

Addressing Teacher Absenteeism and Attendance

In the following report, Hanover Research examines the issue of teacher absenteeism. First, the report presents an overview of the prevalence of teacher absenteeism in the United States and its negative impacts. Following this, we present a brief discussion of some best practices in teacher attendance improvement initiatives. Finally, we provide examples of state and district level recommendations designed to address teacher absenteeism, as well as examples of several state and district level programs or initiatives which have been shown to positively impact teacher attendance.

Executive Summary

In this report, Hanover Research examines teacher attendance improvement initiatives and practices from a state and district level perspective. The report is organized according to the following four sections:

- ❖ **Section I: Literature Review – Teacher Absenteeism** provides background information on the prevalence of teacher absenteeism in the United States and its negative consequences.
- ❖ **Section II: Best Practices in Addressing Teacher Absenteeism and Attendance Improvement Initiatives** discusses common causes for teacher absenteeism so that policymakers may implement tools to address these issues. This section discusses common policy initiatives such as teacher incentives.
- ❖ **Section III: State and District Recommendations for Addressing Teacher Absenteeism Attendance** provides examples of several regional and district level recommendations and initiatives designed to improve teacher attendance rates.
- ❖ **Section IV: Profiles of Successful State and District Programs** offers examples of programs that have successfully improved teacher attendance through incentive programs and experimentation.

Key Findings

The following points summarize the key findings of our research:

- ❖ Teacher absenteeism in the United States is relatively high compared to employee absenteeism in other occupations, at a rate of about five percent. However, attendance rates can vary greatly by district, with low-income, underserved areas being the most negatively affected. These absences have financial ramifications; a 2004 District Management Council report, using statistics from the NCES (National Center for Education Statistics), placed the annual national cost of teacher absenteeism at \$25.2 billion.
- ❖ Key variables that impact teacher absenteeism include work environment, school characteristics (educational level, size, and income level), teacher health and job-related stress, and teacher experience. On the other hand, research has returned mixed results on the impact of teacher incentives on improving teacher attendance.

- ❖ The Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) has made a number of recommendations to districts and policymakers regarding the issue of teacher absences. For example, the WASB recommends that districts closely track teacher absence data, hold principals accountable for teacher absences, and closely communicate attendance expectations with staff. The WASB further recommends that districts work to encourage good health amongst teachers, allow teachers to carry over unused sick days, and eliminate leave banks for serious illnesses. The WASB also supports experimenting with incentive programs designed to discourage teacher absences.
- ❖ In a 2007 report to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, researchers from Duke University recommend the following measures to improve teacher attendance: require teachers to report their absences to an individual rather than an automated system, make free flu vaccinations available to all teachers, offer incentive schemes, and provide cash-out options.
- ❖ Other recommendations made to specific districts to combat teacher absenteeism include (but are not limited to) reducing the number of sick days available to teachers, restricting professional development time for teachers to non-student days, and making teacher attendance a component of teacher evaluations.
- ❖ The North Carolina ABC Accountability Program has proven successful at improving attendance. Through this program, teachers are awarded a cash bonus if their school's average year-over-year improvement in reading and math test scores exceeds a state-set threshold. According to an analysis by the American Enterprise Institute, this bonus program has led teachers to take fewer absences and has had a positive effect on student test scores.
- ❖ The Aldine Independent School District in Texas implemented an incentive program that features an employer-paid supplemental retirement plan for teachers with high attendance rates. The costs of this program are more than offset by the reduction in substitute teacher stipends. Savings from this program have been estimated at \$5 per pupil per year.
- ❖ A recent (2010) study of Chicago Public Schools also indicates that a policy change at the Chicago Public School system which gave principals more autonomy to dismiss probationary teachers has resulted in fewer teacher absences. Research found that this policy change reduced teacher absences amongst probationary teachers by approximately 10 percent.

Section I: Literature Review – Teacher Absenteeism

This section of the report provides an introduction to the topic of teacher absenteeism, discusses the prevalence of this problem in the United States, and examines the negative consequences it has for the educational system.

Introduction

The issue of employee absenteeism has received a good deal of attention in the business world. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, US employers lose approximately 2.8 million workdays per year due to employee absences.¹ A 2008 survey by Mercer—a consulting, outsourcing, and investment services firm—attempted to quantify the costs of employee absences through a survey of over 450 organizations which represented “all major industry segments, sizes, and regions throughout the United States.”² This survey found that the full cost of employee absenteeism (including unplanned incidental absences such as sick days, planned absences such as vacations and holidays, and extended absences, which were generally due to a disability or qualifying leave under federal/state acts dealing with family/medical leave) amounted to approximately 36 percent of payroll.³

Within the education sector, instructional staff absences have received attention from various researchers, organizations, and policymakers in recent years. Interestingly, however, studies of teacher absenteeism within the U.S. education sector are somewhat sparse, especially when compared to scholarship on employee absences in other sectors. For example, a 2009 Urban Institute Working Paper titled “Are Teacher Absences Worth Worrying About in the U.S.?” authors Charles Clotfelter, Helen Ladd, and Jacob Vigdor argue that teacher absences in the U.S. may receive relatively little attention because teacher absence rates are much lower than those in many developing countries. As the authors point out, while teacher absences are an “endemic problem” in developing countries, “the rate of teacher absence in the United States is much smaller,” and the availability of substitute teachers may lessen the harm from such absences.⁴ As Clotfelter, Ladd, and Vigdor state, “Perhaps for this reason, there exists surprisingly little research on

There exists surprisingly little research on teacher absences in the United States.

¹ Gale, S.F. “Sickened by the cost of absenteeism, companies look for solutions: internally devised cost-tracking systems, off-the-shelf software and outsourced absence-reporting services are all growing in popularity as employers try to figure out where an estimated 15 percent of the payroll is going.” Workforce, Inc. 2003. www.workforce.com/archive/feature/23/51/19/index.php

² “The Total Financial Impact of Employee Absences: Survey Highlights.” October 2008. Mercer, Inc., p. 2. <http://www.kronos.com/absenceanonymous/media/mercer-survey-highlights.pdf>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Clotfelter, Charles T., Ladd, Helen F., et al. April 2009. “Are Teacher Absences Worth Worrying About in the U.S.?” Urban Institute. Working Paper No. 24, p. 5. http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/1001286_workingpaper24.pdf

teacher absences in the United States.”⁵ Other researchers have also noted the lack of research on teacher absenteeism; in a review of teacher absenteeism and ill health retirement, author Tony Bowers laments that “teacher absence per se has attracted little interest from researchers.”⁶

The Prevalence of Teacher Absenteeism in the United States

Nevertheless, teacher absenteeism has attracted more attention in recent years, with new research making an appearance. Such research measures its negative effects on student performance as well as on school district budgets and also looks at the prevalence of teacher absenteeism in the United States. Teacher absenteeism in the United States is relatively high compared to employee absenteeism in other occupations. As Clotfelter, Ladd, and Vigdor point out:⁷

Teacher absenteeism in the United States is relatively high compared to employee absenteeism in other occupations.

