

# **The Case for Long-Term Investment in Strengthening the Teaching Profession**

An Assessment of the Contributions of  
CSTP at Age Five

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# **The Case for Long-Term Investment in Strengthening the Teaching Profession**

## **An Assessment of the Contributions of CSTP at Age Five**

*Inverness Research (see [www.inverness-research.org](http://www.inverness-research.org)) has served as the external evaluation group for CSTP since its inception in 2003. As evaluators, we conceptualize projects as investments in improvement, and we examine the returns on those investments. The direct services of projects and their immediate outcomes are only one form of return on investment. Typically, we study the more diffuse and diverse benefits accrued by long-range, upstream investments far from classrooms; CSTP is one such investment.*

*This paper offers a reflective assessment of CSTP, now five years old. We review CSTP's mission and role, illuminate key features of its design and functions, and examine the value of the assets—or “educational capital”—that CSTP generates for Washington education. We draw from our study of CSTP over the full five-year lifespan, and we also take into account what we learned from evaluating its precursor and now sister organization, the Washington Initiative for National Board Teacher Certification. Our hope is offer insight to current and future funders of CSTP, as well as Washington policy makers, education leaders and practitioners, the NBPTS, and similar centers in other states.*

### **Preface: The Importance of a Strong Teaching Profession**

Student learning depends on access to rich, multiple opportunities to learn. Those opportunities depend a great deal on the quality of the teaching that students have. Good teaching really matters. Evidence from experience and from recent research bears this out.

Teaching well—serving diverse students in multiple contexts—is highly complex, non-routine work. Further, society makes ever-greater demands for educational outcomes. For both reasons, good teaching requires *ever-growing* knowledge and skill. Good teaching, and the improvement of teaching, do not occur by accident or reliance on innate talent. High quality teaching and the ongoing strengthening of teaching occur when there is a strong *system* that supports teachers, and when a strong *profession* supports teachers.

State education policies have a strong impact on teachers' work, for better or worse. Policies channel funds toward or away from access to professional development, structure teachers' workdays and career paths, and define available resources. It is vital that teachers, at a large scale, are aware of, involved with, and contributing to policies that influence their ability to do their best teaching and continue to develop their knowledge and skills.

It is important both that states exert steady effort in developing a stronger profession, and that the profession is involved constructively in that effort.

### **Overview: The Case for CSTP**

We have organized this paper into four sections that, together, spell out a logical and evidence-based case for CSTP as an effective investment in strengthening the profession:

Section I. explains what strengthening the profession involves, and asserts that CSTP adds an important missing link in the education reform landscape of Washington.

Section II. shows that, through its work on key issues, CSTP generates multiple forms of “educational capital” that can be used for improvement—human capital, social capital, knowledge capital, functional capital, political capital.

Section III. asserts that in its five years of existence, CSTP has demonstrated that it can produce “returns on investment.” Actors in multiple sectors of Washington’s education landscape are using educational capital generated by CSTP to strengthen policy-making, the education system, and professional practice. Further, CSTP is called upon to serve as a leader nationally.

Section IV. explains that, as a Center with specific attributes, CSTP is structured effectively as an investment in improvement and that it is designed to build its internal capacity over time. Thus, CSTP is strongly positioned to put future investments to work for Washington’s teaching profession.

#### **I. What Strengthening the Profession Involves**

**Strengthening the profession requires ongoing effort on many fronts: improving policies that create conditions of the profession, strengthening the profession’s role in contributing to better policies and a stronger education system, and strengthening the leadership and practices of individuals within the profession. Because the education system is loosely coupled and lacking an infrastructure for improvement, there is a need for a strong agent to galvanize resources and effort to strengthen the profession. By serving in that role, CSTP adds an important missing link to Washington’s long term effort to improve education. Sustaining CSTP’s work requires long-term, steady, upstream investment.**

Strengthening the profession is not a short-term, finite, or uni-dimensional effort; rather, it is an ongoing effort that requires action in multiple spheres from practice to policy and at a substantial scale. Below are three broad ways in which CSTP works to strengthen the profession:

- *Strengthening the quality of the workforce.* By this we mean the broad effort to attract, prepare, induct, develop, retain, and reward knowledgeable, skillful and committed people so that the profession as a whole grows in its quality. This effort requires intensive investment in research about the workforce and factors that affect its quality, and it requires development of effective practices that enhance teacher quality.

## Contributions of CSTP at Age Five

- *Strengthening the profession's ability to improve policies that condition their work and the system they work in.* By this we mean ongoing effort to amplify the perspectives and participation of accomplished and committed teachers in informing policies that improve teaching and conditions for teaching.
- *Strengthening teachers as professionals.* By this we mean strengthening the members of the profession, i.e., the practitioners who work with students and who form the professional communities of schools and districts. Strengthening members of the profession means promoting high quality classroom practices and promoting ongoing opportunities for improvement of those practices. It means raising the professional profile and responsibilities of those practitioners: developing teachers as leaders, and creating opportunities for teacher leadership to form vigorous professional communities that help improve practice.

### **The need for a strong galvanizing agent**

The teaching profession intersects with the policy-making/governance structures (legislature, governor, boards and commissions), the education operating system (OSPI, districts, school), and higher education institutions; yet the profession occupies its own niche. These many sectors of the education landscape are not tightly enough linked to naturally cohere and mutually inform or enrich one another. In fact, education is a historically de-centralized and loosely coupled social function. Professional membership groups such as the teachers' union and discipline societies, while they play important roles for the profession, are alone not adequate to the broad mission of strengthening the profession. There is no "improvement infrastructure" dedicated to ongoing strengthening of the profession; rather, there are disparate—sometimes overlapping, sometimes competing—organizations with interests in professional conditions and quality.

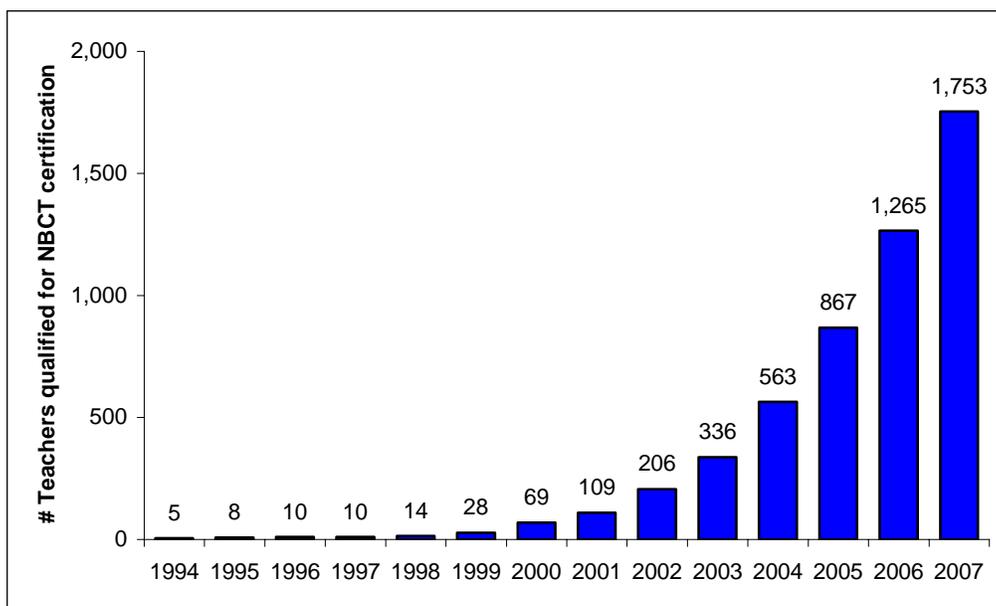
Given this reality, *it takes an active leading agent to assemble and galvanize disparate resources.* The driving force behind this ongoing effort must be both grounded within the profession (the profession must help to strengthen itself) and simultaneously must forge intersections where different sectors of the landscape can help contribute to, and benefit from, the strengthening of the profession. CSTP plays that role for Washington.

### **The Washington education context: CSTP as a missing link**

Washington has sustained an impressively long-term education reform effort since the early 1990's. Early phases focused on development of content standards, assessments in core subject areas, and accountability, the latter heightened further by No Child Left Behind. In the first decade, however, relatively little policy attention went to strengthening teaching and the conditions of the profession. Policy attention turned to teachers and teacher quality in the early 2000's, with initial focus on better, more professional certification (creation of the Professional Certification for teachers in the first five years) and, through the Washington Initiative, promoting National Board certification. The Washington Initiative, in particular, quickly ramped up the numbers of National Board certified teachers (NBCTs) between 2001 and the present, generating a large pool of potential "working assets" for the improvement of teaching. Leading teachers, accomplished and dedicated, are always a vital contributor to improvement of the profession and necessary to improvement at state-level scale.

**Figure 1.**

*Increase in numbers of National Board Certified Teachers (NBCTs) in Washington*



The creators of CSTP—led by the Stuart Foundation, a long-time contributor to educational improvement efforts in Washington and California—asserted that even greater attention needed to go to strengthening the profession. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Washington Education Association (WEA) do important work in this area. However, in part because of their lack of neutrality (OSPI is funded as part of the education system, the WEA is funded by its members as a union) they have not been sufficient, on their own, to drive a long-term, multi-faceted, multi-partisan effort to engage the policy-making and education systems in improving teaching and the conditions of teaching. In a very real sense, there was a missing link in the education landscape.

