



# FYR Macedonia

## TEACHERS

SABER Country Report  
2013

### Policy Goals

#### 1. Setting Clear Expectations for Teachers

There are clear expectations for what students should learn and what teachers are supposed to do. Teachers' official duties involve both teaching and nonteaching tasks related to instructional improvement.

Advanced



#### 2. Attracting the Best into Teaching

Entry requirements, working conditions, and career advancement opportunities may be appealing for talented candidates. However, teacher pay may not be appealing signaling the teaching profession as low-status.

Established



#### 3. Preparing Teachers with Useful Training and Experience

Current teacher initial education systems may be suited to ensure good quality teachers. Beginning teachers have opportunities to develop practical teaching skills.

Advanced



#### 4. Matching Teachers' Skills with Students' Needs

There are official systems in place to address teacher shortages in hard-to-staff schools, but not to attract teachers in critical-shortage subject areas.

Emerging



#### 5. Leading Teachers with Strong Principals

Principals are expected to monitor teacher performance and provide support to teachers to improve instructional practice, but their performance is not rewarded. At present there are training courses for new principals, but no mentorships or guidance to ensure that new principals have the necessary skills to act as instructional leaders and successful managers.

Emerging



#### 6. Monitoring Teaching and Learning

There are systems in place to assess student learning in order to inform teaching and policy. Teacher performance is evaluated every three years using criteria that assess effective teaching.

Established



#### 7. Supporting Teachers to Improve Instruction

There are opportunities for teacher professional development, but requirements for teachers (e.g. the number of days for professional development) are not specified.

Established



#### 8. Motivating Teachers to Perform

There are mechanisms in place to hold teachers accountable. Promotion opportunities are not linked to teacher performance, but high performing teachers do have an opportunity to receive monetary bonuses.

Emerging



## 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.

**A new tool, *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 launched by the Human Development Network of the World Bank. 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

### 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

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 teacher force, as well as copies of supporting documents. The full database is available at the SABER-Teacher website.

**To offer informed policy guidance, SABER-Teachers analyzes the information collected to assess the extent to which the teacher policies of an education system are aligned with those policies that the research evidence to date has shown to have a positive effect on student achievement.** SABER-Teachers analyzes the teacher policy data collected to assess each education system's progress in achieving 8 Teacher Policy Goals: 1. Setting clear expectations for teachers; 2. Attracting the best into teaching; 3. Preparing teachers with useful training and experience; 4. Matching teachers' skills with students' needs; 5. Leading teachers with strong principals; 6. Monitoring teaching and learning; 7. Supporting teachers to improve instruction; and 8. Motivating teachers to perform (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: 8 Teacher Policy Goals



**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, and the analysis of policies of top-performing and rapidly-improving education systems. Three criteria were used to identify them: teacher policy goals had to be (i) linked to student performance through empirical evidence, (ii) a priority for resource allocation, and (iii) actionable, that is, actions governments can take to improve education policy. The eight teacher policy goals exclude other objectives that countries might want to pursue to increase the effectiveness of their teachers, but on which there is to date insufficient empirical evidence to make specific policy recommendations.

**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' 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. 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 eight 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. However, 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, lack of capacity of the organizations in charge of implementing them, or the interaction between these policies and specific contextual factors. Since SABER-Teachers collects limited data on policy implementation, the assessment of teacher policies presented in this report needs to be complemented with detailed information that describes the actual configuration of teacher policies on the ground.

**This report presents results of the application of SABER-Teachers in Macedonia.** It describes Macedonia's performance in each of the 8 Teacher Policy Goals, alongside comparative information from education systems that have consistently scored high results in international student achievement tests and have participated in SABER-Teachers. Additional detailed descriptive information on Macedonia's and other education systems' teacher policies can be found on the SABER-Teachers website.

## Macedonia's teacher policy system results

### Goal 1: Setting clear expectations for teachers

#### Advanced ●●●●

Setting clear expectations for student and teacher performance is important to guide teachers' daily work and align necessary resources to make sure that teachers can 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 how teachers' can use their time to improve instruction at the school level.

**(1) In Macedonia, there are expectations for what students are expected to learn and for what teachers are supposed to do.** 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 stipulated. Teacher tasks go beyond classroom teaching to include activities related to instructional improvement (Figure 2).

