TQ RESEARCH & POLICY

BRIEF

DETERMINING PROCESSES THAT BUILD SUSTAINABLE TEACHER ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEMS

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Ongoing issues of teacher accountability have impelled several responses in the form of changes to current teacher evaluation practices. This TQ Research & Policy Brief reports preliminary findings and recommendations from a study of such change processes that Public Impact conducted for the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality in three school districts and three state departments of education.

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Introduction

About the Study

Study Purpose. The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality asked Public Impact to conduct a study exploring the change processes in the creation and implementation of teacher evaluation systems. This TQ Research & Policy Brief provides an overview of Public Impact's preliminary findings as they relate to the impetus for change and the political and policy context in which such change occurs.

Study Description. In late 2008, the Public Impact study team conducted semistructured interviews with district personnel and state department of education officials who had participated in efforts to improve teacher evaluation—or, in the case of New York City, teacher tenure systems. The study team conducted phone interviews with representatives from three school districts (Chicago Public Schools, Denver Public Schools, and the New York City Department of Education) and three state education agencies (Minnesota Department of Education, Ohio State Board of Education, and South Carolina Department of Education).

Study Questions

In order to get a better understanding of how districts and states were implementing changes to their teacher evaluation policies, Public Impact asked the following questions:

- What was the impetus for change? Why did you decide to make changes to your teacher evaluation system [teacher tenure system]?

- What were your goals for the new system that were not being met by the old system?

- What steps did you take as you made these changes?

- What were the outcomes of your efforts?

- What challenges did you face? How did you respond to these challenges?

- What lessons can you share with other districts and states that are interested in making changes to their teacher evaluation policies?

An overview of the responses to these questions from the three school districts and the three state departments of education appears in the Summary of Findings (page 5). More detailed responses appear in the Appendix.

Although there are relevant differences in district and state efforts to improve teacher evaluation systems, there also are lessons learned that cut across all districts and states included in this study. The examples and lessons offered here are designed to be useful to district and state officials who are engaged in efforts to improve teacher accountability systems or who are considering changes to their existing systems.

STUDY FINDINGS

Tables 1–5 present the interview responses in the following areas: impetus for change, goals, key stakeholders engaged in the planning process, outcomes, and challenges. Table 6 presents the strategies that were used to address the challenges. An X indicates that a particular item was relevant for the district or state.

Table 1. Impetus for Change

Impetus for Change	Chicago	Denver	New York City	Minnesota	Ohio	South Carolina
Dissatisfaction with old system	X	X	X	X	X	X
Legislation				X	X	X
Published study or report	X				X	X
Political pressure (governor, mayor)	X		X	X		
Federal grant	X			X	X	
Changes to the collective bargaining agreement	X	X				

Table 2. Goals

Goal	Chicago	Denver	New York City	Minnesota	Ohio	South Carolina
Increase student achievement by improving teacher quality.	X	X	X	X	X	X
Improve the quality of teacher evaluation tools and processes.	X	X	X	X	X	X
Link teacher evaluation results to professional development.	X	X		X	X	X
Build a comprehensive performance management system.	X			X	X	X
Link teacher evaluation results to increases in compensation (pay for performance).		X		X		
Develop guidelines for districts that want to improve their teacher evaluation process.				X	X	

Table 3. Key Stakeholders Engaged in Planning Process

Participating Stakeholders	Chicago	Denver	New York City	Minnesota	Ohio	South Carolina
District officials	X	X	X	X	X	X
Teachers	X	X		X	X	X
Principals		X	X	X	X	X
State department officials				X	X	X
Union representatives	X	X		X		
External experts	X				X	X
Representatives from higher education					X	X
School board members					X	
Parents		X				

Table 4. Outcomes

Outcome	Chicago	Denver	New York City	Minnesota	Ohio	South Carolina
Helped key stakeholders adopt a "systems" approach for thinking about human capital.	X		X	X	X	
Improved the data systems.	X		X			X
Developed new teacher evaluation tools.	X	X				X
Adopted an external, research-based framework and used it to design rubrics.	X	X				
Increased student achievement by improving teacher quality.*						

* Final outcomes have not yet been determined.

Table 5. Challenges

Challenge	Chicago	Denver	New York City	Minnesota	Ohio	South Carolina
Principals' concerns that the new system will require more work and time	X	X	X	X	X	X
Teachers' concerns about high-stakes consequences	X	X	X	X	X	
Financial resource limitations	X	X		X	X	X
Human capital limitations (e.g., ability of principals and district officials to implement new systems)			X	X	X	X
Measuring the impact of the new system on student achievement		X	X	X		X
Difficulty of changing current collective bargaining agreement	X		X		X	
Balancing state versus local control				X	X	

Table 6. Common Response Strategies Used to Address Challenges

Response Strategy	Challenges Addressed			
	Concern About Extra Work and Time	Concern About High-Stakes Consequences	Financial Resource Limitations	Human Capital Limitations
Develop a communications approach to frame teacher evaluations within the context of a comprehensive human capital management system.	X	X		X
Invest in training for principals and teachers to be proficient with the new system.	X	X		X
Develop technology or new processes to streamline new practices.	X		X	X
Develop a flexible system open to compromise and refinement.			X	

Summary of Findings

The following paragraphs summarize the information presented in Tables 1–6 and indicate how the six districts and states approached the process of implementing changes to their teacher evaluation policies (or, in the case of New York City, teacher tenure policies).