CSTP was funded in 2003 with the broad mission of strengthening the teaching profession through developing and promoting the leadership of accomplished teachers, strengthening policy formation with better research- and practice-based information and knowledge, and galvanizing disparate organizations to make constructive efforts toward an ever-stronger profession.

### **The logic of upstream investment**

Given the nature of the effort it entails, strengthening the teaching profession requires a particular funding logic, one that relies on seeing the difference between an *expenditure* and an *investment*. Typically, funders interested in improving teaching make short-term (3-5 years, typically) grants to fund projects that pay for direct services or products for teachers, e.g., new curriculum resources, new tools or strategies, scholarships to prospective teachers. These function as expenditures—short-term funding for specified services. These expenditures are often targeted downstream, that is, close to the classroom. Outcomes are usually specific, predictable, and proximal.

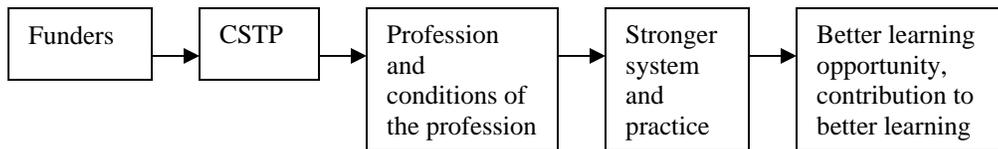
Strengthening the profession, however, requires a different kind of funding logic—one of *investment*. Investments in educational improvement might produce some predictable short-term outcomes, but those are not the primary benefits. Rather, the main purpose of investments is to *generate capital—working assets—that multiple sectors of the system can take up to fuel future work and growth*. Investment outcomes are therefore more distal and less predictable than the outcomes of expenditures.

Our view is that CSTP is best conceived as an upstream investment, with efforts targeted at the policy-making system and having the aim of leveraging the system broadly. While some of CSTP's work takes place close to the classroom, the purpose is not merely to improve those classrooms (although that is a valuable derivative benefit). Rather, CSTP informs policy in ways that are grounded in both practice and research, builds leadership and organizational capacity, and generates new knowledge that can inform both policy and practice.

As portrayed in the diagram below, CSTP aims to strengthen the profession and the conditions of the profession, which in turn contributes to a stronger education system and teaching practice. Those benefits in turn lead to better opportunities for students to learn, which is a contributor to greater student success.

**Figure 2.**

*Strengthening the teaching profession: An upstream investment*



**CSTP: Part of the legacy of *A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century***

*CSTP's existence and mission are part of the legacy of a national movement launched in 1985 with the publication of [A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century](#).*

*A Nation Prepared* was a response to the very influential 1983 report, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*. While *A Nation at Risk* did not focus strongly on teaching, it did recommend that the profession needed to be strengthened, both through better preparation and the affording of greater social stature. *A Nation Prepared* emphasized the centrality of effective teaching, and it recommended the creation of the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards.

The NBPTS was created in 1987, for the purpose of identifying and recognizing teachers who reach high standards of knowledge and practice. In 1989 the NBPTS issued a policy statement "What Teachers Should Know and Be

Able to Do." Since its inception, the NBPTS has certified nearly 64,000 teachers nationwide.

In 1996, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) published *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future*. Explicitly building off the work of the National Board, it offers a "blueprint for recruiting, preparing, and supporting excellent teachers in all of America's schools." NCTAF called for the development of state-level organizations that would focus on the improvement of education policies related to the quality of the professional workforce and the conditions surrounding teachers' work.

With support from the Stuart Foundation, California's Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (CFTL) was launched in 1997. Its focus is on strengthening teacher development policy and practice by supplying policy makers with research about the policy and organizational conditions of effective teaching and about the nature, quality, and distribution of the workforce. The CFTL is credited with serving as the impetus for policies that better prepare new teachers, distribute quality teachers more equitably, and better induct new teachers into the profession. Similarly, in 1999, the Center for Teaching Quality (CTQ) was launched in North Carolina. Its primary strategy has been to promote the leadership of National Board certified teachers and to draw from their perspectives to shape policy proposals that will

promote a more professional vision of teaching and redesign the way we recruit, prepare, induct, compensate, and evaluate teachers.

CSTP, in its short five-year history, and building on the success of the Washington Initiative for National Board certification, has joined the ranks of the CFTL and CTQ as a nationally respected state center that is a legacy of *A Nation Prepared* and NCTAF. CSTP combines the strategies of CFTL's research-based policy work and of the CTQ's focus on the leadership of effective teachers. A member of the NBPTS national office pointed out that because of its "model for teacher quality and organizational collaboration that is unique," CSTP has potential to help build a national model for statewide centers.

## II. CSTP's Work: Generating Educational Capital

**Through its strategic work, CSTP generates many kinds of working assets that function as "educational capital" for Washington education. CSTP has earned stature and credibility among all sectors of the education landscape.**

### CSTP's position and assets

CSTP's status as an independent, non-profit, non-membership organization means that no sector of the education landscape "owns" CSTP or controls its policy positions. This stance is especially vital in the Washington context, where the scale of the state, the tenure and existing relationships of the many political actors, and the cultural tendency to distribute rather than consolidate governance authority pushes organizations toward coalitions and "taking sides."<sup>1</sup> A major finding from our evaluation of CSTP in 2006 was that policy decision-makers say CSTP can be more effective if it is a neutral supplier of data and research.<sup>2</sup> One state-level policy maker put it this way:

*What you have [in Washington] is people more interested in political posturing. It is unfortunate. It is also one of the reasons I give [CSTP] such high marks on research and presentation quality. CSTP stands out from people manipulating data for their own benefit. That is a huge plus.*

Further, CSTP can bring multiple assets and capacities to bear on critical issues facing the profession. As indicated in the diagram below, these include 1800 accomplished, dedicated teachers, as well as constructive working relationships with key actors in the landscape (OSPI, WEA, Partnership For Learning (PFL), various governing boards; the University of

<sup>1</sup> This perception of Washington education politics surfaced both in our research on CSTP and on Washington's Partnership for Learning (PFL), a communications and advocacy group sponsored by the Business Roundtable.

<sup>2</sup> Inverness Research formative evaluation report of CSTP, November 2006.

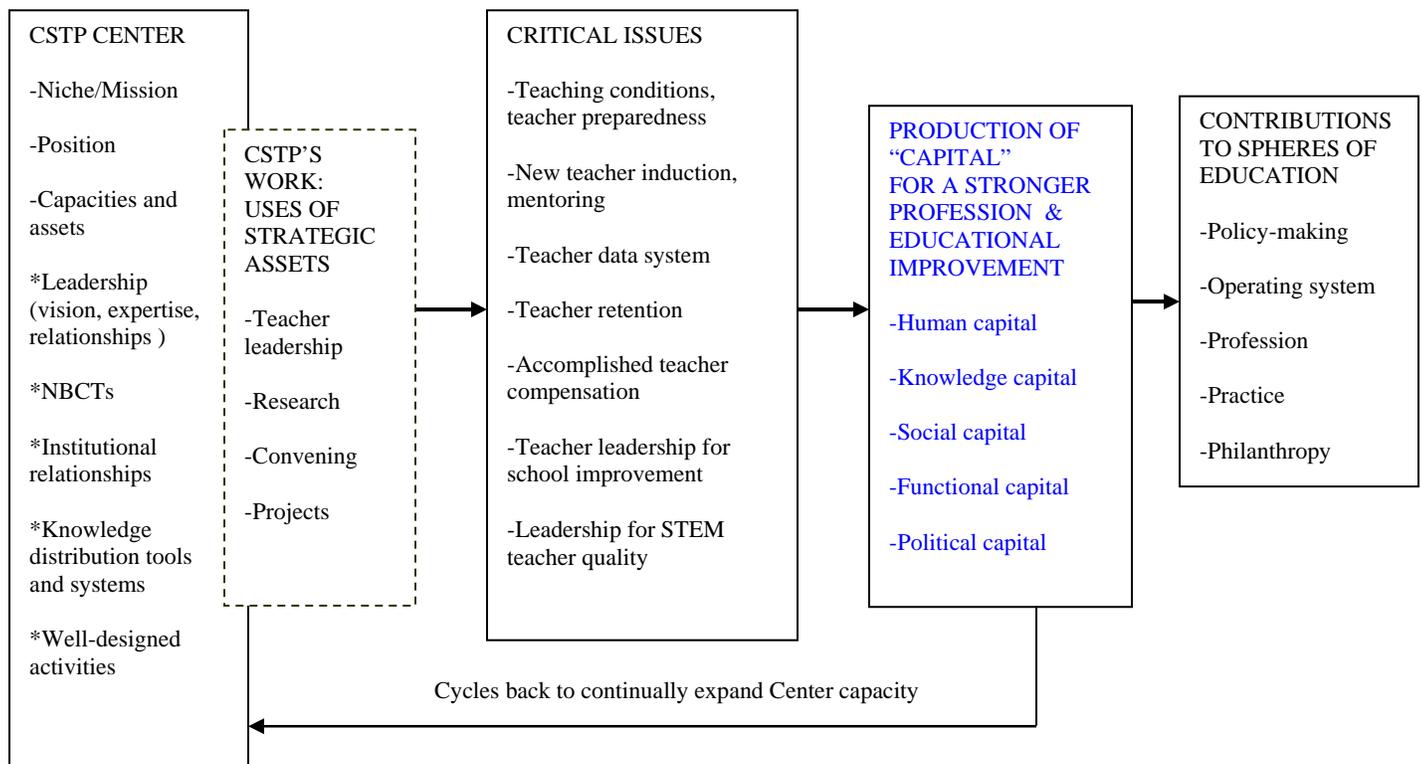
Washington’s nationally respected Center for Research on Teaching and Policy; teacher preparation institutions across the state; professional organizations; leading reform organizations such as Washington Leadership and Assistance for Science Education Reform (LASER) and North Cascades and Olympic Science Partnership (NCOSP, a National Science Foundation-funded regional science partnership). CSTP has also had the benefit of executive leadership that brings vision, credibility and integrity, a vast network of professional relationships in education, and real know-how to the problem area. The importance of this quality leadership has surfaced as a strong theme in interviews with key high-level players in the Washington landscape in 2005, 2006, and 2008. As we will illustrate in the remainder of this paper, all of these assets represent a high level of organizational capacity to work on the multiple fronts needed.

