How Are Rural Districts Meeting the Teacher Quality Requirements of No Child Left Behind?

By Terri Duggan Schwartzbeck and Cynthia D. Prince
American Association of School Administrators
with
Doris Redfield, Helen Morris,
and Patricia Cahape Hammer
Appalachia Educational Laboratory

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About AASA

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About AEL

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How Are Rural School Districts Meeting the Teacher Quality Requirements of No Child Left Behind?

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA), in partnership with the Appalachia Educational Laboratory (AEL), conducted a nationwide online survey of more than 3,000 rural school superintendents in spring 2003 to gain information about how rural school districts are meeting the teacher quality requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The aims of this study were to identify and analyze four aspects of the rural teacher quality challenge:

1. the qualifications of teachers currently working in rural schools and the extent to which they meet the new federal definition of “highly qualified”\(^1\)
2. conditions that impede rural districts’ efforts to attract and retain highly qualified teachers
3. strategies that rural districts are using to attract, recruit, and retain highly qualified teachers
4. the effectiveness of various policies and programs to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers in rural areas

Based on 896 valid completed surveys (a 27 percent response rate), the following information can be reported about districts whose superintendents responded:

- Superintendents estimated that high numbers of teachers employed in their districts would be able to meet the federal definition of “highly qualified,” although there was some confusion about the definition at the federal vs. state levels.
- Multiple-subject teaching was reported as common, presenting a challenge for teachers to obtain multiple certifications, particularly for middle school teachers, many of whom hold only K-8 certificates.
- The number of highly qualified teachers decreased and the number of teachers with multiple-subject assignments increased as district size got smaller, with the smallest districts relying most heavily on multiple-subject teachers.
- Superintendents from the smallest districts—those with 250 or fewer students—also indicated the greatest difficulty in attracting and retaining teachers.
- The largest obstacles to attracting and retaining teachers were reported to be low salaries and the isolation of rural districts.

\(^1\) According to information provided by the U.S. Department of Education, “a ‘highly qualified teacher’ is one with full certification, a bachelor’s degree and demonstrated competence in subject knowledge and teaching.” The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 currently requires that all Title I teachers in core academic subjects (English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history and geography) meet the definition of “highly qualified”; by the end of the 2005-06 school year \textit{all} teachers, not just those supported by Title I, must meet the definition. For more information, see “Teacher Quality: Frequently Asked Questions” on the U.S. Department of Education Web site at www.ed.gov/nclb/methods/teachers/teachers-faq.html.
• Of the many different types of incentives used to attract and retain teachers, the most commonly reported were training/professional development and financial incentives including tuition assistance and bonuses.

The survey results provide insight into the challenges rural school system leaders face in staffing their schools. Teacher quality requirements under No Child Left Behind (NCLB) have added new complications to preexisting challenges by calling into question common strategies—such as multiple-subject assignments—commonly used in small and rural districts to staff schools. While few superintendents anticipated problems in meeting teacher quality requirements, perceptions may change as NCLB proceeds to full implementation in 2005-2006, when teacher quality requirements will pertain to all teachers working in the core academic subjects. Superintendents who have begun to face the issue are taking action to ensure that teachers who do not currently meet the federal definition of “highly qualified” are working toward it.
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2. conditions that impede rural districts’ efforts to attract and retain highly qualified teachers
3. strategies that rural districts are using to attract, recruit, and retain highly qualified teachers
4. the effectiveness of various state and local policies and programs to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers in rural areas

Background

Although teacher shortages are a problem nationwide, it is clear that some types of schools have always had much greater difficulty attracting and retaining high-quality teachers than others. High-poverty, low-achieving urban schools have long been regarded as difficult to staff, and much has been written about the problems that they face finding and keeping teachers.2 Those who study the plight of urban schools point to low teacher salaries, large class sizes, lack of resources, poor physical working conditions, and student discipline problems as some of the underlying reasons why central city schools suffer from acute shortages of high-quality teachers.

Chronic teacher shortages are not strictly an urban problem, however. The Education Commission of the States maintains that “schools in rural America face an array of problems every bit as daunting and intractable as those confronting schools in urban communities.”3 Chief among these problems is attracting and retaining high-quality teachers.4 The factors involved in

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3 Education Commission of the States, “Rural Overview.”
4 Collins, Attracting and Retaining Teachers in Rural Areas.
attracting and retaining teachers are complex and interrelated. However, some themes have emerged. A survey of teachers in Virginia, for example, found that low salaries topped the list of reasons teachers might leave their schools or the profession. Low salaries, isolation, housing shortages, schools badly in need of repair or modernization, multiple-subject assignments, and limited opportunities for training in the surrounding area are just a few of the factors that discourage teachers from working in rural communities.

