

**SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION REFORM & PUBLIC SCHOOL FINANCE**

Monday, February 27, 2006  
Capitol Extension, E1.036  
9:00 a.m.

Handout from:

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Good morning—my name is Dr. Tammy Kreuz and I am here representing the UT System's Institute for Public School Initiatives. The Institute for Public School Initiatives (IPSI) is a relatively new office within the UT System dedicated to P-16 Initiatives aimed at improving college readiness/access for students in Texas. I am primarily responsible for the development and oversight of educator quality initiatives. I was invited here today to discuss: (1) the research on what matters to/motivates teachers (other than money); and (2) a comprehensive research-based program that has been shown to have a positive impact on teacher performance.

One of the most important factors—if not the most important—in the success of American public schools is the quality of our nation's teachers. I would like to thank Senator Shapiro and the rest of the committee for hearing my testimony. As a former teacher, I am honored to be part of this important endeavor that you are seeking information on. I understand there is a working group assigned to the task of exploring teacher incentives and I commend you on your efforts to explore potential state-level policy initiatives aimed at increasing teacher quality in the field.

Support for teacher salary increases/financial compensation: Before I dive into the research on what matters to teachers (other than money), I'd like to briefly recap the support for financial compensation in increasing teacher quality. As you may know, there is a large body of research that supports the notion of increasing salaries and other forms of financial incentives for improving the quality of the teaching workforce. We know that many young college graduates are not attracted to the teaching profession due to the low salary schedule and that many teachers decide to leave the profession because of low pay. In order to make the teaching profession more attractive to qualified individuals, financial compensation that is competitive with markets in private industry is essential.

However, even though salary heavily influences a teacher's decision about whether or not to stay, there are a number of other factors which influence the decision of teachers to leave

public schools. Research indicates that teacher mobility is much more strongly related to characteristics of the students, particularly race and achievement, than to salary, although salary exerts a modest impact once compensating differentials are taken into account.

What matters to teachers: However, in addition to financial compensation, there are also other factors that are important to the teaching profession that should be considered. Even though there are studies which prove that salary is a major reason for leaving the profession, there are also organizational factors which affect this decision.

- *Working conditions*—A recent study of teachers reveals that working conditions matter more than salary. Working conditions can include a number of different things including: support of campus leadership, collegiality, class size, student achievement levels, opportunities for professional growth, commute time, classroom supplies, etc. According to sociologists, current school environments are a reward-scarce setting for professional work and often seem to work against teachers' best efforts to grow professionally and improve student learning. A number of principals and superintendents have begun to realize the effect of teacher job satisfaction on their retention rates. Some administrators at the district and school level have begun to focus more on the school culture in an effort to increase morale and teacher job satisfaction. Teachers have cited feedback as the factor most strongly related to job satisfaction. Autonomy and collegiality are also cited as important factors for teacher job satisfaction. Autonomy is viewed as freedom to develop collegial relationships to accomplish tasks. The literature suggests that collegiality is directly linked to effective schools.
- *Teacher resources*—Some researchers support the idea of increasing teacher resources as the best method of increasing student achievement. Examples of teacher resources as defined here include: professional development, school-university partnerships, and learning opportunities developed in response to teachers' and principals' felt needs. Some researchers have argued that investments in additional teacher training and professional development will lead to even greater gains in student achievement for each dollar spent. Empirical evidence supports the hypothesis that additional educational resources have much stronger effects on minority and low-income students than on more advantaged, non-minority students. It is important to note that research supports the notion that learning is affected by how resources are used in instruction, not by their mere presence or absence.

- *Opportunities for participatory management*—In addition to increasing teacher knowledge and expertise, participatory management has proven to be a successful method of improving productivity and teacher satisfaction in schools. A key element of participatory (or decentralized) management is that it is said to provide a more professional work environment for teachers. Some research shows that when principals effectively used shared governance strategies and participatory management, teachers feel energized and motivated, and their sense of ownership and empowerment increases. By creating a sense of ownership for teachers, there could be a substantial increase in job satisfaction, which could lead to increased teacher retention rates and a decrease in the current teacher shortage.

