

Renewing our Schools,  
Securing our Future



**A Report on:**

***A High Quality Teacher for Every Classroom: Hiring, Supporting,  
Retaining and Assigning Them Equitably***

**November 19, 2004 – Phoenix, Arizona**

**PARTICIPANTS**

***Task Force Members:***

- Louis Caldera, President, University of New Mexico
- Margaret McKenna, President, Lesley University
- Janet Napolitano, Governor, State of Arizona
- Delia Pompa, Principal, DMP Associates and former Director, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs
- James Pughsley, Superintendent, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools, Charlotte, NC
- Chauncey Veatch, National Teacher of the Year, Coachella Valley High School, Thermal, CA
- Roger Wilkins, Professor, History and American Culture, George Mason University

***Panelists:***

- John Wright, President, Arizona Education Association
- Ronald Marx, Dean, College of Education, University of Arizona
- Steve Ybarra, Principal, Carl Hayden Community High School
- Fred Jones, Educational Consultant, Fredric H. Jones and Associates, Inc.
- Gaynor McCown, Executive Director, The Teaching Commission

***Paper Presentation:***

- Richard Ingersoll, Associate Professor of Education and Sociology, University of Pennsylvania

***Teacher Perspectives:***

- Laura Harnish, Master Teacher, Madison Heights Elementary School

## INTRODUCTION

*A High Quality Teacher for Every Classroom: Hiring, Supporting, Retaining and Assigning Them Equitably*, was the fifth of six public education forums held by the *Renewing our Schools, Securing our Future* National Task Force on Public Education. It took place on November 19, 2004, at Lowell Elementary School in Phoenix, Arizona and was attended by approximately 80 people. Participating Task Force members listened to distinguished panelists as they discussed quality teacher preparation programs, efficient and effective hiring practices, high quality clinical experiences, on-going professional development, and assignment of quality teachers to hard-to-serve schools. This event provided a forum for local and state leaders, education advocates, parents, teachers, and community members to discuss Arizona's efforts to prepare, recruit, assign and retain high quality teachers in all of its schools.

To coincide with this forum, the Task Force also commissioned a paper by Richard Ingersoll entitled, *Why Do High-Poverty Schools Have Difficulty Staffing Their Classrooms with Qualified Teachers?* This paper addresses the reasons that the nation's schools, particularly those that are disadvantaged, are unable to provide each classroom with a highly-qualified teacher; the paper concluded that teacher turnover is a major contributor to this problem.

To read this paper in its entirety, visit [www.americanprogress.org/schools](http://www.americanprogress.org/schools) or [www.ourfuture.org/issues\\_and\\_campaigns/education/AZ\\_teacher\\_ret.cfm](http://www.ourfuture.org/issues_and_campaigns/education/AZ_teacher_ret.cfm).

## QUALITY TEACHERS

Research tells us that high quality teachers are the key to helping students learn. To prepare high quality teachers, teacher education programs should provide them with the tools they will need for success, including subject matter expertise and mastery of instructional and classroom management skills. Teacher preparation programs should also be able to demonstrate alignment with K-12 expectations, an ability to recruit "the best and brightest" into the profession, high quality clinical experiences, and accountability for results. High quality professional development is key and can help teachers refine their craft and learn new instructional strategies.

## WELCOME

The Honorable **Janet Napolitano**, Governor of Arizona, welcomed the *Renewing our Schools, Securing our Future* Task Force to her state and, as Co-chair of the Task Force, shared her thoughts on the importance of the project. She noted that a long-term look at education is what underlies the work of the Task Force and is what sparked her interest in participating. The Governor stated that at the governmental level, leaders far too often deal with the here and now of education: how do we increase the number of students passing the AIMS test; how do we implement No Child Left Behind; how do we phase in all-day kindergarten? She also pointed out that policy makers haven't had the luxury of

taking a step back and looking more broadly at the future of schools to ask what they will look like 20 years from now in terms of how they are organized, the length of the school year, and how students will be taught.