Impetus for Change

Dissatisfaction with the old system of teacher evaluation was an impetus for change in all six districts and states. Legislation, published studies or reports, political pressure from the governor or mayor, and federal grants impelled three districts and states to move forward. Changes to the collective bargaining agreement impelled two districts to take action.

Goals

Major goals for all six states and districts were to increase student achievement by improving teacher quality and to improve the quality of teacher evaluation tools and processes. Five districts and states had the goal of linking teacher evaluation results to professional development. Four districts and states had the goal of building a comprehensive performance management system. Two districts and states had the goal of linking teacher evaluation results to increases in compensation (i.e., pay for performance) and developing guidelines for districts that want to improve the teacher evaluation process.

Key Stakeholders Engaged in the Planning Process

All six districts and states engaged district officials in the planning process for improving teacher evaluation. Five districts and states also involved teachers and principals. Three districts and states also involved officials from the state department of education, teacher union representatives, and external experts. Two states also involved representatives from higher education. One district and one state also involved school board members and parents.

Outcomes

Four districts and states helped key stakeholders adopt a "systems" approach for thinking about human capital. Three districts and states improved their data systems and developed new teacher evaluation tools. Two districts adopted an external research-based framework and used it to design teacher evaluation rubrics. Although all districts and states had the goal of increasing student achievement by improving teacher quality, the final outcomes in this area have not yet been determined.

Response Strategies Used to Address Challenges

The response strategy of developing a communications approach to frame teacher evaluations within the context of a comprehensive human capital management system was used to address concerns about extra work and time needed to develop improved teacher evaluation policies, concerns about high-stakes consequences, and human capital limitations.

The response strategy of investing in training for principals and teachers, enabling them to become proficient with the new teacher evaluation system, also was used to address concerns about extra work and time needed to develop improved teacher evaluation policies, concerns about high-stakes consequences, and human capital limitations.

The response strategy of developing technology or new processes to streamline new practices was used to address concerns about extra work and time needed to develop improved teacher evaluation policies, financial resource limitations, and human capital limitations.

The response strategy of developing a flexible system open to compromise and refinement was used to address financial resource limitations.

Conclusion

The current focus of the federal government, as documented by the four assurances[1] under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and the competitive grants available through the Race to the Top Fund (U.S. Department of Education, 2009), indicates that a quality and comprehensive teacher evaluation system will eventually be required in all states. The challenge for districts and states lies in creating such a system in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

This Public Impact study explored the change processes in the creation and implementation of teacher evaluation and tenure systems in the districts and states in which such systems have been implemented. Although the data for this study were gathered prior to awareness of the new federal foci, the study's findings will inform district and state planning and greatly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their implementation of teacher performance evaluation systems.

Recommendations

The major recommendations from the study are as follows:

- **Data Planning.** Plan data systems carefully to meet the needs identified by all stakeholders; such systems should be comprehensive, and all stakeholders should be able to access and share them.[2] Carefully planned data systems are fundamental for accurate assessment of teacher performance—especially as it relates to student academic achievement—and for informing the systems responsible for preparing and supporting effective teachers.

- **External Validation.** Model changes based on nationally recognized standards—such as the *Framework for Teaching* (Danielson, 2007), professional standards and certification standards (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 2002, 2009), or the Teacher Advancement Program [TAP] performance standards (National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, 2009)—and research to ensure that the resulting teacher evaluation systems are both valid and reliable. (See the list of teacher evaluation resources on page 9.)

- **Communication.** Acknowledge the value of effective communication. When the stakeholders are correctly identified, communication cultivates their involvement. Communication also helps teachers and principals see the value of changing the current teacher evaluation system. As a result, the likelihood of improving the system is greatly improved and its implementation becomes easier.

  - First, explain the link between quality teaching and improvements in student achievement— cite research, tell stories.

  - Second, frame changes to teacher evaluation within the context of building a comprehensive human capital management system (selection, induction, evaluation, professional development, tenure, compensation, career ladder).

  - Third, find opportunities for stakeholders to share their positive experiences with the new system (e.g., trainings, online forums, newsletters, conference presentations).