Other considerations: There is also a growing body of research that supports the inclusion of induction/mentoring programs, multiple career paths, and more meaningful teacher evaluation in the teaching profession. Induction and mentoring programs have been shown to increase the level of support and job satisfaction for new teachers and in some cases increase the retention rates. The consensus in the research about multiple career paths is that employees who have opportunities for career advancement are motivated to improve the quality of their work. Because feedback has been cited as an important motivator for teachers, it would seem that teacher evaluation is the obvious vehicle for providing this feedback. The research supports the amalgamation of these elements to increase the quality of the teaching force. The elements implemented in isolation are not nearly as effective as the comprehensive reform. The Milken Family Foundation has taken this research into consideration and developed a highly-effective systemic model for addressing the teacher quality conundrum: the program is called the Teacher Advancement Program.

Teacher Advancement Program: The Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) is a research-based comprehensive reform program aimed at increasing the quality of the teaching force. The program's goal is to draw more talented people to the teaching profession—and keep them there—by making it more attractive and rewarding to be a teacher. TAP provides the opportunity for good teachers to earn higher salaries and advance professionally, just as in other careers, without leaving the classroom. At the same time, TAP helps teachers by giving them opportunities to learn better teaching strategies and holds them accountable for their performance.

The principles of TAP are highly interrelated and dependent upon each other. Although elements of TAP are found in other school reform efforts, TAP is unique because it combines these various reforms into a single, comprehensive, systemic model. The program was brought to Texas as a pilot and implemented in three campuses during the 2005-06 school year. At the request of the Governor, the TAP pilot is being expanded to six additional campuses in Texas during the 2006-07 school year.

A few final thoughts:

1. Working conditions can be directly affected by the quality of the campus leadership—consideration should be given to statewide leadership initiatives.
2. Learning is affected by how resources are used in instruction, not by their mere presence or absence—focus should not only be on increasing the quantity of resources, but rather the efficient and coordinated use of resources in schools.

Again, I commend you on your efforts to increase the quality of teachers in Texas public schools. In addition to increased financial compensation, initiatives targeted at organizational factors hold great promise for improving teachers' professional motivation. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you

