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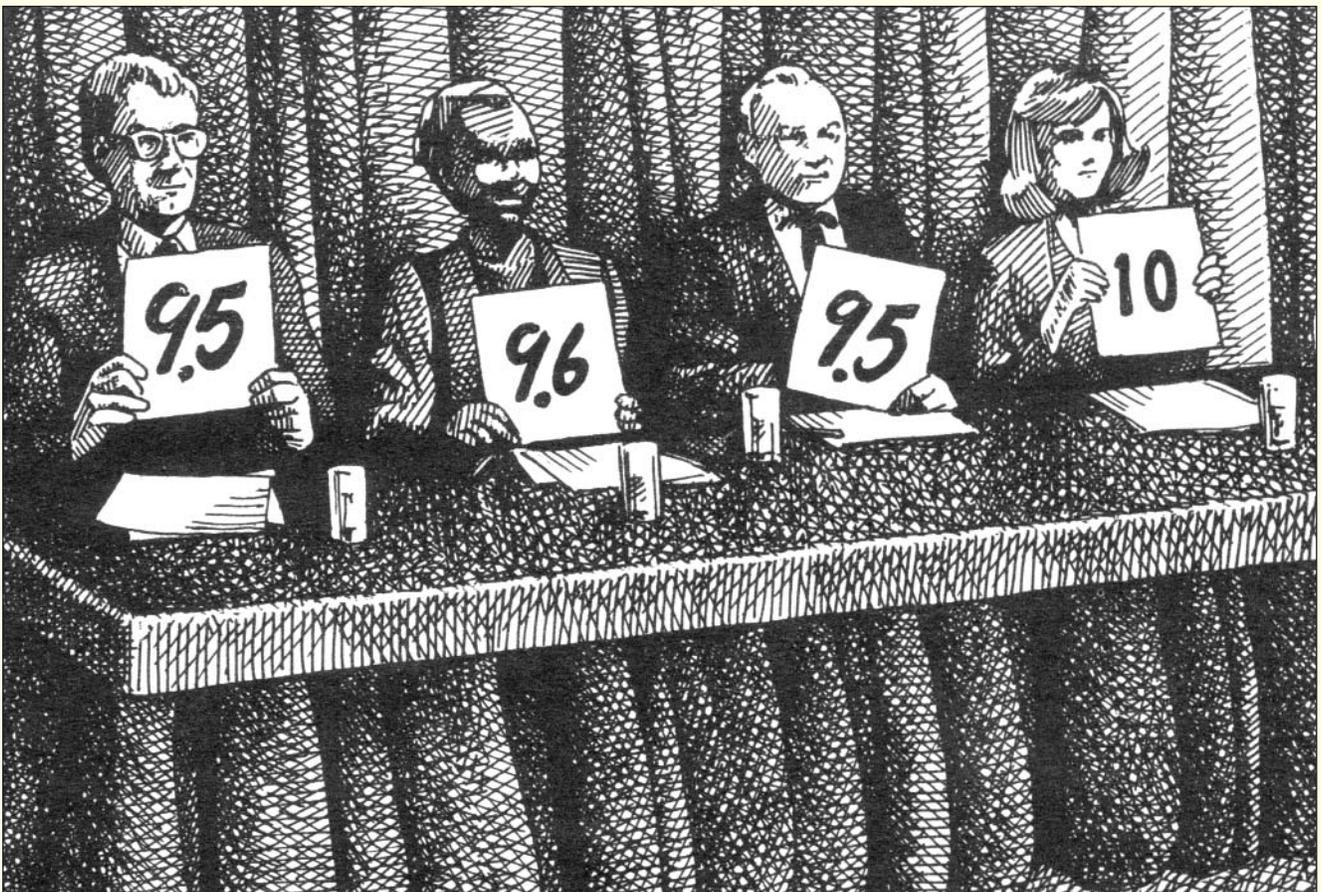
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Catalyst

VOICES OF CHICAGO SCHOOL REFORM

EVALUATING TEACHERS

Board and union seek alternatives to a process they agree is meaningless



Up Close: Back of the Yards

A unique collaboration between community leaders, schools

Contract politics cast shadow over teacher evaluation reform

A few weeks ago, a collective sigh of relief rose up from the city when the Chicago Public Schools and the Chicago Teachers Union reached a last-minute agreement that averted a teacher strike. Both sides scored important wins: Teachers got their best contract in years, and the School Board got four years of labor peace without sacrificing reform programs.

Yet the settlement left a sense of foreboding in its wake. Given the politics that preceded approval, the board and the union may have taken a big step backward in their budding collaboration on school improvement.

Deborah Lynch, the reform-minded CTU president, got knocked for a loop when union members roundly rejected the first tentative settlement. Forced to fight for still more, she put on a game face that left many wondering what kind of leader she would be as she prepares for a re-election bid next spring. An opposition slate has already formed and signaled that it doesn't like her brand of unionism.

Many issues are at stake, and one of them is teacher evaluation, a process that educators interviewed for this month's issue of *CATALYST* think is meaningless. Clarice Berry, president of the Chicago Principals and Administrators Association, calls the existing evaluation forms "generic," and Principal Donald Feinstein of the Chicago Academy says the process is "vague, a little archaic." Teachers gain no insight into their practice, says Allen Bearden of the CTU's Quest Center.

Yet teachers are afraid about what might replace it. Teachers fear equipping principals with a weapon that could be used against them unfairly. Under the current evaluation system, most teachers receive superior or excellent ratings. "It's safe," says teacher Bella Rudnick of Lozano Elementary.

The new teacher contract revives a board-union committee on teacher evaluation that first appeared in the 1993 contract but was excised in 1999. Clearly, it will take both political skill and backbone for Lynch to move forward on this important but politically volatile issue. It will also take thoughtful and sensitive participation by the

board and others who want to bring teacher evaluation into the reform process.

Last spring, Leadership for Quality Education, a business-based school reform group, jump-started the effort when it convened a working group of union and board representatives to learn about other evaluation models. Now, a round of teacher focus groups is in the works, and the group is looking to make some tentative recommendations by July 1.

It would do well to take it one step at a time, dealing first with changes in the evaluation process and giving them a tryout before taking up consequences, such as tying performance to pay. A certain next step should be devising a plan to keep teachers and the public fully informed about deliberations. As the recent round of contract negotiations showed, you can't make significant change without teacher buy-in.

ABOUT US As this issue goes to press, I am heading out for maternity leave and temporarily returning the editorial reins of this magazine to the sturdy hands of founder and publisher **Linda Lenz**. While I'm away, she will oversee day-to-day operations with the able assistance of consulting editor **Lorraine Forte**, a familiar face whom long time readers may remember as a former *CATALYST* managing editor. Since then, Forte has covered courts for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, and currently serves as a news writer and producer for local television and a journalism instructor at Columbia College.



Veronica Anderson

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Catalyst

VOICES OF CHICAGO SCHOOL REFORM

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DECEMBER 2003

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2002, 1997 International Reading Association
2001, 1998 Sigma Delta Chi for public service
2001, 2000 Peter Lisagor Award, Public Service
2000 Peter Lisagor Award, Online Reporting
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1998 Chicago Association of Black Journalists

1998, 1993 Peter Lisagor Award, Best Newsletter
1999, 1995 Peter Lisagor Award, Reporting
1996 Education Writers Association
1997, 1996, 1995, 1994, 1993 Distinguished Achievement Award; 1994, Best Newsletter, Educational Press Association of America

Making process work for kids

A new board-union committee will continue an initiative launched last spring to revise teacher evaluation.

by Ed Finkel

Ten years ago, a new contract between the Board of Education and the Chicago Teachers Union called for a joint committee to look for ways to improve teacher evaluation and to investigate such innovations as peer review and a student achievement component.

A committee was duly formed in October 1994 but went nowhere amid changes in union leadership

and control of the school system. Five years later, the committee was taken out of the contract.

Meanwhile, teacher evaluation remained a matter of principals making largely cursory observations of teachers in their classrooms and checking off such items “uses sound and professional judgment” and “uses appropriate resources.” The process was—and continues to be—one that teachers and principals alike find nearly meaningless.

"We see it, we sign it, we get our paychecks, we go home," Paddy O'Reilly told *CATALYST* in 1994 when he was a Head Start teacher at Whittier Elementary. "It's something you do to fulfill the contract." Today, O'Reilly teaches at the Chicago Academy.

Ten years later, Allen Bearden, assistant to the president for educational issues at the CTU, sounds an echo. "Some principals will just give a cursory look at the classroom, and at the end of the year ask teachers to sign off on an evaluation form. Many of [the teachers] will receive 'superior' or 'excellent' ratings but still know it will have no meaning. From a teacher's perspective, I know there is no respect for the process."

Another echo from 10 years ago: a joint board-union committee on teacher evaluation has returned to the contract. Its discussions will pick up from those started last spring by the nonprofit group Leadership for Quality Education (LQE).

"We should have a system where what is being measured is well-known and accepted by both the people who are doing the evaluation and the people who are being evaluated," says Xavier Botana, CPS director of teacher accountability. "It has to allow for meaningful ongoing feedback, as opposed to one-shot reporting."

Botana, Bearden and a dozen others from CTU and CPS are part of the LQE group.

Pam Clarke, senior associate director at LQE, says she believes the steering committee will "morph" into the joint CTU-CPS committee called for under the contract, but that was unclear in mid-November. The contract provision calls for five people appointed by the union and five by the board to meet, discuss the issues involved and report recommendations by next July 1, Clarke says.

Given the time it took to get the contract approved, she says, "It's not clear to me how firm that deadline is. We'll definitely have something to report by July 1, but whether we'll have final recommendations on a brand new evaluation system is very much open to question."

Since the steering committee had only preliminary discussions, little progress has been made on the substance. So far, the main consensus is that the evaluation system needs to be made more useful for everyone

Local variations

Some principals have made improvements on the official process. **Linda Sienkiewicz**, principal at Audubon Elementary in Roscoe Village, says she tries to visit classrooms for an entire lesson of 30 to 40 minutes, although that time frame is not required. She also has a conference beforehand, also not required, and asks the teacher for a focus area in which they would like particular assistance.