- **Early Wins as Groundbreakers**. As an effective strategy, consider *not* starting the teacher quality improvement effort with teacher evaluation. Instead, identify a related initiative that may

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[1] The four ARRA assurances are as follows: increasing teacher effectiveness and equitable distribution, improving the collection and use of data, enhancing the quality of standards and assessments, and supporting struggling schools.

[2] The creation of statewide longitudinal data systems also is a focus of the federal government, and support is available for this purpose. For more information, refer to the Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems Grant Program (http://nces.ed.gov/programs/slds/).

be carried out more quickly and with less backlash while still advancing better definitions of educator quality (e.g., develop teaching standards, revamp principal evaluation, reform tenure). To encourage teacher buy-in, provide opportunities for open discussion. (See "Guiding Questions for Discussion" below.)

- **Sustainability.** Design a dynamic human capital management system that can continue to be refined over time. Ensure that the teacher evaluation process aligns with the goals of this system.

Looking Forward

With the greater federal focus on encouraging outcomes-based teacher evaluation systems, districts and states will need to think systemically and strategically about how they prepare, support, and evaluate the effectiveness of their teachers. The findings reported here and the lessons learned from districts and states that have gone through the process will serve all stakeholders in these very important efforts to improve systems of teacher evaluation and ensure success for all students.

Guiding Questions for Discussion

The following questions can be used by school districts or state education agencies to facilitate discussion of the teacher evaluation system and initiate improvements.

1. **Impetus for Change.** If you are or have been engaged in a teacher evaluation change effort, what is driving it in your state? What is the impetus for change? (Anything to add that is not captured in our data?)

2. **Goals.** Wherever you are in the change process—some of you may be at the early stages—what are your goals for the new system that are not being met by the old system? (Anything not captured here?)

3. **Prevalence of Systems Approach.** How widely accepted is the need to develop a human capital management system in your state or district?

4. **Early Wins.** Do you think starting with early wins would be a good strategy in your state or district? What would this approach look like in your state? What related initiatives could serve as feasible first steps?

5. **Challenges.** If you recently have initiated changes to your teacher evaluation system, what challenges did you face? If you are just starting or planning your change effort, what do you anticipate will be the major challenges to improving teacher evaluation in your state or district?

6. **Communication Strategy.** What do you think would be the most persuasive way to communicate with key stakeholders about the need to improve teacher evaluation in your state or district? If you are already in the midst of your change effort, which stakeholders have been most important in helping communicate your message?

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Teacher Evaluation Resources Available From the TQ Center

A Practical Guide to Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness
http://www.tqsource.org/publications/practicalGuide.pdf

This publication provides guidance to states and districts as they consider which measure to use for the purpose of evaluating teacher effectiveness. It includes a definition of teacher effectiveness, a table indicating which evaluation methods are most suitable for different circumstances and goals, summaries of various measures, and a planning guide to use in designing an evaluation system.

Approaches to Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness: A Research Synthesis
http://www.tqsource.org/publications/EvaluatingTeachEffectiveness.pdf

This research synthesis examines how teacher effectiveness is currently measured. Practical guidance for evaluating teacher effectiveness extends beyond teachers' contributions to student achievement gains and includes their impact on classrooms, schools, and colleagues as well as their contributions to other important outcomes for students.

Improving Instruction Through Effective Teacher Evaluation: Options for States and Districts
http://www.tqsource.org/publications/February2008Brief.pdf

This TQ Research & Policy Brief discusses the measures currently used in teacher evaluation and focuses on their strengths and limitations. It underscores aspects of evaluation policies that currently are aligned with best practices and illuminates areas in which policymakers can enhance evaluation rules, regulations, and implementation, thereby improving teacher instruction and student performance.

Methods of Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness
http://www.tqsource.org/publications/RestoPractice_EvaluatingTeacherEffectiveness.pdf

This Research-to-Practice Brief is intended to help regional comprehensive center staff and state policymakers as they consider evaluation methods to clarify policy, develop new strategies, identify effective teachers, or guide and support districts in selecting and using appropriate evaluation methods for various purposes.

Communication Framework for Measuring Teacher Quality and Effectiveness: Bringing Coherence to the Conversation
http://www.tqsource.org/publications/NCCTQCommFramework.pdf

This framework was developed to promote effective dialogue about the measurement of teacher quality and effectiveness.

Paying for Teachers' Performance—Strategies and Conditions for Success
http://www.tqsource.org/webcasts/payforteach/index.php

This webcast examines the policy, research, and practice of performance-based compensation, specifically focusing on valid, reliable, and ethical ways to evaluate teachers' instructional performance. Experts discuss the promise and pitfalls of value-added and other statistical measures of student achievement growth as well as teaching portfolios and professional administrator evaluations.