The Governor then identified the focus of the Phoenix education forum - teachers, the single most important ingredient in a public school system. Setting the stage for the forum, she identified the next set of questions that must be addressed - what kind of teachers are in our classrooms and how do we keep them there? Other issues that need to be analyzed are the conditions of employment, the ability of teachers to interact with their peers, the availability of career development and enhancement opportunities, and the ways in which teachers are enticed to stay in the teaching field. Governor Napolitano identified these issues as long-term, large-scale issues that are crucial to creating and maintaining equality in the public school system.

### **PRESENTATION HIGHLIGHTS**

Participants of this forum discussed the importance of high quality teachers in educating the next generation. They addressed the issues of compensation, professional development, classroom management and leadership. Presenters also discussed Arizona's successes and challenges.

**Ronald Marx**, Dean of the University of Arizona's College of Education addressed two major concepts: teacher preparation and teacher professional development. Marx first pointed out that research universities must be heavily engaged in the preparation and ongoing development of our nation's teachers, and that the University of Arizona is doing this. In his discussion on teacher preparation, Marx stated that teaching is a demanding profession and requires four fundamental things:

- Teachers must have a strong understanding of their subject matter;
- Teachers must have knowledge of the pedagogy of instruction, assessment and classroom management;
- Teachers must know and understand children and their communities (including culture and language); and
- Teachers must be able to weave all of these pieces together and implement them in the classroom.

In discussing elements of teacher professional development, Marx stated that high quality teachers result from more demanding preparation, not less demanding preparation. For teacher preparation to be successful at the university level, it must be embraced by the entire university in a cross-campus collaboration. Teacher education must also be intellectually demanding - as demanding as other professions such as nursing, accounting, and architecture.

Marx also pointed out that teaching is not an easy endeavor; it requires high expectations, assignments that link education theory to practice, and the rigorous application of standards. Teacher education must have a direct link to practice, integrate professional

preparation early on, extend over long enough of a timeframe to fully develop students, and take place in a setting that will employ these teachers once they have finished their schooling. Marx promoted the need for diverse faculty in professional teacher education programs, support for structural arrangements among university departments and colleges (leaders, presidents and provosts must be on board and provide resources to enable this to happen), collaboration between universities and professional communities, and the recruitment of students who are committed to education and that reflect the diversity of children in the schools.

In addition, Marx addressed the continuing professional development of teachers and noted that it is a career-long, rather than one-shot, issue. Professional development programs must build toward sustained capability and capacity in the school and must be tailored to the conditions and the context of the school.

**John Wright**, President of the Arizona Education Association addressed teacher compensation, including alternative compensation models, the principles that underlie each model, and Arizona's experiences with alternative compensation. He began by pointing out that higher salaries are necessary but insufficient alone in attracting and retaining quality teachers. As leaders look at salaries and compensation structures, he suggests that they look not only at paying teachers more, but paying them differently. Wright noted that this is the key to building the profession of teaching and ensuring both quality teachers and quality teaching.

When looking at measures that are associated with compensation, in order to evaluate quality teaching, the entire equation of teaching and learning must be analyzed. This includes both inputs (teacher knowledge and skills) and outputs (reliable measures of student achievement). Within the models of alternative compensation, the notion of a tiered profession can be explored. Under this tiered structure, more experienced teachers serve as mentors who coach or lead newer teachers. These "master teachers" are compensated for both their skills and their efforts to support newer teachers. This type of compensation system requires:

- Mutual input from educators, administrators, and school boards;
- Compensation that isn't overly complex. The system should be clearly defined and understandable with expectations written, shared and understood;
- Equal access so that any educator can participate in the system;
- Performance evaluation based on multiple measures;
- Alignment with standards that measure both teacher and student performance; and
- Rewards that are significant enough to be motivating for teachers.

Arizona has 20 years of experience with alternative compensation systems such as the Career Ladder program, which was implemented there in 1985. The program is currently in place in 28 school districts and is a tiered, multi-level system that has several key components including: a rigorous peer evaluation system, a higher level of expected instruction, a level of expected student achievement that includes identification of student needs, outcomes for these students to meet, charting of student progress during the year,

and the submission of a portfolio demonstrating student success by the end of the year. In addition, teachers must offer some type of extended service to their school or district and commit to professional support (e.g., peer evaluation or mentoring/coaching to support peers).

