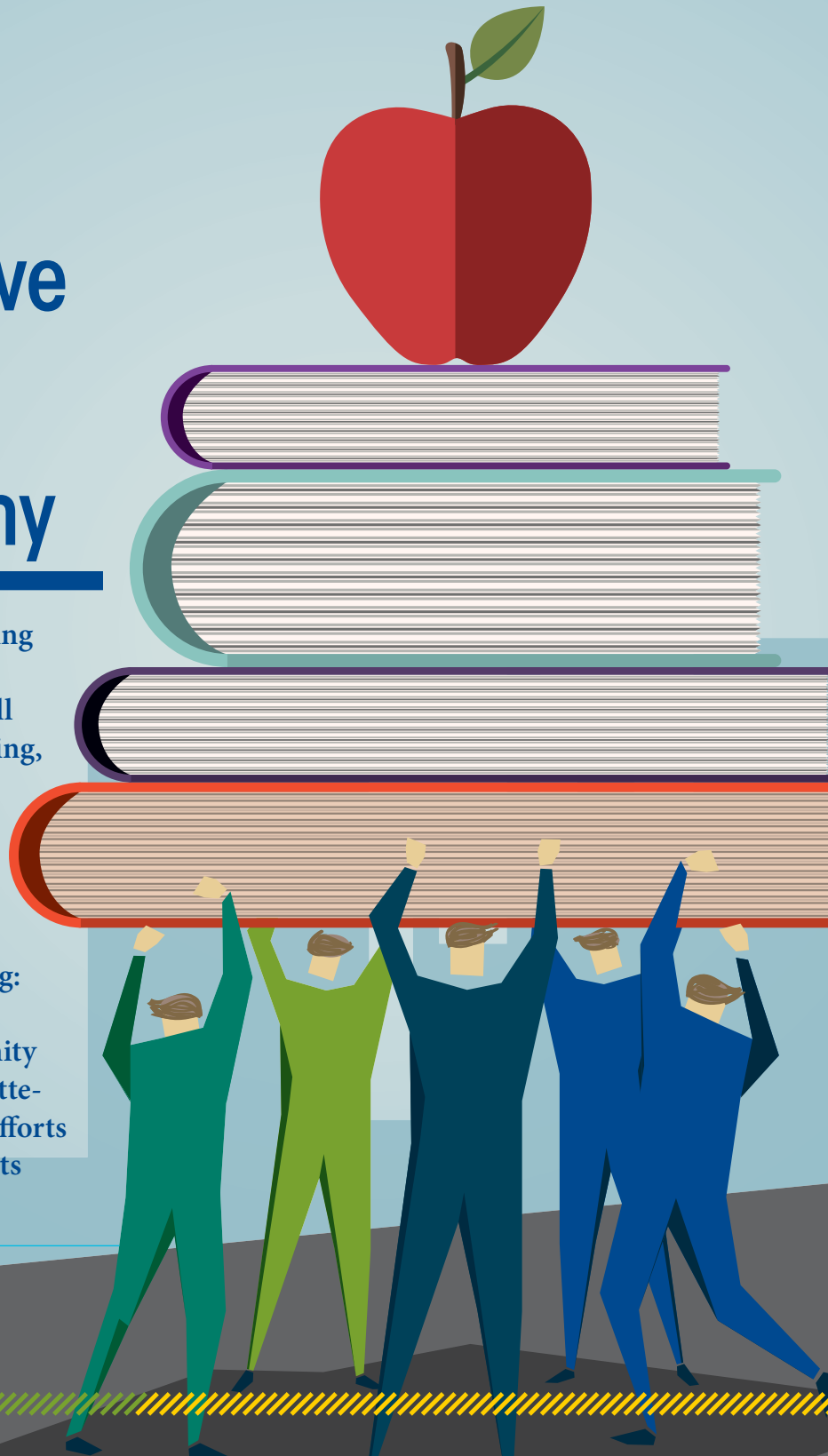


EDUCATION MATTERS

A publication of the Association of American Educators Foundation

How a State Could Achieve Major Gains in Learning, Pay, Economy

For several years, we've been asking teachers and districts to imagine schools and a profession where all teachers can improve their teaching, be rewarded for getting better, and reach more students with excellent instruction—by creating an Opportunity Culture for teachers and students. Districts are responding: As of spring 2014, four districts nationally are piloting Opportunity Culture models, and one, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, is taking its pilot efforts to scale based on recruiting results and demand from schools.