### How CSTP works to strengthen the profession

The diagram below portrays CSTP’s theory of action and design. The remainder of this section provides data and examples of CSTP’s work and the assets it generates.

CSTP occupies an important niche in the education landscape and has specific attributes and capabilities as a center. CSTP identifies and takes up issues that are important to the strengthening of the teaching profession and that are relevant in WA, and it brings its major strategic assets to bear on those issues. Work on these issues produces, over time, multiple forms of **educational “capital,” i.e., capacities and assets that actors in different spheres of education can draw upon to improve their ability to strengthen the profession and improve education.** Moreover, CSTP is designed so that it continually builds up its own internal capacity as well, enabling it to generate ever-greater capital for the state over time.

**Figure 3.**  
*CSTP’s theory of action: Use of strategic assets to generic educational capital*



## **Generating educational capital: Illustrations of CSTP's work**

Educational capital refers to working assets that can be used for the ongoing, steady work of educational improvement. CSTP generates several types of educational capital:

### ***Human capital***

Human capital comprises the specialized knowledge, skills, and motivations of people. CSTP's greatest human capital asset is the NBCTs in the CSTP network, and the sheer scale of that reservoir of capital. Some 3% of the entire teaching force in Washington has earned NB status. Over the past three years CSTP has offered 110 events and activities designed to build the leadership skills of these NBCTs. These activities add value in the form of new knowledge and skills to the teachers' foundational human capital as highly effective classroom practitioners. Activities include:

- the annual conference Sleeping Lady, for new NBCTs interested in becoming positive change agents in their schools and beyond
- advanced leadership institutes for experienced NBCT leaders
- advocacy workshops, where teacher leaders learn to communicate their profession-based ideas for better policies to a range of audiences, including policy makers, the media, and their own communities
- writing and publication projects that enable teachers to make their leadership practices and ideas for education improvement available to a range of audiences

CSTP also builds human capital through its leadership grants to NBCTs. Between 2004 and 2007, CSTP leadership grants supported 330 teachers in 14,680 hours of school-centered professional development, or 45 hours per teacher. CSTP funds compensated teachers for about 55% of those hours; teachers themselves contributed the other 45% of their own time to the work.

The NBCT recipients of the grants have opportunities to put into practice their leadership skills and knowledge, which expands their own capacities to lead. Most NBCTs use the grants to facilitate professional development opportunities for their colleagues, for example, starting up lesson study, curriculum topic study, or critical friends groups focused on mathematics, literacy, or another core curriculum area. NBCTs sometimes use the funds to support their colleagues in gaining the reflective skills they need to achieve NB certification, or to foster better teacher-administrator collaborations for school improvement. These grants clearly build human capital assets in the teacher participants in these projects by enhancing their knowledge for teaching.

CSTP's development of teacher leadership helps teachers become better able to act as change agents for their own profession. A former OSPI official notes:

*This opportunity for teachers who are becoming leaders to network with each other and begin to understand their larger world is very important. Before CSTP was around, there wasn't a good way for teachers to connect with each other and to learn more about what was*

*going on at the state level and even the national level around teacher quality and other issues that affect the profession. They did not have opportunities to become knowledgeable and be able to advocate not just with legislators, but with their neighbors or voters in their community, about some of the things that really influence their work.*

### ***Knowledge capital***

CSTP's knowledge capital comprises, in part, the individual and collective practical knowledge of the NBCTs in the CSTP network. What these highly effective teachers know from their own experiences as teachers, and from their preparation as leaders, is available for system improvement because of the leadership, research, and publication opportunities provided by CSTP.

CSTP also generates new knowledge capital for Washington by producing research- and data-based reports and other knowledge resources for multiple uses. CSTP has mined workforce data to portray characteristics of the labor force, has measured teacher retention patterns across the state, has profiled the characteristics and distribution of new teachers and NBCTs across the state, and has produced surveys that portray both typical teachers' and NBCTs' experiences and views related to quality professional development, conditions for higher achievement in math, and adequacy of preparation to help students meet state standards. An important outcome of CSTP's efforts to develop data-based portrayals of the teacher workforce is the recognition of how limited existing databases are. This discovery has prompted CSTP to spearhead an effort to fund the creation of a comprehensive teacher data system so that policy-making can be grounded in realities, rather than "best guesses" about the teaching force. Finally, between 2003 and 2007, CSTP leaders made some 60 presentations at a wide range of regional, state, and national meetings and conferences of educators. These presentations serve as important venues for distribution of CSTP-based knowledge assets into the system.

### ***Social capital***

Social capital refers to connections and relationships that enable the expansion of capacities for knowledge and work. CSTP—largely through the personal professional network, vision, and skill of the executive director—both draws from and generates social capital at an impressive scale. Between 2003 and 2007, CSTP has engaged in more than 20 collaborative projects associated with teacher preparation, certification, development, leadership, compensation, and career structure. Additionally, CSTP has consulted with some 20 organizations working on improvement of teaching and the conditions of teaching, many within Washington and some nationally. The collaborative work that this social capital generates also helps develop human capital assets in the partner organizations by adding to the knowledge and skills of people who work together with CSTP staff, teacher leaders, and researchers.

An important part of CSTP's role, as noted earlier, is to convene groups that, together, can leverage influence on the policy system for the benefit of teaching conditions and quality. CSTP's social capital—its accumulated relationships and the trust that binds them together—is what enables them to fulfill that role so effectively.

### ***Functional capital***

Functional capital refers to the “know-how” that CSTP has developed to do work, that is, to efficiently and flexibly convene groups, produce publications, disseminate information in a range of usable formats, design and offer programs for teachers and others, distribute mini-grants, and so on. CSTP’s functional capital is of value within Washington, especially to partners lacking that capital. One former leader in OSPI’s new teacher support office pointed out the value of CSTP’s ability not only to help produce standards related to new teacher support, but to build a working laboratory by conducting a high quality experimental project:

*Having the New Teacher Alliance as a little lab, a little experiment to see if we really did put the money into this and we are really thoughtful about it, and paid close attention to the research, what might it look like? Not only in a couple of big districts, but most notably in some little districts, which are routinely ignored in our state. Having that experiment is great.*

CSTP’s functional capital—particularly its ability to offer high quality programs to develop teacher leadership—is also of interest nationally and to other states that are interested in strengthening their accomplished teacher networks. A leader in the NBPTS said of CSTP:

*I can’t say enough how around the country there is demand for some of the products that CSTP has created. We recently had CSTP present their advocacy workshop to NBCTs across the country, which produced interest in others in doing more with CSTP, and with teacher leadership. Sleeping Lady [CSTP’s annual leadership conference for newly certified NBCTs] doesn’t happen anywhere else, writers workshops where teachers’ stories are written doesn’t happen anywhere else.*

### ***Political capital***

CSTP’s political capital reflects the rising visibility of CSTP as an organization, and of Jeanne Harmon as its executive, to be called to the table to discuss policies: to sit on committees and task forces working on issues of the profession, shape policy frameworks, galvanize the actions of teachers to speak to policy makers, and so on. CSTP’s political capital can be brought directly to bear on policy-making and also is used by others to strengthen their positions.

Often, CSTP’s most potent political capital turns out to be its teacher leadership network. When the state salary stipend for NBCTs came was under threat of being revoked in 2006, for example, CSTP “turned the NBCTs loose on their local legislators, and that was the end of that. We all got a call that said, ‘Call off your dogs, we got the message.’” After six years of effort, the legislature made that stipend permanent in 2007.

Another issue that CSTP is working on—an expanded career ladder for teachers, with a leadership position on the matrix—will also likely gain visibility from the leadership of NBCTs. CSTP has engaged a group of NBCTs to prepare a new framework that defines the particular nature of teacher leadership; also, several NBCTs are also writing a blog about the impact of

policy in their classrooms. Both the framework and the blogs are intended to inform policy makers.

