

IV. MEASURES OF TEACHING CONDITIONS

SOCIAL CAPITAL: THE COLLECTIVE COMPONENT OF TEACHING QUALITY

Carrie M. Leana, *Voices in Urban Education*, Spring 2010

In education, human capital—the skills and knowledge of individual teachers—has been a hot topic of debate. But social capital—the interactions among teachers in a school—is often overlooked in discussions of instructional quality and school improvement. This article describes research showing that both are essential in the quest to raise student achievement. The research also suggests that social capital thrives in an atmosphere of mutual trust and collective practice—and that it is a powerful predictor of student performance.

TEACHER WORKING CONDITIONS ARE STUDENT LEARNING CONDITIONS

New Teacher Center Research Brief, November 2010

This review of data from five iterations of the North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey demonstrates that the conditions teachers face in schools and classrooms are essential elements of student performance. Schools where leaders empower faculty, create safe school environments, and develop supportive and trusting environments in which teachers work are shown to be the most successful in promoting student learning..

PHASE I TEACHER EVALUATION DISTRICTS COMPARED TO OTHER NORTH CAROLINA DISTRICTS

New Teacher Center Research Brief, June 2010

The state of North Carolina has created new aligned evaluation systems for teachers, principals, superintendents, and administrators—the North Carolina Educators Evaluation System (NCEES). NCESS replaces the prior, summative approach for teacher evaluation with a much more formative approach, incorporating a continuum of practice for each of the state’s professional teaching standards, using rubrics for goal setting and monitoring progress, and promoting frequent interaction between school administrators and teachers on teaching practice and development. These new tools utilized the North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey (NCTWC) results to inform the redesign of the teacher, principal, and superintendent evaluation processes. The NCTWC data function as an important artifact of evidence in its implementation. Initial trends suggest that fully integrated use of the new teacher evaluation instrument may be contributing to more positive agreement in important areas of teacher working conditions. The evaluation process is designed to improve and enhance the areas of leadership and teacher support. Districts which have been using this instrument the longest are showing higher rates of agreement in those areas.

