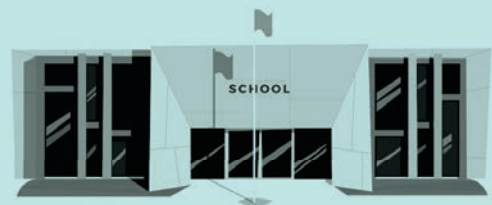


# EDUCATION MATTERS

A publication of the Association of American Educators Foundation



## Putting the Evidence Cart Before the School Choice Horse

By Robert Pondiscio


**W**ith Donald Trump in the White House and longtime school choice advocate Betsy DeVos installed as his education secretary, arguments for and against vouchers and scholarship tax credits are burning white hot.

A *New York Times* report and subsequent editorial claimed that “three of the largest voucher programs in the country, enrolling nearly 180,000 children nationwide, showed negative results.” Choice advocates fired back, disputing the methodology of those studies and insisting that the vast majority of “gold standard” research has found that school choice produces “equivalent or superior academic results, usually for a fraction of what is spent on public schools,” in the words of the Cato Institute’s Neal McCluskey.

Who’s right?  
Who’s wrong?

Wonky battles over research studies can be illuminating. They can also be irrelevant or premature. While McCluskey and other advocates are correct that the preponderance of evidence tends to favor school choice, this entire debate puts the cart before the horse. When we look to test-based evidence—and look no further—to decide whether choice “works,” we are making two rather extraordinary, unquestioned assumptions: that the sole purpose of schooling is to raise test scores, and that district schools have a place of privilege against which all other models must justify themselves.







That's really not what choice is about. Choice exists to allow parents to educate their children in accordance with their own needs, desires, and values. If diversity is a core value of yours, for example, you might seek out a school where your child can learn alongside peers from different backgrounds. If your child is a budding artist, actor, or musician, the "evidence" that might persuade you is whether he or she will have the opportunity to study with a working sculptor or to pound the boards in a strong theater or dance program. If your child is an athlete, the number of state titles won by the lacrosse team or sports scholarships earned by graduates might be compelling evidence. If faith is central to your family, you will want a school that allows your child to grow and be guided by your religious beliefs. There can be no doubt that, if you are fortunate enough to select a school based on your child's talents or interests or your family's values and traditions, the question of whether school choice works has already been answered. It's working perfectly for you.

Deciding whether to permit parents to choose based solely on test-based evidence is presumptuous. It says, in effect, that one's values, aspirations, and priorities for one's child amount to nothing. Worse, our evidence-based debate presumes that a single, uniform school structure is and ought to be the norm, and that every departure from that system must justify itself in terms of a narrow set of outcomes that may not reflect parents'—or society's—priorities. Academic outcomes matter, of course, but so do civic outcomes, character development, respect for diversity and faith, and myriad others. "These outcomes shouldn't be placed in a framework that begs the question of whether [a single school system] is the right structure," notes Ashley Berner, deputy director of the Johns Hopkins Institute for Education Policy.

The question is not whether academic outcomes matter, but when they matter. Evidence should be used to influence school choice program and policy designs, not to decide whether choice should be permitted in the first place. The desirability of school choice and educational pluralism is a values-driven question, not an evidence-based one. Decide first if families should have publicly supported options beyond a single, uniform system. Then use evidence to inform choice or ensure that taxpayer funds are well spent.



Berner is the author of the new book *Pluralism and American Public Education: No One Way to School*, which notes that making traditional district schools the default setting makes American education an outlier. In other countries, she notes, the state "either operates a wide array of secular, religious and pedagogical schools, or funds all schools but operates only a portion of them." Pluralism does not exist to create competition for state-run schools; it's valued intrinsically.

That doesn't mean pluralistic systems are indifferent to school performance. Governments in other lands intervene when schools fail to produce acceptable academic outcomes, but the corrective measures are "sector agnostic," Berner notes. In the UK, for example, whether it's a Church of England school or a nonsectarian, state-run school that's not performing well doesn't matter since both are government supported. "The conversation is not, 'See? Church of England schools are terrible!' The conversation is, 'All schools need to serve students well. Period,'" she says. School outcomes are a downstream conversation. The larger, more important debate—should we have a state-run or pluralistic system?—comes first.

