

Ensuring



Teacher

Quality

A Report from
the MetLife
Fellows in the
**TEACHERS
NETWORK
POLICY
INSTITUTE**



Introduction

The **TEACHERS NETWORK POLICY INSTITUTE** recognizes that the most powerful influence on student achievement is the quality of teachers. **We believe that quality teachers are made, not born.**

Ensuring teacher quality should be the number one priority of education policymakers. But how do we recruit and retain superior teachers—the three million needed to staff our nation's schools?

We offer FOUR recommendations for schools and districts to ensure teacher quality:

- 1 Engage teachers in designing and implementing effective professional development
- 2 Provide time in the school schedule for teacher collaboration to improve instruction and student learning
- 3 Re-envision the teaching profession as a continuum beginning in pre-service and persisting through a lifetime of growth
- 4 Include teachers in the decision-making process about school resources, specifically time and money

WE MUST DEVOTE OUR RESOURCES to meaningful, on-going professional development, giving teachers time to improve their core work—developing lessons, assessing students, and evaluating their work. Through intensive professional development that would include mentoring and collaboration, all of America’s teachers would develop the characteristics of teaching excellence:

- **Maintenance of high expectations for students**
- **Ability to overcome the constraints of their environments**
- **Skillfulness in establishing a sense of trust, respect, camaraderie, and a desire for learning in a classroom community**
- **Knowledge of how to personalize learning for individual students**
- **On-going reflection on their practice leading to continual growth**
- **Ability to design instruction that prepares students for our technology-rich world, including collaboration with others and the development of higher-order thinking skills**

The job description of a teacher should include all of the above activities. In order for teachers to fulfill this job description, our professional workday and compensation should account for all of these responsibilities. We advocate getting creative with teachers’ time so that we have the chance to develop the skills of quality teaching on the job.

As teachers, we want to be held responsible for helping our students achieve high standards. In fairness, though, if we are to achieve this goal, teachers must be accorded the rights to working conditions that foster quality improvement: time to learn and reflect on best practice and to design meaningful instruction; access to funds to choose appropriate teaching materials; and support from teacher leaders who have demonstrated excellence.

WE ARE STEPPING UP TO THE PLATE AND SAYING: Please do hold us accountable for our part of the education equation but do so using valid measures of student achievement. Judge the work of teachers using assessments of student knowledge and skills that go beyond standardized tests to include real student work that shows how much a given teacher’s students have grown over time.

If we are truly to eliminate low-quality teachers from the profession, we must make teaching visible; teachers must have the opportunity to share their work often, so that those evaluating teachers know their struggles and triumphs. A doctor is not judged solely by his or her patient’s health at the end of the treatment but also by the doctor’s adherence to a professional standard of practice and professional ethics. Similarly, when evaluating teachers, we propose that a team of teachers and administrators evaluate teachers on a regular basis according to a set of professional standards.

TEACHERS NETWORK POLICY INSTITUTE represents a group of teachers passionate about our work preparing for our nation’s future. As researchers in our field, we have developed recommendations that address the problem of improving and maintaining teacher quality. While change will not occur overnight, if we invest our resources in meaningful professional development, we will start sure-footedly down the right path to our ultimate objective: a qualified, caring teacher in every classroom and a literate, well-educated citizenry.



Ensuring Teacher Quality: Professional Development

Engage teachers in designing and implementing effective professional development

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IS the strategy schools and districts employ to ensure quality teaching. Effective professional development can enhance teacher practice and improve student achievement. Unfortunately, professional development is often ineffective because teachers are not involved in its planning and implementation, and because funding is inadequate, time is limited, and sustained support is lacking. We have learned from our research that adults need a minimum of six months to learn a new skill. When professional development does not support long-term, individualized teacher growth, new skills are often abandoned and teachers revert back to their old methods of teaching, and student achievement is unlikely to improve.

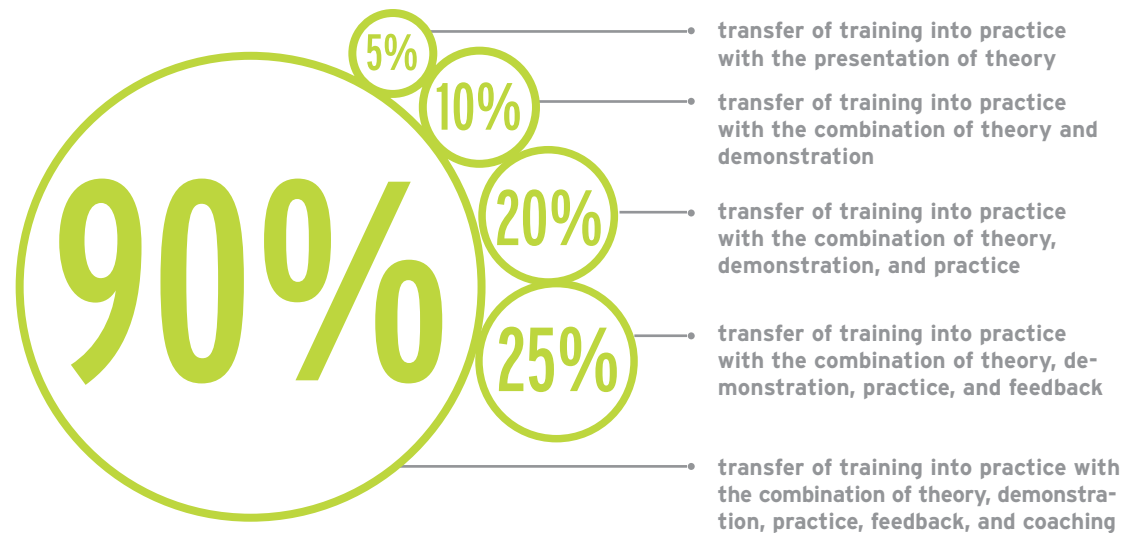
“If I am included in professional development decisions, I am more accountable, more supported, and more invested in my own learning.”