“Opportunity Culture models redesign jobs to extend the reach of excellent teachers to more students, for more pay, within budget—typically in collaborative teams on which all teachers can pursue instructional excellence together and are formally accountable for all of the students they serve.”

But what if a whole state reimaged the teaching profession and pursued an Opportunity Culture for all? What benefits might accrue for students, teachers, and the state as a whole?

Using North Carolina as an example for analysis, Public Impact ran the numbers—and the results weren’t small.

Opportunity Culture models redesign jobs to extend the reach of excellent teachers to more students, for more pay, within budget—typically in collaborative teams on which all teachers can pursue instructional excellence together and are formally accountable for all of the students they serve. They are designed to transform the traditional teaching environment and provide new career paths for teachers that allow them to advance their careers without leaving the classroom.

If three-fourths of North Carolina’s classrooms were to implement Opportunity Culture models over one generation of students—about sixteen years of implementation—we projected, using conservative assumptions, that:

- Students on average would gain 3.4 more years’ worth of learning than in a traditional school model in the K–12 years.
- Teachers leading teams would earn up to \$848,000 more in a thirty-five-year career, with considerably higher figures possible for large-span teacher-leader roles not included in this analysis.
- Teachers joining teams to extend their reach could earn approximately an additional \$240,000 over their careers.
- State income tax revenue would be up to \$700 million higher in present-value terms over sixteen years of implementation; increased corporate and sales tax revenues are not included.
- State domestic product would increase by \$4.6 billion to \$7.7 billion in present-value terms over the next sixteen years.





And that's just using current numbers for North Carolina, where pay is near the bottom nationally. Teachers leading teams in states with pay closer to the national average would earn up to \$1 million more in a thirty-five-year career. (Public Impact has separately suggested that a 10 percent average base pay increase is also needed for teachers in North Carolina.)

By putting excellent teachers and their teams in charge of more students learning, Opportunity Culture models are projected to produce learning gains that begin immediately and build over time. In a traditional classroom model, students have a one-in-four chance of having a highly effective teacher in any given year in a subject. In the Opportunity Culture models analyzed in the brief, excellent teachers are responsible for 33 percent to 500 percent more students, directly and via teaching teams, with no class-size increases.

Public Impact's analyses project that children would acquire more than three extra years' worth of learning in a K-12 career—which would translate into average lifetime earnings increases of \$100,000 to \$130,000 per student, according to research showing the link between student achievement and lifetime earnings potential.

For states, the student achievement gains build a twenty-first-century work force for new and expanding businesses.

Applying prior research findings about how gross domestic product increases with student achievement gains, the analyses show that if North Carolina began its implementation in 2015-16, the annual gross state increases through 2031 would have an estimated net present value of \$4.6 billion to \$7.7 billion.

The fiscal impact for states is projected to accumulate significantly over time as the increase in individual incomes generates additional revenues from income tax receipts—projected to increase by \$700 million, in present value terms, over the sixteen years of implementation according to the North Carolina projection. Increased state revenue from corporate and sales taxes resulting from projected income and economic growth are not included in the analysis and would likely increase this figure.

What should state leaders do with these projections? How about putting aside partisanship and assembling a team of philanthropists, educators, and reformers committed to bringing these possibilities to reality? North Carolina—our home state—could be transformed, and so could yours. ■

See the full brief, *Projected Statewide Impact of "Opportunity Culture" School Models*, written by Christen Holly, Stephanie Dean, Emily Ayscue Hassel, and Bryan C. Hassel, available at opportunityculture.org.

In Jest: The “Social Justice Math” Equation

EAGnews.org posted video of Chicago Teachers Union president Karen Lewis talking about teaching math using “social justice” concepts at the Network for Public Education conference in Austin, Texas, earlier this month. She said:

“You want to talk about organizing? You want to talk about social justice? People always talk about how that there are no politics and values in math, that you can teach math without a place for social justice....”

Johnny has five pencils and if he spent two cents for the red pencils and eight cents for the green pencils, and he has 47 cents, how many pencils can he buy? We’ve all seen that, right? That’s a very political statement because it’s all about consumerism—it’s about buying stuff, right?

