One Newark: In Pursuit of 100 Excellent Schools

Protecting our best teachers during a fiscal crisis.

February 2014

As we have shared with the community, to make good on our promise of 100 Excellent Schools, we must accomplish 7 ambitious goals:

1. Implement a common accountability framework
2. Maximize a universal enrollment system for families
3. Invest in 21st century learning environments
4. Consider quality along with years of service while making tough decisions about the size of our workforce
5. Support Newarkers who may be impacted by district transitions through education, training, and other supports
6. Ensure there are excellent schools and no vacant buildings in every ward
7. Grow capacity to innovate in order to meet diverse student needs

Families are "voting with their feet" in search of excellence. When they choose non-NPS options, money follows the student, causing budget strain.

NPS Budget, 2010-11 to 2016-17P
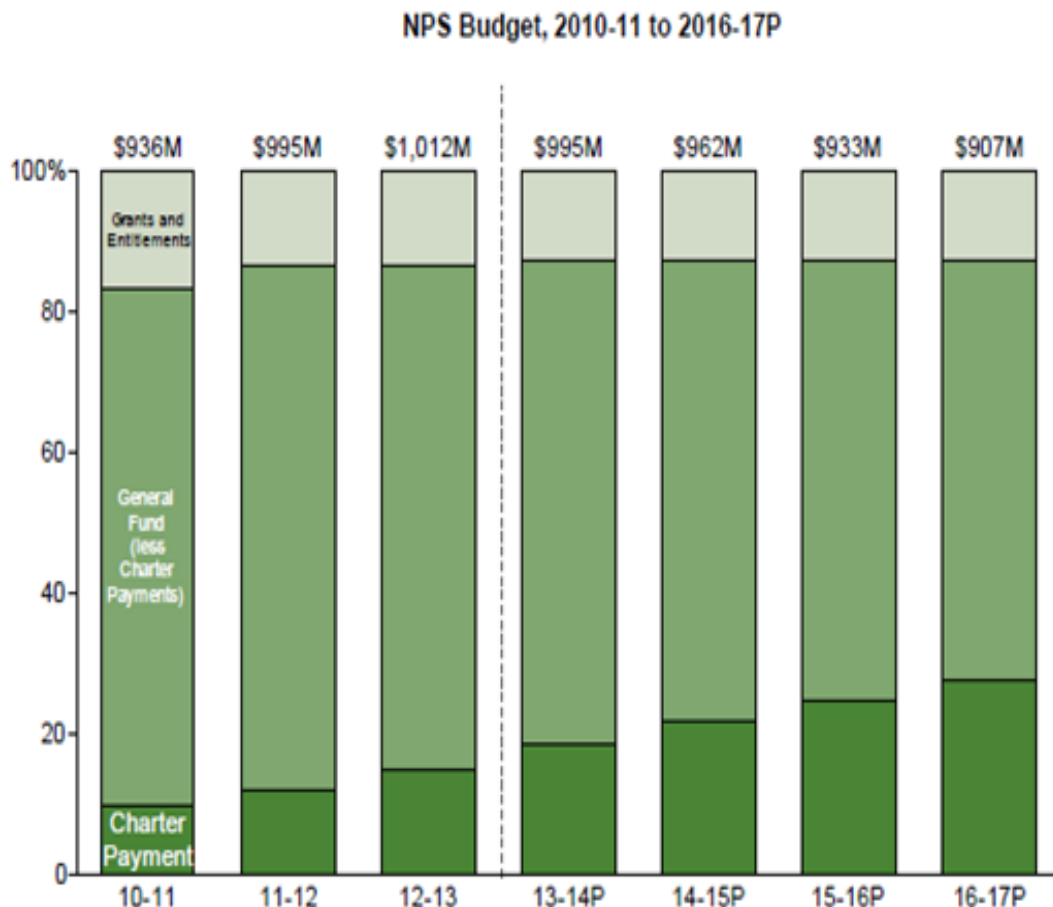
- As students leave, so does the funding

- By school year 2016-2017 alone, 36% of NPS' general fund will be charter payments

To address the budget crisis, we are faced with the tough fact that we will need to lay off teachers.

