teacher distinguished between the evaluation process, which she thought was fair, and the specification of a particular rating, which she thought was subjective: "I do believe there are some subjectivities as far as the actual numbers, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, but I think the process is pretty much fair." She added, "When it comes to the final [rating], I don't think like a 1 would be a 5 or 5 would be a 1, but I think like a 4 may be a 5 or 1 may be a 2." She explained, "There are still some things that the teachers do choose—the goals. It's not like everybody has the same goals." By this she meant that some teachers had more rigorous goals than others, making it more difficult for them to achieve a high final evaluation rating.

This sentiment was also present among some highly rated teachers. One teacher who received a 5 said it was possible for administrators to say, "Okay, I like you. Let me fudge this a little bit and give you a higher score." She explained, "Throughout the whole thing there's still that wiggle room." She continued, providing an example:

I say my goal was 20 percent and I said I met it. I don't know if they always ask for the proof. So then if I don't have the proof, I could tell you that I—'Oh, I hit it. I made my goal.' And then if they don't look at it to see it and prove it, then okay, I should get a 5 because I'm telling you I met everything. And who knows if I really did?

Lastly, some teachers felt that the district's teacher-evaluation program was entirely subjective, reporting that administrators' assumptions about teachers colored all of their teacher evaluation assessments:

I don't think they're consistent. I think unfortunately that they do have preconceived notions...I mean, I hate to say it, but I think it's human nature for people to have preconceived notions and it's so hard to unpack that baggage, and I don't think that they will always do. I don't know if I could be doing their job.

Reported influence on teachers' practice

Teachers' views of evaluation programs are important, to be sure, but what is more important is the extent to which it improves their instructional practice. Teachers reported in general that the Studyville teacher-evaluation program had not changed their pedagogy. But they did say that it had affected their short- and long-term planning by holding them personally accountable for student performance through the evaluation program's goal component. Moreover, there were important differences by rating in whether teachers reported that the evaluation program had affected their pedagogy. Teachers with low ratings (1 and 2) were more likely to report that the district's teacher-evaluation program had affected their instructional practices and their broader planning and preparation. Teachers with higher ratings (3, 4, and 5) were much less likely to report that the evaluation program had changed their work in any capacity.

Direct influence on instruction

Very few of the teachers interviewed reported that the evaluation program had affected their instruction in terms of changing their pedagogical strategies. In responding to questions about the evaluation program's impact on their instruction, teachers revealed what they perceived as the primary effects of the reform. Many identified the primary impact of the evaluations as increasing teacher self-assessment and productivity. Many said that they were already critiquing themselves and modifying their instruction. One highly rated teacher, for example, stated:

> *I'm going to be the person who's most hard on myself. I'm not going to leave that up to my boss. I think, in general, teachers are like that. I hold myself to high standards, which I define from myself and I want to see kids be successful. That's why I'm in this business.*

Another teacher said that the new system did not affect her pedagogy because "I was doing new stuff anyway." While another said, "I've always worked hard."

As teachers explained their responses, many said that although their specific instructional practices had not changed, their broader approach to teaching had been altered. One teacher, for instance, responded to the question of whether the evaluation program had affected her instruction by saying, "Not that I'm aware of, no. I mean I have gone through observations before, I've set goals before." She further explained, however, that the new evaluation program had changed her broader approach to teaching by establishing goals based on student achievement as the foundation for teacher evaluation. "I think I'm more concerned with data in terms of whatever my goal is and sort of in terms of the achievement. So it just sort of focuses me," she said. "I don't think it changes the actual way that I teach but it does keep that as a constant focus throughout the year."

Broader influence on instruction

Consistent with the above comments, most teachers in the sample said that the teacher-evaluation program had broadly changed how they approached instruction. Generally, the program seems to make student achievement as embedded in teacher goals more central to their thinking. As a result, they report aligning their planning more closely to their evaluation program goals, altering the pacing of instruction to ensure students can hit the achievement targets, and jettisoning activities that they believe will not help students attain these targets.