Previous studies suggest absence rates for teachers in the U.S. on the order of 5%, or about 9 days per 180-day working year... Compared to workers in other occupations, however, American school teachers appear to have relatively high rates of absence. By comparison, ostensibly similarly measured rates of absenteeism due to sickness average less than 3% in the U.S. workforce as a whole.

However, in many districts teacher absenteeism is even more prevalent. For example, an article in the *Wall Street Journal* in April 2010 determined that “one-fifth of New York City teachers [had] missed work for more than two weeks” in the previous year.⁸ This type of excessive absenteeism was most widespread in the city’s poorest districts.⁹ Other research has captured this trend as well. Using data from public schools in North Carolina, Clotfelter, Ladd, and Vigdor found that:¹⁰

The incidence of teacher absences is regressive: when schools are ranked by the fraction of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch, schools in the poorest quartile averaged almost one extra sick day per teacher than schools

⁵ Ibid., p. 6.

⁶ Bowers, Tony. 2001. “Teacher Absenteeism and Ill Health Retirement: A Review.” *Cambridge Journal of Education*. Vol. 31 No. 2. Quoted In: Ivatts, Arthur R. “Literature Review On: “Teacher Absenteeism.”” Roma Education Fund, pp. 4-5.
<http://www.romadecade.org/files/downloads/News/teacher%20absenteeism%20-%20literature%20review.pdf>

⁷ Clotfelter, Charles T., Ladd, Helen F., et al. Op. cit., pp.5-6.

⁸ Martinez, Barbara. “Teacher Absences Plague Schools.” *The Wall Street Journal*, April 28, 2010.
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704471204575210451375989306.html>

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Clotfelter, Charles T., Ladd, Helen F., et al. Op. cit., p.4.

in the highest income quartile, and schools with persistently high rates of teacher absence were much more likely to serve low-income than high-income students.

In sum, Clotfelter, Ladd, and Vigdor note that “low-income students in North Carolina face an appreciably higher chance than affluent ones of attending a school with persistently high rates of teacher absence.”¹¹

Other research backs these findings. For example, research by the Center for American Progress found that “teacher absence disproportionately affects low-income students,” as “nationally, teachers at schools with fewer than 24 percent of students from low-income families are absent at a rate of 5 percent or less, while teachers at schools serving higher percentages of students from low-income families are absent 5.5 percent of the time, on average.”¹² This research further notes that researchers at Duke University have found more evidence of a relationship between teacher absences and school poverty: “even after accounting for a host of teacher and school characteristics, each 10 percentage point increase in a school’s low-income population was associated with an additional 10th of a day absence by its teachers.”¹³

Research by the Center for American Progress found that “teacher absence disproportionately affects low-income students.”

In a chat on “Chronic Absenteeism in U.S. Schools” hosted by *Education Week* in 2008, Dr. Mariajosé Romero, a senior research associate at the National Center for Children in Poverty, sums up the issue of teacher absenteeism as follows:¹⁴

The research suggests that teacher absenteeism and turnover are higher when students are low-income, minority, have serious educational needs, and present persistent discipline and behavior problems, as well as little school engagement – in other words, just those students most in need of educational continuity.

In a final note on the prevalence of teacher absences, according to a study of teacher absence trends at one large urban school district over a four-year period, “discretionary absences,” or absences “due to personal days or short-term illnesses” comprised over half (56 percent) of all absences at the school district studied. These discretionary absences occurred more frequently “on days adjacent to non-

¹¹ Ibid., p.21.

¹² Miller, Raegen. October 2008. “Tales of Teacher Absence: New Research Yields Patterns that Speak to Policymakers.” Center for American Progress, p. 4.
http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2008/10/pdf/teacher_absence.pdf

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ “Chronic Absenteeism in U.S. Schools.” *Education Week*. October 27, 2008.
http://www.edweek.org/chat/2008/10/27/transcript_10_27_08.html

instructional days, such as weekends.”¹⁵ Furthermore, the study found that teacher tenure was also related to teacher absence. As he noted, “teachers with tenure tend to be absent more often than teachers without tenure, controlling for other school and teacher characteristics, including experience. The magnitude of this relationship is relatively large, suggesting that tenured teachers take about 0.8 more days of discretionary absences per year than their un-tenured colleagues.”¹⁶

The Negative Impacts of Teacher Absenteeism

As in any industry, teacher absences affect both cost and quality. A 2004 District Management Council report examined data gathered by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The resulting analysis placed the **annual national cost of teacher absenteeism at \$25.2 billion**.¹⁷

However, when a teacher calls in absent, the financial costs of compensating substitutes are not the only consideration. Curricular goals are also interrupted, a reality which is increasingly problematic in a pedagogical culture that privileges the measured outcomes of assessments. For example, researchers at Duke University found that higher rates of teacher absenteeism correspond with lower elementary-school student achievement.¹⁸

Higher rates of teacher absenteeism correspond with lower elementary-school student achievement.

Several studies have reached the same conclusion. In a study accounting for “time-invariant differences among teachers in skill and motivation,” Harvard University scholars found that “each 10 days of teacher absences reduces students’ mathematics achievement by 3.3 percent of a standard deviation.”¹⁹ To cite another example, a 2003 study of Los Angeles schools observed that teachers with absence rates below two percent of the total school year outperformed teachers with higher absence rates in every measured category.²⁰ Correspondingly, as absences increased, performance decreased.²¹

¹⁵ Miller, Raegan. Op. cit., p. 9.

¹⁶ Ibid., p.12.

¹⁷ “Management advisory brief: Reducing teacher absenteeism.” District Management Council. 2004.

¹⁸ Clotfelter, C. et al., “Are Teacher Absences Worth Worrying About in the U.S.?” National Bureau of Economic Research, November 2007. http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1037172

¹⁹ Miller, R. et al., “Do Teacher Absences Impact Student Achievement? Longitudinal Evidence from One Urban School District.” National Bureau of Economic Research, August 2007. <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1009806>

²⁰ Cantrell, S., “Pay and Performance: The Utility of Teacher Experience, Education, Credentials, and Attendance as Predictors of Student Achievement at Elementary Schools in LAUSD.” Los Angeles Unified School District. September 9, 2003.

http://notebook.lausd.net/pls/ptl/docs/PAGE/CA_LAUSD/FLDR_ORGANIZATIONS/FLDR_PLCY_RES_DEV/PAR_DIVISION_MAIN/RESEARCH_PLANNING/PUBLICATIONS/REPORTS/PAU%20PAY%20%26%20PERFORM.PDF

²¹ Ibid.