Lamson Lam
MetLife Fellow
New York, NY

Here is how teachers learn within our current system of professional development. Teachers are sent to one or two-day workshops with little or no follow-up training or support. They are typically passive participants in large groups engaging in activities that have little or no connection to actual classroom practice. This system discourages teachers and can even adversely affect their professional growth.

For learning to occur, teachers need to practice new skills and strategies in collaboration with colleagues and with coaching from experienced mentors. Teachers need the time and opportunity to share the successes and challenges of implementing

Bruce Joyce's study of the effectiveness of professional development suggests that coaching is essential for a new skill to become part of a teacher's practice. The numbers tell the story:



new teaching strategies. However, when schools and districts commit less than 1 % of their budgets to professional development activities, funds are rarely allocated for this type of sustained professional development.

FINDINGS OF TEACHER RESEARCH:

What happens when the professional development agenda is determined without teacher input?

As a staff developer, MetLife Fellow Deborah Gans conducted an action research study on her work with high school math teachers in California. She was compelled to follow the state's script regarding time, place, and curricular presentation. Eighty percent of the teachers who participated in the professional development sessions reported that too much material was covered in the time allotted, that the topics covered were not relevant at the time they were addressed, that there was inadequate support for implementing new instructional strategies in their classrooms, that there were too many people in the professional development sessions, and that the materials were inadequate for practicing new strategies in the professional development sessions. Were

Gans to have been part of the design team for these professional development sessions, she would have worked with her colleagues in a very different way:

"There would be a syllabus printed ahead of time with the subject matter organized as to when it would be discussed. There would be required reading prior to the start of the class. There would be smaller classes (as many as needed) in a quiet cozy place with food and drinks and restrooms nearby. There would be a short lecture by a very knowledgeable math specialist or mathematician, and then time to work on problems, talk about lessons and scenarios, have small group discussions, and brainstorm classroom applications. Ideally, this would occur in the summer or on weekends when everyone is rested and alert. All would be compensated, new learning materials would be provided, and additional materials would be available for purchase. Afterwards, schools would encourage the Japanese *lesson study* idea to grow, with extra time for planning lessons and sharing and supporting peer teachers."

What happens when the professional development agenda is determined with teacher input?

Research by MetLife Fellow Janet Price suggests that teachers can be very effective in setting the professional development agenda. Price and her colleagues at International High School in New York City were given the opportunity to set the professional development agenda for their school. International, a public high school for non-English speaking immigrants, graduated students based on performance-based assessment under a variance from the state testing program that unfortunately ended in 2000. While there was school-wide agreement on which projects to include in the portfolio, there were no specific criteria in place to assess the projects. The teachers determined that their professional development focus would be developing rubrics for the portfolio projects. The school supported their efforts by providing substantial time for teachers to align project activities with state standards; develop, test, and revise assessment criteria; review student work against these criteria to ensure consistency and fairness; review teacher assignments to suggest ways of strengthening them to better assist students in meeting the criteria; and write handbooks and give workshops for parents and students. Most of this work was done during time built into the school day. As a result of this type of professional development, teacher practice throughout the school more consistently supported student achievement as demonstrated in dramatically improved student portfolios.

"Changing professional development practices—from telling teachers what they need to asking teachers what they need—will ensure that student needs are met."
 Gail Ritchie
 MetLife Fellow
 Fairfax County, VA

What happens when professional development is supported and sustained over time?

An action research study conducted by MetLife Fellows Chris Mullin, Harvey Green, and Jerry Swanitz at Santa Ynez High School in Santa Barbara County, CA, documented the need to assist teachers in learning how to use technology in their classrooms. These teacher researchers observed that, "It is only when technology is employed in highly effective, engaging activities that we will begin to reap the benefits of improved student learning. We, therefore, strived to employ the most efficacious form of staff development."

With a California Digital High School grant, Mullin, Green, and Swanitz designed a professional development program to support the integration of technology into teaching and learning. Their program included presentation and Internet research skills, e-mail use, and incorporating technology into instructional practice. Over a two-year period, teachers' presentation skills using software increased from 15% to 30% and Internet use increased from 50% to 80%. Parental contact through e-mail became a frequent form of communication.

Effective professional development is based on a convergence of student needs, teacher needs, school needs, and district needs.



technology

THE CHALLENGES educators and policymakers face in trying to integrate technology into the curriculum demonstrate the importance of providing on-going support for teacher learning. K-12 schools spent an estimated \$6.9 billion in 2000 on computers, servers, wiring, Internet access, and software, through federal, state, and local initiatives. Unfortunately, funds for technology training and support for teachers—the most important component for establishing the necessary link between technology and improved student learning—fell far short of their need. Glenn Kleiman, from the Center

for Online Professional Education, notes, "For technology to be used fully in K-12 schools, it will require significant professional development and support for teachers." In a 1995 report, the Office of Technology Assessment recommended that 30% of technology budgets be spent on training. But Quality Education Data, a Denver-based research firm, estimates that school districts are devoting only 5% of their technology budgets for staff development. While some schools offer teacher training, 51% leave the matter entirely up to the teachers. (The Benton Foundation, 2000)

budgets

SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS generally commit less than 1 % of their budgets to professional development, whereas a business such as IBM invests 6% of its profits educating its workforce.

In New York City's Community School District 2, professional development is the strategy for school improvement. This diverse district of 22,000 students had schools with some of the lowest reading and math scores in the city. Starting in 1987 with Anthony Alvarado as superintendent and continuing with Elaine Fink and currently Shelly Harwayne, District 2 invested all available discretionary resources, about 3% of the total district budget, in professional development for teachers and principals. This investment has paid off in the rise in student achievement throughout the district. Whereas District 2 used to consistently rank tenth in reading and fourth in math in New

York City, 2001 achievement scores show that it now ranks second in both reading and math.

MetLife Fellows Sarah Picard and Matt Wayne teach in District 2 in one of the most improved schools in the city: PS/IS 126 went from having 20.8% of third through eighth graders reading at grade level in 1999 to 50.5% of students reading at grade level in 2001. In math, 17% of third through eighth grade students met standards in 1999 and 47.5% in 2001. PS/IS 126 ranked as the seventh most improved elementary school in reading in the city and the second most improved in math.

