

Recruiting, Training and Supporting a 21st Century Teaching Profession

By Susan K. Sclafani, Ph.D., Chartwell Education Group, for Asia Society

In the 21st Century, the recruitment, training and support of public school teachers represent changes from tradition in many countries. Whereas teaching had been viewed as a highly respected profession with a prescribed preparation period and a stable, long career path, teaching is now facing challenges on many fronts.

Teachers are no longer expected to simply deliver information to the next generation. The role of the teacher is changing to meet the expectations of a global society for well-prepared knowledge workers who can synthesize information, identify and solve problems, create the next innovations in their given fields, work in teams, and make positive contributions to civil society. Teachers must be committed to assisting all children to meet these standards as there is little room in a competitive knowledge society for the uneducated.

Teachers are no longer among the best educated and highest paid professionals in their communities. Multinational corporations and entrepreneurs have created wealth in new areas. And well-educated young people look to careers in the private sector for esteem and success.

Teachers are no longer highly respected in many countries by students, parents and the community. In many western countries, they are seen as bureaucrats maintaining an old system that is not responsive to the needs of today's students. The factory model of delivering lessons in an agrarian-based school-day and school-year schedule no longer appeals to urban students who are "wired"--connected to technology the rest of the time.

As the OECD report *Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers* put it: "The teaching profession must adapt a great deal so that it can act in a constructive manner within a fast-changing society if it is to retain the confidence of society."¹

Highly centralized educational systems are starting to decentralize some authority and responsibilities to the local level. The PISA analysis done by Andreas Schleicher at OECD suggests that the best-performing nations have moved to school-based decision-making within a framework of centralized standards and equitable distribution of resources. In some countries, the hiring of teachers has moved from the Ministry to the prefecture or municipality and in others from there to the school. However, in most countries, the central government still dictates the requirements individuals must meet to be selected as teachers.

There are two variations on the recruitment and selection process: some countries exercise selectivity by limiting the number of people who are accepted into a teacher training program, while others allow many students to participate in teacher training and then use an

¹ OECD. 2005. *Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers*. Paris. P.27.

examination system to select the top candidates based first on an examination score and then on an interview and a practical exercise of teaching prowess. Korea uses a combination of the two as it limits the number of places and exercises selectivity for entry into teacher preparation programs for students to prepare to become elementary school teachers, while it sets no limits for students interested in becoming secondary school teachers: all can enter a preparation program though only 20 percent find employment as secondary school teachers. Many are concerned that this will lead the best-prepared secondary students to select a field other than education to raise the likelihood of getting a job.²

The two methods of selectivity have different recruitment strategies. Limiting access to preparation programs is one form of recruitment as students seek to enter more selective and prestigious programs. In addition, the limitations on entry are correlated to expected vacancies so graduating students hold a high expectation of finding a position. Since prefectures or municipalities make the selection, the student is guaranteed a job, but not a job in a specific school. In many eastern countries, such as Japan, Korea and Singapore, teachers are rotated to different schools every five to seven years, so the assignment to a specific school is not considered a critical issue. However, the other side of the coin is that there is little competition among candidates for job positions. In Korea, elementary schools have barely as many candidates as there are teaching vacancies.³

In systems where the supply of teachers is far greater than the demand as in Japan and secondary schools in Korea, the issue of selection is more important than that of recruitment as generally understood in western countries where demand far outstrips supply. In Japan, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology requires the prefectural boards of education to place a great focus on the job interview in addition to the written appointment examination. This is to ensure that the teachers exhibit the dimensions of character and mission that are important to effective teaching.⁴

In Korea, a similar interest has developed to go beyond the employment examination score to include interviews and practical demonstrations of teaching expertise. However, there have been a number of criticisms of the “formalistic” nature of the interview, necessitated by the large number of candidates for each position. The government allows input from current teachers and parents and is considering external evaluation of the instructional skills of teacher candidates.⁵

Western countries have faced a more difficult task in recruiting teachers because teachers are not generally held in as high esteem there as in eastern nations. Teacher education programs draw their students more often from the lower third of the college class than any other segment. While student populations have become more diverse over the last twenty years, the teacher candidate pool has not. This has led to a number of different recruitment practices.

² Kim, E. & Han Y. (2002). *Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers: Background report for Korea*. Korean Educational Development Institute. Seoul. p.41.

³ Ibid. p.65

⁴ Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. (2002) *Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers: Japanese country background report*. Elementary and Secondary Education Division. Tokyo p.48.

