

How Boomers Can Contribute To Student Success

Emerging Encore Career Opportunities
In K-12 Education

AUTHOR

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MetLife Foundation and Civic Ventures, a think tank on boomers, work and social purpose

METHODOLOGY

This paper is based on an analysis of selected data from the federal Schools and Staffing Survey; original research by NCTAF; plus three case studies and the interviews conducted to develop them.

KEY FINDINGS

- **The problem:** Teacher turnover is rampant, and the nation's teaching population is older than it has ever been, leading to the potential for mass retirements. More and better recruitment will help but won't prevent a devastating brain drain.
- **The solution:** Boomers – both veteran educators and professionals from other sectors – are needed (and eager) to help students achieve and to strengthen school capacity in encore careers. Such careers combine personal fulfillment, social impact and continued income, enabling people to put their passion to work for the greater good. Creative staffing approaches, from part-time work to the widespread adoption of several new job categories that make the best use of boomer experience and talent, could go a long way toward improving student success.

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(over)



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- **Emerging encore careers:** New encore job categories include adjunct teacher, teacher coach, content adviser, project coordinator and tutor, plus a variety of other roles from grant writer to community liaison.
- **Case studies:** The paper includes three detailed case studies. They focus on Patricia Walsh, a veteran teacher who is now a part-time teacher coach working for a nonprofit that consults with the Milwaukee, Wisc., schools; George Auchampaugh, a longtime scientist who serves as a high school math and science tutor with the Santa Fe Alliance for Science in New Mexico; and Isaac Levy, who became an adjunct teacher with the Adjunct Teaching Initiative in Arizona after retiring as an engineer.
- **Lessons learned:** NCTAF's research leads to the following conclusions:
 - 1) Many veteran teachers would stay if they had new challenges or part-time opportunities.
 - 2) The boomers who are becoming teachers in their encore careers make up a promising new addition to the profession.
 - 3) Entirely new roles for encore workers can build strong learning communities in schools and help new teachers stay on the job.
 - 4) Boomers can also provide management expertise – with finances, marketing, team-building, etc. – in ways schools are just beginning to tap.

To download the full study, and get more information on three companion studies, go to www.encore.org/research.

QUOTABLE

- “It is time for teaching teams made up of veterans, novices and individuals from other fields to supplant the stand-alone teacher.”
- “We must revolutionize our human resources policies in education.”
- “Today millions of boomers want to work in encore careers in education, providing an unprecedented opportunity to create a critical mass of innovative arrangements that support teachers, leverage external resources and change teaching and learning for the better.”