Golden Gate University School of Law GGU Law Digital Commons

GGU Law Review Blog

Student Scholarship

10-25-2012

Reevaluating the Evaluations

Andy Brunner-Brown Golden Gate University School of Law, lawreview@ggu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalcommons.law.ggu.edu/ggu_law_review_blog Part of the <u>Education Law Commons</u>

Recommended Citation

Brunner-Brown, Andy, "Reevaluating the Evaluations" (2012). *GGU Law Review Blog*. Paper 4. http://digitalcommons.law.ggu.edu/ggu_law_review_blog/4

This Blog Post is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship at GGU Law Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in GGU Law Review Blog by an authorized administrator of GGU Law Digital Commons. For more information, please contact jfischer@ggu.edu.

GOLDEN GATE UNIVERSITY LAW REVIEW

👔 ABOUT

SUBMISSIONS SPECIAL FEATURES

ATURES PRINT EDITION

POSTS

Reevaluating the Evaluations

🕖 OCTOBER 25, 2012 BY ANDY BRUNNER-BROWN 💭 0 COMMENTS

Educators are great assets. Among the wide variety of assignments teachers face, they teach, nurture, discipline, and lead children. This costs tax dollars. Teachers must be held accountable for this funding—just like Big Bird. Quantifying teacher performance is relatively easy with modern standardized tests, student evaluations, and the opportunity for professionals to observe courses. By placing performance accountability on individual teachers through measured data, this education policy seems to provide incentives for teacher performance and reasons for schools to fire underperforming teachers.

But these data ineffectively measure the nuances in teacher performance and they fail to understand the fluctuations in student performance, which can be caused by number of external factors. Instead, education policy should promote teacher and district success by providing training resources that build upon our existing assets and to enhance outcomes.

Teacher performance evaluations are the new thing. In the last three years, 36 states and the District of Columbia have adopted new teacher evaluations. Once argued to be an immeasurable "art," teaching can now be easily measured to identify good and bad teachers. Simultaneously, this will help school districts keep great teachers and fire bad teachers; both great and bad teachers are often unnoticed for years, until they switch schools or a problem finally arises.

But maybe these systems miss the point of teaching and do not adequately address teachers' needs—or even students' needs. When asked after his keynote address at a Save Our Schools march whether teacher job insecurity would increase performance, Matt Damon described why teachers even teach:

So you think job insecurity is what makes me work hard? I want to be an actor. That's not an incentive. That's the thing. See, you take this MBA-style thinking, right? It's the problem with ed policy right now, this intrinsically paternalistic view of problems that are much more complex than that. It's like saying a teacher is going to get lazy when they have tenure. A teacher wants to teach. I mean, why else would you take a shitty salary and really long hours and do that job unless you really love to do it?

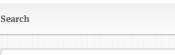
Instead of using "MBA-style thinking" of teacher performance, legislatures should implement Ph.D.-style thinking and utilize data on what creates great classrooms. Instead of just asking which teachers are underperforming, more questions should be asked to determine why the teachers are underperforming and how to make all teachers perform better.

If teachers want to teach, then policy should stop micromanaging teachers and start to fully support teachers. And if the goal is to create a good education system, then policy should focus on positive support for teachers (and students), not negative support.

Positive support programs might still evaluate teachers, but more importantly, they can determine what teachers need in order to better perform in the classroom. Certain teachers might need more supplies, others might need more training; certain districts might need more teachers to reduce class sizes, others might need more after school programs. Negative support programs, however, stigmatize and punish certain behaviors with punishment (loss of a job for a teacher or loss of class time for a student) without providing the retooling necessary. Simply put, the problem is not solved but just pushed under the rug.

Altogether, teachers and school districts need more support, first in high standards to meet the future demands of the nation and then in infrastructure and funding. No matter what, harshly punishing the teacher on account of poor performance for year or two is the opposite of what education policy needs. Such tactics dump valuable but under performing assets when cheaper

http://ggulawreview.org/2012/10/25/reevaluating-the-evaluations/



Recent Posts

- A CC-Pain: Abuse of C.C.P. § 170.6
 - Peremptory Challenges
- = Employee Rights: If Nobody Knows,
 - Who Cares?
- Space Rock Mining: A Land Rush Without Title
- Remove Time Limits on Reunification; Choose

Guardianship over Adoption

- It's Still Perilous to Catch a Lyft in
- San Francisco

| Archives | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| – March 2014 | |
| = February 2014 | |
| January 2014 | |
| November 2013 | |
| October 2013 | |
| April 2013 | |
| March 2013 | |
| February 2013 | |
| - January 2013 | |
| October 2012 | |

| tegories | |
|----------------|--|
| GGU Law Review | |
| Ninth Circuit | |

Authors

Reevaluating the Evaluations | Golden Gate University Law Review

| adjustments can be made | for greater long-term gains. | | Andy Brunner-Brown |
|--|---|--|---|
| Share this: | | cassieheuckroth erikfaussner Mark Wilson | |
| Email Twitter | f Facebook in LinkedIn 8+ | | |
| | | | Executive Online Editor |
| 2 bloggers like this. | | Joanne Badua | |
| | | | = jefftye |
| Related | | | Kristina Maalouf |
| Invest in Education In "GGU Law Review" | Hero Athletes In "GGU Law Review" | Lying in the Sun In "GGU Law Review" | Laura Patty |
| III 000 Law Review | III OOO Law Keview | III OOO Law Keview | Mark Heisey |
| | | | Richard Miyasaki |
| 🚺 GGU Law Review | 0 | education, evaluation, save our schools, teachers | Stephen Butts |
| | | | Lee Howery |
| Rational Criminal Justice | | Invest in Education | GGU LAW Golden Gate University Law Review |
| No comments yet Be th | e first to leave a reply! | | Vou like this. |
| ve a Reply | | | Follow us on Twitter |
| ter your comment here | | | Tweets |
| | | | |
| | | 1. | GGU CGU Law Review 24 Mar |
| | | | GGU Law Review 24 Mar @GGULawReview A CC-Pain: Abuse of C.C.P. § 170.6 Peremptory Challenges wp.me/p2rEUu-6V via @GGULawReview |

olden Gate University Law Review.

Blog at WordPress.com. The Headlines Then