- NPS must close a $100 million budget gap in the next three years

- A large proportion of our budget is spent on school-based staff:

  - Teacher salaries and benefits make up more than 40% of the district's operating budget

  - Staff make up 95% of school-based budgets.

- Sustaining current staffing levels is impossible

  Because NPS will lose approximately 30% more of its students, unfortunately, we must reduce staff by a similar factor.

We know that when it comes to raising student achievement, <u>nothing matters more than the quality of the teacher</u>.

1 extra year of learning

	1 yr		2 yrs
Very good teacher			
Ineffective teacher			

"The students of an ineffective teacher learn an average of half a year's worth of material in one school year, while the students of a very good teacher learn 1.5 year's worth—a difference of a year's worth of learning in a single year."
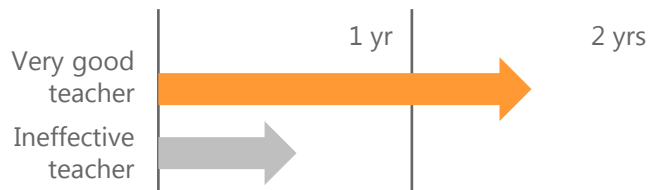
Gap-closing growth in 4 years

White students

Black students

"Having a top-quartile teacher rather than a bottom-quartile teacher four years in a row could be enough to close the black-white test score gap."
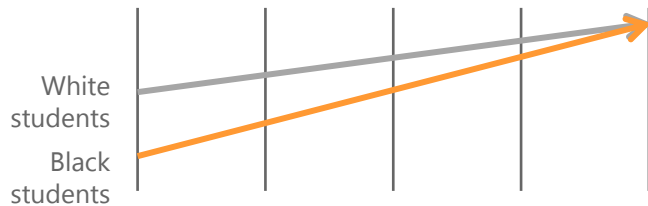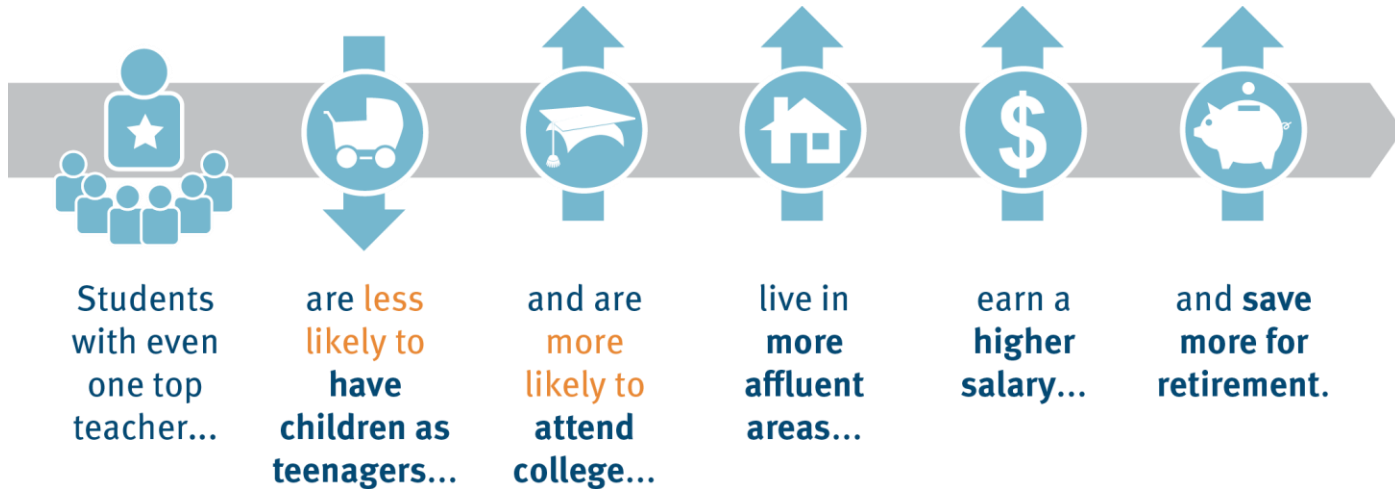
Sources: (1) ERIC HANUSHEK, NATIONAL CENTER FOR ANALYSIS OF LONGITUDINAL DATA IN EDUCATION RESEARCH (CALDER), THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF HIGHER TEACHER QUALITY 3-4 (2010) (working paper); ROBERT J. MARZANO, CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT THAT WORKS 1-3 (ASSOCIATION FOR SUPERVISION AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT) (2003) (citing SANDRA P. HORN, WILLIAM L. SANDERS & S. PAUL WRIGHT, *Teacher and Classroom Context Effects on Student Achievement: Implications for Teacher Evaluation*, 11 JOURNAL OF PERSONNEL EVALUATION IN EDUCATION 57, 63-64 (1997)); (2) ROBERT GORDON, THOMAS KANE & DOUGLAS STAIGER, THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION, IDENTIFYING EFFECTIVE TEACHERS USING PERFORMANCE ON THE JOB 8 (2006).