Section II: Best Practices in Addressing Teacher Absenteeism and Attendance Improvement Initiatives

This section of the report begins with a discussion of common causes for teacher absenteeism so that policymakers may implement tools to address these issues. The includes a discussion of common policy initiatives such as teacher incentives

Factors Contributing to Teacher Absenteeism

Before examining the effectiveness of various programs in combating absenteeism, it helps to first understand the problem at greater depth. Studies exploring teacher absences name a number of motivations beyond illness, family concerns, or other sanctioned reasons. Some of these factors include issues outside the influence of incentives, such as gender, commute distance, and experience level. Data suggest that females, those who have longer commutes, and those with middle ranges of experience tend to miss work most frequently.²²

Data suggest that females, those who have longer commutes, and those with middle ranges of experience tend to miss work most frequently.

Beyond these variables, **work environment** is a major factor influencing teachers' attendance. For example, a 2009 study conducted by the International Association for Childhood Education cited work-related stress, unkempt and unclean school buildings, overcrowded classrooms, and a lack of respect for the teaching profession as major underlying factors.²³ To cite another example, teachers in Oregon skipping out on class (and encouraging their co-workers to do the same) complained of leaky ceilings, violent parents, and disrespectful pupils.²⁴

While environment clearly plays a role, the literature suggests that job satisfaction has little to no impact on teacher attendance. A study published in 1978 titled "Subunit Size, Work System Interdependence, and Employee Absenteeism" reports little to no connection between absenteeism and job satisfaction.²⁵ Instead, the authors cite variables such as school size and employees' level of interdependence at work as

²² Miller, Raegen. Op. cit., p.5.

²³ Whitehead, Diane P. "Teacher, where Are You?" Childhood Education, Vol. 85 No. 4. 2009. http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/custom/portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=EJ840728&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=EJ840728 p.242-B.

²⁴ "Teachers miss days; poor kids miss out: Educators at some struggling schools take most time off, analysis shows." Chicago Tribune. September 25, 2006. <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1G1-151849370.html>

²⁵ "Teacher Absenteeism. The Best of ERIC on Educational Management, Number 63." January 1982. National Institute of Education, p. 3. http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/2f/bc/34.pdf

more significant factors. The authors find that the larger the school and the lower the level of interdependence among teachers, the higher the rate of absenteeism.²⁶ This second set of studies suggests that a **favorable work environment is the best predictor of a teacher's presence in the classroom**. According to this logic, school administrators do well to place emphasis on facilitating clean classrooms, collaborative environments, and low-stress pupils. These studies suggest that “intangible incentives,” such as facility improvements or stress management provisions, are as important to consider as more tangible incentives like money or prizes.

Other school traits have also been linked to teacher absences. Teachers in elementary schools tend to be absent more often than other teachers in the K-12 system.²⁷ As has been noted above, schools with a higher proportion of low-income students often feature higher teacher absence rates. Additionally, large schools (as defined by student enrollment) appear to feature higher rates of teacher absence than small schools, other factors being equal. It should be noted that “The size of a workplace seems to matter outside of education, too, and researchers believe that the extent of interdependence among workers, which falls with the size of a workplace, explains this relationship.”²⁸

A variety of other factors have also been identified which can impact teacher absenteeism. Clearly, **teacher health can have an impact on teacher attendance**. In a 2000 study of elementary schools in five school districts, researchers found that **school-wide use of hand sanitizers reduced rates of teacher absence** – in the school system with the largest teacher population, teacher absenteeism decreased approximately 10 percent in the schools where hand sanitizer was used.²⁹ Teacher absences can also be linked to non-infectious health problems. Evidence exists that a classroom amplification system can prevent teacher absences due to “symptoms and complications of vocal strain.”³⁰ For example, a 2007 research brief written for Miami-Dade County Public Schools notes that teachers in Iowa who used classroom amplification systems had a 36 percent decline in teacher absenteeism.³¹ A multi-year study of amplified classrooms in Florida's Orange County Public School District found that **teacher absenteeism decreased 25 percent in amplified classrooms**.³² Additionally, multiple studies have **linked teacher absences with job-related stress**.³³

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Miller, Raegen. Op. cit., p. 6.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Hammond, B., Ali, Y., et al. “Effect of Hand Sanitizer Use on Elementary School Absenteeism.” *American Journal of Infection Control*. Vol. 28 No 5. 2000. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11029132>

³⁰ Miller, Raegen. Op. cit., p. 7.

³¹ “Improving the Classroom Environment: Classroom Amplification Systems.” March 2007. Miami-Dade County Public Schools, p. 6. <http://drs.dadeschools.net/InfoCapsules/IC0607.pdf>

³² Ibid.

³³ Miller, Raegen. Op. cit.

Teacher experience and tenure status may also affect teacher absence rates. According to Raegen Miller, the author of a 2008 report by the Center for American Progress titled “Tales of Teacher Absence,” “teachers with the most or least experience tend to be absent less often than other teachers. An important driver of this pattern may be that teachers in the middle experience range are more likely to have young families.”³⁴ Additionally, teachers with tenure may be more aggressive about exercising their leave privileges than teachers without tenure.

Further Suggestions to Combat Teacher Absenteeism

Educators, policymakers, and researchers have set forth a variety of practices and initiatives designed to increase teacher attendance and combat the issue of teacher absenteeism. Some potential practices and initiatives which have been shown to increase teacher attendance in certain cases have been noted above (for example, the use of hand sanitizer and the use of classroom amplification systems). While it is of course not feasible to discuss all such practices and initiatives in this report, several general points are worth noting.

Local Education Agencies and School Districts should take note of the fact that **“teachers are absent more frequently when their contracts furnish them with more days of paid leave for illness or personal reasons.”**³⁵ A 1989 study by Ehrenberg, Ehrenberg, Rees, and Ehrenberg which analyzed teacher and student absenteeism in hundreds of school districts in New York State in 1986-1987 determined that “school district policies governing the annual use of teacher leave days that appear in teacher contracts clearly do influence teachers’ use of leave days.”³⁶ As the authors of this study note, a larger number of leave days permitted was associated with “higher actual teacher use of leave days.”³⁷ Additionally, the authors of this study point out that that a larger number of days granted for bereavement leave and the presence of a “sick leave bank” were also associated with higher actual use of leave days.

