

ALLAN ODDEN

The Author of *Strategic Management of Human Capital in Education*

Allan Odden has an impressive portfolio related to leadership, human resources, and performance management in the world of American education. His primary research areas include school finance, teacher compensation, and the management of human capital in public education. Odden has held teaching positions at several notable institutions, including the University of Southern California and Stanford University.

His primary focus throughout this text is on advocating for more cohesive human resource policies that aid in the creation of effective teaching practices and improved student performance. His research in finance and funding play a prominent role in explaining his ideas related to teacher compensation and financial accountability.



Allan Odden publications include *Improving Student Learning When Budgets Are Tight, Ten Strategies for Doubling Student Performance*, and *How to Create World Class Teacher Compensation*, in addition to the text outlined in this newsletter:

Odden, A.R. (2011). *Strategic management of human capital in education*. New York, NY: Routledge.

KEY QUESTIONS

Important Ideas and Questions to Consider

- How do Odden's perspectives on American education apply to our situation in Canada (or Saskatchewan)?
- Odden speaks regularly about tiered licensure and performance-based compensation. Would his ideas help promote improved education in Saskatchewan?
- Who plays the most important role in creating and maintaining exceptional school environments? Teachers? Principals? Divisions? Governments?
- Why are school divisions and governments currently not employing many of the suggestions made by Odden? What barriers are preventing us from reaching the ideas that he describes?
- Are there any educational issues that cannot be solved by the ideas that Odden presents? What realms, problems, or populations has he failed to address?

Strategic Management of Human Capital in Education

CHAPTER ONE

Strategic HR practices are those that align with the goals and needs of an educational community. In order for these practices to be effective, they must be coherent and target all realms of the education sector while maintaining the fundamental goal of improved student achievement.

Talent Acquisition. Education stakeholders must recruit, select, place, develop, and compensate effectively to ensure that they have the most talented professionals working in their schools.

Talent Development & Motivation. Building a strong staff requires outstanding programs for induction, PD, evaluation, and compensation. Acquiring good teachers is not enough; teachers must continue to develop and enjoy their work.

Talent Retention. Teachers will stay if they have received adequate induction/mentoring, meaningful professional development, frequent performance management, and desired compensation (both financial and other).

OVERVIEW & RATIONALE

Strategic human resource management is necessary in education to ensure that we maximize both student performance and teacher effectiveness. Odden suggests that we are lacking exceptional staff (especially in high-needs schools and challenging subject areas), and that better HR systems can help provide a solution. The result will hopefully improve the educational experiences for all children.

KEY STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

1. Creating a sense of urgency.
2. Setting ambitious goals.
3. Adopting a new curriculum and instructional vision.
4. Using multiple forms of student data.
5. Investing in ongoing PD.
6. Using time more effectively and efficiently.
7. Providing extra time to help struggling students.
8. Creating collaborative cultures.
9. Becoming professional communities.
10. Addressing talent and human capital issues.

A Powerful Education Improvement Strategy

CHAPTER TWO

All staff need to participate in the improvement of a school community. HR departments can outline the specific roles played by each individual in contributing to the overarching goals.

Principals	Teachers	Others
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a clear vision.• Focus on student data.• Reallocate resources.• Create schedules that allow for PLC work.• Guide school activity to meet goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver high quality instruction.• Collaborate with colleagues.• Base instruction on student data.• Take responsibility for success and failure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tutors provide additional help to students when necessary.• Instructional coaches help teachers use best practices.• PLC/team leaders guide collaboration.

Staffing and Recruiting Top Talent

CHAPTER THREE

Odden suggests that schools and divisions can use several strategies to recruit the best available teachers and principals, including:

- Choose individuals who have graduated from the most reputable universities (with the best education programs).
- Form relationships with universities to assist in teacher development.
- Create programs to train their own teachers/principals (in addition to university education).



- Provide incentives not offered by other divisions (especially for challenging jobs).
- Recruit throughout the year—not only during crunch time when other school divisions are competing for talented applicants.

KEY STAFF SUGGESTIONS

- 1 principal up to 500 students, then additional.
- 1 teacher/15 students up to grade 3, 1 teacher/25 students up to grade 12.
- 1 instructional coach/200 students.
- 1 tutor / 100 at risk students.