"Considerations for Using Evaluation and Compensation to Enhance Teacher Effectiveness" (Chapter 4 of *America's Opportunity: Teacher Effectiveness and Equity in K–12 Classrooms*)
http://www.tqsource.org/publications/2009TQBiennial/2009BiennialReport_Ch4.pdf

This chapter of the TQ Center's 2009 Biennial Report addresses key questions, current knowledge, and trends related to teacher evaluation and compensation—both of which can be powerful levers for enhancing teacher effectiveness. It also includes an overview of the Ohio Department of Education's recent efforts to develop evidence-based teacher evaluation guidelines for Ohio school districts.

Appendix. Individual Site Descriptions

Chicago Public Schools			
Chicago Public Schools (CPS) is currently piloting the *Framework for Teaching* (Danielson, 2007) in 44 elementary schools. In 2010, approximately 100 schools will be using the framework. The goal is to implement it districtwide within four years.			
Impetus for Change	**Goals**	**Engagement of Stakeholders**	**Process**
• A report by The New Teacher Project (2007) was critical of CPS human resources practices, particularly teacher evaluation. • The 2007 collective bargaining agreement mandated the creation of a joint committee to change how teacher evaluations are conducted. • Senior leadership in the district supported an effort to develop a meaningful evaluation instrument. • CPS has several pilot initiatives that address evaluation; for example, the TAP program (see Chicago TAP, 2008) is available in some schools through the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant.	• To develop a robust evaluation tool that will help teachers improve their teaching by identifying their strengths and weaknesses (intended to be used for development and improvement). • To find ways to incorporate the best elements of the TAP program and Fresh Start Peer Mentoring and Evaluation Program (see Chicago Public Schools, 2007) into a scalable model that could be taken districtwide. • To develop performance rubrics for nonclassroom teachers (e.g., social workers, nurses, instructional coaches).	• A joint committee of five district and five union-appointed members was formed. • District members included representatives from the offices of Strategy and Planning and Labor and Employee Relations as well as an area instructional officer and the director of the Professional Development unit. A person from Charlotte Danielson's consulting organization, The Danielson Group, was the facilitator. • Principals and teachers in nine schools tested the *Framework for Teaching* in spring 2008 and participated in focus groups. Pilot teachers and principals were interviewed about the new rubric and evaluation process.	• The committee met weekly for several hours, speaking with stakeholders and reviewing best practices. • The committee decided to adopt the Charlotte Danielson framework. • The committee was dissolved because of a dispute over how evaluations would affect renewal decisions for probationary teachers. • CPS decided to continue with the pilot using the framework the committee had developed without altering any contractual processes. • In the first year, 44 schools piloted the program. • The committee is currently refining problem areas and expanding the pilot to other schools. • The framework is being adapted to different uses, such as developing interview questions for principals.

Chicago Public Schools (Continued)		
Outcomes	**Challenges and Responses**	**Recommendations**
• Added a more robust component to the current evaluation system. • Led to thinking about how to use evaluations to inform the entire career of teachers from induction to tenure. • Realized that a perfect program cannot be rolled out—teacher evaluation will need periodic adjustments. • Developed a website for teachers to share stories and experiences with the new evaluation system.	• Without union support, some teachers have been hesitant to embrace the new system. Working to overcome negative perceptions and resistance to change is a major task. ▪ CPS has worked to publish a newsletter and collect ongoing feedback to involve teachers in the process. ▪ To clear up misunderstandings, CPS is currently working to disseminate stories about experiences that teachers have had with the system. • Principals have expressed concerns about the additional work. ▪ CPS is working to change principals' attitudes toward the new teacher evaluation process. For many, the new process is going to be challenging, so CPS needs to provide high-quality training and to convince principals that the change is important and worthwhile (e.g., leading to better teacher retention). • Additional cost is a major issue for CPS. • Evaluation work has driven CPS to rethink how it spends money on professional development. • CPS is now working to use its resources in a more efficient and effective way.	• After the pilot, CPS realized it needs to do a better job of reaching out to teachers and sharing their stories. Teachers in the pilot program supported it, but many misunderstandings were floating around. • Support from district leadership is essential. This type of change is an ongoing process. To be successful, there must be a leader who understands high-quality teacher evaluation and supports the change process. • Teacher evaluation is part of a larger human capital management system. When reforming that system, teacher evaluation is the hardest place to start. Locate an early win somewhere else, and start there. • Training for teachers and principals is essential. If possible, conduct joint training on the new evaluation system so each group can learn from the other.

Denver Public Schools			
Denver Public Schools (DPS) has developed a new teacher evaluation process called Professional Compensation for Teachers or ProComp (Denver Public Schools, n.d.), which affects all teachers in the district.			
Impetus for Change	**Goals**	**Engagement of Stakeholders**	**Process**

• ProComp agreement between the district and the union has driven teacher evaluation changes in Denver.
 	
• Professional evaluation is one component of ProComp, so the agreement stipulated that any changes to teacher evaluation needed to go through a teacher evaluation committee.
 	