The new world created by No Child Left Behind. The newly reauthorized Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), has greatly increased the pressure on school system leaders to develop strategies that will successfully attract, retain, and retrain teachers so that each one meets the new federal definition of “highly qualified” within the next four years. According to information provided by the U.S. Department of Education, “a ‘highly qualified teacher’ is one with full certification, a bachelor’s degree and demonstrated competence in subject knowledge and teaching.” The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 currently requires that all Title I teachers in core academic subjects (English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history and geography) meet the definition of “highly qualified”; by the end of the 2005-06 school year all teachers, not just those supported by Title I must meet the definition. Early case studies on how NCLB is being implemented indicate that attracting highly qualified teachers is, in fact, a major concern in rural districts. This is due to both the challenges of rural life and the lower salaries rural districts offer. Of particular concern are the needs of the schools in some of the most rural areas of the United States, where multiple-subject teaching is common. Yet relatively little is known about state and local strategies to recruit and retain teachers in rural schools and the effectiveness of those efforts. As Collins points out, “Recent research on rural teacher recruitment and retention appears thin, and much of it has been conducted outside the United States.”

New federal funds are available through No Child Left Behind to help states and districts develop potential solutions to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools. Title II called for special funding to help states and districts prepare, train, and recruit high-quality teachers. Congress also appropriated $162.5 million for the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) and the Rural and Low-Income School Program. In addition to new federal dollars, the two new rural programs gave rural school districts increased flexibility to consolidate funds from several federal programs and use them where they are needed most. The funds can be used for a variety of purposes, including professional development and teacher recruitment and retention. How rural school districts use these funds is of great interest to educators and policymakers alike.

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5 Certo & Fox, “Retaining Quality Teachers,” 57.
8 Center for Education Policy, Case Studies of Local Implementation.
9 Harman, “A Crisis Looms.”
10 Collins, Attracting and Retaining Teachers.
11 Public Law 107-110, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.
How the Survey Was Conducted

AASA created a database consisting of 3,078 rural public school district superintendents for whom e-mail addresses were available. A survey consisting of 30 questions was drafted and reviewed by AEL staff, AASA staff, and AASA’s Rural and Small School System Leaders Advisory Committee in February and March of 2003. Reviewers looked for clarity, length of time the survey would require to fill out, and the ability of the questions to elicit the desired information.

Zoomerang, an online survey tool, was chosen for delivery of the survey because of its ease of use and online/e-mail compatibility. Through Zoomerang, all superintendents in the database received an e-mail containing a hyperlink, which took them directly to the survey, which they could then fill out online. Zoomerang also stored all responses and provided crosstab capability. The survey was launched on March 18, 2003. It was publicized through AASA’s Web site and additional e-mails to rural members. Additionally, AASA oversampled rural superintendents in the four-state area served by AEL by mailing paper copies of the survey to all rural superintendents in Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia for whom e-mail addresses were not available. The postal mailing consisted of a hard copy of the Zoomerang survey, a cover letter signed by Paul Houston, executive director of AASA, and a return envelope.

Electronic responses were collected by Zoomerang, and postal survey responses were entered into the Zoomerang system. The survey remained open until May 13, 2003, longer than originally planned, to allow for opportunities to send additional reminders. A total of 916 completed surveys were received. The data were examined and 20 surveys were discarded due to duplication and other errors. All results reported below are based on the remaining 896 surveys unless otherwise indicated.

Results

Characteristics of Respondents

This study was based on a convenience sample of rural superintendents for whom e-mail addresses were available. Of the 3,327 persons contacted, only 27 percent responded with usable survey responses. As a result, findings of the survey could reflect sample bias and should not be considered representative of the rural superintendent population nationwide. Of the 896 completed surveys, 830 were completed by superintendents; the remainder were completed by acting superintendents, assistant superintendents, or administrators responsible for staffing. In all, 48 out of 50 states were represented, with only Delaware and Rhode Island missing. The states with the most respondents were Illinois and Iowa, each making up 9 percent of respondents, followed by Nebraska (7 percent), Wisconsin (6 percent), and Missouri and Minnesota (5 percent each).

District size was relatively well distributed among completed surveys. The predominant district size was between 601 and 1,500 students, which represented one-third of the surveyed superintendents. Only nine districts reported having more than 10,000 students, and seven of
those were among the countywide school systems, including the state of Hawaii. The breakdown of district size is illustrated in Figure 1.