School districts and policymakers focused on reducing teacher absences may also wish to consider the impact of policies designed to deal with school climates and work environments, as has been noted above. For example, research suggests that **site-based management** (also known as school-based management), a way to structure relationships between a school and its district that places increased power and authority with the school itself rather than its district, can bring about **increased**

³⁴ Ibid., p. 6.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

³⁶ Ehrenberg, Ronald G., Ehrenberg, Randy A., et al. March 1989. “School District Leave Policies, Teacher Absenteeism, and Student Achievement.” National Bureau of Economic Research. NBER Working Paper Series. No. 2874, p. 2. http://www.nber.org/papers/w2874.pdf?new_window=1.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 25.

collegiality and reduce teacher absenteeism.³⁸ Research by Eisenberg et al. (1986) examined several specific contentions regarding school climate and teacher absenteeism. Findings from this research included the fact that “the strength of an employee’s work effort was found to be dependent on the treatment received by the organization. Employees who believed that the organization valued their contributions and cared about their well-being tended to be absent less often than others.”³⁹

Teacher Incentives and Teacher Absenteeism

The impact of incentive programs on teacher absenteeism has been debated and research has provided mixed results. While some studies support the fact that incentive programs can be effective in helping to curtail teacher absences, other studies do not support this assertion.⁴⁰ Some research, for example, indicates that teachers are absent

Teachers are absent less often when they receive bonuses for high attendance or when “schemes in which districts buy back unused sick leave are available.”

less often when they receive bonuses for high attendance or when “schemes in which districts buy back unused sick leave are available.”⁴¹ As Ehrenberg, Ehrenberg, Rees, and Ehrenberg note in their 1989 study, “policies that govern the ‘buyback’ of unused sick days clearly matter. In districts in which cumulated unused sick leave days can be ‘bought back’, typically at retirement, increases in the number of days that can be ‘cashed-in’ or in the dollars per day buyout are both associated, ceteris paribus, with lower leave usage.”⁴²

One school district that examined the overall impact of its pilot attendance incentives program decided to cut the program due to inconclusive results. In an effort to address a growing teacher absence problem, Palm Beach County experimented with attendance incentives through a 2006 pilot program. The program offered a combination of individual level and group level incentives whereby employees could cash out unused sick days and schools could receive bonuses for improving year-over-year attendance rates.⁴³

³⁸ Vincent, Phil, and Johnson Debra. 2000. “Critical Issue: Implementing Site-Based Management to Support Student Achievement.” North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.
<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/envrnmnt/go/go700.htm>

³⁹ Norton, M. Scott. Winter 1998. “Teacher Absenteeism: A Growing Dilemma in Education.” *Contemporary Education*. Vol. 69 No. 2, p. 97.
<http://search.proquest.com/docview/233043379/fulltextPDF/1360A07C4F2433DEC3D/1?accountid=132487#>

⁴⁰ Norton, M. Scott. Op. cit.

⁴¹ Miller, Raegen. Op. cit.

⁴² Ehrenberg, Ronald G., Ehrenberg, Randy A., et al. Op. cit.

⁴³ “Districts Offer Incentives to Curb Teacher Absences.” EducationWorld.
http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin544.shtml

A year after the program's implementation, the school system halted the initiative due to mixed results. Although a few schools in the district managed to lower absences, absences at many schools actually increased.⁴⁴ In fact, of the twenty schools involved in the pilot, fifteen had more sick days used than the year before, with the number of absences increasing by almost thirty percent at some schools.⁴⁵ While Palm Beach's model could discourage other schools from implementing incentives, it is important to note their particular approach. Under Palm Beach County's pilot program, teachers at many schools were rewarded collectively, rather than independently, for good attendance. Some administrators involved with the program retrospectively suggested that incentives may work best when administered independently, highlighting a potential flaw of the 2006 pilot program.⁴⁶

The National Council on Teacher Quality succinctly summarizes the impact of incentive programs on teacher absenteeism as follows: "Experimentation with incentive programs has not yet yielded a strategy that would curb high absentee rates, but administration can work within individual schools to affect the leave culture."⁴⁷ As will be seen in Section III of this report, a variety of researchers and educators encourage schools and school districts to experiment with incentive programs to improve teacher attendance. However, schools and districts should carefully consider the costs and expected benefits of incentive programs and monitor these programs to ensure they are achieving desired results.

In order to do so, school administrators looking to develop incentives models for their teachers must take care to identify the factors that actually motivate their employees. For example, a 2004 study published in the *Journal of Instructional Psychology* sought to identify the factors that school administrators and teachers selected as being "most important to teachers."⁴⁸ Perhaps unsurprisingly, the study found that teachers favored "good pay" and "good working conditions" above other factors.⁴⁹ Interestingly, administrators believed that teachers would prefer "full appreciation of a job well done" and "job security" the most.⁵⁰ Although district officials could develop a seemingly appealing incentives package based upon observation, input from actual teachers in their district would likely provide the strongest direction for a cohesive and effective program.

⁴⁴ DeNardo, C. "A' is for absent teachers." Palm Beach Post, 3 September 2007.

<http://www.nctq.org/nctq/research/1190911618353.pdf>

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ "Issues and Trends." National Council on Teacher Quality.

<http://www.nctq.org/tr3/issues/index.jsp?sectionId=4>

⁴⁸ Diamantes, T. "What principals think motivates teachers." *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, March 2004.

http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/custom/portlets/recordDetails/detailmini.jsp?_nfpb=true&_&ERICExtSearch_SearchValue_0=EJ774056&ERICExtSearch_SearchType_0=no&accno=EJ774056

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Section III: State and District Recommendations for Addressing Teacher Absenteeism

This section provides examples of several state and district level recommendations designed to improve teacher attendance rates. This begins with a broad overview of recommendations made at the federal, state, and local level. Two examples each of specific state and district level recommendations follow.

Federal, State, and District Policy Recommendations

In a 2008 report titled “Tales of Teacher Absence,” the Center for American Progress makes a number of recommendations for federal, state, and local policymakers to combat teacher absenteeism. At the federal level, the report recommends that policymakers should amend the No Child Left Behind Act to **include data on teacher absences on school report cards**. The report notes that “school districts already collect data on teacher absences,” and offering that information to the public helps to create a more detailed understanding of school quality.⁵¹ Indeed, some states already share this data publicly; Rhode Island, for example, includes teacher attendance rates on its school report cards.⁵²

At the state level, the Center for American Progress recommends that policymakers should **“re-examine and justify statutes governing teachers’ leave privileges.”**⁵³ Leave privileges vary by state, with Ohio offering 50 percent more paid leave than Washington, for example.⁵⁴ States may be able to leverage financial liabilities in order to reduce state-mandated minimum benefits.

At the local level, the Center for American Progress **advocates for experimentation with co-payment and incentive schemes in order to boost teacher attendance**. Unfortunately, research has yet to reveal whether bonus schemes, buy-back provisions, or co-payment programs yield the best results.⁵⁵

Wisconsin Association of School Boards

The Wisconsin Association of School Boards (WASB) addresses the issue of teacher attendance part of its “2009-2011 Bargaining Goals: WASB Position Papers Series.” In the position paper “Addressing Teacher Absenteeism,” the WASB recommends

⁵¹ Miller, Raegan. Op. cit., p. 2.

