

THE TEACHING JOB:

Restructuring for
Effectiveness

SECTION 3

Individual Growth

PRACTICAL TOOLS
for District Transformation

ANALYSES AND DO-IT-YOURSELF WORKSHEETS

THE TEACHING JOB WORKSHEET SERIES INCLUDES worksheets with step-by-step instructions to help you calculate and measure teaching effectiveness. These analyses can help identify your largest challenges and

greatest opportunities for action. Armed with this knowledge, you will be able to quantify transformational opportunities for your district. This document contains **Section 3**.

GET THE REMAINING WORKSHEETS AT WWW.ERSTRATEGIES.ORG.

Analyses for restructuring teaching effectiveness

	ANALYSIS	WORKSHEET
1. DEFINING AND MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS	Measuring and managing teaching effectiveness	1. Span of review for teacher evaluation 2. District use of teacher evaluation data in human capital decisions
	2. HIRING	Supportive hiring practices
Tracking teacher distribution		4. Stability of teaching force by school performance
3. INDIVIDUAL GROWTH	Investing in teacher development	5. District individual professional development spending by category
	Managing poor performers	6. Unsatisfactory teacher performance by school performance quartile 7. Non-renewal patterns of untenured teachers
4. SCHOOL-BASED SUPPORT	Job and team assignment	8. Incidence of novice teachers and student performance by grade
	Collaborative planning time	9. Teacher collaborative planning and unspecified time
	Expert support and facilitation	10. Coach and lead teacher investment per teacher 11. Teacher-to-coach ratio by school, grouped by AYP status
5. COMPENSATION AND CAREER PATH	Compensation and career path	12. Compensation spending per teacher
	Competitive market salaries and benefits	13. Teacher salary relative to contracted hours
	Differentiated compensation	14. Total possible raises and stipends over a teacher's career

Data checklist

Use this list to gather the data and files you will need to complete the worksheets that follow. Once you have the data you need and know which questions you want to answer, follow the steps identified in the worksheets for the appropriate analyses. You will need:

District budget file at the lowest level of detail available.

This file will allow you to:

- a. Categorize professional development spending.

District current-year and previous-year human resources files.

These files will allow you to:

- a. Characterize teachers by district's measure of effectiveness.
- b. Identify tenured and untenured teachers.
- c. Determine reasons for non-renewal of untenured teachers.

District school performance file. This file will allow you to:

- a. Identify schools by performance category.

ANALYSIS AND WORKSHEET 5

Investing in teacher development

Figure 5 illustrates the investment in professional development for individual teachers across five urban districts. The total spending varies widely, as does the breakdown among the different spending categories. Districts A, B, and C invest primarily in induction, which is critical for ensuring that new teachers are positioned for long-term success.

Figure 5: District Individual Professional Development Spending by Category



Spending in districts D and E is focused on continuing education. In many districts, teachers are reimbursed for taking courses *they* choose to earn credits in and that move them along a salary schedule or career path. While teachers should be free to make their own choices when paying out-of-pocket for courses, district tuition-reimbursement resources should be aligned with district priorities, including developing lead teachers and increasing the number of teachers with certification in key subjects.

None of the districts invests significantly in the areas of remediation, targeted skill development, or leadership. Districts that do not also support teachers at these other critical transition points lose the opportunity to develop promising teachers and future leaders. Instead, by identifying areas of need and supporting existing, effective teachers in meeting these needs, districts can improve the quality of their teaching force and retain their best performers.

Worksheet 5: District individual professional development spending by category

OBJECTIVE: To understand how spending on professional development targeted to individual teacher growth is allocated and whether opportunities exist to reallocate spending to more strategic areas.

SUMMARY OF METRICS

STEP 1: Identify the budget line items that relate to professional development for teachers.

STEP 2: Categorize each line item related to teacher professional development as “individual growth” or “school/district.”

STEP 3: Categorize every individual growth line item into the appropriate spending category.

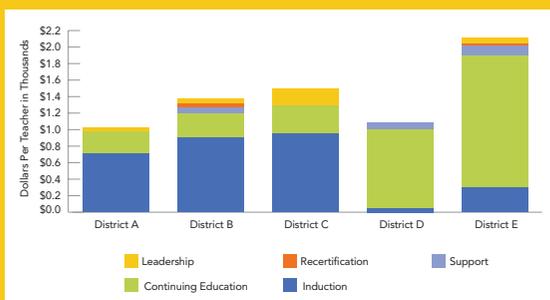
STEP 4: Determine the total number of teacher full-time equivalents (FTEs) in the district.

