Tenure Reform in New York City: Do More Rigorous Standards Improve Teacher Effectiveness?

Aliza Husain, Susanna Loeb, Luke C. Miller, Jim Wyckoff

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How did tenure rates change following the 2009-10 reform in New York City’s teacher tenure process?
2. Did extended teachers voluntarily exit at higher rates, and if so, were their replacements more or less effective?
3. Did performance improve for teachers whose probationary periods were extended if they continued to teach? What were the ultimate tenure decisions for these teachers?

BACKGROUND

• 3 options: approve, deny, extend.
• Prior to 2009-10, 94% of all teachers who stood for tenure, were approved.
• Beginning in 2009-10, NYC changed their tenure process:
  o Alongside sending recommendations to the superintendent, principals also had to provide rationale supporting their decisions.
  o 2010-11: 4-point effectiveness rating scale implemented.

METHOD

• Descriptive: examine tenure decisions from 2007-08 to 2013-14.
• Difference-in-differences framework to compare the effectiveness of “approved-for-tenure” teachers before and after the reform, with the effectiveness of extended teachers who continued to teacher before and after the reform.

RESULTS

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NEXT STEPS

• Conduct analysis for individual years.
• Explore changes at the school-grade-subject level.