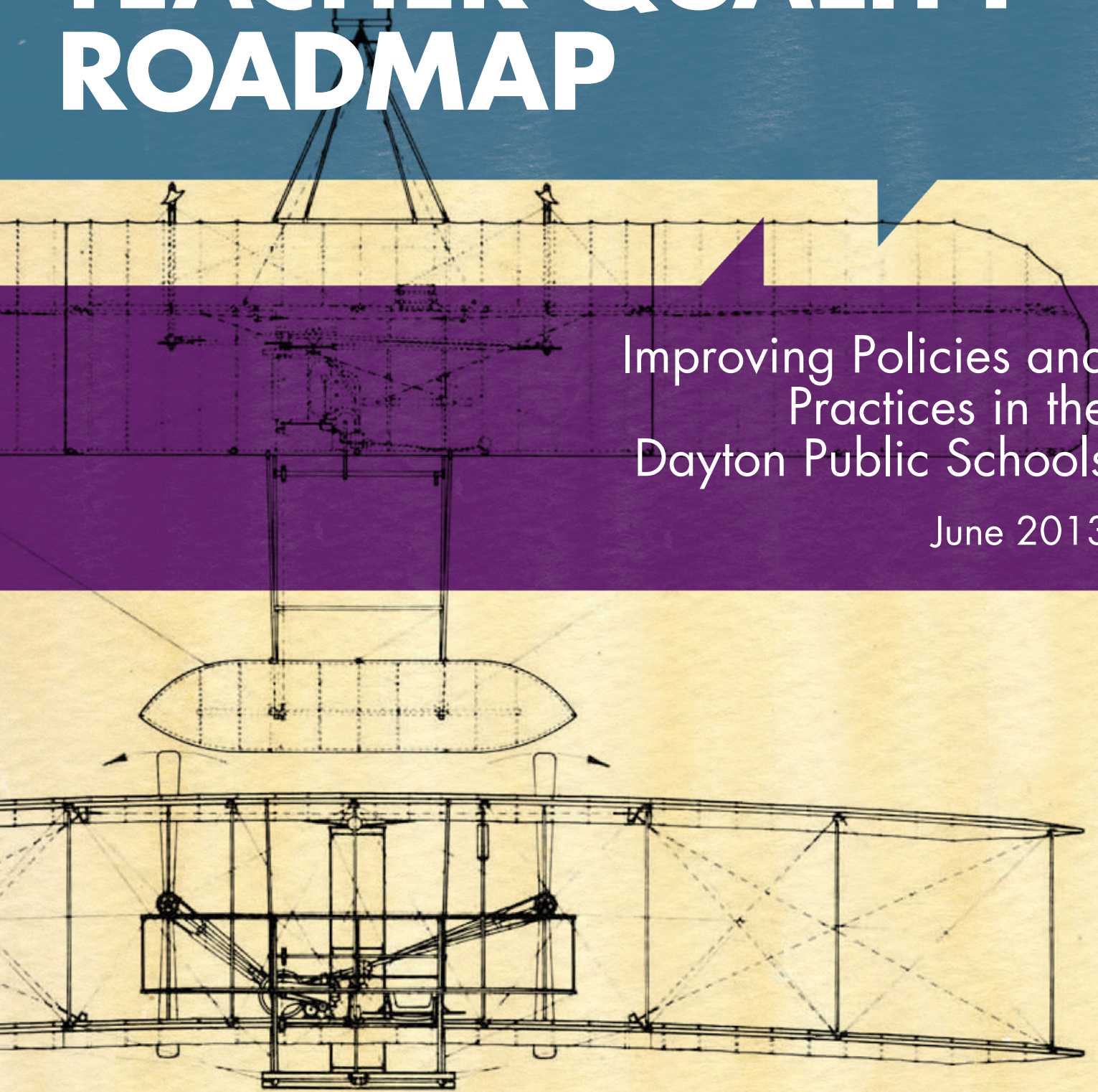


TEACHER QUALITY ROADMAP

Improving Policies and
Practices in the
Dayton Public Schools

June 2013



— "KITTY HAWK" AEROPLANE —

CONCEIVED AND BUILT AT DAYTON, OHIO, AND SUCCESSFULLY FLOWN BY ORVILLE AND WILBUR WRIGHT, DECEMBER 17, 1903, AT

ABOUT THIS STUDY

This study was undertaken on behalf of the 13,675 children who attend school in the Dayton Public Schools.

ABOUT NCTQ

The National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) is a non-partisan research and policy organization committed to restructuring the teaching profession, led by our vision that every child deserves effective teachers.

PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

This study is done in partnership with Learn to Earn Dayton and the Thomas B. Fordham Institute. Additional funding was provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

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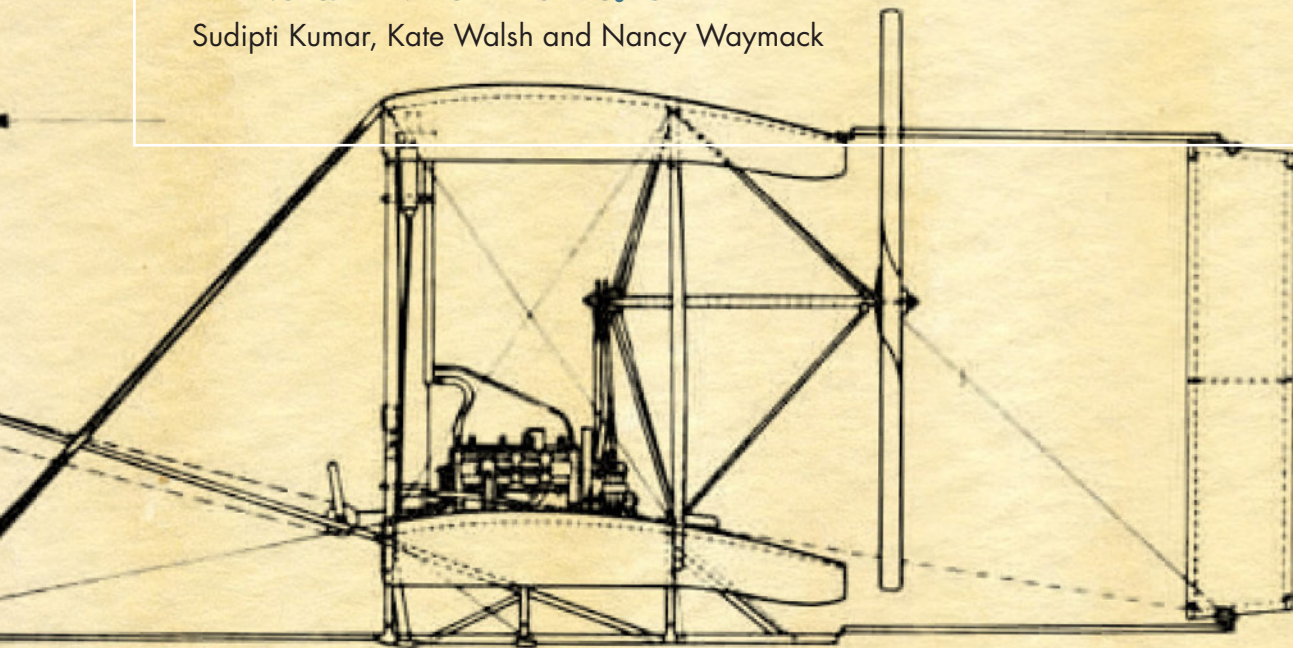
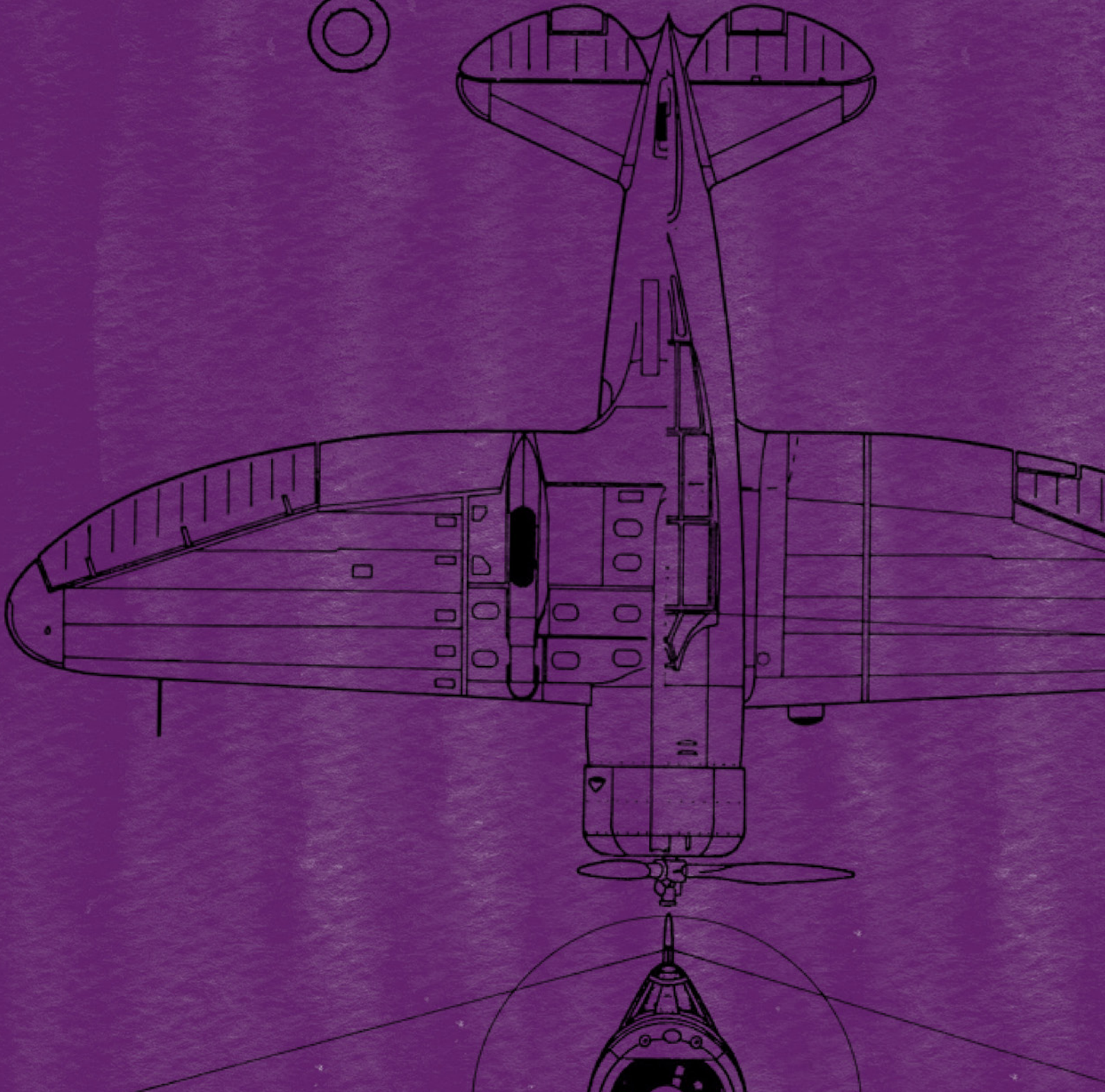
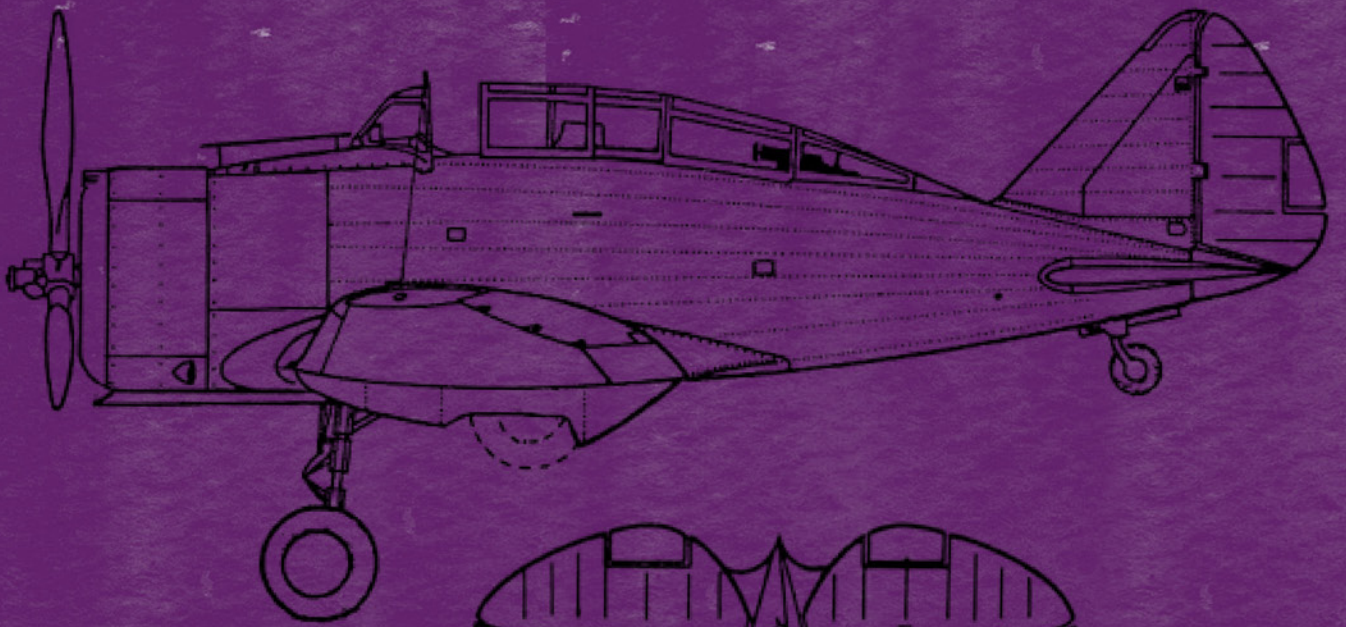




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INTRODUCTION

At the request of Learn to Earn Dayton and The Thomas B. Fordham Institute, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) undertook this analysis of teacher polices in Dayton Public Schools.

Snapshot of the Dayton Public Schools

- 6th largest school district in Ohio
- 30 schools

Dayton Students

- 13,675 k-12 students
- 94 percent economically disadvantaged
- 7 percent Limited English Proficient
- 20 percent students with disabilities

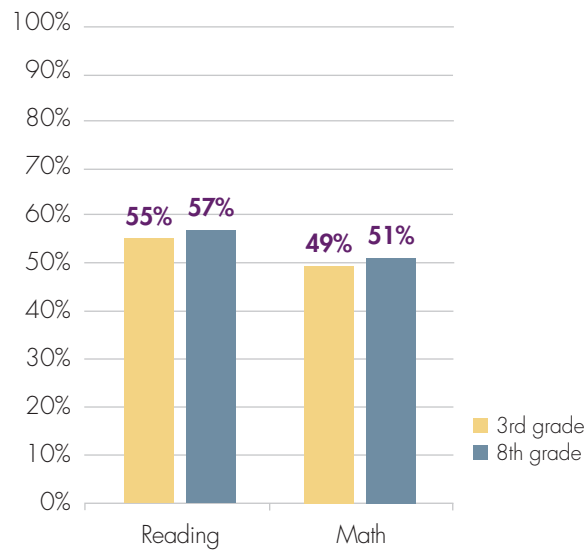
Dayton Teachers

- 991 teachers
- 60 percent with advanced degrees
- Average experience of 13 years
- 25 percent of teachers have over 20 years of experience

Dayton has made some strides in certain metrics related to student outcomes in recent years. In 2011, average student attendance was 92 percent, the highest the district had seen since 1996. However, similar to many urban districts across the nation, students in Dayton are academically far behind their more advantaged peers.¹ On the 2011-2012 Ohio Achievement Assessments, slightly more than 50 percent of Dayton's students in grades three and eight were proficient or above in reading, while less than half of the students in those grades were proficient in math. Students fared better on the Ohio Graduation Tests, with over 80 percent scoring proficient or above in reading and math on the 11th grade exams, which is considered to be a less demanding assessment. However, overall school performance under the Ohio school accountability system has not provided encouraging evidence of improvement. For example, only one Dayton school improved its overall rating in the accountability system in 2011-2012, moving from "academic watch" to "continuous improvement." In the same school year, 14 schools maintained the same rating, and 12 others moved down a category.

1 2011-2012 Dayton City Report Card; <http://archive.education.ohio.gov/reportcardfiles/2011-2012/dist/043844.pdf>

Percentage of students at or above proficient on the Ohio Achievement Assessments, 2011-2012



In the most recent year for which there is data, just over half of Dayton students are proficient or above in reading and slightly less than half are proficient in mathematics in grades three and eight.

As the district strives to improve, it cannot ignore the state of the economy in the Dayton area. Once a manufacturing powerhouse, Dayton has seen many of its industries downsize, close altogether or move away from the city. Over the past 10 years, the labor force in the Dayton metropolitan area has lost approximately 30,000 workers, causing reductions in both the tax base and the school-age population.² In addition, the educational options for parents have expanded to include charter schools and vouchers.³ The combined effect on the district is significant. Enrollment in Dayton Public Schools, at 16,871 in 2006, has decreased by 19 percent in the last seven years.⁴

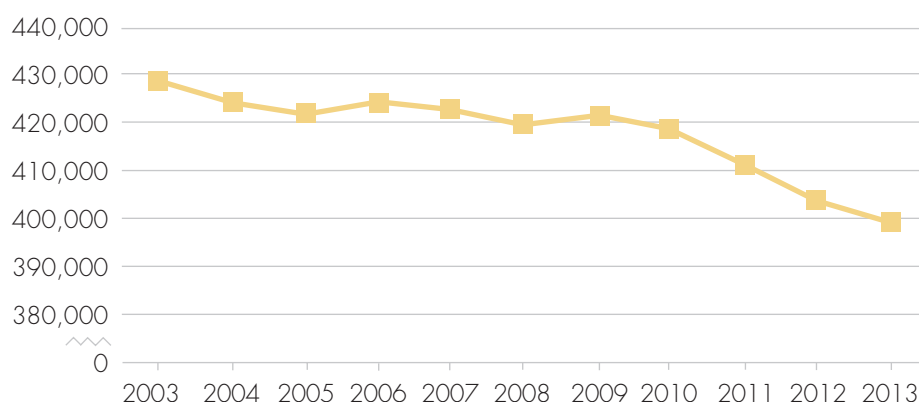
2 Bureau of Labor Statistics, Economy at a Glance, Dayton, OH; http://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.oh_dayton_msa.htm; June 2013

3 There are 5,800 students in charters and 2,125 students using vouchers in the Dayton area. Both numbers include students that may live outside DPS boundaries.

4 Enrollment Data, Ohio Department of Education, 2006, 2013; <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Data/Frequently-Requested-Data/Enrollment-Data>, June 2013



Dayton metropolitan area workforce 2003-2013



Dayton has seen significant losses in industry in the past decade, taking with it both students and the tax revenue to support area schools.

Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, the research and development arm of the U.S. Air Force, currently serves as the anchor employer in the Dayton area, employing one out of every 13 people.⁵ With growing health and education sectors, the city is making an effort to rebound, and the school district is working toward being an asset to the city as it prepares its students to be part of a strong workforce.

Since her appointment as superintendent in 2010, Lori Ward has focused on increasing efficiencies and building partnerships. In addition to keeping the district on solid financial ground in tough fiscal times, she has built a respectful partnership with the Dayton Education Association, the union representing Dayton's teachers. This positive working relationship — all too rare in urban school districts — allows both the district and the union to avoid messy infighting and to focus on collaboration that benefits both students and teachers.

There are opportunities to increase efforts to recruit, retain and reward teacher quality for the district, and we will discuss them at length in this report, but we first want to highlight the following areas in which Dayton can serve as a model:

- **Union-district collaboration.** The district and the union are willing to work together to provide the best education for Dayton's students, shortcutting some of the bureaucratic layers that come with a lack of trust between unions and district leadership. Focus groups repeatedly identified cooperation between district and union leadership as an advantage for Dayton Public Schools.
- **A focus on teacher professional development.** The Dayton Public Schools system offers professional development for struggling teachers in common problem areas (e.g., classroom management). Teachers in focus groups and in survey responses cited this professional development as one of the school district's assets.

5 Wright Patterson Impact Statement; <http://www.wpafb.af.mil/shared/media/document/afd-090824-008.pdf>

- **An increase in principal autonomy in selecting staff.** Dayton principals have newly expanded flexibility to fill positions when voluntary transfers apply for open positions. Principals can now interview candidates for open positions rather than simply receiving the internal candidate with the most seniority.

What this report seeks to accomplish

This report attempts to shed light on teacher policies — as they are written and practiced — that can be improved immediately and in the long term to increase the quality of the teaching force in the district.

NCTQ frames this analysis around five standards supported by research and best practices from the field that are necessary for improving teacher quality.

- 1. Staffing:** District policies facilitate schools' access to teacher talent.
- 2. Evaluations:** The evaluation of teacher performance plays a critical role in advancing teacher effectiveness.
- 3. Tenure:** Tenure is a meaningful milestone in a teacher's career and advances the district's goal of building a corps of effective teachers.
- 4. Compensation:** Compensation is strategically targeted to attract and reward high-quality teachers, especially teachers in hard-to-staff positions.
- 5. Work Schedules:** Work schedules and attendance policies maximize instruction.

For each standard we provide several recommendations, some for Dayton Public Schools, some for the district and Dayton Education Association and some for the state of Ohio.



This symbol reflects practices that the district can initiate administratively or through the Board of Education, without requiring a change in the teacher contract.



This symbol accompanies recommendations whose implementation requires negotiation between the school district and the teachers union.



This symbol accompanies recommendations that require a change in state policy to implement.

Methodology

To undertake this study, a team of NCTQ analysts first reviewed the district's current collective bargaining agreement with its teachers union, the Dayton Education Association. We also looked for any state laws affecting local policies. We compared the laws and policies in Dayton and Ohio with the 100 plus school districts found in our [Tr3 database](#). This exercise allowed us to determine where Dayton falls along the spectrum of teacher quality policies and to identify practices that the district might emulate. In a number of areas, we also collected data from school districts that surround Dayton, which are its biggest competitors for teacher talent.