She says, for example, "'You might not be aware of whether you're teaching higher-order thinking skills.' I can keep tabs on that for a teacher. I try to make the whole procedure meaningful for both of us, as well as meeting the requirements of the evaluation process." She adds, "I'm not sure that I would want the official process to require any more steps because I think that would take more time away from anything else I'd want to do."

Cydney Fields, principal at Ray Elementary in Hyde Park, says she has drawn up her own evaluation form in addition to the contractually specified check-sheet. "Usually, I'll ask the teacher to fill out some kind of self-reflection about the lessons, and we'll use that as a basis of discussion," she says. "If my goal is to improve instruction, I need to use a format that is going to make that possible."

involved. While teacher career ladders are a possibility, so-called merit pay likely is not, Bearden says. As it stands, CPS teacher evaluation has no bearing on pay—the only formal use is on the rare occasion when a teacher is found to be unsatisfactory.

Describing career ladders, Bearden says, "If you meet these criteria, you should be at this place on the ladder—that's doable provided it's not based upon any single score or any single evaluative tool." Rather, he says, it should be based on a set of standards.

"Pay for performance would certainly be a hot-button here," he continues. "There are too many things that impede how a child performs to establish criteria—especially pay criteria—around a specific test score."

That stance is disappointing to Clarice Berry, newly installed president of the Chicago Principals and Administrators Association, which has not been part of the LQE-led steering committee. "I don't know a principal who would not like to offer incentives," she says. "Principals would not mind seeing the opposite for teachers who are not performing."

Invited to the first of the LQE sessions last spring was Charlotte Danielson, a New Jersey-based education consultant who has developed an assessment model based on standards for

teaching that is used primarily in small city and suburban districts. (See story, page 6.)

"We weren't necessarily endorsing her work, or saying this is the route we want to go," Clarke says. "We felt she had some good things to say to get people thinking." Beyond that initial presentation, "We were starting to flesh out a common dialogue of what is good teaching, what does it look like, and what is the purpose of evaluation?"

Another assessment model, peer review, under which teachers evaluate one another, may be considered, says the CPS' Botana. "Anything and everything is on the table, in a serious way," he says.

However, Bearden says peer review is not an attractive option from the union's perspective. In the wake of the contract vote, "I don't think the culture is right for it now," he says. "There might be some discussions about peer coaching, which might be safer than teachers evaluating each other."

The steering committee's next step, Clarke says, would be to send out surveys and hold focus groups with teachers in various corners of the system to find out what they would like to see change. Then the committee would formulate recommendations to the School Board and, if approved, begin a pilot program in a half-dozen schools. ●

Charlotte Danielson's approach:

Use standards of good teaching

School districts are required by law to evaluate teachers, but for most, the process is more about paper pushing than professional growth, says education consultant Charlotte Danielson, who has been tapped to advise Chicago Public Schools on how to revise its teacher evaluation process.

"In many places, it's a big waste of time," she says, because there are no clear descriptions of good teaching.

Danielson's standards-based model defines good teaching as expertise in four domains: planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction, and professional responsibilities. Each of those four categories is further broken down into related skills. Planning and preparation, for example, encompasses such skills as knowing content and pedagogy, designing coherent lessons and assessing what students have learned.

With Danielson's scoring template, school districts then design a set of procedures to measure those skills. For example, it may include traditional observation of classroom performance, review of teachers' lesson plans and other work products, and some measure of how teachers communicate with families.

Danielson cautions that the checklist of skills should be used as a guide. "It's a mistake to be very rigid and formulaic about this," she says. "It's better to use those rubrics for feedback and dialogue, and then make a more holistic judgment."

The National Association of Elementary School Principals is a fan. The Danielson rubric gives teachers a stable set of targets to work toward and provides administrators benchmarks for how to judge them, says Associate Director Ann Walker, who recently retired.

According to Danielson, hundreds of school districts around the country are using her rubric, and Delaware and Pennsylvania use a standards-based tool for teacher assessments. Although districts "are all over the map," the system has found easier acceptance in suburban districts than urban ones, she says.

Critics of Danielson's model note that it's not tied to how students do in class and on tests, and say that it requires a



Charlotte Danielson

Standards-based performance evaluation

How it works: Creates explicit criteria, such as managing student behavior and providing good feedback, that administrators can use to evaluate teacher performance.

Created by: Charlotte Danielson, education consultant based in Princeton, N.J., author of the book, "Teacher Evaluation: to Enhance Professional Practice."

Biggest benefit: Defines guidelines through which teachers and principals can identify quality teaching and enhance professional growth.

Shortcomings: Cumbersome process that is not connected to student achievement.

burdensome amount of documentation. They also say it can be used punitively.

William Sanders, a researcher who has created a system to use student test scores to measure teacher performance, says Danielson assumes wrongly that a certain set of teacher skills and knowledge will invariably bring about better results. "It's based upon the assumption that the process is highly correlated with the outcome," he says.

But Allan Odden, lead researcher of the Teacher Compensation Project at the University of Wisconsin, dismisses that critique. Danielson's system "is fair,

valid and reliable in the places we've studied," Odden notes. To skeptics who wonder whether the model can be used to make decisions and determine consequences, Odden has a quick response. "The answer is yes."

Danielson counters that while student performance is relevant, the assessments "aren't very good."

National union leaders like the emphasis on improving skills but have some concerns. Tom Blanford, who oversees teacher quality issues for the National Education Association, complains about too much paperwork. "It tends to be cumbersome," he says.

And Rob Weil, a deputy director at the American Federation of Teachers, worries that the program can be converted into a point system that determines teacher compensation. In those cases, "it's gone from a supportive mechanism to a punitive mechanism," he says.

In Newport News, Va., the school district uses Danielson's framework to make decisions about whether to retain or fire teachers, not to determine pay scales, says Kathleen Pietrasanta, who coordinates staff development. Teachers are rated in each of the model's 22 skills, and in an additional category, added after the Columbine High School shootings, that scores teachers' ability to handle emergency situations.

To apply the rubric to pay, Pietrasanta says all principals would have to be trained to use it the same way. Now, she says, ratings are "all over the board."

Danielson says she avoids getting involved with performance pay, although some districts she's worked with have adapted the rubric to help them determine raises. "I prefer to stay outside of that debate on money," she says. "It can set up competitive stuff between teachers."

She prefers to limit the use of her rubric simply to make judgments about whether additional training is needed. "It doesn't seem to me that what I'm offering is that big a departure from common sense," she says. "I'm always amazed when people act like this is news. It's what you do in every other field."

Ed Finkel

William Sanders' approach:

Use students' test scores over time

Is it possible to measure a teacher's effect on student performance?

Not only does William Sanders think it's possible, the former University of Tennessee professor has created a statistical program that inputs hundreds of test scores for individual students and produces ratings for their teachers.

Analyzing his own results, Sanders has found that individual teachers have an enormous impact on student learning. In a study of teachers in Tennessee, he found that low-performing students who had three good teachers in a row were much more likely to succeed in high school than those who had a succession of three bad teachers.

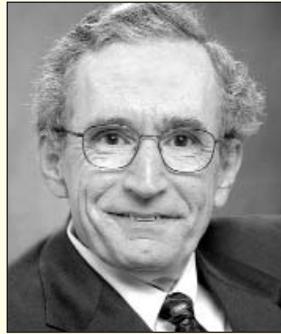
Adopted by the Tennessee legislature in 1992, Sanders' so-called Value-Added Assessment System is now being used statewide there and in more than 300 districts across the country.

By tracking individual students' test scores over time, Sanders, who now manages value-added assessment and research at SAS Institute in Cary, N.C., says his program can identify which teachers raise test scores against the odds and which simply were blessed with easy-to-teach students.

Joel Giffin, principal of Maryville (Tenn.) Middle School, says Sanders' data are an ideal way to begin discussions about teacher performance and pinpoint areas of weakness. "We've been able to analyze what's going on, look at curricular elements, and look at teacher performance to make the right changes," he says.

A few years ago, for instance, the data zeroed in on a group of 20 students who were struggling more than others in math. Teachers decided to add a second math period for those students to get assistance with homework, tutoring and feedback on their work. "We changed the world for those 20 kids," Giffin says. Without the data, "we wouldn't have ever found the problems."

Principals elsewhere share similar experiences. "You talk to some of the principals who have this information, and they say it's really an eye-opener," says Kevin Carey, senior policy analyst at the Washington-based Education Trust.



William Sanders

Value-added assessment

How it works: Generates reports of student test scores over time that can measure individual teachers' impact.

Created by: William Sanders, manager of value-added assessment and research, SAS Institute.

Biggest benefit: By tracking data for individual students, the system factors out the impact of socioeconomic background and other variables, and provides a solid starting point for discussions about a teacher's performance.

Shortcomings: Computing formulas are kept under wraps, offers no guidance to explain why students and teachers are not succeeding, unable to distinguish teachers who perform in the middle ranges of ability.

"It allows them to design their professional development programs in a way that targets different teachers."

However, critics of Sanders' work say the system lacks transparency and provides no insight into why certain schools, departments or teachers are failing.

Most educators will support the concept of value-added but are suspicious of Sanders' reluctance to disclose the formulas the system uses to calculate its results, says Rob Weil, deputy director of educational issues for the American Fed-

eration of Teachers.

"Our methodology is published for God and everyone to see," Sanders responds, but he maintains that the computing formulas are proprietary.

Carey backs him up. Value-added assessment is complicated "because it goes to great lengths to be fair," he says. "There's a bit of a trade-off in terms of transparency."

Tom Blanford of the National Education Association says Sanders' system offers no guidance to help teachers improve. "It just serves a sorting function."

Giffin agrees but points out that data can help identify where problems are occurring. "It could be the high kids, it could be the low kids, it could be the black kids, it could be the special ed kids, whatever," he says. "What we do is sit down as a group and dig into that."

