



*A Union of Professionals*

**AFT Teachers**

# Trends in Teacher Compensation

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American Federation of Teachers, Educational Issues

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## OUR MISSION

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

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# The Teaching Pay Penalty

“The mid-1990s marks the start of a period of sharply eroding teacher pay and an escalating teacher pay penalty:

- Average weekly wages of public school teachers (adjusted for inflation) **decreased \$27** from 1996 to 2017, from \$1,164 to \$1,137 (in 2017 dollars). In contrast, weekly wages of other college graduates rose from \$1,339 to \$1,476 over this period.
- For all public-sector teachers, the relative wage gap (regression-adjusted for education, experience, and other factors known to affect earnings) has grown substantially since the mid-1990s. The teacher wage penalty was 1.8 percent in 1994, grew to 4.3 percent in 1996, and reached a record **18.7 percent in 2017.**”

**The Teacher Pay Penalty has Hit a New High: Trends in the teacher wage and compensation gaps through 2017**  
Sylvia Allegretto and Lawrence Mishel, Economic Policy Institute • September 5, 2018

# What are Teachers Saying?

“Half of teachers say they’ve seriously considered leaving the profession in recent years. That rises to 62% among teachers who feel undervalued by their community, who say their pay is unfair, or who earn less than \$45,000 annually.”

