Russia

TEACHERS

SABER Report
2014

Policy Goals	Tomsk	Ivanovo	St. Petersburg
1. Setting Clear Expectations for Teachers While teachers have substantial time for other tasks outside of class time, official teacher duties do not include any of the most common tasks related to instructional improvement.	Established ●●●○	Established ●●●○	Established ●●●○
2. Attracting the Best into Teaching Although policies regarding career progression and three different pathways to enter the profession suggest the profession is an option for effective teachers, the minimum education requirement for primary school teachers suggest it is not attractive.	Established ●●●○	Established ●●●○	Established ●●●○
3. Preparing Teachers with Useful Training and Experience Low minimum education requirement for primary school teachers and indefinite requirements for practical experience suggest teachers may not begin their career adequately prepared.	Emerging ●●○○	Emerging ●●○○	Emerging ●●○○
4. Matching Teachers' Skills with Students' Needs Of the three, only Tomsk provides incentives to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools. None of the three provide incentives to attract greater numbers of teachers of critical shortage subjects.	Emerging ●●○○	Latent ●○○○	Latent ●○○○
5. Leading Teachers with Strong Principals National and subnational policies do not stipulate that principals should serve as instructional leaders or provide teachers with guidance.	Latent ●○○○	Latent ●○○○	Latent ●○○○
6. Monitoring Teaching and Learning All teachers are evaluated at least every five years, but there are no policies expecting principals to provide teachers with feedback.	Established ●●●○	Established ●●●○	Established ●●●○
7. Supporting Teachers to Improve Instruction Teachers are required to complete limited continuing professional development at least every five years; there are no policies to ensure that professional development activities are collaborative and focused on improving instruction.	Latent ●○○○	Emerging ●●○○	Emerging ●●○○
8. Motivating Teachers to Perform Teachers' performance can influence their promotions and compensation, and teachers can be dismissed for absenteeism, misconduct, and child abuse, but not poor performance.	Established ●●●○	Established ●●●○	Established ●●●○

Overview of SABER-Teachers

There is increasing interest across the globe in attracting, retaining, developing, and motivating great teachers. Student achievement has been found to correlate with economic and social progress (Hanushek & Woessmann 2007, 2009; Pritchett & Viarengo 2009; Campante & Glaeser 2009), and teachers are key: recent studies have shown that teacher quality is the main school-based predictor of student achievement and that several consecutive years of outstanding teaching can offset the learning deficits of disadvantaged students (Hanushek & Rivkin 2010; Rivkin et al. 2005; Nye et al. 2004; Rockoff 2004; Park & Hannum 2001; Sanders & Rivers 1996). However, achieving the right teacher policies to ensure that every classroom has a motivated, supported, and competent teacher remains a challenge, because evidence on the impacts of many teacher policies remains insufficient and scattered, the impact of many reforms depends on specific design features, and teacher policies can have very different impacts depending on the context and other education policies in place.

***SABER-Teachers* aims to help fill this gap by collecting, analyzing, synthesizing, and disseminating comprehensive information on teacher policies in primary and secondary education systems around the world**. SABER-Teachers is a core component of SABER (Systems Approach for Better Education Results), an initiative of the World Bank's Education Global Practice. SABER collects information about different education systems' policy domains, analyzes it to identify common challenges and promising solutions, and makes it widely available to inform countries' decisions on where and how to invest in order to improve education quality.

SABER-Teachers collects data on ten core teacher policy areas to offer a comprehensive descriptive overview of the teacher policies that are in place in each participating education system (see Box 1). Data are collected in each participating education system by a specialized consultant using a questionnaire that ensures comparability of information across different education systems. Data collection focuses on the rules and regulations governing teacher management systems. This information is compiled in a comparative database where interested stakeholders can access detailed information organized along relevant categories that describe how different education systems manage their teaching force, as well as copies of supporting documents. The full database is available at the SABER website.

Box 1. Teacher policy areas for data collection

1. Requirements to enter and remain in teaching
2. Initial teacher education
3. Recruitment and employment
4. Teachers' workload and autonomy
5. Professional development
6. Compensation (salary and non salary benefits)
7. Retirement rules and benefits
8. Monitoring and evaluation of teacher quality
9. Teacher representation and voice
10. School leadership

To offer informed policy guidance, SABER-Teachers analyzes these data to assess how well each system's teacher policies are oriented toward promoting student achievement, based on the global evidence to date. Specifically, SABER-Teachers assesses each education system's progress in achieving 8 Teacher Policy Goals (Box 2).