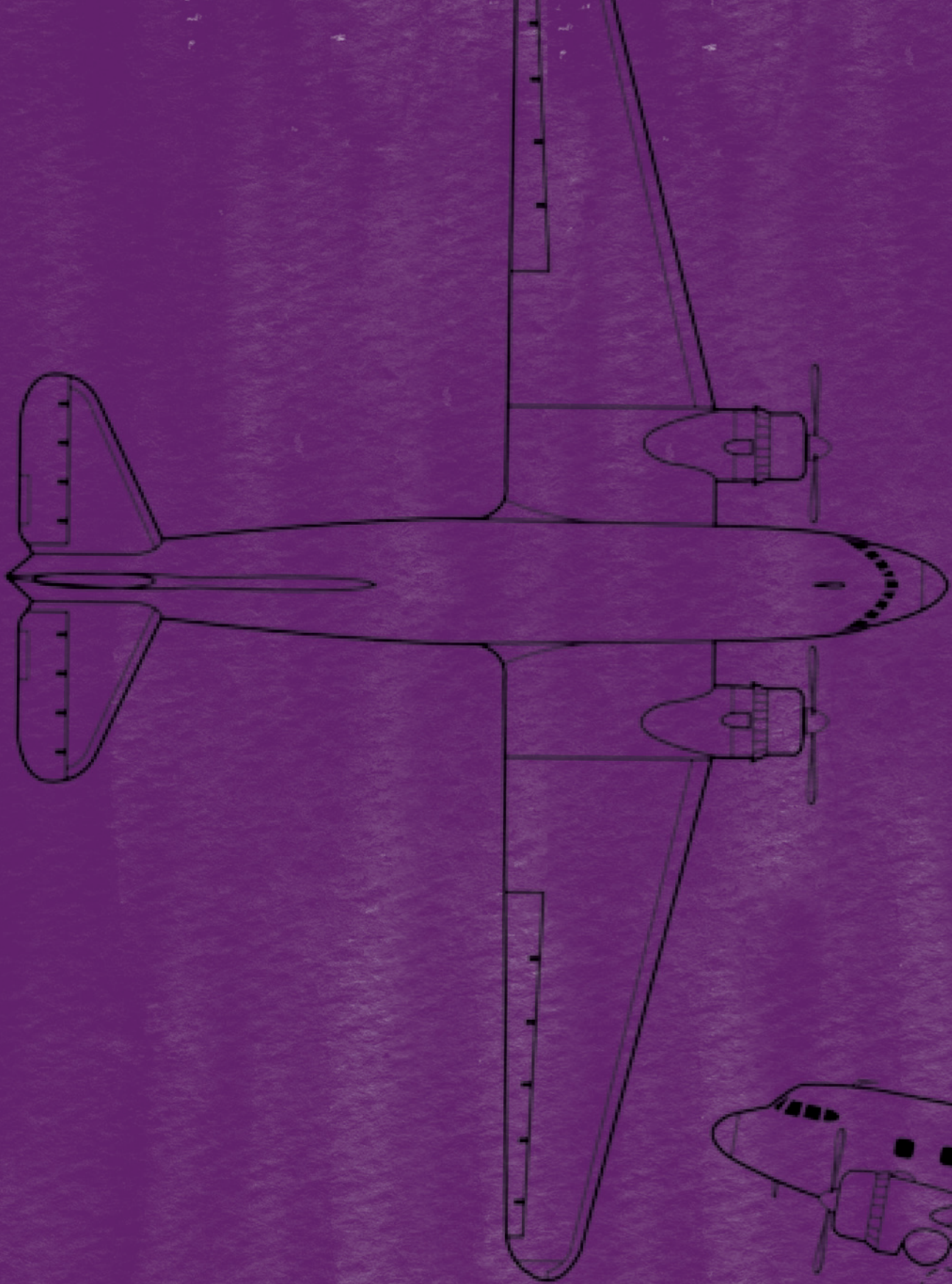


NCTQ met with teachers, principals and district administrators to deepen its understanding of how policies play out in practice. We also spoke with students and community leaders to hear about their experiences in Dayton, which shaped the focus of our study. And we met with leaders of the Dayton Education Association to gain their perspectives.

We conducted surveys of teachers and principals to gain a broader sense of staff attitudes and experiences. The number of responses to the survey was robust: over 25 percent of teachers and 70 percent of school leaders responded. Data from the survey appear in multiple areas of this report, as do quotations from the surveys and/or focus group meetings. The quotations are not necessarily statements of fact but rather represent a variety of teacher and principal perceptions about Dayton policies and practices.

Finally, we looked at a range of teacher personnel data to give us a better understanding of the outcomes of teacher hiring, transfer, evaluation, attendance and compensation policies. We shared a draft of our analysis with the district and the union to verify its accuracy, and both provided valuable feedback that was incorporated into the final draft of our report.

NCTQ would like to take this opportunity to thank both the district and the union for their full participation in this study.



Standard 1

STAFFING

District policies facilitate schools' access to top teacher talent.

Indicators on which this standard is assessed:

- 1.1 The district recruits an ample supply of candidates who have the personal and professional characteristics found to correlate with teacher effectiveness.
- 1.2 Principals and/or school committees select the applicants they wish to interview and have the final say over teacher assignment.
- 1.3 The district's staffing timeline ensures that almost all vacancies are filled by June of each school year; accordingly, teachers who are retiring and resigning provide sufficient notice before transfers occur.
- 1.4 When positions must be cut, teacher performance is a key factor in deciding who stays or goes.
- 1.5 Decisions to terminate a poorly performing teacher occur swiftly and are made by educational leadership, not a court of law.
- 1.6 Principals are trained on low-cost retention strategies for top teachers.

1.1 The district recruits an ample supply of candidates who have the personal and professional characteristics found to correlate with teacher effectiveness.

Finding: The district's central human resources office needs to actively manage its teacher recruitment and hiring process, introducing formal mechanisms to ensure that the needs of all principals in the district are adequately supported.

In the coming years, the district expects a large number of retirees and will likely be hiring new teachers at much higher rates than they have been.⁶ The district's HR office will need to improve its functionality to become more helpful to school principals in successfully meeting these new challenges, e.g., recruiting

⁶ Substitute Senate Bill 342; <https://www.strsoh.org/legislation/legislation.html>

the needed teachers, teeing up the best candidates for interviews and quickly extending official offers. In focus groups, principals stated that the length of time it took for a new teacher to go through the hiring process and receive a final offer was a major obstacle to hiring. They also mentioned that most of their hiring of new candidates happened through their own relationships with university partners, not through human resources.

Applicant Recruitment

Dayton currently relies primarily on hiring student teachers who have completed their practicum in the district, an ideal source of new teachers.⁷ The classroom teacher who supervises a candidate has an excellent perspective on a student teacher's fit, and principals also have plenty of opportunities to observe them. However, the current system is quite informal. Because the district leaves its university partnerships entirely up to individual schools to manage and does not track the placement of student teachers in individual schools, it loses many opportunities to more broadly vet the suitability of student teachers for positions that may become open in other schools. Cooperating teachers frequently provide letters of recommendation for their protégés, but the district would do well to provide more structure to the process, giving each cooperating teacher an opportunity to be a reference for her student teacher and provide specific information that will inform the hiring process.

As the district considers its relationships with local higher education programs, it should make sure that the teacher education programs are conducting sufficient oversight of their student teachers, and, in conjunction with the district, the programs should make sure that student teachers are only placed in classrooms with effective teachers that are strong adult mentors. Taking into account the projected number of teachers needed and the areas in which need is greatest, Dayton should seek student teachers who have shown promise and are likely to be a good fit with the district's needs.⁸

As the need for teachers grows in the coming years, Dayton will need to identify additional sources of teacher applicants. The district has recently entered into a contract with Teach For America, the national service organization that supplies high-need districts with recent college graduates who agree to work as teachers for a minimum of two years. Eight Teach For America "corps members" will start in the 2013-2014 school year, working in typically hard-to-fill subject areas. The district will also need to look at the teacher preparation programs in the area to help meet their needs.

Applicant Screening

Once a teacher candidate fills out an application, human resources screens applicants by looking at grade point average, college attended, leadership and extracurricular activities and student-teaching experience. Teachers then have an in-person interview with the district HR staff. The structure of these

7 Interviews with Dayton Public Schools Human Resources Staff, April, 2013

8 *The Review*, National Council on Teacher Quality, June, 2013



interviews seems to vary from year to year. In some years, the interviews include a demonstration lesson by the teacher, yet in other years this has not been part of the process. Principals are always involved in the interview process, but sometimes the principal that needs a teacher is not the one interviewing candidates. Typically, administrators from schools that have a high number of vacancies participate in the group interview processes.

Teachers that “pass” these two rounds of interviews receive a commitment letter from the district that signals they likely will be hired. This is good practice, but too much time elapses between the letter and the firm offer of a job. At this point in the process, it is not clear where or when the teacher will be placed, because the district must first find placements for displaced teachers and those who are voluntarily transferring before formally offering new teachers an official job. According to principals, the long wait between such interviews and official hiring and placement can result in applicants taking a position in another district that hires earlier. Teachers shared the view that slow timelines inhibit the recruitment of the best teachers for the district, with some teachers in focus groups citing examples of principals moving quickly to select strong potential candidates only to be stymied by the district’s long hiring process. (See section 1.3.)

Academic caliber of candidates

The academic caliber of prospective teachers is important and should be a factor when candidates are screened. As noted above, the district does collect his information from each applicant, but it is not clear that it is used. Many studies over the years have shown that teachers who were themselves strong students are more apt to be effective teachers. For example, research finds that teachers with higher scores on tests of *verbal ability*, such as the SAT or ACT, or even a simple vocabulary test, are more likely to be effective.⁹ Nevertheless, there will always be a certain portion of candidates who are strong but lack a solid academic record. Districts should make sure that academic caliber is given appropriate weight while also giving staff the flexibility to consider other important strengths.

One proxy, although by no means the only one, for the academic caliber of teacher candidates is the admissions selectivity of the teacher preparation program. The selectivity of a college is essentially a proxy for verbal ability, as more selective institutions require higher verbal ability for admission.¹⁰

Below are the five institutions that serve as the biggest sources of teachers in Dayton. They are categorized by the degree to which they ensure that they are adequately selective, admitting only teacher candidates who come from the top half of the college-attending population.¹¹

9 Boyd, D., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., Rockoff, J., & Wyckoff, J. (2007). *The narrowing gap in New York City teacher qualifications and its implications for student achievement in high poverty schools*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

10 Ehrenberg, R., & Brewer, D. (1994). *Do school and teacher characteristics matter? Evidence from high school and beyond*. *Economics of Education Review*, 14.

11 These ratings were developed by evaluating the academic criteria by which teacher preparation programs (and their affiliated institutions) admit students. A program earns a “4” by adhering to at least one of the following policies: 1) requiring a 3.0 GPA for admission, 2) using a standardized test of academic proficiency that allows comparison of applicants to the general college-going population (e.g., ACT, SAT), or 3) being housed in an institution that is sufficiently selective (as indicated by a mean combined SAT mathematics and verbal score of 1120 or above or a mean ACT composite score of 24 or above). Schools that are a “yes” on the matrix earned a 3 or 4. Schools that are “somewhat” earned a 2. Schools that are a “no” earned a 0 or 1.

Academic selectivity of teacher preparation programs

INSTITUTION	Employs adequate selection criteria when admitting candidates
Antioch University Midwest	No
Cedarville University	Yes
Central State University	No
University of Dayton	Yes
Wright State University	Somewhat

Only two of the five institutions from which Dayton typically recruits, University of Dayton and Cedarville, recruit teacher candidates from the top half of the college-attending population.

In focus groups, principals affirmed the importance of recruiting candidates from institutions that adequately screen students during the admissions process. They felt that programs such as University of Dayton and Wright State routinely delivered better prepared teachers while others were hit or miss. Across the board, however, they voiced concerns about all the local programs and their insufficient commitment to providing teachers with skills to manage the realities of teaching in an urban district, such as classroom management strategies, and their ability to establish a strong, positive culture.

1.2 Principals and/or school committees select applicants they wish to interview and have the final say over teacher assignment.

Finding: Dayton’s principals need more autonomy to hire teachers who are a good fit with their schools.

Current policies for placing teachers, based mostly on seniority rules, limit principals’ ability to staff for success. In focus groups and in the NCTQ survey of school leaders, principals reported that they felt frustrated over their inability to hire and maintain their own staff.

Extending such authority to principals is important to both principals and teachers. A vital piece of a teacher’s success in a school is “fit.” In fact, research has shown that teachers who participated in a hiring process that gave them a comprehensive view of a prospective school were on average more satisfied with their jobs than teachers who did not participate in such a process. An information-rich screening process that includes interviews, demonstration lessons and community input results in placements that are better for *both* teachers and schools.¹²

¹² Liu, E. (2005, April). *Hiring, job satisfaction, and the fit between new teachers and their schools*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada.



Finding: The latest agreement between Dayton Public Schools and the Dayton Education Association expanded principals' ability to select between existing teachers that wish to transfer and new applicants, an authority that principals are finding valuable.

Schools receive teachers in three different categories: displaced teachers, voluntary transfers and new hires. Based on the route, principals have differing levels of freedom in selecting the teacher rather than receiving him or her. This autonomy directly corresponds with principal satisfaction in teacher quality.

Displaced teachers

A displaced teacher, sometimes called an "involuntary transfer," is a teacher who requires a new placement due to a decrease in pupil enrollment, program reduction, and/or staff realignment in her school.¹³ According to the teacher's contract, the HR office can place her at another school without receiving the principal's consent, with the decision made entirely on the basis of a teacher's seniority.¹⁴

Voluntary transfers

Voluntary transfers are teachers who elect to change schools. The most recent master agreement with the teachers union provided the district expanded flexibility on requirements for hiring voluntary transfers. Prior to this 2012 agreement, principals were required to take the most senior candidate that expressed interest in a vacant position, regardless of fit. Commendably, now there is an interview process that appears to introduce more latitude.¹⁵ The agreement still states that seniority should be the "main factor" in determining who should be offered the position, even as the principal and faculty council interview both an internal candidate (who by definition will have more seniority than someone new to the system) and the new applicant. District staff noted that in practice the new teacher applicant is often selected over the voluntary transfer, but our interviews with principals and teachers surfaced considerable ambiguity. Both teachers and principals had varying degrees of knowledge and understanding about this new policy. Some of the more experienced principals were aware of the new latitude; newer principals were not as familiar with it, even as they were entering into the hiring cycle for the 2013-2014 school year. Similarly, some teachers were aware that policies had shifted, while others still believed that seniority was the only determining factor to get into a new school or position.

New hires

Principals have the most authority to select new hires. (Refer to section 1.1 for further information.) Principals can interview candidates who have been student teachers in their schools as well as external candidates.

¹³ Dayton Teachers' Contract, Section 25.04.2, page 41.

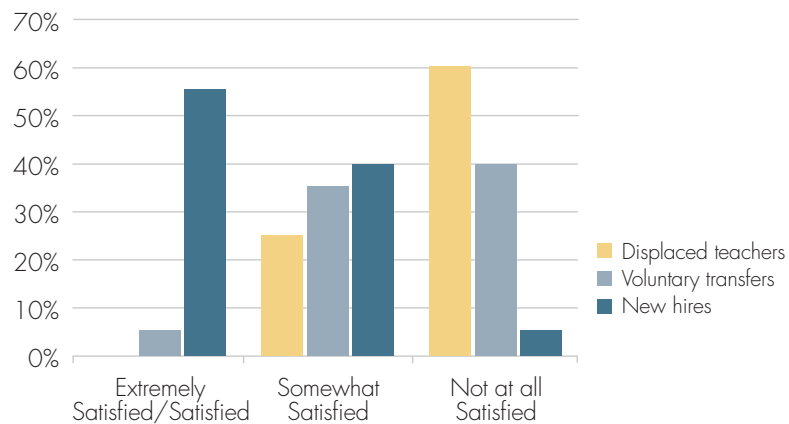
¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ The faculty council is not selected by school leadership and consists of any teachers in the building who are interested in participating. Dayton Teachers' Contract, Section 10.01, page 25.

“ We are so late in the game. Beavercreek hired in April. A lot of the students coming out of the colleges are picked up by the suburbs. We don’t even have a chance to get them.”

– Dayton principal

How satisfied are you with teacher applicants from the following sources?



As principal autonomy increases in hiring, their satisfaction also increases. Principals are the happiest with teachers from the new hire pool, a group where they have the most say in who joins their staff.

As in most districts, many principals have created workarounds to give themselves more control over their staffing. The problem with these workarounds is that they contribute to elongating the hiring timeline at the district level and create confusion and frustration for the district, school leadership and staff. For example, principals sometimes conceal vacancies by assigning long-term reserve (substitute) teachers to avoid having to accept a displaced teacher, opening the position only after they believe all transferring teachers have been placed. Combined with late notifications of resignations from some teachers, HR may not know about all true vacancies until shortly before school begins.

1.3 The district’s staffing timeline ensures that almost all vacancies are filled by June of each school year; accordingly, teachers who are retiring and resigning provide sufficient notice before transfers occur.

Finding: While there is no formal hiring timeline in Dayton, the lengthy process often causes applicants to move on to other districts.

In addition to having an ample supply of candidates, the district must know which positions are available to match teachers with positions.



Delays in changes to school configurations, retirements *and* resignations hinder human resource's ability to accurately project how many vacancies must be filled.

Numerous principals and teachers voiced concerns about the late hiring practices of the district. In fact, over 90 percent of principal survey respondents stated that new teacher hiring happens too late in the year to ensure access to the best new candidates. Many noted that teachers are placed right before the school year or, in some cases, after the school year has begun. While teachers seeking voluntary transfers must do so by February 15th (and are no longer assured of a new assignment in any event), no such deadlines exist for the involuntary transfer of teachers from schools that are going through major changes or losing enrollment. Since the contract requires that existing staff are always entitled to a position, any late decisions about involuntary transfers delay new teacher hiring.

Dayton is the only district NCTQ has studied that does not have, at least on paper, a formalized hiring timeline. While there is a process that takes place every year, dates do not seem to be determined beforehand or shared with principals or even staff internally. Without a clear timeline, delays are increasingly likely to occur as principals and HR staff attempt to fill positions without a set schedule.

Below is a timeline created to reflect the current process as described by central office staff. The process typically begins in April and runs well into the start of the school year in mid-August. The district may want to compare these dates to dates of surrounding districts and their charter counterparts.

Dayton Public Schools hiring timeline



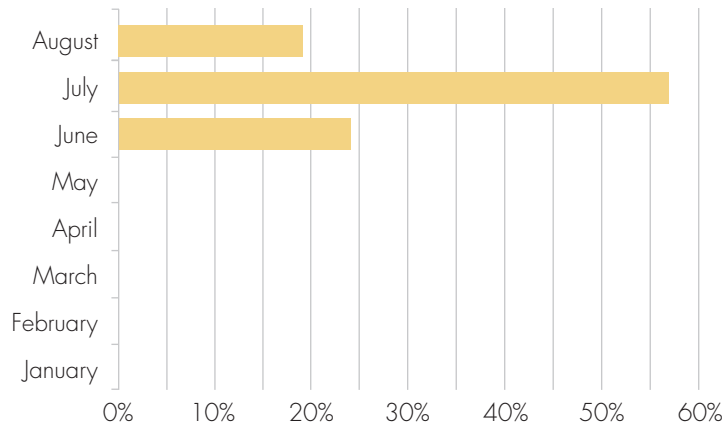
Ohio state law requires that resigning or retiring teachers notify the district of their decision to leave by July 10th.¹⁶ If teachers resign or retire after that time, their Ohio teaching license could be suspended for up to one year. Dayton also provides a \$500 incentive for teachers who give notice of their retirement in April, but no such incentive is provided for an early resignation notice.¹⁷ District staff noted that, for

¹⁶ Ohio Revised Code 3319.15

¹⁷ Dayton Teachers' Contract,, Section 25.09, page 44

some, the July deadline has become a target date for resignations *and* retirements, indicating that the \$500 incentive is not doing enough to encourage teachers to notify the district earlier. The biggest problem that districts usually have is that teachers are generally reluctant to notify their principals that they are leaving before the school year is over.

In what month do you fill the most vacancies for the following school year?



The majority of Dayton principals stated that they fill the most positions in July. Almost 20 percent stated that they fill the most positions in August, the month when school begins.

The Portland Public Schools system in Oregon offers a tiered system of rewards based on when teachers notify the district of their retirement and/or resignation. For notifications by February 15th, teachers receive a \$1,250 incentive. If they notify by March 15th, they receive \$700, and if by April 15th, they receive \$500. In all cases, teachers must give at least 60 days' notice before resigning/retiring.

1.4 When positions must be cut, teacher performance is a key factor in deciding who stays or goes.

Finding: District policy is narrower than state law and uses seniority as the sole criterion for dismissing a teacher, laying off those with the least experience first.

When a district is forced to conduct layoffs because of factors such as declining enrollments, Ohio state law requires that newer, nontenured teachers be laid off before teachers with five or more years of experience — i.e., those who are tenured. If after laying off all nontenured teachers more layoffs are necessary, Ohio law is less wedded to using seniority alone, mandating that seniority is not a deciding factor unless the layoff decision involves tenured teachers with comparable evaluations.¹⁸ In 2009, a

¹⁸ Ohio State Law: Title XXXIII, Section 3319.17. "The board shall not give preference to any teacher based on seniority, except when making a decision between teachers who have comparable evaluations."



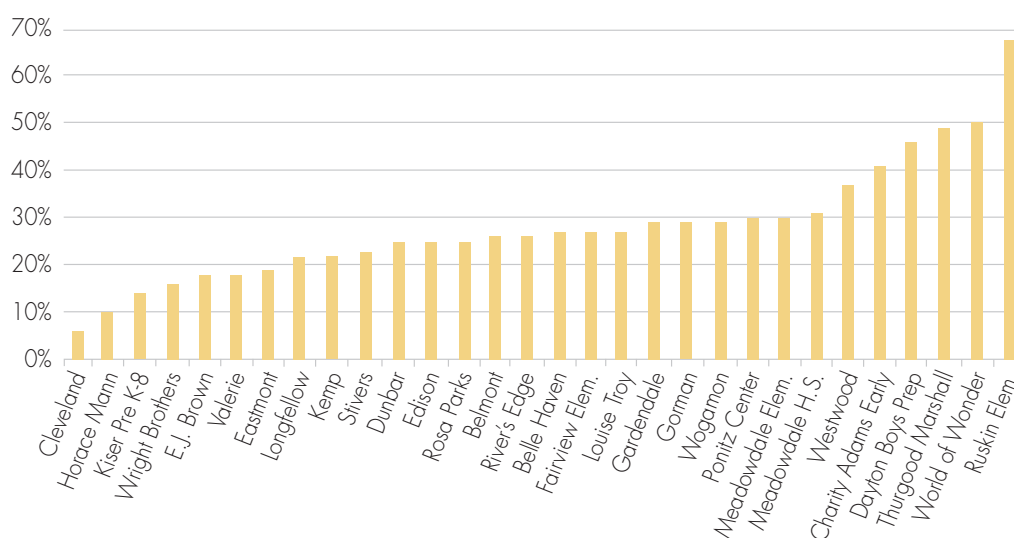
bill was passed that required performance to be a factor in layoffs of tenured teachers.¹⁹ However, this bill, which included amendments to state law beyond the layoff policy, was repealed by referendum in November 2011.

In contrast, the teachers' contract still requires that when layoffs must take place, preference must be given to staff members on continuing contracts (tenured teachers) and to those who have greater seniority.²⁰ As such, district policy differs from state law but since state law trumps district policy, this provision of the contract is unlikely to withstand a challenge if one were to take place.

This law is preferable to the policy in most states where all teachers, regardless of tenure, are laid off solely by consideration of seniority. The problem is that school districts run the risk of laying off potentially talented teachers because their performance is not considered until they have tenure. In Ohio tenure is awarded at five years, meaning that for teachers with five or less years of experience, the seniority based policy is still in effect. It is unlikely that layoffs would affect tenured teachers with more than five years of experience.

A seniority-based system generally hurts some schools more than others, particularly schools with high turnover rates. For example, some schools in Dayton have less than 10 percent of staff with five or fewer years of experience. On the opposite end, some schools have almost 70 percent of staff with five or fewer years of experience, and if a layoff were to occur, these schools would be disproportionately impacted.

Percentage of teachers with one to five years of experience in Dayton by school (2011-2012 school year)



There is a wide disparity in the number of teachers with five or fewer years of experience in Dayton schools. Some schools have less than 10 percent of teachers with five or fewer years, while others have over 40 percent.

¹⁹ Ohio Senate Bill 5. Subject first to the preference for teachers with continuing contracts prescribed in this paragraph, the board shall consider the relative quality of performance the principal factor in determining the order of reductions under this section; http://www.legislature.state.oh.us/BillText129/129_SB_5_EN_N.pdf

²⁰ Teachers' Contract, Section 25.07.01, page 43

The issue over losing talented newer teachers who lack tenure because of layoffs is largely a theoretical discussion; in recent years, in spite of rapidly decreasing enrollments, actual layoffs have been rare. When teachers have been given pink slips, the warning that a layoff is possible, almost all teachers have been called back. In fact, based on data from district-wide layoffs from 2007, 2010 and 2011, only one teacher was not called back to work. District officials noted that attrition through resignations and retirements tends to limit the number of layoffs that are actually needed.

