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Illinois Education Research Council

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Introduction: Human Resource Management in Schools

• Research shows teachers are the most important school resource

• Human resource management describes the strategies that schools use to recruit, support, retain, and reward teachers (and principals)

• Recent policy efforts at all levels (school, district, state, federal) have sought to improve HR management in schools
  • RttT
  • PERA and SB7

• Theory of action is that better HR systems can improve learning climate (including teaching quality and retention), which will boost student achievement gains
## HR Frameworks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Management of Human Capital</th>
<th>Apsen Institute</th>
<th>American Institutes for Research</th>
<th>Carnegie</th>
<th>TNTP</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acquisition</td>
<td>Recruitment</td>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>Acquire</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Selection</td>
<td>Certification</td>
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<td>Placement</td>
<td>Sourcing</td>
<td>Recruitment</td>
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<td>Development</td>
<td>Induction</td>
<td>Induction</td>
<td>Hiring</td>
<td>Develop</td>
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<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>Training &amp; Development</td>
<td>Induction</td>
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<td>Tenure</td>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>On-boarding</td>
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<td>Performance management</td>
<td>Performance management</td>
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<td>Professional Development</td>
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<td>Retention</td>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td>Compensation &amp; Non-Monetary Rewards</td>
<td>Compensation &amp; Incentives</td>
<td>Sustain</td>
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<td>Leadership development</td>
<td>Leadership development</td>
<td>Working Conditions</td>
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*Note: TNTP abbreviations are for illustrative purposes only.*
Introduction: Charter Schools

• **Charter schools**: publicly-funded schools of choice (i.e. no students are assigned to attend, generally open to all students in district, cannot charge tuition) that operate independent from the local school district and – in theory at least – are granted increased autonomy and flexibility from *some* regulations in exchange for increased accountability

• **Charter schools in Illinois**
  – 65 schools across 157 campuses
  – Located throughout the state, but mostly (90%) in Chicago
  – Can be unionized (around 30 unionized campuses in Illinois)
  – If Illinois charter schools were a single district, they would be the 2\textsuperscript{nd} largest district in the state (~59,000 students)

• **Why study HR management in charter schools?**
  – Charters were originally intended to serve as “laboratories of reform” for all schools, and recent literature suggests that they are leveraging their flexibility and especially innovative around HR management
Background: Charter School Teachers

- Compared to teachers in traditional public schools (TPSs), charter school teachers are generally:
  - Less likely to be certified
  - From stronger academic backgrounds (more selective colleges, higher exam scores)
  - Less experienced
  - Paid less (even after accounting for lack of experience)

- It is unclear whether differences arise because charter schools prefer teachers with different characteristics or because that is who they are able to attract (or both)

- Teachers in charter schools typically work longer hours, have less job security, and higher teacher turnover than similarly situated TPSs

- ... but charter school teachers generally report better working conditions than teachers in traditional public schools, especially with regard to:
  - Greater autonomy and more influence over school policies and practices
  - More support from administrators and colleagues
Research Questions

1) How do Illinois charter schools practice HR management?
   – Are there any differences in these practices by school characteristics (Chicago vs. non; HS vs. elementary/mid; network-affiliated vs. standalone; newer schools vs. more mature schools; unionized vs. non)

2) What are common themes in HR practices across schools and across HR functions? Can we create a typology of HR strategies?
   – Are there any differences in these strategies by school characteristics?

3) What are the relationships between charter school HR strategies and school outcomes?
   – Teacher retention
   – School learning conditions
   – Student achievement gains
Data & Methods

• Phone interviews and online surveys with Illinois charter school administrators during the 2013-14 school year
  – Questions informed by and organized around existing HR management frameworks across 7 key functions: recruitment, selection, orientation and mentoring, in-service professional development, evaluation, compensation, and retention

• 2013-14 data on teacher retention, learning conditions, and student achievement from ISBE and CPS