Box 2. Teacher policy goals for evaluation

1. Setting clear expectations for teachers
2. Attracting the best into teaching
3. Preparing teachers with useful training
4. Matching teachers' skills with students' needs
5. Leading teachers with strong principals
6. Monitoring teaching and learning
7. Supporting teachers to improve instruction
8. Motivating teachers to perform

The 8 Teacher Policy Goals are functions that all high-performing education systems fulfill to a certain extent in order to ensure that every classroom has a motivated, supported, and competent teacher. These goals were identified through a review of evidence of research studies on teacher policies, as well as analysis of policies of top-performing and rapidly improving education systems. Three criteria were used to identify the teacher policy goals: they had to be (i) linked to student performance through empirical evidence; (ii) a priority for resource allocation; and (iii) actionable, meaning that they identify actions that governments can take to improve education policy. The 8 Teacher Policy Goals exclude other objectives that countries might also want to pursue to increase the effectiveness of their teachers, but on which there is too little empirical evidence at this point to allow specific policy recommendations.

Figure 1: 8 Teacher Policy Goals

By classifying countries according to their performance on each of the 8 Teacher Policy Goals, SABER-Teachers can help diagnose the key challenges that countries face in ensuring they have effective teachers. For each policy goal, the SABER-Teachers team identified policy levers (actions that governments can take to reach these goals) and indicators (which measure the extent to which governments are making effective use of these policy levers). Using these policy levers and indicators, SABER-Teachers classifies education systems' progress toward achieving each of the 8 Teacher Policy Goals using a four-category scale (latent, emerging, established, and advanced). The scale assesses the extent to which a given education system has put in place the type of teacher policies that are known to be related to improved student outcomes (Annex 1). The main objective of this assessment is to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher policies of an education system and pinpoint possible areas for improvement. For a more detailed report on the 8 Teacher Policy Goals, policy levers and indicators, as well as the evidence base supporting them, see Vegas *et al*. (2012).

The main focus of SABER-Teachers is on policy design, rather than on policy implementation. SABER-Teachers analyzes the teacher policies formally adopted by education systems. This type of policy analysis is an important first step toward strengthening the policy and institutional frameworks that policymakers control most directly and that influence how well the system functions. At the same time, policies "on the ground"—that is, policies as they are actually implemented—may differ quite substantially from policies as originally designed. In fact they often do differ, due to the political economy of the reform process, a lack of capacity of the organizations charged with implementing them, or the interaction between these policies and specific contextual factors. Since SABER-Teachers collects only limited data on policy implementation, the analysis of teacher policies presented in this report should ideally be complemented with other data-gathering efforts focusing on how well teacher policies are actually implemented on the ground.

This report presents results of the application of SABER-Teachers in three administrative divisions of Russia. It describes the performance of Tomsk oblast, Ivanovo oblast, and St. Petersburg in each of the 8 Teacher Policy Goals, alongside comparative information from education systems.

Teacher policy system results in Russia: Ivanovo, Tomsk, and St. Petersburg

Introduction

The purpose of the report is to compare the three regions (Tomsk oblast, Ivanovo oblast, and St. Petersburg) to each other, global peers, and the practices of high performing education systems. The report includes four comparators: Serbia and Bulgaria as regional comparators with available data, and South Korea and Singapore as examples of best practices. Examples of policies from other countries are also used to highlight particular achievements and efficient policy approaches to specific dimensions. Additional detailed descriptive information on Russia's and other education systems' teacher policies can be found on the SABER-Teachers website.

The report was prepared together with a research team from the Higher School of Economics (HSE), Moscow, Russia. An additional goal of the exercise was to create HSE's research capacity in benchmarking regional educational systems using SABER tools.

The report reviews teacher policies in three self-nominated Russian regions. The regions are diverse in terms of socioeconomic development: St. Petersburg represents a high-income city with the status of Subject of the Federation; Tomsk is a mid-income Siberian region with significant scientific, innovative and higher education capacity; and Ivanovo is a low-income industrialized region in the central part of the country.

While some directions of the teacher-related policies are regulated at the federal level, a significant share of the responsibility lies with the regions. Thus, most of the findings of the report are region-specific. At the same time, all three regions demonstrated fairly harmonized progress in the majority of the policy dimensions. Such concord could be explained by the fact that Russian regions are traditionally disposed to following Federal guidance and recommendations and show low proactivity in developing unique and region-tailored policies. However, this early hypothesis needs to be further explored.

Goal 1: Setting clear expectations for teachers

Tomsk	**Established** ●●●○
Ivanovo	**Established** ●●●○
St. Petersburg	**Established** ●●●○

Setting clear expectations for student and teacher performance is important to guide teachers' daily work and align necessary resources toward helping teachers constantly improve instructional practice. In addition, clear expectations can help ensure there is coherence among different key aspects of the teaching profession, such as teacher initial education, professional development, and teacher appraisal.

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers that school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) clear expectations for what students should know and be able to do, and how teachers can help students reach these goals; (2) useful guidance on teachers' use of time to be able to improve instruction at the school level.

(1) In Russia, expectations for what students are expected to learn and for what teachers are supposed to do are set by the national government. The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for setting education goals and controlling the national curriculum. There are officially stipulated requirements for the minimum education, curriculum, and skills students must attain in every subject by every grade.

The tasks teachers are expected to carry out are officially specified by the policy. They include the duties necessary for a teacher to be prepared and continually improving—tasks such as supervising students, grading assessments, and standing in for absent teachers.

