

## Public Education Foundation – *TeachHere* Fact Sheet

*Teach/Here* is a new program that will be launched in summer 2010 in two Tennessee communities as part of those school districts' ongoing school reform and human capital improvement efforts. *Teach/Here* models a national, research-based movement to rethink the recruitment, preparation and support of teachers for high need schools through what is called teacher residency programs. *Teach/Here-Chattanooga* and *Teach/Here-Knoxville* will recruit nontraditional teaching candidates from premier colleges and universities and from STEM-related businesses locally and across the country and then prepare them to become effective math and science teachers, through rigorous, master's level course work and a year-long classroom apprenticeship under the tutelage of a trained mentor-teacher. Similar to the concept of medical residencies, the candidates – or residents – will work and learn in small cohort groups at selected Learning Academy public schools. The residents will graduate with a master's degree plus State of TN teaching certification and will then be deployed to teach in district schools that have critical teacher shortages in math and science. Each district aims to prepare 10-20 new math and science teachers during the first year, with increasing numbers and expanding to elementary schools as the program continues.

The *Teach/Here* partnership is made possible by a grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) and local funders, including the Benwood Foundation. NSF's Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program opened this year a new category of funding for university/district/nonprofit partnerships that had the interest and capacity to develop a new way of preparing expert math and science teachers, which NSF calls "Teaching Fellows/Master Teaching Fellows Program." The *Teach/Here* partnership is one of only three sites in the nation awarded the prestigious NSF planning grant. The Chattanooga-based Benwood Foundation has made a matching planning grant.

The *Teach/Here* partnership is unique in Tennessee and the nation in another way; it is the only two-site program and will serve as an example to other communities in this regard. While other new and existing teacher residency programs concentrate in one school district, *Teach/Here* aims to build a new kind of collaboration where each district shares with the other its particular strengths and strategies. As the university partner, UTK will work in both locations, building a shared curriculum that is delivered locally and adjusted locally to be responsive to local context but subject to shared assessments and accountability. The Public Education Foundation serves as the lead nonprofit partner to build the program in both locations, direct the recruitment process, and manage the *Teach/Here* Steering Committee. Eventually there will be a director and other support staff for each site. The Ochs Center for Metropolitan Studies will be the program evaluator for both locations.

The *Teach/Here* partnership has been invited as one of only a very few selected sites in the country to participate in a year-long training process offered by the Urban Teacher Residency United organization. The UTRU institutes help future sites learn with and from the premier examples of this model, the current teacher residency programs in Boston, Chicago and Denver. At the institutes, the partners gain insight into strategies for recruiting teachers and marketing the program, developing the curriculum in terms of both coursework and classroom apprenticeship structure, selecting and training mentor teachers, choosing training academy school sites, developing assessments and an accountability system, and managing the university/district/nonprofit partnership in such a way that all share ownership and responsibility.

*Teach/Here* is governed by a Steering Committee. Additionally, each location has created a local Design Team, and there is also a Curriculum Committee and a Resources Committee. All committees include representatives of the district – central office administrators, principals, teachers, and human resources personnel; university representatives from both the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Education; staff from the Public Education Foundation; and researchers from the Ochs Center. A senior aide to the TN Governor has been indirectly involved as well. Overtures have been made to representatives of local businesses and community development groups, and some of them will be added to the teams or involved in other ways. The Chattanooga Design Team is further informed and supported by a complementary group of district/community persons who are looking at other components of a teaching quality strategy in the school district.

