

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: The Fate of Ineffective Teachers; Will It Be Different in Indiana?

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It has been widely publicized that approximately 98% of the teachers in the United States are rated as satisfactory (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009). This has led many Americans to think that there are very few ineffective teachers in the United States. But is this true? This study indicated that a majority of the principals in the state of Indiana (56.6%) have ineffective teachers in their schools. When ineffective teachers are allowed to stay in the classroom for multiple years, a lot of students are adversely affected by these decisions (Peske & Haycock, 2006). This research focused on defining teacher effectiveness from the perspective of school principals. Are Indiana principals competent to identify effective and ineffective teachers? This research indicated that over 94% of the principals agreed, "Without hesitation, they were able to identify effective and ineffective teachers".

When principals were asked about six common aspects of the teaching practice that lead to effectiveness, the *ability to engage students* was the overwhelming factor that 68% of the principals indicated as most important. The other factors included achievement score growth, ability to establish quality relationships with students, content knowledge, planning skills, and classroom management skills.

What has historically happened to ineffective teachers in Indiana, specific to their contract status?

Currently a very small percentage of teachers are being counseled out of the profession by their

principals, and even fewer teachers are having their contracts canceled. More specifically, 92.2% of principals indicated that they counseled out less than 3% of their teachers, and 95.5% of Indiana principals indicated that they recommended contract cancellations for less than 3% of their teachers last year.

Lastly, principals were asked if they would make recommendations for more teacher contract cancellations as a result of the changes in Indiana laws that define teacher effectiveness. Only 23.8% of principals indicated that the changes in law would cause them to more frequently recommend contract cancellations.

Three hundred twenty K-12 public school principals were randomly selected and mailed a 36-question survey. One hundred ninety-one principals (59.7%) completed the survey. The comprehensive survey results are included in this study.