## Teachers’ concerns

Public school teachers, 2019



PDK poll, 2019

## Feeling fairly paid

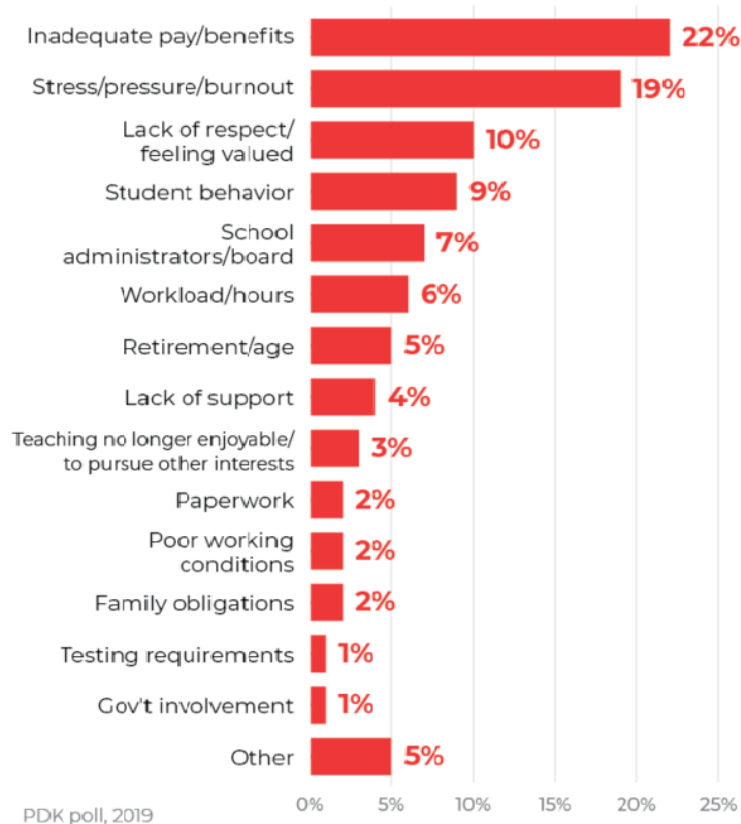
Public school teachers, 2019



**Frustration in the Schools:** PDK Poll of the Public’s Attitude Towards the Public Schools  
PDK, 8/5/19

# What are Teachers Saying?

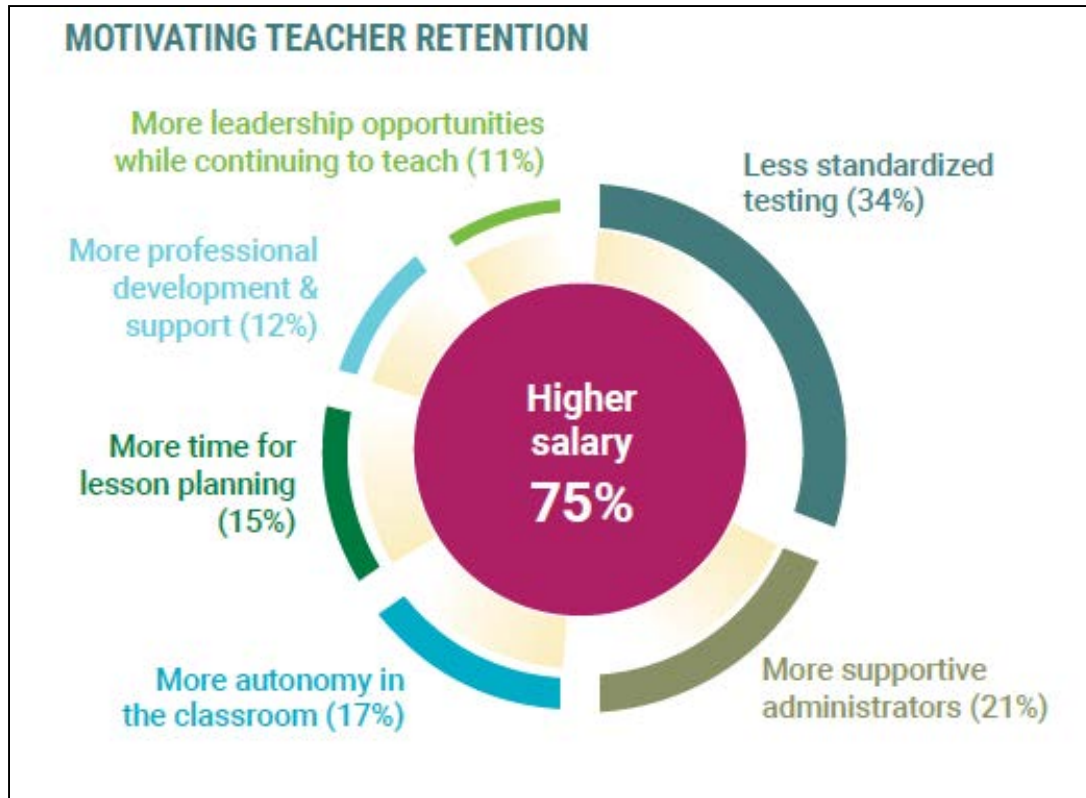
## Reasons teachers have considered leaving the profession



“Low pay isn’t the only motivator for teachers who have considered leaving the profession. While 22% cite pay and benefits, about as many, 19%, cite stress, pressure, or burnout. Ten percent report a lack of respect or of feeling valued.”

