

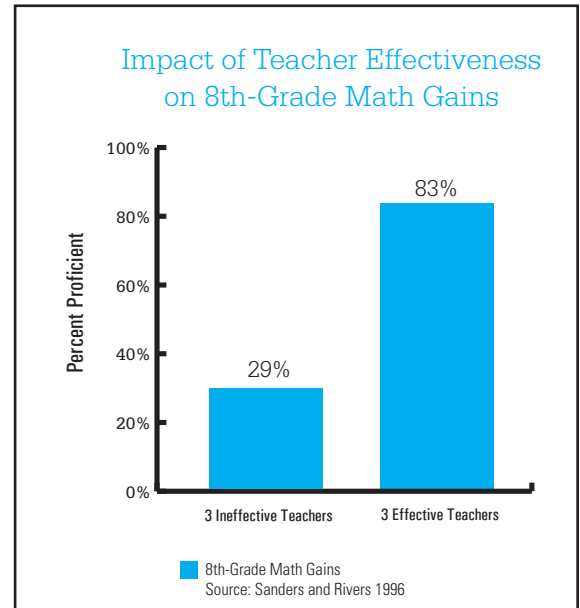
# Facts for Education Advocates

## Teachers and Principals

Teachers and principals stand at the center of the educational enterprise. There can be no school reform or improvement without better support for these professionals. Following is a set of facts about their current work.

### Teacher Effectiveness and Distribution

- Total number of K-12 teachers for public schools, 2006-2007: 3,180,396 (National Center for Education Statistics).
- Teachers have the greatest impact on student learning. The most effective teachers produce student gains almost four times greater than the least effective teachers. Students with three effective teachers in a row make gains almost three times higher than students who experience three ineffective teachers in a row (Sanders & Rivers, 1996).
- Out-of-field teachers are far more common in high-poverty schools. Twentyseven percent of teachers in high-poverty schools are teaching out-of-field subjects (where they have neither an academic major nor state certification in the subject), versus 14 percent of teachers in low-poverty schools (The Education Trust, 2009).
- Teacher shortages are reported nationwide in 13 fields. The top three are: multicategorical special education; severe/profound disabilities special education; and mathematics education. The two top regions that reported the most severe teacher shortages were Alaska and Hawaii (AAEE, 2007).
- Urban school districts lose as many as 60 percent of applicants for vacant teaching positions because of slow hiring practices, delays in state budget timetables and seniority policies (Levin & Quinn, 2003).



### Teacher Attrition

- At the end of the 2004-05 school year, 17 percent of K-12 teachers — about 621,000 — left the schools where they had been teaching (NCES, 2008). The national cost of public school teacher turnover is estimated to be as high as \$7.3 billion a year (NCTAF, 2007).
- Almost half of teacher turnover was due to transfers — 8 percent of the teacher workforce (or 289,000 teachers a year) transferred to a different school (NCES, 2008).
- The other half of teacher turnover was due to leavers — the 9 percent of the teacher workforce, approximately 333,000 teachers, who left the field of teaching because they:
  - o took a job in a field other than elementary or secondary teaching (3.8 percent)
  - o returned to school for further education (0.3 percent);
  - o left for family reasons (e.g., to raise children or take care of other family members) (1.2 percent);
  - o retired (2.4 percent); or
  - o left for miscellaneous “other” reasons (1.3 percent) (NCES, 2008).
- In 2000, researchers predicted that about 760,000 current teachers would retire over the next 10 years, during which 3 million new students would enroll in the nation’s schools. These figures suggest American schools would need to hire some 2.2 million new teachers in the coming decade (Marchant, 2000).

# Facts for Education Advocates

## Effective School Leaders

- Research and practice show that skilled and committed school leaders who help shape and manage teaching and learning are a vital part of creating and sustaining high-quality learning environments (The Wallace Foundation, 2009).
- Principals have the greatest in-school effect on student learning after teachers. The impact of this leadership tends to be greatest in schools with the highest-need students. (Leithwood et al., 2004).
- In a study examining achievement differences among similar schools, researchers identified school leadership as a key factor in schools that outperform others with similar students. Achievement levels were higher in schools where principals undertake and lead a school reform process; act as managers of school improvement; cultivate the school's vision; and make use of student data to support instructional practices and to provide assistance to struggling students (Williams, Kirst, Haertel, et al., 2005).
- Like teachers, effective principals need ongoing professional development and mentoring — a support that many principals do not have (SREB, 2007).
- Despite the profound impact school leaders can have, approximately 80 percent of superintendents and 69 percent of principals think that leadership training offered at schools of education is not applicable to the challenges leaders face in today's schools and districts (DeVita, 2007).

## Works Cited

American Association for Employment in Education. (2007). Educator supply and demand in the United States. Columbus, OH: Author.

DeVita, C. M. (2007). In L. Darling-Hammond et al. (Eds.), *Preparing school leaders for a changing world: Lessons from exemplary leadership development programs*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University, Stanford Educational Leadership Institute.

Haycock, K. (1998). *Good teaching matters... a lot*. Washington, DC: Education Trust.

Leithwood, L., Seshore, K., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004). *How leadership influences student learning*. New York: Wallace Foundation.

Levin, J., & Quinn, M. (2003). *Missed opportunities: How we keep high-quality teachers out of urban classrooms*. Washington, DC: New Teacher Project.

Marchant, V. (2000, June 5). *Why not teach next?* Time Magazine.

[http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/tables/2009305\\_03.asp](http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/tables/2009305_03.asp)

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future. (2007). *The high cost of teacher turnover*. Washington, DC: Author.

Sanders, W., & Rivers, J. (1996). *Cumulative and residual effects of teachers on future student academic achievement*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Value-Added Research and Assessment Center.

Southern Regional Education Board. (2007). *Good principals aren't born — they're mentored: Are we investing enough to get the school leaders we need?* Atlanta: Author.

The Wallace Foundation. (2009). *Assessing the effectiveness of school leaders: New directions and new processes*. New York: Author.

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2008). *The condition of education 2008*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

Williams, T., Kirst, M., Haertel, E., et al. (2005). *Similar students, different results: Why do some schools do better? A large-scale survey of California elementary schools serving low-income students*. Mountain View, CA: EdSource.