Still, Weil suggests value-added data are better at identifying teachers at the top and bottom of the scale than they are at measuring differences among teaching in the middle categories. "The technology does not allow you to cut it that fine," Sanders concedes.

For that reason, critics and some supporters of value-added assessment say principals should be cautious in using the data to make decisions about teachers. Carey of the Education Trust says such decisions should not be based solely on value-added measures.

Blanford of the NEA rules it out altogether. "If the point is to punish and reward, we don't think that's of value to the teaching profession," he says. "If the point is to help teachers identify areas in which they can focus or work on to improve their instructional practice, that's a different ballgame."

Charlotte Danielson, who developed a standards-based evaluation tool, suggests value-added data is too "simplistic" to capture teachers' performance. "Politicians like it because it makes intuitive sense."

However, Sanders says by looking at students' test scores over a number of years, "you're looking at hundreds of pieces of information."

Ed Finkel

Adam Urbanski's approach:

Have teachers review each other

When teachers union president Adam Urbanski sat down at his kitchen table 17 years ago to write a peer review plan for the Rochester, N.Y., school district, he thought he might be on the cutting edge of a new trend.

At the time, Rochester was only the third district in the country, following Toledo and Columbus, to take up peer review. However, the practice never caught on. Today only a handful of school districts have adopted this method of evaluation that calls for teachers to review each other.

Urbanski suspects he knows why. "There is a fear that it will turn teachers against teachers, and lead to massive snitching," he says. "Peer review seems to be controversial only where it doesn't exist."

Elsewhere, teachers are wary that peer review will lead to dissension in the ranks and confusion about the lines of authority between teachers and administrators.

However, Rochester teachers see peer review as an opportunity to have a say in their own fate, says Urbanski. "The program is viewed as cultivating good teaching rather than weeding out bad teaching," he says.

Teachers who undergo peer review in Rochester fall into one of three categories:

- First-year teachers.
- Tenured teachers who are performing poorly and are subject to having a mentor teacher oversee their work for 18 months.
- Tenured teachers who request professional guidance.

In any given year, as many as 20 mid-career teachers and 600 first-year teachers—out of a total of 3,800 in the system—undergo peer review.

Mentor teachers observe their subjects in the classroom, demonstrate lessons for them, relieve them so they can observe best practices elsewhere, direct them to relevant workshops and courses as well as reading they can do, meet one-on-one to talk over issues that arise and evaluate teachers' work products.

"They spend substantially more time with the teacher than any supervisor



Adam Urbanski

Peer review

How it works: Mentor teachers review new teachers, as well as tenured teachers who are failing professionally, and then recommend either retention or dismissal.

Biggest benefit: Gives new teachers a chance to learn from someone who knows the ropes, and may improve teacher retention down the road.

Shortcomings: Some say it undermines collegiality. Others point out the added expense of full- and part-time mentors, and the additional time it takes to make decisions about retention and firing.

could, and their judgment is valued in a commensurate way," Urbanski says. "Very often, we see administrators yielding to the judgment of the mentor."

The Rochester program has produced two significant results: More first-year teachers are fired (up to 12 percent), and fewer teachers who are retained drop out of teaching. Teacher retention in Rochester is over 90 percent, up from 65 percent before peer review began.

Only a few of the tenured teachers who undergo mandatory peer review are ultimately dismissed, he notes. The superintendent has the final say, and teachers have the right to contest that decision in court.

Rochester is unique in requiring mentor teachers to carry a part-time course load. "The single greatest advantage is

that they remain connected to the realities of the classroom," Urbanski says.

But Dal Lawrence, former president of the Toledo Federation of Teachers, believes that "top-notch mentoring" requires mentors who do nothing else.

The two national teacher unions diverge on the issue.

The National Education Association, which represents teachers mainly in small districts, is skeptical. "We're pretty leery about having teachers evaluate other teachers for dismissal purposes," says Tom Blanford, associate director for teacher quality. "That violates a pretty fundamental belief about collegiality and support."

By contrast, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), whose members are more likely to work in large urban districts, supports peer review programs because they provide for sharing responsibility for teacher quality with school administrators.

Don Raczka, president of the AFT local in Poway, Calif.—a district north of San Diego that employs 1,600 teachers—says peer review "is an accepted way of doing business" in his district. He suspects money is a major reason peer review hasn't caught on. Paying mentors to spend most or all of their time outside classrooms "is not an inexpensive commitment of resources," he comments.

Peer review also takes more time than principal-driven evaluation systems, as participants collaborate to reach consensus on how to proceed, says Rob Weil, AFT's deputy director of educational issues. "It takes longer when you have more people in the decision circle," he says. "There's more buy-in, there's more ownership of those decisions, but to get to that, it takes more time."

There's also the potential for peer review to erupt in controversy. In a recent Toledo case, community members cited discrimination when two African American teachers were dismissed as a result of peer review. Now two black school board members "want to 'review' the Toledo plan," Lawrence says. "The lesson is that it's difficult to have a competency system in a ... political environment."

Ed Finkel

Evaluating the CPS evaluation

The check-sheet form that principals use to evaluate teachers in the Chicago Public Schools contains six broad themes that are broken down into 33 skill areas. The options for rating teachers on each skill area are “strength,” “weakness” or “does not apply.”

Ratings in three of the broad themes—instruction, school environment and professional and personal standards—are based on the two class visits required of the principal. The other three—school-wide environment, community relationships and professional responsibility—are rated through unspecified “additional observations.”

The skill areas include such things as:

- provides written lesson plans
- provides bulletin board
- maintains attendance book(s)
- presents an appearance that does not adversely affect the students’ ability to learn
- is punctual and regular in attendance to school & duty assignments.

The two-page form contains three lines where principals may include additional “local school unit criteria” to assess and another three lines for comments, which are sometimes—but not often—given. More often, teachers simply receive their checkmarks and a one-word summary, usually “superior” or “excellent.” Sometimes, the one-word summary is all they get.

Few teachers, principals or observers of the check-sheet forms find them adequate, although some teachers are concerned that a revised system might not maintain the forms’ objectivity. Here is what some of them had to say:

Different voices, similar views

Pam Clarke, senior associate director, Leadership for Quality Education, which has been facilitating joint CTU-CPS sessions on the topic

“It’s just not a meaningful process. It’s a piece of paper that has to be filed, and it’s filed, and it’s never thought about again. Everybody was in agreement that they want to make this a process that starts a dialogue. Even outstanding teachers have areas they can improve upon.”

Xavier Botana, director of teacher accountability, Chicago Public Schools

“It should be changed to reflect something that is clearly connected to what you want kids to know and be able to do. It may be more than a form. It has to be well-understood, which begs for a higher level of clarity and specificity.”

Clarice Berry, president, Chicago Principals and Administrators Association

“It’s so generic. There are some specific things that should be tied into the instructional focus that principals are expected to maintain. It needs to be more streamlined in terms of what is actually happening in the schools right now.”

Donald Feinstein, principal, Chicago Academy

“Some of the line by line items could be made a little more relevant and authentic, and genuine to teacher evaluation. It’s vague, a little archaic, and could be more relevant to the duties and responsibilities and activities that teachers perform on a day-to-day basis.”

Cydney Fields, principal, Ray Elementary

“Some of the stuff that’s in there may be important in terms of, what is the role of the teacher, maintaining attendance books and lesson plans. It’s not that it’s not important, but that’s not, when I go into a classroom to observe, what’s at the top of my mind. I’m looking at how they present the instruction, and the kinds of strategies they use, and are they meeting the needs of all of the learners.”

Linda Sienkiewicz, principal, Audubon Elementary

“There’s areas that, I look at them and wonder, what are we actually supposed to observe? I don’t even know how to judge a teacher’s performance on a couple of the categories that are listed. There’s nothing that mentions test data, student progress in terms of standardized tests or any other kind of diagnostic testing.”

Allen Bearden, assistant to the president for educational issues, Chicago Teachers Union

“It’s just a check-sheet, things like whether your room is in order, whether a bulletin board’s up. Not that these things don’t have value, but they’re not informative about your practice.”

Sandra Finkel, librarian and art appreciation teacher, Franklin Magnet

“It seems pretty general. We’re professionals, and it covers the things we do. Principals could use it as a real punishment for teachers. If they don’t like a teacher, they could give them a poor rating for ‘keeps an attractive classroom.’”

Bella Rudnick, 2nd-grade teacher, Lozano Bilingual

“This way it’s not so critical and it’s not so personal. You just go down a checklist. Then you don’t say, ‘Why did he write this on hers, and he didn’t write this on mine?’ Maybe this keeps it where you don’t take it so personally. It’s safe.”

Cincinnati swears by peer review, backs off tying results to pay

by Grant Pick

“Have a seat, have a seat,” says Jennifer Kelly to students shuffling in the door of her mid-morning English class at Aiken Service Learning High School, in a working-class section of Cincinnati.

“He just hit me,” a sullen girl gripes to Kelly of the boy just behind her.

“No,” says the boy, “she hit me.” The young man uses two fingers to widen his supposedly wounded left eye and presents it to Kelly.

The truth be told, no one hit anyone. The two students are giving Kelly a hard time, something the young teacher has to contend with all the way through the double period ahead of her. To make matters worse, Kelly’s consulting teacher, a colleague assigned to observe and counsel her, chooses this day to make one of her unannounced visits. For 45 minutes, Joyce Yonka, a veteran high school English teacher, takes copious notes.

Yonka is one of some 20 consulting teachers and teacher-evaluators who make up the peer review corps in this struggling district of 40,000, where only 60 percent of students graduate from high school. Cincinnati was a peer review pioneer, adopting the method in 1985. Then in the late 1990s, the school board and teachers union tried to go even further, crafting more specific teaching standards and attempting to link evaluation on those standards to higher pay. While the pay-for-performance plan was sidelined, the practice of teachers judging teachers holds firm.

“We’re a profession,” says Sue Taylor, president of the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers, “and there’s a deep philosophical belief that teachers themselves should be gatekeepers to the profession.”