(2) Guidance on teachers' use of time could focus more on ensuring that expectations are set in a way as to improve instruction. While nearly all governments describe expectations for teachers, the most successful systems expect teachers to focus on continual improvement of instruction and provide them with sufficient time to complete their tasks. Successful education systems [1] such as Ontario, Finland, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore devote considerable time at the school level to activities that are related to

[1] As assessed through international comparative studies (i.e. PISA, TIMSS and PIRLS) and national education quality reviews.

instructional improvement, such as collaboration among teachers on the analysis of instructional practice as well as mentoring and professional development (Darling Hammond & Rothman 2011, Darling-Hammond 2010, Levin 2008). In addition, these systems tend to devote a smaller share of teachers' time to actual contact time with students than other systems do, and a larger share to teacher collaboration, on-site professional development, and research on the effectiveness of various teaching strategies. Japan, for example, devotes about 40 percent of teachers' working time to these type of activities, while Ontario currently devotes 30 percent (Darling Hammond & Rothman 2011).

Despite an enumeration of teacher tasks, the list of duties for teachers in Russia excludes many common activities related to instructional improvement. Their duties exclude collaborating on a school plan, modifying the school curriculum, taking part in internal evaluation activities, and mentoring or supporting other teachers. Other education systems, such as Serbia, include the tasks in official descriptions to reflect expectations and priorities for teachers.

In Russia, primary school teachers are expected to teach 18 of their 36 work hours per week, which provides them sufficient time to complete duties outside of contact time. In addition, the definition of teacher working time is not limited to the hours spent at school, but includes all working time. While these definitions may allow teachers sufficient time to focus on instructional improvement, without guidance, they may not use this time to that end. Japan, similarly, devotes half of working time to non-teaching tasks. In addition to lesson preparation, these include peer meetings to discuss how to teach current content or incorporate new pedagogical methods, mentor peers, or other tasks linked to overall improving teacher effectiveness.

Figure 2. Teachers' official tasks related to school improvement

	Mentor peers	Collaborate on school plan	Design the curriculum	Participate in school evaluation
Tomsk	-	-	-	-
Ivanovo	-	-	-	-
St. Petersburg	-	-	-	-
Serbia	✓	✓	-	✓
Bulgaria	-	-	-	-
South Korea	-	-	-	-
Singapore	✓	✓	✓	✓

Source: SABER-Teachers data

Goal 2: Attracting the best into teaching

Tomsk **Established** ●●●○
Ivanovo **Established** ●●●○
St. Petersburg **Established** ●●●○

The structure and characteristics of the teaching career can make it more or less attractive for talented individuals to decide to become teachers. Talented people may be more inclined to become teachers if they see that entry requirements are on par with those of well-regarded professions, if compensation and working conditions are adequate, and if there are attractive career opportunities for them to develop as professionals.

SABER-Teachers considers four policy levers that school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) requirements to enter the teaching profession; (2) competitive pay; (3) appealing working conditions; and (4) attractive career opportunities.

(1) In Russia, teacher entrants must have a minimal tertiary qualification.
The level of required education for teachers may indicate the attractiveness of the profession. While not the only way to communicate that it is an attractive profession, is serves as one of the indicators: education systems where teacher positions are competitive often have rigorous entry requirements. Systems where entry to the

profession is most demanding require a research-oriented bachelor's or master's degree.
In Russia, primary school teachers are required to graduate from vocational upper secondary schools, which are referred to as teacher colleges (NORRIC, 2005). They are internationally comparable to lower tertiary programs. Teachers at the secondary school level graduate with the equivalent of a bachelor's degree and specialize in teaching a particular subject.

In addition to the educational requirement, other requirements can convey the selectivity of the profession. Before entering the profession, teachers are required to have some practical professional experience, but not an assessment based on practical work, an interview-stage assessment, or a written test.

Countries should strive to select the best candidates to become teachers, and it is most efficient to do so from a broad pool of candidates. By offering multiple paths into the profession, candidates with varied professional backgrounds may enter. In Russia, there are many paths to become a teacher. A person may complete a bachelor's degree in education or a relevant field; acquire a relevant vocational degree in education (referred to as a secondary education in Russia); or acquire a vocational degree in a relevant field and receive professional training in education and pedagogy. By making the profession accessible to committed young people and mid-career professionals, a variety of talented candidates may enter.

(2) Teacher compensation and promotions may not appeal to talented candidates. The available evidence suggests that teacher pay could deter qualified candidates from the profession. According to OECD, primary school teachers make 82 percent of the average earnings of a Russian worker with a tertiary education (OECD, 2013). Average lower and upper secondary teacher salaries are 85 percent and 89 percent of average worker salaries, respectively.