**Frustration in the Schools:** PDK Poll of the Public’s Attitude Towards the Public Schools  
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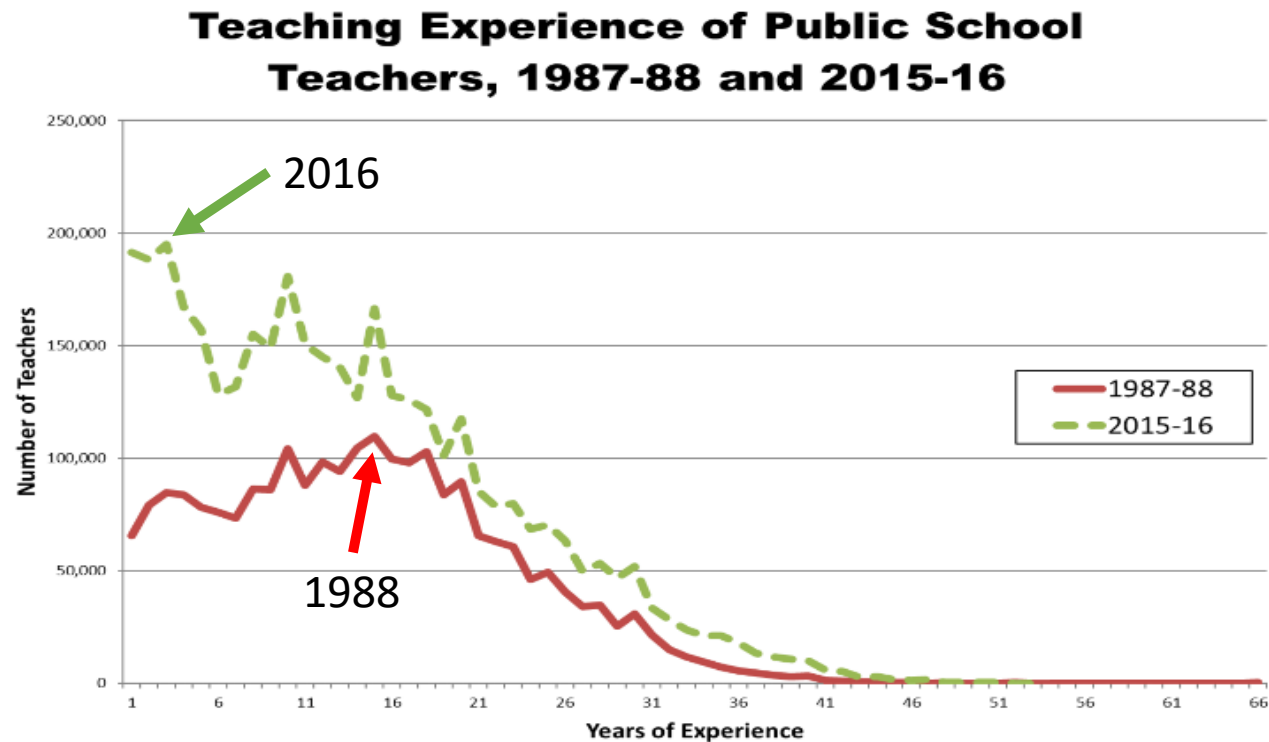
# The Findings are Fairly Consistent



The E4E survey showed that teachers believe low salaries are the biggest challenge.

**Voices from the Classroom: A Survey of America's Educators**  
Educators for Excellence, Survey, 2018

# An Important Factor Regarding Retention

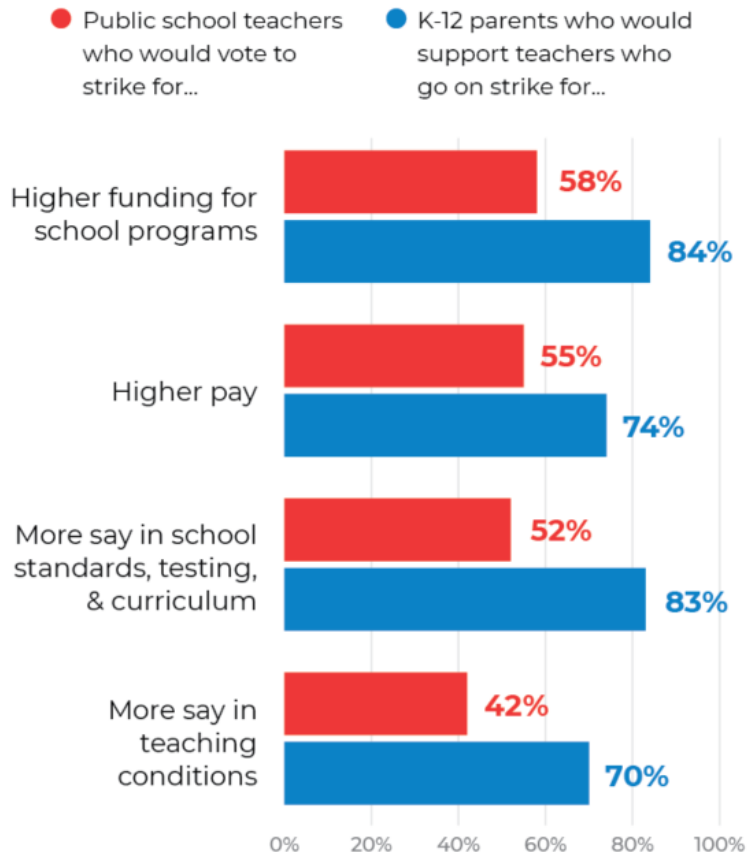


Source: Ingersoll, R., Merrill, E., Stuckey, D., & Collins, G. (2018). *Seven Trends: The Transformation of the Teaching Force*. Consortium for Policy Research in Education, University of Pennsylvania.

