

Preparing Teachers and Principals for Excellence & Attracting Excellent Teachers and Principals to High-Need Schools and Communities

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The sessions on teacher and principal preparation and on attracting teachers to high-need areas were combined. Facilitators Edit and Nick oversaw a broad discussion of both issues, with both small- and whole-group conversations that focused on incentives to attract teachers and offered ideas for improving teacher preparation.

Much of the discussion focused on attracting and keeping new teachers. Key ideas included:

- Using financial incentives to draw teachers to high-need areas has merits but may be unsustainable over time; recognition may also be motivating.
- The critical element in teacher preparation is time: teachers need more practicum classroom time.
- Interning teachers should be offered stipends.
- Adding a full year of in-classroom training would greatly benefit pre-service teachers.
- Districts and schools need to be fair in assigning new teachers, sharing the burden of high-needs classes with veteran teachers.
- Teachers need more mentoring; new teachers should be paired with seasoned ones.
- Alternative certification may be effective in attracting teachers from other professions—but it may undercut efforts to professionalize teaching. What other profession, they asked, offers an alternative route to professionalism?