# Strong teachers have a life-long impact on their students.

Even one year with a highly effective teacher has a lifelong impact on students

Students with even one top teacher...

are less likely to **have children as teenagers...**

and are more likely to **attend college...**

live in **more affluent areas...**

earn a **higher salary...**

and **save more for retirement.**

Source: RAJ CHETTY, JOHN N. FRIEDMAN & JONAH E. ROCKOFF, NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH, THE LONG-TERM IMPACTS OF TEACHERS: TEACHER VALUE-ADDED AND STUDENT OUTCOMES IN ADULTHOOD 38-42 (2012) (working paper).

Years of experience can contribute to quality – but not always.

Most research suggests that improvements in teacher effectiveness level off after a teacher's first three years in the classroom.
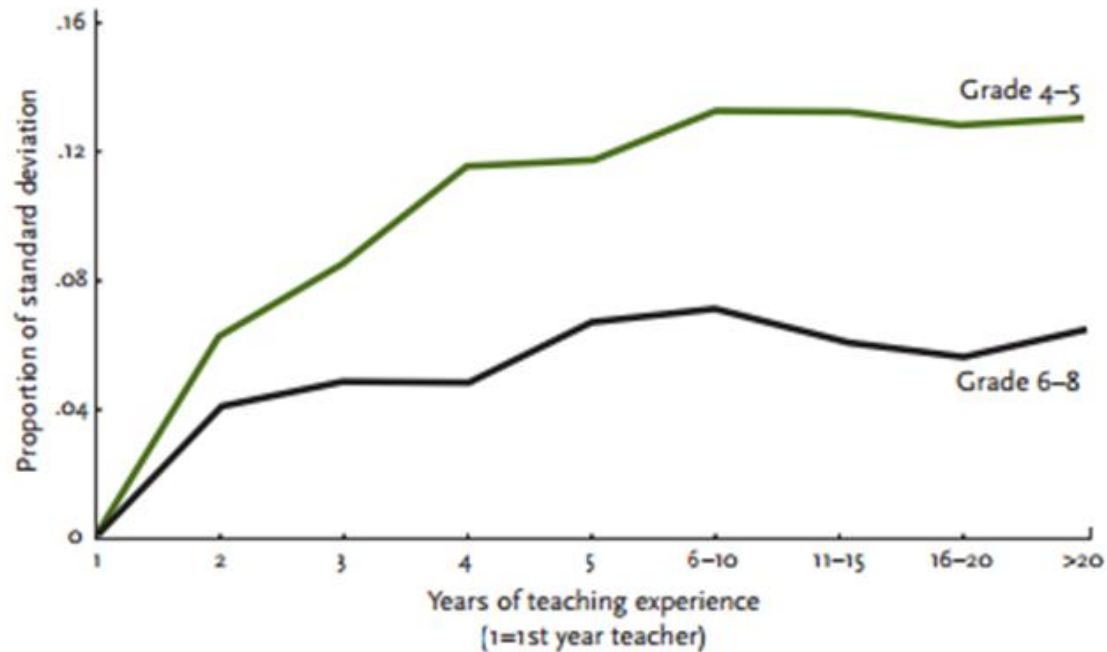

Improvements in math student achievement attributable to additional teacher experience

Sources: (1) DONALD J. BOYD, HAMILTON LANKFORD, SUSANNA LOEB, JONAH E. ROCKOFF, AND JAMES H. WYCKOFF, *The Narrowing Gap in New York City Teacher Qualifications and Its Implications for Student Achievement in High-Poverty Schools*, THE URBAN INSTITUTE AND NATIONAL CENTER FOR THE ANALYSIS OF LONGITUDINAL DATA IN EDUCATION RESEARCH (2007) (Working Paper); (2) LINDA DARLING-HAMMOND, TEACHER QUALITY AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: A REVIEW OF STATE POLICY EVIDENCE (Education Policy Analysis Archives 2000).