The majority of responding superintendents (91 percent) was from K-12 or preK-12 districts, while two percent were secondary only and three percent were elementary only. The districts surveyed also reported a variety of percentages of students receiving free and reduced-price lunch. The median district report was 38 percent of students receiving free and reduced-price lunch. The numbers of students receiving free and reduced-price lunch is illustrated in Figure 2.
Qualifications of Teachers

Superintendents who responded to the survey estimated that while relatively high numbers of teachers were teaching in multiple subjects (see Figure 5), only a few would not meet the criteria for being “highly qualified” under the federal definition (see Figure 3), and they did not expect to lose many teachers as a result (see Figure 4).

FEDERAL DEFINITION OF HIGHLY QUALIFIED (provided in the survey)
By the end of 2005-06, teachers must:
1. be fully certified by the state in which they are teaching;
2. hold at least a bachelor's degree; and
3. demonstrate subject matter competence in each of the core academic subjects that they teach.

Teachers with emergency, temporary, or provisional certificates do not meet the federal definition.

Superintendents may be underestimating the number of teachers who will fall short of the federal teacher quality requirements. This low estimate of the potential impact of federal requirements may have been due to the fact that many of the regulations and details regarding the implementation of NCLB teacher quality measures were incomplete at the time of the survey. The survey did provide superintendents with the federal definition for reference. However, many superintendents indicated there was confusion or lack of a clear definition of “highly qualified” in their states. One superintendent in South Dakota wrote, “Currently the state of South Dakota has not defined what ‘highly qualified’ is.” Another superintendent elaborated, “The definitions of NCLB aren’t even understood at the state level at this time, let alone the local level.” The fact that states still have some control over the definition of “highly qualified,” including the ability to develop their own definitions, likely contributed to some confusion over what “highly qualified” would really mean for districts. This conclusion is supported by the General Accounting Office’s (GAO) July 2003 report, “More Information Would Help States Determine Which Teachers Are Highly Qualified,” in which the GAO reported that it “could not develop reliable data on the number of highly qualified teachers because states did not have the information needed to determine whether teachers met all criteria.”

Other superintendents’ responses indicated that while the current staff was in compliance, the future might not look as bright. One superintendent commented,

We have reviewed all credentials and currently have highly qualified teachers in the classrooms. My concern is that as we face a funding shortage and decreased student population we will be forced to eliminate positions thus creating classrooms without highly qualified teachers.

More secondary teachers fall short of the federal definition, especially those in middle schools. Overall, three times more teachers at the secondary level (9 percent across all districts) were estimated by responding superintendents to fall short of the federal criteria as “highly qualified,” compared to elementary teachers (3 percent). The shortfall varied by district size, with smaller districts estimating larger shortfalls of teachers. A full 20 percent of secondary teachers in districts with fewer than 250 students were estimated by superintendents to fall short of the federal definition of a highly qualified teacher as indicated in Figure 3.

The disparity in estimates of shortfalls of “highly qualified” teachers between elementary and secondary schools may reflect, in part, the issue of multiple-subject teachers at the secondary and middle school levels. Some superintendents expressed concern that middle school teachers, who may hold only an elementary certificate or an education major, will move to teach elementary school rather than complete the additional courses and/or competency testing required for subject-specific secondary certification. As one superintendent explained,

The middle school is a question. All my teachers in that area are K-8 certified. Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction officials believe that middle school teachers are highly qualified by having a K-8 certification.

Another superintendent reiterated this explanation:

I suggest that we will lose a substantial number of our middle school teachers to transfers to elementary positions where they will meet the criteria for being “highly qualified.”

Figure 3. Percentages of teachers who superintendents say currently do not meet the federal definition of “highly qualified,” by district size.
Big challenges exist in small districts. As mentioned earlier and shown in Figure 4, superintendents in the smallest school districts (9.3 percent) were also more likely to indicate the expectation that they would lose some teachers if federal definitions of teacher quality were fully enforced than were superintendents in larger districts (0.8-3.8 percent).

Figure 4. Percentages of teachers superintendents expect to lose as a result of enforcing NCLB requirements, by district size.

If the situation in rural districts closely corresponds to the perceptions of the 896 superintendents who responded to this survey, there could be a practically significant loss of teachers in small districts across the country, especially in secondary schools.

Multiple-subject teaching is an issue. The prevalence of multiple-subject teachers in rural areas will be a difficult problem to solve, as one superintendent explained:

The one issue that will not be solved is the [requirement] to have…staff member[s] fully certified in everything they teach. For many of our teachers, who teach several different things, this would require many additional years of schooling, and is just not an option. They are wonderful teachers, who know their subjects extremely well, but just cannot be expected to jump through hoops for everything they teach, and still be expected to remain a rural teacher.