• The main parties driving changes have been the union and the district.
 	
• There has been little or no involvement from outside parties (e.g., political leaders, general public).
	• To develop a self-evaluation/reflection piece for teachers as well as a plan for struggling teachers (stipulated in ProComp).
	
	• To design an evaluation process for all teachers that is meaningful and based on standards and best practices. DPS wanted it to be linked to professional development and ultimately to improvements in student learning.
	
	• To design the process so that ProComp teachers get additional pay for higher evaluation scores.
		• The process was led by a committee of 25–30 people, cochaired by a human resources officer from the district and a teacher appointed by the union. The committee included parents, teachers, and administrators.
		
		• Subcommittees were formed to involve various stakeholders, each of which worked on its specific issues (e.g., the nurses subcommittee wrote standards for nurses).
		
		• Subcommittee members were asked to canvass constituencies at various points and bring back feedback.
		
		• A public relations firm was hired to support the process. This firm published newsletters and conducted focus groups and surveys.
			• The committee has met regularly over the past seven years.
			  ▪ Initially, committee members reviewed best practices and brainstormed.
			  ▪ The committee decided to use the standards developed by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (n.d.) as a framework for writing new rubrics and improving teacher practices.
			  ▪ DPS piloted the new system for two years.
			  ▪ As a result of the pilot, DPS changed remediation by scaling back its action plan and made it less confusing and quicker.
			• DPS conducted a one-year field test.
			• DPS is currently working on refining problem areas.
			• Newsletters written by the public relations firm have kept the committee on task (by requiring written responses every week) and have increased transparency.

Denver Public Schools (Continued)		
Outcomes	**Challenges and Responses**	**Recommendations**

• Redesigned the teacher evaluation process for all teachers.
 	
• Decided to separate corrective action (addressing issues of professionalism) from remediation (focusing on improving teaching and student outcomes).
 	
• Led to linking evaluation with professional development (through remediation).
 	
• Led to specific rubrics for different types of personnel (e.g., nurses, psychologists, coaches).
	• Time to conduct new evaluations was an issue for everyone.
	  ▪ DPS tried to resolve this issue using technology. Unfortunately, the online system that DPS developed did not work, so it abandoned that method and is in the process of considering alternatives.
	  ▪ DPS shortened the evaluation form to one page.
	  ▪ DPS included time management in training, taught principals how to use the new system effectively, and helped them develop their own processes.
	
	• Fairness was a big issue, particularly as it relates to interrater reliability.
	  ▪ DPS provided evaluator training to both teachers and principals.
	  ▪ DPS separated corrective action (Are you behaving like a professional?) from remediation (Are you effective as a teacher?).
	
	• State law prohibited DPS from using peer evaluations.
	  ▪ DPS is working on getting a waiver for this.
	  ▪ DPS spent a lot of time making sure that the local bargaining agreement matched state law. There were multiple reviews by union and district lawyers.
	
	• Cost is another concern. Initially, DPS had a large grant from a foundation, but there is concern about the cost of training and focus groups in the future.
		• Transparency is necessary at every stage of the process.
		  ▪ Use focus groups and surveys to get lots of feedback and address people's concerns. Keep the committee aware of opposition to elements in the plan.
		  ▪ Create a handbook that describes the new system in detail.
		
		• The desired data should be identified from the beginning, and the collection system should be built to collect them. DPS wishes it had been more deliberate about these necessities (e.g., in order to track evaluation results across the district).
		
		• Modeling the system on nationally recognized standards—using certification guidelines from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (2008)—helped teachers see the value.
		
		• Timing changes would improve results. DPS changed so many things at once that teachers had difficulties managing them, and so evaluation became a focus of general dissatisfaction.
		
		• Include a peer evaluation component.
		
		• Increase funding to pay for external evaluators to validate principal findings.

New York City Department of Education

The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) has not made any changes to its teacher evaluation process—that situation would require renegotiating its collective bargaining agreement with the union—but it has addressed teacher quality by launching a comprehensive effort to improve principals' ability to make well-informed tenure decisions.

Impetus for Change	Goals	Engagement of Stakeholders	Process
• NYCDOE recognized that one of the key teacher quality improvements the district could make was to enable principals to make well-informed tenure decisions. • Approximately 6,000 NYC teachers come up for tenure every year—a daunting number. District leadership recognized that improving the tenure process is a significant step toward improving its overall human capital management system.	• To improve student achievement by improving the overall quality of the teaching force. • To improve the rigor of tenure decisions and give principals the information they need to make better informed tenure decisions. • To encourage principals to take responsibility for the quality of the teaching force in their buildings. • To reverse past practice, which was to grant tenure to almost all teachers at the end of their third year of teaching.	• District leadership made the initial decision to improve principals' ability to make well-informed tenure decisions and worked with the Talent Office to implement necessary changes. • The district has engaged principals, superintendents, school support organizations, legal counsel, and others through training, communications, and one-on-one support.	• In 2007, the district launched an effort to make tenure decisions more meaningful. • The first step was to create an online tenure notification system that informs principals when individual teachers are coming up for tenure. • The district has developed online toolkits within the *Principals' Portal*, a citywide password-protected website for principals. The tenure toolkit includes FAQs, reflection tools, and scenarios. • The district also has provided training directly to principals and other stakeholders. The intended message is the importance of quality teaching in improving student achievement. The training guides principals through the tenure-granting process.