Focusing teachers' work

As discussed earlier, many teachers reported that the inclusion of student achievement goals increased their focus on student achievement in their day-to-day teaching. One teacher explained that the evaluation program helped her to stay focused on long-range student performance targets. "[B]eing more formally evaluated has made me more cautious of what I'm trying to do… Sometimes I get so lost in the day-to-day goals, but [the teacher evaluation program] kind of forces you to think bigger picture."

The district has emphasized teachers' analysis of data for several years, offering professional development on data analysis and holding school- and district-wide "data days" where teachers share and analyze data together. Teachers reported that the teacher evaluation program has amplified this effort. According to one teacher, the evaluation program has made "all of us look at data more" and look at

it "constantly," particularly data related to goal setting as a way of "making sure that you're reaching that goal."

Other teachers said that the district's evaluation program encouraged them to think more carefully about the needs of individual students and what it would take to support their growth. One teacher explained, "[At] the beginning of the year you really look at the kids and you'll say—'Okay, I want to move these kids'—So I want to focus on them. It individualizes my instruction a little more because I know that I have to make sure, or try to make sure to the best of my ability, that these few kids move."

Altering instructional pacing

Teachers in the study also emphasized the evaluation program's effect on their progress through the specified curriculum. Many teachers said that the program made them increase their efforts to teach content and skills that were embedded in their program goals. In many cases, this meant they had to slow the pace of their instruction to ensure that students learned key concepts and skills. As one high school teacher said, "[The evaluation program] forced me to look at my own teaching" and "slow down and think about what's important." She elaborated, saying the following:

> *I had to slow down a lot of the curriculum in terms of coming up with the activities… The curriculum says that they only want me to spend three days, for example, on characterization, indirect characterization, or making inferences; but that's not enough [time]. So I actually know that I'm going to be evaluated on this. I actually have slowed it down. I created more worksheets and games than I normally would just to try to make sure that I drive it home for the kids.*

Another teacher, voicing a similar sentiment, emphasized the consequences for a teacher if students did not learn skills or content embedded in the teacher's evaluation goals. "[If] they [students] don't get the lesson, it's going to come back to haunt you because then they can't pass your final assessment or your goal that you've created for the end of this year." She said that this fact encouraged her to hone in on her individual evaluation goals. "As teachers, you want a thousand goals," she continued, adding that the evaluation program forced her "to really focus [on] those couple of goals throughout everything you do. It makes it [a] more cohesive learning environment."

Maximizing learning time

Teachers reported that the teacher-evaluation program pressed them to maximize learning time. The knowledge that they would be evaluated based on student-performance growth increased the pressure teachers felt to prepare fully and stay true to the curriculum, particularly if skills and content related directly to their goals. On the whole, teachers viewed this pressure to focus on their student-performance goals as a positive of the program. One highly rated veteran said that the evaluation program spurred him to be "constantly on task" in the classroom. This sentiment was particularly pronounced among lower-rated teachers, as discussed below.

Differences by rating

Although the overall impact of the teacher-evaluation program on teachers' pedagogy was reported to be minimal, teachers who received a rating of 1 were more likely to say that the program affected their pedagogy as well as their more general approach to teaching. One teacher who had received a 1 said that feedback he received through the evaluation process led him to change the way he conducted reading groups and the way he prepared lesson plans. Another teacher who received a 1 said that the program made her "more mindful of time." She also said knowing that she would be evaluated on student performance made her more likely to reteach key concepts her students had not grasped. Other teachers who received low ratings said it affected how they approached their work. One teacher said it "gets me more organized." She added that the program makes her "plan more." Another teacher, rated a 1, said, "It made me more on point … I couldn't slack off."

Some teachers who received lower ratings said that the evaluation program changed their instruction, but for the worse. There were complaints about feeling "the wrong type of pressure" and that the program has "taken the enjoyment out of teaching." One teacher opined, "We feel like we're in a race with no finish line." This same teacher said, "Sometimes the administrators point out things but don't work with you to improve it." And he added that the increased focus on student achievement has left much less time for cultivating personal connections with students—"[I] miss personal time with kids."