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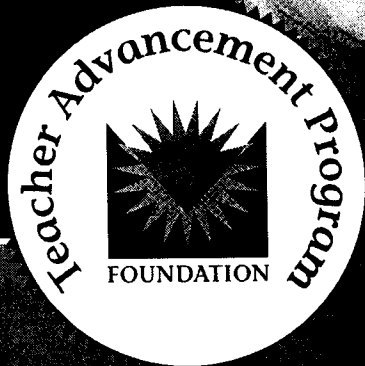
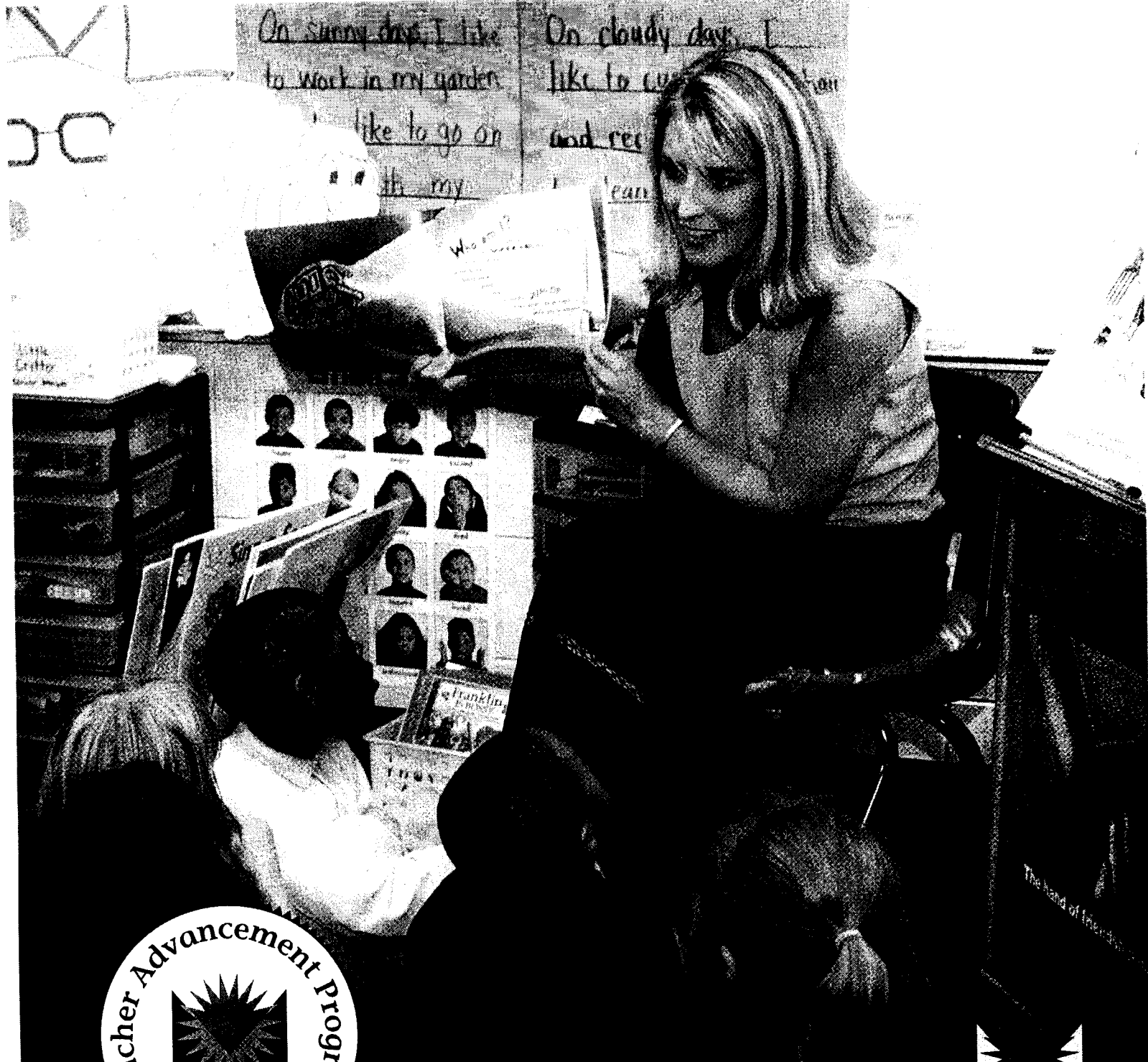
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*Teacher excellence  
Student achievement  
Opportunities for all.*

**"In the past**, teachers worked mostly in isolation, with little feedback on their performance.

**With TAP**, teachers are working together to improve their classroom instruction, and they are getting timely feedback on their performance...a valuable component of teacher accountability. This is making a huge difference in the classroom!"

**"Only by**

**offering teachers**

sustained opportunities for career advancement, professional growth, teacher accountability and competitive compensation can we attract large numbers of capable professionals into America's classrooms and then create the environment for them to thrive. The goal of the TAP Foundation is nothing less than to have a highly skilled, highly motivated and competitively compensated teacher in every classroom in the country."

*Lowell Milken, Founder,  
Teacher Advancement Program Foundation*

## TAP Supports Teachers

**W**e all want the best possible education for our children, and research has shown that the single most important school-based factor for student success is having a talented teacher in the classroom. But unless we act now, we will come far short of having the talented teachers required to ensure that all children receive the high-quality education they need and deserve. This is especially challenging in high-need schools where nearly three-quarters of math classes are taught by teachers who lack a major—or even a minor—in math. Making sure all children are taught by a well-trained and strongly motivated teacher is crucial to closing the achievement gap between low-income and high-income students.