Much of this turnaround can be attributed to a commitment to teacher learning on the part of the principal and teachers. The principal uses every available dollar for teachers to observe their colleagues, plan together, attend workshops, and visit other schools.



Ensuring Teacher Quality: Teacher Collaboration

Provide time in the school schedule
for teacher collaboration to improve
instruction and student learning

THE IMPACT OF SCHOOL reform efforts depends primarily on the opportunities teachers have to learn new instructional practices, teaching roles, and organizational roles. Unfortunately, most education reforms in the United States have avoided a direct focus on what goes on in the classroom and do not provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate and reflect on what the reforms mean for student learning. Not surprisingly, this has meant that teaching methods in the United States seem to have changed little over time.

In *The Teaching Gap*, James Stigler and James Hiebert contrast the American and Japanese approaches to education reform. In Japan, teaching practices appear to have changed markedly over the past 50 years. Stigler and Hiebert attribute this improvement to the Japanese understanding of reform not as the sudden and wholesale change typical of reform efforts in the United States, but as a system that leads to gradual, incremental improvements in teaching over time. In Japan, teachers have the primary responsibility for the improvement of classroom practice. They participate in school-based professional development groups throughout their careers in education. Teacher collaboration is woven into the fabric of school life. It is viewed as essential to improving student learning. Teachers work together in grade-level groups, in subject-matter groups (e.g., math or language arts), and in special committees (e.g., technology committee).

One of the most important components of professional development in Japan is the lesson study. Japanese teachers meet regularly over long periods of time (ranging from several months to a year) to work on the design, implementation, and improve-

ment of one or several "research lessons." According to Stigler and Hiebert, "The premise behind lesson study is simple: If you want to improve teaching, the most effective place to do so is in the context of a classroom lesson."

Such extended investigation by teachers of their own practice is virtually unheard of in the United States where teaching takes place "behind closed doors." Teacher isolation is a consequence of the way we structure our schools. Teachers have few occasions during the school day to discuss with their colleagues the challenges they face in the

scheduling

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS can pay teachers to meet. Currently, New York City elementary school teachers teach 29 out of 35 periods per week. This schedule does not allow much time for collaboration. However, for teachers to meet one period a day, three times a week, it would cost \$2,685.96 per teacher per year based on the current per session rate for teachers. If teachers were to meet just once a week, it would only cost \$895.32 per teacher per year. To have a staff of 20 meet once a week during the school year would cost less than \$20,000 — a miniscule amount in the total school budget. Teachers Network Policy Institute research, as well as that from *The Teaching Gap* and other

sources, suggest the impact of teacher collaboration on student achievement justifies the cost and/or the reallocation of resources.

SECONDARY SCHOOLS can create time for teacher collaboration through block scheduling and creative student programming. At secondary schools committed to teacher collaboration, teachers meet while students participate in community service activities or clubs. At International High School in Queens, teachers meet once a week while the students participate in clubs. MetLife Fellow Janet Price was able to use this time to successfully initiate a lesson study in her school.

classroom. That the demanding task of educating students must be done without support creates a sense of powerlessness that makes teachers question their own capacity to "make a difference" in children's education.

In the larger context of the current standards-based reform movement, teacher isolation makes change difficult to realize on the classroom level. The standards have created new expectations for students, and teachers are being asked to educate in new ways to ensure that all children can meet standards. States have moved quickly to put accountability systems in place, yet teachers have been offered little support for implementing standards-based instruction in their classrooms. While teachers need new

ideas and practices to meet their students' needs, the lack of opportunities for collaboration limits access to better ways of doing things. In the end, this dilutes the effectiveness of the standards movement.

FINDINGS OF TEACHER RESEARCH:

What happens when teachers have the opportunity for on-going collaboration with colleagues to discuss lessons and plan together?

In MetLife Fellow Sarah Picard's New York City second grade classroom, there was a wide range of readers, many of whom were second language learners. The population in her classroom was roughly 40% Asian, 30% Latino, 20% African-American, and 10% Bangladeshi, most living in nearby housing projects and all qualifying for free school lunch.

New York State second grade reading standards require that students read one or two short books or long chapters every day and discuss what they read with another student or in a group. In addition, students are expected to independently read aloud using intonation, pauses, and emphasis that signal the meaning of the text. Picard decided that to help them reach these standards, she needed an organized schedule of partner reading, individual conferences, and flexible guided-reading groups.

Picard began meeting informally with another second grade teacher to talk about the children's progress. After several conversations, they decided to meet on Friday afternoons to talk about children's reading conferences and flexible guided-reading groups. She recorded the conversations. Picard and her colleague investigated individual student's ability to read certain texts. These investigations became their main tool for understanding children's progress and helped them to determine strategies to support their students' development. Picard also taped her lessons so she could examine how she put the recommendations from their conversations into practice.

Picard's research demonstrated a change in her classroom practice. She began to notice handfuls of children in both classrooms who needed help with specific concepts or strategies. Her groups changed, and her teaching became more responsive to student needs. The videotapes revealed that she needed to prepare for the unexpected miscues of the children. The collaboration continued throughout the year. By June, 93% of Picard's students were reading at grade level.

Another action research study on teacher collaboration took place at Manhattan Comprehensive Night and Day High School, a public high school for 17-21 year olds in

New York City. The population of this school comprises recent immigrants and/or native English speakers whose high school education has been interrupted or delayed. MetLife Fellow Penny Arnold created a study group for teachers in the school who, like her, were supervising student teachers. The group reflected on and assessed their own practice with their student teachers.

Arnold documented and analyzed the teachers' conversations and found that they focused 79% of the time on instructional issues, 17% on issues concerning the role of the mentor, and 4% on other professional issues. Three out of five teachers said they were better prepared and organized to help their student teachers as a result of their study group conversation. Four out of five reported that their classes benefited by exposure to new ideas, more attention, and better planning.

