

Teacher Advancement Program (TAP)

Created by the Milken Family Foundation, the Teacher Advancement Program consists of four primary elements:

- Multiple Career Paths
- Ongoing, Applied Professional Growth
- Instructionally Focused Accountability
- Performance-Based Compensation

“Multiple career paths” are available to TAP teachers, permitting them to pursue a variety of positions throughout their careers—career, mentor and master teacher—depending upon their interests, abilities and accomplishments. As they move up the ranks, their qualifications, roles and responsibilities, and compensation increase.

Master and mentor teachers are selected through a competitive, rigorous, performance-based selection process. Master and mentor teachers must have expert curricular knowledge, outstanding instructional skills, and the ability to work effectively with other adults. They take on additional responsibility and authority, and are required to have a longer work year. Master and mentor teachers are held to a different performance standard than other teachers in their school, and are compensated accordingly.

“Ongoing applied professional growth” includes cluster groups and individual growth plans (IGP). Cluster groups meet one or two hours each week during contract time and are led by master and/or mentor teachers.

IGPs require identified goals and activities within clusters and classrooms that support new teacher learning. Both the clusters and the IGPs follow the “TAP Steps.”

- Set learning goals based on an analysis of student performance;
- Identify research-based, proven learning strategies to address goals;
- Work collaboratively to develop new instructional practices;
- Bring the new learning to the classroom; and,
- Measure how well the new strategy helped students meet the learning goals set by teachers.

“Instructionally focused accountability” requires that each teacher is evaluated four to six times a year by multiple trained and certified evaluators using the TAP standards. All teachers in the school are evaluated collectively based on the learning growth of *all* students in the school. Further, each teacher is also evaluated individually based on how much learning growth the students in his or her classroom have achieved during the school year. TAP also provides ongoing training, mentoring and classroom support during the school day to help teachers meet these accountability standards, while providing financial incentives for success. Master and mentor teachers are also held accountable for their additional roles and responsibilities.

“Performance-based compensation” means that teachers are compensated differentially based on the increased demands of the positions they hold, how well they perform in those positions, the quality of their instructional performance and by their students' achievement growth.

TAPs parent organization, the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) is funded by the Walton Family Foundation, the Broad Foundation, Lilly Endowment, BellSouth Foundation, United States Department of Education, and the University of Arkansas.

NIET Homepage

<http://www.talentedteachers.org/index.taf>

Related Stories

Impact of TAP

January 31, 2007

Research conducted by the National Institute for Excellence in Education, the organization that operates TAP, concludes that teachers and schools participating in TAP produce higher student achievement growth than their control counterparts. Comparisons also show TAPs meaningful results in terms of adequate yearly progress (AYP), and its support among teachers as an effective professional development program.

Executive Summary and Full Report

http://www.talentedteachers.org/newsroom.taf?page=release_20070131