Figure 3. Teacher Salaries, as percent of GDP per capita

	Primary	Secondary	Combined
Nationwide	85	89	n/a
Tomsk	n/a	n/a	106
Ivanovo	n/a	n/a	97
St. Petersburg	n/a	n/a	117

Note: Nationwide Data from OECD; Tomsk, Ivanovo, and St. Petersburg Data from Russian Federal State Statistics Service (2014). Other countries excluded due to lack of comparable data.
n/a – not available

Similarly, the potential for salary increases can attract or deter qualified candidates. Teacher salaries (*oklad,* excluding incentives and benefits), on average, increase less than 20 percent after 15 years of experience, or 1.2 percent annualized, which is lower than many education systems (OECD, 2013). While pay compression may be a problem, teachers can receive higher pay based on their performance, which may help make the profession more attractive. While other attributes of the profession, such as retirement opportunities and flexible schedules, may also affect the attractiveness of the profession, their effect is difficult to measure.

(3) It is unclear whether working conditions are attractive. While school conditions are important for learning, they can also affect teacher morale. If many schools have inadequate facilities, candidates may choose a profession with a more pleasant environment. In Russia, there are standards for school infrastructure, hygiene, and sanitation, but the exact level of compliance is unknown. According to the "Our New School" monitoring program, between 80 percent and 100 percent of schools in Ivanovo and St. Petersburg are in compliance, and 60 percent to 80 percent of schools in Tomsk. Without more precise values, it is difficult to determine the adequacy of school infrastructure.

Pupil-teacher ratios can also affect how attractive the profession is. If schools have unmanageably large classes, the profession may appear overwhelming. The pupil-teacher ratios are low in Ivanovo, Tomsk, and St. Petersburg, and nationwide (See Figure 4), increasing the attractiveness of the profession.

Figure 4. Student-teacher ratio, primary and secondary schools

	Primary	Secondary
Russian Federation	20	9
Tomsk	19	9
Ivanovo	14*	
St. Petersburg	15*	
Serbia	16	9
Bulgaria	18	13
South Korea	18	18
Singapore	17	15

Source: SABER-Teachers data and UNESCO Institute for Statistics. Note: *The number of pupils and teachers in Ivanovo, and Tomsk were only available with primary and secondary school aggregated.

(4) Opportunities for career advancement may be appealing enough to help attract talented individuals to the teaching profession. Teachers in most education systems are offered opportunities for promotion to principal positions at some point in their careers. In addition to these "vertical" promotions, most high-performing education systems offer teachers the possibility of "horizontal" promotions, to academic positions that allow them to grow professionally as teachers and yet remain closely connected to instruction, instead of moving up to managerial positions (OECD 2012, Darling-Hammond 2010).

Policies in Russia offer various opportunities for career advancement to teachers. Teachers have the option of applying to either school administration posts as school principals or applying to become instructional leaders. A limited number of teachers may become the head of a methodological association. Methodological associations are subject-specific associations of teachers. Their duties may include approving curricula, sharing their knowledge and experience, managing joint educational projects, or assisting young teachers in adapting to the environment.

Goal 3: Preparing teachers with useful training and experience

Tomsk **Emerging** ●●○○
Ivanovo **Emerging** ●●○○
St. Petersburg **Emerging** ●●○○

Equipping teachers with the skills they need to succeed in the classroom is crucial. To be successful, teachers need subject matter and pedagogic knowledge, as well as classroom management skills and a lot of teaching practice. Good preparation puts all teachers on an equal footing, giving them a common framework for improving their practice.

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers that school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) minimum standards for pre-service training programs; (2) required levels of classroom experience for all teachers.

(1) Minimum education requirements in Russia are low for primary school teachers but substantial for secondary school teachers. Virtually all high-performing countries require that teachers have an educational level equivalent to ISCED 5A, or bachelor's degree. The most effective teacher preparation empowers teachers with both the practical knowledge necessary to teach and the skills to research and assess effective teaching methods. Some systems, such as Finland, go beyond ISCED 5A to require a research-oriented master's degree (OECD 2011). Despite Russia's highly educated population, primary school teachers only need to graduate from a vocational secondary school known as a teachers' college (ISCED 5B).

Figure 5. Required educational level, primary school teachers

	ISCED 5B	ISCED 5A
Tomsk	✓	
Ivanovo	✓	
St. Petersburg	✓	
Serbia	✓	
Bulgaria		✓
South Korea		✓
Singapore		✓

Source: SABER-Teachers data.

(2) Practical classroom experience is required during pre-service training for an unspecified time. Teachers-in-training need opportunities to hone their craft during pre-service training to ensure that their preparation is not only theory-based. The more teachers try out their pedagogical theories, subject-matter knowledge, and classroom management skills, the better prepared they will be for their job. Most high-performing systems require their teacher entrants to have a considerable amount of classroom experience before becoming independent teachers, and some of these systems provide mentoring and support during the first and even second year on the job (Darling-Hammond 2010, Ingersoll 2007). In Russia, at least six months of practical professional experience is required for both primary and secondary school teachers-in-training, but policies do not stipulate details such as duration of the experience. While incorporating practical experience can be very useful, policies need to ensure that teachers receive adequate practice, guidance, and time for reflection.