**(2) Guidance on teachers' use of time could focus more on ensuring that their work conditions allow them to improve instruction.** Teachers' working time in Macedonia is officially defined as the overall number of working hours (as opposed to merely counting contact time with students or hours spent at the school). Global experience suggests this definition may be conducive to

learning, because it recognizes that teachers normally need to devote some time to non-teaching tasks, such as lesson planning, the analysis of student work, and professional development, as well as administrative tasks.

In addition, non-teaching tasks related to instructional improvement are officially a required part of teachers' work in Macedonia. Such tasks may include mentoring peers, collaborating on school plans, or participating in school evaluation. This is similar to successful education systems such as Ontario, Finland, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore devote considerable time at the school level to activities that are related to 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 this type of activities, while Ontario currently devotes 30 percent (Darling Hammond & Rothman 2011).

**Figure 2. Teachers' official tasks related to school improvement**

	Macedonia	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore
Mentor peers	✓	✓		✓
Collaborate on school plan	✓	✓	✓	✓
Design the curriculum	✓	✓		✓
Participate in school evaluation	✓	✓		✓

Source: SABER-Teachers data

## Goal 2: Attracting the best into teaching

### 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) Macedonia, teachers are required to have at least a four-year Bachelor's degree in order to be qualified to teach.** Primary and secondary education teachers in Macedonia receive their initial teacher training in courses taken after 12 years of schooling. Formal requirements to become a primary or secondary school teacher are similar to those in top-performing international education systems. Teachers in Macedonia must pass a formal interview, have a minimum amount of practical professional experience and pass an assessment conducted by a supervisor based on their previous practical professional experience. There are also written exams as part of individual course programs, but there is not one officially mandated final written exam in pedagogical programs. Instead, teachers are required to participate in a one-year internship during their first year of teaching. During the internship, they prepare a research project (case study or essay), and a formal defense of the project.

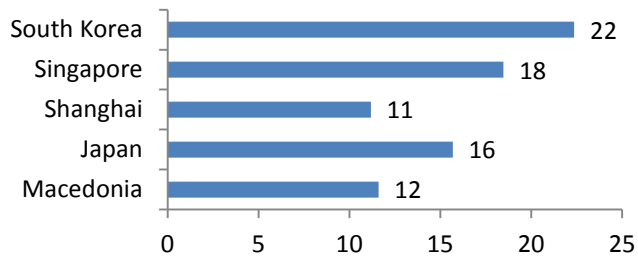
In Macedonia, both concurrent and consecutive models for teacher training exist, but consecutive models are only available for secondary school teachers. Concurrent programs, programs that teach subject knowledge and pedagogic skills relatively simultaneously, are one pathway to enter the teaching profession for both primary and secondary teachers.

There is also a consecutive model for initial teacher training for secondary school teachers. Consecutive programs allow individuals who have a Bachelor's degree in a discipline other than education to gain a teaching certificate after one semester of study at university. To qualify as a teacher, a candidate must undergo a course of study that includes pedagogy, psychology, teaching methodology in the relevant subject and teaching practice at a school (Minimum 45 days).

Entry requirements in Macedonia may help attract a large potential pool of candidates for teaching, because there is more than one pathway to enter the teaching profession.

**(2) Teacher pay may not be appealing for talented candidates.** The starting salary for a teacher is 18.000 denars, which is slightly below the national average salary of 21.000 denars. It takes approximately eight years for a teacher to attain the national average salary. By comparison, the starting salary of a public servant with the same level of education as a starting teacher is approximately 16.000 (e.g. Salaries can vary from 12.000 denars as the starting salary for a policeman to the health sectors, where a doctor who has passed the state exam starts at 24.000 denars). In the private sector, the starting salary for a similarly skilled qualified individual with an MA is higher, usually around 20.000 denars (e.g. in Banking).

**(3) Working conditions may be appealing enough to attract talented individuals to the teaching profession.** Working conditions may play an important role in the decision to become a teacher. Talented candidates who have opportunities in other professions may be discouraged from choosing to become teachers if working conditions are too poor. In Macedonia, there are standards for space, equipment, and sanitation. When a new school opens all standards must be achieved, and working conditions are assessed every three years through an external evaluation conducted by the State Education Inspectorate. In more than 60 percent of schools, working conditions meet standards, but working conditions may not be satisfactory in a smaller, rural schools. In situation where the school premises are not satisfactory, the state education inspectors inform the municipality council to take measures. The municipality usually does not give

**Figure 3. Student-teacher ratio, primary school**

Source: SABER-Teachers data

feedback to the state education inspectors about the measures taken. Apart from the external evaluations, the inspectors also act upon complaints filed by students, parents and other educational stakeholders.