Great teachers are invaluable to students <u>but</u> teachers' job satisfaction, morale, and retention go down when they feel they have to teach alongside ineffective teachers

- High-performing teachers say that school conditions, <u>including the quality of their peers,</u> strongly influence their decision whether to remain teaching at a school or not.
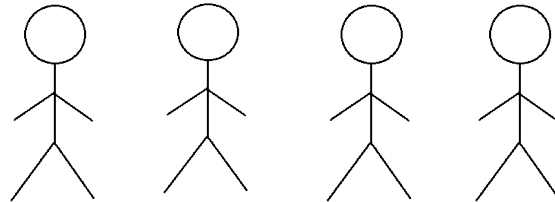
- Teachers have identified ineffective colleagues as one of the main challenges to great teaching even above concerns about school leadership, parent engagement and class size.

Sources: The Irreplaceables: Understanding the Real Retention Crisis in America's Urban Schools 18 TNTP (2012) and Perspectives of Irreplaceable Teachers: What America's Best Teachers Think about Teaching 10 TNTP (2013).

Current processes would force NPS to lay off teachers without any regard for teacher quality.

As we are faced with the reality of teacher layoffs, we have two choices:

Option #1: Implement quality-blind layoffs, considering only the number of years a teacher has taught. This means we would have to place teachers in classrooms even if they are ineffective and/or have not been chosen by school leaders.
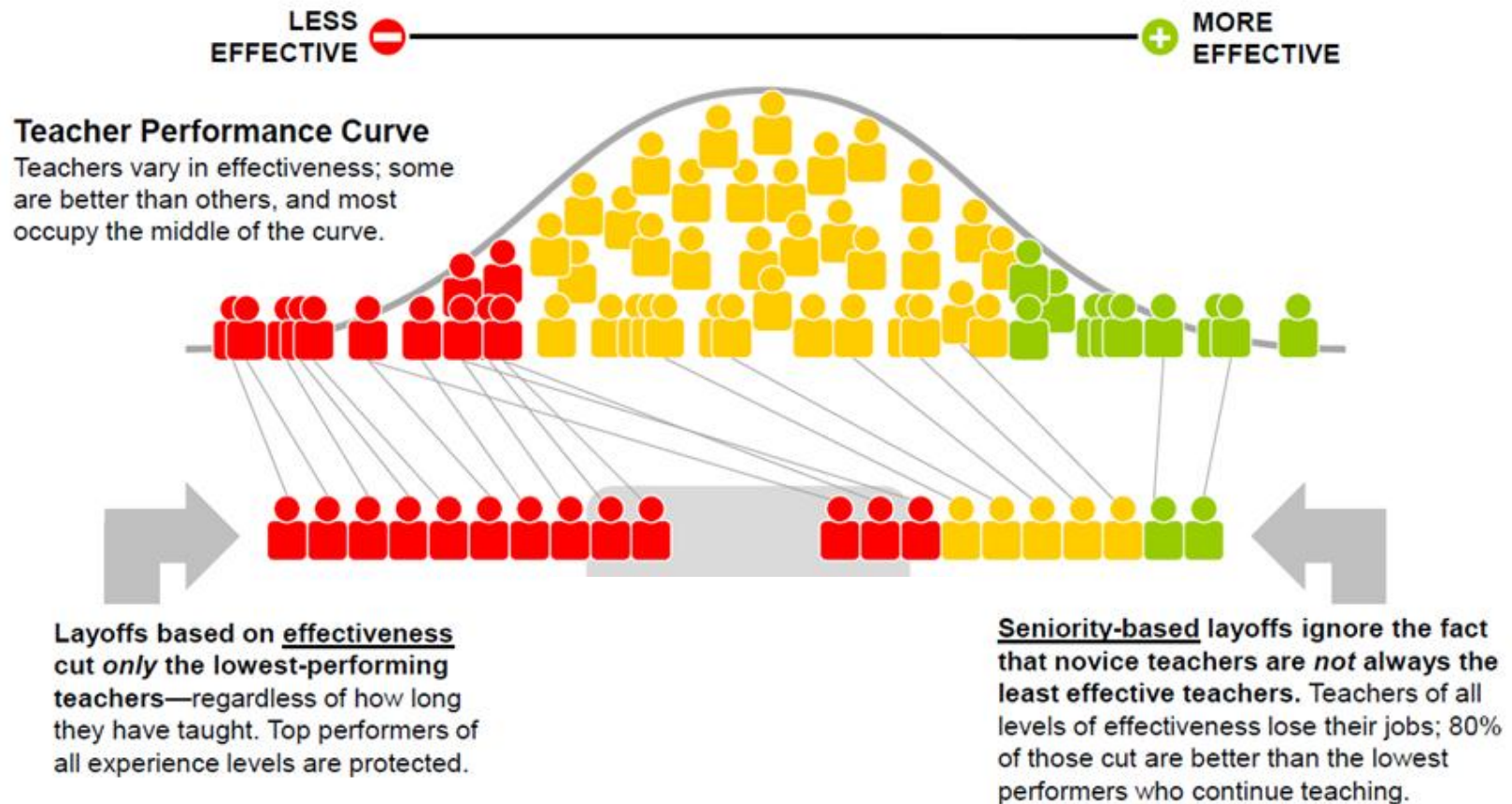
> **This would have a catastrophic impact on student achievement and the district's ability to be on path to excellence and retaining families.**