⁵² Ibid., p. 15.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 2.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 15.

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 2.

the following measures designed to improve teacher attendance, based on research gathered from school districts throughout the United States:⁵⁶

- ❖ **Reporting Absence Directly to One's Supervisor:** Research generally shows that attendance improves if a teacher must report an absence directly to a supervisor. An article printed in *Education Week* in 2008 recommended that teachers be required to call principals for all absences, and that principals be trained to respond appropriately.
- ❖ **Closely Tracking Absence Data:** Districts can be hard-pressed to deal with teacher absenteeism if they do not have data on the nature of the problem. The WASB notes that “several experts recommend close tracking of absence information, and a school district’s database should provide administrators with easy-to-access reports on individual employees and on the staff as a whole.”
- ❖ **Open Communication with Staff:** Districts seeking to reduce teacher absences should “proactively communicate to teachers their attendance expectations and results of their absence-reduction programs.”
- ❖ **Holding Principals Accountable:** For initiatives designed to reduce teacher absenteeism to be effective, “the school board should make it clear to principals that they will be held accountable for implementation.” Principals should be involved in every stage of any attendance plan, including its development, implementation, and its evaluation. Principals can also play a role in monitoring employee attendance patterns.
- ❖ **Encouraging Good Health:** Districts can reduce absenteeism through a wellness program which encourages good health as healthy teachers are less likely to fall ill.
- ❖ **Carry-Over of Unused Sick Days:** Some research suggests that allowing teachers to accumulate unused sick days reduces absenteeism as it eliminates the “use them or lose them” mentality.
- ❖ **Elimination of Leave Banks:** One superintendent recommends that leave banks, where teachers with catastrophic illnesses can draw on the accumulated leaves of other staff members, be eliminated. These banks can implicitly encourage teachers to use available leave instead of carrying it over to later

⁵⁶ Adapted from “Addressing Teacher Absenteeism.” Wisconsin Association of School Boards, pp. 2-3.
http://www.wasbmemberservices.org/websites/employment_law_hr_services/File/position_papers/0911%20Reducing%20Teacher%20Absenteeism.pdf

years as they know that a sick leave bank will be available if they suffer a major illness.

- ❖ **Restrictions on Use of “Personal Days:”** According to a study of approximately 300 teachers, as teachers’ use of sick days decreases, their use of personal days increases. Districts can take a number of steps to reduce the abuse of personal days. Districts can eliminate personal days, though the WASB notes that school board may encounter significant resistance to doing so. Districts can also change the “nomenclature” and “perspective” of personal days. For example, in a 2003 article in *The School Administrator*, a publication of the American Association of School Administrators, Dr. Evan Pitkoff recommends calling them “emergency leave days” instead of “personal days” and requiring teachers to provide a “bona fide reason for their absence.”
- ❖ **School District-Sponsored Leave:** School districts should also review their policies regarding removing teachers from their classrooms for professional conferences, meetings, workshops, or other such purposes.

Other research has focused on the issue of districts that allow teachers to take personal days beyond the number set forth in their contract if these teachers pay for the cost of a substitute. However, the WASB recommends the discontinuation of this practice. Given that teacher pay exceeds the cost of a substitute, a teacher suffers no real financial loss under this system.⁵⁷

Additionally, the WASB notes that “incentive programs” can be useful in discouraging teacher absenteeism. However, not all incentive programs have been proven to have a positive effect on teacher absences. As such, the WASB recommends that districts carefully consider the costs and projected savings of an incentive program, whether the program has been implemented effectively elsewhere, and whether the plan can be easily terminated if it is not achieving desired results (without bargaining with a union, for example).⁵⁸

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

In 2007, researchers at Duke University authored a report for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction titled “Reducing Teacher Absences in North Carolina.”⁵⁹ This report examines four major categories along with more detailed suggestions in nine subcategories. These four categories and nine subcategories are as follows:⁶⁰

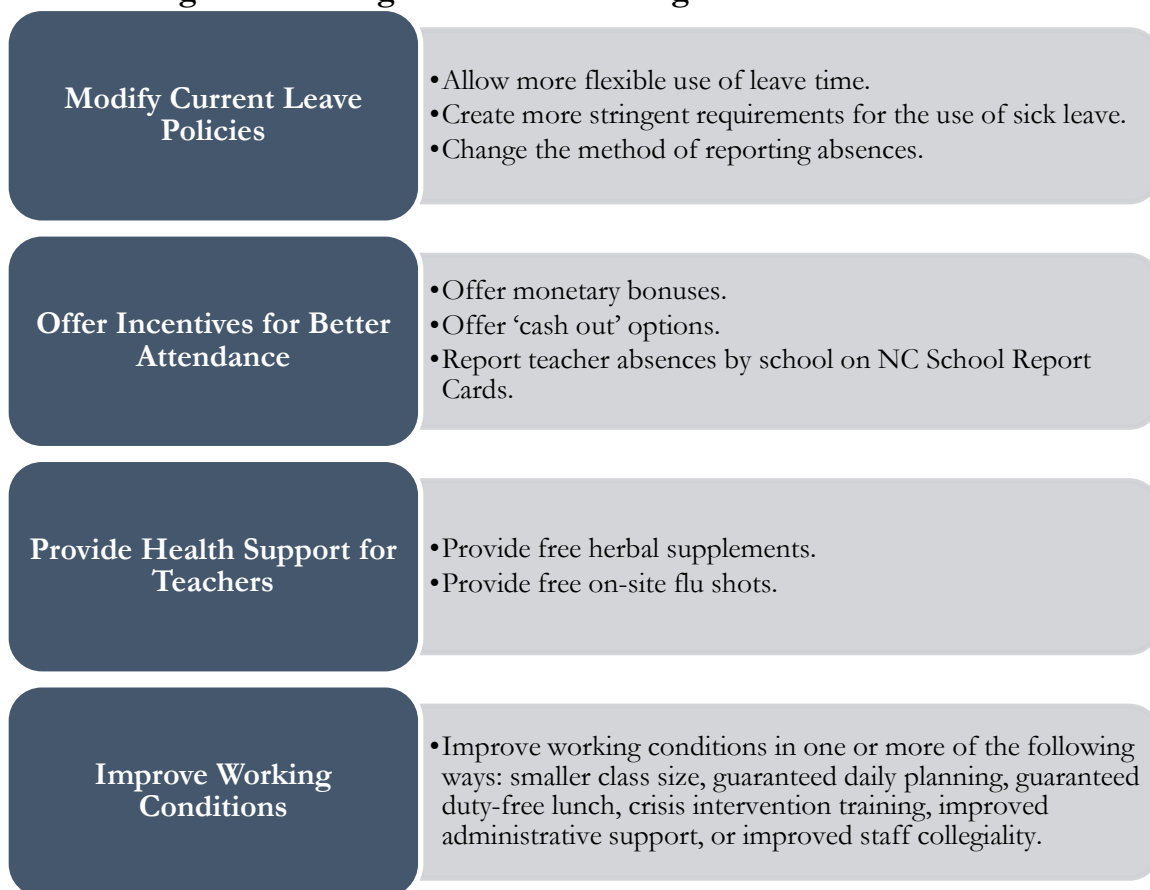
⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Scott, Libby, Vaughn, Christine, et al. “Reducing Teacher Absences in North Carolina.” Duke University. May 2007. <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/intern-research/reports/teacherabsences.pdf>

⁶⁰ Quoted directly from Ibid., pp.5-6.

