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A GUIDE TO DEVELOPING
Teacher Evaluation Systems that
Support Growth and Development

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EDUCATION & SOCIETY PROGRAM

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Introduction and Summary

Teacher evaluation has emerged as a key strategy for improving student outcomes in public education. The rationale is compelling: teachers vary widely in their effectiveness, and evaluation systems need to identify and address this variation. Performance evaluations have historically been largely perfunctory: no meaningful feedback is provided, no improvement expectations are established, and no positive or negative consequences flow from high or low ratings.

In the last two years, most states have adopted new policies governing teacher evaluations, including requirements to factor student achievement gains into individual teacher evaluations. The field is consumed with implementing these policies, moving quickly from design to pilot to full-scale implementation. This guide is designed as a practical toolkit for organizing the process, elevating important issues, and elucidating the tensions and trade-offs that need to be resolved.

To fulfill its potential to contribute to educational improvement, teacher evaluation must be done right. Public education is littered with initiatives that promised transformative change only to be undone by poor planning, weak execution, and the centrifugal force of the status quo. Moreover, current efforts at improving evaluation are complicated by two other dynamics:

- ▶ Simultaneous efforts to implement the new Common Core State Standards, which include implications for instruction that are not yet well integrated into teaching expectations, and
- ▶ Several years of declining funding for public education, which have meant reductions in force at the state departments and school district offices that are charged with leading and coordinating this work.

These dynamics make it even more critical to have a deliberate planning effort that coordinates with other initiatives and builds continuous improvement into the design of the system.

The Key: Supporting Growth and Development

Powerful evaluations provide actionable information to teachers and cultivate cultures of continuous improvement. This guide is designed to support school systems that decide a primary goal of their evaluation system is to support teacher growth and development. If that goal is not high on your list, you may not find this guide helpful.

Much of the current conversation about teacher evaluation focuses on the mechanics of giving every teacher a rating and holding individuals accountable for their performance. Teachers are sorted into rating categories; high performers are recognized while persistently poor performers are pursued for dismissal. This focus is both necessary and insufficient. It is a predictable, technical response to what has been a historic, widespread failure to hold teachers to high standards and confront performance that undermines student learning. As the pendulum has swung to accountability and extrinsic rewards for performance (for which there is little support in research or experience), though, the larger purpose of evaluation — supporting improvement — has gotten short shrift.

The problem with a heavy focus on accountability is that an evaluation system built primarily for accountability often isn't well designed for supporting improvement. Even under the most rigorous systems, the overwhelming majority of teachers fall in the middle range of performance evaluations. They are not so bad that they

are in danger of being fired, but they are not so good that they don't need to improve. The real tragedy of current evaluations is that the lack of meaningful support for improvement forces school systems to tolerate mediocrity instead of striving for excellence.

This guide is designed to support school systems that decide a primary goal of their evaluation system is to support teacher growth and development.

Many systems assume that providing teachers with ratings and feedback on their performance will drive widespread, sustained improvement in instructional practices and student learning. This assumption is wrong. Several systems that are at the vanguard of designing new teacher evaluations have realized that they did not consider professional growth and support adequately during the design phase. For these reasons, the rest of this guide is organized to help school systems develop evaluation systems that foster professional growth and improved teacher practice. Meeting this goal cannot be done at the expense of accountability or other goals, but it is done with the understanding that supporting teacher growth and development is the primary purpose to which other goals must align.

➔ Focusing on Continuous Improvement

This guide is intended to assist those in districts and state departments of education who already have launched their evaluation systems as much as those who are beginning to plan theirs. Meaningful evaluation is built on an expectation of continuous improvement, and this principle needs to be applied to the system for evaluation, too. Wherever you are in the process, it is essential to set aside time to consider the principles that undergird

the system, examine whether the system is adhering to its core values and making progress against its stated goals, and make mid-course corrections. For systems that are beginning to develop an evaluation system, the guide will support a thoughtful and thorough step-by-step process. Systems already engaged in the evaluation work will find the guide a helpful tool for assessing and refining their work.