Not so theoretical is the damage done to a district’s teacher corps as the result of frequent pink slipping, which has a measurably deleterious impact on the morale of newer teachers. In Philadelphia, for example, NCTQ found that over 30 percent of teachers who received layoff notices resigned before being called back. In a seniority-based layoff system, districts may lose top talent in cases where it could be avoided. Given the high turnover rate of its newer teachers, the same problem is likely true in Dayton.

The late notice that teachers may give for retirements and resignations contributes to unnecessary pink slips. According to their contract, layoff notifications are scheduled to go out to affected teachers by May 15th, but teachers are not required to notify the district of their retirement and resignation plans until two months later. Teachers receiving layoff notices could very likely not factor into the attrition.

1.5 Decisions to terminate a poorly performing teacher occur swiftly and are made by educational leadership, not a court of law.

Finding: Dayton dismisses almost no teachers for poor performance, generally allowing poorly performing teachers to move from one school to the next.

According to the central office, over the past five years, not a single teacher has lost her job for performance reasons. There have been some terminations over the years for extreme disciplinary cases or lack of certification, but these are the only types of situations that teachers face the danger of being fired. While the rate of teacher dismissals is low in all the districts we studied, Dayton is the first district we have encountered where dismissal on the basis of performance is nonexistent.

Both HR and principals noted that if a teacher is performing poorly, the general solution is to transfer the teacher to another school. They also stated that the process for dismissing a teacher after a negative evaluation is confusing and time-intensive, with multiple deadlines that must be met. Principals commonly miss one or more of these deadlines and therefore cannot move forward with a dismissal.

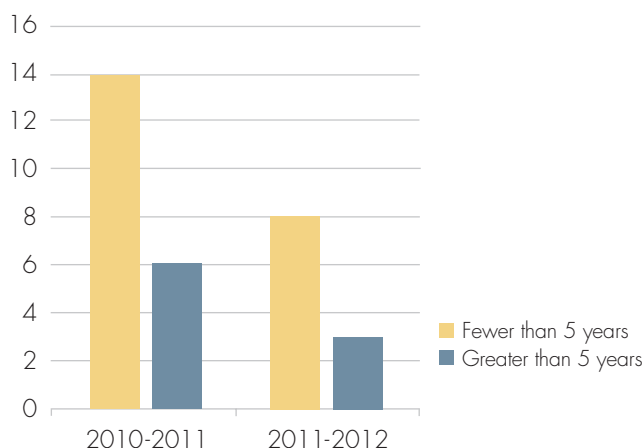
YEAR	TERMINATIONS	REASONS
2010-2011	4	Disciplinary, lack of certification
2011-2012	3	Disciplinary, lack of certification



1.6 Principals are trained on low-cost retention strategies for top teachers.

Like many urban districts, turnover among teachers with fewer than five years of experience is relatively high in Dayton. While some turnover is inevitable, retaining highly effective teachers in the early stages of their careers would save the district time and money.

Resignation data by years of teacher experience



About 25 percent of Dayton's overall teaching corps has fewer than five years of experience, but over the past two years, 65 percent of total resignations have come from teachers in this group.







Given the daily demands of managing a school, retention strategies for high-performing teachers is often low on the list of priorities for principals. Recent research published by TNTP outlined some of the challenges, consequences and solutions surrounding the early exit of high-performing teachers from urban school districts.²¹ The report advised that districts make the retention of high-performing teachers a top priority, and that they strengthen the teaching profession by setting high expectations for teachers.

Focusing on retention efforts in the early years, particularly for high-performing teachers who have shown that they are effective, would decrease the churn of teachers. Simple, low-cost strategies to retain these teachers include recognizing them publicly at schoolwide meetings and giving them opportunities to provide feedback regarding the school culture and instructional practices.

In focus groups, principals gave varied responses when asked about methods used to retain effective teachers. Some talked about public recognition and more sophisticated strategies for high-performing teachers such as serving as models for struggling teachers. While teachers were not quick to name retention strategies used by their principals, some acknowledged that their administrators often provided opportunities for more senior teachers to take on additional responsibility.

21 TNTP, *The Irreplaceables*, August 2012, www.tntp.org/irreplaceables

Recommendations

-  **1. Improve data systems.** Having high-quality data available for making decisions is of the utmost importance for Dayton. Maintaining information on student teachers, numbers and characteristics of new teacher applicants and numbers of teachers displaced or voluntarily transferring annually would allow the district to make better decisions on hiring and staffing processes.
-  **2. Hire teachers earlier.** Implementing a formal hiring timeline whereby all positions are filled by June would benefit the district immensely. Key deadlines should be communicated to school leaders well in advance. Moving up the displacement and voluntary transfer process to late spring would allow the district to focus on new hires well before the start of the school year.
-  **3. Train principals on low-cost retention strategies for effective teachers.** High-performing teachers should understand their value to the school district. Dayton should offer training and regular reminders to principals about strategies to retain these high performers. Such strategies can be simple — for example, public acknowledgment of good work — but unfortunately they are often a low priority in the daily running of a school.
-  **4. Use data to identify quality teacher education programs for recruitment in the area.** NCTQ has just released a comprehensive study of teacher education programs that documents how programs measure up on 17 different standards designed to gauge whether the programs are able to produce teachers ready to work in today's schools. Dayton should use this information when making decisions on recruiting efforts and hiring strategies.
-  **5. Give principals the authority to decide who works in their buildings.** The district should revise its approach whereby principals must accept displaced teachers based on seniority. In addition, while the new contract policy allows principals more flexibility when taking voluntary transfers, it does not go far enough to ensure that principals have a wide enough pool from which to select. They should negotiate with the teachers union to commit to mutual-consent hiring in which principals can interview any number of candidates for all vacancies in the school. At a minimum, principals should be able to reject the assignment of a teacher to their school, including teachers who have lost their assignment in another school no matter what the reason, and extend this authority to all points in the school year.
-  **6. Negotiate more effective incentives for teachers to provide notification of resignations and retirements earlier.** The current \$500 incentive for retiring teachers to notify by April 15th does not seem to be working, and there are no incentives in place for resigning teachers to notify before July. The district should offer an incentive to





resigning teachers and consider a more lucrative incentive for both groups to ensure that notifications are received as early as possible and not throughout the summer.



7. Incorporate state language on layoff policy. Current contract language does not match state law and currently is using seniority as the criteria for all layoffs. The district should change its language to comply with state law and consider criteria other than seniority when laying off teachers. In addition, Dayton should reconsider the practice of treating all nontenured teachers the same, which can negatively affect schools with large numbers of novice teachers. The following are ways the district can manage layoffs by incorporating both seniority and performance:

- Lay off first-year teachers first. Research shows that teachers who have been teaching for only one year are not likely to match other teachers' effectiveness. Targeting first-year teachers is preferable to treating all nontenured teachers the same.
- Lay off teachers after year two on the basis of a weighted system that gives more points to performance and fewer to seniority. If needed, experience could be given more weight after year three.



8. Allow performance to be a factor in determining which teachers will be laid off. While Ohio's law goes further than that in many other states in stating that tenured teachers cannot be laid off by considering seniority only, it does not directly state that evaluation results should be the determining factor in layoffs. The language should be clear, citing performance as the main reason for layoffs and defining how performance is determined.



9. Move the resignation/retirement notification date up. The required date to submit a retirement or resignation notice of July 10th is far too late for school districts whose school year begins a month later. Moving this date to at least 60 days before the start of the school year would benefit school districts immensely as they attempt to hire effectively before the start of the school year.



10. Permit districts to dismiss teachers who are without an assignment after one year (two hiring cycles). Currently, Ohio law does not allow school boards to terminate a teacher's contract for failure to find a position. Several other states, however, do afford districts this authority. This so-called "exit strategy" is critical if districts are to fully implement mutual-consent hiring without having to take on what can be untenable financial burdens.



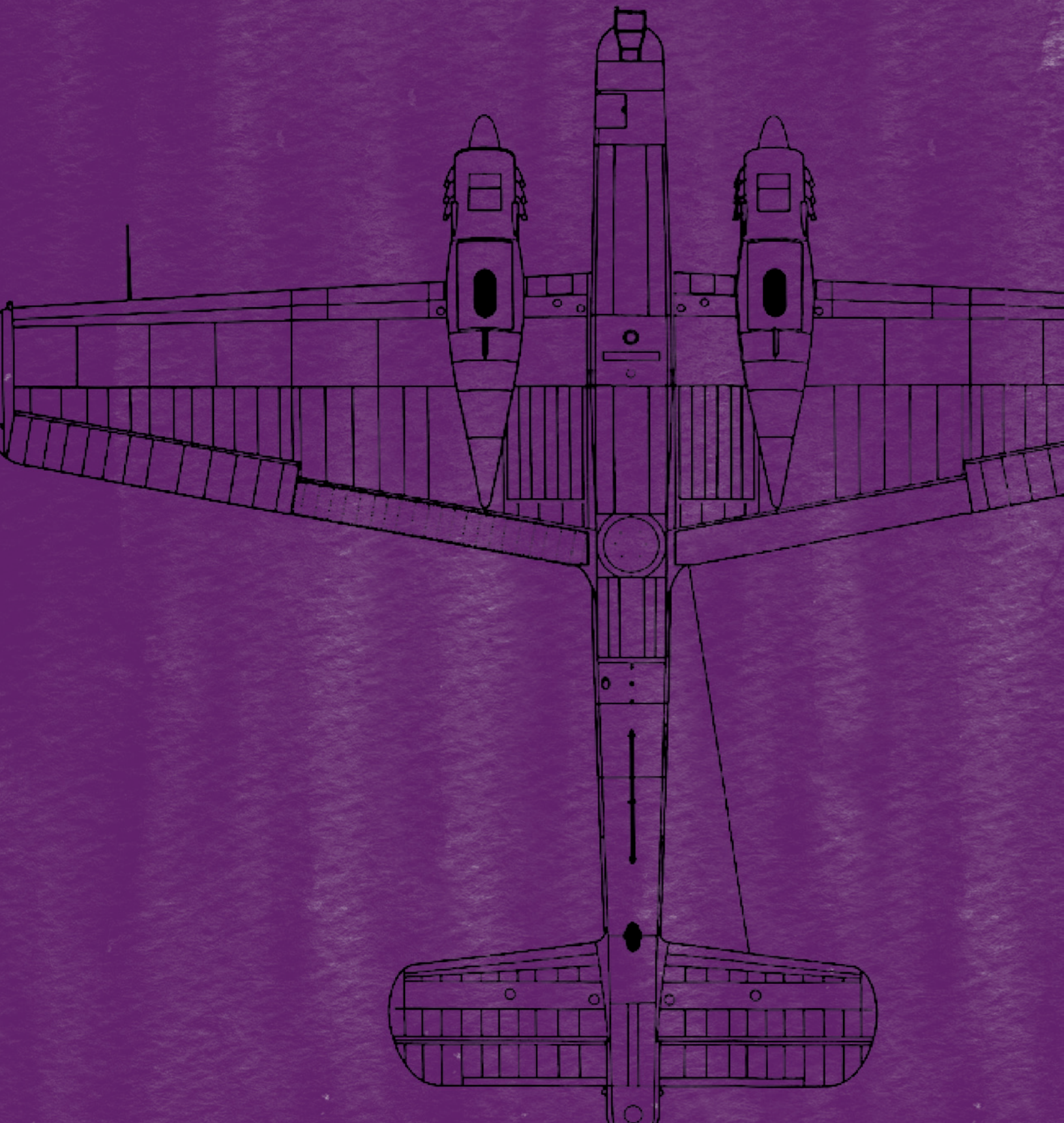
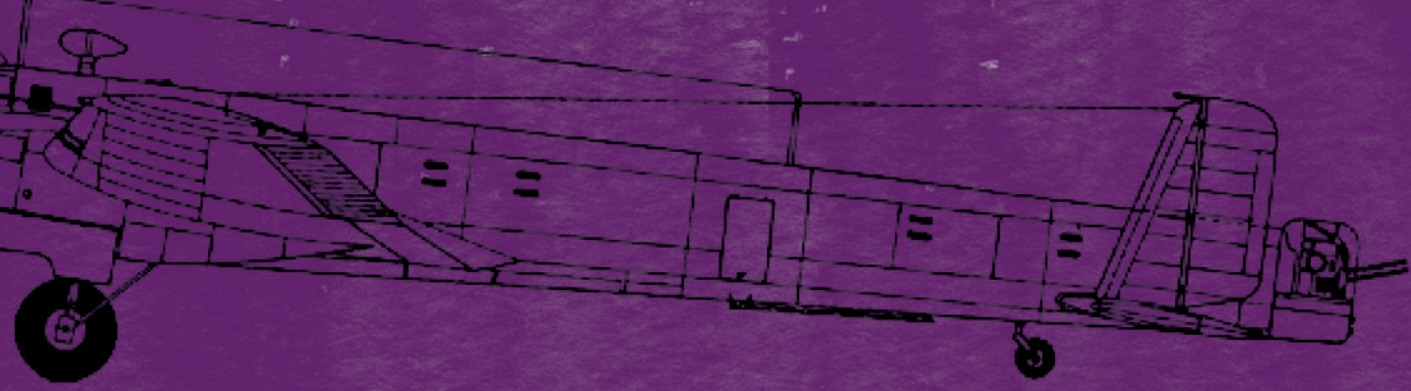
This recommendation requires only a change in practice.



This recommendation requires a formal negotiation between the district and the teachers' union.



This recommendation requires a change in state law.



Standard 2

EVALUATION

The evaluation of teacher performance plays a critical role in advancing teacher effectiveness.

Indicators on which this standard is assessed:

- 2.1 All teachers receive an annual evaluation rating.
- 2.2 Observations occur early enough in the school year to provide sufficient time for struggling teachers to improve and for administrators to make a final decision about a teacher's continued employment by year's end.
- 2.3 Objective evidence of student learning is the preponderant criterion on which teachers are evaluated.
- 2.4 Evaluations factor in multiple observations and feedback from multiple individuals and sources, with observers always providing oral and written feedback to teachers.
- 2.5 Classroom observations focus on a set of observable standards that gauge student learning.
- 2.6 Evaluations offer multiple rating levels to distinguish performance among teachers. Ratings differentiate substantial performance differences among teachers.

2.1 All teachers receive an annual evaluation rating.

Finding: The new state evaluation tool will require all teachers to be evaluated annually, unless teachers earn the highest rating.

The state of Ohio has recently developed a new evaluation framework called the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System, and Dayton plans to implement that framework as part of a new evaluation system in 2013-2014. This system was piloted in seven schools in Dayton in the 2012-2013 school year.²² Under the new model, all teachers will be evaluated annually, unless teachers receive the highest rating level out of a possible four, termed "accomplished." Districts can choose to evaluate accomplished teachers

²² The schools that piloted the new evaluation system are the seven School Improvement Grant (SIG) schools. These schools are: Belmont High School, Dunbar High School, Edwin Joel Brown PreK-8 School, Fairview PreK-8 School, Meadowdale High School, Thurgood Marshall High School, Westwood PreK-8 School.

once every two years.²³ While it may be practical to reduce the number of annual observations for the most effective teachers, eliminating the evaluation completely denies these teachers the opportunity to receive helpful feedback while also suggesting that an annual evaluation is punitive in nature.

Finding: The district does not track evaluation data centrally or use it to drive personnel decisions.

The district collects individual observation forms from principals on all teachers in the district. However, the district does not track any of this data electronically and there is no evidence that it uses the data for decision making. While NCTQ has encountered similar lack of data on teacher ratings in other districts we have studied, most districts are still able to provide some data points, such as the overall summative evaluation results for the district or the number of teachers who were rated at the lowest performance level and are entering intervention. Because Dayton does not maintain this data centrally, NCTQ was unable to determine whether administrators are evaluating all novice teachers annually as specified in the current contract or how experienced teachers are being evaluated.²⁴ Most importantly, the district currently has no way to determine how many teachers are performing at each rating level and what follow-up occurs for individual teachers.

As Dayton moves to its new evaluation system, the state will require annual reporting of the number of teachers evaluated and the number of teachers assigned each rating.²⁵ Maintaining this data will be helpful for the district as well. Tracking the evaluation process and outcomes will enable the district to better assess the overall professional development needs of the district, as well as to identify individual teachers who need targeted support and follow-up. Similarly, such monitoring will allow school or district administrators to identify outstanding teachers for recognition, for possible recruitment to work in high-need assignments or as models for their peers. It also gives districts the capacity to understand the distribution of teacher talent across schools, which in turn can help inform policies for teacher recruitment and assignment.

Collecting this data in real time will also help to monitor the validity and implementation of the evaluation system itself. The overall distribution of teacher evaluation ratings should reflect the actual performance of teachers, which is likely to have standouts on both ends of the spectrum, high and low performing.

23 Ohio Revised Code 3319.111 The board shall conduct an evaluation of each teacher employed by the board at least once each school year, except as provided in division (C)(2) of this section. The evaluation shall be completed by the first day of May and the teacher shall receive a written report of the results of the evaluation by the tenth day of May. The board may elect, by adoption of a resolution, to evaluate each teacher who received a rating of accomplished on the teacher's most recent evaluation conducted under this section once every two school years. In that case, the biennial evaluation shall be completed by the first day of May of the applicable school year, and the teacher shall receive a written report of the results of the evaluation by the tenth day of May of that school year.

24 The current contract specifies that teachers with three or fewer years of experience get evaluated using the Pathwise observation rubric. Teachers with more than three years of experience can opt for two types of evaluation models (Selected or Strategic), neither of which require observations.

25 Ohio Revised Code 3319.111 Section G.



WHERE IT'S BEING DONE

In consultation with its teachers' union, the New Haven public schools system revamped its evaluation instrument. Almost half of a teacher's rating is determined by student growth goals. Measures of progress include standardized tests, district assessments and student work. The remainder of a teacher's rating is largely determined by classroom observation, which focuses on evidence of student learning rather than on teacher behavior. When the teacher's rating from the observation does not match the teacher's student growth rating, the mismatch generates an automatic review by the central office, an important check and balance to the system. Teachers who receive either the highest or lowest evaluation rating from their principal are also automatically reviewed by another evaluator.

2.2 Observations occur early enough in the school year to provide sufficient time for struggling teachers to improve and for administrators to make a final decision about a teacher's continued employment by year's end.

Under the new state evaluation system, administrators will be required to conduct two cycles of observations and periodic walkthroughs for all teachers to determine a teacher's performance, much the same as what occurs now in Dayton for novice teachers. Observations will comprise 50 percent of a teacher's overall rating, though before they comprised 100 percent of a teacher's rating.²⁶

The state will give districts until much later in the school year to complete evaluations, extending Dayton's current deadline of March 15th to a new deadline of May 1st. This late date is likely to ensure that districts can incorporate value-added data in making final evaluation decisions. Earlier deadlines for completion of observations, such as those that are in place now in Dayton, will benefit the district since this will allow them to intervene in a timely manner if a teacher is struggling or needs specific feedback to adjust practice.

In the current evaluation system, principals are only required to observe novice teachers. Thus, it will be a shift for principals who will now have to observe all teachers in the building. In focus groups, principals, particularly those with less experience, voiced concerns on how they will fit in at least two observations per teacher annually. Principals will need support from the central office to help manage the increase in observations with their other duties.

²⁶ In the current evaluation model, teachers with three or fewer years receive annual evaluation results based on observations. Other teachers do not necessarily get observed.

2.3 Objective evidence of student learning is the preponderant criterion on which teachers are evaluated.

Finding: Dayton will begin to include student outcomes as the preponderant criterion in 2013-2014.

Currently, objective evidence of student learning is not used to evaluate teachers. However, this will change with the new evaluation system. Starting in 2013-2014, 50 percent of a teacher’s evaluation score will be based on teacher performance (based on observations) and 50 percent will be based on student growth measures (value-added scores, where available). This percentage is consistent with research findings in the Methods of Effective Teaching study. To ensure validity of the evaluation model, that study recommended that objective teacher-specific student growth data measures (in the case of the study, value-added scores derived from state tests) should comprise 30 to 50 percent of an evaluation model.²⁷

The exact determination of what will comprise the student growth measure will depend on whether or not the teacher instructs a value-added grade and subject.

TEACHER ROLE	EVALUATION MODEL
Teacher instructs value-added subjects exclusively.	All 50 percent of student growth measure comes from value-added data. ²⁸
Teacher instructs some value-added subjects.	Value-added data will be used in proportion to teacher’s schedule of value-added courses.
Teacher instructs subjects that have approved vendor assessments. ²⁹	Vendor assessments will be used in lieu of value-added data.
Teacher instructs subjects with no value-added data or vendor assessments.	Local student growth measures will be used such as Student Learning Objectives.

Based on 2012 data, only about 30 percent of teachers in Dayton actually had value-added scores from state testing available. For teachers in non-tested subjects or grades, the state specifies that districts may use student learning objectives. This will involve identifying or creating assessments for measurement, accounting for student starting points and setting a student learning goal.³⁰ It also involves extensive training, both for teachers and administrators.

27 Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. (2013, January). *Ensuring fair and reliable measures of effective teaching: Culminating findings from the MET Project’s three-year study.*

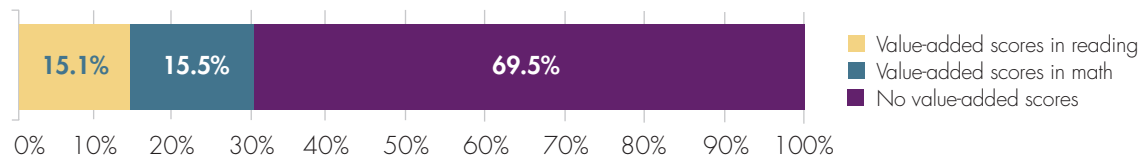
28 Senate Bill 59 proposes to reduce this to 35 percent, however as of the printing of this report in June 2013, this legislation was pending.

29 These are assessments approved by the Ohio Department of Education for use in measuring student growth.

30 TNTP (2012, March). Teacher evaluation system comparative overview (presentation).



Percentage of teachers with value-added scores, 2012 data



Only about 30 percent of teachers actually have value-added scores that can be used for evaluation purposes. The remaining 70 percent require other methods to determine student growth.

Sources of objective evidence of student learning beyond standardized test scores:

- Departmental exams and other district tests
- Periodic diagnostic assessments
- Benchmark assessments that show student growth
- Artifacts of student work connected to specific student learning standards that are randomly selected for review by the principal or senior faculty, scored using rubrics and descriptors
- Examples of typical assignments, assessed for their quality and rigor
- Periodic checks on progress with the curriculum, coupled with evidence of student mastery of the curriculum from quizzes, tests and exams

Finding: Principals welcome the new evaluation tool, but teachers still need more information.

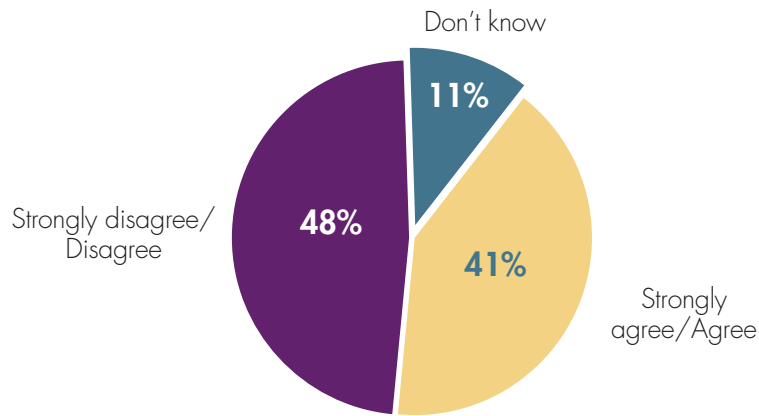
For the new evaluation tool to be implemented effectively, it is important for all key stakeholders to fully understand it. While principals and central office staff voiced excitement and knowledge about the key components of the new system, teacher response varied. Teachers' concerns centered on the creation of the value-added score; they felt the components that went into determining this were not transparent and it was inexplicable to them what calculations had derived their value-added rating during the pilot phase this year. Others also felt like the system was not equitable; one complaint included teachers in tested subjects feeling like they would get all the pressure while those in non-tested grades were able to maintain the status quo. The state of Ohio offers many resources for teachers interested in learning more about the new evaluation system and has run some training events in the Dayton area, but teachers' knowledge of these sessions was also limited.