Option #2: Seek an equivalency allowing NPS to consider quality alongside seniority, thus implementing a performance-based layoff;

> **This would give NPS an opportunity to keep the best teachers and create a sustainable system of excellence.**

Quality-blind layoffs almost always result in worse teachers staying and better teachers leaving.

Teacher Performance Curve
Teachers vary in effectiveness; some are better than others, and most occupy the middle of the curve.

LESS EFFECTIVE — — MORE EFFECTIVE

Layoffs based on effectiveness cut *only* the lowest-performing teachers—regardless of how long they have taught. Top performers of all experience levels are protected.

Seniority-based layoffs ignore the fact that novice teachers are *not* always the least effective teachers. Teachers of all levels of effectiveness lose their jobs; 80% of those cut are better than the lowest performers who continue teaching.
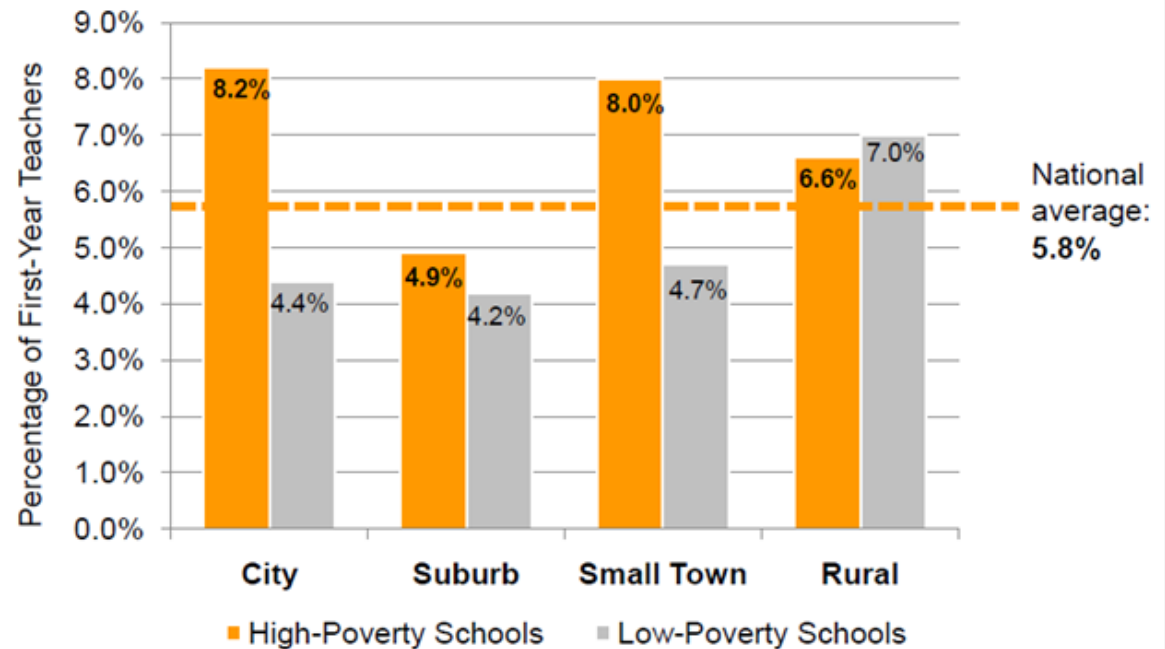
Sources: (1) Donald Boyd, Hamilton Lankford, Susanna Loeb & James Wyckoff, *Teacher Layoffs: An Empirical Illustration of Seniority v. Measures of Effectiveness*, 6 EDUC. FIN. AND POLICY 439, 444-447 (2011); (2) Dan Goldhaber and Roddy Theobold, THE URBAN INSTITUTE AND NATIONAL CENTER FOR THE ANALYSIS OF LONGITUDINAL DATA IN EDUCATION RESEARCH, ASSESSING THE DETERMINANTS AND IMPLICATIONS OF TEACHER LAYOFFS 29 (2010) (working paper).

