

TEACHER TALENT TOOLBOX

Retaining High Performers

How recognition, rewards and growth opportunities can help schools keep their best teachers.

For schools to thrive over time, they must retain top teachers and put their skills to use.



Contents of the Retaining High Performers Toolkit

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- How are high performing teachers recognized and rewarded?
- What career growth opportunities are given to high performers?
- How do schools encourage long-term retention of high performers?

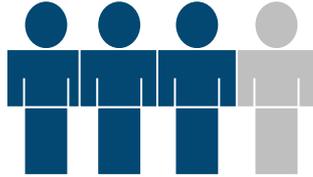
TOOLS

- Monetary rewards
- Non-monetary forms of recognition
- Teacher leadership development programs
- Innovative career path models

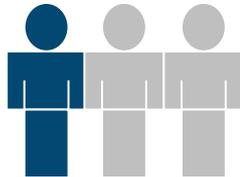


Read TNTP's latest report, *The Irreplaceables*, to further examine the real teacher retention crisis: not only a failure to retain enough teachers, but a failure to retain the *right* teachers.

School leaders and teachers agree that retaining high performing teachers is a challenge.



72 percent of administrators responded that they have lost one or more highly effective teachers in the past 3 years...



... and **36 percent** have lost 3 or more.



“The biggest obstacle to student success is retaining staff; our turnover rate has been between 60-80% both of my years at the school. As a beginning third year teacher, I am tied for second most tenure at the school.”

– Survey response, 3rd year high school math teacher

TNTP surveys show that schools with weak instructional cultures lose twice as many of their best teachers as schools with strong cultures.



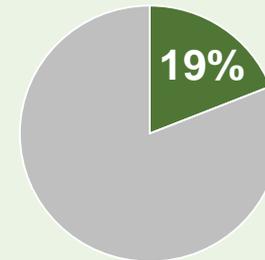
50+ SURVEY QUESTIONS
on school instructional culture

11,000 teachers
surveyed to date

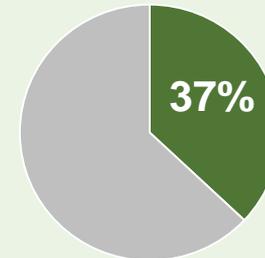
300 schools
applying the results to develop
and retain great teachers

TEACHERS WHO PLAN TO LEAVE THEIR SCHOOL WITHIN TWO YEARS.

TEACHERS AT SCHOOLS
WITH **STRONG CULTURES**



TEACHERS AT SCHOOLS
WITH **WEAK CULTURES**



Identifying high performers to focus retention efforts on depends on an effective evaluation system.

Memphis City Schools

- Redefined what effective teaching means and created the “Teacher Effectiveness Measure” (TEM).
- The TEM evaluates teachers based on student achievement, classroom observations, stakeholder surveys and knowledge of teaching.

Achievement First

- Created a new “Teaching Excellence Framework” to drive a new career track.
- The framework includes student achievement data, student surveys, parent surveys, lesson observations, portfolio review, peer surveys and overall principal assessment.

Houston Independent School District

- Created a new “Teacher Appraisal and Development System” that includes multiple measures of student performance, regular feedback and individualized support.



Refer to the *Evaluation* toolkit to learn more about effective evaluation systems.

Promising Practices for Retaining High Performing Teachers

- 1 Offer monetary rewards**

Recognize exemplary performance by providing financial incentives at the individual, grade or school level.
- 2 Provide non-monetary recognition**

Formal and informal recognition of achievements increases satisfaction and retention of all teachers.
- 3 Manage workload**

Identify efficiencies that conserve teachers' time to help prevent high-performers from leaving due to work-life imbalances.
- 4 Provide career growth opportunities**

Create a **school leadership career pathway** for teachers to move into administrative roles by providing growth opportunities and additional leadership responsibilities for selected teachers.

