**Case Study Background: Booker T. Washington Elementary**

Booker T Washington Elementary School is facing many challenges. Teacher turnover is high; student achievement is well below the state average; and the majority of students come from low income households. Take a moment to review the data included in the Elementary Data folder, which will be referenced throughout the case study and related data activities Data Set:

* ES- Department List
* ES- Staffing Report
* ES- Student Demographic
* ES- Teacher Evaluation
* ES- Teacher Qualifications
* ES- Turnover Snapshot
* ES-Student Achievement

It’s Januaryand the principal, Ms. Smith knows that the best schools in the district are already making plans for hiring. Some have been interviewing the December graduates from local colleges of education. Others have surveyed staff and have a good handle on their hiring needs for the next school year. Ms. Smith is new—this is her second year at the school. She and her leadership team know that the annual teacher turnover and the need to re-staff the school each year drains a lot of their time and attention away from other priorities. She wants to do a better job this year so she presents this problem to her leadership team.

*Key goal*: Find a new approach to hiring and assignment that results in strategic improvements, including an eventual decrease in teacher turnover and successful placement of effective teachers in appropriate assignments.

Principal Smith anticipates the following staffing changes:

* 3 confirmed vacancies to fill (Resulting from two veteran teachers retiring and an additional position being added).
  + 2 of these in Upper Elementary, 1 in early childhood
* Additional vacancies possible:
  + Last year a total of six teachers left the school for various reasons – the only absolute rule is that teachers have to resign by June 30 or risk their state certification

The team starts by reviewing historical datawhich includes the number of new teachers hired over the past ten years and length of stay at the school, highly qualified status versus teachers who were teaching outside of their certification area, how many long term substitutes the school employed, and annual evaluation ratings. *See Elementary Data folder: (ES-STAFFING REPORT, ES-TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS and ES-TEACHER EVALUATION)*

The school leadership team agrees on the following goals for a successful hiring process:

* To hire all teachers who scored at or near the top of the rating scale in their most recent annual evaluation, with at least three years of elementary content area experience.
* To hire teachers who stay at Booker T Washington for a minimum of three years
* To improve student achievement by hiring effective teachers

The work proceeds smoothly at first but gets harder when the team faces the question of what defines an “effective” teacher. A few considerations about how to define effectiveness include:

* Knowledge of local standards
* Evidence of ability to establish relationships with students
* Managing students’ needs and classroom behavior
* Ability to complement grade/subject level teams and become part of the school culture

Principal Smith wants to involve teachers in the hiring process, so she asks her leadership team to recruit teachers from the grades with known upcoming vacancies for volunteers to participate in the hiring process. The hiring team now includes members of the leadership team, a 5th grade teacher, two 4th grade teachers, a kindergarten teacher, and a pre-kindergarten teacher.