Quality-blind layoffs are particularly hurtful to schools and students in need of the best teachers.

Schools serving high-poverty communities tend to have the highest rates of teacher turnover and the largest concentrations of novice teachers.

When layoffs must be decided by years of experience, the schools that bear the brunt of the cuts are those with the most new teachers. In some schools, entire academic departments may be wiped out.

**High-Poverty Schools Are More Likely to Have First-Year Teachers**

Percentage of First-Year Teachers

	High-Poverty Schools	Low-Poverty Schools
City	8.2%	4.4%
Suburb	4.9%	4.2%
Small Town	8.0%	4.7%
Rural	6.6%	7.0%

National average: 5.8%

■ High-Poverty Schools   ■ Low-Poverty Schools

25% When layoffs are based solely on seniority, the poorest schools see **25% more layoffs** than the wealthiest schools.

Sources: (1) SARAH ALMY & CHRISTINA THEOKAS, *Not Prepared for Class: High-Poverty Schools Continue to Have Fewer In-Field Teachers*, THE EDUCATION TRUST (2010); (2) CHRISTINA SEPE & MARGUERITE ROZA, T*he Disproportionate Impact of Seniority-Based Layoffs on Poor, Minority Students*, CENTER ON REINVENTING PUBLIC EDUCATION (2010).

Quality-blind layoffs would be detrimental to the students of Newark.

- Quality-blind layoffs would force us to cut hundreds more Effective and Highly Effective teachers that we could otherwise retain.

Teacher Ratings 2012-2013

Highly Effective: 11%
Effective: 69%
Partially Effective: 16%
Ineffective: 4%
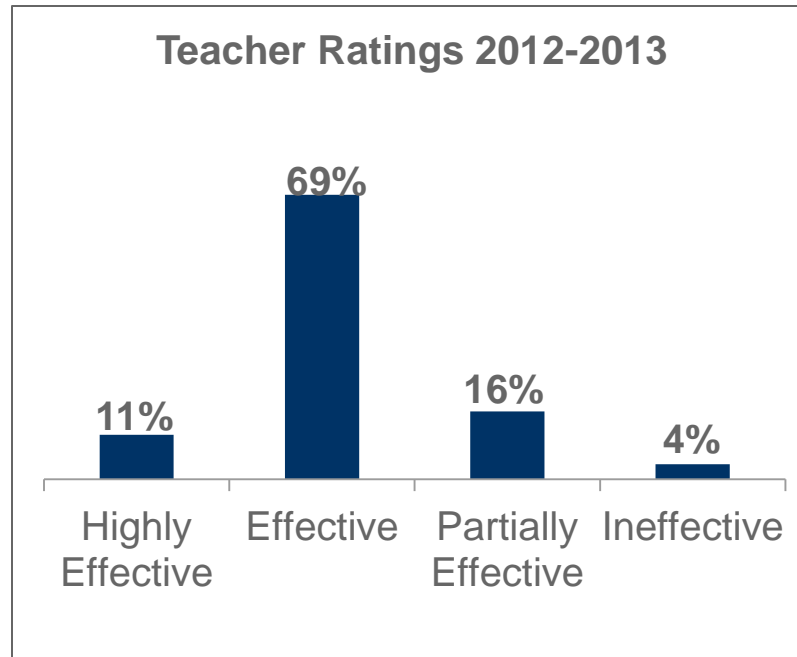
A performance-based system would allow us to consider quality alongside seniority in each subject area, thus retaining more of our best teachers.