Many teachers *do* acknowledge that there is room for improvement in the current evaluation system, particularly to provide more differentiation in teacher performance and feedback.³¹ Once the new system is implemented in Dayton, it will be important to continue to get feedback from teachers on what improvements can be made. Districts who have utilized teachers' input on how to improve their evaluation systems have benefited from greater buy-in at the school level and arguably, a stronger system overall.

31 NCTQ focus groups with teachers and survey responses. April/May 2013.

After implementing its new evaluation system, the state of Tennessee made many changes to the original model based on teacher and school leader feedback. The state decreased the required number of observations, which originally was very high (six for novice teachers and four for all other teachers) and made revisions to certain parts of the observation rubric.³²

Teacher survey responses: "I believe that the district's current evaluation process is a good measure of a teacher's performance."



While just over 40 percent believe that the current evaluation process is a good measure of a teacher's performance, more do not.

Finding: Dayton's value-added data show that most teachers produce average value-added gains with far fewer in the "most effective" and "above average" categories.

Ohio is farther along than many other states in that the state already tracks teachers' performance based on student growth on the Ohio Academic Assessments, also called a teacher's value-added score.³³ For 2011-2012, Dayton's data indicates that most teachers tend to fall in the middle (at average or approaching average), with fewer in the highest and lowest brackets (most and least effective). If Dayton maintained data on its classroom observations, these ratings could have been compared to teachers' value-added scores to determine discrepancies that require further investigation.³⁴ The kinds of questions that are raised from these multiple measures are invariably useful. Districts need to identify teachers with a high observation rating who are at the lowest level of value-added performance or vice versa. When such inconsistencies occur, the district should review the principal's evaluations to determine that they are done well, with appropriate emphasis on key instructional topics and issues.

32 Tennessee Department of Education. Teacher evaluation in Tennessee. A report on year one implementation. July 2012.

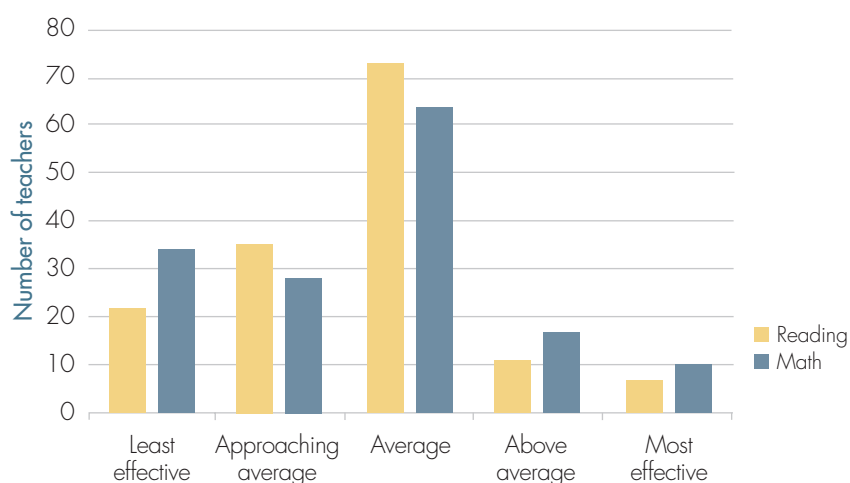
33 Value-added measurement refers to measuring the progress made by students over the course of one year.

34 It is important to note that value-added data used in evaluations will be based on three years of student outcomes, where available.



Some principals may lack the instructional expertise needed to be effective observers and will need intensive training beyond what is provided to all administrators. Engaging third party evaluators can also serve as a check on the validity of principals' evaluations (see section 2.4 for more information on third party evaluators). Factors outside a teacher's control could lead to a teacher earning a low value-added score in a given year, and it is important to draw out those reasons to contribute to the district's knowledge of its system, improvements that principals need to make and to ensure the evaluation model is fair for teachers.

2012 teacher value-added scores reading and math grades 4-8³⁵



Value-added scores for the district indicate that most teachers are in the average or approaching average range. A larger number of teachers are in the "least effective" category as compared to "most effective", a rating very few teachers achieved.

Finding: Teachers feel that there are no consequences, positive or negative, to evaluations.

In focus groups, teachers and principals overwhelmingly reported a lack of consequences — both positive and negative — following evaluations. While teachers mentioned performance improvement plans for their colleagues that received unsatisfactory ratings, it seemed that the plans usually consisted of a requirement to take a professional development course delivered by the central office without much other follow-up. Teachers noted that these classes could be helpful, but often a class was not enough support to significantly improve the performance of teachers with unsatisfactory ratings. On the other end of the spectrum, teachers with positive evaluations felt like they did receive a lot of positive feedback, but they had to seek out growth opportunities and constructive criticism geared toward improving practice on their own.

³⁵ Teachers in this graph are double counted when they have scores in more than one tested subject. If a teacher instructs both math and reading and her students received scores in both subjects, she would be included twice in the graph above.

“ We get a lot of positive feedback, but if I want critical feedback I have to seek it out myself.”

– Dayton teacher

Principals also felt like they had few options for poorly performing teachers except to encourage the teacher to transfer to another school. They reiterated that the professional development the district offers, while it can be helpful for some teachers, is often not enough to address the needs of struggling teachers.

2.4 Evaluations factor in multiple observations and feedback from multiple individuals and sources, with observers always providing oral and written feedback to teachers.

Finding: Ohio already has the system in place that allows its districts to realistically execute a meaningful evaluation system involving multiple parties.

Ohio has a sensible statute in place concerning who is allowed to evaluate a teacher, only restricting the execution of evaluations to credentialed evaluators, which can include school building administrators or teachers in positions designed to support their peers. Should a district so choose, it is free to employ peer reviewers. Commendably, all evaluators must complete a three-day, state-sponsored evaluation training and pass an online credentialing assessment. The state leaves it up to the district to decide who will be the evaluator of record for specific schools and teachers.³⁶ The law also allows multiple observers to be part of one teacher’s evaluation process.³⁷

Research supports the importance of using multiple observers for evaluations and shows that adding an additional observer increases the reliability of observation ratings more than simply requiring more visits by the same observer. Even when visits by the additional observer are as short as 15 minutes, the reliability of an observation is improved.³⁸

More evaluations by observers other than the principal or assistant principal would offer support to school leaders (who are often time-strapped) and provide content-specific feedback to a teacher. Incorporating the views

36 Teachers with above average expected student growth may choose his or her own evaluator. Ohio Department of Education Teacher Evaluation System Frequently Asked Questions, March 11, 2013.

37 Ohio Revised Code 3319.111

38 The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. (2013, January). *Ensuring fair and reliable measures of effective teaching: Culminating findings from the MET Project’s three-year study.*



of multiple, trained observers (particularly subject-area experts) also serve a second important purpose: It allows the superintendent to gauge the robustness of an individual principal's ratings. When a principal's observations closely match those of an alternative evaluator, the district and the teachers themselves can be more confident that the principal is unbiased and skilled at evaluation. If they do not match, the school district should increase training for the evaluator performing evaluations. Additional observations and evaluations can be conducted to the degree the budget allows. Even if only one teacher in a building is observed by another evaluator, principals and teachers will have the benefit of a second expert opinion to verify the principal's work.

WHERE IT'S BEING DONE

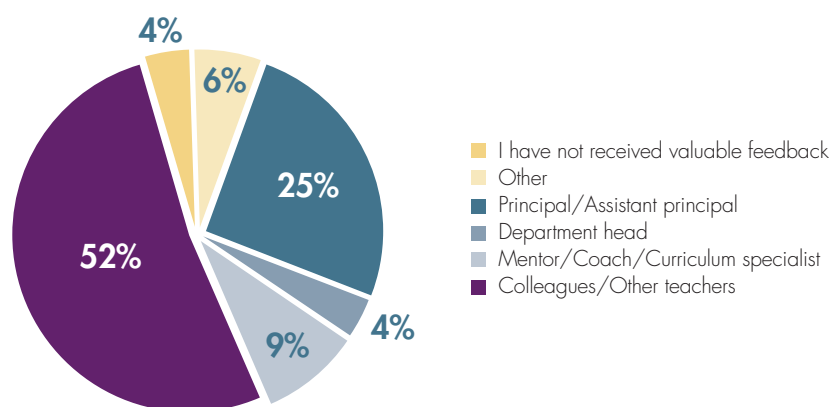
There is a great deal of work underway nationally that could inform Dayton's observation practices. In Rochester, New York, and Jefferson County, Kentucky, teachers may request that a peer evaluate them in addition to an administrator. Cobb County, Georgia allows department chairs to evaluate teachers if the principal thinks the chair is better suited for the job, usually in cases of subject-matter expertise.

Hillsborough County, Florida, Washington D.C. and Memphis, Tennessee all use full-time "Master Educators" to support the evaluation of teachers. In Memphis, all teachers are evaluated by content experts as well as by the principal. A modified version of such a model, where only some teachers receive third-party evaluations, would be less costly and still beneficial.

Finding: Teachers feel that peers provide valuable feedback to their practice.

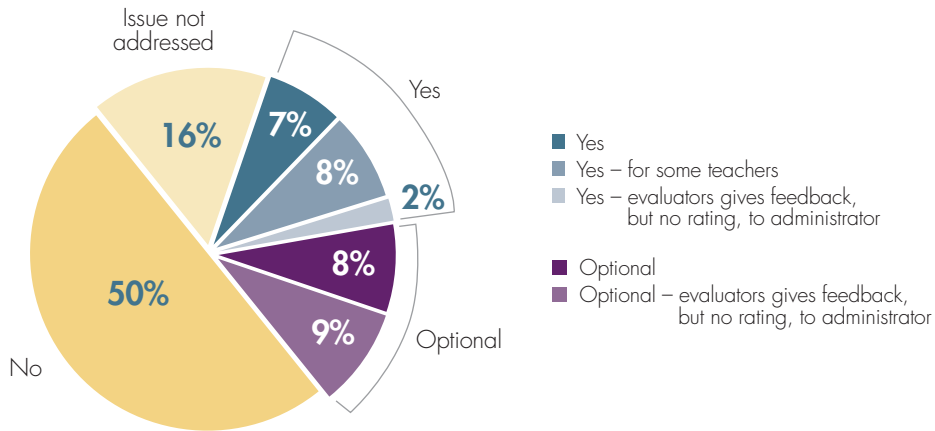
Many teachers in Dayton voiced that peers are the most importance source of feedback in improving their practice. Even when not acting as an evaluator, peer coaches noted the value of being trained in the observation protocol so that they could help prepare teachers for the evaluation process.³⁹

Whose feedback do you find most valuable in improving your instruction?



Over 50 percent of Dayton teachers said that their colleagues are the most valuable source of feedback that improves their instruction.

Which districts allow peer evaluations? (Tr3 districts)



Only one out of six districts in the 114-district Tr3 database allow peers to evaluate teachers.

Student surveys

Ohio’s new evaluation framework lays out a system that relies specifically on value-added scores (on state tests or vendor assessments), student learning objectives, and “performance” (usually interpreted as observations). Carefully crafted student surveys, found to correlate strongly with overall student achievement,⁴⁰ could add another viable measure of determining teacher effectiveness. An individual student generally observes a teacher for more than 1,000 hours a year. Multiply that student by a class of 30 and it is easy to see why 30,000 hours of observation are likely to be more reliable than the two hours an administrator may spend observing a teacher.

WHERE IT’S BEING DONE

Atlanta; Denver; Dekalb County, Georgia; Gwinnett County, Georgia; Memphis, and Pittsburgh all now require that student survey data be factored into teacher evaluations. In Memphis, input from students, parents and other teachers counts for 5 percent. In June 2013, Pittsburgh proposed to the state that these surveys count for 15 percent of a teacher’s evaluation rating.

40 MET Project Policy Brief. Learning about teaching. Findings from the Measures of Effective Teaching Project. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, December, 2010.



2.5 Classroom observations focus on a set of observable standards that gauge student learning.

Finding: Ohio's teaching standards focus on teacher behaviors rather than student behaviors.

State law requires the district to align their new observation tool to Ohio's Standards for the Teaching Profession, which has seven indicators and 34 elements. The state also provides a rubric, which offers further details on the evidence an evaluator should look for, and the part of the observation cycle specific elements should be addressed. The standards cover teacher communication and collaboration, instruction, and the learning environment, as well as a variety of other factors that affect a teacher's performance in the classroom.

As in many states and districts, the Ohio teacher standards and the associated rubrics focus on *teacher behaviors*, paying little attention to what students are doing in the classroom. An effective observation tool focuses on both teacher and student behaviors, as it is an important indicator of the culture and tone of the classroom, as well as an opportunity to gauge the effectiveness of a teacher.

Sample Elements from the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession

Standard 4 elements	INDICATORS		
	Proficient	Accomplished	Distinguished
4.3 Teachers communicate clear learning goals and explicitly link learning activities to those defined goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Teachers clearly communicate learning goals to students. b) Teachers communicate to students the link between learning activities and goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c) Teachers establish and communicate challenging individual learning goals based on the needs of each student. d) Teachers create instructional environments where students actively and independently set, articulate and internalize learning goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> e) Teachers empower students to independently define short- and long-term learning goals and monitor their personal progress.
4.4 Teachers apply knowledge of how students think and learn to instructional design and delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Teachers understand the cognitive processes associated with learning, and demonstrate through instruction that they know how to stimulate these processes. b) Teachers use research based instructional strategies. c) Teachers implement instructional activities that are sequenced to help students acquire concepts and skills of the discipline. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) Teachers articulate a logical and appropriate rationale for the sequence of learning activities. e) Teachers link the content of each learning activity to the content of previous and future learning experiences. f) Teachers prepare learning activities with clear structures that allow for content review, student reflection and different pathways, depending on student needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> g) Teachers evaluate instructional processes in order to ensure a systematic, purposeful, research-supported process for teaching new knowledge or skills.

In the Ohio Standards for the Teaching Profession, focus is entirely on teacher behaviors. An effective observation tool looks at evidence from both teacher and student actions.

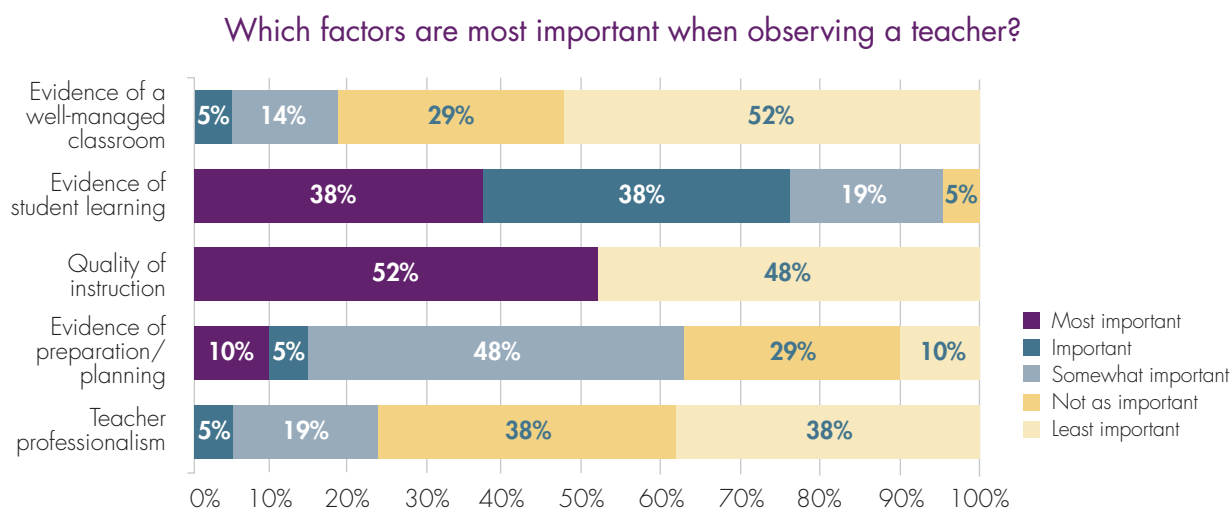
Sample elements from Washington D.C.'s evaluation tool (IMPACT)

TEACH 2: EXPLAIN CONTENT CLEARLY

<p>EFFECTIVE</p> <p>The following best describes what is observed:</p>	<p>HIGHLY EFFECTIVE</p> <p>The following best describes what is observed:</p>
<p>Explanations of content are clear and coherent, and they build student understanding of content. The teacher might provide explanations through direct verbal or written delivery, modeling or demonstrations, think-alouds, visuals, or questioning.</p>	<p>Explanations of content are clear and coherent, and they build student understanding of content. The teacher might provide explanations through direct verbal or written delivery, modeling or demonstrations, think-alouds, visuals, or questioning.</p> <p>Explanations of content also are delivered in as direct and efficient a manner as possible.</p>
<p>The teacher gives clear, precise definitions and uses a broad vocabulary that includes specific academic language and words that may be unfamiliar to students when it is appropriate to do so.</p>	<p>The teacher gives clear, precise definitions and uses a broad vocabulary that includes specific academic language and words that may be unfamiliar to students when it is appropriate to do so.</p> <p>Students also demonstrate through their verbal or written responses that they are internalizing academic vocabulary.</p>
<p>The teacher emphasizes key points when necessary, such that students understand the main ideas of the content.</p>	<p>The teacher emphasizes key points when necessary, such that students understand the main ideas of the content.</p> <p>Students also can authentically explain the main ideas of the content beyond simply repeating back the teacher's explanations.</p>
<p>Students show that they understand the explanations. For example, their verbal or written responses, dialogue, questions, or level of participation indicate understanding.</p>	<p>Students show that they understand the explanations.</p> <p>When appropriate, concepts also are explained in a way that actively and effectively involves students in the learning process. For example, students have opportunities to explain concepts to each other.</p>
<p>The teacher makes connections with students' prior knowledge, students' experiences and interest, other content areas, or current events to effectively build student understanding of content.</p>	<p>The teacher makes connections with students' prior knowledge, students' experiences and interests, other content areas, or current events to effectively build student understanding of content.</p>

Washington D.C.'s IMPACT evaluation instrument is an example of an effective observation tool that successfully balances teacher and student behaviors.

Principals agree that evidence of student learning is critical when observing a teacher to understand his or her performance. In NCTQ's survey of Dayton's principals, over 70 percent of respondents ranked it as the first or second most important factor.



Over 70 percent of principals cited evidence of student learning as the first or second factor they are looking for when observing a teacher, right after quality of instruction.

2.6 Evaluations offer multiple rating levels to distinguish performance among teachers. Ratings differentiate substantial performance differences among teachers.

The new evaluation framework will have four summative rating levels — accomplished, proficient, developing, and ineffective. Five categories may be more advisable, or else much of the differentiation identified by the value added model will be lost. The risk with four categories is that the accomplished rating will not be reserved for just the higher achievers and/or that the developing category will be a very mixed bag of teachers who are nearly proficient and those in serious need of improvement.

A teacher's final rating will be based on his or her performance (as measured through observation results) and student growth outcomes.⁴¹ Previous value-added data collapses the middle three categories (approaching average, average, and above average) into one for the purposes of the table on the next page: expected growth. Principals arrive at the summative evaluation rating by placing the teacher's performance rating and the student growth category in the matrix below.

⁴¹ If student growth is measured through value-added data, the yearly student growth portion of a teacher's evaluation places them into one of five categories: least effective, approaching average, average, above average, and most effective. For the purposes of a final evaluation, the middle three categories (approaching average, average, above average) collapse into one "expected growth". Teachers who are most effective are placed in the "above" expected growth category, and those who are least effective are placed in the "below" expected growth category.

Ohio's Evaluation Matrix

		TEACHER PERFORMANCE			
		4	3	2	1
STUDENT GROWTH MEASURES	ABOVE	Accomplished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing
	EXPECTED	Proficient	Proficient	Developing	Developing
	BELOW	Developing	Developing	Ineffective	Ineffective

Ohio teachers' ratings are based on a combination of their contributions to student growth and performance in observations. A 1 is equivalent to the poorest observation rating, while a 4 means the teacher had very strong observation results.

Finding: The district's personnel decisions based on performance data have shifted struggling teachers from school to school rather than improving their practice.

Six low-performing schools in Dayton were recently reconfigured to better address the needs of its student body.⁴² As part of the turnaround, teachers with value-added ratings of "least effective" will be moved to another school in the 2013-2014 school year so that teachers with proven track records of student achievement gains can join the school.⁴³ These teachers are not dismissed, but are instead placed in another school in the district. This approach is detrimental to students in the district, as it passes a teacher already deemed to be ineffective to another school. If this teacher landed at a new school with an extensive improvement plan in place, and progress against that plan was tracked, then there could be some opportunity for the teacher to improve in a new setting. However, conversations with school leaders and district staff indicated that this is not happening.

Finding: The district is not tracking which teachers are on improvement plans. Principals are often unlikely to know that a teacher they are inheriting has been or should be on such a plan.

42 The six reconfigured schools in Dayton are Belle Haven, Meadowdale, Edison, Rosa Parks, Wogaman, and Louise Troy.

43 Interviews with district staff.



Currently, the district places any teacher in danger of non-renewal or termination based on principal observations on a performance improvement plan for the following year. The district was unable to tell us how many teachers were under such a plan at any one time or provide historical data on these measures.

If a teacher on an improvement plan is displaced (and they often are because principals find ways to remove struggling teachers out of their own schools), that plan is supposed to follow the teacher to the next school and can be revised with the new principal. According to administrators, they don't always know about plans that come with teachers from other schools and there is very little follow up when the teacher changes schools. In focus groups, many of them noted that displaced teachers land with "no paper trail at all".

Finding: Rewards and consequences based on ratings are not laid out for teachers in Ohio or Dayton policy.

The lack of language in board policy explaining procedures for unsatisfactory rated teachers explains in large part why the district never dismisses a teacher for poor performance. Both currently and under the new evaluation system, teachers can receive one of four ratings (although the category names have changed). Unfortunately, rewards or consequences based on these ratings are not spelled out in the contract or anywhere else. In current board policy for Dayton, the decision of how to evaluate and dismiss teachers is left to the negotiation between the teacher's union and district.⁴⁴ Yet the teachers' contract simply states that if a teacher is in danger of non-renewal or termination, he or she should be placed on an improvement plan. There is no link between the evaluation rating and placement on an improvement plan.

The contract does state that teachers who are placed on improvement plans and "who fail to improve" can be dismissed. However, there is no direction on what improvement would look like, in terms of evaluation results. The contract needs to define more explicitly how sufficient improvement is determined, such as a teacher's growth as measured by movement towards a better evaluation rating. This lack of clarity and specificity may be the reason that no teachers have been dismissed for poor performance over many years.





Under the new evaluation model, state law directs districts to create procedures for both retention and promotion of teachers at the district's discretion, giving Dayton an opportunity to design the policy that will be the most effective for its district.⁴⁵ However, Ohio does specify that teachers who teach "core subject areas" and receive an "ineffective" rating (the lowest rating) for two of the last three years must retake all written examinations of content knowledge required for licensure. Since some teachers struggle

44 Dayton Public Schools Policy Manual. AFC-1.

45 Ohio Revised Code 3319.111. The board shall include in its evaluation policy procedures for using the evaluation results for retention and promotion decisions and for removal of poorly performing teachers. Seniority shall not be the basis for a decision to retain a teacher, except when making a decision between teachers who have comparable evaluations.

for reasons other than lack of content knowledge, and presumably any teacher was, at one time, able to pass such tests, the law is not likely tackling the problem in full. The law also fails to be explicit about what actions must be taken or are allowed based on the outcome of the exams.

