

Retaining Effective Teachers in Schools

Pointers for policy development

EVALUATE AND REWARD EFFECTIVE TEACHING

- Emphasise importance of teacher evaluation to enhance classroom practice, recognise teachers' work and help both teachers and schools to identify professional development opportunities.
- Include in teacher evaluation self-evaluation, informal peer evaluation, classroom observation and regular feedback by the principal and experienced peers.
- Make sure that teacher appraisal occurs within a framework of profession-wide agreed statements of teachers' responsibilities and standards of professional performance.
- Ensure that principals and other senior colleagues are trained in evaluation processes and schools have the resources to meet identified needs in teachers' professional development.
- Consider using teacher evaluation for rewarding teachers for exemplary performance with faster career progression, time allowances, sabbatical periods, opportunities for school-based research, support for post-graduate study or opportunities for in-service education.
- Ensure that measures used to assess teacher performance are broadly based to reflect school objectives and take account of the school and classroom contexts.
- Distinguish ongoing, informal evaluation – formative evaluation – for teacher improvement from summative evaluation for teacher promotion which should have a stronger external component.

RESPOND TO INEFFECTIVE TEACHERS

- Develop stronger systems of initial teacher education, more rigorous approaches to selection and probation and regular formative teacher evaluation to prevent poor teachers from entering and remaining in the profession.
- Provide processes that both enable ineffective teachers to move either out of the school system or into non-teaching roles and ensure that this happens.
- Include authorities external to the school, including representatives of the teaching profession, when making decisions about ineffective teachers.

PROVIDE MORE SUPPORT FOR NEW TEACHERS

- Ensure that all new teachers participate in structured induction programmes that involve:
 - a reduced teaching load
 - trained mentor teachers in schools
 - close partnerships with teacher education institutions
- Ensure that new teachers are not concentrated in the more difficult locations.

PROVIDE MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CAREER VARIETY AND DIVERSIFICATION

- Develop a dual approach:
 - create new positions associated with specific tasks and roles in addition to classroom teaching
 - create a competency-based teaching career ladder associated with extra responsibilities
- Create roles such as mentor of new and trainee teachers, co-ordinator of in-service training and school project co-ordinator to recognise the greater range of tasks of schools and teachers.

- Consider a performance- and competency-based professional career ladder associating distinct teacher competencies and responsibilities to career stages as a part of a lifelong learning continuum.

IMPROVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND SCHOOL CLIMATE

- Improve training, selection and evaluation processes for school leaders, and provide them with upgraded support services and more attractive compensation packages.
- Ensure the presence of a leadership team in each school to share the load and ensure effective delivery so the school principal focuses on educational leadership rather than administrative tasks.
- Advertise openly principals' positions on the basis of clear criteria including professional development activities, formal qualifications and leadership experience as a teacher.
- Select principals through a broadly-based panel including external experts.
- Ensure that principals undergo a formal evaluation before renewal of their appointment.

IMPROVE WORK CONDITIONS

- Recognise the breadth and complexity of teachers' roles and responsibilities in job profiles.
- Use well-trained professional and administrative staff to help reduce the burden on teachers.
- Provide better facilities at schools for staff preparation and planning.
- Establish programmes that enable teachers to work part-time, take more leave opportunities or reduce their working hours without jeopardising their long-term employment and pension rights.
- Ensure that schools provide attractive environments for older teachers.
- Develop programmes aimed at retaining important skills in schools including professional development activities for older teachers, reduced classroom teaching and overall hours and new tasks including curriculum development, advising other schools and mentoring new teachers.

FURTHER READING

These general pointers for policy development are drawn from the Thematic Review on Teacher Policy and the findings are presented in *Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers*, published in 2005. Country background reports prepared by 25 countries, country reviews of 10 countries and other documents are on the OECD website www.oecd.org/edu/teacherpolicy.