STEP 5: Calculate the per-teacher expenditure for each category.

STEP 6: Graph the per-teacher expenditure for each category to understand spending differences across the categories.

REMINDER

Figure 5: District Individual Professional Development Spending by Category



STEP 1: Identify the budget line items that relate to professional development for teachers.

1. Using your district’s budget file, identify every line item that relates to professional development for teachers.
 - a. Include all professional development programs and initiatives.
 - b. Include tuition reimbursement payments to teachers.
 - c. Include time for district administrators working on professional development. If there are district administrators whose time is split between teacher professional development and other areas, split their compensation into two different categories, one for professional development and one for nonprofessional development, according to the approximate time they spend working on teacher professional development.
 - d. Do NOT include lane increments on the salary schedule or teachers’ time.

STEP 2: Categorize each line item related to teacher professional development as “individual growth” or “school/district.”

1. Categorize every professional development budget line identified in Step 1 as either “individual growth” or “school/district.”
 - a. Individual growth items should be those that are tailored to an individual teacher’s needs (e.g., a mentor or training program for a new teacher, or optional courses offered by the district).
 - b. School/district items should be those that are implemented for all teachers at a district or a school (e.g., training on a new reading curriculum).

STEP 3: Categorize every individual growth line item into the appropriate spending category.

1. Categorize every individual growth line item from Step 2 into a particular spending category, using the following guidelines:
 - a. Induction: Any costs associated with orienting new teachers and helping them become effective in their role.
 - b. Continuing education: Tuition reimbursement for any classes that teachers take related to their profession, unless specifically for recertification.
 - c. Support: Any costs associated with remediation for struggling teachers.
 - d. Recertification: Any costs associated with teacher certification renewal or helping a teacher become certified to teach a new subject, grade level, or student population.
 - e. Leadership: Any costs associated with providing leadership opportunities for teachers.

STEP 4: Determine the total number of teacher full-time equivalents (FTEs) in the district.

1. Using your district HR file:
 - a. Calculate the total number of teacher FTEs in the district by summing the FTE values across all unique teacher IDs.

STEP 5: Calculate the per-teacher expenditure for each category.

1. For each category described in Step 3, sum the total cost of the line items within that category to calculate the category's total cost.
2. Perform the following calculation:

$$\frac{\text{Total cost of each category}}{\text{Total number of teacher FTEs in the district}} = \text{Per-teacher expenditure by category}$$

STEP 6: Graph the per-teacher expenditure for each category to understand spending differences across the categories.

1. Construct a graph with:
 - a. Y-axis: Dollars per teacher in thousands.
 - b. X-axis: Create a stacked bar for your district individual growth professional development spending, in which each spending category from Step 3 constitutes one section of the bar. Compare your district's spending to the other districts shown in this guide.

Managing poor performers

Most districts have a process to give a struggling teacher feedback on his or her performance, provide support for improvement, and take steps toward dismissal if improvement does not occur. But many districts and schools do not use this lever. Figure 6 illustrates that in one urban district, only a tiny percentage of teachers ever receive unsatisfactory performance reviews, even at the lowest-performing schools. This pattern is repeated in large districts nationwide.¹ Districts and schools that do not give unsatisfactory ratings to low performers are limiting their options for giving these teachers the help they need to improve and, if they don't improve, counseling them out of the district.

Figure 6: Unsatisfactory Teacher Performance by School Performance* Quartile



*The school performance metric is the average of the percentage of students proficient in math and the percentage of students proficient in English language arts