Implement a comprehensive approach to recognition and growth through a defined **teacher career pathway** that allows exemplary teachers to remain in the classroom with additional responsibilities, recognition and compensation.
- 5 Learn from experience**

Collect data on current teachers' retention plans in order to better understand what options they care about and conduct exit surveys to learn about motivators for teachers who leave.

Promising Practices in Action

PROMISING PRACTICES IN ACTION

1 Offer monetary rewards

Denver Public Schools' ProComp system allows teachers several opportunities to build upon and supplement their base salary based on student achievement and professional accomplishments.

2 Provide non-monetary recognition

D.C. Public Schools holds an annual awards ceremony and formal reception to recognize excellent teachers.

3 Manage workload

Citizens Academy supports teachers by providing one Instructional Assistant per grade and volunteer tutors to give students one-on-one attention.

4 Provide career growth opportunities

Rocketship offers a teacher-leader development program for high performers to move into school leadership positions.

5 Learn from experience

Memphis City Schools created the Teacher Ambassador program that allows teachers to take on a leadership role within their school and receive a stipend while remaining in the classroom.

YES Prep tracks attrition data and uses surveys to solicit teachers' retention plans.

Monetary rewards can take many forms.

D.C. Public Schools

Performance Pay

Links performance-based pay system, *IMPACTplus*, to evaluation.

Teachers can potentially earn over \$130,000 if they are rated as Highly Effective.

Noble Street

Individual Bonuses

Pay for performance system provides budgetary discretion for principals to reward performance up to 25% of salary.

Bonus plan varies based on the specific student outcome goals for each campus.

Citizens Academy

Grade-Level Bonuses

Awards grade-level bonuses that are based on a tiered framework for meeting or exceeding student achievement goals set at the beginning of the year.

Denver Public Schools

Salary Supplements

Each year, teachers can supplement their base salary in several ways, including exceeding district expectations for student growth on the state assessment (+\$2,403) and teaching in a designated "Hard-to-Serve" school (+\$2,403).

Performance-based awards can be based on a summative evaluation rating or account for other areas of achievement.

D.C. Public Schools

Summative Evaluation Rating

- Teachers who achieve the highest rating receive a bonus; receiving the highest rating two years in a row results in an increase in base salary.
- If a teacher is in a group where student achievement data counts for 50 percent of the rating, he/she can receive an additional bonus for being rated highly effective.
- Teaching in a school with a high percentage of students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch or in a high need subject areas will increase a teacher's bonus.

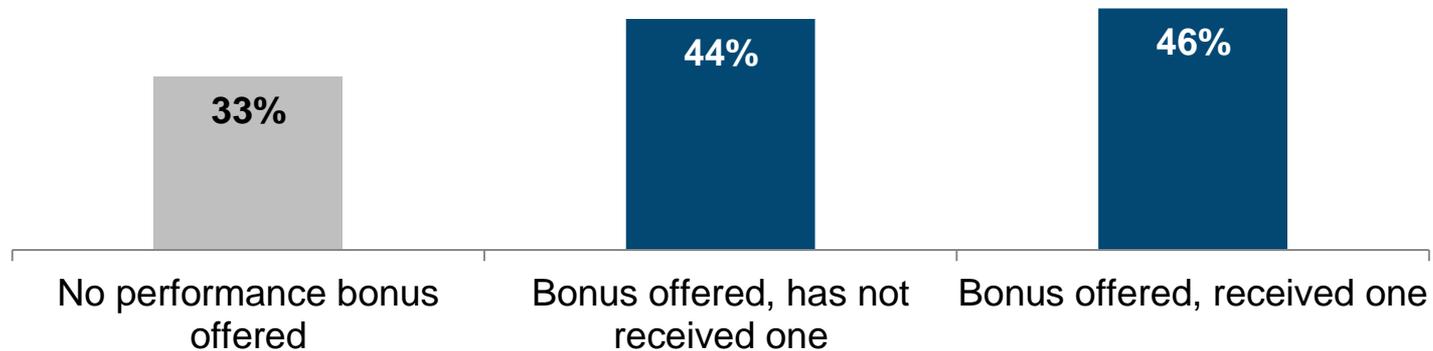
Denver Public Schools

Rating Plus Other Achievements

- Teachers can increase their base pay depending on their summative evaluation rating.
- Other opportunities for monetary rewards include, but are not limited to:
 - Pursuing additional professional development can increase base pay.
 - Bonuses are available for teaching in a school with a high percentage of students who qualify for free and reduced-price lunch and in roles that are hard to staff.

