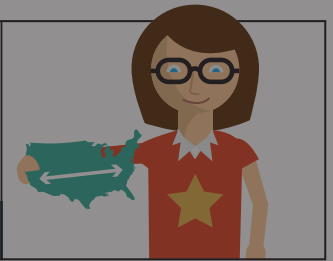


# TEACHER PAY AND CAREER PATHS IN AN OPPORTUNITY CULTURE

## A PRACTICAL POLICY GUIDE

BY PUBLIC IMPACT



### INTRODUCTION

**T**o help all teaching.

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NOTE: An updated version of this publication can be found here:  
[https://opportunityculture.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Career\\_Paths\\_and\\_Pay\\_in\\_an\\_Opportunity\\_Culture\\_A\\_Practical\\_Guide-Public\\_Impact.pdf](https://opportunityculture.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Career_Paths_and_Pay_in_an_Opportunity_Culture_A_Practical_Guide-Public_Impact.pdf)

ent access to excellent this guide shows how.

that will keep excellent design these paths, they d teachers to contribute

#### Why do students n

Research confirms that without excellent teaching consistently, students who start behind stay behind. Even hardworking, solid teachers who achieve one year of learning progress each year leave achievement gaps intact. By providing all students with excellent teachers—those in today’s top 20 to 25 percent who achieve well over one year of learning progress—schools can close gaps fast. But with traditional staffing plans, most schools can provide students with excellent teachers in only one out of four classrooms.

#### How can all students have access to excellent teaching?

- \* **Recruit.** Nations now surging ahead in education have limited who can teach to top high school or college students who also exhibit other qualities needed for great teaching. U.S. school districts should follow their lead. But this alone would be inadequate in the U.S. economy, where higher-paid careers attract top candidates, too.
- \* **Retain.** Top-performing professionals want rapid on-the-job development that leads to paid career advancement opportunities; districts and states must provide these to make teaching an attractive, long-term career option (see Figure 1).
- \* **Extend.** Most teachers today work alone. Excellent teachers rarely have authority, time, or sustained incentives to lead while teaching. Solid teachers are on their own, with few chances to learn on the job from excellent peers. To ensure that every student has access to excellent teaching consistently, districts must help excellent teachers extend their reach to far more students, directly and by leading teaching teams. “Reach extension” also creates new roles and in-school time for all teachers to learn on the job from the best, contribute to excellence immediately, and pursue sustainably paid career advancement.

an “Opportunity Culture” for students and teachers (see Figure 2).

#### How can district leaders make this a reality?

- \* **First,** district leaders must commit to reaching every student with excellent teaching consistently. Districts implementing Opportunity Culture models commit to five Opportunity Culture Principles that support this goal (see Figure 3).
- \* **Second,** leaders must change how teaching roles are organized, by engaging teachers and principals to craft school models that reach all students with excellent teaching. [OpportunityCulture.org](https://opportunityculture.org) provides materials to help.
- \* **Third,** districts must align pay and other systems to support teaching excellence and learning. This practical guide helps districts design **career paths and pay** that reflect community values, as well as the core goals of an Opportunity Culture—excellent instruction for all students and excellent career opportunities for all teachers.

Early schools and districts implementing an Opportunity Culture have been ambitious. All districts are aiming to:

- reach at least 80 percent of students with truly excellent teachers** who are formally accountable for their learning,
- pay supplements of 10 to 50 percent** to highly effective teachers from the start,
- fund pay supplements within regular budgets,**
- add time for teacher planning and collaboration,** and
- adapt evaluation and accountability systems** to reflect the responsibilities of new roles.

Opportunity Culture Principles (see Figure 3) make a range of sustainable, high-impact career path options possible, with more or fewer levels of advancement, and with higher or lower pay supplements available to each role.