



## *News Release*

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### **Effective Teachers Matter Most, Hutchinson Tells Century**

Improving the preparation of teachers is the most important issue facing both K-12 and higher education, Peter Hutchinson, president of the Bush Foundation, told a Century audience on Dec. 1.

Popular reforms such as increasing the length of the school day or year, reducing class or school size, starting more charter schools, expanding early childhood education, starting more tutoring or after-school programs, increasing standards and accountability, and engaging parents are all fine ideas, he said. But they won't have the impact that turning out more effective teachers will have.

“When I was superintendent in Minneapolis we changed a lot of things, but one thing I didn't try was paying personal attention to who we hired and who we granted tenure,” said Hutchinson, speaking at a Century K-12 luncheon speaker series event. “If I had it to do over, I would let go of all that other stuff. Highly effective teachers matter more than any other in-school variable. Teaching really matters.”

Hutchinson said research shows that if students have three ineffective teachers in a row, they get so far behind, they never recover. “We have got to get every child, every year, every class, a good teacher,” he said.

To this end, the Bush Foundation is spending \$40 million to help colleges and universities improve teacher preparation and support new teachers during their first assignments. The foundation is working with 14 college and university partners that will guarantee the effectiveness of the new teachers they produce.

Bush wants 25,000 effective new teachers to be in Minnesota classrooms in the next 10 years.

The Bush plan includes recruiting the best students to become teachers, preparing them by putting them in classrooms earlier, placing them in schools with effective teaching cultures and supporting them once they secure their first jobs.

“Teacher preparation today is way too heavy in on-campus learning,” said Hutchinson. “Students need to get in professional practice programs as quickly as they can.”

Hutchinson said the success of Minnesota’s huge investment in improving student achievement is directly linked to improving the preparation of teachers.



Photo: Peter Hutchinson