Ensuring a foundation for success of the teacher residency program in Chattanooga and Knoxville is the demonstrated progress of the comprehensive school reform efforts in both locations. In Chattanooga's Hamilton County Department of Education, school reform efforts have been underway for more than eight years and currently touch nearly every one of the 81 schools in the 41,000 county-wide district. All 16 high schools are part of a process called Schools for a New Society, which has created a Single Path Diploma policy, launched 9th grade and business-related academies in all schools, and resulted in a 24% increase in 2007 in diplomas

awarded since 2003, with 73% of those 2007 graduates enrolled in colleges. Likewise all 21 middle schools are part of the Middle Schools for a New Society effort to assure that their students will successfully transition to the high schools. Finally, 16 of the highest need elementary schools are part of the Benwood Initiative (which also included the Osborne Fellows Initiative for some of their teachers). The first phase of that effort, with 8 schools, has resulted in 2008 scores showing 81.8% of 3rd-5th graders scoring proficient/advanced in literacy and 81.3% of 3rd-5th graders scoring proficient/advanced in math. These results have been lauded by Education Trust, the Achievement Alliance, and others, and featured on the PBS Merrow Report; the results were validated by a study done by Education Sector in 2008. Hamilton County has also been using for many years the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) data, through SAS, as a measurement indicator for awarding bonuses to high performing teachers in urban elementary and middle schools.

In Knox County, there are 86 schools serving 55,000 students. Knox County students lead the state in ACT scores and the district's work to improve ACT achievement has been a model for the ACT organization and other districts in the nation. A current focus for the district is on increasing graduation rates. Knox County schools served as the beta site for the research and testing that resulted in William Sanders' Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS); value-added is now used for school and teacher assessment across Tennessee and as a model for other states and districts. In 2004 Knoxville developed a community-wide effort called the Great Schools Partnership as a support organization to the school district; Every School a Great School Plan followed. Additionally, four schools are part of the Milken Foundation Teacher Advancement Program, and KCS has been selected to be part of the Stanford University School Redesign LEADS Network.

The University of Tennessee at Knoxville is the state's flagship research institution. It comes to the work of developing a teacher residency program with a history of related experience and expertise and with a national reputation for the excellence of its programs. For many years, the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences has structured its teacher preparation program as a five-year bachelor's/master's combination degree, with the fifth year entirely in the classroom. The university's College of Arts and Sciences has for many years worked collaboratively with the College of Education in school-based programs. The five-year program at UTK has been documented by SAS to produce secondary math and science teachers that outperform non-UTK teachers teaching in Tennessee as measured by TVAAS.

The Public Education Foundation is the nonprofit partner to both school districts and the university. PEF's mission is to challenge, support and improve the public schools so that all students succeed in learning and in life. PEF works collaboratively with both central office and individual schools to develop plans, provide research-based innovation and offer professional development, in order to affect changes that yield measurable improvement in student achievement. It has been a key partner in all of the Hamilton County school reform efforts described above. Founded in 1988, PEF's history includes facilitating a plan for the merger of the former Chattanooga city and Hamilton County school systems in 1996, guiding a community-wide process to develop student learning standards in the new district, and launching peer networks and a leadership development initiative for all educators. To support this work, PEF has engaged a variety of national and local funders, as well as community and business partners.

The Ochs Center for Metropolitan Studies is based in Chattanooga but provides a full array of research and data analysis for governments and nonprofit organization across the southeast region and beyond. Its work provides an example for the impact that mid-sized cities can have as a state/regional nexus for research, information gathering and planning. The Ochs Center's core product is the State of Chattanooga Region Report, which compares conditions in Hamilton County with 13 other benchmark jurisdictions around the country. Survey design and analysis, program evaluation, focus groups, economic modeling, budgetary and operational reviews are among the organization's other core competencies.

Before embarking on this effort, the Chattanooga-based Ochs Center for Metropolitan Studies conducted a comprehensive study to identify how the Chattanooga school district was currently recruiting and hiring its new teachers and where and how well they were being prepared. The research study was an internal document for district planning; it concluded with many recommendations for a comprehensive teacher quality initiative – including changes in state policy, relationships with local colleges and universities, and district practices – but foremost among them was a recommendation that the district recruit and prepare some of its own teachers specifically for service in its most hard-to-staff schools, and train them in a way that ensures they will learn from master teachers and be committed to remain in high poverty schools. The findings were specific to Chattanooga but are applicable to other districts, like Knoxville, where there is a need to focus attention on teaching quality especially for hard-to-fill positions and in hard-to-staff urban schools.