The mode of teacher experience in 1988 was 15 years, in 2016 it was 3 years of experience

# What is the Public Saying?

## Support for a teachers strike



PDK poll, 2019

“Parents and the overall public stand with them (the teachers); 74% of parents and 71% of all adults say they would support a strike by teachers in their community for higher pay. Even more, 83% of parents and 79% of all adults, say they’d support teachers striking for a greater voice in academic policies.”

**Frustration in the Schools:** PDK Poll of the Public’s Attitude Towards the Public Schools  
PDK, 8/5/19



# Teacher Pay in New Mexico

State	2017	2017 Rank	2018	2018 Rank	% Change	Change Rank
Nebraska	52,338	29	54,213	25	3.58	3
Nevada	54,674	23	54,280	24	-0.72	51
New Hampshire	57,522	18	57,833	19	0.54	39
New Jersey	69,623	6 *	69,917	6 *	0.42	41
New Mexico	47,122	47	47,152	48	0.06	46
New York	81,902	1	84,227	1	2.84	5
North Carolina	49,970	38	51,231	34	2.52	7
North Dakota	52,536	26	52,850	29	0.60	38
Ohio	58,202	16	58,000	17	-0.35	48

From 2017 to 2018, the average public school teacher salary increased by 1.58 percent. The average teacher salary in the United States in 2018 was \$60,477.

Rankings of the States 2018 and Estimates of School Statistics 2019

- National Education Association 2019

# What are Teachers Viewing Online?

W **WalletHub** Search Credit Cards

WalletNews Blog Studies & Statistics

## Best & Worst States for Teachers

Sep 23, 2019 | Adam McCann, Financial Writer

Teaching can be a profoundly rewarding career, considering the critical role educators play in shaping young minds. But many teachers find themselves overworked and underpaid. Education jobs are among the [lowest-paying occupations](#) requiring a bachelor's degree, and teacher salaries consistently [fail to keep up with inflation](#). Meanwhile, the [Every Student Succeeds Act](#) demands growth in student performance.

92			40		31
99			47		8
99			43		29
72			48		11
	43	District of Columbia	43.49	42	36
	44	South Carolina	42.20	38	49
	45	Oklahoma	41.92	37	50
	46	New Mexico	41.07	44	42
	47	West Virginia	40.71	45	37

# The Traditional Salary Schedule

**APPENDIX A - Teacher Salary**

	1	2	3	4	M
	B.S.	B.S.+15	B.S.+30	M.S.	M
A	35,540	36,458	37,378	38,296	39,214
B	37,008	38,053	39,098	40,141	41,184
C	38,483	39,650	40,815	41,978	43,139
D	39,958	41,246	42,532	43,815	45,046
E	41,430	42,842	44,253	45,662	47,071
F	42,903	44,436	45,973	47,507	48,954
G	44,372	46,031	47,687	49,352	51,001
H	45,846	47,629	49,406	51,297	52,946
I	47,323	49,226	51,128	53,242	55,191
J	48,793	50,821	52,846	54,987	56,936
K	50,265	52,416	54,562	56,832	58,981
L	51,739	54,014	56,282	58,552	60,207
M	53,211	55,607	58,001	60,396	61,867
N	54,684	57,200	59,717	62,232	63,528
O	56,158	58,799	61,439	64,076	65,289
P	57,632	60,396	63,156	65,920	67,046
Q	59,103	61,988	64,873	67,754	68,801
R	60,580	63,587	66,593	69,599	71,258
S	62,052	65,179	68,309	71,440	73,099

Most teachers across America are paid according to a salary schedule based almost exclusively on levels of education and years of experience. This system was originally created to accommodate an industrial model of education where teaching was perceived as requiring low-level skills.