- If granted, the equivalency would allow us to determine how many teacher we need by subject area, and then layoff the least effective first in order of seniority; the outcome would be dramatically better for students.

- Initial estimates:
  - Current, quality-blind layoff = 75% of teachers laid off are effective or highly effective.

  - Our proposed performance-based layoff = Only 35% of those laid off are effective; no highly effective teachers would be lost.

  - Current, quality-blind layoff = Only 4% of teachers laid off are ineffective, and only 28% of all ineffective teachers in the district are removed.

  - Our proposed performance-based layoff = 14% of teachers laid off are ineffective, and 98% of all ineffective teachers in the district would be removed.

Percent of Ineffective Teachers Removed

Performance-based	Quality-blind
98%	28%
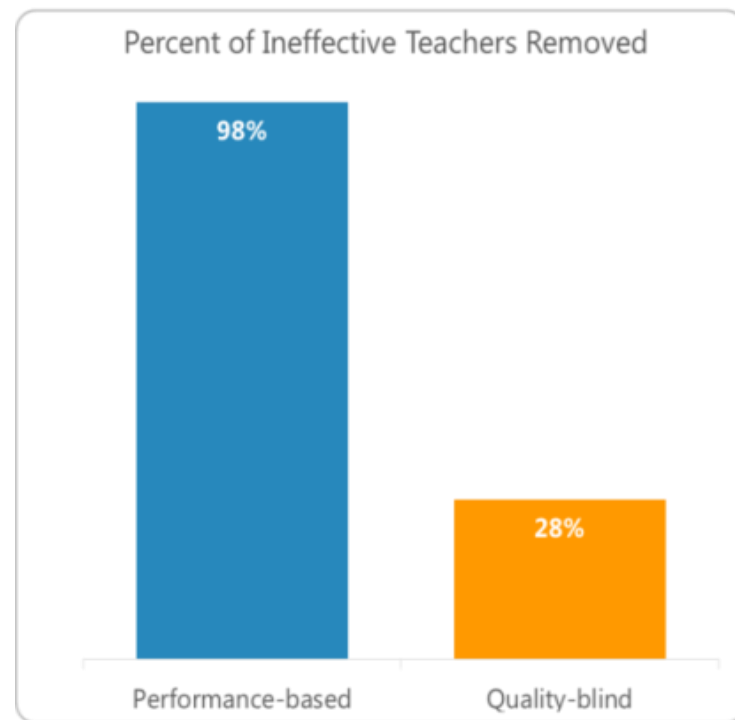
Performance-based layoffs would allow for a less drastic impact on Newark schools, especially those with the highest concentration of poverty.

- More schools would lose at least 20% of their Effective and Highly Effective teachers in a quality-blind layoff than under a performance-based layoff.

- The district's highest-poverty schools would lose almost twice as many effective and highly effective teachers under a quality-blind layoff as under a performance-based layoff.

A performance-based RIF protects more schools from losing disproportionate numbers of effective and highly effective teachers.

Quality-blind RIF

Performance-based RIF

62% (44 schools) lose 20% or more of their Effective or Highly Effective teachers.

15% (11 schools) lose 20% or more of their Effective or Highly Effective teachers.

According to research-based best practice, NPS implemented "mutual consent" to drive student achievement and teacher satisfaction which created an EWPS pool.