The teacher network also provides political capital to other groups working on teacher issues. A leader at OSPI recounts the benefit of being able to draw from CSTP's deep reservoir of well-prepared and high-credibility teachers to help explain the problem of new teacher support to legislators:

*When I testify at the legislature, it is like 'Oh for Pete's sake, another OSPI program person.' But when you can get a new teacher or a district mentor, one of the real people who really feels like they hung on because of the assistance that they received in districts where they are pouring more money into it and doing the kinds of things that we would like all districts to be able to do, it is more powerful. CSTP facilitated that happening.*

Results of our earlier evaluations of CSTP underscore this point. A member of the state House of Representatives told us in 2006, "I make policy decisions based on communications I have with teachers."

### **CSTP Profiles: Generating educational capital**

The following profiles—one of a teacher leader and one of CSTP work on the issue of new teacher induction—illustrate how CSTP uses its many assets to generate educational capital in different forms that, together, help the profession and the system strengthen themselves.

#### ***Profile # 1: Teacher leadership***

Tom White (see profile on following page) has been a NBCT teacher leader since 2001, first with the Washington Initiative and now with CSTP. His trajectory of leadership development and work reflects the multiple opportunities that CSTP offers for accomplished teachers. The profile also shows how CSTP's generation of human capital—i.e., Tom's leadership capacity—in turn generates further educational capital for use by the education system. Through integrating Lesson Study into his school, Tom helped to generate greater **human capital** by providing his colleagues with knowledge and skill that helps improve their teaching. The Lesson Study work also generated **functional capital** for his school organization by providing a working model for in-school professional development and building professional learning community. Further, what Tom has learned from his leadership work generates **knowledge capital** for CSTP's teacher network, put to use when Tom shares his experiences with other teacher leaders at Sleeping Lady conferences. And finally, Tom's experiences as a published writer and blogger, within his roles as dedicated member of both the CSTP network and the WEA, generate **political capital** that both organizations can draw from to strengthen their alliance for the cause of strengthening the profession.

### Profile of a NBCT teacher leader: Tom White

*Tom White is a third grade teacher in Lynnwood, WA. He was National Board certified in 2000. Tom's leadership journey began in 2001 with the Washington Initiative. Tom recalls his first Sleeping Lady conference for teacher leaders where Jeanne Harmon, then WI director, introduced the idea of "spheres of influence" and the idea that it is possible to be a leader and remain in the classroom. Tom believes that CSTP's focus on developing teacher leadership is important for the state, and that policy makers will ultimately learn from CSTP that the best resource for professional development and for improving the profession is teachers themselves.*

Tom's leadership work began in 2001 when he applied for and received a Leadership Grant from the Washington Initiative. He had learned about Lesson Study<sup>3</sup> at CSTP's Sleeping Lady conference and wanted to implement it at his school. Tom created a Lesson Study program at his school that began with a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade team and eventually added teams of teachers from the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grades. His school's lesson study work continues seven years later in 2008, using local and other funds for support. As a result of this work, Tom was invited to present what he learned from this leadership experience at subsequent Sleeping Lady conferences.

#### Connecting with the WEA

Tom has also been strongly interested in the involvement of teacher leaders in the Washington Education Association (WEA). In 2004 he attended CSTP's first Writer's Retreat. These retreats support teachers in writing about and publishing their ideas and experiences. Tom produced an article, entitled *A Source of Association Leaders*, in which he argues for NBCTs to get involved in association leadership. He believes that the National Board and the WEA share many of the same goals, and that NBCTs could be an asset to state and local associations. (The article is available on the CSTP website and also appeared in the WEA newsletter.)

Tom's paper then led to several presentations on this topic at Sleeping Lady. For one, he brought in Jim Meadows, who works in the teaching and learning division at the WEA, to present with him and provide the WEA perspective. Tom says:

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<sup>3</sup> A format for school-based professional development, originating in Japan and spreading across the U.S.. See [www.cstp-wa.org/Accomplishedteaching/Lesson\\_study](http://www.cstp-wa.org/Accomplishedteaching/Lesson_study).

*The WEA is traditional association where they are petitioning for better salaries, lower class size, and what you normally would associate with union work. But there is also a side of the association that is not quite as well-known which is more professional, more about advocating for better teaching. I think the National Board certification falls in with that, and the WEA has been a huge backer of the National Board since the beginning, but a lot of people don't really realize that.*

Tom also joined a WEA-sponsored program called Jumpstart, a pre-candidacy program for teachers interested in pursuing National Board certification. Started by Jim Meadows in 2003, the program began with 1 seminar for 30 teachers and led by 3 NBCT facilitators. In 2008, there were 3 seminars for about 1200 potential candidates, and a sizable team of facilitators. This program has caught the attention of other states.

#### Expanding understanding of teacher leadership

More recently, Tom has been involved in two efforts sponsored by CSTP to further define and explicate the nature of teacher leadership. In 2007, CSTP gathered a small group of NBCTs to reflect on CSTP's four years of support for teacher leadership. The teachers at this meeting agreed that much progress has been made to encourage and support teachers in their leadership roles, but there were still many teachers who felt unprepared for leadership outside of their classrooms. Tom explains:

*We might be good teachers, but the skill set needed for teaching is completely different from what I need to work with adults. I learned the hard way that working with a bunch of 30-year-old teachers is a totally different thing than working with 8-year-olds. One of the things that you want to focus on*

*is saying, 'what do teachers need to become teacher leaders in terms of skills?' How to run a meeting for example, or how to deal with a hostile participant, or how to get adults focused.*

Prior to this retreat, CSTP supported Tom in attending (with Terese Emry of CSTP) a National Staff Development Conference meeting in Orlando to learn about how others are preparing teachers for leadership roles. This effort to define teacher leadership is an ongoing CSTP project.

Tom's current leadership work for CSTP is writing for a blog launched in summer 2008 *Stories From School: Practice Meets Policy* ([www.storiesfromschool.org](http://www.storiesfromschool.org)). This blog gives six NBCTs a chance to write about how policy decisions impact their classroom practice. Tom feels that this writing opportunity is a good follow-up to the CSTP Writer's Retreat.

Tom's leadership has moved from work within his own school, to state-level work with the WEA, to potentially international contributions through the blog. Here he reflects on ways his identity as a leader has changed over the years, and how he has been able to find his leadership comfort zone:

*When I first thought about teacher leadership, I thought a teacher leader is somebody who is teaching and they are helping the principal by putting on staff development on half day Fridays or something like that. But the definition of leadership has matured in my thoughts...It could just be somebody who opens up their classroom to have people come in and see how they are doing. It could be writing. It is going beyond the classroom but it is doing it within your comfort zone. One of the things that CSTP talks about is that comfort zone is huge. I honestly don't really like putting on school level inservices. To me, that is not comfortable, because the people are all my friends and it is hard to have that role with people that I can be goofy around. But if I am doing something at a different school, or doing it at the state level, or writing, then I am a lot more comfortable. I think one of the things that CSTP and those Sleeping Lady conferences have done is really opened up my mind in terms of all of the different things that you can become involved with.*

### ***Profile #2: Issue of New Teacher Induction***

Support for new teachers has become recognized as an important issue for strengthening the profession in Washington, particularly because of increasingly rigorous accountability standards and retention patterns that exacerbate shortages in mathematics, science, and special education. State investment in new teacher support stands at \$780 per teacher in 2007-08 and is available for teachers' first year only. CSTP and others believe this level of support is far too low, given the importance of the early years of teachers' careers for both retention and competence.

In 2005, CSTP launched the New Teacher Alliance, a major new teacher support initiative. The core work of the NTA between 2006-09 is a project involving funding and development of model new teacher support programs in two large districts, five small districts, and two ESDs.<sup>4</sup> The initiative began with formulation of standards for district support of new teachers<sup>5</sup> and the publication and distribution of cases of effective district programs for new teacher support. CSTP leaders have disseminated the standards and cases widely around the state through series

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<sup>4</sup> The NTA is funded by the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation. Inverness Research is evaluating the New Teacher Alliance for CSTP.

<sup>5</sup> The formulation of these standards, conducted in collaboration with OSPI's TAP program, involved a sizable cadre of experts, including NBCTs with experience as mentors as well as leaders in WA districts with model new teacher programs.

of regional Think Tanks and professional meetings. In interviews we conducted in 2006, state-level decision-makers told us these standards are an important component of an improvement effort. One person said, “This [development of standards] is very important. I think there are uneven programs throughout the state in areas like induction.”

CSTP’s work on the issue of new teacher issue illustrates the capacity it has developed over five years to direct a wide variety of assets to multiple strands of strategic work, which in turn generates educational capital available to both the education operating system (OSPI, districts and schools) and the policy making process. CSTP has produced several kinds of **knowledge capital**, including published and disseminated cases of effective new teacher support and research on state policies for new teacher support, and is also generating practical knowledge from experience by building model programs in districts. CSTP’s ability to run the NTA effectively demonstrates its **functional capital**, and the districts that are participating are being supported in enhancing their own functional capacity to better support new teachers. Further, the participants in those districts—the new teachers, mentors, administrators—are gaining knowledge and skill from this program, a **human capital** asset that will be available for ongoing improvement efforts both locally and beyond. CSTP is also generating **social capital** at the organization level by building relationships around the state among districts (the seven in the NTA and the 48 that have adopted the standards), OSPI, the PFL, and others with a stake in better supports for new teachers. CSTP also builds social capital at the individual professional level by organizing participants in the NTA districts as a network that facilitates sharing of information and joint problem-solving. Slowly, all of this work is beginning to build up **political capital** that CSTP and others can add to keep the issue of new teacher support on the front burner of policy development.

