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USING FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDING TO PROMOTE NEW TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS

How The New Teacher Center Can Help Your District Achieve Success

The New Teacher Center (NTC) is the nation's premier organization focused on accelerating new teacher development and improving student achievement. Through new teacher induction and school leadership development, we advance student learning by promoting more effective instruction.

High-quality induction programs are critical to making beginning teachers more effective. They provide intensive professional development at a formative stage of teacher development. Despite good intentions, new teachers have yet to develop their skills and knowledge and, on average, are less effective than their more experienced peers. Intensive induction programs not only dramatically decrease new teacher attrition¹, but also support new teachers in becoming as effective as their more veteran colleagues.² Further, induction is a cost-effective investment, with each dollar spent yielding a return of \$1.66.³

In order to create a culture of learning in schools, we also need exemplary principals. The NTC helps principals to become highly skilled facilitators of teacher development and student learning. Principals who receive intensive induction support are more effective instructional leaders than those who do not.⁴

Induction and leadership development affects more than individual teachers and principals – its power stretches to catalyzing school transformation, creating a culture of continual improvement, and developing collective responsibility for student learning. Effective induction practices—coupled with coaching-based supervision and the development of strong professional learning communities—have proven to be powerful strategies in supporting significant growth in some of our nation's most challenging schools and districts. Due to our deep experience in human capital development, the NTC is in a unique position to support states and districts in helping schools to scale up these effective practices in every American classroom.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) includes a focus on innovative school reform, teacher effectiveness, and meaningful interventions in the lowest-performing schools. It recognizes that high-quality teachers and school leaders are prerequisites to increased student achievement and school improvement. U.S. Department of Education guidance suggests that in considering how to spend ARRA funds, states and districts should ask whether the proposed purpose improve results for students, increases educators' long-term capacity, accelerates school reform, improves productivity, and fosters continuous improvement.⁵ Our work to accelerate new teacher development, strengthen the capacity of principals and school leaders, and create communities of practice within schools and districts achieves all five of these goals.

School Districts

ARRA creates a \$650 million **What Works and Innovation Fund** for eligible Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and partnerships between a nonprofit organization and one or more LEAs (or consortia of schools) to scale up innovative programs. The Fund will allow districts and nonprofits with a track record of closing achievement gaps and meeting annual student performance goals to leverage additional resources to accelerate their work.

Among its four performance measures, the What Works and Innovation Fund requires eligible applicants to have: (1) Exceeded the state's Adequate Yearly Progress objectives for at least two years in a row; (2) Closed achievement gaps between student subgroups significantly; (3) Made significant improvements in high school graduation rates or increased recruitment and placement of high-quality teachers and school leaders; and (4) Established partnerships with the private sector or philanthropic organizations to provide matching funds.

The NTC is well-positioned to support interested LEAs as a nonprofit partner. Our leadership and expertise will allow districts to document and expand successful induction practices, approaches to school leadership development, and positive teaching and learning conditions. We have extensive experience working in the nation's largest school districts (including Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, New York City, and Washington, DC) as well as in districts throughout the state of California (including the NTC-led Santa Cruz/Silicon Valley New Teacher Project). In many of these settings, the NTC provides a comprehensive and integrated range of

services to meet the broad range of a district's human capital needs.

Our intensive approach to induction and mentoring accelerates new teacher practice. In support of this core work the NTC has capacity and expertise in:

- Designing and implementing high-quality induction programs for new educators;
- Developing communities of practice for new teachers, mentors, and school administrators;
- Analyzing classroom practice through video and other data sources to validate effective teaching and train teachers, mentors, and principals;
- Supporting and training mentors, instructional and leadership coaches, and school principals in mentoring and coaching-based practices that build new and veteran teacher and principal efficacy and retention; and
- Aligning teacher development practices with formative assessment and evaluation systems that provide feedback to increase educator effectiveness and promote retention in the profession.

ARRA also provides additional funding streams that can be utilized by school districts to advance educator quality. These include:

- State Stabilization Fund – School districts can use State Stabilization Fund dollars for any authorized activity under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and other federal education acts. U.S. Department of Education guidance encourages districts to use Stabilization Fund dollars to assist their state in making progress on the four education reform assurances in the state application (strengthen academic standards and assessments, build statewide data systems, improve teaching quality, and support low-performing schools). As possible strategies, the guidance specifically mentions “improving teacher effectiveness and the equitable distribution of highly qualified teachers” by “establishing a system for identifying and training highly effective teachers to serve as instructional leaders” and “modifying the school schedule to allow for collaboration among the instructional staff.” The NTC has expertise in helping districts with this work.
- Title I – NTC can help districts to identify available funding sources to support induction and professional development work. Districts with schools in need of improvement must set-aside 10 percent of regular and ARRA Title I funding for professional development (unless a district or state applies for a waiver).

- Teacher Incentive Fund – The NTC has the capacity to support district TIF applications, especially those interested in creating salary incentives for educators who take on additional responsibilities and leadership roles, such as instructional coaching and mentoring.
- Teacher Quality Enhancement Grants – Authorized by Title II of the Higher Education Act, the NTC is available to support Partnership Grants applications which are intended to promote innovative approaches to teacher preparation, and Recruitment Grants which are intended to support the recruitment and retention of highly qualified teachers and the design of high-quality preparation and induction programs.

When the U.S. Department of Education releases further guidance regarding the distribution of ARRA’s competitive grant funds, we will update you about specific ways that you can use the money to support high-quality induction and mentoring and other initiatives to improve the effectiveness of beginning educators.

If you have an interest in learning more about the work of the New Teacher Center or in exploring a potential district-level partnership involving federal stimulus funding, please contact Alicia Livingston, executive assistant to NTC Executive Director Ellen Moir, at alicial@ucsc.edu or (831) 459-4323. Thank you.

¹ Smith, T. & Ingersoll, R., “What are the Effects of Induction and Mentoring on Beginning Teacher Turnover?” *American Educational Research Journal*. Vol. 41, No. 3 (2004), pp. 681-714.

² Fletcher, S., Strong, M & Villar, A. “An Investigation of the Effects of Variations in Mentor-Based Induction on the Performance of Students in California,” *Teachers College Record*, Vol. 110, No. 10 (2008), p. 2271-2289.

³ Villar, A. & Strong, M. “Is Mentoring Worth the Money? A Benefit-Cost Analysis and Five-Year Rate of Return of a Comprehensive Mentoring Program for Beginning Teachers,” *ERS Spectrum*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (Summer 2007), pp. 1-17; Goldrick, L., *NTC Policy Brief: New Teacher Support Pays Off: A Return on Investment for Educators and Kids*, Santa Cruz, California: New Teacher Center (Fall 2007).

⁴ Strong, M., Barrett, A., and Bloom, G., *Supporting the New Principal: Managerial and Instructional Leadership in a Principal Induction Program*, Santa Cruz, California: Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (2003).

⁵ U.S. Department of Education, “American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009: Using ARRA Funds to Drive School Reform and Improvement” (April 24, 2009).