⁵ Op.Cit. p. 69.

In New South Wales in Australia, prospective teachers of mathematics, science and technology can receive scholarship awards of A\$10,000 in their senior year to commit to teach for two years in a remote area. In Western Australia, the Catholic Education Office actively recruits teacher candidates with a serious calling to service to teach children in remote areas. The Kimberly Calling program provides a strong induction and cultural awareness program and requires a time commitment.

In Denmark teachers receive special allowances, including free accommodations and home computers, for their willingness to teach in remote areas. In France, the Ministry has offered special job placements for beginning teachers who have taken specialized courses in school improvement to go as a five-person team to priority schools with economically disadvantaged students.

In the United Kingdom, prospective teachers in hard-to-fill subject areas can receive up to £5,000 for preparing to teach in those areas. In addition, these new teachers receive a “Golden Hello” one-time stipend of £4,000 upon successfully completing their first year of teaching. In the United States, the federal government offers loan forgiveness of up to \$17,500 for teachers in areas of mathematics, science, special education. However, this amount does not attract students from the best universities who may have loans of much higher amounts and look for higher paying professions as a result. Many school districts offer small incentive pay stipends to recruit teachers in areas of mathematics, science, special education. However, these stipends have not had a large impact.⁶

As a different strategy, states in the United States have developed alternative certification programs (ACP) which allow college students to pursue a major in a specific subject area and then upon graduation participate in an ACP. The programs offer a summer course session followed by on-the-job training during the first two years of teaching. Teachers are fully certified at the end of the second year. This has enabled school districts to recruit not only people with better academic preparation, but has also encouraged mid-career professionals to change careers and enter teaching. Such a program in New York City has greatly reduced the vacancy problem in inner city schools.

Teacher Training

Induction Programs

Many countries face an attrition rate of teachers during their first five years of service that ranges up to fifty percent in some countries like the United States. Induction programs provide a transition from supportive teacher pre-service education to the formal teaching job by providing new teachers additional training, mentoring by an experienced teacher, and/or release time for observing exemplary teachers. Some countries have established formal induction programs for all new teachers, such as the one-year programs of England and Wales, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Northern Ireland and Switzerland. In other countries, induction programs are left to the discretion of individual states or local schools. In Israel, Japan, Northern Ireland and Switzerland, the induction program is carried out with the collaboration of the teacher preparation program and the school. In the other

⁶ Sclafani, S. & Tucker, M. (2006). *Teacher and Principal Compensation: An international review*. Center for American Progress, Washington, DC. Pp.57-60.

countries, it is the school which is responsible although the components may be established for them by the national government.⁷

Korea and Switzerland provide good examples of different induction programs. Korea offers a two-week pre-employment training program that focuses on classroom management, counseling students, and teacher tasks through the use of case studies and practical tasks. For the first six months of teaching, the new teacher receives “instructional guidance and evaluation, classroom supervision and life guidance, student specialty and aptitude guidance, and supervision of clerical work.”⁸ The work is led by the principal, assistant principal and mentor teachers.

Switzerland offers a two-year induction program that is a required component of certification. There are three levels of support provided: Mentor/mentee learning; courses for new teachers through the teacher education program, some of which are required, while others are voluntary; and voluntary consultations with new teachers by the Department of Education in the area. These consultations are requested by new teachers who prefer the confidentiality of talking with someone external to the school. New teachers have the choice of teaching 50%, 80% or 100% of a normal teaching load, though their salaries are commensurate with the percentage. There is no evidence to date of the effectiveness of the induction program in Switzerland.⁹

In-service Training

In most countries, teachers have access to professional development during their tenure in the teaching profession. OECD found three main strategies for encouraging participation in professional development: entitlement to a specific number of hours or courses as stipulated in a collective bargaining agreement or contract; incentive-based with participation in professional development tied to teacher evaluation results or related to salary increases or opportunities to take on new roles; and the third is school based, linking the school improvement plan to the professional development program of the whole school or certain segments of the faculty of the school.¹⁰

The challenge with professional development is the lack of coherence in most programs. Teachers pick and choose from a menu of options that may be only tangentially connected to the needs of their students. The second and third strategies of connecting the professional development sessions to either the teacher’s individual needs or the students’ needs as described in the school improvement plan can help, but only if the providers of professional development have aligned their offerings to those needs. Singapore is one of the few countries that has achieved this level of coherence. Japan has developed a system for evaluating the performance of teachers after ten years on the job and identifying the specific

⁷ OECD. 2005. *Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers*. Paris. p.119.