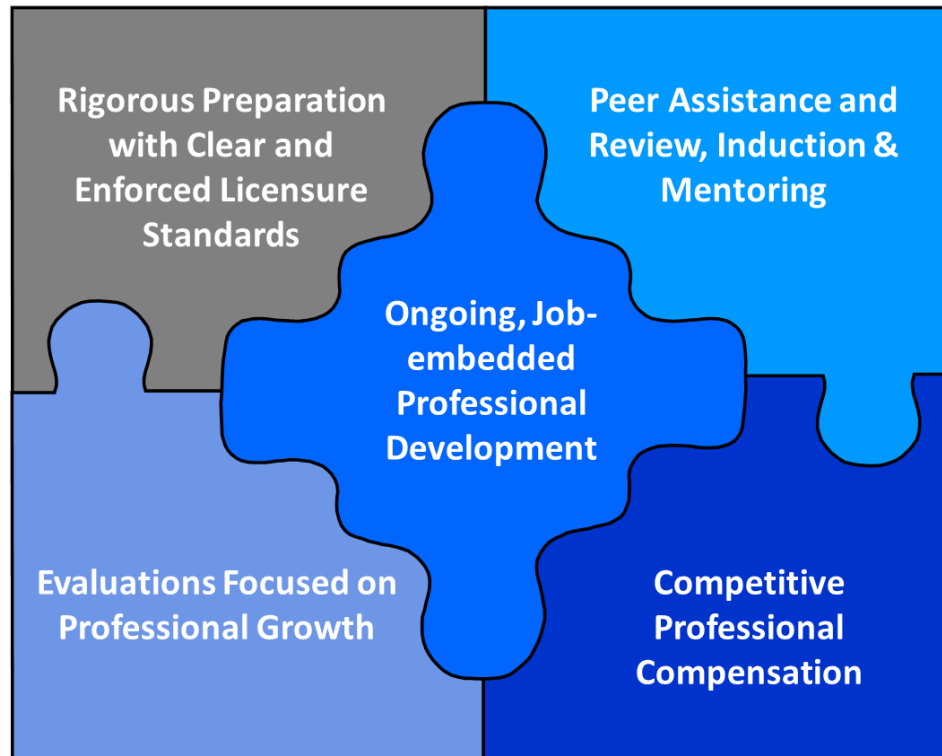
The traditional salary schedule was developed in response to discriminatory practices and to ensure fairness in the system. Implemented prior to collective bargaining, the current teacher salary system was designed to eliminate disparity based on gender, race or educational level of students taught (elementary, middle or secondary).

It has not produced salaries for teachers that:

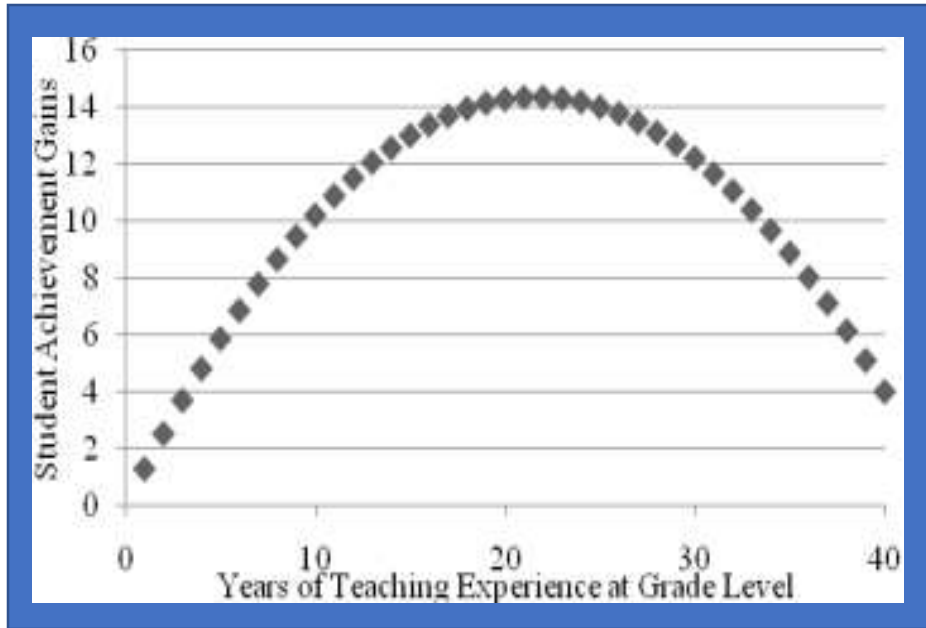
- are competitive based on the given teachers' education
- reflect the complexity of the work
- reward additional skills and knowledge that benefit children

# Differentiated Compensation

Although critically important, compensation should not be considered in isolation. It must be part of a complete instructional development system that includes rigorous entry standards, induction and mentoring, continuous professional development, supportive evaluations, and competitive professional compensation.