Performance bonuses appear to modestly affect planned retention.

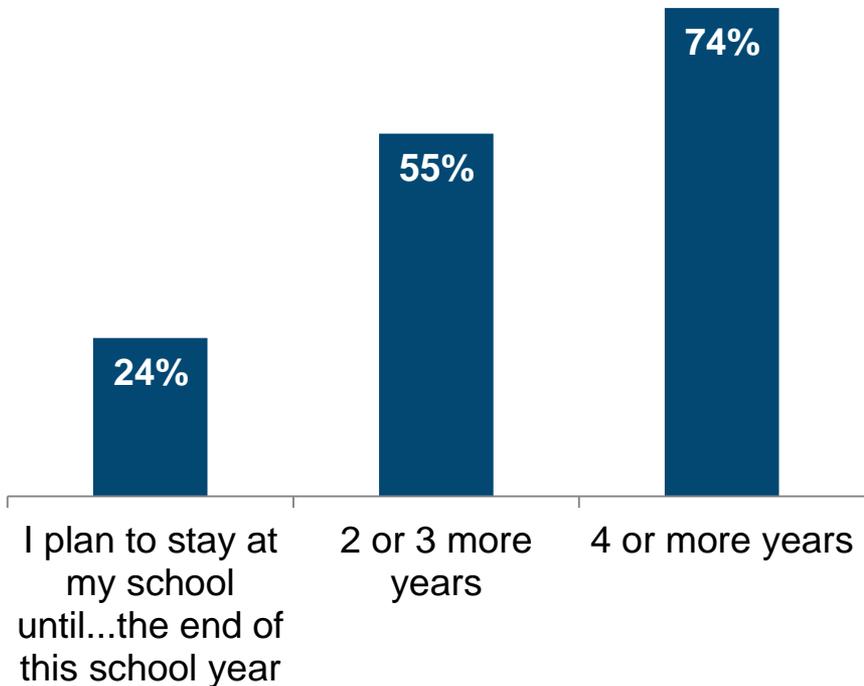
Percent of teachers who plan to remain in their schools for four or more years



68 percent of bonuses self-reported by teachers were between \$1,000 and \$3,000

Non-monetary forms of recognition have a significant impact on planned retention.

Percent of teachers who “Agree” or “Strongly agree” that “I feel appreciated for my hard work at my school” by length of planned retention.



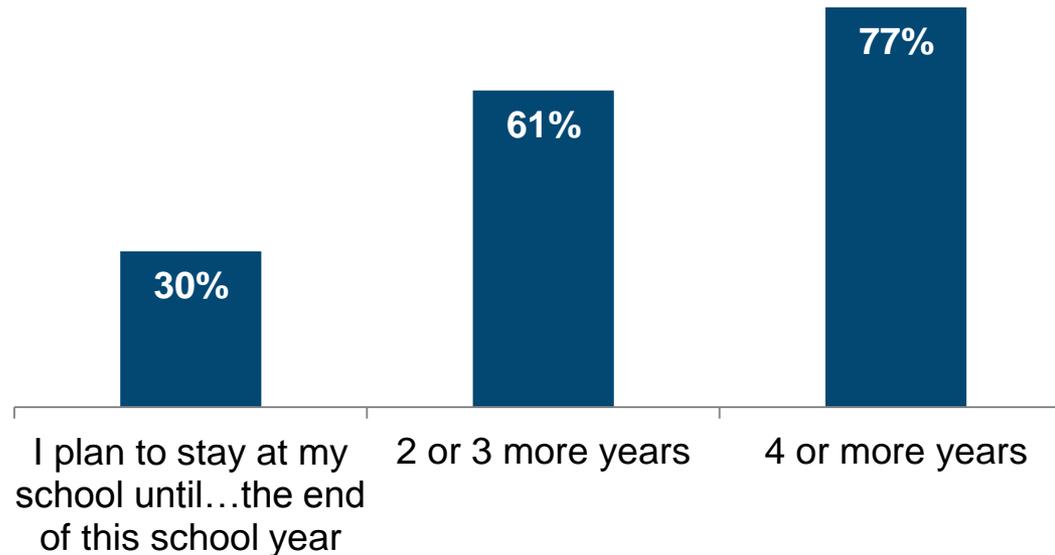
“I just love getting **shout-outs in our newsletter** and at our meetings... it is simply satisfying intrinsically.”
 – 4th year elementary teacher