New York City Department of Education (Continued)		
Outcomes	**Challenges and Responses**	**Recommendations**

• The district notified principals of upcoming tenure decisions. This step in itself was a very powerful intervention; many had not received this information under the previous system.
 	
• Principals now have many more resources and a better understanding of the role that tenure can play in improving overall teacher quality.
 	
• NYCDOE developed a data system to track tenure decisions across the district.
	• Principals had initial concerns about paperwork and the time required to terminate probationary employees.
	  ▪ The district put the notification and approval system online, which saved time by making it easier for principals to search for a teacher's rating the previous year and enabling them to access the system at home.
	  ▪ The district also created online training and toolkits to answer FAQs, respond to myths, and clarify facts.
	
	• It was a challenge to convince principals to think about the link between teacher quality and student achievement. Some principals completely understand the link; for others, understanding the link is a stretch.
	  ▪ The district has implemented competency-based principal screening to identify a principal's ability to strategically manage staff.
	  ▪ The district has designed training to help principals see how teacher quality affects student achievement and how even modest improvements make a difference.
	
	• Principals did not have tools to help them facilitate tenure discussions and decision making at their schools.
	  ▪ The district created an automated e-mail system to alert principals when teachers were in a position to earn tenure.
	  ▪ The district created an online toolkit and offered training on how to start tenure discussions and get teachers to reflect on tenure.
		• The quality of people making tenure decisions is important: Focus efforts on better principal selection as well as on providing current principals with compelling evidence about the importance of improving teacher quality.
		
		• Shift from compliance-based decision making to data- and tool-driven decision making, which will empower principals to make good decisions.
		
		• Develop easy-to-use tools. In addition to giving principals information about the process, the district also should provide them with tools to make better decisions—scenarios that they can read and discuss, self-reflection pieces, examples from practice. Tools should not be too prescriptive; principals should take responsibility for making more strategic decisions.
		
		• There is an overall need to examine the entire human capital management system and identify areas where the district can have the most influence. In the case of NYCDOE, tenure was an important lever.

Minnesota Department of Education

Minnesota has developed the Quality Compensation for Teachers or Q Comp system, a voluntary program that helps districts fund integrated human capital management systems (see Minnesota Department of Education, 2008a). Q Comp includes a teacher evaluation system that requires classroom observations and evidence of student achievement gains as measures of teacher performance.

Impetus for Change	Goals	Engagement of Stakeholders	Process
• State discussions of how to define and measure teacher quality are ongoing. Interest in reforming professional development, teacher pay, and evaluations in the state is high. • In 2003, the state received a U.S. Department of Education Teacher Quality Enhancement (TQE) grant, which required the department to redesign its human capital management system. • The governor, commissioner, and deputy commissioner pushed the effort to improve teacher evaluation, culminating in the passage of the Q Comp law in 2005.	• To build a framework for districts to design an integrated human capital management system that includes teacher evaluation, professional development, and alternative compensation. • To encourage districts to enroll in Q Comp and adopt its framework, including revisions to current teacher evaluation processes. • To design a system that respects local control. The result needs to improve district practices without being overly prescriptive.	• The governor's office, department commissioner, deputy commissioner, Education Minnesota (the state teachers union), and education organizations collaboratively developed the five elements of the Q Comp framework (see Minnesota Department of Education, 2008b). • At the district level, leaders and teacher representatives are in charge of designing their own plans to meet the requirements of the Q Comp system.	• In 2002, the state began an alternative compensation program. The program started a conversation about how to align pay with performance. • In 2003, the state received a TQE grant. One of the grant components was a requirement to pilot a program aligning compensation to teacher quality and increase the number of effective teachers. • In 2005, the Q Comp framework was signed into law. The Q Comp framework includes five components: (1) career ladder/advancement options, (2) job-embedded professional development, (3) teacher evaluation/ observation, (4) performance pay, and (5) alternative salary schedules (Minnesota Department of Education, 2008b). • Districts submit applications to the state for approval in order to join Q Comp.

