

Researched proposal essay on education reform



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Researched Proposal Essay on Education Reform Name: Course: Tutor:

College: Date: Ensuring Every Child has a Caring, Competent and Qualified

Teacher Introduction Every year when the schools close in September, the question on every parent's mind is whether the teacher teaching their child is competent, whether they will inspire them or whether they shall concentrate on their individual needs.

The question whether teachers help students in developing the necessary basic skills, think and solve problems and have a good knowledge of what they teach and their students, is important. This is because in the hands of the teacher is where every parent entrusts their children. Though much progress has been made in answering the above stated questions, more work is needed in the improvement of the education sector in America. More parents are required to demand that their children are handled by competent teachers and educationists. Business leaders need to demand the investment in teacher development by schools and show them an example by how they invest in their employees. The law and policy makers need to make the quality of teaching and the recruitment of competent teachers a first priority in their legislations (Thomas, 2002). Proposal's Justification This proposal is relevant due to the importance of education not only at an individual level but also for the nation as a whole. If the teaching standards remain unchecked, then the quality of education is adversely affected, resulting in a situation where the nation becomes undereducated.

This results in a workforce that cannot handle its affairs appropriately or effectively. Counterarguments may assert that the form of education provided aids in developing the student to become self-reliant. However, it is

important to note that without a steady framework of analysis, there is no way to ensure that this is indeed the case. An analysis of the teaching standards in America is therefore necessary. Discussion The teaching standards in America require revision as this would show a sign of progress.

The problems with the teaching profession in America include standards that are meant to ensure that teachers have a sound knowledge of the subjects they teach. The performance of the children in America's academic institutes depends on the teachers and instructors. The content they teach these young minds is what is etched in their minds and what forms a foundation for their future lives. Elementary and early childhood education is very important in determining the future of the child in terms of academics.

This is because, how a child's mind is molded and shaped is how it has been programmed to grow for the rest of their life. Therefore, it is crucial that the instructors that handle the children when they are in this stage of their life are highly competent for the future of America and its children. Another problem with the teaching profession in America is in the standards that are meant to ensure that teachers actually know how to teach these subjects.

There are various different subjects in the American class curriculums and each subject has different ways and rubrics of how it should be instructed. These strategies and methods are very important in the instructing of children, as each subject requires care for the student to get its concept. It is also important for the instructors to have a knowledge and understanding of how the children learn. This is for the importance of knowing how to handle different children depending on the condition of the child.

For instance, there are children who are fast learners and those who require repetitive instruction for them to grasp a concept. These children are usually in the same class with no possible factor of differentiating one from the other. Therefore, the teacher has to have sound knowledge of how to teach in order for both groups of children to understand the concept.

It is important for the teacher to know what a student does when they are encountering difficulty in understanding and how to handle such a student. As there are students who learn easily and those with special needs, the teachers need to be well versed with sound teaching skills to cater for all classes of students (Shukla, 2004). Raising new standards for qualification for teachers alternatively raises the quality of teacher preparation that is required. There is a huge problem in this field as this acts as a disadvantage to the children in several ways. One, school districts keep on hiring teachers who are unprepared for the job. Moreover, the districts hire teachers and assign them to areas that are beyond or outside their expertise.

Another major problem arises due to this because, as the country is trying to staff the nation's schools with competent teachers, the other non-competent ones leave their classrooms in large numbers. This means that they are encountering difficult conditions and very few gestures from the government to show that they support them. Moreover, these classrooms are left unattended meaning that the children are left to suffer. The remuneration system for the teachers is also a severe problem that inhibits the acquisition of competent teachers in the American schools.

Most qualified teachers seek job opportunities in the affluent cities and towns. This is to the extent that, different cities or schools have long waiting lists of teachers wishing to join their school. On the other hand, in the rural areas, the schools, due to poor resource allocation by the government, have inadequate competent staff, poor working conditions and difficulties in teacher recruitment.

This eventually causes the schools to hire under qualified and under prepared staff to teach in their classrooms. The state governments take the wrong move and encourage under qualified teachers by lowering the standards for entry instead of improving the incentives and the packages they offer to attract competent workmanship in their schools (Minaya-Rowe, 2002). This brings this discussion to another question as to whether America can raise the standards for teachers and still have enough of them for all the schools.