“Who are the key staff in schools? Are people occupying these positions up to the task.” - pg.34

“Performance management involves consequences for good and poor performance.” - pg.64

“Performance management is about a continuous cycle of instructional and student performance improvement.” - pg.65

Performance Management in Education

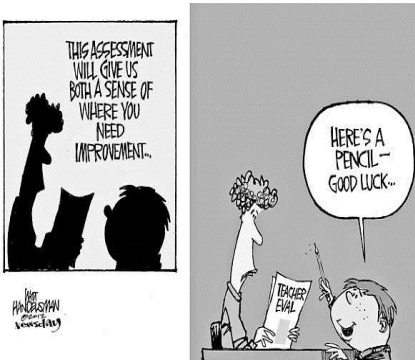
CHAPTER FOUR

Odden believes that teachers need to undergo regular and continuous performance management to ensure that they are meeting the demands of their job assignments. He suggests that this is a responsibility shared by teachers, principals, and divisions.

The role of teachers. Teachers should use formative data, benchmarks, reflection, and other strategies to continuously assess and improve their performance. This allows teachers to manage performance on their own.

The role of principals. Principals must set school goals to guide teacher performance, provide PD opportunities (individual and group), and conduct teacher evaluations (using standards, descriptions, observations, etc.) to promote improvement.

The role of divisions. Odden believes that divisions need to measure performance (using student achievement and other data), pay staff based on performance, and make changes to staff based on good/poor performance.



Cartoon retrieved Aug.31 from www.heraldtimesonline.com

Measuring Teacher Performance

CHAPTER FIVE

KEY TEACHER
COMPETENCIES
(MILANOWSKI, HENEMEN,
& KIMBALL, 2009)

Measuring Teaching Practice

Administrators, coaches, and division officials can examine teacher practice by:

- Conducting formal observations of classroom practice.
- Looking at work samples (lesson plans, exams, assignments, etc.).
- Walking through classrooms on a regular basis.



Measuring Teacher Productivity

Teacher productivity can be examined by:

- Examining changes to student achievement scores (data).
- Allowing for external analysis of teacher success.
- Using multiple years of data (related to student scores) to pro-

- Attention to student standards.
- Use of formative assessment
- Differentiation.
- Content/pedagogical knowledge.
- High expectations.
- Plan/lesson adjustment.
- Managing student behavior.
- Classroom procedures.

Odden suggests that induction/PD processes fail to provide the support that new teachers need. Programs are often short in duration, disconnected, or too simplistic. As an alternative, Odden describes a “residency”-type program where new teachers are immersed in continuous learning opportunities.

Induction and Professional Development

CHAPTER SIX

Initial Induction Suggestions

- Common planning time with other teachers.
- Collaboration with teachers regarding instructional practice.
- A mentor (in the same subject area).
- Connections to colleagues outside of the school who are working on issues related to instruction and curriculum.
- Help/support beyond the first year of teaching (up to 3 years).

Ongoing PD Suggestions

- Teacher collaboration groups (planning, instruction, etc.).
- Continuous, ongoing, long-term PD activities (200hrs annually).
- Comprehensive opportunities for entire school staffs to work together.
- Connection between teacher practice and student learning.
- Active participation of teachers (help from coaches, tutors, etc.).

Percent Turnover of Beginning Teachers After One Year, by Amount of Induction Received

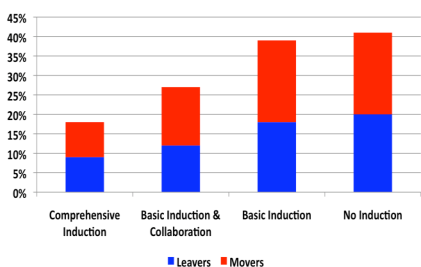


Table retrieved Aug.31 from <http://www.winginstitute.org/Graphs/Staff/Staff-Graph-Landing-Page/>

New Policies for Licensure, Tenure, Evaluation, Dismissal

CHAPTER SEVEN

Odden proposes a multi-tier process for licensing teachers requiring them to meet specific requirements at each level.

Tier 1: Initial License	Tier 2: Professional License	Tier 3: Tenure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• University course requirements.• Student teaching requirement.• Content exams (subject qualifications).• Formal assessment of instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 to 4 years of teaching.• Completion of induction program or residency.• Completion of PD requirements.• Formal performance assessments/evaluations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High performance standard (compared to tier 2).• Significant time commitment (min 5 years after tier 2).• Substantial impact on student achievement (use of data).