### Profile of CSTP work: The issue of new teacher induction

*CSTP has partnered with a number of organizations, centrally the OSPI, to help make the case for increased state support for new teacher induction. This vignette offers key partners’ perspectives on CSTP’s role and work on this issue.*

In 1987, the Washington state legislature funded a mentor program for new teachers at \$2 million annually. After 20 years, this allocation has remained relatively unchanged. These funds maintain the formal state new teacher support program - the Teacher Assistance Program (TAP) - which provides funds to districts to support new teachers. The amount of money districts receive depends on how many new teachers (narrowly defined as brand new teachers in their first year only) are in the state in any given year, but districts typically receive between \$750 and \$800 per new teacher. Districts can use the money to support a mentor, provide training, or fund release time. In addition OSPI provides a week-long mentor training program, the Mentor Academy. Participation in the TAP program is not mandatory; last year 168 of 296 districts participated.

#### CSTP’s New Teacher Alliance: Developing evidence from practice

The CSTP New Teacher Alliance (NTA) is an effort to apply CSTP-developed standards for new teacher support by establishing model programs, and to collect evidence about how new teacher support might be improved with the appropriate amount of funding.

The NTA is working in two large districts, one on the east side of the state and one on the west, as well as five very small rural districts and two ESDs in the central and southwest regions of the state. Both internal reflection and external evaluation on the NTA will identify lessons learned about the realities of new teachers’ experiences and needs, about the capacities that districts must develop to support new teachers, and about promising practices that can

## Contributions of CSTP at Age Five

be adopted around the state. The hope of CSTP and its partners on this issue is that the NTA work contributes both to better practice around the state and more favorable policy support for new teacher induction and retention.

### Garnering legislative support

A major challenge over the years has been keeping the issue of new teacher support alive in the legislature. According to a former TAP director, accomplishing this meant that legislators needed to hear from OSPI.

In preparation for the 2009 legislative session, CSTP developed and disseminated resources to inform the legislature about the new teacher issue: a position paper about induction and why it is important, a comparison of new teacher induction policies and practices in four states, and case studies of model induction programs. CSTP is proposing to OSPI that they request \$20 million for new teacher induction. If OSPI chooses not to include this request in their budget, CSTP's effort will shift to finding "a legislative champion who thinks that this is the right thing and is willing to carry the torch."

### Unfinished policy work

For the issue of new teacher induction and other issues related to teacher quality, CSTP brings a perspective that, some suggest, is unavailable anywhere else—a perspective that combines the

wisdom of accomplished teachers, data on new teacher needs and retention patterns, and evidence from effective practices in supporting new teachers. However, CSTP's influence alone is not likely to suffice in today's landscape of limited funds and many urgent needs. The director of a statewide education advocacy group, a CSTP partner, believes that CSTP will have to form a broader coalition over time to strengthen policy investment in new teacher support:

*CSTP can't push these boulders up the mountain alone. They have to rally a much broader coalition around them to get to the point where they can check it off and say, we have success, we pushed this issue to completion, statewide. I think they have been really great at pushing innovation and being involved in pilots and creating some proof points... but we haven't gotten to the place where we have people to support statewide scalable systemic reforms.*

While CSTP cannot "push the boulder" alone, its role is vital to policy improvement: continuing to take the lead in raising the visibility of the issue, generating knowledge that is helpful to education organizations and legislators, and coordinating efforts of stakeholders with an interest in new teacher support.

### ***Profile #3: Building support for a teacher data system***

In 2003, CSTP published its first commissioned report, *Who's Teaching Washington's Children*. Besides producing a first set of data for policy makers, the researchers charted the available databases to ascertain what questions about the workforce could be answered and what implications the data held for policy solutions. The answer was that the databases themselves were very few and were also disconnected from one another: there is no common instrument where school districts report data about their teaching staff. Thus, even as CSTP began whetting Washington's appetite for data to enhance decision-making, the databases themselves could not answer the call. CSTP's view is that workforce data—on teacher preparation and qualifications, teaching assignments, teacher mobility, and student demographics in teachers' rooms—will help decision-makers understand problems and solutions better.

CSTP's position as an independent entity, along with the long-term nature of its own funding and mission, mean that it is ideally suited to hold a steady beam of light on this issue and keep using its multiple and growing assets to build up **political capital** over time. CSTP's **functional**

**capital** (e.g., ability to gather resources, commission reports) and **social capital** (e.g., ability to leverage relationships to broaden advocacy for the issue) are strongly at play.

### Profile of CSTP work: Statewide teacher data system

*CSTP has taken the lead as the “squeaky wheel” on the issue of a statewide teacher data system for five years, to the extent that, as one person said, “everybody knows this is CSTP’s issue.”*

Like any policy proposal, the teacher data system proposal faces barriers. The WEA is concerned about teacher privacy, school districts are concerned about changing to centralized electronic data systems, and the legislature is faced with the challenge of prioritizing among many pressing problems. One partner working with CSTP put it this way:

*I feel like the data issue in particular suffers from benign neglect. There are a lot of advocates that we could get riled up about this, but for a variety of reasons they are focused on other things and haven’t quite made it as high a priority as we think they should.*

In 2007, the state professional standards board asked CSTP what was known about other states’ approach to this issue. CSTP commissioned a research paper on other states’ data systems and costs, and is circulating it around the state. CSTP has convened prominent funders in WA, trying to form a larger coalition of what one partner called “outside agitators” to address this issue, focusing on important questions that cannot be answered without a data system. The group is now creating advocacy plans and have the endorsement of the professional standards board and the state board of education. CSTP leaders believe an important next step is to secure funding for an independent feasibility study, leveraging not only private but public funds so that the state becomes a stakeholder. For the 2009 session, CSTP leaders are working with OSPI and a legislatively mandated

feasibility committee to shape recommendations for a data system, and are also working with a governor’s task force charged with restructuring the education funding system.

#### A “non-sexy” policy issue

A major challenge to CSTP’s building of political capital is that a data system is part of an underlying system infrastructure, i.e., inherently removed from the classroom and with longer term, less visible, more diffuse benefits. Thus, it is an inherently “non-sexy” issue for policy makers to allocate dollars to. Policy makers can gain more credit with their constituents and with educators by paying for changes that produce immediate and highly visible changes, such as more math coaches or more science kits. In interviews we conducted in 2006, we heard this tension between immediate and longer-term, more uncertain benefit, from a state decision-maker:

*I think we could put a lot of time and effort into a data system, and I think we should do this, but I don’t want the balance to be creating the database. It is what you do with the database after you have it. It is not as critical as providing professional growth opportunities in my mind.*

The complexity and long-term nature of policy decision-making make it vital that CSTP be perceived as, and function as, a fixture and a force to be reckoned with in the education landscape.

### Summary

The fact that CSTP is home to a large, active teacher leadership network and is partnering with a nationally recognized academic research group means that it can bring strong and diverse assets to educational problems, enabling its work to yield multiple types of capital. These examples of CSTP’s work illustrate how those various forms of capital work together and mutually enrich one another. Our research on CSTP’s work over all five years shows that its **social capital—a cumulative web of skillfully formed personal and organizational relationships—is the**

**“priceless” dimension of CSTP’s accumulated credit**, impossible to quantify and yet vital to all the others. Steadily rising social capital relies on CSTP’s carefully sustained position as an independent entity and very conscious executive leadership with unassailable integrity. Further, the power of this capital relies on growing recognition across the state that CSTP is here to stay: it is an entity that applies steady pressure on issues significant to a stronger profession, and it actively feeds the system with high-quality data and information.

### **III. CSTP’S Contributions: Producing Returns on Investment**

**At age five, CSTP is demonstrating “returns on investment.” Actors in multiple sectors of Washington’s education landscape are using educational capital generated by CSTP to strengthen policy-making, the education system, and professional practice. Further, CSTP is called upon to serve as a leader nationally.**

#### **A preface: The unpredictable route to policy improvement**

The legislature’s establishment of the \$5,000 NBCT stipend as a permanent part of the budget in 2007 was the result of work among a united coalition of OSPI, WEA, and CSTP. A member of the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards said, “You can’t really appreciate the success without understanding there has been very focused work over a sustained period of time.” A truism of policy-directed work is that it requires years of relentless effort over time, both to raise the visibility of issues and to influence action on them. Policy windows—consisting of variations in funding levels and issue salience—open and close in unpredictable ways. Policy-directed work and its results are often barely visible. In California, CSTP’s sister project and predecessor, the Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning, provided the legislature with research on teacher certification, retention, and quality for about ten years before seeing payoff in the form of significant policy investment in new teacher support and in incentives for more equitable distribution of qualified teachers. The director said, “We just never let them take their eyes off these issues. Finally they couldn’t ignore the data any longer.”