**Steve Ybarra**, Principal of Carl Hayden Community High School, spoke about the kind of teachers he prefers to employ. He seeks teachers who are lifelong students and who accept the role that they are still learning. He hires teachers that are willing to be learning participants in his school. Citing the changing demographics of the school-aged population, Ybarra pointed out that he needs teachers that are not only trained in their content area, but those that are trained in English as a Second Language (ESL) methods and embrace diverse cultures. His teachers are strong and able to showcase their talents.

Ybarra feels that because teachers have important contact with children in our schools and put in hard work, they should be compensated accordingly. He believes that salaries shouldn't be tied to a career ladder system, but instead be out there for all teachers to access. Ybarra continued that in order to prepare teachers to be the best, university preparation programs must enable students to enter the classroom during their first year of study and encourage training in ESL. He also identified the mentoring of new teachers and the pairing of new teachers with experienced teachers as a principal's responsibility. He acknowledged the importance of accountability and emphasized the need for administrators to hold teachers accountable for student achievement.

**Fred Jones**, an Educational Consultant with Fredric H. Jones and Associates, Inc., has spent 35 years studying teachers – who they are and what they do in the classroom. In his presentation, Jones defined the teaching techniques of “natural” teachers who work “smart” versus those that are working hard, but not effectively. Ineffective teachers are often exhausted.

Jones then outlined the typical pattern of an ineffective teacher. First, the teacher does most of the work by presenting the lesson at the front of the classroom. This is what he referred to as “performing a matinee six times a day.” While the teacher was presenting the lesson, the students in the back half of the classroom are in the “green zone” or the “go zone” and are talking and fooling around. So, when students enter into a period of work known as guided practice, the teacher is met with what Jones refers to as the “helpless handraisers.” The teacher then spends, on average, 4.23 minutes tutoring the “helpless handraiser” and reinforcing “learned helplessness.” Jones points out that while the teacher is tutoring four or five students, the other two-thirds of the students are chatting and the noise level increases.

Natural teachers, on the other hand, are “working the crowd.” They are more often out there among the students, rather than standing in front of the classroom. In doing this, Jones said they are suppressing or preventing many discipline problems. He also mentioned that the simple act of rearranging the furniture can reduce the amount of “goofing off” that takes place in the classroom. Jones characterized the behavior pattern of “the natural” according to the way they package the lesson. Most lessons taught by

teachers who are working themselves to death are packaged as input, input, input, output. This forces children into a state of passivity, leads to cognitive overload and doesn't enable kids to learn by doing. Alternatively, "the natural" packages the lesson in an input, output, input, output fashion. These naturals engage their children in activity and, in essence, are actually serving as activities' directors. These teachers recognize that children learn by doing and view learning as a by-product of activity. The naturals also walk around the classroom, checking on the progress of their students every step of way. By the time the classroom reached the stage for guided practice, the children have performed the activity correctly once, twice, even three times.

The natural is also able to give corrective feedback. Instead of tutoring the "helpless handraiser," the teacher knows how to respond to the child's questions – "how to get in and out of there in ten seconds without reinforcing helplessness." According to Jones, if teachers spend more than 10 seconds answering one student's questions, they will lose the rest of the classroom. The way the teacher responds is by pre-packaging the steps of performance. To illustrate, Jones gave the example of model airplane instructions that clearly depict graphically and in writing the steps of assembly. It is here that Jones promoted the use of a permanent, visual display that refers to the critical features in the process the child is learning. This enables the teacher to quickly assist the student – to point to the visual on the wall and indicate the next step.

Jones also discussed how natural teachers convey that they mean business – through the use of body language. According to Jones, "calm is strength, upset is weakness." To illustrate this point, he reported that 80% of student referrals are due to back talk. Children mouth-off to their teacher and the teacher resorts to the fight-or-flight technique and begins to argue back. The back-and-forth arguing continues, leaving only one option for the teacher – pulling rank and sending the child to the office.

In closing his remarks, Jones stated that research verifies the need for a common language and a common understanding of effective practice. Without it, pre-service and in-service training is nothing more than "catch as catch can."

**Gaynor McCown**, Executive Director of The Teaching Commission, discussed the recommendations put forth by The Teaching Commission as they focus on teachers and teaching. Nothing is more critical to what goes on in a school than the quality of its teachers and the interaction that occurs between student and teacher. The scope of The Teaching Commission's recommendations cover three areas: performance and compensation, skills and preparation, and leadership and support.