[Milwaukee Teachers Education Association president] Bob Peterson tells them about José working in a factory making piecemeal clothes. He uses the same numbers and gets the same answer. Math is political, too.”

I wasn’t aware that the Chicago Teachers Union had a huge communal pencil bank, stocked with writing imple-

ments made from recycled ice cream sticks and graphite mined by Brazilian worker collectives. Everywhere else we buy pencils.

Lewis’ reference to Bob Peterson leads us to the book he edited with Eric Gutstein titled *Rethinking Mathematics: Teaching Social Justice by the Numbers*. The paperback edition is available to everyone everywhere for the low, low price of \$16.95. An expanded second edition was released last year.

When the book was published in 2005, it caught the eye of one pundit, who reviewed it this way in the *Wall Street Journal*:

“Partisans of social justice mathematics advocate an explicitly political agenda in the classroom. A new textbook, Rethinking Mathematics: Teaching Social Justice by the Numbers, shows how problem solving, ethnomathematics, and political action can be merged. Among its topics are “Sweatshop Accounting,” with units on poverty, globalization, and the unequal distribution of wealth. Another topic, drawn directly from ethnomathematics, is “Chicanos Have Math in Their Blood.” Others include “The Transnational Capital Auction,” “Multicultural Math,” and “Home Buying While Brown or Black.” Units of study include racial profiling, the war in Iraq, corporate control of the media, and environmental racism. The theory



behind the book is that “teaching math in a neutral manner is not possible.” Teachers are supposed to vary the teaching of mathematics in relation to their students’ race, gender, ethnicity, and community.

This fusion of political correctness and relevance may be the next big thing to rock mathematics education, appealing as it does to political activists and ethnic chauvinists.

It seems terribly old-fashioned to point out that the countries that regularly beat our students in international tests of mathematics do not use the subject to steer students into political action. They teach them instead that mathematics is a universal language that is as relevant and meaningful in Tokyo as it is in Paris, Nairobi, and Chicago. The students who learn this universal language well will be the builders and shapers of technology in the twenty-first century. The students in American classes who fall prey to the political designs of their teachers and professors will not.”

The author of that withering critique was none other than Diane Ravitch, current union darling and the president of the Network for Public Education, to whose audience Lewis delivered her speech.

Ravitch has famously disavowed her pre-2007 views on school reform, but I wonder if we are supposed to disregard everything she wrote back then or is our amnesia supposed to be more selective? Surely such a prolific writer can spare a few minutes to let us know which statements are operative and which are inoperative.

As for social justice math, well, two can play at that game. If we’re going to inject that kind of thing into math class, these questions should be acceptable as well:

- How many loaves and fishes does it take to feed five thousand people?
- How many divisions does the Pope have?
- How good does something have to be before it is double-plus good?

Do you have thoughts about “social justice math”?

Email us at editor@aaeteachers.org. ■

Mike Antonucci is a writer, consultant, Air Force veteran, marathoner, specialist in military history, intelligence, cryptanalysis and the Byzantine Empire. He has a reputation for writing about public education and teachers’ unions. He usually posts in the Education Intelligence Agency’s blog *Intercepts*. This article is from that blog.



Write for AAE on Your Summer Vacation

Do you have opinions or insight about classroom policy or education reform? Are you implementing a new program in your classroom, school, or district that you would like to share with your fellow members? We want to hear from you!