Minnesota Department of Education (Continued)		
Outcomes	**Challenges and Responses**	**Recommendations**
• The department created an integrated system for teacher evaluation, professional development, and compensation that districts can voluntarily adopt in return for additional resources. • Minnesota wrote its system into law in 2005 through Q Comp legislation.	• There is an ongoing tension between providing direction to districts while allowing for local control. • When the original TQE grant was received, many believed that initiatives would end after the money ran out. This situation led many to adopt a "wait and see" attitude toward reforms. Overcoming this perception was a major obstacle to implementation. 　▪ Signing Q Comp into law and tying state money to the program convinced many that Q Comp is here to stay. 　▪ Stressing the link between evaluation, professional development, and student achievement also helped solidify the importance of the initiative. • Teachers resisted change. 　▪ The state found ways to highlight teachers who were having success and let them influence colleagues. 　▪ The state helped district leaders develop a clear message to send to the stakeholders. • Funding is an ongoing concern. Professional development budgets are often the first to be cut, so hard work is needed to convince local leaders that professional development should be a major focus. 　▪ Sharing research and stories to illustrate the connection between professional development and teacher quality can help change attitudes. 　▪ Seeing the connection can be a very powerful realization.	• Developing a structure in the state for stakeholders to begin having the conversation about utilizing human capital is an important first step. For state and district stakeholders, the TQE grant and Q Comp created a safe zone to talk about reforming the human capital management system as a whole. • Local buy-in is essential to the process. Build support from the bottom up by helping participants share positive experiences with others. • Training also is important. Assist teachers and school leaders in understanding their new roles. Many are not familiar with how evaluations should be conducted. When possible, perform the training together. It is important for school evaluation structures to mirror one another and not have separate expectations for formal and peer evaluations. • Have a plan to work with local districts to develop a communication strategy. Sending the right message about these changes is very important early on. There may be fears and misconceptions about any new teacher evaluation program.

Ohio State Board of Education

The Ohio State Board of Education, in collaboration with the Ohio Board of Regents, is working to establish guidelines for the evaluation of teachers and principals. Principal evaluation guidelines were established in 2007, and teacher guidelines were being established in 2008–09.

Impetus for Change	Goals	Engagement of Stakeholders	Process
• A 2004 law required the state to develop uniform standards for teachers. • A federal TIF grant to expand the TAP program in the state encouraged some districts to rethink the state's evaluation systems and helped articulate what high-quality teacher evaluation could look like.	• Because state law dictates that teacher evaluations are bargained at the district level, the Ohio State Board of Education's goal has been to develop research-based guidelines for districts to adopt if they choose. • The state wants encourage more districts to adopt best practices in teacher evaluation, including developing formative evaluation models. • Eventually, the state would like to develop a model framework for districts.	• The committee that developed teaching standards was made up of teachers, principals, a superintendent, a school board member, and representatives from higher education. • More recently, the state put together a group of 30 key stakeholders to review the work in Ohio and elsewhere. The group conducted focus groups across the state and brought in external experts on teacher evaluation. • The state plans to hold statewide conferences to engage stakeholders in discussions of new practices.	• In 2003, the Governor's Commission on Teaching Success published a report recommending that the state write a set of uniform standards for teachers. • As a result, the state passed a law in 2004 creating a state board to write standards that align across the teaching career. • In 2007, the state piloted a framework for principal evaluations. • In 2008, the state began working on a similar framework to guide teacher evaluations. • The state plans to convene a second group next year to develop a model teacher evaluation process.

Ohio State Board of Education (Continued)		
Outcomes	**Challenges and Responses**	**Recommendations**

• The board developed a uniform set of standards for teachers.
 	
• The board revised principal evaluations to include formative components.
 	
• The board developed a set of guidelines from the best available research that can guide the teacher evaluation process at the district level.
 	
• The board hosted a statewide conference to highlight what districts are doing to improve teacher evaluation.
	• State law mandates that teacher evaluation policies be dictated by the local collective bargaining agreement.
	  ▪ The state has focused on advocating best practices and creating forums at which teachers can discuss issues and learn from each other and from external experts.
	  ▪ The state has changed the process of principal evaluations, which are not covered by the collective bargaining agreement.
	
	• Principals have concerns that a new evaluation system will be too time-consuming to use.
	  ▪ The state is looking for ways to develop evaluations that are not based on observation. Such evaluations might involve portfolio review; examination of student work; peer review; or other, more participatory models.
	
	• Limited resources are a major challenge for work at the state level. Because this new initiative blurs the boundaries between departments, the project is short on staff.
	  ▪ The staff shortage has forced the department to work slowly and deliberately.
	  ▪ The pace of the process may have positive effects because it provides time for changes to take effect organically.
		• Creating educator standards is an important first step. Working on them provided a strong foundation and established a framework to begin talking about improving evaluations. Designing these standards with a broad-based group of people helped develop early buy-in.
		
		• If possible, start by revamping principal evaluation, which secures buy-in from principals and serves as a dry run to provide experience with the change process.
		