Likewise for CSTP, the “upstream” nature of their work and the multiple dimensions within which it occurs are such that accomplishments can be partial, slow, difficult to identify. Nonetheless, we can point to indications that CSTP is playing a substantive and respected role in informing policy. Moreover, CSTP as an organization employs multiple strategies to help strengthen not only policy but also practice at different levels of the education system. And the members of CSTP’s teacher leadership network are at work every day in nearly 1,800 classrooms in 168 districts around the state.

#### **CSTP’s contributions in key spheres of education**

CSTP itself and other actors in the education landscape—OSPI, WEA, PFL, districts, professional associations, teachers, boards, legislators, funders—draw from these CSTP-generated assets to build up their own capabilities to help strengthen professionals, improve the quality of the teacher workforce, and strengthen the profession’s role in improving policy and the

education system. Furthermore, collaborating organizations, including funders, that work with CSTP leaders and use CSTP resources are building their own human capital.

***Policy system***

- Washington state sees **teacher certification** as an important contributor to a stronger profession. CSTP has made a number of substantial contributions to certification policies and practices.

Contribution to development of the Professional Certificate (ProCert). CSTP's predecessor, the Washington Initiative, involved universities in NBPTS candidate support, thereby exposing teacher preparation and development faculty to NBPTS certification practices. Similar practices were built into the foundation for the ProCert process. CSTP has also invested leadership grant funds in NBCTs establishing model ProCert programs in their districts. Further, CSTP's New Teacher Alliance includes preparation for the ProCert among the important attributes of a high quality new teacher support program. Improvement of the ProCert process at state-level scale remains high on CSTP's agenda, working in partnership with the OSPI.

As noted earlier, the permanent salary stipend for National Board Certified Teachers was approved in 2007 by the state legislature. This successful policy outcome was the result of many years of persistent collective effort and of many CSTP-trained teachers making the case to their legislators. A "softer," less tangible benefit of these years of CSTP's work with the OSPI and the WEA is the development of greater trust and constructive working relationships among these organizations.

- CSTP, in collaboration with OSPI, has worked to maintain the issue of **new teacher support and retention** firmly on the education policy agenda. OSPI staff have relied on CSTP executive leadership, commissioned retention studies, evidence from the New Teacher Alliance, and NBCT teacher leaders to develop a proposal for a 10-fold expanded Teacher Assistance Program for the incoming 2009 legislature.
- In 2007, Washington stepped up policy support for **teacher development in mathematics and science**. Attention to these areas will continue in the 2009 session.

CSTP has sponsored studies capturing the knowledge and experiences of accomplished teachers of mathematics and science. In 2007 CSTP produced *Teaching Math in Washington's High Schools: Insights from a Survey of Teachers in High Performing or Improving Schools*. CSTP also summarized the findings in a user-friendly briefing format appropriate for broad distribution. In the fall of 2008 in time for the new legislative session, CSTP will have findings from a new study, *Strengthening Elementary Science Teaching: A Study of Teachers Improving their Practice*, which documents science teachers' perspectives about the processes and resources necessary to the strengthening of their practice.

CSTP's Executive Director sits on policy advisory committees such as the OSPI Strategic Science Group, the Governor's Basic Education Task Force, and the Washington State Coordinating Council. These committee seats, which are indicators of CSTP's role and stature, create more avenues for these reports, other data, and teacher leader perspectives to reach policy.

One reform leader in science describes CSTP as a “bridge” that links evidence from implementation of high quality teacher development to the decision-makers who want to make better policy investments in teacher development statewide:

*It is really great to feel like there is a partner, a bridge, for implementation efforts to be sure findings are communicated. I think the more CSTP can help us work to develop more evidence-based ways to approach policy and action, supporting evidence prior to throwing money at implementation, the better. CSTP can help the legislature recognize the value from the money that has been put into studies through NSF and others who are trying to encourage a more evidence-based approach to implementation of policy.*

### ***Higher education***

- In 2003-04, we documented the role of the Washington Initiative, CSTP's predecessor, in influencing **changes in Teacher Education programs**.

At that time, universities across the state were already beginning to draw from their experiences with NBPTS candidate support to develop ProCert processes, and they were also turning to the NBCT leadership network as a source of expert teachers to serve in supervisory or adjunct faculty roles. A few universities were adding new courses, changing existing course content, and changing teacher candidate assessment processes to bring them into better alignment with evidence-based standards for assessing competency. Some were also beginning to re-design Master's programs. Now, in 2008, we can observe these new developments reaching greater fruition, as CSTP and its network of NBCTs have maintained working relationships with colleges and universities. Here, two NBCTs we interviewed in 2006 give a teacher's eye view of changes that they have observed:

*Here's one place where I think that what CSTP has done has impacted the state. When I get information from universities that are offering master's programs, all of a sudden there are new master's programs being offered in leadership. When I got my master's, they weren't offering a specific category on leadership. You could never pay me enough to be a principal, but you could pay me more to be a leader in my building and work with other teachers and make things happen within my district.*

*I see the colleges and universities helping with the pro cert process and more involvement of teachers in the classroom with new teachers.*

### *Districts and schools*

- CSTP's focus on **strengthening new teacher support** has generated direct benefits for a number of districts, schools, and teachers.

CSTP leveraged its resources to garner a sizable additional grant for the New Teacher Alliance. Evidence from program evaluation indicates that the seven NTA-sponsored districts and two ESDs are in fact building the capacities needed to strengthen new teacher support, and that some conditions for new teachers are improving.<sup>6</sup>

The NTA is also moving toward impact at a state-level scale. CSTP spearheaded the creation of new teacher induction standards for the state. Forty-two districts are using the standards to take stock of their programs and make improvements. Since 2007, districts seeking state Teacher Assistance Program funds must address the induction standards in their applications and implementation reports.

- **Schools and districts are embracing the leadership work of NBCTs** who have had CSTP leadership grants.

Evaluation research done in the earlier years of CSTP suggests that some schools and districts sustain teacher-initiated change beyond the grants, using internal funds to sustain, for example, ProCert support programs, lesson study groups in literacy or mathematics, and teacher-administrator study groups. While the leadership grant strategy does not have potential to reach a statewide scale, the grants have direct benefits for local schools; they also serve as model projects that generate teacher leadership capacity as well as knowledge for the system about the many roles NBCTs can play in leadership for local improvement.

- CSTP, together with OSPI, is enhancing district capacity to **implement the state's mathematics and science reform.**

To support the state's investment in teacher development in mathematics and science through a coaching model, CSTP partnered with OSPI to write and distribute Improving Instruction through Coaching to guide districts and ESDs as they employ more instructional coaches. CSTP is also disseminating published research findings on strategies for evaluating coaches.

### *Education organizations*

- One indicator of CSTP's visibility and value to education is the extent to which it is called upon for joint efforts and consultations. Through these, CSTP's educational capital helps **strengthen multiple other organizations.**

Between 2003 and 2007, CSTP has engaged in more than 20 collaborative projects associated with teacher preparation, certification, development, leadership, compensation, and career structure. Additionally, CSTP has consulted with some 20 organizations working on improvement of teaching and the conditions of teaching, many within Washington and

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<sup>6</sup> Inverness Research is the evaluator for the NTA and makes annual progress reports to the funders.

some nationally. A sample of those within Washington include the Professional Educators' Standards Board Advisory Group, Teachers for a New Era, the Northwest Regional Laboratory, the Coalition of Essential Schools Northwest, Washington Education Research Association, the Washington State Education Coordinating Council, the Washington Technology Alliance, and the Science Education Advisory Board. A sample of those beyond Washington include California's Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning, the Southeast Center for Teaching Quality, the National Center for Teaching and America's Future, the National Science Teachers Association, and the National Staff Development Council.

### *The profession*

- CSTP adopted the Washington Initiative's leadership network of NBCTs and has invested steadily and in multiple ways in the teachers' ongoing development of knowledge, skill, opportunity and influence. The best indicator of CSTP's effectiveness in **the development of a strong and active statewide teacher leadership cadre** is the NBCTs' powerful embrace of CSTP as a vitally important professional leadership community.

In 2004, we surveyed NBCTs who were part of the Washington Initiative and, as such, were beginning to experience support and encouragement for leadership work. We learned that, even as board-certified professionals, three-fourths of accomplished teachers say they need to belong to an active leadership-focused professional network in order to sustain motivation, build knowledge, seek opportunity, and develop effectiveness in leadership.<sup>7</sup> In 2006 we interviewed leaders active in CSTP, and what we heard verified that the same holds true. A few comments:

*CSTP is vital for the professional health of teachers in Washington State. They can speak to their local representatives, they can speak to their school board, they can speak to their community and say, "This is what teachers need to effectively work with children."*

*I know when I work on a project that is involved with CSTP, I am going to be working with very committed people.*

*I leave the Sleeping Lady conference saying "I am a leader." I can take one more thing on.*

*I see CSTP as the best support system for teachers in our state. I see it as being a really strong support system for teacher leaders who want to take a stronger step forward and really do something on a larger scale and impact student learning across the state of Washington.*

Year after year, NBCTs respond with this deep commitment to CSTP invitations for rigorous leadership activity, e.g., to:

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<sup>7</sup> See the Research page of the Teacher Leadership section of the CSTP website for survey results.