As Figure 5 indicates, smaller districts seem to have more teachers teaching multiple subjects, compared to larger districts.
Teacher shortages affect many subject or specialty areas. Survey respondents’ districts reported some significant teacher shortages. The most commonly cited subject or specialty areas of teacher shortage included:

- special education, grades 7-12 (cited by 65 percent of respondents)
- mathematics, grades 7-12 (61 percent)
- science, grades 7-12 (61 percent)
- special education, grades K-6 (49 percent)
- foreign languages, grades 7-12 (48 percent)

An additional concern that emerged related to some of these subject or specialty areas, including foreign languages and special education, was state licensing regulations that do not allow for state-to-state reciprocity. Districts are reportedly limited in their attempts to attract high-quality teachers into their schools by state regulations regarding licensing. For example, in a few states, all new teachers are considered to be provisionally certified, which is not acceptable under the federal definition of “highly qualified.” As one superintendent described:

Newly graduated teachers have provisional certificates. No new teachers will meet the highly qualified rating for three to five years.

In other states, teachers who have out-of-state certification are automatically considered “emergency certified” until they have passed the in-state certification test. Again, this hampers the ability of districts to hire teachers because emergency credentials are not acceptable under the federal definition.
Attracting and retaining quality teachers is a daunting challenge for rural schools. The AASA-AEL survey asked superintendents about the difficulty of both attracting and retaining teachers and asked them to identify the primary obstacles in doing so. Figure 6 shows that overall, a higher percentage of superintendents reported it was “very” or “extremely” difficult to attract qualified teachers than reported similar difficulty in retaining qualified teachers.

Small districts experience more problems attracting and retaining teachers. A much higher percentage (41 percent) of superintendents in districts with 250 or fewer students reported that it was “very” or “extremely” difficult to attract teachers, compared to 19 percent of all surveyed superintendents. Similarly, 17 percent of superintendents in districts with fewer than 250 students reported difficulty retaining teachers, compared to an average of about 10 percent, as illustrated in Figure 7.
Low salaries and isolation are cited as reasons for difficulty attracting and retaining teachers. Difficulty attracting and retaining teachers was attributed to a variety of factors. The most commonly cited factor was low salaries (reported by 44 percent of respondents) followed by social isolation (42 percent), geographic isolation (38 percent), and lack of adequate housing (36 percent).

Figure 7. Percentage of rural superintendents reporting that it is “very” or “extremely” difficult to attract and retain teachers, by district size.

Figure 8. Factors responsible for difficulties attracting and retaining teachers (percentage of superintendents identifying each factor as “extremely” or “very” important).
Of superintendents who responded that it was “extremely” or “very” difficult to attract teachers, social isolation, geographic isolation, and low salaries topped the list (see Figure 9).

Low salaries, on the other hand, topped the list of responding superintendents who indicated it was “extremely” or “very” difficult to retain teachers in their districts, while social and geographic isolation remained near the top.
More than half of superintendents in the smallest districts reported problems with low salaries and requiring teachers to teach multiple subjects. The issue of low salary was also of particular importance in the smallest districts. More than half of the superintendents with enrollments of 250 or fewer identified low salaries as “extremely” or “very” important in the difficulties they experienced in retaining teachers. Also, while requiring teachers to teach multiple subjects was cited as important by only 18 percent of survey respondents as responsible for difficulties attracting teachers, more than half of the superintendents in these smallest districts found that to be the case.

![Figure 11. Percentage of respondents reporting that low salaries were “extremely” or “very” important factors responsible for the difficulties experienced retaining teachers, by district size.](image)

![Figure 12. Percentage of respondents reporting that multiple-subject teaching was an “extremely” or “very” important factor responsible for difficulties experienced attracting teachers, by district size.](image)
Superintendents’ responses reveal big-picture issues with individual school challenges. When asked about specific schools that are hard-to-staff, other factors emerged. Forty-four percent of respondents indicated that while they might have problems staffing their district as a whole, no individual school was harder to staff than others. Of those that did identify factors that made a particular school harder to staff, the top factors were limited resources (16 percent), the range of grades served by the school (16 percent), school is old or needs repairs (9 percent), high staff turnover (8 percent), high concentrations of poor students (8 percent), and low student test scores (7 percent).

