



Center for the Study of
Teaching and Policy

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RETHINKING THE ALLOCATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF STAFFING RESOURCES

to Support Learning Improvement and Learning-Focused Leadership

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Who we are and how the study is supported

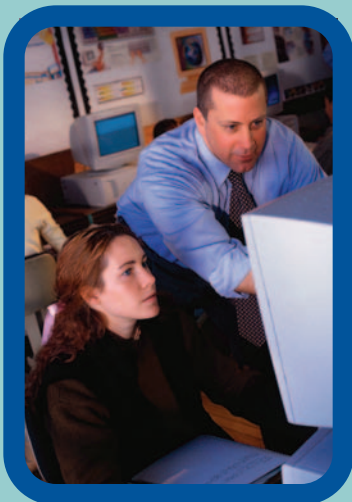
With support from The Wallace Foundation, a team of researchers from the Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy at the University of Washington is undertaking an investigation of leadership in districts and state systems that seek to improve both learning and leadership in schools and classrooms.



What this study is about

Leaders at different levels of the educational system who care about promoting powerful, equitable learning face fundamental issues concerning the distribution and capacity of staff—both individuals who instruct young people and others who directly support instruction (e.g., mentors, instructional coaches, school administrators, central office staff). Often these issues concern rethinking how staff are allocated so as to address learning improvement priorities, by shifting placements, assignments, roles, working conditions, and incentives, often in the face of inertia and resistances. It also means ensuring that staff capacity is developed through professional learning, peer networks, coaching, and other interventions (including creative use of the collective bargaining process and the restructuring of the district's professional support and personnel functions).

The decisions that leaders make about these “human resources” are often done in the context of significant inequities—in which certain schools and student populations receive the benefit of more or higher quality instructional or instructional support staff than others. Leaders at state, district, and school levels are in a position to reallocate and develop staff resources in ways that focus energy and attention on these inequities. It requires that leaders become more purposeful and learning-focused regarding issues of staff recruitment, assignment, deployment, and professional development.



In this investigation, we will describe and analyze how state and local leaders address the challenge of improving students' access to high-quality teachers and teaching by reconfiguring instructional roles, assignments, working conditions, incentives, and access to professional learning. We will examine these matters in selected states, districts, and schools that have placed high priority on these types of efforts to improve teaching and learning across the system.

Expected contributions

The study will generate a detailed picture of how decisions at several levels of the educational system can enable educational leaders to get staff to where they are needed in the nation's urban centers, and to support them in the difficult task of educating young people. The study will provide several forms of feedback to participating sites, as well as analyses and reports for wide dissemination among interested audiences in the field.

What this study involves

This study pursues these matters at three levels of the education system—state, district, and school—and explores how leadership actions and conditions at one level of the system impact other levels. The study concentrates on urban districts located within three states, which vary in size, demographics, and educational governance and finance systems. Within each district we will concentrate on three to four schools that vary by level and by the way they have configured and supported staff resources to address learning improvement priorities.

Within each study site, we will be gathering information of several kinds across an 18-month period (from early in 2007 through June, 2008):

- Personnel, fiscal, and performance data from publicly available sources.
- Interviews with key participants in decisions concerning the allocation and development of staff resources.
- An inventory of state policies related to the deployment or development of instructional and instructional support staff.
- Review of local archival sources that indicate how staff are deployed (e.g., master schedule and school improvement plans; district strategic plans).
- Surveys of all school and district leaders involved or potentially implicated in the allocation and development of human resources.

The study is designed to track a full annual cycle of resource allocation decisions, and to identify the consequences of these decisions for teaching and leadership practice.

For Further Information

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Companion Studies

This investigation is closely linked to two other studies which address related aspects of learning-focused leadership and leadership support:

- **School Leadership Roles for Learning Improvement: How Schools Reconfigure, Assess, and Support Learning-focused Leadership Roles**

Principal Investigators:

Dr. Bradley S. Portin
Dr. Michael S. Knapp

- **District-level Leadership for Learning: How School District Central Office Administrators Participate in Strengthening Learning Opportunities for All Students**

Principal Investigators:

Dr. Michael A. Copland
Dr. Meredith I. Honig

Related Research

Additional information may be obtained in the following reports, which are available on the CTP website:

Leading, Learning, and Leadership Support

Michael S. Knapp, Michael A. Copland,
Margaret L. Plecki, Bradley S. Portin,
& Colleagues

Allocating Resources and Creating Incentives to Improve Teaching and Learning

Margaret L. Plecki, Christopher R. Alejano,
Michael S. Knapp, & Chad R. Lochmiller

Redefining and Improving School District Governance

Margaret L. Plecki, Julie McCleery, &
Michael S. Knapp