# Teaching Experience



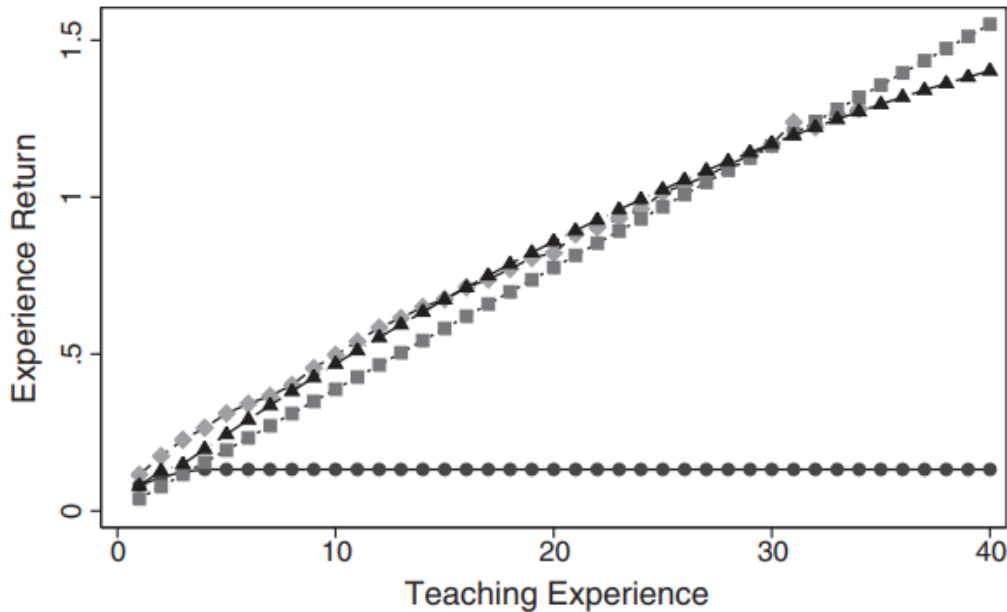
“Total years of teaching experience was also not a significant predictor but a more specific measure, years of teaching experience at a particular grade level, was significantly associated with increased student reading achievement.”

Is Experience the Best Teacher? A Multilevel Analysis of Teacher Qualifications and Academic Achievement in Low Performing Schools, Francis Howard, L. Huang Tonya R. Moon, University of Virginia (2009)

“Using within-teacher variation, I find that both general experience and grade-specific experience improve teacher performance. For math scores, the magnitude implies that teachers who always repeat grade assignments improve approximately 35% faster than teachers who never repeat grade assignments.”

How Do Teachers Improve? The Relative Importance of Specific and General Human Capital, Ben Ost, Cornell University, 11/29/09

# Teaching Experience



—●— Kane et al (2008)      - - ◆ - - Non-Parametric FE Estimate  
.....■..... Linear FE Specification      - ▲ - Quadratic FE Specification

“However, using an unrestricted experience model **I find that for mathematics achievement there are high returns to later career teaching experience, about twice as much dispersion in initial teacher quality as previously estimated,** and a pattern of negative selection where high quality teachers are more likely to exit.”

The Dynamics of Teacher Quality, Journal of Public Economics, Matthew Wiswall, Arizona State University (2013)

“Consistent with past research and economic theory, we find that teachers experience their most rapid productivity growth early in their careers. However, we also find substantial evidence of modest but continued returns to experience beyond ten years in the classroom. Thus, teachers appear to continue accumulating relevant human capital throughout much of their careers.”