Goal 4: Matching teachers' skills with students' needs

Tomsk	**Emerging**	●●○○
Ivanovo	**Latent**	●○○○
St. Petersburg	**Latent**	●○○○

Ensuring that teachers work in schools where their skills are most needed is important for equity and efficiency. First, it is a way of ensuring that teachers are distributed as efficiently as possible, making sure that there are no shortages of qualified teachers in any given grade, education level, or subject. Second, it is a means of ensuring that all students in a school system have an equal opportunity to learn. Without purposeful allocation systems, it is likely that teachers will gravitate towards schools serving better-off students or located in more desirable areas which will deepen inequalities in the system.

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers that school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) incentives for teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools; and (2) incentives for teachers to teach in critical shortage areas.

(1) There are mechanisms to address teacher shortages in hard-to-staff schools in Tomsk, but not in Ivanovo or St. Petersburg. Attracting effective teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools (schools that are in disadvantaged locations or serve underprivileged populations) is a challenge for many countries, and often requires a specific set of incentives. In Russia, equitable teacher deployment is under the authority of the administrative regions. In Tomsk, St. Petersburg, and Ivanovo, teachers are not assigned or transferred between schools; teachers apply directly to schools for positions. Since authorities do not directly determine the flow of human resources, incentives are the most relevant tools available to ensure equitable deployment.

In Tomsk, there are policies to encourage teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools. Teachers in hard-to-staff schools may receive a higher basic salary, monetary bonuses, scholarships, housing support, travel benefits, and food and beverage benefits. In St. Petersburg and Ivanovo, there are no policies to attract teachers to hard-to-staff schools (Figure 6).

(2) None of the three administrative regions have policies to attract teachers to critical shortage subjects. Subjects with too few teachers to meet student needs are present in nearly all education systems. When there are no policies to manage the number of teachers by subject, there is an inevitable skill asymmetry between the teacher supply and school needs. Many systems develop policies and offer incentives for teachers to teach these subjects through scholarships, additional pay or benefits (such as subsidized education or housing support), or career opportunities. Singapore and South Korea do not provide special incentives for this purpose but entry to the profession is highly competitive, and admission is provided based on the subject that

candidates would teach. In Tomsk, Ivanovo, and St. Petersburg, respondents suggested there were shortages of primary school teachers, foreign language teachers, and mathematics teachers. However, there are no incentives to attract teachers to areas of need.

The analysis under Goal 2 suggests that, overall, teaching is an attractive profession in Russia, but finer inducements are required to ensure that the profile of teachers entering the schools is efficient.

Figure 6. Incentives for teachers to teach in hard-to-staff schools

	Promotion	Higher basic salary in hard-to-staff schools	Monetary bonus	Subsidized education	Housing support
Tomsk	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ivanovo	-	-	-	-	-
St. Petersburg	-	-	-	-	-
Serbia	-	-	-	-	-
Bulgaria	-	✓	-	-	-
South Korea	✓	-	-	-	✓
Singapore	-	-	-	-	-

Source: SABER-Teachers data.
Note: Singapore has no specific incentives to attract qualified teachers to hard-to-staff schools, but it does have a centrally-managed teacher deployment system that ensures an equitable and efficient distribution of teachers.

Goal 5: Leading teachers with strong principals

Tomsk **Latent** ●○○○
Ivanovo **Latent** ●○○○
St. Petersburg **Latent** ●○○○

The quality of school heads is an important predictor of student learning. Capable principals can act as instructional leaders, providing direction and support to the improvement of instructional practice at the school level. In addition, capable principals can help attract and retain competent teachers.

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers that school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) the education system's investment in developing qualified school leaders; (2) decision-making authority for school principals to support and improve instructional practice.

(1) In Russia, principals must have a university degree and complete specific coursework. Research from high-performing education systems suggests principals can develop leadership skills through supported work experience or through specific training courses. High-performing systems such as Japan, South Korea, Shanghai, and Singapore require applicants to principal positions to participate in specific coursework and/or a specialized internship or mentoring program aimed at developing essential leadership skills (OECD, 2012; Darling-Hammond 2010).

To become a school principal in Russia, a candidate must have completed five years of teaching. Candidates are also required to complete a university diploma that includes specific courses on governance and management. This is the same education level required to become a secondary school teacher but above that required to be a primary school teacher.

Beyond having a good understanding of teaching, effective principals need to be effective managers and school leaders. An effective way to help develop the abilities of head teachers and principals is through mentoring programs or on-the-job training. There are no national or regional policies requiring or recommending a systematic induction program for principals.

Given that new principals often lack peers to learn from, programs that allow them to be mentored during their initial months by nearby experienced principals, or to receive increased support from education officers, can help principals become more effective. These programs make it possible for principals to learn good practices from others instead of learning only through their own experience. In Bulgaria, recent policy changes created an official track for principals to become authorized mentors. In addition, they offer optional training courses on institutional leadership, conducting teacher evaluations, and leading teacher teams.

