



THINK TANK ON STATE POLICY TO PROMOTE EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

THINK TANK RESOURCES

10.14.14

In anticipation of our discussion at the meeting, we have identified five resources that present provocative or innovative views on improving the quality of teaching and learning. For each reading, we provide a brief summary and several key questions to stimulate your thinking. As you prepare for the meeting, we hope you will take a moment to peruse these readings and consider the suggested questions from your perspective and role in research, policy, or practice. We have arranged the readings in order of their relevance to our discussion to help you prioritize your time. In addition, please note that we have a much longer running resource list that will inform our ongoing work on the topic. We welcome your input on other key resources that we should consider as we engage in this important work. We are looking forward to a lively discussion!

Excellent Teachers for Each and Every Child: A Guide for State Policy

December 2013

<http://www.otlcampaign.org/sites/default/files/teaching-quality-policy-guide.pdf>

Summary: This guide offers a roadmap for policymakers to support state, district, and classroom practices and policies that provide all students with opportunities to learn and succeed. It identifies six categories of comprehensive strategies that support teaching quality (see pg. 2). It takes a systems perspective on teaching quality that takes “*into account not just the teacher but the factors that affect the quality of teaching such as the expertise of teachers and their professional peers, learning conditions, school environment, instructional resources and supports (academic, social, emotional, and health).*”

Key Questions: What resonates from this definition of teaching quality? How does this conceptualization apply to the early care and education workforce? What strategies are most relevant for influencing early care and education teaching quality?

Change the Terms for Teacher Learning

Michael Fullan, Summer 2007

<http://qrisnetwork.org/sites/all/files/session/resources/Change%20the%20Terms%20for%20Teacher%20Learning%20by%20Michael%20Fullan.pdf>

Summary: Fullan calls for a shift how we think about professional development and teaching effectiveness. The author argues that the most effective teachers engage in ongoing self- reflection and evaluation process to improve their students’ learning. The key components of teaching quality include precision, personalization, and professional learning. He offers a new definition of teaching effectiveness that has broad implications for the types of supports that can improve teaching and learning.

Key Questions: What resonates from Fullan's discussion of teaching quality? How does this conceptualization apply to the early care and education workforce? How does this definition shape your perspective on the key supports and accountability systems in place to support early care and education teachers?

To Close the Achievement Gap, We Need to Close the Teaching Gap

Linda Darling Hammond, 2014

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/linda-darlinghammond/to-close-the-achievement_b_5542614.html?utm_hp_ref=tw

Summary: In this brief, Linda Darling Hammond synthesizes the results of the Teaching and Learning International Survey. The results of this international comparison of teaching conditions shows American teachers work longer hours in more challenging conditions than many of their counterparts in other countries. In light of the findings, she makes several recommendations about the key supports that should be in place to promote better teaching. Her call for more time for collaboration and more effective teacher evaluations are especially pertinent to our Think Tank discussion.

Key Questions: In what ways can these recommendations be integrated into early care and education policy systems?

Renewing Head Start's Promise: Invest in What Works for Disadvantaged Preschoolers

Sara Mead: Bellwether Education Partners, July 2014

http://bellwethereducation.org/sites/default/files/Bellwether_Head-Start_July2014.pdf

Summary: This review of Head Start's performance and structure highlights several challenges with the status quo that compromise Head Start's delivery of high quality early care and education, (see pg. 14-24). According to Mead, Head Start suffers from a lack of clear goals for program performance, an overemphasis on compliance, overly broad and prescriptive requirements, and too little attention to curriculum. Although this discussion focuses on Head Start, it raises issues that influence the quality of teaching and learning children experience across the early care and education system.

Key questions: What components of early care and education monitoring efforts are essential to promote quality teaching and learning? How can our systems shift from a compliance mentality and emphasize outcomes for children and families?

Beyond Subprime Learning: Accelerating Progress in Early Education

Laura Bornfreund, Clare McCann, Conor Williams, and Lisa Geurnsey, July 2014

http://www.newamerica.net/sites/newamerica.net/files/policydocs/Beyond_Subprime_Learning_by_Bornfreund-et-al_New_America_Jul2014.pdf

Summary: The New America Foundation report provides a set of strategic actions for early education reform. It provides ten recommendations to professionalize and improve the early care and education workforce (see pg. 8-9). The recommendations are comprehensive and address teacher preparation, teacher evaluation, licensure, professional development requirements, and financing.

Key Questions: What strategies are the most relevant and timely for influencing early care and education teaching quality?