Further, 27 percent of respondents chose to provide their own answers to the question “what makes individual schools hard to staff?” and listed items that were more descriptive of whole districts than individual schools. Some key factors emerged in their responses:

- **Concern with state certification requirements.** While many superintendents did not seem to think they would have many teachers falling below the federal standard of “highly qualified,” a common response to the question about individual hard-to-staff schools was, in fact, adequate teacher certification or the need to be certified in multiple subjects at the middle and high school levels.
- **A generally small applicant pool.** Many respondents indicated that there are insufficient applicants for the positions that are available.
- **Remote location.** While location was included as a factor in the survey question about the district’s ability to attract and retain teachers, it also emerged as a specific reason an individual school might be hard to staff.

**Strategies That Rural Districts Are Using to Attract, Recruit, and Retain Qualified Teachers**

**Training and financial incentives.** While relatively few superintendents showed great concern over their ability to attract and retain highly qualified teachers, those who showed concern also indicated that they were already taking action to meet the challenge. When asked what the district was doing to ensure that all teachers met the NCLB definition of “highly qualified,” many superintendents commented that currently employed teachers not meeting the definition had been notified and were taking courses or other steps to ensure that they would be certified soon. Many indicated that records had been checked and that, whenever possible, contracts would not be offered to teachers not meeting the definition.

As for incentives, the most common types of incentives mentioned by respondents for attracting and retaining teachers included mentoring or induction programs, tuition assistance, and bonuses for National Board Certified teachers. As indicated in Figure 13, mentoring and induction programs were by far the most common incentives. Other incentives not shown below and mentioned by superintendents included a supportive staff and environment, strong professional development programs, good benefits packages, and beneficial salary schedules. Some districts indicated, though, that they are hampered by union contracts in this arena. While many kinds of incentives were commonly used to fill teacher vacancies at the district level, the vast majority (89 percent) did not offer monetary incentives to work in individual schools. Seventy-seven percent did not offer nonmonetary incentives.
Figure 13. Kinds of incentives offered by responding districts to attract and retain teachers.

Other strategies. Districts did, however, indicate that they make use of a wide variety of nonincentive strategies to fill teacher vacancies at the district level. The most common, indicated in Table 1, include advertising and local and online recruiting.

Table 1. Strategies Used by Districts to Fill Teacher Vacancies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertise extensively</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit teachers from local populations</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit online</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit from substitute teacher list</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use state teacher clearinghouse and/or job bank</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire alternatively certified teachers</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct site visits to colleges</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form partnership with teacher training institution</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit out-of-state</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish &quot;grow-your-own&quot; programs to encourage paraprofessionals and teachers who lack full certification to become fully certified</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrain current teachers to teach hard-to-fill subjects (e.g., mathematics, science, special education)</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage high school students to become teachers (e.g., Future Teachers of America clubs)</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share part-time teachers with neighboring school district</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempt to secure job commitments from college students before they graduate</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold job fairs</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit internationally</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Distance learning was also a strategy that districts indicated was used to offer additional courses; 62 percent of districts used distance learning, with the most common courses including:

- secondary-level foreign languages (32 percent)
- Advanced Placement courses (26 percent)
- secondary-level mathematics (22 percent)
- secondary-level science (18 percent)
- other high school honors courses (18 percent)
- other (18 percent)

Of those who indicated “other,” the most common response was that distance learning was used for dual enrollment or other community college/college/university courses; technology education was also frequently cited.

**Use of Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP)**

Of the responding superintendents, a little more than one-third (39 percent) indicated they received REAP funds during the 2002-2003 school year. Among those who did, the most common uses were teacher professional development (60 percent), education technology (59 percent), curricular materials (44 percent), and teacher salaries (31 percent). Teacher recruitment and retention were cited by just 15% of those who responded, and teacher signing bonuses by just 2%.

**Conclusion**

No Child Left Behind has increased the pressure on school system leaders to develop strategies to successfully attract, retain, and retrain teachers to meet the definition of “highly qualified” within the next four years. This survey of rural superintendents was developed to assess the level of urgency—are rural teachers currently highly qualified?—as well as to ascertain the strategies in use to recruit and retain teachers in rural areas.

While survey respondents indicated that high numbers of teachers would be able meet the federal criteria for being “highly qualified,” their responses also revealed a lack of clarity about what exactly that definition was, particularly for their individual states. Others indicated that their districts and teachers were taking action to be highly qualified by 2005-06. It may be that as implementation progresses, definitions will be clarified, and superintendents will express concern about the status of more teachers than at the present time.

Additionally, superintendents did indicate fairly high levels of multiple-subject teaching and expressed a particular concern about middle school teachers, for whom a K-8 certification may no longer be enough. Further, the smaller the school district, the higher the numbers of teachers not highly qualified, teaching multiple subjects, and likely to be lost if NCLB definitions were enforced.