The other question is whether the raising of teacher's standards shall create a shortfall of teachers or serve as an encouragement for the teachers to practice their profession diligently and remain in teaching. The demand for teachers shall continue to grow over the next five years, no doubt. This is because there is increased enrollment of students due to increased birthrates and the immigration of foreigners into America. Moreover, the retirements and staff turnover for the young American teachers is high leading to a constant growth in demand for teachers. This shortage serves as an artificial one as America produces more teachers than are required in. The United States produces a surplus in teachers every year producing double the amount of teachers required in a year.

The real problem is with the distribution of these teachers to where they are needed. These problems in distribution create shortfalls in specific locations and states. For instance, the shortages occur in the sense that, a state prepares very few teachers, and at the same time has a rapid student enrollment scheme.

When this is coupled with high teacher turnover rates and the reduced cross-state licensing, it creates a teacher shortage in the state. In some states, shortages are created by their own agencies where they have a bureaucratic method of hiring that discourage qualified teachers, lack of other policies regarding salaries and pensions and hiring of less qualified teachers who cost less. Real shortages in teachers include in teachers who require specific skills like math teachers, bilingual teachers and special education teachers. Another great problem in America's education system is in the variations in standards that different states have. The licensing requirements and the education level requirements differ according to the different states.

Some states require high standards that involve the attainment of a major in the specific subject and intensive tutor training of about fifteen weeks. Other states require a few educational courses and about five weeks of student teaching to qualify. For instance, in Minnesota or Wisconsin a teacher requires substantial and rigorous training for them to qualify. In Louisiana a teacher does not require having any major in the teaching subjects they are going to teach (Lucas, 1999). In addition to the difference in the standards, the difference in their enforcement is also great. In some states, candidates are hired without qualifying while in others it is very strict that a candidate should have completed a high level of education. In some states, hiring

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teachers with emergency licenses is allowed while in others, without a legal license, it would be impossible to get employment.

Every category of teacher education, employment and practice there are very substantial differences in the policies and practices in different American states. These differences in strategies and practice greatly influence what students learn. There are solutions to the problems that are facing American schools and the quality of education that is being channeled to the students.

Teachers' standards should be raised while at the same time equalizing their remuneration plans. This works in the sense that, as the teaching standards are raised an equal and significant raise in the corresponding salary package is also incorporated. For instance, the strategies employed in Connecticut where they increased the salaries as per the level of qualification for the teachers, raised the enrollment of teachers to the extent of having surpluses and the education levels for Connecticut schoolchildren improved greatly. Their performance as a state in academics increased from the twentieth position to the top position in the year 1986. The government could also introduce reciprocity arrangements in licenses across states. This helps in the sense that, in states with surpluses in competent staff, such as Maine, Connecticut, Minnesota, and Iowa, teachers with licenses from these states should be allowed to move to other states that have shortfalls. While here, they could be allowed to practice in the schools.

This move is greatly encourages by the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) where the body has a general assessment

for teachers all over the country and creates standards that allow teachers to have portable licenses that are valid all over the country. This is because thousands of teachers are not hired in the states where they are trained to teach and therefore stay unemployed until they get an opening (Gorard, See & Smith, 2006). The entrants and immigrants from other countries could also be allowed to teach in American schools. This could be allowed by making them undergo a National Board Certification examination that would gauge if they were competent or not. This would mimic the board certification for engineers and architects. This would only be granted to only highly accomplished instructors who have proved to be competent.

This policy could help the national labor market for teachers by increasing the number of available and competent teachers for employment. The government could also create national initiatives that allow for recruitment of teachers and streamline the recruitment procedures. The move could also develop an online information technology platform that would help the teachers in the recruitment exercise. These moves would be very useful in reaching the teachers who are not interested in staying in the locations where they teach and for managing their application in a timely and efficient manner. The online information would enable teachers select where they want to teach and how they get the employment there (Degazon-Johnson, 2010). Implementation of scholarship programs to high performing candidates would also help a great deal in the creation of competent teaching staff. This program would for instance work like the North Carolina Teaching Fellows program, which fully pays the education fees for hundreds of high performing students.

Implementation of such a program would mean that the shortages in teachers and the hiring of under qualified teachers would become outdated. This is because the program would supply minority teachers and teachers in shortage fields like sciences and mathematics. This approach is known for quick results and teachers from here would be posted as soon as they were through with their training. The expansion of the training of teachers in fields where high needs are would also be a good move in the ensuring that American children are getting quality education. In America today, the funding of teaching projects is not driven by the requirement of specific teachers in specific fields. There are surpluses in teachers for elementary education, social studies and languages in many states. However, in areas like math, special education and physical sciences there is a great need. If the government focuses on funding training in high need areas like these, there would be no shortages in teachers.

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