School choice proponents who seek to prove that vouchers, tax credits, and scholarships work by citing test score-based research have allowed themselves to be lured into argument that can never be completely won. They have tacitly agreed to a reductive frame and a debate over

By Stephen Merrill

# Anatomy of School Bullying

Understanding the hot spots within schools is essential to putting a stop to student bullying



what evidence is acceptable (test scores) and what it means to win (better test scores). This is roughly akin to arguing whether to shop at your neighborhood grocery store vs. Wal-Mart based on price alone. Price is important, but you may have reasons for choosing the Main Street Grocery that matter more to you than the 50 cents per pound you'd save on ground beef. Perhaps Main Street's fresh local produce and personal service are more important to you.

If we limit the frame of this debate to academic outputs alone, every new study provides ammunition but never a conclusion. The real debate we should be having is, "What kind of system do we want?" Answer that question first, then use evidence to improve the school designs, policies, and programs we have agreed deserve public support. ■

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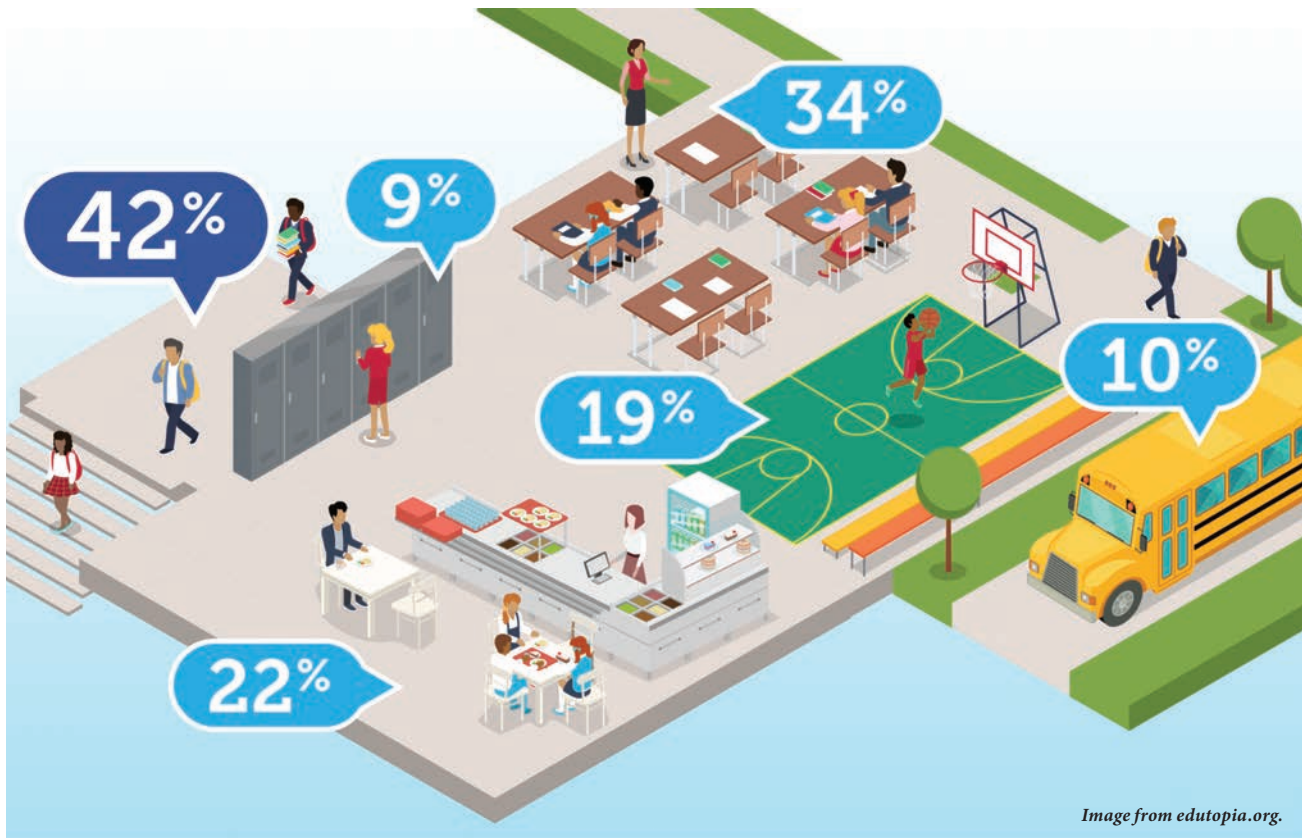
**H**allways and stairwells are bullying hot spots, according to a new report from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). In the 2014–15 academic year, students between the ages of 12 and 18 reported nearly twice as many bullying incidents in transitional areas between classes—where they spend a fraction of their time—as in other school areas such as cafeterias or playgrounds.