In addressing compensation issues, McCown reported that teachers, on average, need greater compensation. In response, there should be a willingness to link compensation to performance (performance defined as student achievement). She also addressed the need for career tracks in teaching so that individuals do not feel the need to leave teaching in order to earn higher pay or recognition for excellence. In addition, offering incentives for individuals to go into hard-to-serve areas and to teach hard-to-serve subjects such as math, science and special education, was recommended.

When discussing skills and preparation, McCown stated that teacher education is a college and university responsibility and that university presidents must commit to raising their standards and improving their departments of education. She continued by addressing certification and licensing issues and the disservice that many states are doing to the teaching profession by creating barriers. Some states have so many barriers that it prevents people from going into the teaching field, particularly mid-career individuals. She called for states to increase their standards while decreasing the bureaucracy. State should not make people “jump through so many hoops” such that it creates a disincentive to the profession.

Her remarks on leadership focused on action at the principal level. Schools need strong leadership to create an environment that will encourage teachers to stay in the profession. Additionally, principals should be given the authority to hire and fire staff in an effort to assemble their own team. McCown also noted the need for principals to be held accountable for offering mentoring and induction programs.

To sum up her remarks, she pointed out that all of these pieces should be packaged together; each recommendation alone is not enough. The Teaching Commission will judge its success based on its ability to get governors and states to implement these recommendations.

**Richard Ingersoll**, Associate Professor of Education and Sociology at the University of Pennsylvania, provided a brief summary of his paper, *Why Do High-Poverty Schools Have Difficulty Staffing Their Classrooms with Qualified Teachers?* National data tells us that teacher shortages are not the culprit in the woes of poor, low-income, Title I schools not being able to staff their classrooms with qualified teachers. The primary problem is that there are too many teachers prematurely leaving. When it comes to solutions, recruitment alone won't do it. According to Ingersoll, national data shows that 40-50% of teachers leave the field within five years. The sources of turnover and the concrete steps that schools can take to address the problem are covered in Ingersoll's paper, which can be found at [www.americanprogress.org/schools](http://www.americanprogress.org/schools) or [www.ourfuture.org/issues\\_and\\_campaigns/education/AZ\\_teacher\\_ret.cfm](http://www.ourfuture.org/issues_and_campaigns/education/AZ_teacher_ret.cfm).

## **TASK FORCE AND PANELIST DIALOGUE**

Following these initial presentations, panelists and Task Force members entered into a dialogue on teacher certification, compensation and the staffing of hard-to-serve schools, recruitment and retention, classroom management, English acquisition, and the quality teacher gap. Below is a summary of each discussion.

### ***Teacher Certification:***

Arizona's public universities and private institutions are creating alternative certification routes that are accessible to individuals who do not live close to a college campus. The alternative certification routes aim to create high quality teachers as well. The University of Arizona, for example, has a one year program that is partially funded through sales tax revenue and offers certification programs in the areas of math, science and agriculture to

mid-career individuals. Arizona State University has a similar program, and Northern Arizona University, whose mandate is more statewide, also has a program for career change students.

***Compensation and Staffing of Hard-to-Serve Schools:***

Panelists provided their perspectives on how to construct incentive programs that bring teachers to difficult schools while providing them with the right rewards for their performance. Simple-minded outcome measures as criteria to judge performance are wrong and will likely yield the wrong individuals receiving higher compensation. Tests, such as Arizona's AIMS test, have scales of economy that are based on narrow-minded views of what it means to measure learning. Other technologies give more solid data, but are more expensive to use. The development of assessment models that are more usable, exportable, and scaleable can better measure performance criteria and will be more suitable.

One way to develop an incentive system to entice teachers into hard-to-serve areas is by establishing partnerships with colleges and universities and school districts. Through the expertise of the universities, high quality professional development for teachers can be created. It was suggested that economists identify the investment strategies, such as 12-month pay, that will help to keep individuals in schools for a longer period of time.

***Recruitment and Retention:***

Task Force members and panelists discussed the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers, and emphasized relationship building, cultivation and mentoring, and the use of more competitive criteria in selecting students for teacher education programs.