Teachers who received an exemplary rating (5), by contrast, were more likely to say that the teacher-evaluation program did not affect their pedagogy. Instead they felt that it was more of an acknowledgement of their good work. When asked

whether the evaluation program affected her instruction, one teacher who had been recommended as a 5, said, "For me, I don't think it did. I think it just solidified that I was doing what I was supposed to be doing."

If they cited any affect on their work, teachers who received a strong (4) or exemplary (5) rating said that it made their goals and student performance more prominent in their thinking. As one first-grade teacher explained:

> *It has helped me have a more direct goal and to not be so wide ranged in everything I want to do. I mean I would love to have these kids all day everyday to get everything in which is just not possible. So it helps me to look at… what do they need in order to make it to second grade; what do I want them to know; what do they need to be able to do in order to be ready for second grade… I'm more focused on what they need in order to be successful and to move on [to second-grade].*

Limited impact on pedagogy

Although many teachers reported that the teacher-evaluation program affected the broad way they approach teaching, most said that it had not directly affected their pedagogy.

Why was this the case?

Almost all teachers said they met with their evaluator to set goals and assess their progress towards them, but teachers reported that the frequency of classroom observations varied. Moreover, only a few teachers reported that they received helpful feedback from their administrators following observation. Let's look at both factors in greater detail.

Frequency of observations

According to this sample of teachers, observations do not seem to be more frequent than prior to the implementation of the teacher evaluation program. Approximately 60 percent of teachers in the sample said they were observed less under the new evaluation system than under the prior system. This perception does not seem to stem from teachers defining the term "observation" narrowly to mean a formal, scheduled observation.

Some teachers reported that they were observed about the same number of times as under the previous system. A much smaller segment of teachers said that they were not observed. One teacher said of an evaluator, "I'm not observed at all." Said another teacher of her administrator, "He was rarely in my classroom and only for very brief moments."

Teachers also reported that when administrators did observe their classrooms, they felt that the administrators did not spend the time needed to get an accurate sense of their classrooms. One teacher explained, "Last year, she would pop in for

just a couple minutes and not even really enough in my opinion to really gauge what lesson I was doing." The teacher said it seemed as if the evaluator was simply stopping by "just to see if the kids are on task. That's pretty much all she looked at."

Other teachers voiced a general wish for more observations. "I wish that they came in more often. I feel like I'm an okay teacher but sometimes I feel like this system still allows people to get away with things like the last system did," said one high school teacher.

Helpfulness of feedback

In addition to infrequent observations, teachers reported that the feedback they received from administrators was of varied quality. Only about half of the teacher sample said that the feedback under the auspices of the teacher evaluation program was "helpful."

One teacher offered, "You don't really get feedback. I haven't gotten any feedback, none in any of the schools … I just don't know what's going on, so it gives you that sense of— 'What are they looking for? What are we doing?'"

Another teacher said that the focus of the evaluation program was on holding the required meetings to set teachers' goals and analyze progress toward them. She said there was less emphasis and consistency in the observation and feedback component. In May, as the 2011–2012 school year was winding down, this teacher said she had been observed only one time and had "not really" received feedback. She said there was not enough feedback to help her learn and asserted that the evaluation program must change so that it becomes focused on teacher learning and on the "process" rather than just on "compliance."

Other teachers discussed a mismatch between their subject expertise and the expertise and backgrounds of administrators. A seventh- and eighth-grade math teacher, for example, said that the feedback he had received was not helpful because his administrator, who had experience with primary grades, did not have a background to evaluate his subject area. "I teach algebra and pre-algebra, and she'll come in and some of the lessons might blow her away but it could be something as simple as just two-step equation, which is very simple to me," he said, speaking of his evaluator. "I think that they need to bring in either an evaluator from the district or somebody that can judge a lesson plan for that specific specialty."

Overall, then, the reported infrequency of observation and the unevenness of feedback may explain why few teachers felt that the teacher evaluation program led to changes in their pedagogy.

Recommendations

Based on interviews with a purposive sample of teachers, the study found that the Studyville School District's teacher-evaluation program is generally well regarded by educators in the classroom. Although teachers were divided about whether the new system is fair or objective, the majority would recommend it with slight modifications to other districts. In terms of its reported effects on teacher practice, the program seems to have had the largest impact on teacher planning and productivity, and it has led to changes in pedagogy for a few teachers, mostly those who received very low ratings.