About 5 percent of students faced overtly physical forms of bullying, reporting that they had been “pushed, shoved, tripped, or spit on.” Students reported higher levels of verbal and relational bullying, disclosing that they have been “made fun of, called names, or insulted” (13 percent) or were the “subject of rumors” (12 percent). The numbers suggest that digital bullying, which seemed to herald a dangerous new era of harassment when it first appeared, has not developed as predicted. While bullied girls reported online harassment (15.9 percent) at more than twice the rate boys did, they still encountered far more harassment in school environments than digital ones. Only 6.1 percent of bullied boys reported online incidents. However, it's the location data that jumps off the page of the report. While the playground is typically considered the epicenter of bullying, it's the more transitional spaces—the fast-

moving, highly social hallways and stairwells—that dominate the landscape of student harassment. Almost 42 percent of students who were bullied reported incidents in hallways or stairwells, a number that was similar for both boys (41.8 percent) and girls (41.6 percent). A much smaller percentage of bullied students reported incidents outside on school grounds (19.3 percent), in a bathroom or locker room (9.4 percent), in the school cafeteria (22.2 percent), or on a school bus (10 percent).

Discouragingly, almost 34 percent of bullied students reported incidents in the classroom, a fact that deserves deeper consideration. As a former teacher, I think back to the transitional moments within a class, as students arrived, settled in, transitioned between activities, and then exited. Those situations are chaotic and difficult to manage well—and feel like a possible explanation for this unexpected finding.

Modern thinking on bullying acknowledges the complexity of the problem, and has shifted responsibility away from teachers and administrators, emphasizing instead the positive effects of broader networks and school-wide cultural transformations. According to Edutopia contributor Anne O'Brien, it's critical to develop a clear code of conduct, to empower “teachers and especially students to help enforce it,” and to socialize the message through



activities like all-school assemblies and “art contests highlighting school values.” And a broader look at what Edutopia contributors have written on the topic over the course of years reveals a clear theme: the importance of establishing a web of allies, including administrators, students, teachers, parents, and even unaffiliated citizens. This more holistic, school-and-environs approach is best summed up in our recent blog post “Successful Community Efforts to Prevent Bullying.” It takes a village.

Whatever model of bullying prevention a school adopts—however diverse the coalition summoned to take a stand against bullying—it makes sense to be mindful that hallways and stairwells, taken together, are nearly twice as likely to be the source of the problem as the cafeteria, playground, or buses and bathrooms. Supervision and vigilance in those fluid spaces between classes are likely to benefit vulnerable students disproportionately.

The full report—which, I should warn you, begins with a very detailed description of the statistical models and assumptions used—can be found at [is.gd/c2P4fU](https://is.gd/c2P4fU). To see critical resources on bullying prevention, visit [edutopia.org/blogs/tag/bullying-prevention](https://edutopia.org/blogs/tag/bullying-prevention). ■

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**Stephen Merrill** is a former high school teacher of English and history. He currently works as an editor or media product leader at publications like *CNN*, *Outside Magazine*, and *Newsweek Budget Travel*.



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# Creating Matters

Anderson William's recent book about the importance of creating for lifelong learning, continual self-development, and improvement is also about leadership.

**W**e are using *Creating Matters* as a guide in the development of the Academic Team with Seton Catholic Schools in Milwaukee. It's helping us to think differently about our work as educators; our priorities, relationships, and what we are creating—in this case high-performing schools and effective leaders.

The world has always belonged to learners. Creating, building creative relationships, and purposefully reflecting can generate continuous learning and help us think differently about transforming a school, a business, or one's life.

We have to think differently or we won't grow and understand the changing world around us. Lifelong learning opens our minds, exposes us to new vantage points, more things to see, to touch, to explore. Lifelong learning is hard work. It is not for everyone, but, for those who commit, the joy and engagement makes one's life better.