MetLife Fellow Rekha Patel's research in Fairfax County, VA measured how teachers experienced participating in a collaborative group as a catalyst for improving teaching and learning. The teachers who worked together moved away from thinking of themselves as technicians carrying out the directives of others to professionals taking action based on their expertise. Because of new perspectives on writing processes that they discussed in their group, teachers found their work with student writers became more successful.

What happens when teachers have opportunities to form and participate in teacher networks?

MetLife Fellow Jane Fung conducted a study while teaching at White House Place Primary Center, a primary school (K-2) near Downtown Los Angeles. In 1999, over 55% of the teachers at her school were non-credentialed and had taught for fewer than three years. Most of them had not taken a formal reading methods class prior to entering the classroom, so it was necessary to train these new teachers to provide quality language arts instruction. Although they were eager to learn and develop their craft, there were few opportunities in the district to meet and collaborate on an on-going basis.

Fung's research focused on nine new teachers who joined the Early Literacy Club (ELC), her in-school network for beginning teachers that provided instructional and emotional support during the first years of teaching. Fung asked each member of the network to complete two questionnaires: one in the fall and the other in the spring. She collected data from classroom observations made by members throughout the year; teacher reflections on state standards, the collaborative process, and classroom instruction; and documents created by the network: "Language Arts Standards Time

Line" and "Language Arts Standards Resource Guide for Teachers." Fung found that the ELC was instrumental in helping teachers to:

- **Demonstrate an improvement in their professional practices**
- **Acquire a deeper understanding of state standards and subject matter knowledge**
- **Gain confidence in their own teaching**
- **Participate in creating teacher resources**
- **Access a readily available support system and have opportunities to collaborate regularly**
- **Seek further professional development opportunities in addition to the network**
- **Elect to take on leadership roles both at and beyond the school**
- **Experience greater job satisfaction**

Those teachers who did not participate in the ELC left the school within two years.

MetLife Fellow Karin Kunstmann established a writing workshop teacher network at Camellia Avenue Elementary School in San Fernando Valley, CA in which 80% of the population was designated Limited English Proficient (LEP) and many of the students ranked below the 30th percentile on standardized state tests in English. Together, the teachers discussed important skills that their students needed to learn and then created a rubric to evaluate the students' progress. Kunstmann found an overall 21% improvement from students' first writing sample to the second. The area of mechanics showed the greatest growth with 28%, followed by content with 25%. These two areas were directly connected with the activities of the teacher network.

"Without being given the opportunity to collaborate around student needs, we cannot be expected to engage in the high-level of practice necessary to ensure that all children meet standards."

**Rebecca Hollander
MetLife Fellow
New York, NY**

MetLife Fellow Ron Klemp focused his research on the relationship between networking and teacher professionalism in Los Angeles. He analyzed a group of teachers following a collaborative action research model from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Together these teachers studied literacy, motivation, and community in their classrooms and reported that their collaboration was an "essential component of professionalism." Klemp found that by sharing the same contexts and concerns, teachers were able to learn from each other and collaborate on diagnosing problems and creating solutions for their students. The challenge, however, was moving beyond a single-semester project into making it possible within the normal school day to include such collaboration in order to benefit students.



Ensuring Teacher Quality: Redefine the roles of teachers

Re-envision the teaching profession
as a continuum beginning in pre-service
and persisting through a lifetime of growth

WHILE SCHOOLS HAVE undergone a century of reform, the roles of teachers have remained remarkably static. The demands on a first-year teacher are exactly the same as those for teachers who have been in the profession for 30 years. That new teachers have the same responsibility as experienced teachers not only makes their job incredibly demanding, it also devalues the expertise of more experienced teachers who find that their knowledge and skills are not rewarded in the profession. Experienced teachers seeking new challenges must move out of the classroom into administration or higher education.

We need to re-imagine both the support and the roles that currently exist for teachers. New teachers enter the profession with high ideals, but are quickly overwhelmed by the difficulty of learning a new, complex craft within challenging environments in which they often feel isolated and unsupported. As a result, new teachers are leaving the profession in record numbers, nearly 30% within the first five years with percentages increasing up to 50% in urban and rural areas. Research indicates that the attrition rates among new teachers who have continuous support from a skilled mentor drops to lower than 5% and that new teachers who receive support are more likely to shift their focus from basic classroom management to student learning. Experienced teachers within the school could provide such school-based support.

To ensure a high level of teaching in every classroom, teachers need time and support to learn and grow in the profession. There is a persistent perception that teachers are "working" only when they are in front of children. This was evident in California when

former Governor Pete Wilson proposed to extend the school year but not pay teachers for passing time between periods.

According to the 1994 government-commissioned report, *Prisoners of Time*, teachers today are expected to do too much with too little time. The report notes, "Unlike teachers in many systems overseas, who can take advantage of continuous, daily opportunities for professional development, American teachers have little time for preparation, planning, cooperation, or professional growth."

new roles for the experienced teacher

FOR TEACHING TO become a profession of continuous professional growth, it is important that we develop a career ladder that enables experienced teachers to use their skills and stay in teaching. Some ways to encourage and retain excellent instructors are as follows: ----->

A career continuum can even extend into retirement. Fairfax County, VA responded to research by MetLife Fellow Tina Yalen by recruiting retired teachers as mentors for new teachers.

- **Develop career continuum and compensation systems that reward knowledge and skill**
- **Support programs where effective, experienced teachers are involved in teacher preparation programs as paid clinical faculty**
- **Enact incentives for national board certification**
- **Support programs that prepare experienced teachers at all grade levels for new roles as mentors, field-based teacher educators, and researchers**

FINDINGS OF TEACHER RESEARCH:

What happens when pre-service and new teachers are part of a collaborative community?

MetLife Fellows Jane Murphy and Judi Fenton studied six first-year teachers with differing pre-service backgrounds. They found that the one teacher who had spent a two-year supervised apprenticeship in a classroom felt prepared for teaching. This new teacher had the opportunity over time to talk with professionals, assume responsibility as a student teacher, and understand the complexities of schools and classrooms. Her move from pre-service to practicing teacher was seamless.

