

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910827895403321
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Titolo	Great Teachers : : How to Raise Student Learning in Latin America and the Caribbean // Bruns, Barbara
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Washington, D.C., : The World Bank, , 2014
ISBN	1-4648-0152-5
Edizione	[1st ed.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (372 pages)
Collana	Latin American Development Forum
Disciplina	371.102
Soggetti	Teaching - South America Teaching - Caribbean Area Caribbean Area Latin America
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references at the end of each chapters and index.
Nota di contenuto	<p>""Cover""; ""Contents""; ""Foreword""; ""Acknowledgments""; ""About the Authors and Contributors""; ""Abbreviations""; ""Overview""; ""Why teachers matter""; ""LAC's teachers inside the classroom""; ""Recruiting better teachers""; ""Grooming great teachers""; ""Motivating teachers to perform""; ""Managing the politics of teacher reform""; ""Note""; ""References""; ""Chapter 1: How Good Are Teachers in the Region?""; ""How are LAC education systems performing?""; ""What drives student learning?""; ""What makes teachers effective?""; ""Who are LAC's teachers?""; ""Conclusions""; ""Notes""</p> <p>""References""""Chapter 2: Inside the Classroom in Latin America and the Caribbean""; ""LAC classroom observation sample""; ""Observation method and instrument""; ""What are we learning from classroom observations in LAC?""; ""Conclusions""; ""Notes""; ""References""; ""Chapter 3: Recruiting Better Teachers""; ""Raising the selectivity of teacher education""; ""Raising the quality of teacher education""; ""Raising hiring standards""; ""Recruiting better teachers over the next decade""; ""Conclusions""; ""Notes""; ""References""; ""Chapter 4: Grooming Great Teachers""</p> <p>""Teacher induction and probationary periods""""Teacher evaluation""; ""In-service training""; ""Grooming teachers through school</p>

leadership"; "Challenge and promise of information technology"; "Conclusions"; "Notes"; "References"; "Chapter 5: Motivating Teachers to Perform"; "What motivates teachers?"; "Professional rewards"; "Accountability pressure"; "Financial incentives"; "Conclusions"; "Notes"; "References"; "Chapter 6: Managing the Politics of Teacher Reform"; "Education policies through the lens of teachers' interests"; "Sources of union power"; "Political dynamics of education reform: Four recent cases"; "Conclusions"; "Notes"; "References"; "Index"; "A"; "B"; "C"; "D"; "E"; "F"; "G"; "H"; "I"; "J"; "K"; "L"; "M"; "N"; "O"; "P"; "Q"; "R"; "S"; "T"; "U"; "V"; "W"; "Y"; "Boxes"; "1.1 Math and reading skills as measured on PISA"; "2.1 How the Stallings Classroom Snapshot works"; "2.2 Explaining learning improvements in Mexico, D.F."; "2.3 Innovations in system monitoring: Digitized Stallings observations"; "3.1 How top education systems attract talented teachers"; "3.2 Pupil-teacher ratio and average class size"; "4.1 Raising teacher quality through rigorous induction in Rio de Janeiro"; "4.2 Measuring teacher quality with classroom observation instruments"; "4.3 Teacher evaluation in Singapore"; "4.4 Raising quality through teacher evaluation in Washington, DC"; "4.5 Colombia's Escuela Nueva"; "4.6 Rio de Janeiro's Educopedia"; "5.1 Fair comparisons of school performance: The design of Chile's Sistema Nacional de Evaluaci3n del DesempeA±o (SNED)"; "Figures"; "0.1 Cognitive skills and long-term economic growth across regions, 1960a€?2000"

Sommario/riassunto

The seven million teachers of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) are the critical actors in the region's efforts to improve education quality and raise student learning levels, which lag far behind those of OECD countries and East Asian countries such as China. This book documents the high economic stakes around teacher quality, benchmarks the current performance of LAC's teachers, and delineates the key issues. These include low standards for entry into teacher training, poor quality training programs that are detached from the realities of the classroom, unattractive career incentives, and weak support for teachers once they are on the job. New research conducted for this report in close to 15,000 classrooms in seven different LAC countries - the largest cross-country study of this kind to date - provides a first-ever insight into how the region's teachers perform inside the classroom. It documents that the average teacher in LAC loses the equivalent of one day of instructional time per week because of inadequate preparation, excessive time on administration (taking attendance, passing out papers) and a surprisingly high share of time physically absent from the classrooms where they should be teaching. Teachers also make limited use of available learning materials, especially those using information and communications technology (ICT), and are unable to keep the majority of their students engaged. The book sets out the three priority lines of reform needed to produce great teachers in LAC: policies to recruit better teachers; programs to groom teachers and improve their skills once they are in service; and stronger incentives to motivate teachers to perform their best throughout their career. In every area, the book distills the latest evidence from inside and outside the region to provide practical guidance to policymakers in the design of effective programs and sustainable reforms. A final chapter analyzes the politics of recent major teacher reforms in Chile, Peru, Ecuador and Mexico, chronicling the prominent role of teachers' unions and the political and communications strategies that have underpinned successful reforms.

