LEGISLATIVE AGENDA: Teachers and school leaders are the two most important in-school factors that affect student achievement. Yet, the current approach to preparing, supporting, and evaluating educators does not reflect this reality. A robust federal investment in time and resources is necessary to provide ongoing professional development for teachers and school leaders and successfully recruit, train, and induct them. All educators should receive a stair-stepped induction into the profession, time to reflect and refine their practice, and personalized professional development that recognizes their strengths and allows them to grow. Of course, any educator evaluation system should include multiple measures, evaluate educators only on the subjects they teach, and ultimately be rooted in the goal of enhancing practice.

KEY POINTS

ENSURE a robust federal investment to help districts and schools support educators through the entire career continuum.

- A formal internship or induction process will help beginning educators gain exposure to a broad array of experiences, receive constructive feedback, learn professional responsibilities, and positively affect student learning.
- Research shows that new educators who receive induction, mentoring, and ongoing professional development are more likely to stay in the profession and excel in the classroom.

ALLOCATE time in the school day for personalized professional development that recognizes educator’s strengths and allows them to grow.

- All educators benefit from regular observations and feedback sessions, coplanning, collaborative problem solving, and reflection to help them adjust their instructional practices to best meet the needs of students.

- Well-designed and well-implemented professional development for all school employees is an essential, long-term investment that increases educator effectiveness and school quality and improves the retention of high-quality educators.

EVALUATE educators only on the subjects they teach.

- Evaluating educators on student test scores in subjects unrelated to the ones they teach results in inaccurate and unfair data about their performance, fails to provide educators with useful feedback, and can cause good educators to leave the profession.

USE multiple measures in evaluations.

- Observations, peer reviews, and evidence of student learning provide a more accurate picture of educator effectiveness than student test scores alone.
- Educator evaluation results should lead to professional development to increase their effectiveness and influence student learning.