

The **W**hat's

“teacher famine,” complained New York University education professor Adolphe Meyer, was caused by “economic cheeseparing. . . . First-rate men and women have long since turned their back on chalk and blackboard; but now it is becoming difficult to attract even those of a lesser caliber.” If the complaint sounds dated,

it is. Meyer was writing in 1957. Plenty of things have changed since then, including the total amount of money we spend on public education—now, almost \$11,000 per student, more than any other country in the world. “Cheeseparing” today comes less from a parsimonious public than from an inefficient and ineffective salary distribution system, as our three *Forum* contributors—Lewis Solmon, Brad Jupp, and Julia Koppich—suggest. It is not that average salaries are terrible, but that our best teachers are paid little more than our worst. What is remarkable is that Solmon, a former education dean, Jupp, a union leader, and Koppich, a “new union” advocate, agree that the debate is no longer whether to throw out the single salary schedule by which most of our teachers are paid, but what to replace it with. On the pages that follow, they offer provocative—and concrete—proposals for paying teachers what they are worth while providing students with an education they deserve. As Jupp says, “We are in an exceptional moment, one where the single salary schedule can no longer support the pressures placed on it.”

ILLUSTRATIONS BY DAVID CUTLER



Brad Jupp

puts the union label on
merit pay in Denver.
page 10

Julia Koppich

argues that we have the tools for
recognizing—and rewarding—
the best teachers.
page 13

Lewis Solmon

makes the case for rewarding
better teachers
with more money.
page 16

a TEACHER Worth?

