

# Great Ideas for Great Public Schools

## WISCONSIN

### Union and district agree to tie higher pay to advanced degrees

In the fall of 1999, the Manitowoc Public School District and the Manitowoc Education Association developed an **innovative teacher compensation system** designed to encourage and reward teachers for acquiring specific skills and knowledge—the parties believed the result would be enhanced student achievement. Previously, the district used the traditional two-lane salary schedule: bachelor's degree and master's degree, each with 12 steps based on years of teaching experience. To move to the new salary system, which includes higher pay for advanced degrees, teachers must work toward a goal: a master's degree, a doctorate, certification by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, or a professional development certificate.

#### How it works

- Teachers who earn a master's degree can increase their pay by 9 percent.
- Teachers who earn a doctorate or become Board-certified can increase their pay by 13 percent.

#### Positive results

- Tying economic rewards to specific types of professional development has resulted in a growing number of teachers deciding to improve their skills and knowledge.
- Before the introduction of the new system, most educators in the district (77 percent) had a bachelor's degree and the district had no Board-certified teachers.

- Since the introduction of the new system, the number of teachers in the district with master's degrees has risen from 91 to 155.
- The district now has 19 Board-certified teachers.
- Teacher turnover in district was 11 percent in 2004-05, compared to 20 percent in 1997-98 before the new system was introduced.

#### Rising student achievement

- As more teachers have exercised the professional development options the contract provides, the reading comprehension scores of third-grade students have gone up.

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*Great Public Schools for Every Student*