To sustain lifelong learning, we must depend on our creativity. Creativity defines the nature of our relationships. It puts our learning into action. It is a philosophy of how we see the world and our role in it. Cre-

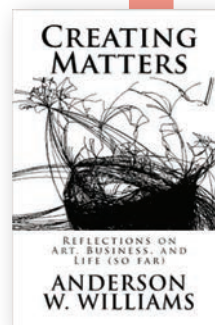


ativity will determine whether our efforts will ultimately create impact, whether we transform schools and build new leaders, and pass that work to a new generation.

Creating anything new starts with asking questions about the perceptions of others, the sources of accepted fact, the thinking that verified it, and how we rethink the work of transforming schools from scratch.

Too many schools and districts are great examples of organizations that have failed over time to recreate themselves while convincing themselves they are better than the facts show. In the case of Seton Catholic Schools, *Creating Matters* guides us in creating with a focus on what kids should be learning and becoming: creative, lifelong learners who are ready to change and engage in their community.

Isn't that what schools are charged with doing? ■



**William H. Hughes** is an AAE Foundation board member and Chief Academic Officer at Seton Catholic Schools, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

# The Ghost of Teacher Shortages Past

Here's something I've been struggling to understand of late. What makes the prospect of a teacher shortage such an immediately compelling narrative, capable of spreading with all the speed of a brush fire?

With almost no real data—because neither states nor the federal government collect the data that's really needed to pronounce the onset of a teacher shortage—we witness the press, school districts, state school boards, and even the U.S. Congress all concluding we are in the throes of a full-blown national crisis.

At the root of this crisis was a random *New York Times* news story published two summers ago in which eight school districts reported in August that they were having a tough time filling positions (although all but two ultimately started the year just fine). Whoosh! Overnight the teacher shortage became real.

That early rumbling was then steadily fed by news stories that teacher preparation programs were facing unprecedented enrollment drops. Whoosh! Nobody thought it important to mention that teacher preparation programs had for years been graduating twice as many teachers as were needed.

Get this. Over the last thirty years, programs have graduated between 175,000 and 300,000 teachers each year, yet consistently school districts have only hired somewhere between 60,000 to 140,000, with about 95,000

“The fallout of faux teacher shortages is of tremendous consequence. It routinely results in both states and school districts lowering standards for who is licensed and hired.”

being the most recent number.

The blaze reached new heights recently with a new report from Learning Policy Institute (LPI), producing a scary chart that shows an ever-widening gap between teacher supply and demand over the next nine years. While I would not characterize LPI's supply and demand projections as irresponsible or even without some merit, they were predicated on glass-half-empty assumptions that economist Dan Goldhaber rightfully questioned in an editorial published on *The 74*, an education news website. (It's also worth mentioning Mike Antonucci's reminder of the report's déjà-vu qualities given that LPI is led by Linda Darling-Hammond.)

Let's make this simple. Simply by tweaking just one of the assumptions made by LPI, the results are altogether different. For example, if we project that the class size average of student to teacher is 16.1 to 1 (which, importantly, it is currently) rather than LPI's estimate of 15.3 to 1, voila! The shortage disappears entirely.

Anyone basing predictions on the available data needs to be transparent about the limitations and

assumptions baked into the analysis—which I would argue LPI was not—and be clear that if anything changes (such as class size, or slower than expected student population growth, or a renewed interest in teaching following the end of the Great Recession), their predictions will shift dramatically.

The systems to report whether districts are facing a shortage exist in a small number of states (data is recent but not in real time) and not at the federal level at all. Contrast this to the reporting on the health of the American economy, which is done routinely with mountains of real-time data at the federal, state, and business levels. Even then, no one would declare a depression based on years-old data and rough hiring projections a decade from now. But somehow doing exactly this is okay for teacher shortages.

What I find so frustrating about all of this is that we do actually have a long-standing, huge problem with teacher supply and demand—one that not only gets lost in the current rhetoric but that is, believe it or not, actually ill served by what could be a drummed-up crisis.

Let me explain this apparent contradiction in my logic.



For thirty years nearly every district in the nation has struggled to find enough secondary science and math teachers. Also and for just as long, rural and urban districts have been unable to tap into a reliable and stable source of new teachers, putting Band-Aids like Teach For America on the problem.

One of the answers is to pay such teachers more than other teachers are paid, but most districts continue to reject that solution because it is untenable with their unions. For STEM teachers we could ramp up the availability of part-time teaching positions, but again few districts and states embrace this option—also because unions worry that districts will begin replacing full-time employees and their costly benefits with part-timers.