Figure 7. Required principal duties related to improving instruction

	Guidance for curriculum and teaching-related tasks	Performance Evaluations
Tomsk		
Ivanovo		
St. Petersburg		
Serbia	✓	✓
Bulgaria	✓	✓
South Korea		
Singapore		

Source: SABER-Teachers data.

(2) In Russia, principal duties vary between municipalities, and there is no system wide focus on improving instruction. Once education systems get talented candidates to become principals, they need to structure the principals' time such that they can focus on improving teacher instruction (OECD 2012, Barber & Mourshed 2007). High-performing education systems such as Finland, Ontario, and Singapore think of their principals as instructional leaders, and not simply administrators. Effective principals are expected to be knowledgeable in teaching and curriculum matters, and provide guidance and support to teachers. Effective principals evaluate teachers, provide feedback, assess the school's needs for professional development, and direct instructional resources where they are most needed (Darling-Hammond & Rothman 2011).

In Russia, the national standards that define the duties of principals specify management abilities, but do not refer specifically to abilities related to pedagogical leadership (Ministry of Social Development and Health, 2011); their duties are determined by the local authorities that employ them, and not by standard expectations set by regional or national authorities. While some principals may be expected to support teachers in some municipalities, national or subnational policies and support do not exist.

Goal 6: Monitoring teaching and learning

Tomsk **Established** ●●●○
Ivanovo **Established** ●●●○
St. Petersburg **Established** ●●●○

Assessing how well teachers are teaching and whether students are learning is essential for devising strategies to improve teaching and learning. First, identifying low-performing teachers and students is critical for education systems to be able to provide struggling classrooms with adequate support to improve. Second, teacher and student evaluation also helps identify good practices which can be shared across the system to improve school performance.

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers that school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) adequate systems to monitor teacher performance; and (2) multiple mechanisms to evaluate teacher performance.

(1) Regional education management officials conduct teacher evaluations. As one component of an evaluation system, classroom observations can be useful to help teachers learn how to improve their effectiveness in the classroom. Evaluation methods vary by region, but all regions require teacher evaluations every five years. There are no national or subnational policies providing guidance on internal evaluations by principals, nor are evaluations records used to track teacher performance over time.

(2) Evaluations of teacher performance incorporate a variety of perspectives. Research suggests that no single method of evaluating teacher performance is fail-safe. Most high-performing systems conduct teacher evaluations using a multiplicity of mechanisms, for data collection and varied criteria for assessment. Ideally, an evaluation system includes a comprehensive teacher evaluation framework that combines student results, teachers' portfolios, classroom observations and feedback from students/parents. International experience and research on the topic suggest that none of these approaches taken separately can produce a balanced and objective evaluation of teacher performance.

In Tomsk, Ivanovo, and St. Petersburg, the required external evaluations include classroom observations,

feedback from principals, and feedback from fellow teachers. By incorporating multiple professional perspectives, evaluations are more likely to be well-informed.

In addition to a variety of perspectives, a variety of criteria can be useful. In Tomsk, Ivanovo, and St. Petersburg, policies explicitly require that evaluations consider teacher subject matter, teaching methods, student assessment methods, and student achievement. Assessment criteria may vary in other administrative regions.

Figure 8. Criteria to evaluate teacher performance

	Subject matter knowledge	Teaching methods	Student assessment methods	Students' academic achievement
Tomsk	✓	✓	✓	-
Ivanovo	✓	✓	✓	✓
St. Petersburg	✓	✓	✓	✓
Serbia	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bulgaria	-	✓	-	-
South Korea	✓	✓	-	✓
Singapore	-	-	-	-

Source: SABER-Teachers data

Goal 7: Supporting teachers to improve instruction

Tomsk **Latent** ●○○○
Ivanovo **Emerging** ●●○○
St. Petersburg **Emerging** ●●○○

Support systems are necessary to help improve instruction at the school level. In order to constantly improve instructional practice, teachers and schools need to be able to analyze the specific challenges that they face in classroom teaching, have access to information on best practices to address these challenges, and receive specific external support tailored to their needs.

SABER-Teachers considers three policy levers that school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) availability of opportunities for teacher professional development; (2) teacher professional development activities that are collaborative and focused on instructional improvement; (3) ensuring that teacher professional development is assigned based on perceived needs.

(1) National law stipulates that all teachers are entitled to and required to participate in professional development every five years. Recent legislation in Russia rules that teachers are entitled to professional development once every three years and are required to participate once every five years. Primary school teachers are required to attend 72 hours of professional development every five years, and secondary school teachers are required to attend 108 hours every five years. High-performing education systems like Japan and Ontario devote as much as 30 per cent of school time to professional development and instructional improvement activities.