“[I appreciate] recognition of contributions through **staff awards or notes of praise** all of which are felt to be sincere and are appreciated.”
 – 6th year English teacher

“My administrators tell me I’m a star all the time. **Positive reinforcement** works with teachers, too!”
 – 2nd year English teacher

Schools where high performance is recognized and rewarded see higher planned retention of their teachers.

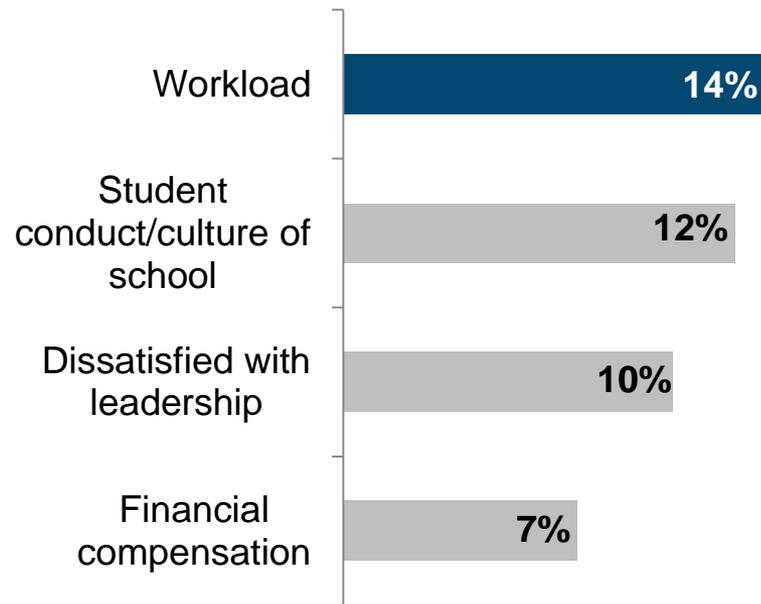
Percent of teachers who “Agree” or “Strongly agree” that “Teachers’ accomplishments are regularly recognized and celebrated” by length of planned retention.



Refer to the *Building a Professional Culture* toolkit for more information on creating a healthy culture for all teachers.

A key reason for attrition is workload.

The top four reasons for leaving among teachers at all schools who plan to leave within two years.*



*Not including "Personal Reasons."

TNTP Instructional Culture Insight Survey 2011



"The current amount of work that we have to do on a daily basis is more than expected, and honestly, more than I have time for. If we did not have so much extra work to do outside of school, I would not be considering leaving."

- 4th year math teacher

"The school is not as committed to teacher success as it is to student success. The work load for teachers is far too demanding and not all tasks are necessary."

- 1st year teacher

TNTP Benchmark Survey 2010

Provide additional support and set aside time to plan.