Figure 3.1: Categories for Addressing Teacher Absenteeism



Source: Duke University

The report notes that, out of these examined possibilities, some options are more likely to minimize teacher absences than others. For example, the authors point out that “requiring teachers to submit a medical excuse for absences longer than a set amount of time (e.g. 3 days)” will reduce the number of absences taken by teachers for reasons other than sickness. However, the authors go on to point out that this action would “not be politically feasible.”⁶¹

The authors also note that **requiring teachers to report their absences to a person (rather than an automated system) would decrease the number of absences**, since focus group participants “said they would be less likely to call in to a person if they were not actually sick.”⁶² Other initiatives which are most likely to decrease teacher absences include **offering monetary bonuses to directly incentivize teachers to attend school and ensuring that free flu vaccines are provided for teachers**, as this could reduce the risk of teachers becoming sick.⁶³

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 17.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid., pp. 18-20.

The authors further note that offering **“cash out” options** where teachers can “cash out” a certain portion of their sick leave at the end of every year (or at other set time periods) will result in reduced teacher absences, but only for certain teacher groups. For example, teachers who are close to retirement would not benefit from this option, as currently in North Carolina teachers can receive compensation for unused sick leave when they retire.⁶⁴ Finally, **creating better working conditions in schools would also result in fewer teacher absences**, since interview evidence “indicated that teachers in schools with poor working conditions are more likely to be absent than teachers in schools with good working conditions.”⁶⁵

Based on the analysis of the original attendance improvement options (see Figure 3.1), the report recommends four final initiatives aimed to improve teacher attendance. These initiatives are as follows:⁶⁶

- ❖ **Conduct a study of absence rates related to automated call-in systems.** Although researchers believe requiring teachers to report to a person (rather than an automated system) will decrease teacher absences, “before implementing a change in the way teachers call in sick, it is important to confirm that an automated system does in fact decrease absences.”
- ❖ **Implement a pilot study to examine monetary bonuses.** This will allow districts and schools to find the model that achieves the best results.
- ❖ **Implement a pilot study to investigate the cash out option.** This will help determine the best program structure including maximum monetary rewards per day and maximum days available for cashing out.
- ❖ **Offer free flu vaccines to all teachers.**

Hartford Public Schools, Connecticut

In a report for Hartford Public Schools, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) sets forth a number of goals to help the district “align teacher policies with teacher quality needs.”⁶⁷ One of these goals is as follows: “policies encourage teacher attendance and minimize the deleterious impact of teacher absences.”⁶⁸ To this end, the National Council on Teacher Quality sets forth several recommendations for the Hartford Public Schools system designed to curb the phenomenon of teacher

⁶⁴ Ibid., pp. 15, 18-19.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 21.

⁶⁶ Ibid. pp. 21-22.

⁶⁷ “Human Capital at Hartford Public Schools: Rethinking How to Attract, Develop, and Retain Effective Teachers.” 2009. National Council on Teacher Quality, p. 10.
http://www.nctq.org/p/publications/docs/nctq_hartford_human_capital.pdf

⁶⁸ Ibid.

absenteeism. First, the NCTQ **recommends that Hartford Public Schools reduce the number of sick leave days available for teachers.** As the NCTQ notes, Hartford Public Schools features extremely generous leave policies (teachers receive twenty days of sick leave, five of which can be used as personal days). This represents approximately twice the average number of days provided to teachers provided by 100 large school districts in the NCTQ TR³ database, a database which contains information on school board policies, state laws, and collective bargaining agreements for over 100 school districts in all 50 states.⁶⁹ As such, the NCTQ recommends that Hartford Public Schools reduce the number of sick days provided to teachers to 15 (the state of Connecticut, where the district is located, requires teachers be provided with a minimum of 15 days of sick leave).

Additionally, the NCTQ recommends that Hartford Public Schools “**closely monitor teacher attendance**” in order to determine if there are patterns of sick leave abuse.⁷⁰ The NCTQ further recommends that the **district encourage principals to exercise their authority to combat the issue of teacher absenteeism.** As the NCTQ puts it, “the district should encourage principals to exercise their authority to request doctors’ notes for use of leave surrounding nonschool days or patterns of excessive leave. Hartford may want to consider a contract provision that allows principals to request an additional medical opinion paid for by the district for teachers whose habitual use of sick leave is excused by a doctor’s note.”⁷¹ The NCTQ further recommends that **teacher attendance should be made a mandatory component of teacher evaluations.**

Finally, the NCTQ recommends restricting professional development time for teachers to non-student days. While the NCTQ notes that “sometimes staff development during school hours is unavoidable,” professional development time should occur only during normal instructional hours as a “last resort” and “for no more than two days a year.”⁷² As such, the NCTQ recommends school-based professional development could occur in the mornings before school at Hartford Public Schools, as teachers generally are too tired to participate in professional development after school has finished.

*The NCTQ recommends
restricting professional development
time for teachers to non-student
days.*

Santa Rosa County School District, Florida

SchoolMatch Consultants provides a comprehensive report that analyzes the operations of Santa Rosa County School District in order to provide

⁶⁹ “About TR³.” National Council on Teacher Quality. <http://www.nctq.org/tr3/about.jsp>

⁷⁰ “Human Capital at Hartford Public Schools...” Op. cit., p.31.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

recommendation for school improvement. In particular, section 5 “Educational Service Delivery,” sets forth several recommendations for dealing with the issue of teacher absenteeism within the district. The report suggests that, through the implementation of a six-step “action plan,” the district can reach a target teacher attendance rate.