Student-teacher ratios, which are another indicator of teacher working conditions, are similar to those in top-performing international education systems. The student-teacher ratio for both primary and secondary education is 11.6:1 (Figure 3). It is important to note that there is substantial variation among schools. In urban schools the ratio may be as great as 30 students per classroom, where class sizes in rural areas may be very small.

**(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 Macedonia offer various opportunities for career advancement to teachers. Teachers have the option of applying to either school administration posts (such as school principals) or academic leadership positions. Additionally, promotion opportunities in Macedonia are not officially linked to teacher performance. This is another way of improving career opportunities in the teaching profession for attractive candidates.

### Goal 3: Preparing teachers with useful training and experience

#### Advanced ●●●●

Equipping teachers with the skills they need to succeed in the classroom is crucial. Teachers need subject matter and pedagogic knowledge, as well as classroom management skills and lots of teaching practice in order to be successful in the classroom. In addition, preparation puts all teachers on an equal footing, giving them a common framework to improve their practice.

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

**(1) Teacher initial education requirements have the potential to provide prospective teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to be successful in the classroom.** Virtually all high-performing countries require that teachers have an educational level equivalent to ISCED 5A (a Bachelor’s degree), and some systems, such as Finland, require in addition a research-based master’s degree (OECD 2011). School teachers in Macedonia go through their teacher initial education at the ISCED5A level and above, attending a practically oriented 4-year Bachelor’s degree course.

**(2) Practical classroom experience requirements for novice teachers could be strengthened.** Practical experience is an important factor in teaching quality. 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 Macedonia, student teachers for primary and secondary education positions have to develop classroom experience during their teacher initial education program, but the duration of classroom experience varies across teacher training colleges and universities. Mentoring programs are obligatory for new teachers, but these also vary depending on where a teacher obtains his/her degree.

**Figure 4. Required classroom experience, primary school teachers**

	Macedonia	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore	South Korea
3 months or less					✓
12 months or less	✓		✓		
12-24 months				✓	
More than 24 months		✓			

Source: SABER-Teachers data

The classroom experience required of teacher trainees during initial education is less than twelve months—approximately 230 hours for primary school teachers, and varying widely from 10 hours to 100 hours for secondary school teachers— Figure 4. Teacher candidates who pursue a consecutive model of education, obtaining their BA in a subject area first and then pursuing a teaching certification, much have a minimum of 45 days teaching practice. In high-performing systems, programs aimed at facilitating new teachers' transition into teaching for both primary and secondary school teachers are usually longer than 7 months. These programs have the potential to make teachers more effective in the classroom and reduce teacher turnover.

#### Goal 4: Matching teachers' skills with students' needs

##### Emerging ●●○○

Ensuring that teachers work in schools where their skills are most needed is important for both equity and efficiency. First, it is a way of ensuring teachers are distributed as efficiently as possible, making sure that there are no shortages of qualified teachers at any given grade, education level, or subject. Second, it is a means of ensuring 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, deepening inequalities in the system.

SABER-Teachers considers two policy levers 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 ensure that there are not teacher shortages in hard-to-staff schools.** 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 Macedonia there is a policy for teachers to teach in hard-to-staff schools. Teachers receive a monetary bonus for teaching in these schools (Figure 5). In practice, these bonuses are not large (10 percent of a teacher's salary in schools with the greatest shortages) and may not be appealing enough to attract qualified teachers.

**(2) Macedonia has not identified critical-shortage subjects, and there is no policy does not systematically identify or address critical shortage subjects.** Critical shortage subjects, subjects where there is a shortage of teachers to meet student needs, are present in many education systems, and many systems develop policies and offer incentives for teachers to teach these subjects (e.g. monetary bonuses, subsidized education/scholarships in these subject areas). However, 28% of teachers in primary and lower secondary schools do not meet the minimum standards required for teachers due to the lower level of education (ISCED 5B that was required in the past) or due to teaching subjects he/she is not qualified (usually arts). There is shortage of teachers in rural schools and in Albanian or Turkish language of instruction. These are small rural schools and there are not enough classes to employ full-time teachers for each subject. Even if there are qualified teachers on the labor market they are not interested in working part-time, especially in hard-to-staff school areas.