- In analyzing what makes a difference in the hiring and retention of quality teachers, a panelist answered simply “relationships.” The relationships that administrators build with the people they hire is key. Finding people that “fit” with the community and the students served is extremely important. Another element that makes a difference, in addition to performance-based compensation, is the consideration of a teacher’s portfolio - the types of assignments that students are asked to produce and how teachers instruct them.
- Discussion also included efforts to identify the most promising Teach For America students and ways to attract them permanently into the career of teaching so that participants are not just temporary employees. In order for Teach For America students to succeed in the school, they need cultivation, support and mentoring.
- Selectivity was also identified as a way to attract and retain talented individuals in the teaching field. Some universities have explored increasing the GPA criteria for students wishing to enter education training programs. With respect to retention, this practice has shown to have positive effects and is considered a way to recruit the best into the field; these students will be more successful in training and will therefore be more successful in practice.

***Packaging of the Classroom Management Curriculum:***

Classroom management techniques must be packaged into a curriculum that novice teachers can learn from the beginning because “you can’t do tenure track for a living and teacher training on the side; not if you want excellence.” The institutional framework that would develop trainers and advance them in their career currently doesn’t exist. Instituting a system that offers a degree of protection and contains a system of faculty development and faculty compensation that rewards the training process would be very helpful. Until this institutional framework exists, teacher training will be practiced on the side. Some university departments of education are experiencing success. This success is due to a critical mass of employees that are both able and committed. There is a definite need for more institutions to implement this type of custom-built structure because without it there aren’t enough able and committed individuals to staff all departments of education.

***English Acquisition:***

A model district using English language acquisition techniques is Union City, New Jersey where all teachers are required to be ESL specialists (often in addition to their area of expertise). This district, with a large population of Haitian and Cuban students, has successfully transformed itself, due in large part to this ESL requirement.

But it’s also important to acknowledge that there is no single, uniform way to teach kids to learn. The current movement in this country is to find big solutions to education problems when what is needed is more scientifically-based information to help leaders make better decisions. Education is a local phenomenon – “it’s a school in a neighborhood with parents, kids and community.” School practices must be rooted in the community for us to move forward. We must have an education research agenda that enables decision-makers to choose from a full range of solutions, instead of leaving them with one solution to be used for all problems.

***Quality Teacher Gap:***

To close the achievement gap, we must first close the quality teacher gap. The rate of progress in closing this gap is of great concern. The need to accelerate improvements in closing it is huge.

Additionally, both the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards of work are important and the need to balance the two can not be over-estimated. In the words of a panelist “You can not pay me enough to go to a job where I’m not valued, not respected and not consulted.” Teaching includes much more than simply offering instruction. Those who are, or were, teachers understand the range of work and the confines of time in accomplishing this work. Providing a work year with regular periods of time that can be used for planning, professional development, collaboration with colleagues, and instruction preparation is necessary. Providing blocks of time at the end of a teaching period will finally enable teachers to meaningfully focus on and assess the work they have assigned to students, but traditionally have never had time to evaluate.

The recognition of excellence is also a real issue (and money is only one way of acknowledging this excellence). Another piece is accountability and making sure that schools are staffed with the right people. Administrators must be careful not to put their teachers in environments where the level of work and capacity are different from one classroom to another.

## **TEACHER PERSPECTIVE**

Laura Harnish, a master teacher at Madison Heights Elementary School offered a snapshot of the professional development and compensation models in place at her school. Madison Heights has implemented the Milken Family Foundation *Teacher Advancement Program* (TAP). As the basis of their teacher pay-for-performance model, the school uses a rigorous evaluation system and a professional development support system that focuses on student achievement.

Madison Heights also uses an embedded professional development model that contains two major components: collaboration and teacher leader support. The school allows for collaboration time, enabling teachers to regularly assess student work and monitor student progress on a continuum. Through the school's teacher leader support system, master teachers work in the classrooms with teachers and participate in reflective and planning dialogue. Harnish noted that learning does not happen outside of the classroom and that like children, teachers learn by doing. Because of this, professional development must be completely embedded with the day-to-day activities of a teacher's job.

## **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

To learn more about the issues facing Arizona's teachers and administrators, Task Force members and panelists turned to the audience to hear about their experiences, concerns and ideas. The highlights of this segment are below.