For even longer than those shortages have been so problematic, school districts have been awash with applicants for elementary teaching positions. That's because teacher prep programs don't see it as their job to tell their incoming candidates that they can't all major in elementary ed, that they'll need to consider another teaching field such as special ed or ELL where there is real need. The problem is

that higher ed accepts no responsibility for aligning teacher production with district demand. Given that those teacher prep programs can't operate without state approval, states could conceivably impose limits on production in some areas.

All of these workable solutions to address the dearth of secondary STEM teachers are not on the agenda of those who declare the nation to be in the throes of a teacher shortage. While the LPI report mentions differential pay in passing, it is drowned out by a flood of other recommendations such as across-the-board pay increases—which, let's be perfectly clear, may be great for the teaching profession writ large but will do nothing to persuade someone to take a harder teaching job versus a less hard one if the pay is the same. Other solutions, such as increasing the supply of qualified teachers through pathways such as more residency models and retention strategies such as mentoring, induction, and better working conditions are, I would go so far as to say, almost beside the point.

I'm inspired by what can happen when districts just start working smarter. No district in the country faced worse shortages than Clark County, Nevada. Faced with a stag-

gering 1,000 teacher vacancies at the start of the 2015-16 school year, few would have expected that just one year later the district would begin the school year with nearly 700 fewer vacancies.

How did it do this? It got smart about recruiting. The district negotiated a higher starting salary for new teachers. With great success, their interim Chief Human Capital Officer Mike Gentry targeted potential applicants in areas with notoriously high costs of living, including Chicago, California, New York, and Pennsylvania. The team made a real effort to market the benefits of working in Clark County schools; Gentry estimates that more than two million people have seen advertisements for the district on Facebook and other social media platforms. Finally, as the *Las Vegas Sun* reports, state efforts to ease certification requirements and improve certification reciprocity have supported the work of the Clark County team. This is an approach eminently employable elsewhere.

The fallout of faux teacher shortages is of tremendous consequence. It routinely results in both states and school districts lowering standards for who is licensed and hired. But more importantly, and perhaps deliberately, it serves to distract us from fixing the chronic and persistent misalignment of teacher supply and demand. ■

*Originally published on [nctq.org](http://nctq.org).*



**Kate Walsh** has served as the president of the National Council on Teacher Quality since 2003, leading work to ensure that every child has equal access to effective teachers.

# Teacher-Made Lessons Make Inroads

On a February morning, third graders here at Bellaire Elementary were discussing types of surprising treasure found in the novel *Treasure Island*.

Their teacher, Meredith Starks, confidently navigated through the 50-minute lesson that ended with students writing a paragraph about how a modern-day “treasure” would surprise a pirate. (One student’s answer: A pirate might mistake a jet plane for a flying dolphin.)

Starks’ ease with the lesson isn’t surprising—after all, she wrote the curriculum that is now being used across the state.

Starks is one of the more than

seventy-five teachers who have been selected by the Louisiana education department to write an English/language arts curriculum. While most states using the Common Core State Standards tend to look to commercial publishers for standards-based curricula, Louisiana educators couldn’t find material that fully and coherently represented the now seven-year-old ELA standards.


“We just decided ... there wasn’t anything on the market good enough for our teachers,” said Rebecca Kockler, the assistant superintendent of academic content at the state education department. And who better to fill that void than actual teachers?

The state started developing its ELA curricula, called “guidebooks,” in 2012, and the first iteration was published in April 2014. Louisiana has since revised its own standards, which are based on the Common Core, and revamped the guidebooks to give teachers more resources.

Guidebooks 2.0 was released last year for grades 3-12. There are between one and five ELA units for each grade; more are rolling out later this year. Each unit corresponds to grade-level texts and includes assessments, supplementary materials, and 30-50 individual lessons.








The guidebooks, which are freely available to anyone in Louisiana and beyond, live on a cloud-based platform and come with ready-made slide shows, thanks to the state's partnership with LearnZillion, a website with Common Core-aligned resources created by teachers.

While the curriculum is optional for districts, Kockler said more than 80 percent have opted to use the guidebooks in some form, either as a complete curriculum or support resource for their teachers.

Louisiana already appears to be seeing some promising signs of success from the teacher-made curriculum. The most recent state test results showed that students improved performance in reading and math.