**Figure 5. Incentives for teachers to teach in hard-to-staff schools**

	Macedonia	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore	South Korea
Promotion			✓		✓
Higher basic salary		✓			
Monetary bonus	✓	✓	✓		
Subsidized education			✓		
Housing support		✓			✓

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

### Emerging ●●○○

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

**(1) In Macedonia, there are programs to support the development of principals' leadership skills, including coursework.** A training program that consists of six modules is compulsory for candidates for principals. These modules include: An introductory module, a module on organizations, managing people in organization, principals as educational leaders, planning and decision making, and law regulation and financing. After completion of each module a candidate prepares seminar paper which is presented in front of the trainer. The Ministry sets up a final exam for the candidates who have successfully completed the training course.

Research from top-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 the participation of applicants to principal positions 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 Macedonia, an applicant must have a minimum of 5 years of teaching experience and at least a four-year Bachelor's degree. There are currently no training mechanisms beyond the six-module course to ensure that applicants to principal positions can develop the necessary skills to act as instructional leaders, such as participation in a mentoring or internship program.

There is no policy to evaluate principal performance and principals' performance is not rewarded with incentives or bonuses. Research suggests that improving principal performance can both enhance teacher quality and lead to better outcomes in student achievement. Principals in most education systems play a critical role, and are the local point of contact for most teachers seeking guidance in their day-to-day work. Most high-performing education systems have mechanisms in place to ensure accountability and to evaluate the performance of principals.

**(2) Principals in Macedonia are explicitly expected to monitor teacher performance and to provide support and guidance to teachers for the improvement of instructional practice.** Once education systems get talented candidates to become principals, they need to structure their time to focus on improving instruction (OECD 2012, Barber & Mourshed 2007). High-performing education systems such as Finland, Ontario, and Singapore think of their principals as instructional leaders. Principals are expected to be knowledgeable in teaching and curriculum matters, as well as to provide guidance and support to teachers (Figure 6). They 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).



**Figure 6. Mechanisms to support the development of principals’ leadership skills**

	Macedonia	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore	South Korea
<b>Courses or other training requirements</b>	✓		✓	✓	✓
<b>Mentoring or internship program</b>		✓		✓	

Source: SABER-Teachers data

In Macedonia, principals are expected to hire and dismiss teachers, assess teachers’ performance, evaluate the overall school’s performance, manage the schools budget, represent the school, respond to subnational and local authorities, and maintain student discipline. Many of the tasks that are expected from principals in Macedonia are aligned with instructional leadership tasks that research suggests are associated with high student performance, though their administrative load may be especially burdensome and may detract from their ability to manage teachers effectively.

**Goal 6: Monitoring teaching and learning**

**Established ●●●○**

Assessing how well teachers are teaching and whether students are learning or not is essential to devise strategies for improving 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 three policy levers school systems can use to reach this goal: (1) availability of data on student achievement in order to inform teaching and policy; (2) adequate systems to monitor teacher performance; (3) multiple mechanisms to evaluate teacher performance.

**(1) In Macedonia, there are systems in place to assess student learning in order to inform teaching and policy.** All high-performing education systems ensure that there is enough student data to inform teaching and policy, but they do so in very different ways. Regardless of the mechanism they decide to follow, high-performing systems ensure that three main functions are fulfilled: (1) There is a system to collect relevant and complete data on student achievement regularly;(2) There is a mechanism for public authorities to have access to these data so that they can use it to inform policy; and (3) There is a mechanism to feed these data and relevant analyses back to the school level, so that teachers can use it to inform the improvement of instructional practice. In Macedonia, principals receive assessment data that compare their school’s performance with national averages. National data are publicly available. However, because the law does not stipulate that data collected from these assessments be comparable year on year, it may not be possible to look at time trends and changes in school performance.

In Macedonia, there are sample-based national student assessments after completion of grades 4 and 8 (for children ages 10 and 14), but it is was last implemented in the year 2006. There are also external assessments of students in all grades each year (ages 10-18). Each student is assessed in two subjects. It is planned this year results to be used for teacher assessment and to impact teachers’ salaries from year 2014. All students are required to take and pass a national exam, the State Matura, to graduate. Macedonia also participates in international assessments (PISA, TIMSS, and PIRLS). Despite the opportunity to connect the results of national assessments to teacher performance, results of these exams do not have any impact on teacher evaluation or salary.