First, this “action plan” suggests that the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources at the district be assigned the responsibility of developing a “teacher absentee reduction plan.”⁷³ In order to achieve the goal, the action plan recommends that the district “**analyze current teacher absence data for each building**” and then “**publicize the absence rates of each building at district-wide principal meetings.**”⁷⁴ The fourth step involves the role of the principal. The action plan recommends that **principals be required to meet with any teacher who has been absent for more than five non-consecutive days** to work with the **teacher to develop a plan to improve the teacher’s attendance.** This plan is to be signed by both the teacher and the principal and goes on to become part of the teacher’s personnel file. Additionally, the action plan recommends that the district develop a “reward/recognition program for perfect attendance,” and annually report findings to the school board.⁷⁵

Kansas City, Missouri School District

A recent report for the Kansas City, Missouri School District by the National Council on Teacher Quality provides recommendations for this district to combat its problem with teacher absenteeism. Many of these recommendations echo those made above. As the NCTQ notes, while teachers in the Kansas City Missouri School District (KCMSD) are provided with a “sensible” amount of sick and personal leave (12.5 days per year), teachers in this district used almost all of their allowable leave in 2009-2010, missing an average of 9.6 of the 10.5 sick leave days they were allotted.⁷⁶ Perhaps more striking, nearly 50 percent of all sick leave absences in the district during 2009-2010 occurred on either a Monday or a Friday. Finally, tenured teachers in the district used approximately 35 percent more leave days than non-tenured teachers at the district. This trend mirrors findings from other research that correlates increased job security with reduced worker effort, as measured by staff attendance.⁷⁷

To address the issue of teacher absenteeism at the district, the NCTQ recommends that the district improve its record-keeping and provide district principals with regular

⁷³ “Educational Service Delivery.” SchoolMatch Consultants, p. 12.

http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/reports/pdf/bfmpsrosachp5_2002.pdf

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ “Building Teacher Quality in the Kansas City, Missouri School District.” 2011. National Council on Teacher Quality, p. 25. http://www.nctq.org/docs/nctq_tr3_kansas_city_01-2011.pdf

⁷⁷ Ibid., p.27.

attendance reports, a practice which would allow principals “to more actively discourage teachers from abusing sick leave.”⁷⁸ **The NCTQ also recommends a change in the district’s leave reimbursement policy in an effort to promote teacher attendance.** As the NCTQ notes, the district currently features a leave reimbursement policy which reimburses teachers at 75 percent of their daily rate of pay for unused sick days at their retirement, up to a maximum of 175 days.⁷⁹ However, since district teachers used approximately 90 percent of their allotted sick leave in 2009-2010 (on average), this policy “appears to do little to improve teacher attendance.”⁸⁰ As such, the NCTQ recommends that the district shift its leave reimbursement policy from retirement to an annual buyback system in an effort to improve teacher attendance. Finally, the NCTQ recommends that the district make teacher attendance a mandatory component of teacher evaluations, a recommendation which echoes the NCTQ’s recommendation to Hartford Public Schools (see above).⁸¹

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 29.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 25.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 29.

⁸¹ Ibid.

Section IV: Profiles of Successful State and District Programs

While the previous section represents recommended practices to reduce teacher absenteeism, districts may also wish to study programs and initiatives which have been proven successful at increasing teacher attendance. To this end, three different programs which have been identified as having a positive effect on teacher attendance are discussed below. The first program profiled is a bonus program offered by the state of North Carolina. Following this, examples of initiatives which have been proven to increase teacher attendance at two school districts are reviewed.

The North Carolina ABC Accountability Program

Recent research has pointed to the fact that a teacher bonus program offered by the state of North Carolina has been effective at increasing teacher effort and reducing teacher absences. The North Carolina ABC Accountability program, which was first instituted in the 1996-1997 academic year,

A North Carolina teacher bonus program has been effective at increasing teacher effort and reducing teacher absences.

awards teachers with cash bonuses if their school's average year-over-year improvement in reading and math test scores exceeds a state-set threshold.⁸² A 2011 analysis of the North Carolina teacher bonus program by the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) describes the program as follows:⁸³

In its inaugural year, teachers in elementary and middle schools were awarded a cash bonus of \$1,000 if the school's average year-over-year improvement in reading and math test scores exceeded the threshold set by the state. In the following year, the bonus program was extended to high schools, and the award became two-tiered, with teachers receiving \$750 in schools that cleared a first threshold referred to as "expected" growth in test scores and \$1,500 in schools that cleared a more stringent "exemplary" or "high" growth threshold.

As such, it should be noted that this program is not designed specifically to reward teacher attendance; rather, it is aimed at incentivizing teachers (and schools) to improve student learning outcomes. However, according to the AEI's analysis, the North Carolina bonus program has positive effects both on teacher effort and student outcomes. Indeed, the authors of this analysis note that "the bonus program leads teachers to exert more effort on the job: the average teacher took 0.6 fewer sick

⁸² Ahn, Thomas, and Vigdor, Jacob L. "Making Teacher Incentives Work: Lessons From North Carolina's Teacher Bonus Program." American Enterprise Institute, June 28, 2011.

<http://www.aei.org/article/education/k-12/making-teacher-incentives-work-outlook/>

⁸³ Ibid.

days.”⁸⁴ Furthermore, the program has a positive effect on student test scores: “standardized test scores rose by about 1.3 percent of a standard deviation in reading and 0.9 percent in math.”⁸⁵

The success of the North Carolina bonus program is especially notable as “conventional wisdom” dictates that individual incentives are more powerful than group incentives. Nevertheless, the success of the North Carolina bonus program, which utilizes group incentives in an attempt to increase teacher performance, may be tied to what the authors of the AEP’s analysis refer to as the “tortoise and hare effect.” The authors illustrate this effect with the following scenario: ⁸⁶

One teacher is excellent—one of the best in the business. If the school system sets a bar and promises her rewards if her students exceed it, she knows she can exceed the expectation without trying. Like the hare in the fable, her incentive to try her best is undermined by a sense that success is inevitable. We may fault the hare for his laziness, but is this really such a surprising response? The teacher next door, however, is hopelessly incompetent. Everyone knows that no matter where the bar is set, her students will almost certainly fall below it. Like the tortoise in the fable, it is only her personal virtue that implores her to exert effort; the incentive means very little. Again, we may cheer the tortoise for his perseverance, but few of us would persist so doggedly in the face of overwhelming odds.

As the AEP’s analysis of the North Carolina bonus program points out, for both of these teachers, an individual-level incentive program provides almost no incentive to exert greater effort, as one teacher is destined to be rewarded, while the other is almost sure to fail. However, if both these teachers are “tied together” in that their rewards will be based on the sum total of their accomplishments, “the excellent teacher recognizes that the status of her reward is in doubt, and the teacher next door realizes that she now has a realistic shot at the reward.”⁸⁷ As such, both teachers must exert effort to ensure that the average between their classrooms meets the threshold for the reward.