Recommendations

-  **1. Track and use evaluation data at the school and district level.** In the new evaluation framework, the state requires Dayton to maintain summative evaluation data on all teachers by rating level. It is critical for the district to not only keep overall results but also maintain and use a comprehensive database of information that includes individual evaluation outcomes (including teacher scores on the performance portion) and principal recommendations for next steps. Having this type of data will allow Dayton to make informed decisions on district-wide professional development needs and to recommend specific follow-up actions for teachers.
-  **2. Under the new evaluation framework, maintain the current schedule of observations.** Dayton’s current contractually-required observation schedule is strong in that it begins early enough in the year for teachers to receive feedback to either improve enough by the end of the year, or be dismissed if no improvements are made.” In the new evaluation model, this observation schedule should be maintained so teachers get the benefit of hearing feedback early in the school year to make sufficient changes to avoid dismissal.
-  **3. Train principals and educate teachers on new evaluation model, asking frequently for and using their feedback.** To ensure that the evaluation model is implemented fully and with buy-in at the teacher level, teachers should be regularly trained on the new evaluation model and asked for their input throughout the school year. In particular, teachers should have an understanding of how evaluations are developed and how to interpret the outcome ratings, so that they understand the value of these evaluations in improving their practice.
-  **4. Include student voice in teacher evaluations.** Feedback from students can help teachers improve and can give evaluators a better sense of teacher instructional practices. Carefully crafted student surveys have been found to correlate strongly with student outcomes and can, according to the Ohio Department of Education, be used as a part of the “performance” half of teacher evaluations.⁴⁶

46 Email communications with the office of Educator Equity and Talent, Ohio Department of Education, May, 2013.





Sample student survey:
How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Check one box after each question.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. My teacher in this class makes me feel that s/he really cares about me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. My teacher really tries to understand how students feel about things.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Students in this class treat the teacher with respect.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Our class stays busy and doesn't waste time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. My teacher has several good ways to explain each topic that we cover in this class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. In this class, we learn a lot almost every day.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. In this class, we learn to correct our mistakes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. My teacher makes lessons interesting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I like the way we learn in this class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Students speak up and share their ideas about class work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. My teacher respects my ideas and suggestions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. My teacher checks to make sure we understand what s/he is teaching us.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. The comments that I get on my work in this class help me understand how to improve.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



5. Determine rewards and consequences for evaluation ratings. As work is completed to implement the new evaluation model, the district and union should consider how follow-up actions will vary based on a teacher's rating. Teachers who receive proficient ratings should have opportunities for professional development related to their needs, and those who are rated at the top should have opportunities to serve in teacher leadership roles (see standard 4: compensation). Likewise, teachers who are rated "developing" and "ineffective" should be given support to improve. For those rated "ineffective", steps should be taken to ensure that their improvement is immediate or that they are removed from the classroom.



This recommendation requires only a change in practice.

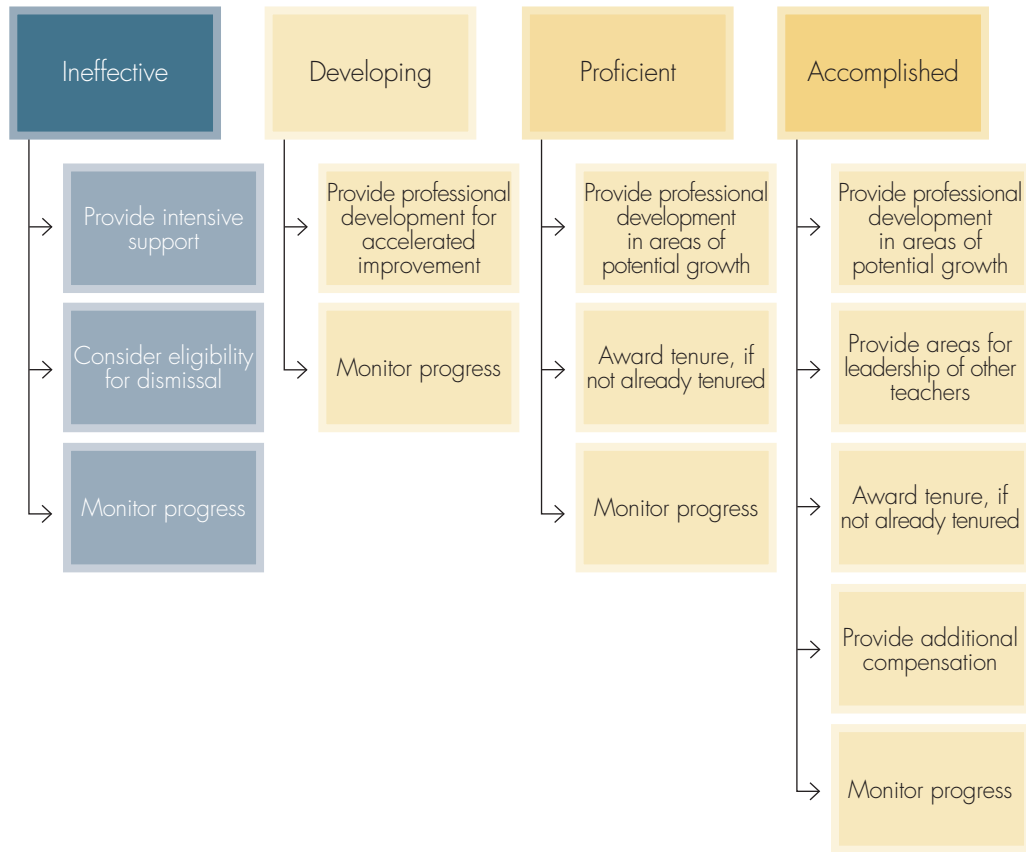


This recommendation requires a formal negotiation between the district and the teachers' union.



This recommendation requires a change in state law.

Recommended follow-up actions for each evaluation rating



6. Incorporate peer reviewers/content specialists. State law gives Dayton the flexibility to incorporate multiple observers. The district should formalize the process of peer reviewers or content specialists that can validate principal observations, assess content-relevant instruction and ease the time demands of evaluation for building administrators.



7. Clarify the consequences for teachers who are required to re-take licensure exams. If a teacher receives an “ineffective” rating two years out of three and is required to retake licensure content exams, the state needs to specify what action should be taken if the teacher passes the exams and what the consequences will be if he or she fails the exams.



This recommendation requires only a change in practice.



This recommendation requires a formal negotiation between the district and the teachers’ union.



This recommendation requires a change in state law.

Standard 3

TENURE

Tenure is a meaningful milestone in a teacher's career.

Indicators on which this standard is assessed:

- 3.1 A teacher's classroom performance is the primary criterion in the tenure decision.
- 3.2 Teachers receive tenure only after the district has acquired sufficient evidence of their consistent, effective performance.
- 3.3 Awarding tenure to a teacher involves an explicit point of decision based on a thorough review of a teacher's performance.
- 3.4 The tenure designation is not an obstacle to dismissing an ineffective teacher.

3.1 A teacher's classroom performance is the primary criterion in the tenure decision.

Finding: Ohio state law grants tenure after five years of service, which provides districts enough time to factor in a teacher's classroom performance.

The decision to award a teacher tenure is effectively a \$2 million decision by a school district factoring in combined salary, benefits and pension over the course of a teacher's career.⁴⁷ It should be treated as an important decision for a district to make, but too often school districts make it without any reflection or evidence of effectiveness.

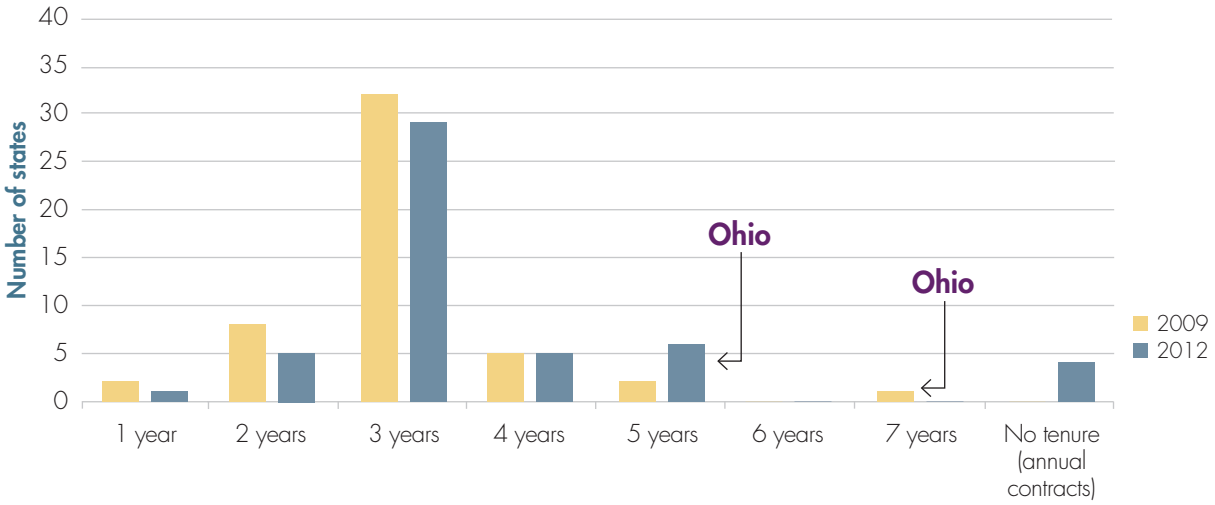
Across the United States, districts decide whether to award teachers tenure, but state law sets the terms. Over the past few years, there have been significant changes in tenure laws across the country, and commendably, that includes Ohio. Ohio's tenure law used to award tenure after three years of service in 2009. Given the steep learning curve that teachers experience in their first few years on the job, this did not give districts enough time to make tenure a truly meaningful accomplishment, awarded only to those teachers whose performance merited the designation. In 2009, Ohio changed this law so that tenure was awarded after seven years, with an additional requirement that teachers achieve a master's degree or its equivalent. Recently the state law changed again, so that tenure is granted after five years of service, when teachers are given "continuing contracts." At five years, Ohio takes more time

⁴⁷ Estimated cost of post-tenure salary and benefits for a Dayton teacher based on current salary levels.

than many other states before awarding tenure, giving districts a significant amount of time to gather information on a teacher’s classroom performance.⁴⁸

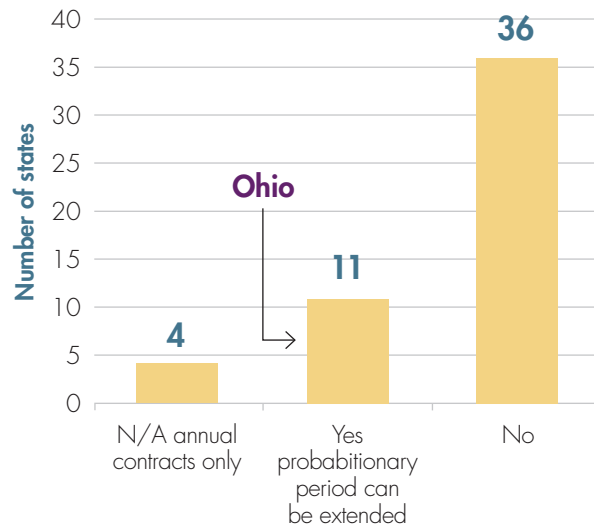
Additionally, state law in Ohio allows districts to extend a contract of a probationary teacher for two additional years. Most states do not allow for such an extension at all, and far fewer allow the probationary period to extend two additional years instead of one.

How long before a teacher earns tenure?



In 2009, Ohio changed the amount of time required to earn tenure from three years to seven. In 2011, the state lessened the requirement by two years to five years through a voter referendum.

Do states allow districts to extend the probationary period?



Ohio is only one of 11 states that allow districts to extend the probationary period if they so choose.

⁴⁸ In 2009, the tenure law in Ohio was change to award teachers tenure after seven years of service. It was moved this back to five years in 2011, which is a sufficient amount of time for a state to gather evidence on a teacher’s performance.



Finding: Even though Ohio law awards tenure after five years of teaching, the agreement between the Dayton Public Schools and Dayton Education Association provides many of the rights tenure would bestow to teachers on temporary contracts after two years.

While many districts use tenure as the cutoff point to determine the group of teachers who get due-process rights or other benefits based on longevity in the district, Dayton teachers are granted many of these rights long before the tenure mark. For example, the district must provide “just cause” to dismiss a teacher after two years of employment, which is three years before tenure kicks in. Teachers with more than three years of experience do not have to be observed and evaluations are determined on progress toward self-determined goals.⁴⁹ However, when considering layoffs, non-tenured teachers are laid off first.

When do Dayton teachers receive rights related to tenure?

Teacher experience level	Contract status	Evaluation requirements	Status/Tenure	Layoff/Dismissal
Years 1-2	Limited contract	Teachers with three or less years of experience are evaluated via the Level I framework (which requires annual observations).	Probationary (non-tenured)	First to go when layoffs take place. The contract can be non-renewed at the end of its term for any non-discriminatory reason. Notice must be given by April 30.
Years 3-5	Limited contract	See above for teachers in year 3 and see below for teachers in year 4 and beyond.	Non-probationary (non-tenured)	First to go when layoffs take place. The contract can be non-renewed at the end of its term for just cause. Notice must be given by April 30.
Years 6 and beyond	Continuing contract	Level II evaluations: No formal observations as part of evaluation; ratings are based on the teacher's progress towards self-determined goals.	Non-probationary (tenured)	Last to go when layoffs take place. The contract can be non-renewed at the end of its term for just cause. Notice must be given by April 30.

⁴⁹ This policy will change in the 2013-2014 school year as the OTES evaluation is implemented requiring all teachers to be evaluated annually. See standard 2 for more information.

3.2 Teachers receive tenure only after the district has acquired sufficient evidence of their consistent, effective performance.

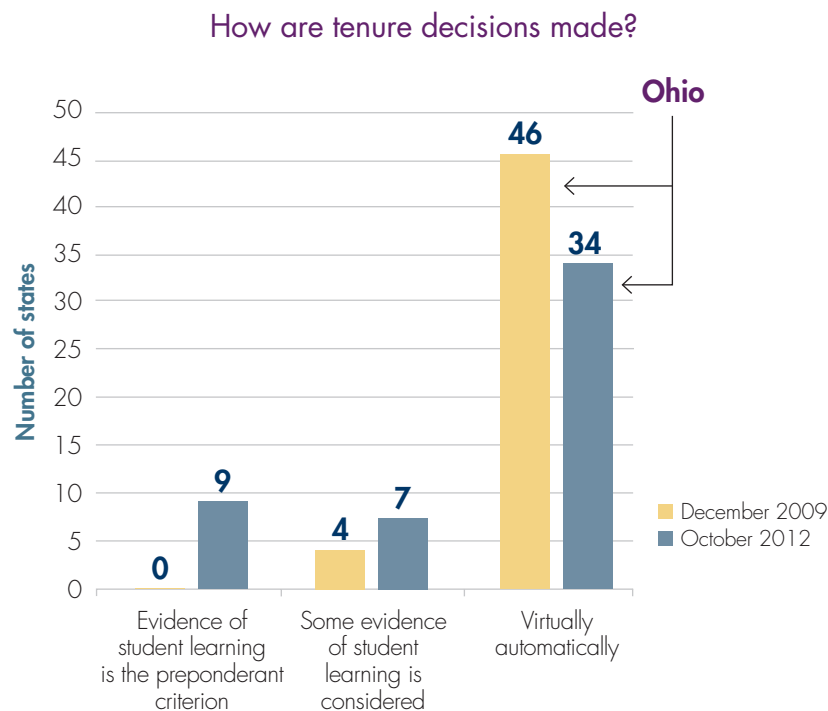
3.3 Awarding tenure to a teacher involves an explicit point of decision based on a thorough review of a teacher's performance.

Finding: A teacher's effectiveness is not examined when making a tenure decision in Dayton. Virtually all teachers earn tenure provided they are still employed in the district.

Ohio does not connect tenure decisions to evidence of teacher effectiveness. However, state law does indicate that a district superintendent can decide whether a teacher eligible for a continuing contract should receive it.⁵⁰ Unfortunately, language in the law is vague and does not indicate what evidence the superintendent would use to decide to give teachers tenure or to deny it. Presumably it would be based on evaluation results, but this is not explicitly specified.

Both district staff and union officials noted that principals have recommended against giving some teachers tenure in the past. Previous district policy entailed a principal submitting a letter of recommendation for a teacher about to receive tenure. In 2011, the Dayton Education Association filed suit on behalf of a group of teachers who were not recommended for tenure. A summary judgment was reached that ruled in favor of the union and tenure was awarded in spite of the principals' objections, because of technical missteps on the district's part. District staff noted that at this point, tenure in Dayton is effectively an automatic decision for any teacher who has taught for five years.

50 Ohio Revised Code 3319.11 Upon the recommendation of the superintendent that a teacher eligible for continuing service status be reemployed, a continuing contract shall be entered into between the board and the teacher unless the board by a three-fourths vote of its full membership rejects the recommendation of the superintendent. If the board rejects by a three-fourths vote of its full membership the recommendation of the superintendent that a teacher eligible for continuing service status be reemployed and the superintendent makes no recommendation to the board pursuant to division (C) of this section, the board may declare its intention not to reemploy the teacher by giving the teacher written notice on or before the first day of June of its intention not to reemploy the teacher. If evaluation procedures have not been complied with pursuant to section 3319.111 of the Revised Code or the board does not give the teacher written notice on or before the first day of June of its intention not to reemploy the teacher, the teacher is deemed reemployed under an extended limited contract for a term not to exceed one year at the same salary plus any increment provided by the salary schedule. The teacher is presumed to have accepted employment under the extended limited contract for a term not to exceed one year unless such teacher notifies the board in writing to the contrary on or before the fifteenth day of June, and an extended limited contract for a term not to exceed one year shall be executed accordingly. Upon any subsequent reemployment of the teacher only a continuing contract may be entered into.



While there have been some recent changes, the majority of states continue to award tenure virtually automatically.

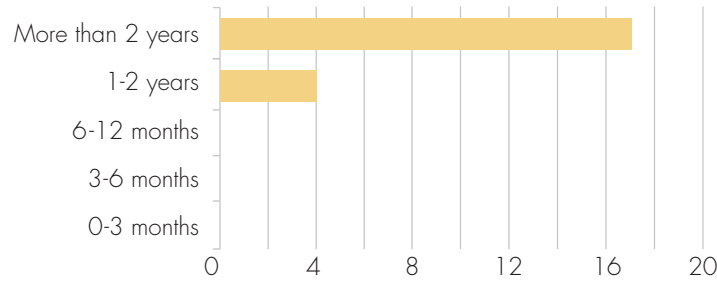
3.4 The tenure designation is not an obstacle to dismissing an ineffective teacher.

Finding: Due to the lengthy timeline to dismiss tenured teachers and the number of deadlines that must be met, many principals do not initiate dismissal proceedings or are unsuccessful in following through.

Dayton's contract indicates that a teacher who is non-probationary (has taught for more than 2 years) may be terminated for "gross inefficiency or immorality, willful and persistent violation of reasonable regulations, or for other good and just cause."⁵¹ Probationary teachers (those in their first two years) do not have just cause rights and, as a result, these teacher's contracts can be terminated or non-renewed for any non-discriminatory reason. The contract also notes that a non-probationary teacher who is in danger of termination or non-renewal will be placed on an improvement plan. These teachers are given one additional year to improve, and if they do not improve, this shall be considered just cause for non-renewal or termination. If a principal follows all procedures and meets the deadlines, it would still take over a year for a tenured teacher to be dismissed.

51 Dayton teachers' contract. Article 46.01.

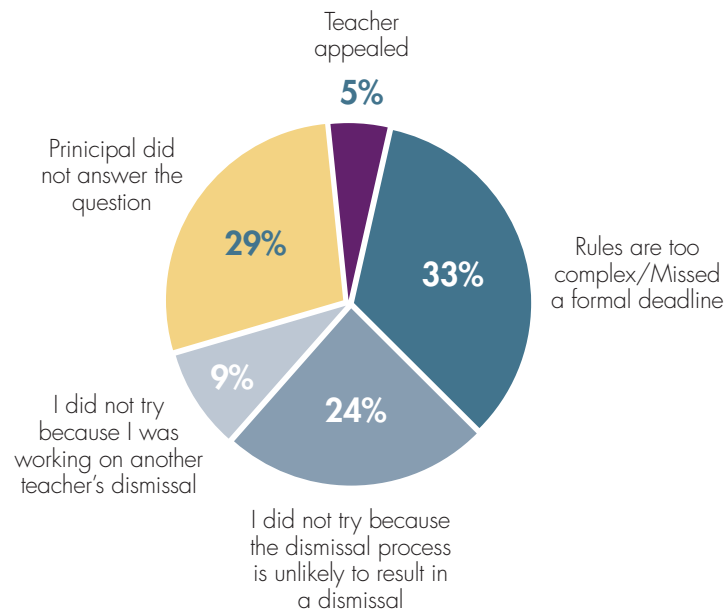
How long does it take to dismiss a tenured teacher for poor performance?



In survey responses, all principals responded that it takes longer than one year to dismiss a tenured teacher, with the majority stating that it took over two years.

In practice, few teachers in Dayton are dismissed overall, and no teachers have been dismissed in the past five years for performance reasons (see standard 1.5 for more information) whether they are probationary or not. Principals seem to shy away from even attempting to dismiss a teacher. Even when they try to do so, they are seemingly unable to complete the proceedings due to the complexity of the process or the number of deadlines they must meet.





What is the most common reason you are unable to dismiss a tenured teacher?



Principals noted that one of the main reasons they could not dismiss a teacher is that the rules are too complex or they missed a deadline. Many principals also stated that they did not try because they did not think the process would actually result in a dismissal.



Recommendations

- 
1. Hold a tenure review to decide whether to award tenure. Tenure should be a significant milestone in a teacher's career and awarded only after deliberate and thoughtful consideration of a teacher's performance. With the benefit of five years of quality, rigorous evaluations, Dayton principals should use those evaluations to inform their recommendations on tenure so that decisions reflect a teacher's performance and the teacher is already familiar with the praise and criticisms on which the decision is based.
- 
2. Reward teachers who earn tenure with a significant pay increase. A meaningful tenure process should be accompanied by a salary structure that recognizes the teacher's accomplishments. See Standard 4 for more ideas on how Dayton's salary schedule can work toward attracting, retaining and rewarding effective teachers.
- 
3. Align contract to state law. State law allows for tenure to be granted after five years in the classroom, but by giving teachers "non-probationary" status after two years, Dayton essentially awards tenure three years early by another name. The teachers' contract should be updated so that teachers receive the typical benefits of tenure, "non-probationary" status and a continuing contract, at the same time.
- 
4. End the automatic awarding of tenure and require consideration of evidence of effectiveness in tenure decisions. The state should articulate a process that local districts must administer in considering evidence and deciding whether a teacher should receive tenure. The process should require evidence of student learning rather than number of years in the classroom as the most significant factor in the tenure decision.