◆ ◆ ◆

As Jennifer Kelly’s students take their seat, some hip-hop poetry is playing from a boom box. The teacher, a slight



MATT BORCENDING

Joyce Yonka (right), a teacher in Cincinnati’s peer review corps, says newcomer Jennifer Kelly needs to work on maintaining class discipline.

woman wearing large loop earrings, attended a local book festival over the weekend, and the tape is courtesy of a poet she met at the event. “He has his own radio show,” she bursts.

Kelly suggests that the students set up a booth at an upcoming community fair and sell their own poems and songs. The discussion veers off into books Kelly encountered at the fair, the identity of onetime Cincinnati resident Harriet Beecher Stowe—“Wasn’t she a slave or somethin’?” a boy asks of the “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” author—and returns to the poet on the boom box. A boy named Chris points out that the poet’s work doesn’t rhyme. “It doesn’t have to rhyme,” says Kelly. “There are plenty of poems in history that haven’t rhymed. You need to be open to different types of writing.”

Throughout, Kelly is fighting the talking, note-passing and general indifference among the students. In a stab at controlling the situation, she writes the names of the disruptors on the blackboard—three mentions will bring detention, she warns. Soon, the list has grown impossibly long. The unruliness mounts even more after Kelly hands out self-assessments in writing and reading that the students are to complete. A few fill

out the forms; others watch Dajuan, a lanky young man, as he stands on a desk and fiddles with a yellow window shade.

When Yonka takes her leave, she does so with a firm opinion. “There was no teaching going on,” she says of Kelly, who though new to the Cincinnati schools, has a master’s degree in education and has taught in the suburbs. “The stuff about the books was great, but it didn’t connect to what the kids were reading. The only teachable moment had to do with the poem that didn’t rhyme. But that was brief.

“Jennifer had no control of the kids,” she continues, “so however well-done her lesson plan might have been, it didn’t do any good because no one was listening.”

In the week ahead, Yonka will sit down with Kelly and go over her leadership of the class in detail, showing how it squared with Cincinnati’s standards. For her part, Kelly will furnish a written reflection on Yonka’s visit. She must also submit to another five observations, attend biweekly after-school sessions conducted by Yonka, and produce a portfolio of material that includes a lesson plan spread over several days, samples of student work and ways she has communicated with parents.

In the end, Kelly must earn repeated scores of at least two (basic level) on a four-point scale in order to advance in her career. “She’ll get her two’s,” predicts Yonka, “but she won’t get higher, at least this year.”



Cincinnati followed the lead of Toledo, Ohio, and Rochester, N.Y., in establishing peer-evaluation. But it broke out on its own with a pay-for-performance component that was introduced in 2000. “The eyes of the nation are upon us,” Superintendent Steven Adamowski said at the time. “We can’t afford to let this fail.”

But fail it did, at least in part. Previously, new teachers, fifth-year veterans and those in trouble were evaluated. Under the 2000 plan, teachers at certain benchmark years beyond 5 were also put under review. Plus, teachers were subjected to more detailed standards based on those of Charlotte Danielson, a consultant affiliated with the Educational Testing Service. “Teachers were driving themselves nuts, getting up at four o’clock in the morning to be judged well,” recalls Rick Beck, then the union president. “Many were on edge emotionally.”

As a result of what one observer calls “chaos,” the number of target groups was scaled back. The extra-pay aspect of assessment hadn’t kicked in yet, but already teachers viewed it with considerable hostility. “People thought that however refined the instrument, peer evaluation was subjective,” says Sue Taylor, a social studies teacher who was then on the union’s collective-bargaining team.

In April 2001 Taylor, running on a platform opposed to pay for performance, toppled incumbent Rick Beck, who was wed to the concept. A year later, teachers overwhelmingly voted down the pay component, handing Adamowski a bitter defeat. “Our students deserve more than a ‘no,’” Adamowski said at the time. “I hope the community will join all of us who are committed to professionalism in teaching—teachers included—in demanding a constructive proposal.”

However, the added pay issue seems dead for the time being. Adamowski resigned in October 2002 to become an education professor at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Alton Frailley, Adamowski’s successor, was unavailable to be interviewed for this story. So far, he has been silent on the subject.



Yonka oversees the assessment of 16 new teachers. She feels some are already in sterling condition, such as a young woman whom Yonka recently saw take a class of girls through a discussion of John Steinbeck’s “The Pearl” and was “sharp as a tack.” At the other end of the spectrum is a career-changing man at a middle school. “The guy doesn’t have any with-it-ness,” she says. “Oh, he knows some things, but he’s stuck in the ‘70s. And he’s so disorganized.” Still, she feels she can ultimately assist everyone in her caseload and that peer evaluation is “unbelievably useful. The learning that goes on among the teachers who are under review is terrific.”

For her part, Jennifer Kelly feels sustained. “I have my shortcomings, and I appreciate the feedback that Joyce is giving me,” says the teacher, even on a day when she has received a bracing report from Yonka. Other observers are likewise enthusiastic. “Now teachers know what the expectations are,” remarks Carolyn Turner, executive director of Cincinnati Parents for Public Schools, an advocacy group.

As to the weeding out of brown grass, of some 320 teachers who came under scrutiny last year (out of a total of some 3,000 teachers), 11 were recommended for termination, and only four of those lost their jobs.

Despite promising results, some observers believe the program visits too much pressure on beginning teachers, who have plenty to do acclimating to new careers, schools and colleagues.

The most onerous requirement, many complain, is the preparation of teacher portfolios. “We have some teachers spending 75 to 100 hours on those portfolios,” says Taylor. “To expect that level of rigor, that level of comprehensiveness is a mistake.” But Susan Hiles-Meadows, who administers the program, says the burden of the portfolio is overstated: “You fill out some forms, and you have to write legibly. That’s all. These are things you should be doing anyway.”

Taylor says that in upcoming contract negotiations, the union will try to push the evaluation of new teachers back to the second or third year of service. Meanwhile, beginning in the 2005-06 school year, schools are supposed to reintroduce a more frequent form of evaluation. How frequent will be negotiated with the union, says Hiles-Meadows.

Peer review specifics

Consulting teachers

- Work full time in that capacity for three years.
- Are assigned about 14 teachers to review each year.

Teachers under review

- Those new to the district.
- Fourth-year teachers seeking the equivalent of tenure.
- Teachers identified by their principal as doing poorly.

The measures

- Four domains are covered: planning, creating an environment for learning, actual teaching and professionalism, which includes grading procedures and family involvement.
- Each domain has 16 standards, each one further detailed.
- A teacher portfolio, including a lesson plan and samples of student work.

The process

- Consulting teachers visit teachers under review six times and conduct follow-up conferences.
- Toward year’s end, consulting teachers arrive at a rating on each standard in each domain.
- Teachers whose ratings fall short of prescribed expectations are referred to a 10-member panel—half administrators and half teachers—for further scrutiny or possible dismissal, based on a hearing.
- Appeals are possible to the superintendent and board.

The cost

- \$3,125 per teacher reviewed.

“But whatever happens,” says Taylor, “this is going to strengthen the teaching and learning of our students. I’m sure of that.”

Grant Pick is a Chicago-based writer

WebExtra: Go to www.catalyst-chicago.org for snapshots of other districts and schools.

BACK OF THE YARDS



CHICAGO

W. 33RD ST.

55 DOWNTOWN



ST. LOUIS

ASHLAND AVE.

RACINE AVE.

McKINLEY PARK

PERSHING RD.

PULASKI RD.

KEDZIE AVE.

KELLY PARK

SEWARD

HOLY CROSS

LARA

BACK OF THE YARDS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING SERVICE

W. 47TH ST.

HEDGES

CHAVEZ

HAMLIN

SAN MIGUEL

ST. JOES

PARK FEDERAL SAVINGS BANK

DALEY

W. 55TH ST.

GAGE PARK

GARFIELD ST.



Back of the Yards

Not in their back yard

Schools, community unite against gang violence

by Debra Williams

In November 1997, a parish priest in the Back of the Yards and principals from Chavez and Seward elementary schools began discussing ways to improve the lives of children in their community.

Their discussions took on greater urgency three months later when a 12-year-old from Seward shot two students from nearby Daley Elementary in an effort to prove he was tough enough to join a gang, police said.

To the priest, Rev. Bruce Wellems, and principals Sandra Traback and Marcey Reyes, it became clear that combating gang violence had to be a major focus of any effort to improve children's lives. Their first step was to create two alternative schools for dropouts, housed at Chavez and Seward. "We found that the kids committing the violence had either dropped out of school or were put out," says Traback, the principal of Chavez.

Soon other principals and community leaders joined the discussions. Thus was born The Peace and Education Coalition of the Back of the Yards/ New City. The non-profit alliance is a diverse group that includes six public elementary schools (Chavez, Seward, Hamline, Daley, Hedges and Lara); a Catholic middle school, San Miguel; and two parishes, Holy Cross/Immaculate Heart of Mary and St. Joseph. The city's Neighborhood Housing Services, the Back of the Yards Neighborhood Council and a local bank, Park Federal Savings, also are members.

Its mission is to end violence by helping families provide a better home environment for children, finding ways to help children get to know each other, eliminating influences that promote violence and revitalizing the neighborhood. "If we don't change what's happening outside the schools, we'll never be able to change what's happening in the schools," says Traback.

Neighborhood Housing Services sought to counter gang activity by getting more families involved with Community Alternative Policing Strategy. CAPS meetings were moved from a trailer at St. Joseph's Church to schools, where parents felt more comfortable, and attendance increased. At one CAPS meeting where attendance previously topped off at 12, 60 to 100 now attend.

The alliance also took aim at vacant buildings used for crime and drug activity. Housing Services bought

the abandoned properties, rehabbed them and sold them. So far, 22 homes have been sold to renters who lived in the community. And this summer, Chavez's principal moved into the neighborhood.

John Groene of the Neighborhood Housing Services, notes, "For some students, this could mean that they now have a place to do their homework." Homeowners are also more likely to vote, participate in CAPS and take ownership of the community, says Groene.

