**Case Study Background: Booker T. Washington High School**

Booker T Washington High 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 High School Data folder, which will be referenced throughout the case study and related data activities Data Set.

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

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 initiates strategic improvements, including a decrease in teacher turnover and the selection of effective teachers for appropriate placements.

Principal Smith anticipates the following staffing changes:

* 4 confirmed vacancies for next year based on the departure of two math teachers (algebra and geometry); an English teacher, who also coaches the debate team; and the Spanish teacher, who organizes/sponsors a lot of clubs and extracurricular activities, including the prom and homecoming. One of the math teachers is an assistant basketball coach for the girls’ varsity basketball team.
* 2-3 additional vacancies possible (last year there were 7). The district has not asked teachers to commit for the following school year yet.

The team starts by reviewing staffing datawhich includes historical information about number of new teachers hired 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 High School Data folder*).

Your team has set goals for what would constitute a successful hiring process:

* To hire all teachers who scored near or at the highest rating in their most recent evaluation, with at least three years of experience in high school and the appropriate content area
* To hire teachers who will 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 as your team considers 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

Ms. Smith wants to involve the teachers from the affected departments in the hiring process, so she invites teachers from the math, English, and foreign languages departments to participate in the hiring process.