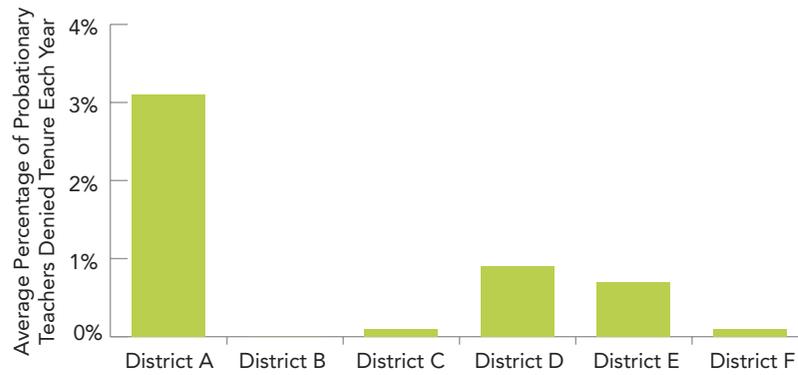
Many might argue that the effort and unpleasantness associated with delivering poor evaluations isn't worth it because collective bargaining agreements and state requirements make it so difficult to remove teachers. District and school leaders already have more autonomy to remove provisional or untenured teachers. But unfortunately, even in these instances they are often avoiding these hard decisions.

Districts have the authority to deny tenure to new teachers who are not performing, yet this option is seldom exercised.² While it can sometimes be difficult to predict long-term performance so early in a teacher's career (tenure is typically granted after an average of three years in the district³), research shows that principals have a much better sense of a teacher's effectiveness after one to two years than upon hiring.⁴ Figure 7, from *The Widget Effect*, shows the percentage of teachers not granted tenure over a five-year period across several districts—and illustrates how few principals exercise their right to withhold tenure for low-performing teachers.

Districts that do not support teachers at critical points lose the opportunity to develop promising teachers and future leaders.

- 1 Weisberg, D., Sexton, S., Mulhern, J., & Keeling, D. (2009).
- 2 Weisberg, D., Sexton, S., Mulhern, J., & Keeling, D. (2009).
- 3 U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010–11 Edition*. www.bls.gov/oco/ocos318.htm.
- 4 Kane, T., & Staiger, D. (2005). *Using Imperfect Information to Identify Effective Teachers*. Working paper. Los Angeles: UCLA Department for Policy Studies.

Figure 7: Non-Renewals of Probationary Teachers for Performance, SY 2003–04 through SY 2007–08



Source: *The New Teacher Project, The Widget Effect (2009)*

Firing even an untenured teacher is not easy. It can be confrontational, it creates additional staff churn, and there is no guarantee that the principal will be able to replace the teacher with a more effective candidate. Districts can support principals in focusing attention early in a teacher’s career on progress and performance and working to expand the pool of qualified replacement candidates. Armed with this information, principals can and should be much more selective in granting tenure because it is so much more difficult to dismiss someone once they have it.

Worksheet 6: Unsatisfactory teacher performance by school performance quartile

OBJECTIVE: To determine what percentage of teachers receive unsatisfactory ratings and whether there are differences in ratings that are correlated with school performance.

SUMMARY OF METRICS

STEP 1: Determine the number of teachers at each school who were recently evaluated.

STEP 2: Determine the number of teachers at each school who received an unsatisfactory rating on their recent evaluation.

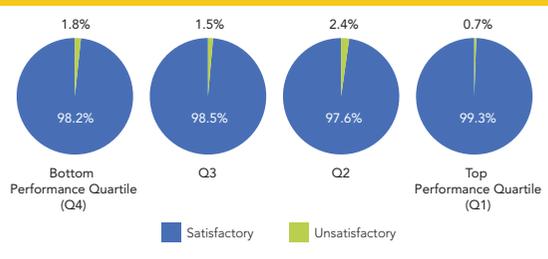
STEP 3: Calculate the percentage of teachers receiving an unsatisfactory rating at each school.

STEP 4: Assign schools to performance categories.

STEP 5: Graph comparison metrics to understand the incidence of unsatisfactory teacher ratings across school performance categories.

REMINDER

Figure 6: Unsatisfactory Teacher Performance by School Performance Quartile



STEP 1: Determine the number of teachers at each school who were recently evaluated.

- Using your district’s HR file:
 - Identify the total number of K–12 teachers at each school.
 - Identify the teachers at each school who were evaluated during your most recent evaluation period (e.g., last school year).
 - Count the total number of teachers at each school who have recent evaluation ratings.

STEP 2: Determine the number of teachers at each school who received an unsatisfactory rating on their recent evaluation.

- Identify the evaluation ratings that correspond to an unsatisfactory rating.
- From the set of teachers identified in Step 1, count the number of teachers at each school whose recent rating corresponds to an unsatisfactory rating.