Rocketship Education

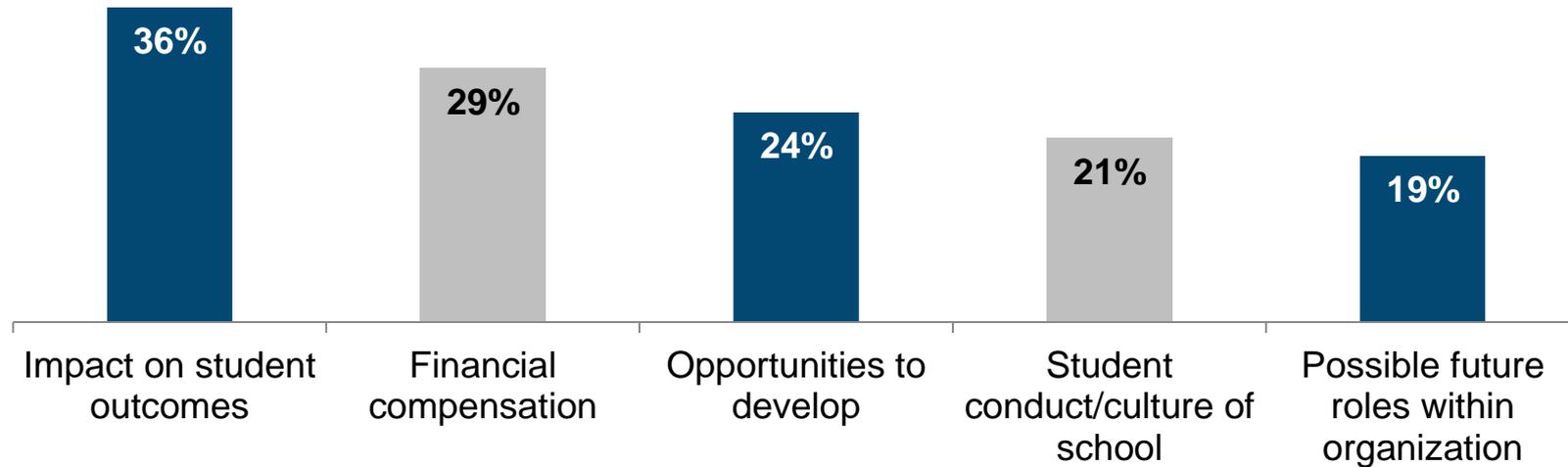
- Developed scope and sequence and unit plans for every course.
- Created homework binders with assignments for every state standard.
- Catalogued lessons and resources online for teachers.
- Uses substitute teachers to administer and score interim assessments.
- Staffs silent reading center with non-certified personnel.
- Uses college students to conduct supplemental tutoring.
- Interns shadow teachers to record how hours are spent and identify additional efficiencies.



Refer to the *Building a Professional Culture* toolkit to learn more about how to manage work loads and other ways of creating a healthy culture for teachers.

The ability to influence students and grow professionally are among the top reasons that teachers stay in their schools long-term.

Top reasons for staying, among teachers planning to remain in their schools for four or more years*



*Reasons listed among top two

TNTP Benchmark Survey 2010

Use instructional support positions to give teachers the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities and grow professionally.

Friendship Public Charter Schools

Instructional Performance Coach is a full-time position. Coaches work with the school's administration to give instructional support to teachers across all subject areas.

Brownsburg Community School Corporation

Instructional Coach is a full-time position at a school. Coaches assist teachers who are not meeting expectations on multiple measures. They also facilitate professional development opportunities and Professional Learning Communities.

West Denver Prep

Specialists are full-time teachers who receive a stipend to assume one period daily, four days a week, to support students and teachers in reaching instructional goals in one particular subject area.

Memphis City Schools

Teacher Ambassadors are full-time teachers who receive a stipend to serve as a school's communication liaison between teachers and the district. They work to effectively communicate and advocate for reform efforts.

Develop administration and teaching pathways to provide varied career options for high performing teachers.

Q: “Are there ... ways excellence is recognized that contribute to your desire to continue to teach at your school?”