⁸ Kim, E. & Han Y. (2002). *Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers: Background report for Korea*. Korean Educational Development Institute. Seoul. p.58.

⁹ Notes from the OECD/Aspen Institute Seminar on Teacher Quality, October 17, 2006. Rockefeller Foundation, Bellagio, Italy

¹⁰ OECD. 2005. *Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers*. Paris. p.136.

development needs that will be part of each teacher's individual training plan.¹¹ The actual process must be developed and implemented in each prefecture.

The Korean Country Background report also focuses on the need for coherence. It suggests that the first promotion step requires professional development that basically repeats what was done in the pre-service curriculum. It also notes that over 1300 training institutes provide professional development. The report suggests that there should be a clear delineation between what is offered to prepare new teachers to be able to continue to learn, while inservice education should focus on "continuous and broad opportunities for continuing education throughout the lifespan."¹²

The conclusion of the OECD report was

Effective professional development is ongoing, includes training, practice and feedback, and provides adequate time and follow-up support. Successful programmes involve teachers in learning activities that are similar to ones they will use with their students, and encourage the development of teachers' learning communities. A key strategy involves finding ways for teachers to share their expertise and experience more systematically. There is growing interest in ways to build cumulative knowledge across the profession, for example by strengthening connections between research and practice and encouraging schools to develop as learning organizations.¹³

Supporting Teachers

Teacher Compensation

In a 2005 study comparing education indicators in the United States and other G-8 countries, the National Center for Education Statistics found that the average entry-level salary of American primary school teachers was higher (\$28,681 in 2001 in Purchasing Power Parity Dollars, (\$ PPP)) than every other country besides Germany (\$38,412).¹⁴ But Purchasing Power Parity is a tool used to enable economists to compare what salaries will actually buy in different countries. So it is no surprise that teachers' salaries will buy more than teachers' salaries will buy elsewhere, because American salaries generally are very high, relative to other countries.

The real issue in teaching is not how large a basket of groceries a teacher in one country can buy with her paycheck relative to teachers in some other country, but rather how a teachers'

¹¹ Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. (2002) *Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers: Japanese country background report*. Elementary and Secondary Education Division. Tokyo p.102

¹² Kim, E. & Han Y. (2002). *Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers: Background report for Korea*. Korean Educational Development Institute. Seoul. p.60.

¹³ OECD. 2005. *Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers*. Paris. p.136.

¹⁴ The study compared education indicators in the following countries: England, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Scotland, and the United States
Sen, A., Partelow, L.A. & Miller, D.C. "Comparative Indicators of Education in the United States and Other G8 Countries: 2004," (NCES 2005-021). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2004, p. 36. <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2005/2005021.pdf>

salary in one country compares with other professionals' salaries in the same country. That, not purchasing power parity, is the basis on which young people actually base their career choices. Here we find a very different picture.

One way to make valid comparisons among countries on this point is to look at how the pay in a particular profession compares to the gross domestic product of a country on a per capita basis. In this case, we would compare the value of an average teacher's pay to the average value of what every worker in that country produces. Then we can compare what members of other professions make compared to the same index and so compare professions, without having to take the value of different currencies into account. When we compare teachers' compensation against GDP per capita, the average starting salary of American teachers with the minimum teaching qualifications was the lowest among all of the G-8 countries.

One must also consider the levels of salary increases during a career. The study also revealed that, after accumulating fifteen years of experience, teachers in each country earned a salary that exceeded their respective country's GDP per capita. In the United States, the ratio of average teacher salary to GDP per capita after fifteen years of experience (1.19) surpassed those of France (1.14) and Italy (1.07), but compared quite unfavorably with Scotland (1.42), England (1.46), Japan (1.63) and Germany (1.75). Beginning teachers in Japan receive the lowest average salary of the group (both in Purchasing Power Parity Dollars, (\$ PPP) and as a ratio of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita), but after fifteen years of teaching experience they rank second behind only Germany in each category. In Thailand, an experienced teacher who has attained the maximum salary earns almost five times as much as a teacher at the beginning of the career. Other countries with large increases in salaries during service include Brazil, France, Indonesia, Jordan, the Republic of Korea and Portugal. However, the number of years required to reach the top of the salary scale from the starting salary varies considerably, from eight years in Australia, Denmark and New Zealand to 35 years or more in Hungary, Italy, Jordan, the Republic of Korea, Spain and Thailand.¹⁵