➔ Steps to Design, Assess, and Refine Your Evaluation System

This guide outlines nine steps to be used by states and school districts in designing new evaluation systems and assessing and refining existing systems. Each step in the process outlined below builds on the previous steps, helping to ensure coherence, alignment with the system's core values, and coordination with other important initiatives. Templates provided at the end of each section will facilitate the work of each step.

Step 1: Define the Vision and Goals for Your Evaluation System

The goals for the evaluation system — what you want it to do — guide both its design and implementation. They also signal to teachers and everyone else in the community what the system values.

Step 2: Articulate Your Theory of Action

Articulating a theory of action — a simple statement that says, *“If we do X, Y, and Z, then teaching will improve and student achievement will rise”* — makes explicit the implicit beliefs about how teachers improve their practice and what steps they and others in the system must take to support this improvement. A thoughtful, well-articulated theory of action provides the foundation for building a teacher evaluation system.

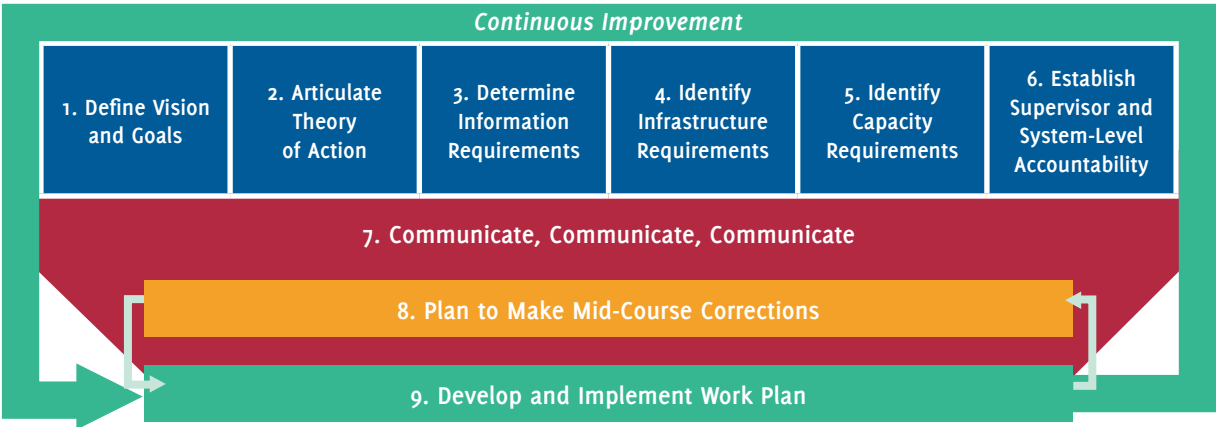
Step 3: Determine Information Requirements

Assembling the information that will be used to assess teacher performance (and the timing and presentation of it) and to guide professional growth activities is critical to ensuring a focus on teacher growth and development. Five categories of information need to be considered:

- ▶ Student outcomes;
- ▶ Teacher inputs;
- ▶ Professionalism;
- ▶ Feedback from students, parents, and peers; and
- ▶ Development of students' character and habits of mind.

Step 4: Identify Infrastructure Requirements

Using evaluation to support teacher growth and development has implications for how the school system is structured and organized. Defining the infrastructure needed to successfully implement new evaluations and developing a strategy to develop it is essential. Special attention must be given to policies and procedures, data systems, and time and job responsibilities.



Step 5: Identify Capacity Requirements

Evaluations won't affect only teachers. School leaders and their supervisors, most central office staff, and any teacher leaders/peer evaluators involved in the evaluation process are going to need significant training and ongoing support to enact the new policies. In addition to ensuring accuracy and reliability in ratings — which are hugely important and complicated challenges on their own — ensuring evaluators' capacity to translate this new information into guidance that leads to more effective instruction is paramount to ensuring the evaluation truly supports teacher growth and development.

Step 6: Establish Supervisor and System-Level Accountability for Teacher Growth and Development

Good evaluations don't merely assign ratings — they play an integral role in guiding and supporting professional growth. While the best school leaders always have embraced this responsibility, it will be new work in many schools and school systems. Establishing measures and metrics for assessing whether key players in the evaluation work are meeting their responsibilities and teachers are getting needed feedback and support will help ensure that the intentions of the evaluation system are realized.