The largest obstacles to attracting and retaining teachers tended to be low salaries and the isolation rural districts experience. Similarly, rural superintendents tended to report more issues.
with staffing the district as a whole compared to staffing individual schools within the district. Respondents are taking action to improve their recruitment and retention of teachers. Financial incentives including bonuses and reimbursement for tuition were the most common, as well as training opportunities, and districts reported making use of a wide variety of recruiting strategies, including advertising. Additionally, many had already taken action to ensure that their staff members who might not currently meet the federal definition of “highly qualified” were in fact working toward it, by notifying teachers and encouraging those requiring additional coursework or certification to take steps in those directions.

Notes for Future Research

It would be highly beneficial to continue to repeat this survey or aspects of it, particularly in reference to meeting the “highly qualified” definition of NCLB. As definitions are clarified and as the deadline year of 2005-06 approaches, the sense of urgency may increase.
References


Chmelynski. C. “Districts are Struggling to Hire Enough Teachers.” *School Board News* (September 12, 2000).


Appendix

Survey Results: Attracting and Retaining Highly Qualified Teachers in Rural Schools
## Survey Results

### Attracting and Retaining Highly Qualified Teachers in Rural Schools

#### PART A. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. **What is your primary position?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Response Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Superintendent</td>
<td>818</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acting or Interim Superintendent</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Schools</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>891</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Please indicate the state in which your school district is located.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Response Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montana</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nevada</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hampshire</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utah</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyoming</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>888</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Is your district a countywide school system?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>164</td>
<td>718</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. What is the approximate size of your school district?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size Range</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Response Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>250 or fewer students</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>251 - 600 students</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>601 - 1,500 students</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,501 - 2,500 students</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,501 - 10,000 students</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 10,000 students</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>892</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Percentage of students in your district who are:

881 Responses
6. Percentage of students in your district who are:

869 Responses

7. Range of grades your school district serves:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Range</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Response Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K - 6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K - 8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K - 12</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 - 12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>886</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. What are your major teacher shortage areas? (Check all that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Response Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary education (general)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics - Grades K - 6</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics - Grades 7 - 12</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science - Grades K - 6</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science - Grades 7 - 12</td>
<td>523</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special education - Grades K - 6</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special education - Grades 7 - 12</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual education - Grades K - 6</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilingual education - Grades 7 - 12</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as a Second Language - Grades K - 6</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as a Second Language - Grades 7 - 12</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music - Grades K - 6</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music - Grades 7 - 12</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art - Grades K - 6</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art - Grades 7 - 12</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign languages - Grades K - 6</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign languages - Grades 7 - 12</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other(s), please specify subject(s)/grade range(s)</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PART B. ATTRACTING TEACHERS TO YOUR DISTRICT

9. On a scale of 1 to 5, how difficult is it to attract teachers to your school district?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Difficulty Level</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Response Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extremely difficult</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very difficult</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately difficult</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat difficult</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not difficult</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In your opinion, what factors are primarily responsible for the difficulties you experience ATTRACTIONING teachers to your school district? (Check N/A on each line if you indicated on Question 9 that you have no difficulty attracting teachers.)

The top percentage indicates total respondent ratio; the bottom number represents actual number of respondents selecting the option.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>1 Extremely important</th>
<th>2 Very important</th>
<th>3 Moderately important</th>
<th>4 Somewhat important</th>
<th>5 Not a factor at all</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Low salaries</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>174</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Concentrated student poverty</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Geographic isolation, remoteness</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>133</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Social isolation (e.g., fewer adults in community with similar interests; fewer stores, restaurants, professional sports, etc.)</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>145</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Distance from colleges and universities</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Lack of adequate housing</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>123</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. High cost of living</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Economic health of the surrounding community</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>69</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Teachers are expected to teach more than one grade</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Teachers are expected to teach multiple subjects</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>58</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What kinds of incentives do you offer to ATTRACT teachers to your district? (Check all that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incentive</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Response Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signing bonuses</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonuses for National Board Certified teachers</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonuses for teachers of hard-to-fill subjects (e.g., mathematics, science, special education, bilingual education)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting salaries at higher steps on the salary scale for teachers of hard-to-fill subjects</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition assistance</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student loan forgiveness</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing assistance</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal mentoring/induction program for beginning teachers</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PART C. RETAINING TEACHERS IN YOUR DISTRICT
12. On a scale of 1 to 5, how difficult is it to RETAIN teachers in your school district?