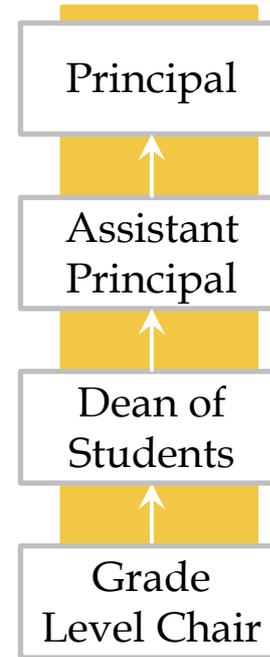
A: “Definitely! My school and my charter network have a **Career Pathways program for teachers that helps them hone their teaching ability, identify their areas of interest and pursue opportunities in that area.** For me, as a first year teacher, I'm excited to fill out my professional growth plan and have assistance figuring out what my professional goals are for the next 3-5 years and over the long term.”

- *First year elementary teacher*

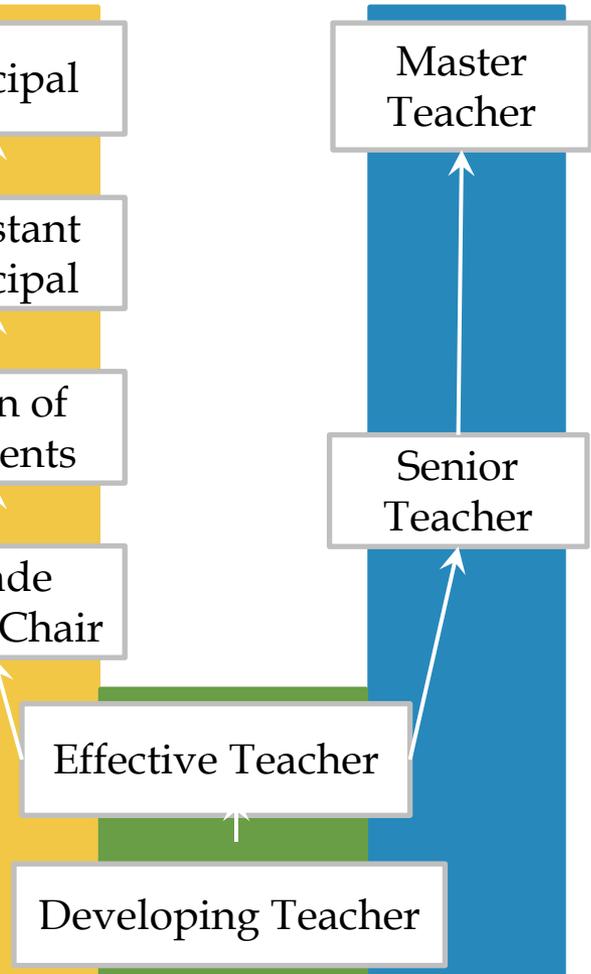
A: “Excellence should be highly valued professionally, and evidenced by more personal time, money, growth and development opportunities.”

- *7th Year Social Science teacher*

School Administration Pathway



Teaching Pathway



Implement leadership development programs to prepare teachers for school leadership roles. (1 of 2)

Rocketship Education

Offers a leadership training program to all teachers, which it uses to target individuals for school leadership positions.

**Year 1:
Embedded
Leadership**

**Year 2: Full-
time Training**

**Year 3: In-job
Training**

All teachers participate in staff-wide program to develop leadership skills.

Teachers identified in staff-wide program as having key traits that will allow them to be an effective leader are selected into training program.

In Year 2, candidates who meet rigorous selection criteria move into roles as Principals-in-Training or Deans-in-Training.

Year 3 involves the ongoing professional development and support of Principals and Deans once they move into their roles.

Implement leadership development programs to prepare teachers for school leadership roles. (2 of 2)

Green Dot Public Schools

Teacher Leadership Development Program

- Teachers apply to the program based on student achievement data, past leadership experience and administrator recommendation.
- Participants are trained over the summer and during the year to teach and coach adults.
- Participants facilitate several teacher professional development events over the course of the year.