Also an October study from the RAND Corp. found that Louisiana teachers are teaching and thinking about their work in ways that are more aligned with the Common Core than teachers in other states.

Teachers in Louisiana were significantly more likely to ask students to use evidence from a text, for example, and their students spent more time reading texts that were at grade level, said Julia Kaufman, one of the report's authors.

"We don't have really clear evidence that ties the use of this teacher-developed curriculum to those practices," Kaufman said. "But we have to assume that's a big reason."

To Starks, it makes sense that the teacher-made curriculum would lead to student achievement and a deeper understanding of the more rigorous standards. The guidebooks are designed to engage students in meaningful discussions with meaty texts.

"Louisiana already appears to be seeing some promising signs of success from the teacher-made curriculum. The most recent state test results showed that students improved performance in reading and math."

"I feel like my life's passion is to get textbooks out of teachers' hands and say [to teachers], you can do so much more," she said.

Once, she received an email from a teacher across the state who said her fourth graders loved the *Whipping Boy* unit, which Starks wrote. The teacher put a stick figure picture of Starks on her board. "Every time my kids are really super engaged in something," the teacher wrote, "we always stop and say thank you, Mrs. Starks, for writing this awesome unit."

### An Organic Lesson

In a fourth-grade classroom at nearby Curtis Elementary, which is also part of Bossier Parish schools, Kara Stephenson was teaching a guidebooks unit on the American Revolution. As Stephenson read aloud from the book, *George vs. George*, she also held her provided teaching notes, which were highlighted and marked with colorful sticky notes.

The ELA guidebooks come with teacher notes that include suggested times for each section of the lesson and explicit directions for how teachers can lead class discussion, including examples of class discussion questions and "student look-fors," which allow the teachers to gauge student level of understanding and engagement.

"As long as [teachers] know the unit, they don't have to read these things verbatim," Starks said, adding that she knows teachers who are asking every question listed in the notes. "Maybe after the first year, when they're more comfortable with the lesson, they won't have to refer to this so closely."

While Stephenson said she doesn't adhere entirely to the teaching notes, they have been helpful. Between the LearnZillion slides and the teaching notes, she said, she feels like she has a solid base for her lessons, which gives her more time to focus on finding high-quality supplementary materials.

On this day, one lesson objective was to learn academic vocabulary within the text. As Stephenson read aloud, she paused to lead class discussions on vocabulary words like "unravel" and "convinced." Stephenson also had an iPad next to her displaying the LearnZillion slides, which showed quotes from the text.

One slide had the quote, "The English were convinced that the rest of the British Empire was backward and uncivilized."

"What does 'uncivilized' mean?" Stephenson asked the class. She then had the students turn to their neighbors and discuss why the British thought the American colonists were uncivilized, before coming together as a class to share their thoughts.



The lesson felt organic, Stephenson said later. “It’s not, ‘Let’s turn to page so-and-so and do this,’” she said. “You’re doing all the components you need to do, but everything is not cookie-cutter. It just kind of flows, and you can tell a teacher created that.”

Bossier Parish has been rolling out guidebooks over the past couple of years and required grades 3-5 to implement at least two guidebooks this school year.

For its third grade, Bellaire Elementary stuck with a textbook from an outside publisher for the first semester and is using two guidebooks during the spring semester: one on Cajun folktales and the other on the Louisiana Purchase. (Starks is teaching her *Treasure Island* guidebook in addition to the other two, to iron out any last-minute kinks.)

### Scores Hold Steady

Between the guidebooks now and the textbook last semester, students are scoring comparably on classroom assessments, but there have been some growing pains with the guidebooks, Principal Alyshia Coulson said.

“Guidebooks were really developed for the higher-achieving child. That’s another thing the teachers really have to work on: how do you help the struggling student?” Coulson said.

The state education agency’s Kockler said a teacher team is adding new supports for special education and English language learners to the guidebooks.

Meanwhile, Bellaire teachers have been using their professional learning community time to dive

## “It’s really powerful that it was written by teachers, for teachers....”

into guidebooks. Already, Coulson said, they have decided to teach some of the lessons in a different order.

Another challenge is the guidebooks only include three assessments—fewer than what the district requires, Coulson said. They include a culminating writing task, one cold-read task, and an “extension task” that typically involves research. Teachers write their own assessments to fill in the gaps.