• Participants: 27 of 57 (47%) Illinois charter “schools” representing 60% of the state’s charter school students
  – For the purposes of this study, “schools” = stand-alone schools OR multi-campus networks
  – Representative sample (see next slide)
Characteristics of Sample vs. Non-Sample Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Characteristics</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Non-Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% in Chicago (vs. rest of Illinois)</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Mature Schools (vs. schools less than 5 years old)</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Standalone (vs. network/CMO)</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% High School (vs. Elementary/Mid)</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean ISAT composite</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean PSAE composite</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median student enrollment</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Low Income students</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% ELL students</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Black students</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Hispanic students</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unionized</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- None of these differences are statistically significant
  - But this does not necessarily mean that the all of the results are generalizable across all Illinois charter schools
Limitations & Caveats

• Limited sample

• Data provided by school administrators only
  – Interviews and surveys with teachers might reveal differing perceptions, or could provide additional support

• Respondents may have inadvertently omitted some HR practices due to the limitations of interview/survey format or time constraints
  – Mitigated somewhat allowing each respondent to review coded data to check for reliability and completeness
  – Many of our findings mirror results from prior studies

• These findings present only a point-in-time snapshot
  – HR practices have likely evolved since the time the data were collected (especially given the “nimbleness” of the charter sector as described in the literature).

• This study does not intend to compare HR management practices in charter schools with those in district schools.
  – Though some data from others’ studies of non-charter schools are included for context, we did not interview or survey any non-charter school representatives for this study, and do not have any non-charter comparison group.
Descriptions and Examples of HR Practices in Illinois Charter Schools

- Sourcing
- Recruitment process
- Selection criteria
- Hiring process
- Timelines
- Orientation and mentoring
- In-service PD
- Teacher evaluation
- Salaries
- Variable pay
- Retention strategies
- Career pathways
Descriptions and Examples of HR Practices in Illinois Charter Schools

• Sourcing
• Recruitment process
• Selection criteria
• Hiring process
• Timelines
• Orientation and mentoring
• In-service PD
• **Teacher evaluation**
• Salaries
• Variable pay
• Retention strategies
• Career pathways
Evaluation Systems

• Typically devolved to school-, rather than network-, level

• Observations
  – Non-Danielson (home-grown/locally-developed) frameworks
  – Multiple observers
  – 3+ observations (including informal observations)

• Student growth
  – Used to direct PD, but not for evaluations
  – Not heavily weighed (relative to PERA requirements)

• Student and parent surveys, on-track indicators, self-evaluation occasionally included
  – Also often used to direct PD, but not for evaluations
Evaluation Process

• Not formulaic
  – Often difficult for leaders to estimate % weighting
  – May consider context, growth, extenuating circumstances, etc.

• Improving teacher evaluations viewed as important future step moving forward

• Viewed as formative more than summative – “an extension of coaching”
  – Low scores more likely to be met with intensive coaching than for retention decisions (at least at first)
  – Donaldson and Peske (2010) and Gross and DeArmond (2013) describe similar practices in the schools they studied:

    “Rather than engage with each other only around a formal evaluation schedule, leaders and colleagues in these schools used embedded development and evaluation to constantly work together to improve their practice.”

• ...But often linked to salary schedule and/or bonuses
  – Performance-based pay (where present) typically linked to multiple measures, such as teacher evaluation results
Which teacher performance rubric does your school use during classroom observations?

- Danielson Framework: 52%
- Locally developed or hybrid standards: 44%
- Marzano: 4%
How many different observers rate each teacher’s practice?
How many formal observations do teachers undergo as part of the evaluation process?

- 1-2 observations: 29% (29% of teachers)
- 3-5 observations: 29% (57% cumulative total)
- 6-10 observations: 14% (71% cumulative total)
- 11+ observations: 29% (100% cumulative total)

Median = 4.0 observations
What data are included as part of teachers’ formal evaluation ratings?

- Student growth measure: 57%
- Student growth is calculated, but not used for evaluations: 26%
- Self-evaluation/goal-setting: 33%
- Student surveys: 8%
- Parent surveys: 8%
How are the results of teacher evaluations used at your school?

