

Summary and Conclusions for
Addressing Teacher Quality and Supply
Through Compensation Policy

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The Purpose of the Article: This Article is designed to address the issue of salary compensation as it affects teacher quality, teacher supply, and teacher retention in New York State, particularly in hard-to-staff schools. The authors make the case for changing the current single salary schedule in favor of a tiered process that rewards teacher's continuous improvement of skills and knowledge.

Summary: Odden and Kelly provide a review of teacher union activity in compensation reform, a synopsis of unique compensation plans in different states and districts, and a review of the research on teacher performance and compensation. Mindful of providing adequate incentives to new teachers, they argue that New York State should set a base salary linked to the average yearly income for new college graduates. Added to this, the State should provide minimum incentives for teachers achieving National Board Certification status, teachers who become certified in hard to staff subject areas, and teachers who elect to teach in hard-to-staff, high-poverty, or low performing schools. Also, monetary reward should be provided to those schools, teachers and principals, whose student achievement data shows improvement.

Local district salary structures, Odden and Kelly recommend, should be based on a teacher's *demonstrated* increase in knowledge and skills. By moving to greater proficiency from Apprentice to Advanced, based on the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's teacher proficiencies, a teacher would receive salary increments for their own and for their students' improved performance. Teacher evaluation for salary increases would be linked to a performance review undertaken by the teacher himself, a peer, preferably a master, and a principal, the latter two having been trained by the state in the review process. Reviews would occur at least every five years, with more frequent evaluations occurring in the first two years of teaching. If teachers do not achieve mid-range "Teacher" status in five years, they would not be renewed. They could conceivably stop advancing on the salary scale once they had achieved seven years of employment if their proficiency no longer advanced. In any case, beyond "Teacher," they would remain at the proficiency level they chose for the remainder of their careers. However, any continued improvement would be tied to salary increases.

Conclusion: The article concludes that with new teacher mentoring, with a focus on responsive staff development, and with excellent teaching linked to reasonable compensation, the pool of New York State's teachers and retaining them will improve. Ultimately, the authors contend, their recommendations would allow expert teachers to earn the highest salaries, would raise beginning and average teacher salaries, and would encourage quick and steady growth on the part of eager young teachers entering the field.