MetLife Fellows Joe Rafter and Joe Gottschalk studied a school-university partnership from the unique vantage point of being cooperating teachers and student teacher

supervisors at their school. They piloted a model of teacher education that gave them adjunct status at the university for their supervision and mentoring of the student teachers placed in their classrooms. These experienced teachers met weekly with the preservice students during a back-to-back lunch/prep double period in order to discuss student work and pressing classroom issues. They also developed case studies of individual children in order to better understand the learning process. At the end of the school year, several of the student teachers were offered teaching positions at the school. Again, the move from pre-service to practicing teacher was seamless.

What happens when there is a continuum of experience in a school?

Tom Corcoran of the Consortium for Policy Research in Education notes that, "The failure to use exemplary teachers to lead professional development wastes talent, increases costs, and contributes to the division between research and practice."

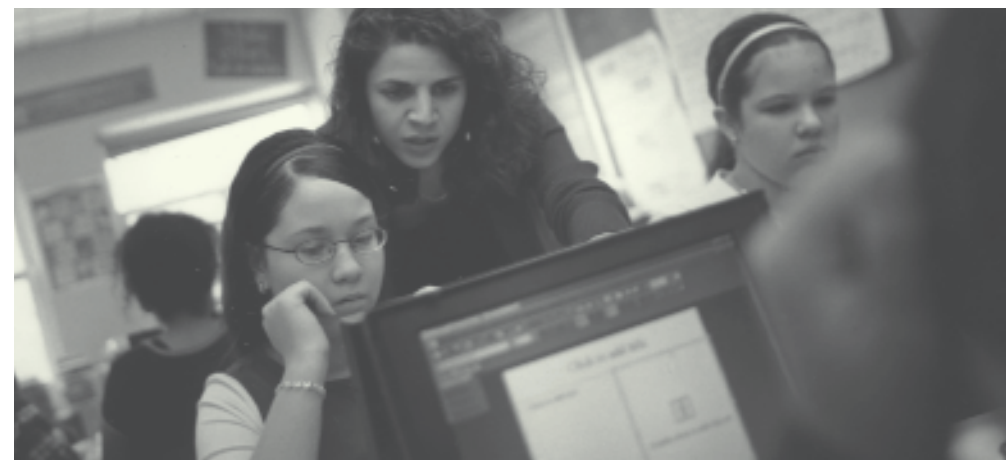
MetLife Fellows Regla Armengol and Lisa Holm of Fairfax County, VA documented a model that offered experienced teachers opportunities for leadership. In their interviews with 10 teacher leaders, Armengol and Holm found the following factors to be significant to their having taken on leadership roles:

- **A personal invitation or an opportunity provided by an administrator or other respected education leader provided the catalyst for taking the first steps into leadership**
- **Support from administrators who value professional growth and environments structured to stimulate on-going, collaborative work enabled teachers to sustain leadership roles**
- **Veteran teacher leaders who served as role models for other teachers were inspirational**
- **Teaching other teachers had a regenerative effect on craft and sustained teacher leadership**
- **Supervising pre-service teachers and mentoring beginning teachers validated teacher leadership**
- **Recognition of achievement through national board certification and completion of specialized course work advanced teachers along the continuum of leadership**

Armengol and Holm were interested in finding ways to embed these supports for teacher leadership in teachers' workdays. Their research led them to a model at Bailey's Elementary School in Fairfax County, VA. This model enables a teacher to engage in leadership activities throughout the school without abandoning her classroom responsibilities. The teacher leader teaches for half the day while a colleague covers the other half of her program. In the case of Bailey Elementary, a classroom teacher who does Reading Recovery in the morning teaches the teacher leader's program in the afternoon. Through interviews with the teacher leader and colleagues, Armengol and Holm identified several strengths of this model:

- **Children benefit from working with a highly motivated teacher**
- **The teacher leader benefits from engaging in activities such as peer mentoring and coaching new teachers—activities that promote professional growth**
- **Colleagues benefit from working with a professional developer—a classroom teacher who can draw on daily interaction with her students to illustrate a teaching strategy**

This is a model for restructuring the workplace in order to provide teacher leaders with alternatives to administration. Most important, it is a way to retain experienced teachers in the classroom and school where they can have maximum impact on student learning.



Ensuring Teacher Quality: School Resources

**Include teachers in the
decision-making process about school
resources, specifically time and money**

TYPICALLY, SCHOOL and district administrators make decisions about how time and classroom resources are used in schools. Teachers rarely have significant input into these decisions even though they spend the most time with students and are in the best position to understand their needs.

The way we currently allocate time in schools does not take into account the needs of the students we are trying to educate. While the demands on student achievement have changed over the last century, the schedule of most schools has not. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, schools generally offer a six-period day, with about 5.6 hours of classroom time daily. No matter how complex the school subject or how much time the students need to understand it, the schedule assigns an impartial national average of 51 minutes per class period. Teachers, those with the most substantial knowledge of student needs, are rarely included in decisions about how time in school is structured.

There is an unequal allocation of resources from school to school that reflects socioeconomic factors and neighborhood demographics. Many schools, especially in urban areas, lack adequate classroom materials. Linda Darling-Hammond analyzed effective New York City and suburban schools and found that one characteristic of schools that have resources is that "the divide between planners and doers is minimized or eliminated." In a recent survey of teachers, parents, school board members, and superintendents, Public Agenda found that, of all the groups surveyed, teachers feel the most ignored, with 70% saying they are left out of the decision-making process.

FINDINGS OF TEACHER RESEARCH:

What happens when teachers have a hand in shaping schedules to meet the needs of their students?

MetLife Fellow Arlyne LeSchack did research that illustrates the connection between teachers' involvement in decisions about how schools use time and how that relates to student achievement. Her school, PS 305 in Brooklyn, is on a state list of 97 failing schools and was one of 39 New York City schools chosen as an "Extended Time School." Extended time comprises an extra week of school each year and 40 additional minutes per school day. In her school, the extra week is devoted entirely to staff development at the beginning of the school year; the additional 40 minutes per day are split between staff development and small group instruction.