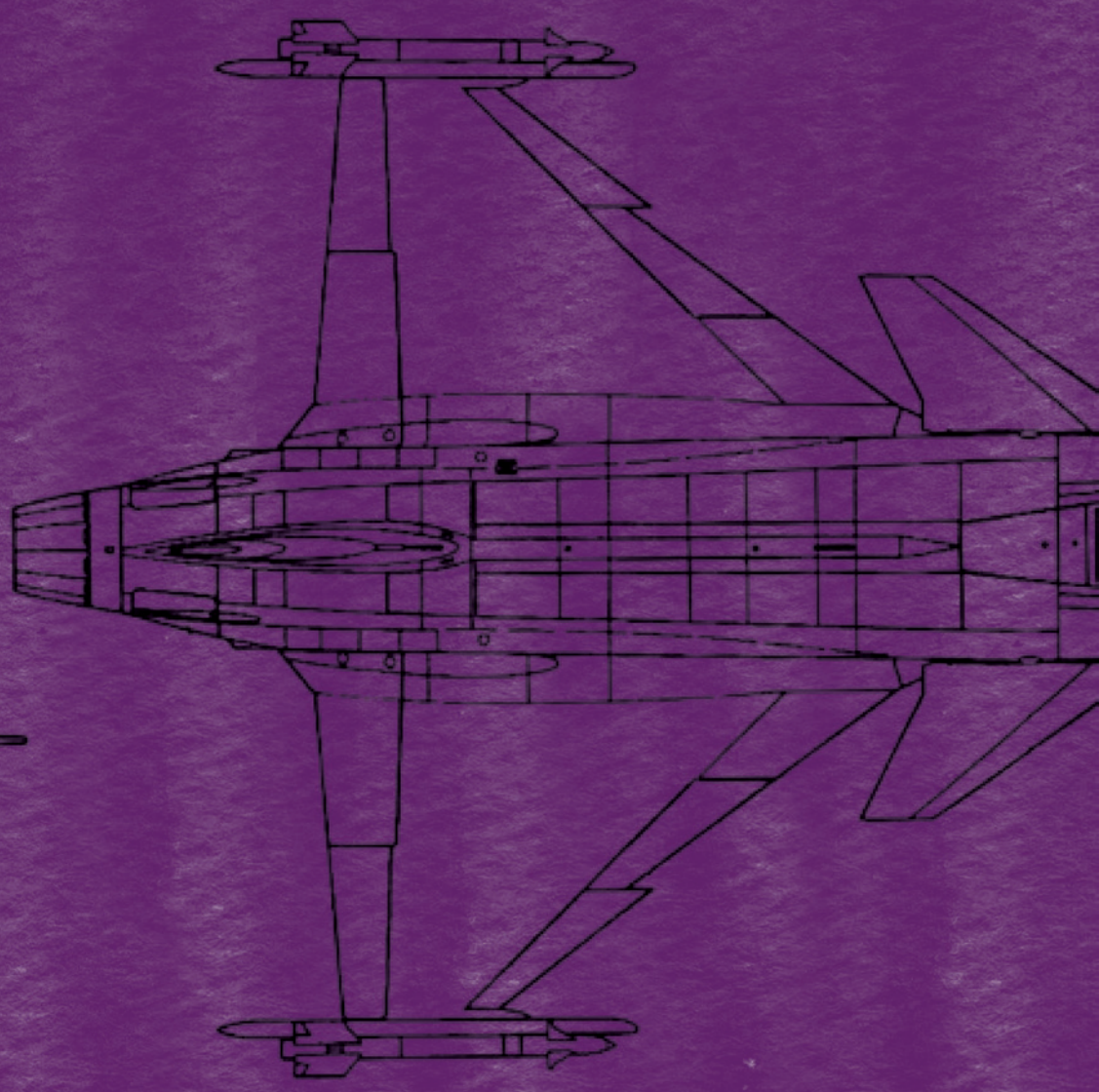
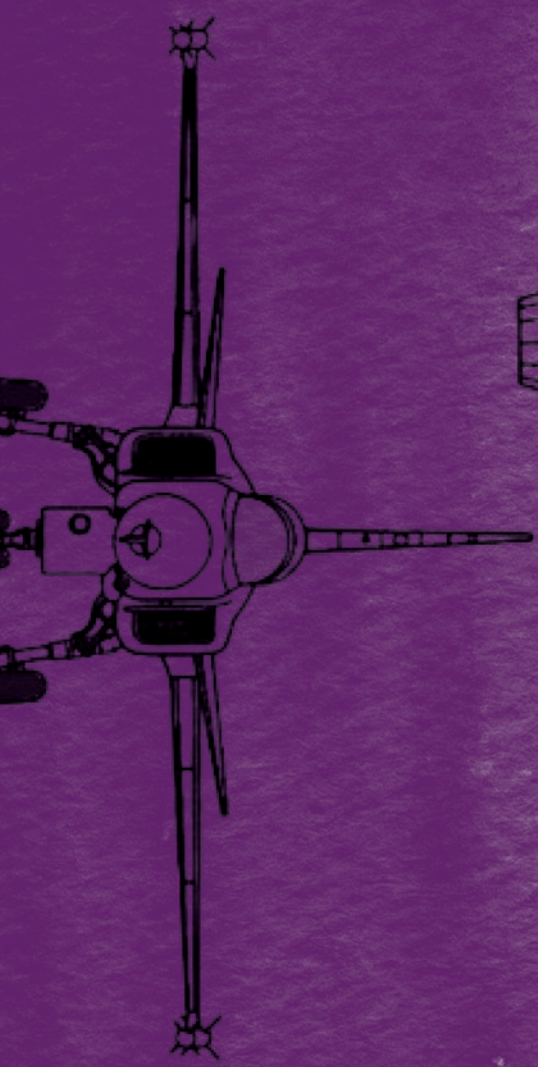
This recommendation requires only a change in practice.



This recommendation requires a formal negotiation between the district and the teachers' union.



This recommendation requires a change in state law.



Standard 4

COMPENSATION

Compensation is strategically targeted to attract and reward high-quality teachers, especially those in hard-to-staff positions.

Indicators on which this standard is assessed:

- 4.1 The district's salaries are competitive with other school districts in the area.
- 4.2 Raises are tied to a teacher's impact on student learning, not indiscriminately to education credits or experience.
- 4.3 The district offers financial incentives to employ and retain effective teachers in high-needs schools and critical shortage content areas.

Any discussion of teacher compensation in Dayton must take into account the school district's dire fiscal condition. The district's financial woes are due, at least in part, to declining enrollment that has not been matched by a reduction in spending, decreased funding from state and federal governments, prevailing economic conditions, as well as growth in the district's wages and benefits, particularly health care benefits.

Even with these considerable challenges, there are opportunities for the district to attract and retain strong teachers by reprioritizing existing resources.

4.1 The district's salaries are competitive with other school districts in the area.

Finding: Dayton's salaries start below most other districts in the region and remain some of the lowest salaries in the market throughout a teacher's career.

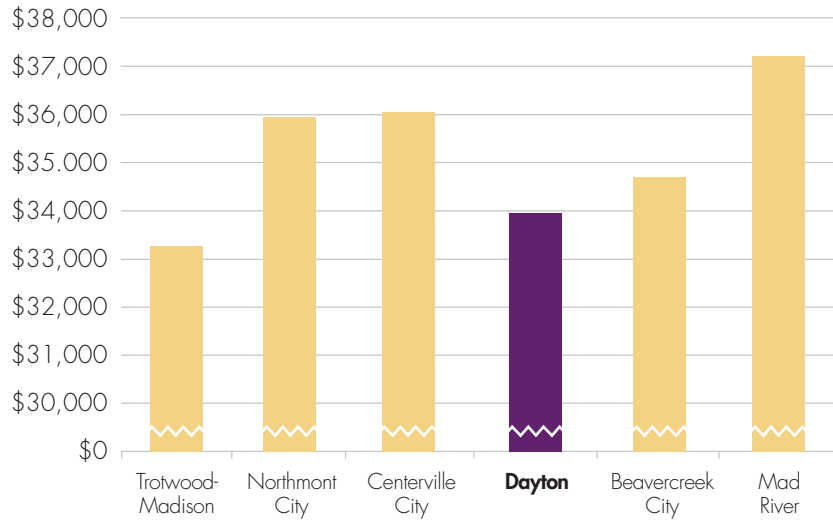
Districts are at a strong disadvantage if their starting salaries are not comparable with surrounding districts. Prospective teachers likely "shop around" for the best compensation package. If compensation is a major factor in their decisions to join or remain in a district, Dayton is not likely to fare well in comparisons. New teachers in Dayton begin their careers at an annual salary under \$34,000, which is less competitive than most area districts, far behind other local communities such as Northmont, Centerville and Mad River.

“We are working harder and more for less and less compensation. That is the most frustrating thing in Dayton.”

– Dayton teacher

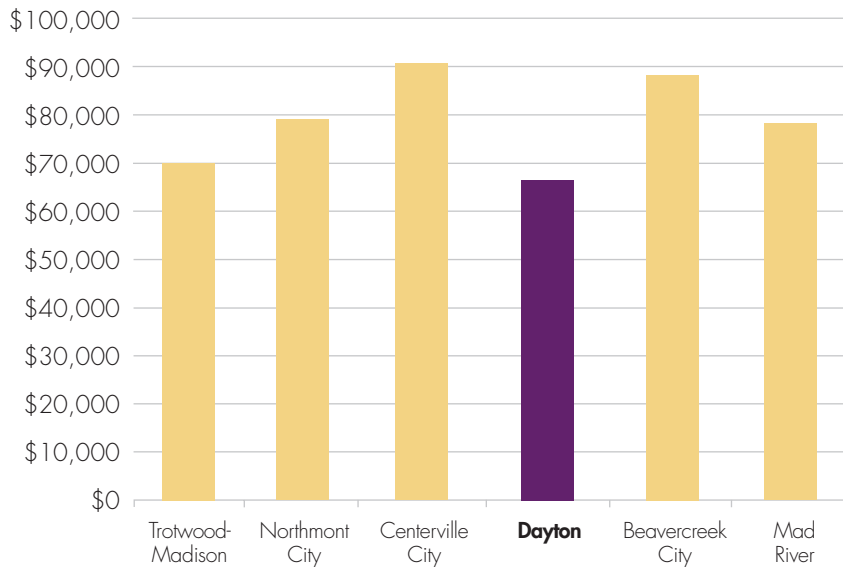
As teachers gain more experience, their pay never catches up, and instead, falls behind even further. The lifetime earnings for Dayton teachers are lower than those of teachers in any of the surrounding districts examined.

Starting salaries for teachers (BA only)



Starting salaries in Dayton are less than all other surrounding districts except one, Trotwood-Madison.

Maximum teacher salary with master's



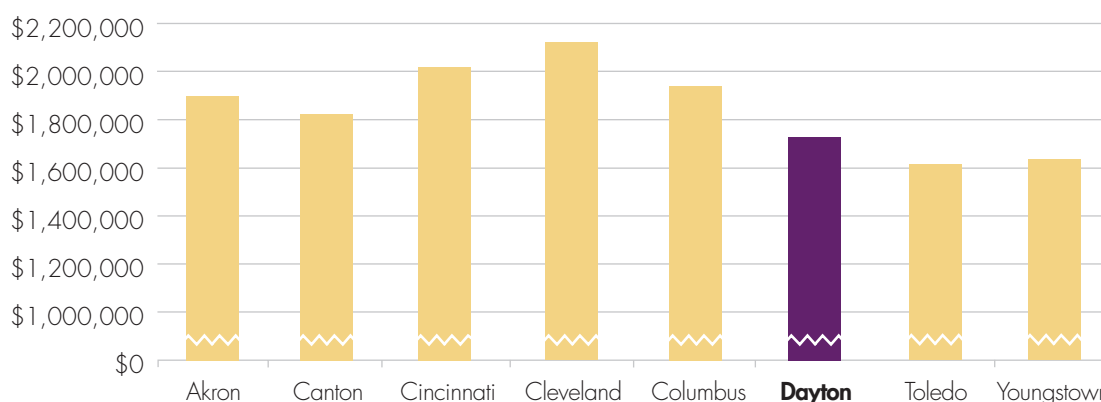
A teacher's maximum salary (with a Master's) is lower in Dayton than in all other surrounding areas. Even teachers in Dayton with a Ph.D. do not reach \$70,000 by the end of their careers.



Teachers voiced frustration on compensation in the district, citing that they haven't received cost-of-living raises in at least five years, and they also expressed that they are well aware of the district's lack of competitiveness. In NCTQ's survey of Dayton teachers 65 percent felt that compensation in the district was not competitive with surrounding areas.

It is often true that an urban center cannot compete with its affluent nearby districts in terms of teacher compensation because of higher tax bases in some suburban areas. For this reason, NCTQ also compared a teacher's potential lifetime earnings in Dayton with those of the other major urban districts in the state. Even among these urban districts, Dayton teachers' compensation is still low, competitive only with Toledo and Youngstown.

Lifetime earnings for teachers working in Ohio urban districts



Compared to other urban districts in Ohio, Dayton teachers do not fare as well, earning less than \$1.8 million over a 30 year career. This chart illustrates earnings projected for a teacher with a master's degree, using 2013 dollars.⁵²

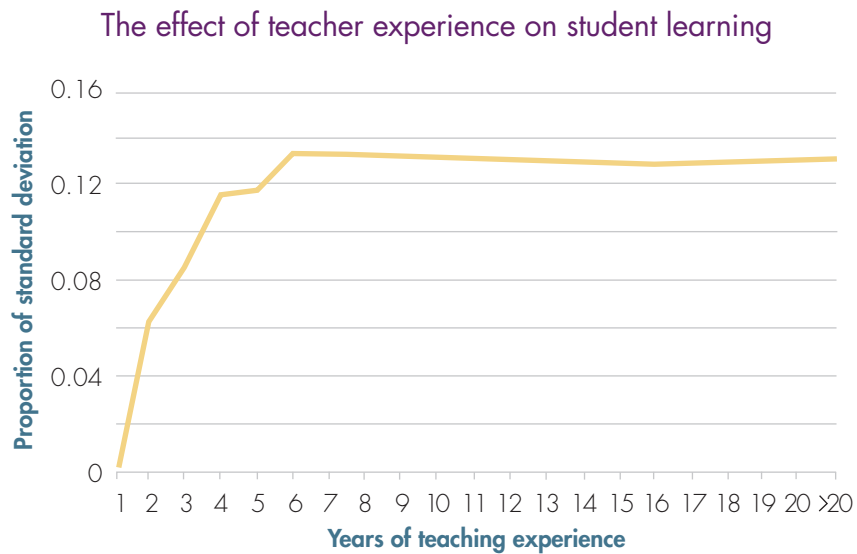
4.2 Raises are tied to a teacher's impact on student learning, not indiscriminately to education credits or experience.

Extensive research over a number of decades has definitively concluded that graduate coursework does not, on average, make teachers more effective in the classroom. In 2009, NCTQ asked university researchers to compile a summary of all existing research examining the impact of a master's degree on teacher effectiveness, as measured by student learning. (See page 58.) Out of 102 statistical tests examined, approximately 90 percent showed that advanced degrees had either no impact at all or even a negative impact on student achievement. Of the 10 percent having a positive impact, none reached a level of statistical significance. Those few studies finding a positive correlation were degree-specific and only in mathematics.

⁵² NCTQ uses a standard measure to calculate a typical teacher's expected lifetime earnings in any district we study: the salary of a 30 year veteran teacher who earned a master's degree after working five years, adding an additional 30 credits after 10 years, and an additional 30 credits after 15 years to qualify for the Ph.D. salary level.

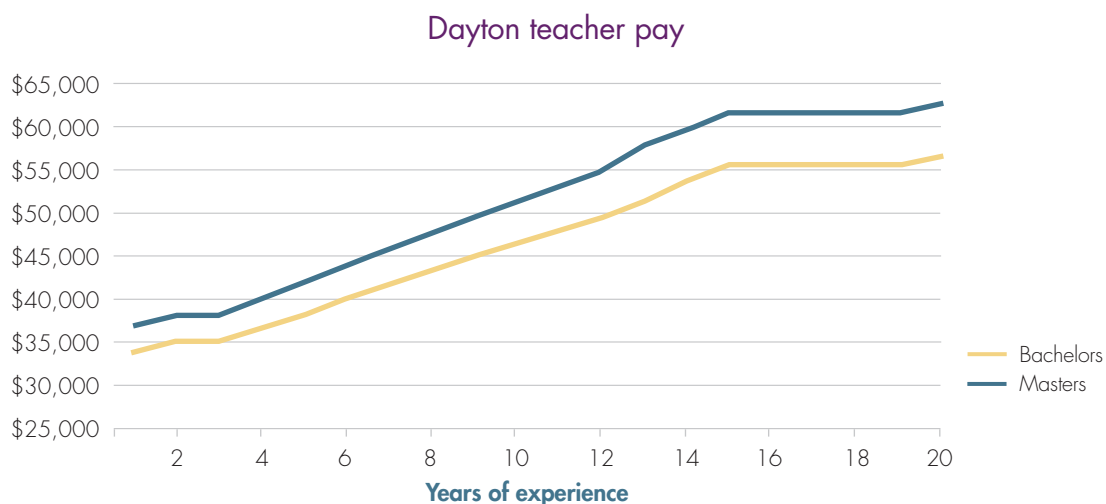
Finding: Dayton teachers have to wait until their 20th year of teaching to earn the highest salary on the salary schedule.

While a few school districts across the nation are tying pay to a teacher’s effectiveness in the classroom, most traditional salary schedules reward teachers based on credits and experience only. A consensus body of research, however, shows that teachers, on average, do not become steadily more effective with each year they teach, though that is how salaries are typically structured. Teachers rarely experience increases in effectiveness at the end of their career, yet many districts provide some of the biggest compensation increases at the end of a career.⁵³ In fact, the biggest jump in an average teacher’s effectiveness comes in the first two years, followed by smaller increases through year five and flattening out in the remaining years. While this pattern does not accommodate other important ways in which veteran teachers contribute to a school’s well-being, it does suggest that districts need to better recognize the value rendered by novice teachers, those with two to five years under their belt.

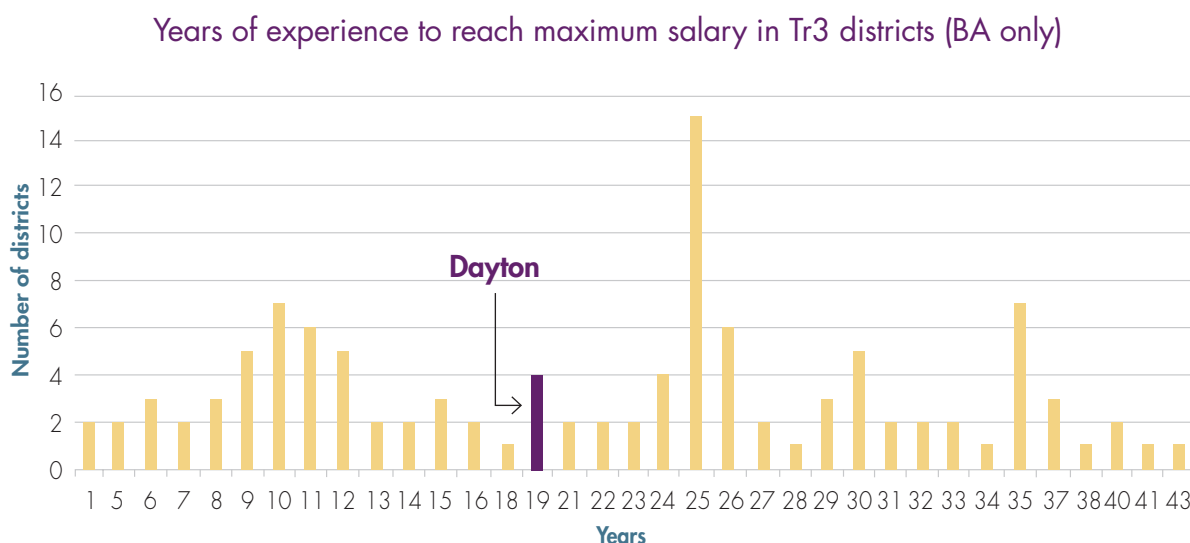


This graph shows a typical trajectory of a teacher’s effectiveness in relationship to the years worked. It is a finding replicated many times. While it looks at the most important contribution a teacher makes — increasing student learning — it does not factor in other ways that more senior teachers contribute to a school’s well-being.

53 Hanushek, E., Kain, J., & Rivkin S. (1998). *Teachers, schools and academic achievement*. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.



A slow steady climb: Dayton’s current salary schedule rewards teachers with their highest salary after 19 years of service.



In Dayton, teachers have to gain 19 years of experience before they reach the highest salary possible. While this is earlier than some districts, it is longer than over 40 percent of districts in the Tr3 database.⁵⁴

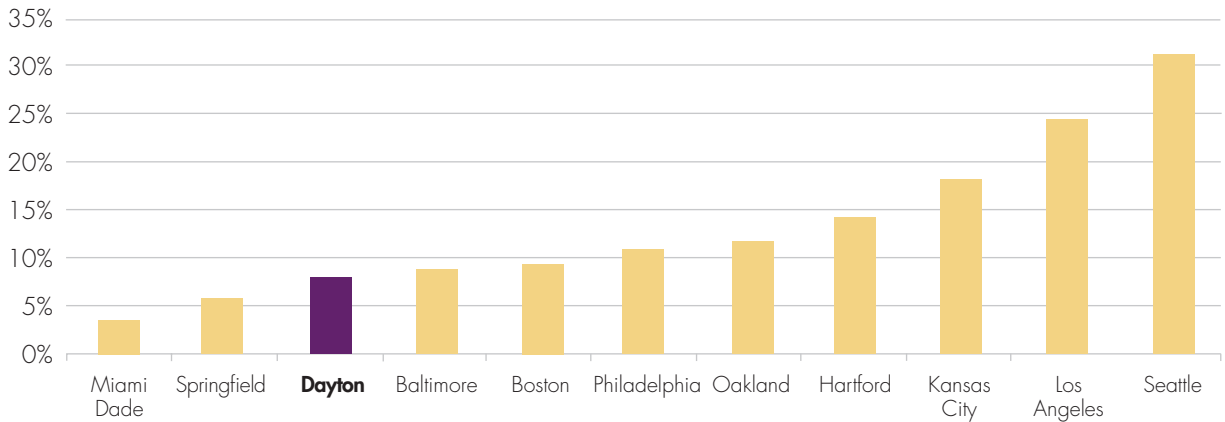
Finding: Dayton is spending \$4.5 million a year to compensate teachers for additional course credits.

Commendably, Dayton only spends about \$4.5 million a year out of a teacher payroll of \$57 million to compensate teachers for additional coursework. This is low compared to the other districts NCTQ has studied, higher only than the proportion of salary dollars that Miami-Dade and Springfield dedicate.

⁵⁴ Harrison School District Two is excluded from the above graph because it only offers pay for performance. Baltimore City, Denver, District of Columbia, and Newark all offer a combination of years of experience and performance-based pay. The graph denotes years of experience to reach maximum salary and does not account for performance-based pay in these districts.

Part of the reason Dayton spends less is that the district’s raises for additional course work are as not as large as they are in many of the other districts studied. For example, in Seattle, the average salary differential for a teacher who has a PhD over a BA is about \$23,000. In Dayton, the average differential is less than \$9,000. Clearly, teachers in Seattle are incentivized to get additional credits, generally equivalent to three master’s degrees, whereas in Dayton, the rewards are not as significant.

Percentage of payroll spent on graduate coursework



Of the 11 districts NCTQ has studied, Miami-Dade spends the least on raises associated with advanced degrees while Seattle spends the most. Dayton is on the lower end, spending only about 8 percent of teacher payroll on these differentials.

In Dayton, teachers can earn additional credits towards a salary increase by either working towards an advanced degree in teaching or education, or they can accumulate staff development hours. This includes in-district professional development or staff development taken outside the district.⁵⁵ There was no indication that these staff development hours are monitored for rigor or relevance to the teacher’s content area or overall practice. In many districts such as Los Angeles, this practice is too liberally applied with teachers qualifying for credits by taking a trip to a museum or the symphony.