![Bar chart showing percentages of teachers who use results for different purposes: 52% for direct PD, 52% for determining pay/bonuses, and 44% for retention decisions.]
Evaluation Differences by School Characteristics

• Chicago charter schools (n=21) were significantly more likely than non-Chicago (n=5) charters to:
  – Use multiple observers for teacher evaluation
  – Use more observations for teacher evaluation
  – Offer non-monetary rewards for high performing teachers

• Unionized charter schools (n=4) were significantly more likely than non-unionized charters (n=23) to:
  – Use the Danielson Framework for teacher observations rather than locally-developed standards and rubrics
  – Include parent surveys in teacher evaluation scores
  – And significantly less likely to include self-evaluations in teacher evaluation
Cross-Cutting HR Strategies

• Looked across schools and across functions to view HR as a system, rather than isolated components

• Identify four broad themes that describe HR management strategies in Illinois charter schools:
  1. Incentivist reforms
  2. Teacher support and empowerment
  3. Information-rich decision-making
  4. Mission-driven practices

• Developed composite scores from the coded survey and interview responses
  – Theoretically and statistically coherent
  – School composite score represents the % its practices that were classified into that theme

• All but three of the schools in the study used each of these four strategies, to some degree or another
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Teacher Empowerment

- Teachers involved in hiring: 77%
- Recruitment strategy of using referrals: 59%
- Teacher voice used for retention: 52%
- Seek good collaborators/team players: 48%
- Principal makes final decision with teacher input: 48%
- Leadership positions used for retention: 44%
- School offers hybrid/teacher leader roles: 44%
- Experienced teachers serve as mentors: 38%
- Observations conducted by peer/master teacher: 35%
- PD based on teacher input: 36%
- School has informal career adv. pathway: 28%
- Most success with supporting teachers: 27%
- Base salary above $45k: 26%
- PD opportunities used for retention: 24%
- Most success with PD: 19%
- Individual stipends for PD provided: 8%
Information-Rich Decision-Making

- Hiring involves a demonstration lesson: 81%
- Seek person-organization fit: 67%
- Recruit early (before February): 50%
- New teacher orientation 2 weeks or more: 48%
- Hire early (before May): 45%
- 5 or more observations for evaluation: 43%
- Seek content knowledge/prior achievement: 41%
- PD provided by instructional coaches: 32%
- PD based on observed need: 32%
- Recruit TFA alumni: 30%
- PD based on data/assessments: 28%
- Recruit from University of Chicago Urban Teacher Education Program: 26%
- Seek evidence of student growth: 26%
- Student growth is used, but not for eval: 26%
- Evidence of teacher academics collected: 20%
- PD provided for data analysis days: 20%
- Recruit from Northwestern: 11%
Mission-Driven HR

- School has formal orientation process: 95%
- Seek person-organization fit: 67%
- Recruitment strategy of using referrals: 59%
- Emphasize school mission: 58%
- Communicate with local colleges: 56%
- Communicate with TFA: 52%
- PD based on leadership team decision: 52%
- Seek experience with specific student populations: 48%
- Orientation addresses school culture: 48%
- Most success with school culture/mission: 23%
- Hiring bonus: 19%
Differences in HR Strategies by School Type

• Relative to network- and CMO-affiliated schools, standalone (single site) schools use significantly *fewer* incentivist practices and significantly *more* teacher empowerment practices

• Newer charter schools (those that had been in operation for less than 5 years) use significantly lower proportions of incentivist practices (3%) than their more mature counterparts (12%)
HR Practices and School Outcomes
• HR practices (at least as measured here) have no consistent, systematic relationship to teacher retention (as measured here)
The HR practice measures have no statistically significant impact on any of the three “essential” learning conditions used in this study (ambitious instruction, effective leaders, or collaborative teachers).
HR Practices & Narrower School Learning Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>5Es Teacher Influence</th>
<th>5Es School Commitment</th>
<th>5Es Academic Press</th>
<th>5Es New Teacher Socialization</th>
<th>5Es Teacher Collaboration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(R Square = .570)</td>
<td>(R Square = .409)</td>
<td>(R Square = .335)</td>
<td>(R Square = .325)</td>
<td>(R Square = .163)</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Mission-Driven</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Info Rich</td>
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<td>0.16</td>
<td>-0.06*</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Empowerment</td>
<td>0.60*</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>-0.63*</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Incentivist</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05.