### ***Teacher Recruitment and Retention:***

Teach for America is highly selective, takes creative people with passion, trains them and places them in hard-to-serve schools. It serves as an opportunity for schools to identify young talent and bring those people into the field of teaching.

Class size is another important issue when looking at retention. To reach students, especially those in grades K through 3, a smaller class size is important. It has an impact on both student behavior and a student's ability to learn.

### ***Business Community:***

In moving reform forward more rapidly, we must acknowledge that businesses should be educational partners. These relationships provide an opportunity to move from rhetoric to 'how do we move forward.' Finding ways to bring this collaboration between business and education into the system is very important.

### ***Professional Development:***

Numerous audience members shared their thoughts on professional development with panelists and Task Force members. A summary of their comments are provided here.

- While the coaching and mentoring model is currently popular, we need to move to a model which links theory to practice so that teachers in the classroom are continually interacting with researchers at the university level. Researchers, community members and members of the business community need to be brought into the system, providing all teachers with the same opportunity to interact with others. Teaching is a relationship. What will make teachers good is their ability to interact with and respond to students. Professional development is a relationship, not a delivery.
- The most successful teacher education programs are those where the faculties of the program and the schools are partners. A school of education with faculty that hasn't visited a school since they were actually students, is a failure.
- Arizona's career ladder programs, which represent approximately one-third of its students and one-third of its teachers and have been in place for 20 years, are focused on individual teacher accountability for student achievement. Student achievement coaches are trained in grade-level and content areas, are classroom teachers, and support colleagues in the writing of the student achievement plans.
- Elementary school teachers need to work closely with high-school teachers. Elementary schools are feeders into the high schools, and they all need to be on the same track, heading in the same direction. All levels of schools need to work together as a team.

### ***Best Practices:***

Teachers need time to collaborate and implement best practices. Teachers often work until 6:00 or 7:00 pm; what teachers really need is time – either through a 12-month model or by changing the way the teaching day is organized. Either way, teachers need more time to dedicate to their craft, and they should be paid for the work they put in.

### ***Gender Bias in Education:***

There is gender bias in the classroom. Women were encouraged, 50 years ago, to go into the field of teaching because few other career opportunities were available. Now, women have many more career opportunities and need to be encouraged into specific fields such as technology, math, and science. Female students, Latinas in particular, need to be encouraged into these fields as well. Gender bias and awareness should also be discussed in teacher education programs at the university level.

### ***Connecting Learning with Real Life Experience:***

In a global economy and age of information, children don't believe that what they are being taught in school will help them in the future. These students are the labor force of

tomorrow, yet there is a critical course missing from the K-12 system - economics. In addition to students learning economics, teachers should be trained in the subject as well.

***Arizona's Community College System:***

Arizona's community college system has been asked by its school districts to start a graduate-degree teacher preparation program. Rio Salado College, one of Arizona's community colleges, has created a hybrid program that is both on-line and hands-on. In developing the college's curriculum, they asked the school districts to provide input into what was needed. This program is now the military's preferred program. It exists in 33 countries and is used to train interested members of the military, so that when they return to the U.S. they are ready to be teachers. Arizona's community college system also delivers a large number of students to the university system; 57-63% of students that go on to universities come from the community college system and get their content training there.

**CONCLUSION**

Governor Janet Napolitano concluded the forum by pointing out the five **myths** that were addressed during the forum.

1. It's just about the college of education. It's really about our universities as a whole, and our community colleges preparing teachers.
2. It's just about the need to graduate more teachers; if we graduate more teachers, we'll have more teachers. It's really about retaining teachers, particularly in hard-to-staff or difficult schools.
3. It's just about the pay. It's really about pay combined with conditions of employment that don't allow people to fulfill their total professional potential.
4. Professional development is segmented from, and different from teaching, that you do it in the summer, on your off hours, or on your own time. It's really about how you integrate professional development into the core of teaching and every moment of it, and align it to the curriculum that we impart on students whose level of achievement we are trying to raise.
5. Nothing is happening in Arizona. Really, there is much happening in Arizona -- from the Arizona Reads initiative, to TAP, to charter schools. Arizona is an ideal site for Task Forces such as this to visit, and an ideal site from which knowledge can be gained.