Figure 9. Number of days (or equivalents) of required professional development, primary school teachers

	Unknown/ Undefined	1 to 5 days	6 to 9 days	10 or more days
Tomsk		✓		
Ivanovo		✓		
St. Petersburg		✓		
Serbia		✓		
Bulgaria	✓			
South Korea				
Singapore				

Source: SABER-Teachers data

(2) Professional development policies include some professional development activities known to improve practice. Research suggests that effective teacher professional development is collaborative and provides opportunities for the in-school analysis of instructional practice. Some high-performing countries include observation visits to other schools, participation in teacher or school networks as well as opportunities to engage in research, mentoring or coaching. In Russia, schools may be granted the status of a regional site for innovations or internship. Those schools can host hands-on seminars and arrange observation lessons. Teacher and school networks, mentoring, and independent research are not practiced. These methods have been shown to be much more likely to result in teachers improving their practices (Desimone, 2002).

(3) Teacher evaluations can be used to assign professional development. Assigning professional development to teachers when they score low on performance evaluations is one way of potentially improving instructional practice. Teacher professional development can be targeted to meet the needs of specific teachers. In Russia, teacher evaluators can assign teacher-specific professional development to strengthen their abilities. Other systems create strong links between professional development and perceived needs. South Korea has school staff developers whose job is to identify growth areas for schools and ensure staff get the training they need. In addition, each South Korean school has a fund used to pay for teacher professional development.

Figure 10.Types of professional development

	Observation visits	Teacher networks	School networks	Research	Mentoring/coaching
Tomsk	✓				
Ivanovo	✓				
St. Petersburg	✓				
Serbia	✓	✓			
Bulgaria					
South Korea					
Singapore	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Source: SABER-Teachers data.

Note: While South Korea doesn't incorporate the mentioned mediums as professional development, observation visits, research, and mentoring are built into the qualification programs required for career progression.

Goal 8: Motivating teachers to perform

Tomsk **Established** ●●●○
Ivanovo **Established** ●●●○
St. Petersburg **Established** ●●●○

Adequate mechanisms to motivate teachers are a way for school systems to signal their seriousness in achieving education goals, making the teaching career attractive to competent individuals, and rewarding good performance while ensuring accountability.

SABER-Teachers considers three policy levers that school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) linking career opportunities to teachers' performance; (2) having mechanisms to hold teachers accountable; (3) linking teacher compensation to performance.

(1) In Russia, promotions but not permanent positions, are informed by performance. Teachers cannot be promoted without passing external evaluations, which may provide motivation for continual improvement. One common challenge of education systems is to balance teacher stability and accountability. In many systems, once teachers are hired, there is a probation period during which underperforming teachers can be dismissed. Russia has no probation period or any other channel to dismiss teachers due to poor performance.

(2) There are some mechanisms to hold teachers to a minimum standard of conduct. Requiring teachers to meet some standards to remain in the teaching profession can facilitate the removal of ineffective teachers. In most high-performing systems, teacher performance is evaluated annually, and there are official mechanisms to address cases of misconduct, child abuse, absenteeism and poor performance. In Russia, while teachers can be dismissed for misconduct, child abuse, or absenteeism, there is no mechanism to dismiss teachers for poor performance (See Figure 11).

(3) Teacher compensation is linked to teacher performance. In Russia, teachers cannot be promoted without an external performance evaluation. Basing career progression on performance can be an effective tool for improving teacher motivation.

Figure 11. Grounds for dismissal

	Misconduct	Child abuse	Absenteeism	Poor Performance
Tomsk	✓	✓	✓	
Ivanovo	✓	✓	✓	
St. Petersburg	✓	✓	✓	
Serbia				
Bulgaria				
South Korea	✓	✓		
Singapore	✓	✓	✓	✓

Source: SABER-Teachers data.

Policy Options

This SABER country report has offered a snapshot of Russia's key teacher policies and how they compare with those of top global performers in education. This section suggests some policy options for further improvement of the teacher policy framework. These recommended measures are derived from the above analysis and interviews conducted in Russia. Policy suggestions are provided only for the priority areas where level of performance is below "established".

Preparing Teachers with Useful Training and Experience (Goal 3)

It is crucial to equip teachers with subject matter, pedagogic and classroom management skills, and a lot of teaching practice. Russian regulation imposes minimum education requirements for primary school teachers. Some options to consider:

- Introduce regional best practice benchmarks (standards) for teachers' preparation that impose high requirements for teachers' pre-service education and training (an educational level equivalent to ISCED 5A).
- Provide incentives for future teachers to master pedagogical and classroom management skills in real teaching environments.
- Provide incentives for schools to provide practice opportunities for future teachers.
- Ensure that policies provide for teachers to receive adequate guidance and time for reflection, mentoring and support during the first several months on the job.

Matching teachers' skills with students' needs (Goal 4)

Nearly all education systems struggle to attract teachers for certain specializations or to some subset of schools. Ivanovo and St. Petersburg have no formal policies to address teacher shortages in hard-to-staff schools or subjects. While regional authorities have used ad hoc incentives in the past, there are no formal policies to improve deployment. Systems where recruitment is largely decentralized require a unique set of policy responses, given that direct transfers and individual salaries are not set regionally. Some options would be to:

- Provide additional funding for teacher hiring in hard-to staff areas.
- Monitor the teacher supply systematically to be aware of current shortages and predict future shortages.
- Provide visible incentives for teachers to work in hard-to-staff schools (e.g. faster promotion rates, higher salaries, or increased benefits).
- Provide differentiated scholarship programs or admissions standards to attract teacher candidates to subject specializations with shortages.
- Introduce termed contracts for work in challenging areas with special salary, promotion and other benefits (e.g. to encourage new graduates to teach in challenging conditions for a limited period).