- Teacher empowerment practices were **positively** and significantly related to the 5Es teacher influence measure, but **negatively** associated with the 5Es measure of academic press.

- Information-rich decision-making was inversely related with the 5Es school commitment measure.
Student Achievement Measures

• Numerous achievement measures assessments were available for these analyses, but none were ideal in terms of both coverage and design
  – No single assessment was administered to all schools in the study
  – Little to no correlation between NWEA RIT growth and other assessments

**Correlations amongst 2014 reading assessment results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>ISAT Scale Avg (n=18)</th>
<th>PSAE Scale Avg. (n=11)</th>
<th>Standardized Combined (n=19)</th>
<th>ISBE All Tests Composite (n=23)</th>
<th>ISAT Growth (n=15)</th>
<th>NWEA Avg. RIT Growth (n=14)</th>
<th>EPAS Combined Scale Growth (n=11)</th>
<th>IERC Residual (n=19)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ISAT Scale Avg (n=18)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PSAE Scale Avg. (n=11)</td>
<td>.76*</td>
<td>—</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Standardized Combined (n=19)</td>
<td>.90**</td>
<td>.95**</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
<td>.87**</td>
<td>.78*</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.26</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISBE All Tests Composite (n=23)</td>
<td>.93**</td>
<td>.90**</td>
<td>.97**</td>
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<tr>
<td>ISAT Growth (n=15)</td>
<td>.87**</td>
<td>.78*</td>
<td>.80**</td>
<td>.80**</td>
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<tr>
<td>NWEA Avg. RIT Growth (n=14)</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.39</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>- .013</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPAS Combined Scale Growth (n=11)</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.77*</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>.22</td>
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<tr>
<td>IERC Residual (n=19)</td>
<td>.51</td>
<td>.66*</td>
<td>.61**</td>
<td>.63**</td>
<td>.65**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.77*</td>
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* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

• We model the relationship between HR practices and achievement growth using a variety of assessments and statistical models
HR Practices & Student Achievement Gains (part 1 of 2)

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>β</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>β</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Mission-Driven</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Info Rich</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Empowerment</td>
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<td>0.38</td>
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<tr>
<td>% Incentivist</td>
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<td>0.41</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRL 2014</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 Pre-Test</td>
<td>0.90*</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at the .05 level.

- No statistically significant relationship between HR practices and ISAT or PSAE scale scores after controlling for poverty and prior test results.
HR Practices & Student Achievement Gains (part 2 of 2)

- Statistically significant relationship between incentivist practices and math gains (relative to the state as a whole)
  - Coefficient for % Incentivist Practices is consistently large and positive in models using state tests, but not on those using NWEA

- Taken together, these results suggest that incentivist practices may have some positive association with math achievement gains, but this is largely dependent on how school achievement is being measured
  - There is little evidence from these analyses that any of the other set of HR practices consistently affects school achievement gains

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Mission-Driven</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>p</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-0.04</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Info Rich</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Empowerment</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Incentivist</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.52*</td>
<td>0.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRL 2014</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05.
Discussion

• The findings from this study indicate that HR management in Illinois charter schools is more complex and varied than this common perception would suggest.
  – Some charters are utilizing their flexibility
  – Many missions → many definitions of “mission-driven” practices
  – Different HR practices from new generation of charter schools – moving away from incentivist practices

• Illinois needs better data systems
  – PARCC and LDS should help
  – Will facilitate more (and better) research on the impact of HR (and other) organization practices statewide

• Principals need HR management skills
  – Plus time and autonomy to exercise them

• Many HR practices from the charter school sector – particularly around teacher support, empowerment, and leadership opportunities – address perceived weaknesses in the teaching profession
  – Driven by strategy or by necessity?
  – We need data on teachers’ perceptions
  – More research needed, but likely something to learn