- Mutual consent is an open market hiring process to stop "force placing" and allow principals to pick their teams according to quality and fit

- This process is proven to drive student achievement *and teacher satisfaction*

- NPS has implemented mutual consent for the last 3 years

- Despite offering teachers supports to find the right match (e.g., online application process, hiring fairs, and workshops), many educators have not been hired for permanent positions

- Facing a decision to "force place" or fashion another solution, NPS created a pool of Educators Without Placement Sites (EWPS). EWPS still teach but are placed by the district

- The EWPS pool is expensive and will grow as we lose students unless NPS goes back to "forced placing"

25%

Quality matches make for more effective teachers.

- Teachers are more effective when they work in schools that are good fits—which is much more likely to happen under mutual consent staffing rules.

- Research has shown that **25% of teachers' effectiveness** in the classroom depends on the quality of the match with their school.

Source: C. Kirabo Jackson, *Worker Productivity, and Worker Mobility: Direct Evidence From Teachers*, Match Quality, (2010).

Performance-based layoffs could alleviate the costs of the EWPS pool now and moving forward.

- EWPS teachers are 6 times more likely to receive an Ineffective rating than teachers with full-time teaching placements.

- The vast majority of EWPS -- 79% of this year's 159 EWPS teachers – have been in the pool for two or three years

- Current, quality-blind layoff = Only 11% of the EWPS teachers are laid off

- Proposed, performance-based layoff = 5 times as many (53%) EWPS teachers laid-off and removed from the EWPS list

Percent of EWPS Teachers Removed

Performance-based	53%
Quality-blind	11%
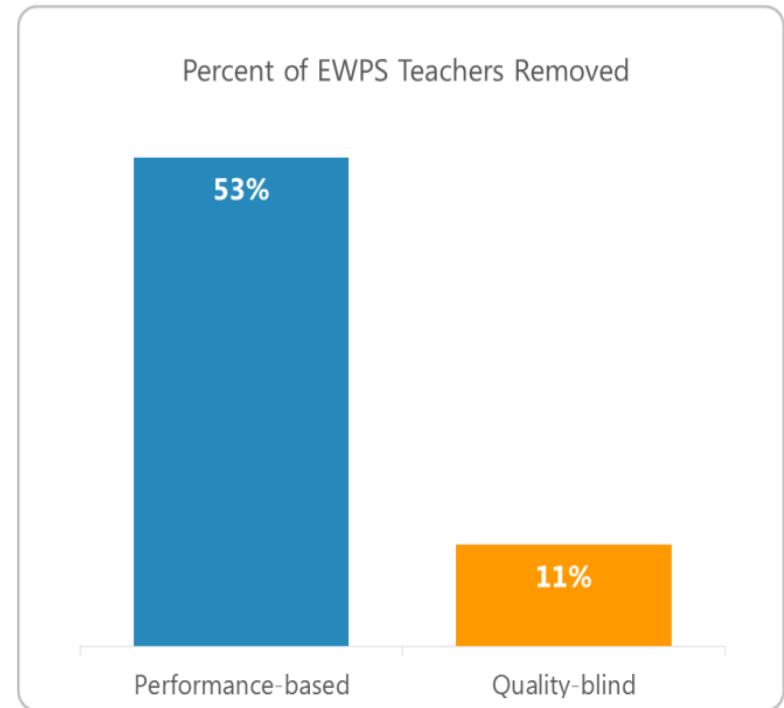
Quality-blind layoffs would force NPS to retain most of our ineffective EWPS teachers – now and as we lose students

The equivalency is the only way NPS can address its fiscal issues without sacrificing teacher quality – and the future of the district.

- Far fewer teachers will have two years of ineffective ratings (one combination ratings necessary to deny or revoke tenure under the TEACHNJ Act) than the number of layoffs we may need to make in order to balance our budget.

- Despite the reforms to streamline tenure revocation, the process is still too lengthy and expensive to address NPS's urgent fiscal issues – and ongoing challenges related to declining enrollment.
  - Each tenure case costs between $50K and $200K in legal fees -- even with the new legislation – for an average of $125K per case. Even if we weren't facing enrollment decline, the legal costs of exiting ineffective teachers would be around $20 million.

- Although they address different issues, the equivalency and TEACHNJ share a common purpose – to empower districts to consider teacher quality when making personnel decisions.

NPS must address its fiscal crisis while increasing teacher quality. The only way to do this is to be granted an equivalency to right size with quality alongside years of service in order to remain competitive and offer quality schooling options for all Newark families.