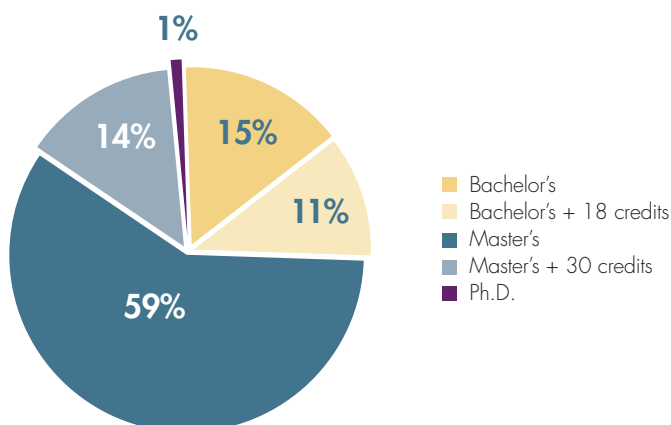
Finding: It is financially rewarding for teachers in Dayton to earn a master’s degree, but coursework beyond that does not provide a significant bonus.

Almost 60 percent of Dayton’s teaching force has a master’s degree. However, fewer teachers move on to achieve the equivalent of two or three masters degrees which is so common in other school districts. The reason may be that the biggest bump in a teacher’s potential salary comes when a teacher obtains a masters degree. In fact, these teachers see about a nine percent increase in their compensation. However, a teacher who moves from a master’s degree to a master’s plus an additional 30 credits (in effect two master’s degrees), only realizes a three percent increase in compensation.

55 Teachers’ contract. Section 50.03

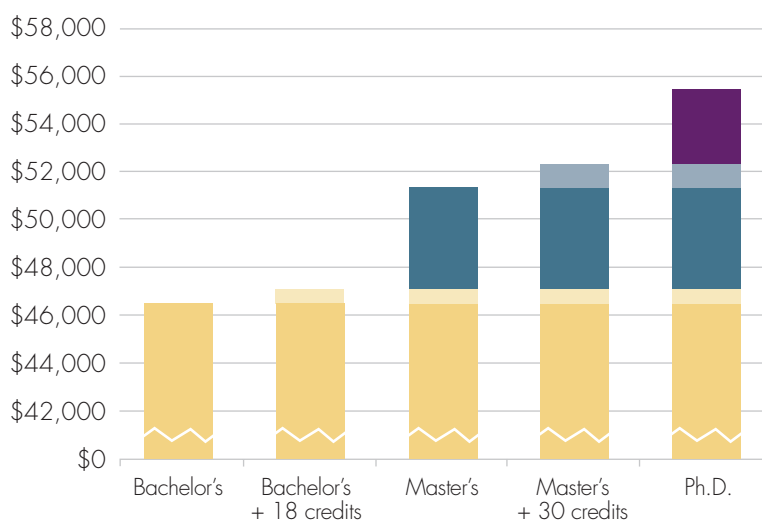


Education level of teacher workforce



About 60 percent of teachers in Dayton have a master's degree. Only 15 percent have pursued additional coursework beyond this.

Salary by education level for a tenth year teacher



It benefits a teacher in Dayton to get a master's degree. By doing so, she will see a raise of about nine percent. However when a teacher attains a master's plus 30, the concurrent raise in salary is only about three percent.

NCTQ analyzed the cost that is incurred when a teacher decides to add credits in comparison to the benefit she will receive when moving to a higher salary lane. If a teacher took graduate courses that averaged \$540 per credit, the total cost to receive a master's degree (or obtain 30 credits worth of coursework) would be a little more than \$16,000.⁵⁶ A Dayton teacher who decides to obtain a master's would be able to pay for her coursework in a little over three years and can then reap the benefits of the degree obtained in the form of a higher salary. It would take a teacher over 12 years, however, to see any financial benefit of moving from a master's degree to a master's plus 30 additional credits level.

56 The \$540 cost per credit is the charge at University of Dayton's graduate school of education for additional credits. At Wright State, the per credit hour tuition is slightly higher, at \$577 (for the first 11 credits). It would cost a student a little over \$16,000 to obtain the equivalent of 30 graduate credits at University of Dayton.

4.3 The district offers financial incentives to employ and retain effective teachers in high-needs schools and critical shortage content areas.

Finding: Dayton has begun to provide sizable incentives for effective teachers to join high-needs schools, but does not provide incentives to recruit teachers for hard-to-staff subject areas.

Districts across the country have difficulty recruiting teachers in certain subjects such as math, science, special education, and English as a second language. To attract qualified candidates, districts must increase their incentives and prioritize hiring in these areas. In the past, Dayton did not offer financial incentives to recruit or retain teachers in any form. However, the district recently implemented sizable recruitment bonuses (\$7,500) to get teachers with above expected value-added scores to move to hard-to-staff schools. Teachers who are part of the STEM Fellows program (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) can also get a \$3,000 additional bonus if they move to hard-to-staff schools.⁵⁷ Unfortunately, according to central office staff, these incentives have not resulted in a large number of transfers. We have seen districts all over the country try to use incentives alone to persuade teachers to leave one school and teach in another. This strategy has shown greater merit when districts provide incentives in concert with moving a cohort of teacher leaders to the school, headed by a transformational principal with a proven track record of results.

In Boston Public Schools, a cohort approach to working with low performing schools in need of significant achievement gains was introduced in 2009. In this model, called Turnaround Teacher Teams, or T3, 25 percent of the faculty is comprised of teacher leaders who have responsibility for instructional leadership (in exchange for higher pay and extensive training). These teams have accelerated student achievement across grade levels in both English Language Arts and Math in comparison to other public schools in Boston. The results provide a strong indication at the success of this cohort strategy when it is included as part of school turnaround work.⁵⁸

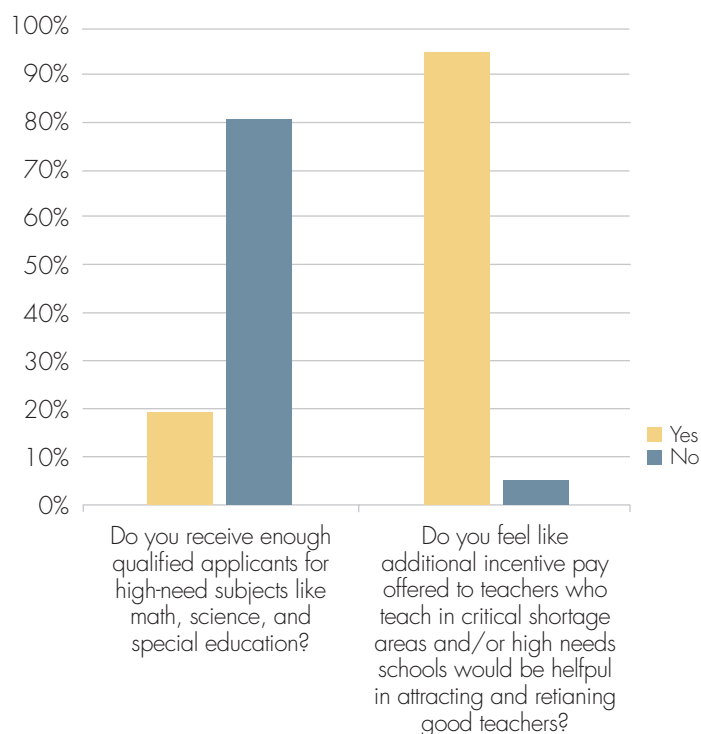
The district does not give incentives to recruit teachers for hard-to-staff subjects across the board such as math, science, or special education. In particular, special education is a subject area where the central office noted they had difficulty in recruiting candidates. Principals reiterated this challenge in their survey responses, with most feeling like they struggle to hire top talent for hard-to-staff subjects.

57 STEM Fellowships are fellowships open to teachers with background in Science, Technology, Math and Engineering who commit to teaching in a high needs school.

58 Closing the Gap: Progress over two years in T3 Schools. December 2012. http://www.teachplus.org/uploads/Documents/1355156579_T3ClosingtheGap.pdf



Principals views on hiring teachers in hard to staff subjects



Over 80 percent of principals do not feel like they receive high quality applicants in high-need subject areas. Almost all principals signaled their support of offering additional incentive pay to encourage teachers to come to Dayton.

Prince George's County, Maryland; Guilford County, North Carolina; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania all have separate pay schedules for special education teachers that can serve as an effective recruitment strategy. In Prince George's County, a salary differential for the first seven years allows special education teachers to make over \$16,000 more than other teachers in the district.






Finding: Dayton does not provide financial incentives for highly effective teachers to stay in the district.

Some districts have developed career ladders in schools that allow qualified teachers to receive increased compensation for additional responsibility and leadership. Rewarding teachers in this way is often an easier route to differentiated compensation for districts than articulating rewards for individual performance. In focus groups of Dayton teachers, they were appreciative of the opportunities that are available to take on leadership roles at their schools, but they wanted to be paid more for the additional responsibility. District office staff noted that there are plans in the works to reward teachers including opportunities for

highly effective teachers to lead summer professional development sessions and become coaches during the school year, which will come with a \$3,000 incentive. Beyond this however, there is no defined career ladder for teachers as they progress through their careers.

Baltimore City, Maryland, has identified four pathways for teachers ranging from “standard” to “lead”. In the standard pathway, teachers focus on instruction and receive professional development. As teachers move from one pathway to another, they earn additional responsibilities and compensation. Lead teachers are considered school-wide academic leaders. They collaborate with the principal in strategies to improve student academic performance.

Recommendations

-  **1. Offer incentives for teachers in hard-to-staff subjects, particularly special education.** Central office staff and principals voiced concern over the difficulty in filling special education positions, as well as other hard-to-staff subject areas such as math and science. The district should consider ways to provide recruitment and/or yearly incentives for teachers in these subjects.
-  **2. Staff high-needs schools for success.** Infuse high needs schools with high performing teams, a small group of teachers and a like-minded principal who each receive incentives to help a school realize its potential.
-  **3. Jointly seek additional revenue to raise teacher salaries.** Whether additional revenue comes from the state, local voters, or private funding, the district and union should seek funds by presenting an agreement that clearly spells out what citizens would receive for the additional dollars: a stronger applicant pool, more professional development, and increased accountability.
-  **4. Link the largest raises to significant accomplishments, including the year in which a teacher earns tenure, provided tenure becomes a real milestone in a teacher’s career and not an automatic decision (see Standard 3).** When teachers earn tenure in Dayton after five years, there is little (if any) recognition. Making tenure a real milestone in a teacher’s career should be accompanied by a significant pay increase in year six.
-  **5. Develop career ladder positions that allow qualified teachers to receive increased compensation for more responsibility and leadership while continuing to teach students.** Dayton does seem to have some incentives for qualified teachers to take on additional responsibilities that correspond to a financial reward, but it has not yet formalized these roles as part of a career ladder structure. These positions can provide coaching and feedback for peers while giving high-performing teachers an opportunity for career growth and higher pay without leaving the classroom.





- 6. Look for high impact but low cost ways to reward high performing teachers.** Dayton could also offer higher salaries to the top teachers (teacher “chairs”) who consistently produce the greatest learning gains. Recognized “chairs” could be located in high-needs schools, which could benefit greatly from the expertise these teachers bring with them. One chair in each school would send a strong signal that the district values its superstars and be a morale booster to all teachers.
- 7. Phase out salary differentials for earning course credits.** This policy can be automatic for incoming Dayton teachers and optional for veteran instructors. Redirect funds previously used to pay for additional courses to increase starting salaries and begin to award teachers substantive bonuses for their effectiveness.

One promising performance pay system that we have seen is the Neenah Joint School District in Wisconsin, implemented in 2012. The new salary schedule replaces traditional steps and lanes, and uses a series of indicators to determine a teacher’s performance level, which corresponds to a certain salary bracket.

PERFORMANCE LEVEL	COMPENSATION
Quality I	\$40,500-\$43,000
Quality II	\$43,000-\$45,000
Quality III	\$45,000-\$55,000
Quality IV	\$55,000-\$65,000
Quality V	\$65,000-\$70,000
Exemplary	\$70,000-\$75,000

Rather than relying on a single assessment, the district uses multiple measures to ascertain student achievement.

What a teacher must demonstrate in Neenah to reach a Quality IV

Analyzing and interpreting student data that includes district improvement trends and realizes student achievement gains

Applies high-level inquiry based learning

Contributes to innovative improvements that benefit the entire district

Evaluates learning that guides the instructional process

Demonstrates being a champion of the school, district, and community

Distinguished in at least three areas of performance (on the evaluation rubric) and at least effective in others



This recommendation requires only a change in practice.



This recommendation requires a formal negotiation between the district and the teachers’ union.



This recommendation requires a change in state law.



Standard 5

WORK SCHEDULE

Policies encourage a professional and collaborative culture.

Indicators on which this standard is assessed:

- 5.1 Teachers' on-site work schedule is 8 hours and includes substantial time beyond the instructional day for individual and common planning.
- 5.2 Teachers receive a reasonable amount of general leave (sick and personal).
- 5.3 The district provides the technology and support to help principals monitor attendance, preventing abuse of leave policies.
- 5.4 Principals' job descriptions include coaching and developing teachers

5.1 Teachers' on-site work schedule is 8 hours and includes substantial time beyond the instructional day for individual and common planning.

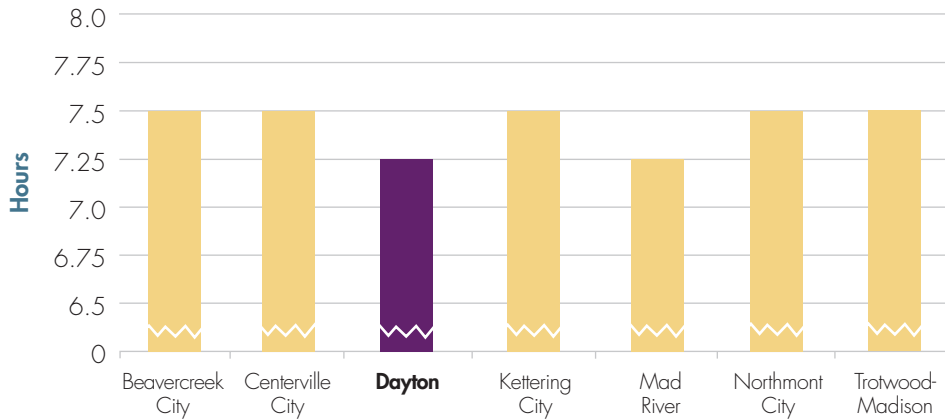
Finding: The length and structure of the workday for Dayton's teachers, at 7 hours 15 minutes, is insufficient for meeting the needs of today's classrooms.

The length of the school day in Dayton is 7 hours, 15 minutes for both elementary and secondary teachers, slightly shorter than the national average of 7 hours, 30 minutes as well as most of Dayton's surrounding districts, almost all of whom at least meet the national average.⁵⁹ Unfortunately, even increasing to a 7-hour, 30-minute day would not give Dayton teachers the sufficient time they need to plan and effectively support their students. Similar to most other districts NCTQ has studied, almost 100 percent of teachers stated that they were at school at least eight hours a day.⁶⁰ But because this additional time is not a formal part of the workday, schools cannot use time beyond 7 hours and 15 minutes to organize school-based professional development or schedule collaborative learning time. Many school districts understand this challenge and have instituted a longer contractual day to address these needs. In NCTQ's analysis of the districts in its Tr3 database, about 20 percent of school districts have close to an eight-hour school day.

59 The national average is determined based on the 114 districts in NCTQ's Tr3 database.

60 NCTQ Teacher Survey responses.

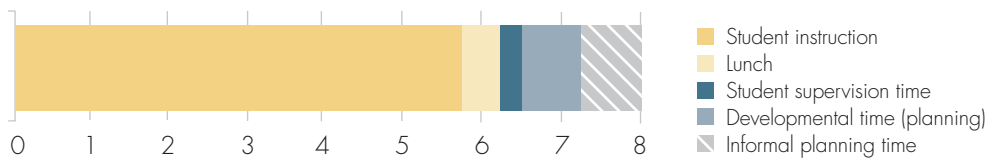
Length of school day in Dayton compared to area districts



At 7 hours and 15 minutes, Dayton’s school day is slightly shorter than most of the surrounding districts and does not provide time for collaborative planning.

Principals in Dayton also voiced concerns with the length of the school day. Many of them felt that there was not enough time for teachers to collaboratively plan with their peers. The district uses “teacher-based teams,” through which teachers in some schools meet to review data and discuss professional development needs at the school level; other schools meet in grade-level clusters. In some schools, teachers voiced that these teams were effective. Other teachers noted that while there was some time on the schedule for collaborative planning, it didn’t happen because teachers also had to do their own individual planning. Given that there are only 45 minutes in a day that a teacher has dedicated to planning, a longer school day would give Dayton more flexibility to ensure teachers have time to plan both individually and collectively.

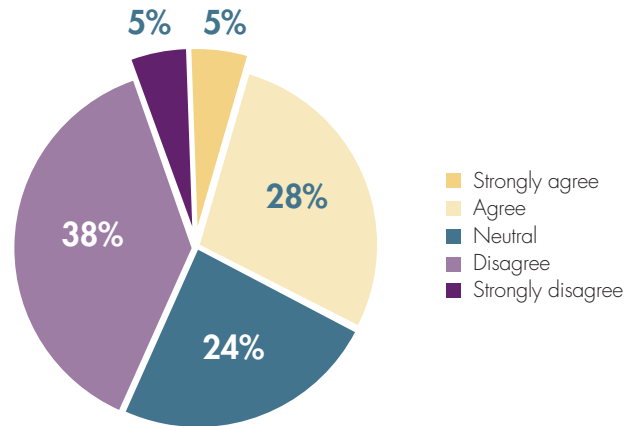
What the workday looks like for Dayton elementary teachers



Dayton teachers have 45 minutes a day for planning. Depending on the school, some of this time may be used for collaborative planning.



There is enough time in the school day for teachers to do collaborative planning



Almost 40 percent of principals do not think there is enough time in the day for collaborative planning.

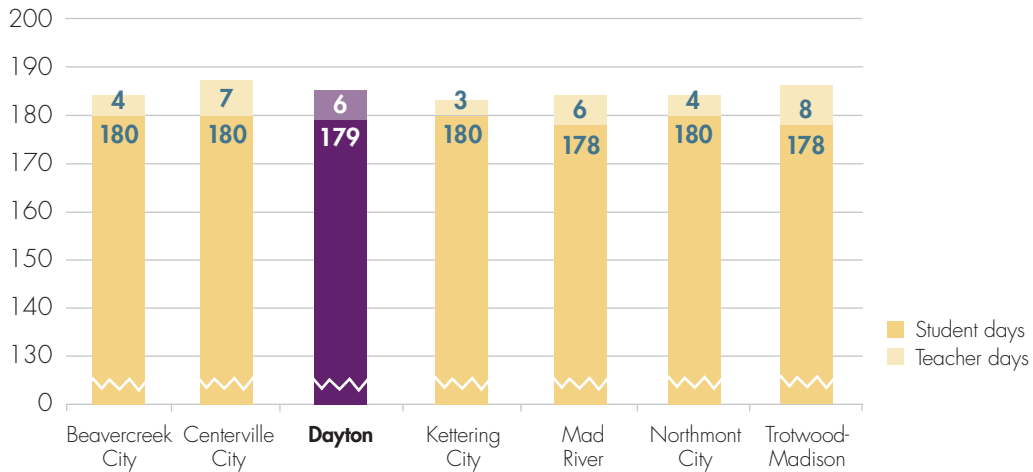
The number of districts recognizing the importance of collaborative planning time is growing based on our tracking of such districts. About a third of the districts in NCTQ's Tr3 database provide collaborative planning time either every day or a few times a week. To do this, districts have gotten more creative with scheduling. Some extend the workday once a week whereas others guarantee a daily planning period in addition to individual planning time.

Kansas City, Missouri sets aside 40 minutes out of their workday of 7 hours and 45 minutes for common planning each day. DC Public Schools provides teachers daily, 30-minute "morning blocks" for collaboration out of their 7-hour and 30-minute workday.

Finding: Teachers in Dayton feel that professional development offered in the district is beneficial to them, but principals want more opportunities for school-based professional development.

In addition to daily preparation time, non-instructional workdays — when well designed — can often serve as opportunities for more sustained collaboration and professional development. In Dayton, teachers are on-site for 185 days, 179 of which are spent with students, leaving six non-instructional workdays. These days are used for professional development, parent-teacher conferences, or teacher workdays for records management. The length of the school year and number of teacher workdays in Dayton is comparable with nearby districts but the number of non-instructional workdays is lower than the national average in the 114 districts in the Tr3 database. While the average school year in the 114 districts in NCTQ's database is 178 student days, teachers have nine non-student workdays on average.

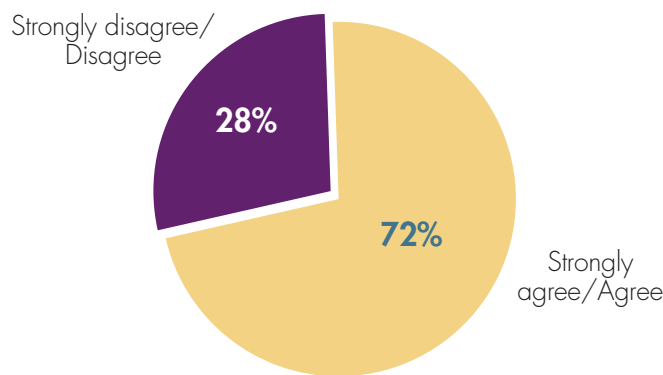
Teacher workdays for 2012-2013



The length of the school year in Dayton is comparable to nearby districts. The number of teacher workdays is shorter than the national average of nine days.

Because professional development days are expensive for districts, Dayton must ensure that the district is getting an appropriate return on its investment. In NCTQ’s survey of teachers, a large majority responded that the professional development the district offers helps them to improve their practice. Principals, however, voiced frustration. In focus groups, they stated that while there are multiple teacher workdays for professional development, almost all of these are district-wide days and gave them little opportunity for school-based coaching and development (see section 5.4 for more information).

Professional development offered in my district helps me to improve my instructional practice



Over 70 percent of teachers feel that district professional development helps them and is a beneficial way to improve their instructional practice.



5.2 Teachers receive a reasonable amount of general leave (sick and personal).

Finding: Dayton’s policy on leave is too high, with teachers having the option to take 21 days in one school year.

Dayton’s leave allotment is far higher than the average of districts in NCTQ database.⁶¹ Dayton teachers receive a total of 21 days when accounting for sick and personal leave, which NCTQ refers to as “general leave” so that in order that this figure can be reported as a standardized unit of measure. The median leave package for the 114 Tr3 districts is 12.5 days per year. In fact, only five districts in the database offer as many general leave days as Dayton.

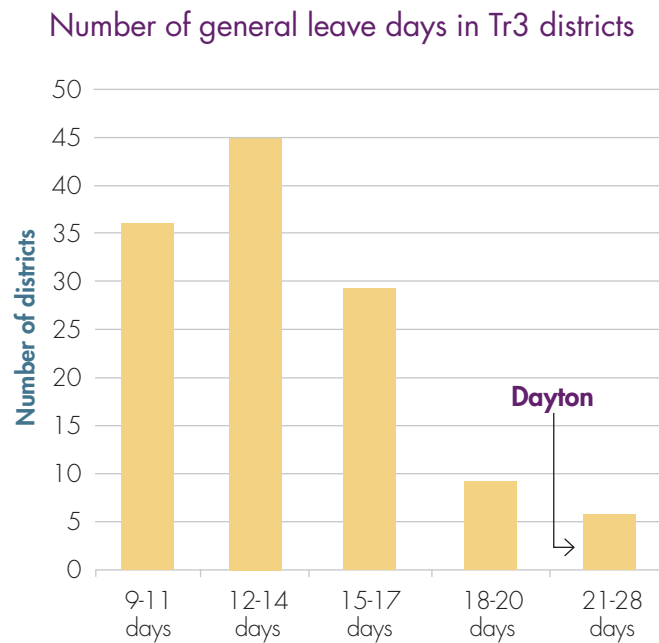
Part of the package in Dayton includes four days of “restricted personal leave” if a staff member can provide satisfactory evidence of an actual emergency situation. In this case however, “emergency” leave is broadly defined to include a variety of reasons including attending weddings and graduation ceremonies, as well as a loosely defined reason specified in the teachers’ contract simply as “obligations”.