In LeSchack's school, the faculty wanted to use the extended time in the morning, before school officially begins. They believed that students would be more focused and the program would work more effectively at that time. However, the Board of Education unilaterally decided to extend the school day after school for all fourth through sixth grade students, not just children who needed extra help.

LeSchack surveyed the staff and found that the Board's schedule resulted in a poorly constructed afterschool program giving fourth through sixth graders a maximum of 20 minutes with a teacher and warehousing pre-K through second graders who depended on their older siblings to accompany them home. The teachers' union filed a grievance and won. The schedule was changed to the teachers' initial plan to use the morning.

LeSchack conducted another survey during the second year and also observed several classes. Teachers reported 10 more minutes of daily instruction with the new schedule. This amounts to an additional 30 instructional hours per year.

In another study, MetLife Fellow Anna Liebovich looked at the impact of scheduling at Forest Hills High School in Queens. She found that her English as a Second Language students progressed more quickly when they were receiving literacy instruction in double period language classes than when their instruction was split between a language teacher and a literacy instructor in two separate classes.

When the issue of class time arose at International High School in Queens, teachers were involved in the decision-making process. They decided that a teacher would spend a day following a student's schedule to view the situation from the student's perspective. The result was an increase in class time from 45 minutes to 70 minutes, and

a move towards interdisciplinary instruction—both of which are indicated in improving the quality of instruction and student achievement.

It can be even more important for teachers to find the time to work together when students are in special education settings. National board certified special education teacher, Gayle Zavala, reports that her students with multiple handicaps often receive services from up to 10 people. As their homeroom teacher, she is not allocated the time to meet with these colleagues during the school day. She must scramble to find them on her own time, or her students' needs will remain unmet.

What happens when teachers and students do not have the resources they need to meet standards?

When teaching at EBC/ENY High School in one of New York City's poorest neighborhoods, MetLife Fellow Zahra Dhakkar asked her students and fellow teachers what they needed to help them meet standards. They talked about not having materials or having materials that were inadequate, out of date, and dog-eared. They wanted access to computers, a school library, and current science materials for constructing projects and conducting experiments.

The teachers whom Dhakkar interviewed expressed an overwhelming concern that students are not ready to meet the new standards. One teacher stated, "The call for higher-order thinking, problem solving, reasoning skills, and the ability to articulate a point and make connections required by the new standards assumes that students are fully equipped with the necessary foundation." Another teacher responded, "We think higher standards are critical but the expectation that kids will meet these standards without the provision of the resources and support they need is unrealistic."

What happens when teachers decide what resources are used in their classrooms?

Research by two New York City teachers, MetLife Fellows Matt Wayne at the Riis Upper School, a middle school on Manhattan's Lower East Side, and Carol Tureski at two New York City high schools, speaks to the issue of teacher decision-making regarding the allocation of classroom materials.

Matt Wayne began his research by asking the following question: How can we get the right books into the hands of struggling readers so that they become excited about reading and attain the challenging reading standards? He had to reorganize his classroom library and purchase new books.

"Time and choice proved to be a winning combination."

**Carol Tureski
MetLife Fellow
New York, NY**

After identifying which of his students were struggling readers through test scores, surveys, and "running records," Wayne examined the books they were reading. Many of Matt's students were going through the motions of picking out books and trying to look as if they were reading. However, the standards require evidence of students' understanding of what they are reading. Because struggling readers at the middle school level do not want to choose easier—"baby"—books that suit their reading level, the students in Matt's class were choosing inappropriate books. Wayne also observed his students during independent reading time and found that those who needed to be reading more in order to become better readers were actually reading less and fidgeting more—most likely due to their inability to comprehend what they were supposedly reading. To remedy the situation, Wayne created opportunities for his struggling readers to read more books—that he had purchased himself—and to have successful interactions with texts. Wayne reports that the majority of his students' percentiles on the statewide reading test increased, in some cases significantly.

MetLife Fellow Carol Tureski conducted two studies of how resources shape the learning of adolescent readers in two very different high school settings. In her first study at Prospect Heights High School, a large, comprehensive high school in Brooklyn, 90% of the students reported that there were too few books available to them and that what was available was of little interest and/or difficult to read. They expressed a need for a more diverse selection of age-appropriate books and reading materials in their classrooms, and in school and community libraries. "Read more" topped the students' lists of how best to improve their school's literacy program.

Tureski also surveyed fellow teachers and conducted classroom observations. While there was an emphasis on reading in the classroom, she found that the reading selections from a shared reader were generally too short to engage the students. According to Tureski's survey, teachers agreed with students that a key ingredient in helping them to become better readers would be "going to the library." Unfortunately, as Tureski discovered, the library collection was very limited and not the answer to meeting the needs of these students.

In order to obtain the necessary materials, Tureski had to learn how to make the system work for students, and this led to her second study which took place at International, a high school that is noted for being responsive to teachers' and students' needs. This second study documents what happens when students are given

both time to read and choice in the selection of their reading materials.

Even in this kinder, gentler setting, Tureski uncovered a variety of barriers to student learning. Teachers reported limited influence on the design of student schedules; difficulty in convincing administrators that silent reading is part of teaching and is worthwhile; and minimal input concerning which books and materials are purchased for students. Department heads usually chose the books for all classes, and school administrators gave teachers no indication of the allotment that the school and their departments received each year for books, or failed to notify teachers when monies were available for purchasing materials. Tureski also found that teachers' selection of appropriate books for their students was severely limited by the Board of Education's purchasing procedure which does not allow teachers to buy books not listed in its catalogues. And, on top of that, the process is painfully slow.

Like Matt Wayne, Tureski needed to use Teacher's Choice monies (an annual \$200 allowance) to purchase books for her students. With the additional books and some success in implementing a block schedule, Tureski found that students' interest and engagement in reading grew significantly over the year.

How do teachers find the time to plan effective instruction?