- Extremely difficult: 1%
- Very difficult: 8%
- Moderately difficult: 27%
- Somewhat difficult: 34%
- Not difficult: 29%

Total: 100%

13. In your opinion, what factors are primarily responsible for the difficulties you experience RETAINING teachers in your school district? (Check N/A on each line if you indicated on Question 12 that you have no difficulty retaining teachers.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>1 Extremely important</th>
<th>2 Very important</th>
<th>3 Moderately important</th>
<th>4 Somewhat important</th>
<th>5 Not a factor at all</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low salaries</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentrated student poverty</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic isolation, remoteness</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social isolation (e.g., fewer adults in community with similar interests; fewer stores, restaurants, professional sports, etc.)</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance from colleges and universities</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of adequate housing</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High cost of living</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic health of the surrounding community</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are expected to teach more than one grade</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are expected to teach multiple subjects</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of mentoring/support for beginning teachers</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 870 respondents

14. What kinds of incentives do you offer to RETAIN teachers in your district? (Check all that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incentive</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Response Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonuses for National Board Certified teachers</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonuses for teachers of hard-to-fill subjects (e.g., mathematics, science, special education, bilingual education)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starting salaries at higher steps on the salary scale for teachers of hard-to-fill subjects</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition assistance</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student loan forgiveness</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing assistance</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal mentoring/induction</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**PART D. STRATEGIES**

### 15. Which of the following strategies does your school district use to fill teacher vacancies? (Check all that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Response Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Form partnership with teacher training institution</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertise extensively</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hold job fairs</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct site visits to colleges</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempt to secure job commitments from college students before they graduate</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit teachers from local populations</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit from substitute teacher list</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit out-of-state</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit internationally</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruit online</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish &quot;grow-your-own&quot; programs to encourage paraprofessionals and teachers who lack full certification to become fully certified</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage high school students to become teachers (e.g., Future Teachers of America clubs)</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use state teacher clearinghouse and/or job bank</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrain current teachers to teach hard-to-fill subjects (e.g., mathematics, science, special education)</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share part-time teachers with neighboring school district</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire alternatively certified teachers</td>
<td>353</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 16. When your school district cannot fill a critical teacher vacancy, in what ways does your district use distance learning (via satellite, online courses, etc.) to offer courses in the following subject areas? (Check all that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Response Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My district never uses distance learning.</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics - Grades K - 6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics - Grades 7 - 12</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science - Grades K - 6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science - Grades 7 - 12</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as a Second Language - Grades K - 6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as a Second Language -</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Grades 7 - 12
- Music - Grades K - 6: 3, 0%
- Music - Grades 7 - 12: 8, 1%
- Art - Grades K - 6: 2, 0%
- Art - Grades 7 - 12: 17, 2%
- Foreign languages - Grades K - 6: 8, 1%
- Foreign languages - Grades 7 - 12: 269, 32%
- Advanced Placement (AP) courses: 225, 26%
- International Baccalaureate (IB) courses: 0, 0%
- Other high school honors courses: 152, 18%
- Other, please specify: 153, 18%

### PART E. INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS THAT ARE ESPECIALLY HARD-TO-STAFF

#### 17. Please list the total number of schools in your district:
- 886 Responses

#### 18. How many of these schools do you consider particularly hard to staff, relative to other schools in your district? (Please enter a number on each line.)
- 795 Responses

#### 19. In your opinion, what makes these schools particularly hard to staff, relative to other schools in your district? (Check all that apply.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Responses</th>
<th>Response Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A – My DISTRICT is hard to staff, but no individual school is more difficult to staff than others.</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The range of grades served by the school</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High student mobility</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High concentration of poor students</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low student test scores</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School has reputation for student discipline problems</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of parental involvement</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large class size</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited resources</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High staff turnover</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High concentration of inexperienced teachers</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low levels of staff collegiality and teamwork</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor quality of teachers currently in the school</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor quality of principal in the school</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of administrative support for teachers</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


1/20/2004
No mentoring program to support new teachers 23 3%
Principal only allows low levels of teacher influence on instructional, curricular, and policy decisions 7 1%
Teachers' or principal's job security is dependent upon improvements in student scores on state-mandated achievement test 8 1%
School has been identified for state takeover or reconstitution 3 0%
School is old or needs repairs 67 9%
Insufficient access to technology (e.g., lack of computers, no Internet access) 18 2%
Other, please specify 211 27%

What kinds of monetary incentives does your district offer to encourage teachers to work specifically in hard-to-staff SCHOOLS?
20. (Check all that apply.)

