

The New Teacher Project's Model Staffing Initiatives help low-performing schools build strong instructional teams and open the school year fully staffed. TNTP gives principals the tools and support they need to hire top talent – a key to raising student achievement.

## The Problem: Inefficient Hiring Practices

For low-performing schools, effective teachers are critically important. Every new teacher hired represents an opportunity to strengthen a school and raise student achievement. Yet in school districts across the country, teacher hiring receives scant attention.

Hiring delays and inefficiencies drive away the strongest teacher candidates. As TNTP documented in its 2003 *Missed Opportunities* report, the most motivated candidates apply in early spring, but many urban districts don't hire until August. Frustrated by months in limbo, up to 58 percent of candidates withdraw, including those who are most qualified to teach in high-demand subject areas like math and science.

What's more, though building a strong, collaborative instructional team is central to any school leader's success, principals receive little formal training in teacher hiring at any point in their careers.

As a result, schools miss a critical opportunity to shape their teacher workforce and transform student outcomes. Hundreds of thousands of students begin school each year with unqualified temporary or substitute teachers every year, further disadvantaging those who need great teachers most.

## The Solution: Early, Strategic Hiring

*How* and *when* teachers are hired can have a dramatic impact on teacher quality. Through its Model Staffing Initiatives, TNTP helps historically struggling schools hire as early and effectively as possible.

TNTP's Model Staffing Initiatives provide intensive support to a district's hardest-to-staff schools, ensuring that the schools open each year fully staffed with excellent teachers.

In a TNTP study of hiring in four urban districts, **more than five applicants** applied for every open spot.

But **31-58%** of candidates withdrew from the hiring process in August.

And **50-70%** cited late hiring timelines as a major reason they found other jobs.

Source: *Missed Opportunities*, TNTP 2003.

"I can't imagine where our school would be without the support of TNTP... Their emphasis on finding a 'good fit' and developing a culture that supports staff has helped me think about how to induct and support teachers, which has definitely led toward better retention. In general, I'm finding that there is a better candidate pool out there, which of course helps us identify strong teachers who share our vision for student success." –Principal, San Francisco Unified School District



## How It Works: Four Core Strategies

1. **Direct priority applicants to target schools.** When it comes to identifying talent, TNTP puts struggling schools at the front of the line. Drawing from the district’s existing teacher applicant pool, TNTP staff prioritize and cultivate promising teacher applicants in shortage subject areas—including math, science and special education—and match the best with participating schools. Where necessary, TNTP also supplements the existing applicant pool through targeted teacher recruitment.
2. **Train principals in effective hiring.** TNTP gives school leaders the tools they need to make smart hiring decisions. Through an intensive workshop series, principals learn how to market their schools to prospective candidates, identify and select for desired teacher qualities, and develop and employ effective interviewing techniques.
3. **Provide personalized staffing assistance.** Principals inundated with daily demands can let hiring fall by the wayside. TNTP works side-by-side with school leaders to project vacancies, create strategic staffing plans and refer candidates, adding capacity and ensuring a constant focus on hiring.
4. **Analyze and address policy barriers.** Some hiring barriers lie outside schools’ control. TNTP works with its district partners to streamline staffing processes, secure earlier budgets, advance hiring timelines and give participating schools the flexibility to hire the teachers they need to improve student outcomes.

## The Results: Staffing Success

In 2009, TNTP provided intensive, targeted staffing support in eight school districts: Baltimore, Chicago, Denver, Milwaukee, Nashville, New Orleans, New York and San Francisco.

Across districts, 93 percent of principals agreed participation in the Model Staffing Initiatives increased their ability to staff their schools with high-quality teachers.

Overall, Model Staffing Initiatives filled 1,295 vacancies in 137 low-performing schools in 2009, giving an estimated 62,000 students a chance to learn from the best possible teacher...from day one.

### Patterson High School, Baltimore

In 2005, Patterson High School was one of Baltimore’s lowest-performing, losing one-quarter of its staff each year. More than **600 students lacked a qualified teacher** in a core subject area on the first day of school.

That year, TNTP’s Baltimore Model Staffing initiative began working with Principal Laura D’Anna, helping her develop a staffing plan, identify vacancies earlier, and assess potential teacher candidates.

By 2008, Patterson had opened for **three consecutive years fully staffed**. Teacher turnover declined dramatically, with the number of new vacancies down by 79 percent. Most importantly, **student passing rates** on key tests jumped from 7.5 to 33 percent, a promising initial improvement.