



Teacher Quality and Improvement

e-Newsletter of the CCSSO Teacher Quality Network

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The Teacher Quality and Improvement e-newsletter is a free publication from CCSSO focusing on efforts at the state and district level to strengthen teacher quality and school leadership, particularly in high-poverty, low-performing schools. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide links to recent reports, studies, legislative action, and news articles related to teacher quality and improvement efforts.

To submit a news item relevant to teacher quality and improvement at the state or district level, provide feedback, or subscribe/unsubscribe, contact Cindy Prince at cindyp@ccsso.org. If you are having problems reading this file, the PDF version of this newsletter is available at <http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/TQINewsletter19May06.pdf>. All previous issues are posted on the CCSSO website at http://www.ccsso.org/whats_new/newsletters/teacher_quality_and_improvement/index.cfm.

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COMING ATTRACTIONS

Teacher Incentive Fund

- **May 22, 2006**: Information session for potential applicants, 1 – 3 pm (Eastern), U.S. Department of Education
- **June 1st, 8th, and 15th**: Conference calls for potential applicants, 1 – 2 pm (Eastern)
- **June 15, 2006**: Deadline for notifying USDE of intent to apply
- **July 31, 2006**: Deadline for submitting applications

Purpose: to support programs that develop and implement performance-based teacher and principal compensation systems in high-need schools.

Eligible applicants:

- local educational agencies (LEAs), including charter schools that are LEAs in their state;
- state educational agencies (SEAs); or
- partnerships of (a) an LEA, an SEA, or both, and b) at least one non-profit organization.

For further information and to RSVP for the information session or conference calls, see the [USDE website](#) and the [Federal Register notice](#).

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WORK IN PROGRESS AT CCSSO

CCSSO convenes states to develop NCLB-required state teacher equity plans

On May 8-9, 2006, participants from 27 states met in Washington, DC for the second annual meeting of CCSSO's State Teacher Quality Network. The Network was established in 2004 with support from the Joyce Foundation to help states develop effective strategies to prepare, recruit, develop, and retain qualified, effective teachers, particularly in high-poverty, low-performing, and hard-to-staff schools. Thirty-seven states and jurisdictions are members of the Network.

The primary purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for state education agencies to work collectively on the development of state teacher equity plans to ensure that poor and minority students are not taught at higher rates than others by inexperienced, unqualified, and out-of-field teachers. A written teacher equity plan is one of six required elements of a broader highly-qualified teacher (HQT) plan that each state must submit to USDE by July 7, 2006. The revised HQT plans must describe what the state intends to do to bring the rest of its teachers to highly-qualified status a year from now. In March, USDE sent a [letter to chief state school officers](#) explaining these requirements, as well as the [protocol](#) that USDE and peer reviewers will be using to evaluate the adequacy of states' revised plans.

Topics addressed at CCSSO's meeting included analyzing the extent to which teachers are equitably distributed; aligning state strategies with identified areas of need; enlisting strategic partners to help implement the teacher equity plan; assembling evidence needed to justify the strategies selected; and measuring and reporting progress. Connecticut, Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin shared specific examples of strategies to close the teacher quality gap that will be included in their own state teacher equity plans. For further information, contact Cindy Prince, Director of Teacher Professional Development, at (202) 312-6868, cindyp@ccsso.org.

Template to help states develop teacher equity plans is available online

One of the products developed by CCSSO's State Teacher Quality Network is a [template](#) to help states organize, plan, and develop their teacher equity plans. The template identifies eight elements that should be addressed in a well-designed plan:

1. **Data and Reporting Systems**
2. **Teacher Preparation**
3. **Out-of-Field Teaching**
4. **Recruitment and Retention of Experienced Teachers**
5. **Professional Development**
6. **Specialized Knowledge and Skills**
7. **Working Conditions**
8. **Policy Coherence**

The template provides links to multiple examples of existing state-level policies and programs to improve teacher equity, and includes a series of steps for states to follow as they construct their plans. For further information, contact Cindy Prince, Director of Teacher Professional Development, at (202) 312-6868, cindyp@ccsso.org.

SOME OF THE TOP STORIES

USDE concludes that no state will meet the highly-qualified teacher goal by the end of the 2005-2006 school year; all states must submit revised plans to USDE by July 7th

29 states deemed to be making good-faith efforts and are on track to meet the goal; 9 states plus DC and Puerto Rico face possible federal sanctions; remaining 12 states still under review

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