To address this problem, the Teacher Advancement Program Foundation is working with education, business and community leaders to implement a bold new strategy to help schools and districts attract, develop, motivate and retain high-quality teachers. Begun in a few schools in 1999, TAP has expanded to more than 100 campuses impacting over 3,100 teachers and 45,000 students. The Teaching Commission—a national panel of educators, policymakers and business leaders—singled out TAP as "an ambitious effort to improve student performance by attracting and retaining larger numbers of motivated and talented teachers" in its recent report, "Teaching At Risk: A Call to Action."

TAP's goal is to keep talented people in the teaching profession—and draw

more of them there—by making it more attractive and rewarding to be a teacher. Under the TAP system, good teachers can earn higher salaries and advance professionally, just as in other careers. And they can do it without leaving the classroom where they are needed most.

At the same time, TAP helps teachers become the best they can be by giving them opportunities to learn the most effective teaching strategies and holding them accountable for their performance. Student achievement growth can only be built on a foundation of strong teachers. In turn, teachers must be adequately supported to provide educational opportunities and drive success for all students.

## Teachers Support TAP

**A**s TAP grows, so does its support among teachers, administrators and parents. The more educators learn about successful instructional strategies through TAP, the more they see the program as a gateway to success in their careers. TAP provides educators with the instructionally specific strategies and support they do not often receive in their pre-service teacher education courses or through traditional teacher in-service professional development. It addresses the concerns of new educators entering the classroom and provides ongoing support and development for more experienced professionals.

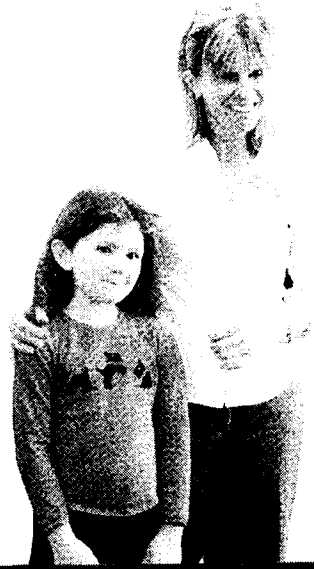
Because of TAP's attractive opportunities and incentives, teachers play an active role in bringing the program to their schools and take the lead in refining and strengthening its core elements.





# TAP Supports Teachers

## through the implementation of four key elements:



**Multiple career paths** give qualified teachers opportunities to take on more responsibility and get compensated for doing so.

Depending upon their interests, abilities and accomplishments, teachers can move up the ranks from career to mentor to master teacher. Each position requires greater qualifications with additional roles and responsibilities, while compensation increases as well. Good teachers achieve more responsibility and more pay without having to leave the classroom.

"I love that there are opportunities for teachers other than simply climbing the ladder into administration. I wanted to impact what was happening in the classrooms, and specifically to encourage more good practices in classrooms. I feel like I have expanded my realm of influence by stepping into TAP."

- Heather Hacker, Master Teacher, Indianapolis, Indiana

**Ongoing applied professional growth** provides teachers with school-based professional development during the school day. Teachers meet weekly in small "cluster" groups, led by a master teacher working together to analyze student data, improve instruction, and learn new research-based instructional strategies that increase their students' academic achievement.

"Teachers feel that everything they're doing in cluster groups has a direct effect on their classroom and is helping instruction on a daily basis. Through cluster groups, they're learning new instructional strategies that they can take right back into the classroom and see the effects."

- Melissa Carpenter, Mentor Teacher, Gypsum, Colorado

**Instructionally focused accountability** ties teacher evaluations to teaching skills and student achievement. Evaluations are fair because criteria are clearly defined, and they are conducted four to six times during the year by multiple evaluators whom TAP trains and certifies.

With extensive input from classroom teachers, TAP has developed a comprehensive system for evaluating how well teachers instruct their students based on the *TAP Teaching Skills, Knowledge and Responsibility Standards*, as well as on the academic growth of their students.

"Although I've always worked hard and felt I was a good teacher, by studying the instructional rubric and applying it to my classroom, I have become a better teacher. We all have room to grow professionally and our students deserve the best we can offer them. TAP has helped me offer more to my students."