		• Helping people connect to research is an important role the state can play: Provide forums for stakeholders to discuss teacher evaluation, and provide them with literature and reviews of the state's practices to help them understand what they need to do and what value it has.
		
		• Some districts will eagerly embrace reform, some will be hesitant, and others will oppose it. Tailor responses to the district's stance. Encourage early adopters and educate the hesitant.

South Carolina Department of Education			
The state requires local districts to use the statewide evaluation system, called Assisting, Developing, and Evaluating Professional Teaching (ADEPT), which measures teachers' success in meeting 10 established performance standards. As of 2008, 45 schools in 14 districts also were fully implementing the South Carolina Teacher Advancement Program (SCTAP), which is aligned with ADEPT.			
Impetus for Change	**Goals**	**Engagement of Stakeholders**	**Process**
• Teachers and principals expressed widespread dissatisfaction with the state's previous evaluation system. • A state-sponsored report by an external consultant in 2004 recommended improvements to ADEPT. • The state superintendent has made professional development a high priority. • In general, policymakers have been moving toward more evidence-based decision making.	• To develop a comprehensive new evaluation model for teachers that informs decision making. • To empower teachers to be more reflective and take an active role in their professional development. • To use data to inform decisions throughout a teacher's career from training and induction to tenure.	• A statewide committee of many stakeholders was convened to create the system. • The committee included representatives from all fields who would be covered by the new system (e.g., teachers, administrators, nonclassroom personnel, higher education). • Committee members were expected to act as representatives who would relay information and gather feedback from their constituents. • The committee was proactive about posting information and soliciting feedback from outsiders.	• In 1998, South Carolina passed a law eliminating its old evaluation system and replacing it with ADEPT. • In 2003, ADEPT was expanded to include standards for nonclassroom personnel. • In 2002, the state began piloting SCTAP in a few schools. SCTAP performance standards are correlated with ADEPT. • In 2004, a study recommended adding a student achievement component, aligning implementation of the system's components, and adding more training for evaluators. • The state has been working to address all these recommendations. It is also working to scale up SCTAP.

South Carolina Department of Education (Continued)		
Outcomes	**Challenges and Responses**	**Recommendations**

• The state created a new evaluation system for all teachers and nonclassroom personnel.
 	
• The state created a statewide data base that teachers and administrators can access and that includes each teacher's ADEPT history.
 	
• The state also began linking teacher evaluation information back to teacher certification programs.
 	
• The state developed rubrics for other personnel (e.g., nurses, coaches).
	• Getting buy-in to a new process is always a challenge.
	  ▪ The state tried to clearly articulate the goals of the new process and how it affects different stakeholders differently.
	  ▪ The state emphasized that the new evaluation process was designed to improve student learning. The process should enable teachers to tailor professional development to their needs.
	  ▪ The state emphasized ways that the new system is an improvement over the old system, which most people agreed was not helpful.
	
	• Scarcity of resources was another challenge.
	  ▪ The department had to move slower than it would have liked on some elements.
	  ▪ Even in the midst of budget shortfalls, the department did not compromise on either training or communications but kept them as high priorities.
	
	• Measuring whether the new system is working was difficult to do.
	  ▪ After a few years, the department brought in an external consultant to review the system. This approach lent credibility to the process and helped the department clarify next steps for improvement.
		• Decide early on what accomplishments are desirable in order to explain what is being accomplished. Explaining actions is very important, so articulate a clear, concise, and meaningful message. This message will help guide the process and allow future self-evaluation.
		
		• When getting feedback from constituents, it is best to present ideas for their response, rather than start from scratch. Starting from scratch in an unstructured forum can create a logjam that impedes all progress.
		
		• Remember that change is a long-term commitment. A dynamic system created from the beginning will position the department for adjustments to the process that future circumstances may require.

About the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality

The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (TQ Center) was created to serve as the national resource to which the regional comprehensive centers, states, and other education stakeholders turn for strengthening the quality of teaching—especially in high-poverty, low-performing, and hard-to-staff schools—and for finding guidance in addressing specific needs, thereby ensuring that highly qualified teachers are serving students with special needs.

The TQ Center is funded by the U.S. Department of Education and is a collaborative effort of ETS, Learning Point Associates, and Vanderbilt University. Integral to the TQ Center's charge is the provision of timely and relevant resources to build the capacity of regional comprehensive centers and states to effectively implement state policy and practice by ensuring that all teachers meet the federal teacher requirements of the current provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as reauthorized by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act.

The TQ Center is part of the U.S. Department of Education's Comprehensive Centers program, which includes 16 regional comprehensive centers that provide technical assistance to states within a specified boundary and five content centers that provide expert assistance to benefit states and districts nationwide on key issues related to the current provisions of ESEA.

Acknowledgments

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