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- gain new perspectives on leadership work and opportunity (through participation in annual conferences at Sleeping Lady)
  - publish their professional perspectives (*Teachers' Voices: Strengthening the Profession through Writing*)
  - publish their lessons learned about leadership (*Teacher to Leader: Dilemmas in Teacher Leadership*)
  - respond to multiple surveys administered by the UW and team and Inverness Research to contribute to CSTP reports (e.g., *Teaching Math in Washington's High Schools: Insights from a Survey of Teachers in High Performing or Improving Schools*; also, *Teachers' Views: Professional Development That Improves Teaching and Learning*)
  - learn to make their case to policy makers, the media and the public (through annual participation in Advocacy workshops)
  - contribute to white papers and other documents that capture professional perspectives on issues (standards for new teacher induction, defining teacher leadership, improving instructional coaching, staffing high-needs schools)
  - most recently, write a blog about the impact of policy on the ground in their classrooms (*Stories from School: Practice meets Policy*, [www.storiesfromschool.org](http://www.storiesfromschool.org))
- CSTP's work helps **other teacher-centered organizations build human capital**.

NBCTs who are active in the CSTP network and the WEA helped to develop the WEA's Jumpstart program, which supports potential NBPTS candidates in developing the reflective skills and materials that will enhance their candidacy. The program now offers workshops to some 1,200 teachers a year. An NBCT also published an article, *A Source of Association Leaders*, aimed at encouraging NBCTs to become more involved in local WEA chapters.

The North Cascades and Olympic Science Partnership (NCOSP) is using the CSTP model of teacher-written cases of leadership (*Teacher to Leader: Dilemmas in Teacher Leadership*) to produce cases of leadership for the improvement of science instruction. This project will develop both human capital within NCOSP and knowledge capital about science improvement for the rest of the state.

### *Professional practice*

- While the focus of CSTP's work is upstream, on the development of leadership and research to help inform policy, **CSTP's activity also reaches inside classrooms**.

About three-fourths of all NBCTs are full-time classroom teachers, and most of the others are on special assignment as coaches and mentors working directly with their colleagues on classroom teaching. In surveys conducted by the University of Washington and Inverness Research, the great majority of NBCTs report that serving in leadership roles continues to strengthen their classroom practice.

Further, the leadership grants that NBCTs have received have provided high-quality, sustained, in-school professional development for hundreds of teachers around the state.

CSTP's New Teacher Alliance (NTA) is directly improving the supports provided to several hundred new teachers in grant-sponsored districts, as well as strengthening the training and supports for the dozens of teachers serving as mentors.

### ***The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards***

- A member of the national office of the NBPTS regards Washington's comprehensive program for NBCTS as "one of the most substantial National Board programs in the country." The NBPTS regards CSTP as a leader and model in the deliberate development of teacher leadership, in its ability to convene and coordinate efforts among the multiple education stakeholders and organizations in the state, and its overall ability to "develop a system of support" for the development of policies. Similar organizations in other states are turning to CSTP and its experienced NBCTs to offer advocacy trainings around the country. NBPTS staff see CSTP as leading the way in developing a national model for supporting seamless professional growth from early licensure to leadership.

### **Summary**

These many examples reaffirm CSTP's productivity and, beyond that, they demonstrate the ways in which actors in multiple spheres of the education landscape—from individuals to institutions—take up the education capital that CSTP generates and employ it in the service of helping to strengthen teaching, the profession, and the conditions of the profession. These examples reflect the range of "returns on investment" possible through steady, strategic effort on CSTP's part.

### **Teacher Leadership Profile – Jenny Holmstrom**

*Jenny Holmstrom has been teaching high school mathematics for over 20 years, the last 18 in the Sumner School District. She received her NBPTS certification in 1999. Since then, in large part due to her connection to the Washington Initiative (WI) and then CSTP, her leadership work has expanded from local to regional, state, and even national spheres. Like other NBCTs we have surveyed and interviewed, Jenny attributes this leadership opportunity to CSTP.*

#### Linking to teacher education

One of Jenny's first leadership efforts after she certified was to meet with the dean of the School of Education at Pacific Lutheran University (PLU), located near her district, to introduce her to the NBPTS and share her portfolio. The PLU dean then invited Jenny to accompany her and PLU faculty to a National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) conference in Washington DC. There Jenny learned about accreditation standards and their congruence, or not, with National Board standards. Jenny then worked with Jeanne Harmon (then- director of the WI, currently CSTP director) to integrate PLU into the WI.

Jenny worked closely with PLU for the next three years. Ultimately, she saw that the NBPTS standards greatly influenced the pre-service program at PLU

*PLU used the National Board facilitators to help them redesign and rethink their ed program and their ed training, and it was just really a wonderful partnership...it really helped them with the new NCATE directive of infusing National Board standards...they were so eager to embrace the process.*

#### CSTP support for professional development in-district

Jenny participated in several CSTP leadership conferences at Sleeping Lady, twice as a

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presenter. She found these conferences stimulating, and unlike any other event:

*The first year I attended, I went to several work sessions to hear what other teachers in the area were doing, and it was just a wonderful treat to get together with dynamite instructors from around the state. People who cared so much about education, like you do, who are willing to go out on a limb for it.*

After her first conference Jenny and a colleague in her district applied for and received a leadership grant from the WI to develop a program for Professional Certification candidates in their district, a program that her district then institutionalized. Jenny taught in the program for four years.

In February of 2007, Jenny found out about a math standards workshop from the CSTP listserv. The conference—co-sponsored by CSTP and Western Washington University—featured a professional development approach called Curriculum Topic Study (CTS), Curriculum topic study in mathematics, Jenny's specialty, is a process by which teachers identify a topic within the mathematics curriculum and examine a variety of resources related to that topic, such as national standards, state standards, research on learning, to determine what kinds of skills and knowledge both teachers and students need to possess to successfully understand that topic. At this conference, Jenny studied the topic of "fractions" with teachers from elementary and middle grades. This cross-grade experience was very eye-opening for Jenny; she came to understand how teachers' views and understandings of particular math topics can determine what students ultimately learn about them.

In spring 2007, Jenny applied for and received a CSTP leadership grant, which enabled her to share with her colleagues what she learned about curriculum topic study. Her grant project included 2 elementary, 2 middle, and 2 high school teachers, plus a district TOSA in math. The group met once per month, focusing on a different math topic each time. The grant paid for a variety of method resources used by the CTS program, and the district paid for teachers' time.

Jenny describes their process:

*We studied fractions, percents, measurement and geometric sense, probability and communication in math, and writing in math. We would read about how students at each grade level were supposed to be taught these things, so the teachers at the elementary then could see 'oh, I am teaching this part of it, but in the next 3 grades, they are going to be getting this part of it and then after that, this next part.' They could really help tailor their instruction to have the students be ready to progress without just stopping... We shared our teaching methods. The research would say, kids at this grade level are always confused here and we would study that and decide how we could teach it differently. It was a real eye-opener...*

Jenny notes:

*We had a great camaraderie throughout the year in our group. We would never have done it on our own! ... They said I am so glad I participated and I learned so much about math and teaching. It was great to share across all of the grade levels.*

### Expansion of leadership, still from the classroom

As a 20-year veteran teacher, and coming up on nearly 10 years as an NBCT, Jenny greatly appreciates the opportunities that CSTP has provided her. Prior to becoming certified, Jenny enjoyed leadership, but since then her options have broadened. Jenny describes the evolution of her leadership work:

*I was known in my district for helping lead the mathematics improvements since the early 90's. But what all of my work with the National Board did was broaden where my work happened. I was able to work at the university level which I never would have before, and now I have that connection. I was able to work with teachers all over, not just my county. Being able to participate in things like NCATE, which really had a national flavor... now I have worked with developing math standards at the state level through the legislature. I have participated in the communication aspects, working on how to give presentations and how to meet with people. I have met with my state senator several times about education*

*issues. I have gone down to Olympia and testified in Senate ed hearings on different educational initiatives. All of that came about because of the CSTP training. Working with CSTP extended my involvement to the community, the university level, the legislative level, things that I was not really involved in before.*

Jenny believes that CSTP fills a critical niche for accomplished teachers in Washington. She is impressed with the growing number of NB-certified teachers in the state and the opportunities that CSTP provides them to engage in leadership work from the statehouse to the classroom. Without CSTP, she thinks it unlikely that these opportunities would be available to teachers like herself. She explains:

*CSTP has a vested interest in advancing educational programs in Washington State. They are saying, 'we want people involved in book studies, and critical reviews of*

*student work, and trying to improve their teaching, and we want it to happen now, and we are going to pay you to do it.' That is pretty powerful for teachers...The CSTP initiatives are helping teachers get there by providing powerful professional development.*

Beyond the state-level impact of CSTP, Jenny believes CSTP has substantially influenced her district:

*In my district, CSTP has really helped with the new teacher professional certification program, and we have the ongoing National Board support that is directed through my district now. And the math curriculum topic study we have brought in—all of this has been made possible because of the Washington Initiative and CSTP. My district has been impacted by them, and by me personally, in many ways.*

#### IV: CSTP's Capacity as a Center for Ongoing Work and Growth

**As a Center, CSTP is structured effectively as an investment in improvement. CSTP is designed to build its internal capacity over time. Thus, CSTP is strongly positioned to put future investments to work, generating ever-expanding amounts and variety of educational capital that will continue to help the teaching profession in Washington grow stronger.**

#### A "Center" as a structure for investment in strengthening the teaching profession

CSTP is funded as a Center, which is a different type of investment from that in a project, partnership, or network.<sup>8</sup> A Center's special role is to promote and provide stewardship within a specified domain—that is, to be at the center helping to provide vision, promote and shepherd constructive effort, and link assets and resources both within the domain and between the domain and others it intersects with. Centers are about contributing to the health, strength, and advancement of their domain.

