

Building Block #6: Redesign schools as places in which teachers will be treated as professionals, with incentives and support to continuously improve their practice and the performance of their students**GAP ANALYSIS***Teacher Compensation*

Because the top performing jurisdictions are trying to attract teachers from the same cohort of high school students who go into the high-status professions, their typical stated policy is to compensate them at levels comparable to compensation for the high-status professions. Starting pay for teachers in these countries is often higher than in the high-status professions. When lower, the difference is almost always less than 25 percent. Neither Maryland nor the top performing states in the United States do that. The average statewide starting salary for teachers in the U.S. was \$34,234 in 2015, which consistently lagged behind other professions, often by margins of 50 percent. Teachers' average salaries also lagged behind other professions, by margins of 35-55 percent. This again is similar to New Hampshire and New Jersey, although the gap in Massachusetts is much smaller, between 8 and 12 percent.

Career ladder systems

The top performing jurisdictions are increasingly using highly structured career ladders, similar to those found in most high-status professions, to structure the careers of teachers. In Shanghai and Singapore, the world's leaders in this development, as teachers progress up a well-defined sequence of steps, they acquire more responsibility, authority, status and compensation, much as one would in a large law firm in the United States, progression from associate, to junior partner, to senior partner, to managing partner. Or one could compare the careers of school teachers, who typically have the same job on their last day of work as they did on their first day, to those of university faculty, who might progress from lecturer to assistant professor to associate professor to full professor to full professors who hold endowed chairs. The career ladders for teachers in the top performing countries can be visualized as a "Y" in which the teacher proceeds from novice up the ladder to a fully proficient teacher and then choose either to proceed on one branch up to master teacher and up the other to principal and beyond. In these systems, master teachers typically make as much as school principals. The criteria for moving up the ladder start with a focus on excellent teaching, but then, as they move up, focus on the teachers' ability to mentor other teachers, lead other teachers in the work of teacher teams and, finally, lead other teachers in doing research leading to steady improvement in student performance in the school. In Ontario and Finland, the professional status of teachers and opportunities for differentiated roles creates comparable incentives for retention and professional development. All well-developed career ladders in the leading jurisdictions provide strong incentives to all teachers to get better and better at the work.

Maryland has no statewide career ladder system for teachers, although, to its credit, Baltimore City's pilot system is further along than pilots in the other benchmark states that are all experimenting with career ladders. Massachusetts, the state with by far the best student performance in the United States, is the only top performing state that has a design for a state-level career ladder system, and that system has been implemented in only a few school districts.

The organization of teachers' work

The career ladders in the top performing jurisdictions are organized to support a very different form of work organization in the school, much more like that found in professional service practices such as law firms, engineering firms or universities than the form of work organization typically found in the typical American school. American teachers are expected to spend more time facing students in the classroom than teachers in any other industrialized country. By contrast, in many top performing countries, teachers are in front of a class teaching for about 40 percent of their time at work. Most of the rest of their time is spent in teams working to systematically improve their lessons and the way they do formative assessment, work together to come up with effective strategies for individual students who are falling behind, tutoring students who need intensive help, observing and critiquing new teachers, observing other teachers to improve their own practice, doing research related to solving problems in the school and writing articles based on their research. The career ladders in these countries have structured the roles available to teachers as they move up the career ladder to support the form of work organization just described. There is no state in the United States that has thus far implemented policies designed to support the form of work organization just described.

Support for New Teachers

Ontario, Shanghai and Singapore have well-developed systems to induct new teachers into the teaching profession. They are tightly structured and monitored: mentors are recruited, selected through an interview process, trained and evaluated. Maryland has an induction coordinator for each school district and the state provides orientation training for all new mentors, but, as in Massachusetts and New Jersey, mentors are self-selected and receive minimal ongoing training at the discretion of local districts. New Hampshire leaves the decision of whether to implement a program to the districts.

The 2016 Maryland Teacher Induction, Retention and Advancement Act (TIRA) established a stakeholder group to develop recommendations for strengthening induction in the state. The recommendations include: integrating mentoring during the teacher training practicum with mentorship during induction and establishing formal qualifications for mentor teachers such as tenure, five years of teaching experience, and highly effective ratings on teacher evaluation and principal recommendations. These recommendations represent a good starting point for developing a high performance system for making mentoring new teachers an integral part of the new career ladder system.

Helping Teachers to Continually Improve Their Practice

In Shanghai, teachers are required to take 120 hours of professional development during their first year and 240 hours every five years after that. Senior-level teachers are required to take 540 hours every five years. In Singapore, all teachers are required to have 100 hours of professional development each year. In Ontario, it is the equivalent of Shanghai at 6 days per year, while Finland allows local municipalities and schools flexibility to allocate time for professional development as they see fit.