Step 7: Communicate, Communicate, Communicate

During the design and implementation of an evaluation system, communication has multiple goals:

- ▶ Conveying the system's vision, priorities, and goals;
- ▶ Soliciting input from teachers and other stakeholders;
- ▶ Building ownership;
- ▶ Ensuring clarity regarding expectations and opportunities; and
- ▶ Facilitating feedback from the front lines to guide improvement.

Accomplishing these goals requires consideration of the various stakeholders who need to be engaged, the best messengers, the messages themselves, and ways to ensure communication genuinely goes in both directions.

Step 8: Plan to Monitor Progress and Make Mid-Course Corrections

Only during implementation can system leaders learn what works in practice, as things inevitably arise that couldn't have been anticipated in the design phase. Building in an up-front strategy for learning rapidly from implementation is essential. Deciding what information to track and review to gain a clear sense of how things are going and to make mid-course corrections will support the overall integrity of the evaluation system.

Step 9: Develop and Implement the Work Plan

This final act of synthesis weaves together the work of each of the previous steps. It results in a concrete work plan that can be used to guide action — first in design and then in implementation — and to benchmark progress.

As you go through these steps, issues of capacity, resources, and pace of implementation become clearer. When you lay everything out and see how it looks when it's all put together, you can really assess if the timeline is manageable, if you have allocated enough resources to critical elements of the system, and if you need to make further refinements.

If evaluations are to realize their long-term potential for improving teachers' effectiveness and increasing student achievement, it is worth investing in a deliberative process that builds engagement, values perspectives of multiple stakeholders, and creates shared ownership and accountability. Meaningful evaluation and performance management confront deep-seated traditions of professional autonomy and isolation, as well as cultures in which teachers were never told they had to improve (and principals were never expected to tell them or held responsible for supporting their growth and development). This guide offers strategies for ensuring evaluation systems address these challenges and establish a culture of high expectations, shared ownership, and continuous improvement.

Templates for each step are located at the end of each section. Interactive, downloadable versions are available on-line at www.aspeninstitute.org/MeansToAnEnd_blank_templates.

Getting Started

Who Should Use This Guide?

The guide is written for people who are working to improve teacher evaluation systems. It will be useful to:

- ▶ State department of education staff who are setting evaluation policy;
- ▶ Superintendents and school boards;
- ▶ Union leadership;
- ▶ The champions charged with building the evaluation system;
- ▶ District-level leadership teams charged with oversight; and
- ▶ Central office and school leadership staff who will be integral in the work of design and implementation.

The guide is intended to be useful for systems at different stages of building an evaluation system. For systems that are in the thick of implementing an evaluation system, the guide will assist you in assessing your work-in-progress and making refinements to strengthen its impact on teacher growth and development. For school systems just embarking on this work, the guide will help you build a rigorous system that has integrity.

The most important resources in building and implementing an evaluation system are the teachers, principals, coaches, and data analysts in your system who will have to do the work or are currently doing it. Be sure to engage a broad group of stakeholders as you work through this guide to get input and insights from the front lines and build ownership for the critical work of implementation and refinement. Involve people not only in envisioning what the system can be but also in vetting specific proposals and providing feedback once work rolls into the field. At the school district level, a team that brings together people from the functions that are heavily implicated — the human resources, curriculum and instruction, professional development, research and assessment, and information management departments — needs to drive the design, implementation, and refinement work.

Be sure to engage a broad group of stakeholders as you work through this guide to get input and insights from the front lines and build ownership.

Appointing a Champion

While the design and implementation processes must engage many, a single champion must be charged with orchestrating the multiple streams of work required to get the system up and running. School systems in the forefront of this work suggest that the most important attributes of this champion are:

- ▶ Strong project management skills;
- ▶ High expectations;
- ▶ Strong interpersonal skills;
- ▶ The ability to learn quickly;
- ▶ A commitment to continuous improvement; and
- ▶ Tenacity.

Identifying a single champion for this work is a strategic decision and has symbolic significance as the reporting lines and other responsibilities (if there are any) of this person signal the organization's level of commitment to the evaluation work.