The researchers argue that changing the bonus program from its current setup to an individual-level incentive program would not yield an increase in teacher effort and student achievement. Instead, the average impact of the individual-level incentive program on teacher effort would in fact be lower, as “a higher proportion of teachers views bonus receipt as either a sure thing or an unattainable goal.”⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

Indeed, under the current North Carolina bonus program, few schools can count on receiving the full (\$1,500) bonus, and few schools view the \$750 bonus as completely unattainable. Between AY 1999-2000 and AY 2001-2002, “roughly three-quarters of the schools in the state received bonus payments, but less than half received the full \$1,500.”⁸⁹ This is notable since “an increase in the likelihood of qualifying for the bonus will cause... [a teacher] to take fewer absences.”⁹⁰ As they note:⁹¹

If we take an average teacher who has a very small chance of qualifying for a bonus (where her expected bonus is equivalent to \$400) and increase her probability of qualifying for the bonus (so her expected bonus becomes \$900), we expect her to take about one fewer sick day over the course of a school year. In terms of the underlying effort variable, the incentive effect of the extra \$500 at stake is a 10 percent boost to effort.

This finding raises an important related point. As Ahn and Vigdor note, “incentives do not accomplish anything if they are impossible to obtain, or if they are impossible *not* to obtain.”⁹² As such, the authors recommend that policymakers “should take care not to make the bonus too easy or too difficult to get,” as neither of these extremes will serve to greatly motivate teachers. While it is important to note that this advice is not specifically targeted at programs designed to incentivize teachers to take fewer absences, the success of such a broad-based incentive program is noteworthy.

Aldine Independent School District, Texas

At Aldine Independent School District (AISD) in Texas, the district has sought to combat the issue of teacher absenteeism through an incentive program. Effective beginning in the year 2000, Aldine Independent School District established “an employer-paid supplemental 401(a) retirement plan.”⁹³ In this plan, “employer-paid contributions are made to the Plan on behalf of eligible employees and accumulate with earnings on a tax-deferred basis.”⁹⁴ The plan is designed to encourage employee retirement saving, as employer-paid contributions into the plan are based on the amount an employee has voluntarily contributed to a salary deferral program.

The plan is also designed to reward employee attendance, as it provides an additional employer-paid contribution if employees meet attendance goals. Employees with “excellent attendance,” which is defined as one half to two days of absence per school year, receive an employer-paid contribution into this retirement plan of 0.5

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ “Aldine ISD 401(a) Matching Plan for Retirement Savings Plan Highlights.” Aldine Independent School District. <http://aldineisd.parsinfo.org/html/401%28a%29-matching/02-401%28a%29-matching-Plan/401%28a%29-matching-plan.htm>

⁹⁴ Ibid.

percent of the employee's annual gross compensation. Additionally, employees with "perfect attendance" (defined as zero days of absence within a school year) receive an employer-paid contribution into this plan equal to one percent of their annual gross compensation.^{95,96} The costs of this program are more than offset by the reduction in substitute teacher stipends. According to the District Management Council, this policy at Aldine ISD has aided resolving the problem of teacher absenteeism: "Approximately \$284,000 per year is saved and reallocated to other district resources."⁹⁷ The Center for American Progress notes that, savings from this program at Aldine ISD "amount to roughly \$5 per pupil, per year."⁹⁸

Chicago Public Schools, Illinois

In addition to the implementation of incentive programs, other districts have experimented with programs aimed to affect employment security. Recent research from the University of Michigan has revealed that a policy change within the Chicago Public School system, which gave principals more autonomy to dismiss probationary teachers, has resulted in fewer teacher absences.

A policy change within the Chicago Public School system, which gave principals more autonomy to dismiss probationary teachers, has resulted in fewer teacher absences.

In many public school districts across the country, teacher dismissals and layoffs are tightly regulated, as "collective bargaining agreements outline procedures in which the least experienced employees get laid off first" and make it difficult for principals to dismiss teachers with tenure.⁹⁹ However, in 2004, Chicago Public Schools and the Chicago Teachers Union signed a collective bargaining agreement "that gave principals the flexibility to dismiss probationary teachers—those with less than five years experience—without the elaborate documentation and hearing process typical in many large, urban school districts."¹⁰⁰

To explore the effects of employment protection on worker productivity, the research compared changes in teacher absenteeism before and after this new policy

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ "Top 25 Reasons to Work in Aldine." Aldine Independent School District.

http://www.aldine.k12.tx.us/sections/prospective_employees/25reasons.cfm

⁹⁷ Jacobs, Karen Dupre, and Kritsonis, William Allan. Fall 2007. "An Analysis of Teacher and Student Absenteeism in Urban Schools: What the Research Says and Recommendations for Educational Leaders."

The Lamar University Electronic Journal of Student Research, p. 6 .

http://www.ccsu.edu/uploaded/websites/ISCJ/An_Analysis_of_Teacher_and_Student_Absenteeism_in_Urban_Schools.pdf

⁹⁸ Miller, Raegen. Op. cit., p.16.

⁹⁹ "New Research by Brian Jacob Explores Decline in Public School Teacher Absenteeism Based on the Autonomy of Principals to Dismiss Probationary Teachers." University of Michigan. January 21, 2010.

http://www.fordschool.umich.edu/news/?news_id=278

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

was enacted for probationary teachers as well as for teachers who had received tenure. Since tenured teachers were not directly affected by the contract provision which gave principals more control over the dismissal of probationary teachers, these tenured teachers functioned as a comparison group. Overall, the analysis revealed that the policy “reduced annual teacher absences by roughly 10 percent and reduced the prevalence of teachers with 15 or more annual absences by 20 percent.”¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Jacob, Brian A. “The Effect of Employment Protection on Worker Effort: Evidence From Public Schooling.” February 2010. <http://www.nber.org/papers/w15655.pdf>

Project Evaluation Form

Hanover Research is committed to providing a work product that meets or exceeds member expectations. In keeping with that goal, we would like to hear your opinions regarding our reports. Feedback is critically important and serves as the strongest mechanism by which we tailor our research to your organization. When you have had a chance to evaluate this report, please take a moment to fill out the following questionnaire.

<http://www.hanoverresearch.com/evaluation/index.php>

Caveat

The publisher and authors have used their best efforts in preparing this brief. The publisher and authors make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this brief and specifically disclaim any implied warranties of fitness for a particular purpose. There are no warranties which extend beyond the descriptions contained in this paragraph. No warranty may be created or extended by representatives of Hanover Research or its marketing materials. The accuracy and completeness of the information provided herein and the opinions stated herein are not guaranteed or warranted to produce any particular results, and the advice and strategies contained herein may not be suitable for every member. Neither the publisher nor the authors shall be liable for any loss of profit or any other commercial damages, including but not limited to special, incidental, consequential, or other damages. Moreover, Hanover Research is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional services. Members requiring such services are advised to consult an appropriate professional.