- Leslie Comeaux, Career Teacher, Lake Charles, Louisiana

**Performance-based compensation** provides bonuses to teachers who demonstrate their skills through classroom evaluations and who increase their students' academic growth over the course of the year. TAP's professional development is designed to support teachers in achieving these goals. TAP provides additional compensation to teachers according to their roles and responsibilities, their performance in the classroom, and the performance of their students.

"In public education, teachers seldom get a 'pat on the back' for a job well done. Through implementation of TAP's performance pay, we are not only seeing increases in academic growth, but our work is also getting validated in a very tangible way. Performance pay increases morale for the school and for everyone involved."

- Jason Culbertson, Master Teacher, Clinton, South Carolina

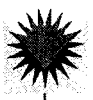
"TAP is the kind of embedded professional support, at the worksite and in the classroom, that teachers have wanted for a long time. The pay element is an added bonus."

Louise Sundin, President,  
Minneapolis Federation  
of Teachers, Minnesota

"TAP has helped me to refocus on and get even more excited about my own instruction. I like the opportunity to meet with peers to analyze instruction and its impact on students."

Nathie Peterson, Career Teacher,  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

"TAP has provided economic incentives that have helped me to continue to grow as a professional. I enjoy the opportunity to meet with my peers and my administrator to discuss my own and my students' growth. I feel that TAP has helped me to become a more effective teacher and a more effective leader."



## TAP Supports Student Achievement Growth

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By providing steady increases in teacher skills over time, TAP has helped schools and districts increase student achievement. Because teachers work in collegial groups and are evaluated based on school-wide achievement gains in addition to their individual classroom gains, collegiality and teamwork increase in TAP schools.

In addition, TAP provides a professional support system for teachers in "hard-to-staff" schools and enables the faculty to work as a team in addressing the most challenging achievement gaps. Excellent veteran teachers have moved to high-need schools that are implementing TAP in order to become master teachers and earn higher salaries through helping the most needy students achieve at higher levels.



## TAP Builds Partnerships

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In just five years, TAP has made tremendous strides in working with schools and building partnerships to meet the challenge of ensuring that every student has an excellent, well-compensated teacher.



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**"Last week, 73 teachers [at Rockefeller Magnet and Stephens Elementary in Little Rock, AR] got bonus checks worth up to \$5,000 [each] thanks to the Teacher Advancement Program. When the teachers heard the news and got their checks, they practically did a TAP dance. Imagine a world where an approach like TAP can keep the best teachers teaching and maybe even attract more good people to teaching."**

*Editorial, "TAP dance: Great news for great teachers"  
Arkansas Democrat Gazette, 12/22/04*

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**"In reality, TAP is a process rather than a program. It is not a 'prefabricated' program that has been implemented, but a process that has taken the four elements and developed and refined them into a systematic reform effort for our schools. We need to do things differently in order to improve performance. As parents, don't we want to see our children reach their best potential in school in order to help them in their life's journey? In the end, that is the reality of educating every student for success."**

*Commentary by John Brendza, Superintendent,  
Eagle County School District  
"Eagle County Schools has a bold mission: Educating Every  
Student for Success," Vail Daily, Colorado, 5/31/05*

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**"My school is in a rural, poverty-stricken area of the south. Our free/reduced ratio is around 78 percent. We are a Title I school. The positive changes I have seen in my school in just ten months since the implementation of TAP have been phenomenal. Many people ask me to tell them about the 'program' I work with, and my response is always that TAP is not a program—it is a process that provides teachers with the tools to be the most effective educators they can be."**

*Renee Kirby, Master Teacher, Hartsville, South Carolina*



## *Mission Statement*

**R**ecognizing that a quality teacher is the most important school-based factor impacting student achievement, the Teacher Advancement Program Foundation is committed to having a highly skilled, strongly motivated and competitively compensated teacher for every classroom in America.

The Teacher Advancement Program is a comprehensive, research-based school reform that seeks to attract talented people to the profession and then create an environment in which they can thrive. It does so by offering educators sustained opportunities for career advancement, ongoing school-based professional development, instructionally focused accountability and performance pay. Hence, the Teacher Advancement Program enhances the learning of all children and contributes to the closing of achievement gaps.