DISMISSAL OF TEACHERS

Odden suggests that most school divisions do not have a way to eliminate ineffective teachers. Dismissal based on student achievement alone is not appropriate, but divisions do need to set parameters for measuring teacher performance. This could include student achievement data, performance evaluations, and documented intervention attempts. If a teacher is unable to reach tier 3, they would likely qualify as ineffective. Odden does advocate for fairness and opportunity for a single appeal.

KEY THINGS THAT TEACHERS WANT

- No teaching in isolation.
- Work collaboratively to plan instruction.
- Receive feedback on how to improve.
- Have room for growth and promotion (including leadership & pay increase).



Cartoon retrieved Aug.31 from http://theperfectpayplan.typepad.com/the_salary_sage/2009/01/

The Compensation Side of Strategic Talent Management

CHAPTER EIGHT

Odden suggests that teacher pay should be comprised of a salary (base pay) component and opportunity for additional earnings based on responsibilities, student achievement, and other factors.

Teacher Salaries. Base pay should not be standard for all teachers in all areas. Challenging inner city schools, for example, could start at a higher rate to attract talented teachers. In addition, teachers should make more money depending on the knowledge/skills that they have acquired. This would allow teachers to earn additional money by year and education as currently exists, but also by tier (as identified in chapter 7).

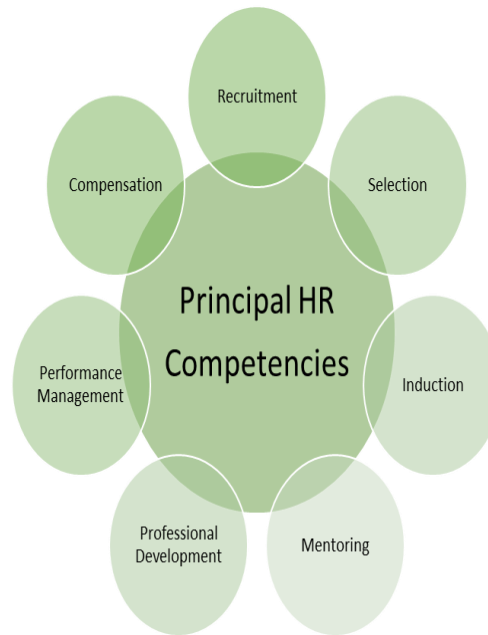
Additional Earnings. Teachers should receive additional money (often in the form of a bonus) for measurable improvement on student learning outcomes (over several successive years). This could occur at an individual or school level depending on structure and available funding. Although there are problems with accurately measuring student success and distributing bonus money in a fair way, Odden insists that school divisions should emphasize student learning as the fundamental goal of education and therefore reward teachers accordingly.

Strategic Talent Management for Principals

CHAPTER NINE

The principal plays a fundamental role in creating and sustaining an effective learning environment. In a strategic learning environment, they connect a variety of HR pieces together to promote outstanding teaching and learning.

Odden says that principals, like teachers, should be subject to regular performance evaluation by the division and privy to compensation that is based on their performance. Principals should also have opportunities for growth based on success in individual schools, including movement to division office positions or inter-school leadership roles.



KEY LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

School Staffing. Selects talented staff who align with school goals.

Induction & Mentoring. Selects mentors and helps participate in mentoring process.

Professional Development. Prepares PD plan and manages PD programming.

Performance Management. Assists, evaluates, and provides feedback to staff.

FOUR CRITICAL ELEMENTS FOR TALENT-CENTRIC ORGANIZATIONS

Alignment

- HR system is based on goals/beliefs of division.

Performance Competencies

- Each individual has a key role and is measured for effectiveness.

Leadership

- HR needs a single leader to orchestrate all human capital projects.

Culture

- Emphasis on performance, accountability, practice, and results.

Organizing to Implement Strategic Human Management

CHAPTER TEN

The HR department should play a vital role in analyzing their procedures in the following categories to allow for continuous improvement.