Schools and other coalition members identify students who engage in chronic violent behavior and appear to have serious emotional problems and refer them to Youth Outreach, where therapy focuses on the entire family, not just the child.

To help students from different schools in the neighborhood get to know each other, several schools began bringing students together for basketball games. "We thought if they started playing ball together and got to know one another, they would be less likely to shoot each other later," says Traback. Last year, the group held its first youth summit for the upper grades of the six elementary schools to introduce students to each other.

There are some signs the coalition's work is paying off. For the last two years, parents felt safe enough to allow children to go trick or treating on Halloween. Students also walk to other schools for basketball games; in the past they were bused even though the schools are only two blocks away. "Personally, I know that [the coalition's] involvement has benefited that community tremendously," says Pat Camden, the spokesman of the Chicago Police Department.

Looking ahead, the coalition wants to expand the youth summit and involve students in other joint activities. It is also searching for a permanent home for one of the alternative schools, and it wants to get more businesses and community organizations involved in anti-gang activities.

Though coalition members believe their efforts are having an impact, the potential for violence still lingers. Last April, after a community cleanup outside of Hamline, a 12-year-old from the school was shot and killed in a case of mistaken identity. Says Wellems: "The violence hasn't disappeared. We know that. But we used to have six burials a year. This year, we've had one." ●

Fighting fear with friendship

School summit brings neighborhood kids together, breaks down barriers

by Debra Williams

On a crisp mid-October morning, 18 students from Hamline Elementary grab their coats and walk to Chavez Elementary four blocks away. An unremarkable event in most neighborhoods, perhaps, but in Back of the Yards the idea of walking from one school to another would not even have been considered just a few years ago.

Four to five gangs dominate the area, and violence was so prevalent back then that youngsters could easily become targets of random gunfire if they dared to venture beyond the landmarks separating gang turfs.

When the Hamline students arrive at Chavez, they are greeted at the door by Assistant Principal Antonio Perez. "Hey, what school are you from?" he asks, as he holds open the door.

"Hamline," the students yell in unison.

"I used to teach at Hamline for six years," he says. "How's it going over there? Come on in." He gives a bear hug to a former Chavez student he recognizes on the way in.

Later, he greets more groups that come from Daley, Seward, Hedges and Lara elementaries. Chavez students are there too. In all, more than 150 6th-, 7th- and 8th-graders are gathered at Chavez to participate in the Back of the Yards 2nd annual Peace and Education Summit, sponsored by the Peace and Education Coalition of Back of the Yards/New City.

For four hours, students meet others from different schools; work on a project as a group; discuss such issues as diversity, tolerance, racial stereotypes and the pitfalls of gangs and drugs; and have a say in the activities they'd like to participate in.

The summit is one way that community leaders hope to curb violence and crime among neighborhood youths. In a neighborhood where students are segre-

gated by viaducts, blocks and streets, the goal is to show them they are more similar than different, and that their community extends beyond their own streets and schools.

"You reduce fear by getting to know who's who in the community and caring for the neighborhood," says Rev. Bruce Welles of Holy Cross/Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, a member of the coalition. "That's one of the things we are trying to do with the kids."

Mixing it up

Upon arrival at the summit, each student receives an identical Peace and Education T-shirt with a color-coded name tag. Then, they are put into groups by color and not school, ensuring that they will meet new people.

Each school was asked to send 30 students—10 students each from 6th, 7th and 8th grade—and to recruit student leaders for the event. "They didn't have to be the best and the brightest," says Marcey Reyes, Seward's principal, "but they had to be leaders, those other kids listen to."

The coalition was clear about why students had been gathered.

"This summit is about building relationships because we are so divided," Rev. Ed Shea of St. Joseph's Church told them. "There's the city vs. the suburbs, the Cubs vs. the Sox. Do you know a fight broke out among the adults at a Peace Coalition meeting over the Cubs and the Sox?"

The students burst into laughter.

"So there should not be a Hedges vs. Hamline. What is that all about? That's crazy," says Shea. "Is it possible to think that we are one family? Because we are. I hope you'll really think about that today, okay?"

Students were then broken up into groups to attend 30-minute workshops held over four hours. The workshops were led by the 9th District police, the

Cook County State's Attorney's Office, the Chicago Children's Museum, the city's Animal Care and Control Department, the social-service initiative City Year and Youth Outreach Services, a non-profit social service agency.

Presenters covered topics such as gangs and drugs, the juvenile arrest process and the proper way to treat animals because of the popularity of dog-fighting among gangs. Students also were challenged to examine the perceptions and realities of culture, tolerance, diversity and inclusiveness.

For example, in the workshop presented by Youth Outreach, students were asked to identify the nationality of one of the presenters based on how he talked and dressed. Student guesses: Jamaican or Latin. He actually was African American and Puerto Rican.

How often do we develop misperceptions about other people because we see them act or dress in a certain way?, the presenter asked.

In a Children's Museum workshop aimed at promoting teamwork, students were grouped into teams and asked to build a device that could move a golf ball from one point to another, without the use of hands.

The police department encouraged students to participate in the 9th District's peer jury, where students decide punishments for minor juvenile offenses.

"I called to be part of the peer jury program," says Yasmin Quinonez, an 8th-grader at Chavez, a few weeks after the summit. "It was the first time I'd heard of the program, and I was very interested."

Another popular workshop was led by Chavez's principal, Sandra Traback, who asked students to identify community activities they'd like the coalition to sponsor. Among the top requests: karate classes, soccer, basketball, art, football and swimming. Others included a talent show, a play, a dance and taking a community trip.

In response to the students' over-



JOHN BOOZ

Carrie Meeks, Irma Santos, Samantha Gonzalez, and Maria O'Campo, (from left), who are from different schools, practice the team-work exercise of moving a ball from one point to another without using their hands.

whelming request for sports, the coalition has approached the Chicago Park District, which Traback says is looking to rebuild Davis Square Park. The park was closed after it was damaged in a serious thunderstorm, and the coalition believes the loss of park programs contributed to some of the neighborhood violence.

So far, the coalition has not heard from the Park District. But with its non-profit status, the group can seek grants to help fund these initiatives.

Imaginary boundaries

In an analysis of 2000 U.S. Census data, the coalition found that 5,000 young people under the age of 18 live in a 10-by-10-block area in the neighborhood, but do not come in contact with each other based on where they live.

Imaginary geographic lines exist that are keeping kids from getting to know each other, says Marcey Reyes, Seward's principal. "We had to come up with a way to break down barriers, to say, 'Yeah, you live here, I live there, but we're the same.'"

In 1998, the coalition began hosting

basketball games between schools. Even though some schools are only a few blocks apart, students had to be bused in because of the frequency of violence in the neighborhood.

Last year, the coalition came up with the idea of a Peace and Education summit among the schools. Five of the six elementary schools participated; Hamline could not because of a scheduling problem. This year, all six public schools participated.

"Eight years ago, these schools hadn't even considered working together," says Wellems. But the youth summit has taught the community the importance of adults coming together to help kids.

Next year, the coalition hopes to include San Miguel, a Catholic middle School, in the summit.

Bridges built

In small but noticeable ways, young people are building connections among themselves, say coalition members.

Valerie Brown, Hamline's principal, says: "I see the coalition's impact. I'm not saying the violence has totally disap-

peared. It hasn't. But [it] is not as escalated as it has been. The peace coalition is making sure all the schools are on the same page."

"I learned it doesn't matter how people look, we are all really the same," says Julio Alejandro, an 8th-grader from Seward.

"When I was with my friends, I saw a girl that I met at the summit that went to Daley. She was in my group," says Tywana Gill, an 8th grader at Chavez. "I told her 'Hi, how have you been?' I never would have said anything if I hadn't met her at the summit."

Jeremy Sanchez, an 8th-grader from Seward, says on a recent trip to a neighborhood park, he also saw a student he'd met at the summit. "I told my friends, 'I know him,'" says Sanchez. "I met a lot of people from Hamline, Chavez and Lara that I see around here now."

And fellow Seward student Salvador Rojas says, "When I go home, I see some of the kids from Hedges. I may not say nothing, but I nod my head to let them know I've seen them. I thought the summit was going to be boring and all the adults would do was talk, talk, talk, but it was cool." ●

Principal moves into neighborhood

by Debra Williams

Sandra Traback has long been a familiar face at community policing meetings held at Chavez Elementary. As the school's principal and president of the Peace and Education Coalition of the Back of the Yards/New City, she needs to stay abreast of what's happening in the neighborhood.

But at November's meeting, she had a new status.

In October, she moved from her Oak Park house to her new home two blocks away from her school, becoming a community resident.

"It was great," laughs Traback, recalling the November meeting. "When I walked in, one of the coalition members said 'Welcome, to our newest resident.' The other residents applauded; the police looked confused."

Traback's move is an example of a principal practicing what she preaches—a deep commitment to her school's community and to her students.

"I thought there was so much more I could do if I lived here," she says. "I felt that I could at least help anchor one block. One person can make a difference. I've seen it happen and I hope I make a difference here."

Making the decision

Traback first began to mull over a move last year. She had suffered a series of major heartaches over the past six years, with the deaths of her mother, father and only sister. Then her daughter left home to attend Washington University in St. Louis as a pre-med major.

"I felt stagnated in Oak Park," says Traback, who was spending 60 hours or more a week in Back of the Yards. "I realized I had more to give and it wasn't out there."

"My mom is very devoted to her school," says her daughter, Santana Grant. "She wasn't leaving the school until 9 or 10 p.m. There was always something, a coalition meeting, a CAPS



ANDRÉ VOSFETTE

Chavez principal Sandra Traback heads to work only two blocks away from her new home. She moved into the neighborhood in October. "I thought there was so much more I could do if I lived here," she says.

meeting, or it was her Second Chance kids." Second Chance is an alternative high school based at Chavez.