Do Teachers Continue to Improve with Experience? Evidence of Long-Term Career Growth in the Teacher Labor Market, John P. Papay & Matthew A. Kraft  
Harvard University Graduate School of Education, February 2011

# There is a Difference

The Purpose is Very Important

## Reward Systems:

- Most common
- Reward outcomes (after the fact)
- Easy to understand (public)
- Easy to implement
- Easy to administer
- Politically expedient
- Limited ability to improve outcomes
- Tend to have short “shelf life”

## Organizational Growth Systems:

- Reward growth and application
- More difficult to explain externally
- Sophisticated implementation
- Advanced administration
- Politically difficult to maintain support
- Focus on Building System Capacity
- Long-term program

Of course, most systems are a combination of reward and organizational growth systems. The more organizational growth you build into your program the more you support active improvement.

# Think Strategically

## Develop a Strategic Process

Where you  
are today

Teachers must be an integral part of this process

Where you  
want to be

**A**



What you  
learn here...

**B**



...will improve  
your outcomes

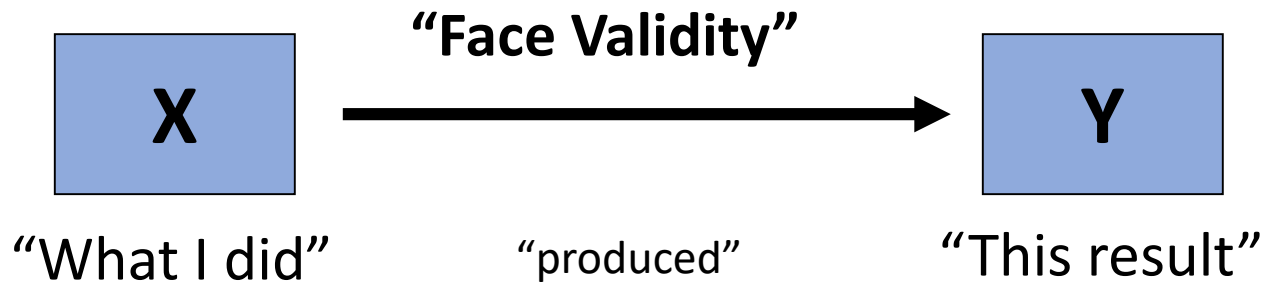
**C**

Differentiated pay is a process, not an event.



# Teacher Must See the “Causal Effect”

Teachers in “differentiated” pay plans must see how their actions directly affect the outcomes. Getting this right is harder than it seems.



The importance of this “effect” goes beyond individual need; it also is the key to organizational

growth.

Warning: Campbell’s Law - “The more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision-making, the more subject it will be to corruption pressures and the more apt it will be to distort and corrupt the social processes it is intended to monitor.”

# Things to Consider

- Labor/Management Collaboration (“Ownership”)
- An Adequate Base Salary (Starting Point)
- Sufficient and Stable Funding
- Ongoing Review of the “Effects”
- Easily Understood, Agreed-upon Standards of Practice
- Connection to Improve Professional Practice
- Available to All Teachers
- Auxiliary Supports for Program

Not in any particular order

# Growth Model

How you move between the “rungs?”