Countries have responded to specific needs for recruitment or retention by targeting salary increases at groups of teachers with very different amounts of experience. For example, Australia, Denmark, England, Finland, Norway and Scotland focused their increases on starting salaries to encourage teachers to enter the field. Austria, Japan and Portugal focused on mid-career teachers to retain them, and Greece, Hungary and New Zealand rewarded experienced teachers with the largest increases.¹⁶

Any comparison of teacher compensation levels across countries must also take into account the disparities that exist in terms of the number of hours that teachers are working in a year. The National Center for Education Statistics study reveals that primary and secondary teachers in the United States, on average, work substantially more hours per year than their counterparts in the other countries.¹⁷ As we will see in a moment, though, official hours

¹⁵ UNESCO, *Education For All Global Monitoring Report*, Paris, p. 37 http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=35962&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

¹⁶ OECD Report. "Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers," OECD, Paris, 2005, p. 77.

¹⁷ Sen, A., Partelow, L.A. & Miller, D.C. "Comparative Indicators of Education in the United States and Other G8 Countries: 2004," (NCES 2005-021). U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2004, p. 54.

required do not necessarily reflect the hours that teachers are actually expected to be in school. This is partly a reflection of cultural norms and traditions.

Average teacher compensation and time spent in the classroom vary widely across countries. Relative to GDP per capita, teachers in some countries receive on average more than twice as much as teachers in other countries. The same disparity holds true for average annual teaching hours throughout OECD countries. While some countries regulate hours in the classroom such as Japan and Germany, many countries focus instead on the total number of hours teachers spend in school, which is not the same thing. For example, teachers in Japan spend about 535 hours per year in the classroom, whereas teachers in the United States and Mexico average more than 1,000 hours of teacher time each year.¹⁸ That does not mean that Japanese teachers spend less time at school than American teachers; in fact, most Japanese teachers are at school from before 8:00 am and leave after 5:00 pm. However, it is their official teaching hours that are required in their contracts.

A chart from UNESCO provides a comparison of working hours per week in 2001.¹⁹ It demonstrates the variety of systems that have been established, from those which specify total time and the place where it is to be completed to those that simply designate the hours a teacher must be at school conducting classes. Total time varies from 27.5 hours for teachers in Scotland to 44 hours per week in Korea and Norway. However, only Australia, England, Greece, Ireland, Scotland and Spain require that all work is done at the school site. For countries that require that teachers are at school only for the hours taught, the work week varies from 14 hours per week in Turkey to 22 hours in Ireland. Other countries in this category are Belgium (French), Finland, France, and Portugal. In New Zealand and the United States, hours are set at the local school level.

However, Siniscalco pointed out that one cannot look only at salary levels or numbers of hours worked as these provide an incomplete picture. There are four factors that make up the salary and working conditions: the number of teacher hours worked per year, the size of classes, the number of classes taught each day, and the number of hours of instruction each student is expected to receive in a year. It is the way in which countries combine these four factors that determines the costs per student of education, but, more importantly, that creates the working conditions that attract or deter teacher recruitment and retention.

For example, though the Japanese teacher is expected to put in much less time actually teaching, that teacher is expected to be in school at least as long as the American teacher. The real difference is in class size. Class sizes in Japan are much larger than in the United States, though teacher-student ratios are very similar. The Japanese teacher has chosen to trade larger class sizes for more prep time, more time planning and diagnosing student problems with other teachers, and more time to give students individual attention outside of regular class time. This shows quite concretely why it is important to look at all these variables together.

¹⁸ *Education at a Glance*, OECD Indicators, OECD Publishing, Paris, 2005, p. 58.

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/20/25/35345692.pdf>

¹⁹ Siniscalco, M. "A Statistical Profile of the Teaching Profession," International Labor Organization, UNESCO, Geneva, 2002, p. 31.

New Zealand and Korea spend similar amounts per student per year, approximately US\$1700, using PPP, which is slightly above average for the countries in Siniscalco's study. However, their choices are again very different. New Zealand teachers work more than 900 hours per year, but have below average class sizes, while Korea chose to have its teachers work less than 600 hours per year, and made up for that cost by raising class size ranges to from 37-50 students, much above the study country average of 24.

