

## FINAL DRAFT: TNTP OPEN LETTER

Uncertain economic times and increased global competition underscore the need for every child to have access to a high-quality education as a priority for our community. Today, those without a high school degree are three times more likely to be unemployed and as much as five times more likely to live in poverty as those who graduate with a bachelor's degree.

Ending education inequality and ensuring educational excellence for every child has never been more urgent. Yet all too often, we rehash old differences that block community progress.

Recently, Cincinnati Public Schools, the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers, and a coalition of local and national non-profit organizations, supported a groundbreaking study by The New Teacher Project (TNTP) – a nationally-recognized, non-partisan education organization. TNTP surveyed more than 1,200 CPS teachers, principals and administrators to understand their current challenges and to seek their ideas for innovative solutions.

As a result, Cincinnati has an unprecedented opportunity to unite behind specific action items to improve teaching and learning and institute meaningful improvements in our public school system. Stronger schools and a better educated workforce are within our reach.

Acknowledging that teacher quality matters more than any other school factor in student success or failure, the TNTP report provides a roadmap for policy reforms and changes to the teachers' contract that lay the groundwork for dramatic improvements. Key recommendations from the report focus on a few important areas, including:

- Strengthening teacher effectiveness by adopting an evaluation system based on results – a system that rewards excellent teachers, encourages innovation, and ties teacher compensation, development and advancement to student achievement.
- Providing greater flexibility to address chronically low-performing schools through alternative structures, school redesigns, adaptable staffing and new school options that provide more choice for parents and their children.

These recommendations are not controversial. In fact, they are consistent with the policy changes that President Obama and Education Secretary Duncan are pursuing in Washington and have been embraced by many districts throughout the country.

As Cincinnati Public Schools and the Cincinnati Federation of Teachers engage in contract negotiations over the next several months, we urge the entire community to support real change that will provide every child in our community access to a superior education. We must create a culture of high expectations which recognizes that every child has the ability to succeed in school and in life. The children of our city deserve no less.

Please join us in a Community Conversation on April 8<sup>th</sup> at TBD (time) at TBD (school) to discuss this important report and how we can chart a path forward together. A copy of The New Teacher Project Cincinnati Public Schools Report can be found at...