Thus, the district's teacher-evaluation program seems to have spurred the greatest degree of change in teacher practice through its goal-setting element. The observation element, coupled with coaching and feedback, does not seem to have changed teachers' practice. This may be because many teachers said they were not observed frequently and received little helpful feedback.

Moreover, the evaluation program's reported impact was greatest on those teachers with the lowest evaluation ratings. These teachers were more likely to report that the evaluation program caused them to change their pedagogical practices as well as their broader approach to their work. Teachers who received high ratings were much less likely to report that the program produced any concrete changes in their instruction.

These findings suggest that it is possible to spur changes in teacher practice by increasing individual-level teacher accountability for student achievement while at the same time elevating teacher ownership over teacher evaluation and instituting safeguards to protect teachers against biased actions on the part of administrators. These findings suggest the following implications for policymakers and practitioners.

Hold teachers accountable for student performance

Teachers were clear that the teacher-evaluation program would have had little effect on their broader approach to their work had there not been clear consequences attached to this reform. The fact that teachers were dismissed after the evaluation program's first year and the fact that student-performance growth was weighed so heavily in the new evaluation system caused teachers to increase their focus on this outcome. Holding teachers accountable for student performance, with real consequences attached to achieving or not achieving set goals, seemed to produce real changes in teachers' behavior. Policymakers have in many cases made student performance a central aspect of teacher evaluation. This study suggests that making student performance central to teacher evaluation and specifying real consequences for whether or not teachers reach their student performance goals focuses teachers' attention on this outcome.

Include goal setting in teacher evaluation

The teacher-evaluation program's impact on teacher practice was achieved almost entirely through the goal portion of this evaluation reform. Under the previous evaluation system, teachers set goals, but the stakes were higher under the new evaluation program, and this led them to take the goals more seriously and teach and plan with the goals in mind. Teachers said that the increased emphasis on goals generally made their teaching more coherent, along with making them more organized and more mindful of how they used time. Teachers already setting goals on their own appreciated the fact that this practice was endorsed by the new evaluation program. Policymakers should consider goal setting as a promising strategy to focus teachers on key outcomes, thus shaping their work in and out of the classroom.

Include teachers as partners in teacher evaluation

The majority of teachers interviewed for this study viewed the district's new teacher evaluation program favorably. Even those who received low ratings felt that the program was an improvement over the district's previous evaluation system. The generally positive view held by teachers stemmed in large part from their ongoing involvement with the program. Teachers valued the fact that they were able to set their own goals in consultation with their administrator. This increased their ownership over the process and, especially for those teachers who were not at risk of losing

their jobs, made them feel that they could benefit from participating in the evaluation program. Teachers also cited the involvement of their colleagues as partners in developing the reform as a key reason for their support of the initiative. Overall, this suggests that policymakers should consider ways to craft teacher-evaluation policy to enable teachers to join as partners in their own assessment and improvement. This seems particularly important to higher-performing teachers.

Invest in building the capacity of administrators as instructional leaders

This study finds that the teacher-evaluation program seems to be spurring changes to the work practices of lower-rated teachers via the threat of negative consequences and, to some extent, direct feedback from administrators regarding specific pedagogical changes. In short, the evaluation program seems much more successful in its effort to increase teacher accountability than in its effort to increase the reported instructional capabilities of all its teachers. In many ways, this is no surprise. It is much easier to institute accountability and consequences than to make the cultural and structural changes necessary to capitalize on the teacher-evaluation program's potential to improve the instruction of all teachers. Bolstering the professional learning aspect of the evaluation program requires increased attention to developing skill, will, and opportunity for school leaders to get into their teachers' classrooms and offer high-quality, ongoing feedback.

This is much easier said than done, yet the success of the teacher-evaluation system hinges in large measure on the work and involvement of school leaders. As policymakers ramp up teacher-evaluation systems to make them more "rigorous," the burden on school leaders in most cases intensifies dramatically. In the rush to hold teachers accountable, too few policymakers stop to consider the practical implications of their proposals, including the question of who will evaluate all these teachers based on multiple measures and multiple observations.

