

Approaches to Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness: A Research Synthesis

The method of evaluating the effectiveness of teachers has changed over time along with the definition of effective teaching. This is due in part to increasing state and federal attention to school-level and classroom-level accountability for student learning. Besides a lack of clear consensus on what an effective teacher is and does there is not a generally agreed-upon method for evaluating teacher effectiveness. Commonly used methods include classroom observations designed to measure teacher practices against some standard of effective teaching and value-added models that set out to measure the contribution of individual teachers to their students' achievement gains.

This research synthesis examines the various ways in which effective teaching can be conceptualized and measured. By evaluating the research on teacher effectiveness and the different instruments used to measure it, this synthesis contributes to the discussion of appropriate rigor and relevance of measures for different purposes. The authors also describe how a variety of measures have been evaluated, explaining why certain measures are most suitable for certain purposes, and suggesting how the results of the study might be used to inform the national conversation about teacher effectiveness.

The research synthesis discusses at length the rationale and goals of the study, important definitions and specifications, proposal of a comprehensive definition of teacher effectiveness, data collection and methods, validity and considerations in measuring teacher effectiveness, methods of measuring teacher effectiveness, considering a comprehensive measure of teacher effectiveness, and policy recommendations and implications.

Goe, L., Bell, C., & Little, O. (2008, June). *Approaches to evaluating teacher effectiveness: A research synthesis*. Washington, DC: National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.