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Executive Summary of

The Distribution of Teachers in North Carolina, 2009-2013

Research Brief

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THE DISTRIBUTION OF TEACHERS IN NORTH CAROLINA, 2009-2013: RESEARCH BRIEF

Executive Summary

Research shows that teachers influence student learning more than any other school-based resource. This research brief addresses the question of whether this important resource is equitably distributed across districts (local education agencies), schools, and classrooms in North Carolina. The concern is that students in high-poverty and low-achieving schools and classrooms may not be getting the most effective teachers. North Carolina's Race to the Top (RttT) plan included several specific interventions that were designed to improve the effectiveness of teachers and reduce inequities in students' access to high value-added teachers. This report provides a follow-up to the baseline report of teacher distribution¹ and assesses changes in the distribution of high value-added teachers that may have resulted from implementation of the state's RttT plan. The findings of this report could help inform policy initiatives—such as relocation bonuses and strategic staffing practices—that attempt to address inequities in access to high value-added teachers.

Do the percentages of teachers in each of the three teacher value-added ratings (Exceeded, Met, Did Not Meet growth standards) vary by on-the-job experience, grade level, or subject taught?

- Novice teachers have lower value-added ratings than more experienced teachers.
- Value-added ratings vary by grade level and subject. Fewer reading and English teachers and fewer 5th grade teachers in reading and mathematics were identified as exceeding and not meeting growth expectations than teachers in other grades and subjects.

Do students assigned to teachers with high past value-added scores show higher test score growth?

- Students assigned to high value-added teachers tend to show substantially more achievement growth than do students assigned to low value-added teachers, but the size of the gain varies by subject. The impact of teacher skill is weaker on reading and English than on mathematics and science test results (End-of-Grade [EOG] mathematics, EOG science, Algebra I End-of-Course [EOC], and Biology EOC).

Do low value-added teachers tend to teach in high-poverty classrooms and schools and low-achieving classrooms and schools? If so, has this tendency weakened over time?

- High-poverty schools and low-achieving schools tend to have lower mean teacher value-added scores, on average.
- We also find some evidence of inequity in the distribution of teachers between classrooms *within* schools, but this phenomenon is substantially weaker than the differences *between* schools.

¹ http://cerenc.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Baseline-TQ-Report_FINAL_12-05-2013.pdf

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- There is suggestive evidence that inequitable access to high value-added teachers declined by 2013.

Are differences in teacher value-added across districts relatively stable, or can we detect change over time?

- Between 2009 and 2012, districts became more similar in their average teacher value-added scores. In 2013, however, variation between districts widened.

Are there differences across districts in the equity of the distribution of teachers across schools within districts?

- There was a slight increase in the variation in mean teacher value-added scores between schools within districts. Two large districts, however, reduced the differences across schools in teacher value-added.

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