

**Great Lakes West**  
Comprehensive Assistance Center



LEARNING POINT  
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# **Closing the Wisconsin Educator Capacity Gap: Some Research and Evaluation Challenges, Opportunities, and Priorities**

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## **The Educator Capacity Gap**

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To what extent are highly qualified educators also highly effective?

The public, parents, and students expect educators to be both HQ and HE.

The size of the discrepancy between qualifications and effectiveness can be described as the WI educator capacity gap.

# A perspective on teaching. . .

- . . . as civilization advances, the gap between the capacities of the young and the concerns of adults widens. Learning by direct sharing in the pursuits of grown-ups becomes increasingly difficult . . . Ability to share effectively in adult activities thus depends upon a prior training given with this end in view. Intentional agencies -- schools -- and explicit material -- studies -- are devised. The task of teaching certain things is delegated to a special group of persons.

# A second perspective on teaching. . .

*. . . we need fundamental changes to our educational system to create the level of results which will enable all students to compete with their peers, nationally and internationally, as workers and as productive, educated citizens.*

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future  
(2007). *Building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education System* (2007).

# more from the National Commission

- . . . *Moving toward a more uniform system of teacher education and training which incorporates rigorous high standards will produce a core of teachers who have the same degree of training one would expect of doctors, lawyers, pilots, engineers or practitioners of other professions.*
- *Clearly this is not the case today, despite substantial progress led by NBPTS, National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF), National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and many others.*
- *Robert Wehling, NCTAF Board Member*

# Federal and State Policy Priorities

In 2001, NCLB provides numerous requirements and expectations for assuring all students have highly qualified teachers.

In 2004, PI 34. . . Aligning teacher education, professional development, program approval and licensing . . . to ensure highly qualified licensed staff (who reflect) competence in the standards.

# Continuing Challenges

With more than 98% of WI educators “highly qualified”, student achievement/outcomes paradoxes persist:

- 24% of HS graduates take AP exams, yet in 2004 the WTCS reported nearly 26,000 enrollments in remedial and developmental courses, half of whom were recent HS grads
- In June, 2006 92 schools failed to meet AYP goals. Of these 92 schools, 27 missed AYP only because the reading and math performance of students with disabilities was below the State-set threshold.

# Teacher Effectiveness: The Knowledge Base

- Since 2001 Educators have been encouraged to focus on adopting and using scientifically rigorous research.
- “What Works” and “Doing What Works” websites offer some examples of curricula and interventions that have been experimentally tested and replicated
- At these sites, the research evidence on the practices related to teacher education, induction, and professional development is less prominent.

# Evidence from Recent Research Syntheses

- Rand (2004). . . Schools providing mentoring and induction programs, particularly those w/collegial support, had lower turnover rates among beginning teachers.
- CCSSO (2008). . . Evaluations of professional development are improving-10 studies increased content knowledge and changed instructional practices of math and science teachers.

# The context matters . . .

- NCCTQ-Teacher Quality and Student Achievement. . . *The majority of variation in teachers' effectiveness at raising student achievement scores is due to "unobserved" variables.*
- . . . *The literature does not suggest a relationship between teacher effectiveness and value added scores, teacher qualifications, characteristics, or practices.*

# The Research Seminar: A Beginning

Pressing questions about the quality and effectiveness of education and educator require:

- Examination in a “state and local context” using theory and methodological rigor (Rand)
- State funding for rigorous program and policy evaluation (Rand)
- Linked student-teacher data (NCCTQ)

# Two Key Outcomes

- Establishing a community of scholars and leaders committed to evaluating and strengthening the implementation and impact of PI 34 on educator effectiveness and student learning in Wisconsin, and

# Two Key Outcomes

- Creating an on-going research network through which educational leaders, researchers, and policymakers can: (a) share results from Wisconsin-focused studies; (b) share public datasets, study designs, and instruments; (c) develop research-guided, school-university professional development partnerships; and (d) disseminate study results to inform public policy on 'what works' in improving educator effectiveness.