Administrator-in-Residence (AIR) Program

- Participants complete year-long residency program:
 - Gain hands-on experience in schools under mentor principals (4 days/week).
 - Complete special projects at the network office and receive individualized professional development (1 day/week).
- Program completers are considered for assistant principal or principal roles with Green Dot schools.



“Our biggest challenge right now is the school leadership pipeline. We created an **internal residency program** because it was hard to find principals who can come in and take over a school right away.”

– Green Dot Leadership Team Member

Use career pathways that allow high performing teachers to stay in the classroom and maximize student achievement.

Goals for a teaching career pathway:

D.C. Public Schools

- Provide a clearer career path for high performing teachers.
- Use the district's rigorous annual evaluation system to drive teacher movement up the pathway.
- Organize a diverse array of opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles while remaining in the classroom.

YES Prep

- Provide a leadership pathway that does not remove high performers from the classroom.
- Create incentives for high performing individuals to teach at YES Prep and to remain with the organization longer.
- Enable YES Prep to target resources to maximize student achievement.

Create robust teaching pathways to provide development and recognition in addition to increased compensation.

Achievement First

- **Increased Compensation:** Higher salary based on performance level.
- **Team Incentives and Recognition with School-wide Bonuses:** All team members in a school have an opportunity to earn a bonus of up to 10 percent of their salary based on the overall success of the school.
- **Robust Learning Opportunities:** Top teachers get self-directed professional development budget and access to leadership and professional development opportunities.
- **More Feedback/More Sources:** All teachers will have new parent, student and peer feedback included in their evaluations.
- **Consistent Recognition:** Network-wide publication of top tier teachers and video of teaching used as exemplar in professional development.

Build in time and multiple opportunities for teacher input to refine and enhance pathway design. (1 of 3)

Houston ISD

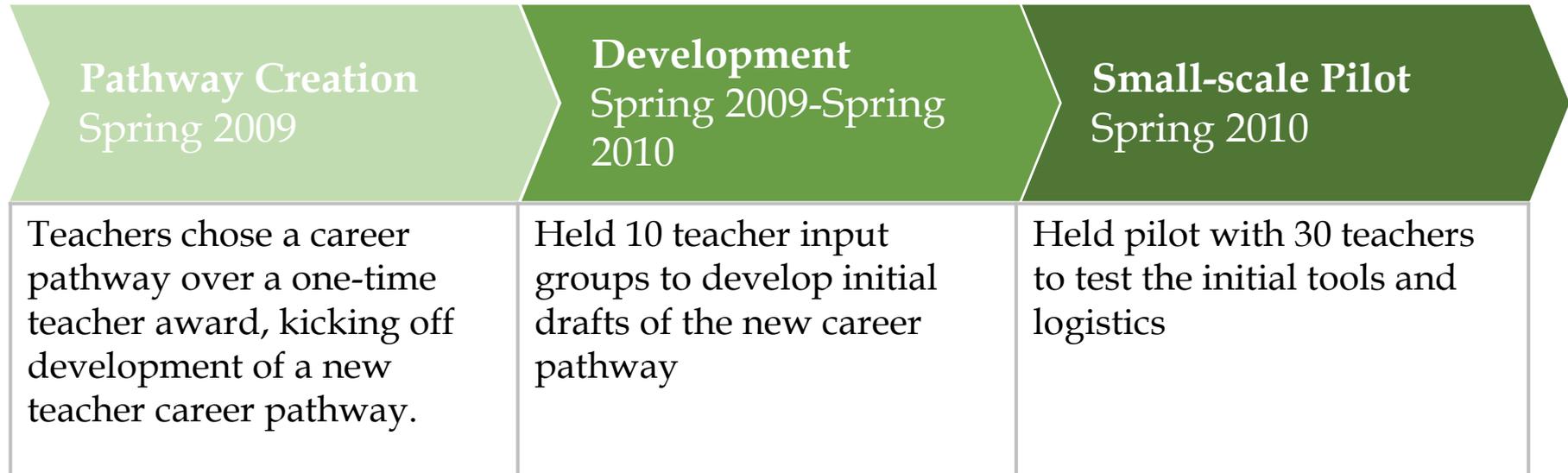
From September 2010 to March 2011, Houston ISD engaged teachers in several ways on the design of a new Teacher Appraisal and Development System:

- Created a public **website** to share materials on the design process. (www.hisdeffectiveteachers.org)
- Sent teachers and principals biweekly **email updates** on the design of the new system.
- Organized **working groups**, including teachers and principals, that met weekly to develop the rubrics for the system.
- Created an **online survey** of the draft proposal that was completed by 2,655 teachers and 282 appraisers.
- Conducted **focus groups** with 40 teachers and 18 principals to elicit feedback on particular parts of the new system.
- **Field tested** the Instructional Practice Rubric in several schools before implementing the new system district-wide.

Build in time and multiple opportunities for teacher input to refine and enhance pathway design. (2 of 3)

Achievement First

- Solicited input from teachers over the course of two years.
- Input groups developed initial drafts of a new career pathway and provided on-going feedback on improvements.
- Network co-CEOs visited every school to introduce the pathway to every teacher and to receive their additional feedback.



Build in time and multiple opportunities for teacher input to refine and enhance pathway design. (3 of 3)

Achievement First

Full-scale Pathway Introduction and Pilot
Sept - Dec 2010

On-Going Evaluation and Feedback
Dec 2010 - Aug 2011

Continued Evaluation and Advancement
Sept 2011 - Sept 2012

- **Sept 2010:** Meeting with principal cohorts to introduce comprehensive model and gather feedback
- **Oct 2010:** Meeting with all teachers at every school to introduce comprehensive model and gather feedback
- **Nov 2010:** Observation training/ norming for all coaches
- **Nov 2010:** Lesson observations began

- **Dec 2010 - Jan 2011:** Professional Growth Plan (PGP)
- **March - May 2011:** Parent survey, peer survey, student survey, principal planning assessment
- **April 2011:** Feedback from teachers on Pathway as part of Network Support Survey
- **May - June 2011:** Teachers received comprehensive report and feedback from coach (TBD)
- **June - Aug 2011:** Feedback and revisions to model from principal feedback and input groups

- **2011 - 2012 School Year:** All evaluation and feedback continues for a second year
- **2012 School Year:** Continued feedback from teachers and leaders
- **Sept 2012:** Teachers are placed in a stage based on two prior years of data. Compensation increases based on their stage

Career pathways may require innovative funding solutions.

Pittsburgh Public Schools

- Applied for significant external funding from private foundations and several federal programs to fund new career ladders with differentiated compensation.
- Received funding from a private foundation and a federal program.

Achievement First

- Projects long-term cost for career pathway along with ways to increase funding and maximize current resources.
- These costs could be made up by combination of:
 - Increased per pupil allocations from the state
 - Philanthropy (only to be used in the short term)
 - Reducing non-personnel costs
 - Managing school staffing and hiring to ensure a mix of teachers at each stage in each school
 - Slightly reducing, through natural attrition, the total number of teachers
 - Adding slightly more students per school

Gather data on attrition to drive targeted retention programs.

YES Prep



Uses surveys to track teachers' current retention plans and differentiate "regrettable" attrition

Metrics Tracked*

Rate of teacher attrition out of YES Prep

Percent of teacher attrition YES Prep considers "regrettable"

Number of teachers leaving YES Prep categorized as "regrettable"

Number of "regrettable" leavers categorized as "avoidable" – that is, those who left for graduate school or to pursue employment elsewhere (rather than those who married, left the state, or chose to leave YES Prep to care for children)

Number of "reluctant hires" YES Prep has made due to low numbers of outstanding candidates in key areas (especially math, science, foreign language)

Number of teachers who have left the classroom to become administrators at YES Prep

*Data are tracked over time, reflecting the past five years

Explore additional tools for this Toolkit on the [Full Toolbox](#) page. Also, be sure to access the five other Toolkits of the [Teacher Talent Toolbox](#) to craft a complete talent management strategy.