Probationary

- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3

Standard

- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3

Advanced

- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3

Master

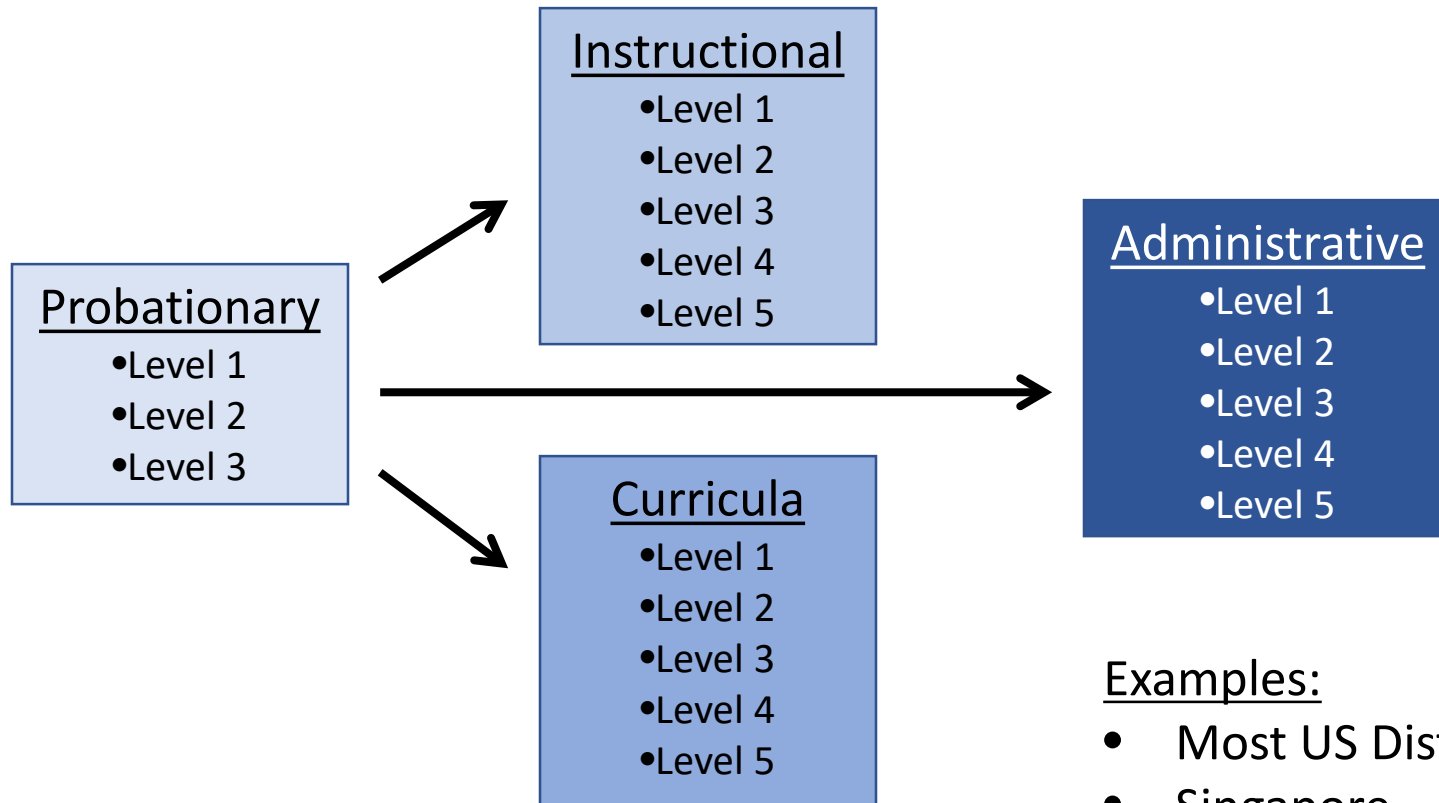
- Level 1
- Level 2
- Level 3

Examples:

- Baltimore
- Austin
- Cleveland\*
- New Mexico
- National Board
- Numerous Countries

The best for systems that have, or will have, many new teachers.

# Career Model



## Examples:

- Most US Districts
- Singapore

The most effective systems combine the growth model with the career model.

# Why Do Some Differentiated Pay Systems Fail?

- Underfunding (Cleveland – Career Ladder)
- No improvement in outcomes (Texas Programs – DATE, TEEG, GEEG, more)
- Quotas (Virginia – NBPTS)
- Management mission creep (Denver Pro Comp)
- Rewarded teachers in the wealthiest schools (Hillsborough – Individual Bonus Program, “The Lottery”)
- Created teacher morale problems (Florida School Bonus Program)
- Difficult-to-understand procedures for evaluating teaching, perceptions of favoritism rather than performance was driving the system (DC Programs)
- Political Expedience (Douglas County Colorado)
- Crazy consequences (Florida – Teachers accountable for students they didn’t teach)

Note: Not understanding the powerful and unintended consequences of causal effect is a common reason differentiated pay systems fail. This is called Campbell’s Law in the social sciences and Goodhart’s Law in economics. Some researchers see this phenomenon similar to the “principal-agent problem.”

## Contact information



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