MetLife Fellow Lisa Peterson demonstrates how much time is necessary for teachers to meet individual student needs and prepare students to achieve the rigorous new standards being adopted across the country. Peterson is a humanities teacher at IS 218 in Manhattan, a large public middle school. She documented her use of time over two weeks—for five days during two randomly selected weeks, one in February and one in June. When she examined the data, she found that she was working over 70 hours a week on teaching-related tasks. On weeknights, she generally worked 5 or 6 hours beyond her mandated 6 hour and 20 minute workday, and on weekends, she worked a total of 8-10 hours. These charts below show how Peterson spent her time.

Peterson draws several conclusions from her research. First, she argues that teaching to high standards requires significant amounts of time. Peterson could have taught

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 19 (five days)	
Planning/assessing	8 hours
Tutoring individuals	7 hours
Extended day literacy program (<i>I am paid for work in this program.</i>)	4 hours
Organizing, preparing room	4 hours

WEEK OF JUNE 4 (seven days)	
Planning/assessing	14.5 hrs
Organizing 3-day class trip to Boston	7-8 hours
Preparing video for NY State permanent certification	6 hours
Organizing, preparing room	4 hours

straight from the textbook without spending any extra time of her own. However, she wanted her students to develop critical thinking and writing skills, so she chose to engage them in research and writing projects, which proved very time-consuming. During both weeks, she spent a lot of time commenting on drafts of student history papers.

Peterson also notes that the scheduling of preparation time affects its usefulness for different tasks. She found that preparation periods that are scattered throughout the day are useful mainly for gathering resources, phone calls, record keeping, and other relatively short

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: *Relationship between hours worked per week and time available for planning lessons and reviewing student work **

Total Hours Worked per Week**	Hours per Week for Planning and Marking Papers	Planning per Class	Review Work of Each Student
45 hours	9 hours	10 minutes	12 minutes
50 hours	14 hours	15 minutes	20 minutes
60 hours	24 hours	30 minutes	29 minutes
70 hours	34 hours	40 minutes	45 minutes

SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: *Relationship between hours worked per week and time available for planning lessons and reviewing student work **

Total Hours Worked per Week**	Hours per Week for Planning and Marking Papers	Planning per Class	Review Work of Each Student
45 hours	9 hours	6 minutes	3 minutes
50 hours	14 hours	10 minutes	5 minutes
60 hours	24 hours	12 minutes	9 minutes
70 hours	34 hours	15 minutes	13 minutes

*The table assumes teachers

- are contracted to spend 35 hours in school each week,
- spend an additional four hours per week after school meeting with students and parents or in required meetings,
- are able to use about three hours per week of contract time for planning and marking papers,
- teach five classes per day, and
- teach 24 students per day.

Hours shown are rounded to nearest whole number.

**Hours worked at school and at home.

Source: Swaim, 1999

*The table assumes teachers

- are contracted to spend 35 hours in school each week,
- spend an additional five hours per week after school meeting with students and parents or in required meetings,
- are able to use about four hours per week of contract time for planning and marking papers,
- teach five classes per day, and
- teach 125 students per day.

Hours shown are rounded to nearest whole number.

**Hours worked at school and at home.

Source: Swaim, 1999

tasks. While such time is useful, it is not conducive to long-range planning. If she and her colleagues want to plan a thoughtful, in-depth unit, they have to do so outside of the school day.

What happens when teachers have the opportunity to discuss student needs?

At Riis Upper School in New York City, teachers were offered compensation through a Least Restrictive Environment grant to meet and discuss special needs students. The teachers used the time during these weekly meetings to analyze a case study of a student. MetLife Fellow Matt Wayne brought in research he had collected around one particular student's participation in writing activities. Among the comments made that day, one teacher noted that many middle school writers are self-conscious about how their writing looks. Wayne decided to give his student time to do her work on the computer. When presented with the opportunity, she put more effort into her responses. The quality of her work improved dramatically and the amount of writing increased from half a page of hand-written work to a full page on the computer. As a result of their collaboration, other teachers in the school made similar adjustments to improve their students' work, thus affecting classroom practice and student achievement throughout the school.



The teachers' voice is essential to implementing these recommendations. In order to improve student achievement, communities across the country have established **TEACHERS NETWORK POLICY INSTITUTE (TNPI)** affiliates as a mechanism to ensure that education policymaking is informed by the realities of schools and classrooms.

If you would like to explore starting a TNPI affiliate in your district or county, we invite you to request *A Guidebook for Connecting Policy to Practice for Improving Student Achievement*. We also encourage you to check out our web site: www.teachersnetwork.org where you will find an area dedicated to the **TEACHERS NETWORK POLICY INSTITUTE**. On the site, you will find comprehensive information about our achievements, including in-depth descriptions of the teacher research studies that appear here, as well as many more studies that we continue to produce annually.

THIS REPORT WAS DRAFTED BY TEACHER LEADERS AT THE TEACHERS NETWORK POLICY INSTITUTE'S SUMMIT IN SNOWBIRD, UTAH FROM JULY 29 THROUGH AUGUST 5, 2001.

TEACHER LEADERS

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Jim Blackwood	Venice High School
Kathy Blackwood	Venice High School
Harold Boger	Crenshaw High School
Marvilla N. Bonilla	Hoover Street Elementary Sch.
Jane Fung	El Sereno Elementary School
Lara Goldstone	Camino Nuevo Charter Academy
Diana Takenaga-Taga	Windsor Hills Magnet School

Santa Clara / Santa Cruz Counties

Lorena Anaya	Forest Hills Elementary School
Bill Laraway	Silver Oak Elementary School
Christine Palochak	Happy Valley Elementary School

Santa Barbara County

Quinn Plante	Righetti High School
Linda Wiezorek	Lompoc Unified School District

FLORIDA

Fort Lauderdale / Broward County

Henry Brown	Florida Teacher of the Year
Jan Hartleben	Whispering Pines School

Miami-Dade County

Pamela Bausher	Miami Central High School
Mary Jane Kerns Glueck	Westview Middle School
Barbara Hampton	Westview Elementary School
Steven Payne, Jr.	Garfield Elementary School
Claire Price	Lakeview Elementary School
Patrick Williams	Miami Central High School