Staffing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average time to fill positions. • Connection between hiring/retention. • Level of turnover. 	Professional Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of staff participating. • Type/level of PD offered. • Role of administrators.
Performance Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alignment of goals (personal/school). • Proper performance evaluations. • Connection between evaluations and student learning gains. 	Compensation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market competitiveness (financial and other). • Achievement of performance-based pay. • Special compensation programs.

The State Role in Strategic Management

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Create Data Systems

- Link student data to teachers, schools, divisions.
- Determine if programs have intended results.
- Identify effective training/recruitment programs.

Enhance Talent Level

- More rigorous standards in undergraduate programs.
- Make sure that new teachers (tier 1) have exceptional content knowledge.

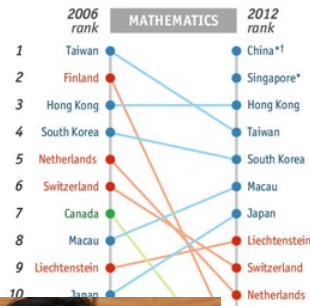
Create Development Programs

- Establish a residency/induction program for new teachers with mandatory ongoing PD for all teachers.
- Enforce a multi-tiered license program (at least 3 levels).

Change Staffing Processes

- Allow for discipline and/or dismissal for ineffective teachers.
- Alter compensation (including allowing performance-based pay).

“Although many states currently require tests of undergraduate literacy and numeracy expertise for admission into teacher training, few have set the bar very high. Thus, across the country, virtually anyone can gain entrance into an undergraduate teacher training program.” - pg.179



The Policy and Political Environment for Change

CHAPTER TWELVE—WRITTEN BY JAMES A. KELLY

James A. Kelly suggests that the kinds of widespread change identified by Odden are occurring across the country in a variety of forms. New methods, programs, and ideas are infiltrating the education sector creating new solutions (and challenges) for education.

BIG QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Why hasn't reform already happened? Kelly lists a variety of reasons that HR policies have not yet changed, including fierce teacher unions, minimal political action (for fear of backlash), ignoring HR success in other sectors, complacency with an “adequate” education system, and the difficulty of overcoming long-standing traditions.

Is it possible? Kelly proposes that widespread change has happened several times in education already (through the help of civil rights movements, abilities advocates, finance reforms, etc.) and that the integration of new HR practices can be the next fundamental shift in education.

THE FINLAND PHENOMENON

INSIDE THE WORLD'S MOST SURPRISING SCHOOL SYSTEM



IN CONCLUSION

A Summary of Strategic Management of Human Capital in Education

Odden's *Strategic Management of Human Capital* provides an interesting, descriptive analysis of the problems facing the human side of education and a variety of clear, comprehensive solutions. He frequently asserts that the greatest duty facing any educational HR department is to evaluate the relationship between teacher performance and student achievement within the division. While highlighting student success as the fundamental goal of education, he identifies the importance of choosing, developing, and retaining the best suited and most talent people to bring about this success. In doing so, Odden gives administrators and divisions the responsibility to eliminate ineffective educators and to reward outstanding educators with performance-based pay. As American education proceeds into the future, Odden describes an increased need for accountability and data-based decisions that will drive achievement for a diverse population of students.

AN ANALYSIS

Critique and Review of Odden's Ideas

Odden provides some outstanding insights into the problems facing the American education system. He clearly identifies the need for better induction and development programs to ensure teacher retention, acknowledges the lack of talented educators in challenging urban environments, and advocates for more stringent teacher training programs. I appreciate his consistent connection to HR in education when discussing ways to improve educational systems; he relates educational improvement to changes that can be made at an HR level, including hiring, induction, compensation, and dismissal.

At the same time, his suggestions often seem somewhat radical when compared to the current educational climate. His insistence on performance-based pay that is linked directly to student achievement seems to contrast the notion of whole-child development and may result in competitiveness (rather than collegiality) among school staffs. In addition, although I like his suggestions about eliminating ineffective teachers, I think he failed to adequately propose how divisions would acquire support from governments and unions to initiate this process.

I thoroughly enjoyed the unique perspectives that Odden brings to the educational climate. His ideas certainly inspire substantial reflection about the practices of teachers, administrators, and divisions when managing HR issues. Although I'm not sure that the ideas he presents are all practical and/or applicable in our own education sector, a greater exposure of his ideas may prompt some necessary change in the development and growth of our teaching staff.