**(2) There are systems in place, both internal and external evaluations, to monitor teacher performance.**

In Macedonia, national authorities monitor teacher performance and track teachers over time through an assigned personal identification number. One-third of teachers are externally evaluated each year, so that each teacher gets evaluated once every three years. Teachers keep portfolios, which are the basis for

evaluation. There is a book of rules that is used by state educational inspectors to assess the fulfillment of teachers' duties regulated in the laws for education. It contains standards against which a teacher portfolio is assessed. The laws for primary and secondary education prescribe that the external evaluation will influence the teacher salaries and that after three unsatisfactory results a teacher will be dismissed. In practice, this policy is not enforced. Principals are also involved in internally monitoring teacher performance. These internal evaluations include mandatory classroom observation. In addition to internal and external evaluations, school management staff are monitoring and assessing the teachers' performance but there is no official performance evaluation process in place.

**(3) According to policy, the criteria used to evaluate teacher performance focus heavily on criteria that have been found in research influence student achievement (Figure 7).** Research suggests that no single method of evaluating teacher performance is failsafe. Most high-performing systems conduct teacher evaluations using a multiplicity of mechanisms of data collection and varied criteria for assessment. Furthermore, research has shown that a balance of different criteria—such as a combination of a student achievement results, classroom observations and feedback from student survey results—might be more effective. Many top-performing education systems define explicit criteria for assessing teacher performance. Figure 7, for instance, highlights some of these criteria.

**Figure 7. Criteria to evaluate teacher performance**

	Macedonia	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore	South Korea
<b>Subject matter knowledge</b>		✓		✓	✓
<b>Teaching methods</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Student assessment methods</b>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Students' academic achievement</b>	✓		✓		

Source: SABER-Teachers data

## Goal 7: Supporting teachers to improve instruction

Established ●●●○

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 specific challenges 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 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) making sure teacher professional development is assigned based on perceived needs.

**(1) Teachers are required to participate in teacher professional development, but there are no specific requirements as to the duration or intensity of the training.** In Macedonia, participating in professional development is a requisite to stay in the profession as well as a requisite for promotions. In addition, in order to advance from one rank to another in the teacher career ladder, teachers are required to have participated in professional development seminars or workshops according to their rank. Teacher professional development is provided free of charge.

**(2) Teacher professional development includes activities that have been found by research to be associated with instructional improvement (Figure 8).** Research suggests that effective teacher professional development is collaborative and provides opportunities for the in-school analysis of instructional practice, as opposed to being limited to one-time workshops or conferences. As mentioned earlier, 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. Some of these include observation visits to other schools, participation in teacher or school networks as well as opportunities to engage in research, mentoring or coaching. All such opportunities exist in Macedonia.

**Figure 8. Types of professional development**

	Macedonia	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore	South Korea
Observation visits	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Teacher networks	✓	✓	✓	✓	
School networks	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Research	✓	✓		✓	
Mentoring/coaching	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Source: SABER-Teachers data

**(3) Teacher professional development is formally assigned based on perceived needs.** When teachers perform poorly on external evaluations, they may be assigned to participate in professional development activities. Assigning professional development to teachers, or connecting them with a supervisor or mentor, 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.

### Goal 8: Motivating teachers to perform

#### Emerging ●●○○

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

SABER-Teachers considers three policy levers 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 Macedonia promotion opportunities are not linked to performance on the job.** There is no official mandatory probation period for teachers before they are granted open-ended appointments, and official policy does not stipulate that performance on the job factors into whether teachers receive this type of appointment. But although probation periods are not mandatory, there is a practice of having them at the school level, and principals have discretion over whether to renew a teacher’s contract or not.

**(2) There are mechanisms in place to hold teachers accountable.** Requiring teachers to meet some standards to remain in the teaching profession can facilitate the removal of ineffective teachers. In Macedonia, teacher performance is evaluated annually, and there are official mechanisms to address cases of misconduct, child abuse, absenteeism and poor performance. However, in practice, the dismissal rate is very low— less than 1 percent per annum, according to unofficial data sources.