To increase the probability that teacher-evaluation reform will improve teachers' instruction, policymakers should consider ways in which to increase the capacity of administrators as instructional leaders. This means that most, if not all, school leaders will need additional professional development regarding not only effective instructional techniques in different subjects and grade levels, but also how to deliver high-quality feedback and coach teachers across the performance spectrum. It also requires that schools structure opportunities for leaders to offer such feed-

back. This may involve taking some responsibilities away from school leaders and, as discussed below, enlisting additional evaluators to carry out this important work.

Provide opportunities for qualified teachers to exercise instructional leadership

Policymakers would be wise to consider whether school leaders can reasonably carry out high-quality teacher evaluation while attending to their many other responsibilities. The answer in many cases most likely is that school leaders cannot successfully do all of what is required of them. Given this reality, states would be wise to consider permitting individuals other than school leaders to evaluate teachers. These evaluators could include retired administrators. The most promising source of additional evaluators, however, is master teachers. These individuals know teaching well and often possess specific subject-area and/or grade-level expertise that a building principal or assistant principal may lack. To dramatically intensify the consequences of teacher evaluations, states and districts may need to enlist expert teachers.

Devote more consideration to how teacher evaluation can benefit high-performing teachers

Lastly, a clear implication of this study is that policymakers seeking to reform teacher evaluation need to devote more consideration to determining how teacher evaluation can benefit high-performing teachers. According to this sample, high-performing teachers appreciated the validation of their rating. They also reported that the evaluation program focused their attention on student achievement as embedded in their goals. But they did not report that the evaluation system helped them improve their classroom instruction or provided concrete rewards for obtaining high ratings. While these high-performing teachers said that the evaluation program was not a burden, they also said the program did not benefit them professionally.

In recent years policymakers have focused on reforming teacher evaluation to sharpen consequences for persistently low-performing teachers. It is now time to start thinking more broadly about how teacher evaluation can enhance the practices and outcomes of teachers across the performance spectrum. To maximize the effects of teacher-evaluation reform, considering the supports and rewards that encourage middle and high performers to improve their practice is imperative.

Conclusion

Teacher-evaluation reform is front and center in the efforts to improve our public schools. Despite the magnitude of the changes being enacted to teacher evaluation and the consequences tied to the process, we have little systematic evidence regarding how teachers are responding to these changes and whether their experiences with reform differ by level of teacher performance. This small-scale study sought to provide evidence to inform the debate among policymakers about how evaluation should be changed so that it yields the greatest impact for schools, district leaders, administrators, teachers, and, most importantly, students.

About the author

Morgaen L. Donaldson is an assistant professor of educational leadership at the University of Connecticut's Neag School of Education and a research affiliate at the university's Center for Education Policy Analysis. She is also a research associate at the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers at Harvard University. As a researcher, she studies policies and practices related to teacher quality, teacher evaluation, school and district human-capital development, and teacher unions. Her recent publications include "Strengthening Teacher Evaluation: What District Leaders Can Do" in Educational Leadership (2012); "Teach for América: The Latinization of U.S. Schools and the Critical Shortage of Latino/a Teachers" in American Educational Research Journal (2012); and "The Price of Misassignment: The Role of Teaching Assignments in Teach for America Teachers' Exit from Low-Income Schools and the Teaching Profession" in Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis (2010). A former public high school teacher, Donaldson was a founding faculty member of the Boston Arts Academy, Boston's public high school for the arts. She also served as a project manager in a Gates Foundation-funded initiative to replicate the practices of small schools that effectively served low-income and minority students. Donaldson holds a doctor of education and a master in education degree from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a bachelor's degree from Princeton University.

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Endnotes

1 See, e.g., Daniel McCaffrey and others, "Evaluating value-added models for teacher accountability" (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2003).

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5 These recommendations are not listed in any particular order.

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18 All teachers in the sample were working in the district at the time of the district's 2011 teacher survey.

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