Palm Beach County

DeCarla Boggs	Jefferson Davis Middle School
Gayle Solis Zavala	Gove Elementary School

Tallahassee / Leon County

Diane Porter	Leon Classroom Teacher Assoc.
Nancy Watson	Raa Middle School

ILLINOIS

Chicago

Erin Roche	National Teachers Academy of Chicago Public Schools
-------------------	---

KENTUCKY

Lexington / Fayette County

Anne Buchanan	Bryan Station Traditional Magnet Sch.
Judith Painter	Tates Creek High School
Betty Rhodes	Tates Creek Elementary

NEW YORK

New York City

Susan Browne	Children's Workshop School
Jeremy Copeland	William E. Grady Technical Vocational School
Allison Demas	PS 314, Brooklyn
Zahra Dhakkar	The Heritage School
Judi Fenton	New Educator Support Team
Wade Fuller	Bread & Roses Integrated Arts High School
Mark Grashaw	Abraham Lincoln High School
Rebecca Hollander	Hunter College High School
Alice Hom	MS 131, Manhattan
Paul Kihn	MS 246, Brooklyn
Arlyne LeSchack	PS 305, Brooklyn
Linda Mott	PS 13, Queens
Lisa Peterson	IS 218, Brooklyn
Sarah Picard	PS 126, Manhattan
Joe Rafter	New York University School of Edu.
Helen Scharff	Hunter College High School
Gladys Sotomayor	PS 67, Brooklyn

Denise Watson PS 197, Brooklyn
Matt Wayne The Riis Upper School

NORTH CAROLINA
 Charlotte-Mecklenburg
Tezella Cline Spaugh Middle School
Sheryn Northey Northwest School of the Arts
Barbara Temple Vance High School

Southeast Center for Teaching Quality / NCTAF
Megan Kieser Isaac Dickson Elementary Sch.
Carolann Wade Apex Elementary School

OHIO
 Akron / Summit County
Kathy Devus Essex Elementary School
Rita Elavsky Roberts Middle School
Kadee Malm East Woods School

VIRGINIA
 Fairfax County
Gail Ritchie Kings Park Elementary Sch.
Shirley Shannon Kings Park Elementary Sch.

STATE OF WYOMING
Jean Davies Goins Elementary School
Joan Gaston Fremont County School
Carol Lynch Hot Springs County High Sch.

SPECIAL GUESTS

Honorable Governor Jim Geringer—State of Wyoming

Ellen Dempsey President & CEO, Teachers Network

Adam Urbanski Director, Teacher Union Reform Network, and Vice President, American Federation of Teachers



PARTNERS

Education Commission of the States (ECS)
Cal Frazier Distinguished Senior Fellow
Bob Palaich Vice President—Policy Studies and Programs
Spud Van de Water Program Director—P-16

National Commission on Teaching & America's Future / SECTQ
Dylan Johnson Research Associate
Laura Turchi Senior Research Consultant

AFFILIATES

Charlotte-Mecklenburg (NC) Suzanne Newsom, Director
Chicago (IL) Kris Reichmann, Director
 Ernestine Muhammad, Coordinator
Fairfax County (VA) Sylvia Auton, Director
 Robyn Cochran, Coordinator
Fayette County (KY) Betty Rhodes, Director
Los Angeles (CA) Dianne Glinos, Director
Miami-Dade County (FL) Thelma Davis, Director
New York City (NY) Ellen Meyers, Director
 Corey Todaro, Coordinator
Santa Barbara County (CA) Carol Gregor, Director
Santa Clara/ Santa Cruz Counties (CA) Bonnie Plummer, Co-Director
 Lynn Butterworth, Co-Director
State of Wyoming Debra Holloway, Director

STAFF

Ellen Meyers Senior Vice President, Teachers Network, and Director, Teachers Network Policy Institute

Peter A. Paul Director of Programs, Teachers Network, and Coordinator, Teachers Network Policy Institute

Frances Rust Professor, New York University Steinhardt School of Education, and Advisor, Teachers Network Policy Institute

The MetLife Fellows in the **TEACHERS NETWORK POLICY INSTITUTE** have co-authored three publications prior to this report: *Getting Real & Getting Smart: The teachers' voice in education policymaking* (1998); *A Guidebook for Connecting Policy to Practice for Improving Student Achievement* (2000); and, the groundbreaking *What Matters Most—Improving Student Achievement* (2000). Order information for these publications is available by visiting the "Teacher Bookstore" at Teachers Network's premier education web site: www.teachersnetwork.org.

TEACHERS NETWORK POLICY INSTITUTE affiliates are: **Charlotte-Mecklenburg (NC)**, **Chicago (IL)**, **Fairfax County (VA)**, **Fayette County (KY)**, **Los Angeles (CA)**, **Miami-Dade County (FL)**, **New York City (NY)**, **Santa Clara** and **Santa Cruz Counties (CA)**, **Santa Barbara County (CA)**, and the **State of Wyoming**. Teachers Network Policy Institute works in partnership with the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future (NCTAF), the Education Commission of the States (ECS), and New York University Steinhardt School of Education—Department of Teaching and Learning.

Major funding for the **TEACHERS NETWORK POLICY INSTITUTE** is provided by MetLife Foundation. Additional support is provided by Booth Ferris Foundation, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, and Rita J. and Stanley H. Kaplan Family Foundation.

The **TEACHERS NETWORK POLICY INSTITUTE** is a major initiative of **Teachers Network**. Teachers Network is a non-profit education organization that identifies and connects innovative teachers who exemplify professionalism, independence, and creativity within public school systems.

Research summaries cited
in this report as well as
other studies by the MetLife
Fellows are available on
TEACHERS NETWORK'S premier
education web site at:

www.teachersnetwork.org/tnpi

By visiting this site, you can
also find out more about who,
what, and where we are; learn
about our major accomplish-
ments; peruse our digital library;
view an action research video
online; and much more.

This document has been funded by a grant from **MetLife Foundation**.