Maryland sets professional development requirements for teachers who must earn an “advanced teaching credential” to continue teaching after five years of teaching by taking 36 hours of professional development, including 21 hours of graduate credit, earning a master’s degree in education or earning a certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards along with 12 hours of graduate work. After earning this advanced credential, Maryland does not require any further professional development. Massachusetts and New Hampshire require 100 hours and 75 hours of professional development every three years for recertification. New Jersey only requires 20 hours of professional development for a one-time recertification of a provisional license, with no additional requirements. Like the benchmark states, Maryland generally leaves provision of professional development to districts. The research shows that requirements for specified amounts of professional development of the usual sort, including requiring Masters degrees, acquiring certificates, taking courses or earning credits by taking workshops, have little or no effect on the performance of the students who are involved in this kind of professional development. Only when these forms of professional development are used to supplement professional development that is embedded in the work that teachers do as they participate in teams that work to systematically improve student performance does professional development make a real difference in student performance.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Maryland must build a statewide career ladder system modelled on the most effective such systems in the world
 - a. The development of a meaningful career ladder will require considerable effort extending over several years and involving all of the stakeholders (LEAs, MSDE, collective bargaining units, school boards, etc.)
 - b. Maryland should consider participating as a pilot state in the development of a national career ladder system for teachers to be run by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, provided that Maryland and its districts retain control over the way teachers and principals certified at each step of

- the ladder are compensated and the roles people certified at each step of the ladder are assigned
- c. Maryland should develop a statewide framework for a career ladder system and then task each district and local bargaining unit with negotiating a teacher leadership system—or career ladder—within the statewide framework.
 - d. Each career ladder should present two paths to school leadership for exemplar teachers: a “Master Teacher” track that allows great teachers to stay in the classroom and an administrative track that gives teachers the chance to become assistant principals and principals.
 - e. Teachers should be evaluated and recommended for promotion up the career ladder by a combination of master teachers and administrators.
2. Increases in compensation for Maryland teachers must be tied in significant measure to their positions on the career ladder as they move up that ladder. Advancement up the ladder must be based on the acquisition of specified knowledge and skills and must lead to additional responsibilities commensurate with the additional compensation
 - a. The career ladder should be designed to complement and facilitate the implementation of the high performance work organization in the schools (see #4 below)
 - b. There should be a transition period during which currently serving teachers would eventually be placed within the new career ladder structure. Until that time, compensation for currently serving teachers would continue to be determined by the current process.
 3. Maryland must move to eliminate the gap in compensation between teaching and the high-status professions
 - a. The closing of the gap should be phased in over the implementation period of the Commission’s recommendations, including raising the standards for licensing teachers, the new career ladder system and the new approach to school organization and management is implemented
 - b. Teachers’ compensation should continue to be negotiated at the local level between bargaining units and school boards, but the state should conduct regular periodic surveys of compensation in Maryland, county by county, to determine prevailing rates of beginning and average compensation in the high status professions, to provide benchmarks to be used in collective bargaining over teachers compensation in each jurisdiction
 4. Maryland must change the way its schools are organized and managed to make them more effective and to create a more professional environment for teaching
 - a. The state should establish the maximum time that teachers should be expected to teach in a typical week not to exceed 60%, moving toward that goal over the course of a multi-year phase-in of the program so that teachers can work in collaboration to improve the curriculum, instructional delivery,

and tutor students with special needs; the state should explicitly move toward modern forms of teachers' work organization of the kind described above

5. Maryland must strengthen its teacher induction systems. As part of its policies establishing the career ladder system, Maryland should require that the career ladders include as part of the responsibility of senior teachers the responsibility to mentor new teachers and experienced teachers who need help; as part of the policies established to implement new forms of work organization, these mentor teachers should be given enough time with their mentees to provide the guidance and support they will need to succeed in their initial years in teaching. An excellent starting point for a new induction system is the Teacher Induction and Retention Program (TIRA), modeled on Peer Assistance and Review Program (PAR), which should be scaled up across the state as quickly as possible, evaluated on an ongoing basis and integrated into the new career ladder system.

ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED WITH RESPECT TO CAREER LADDER PROPOSAL:

1. Assuming there is a statewide framework for a career ladder system, which of the following should be decided at the state level and which at the district level: Number and names of steps on the ladder? Criteria for advancing up the ladder? The roles in the schools and system that a person at each step of the ladder will have (assuming that teacher's compensation will be negotiated locally)?
2. If the state sets the framework for a common ladder (number of steps and criteria for advancing up the ladder), should the system allow the state standards for advancing up the ladder to be supplemented by local district criteria?
3. Should the career ladder be structured so that in order to ascend the career ladder a teacher must demonstrate success in teaching in schools with high proportions of low performing students or large achievement gaps between subgroups of students?

OTHER ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED:

1. Should Maryland place a higher priority on funding higher compensation for teachers or reducing class size?
2. Should Maryland place a higher priority on reducing class size or on creating working conditions for teachers similar to the working conditions enjoyed by high status professionals, which would mean, among other things, much more time to work with each other and less time facing students in class?
3. Should Maryland provide incentives (within or outside the career ladder) for high quality teachers to teach in low performing schools? If so, what kinds of incentives (including nonmonetary incentives) would be appropriate?