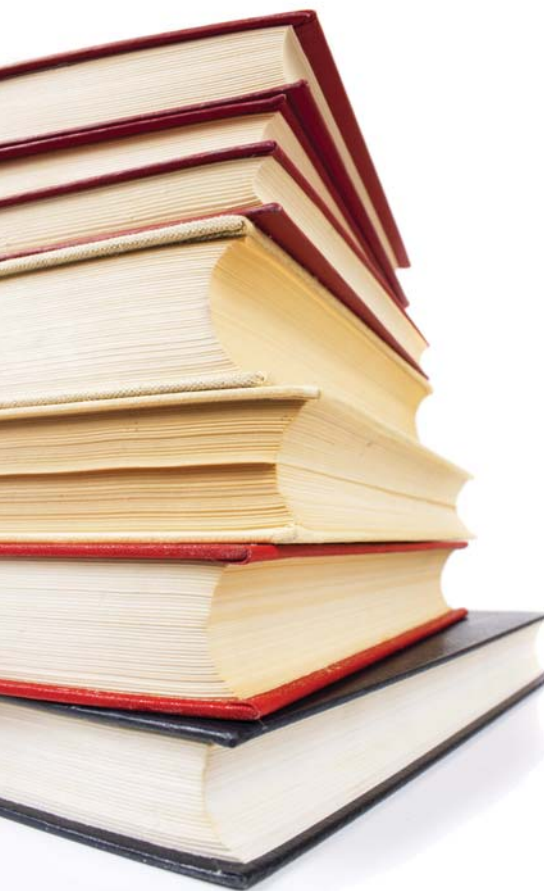
Write an article for the Association of American Educators over your summer vacation! AAE is constantly looking for new material to share in *Education Matters* or on the AAE blog. We would love to hear from real classroom teachers and members interested in sharing their experiences. Whether you are interested in class size, teacher choice, education reform, cutting edge curriculum, or anything in between, don’t hesitate to contact AAE’s editorial staff. Email AAE today at editor@aaeteachers.org with your articles or ideas. Have a great summer!

2014 Summer Reading List for Teachers

ReallyGoodStuff.com asked teachers their opinions on the best Professional Development books for summer 2014. The following books were their recommendations:

1. *Word Nerds* by Brenda Overturf, Leslie Montgomery, and Margot Holmes Smith
2. *Number Talks: Helping Children Build Mental Math and Computation Strategies* by Sherry Parrish
3. *Teach Like a Pirate* by Dave Burgess
4. *Launching a Primary Writing Workshop* by Lucy Calkins
5. *Ending the Homework Hassle* by John Rosemond
6. *Teach Like Your Hair Is on Fire* by Rafe Esquith
7. *Teach Like a Champion* by Doug Lemov and Norman Atkins
8. *The Book Whisperer* by Donalyn Miller
9. *Note and Notice: Strategies for Close Reading* by Kyrene Beers and Robert E. Probst
10. *Teaching with Poverty in Mind: What Being Poor Does to Kids' Brains and What Schools Can Do About It* by Eric Jensen
11. *Literacy Work Stations* by Debbie Diller
12. *Falling in Love with Close Reading* by Christopher Lehman and Kate Roberts
13. *What Do You Do with an Idea?* by Kobi Yomada and Mae Besom
14. *The First Six Weeks of School* by Paula Denton and Roxann Kriete
15. *Whole Brain Teaching for Challenging Kids* by Chris Biffle
16. *NurtureShock* by Po Bronson and Ashley Merryman
17. *Boys Adrift and Girls on the Edge* by Leonard Sax
18. *Academic Vocabulary* by Robert Marzano
19. *The Daily Five* by Gail Boushey and Joan Moser
20. *The Cafe Book* by Gail Boushey and Joan Moser
21. *No More "I'm Done!"* by Jennifer Jacobson
22. *The Morning Meeting Book* by Roxann Kriete
23. *Teaching with Love and Logic* by Jim Fay and David Funk
24. *The Literacy Teacher's Playbook* by Jennifer Serravallo
25. *Making Sense* by Thomas Carpenter
26. *Better Answers* by Ardithe Davis Cole
27. *Spaces and Places: Designing Classrooms for Literacy* by Debbie Diller
28. *Overcoming Dyslexia* by Sally Shaywitz
29. *The Shutdown Learner* by Richard Selznick
30. *Teaching Children to Care* by Ruth Sidney Charney
31. *What Great Teachers Do Differently* by Todd Whitaker
32. *Guided Math: A Framework for Mathematics Instruction* by Laney Sammons
33. *Strategies That Work: Teaching Comprehension for Understanding and Engagement* by Stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis
34. *Math Work Stations* by Debbie Diller
35. *What's Under Your Cape? SUPERHEROES of the Character Kind* by Barbara Gruener ■

This list was originally published on reallygoodstuff.com



AAE Member Discount Program's Deals of the Month

Have you registered for AAE's discount program? If not, go to aaeteachers.org/discounts now and register! This month's login code is: **teacherssave**.

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Are you a new member? Are you new to the classroom? Do you have colleagues who are beginning their first year of teaching? Check out AAE's newest publication, *New Teachers Matter*. Email profdev@aaeteachers.org to receive your free copy.