But when she first mentioned the idea of moving, some family and friends balked. "I thought she was crazy," says Marcey Reyes, principal of Seward Elementary and a close friend of Traback's. "This is a violent neighborhood. I will always support her, but I worried about her safety, and I thought she'd never have any down time with the school being in her back yard."

However, Traback drew closer to making the decision. "I felt like I had friends and family already there," she says. "My birthday was in February and you know who called me and wished me a happy birthday? Father Bruce and

Father Ed." Both priests oversee parishes in the community and are members of the coalition.

When she finally decided to make the move, Traback approached coalition member John Groene from the city's Neighborhood Housing Services. The agency was buying and rehabbing abandoned, vacant buildings and homes and selling them to homeowner occupants. Many of them had been prime spots for drug trafficking and other crime.

Groene says he was more than happy to sell one to Traback. "I was very excited when Sandy said she wanted to move," he says. "It sends a message to the other neighbors. 'Hey, the principal wants to buy on our block. We're getting better.'"

Paul Lopez, senior vice president and

chief lending officer of Park Federal Savings Bank, another coalition member, provided the home loan. "I was right there when John told her he'd found a house for her," recalls Lopez, who grew up in the neighborhood. "I told her, 'If you are willing to move here, then your loan is approved.'"

"The kids on the block, they want to walk my dogs, carry my groceries," Traback says with a laugh. "A lot of my kids live on this block. They wave. Everyone is looking out for me."

"I was blown away when I found out. She's done so much for this community already," says Shannon Hubbs-Judd, one of Traback's neighbors. "But for her to take it a step further and move here? Most principals live outside the school community. She's given the community hope. Everyone is very happy about it."

Groene points out that the neighborhood is significantly different from what it was five years ago, when the area's nickname was 'Murder Field.' There are still problems, he says, "but for the most

part, there is progress. And now that Sandy's here, it's created a positive momentum."

Walking the talk

A CPS veteran of 34 years, Traback has been principal of Chavez Elementary for the last 10. Before that, she was a teacher at Brown Elementary on the Near West Side, a Federal Title 1 coordinator in the Office of School Reform and then a counselor at Seward.

"When my Title I position was cut, I called Marcey's husband, Reynes Reyes, who was principal at Brentano," recalls Traback. "Reynes told me to call Marcey, who had a counselor position available."

In 1993, Chavez was built to relieve overcrowding at Seward, and Traback was selected by the local school council to head the school.

While the community views Traback as an asset, she says the move has been good for her, too. "When I was in Oak

Park, it took me an hour or an hour and a half on a good day to drive," she says. "Now it's a six-minute walk."

Also, being a resident gives her the chance to see a part of the community not everyone is aware of. "I'm up at 5:30 or 6 a.m. walking the dogs. That's when you see the working community here. People are loading their cars with tools and other stuff going to work. You only hear about the undesirables."

Her next projects include helping the coalition secure a new building for Second Chance and finding a use for the shuttered Goldblatt's department store that will benefit the community.

Thinking of future projects reminds her of a conversation she had with one of her youngest neighbors soon after she moved in.

"This little boy walked up to me and said, 'This is a good neighborhood since you came here,' " she recalls. "And I told him, 'No, this has always been a good neighborhood. We're all just going to make it better.'" ●

Alternative school gets second chance

Mayor, cardinal pitch in with fundraiser

It was a first for both the city and the Chicago Archdiocese when Francis Cardinal George and Mayor Richard Daley joined forces last July to raise money for CPS' Second Chance Alternative High School.

"They may be at odds about other stuff," says the Rev. Bruce Wellems from Holy Cross/Immaculate Heart of Mary Church. "But they have been together on this one."

The fundraiser, held at the Chicago Club downtown, raised \$100,000 to help finance a permanent home for Second Chance. The Archdiocese matched that amount, and Chicago Public Schools agreed to pick up the school's operating costs. Funds raised will go toward construction or rehab work.

"Never in the history of time has the mayor co-chaired a fundraiser with the church," says Sandra Traback, the principal of Chavez Elementary, where Sec-

ond Chance is housed. "The mayor is tough on crime, and he knows we have to give our kids a light to shine them down the right path. The cardinal has visited us twice, so he knows what's going on, too."

Second Chance was created in January 2001 when a gang member approached Wellems about going back to school. But rival gang members attended the area's only alternative high school, making that a risky option.

"I told him if he was seriously interested and knew other kids who were interested, to come back and we'd talk" about opening another school, says Wellems. "This gang-banger came back with 60 other kids."

Wellems approached former schools CEO Paul Vallas, who liked the idea, and Traback found space at her school to house the program.

In January 2001, Second Chance opened its doors. So far 32 students have completed the program. Students receive diplomas from Richards High School. This year, 52 students are enrolled, and

there's a waiting list.

"We turn kids away every quarter," says Traback.

Besides accommodating more students, another building would alleviate the confinement of Second Chance students, whose space at Chavez has been limited to a community room, a special education room and a science lab.

"They need their own identity, their own space," explains Traback. "They need stuff that is high school-like—regular-size classrooms, a computer lab, their own gym room, lockers—just space to be teenagers."

Wellems says he approached the mayor with the problem. "I told him we didn't have a building, and he asked me what I needed. It was his idea to do a fundraiser." The cardinal, who had visited Back of the Yards, also offered his services.

By November, community leaders found two possibilities: an old pickle factory at 49th and Racine, and a shuttered church and school at 51st and Elizabeth.

Debra Williams

Teacher effectiveness study

Researchers

William Sander, a professor of economics at DePaul University, initiated the study, inviting participation by Daniel Aaronson and Lisa Barrow, senior economists at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. Aaronson says the Fed is interested in educational research because improving schools helps long-term economic growth.

Key findings

Some teachers are more effective than others at raising math achievement, as measured by standardized tests. A teacher's effectiveness has little to do with his or her own education and experience.

Implications

The researchers say the findings call into question the standard practice of paying teachers more for additional degrees and years of teaching.

Who was studied

The study focused on freshman-level math teachers (a total of 650) and their students (53,000) during three school years—1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99.

What was studied

Researchers calculated the difference between students' 8th-grade and 9th-grade math test scores and then calculated a growth average for each teacher's classes in each of the three years. To make fair comparisons, researchers factored out differences among students (such as prior achievement and poverty) and among classes (such as whether they were honors or remedial). They also factored out differences among schools that might be due to leadership, safety or the like. Finally, the researchers looked for patterns between average growth and teacher characteristics.

For more information

The study, "Teachers and Student Achievement in the Chicago Public High Schools," can be found online at www.chicagofed.org. On the CATALYST web site, this story also contains a link. Go to www.catalyst-chicago.org.

'Teacher credentials have no impact'

Study examines math teachers, math scores

by Elizabeth Duffrin

Teachers' education and experience make little difference in students' math scores, according to a recent study by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago.

Analyzing math test score gains for three years worth of Chicago freshmen, researchers found that teachers had an enormous impact on test scores but that their credentials, including their advanced degrees and years of teaching experience, did not.

Whether a teacher had three years in the classroom or 30, a bachelor's degree or a Ph.D., a degree from a modest local college or an Ivy League university—none of that made a significant difference in student outcomes, the study found.

G. Alfred Hess Jr. of Northwestern University says the findings don't surprise him. His 2001 study of Chicago high schools also found no link between teacher experience and student achievement. "We saw experienced teachers who were great and experienced teachers who were dreadful," he recalls. "We saw new teachers who were great and [ones] who couldn't control a class to save their lives."

The study raises questions about pay scales, like Chicago's, that reward teachers based solely on education and experience, says Lisa Barrow, a study co-author and Federal Reserve Bank senior economist. "The compensation structure isn't set up to reward good teaching," she observes.

The findings should not be construed to mean that teachers never benefit from additional education. Other research has

found that students learn more from high school math teachers who hold a master's degree in mathematics.

The Fed's study did not distinguish between master's degrees in math and master's degrees in other subjects because that information was not available to researchers. But when it comes to pay raises, the Chicago Public Schools doesn't make distinctions either. A master's degree brings an increase in pay regardless of whether it is in the subject area the teacher teaches.

The Fed's study analyzed data on 53,000 freshmen and 650 math teachers whose classes they attended sometime between 1996-97 and 1998-99.

There was one exception to the overall finding that credentials don't matter: Students whose teachers had majored in math, science or education as an undergraduate performed slightly better than those whose teachers had other majors.

Individual teachers made a big difference. Students assigned to a teacher who ranked in the top third of the group studied, gained, on average, an extra six months in test score growth, compared to students with teachers in the bottom third. Teachers were rated by how well their students progressed, after accounting for factors in students' families or in the school environment that might impact test score gains.

Using test scores to judge teachers is tricky, Barrow and co-author Daniel Aaronson agree. For one, a district or principal would need to collect data on at least 200 students for each teacher. Otherwise, outcomes might be due to chance, they say. And an evaluation would have to control for outside variables known to impact student gains,

What other studies show

Here's how the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago's study on teacher credentials and student achievement stacks up against similar research.

Teacher experience

Like the Fed's, many studies have found that teaching experience has little impact on student test score gains. A common finding is that students perform somewhat better when teachers have at least two or three years experience, but research conflicts on whether experience matters beyond that point.

But the research is flawed, according to Andrew Wayne of SRI International and Peter Youngs of Stanford University, who analyzed research on the issue. They say researchers have not taken into account the impact of varying job markets. For example, where there are teacher shortages, schools may be forced to hire less desirable teachers to begin with. In hard economic times, they may enjoy a better selection.

such as family background. "Just looking at raw data is going to get you into tons of trouble," says Aaronson.

An evaluation must also ferret out those who game the system, he continues. In this study, researchers were able to confirm that teachers rarely encouraged low-achievers to stay home on test day. Aaronson says they still are looking for evidence that teachers may have helped students cheat. They are using a method developed by University of Chicago economist Steven Levitt, who found that cheating on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills is relatively rare in Chicago. (See *CATALYST*, September 2001.)

Nonetheless, Aaronson believes that student test score gains should be factored into teacher pay and tenure decisions because the same teachers tended to get the best results year after year. "In my mind, this is a no-brainer."