To be effective in strengthening and advancing their domains, Centers have multiple functions. These can serve as criteria for assessing the effectiveness of a Center:

- **Promoting research and development within the domain.** A Center can provide support (financial, conceptual, technical) for particular efforts, people, and institutions involved in the work of the domain. Centers can conduct its own research and development programs, or contribute direct or indirect support to existing, independent research efforts

<sup>8</sup> Inverness Research has been evaluating large publicly and philanthropically funded centers for several years. The concepts in this section comprise evaluation criteria we have developed over time.

- **Connecting the various efforts that are taking place in the domain.** A Center can provide isolated efforts—research, development, or policy-related—with opportunities for greater connection. This might involve knowledge exchange or more significant collaborations. A Center can be a setting for such connections and/or can play a proactive role, identifying, brokering, or facilitating promising connections.
- **Serving as a knowledge node in the domain.** Centers generate or assemble, and then distribute, knowledge resources within and beyond the domain. Part of this role involves convenings and symposia that bring together people from various groups across the domain.
- **Promoting the domain to external audiences, funders, the policy system.** This role involves a Center serving as an advocate for the importance of the domain and work done within it. A Center helps to increase resources that support work for the advancement of the domain.
- **Importing knowledge, expertise, and policy information.** Centers help all members of the domain remain better informed about the external context (work events and policies) that shape the work of the domain itself.

In the case of CSTP, the defined domain is the teaching profession in Washington. Given the nature of the domain and the mission of CSTP, it is vitally important that it was funded and structured as a Center. As we have shown earlier in the paper, CSTP commissions research, sponsors projects, builds partnerships, and coordinates networks, all within its broader role as a Center that leads and galvanizes ongoing effort to strengthen the profession.

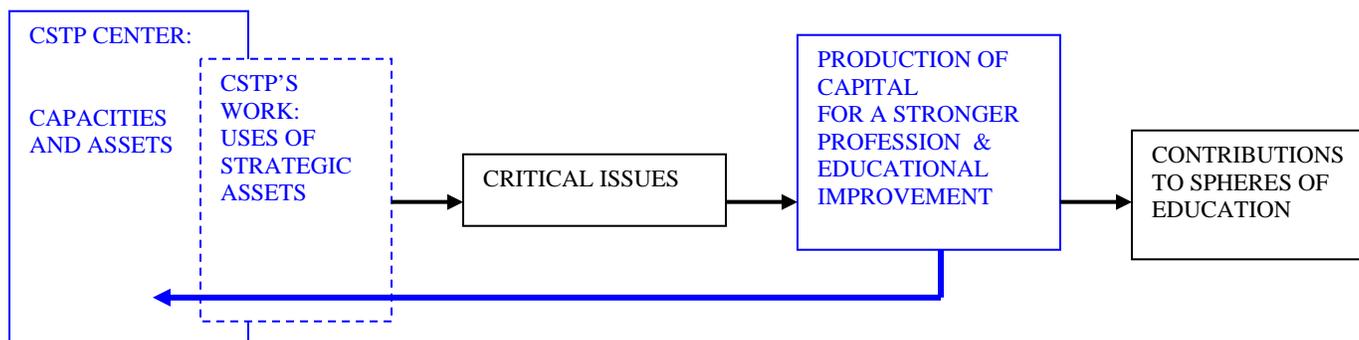
### **CSTP is designed to “re-capitalize” itself**

The multiple types of capital the CSTP generates do more than enrich others in the education landscape. Just as importantly from an investment perspective, CSTP’s capital feeds directly back to enrich its own internal capacity as a center.

- CSTP has developed, over time and through steady work, a flexibility and functional capacity that other organizations envy and ask for: CSTP has a growing and carefully cultivated stock of relationships, development and dissemination processes, accumulated substantive knowledge on a range of critical issues, and political acumen that it draws upon efficiently to commission a study, make a presentation, provide testimony or consultation, or convene a meeting of disparate stakeholders.
- CSTP’s human capital assets—in the form of increasingly knowledgeable and skilled teacher leaders—enrich CSTP continually by contributing back to CSTP’s leadership development programs. Just as one example, the Sleeping Lady leadership conference is designed, coordinated, and facilitated by an ever-growing cadre of NBCTs, whose experiences and lessons learned from years of real leadership experience enrich and increase the sophistication of the program. In fact, all of CSTP’s programs are designed and led by NBCTs, which fosters collective growth of practical wisdom from experience and sustains

teachers' experiences of renewal and commitment to educational improvement. Because CSTP's executive leadership has deliberately designed CSTP's approach to leadership development this way, ever-richer, cumulative leadership capacity grows over time.

**Figure 4.**  
*CSTP's design for cumulative internal capacity-building*



### The role of philanthropy in the mission of CSTP

Independent philanthropies are ideally suited to fund the leadership necessary to CSTP's mission. Philanthropically funded organizations can have advantages over publicly funded (such as OSPI) or member-funded (such as WEA) organizations.<sup>9</sup> First, philanthropy brings a broader, more neutral interest in the public good to social problems than organizations funded in other ways. In our earlier evaluations of CSTP, policy makers we interviewed<sup>10</sup> told us that because CSTP is philanthropically funded and independent, CSTP's data and research are deemed more credible. One person said, "I think they are credible. When they are brought up, there isn't skepticism or doubt." Another said, "They do solid work. I think being a non-profit helps." Thus, the perceived lack of bias has as much import to policy makers as substantive quality. CSTP's funding sources undergird its ability to hold the stance of advocating broadly for the betterment of the profession, rather than being a typical advocacy organization fighting for control over a point of view.

Philanthropies can also provide funding that is long-term and stable, able to persist through structured turnover in legislative policy-making and organic turnover in the ever-shifting education system. Such steadiness enables CSTP to sustain attention on critical issues through cycles of change. At the same time, philanthropic investment also enables a more flexible, nimble approach than publicly-funded organizations can adopt. The philanthropic propensity toward opportunism helps create a context in which CSTP can target its human capital resources and funds to ever-shifting policy windows. An OSPI staff member pointed out, for example, that they would not be able to provide stipends at short notice to teachers invited to leave their classrooms to testify at a legislative hearing. CSTP, on the other hand, can channel its funds very quickly to a range of uses that are targeted to getting optimal information resources to

<sup>9</sup> See *Effective Education Grantmaking: Roadmap for Results in Education Philanthropy*. Grantmakers for Education, 2005. [www.edfunders.org](http://www.edfunders.org).

<sup>10</sup> Inverness Research formative evaluation report for CSTP, October 2005.

decision-makers—teacher time if teachers are needed, researcher time if a commissioned report is needed, meeting expenses if a convening of groups is needed.

A disadvantage of philanthropic investments, however, is that they are very small compared to the size of the systems and social problems they address. Investments often focus, therefore, on strategic leveraging of assets—other funding, multiple institutions, available knowledge, leadership and influence, and so on. One of CSTP’s hallmarks as a small, independent organization is that it can serve as the connective tissue among large and disparate, sometimes competing organizations. For example, one state-level educator we interviewed described Jeanne Harmon in her role as CSTP director as being able to “fill the gap” between OSPI and WEA by defining a goal that both share and creating a neutral place to address it together.

Education philanthropists face the challenge of how long to persist in their funding relative to the problem area they have chosen to work in. It is difficult for them to assess the returns on their investments. This is an even more important concern as the slowing economy shrinks assets and as the education system’s increasingly depleted conditions complicate the problem of improvement. A central purpose of this paper is to make the case that strengthening the profession is a problem area that requires steady ongoing support, and that CSTP is well-designed to make best strategic use of philanthropic funds to generate ever-growing assets for the system and the profession.

### **CSTP’s strong position for future investments in improvement**

An assessment of CSTP’s design, work, and accomplishments at age five suggests that CSTP is, and will continue to become, an effective investment in the strengthening of the teaching profession in Washington. The combination of its independent and galvanizing role, its efficiency, its generativeness, and the cumulative assets that serve the state and its own development make it very well positioned to make ever-more visible contributions to Washington education. Its ability to leverage a high level of capacity—e.g., accumulated organizational and professional relationships, its own and other knowledge resources—also make it well positioned to make ever-more efficient use of philanthropic funding.

Given the nature of policy development and the pace of education improvement, it is critically important that CSTP be seen—by funders as well as other actors—as a reliable and lasting presence in the education landscape, a presence that can keep the spotlight’s unswerving beam on the many issues that affect the quality and vitality of teachers, teaching, and the profession as a whole.