



## Effective Teaching for All Children: *What It Will Take*

**ALL CHILDREN IN PHILADELPHIA** have the right to have consistently effective teaching in every content area and at every grade level, pre-k through grade 12. The quality of a child's teacher is the biggest single school-related factor in his or her learning. There is not enough high-quality teaching in Philadelphia's schools. Every year students enter classrooms with no permanent teacher. Every year students in our highest poverty schools have the least experienced teachers. Our poor and minority children have the least chance of being taught by a stable, talented combination of effective new and veteran teachers.

Other cities have found solutions to these problems—solutions that Philadelphia can find too. The Ed Fund has long been an advocate for improving teaching quality and has worked with teachers, principals and others at the School District of Philadelphia for many years to improve teaching practice in the classroom. Recently, the Ed Fund, through its role as the convener of the Education First Compact, and in collaboration with the Philadelphia Cross City Campaign for School Reform and other Compact members, has brought the issue of improving teaching quality and equity in Philadelphia to the public.

Together we have launched a campaign titled, "Effective Teaching for All Children: What It Will Take." We believe that the time is right to focus on this critical issue because unique opportunities exist to make significant changes. The School District of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers are renegotiating a

contract; Superintendent Arlene Ackerman has made eliminating the achievement gap a central part of the District's new strategic plan; the Governor and Mayor have appointed three new School Reform Commission members; and additional funding is available from the state, including funds from the new federal economic stimulus package.

### TWO IMPERATIVES GUIDE THE CAMPAIGN:

- 1) Every child deserves an effective teacher.
- 2) Every child needs a stable workforce of effective teachers.

### IN ORDER TO TRANSLATE THESE TWO IMPERATIVES INTO REALITY THE DISTRICT MUST:

#### **1. Distribute experienced and effective teachers equitably across District schools.**

Actively manage staffing to ensure an effective and stable mix of novice and experienced teachers in all schools; it will be important to offer meaningful incentives and change the work environment in hard-to-staff schools to attract high-performing teachers.

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**The Philadelphia Education Fund** is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the quality of public education throughout the Philadelphia region. It is one of 81 local education funds affiliated with the Public Education Network.

The Philadelphia Education Fund, in collaboration with schools, school districts, and other partners, enhances teaching and learning; conducts research studies that fuel its work and that of others; directly assists students to access and succeed in post-secondary education; convenes public education stakeholders in support of school reform policy and practice; and informs and engages citizens as public school advocates in the greater Philadelphia region.

**The Ed Fund's Community Learning Briefs** are designed to keep parents, families and communities central to the academic success of our young people.

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## **2. Create performance standards for teachers and principals that are aligned with student success and are implemented consistently District-wide.**

Clearly define good teaching; set standards aligned with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, grade-level performance and/or PSSA proficiency; evaluate teaching using these standards; and use evaluations to inform teacher professional development.

## **3. Create an effective professional development strategy which allows staff input and creates a "culture of collaboration" in schools.**

Develop a comprehensive professional development plan for principals and teachers and invest resources heavily.

## **4. Give school leaders the tools and resources to hire and create teams of effective teachers.**

Principals and their school leadership team (including teacher leaders, as well as parent and student representatives) should be able to hire their own staff and create professional learning communities.

## **5. Create a "deep bench" of applicants for teaching positions.**

Expand the pool of applicants as other cities have done. In Philadelphia, there are 2.5 applicants for each teacher vacancy; in Boston there are twelve. Philadelphia needs to recruit teachers earlier and more aggressively.

## **6. Open school with NO teacher vacancies.**

The District should complete teacher assignments early in the summer so school communities have time to prepare for the school year.

## **How Can You Help?**

We invite residents, groups and organizations across the city to join with us in highlighting the need for effective teaching for all of our children, supporting and applauding our leaders when they move us in the proper direction and holding them accountable for all of their decisions and actions because truly, our children need to be our number one priority.

**Please join the Campaign!** Visit [www.phillytqe.org](http://www.phillytqe.org) to add your name as a supporter, to read the full teaching effectiveness platform, or just to learn more about this important issue. For more information, please contact Brian Armstead at [barmstead@philaedfund.org](mailto:barmstead@philaedfund.org) or 215-665-1400 ext 3332.

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