

RESPONSE TO NATIONAL COUNCIL ON TEACHER QUALITY'S HUMAN CAPITAL IN SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Seattle Public Schools appreciates the effort the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) has undertaken to look at staffing and personnel policies in Seattle's schools. We look forward to a communitywide conversation about improving public education.

At Seattle Public Schools, we are committed to providing an excellent education for each of our students. We are joined in that goal by the caring and dedicated teachers, principals and school staff who make learning happen – every day, in every school.

Preparing every student to graduate ready for college, careers, and life is our central goal at Seattle Public Schools, and we are guided in our work by a five-year plan called *Excellence for All*. We've made significant progress toward our goals over the last several years, in particular in strengthening teaching and learning in Seattle's schools.

Improving instruction requires action in many areas: hiring, transfers, professional development, evaluation, and compensation, to name a few. Through our labor agreement this fall with the Seattle Education Association (SEA), as well as our ongoing work in collaboration with teachers and principals, we have streamlined our hiring and human resources processes, strengthened our performance management system, and added support for principals who are accountable for conducting evaluations, managing the appropriate use of leave time, and identifying strategies to support struggling teachers. These collaborative efforts to improve instruction at every school will continue through our next round of contract discussions with SEA members, through continual improvement of central systems to support our schools, and through ongoing opportunities to learn from families, community members, and experts doing research on teacher development and the broader field of teaching and learning.

Some of the issues we've been focused on improving were covered in the NCTQ report, as these issues are faced by school districts around the state. We're pleased that the report identifies as "best practices" many of the goals we've been working to achieve.

As we move forward, we will continue to work with colleagues in school districts throughout the state as well as with our state legislators to build on the progress of statewide education reform and identify sustainable funding sources to support basic education. In addition, we will continue to work with teachers, principals, school staff, families and community members to explore a range of issues, including differential pay, more effective evaluations and performance management. These issues will rightly continue to be central in our ongoing work with the Seattle Education Association to improve instruction in every classroom. We look forward to listening and learning as community members respond to this recent NCTQ report.

For more information, please contact David Tucker, 252-0200.