Allan Odden, a professor of educational administration at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, calls it impractical to judge teachers on test scores. "It's

Undergraduate school

Contrary to what the Fed concluded, several studies have found that teachers who attended prestigious colleges tend to produce higher student test score gains. This issue may have gone undetected in the Fed's study because Chicago teachers typically come from similar, middle-tier colleges like Northeastern Illinois University, explains G. Alfred Hess Jr. of Northwestern University. That would make it difficult to distinguish the impact of teachers with stronger undergraduate education from that of those with weaker undergraduate education, he says. His own 2001 study of Chicago high schools found that students with teachers from prestigious colleges performed slightly better on tests.

Standardized tests

Research consistently finds that students perform better with teachers who themselves score higher on tests of reading comprehension and vocabulary. Studies are mixed on whether scores on the basic

not only politically controversial, it's technically difficult—if not impossible," he says.

Among other complications, he explains, most districts would need to add standardized tests in subjects not traditionally tested—such as music, art and gym—or put those teachers on a separate pay scale.

Instead, Odden suggests retaining a traditional pay scale with extra raises for teachers who receive superior evaluations. Odden helped develop an evaluation system in Cincinnati that rated teachers on their instructional practices and was found to correlate strongly with student test-score gains. (See story on page 11.) Schools in Arlington, Va., have adopted a similar system, and other districts are considering it, he says.

"If you tie pay [only] to education and experience, you tell teachers, 'To get paid more you have to live long and take any kind of university credit hours you want,'" he adds. "You don't have to become a better teacher." ●

skills tests that typically are required for teacher licensure have any correlation with teacher quality. The Fed's study did not look at teachers' test scores.

Race

The Fed found that a teacher's race had no impact on student achievement—with one exception. African-American boys performed slightly better when the teacher was also African-American. The teacher's race had no effect on the performance of African-American girls.

Elsewhere, some studies have determined that children achieve better with teachers of the same race, while others have found no connection.

The disparities in the findings do not surprise Andrew Porter of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., who researches the achievement gap between black and white students. Studies on teachers' race and student achievement have been local rather than national, he explains, and what is true for one community may not be true for another.

Elizabeth Duffrin

New year, new feature

'Ask *CATALYST*' will debut in March.

Send us your questions about school issues, problems and programs. If your question is chosen for publication, we will track down the expert advice you need. For fax, email and regular mail addresses, see the masthead on page 3.

Updates

Board set to fill half of charter slots

by Sabrina Strand

The Board of Education is expected this month to approve operators for about half of the 13 additional charter schools it is authorized to open.

In April, the Illinois Legislature doubled Chicago's charter school quota, raising it to 30. The School Board quickly approved two new charters, Chicago Children's Choir Academy and KIPP Ascend Academy, leaving 13 to go.

Twenty-five community groups, non-profit organizations and educational institutions are in the running. But Greg Richmond, CPS chief officer of new school development, says only five to seven will be approved now.

Richmond and seven members of the board's 20-person charter evaluation team reviewed each of the applications, measuring it against a variety of criteria, including a strong curriculum plan and community support. Following the review, interviews were granted to 16 applicants—the board isn't saying which ones.

"Every year we've created charters, we've raised the bar," says John Ayers, executive director of Leadership for a Quality Education, a business organization that works with Chicago charters. "CPS has gotten smarter about what works as far as charters are concerned."

In addition to educational plans, the basic step of securing a workable building was essential, Richmond says.

"I can't think of a scenario where we would grant a charter to someone without a building," Richmond says. "It's hard to evaluate other parts of an application without that core element in place."

But as Ayers points out, finding a quality building is a challenge. While bigger charters have the ability to pay brokers to find acceptable sites for them, smaller community groups often have to

settle for options like former parochial schools that are old and in disrepair.

Applicants also need to show that they have a realistic plan for budgeting and finance, Richmond says.

"The truth is that good charter schools have to raise a lot of money," says Allison Jack, an educational consultant who worked on several of the applicants' proposals. "But they shouldn't be judged solely on the depth of their pockets."

Jack says funds typically can be obtained more easily once a school has proven its worth, and that applicants "should be judged based on their potential to accumulate funds, not just on the funds they've already secured."

Richmond agrees, but notes that it takes a healthy combination of vision and practicality to ensure a successful school. "It's important to have lofty aspirations to inspire the board and community, but it's just as important to have the practical, day-to-day considerations outlined," he says.

The following examples indicate the variety of applicants.

YMCA

Several observers single out the YMCA as one of the strongest applicants; the organization is the largest YMCA affiliation in the country and has an annual budget of \$90 million.

However, the YMCA has no educators on its staff. As a result, it has opted for an extra year of planning, with the goal of opening in fall 2005, says Pat Welborn, the organization's interim director for charter schools.

Welborn says she doesn't think the YMCA's selection is "a slam dunk. The competition is going to be very serious." The group's proposal spells out a curriculum focused on arts integration and rigorous academics.

Namaste

The brainchild of two Teach for America educators who met in 1993 in Houston, Namaste is the Hindi greeting that means "my inner light salutes your inner light." Based on the theory that a healthy body paves the way for a healthy mind, Namaste would aim to teach students about nutrition and physical fitness, as well as provide them with a rigorous academic curriculum.

"Poor nutrition and lack of physical exercise are major barriers for inner-city kids," says Allison Slade, a dual language teacher at Oak Terrace Elementary in north suburban Highwood. "They lead to poor concentration in the classroom and poor health." Slade developed the concept with Katherine Graves, a master's degree candidate at the Harvard University Graduate School of Education.

Namaste would provide breakfast and lunch to students, as well as an hour of physical education every day.

Entrepreneurship Center

Herb Gordon, a retired businessman who has been a consultant to CPS for the past 10 years, is the lead organizer for this academy, which would seek to prepare high school students for the work world.

Students would graduate with real work experiences and the ability to envision and run a small business, Gordon says. The curriculum would be based on both Illinois' academic standards as well as the standards from the National Business Education Association. The curriculum would include three years of entrepreneurship courses.

WebExtra: Go to www.catalyst-chicago.org for a list of all charter school applicants.

Gates small schools

CPS to approve one proposal, delay a second for Flower High

by Maureen Kelleher

A proposal to open a small high school named in memory of a local civil rights activist is expected to be the first to get a green light under an initiative that calls for 12 such schools to open over the next four years.

If approved, the Al Raby School for Community and Environment would open next fall in the building that once housed Lucy Flower High School in East Garfield Park.

However, members of the advisory panel that gave the thumbs up to Raby clashed over whether it should recommend another proposal to fill the second new school slot in the Flower facility.

The community needs to serve more neighborhood kids, says Curlee Reed, an area resident and member of the Flower Transition Advisory Council. "I vehemently oppose the decision," he says. "It shouldn't even have been an issue whether one or two schools would go in. We had already decided on two schools."

In August, CPS issued a request for proposals for one or two small high schools to open at Flower next fall. The project would be the first funded under a \$7.6 million grant the district received



At the Small Schools Expo held at Whitney Young in November, parent LaShonda Curry (left) and students from Woodlawn Elementary learn about new small schools at Flower High from transition team members Bridget Howleit (in white) and Ida Chester (right).

in the spring from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The executive committee of the Chicago High School Redesign Initiative, which oversees distribution of the Gates grants, is expected to make a decision about Raby on Dec. 10.

Members of the council—consisting of community residents, CPS parents and Ald. Ed Smith—agreed that Raby had the

most solid proposal of all six applicants. However, some council members wanted to recommend another proposal that others said lacked a budget plan.

"I would much rather see us go in with one school that I think could get ready in six months," says one advisory panel member who requested anonymity. "There's a feeling, though, among some of the community folks, that they've been railroaded."

Council member Mildred Wiley of Bethel New Life says the group learned a lesson in the process. The next time they solicit proposals for Flower, the panel will set benchmarks to inform the community about the proposal process and offer more technical assistance to applicants.

The council plans to meet again in January to set a timeline for the second round of proposals. Another round of proposals will be solicited and considered for a fall 2005 opening at DuSable High School, which this year did not accept freshmen.

Al Raby School for Community and Environment

Planners of the Raby School envision combining environmental studies with community organizing, in the spirit of civil rights activist Al Raby, who died in 1988.

The idea was originally pitched to South Shore High School, where members of the planning team currently work. But South Shore—already the site for four small high schools funded under another Gates grant—did not have space to accommodate Raby.

Backers of the Raby school shifted their sights when Flower became available, and have already secured partnership agreements with the Garfield Park Conservatory, Bethel New Life and the Center for Neighborhood Technology.

A potential snag in choosing a principal has yet to be worked out. South Shore teacher Janice Jackson, the group's choice, has administrator credentials, but has not been approved as a principal by CPS. Although a plan to have her serve as interim principal with a mentor is pending, interviews with other candidates will begin in this month.

For more information call Janice Jackson at South Shore High School, (773) 535-6180.

Intern Sabrina Strand contributed to this report.

CPS eyes new dropout calculation

CPS is re-examining how it counts and reports high school dropouts in response to a recent analysis of state data that shows more kids are leaving and the rate is growing.

The analysis, released by a grassroots community organization in West Town, found that 17.6 percent of CPS high school students dropped out in 2002. CPS reports a lower rate—14.4 percent—in figures it provided to the Illinois state report card. (Figures for 2003 are not yet available.)

The CPS rate is lower because it does not include students who drop out of 27 district-run alternative schools, including programs for teen parents and incarcerated youth, both of whom drop out of school at higher rates. Other districts also exclude such schools in calculating dropout rates because the state report card permits them to do so.

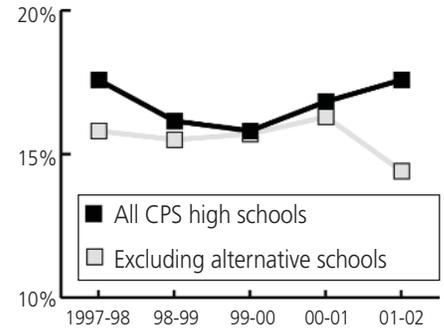
However, Bill Leavy of the Greater West Town Development Project argues

Top five

Communities with the highest number of unemployed, out-of-school youth age 16 to 19.