The Teacher Advancement Program Foundation responds to the urgency and scope of such reforms by establishing public/private partnerships among educators, policymakers, corporations, governments, foundations and individuals to ensure a quality educational opportunity for all students.



**"High-quality teachers must be recognized and rewarded for their classroom performance and the amount their students are learning. TAP does that in an environment that provides an opportunity for all teachers to grow and advance in their profession and for all students to learn and advance in the classroom."**

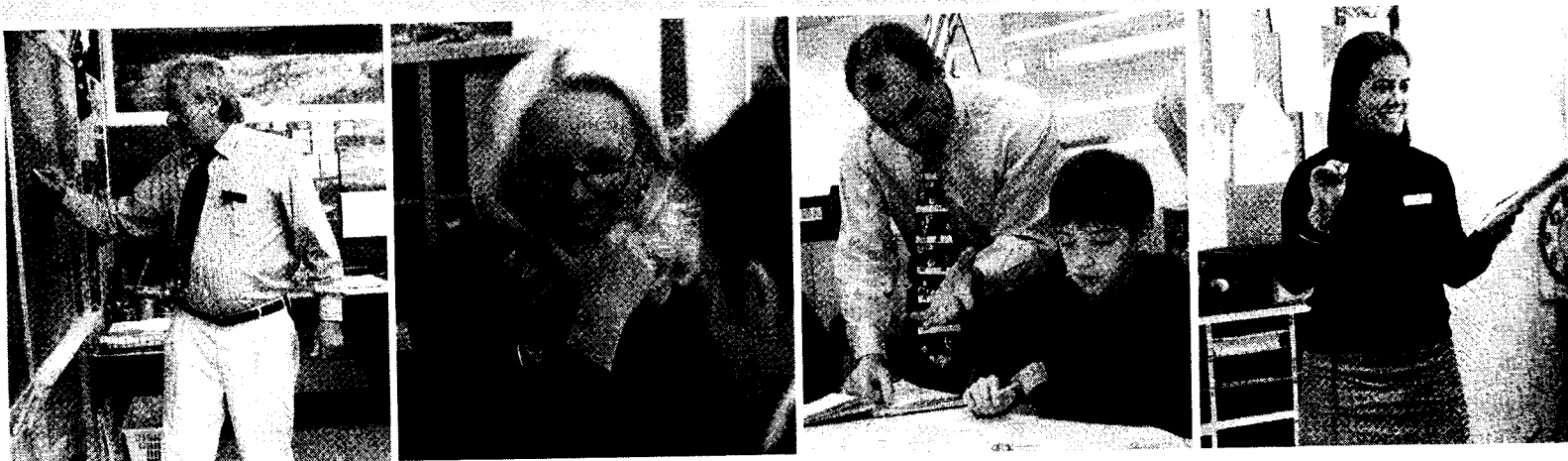
*Dr. Lewis C. Solmon, President,  
Teacher Advancement*

**"Tapping into TAP is a smart move for Minnesota, a way to build on the educational strengths the state already enjoys and as an innovative means for addressing the coming teacher shortage."**

*Editorial, "Private-sector solution for public school woes"  
St. Paul Pioneer Press, Minnesota, 9/15/04*

**"We must find ways to recruit high-quality public school teachers, retain them for career-long service and help them get better every year. The Teacher Advancement Program rewards individual teachers for their strides in this area. In the end, it is our public school students who will see the most benefit from this program's successful implementation and expansion."**

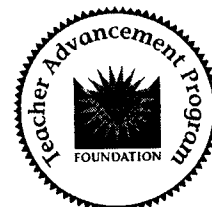
*Editorial, "Grant rewards right approach to help teachers"  
The State, South Carolina, 7/13/03*



## *Become a TAP Partner Join TAP Today*

The TAP Foundation welcomes individuals, corporations and foundations as partners in this effort to ensure that there is a high-quality teacher in every classroom in America.

To join TAP or learn more about the program,  
visit [www.tapschools.org](http://www.tapschools.org) or call (310) 570-4860.



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