- My district does not offer monetary incentives to work in a particular SCHOOL. 734 89%
- Signing bonuses 16 2%
- Additional bonuses for National Board Certified teachers who work in hard-to-staff schools 15 2%
- Additional bonuses for teachers of hard-to-fill subjects in hard-to-staff schools (e.g., mathematics, science, special education, bilingual education) 13 2%
- Starting salaries at higher steps on the salary scale 31 4%
- Tuition assistance 50 6%
- Student loan forgiveness 21 3%
- Housing assistance 6 1%
- Other type of monetary incentive, please specify 32 4%

What kinds of non-monetary incentives does your district offer to encourage teachers to work specifically in hard-to-staff SCHOOLS?
21. (Check all that apply.)

- My district does not offer non-monetary incentives to work in a particular SCHOOL. 636 77%
- Smaller class sizes 135 16%
- Reduced teaching load 24 3%
- Additional planning time 53 6%
- Release time for professional development opportunities 140 17%
- Teaching assistants 61 7%
- Additional classroom materials or equipment 84 10%
- Other non-monetary incentive, please specify 20 2%
In your opinion, which of the following incentives would be most effective at attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers in hard-to-staff SCHOOLS in your district? (Check N/A on each line if you indicated on Question 18 that you have no particularly hard-to-staff schools, relative to other schools in your district.)

The top percentage indicates total respondent rating; the bottom number represents actual number of respondents selecting the option.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incentive</th>
<th>1 Extremely effective</th>
<th>2 Very effective</th>
<th>3 Moderately effective</th>
<th>4 Somewhat effective</th>
<th>5 Not effective at all</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bonuses</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition assistance</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing assistance</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller class sizes</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced teaching load</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional planning time</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release time for professional</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>development opportunities</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching assistants</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional classroom materials or</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equipment</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PART F. NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND The No Child Left Behind Act requires all teachers to be "highly qualified" by the end of the 2005-06 school year. In order to meet the federal definition of highly qualified, teachers must: (a) be fully certified by the state in which they are teaching; (b) hold at least a bachelor's degree; and (c) demonstrate subject matter competence in each of the core academic subjects that they teach. Core academic subjects include: English, reading/language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography. (For elementary school teachers, passing a state certification or licensing test covering the basic elementary school curriculum is sufficient to meet requirement "c."). Teachers with emergency, temporary, or provisional certificates DO NOT meet the new federal definition of "highly qualified."

22. In your opinion, which of the following incentives would be most effective at attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers in hard-to-staff SCHOOLS in your district? (Check N/A on each line if you indicated on Question 18 that you have no particularly hard-to-staff schools, relative to other schools in your district.)

23. How many teachers do you have in your district? (Please enter a number on each line. For junior high and high school teachers, count only those who teach core academic subjects; e.g., do not include shop teachers.)

856 Responses

24. How many teachers in your district currently teach more than one core academic subject (e.g., chemistry and biology, Spanish and French, English and history)? (Please enter a number on each line.)

841 Responses

25. How many teachers in your district DO NOT currently meet the new federal definition of "highly qualified" for each core academic subject that they teach? (Please enter a number on each line.)

839 Responses
Some teachers will need to complete additional college coursework or pass additional state assessments to become fully certified and satisfy the requirements of No Child Left Behind.

26. How many of your teachers do you estimate that you are likely to lose if you enforce these requirements? (Please enter a number on each line.)

831 Responses

What is your district doing to ensure that all currently employed teachers have the training, credentials, and formal certification needed to meet the new federal definition of “highly qualified”? (To review the federal definition of “highly qualified,” scroll back to the paragraph preceding Question 23.)

685 Responses

PART G. RURAL EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM (REAP)

The Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) provides funds to school districts that may be used for a variety of purposes, including teacher recruitment and retention, salaries, and signing bonuses. Is your school district receiving REAP funds during the 2002-2003 school year? (If no, skip to Question 30.)

28. Yes 336 39%
   No 533 61%

29. If yes, how are you using your REAP funds? (Check all that apply.)

   Teacher recruitment and retention 53 15%
   Teacher salaries 105 31%
   Teacher signing bonuses 6 2%
   Teacher professional development 206 60%
   Education technology 201 59%
   After-school or extended day programs 98 29%
   Title I 152 44%
   Curricular materials 40 12%
   Other, please specify

30. Are you a member of AASA?

   Yes 715 82%
   No 162 18%

Thank you very much for your assistance. Please note that AASA will not identify respondents or their school districts by name when summarizing the results of this survey. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Cindy Prince, Issues Analysis Director, at (703) 875-0767, cprince@aasa.org.