	# Kids 16-19	Unemployed & out of school	
		#	%
Little Village	7,216	2,013	28
Austin	7,412	1,293	17
Humboldt Park	5,087	1,253	25
Chicago Lawn	4,233	898	21
New City	3,501	851	24

Annual dropout rates



SOURCES: Alternative Schools Network, Greater West Town Development Project

that to be accurate, dropout rates should include figures from every school, including those that enroll high-risk students. “Do you want to see the whole picture or just the part of the picture they want you to see?” he asks. “We can’t take children off the books

and hide the results.”

CPS enrolls more students in alternative schools than any other district in the state. One alternative school, Nancy B. Jefferson School for youth in the Cook County Juvenile Detention Center, serves over 7,000 students a year.

New bill would require schools to re-enroll dropouts

Last month, state Sen. Miguel del Valle introduced a bill that would prohibit high schools from permanently dropping chronic truants from their rolls.

Under the proposed law, chronic truants between the ages of 16 and 19 who are failing could be dropped from school attendance rolls for only one semester. Schools would then be required to re-admit those students, or so-called pushouts, if they choose to return.

Current law permits schools to drop truant students over age 16 who would be unable to earn enough credits to graduate by the time they turn 21. The law also requires schools to offer such students “due process as required in cases of expulsion.” However, this provision is largely ignored.

The bill also would mandate that schools provide support services such as tutoring and counseling to students prior

to dismissing them, and track the academic progress of dropped students if they are re-admitted.

Some principals argue that schools are already making substantive efforts to keep students in school. A staff of six works the phones in the attendance office at Robeson High in Englewood, “begging and preaching the importance of education” to parents and students, says Principal James Breashears. “We are hustling and expending tremendous resources trying to keep kids in school.”

Breashears says older students with few credits would be better served in alternative or evening programs, and high school staff would have more time to focus on preventing younger students from dropping out.

Community groups who support the pushout bill agree that meeting the needs of older dropouts is a challenge, but argue that many high schools make

little effort to retain chronic truants. This fall, Parents United for Responsible Education helped as many as a dozen students re-enroll in schools that had pushed them out.

Juliann Salinas, an organizer at Greater West Town, which runs an alternative high school for returning dropouts, says students who are pushed out have nowhere to turn. The bill would “put a little more accountability on the principals and the teachers. You can’t just hand [students] walking papers and say bye-bye,” she says.

Advocates do not expect legislators to take immediate action on the bill, which was introduced in the fall veto session. A coalition of community groups is convening to lobby lawmakers and push CPS to make policy changes that would reduce pushouts and expand dropout recovery programs.

Maureen Kelleher

Dan Bugler, chief officer of research, evaluation and accountability, estimates up to half of the detention center students are mistakenly coded as dropouts rather than as transfers to other correctional facilities outside Chicago. "We need to dig into the recordkeeping system in the jail school," he says. Besides recordkeeping, CPS is planning to use social service agencies to beef up dropout recovery efforts and reduce truancy.

The analysis also found that African American males enrolled in CPS high schools are more likely to drop out (25.8 percent) than any other group, a finding that goes against a national trend that shows Latinos' dropout rates are highest.

In October, another local group, the Alternative Schools Network, released a study that echoes the magnitude of the Chicago dropout problem. An analysis of data from the 2000 U.S. Census and recent population surveys found Chicago had the second-highest number (97,000) of out-of-school and jobless youth ages 16-24 in the nation. Close to half of them are high school dropouts.

Maureen Kelleher

Letters

Principal takes exception to editorial

This past summer I facilitated all my new hires to participate in the summer orientation afforded Lawndale community schools based on the anticipated school needs. The first day of school began with full staff participation in developing our mission and vision statements and case studies from the perspective of a new teacher for the entire learning community during our professional development activities. On the second day of school, each new hire was introduced, not only to their mentors, but also their lifeline, which is an additional support teacher within the school. The third day of professional development was facilitated by Jan Schmidt, a behavioral specialist from Children's Memorial Hospital on effective classroom management techniques.

Due to technical difficulties we were unable to access the Golden Teacher's program via the computer. However, Valeria Davis, Golden Teachers facilitator, assured us she would input the data according to my assistant principal, Shirley Dillard.

I strongly take exception to you slan-

dering my name and the May Community Academy learning environment. I realize my students are reluctant learners and May Academy is a very challenging learning environment, however, much effort and concern is given to making this a better place for all the members in this learning environment. I am in support of doing everything possible to facilitate successful experiences of my new hires. This is the reason why an internal support exists and is in place at May Community Academy. Unfortunately, sometimes this is just simply not enough!

*Sandra McCann-Beavers
Principal, May Elementary*

Editor's response: The point of my editorial, "Mentor, principal support are keys to keeping new teachers" (November 2003), is that the principal is one of the most important factors in retaining new teachers, and that CPS should make it easier for principals to support new teachers and then hold them accountable for doing so.

CTU sampler

Below are key provisions of the new Chicago Teachers Union contract, which runs through June 30, 2007. It was approved Nov. 18 by a vote of 15,104 to 12,599. The 55 percent approval rate reflected an earlier vote in the House of Delegates. Both the House and the full membership had rejected the first tentative settlement by a ratio of 3 to 2. (Go to www.catalyst-chicago.org for the full list.)

Salaries

- All members will get 4 percent cost-of-living raises in each of the four years.
- Teachers with 13-17 years of service will get one extra sick day each year (equivalent to a half-percent raise each year).
- Teachers with 18+ years of service will receive two extra sick days each year (equivalent to a 1 percent raise each year).
- Each year, educational service personnel (e.g. school clerks) will receive a \$225 pensionable bonus.

Work day and year

- Seven fewer work days in exchange for 15 minutes added to the school day, with eight going to instruction and seven banked for professional development.
- Bereavement leaves will cover loss of grandparents and domestic partners.

Insurance

- For two base plans, employee contributions will be frozen for the life of the contract at 1.3 percent of salary for single coverage, 1.5 percent for couples and 1.8 percent for families. Increased costs for other plans will kick in next school year.
- Increases in co-pays ranging from \$5 to \$20.
- New vision plan will pay 100 percent after \$20 co-pay per annual visit; discount on eyewear.

Pension and retirement

- Accelerated payment of 45 accumulated sick days prior to retirement to boost pension benefits; remaining sick days in employee bank will be available to eligible employees for cash out upon retire-

ment. ... This is a voluntary program. Prior notice is required only for those who wish to utilize this benefit.

Working conditions

- Elementary teachers will be guaranteed a duty-free, self-directed fourth morning prep period.
- Union delegates and LSC reps will receive duty-free prep periods.
- High school advisory period will be suspended for the remainder of this school year. Each school will develop its own student development program.
- A panel in each region will monitor and enforce class size limits.
- \$2 million to reduce class size in identified kindergartens and 1st grades.

Jobs

- Job sharing will be allowed in up to 500 positions.
- Certified full-time-basis substitutes filling vacancies will be appointed and placed on tenure track effective July 1, 2004.

Santee Blakey

AT CLARK STREET **Avis LaVelle**, a seven-year member of the Chicago Board of Education and currently its vice president, has resigned to become a commissioner on the Chicago Cable Commission, pending approval by the Chicago City Council. A replacement has not been named. ... **Joe McCord**, former manager of community relations for the Chicago Park District, is now a citywide administrator for the Department of Local School Council Relations, formerly known as the Office of School & Community Relations; he replaces **Erika Delariva**, who is now office administrator for the Department of Math & Science.

MOVING IN/ON **John Easton**, executive director of the Consortium on Chicago School Research, has been appointed to a four-year term on the National Assessment Governing Board, which creates policies for the National Assessment of Educational Progress, also known as "the Nation's Report Card." ... **Jackie Gallagher**, former principal lobbyist for the Chicago Teachers Union, was appointed chair of the Illinois Labor Relations Board, replacing **Manny Hoffman**, who retired. Her position at the

CTU has been filled by **John Ostenburg**, editor of the Chicago Union Teacher. ... **Brenda Holmes**, a former special assistant to the state superintendent of education, has been appointed the first-ever deputy chief of staff for education under Gov. Blagojevich. She will advise the governor on education funding and policy issues, as well as work closely with educators to develop and promote the administration's education agenda. ...

Beverly LaCoste, former principal at Kenwood Academy, has been named executive coordinator for a new group of seven schools in the 4th Ward. LaCoste will work under Area 15 Instructional Officer Virginia Vaske, who oversees all but one of the group's schools, to improve the schools' academics and community relations. ... **Terry Mazany**, director and senior program officer for the Chicago Community Trust's education initiative, was promoted to the newly created position of chief operating officer; a replacement has not been named. ... **Randi Starr**, executive director of The McDougal Family Foundation, will leave at the end of this year; a replacement has not been named.

PRINCIPAL CONTRACTS The following interim principals have been awarded contracts: **Therese Connell**, Hale; **Loretta Dent**, Overton; **Marilyn LeBoy**, Ebinger; **Rita Ortiz**, Irving.

Principals whose contracts have been renewed: **David Dalton**, Grimes; **Suzanne L. Dunaway**, Andersen; **Gerard A. Gliege**, Sawyer.

Principal retirements: **Richard Kerr**, Nash; **Enid Collins**, a former social worker at the school, is interim principal.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION Lt. Gov. **Pat Quinn** plans to seek legislative approval of a constitutional amendment next spring that would double the income tax on Illinois' richest residents, in part to raise money for schools. To get on the November ballot, the proposal would need 60 percent approval from both the House and the Senate. The tax, a 3 percent surcharge on individuals making over \$250,000 a year, would generate an estimated \$1.2 billion, half of which would go toward public education, according to Quinn.

Sabrina Strand

New year, new look Watch for a new and improved CATALYST in 2004



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