STEP 3: Calculate the percentage of teachers receiving an unsatisfactory rating at each school.

$$\frac{\text{Number of teachers at each school receiving unsatisfactory rating}}{\text{Number of teachers at each school recently evaluated}} = \text{Percentage of teachers receiving unsatisfactory rating at each school}$$

STEP 4: Assign schools to performance categories.

1. If you have an accepted school performance metric that is used within your district, use it to group your schools by performance. If it is a continuous metric, we recommend grouping the schools by performance quartiles.
2. If you do not have an accepted school performance metric used within your district, we recommend using the following:
 - a. For every school, calculate the percentage of students who achieved at least a proficient on the previous year's standardized test for math, and then calculate the same percentage for English language arts. The average of these two numbers is the school's percent proficient value.
 - b. Group the schools in quartiles according to their percent proficient value.

STEP 5: Graph comparison metrics to understand the incidence of unsatisfactory teacher ratings across school performance categories.

1. Using the groupings created in Step 4 and the percentages calculated in Step 3, calculate the average unsatisfactory rate across schools within each performance group, weighted by student enrollment.
2. For each performance group, graph the unsatisfactory rates versus the satisfactory rates as a pie chart.

Worksheet 7: Non-renewal patterns of untenured teachers

OBJECTIVE: To assess how selective the district is in granting tenure.

SUMMARY OF METRICS

STEP 1: Identify the set of untenured teachers in the most recent school year.

STEP 2: Of the untenured teachers, identify those who were non-renewed for performance reasons.

STEP 3: Calculate the percentage of untenured teachers who were non-renewed for performance reasons.

STEP 4: Graph the non-renewal rate to understand the incidence of untenured teachers being non-renewed for performance.

Note: This chart is from *The New Teacher Project, The Widget Effect 2009*. We suggest the following methodology to calculate this metric for your own district.

STEP 1: Identify the set of untenured teachers in the most recent school year.

1. Using your district's HR file for the most recently completed school year, identify all untenured teachers.

STEP 2: Of the untenured teachers, identify those who were non-renewed for performance reasons.

1. Within your district's HR file:
 - a. Identify the set of values within the Reason for Termination field or its equivalent that equate to non-renewal for performance.
 - b. Count the number of teachers identified in Step 1 who were non-renewed due to performance.
 - c. If you don't have Reason for Termination information available, then identify all untenured teachers who were non-renewed.

STEP 3: Calculate the percentage of untenured teachers who were non-renewed for performance reasons.

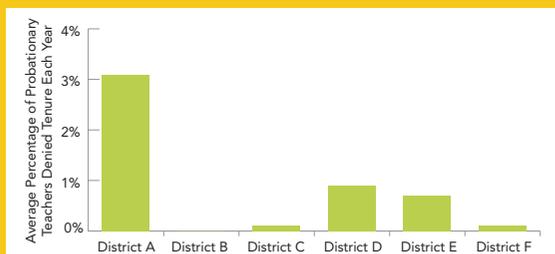
$$\frac{\text{Number of untenured teachers non-renewed for performance reasons}}{\text{Number of untenured teachers}} = \text{Percentage of untenured teachers non-renewed for performance reasons}$$

STEP 4: Graph the non-renewal rate to understand the incidence of untenured teachers being non-renewed for performance.

1. Construct a bar graph:
 - a. Y-axis: Percentage of untenured teachers non-renewed for performance reasons.
 - b. X-axis: Bar for your district.
2. To take it a step further, calculate the non-renewal rates for each school, and construct a bar graph to compare the non-renewal rates across schools.

REMINDER

Figure 7: Non-Renewals of Probationary Teachers for Performance, SY 2003–04 through SY 2007–08



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER AND ACTION STEPS

Questions to Consider

1. Does your district support teachers at all critical transition points, or is support focused primarily on induction?
2. How can you use your existing evaluation system to match support to instructional needs?
3. Does your district reimburse teachers for taking courses they choose that may or may not support district or school needs?
4. Are school leaders accurately rating teacher performance?
5. Is your district automatically granting tenure regardless of performance?
6. Is the tenure decision driven by a shortage of qualified candidates? How can you attract more teaching applicants?
7. Is there a clear and reasonable process for teacher dismissal?

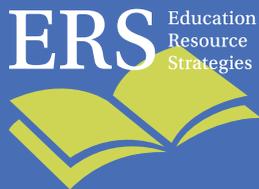
Take Action!