Siniscalco also considered countries with different costs per student: Switzerland at US\$4,315, as compared to Austria at US\$2,857, and Denmark at US\$2,814. Switzerland balances its high salaries with a high teaching load of 860 hours per year, while Austria and Denmark have lower salaries but also lower teacher loads, 658 and 644 hours per year. All three have relatively small class sizes. On the other hand, the Philippines keeps costs per student down while providing the highest number of student hours of instruction in her study. It does this by combining higher teacher work hours with larger than average class sizes and lower than average salaries. This of course exacerbates the issue of working conditions.²⁰

The OECD study, "Teachers Matter," noted that reducing class size, while it may improve education for targeted groups of students, such as young children or disadvantaged students, is expensive and has not been proven to increase student achievement when class sizes were reduced across the board for all students. As the United States found in California, class-size reduction efforts may in fact reduce student learning when qualified teachers are not available to poor or urban districts. OECD suggested that it might be better to keep class sizes constant, raise teacher salaries, and increase the support staff available to assist teachers. It has found evidence that more OECD countries are raising salaries than reducing class sizes. However, some countries have teacher surpluses and average teacher salaries, and the study suggests that they would do well to reduce class sizes and bring more teachers into the schools.²¹

In addition to class size and the amount of time that teachers are expected to teach, there are other differences in working conditions that need to be taken into account when considering teachers' compensation. One of the most important is the difference in the duties teachers are expected to perform. The Eurydice database identifies the various duties required of teachers in Europe within the school day, week and year.²²

It shows that teachers in different countries are responsible for supervision between lessons; supervision after school; standing in for an absent colleagues; support for future teachers and new entrants; teamwork on the school plan, cross-curricular work or curriculum; teamwork on the internal evaluation of the school; or special cases. The most common duties across countries are supervision between lessons and teamwork on the school plan, cross-curricular work or curriculum.

²⁰ Siniscalco, M. T. "A Statistical Profile of the Teaching Profession," International Labor Organization, UNESCO, Geneva, 2002, pp.41-43.

²¹ OECD. "Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers," OECD, Paris, 2005, p.90.

²² European Commission. "The Teaching Profession in Europe: Profile, Trends and Concerns. Report III: Working Conditions and Pay, General Lower Secondary," Eurydice, Brussels, p.54.

Many OECD countries also provide additional salary for teachers. A chart was prepared by OECD in 2004 to summarize the various criteria,²³ including teaching conditions and responsibilities; teacher qualifications, training and performance; and demography.²⁴ Many countries are providing various forms of incentive compensation to attract competent teachers, in and out of shortage subjects, to schools serving low-income children and remote communities. They are trying loan forgiveness, signing bonuses and the full panoply of other such instruments. OECD noted, however, that most of the differences from average compensation reflect differences in qualifications, in school level (primary, lower secondary or upper secondary) and years of experience. The report also observed that the incentives provided are often not well targeted and are much smaller in relation to total compensation than is the case in the private sector, where they seem to work better. The report also points out there is little research evidence that incentive strategies of this sort and at this level work.²⁵

Comparisons of compensation systems may suggest ways to rethink current systems. However, it is critical to look at the details of the systems different countries have put in place to see what they hoped to accomplish.

²³ OECD. "Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers," OECD, Paris, 2005, p. 183.

²⁴ OECD. "Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers," OECD, Paris, 2005, p. 183.

²⁵ OECD Report: "Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers," OECD, Paris, 2005, p. 182.

Table 6.4 Adjustments to base salary for teachers in public institutions, 2002
Types of criteria to adjust base salary awarded to teachers in public institutions

	Criteria based on teaching conditions/responsibilities						Criteria related to teachers' qualifications, training and performance				Criteria based on demography	
	Management responsibilities in addition to teaching duties	Teaching more classes or hours than required by full-time contract	Special tasks (career guidance or counselling)	Teaching in a disadvantaged, remote or high-cost area (location allowance)	Special activities (sports and drama clubs, homework clubs, summer school)	Teaching students with special educational needs (in regular schools)	Teaching courses in a particular field	Holding an initial educational qualification higher than the minimum qualification required to enter the teaching profession	Outstanding performance in teaching	Successful completion of professional development activities	Family status (married, number of children)	Age (independent of years of teaching experience)
Australia	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Austria	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Belgium (Fl)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Belgium (Fr)	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Czech Republic	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Denmark	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
England	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Finland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
France	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Germany	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Greece	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Hungary	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Iceland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Ireland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Italy	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Japan	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Korea	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Mexico	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Netherlands	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
New Zealand	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Norway	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Portugal	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Scotland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Slovak Republic	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Spain	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Sweden	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Switzerland	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
Turkey	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	
United States	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	

Source: Derived from Table D3.2.a of OECD (2004a). See Annex 3 of OECD (2004a) for notes.