Dayton’s general leave package

LEAVE TYPE	# OF DAYS	DESCRIPTION
Sick leave	15	For personal illness, pregnancy, injury, and illness of an immediate family member
Unrestricted personal leave	1	For personal use
Restricted personal leave (“Emergency leave”)	4	For use in emergencies, obligations, disasters affecting the employee or immediate family, poor road conditions, observance of religious holidays, graduation exercises, or a wedding of an immediate family member.
Bereavement (non-immediate family)	1	To be used to attend the funeral of a non-immediate family member
Total	21	

⁶¹ The 114 districts in Tr3 have an average of 13.5 days of general leave. The median amount of general leave for these districts is 12.5. NCTQ’s definition of general leave and a detailed explanation of leave benefits can be found in *A Closer Look at Teacher Leave Benefits: An Apples to Apples Comparison* by Ginger Moored. August, 2012.

⁶² Leave in this category is sometimes limited to one day per type of occurrence. For example, a teacher may use this leave type for only one day to attend a wedding involving someone other than an immediate family member.



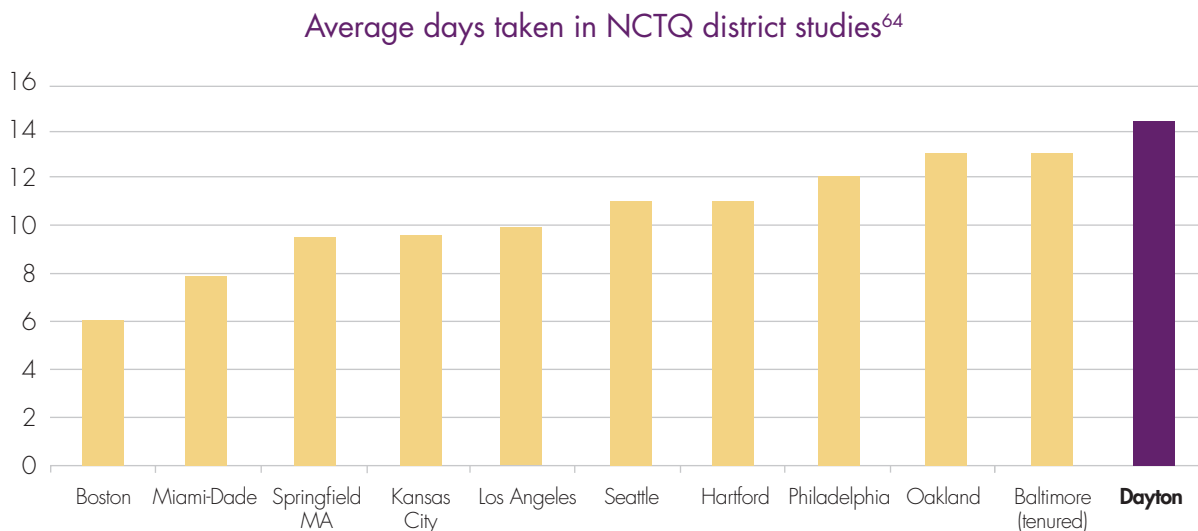
Dayton teachers get 21 days of general leave — higher than all almost all other districts in the Tr3 database.⁶³

5.3 The district provides the technology and support to help principals monitor attendance, preventing abuse of leave policies.

Finding: The absentee rate in Dayton in the last school year was eight percent, meaning that teachers were out of the classroom on average, one out of every 13 school days.

In the last school year, Dayton teachers used a large portion of their available leave. Compared to other districts NCTQ has studied, Dayton’s absentee rate is the highest we have seen.

⁶³ One other district (Boston, MA) also provides 21 days of general leave. Five other districts (Providence, Rhode Island — for teachers with more than three years of experience; Burlington, Vermont; Toledo, Ohio; Hartford, Connecticut; and Newark, New Jersey — for teachers with more than 25 years of experience) provide more than 21 days of general leave.



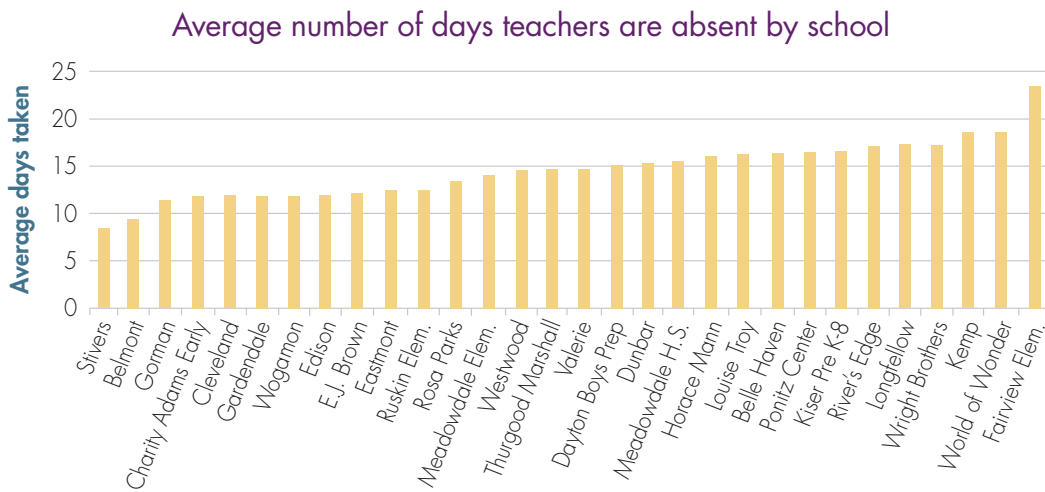
In 2011-2012, teachers in Dayton took almost 15 days of leave. This places them the highest in terms of leave taken compared to other districts NCTQ has studied.

Finding: Principals note that absenteeism is a problem in the district, and the depth of the problem varies widely by school.

A large percentage of principals in Dayton indicated that absenteeism was a problem at their school. Most noted that the issue was that certain teachers were absent frequently, but there were also many teachers that were not absent very much at all. There are district-wide policies in place that are commendable, including teachers having to call their principal directly when they are going to be out as well as the principal's ability to require a doctor's note if the absence will surpass five consecutive days. However, even with these policies in place, there are certain schools where, on average, teachers miss more than 15 school days a year. In other schools, the absence rate is far lower, at only 8 or 9 days a year. The district needs to understand how some schools can achieve this low rate, while others often record high rates.

Teachers seem to recognize excessive absences as a problem, too. Two-thirds of teachers and 100 percent of principals that responded to our survey indicated that attendance should be part of a teacher's evaluation.

⁶⁴ This includes all leave (teachers who are out for general leave as well as jury duty, funeral leave, and professional development) but does not include teachers who are out on long-term leave (those who were absent for 15 or more days consecutively).



The average number of days taken varies widely by school in Dayton. Fairview School has the highest rate of absenteeism among teachers, with an average amount of 23 days taken by teachers in 2011-2012. On the other end is Stivers, where on average, teachers took less than 9 days.⁶⁵

Finding: With urgency, the district must address chronic absenteeism.

Not counting teachers out for long-term leave, almost 400 teachers in Dayton were absent 16 or more days in 2011-2012, almost once every two weeks.⁶⁶ This represents almost 40 percent of teachers in Dayton. When teachers are chronically absent, the school principal is obligated to make it clear that high absenteeism, no matter what the reason, is detrimental to student learning. In focus groups, both teachers and principals noted that frequent absenteeism is prevalent in the culture at many schools. The combination of a generous leave policy and a culture of frequent absenteeism, results in students missing out on learning. In fact, one study found that every 10 absences a teacher has can lower mathematics achievement by the same amount as having a first year teacher instead of a more experienced teacher.⁶⁷ Another study found that teachers' absence patterns tend to reflect those of their colleagues.⁶⁸

65 The district notes that Fairview had certain external circumstances that resulted in an abnormally high number of absences in the 2011-2012 school year.

66 NCTQ defines teachers out on long-term leave as those who were out for 15 or more days continuously.

67 Clotfelter, C.T., Ladd, H.F., & Vigdor, J.L. (2007). *Are teacher absences worth worrying about in the U.S.?* Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

68 Bradley, S., Green, C., & Leeves, G. (2007). *Worker absence and shirking: Evidence from matched teachers-school data.* *Labour Economics*, 14(3), 319-334.

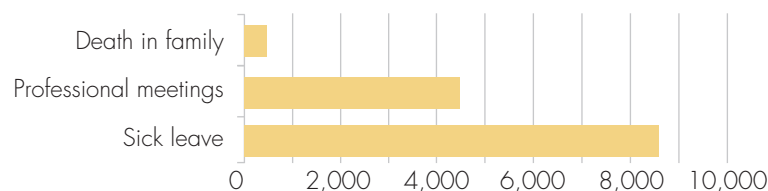


In 2011-2012, almost 40 percent of teachers were absent 16 or more days, effectively a day every two weeks.

Finding: Professional development is the second largest reason teachers are absent, and accounts for about 30 percent of all absences.

While the district has a policy in place whereby teachers can take two days for professional development to visit other school buildings, the number of days taken for professional development is actually far higher. Over 50 percent of teachers in 2011-2012 took more than 2 days for “professional meetings.”

Leave taken by reason, 2011-2012



The second largest number of absences in Dayton — almost 30 percent — comes from teachers who are out of the building due to “professional meetings.”

Districts must limit the use of days for professional meetings. Teachers may need to be out of the classroom from time to time to improve their instructional craft, but when a teacher is out of the classroom for any reason, students miss out on learning. If the district adhered to the policy outlined in the contract whereby teachers could only use two days out of the classroom for professional learning, the average days of leave taken would decrease from 14.6 to 12.

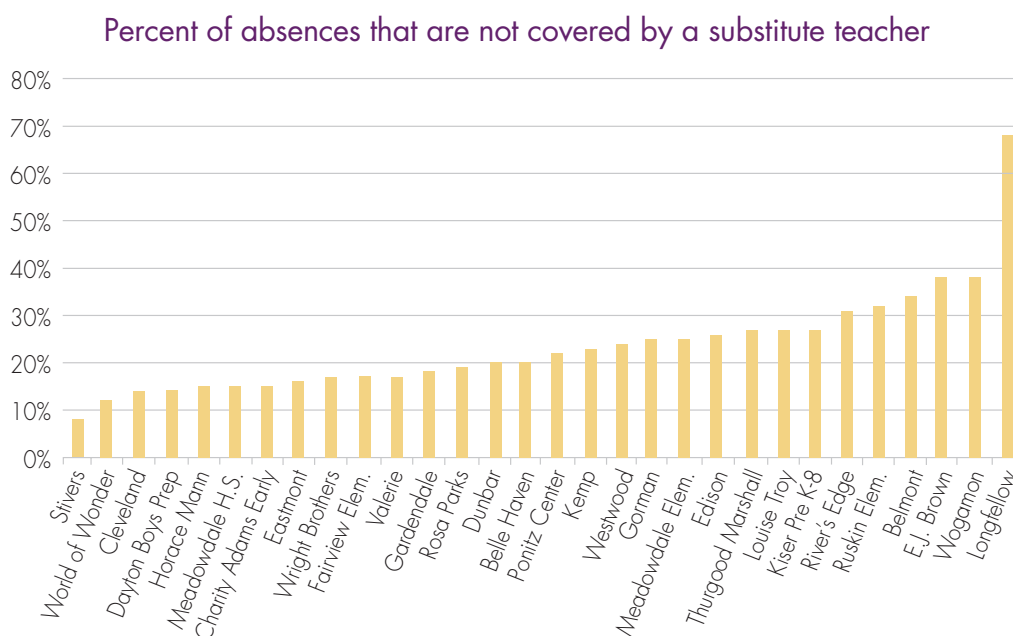
“ There is a HUGE shortage of reserve teachers [substitutes] in the district... almost weekly at my school there is not coverage for at least one class in the building.”

– Dayton teacher

Finding: Allocation of substitutes is not uniform across schools, leaving some schools with high numbers of absences that are not covered by substitutes.

In Dayton, the substitute pool does not seem to be well-allocated to manage the high number of absences the district experiences across all schools. According to principals, substitute teachers prefer going to specific schools due to location or ease of assignment, and as a result many schools do not always secure the substitutes they need for their absent teachers. When this happens, the school generally has to ask teachers to cover the absent teacher during their planning period or split the students into multiple other classes, causing even more grievous disruptions to student learning. The latter is a particularly concerning strategy, as kindergarten students could end up spending their day in a third grade classroom with little to no learning taking place. While a lack of available substitutes is something NCTQ finds in many districts, it happens often enough in Dayton to be voiced as a real concern by many principals.

When NCTQ examined the number of absences that were covered by substitutes, we found that on average, 20 percent of absences are not covered. However, this number varies widely by school. In fact, for certain schools, such as Stivers, only eight percent of absences were not covered by substitutes. At World of Wonder PreK-8 School at Residence Park, which has a high average absentee rate of about 18.7 days per teacher, only 12 percent of total absences were not covered by a substitute. However, at Longfellow, almost 70 percent of absences were not covered by substitutes. This data suggests that even if the district were to decrease its overall absentee rate, proper allocation of substitutes is an issue that it must address.



The percentage of teacher absences that were not covered by substitutes varies by school. Some, such as Stivers and World of Wonder, had most of their classes covered. Others went without substitutes in one-third of absences and Longfellow, an outlier, went without substitutes in almost 70 percent of absences in 2011-2012.

Finding: The district provides an incentive so teachers will not use their one available unrestricted personal leave day, but all other attendance incentives are realized at the end of a teacher's career.

Many districts engage in incentive systems to encourage teachers to avoid absences; some are more effective than others. Some systems involve paying teachers some fraction of their daily pay rate for unused leave, either at the end of the school year, upon retirement, or a combination of both. Annual incentives are more likely to influence attendance, whereas end-of-career buyback provides an additional benefit to supplement salary at the end of a teacher's career.

Dayton has a small annual incentive that provides teachers the full value of one day if they have not used their unrestricted personal leave day, but they provide the bulk of their incentives at the end of a teacher's career. For each day of sick leave accumulated, teachers with at least five years of continuous service receive one-fourth of a day's pay at their current rate for up to 180 days. Given this policy, a teacher who retires after 30 years and is absent one day a month (10 days each year) could get a payout of over \$12,000 upon retirement.

Sample teacher sick leave payout

Years of salary	30
Teacher salary (Master’s Degree)	\$ 62,646
Sick leave taken annually	10 days
Sick leave accumulated annually (after days used)	5 days
Total sick leave accumulated after 30 years (5 x 30)	150
Amount of days eligible for severance pay (150/4)	37.5
Pay-out rate (\$62,646/185 days)	\$ 339
Total amount paid out at retirement (\$338.63 x 37.5)	\$ 12,699

In this example, a teacher takes two-thirds of her sick days each year (10 days) and retires after 30 years. She has enough accumulated days to receive a payout of almost \$13,000.

Using an end-of-career payout as Dayton does provides teachers with a nice bonus as they leave the system, but it does nothing to provide incentives for better attendance or reward good attendance on a yearly basis. Given the continuing problem with excessive absences for some teachers, these incentives — even at a cost to the district of over \$300,000 per year — do not appear to be a compelling force for improvement.

5.4 Principals’ job descriptions include coaching and developing teachers.

Compared to other districts, Dayton seems to have a strong professional development framework in place. In focus groups, many teachers commended the quality of the professional development offerings, and over 75 percent of principals stated that when a teacher is struggling, they look for professional development options in the district that the teacher can attend.⁶⁹ For example, if a teacher is not performing at the level required and is placed on an improvement plan, he or she can be required to go to district-designed classes on specific topics such as classroom management skills. These courses were praised by some, and panned by others as not helpful or practical. In general, however, teachers and principals view the number and variety of professional development options that Dayton offers as one of the district’s strengths.

In focus groups, some principals voiced innovative strategies to support struggling teachers at the school level, including partnerships between schools where lower-performing teachers can observe an effective teacher over a period of time.⁷⁰ Others discussed holding regular Monday morning meetings for

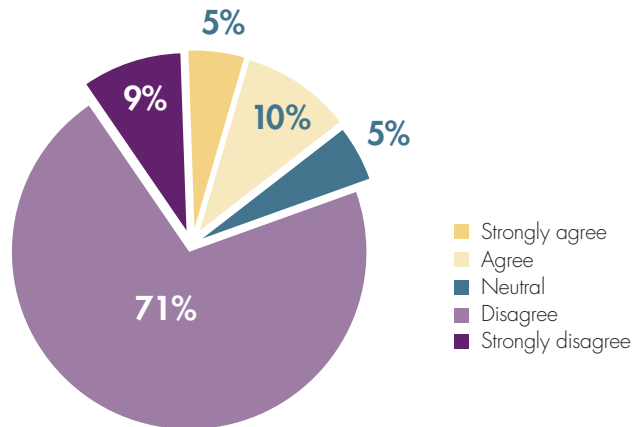
⁶⁹ NCTQ principal survey responses.

⁷⁰ Two principals told of identifying a teacher at each site to spend time in a struggling teacher’s classroom and vice versa. This teaming across schools provided support for the individual teacher in addition to sharing best practices between schools.







school-wide professional development. Overall however, most principals felt like there wasn't enough time in the day to offer targeted, school-based professional development at their school site.


There is enough time in the school day to offer teachers professional development



80 percent of principals do not feel that there is enough time in the day to offer their teachers professional development.

Recommendations

- 
1. Provide administrators monthly reports on absences. Regularly provide summative absence information by school to principals. This will give administrators the information they need to identify potentially problematic absence patterns (as well as teachers with stellar attendance records) so that they can respond appropriately.
- 
2. Develop an absence intervention process. Provide guidance to principals about monitoring absences, identifying causes of excessive absences, creating attendance improvement plans, and, in extreme cases, taking disciplinary action.
- 
3. Consider strategies to allocate substitutes more effectively across schools. Possibilities include assigning substitutes to specific buildings and not allowing substitutes to accept a teaching position in one school if they rejected another on the same day.
- 
4. Move towards an 8-hour contractual workday that is performed on-site. So much of a teacher's work involves interaction with others. Teachers need to be at work, on-site for a standard 8-hour day. If the district were to move toward an 8-hour day, additional collaborative planning time as well as individual planning time could be built in to the school day on a regular basis.

 This recommendation requires only a change in practice.

 This recommendation requires a formal negotiation between the district and the teachers' union.

 This recommendation requires a change in state law.



5. Revise available general leave days. Offer teachers 10-12 sick leave days plus one personal day per year. Restricted personal leave should be specified as use for real emergencies only and should not include reasons such as weddings, graduations, or simply “obligations”.



6. Reward teachers for good attendance annually rather than at the end of their careers. Providing annual rewards rather than payouts at the end of a teacher’s career is more likely to result in improved attendance. Consider the examples of Broward County, Florida, Providence, Rhode Island, and Denver, Colorado, all of which give annual rewards for unused sick days.



This recommendation requires only a change in practice.



This recommendation requires a formal negotiation between the district and the teachers’ union.



This recommendation requires a change in state law.

DAYTON DATA DASHBOARD

The table below lists the data requested from Dayton Public Schools (DPS) for this study. All data was tagged with a unique identifier; no teacher names were requested or provided. When data was incomplete or inconsistent, NCTQ staff sought clarification from district officials and standardized the data as much as possible. If there were questions of accuracy, conclusions in this report are based on multiple sources.

Requested Data	Notes	Was the data complete?	Was the data reliable and consistent?	Is this data the district normally collects and reviews?
School Level Data – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ID number and grade levels Poverty rate Student enrollment Student attendance 	The district provided general descriptive information for each school.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Teacher background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergraduate institution 	DPS does not maintain data on teacher’s undergraduate institution.	N/A	N/A	No
Teacher staff list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current school Subject area 	The teacher staff list has teachers with extensive long-term absences (who are essentially inactive) on the list without any indication.	Partial	No	Yes
Teacher Seniority dates	The district did provide seniority date data.	Yes	No	Yes
Teacher performance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation ratings Value-added data 	The district was able to provide value-added data on teachers, which is compiled by the state. They do not keep evaluations or summary evaluation ratings electronically. Evaluation data is not summarized at a school or district level.	Partial	Yes	Yes
Teacher attendance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Type of absence Date/day of week of absence Long term leave identified 	The district was able to provide the type of absence and the date of absence. However, teachers on long-term leave were not identified.	Partial	Yes	Yes
Professional Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of PD hours by teacher by type 	The district was unable to provide any data on professional development hours by teacher.	N/A	N/A	No

Requested Data	Notes	Was the data complete?	Was the data reliable and consistent?	Is this data the district normally collects and reviews?
Teacher recruitment and placement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Displaced teachers/ involuntary transfers ■ Voluntary transfers ■ New hires 	The district was able to provide data on new hires, but they were unable to provide data on other teacher placement methods.	Partial	Yes	Yes
Applicant pool <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of total teacher vacancies each month (including hard to fill) ■ Number of total teacher applications received each month ■ Number of total teacher applications received each month ■ Number of total teacher vacancies filled each month 	The district did provide data on vacancies, but was unable to provide data on total number of teacher applications received or when and the number of position filled.	Partial	No	No
Teacher employment offers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer dates ■ Start dates 	The district does not keep track of dates jobs are offered to teachers. Teachers' start dates in the school system are maintained.	Partial	Yes	Yes
Retirements and resignations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Notification dates of teachers who resigned or retired ■ Effective dates of resignation/retirement 	DPS does maintain data on the effective dates of teachers who resigned or retired, but not their notification dates.	Partial	Yes	Yes
Support for teachers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of teachers who entered intervention 	The district does not maintain data on teachers who are on performance improvement plans.	N/A	N/A	No
Teacher dismissal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of tenured teachers dismissed as a result of poor performance ■ Number of non-tenured teachers' contracts not renewed as a result of poor performance 	DPS does not maintain data on this, but was able to compile it when requested.	Yes	Yes	No
Teacher retention: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Retention percentage, by school 	The district does not maintain this data, and was unable to provide it when requested.	N/A	N/A	No
Salary schedule distribution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ number of teachers on each step of each lane of the salary schedule ■ List of coursework and other activities submitted for advancement on the salary schedule 	DPS was able to provide the distribution of teachers on the salary schedule; however, it does not electronically maintain data on coursework completed for raises.	Partial	Yes	Yes



Requested Data	Notes	Was the data complete?	Was the data reliable and consistent?	Is this data the district normally collects and reviews?
End of career payouts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Payout for each teacher with unused sick leave or other, by type of leave ■ Total number of teachers who qualified for payouts for unused leave, by type of leave 	The district did provide this data.	Yes	Yes	No
Bonus Pay: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ List of bonus/incentive pay awards for each teacher 	The district did not provide this data.	N/A	N/A	No
Substitutes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Line item expense for substitutes ■ Number of substitute days worked in the district ■ Number of long-term and full-time status subs and their assignments 	The district did provide the line item expense for substitutes and the number of long-term and full-time status subs and their assignments.	Yes	No	No
Grievances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of grievances by category 	The district does not maintain this data.	N/A	N/A	No
Staffing timeline	The district does not maintain a staffing timeline.	N/A	N/A	No

This report is available online at
http://www.nctq.org/dmsStage/Final_Dayton

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The National Council on Teacher Quality advocates for reforms in a broad range of teacher policies at the federal, state and local levels in order to increase the number of effective teachers.

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