“That was probably the number one issue that came up with teachers across the state: where do I get my reading grades? where do I get my grammar grades?” Starks said. “It’s hard for us as writers to predict what district requirements are. And if we include [extra assessments], they feel like they have to do it.” Language tasks to help teachers integrate grammar instruction with the guidebooks will be released in June.

Many of the teachers who wrote the original guidebooks have since left the classroom to become curriculum coaches or work at the state education department, Starks said.

She hasn’t left, she said, “because I think that when I’m helping other teachers and when I’m training on guidebooks, ...there is so much value to me being able to say, ‘I’m in the classroom just like you. I am a teacher just like you.’”

Kaufman, the RAND researcher, said having teachers develop curriculum deepens their knowledge and understanding of the standards, which they, in turn, pass on to other teachers.

Indeed, during Louisiana’s profes-

sional development sessions on the guidebooks, Starks said teachers appreciated being able to hear practical strategies and tips from the curriculum’s authors.

“It’s really powerful that it was written by teachers, for teachers,” Starks said. “I’m a third-grade teacher in Bossier City, LA. I mean, how is it possible that the state saw enough value in me and what I was doing to ask me to do something like this?”

And her work is spreading beyond the state: Louisiana’s guidebooks are open source, meaning they are freely available online. So far, the department has heard from districts in Connecticut, Florida, Ohio, and Washington state, as well as other organizations that have used the curriculum for training.

In Louisiana, the curriculum has been the hook for the state’s overall focus on improving student achievement, Kockler said. “Our insistence that teachers be a core part of this from the beginning,” she said, “ensured we were building real resources that teachers needed.” ■

*As first appeared in Education Week on March 28, 2017. Reprinted with permission from Editorial Projects in Education.*



**Madeline Will** is the assistant editor for *Education Week Teacher* and a contributing writer for *Education Week*. She writes for the *Teaching Now* blog.



# Congratulations to Our Spring 2017 National Teacher Scholarship and Classroom Grant Winners!

**W**e are pleased to announce AAE's National Teacher Scholarship and Classroom Grant award winners for spring 2017. These eleven teachers embody our core values with their dedication to the field and innovative initiatives. We couldn't have chosen better!

The AAE Foundation is committed to offering individual educators various avenues for improving their effectiveness and student outcomes. The teacher scholarships provide teachers with funding to pursue additional teacher trainings, or attend workshops or specialized conferences. The classroom grants are offered to educators to supplement the costs of student-focused projects or activities. Both awards are available to all educators, regardless of location, school, or membership status.



## Congratulations, teachers!

Thanks to all who applied but were not selected to receive a scholarship or grant in this spring competition. The AAE Foundation National Teacher Scholarship and Grant Program is held twice a year in the fall and spring. Please consider applying for the next round of scholarships and grants. The deadline for the upcoming fall competition is October 1, 2017. ■



## THE SPRING 2017 WINNERS

**Katharine Damon**, Terraset Elementary School, Reston VA, will promote reading fluency using reader's theater and humor.

**Pamela Dean**, Sonoran Science Academy, Tucson, AZ, will purchase math manipulatives to promote hands-on learning.

**Susan DeLoach**, Riverside Community Charter Elementary School, Sherman Oaks, CA, will purchase assistive technology to provide access to curriculum materials for her special education students.

**Janette Fagle**, Dual Immersion Academy, Salt Lake City, UT, will attend the Illuminate Conference to learn how to better use data-driven decision making.

**Rebecca Holloway and Ginger Tober**, Holley-Navarre Primary, Navarre, FL, will attend training on the Café System.



**Iris Raga**, Forester Elementary, San Antonio, TX, will use Kore Wobble Seating to transform her classroom into a deskless environment.

**Jennifer Rich**, Hope International University, Fullerton, CA, will attend a librarianship conference to help her develop tips, tools, and resources on developing information literacy.

**Joanna Rodriguez**, BASCS, Hackensack, NJ, will create ink block prints with her students.

**Cheryl Selden**, BASCS, Garfield, NJ, will purchase books for a classroom library so that she can implement Accelerated Reader at her school.

**Sherri Story**, Kings Fork High School, Suffolk, VA, will purchase binocular lab microscope adaptors and weatherproof cameras to provide authentic, project-based learning opportunities in biology.

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