**(3) Teacher compensation is linked to performance (Figure 9).** Performance reviews in Macedonia do not carry salary implications, but high-performing teachers do receive monetary bonuses for good individual performance in some municipalities. Such pecuniary rewards can be effective tools for improving teacher performance, assuming that there is a valid and well-accepted system of performance evaluation is in place.

**Figure 9. Incentives for high performance**

	Macedonia	Japan	Shanghai	Singapore	South Korea
Individual monetary bonus	✓		✓	✓	✓
School-level bonus			✓		✓

Source: SABER-Teachers data

## Policy Options

This SABER country report has offered a snapshot of Macedonia's key policies on teachers and how they compare with those of top global performers in education. Building on that diagnosis, this section offers some options for further strengthening the teacher policy framework.

### Goal 1: Setting clear expectations for teachers

There are clear expectations for what students should learn and what teachers are supposed to do. Teachers' official duties involve both teaching and nonteaching tasks related to instructional improvement.

- Set expectations for what percentage of teachers' working time should be dedicated to teaching and what percentage should be used for other necessary activities that may contribute to instructional improvement.

### Goal 2: Attracting the best into teaching

Entry requirements, working conditions, and career advancement opportunities may be appealing for talented candidates. However, teacher pay may not be appealing signaling teaching as a low-status profession.

- Ensure teachers get competitive pay, especially at the entry-level.
- Ensure teacher performance is one of the criteria used for teacher promotion and career advancement. For example, vertical and horizontal promotions could be based on merit, not tenure (relax the years of teaching experience requirement for promotions, so that high performing teachers have the opportunity for career advancement).

### Goal 3: Preparing teachers with useful training and experience

Current teacher initial education systems may be suited to ensure good quality teachers. Beginning teachers have opportunities to develop practical teaching skills.

- Teacher preparation could include more experience in the classroom. The more teachers are able to try out their pedagogical theories, subject matter knowledge, and classroom

management skills on students, the better prepared they will be for their careers.

### Goal 4: Matching teachers' skills with students' needs

There are official systems in place to address teacher shortages in hard-to-staff schools, but not to attract teachers in critical-shortage subject areas.

- Develop a system for identifying critical shortage subjects at the regional level, and by language of instruction.
- Reconsider existing incentives for working in hard-to-staff schools and ensure that they are appealing to teachers.

### Goal 5: Leading teachers with strong principals

Principals are expected to monitor teacher performance and provide support to teachers to improve instructional practice, but their performance is not rewarded. At present there are training courses for new principals, but no mentorships or guidance to ensure that new principals have the necessary skills to act as instructional leaders and successful managers.

- Principal performance in Macedonia could be further enhanced by providing principals with an obligatory mentorship program and/or specific coursework to promote leadership skills.
- Initiate a system for evaluating principal performance and ensure student and teacher outcomes are factored into principal performance reviews.
- Conduct a needs assessment to understand what are the specific needs and issues principals face in their work.

### Goal 6: Monitoring teaching and learning

There are systems in place to assess student learning in order to inform teaching and policy. Teacher performance is evaluated every three years using criteria that assess effective teaching.

- Ensure that student achievement data collected are comparable year-on-year, so that it becomes possible to evaluate teacher and school performance over time.

### **Goal 7: Supporting teachers to improve instruction**

There are opportunities for teacher professional development, but requirements for teachers (e.g. the number of days for professional development) are not specified.

- Continue to require that primary and secondary school teachers participate in professional development activities each year. Research suggests that effective teacher professional development is collaborative and provides opportunities for the analysis of instructional practice, as opposed to one-time workshops or conferences.
- Focus more on ensuring the quality rather than quantity of professional development activities.
- Ensure there is a regular budget for professional development activities.

### **Goal 8: Motivating teachers to perform**

There are mechanisms in place to hold teachers accountable. Promotion opportunities are not linked to teacher performance, but high performing teachers do have an opportunity to receive monetary bonuses.

- Improve mechanisms for holding teachers accountable. For example, set requirements for professional development or additional performance evaluations for teachers who underperform and need it.
- Reward high-performing teachers with desirable incentives—monetary or otherwise.
- Link teacher performance reviews to student outcomes.
- Ensure that the results of teacher evaluations and feedback reaches teachers and that evaluations are not simply done pro forma.

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Law on primary education (Закон за основното образование)

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JURISDICTION OF THE STATE SANITARY AND HEALTH  
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This report focuses specifically on policies in the area of teacher policies.

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