Leading teachers with strong principals (Goal 5)

Principals can have an immense effect on student outcomes, but their role in improving education outcomes needs to be clear and oriented towards instructional leadership. While there are higher requirements to become a principal than a teacher in all three regions, the duties of principals aren't designed to orient principals towards improving learning. In Tomsk, there is no official description of principal duties at all. In education systems with a high degree of local autonomy, the need for clear expectations and learning opportunities for leadership are even more important. The following measures may help to ensure that principals are oriented towards improving education outcomes and have the resources necessary available to them:

- Conduct a needs assessment to better understand the specific needs and issues that principals face in their work.
- Provide principals with an obligatory mentorship program, instructional leadership training and ongoing professional development.
- Ensure that principals see professional development of teachers and school improvement as their core responsibility.
- Ensure principal appointments are based on merit and not entirely on tenure in order to open a career track to highly effective teachers.
- Establish "leadership academy" to speed up the professional development of school leaders and use the high status of principals to attract highly effective candidates.

Supporting Teachers to Improve Instruction (Goal 7)

Two critical components to effective professional development are to integrate it as an ongoing part of the profession, to use professional development methods. While recent legislation requires all teachers attend some professional development at least every five years, the number of days and types of professional development remain limited. Some options to consider:

- Build on the recent legislation by offering new methods of professional development. Facilitating networks of teachers and mentoring are easy to implement ways to encourage sharing of best practices among teachers.
- Integrate professional development and teacher support through stronger instructional leadership.
- Create and facilitate professional networks for peer learning and sharing good practices.

Greater customization of regional policies

While many policies are determined at the regional level in Russia, there was little measurable variation observed between the policies pursued by Tomsk, Ivanovo, and St. Petersburg. Increased knowledge exchange with and between regions may help regional governments customize their policies to meet their unique needs.

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Annex 1. SABER-Teachers Ratings

The SABER-Teachers team has identified policy levers (actions that governments can take) and indicators (which measure the extent to which governments are making effective use of these policy levers) for each of the eight policy goals referenced in this country report. For example, for Teacher Policy Goal 1, Setting Clear Expectations for Teachers, the SABER-Teachers team has identified the following policy levers and indicators:

Table 2. Setting Clear Expectations for Teachers

Policy Levers	Indicators
A. Are there clear expectations for teachers?	1. Are there standards for what students must know and be able to do?
	2. Are the tasks that teachers are expected to carry out officially stipulated?
B.Is there useful guidance on the use of teachers' working time?	1. Do teachers' official tasks include tasks related to instructional improvement?
	2. Does the statutory definition of working time for primary school teachers recognize non-teaching hours?
	3. What is the share of working time allocated to teaching for primary school teachers?

For each goal in the country report, we define the goal in the first paragraph of the country report, identify the levers in the second paragraph, and the remaining paragraphs are used to provide details about the indicators that measure each of the levers.

Using the policy levers and indicators, SABER-Teachers classifies education systems' performance on each of the eight teacher policy goals using a four-category scale (latent, emerging, established, and advanced), which describes the extent to which a given education system has in place teacher policies that are known to be related to improved student outcomes.

This four-tiered rating system represents a continuum from systems with more comprehensive, developed policies oriented toward learning to systems with no policies at all (or, in some cases, policies that are detrimental from the perspective of encouraging learning). SABER-Teacher ratings can be defined in the following manner:

- Advanced—Systems that are rated "advanced" toward a particular policy goal are those that have multiple policies conducive to learning in place under each of the policy levers used to define a policy goal.
- Established—"Established" systems are those that have at least one policy/law in place that uses those policy levers.
- Emerging—"Emerging" systems may have only some appropriate policies in place under the policy goal.
- Latent—"Latent" systems are those that have none or few. Please refer to Vegas et al. 2012 for a detailed review of policy levers and indicators assessed for each goal.

Please reference the Vegas et al. (2012) background paper, "What matters most for teacher policies? A framework for building a more effective teaching profession," for more details about these definitions and a detailed review of policy levers and indicators used by SABER-Teachers.

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The **Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER)** initiative produces comparative data and knowledge on education policies and institutions, with the aim of helping countries systematically strengthen their education systems. SABER evaluates the quality of education policies against evidence-based global standards, using new diagnostic tools and detailed policy data. The SABER country reports give all parties with a stake in educational results—from administrators, teachers, and parents to policymakers and business people—an accessible, objective snapshot showing how well the policies of their country's education system are oriented toward ensuring that all children and youth learn.

This report focuses specifically on policies in the area of teacher policies.

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