- **Assess your overall professional development spending and ensure that it is aligned with district priorities.** A strategically designed professional development plan targets scarce resources to a district's most important priorities in ways most likely to improve student achievement. Make sure that your investment is well balanced among individual and districtwide professional development and school-based support (Section 4 of this series). Establish reliable systems to measure whether professional development programs are having a positive impact on student and teacher performance—and if they aren't, change them.
- **Develop an effective teacher induction program.** Teachers who are new to teaching or even new to your district need additional support. Most districts provide orientation and new teacher training. Many also pair new teachers with mentors or coaches. If you do have new teacher mentors, you should ensure that mentors teach the same subject or grade as the teachers they support. You should also consider giving new teachers reduced responsibilities, such as fewer course sections, smaller classes, fewer preps, or the opportunity to co-teach with an experienced teacher.
- **Examine tuition reimbursement and other professional development programs.** Reimburse teachers only for courses that directly impact teachers' effectiveness or expand their skills in areas of school or district need. Examine investments in workshop-based programs that are not directly linked to classroom instruction. These dollars may be freed up to invest in school-based support such as collaborative planning time, formative assessments, and expert support resources.
- **Create a leadership development program for your best teachers.** Identify leadership needs that are common across schools in the district. These needs might include instructional coaches, lead teachers, curriculum development, or web-based instruction. Identify strong teachers who are interested in and well suited for leadership positions, and develop ways to provide them training or mentoring in the skills they need. Then investigate creative ways to both develop and leverage their expertise within their schools and districtwide.

- **Provide opportunities and support for additional certifications.** Teachers who are certified in multiple subjects or specialties greatly expand the options available to school leaders for instructional grouping and scheduling, especially in small schools. Encourage promising teachers to seek additional certifications by identifying and publicizing the combinations of certifications that are most needed. Also consider tuition reimbursement for required courses and/or other financial incentives.
- **Develop a rigorous, consistent approach for granting tenure.** Set clear and consistent performance standards across the district, and make sure all teachers and principals are well-versed in the standards. As discussed previously, make sure you have a rigorous and multifaceted evaluation process in place for all teachers to support tenure decisions. Most important, hold firm about the standards, and if a teacher's evaluation does not support tenure, do not grant it. This sends a clear message about expectations—and also makes it easier to remove low-performing teachers if necessary.
- **Work to refine teacher tenure and dismissal requirements.** In many states, state statute governs teacher tenure provisions and dismissal procedures. In some, they are defined or refined in collective bargaining agreements. State, district, and union leadership should consider alternatives to the traditional structure of tenure, such as a provisional period of five years instead of two or three, and/or require “re-tenuring” of teachers every five to ten years to allow for periodic review. They also need to create a fair and transparent process for removing low-performing teachers that guarantees due process but also supports timely removal of teachers if performance does not improve.
- **Create a clear and timely process for remediation and dismissal.** Teachers who are not performing must be identified quickly and put on performance plans that clearly detail what their performance challenges are, what they need to do to overcome them, and what the time frame is for improvement. Consider providing coaches, mentors, or training to teachers in remediation to maximize their opportunity to improve. If they have not demonstrated sufficient progress within the designated time frame, you need a clear process for dismissal. State and union rules and processes around dismissal can be unreasonably burdensome. School leaders are often reluctant to place teachers on performance plans because the process for counseling out underperformers is long, unclear, and often unsuccessful, leaving the principal with an underperforming, resentful employee. School supervisors and human resources personnel will need to work closely with principals to ensure they have the information and training they need and are supported in this process.
- **Develop individual development plans for all teachers.** In addition to the “point in time” support provided by induction, remediation, and leadership development, each teacher should have a dynamic plan that guides professional development that is based on an evaluation of strengths, areas of challenge, and goals for improvement. Teachers should be held accountable for following this plan—and school leaders should be held accountable for ensuring that they do. These plans should intersect and build on each teacher's career goals and should help ensure that teachers feel professionally fulfilled and rewarded. Sticking to the plan will help reduce participation in ineffective professional development and thus help districts redirect resources toward strategies that are directly related to what teachers need.

ABOUT ERS

ERS is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping urban school systems organize people, time, and money to create great schools at scale.



480 Pleasant Street C-200
Watertown, MA 02472

617.607.8000

www.erstrategies.org