This guide is intended to serve as a trusted advisor and companion to people charged with championing teacher evaluation. In addition to providing templates to facilitate the work of each step, the guide offers examples of how school systems and state departments have responded to common challenges to provide images of the work in action. Reading the guide in its entirety initially provides a fairly detailed sense of the scope of the work. It is written for an audience that is sold on the importance of the endeavor and sees its potential to transform the quality of teaching.

STEP 1

Define the Vision and Goals for Your Evaluation System

The goals for the evaluation system — what you want it to do — guide both its design and implementation. They also signal to teachers and everyone else in the community what the system values. For these reasons, defining goals is the first essential step.

The goals for a teacher evaluation system can be quite varied, such as:

- ▶ Sorting teachers by performance;
- ▶ Informing staffing across the system;
- ▶ Providing feedback to support teachers' development;
- ▶ Guiding system support and professional development for teachers and principals; and
- ▶ Identifying teachers whose performance demands special recognition as well as those whose performance requires remediation or removal.

Many school systems and policy leaders expect evaluation to support multiple goals. Articulating each goal separately and prioritizing them is important so that system leaders can deliberately allocate resources. An evaluation system can support both consequential human resource decisions (e.g., retention, termination) and professional growth for all teachers, but only if each of these purposes is clearly defined and then gets the necessary attention and resources.

TEACHERS AND THEIR UNIONS HAVE A VITAL ROLE TO PLAY

More than any prior education reform, new teacher evaluation systems will profoundly affect the day-to-day job responsibilities and career prospects of classroom teachers. Teacher unions and other associations representing

teachers' voices have a huge role to play in translating these policies into practice.

There are positive examples to emulate. In **Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**, for example, the president of the local chapter of the American Federation of Teachers and the superintendent worked relentlessly to build trust and goodwill that led to an historic new evaluation system, enshrined in a five-year contract that was ratified in 2010. The two leaders met often to discuss substantive issues, creating space for their subordinates to do the same; found common ground on substantive issues and approaches before trying to negotiate the most contentious topics; and embraced uncertainty and a commitment to continuous improvement as the best way to partner on ambitious work with unknown consequences. Teacher union and system leaders in **Hillsborough County, Florida**, and **New Haven, Connecticut**, also demonstrated that collaboration can strengthen evaluations.

In addition, tough-minded, productive collaboration has been demonstrated at the state level. In **Illinois** and **Delaware**, for example, National Education Association leaders worked closely with political leaders and other stakeholders to design new evaluation policies. In both situations, political leaders created conditions under which the unions could say “yes,” and union leaders embraced the imperative for change.

Look Beyond the Unions

While unions remain the dominant representative of teachers, a new breed of teacher associations is seeking to give greater voice to teachers' professional aspirations. **Memphis City Schools** partnered with **Teach Plus** to engage teachers in designing teacher effectiveness measures, while Teach Plus fellows played an active role in shaping new state policies in **Indiana**. (Teach Plus is a national organization that trains early-career, effective teachers to play an active role in redefining the teaching profession.) School systems should seek as many opportunities and venues as possible for including teachers in the design, piloting, and refinement of new evaluations, and new organizations can help.

→ Engaging Stakeholders

Engage people from across the system to work through this step. Bringing multiple perspectives to the conversation will lead to a stronger and more comprehensive vision and goals. Their involvement also begins to build engagement in and ownership of the work.

If stakeholders are engaged early on, they likely will be much more committed to the change required than if they step into the work in midstream.

Teachers' and principals' perspectives ensure the conversation is grounded in the daily realities of schools. Involving central office department leaders (e.g., professional development, curriculum and instruction, research, assessment, data) will help surface

any efforts already under way that support this work as well as what needs to change to make the evaluations effective. These conversations likely will evolve and change your perspective and direction multiple times. Be sure to listen more than you talk.

Engaging a broad, representative group of leaders from all levels of the system in this first step is critical because their work may need to evolve in important ways as part of building and implementing the evaluation system. If they are engaged early on, they likely will be much more committed to the change required than if they step into the work in midstream.

In addition to using traditional venues for soliciting input, consider new ways of engaging a broader cross-section of stakeholders. Electronic, anonymous surveys are inexpensive and allow teachers and others to contribute ideas. Where feasible, focus groups can help to refine aspirations into operational goals and priorities.

→ Making the Overall Vision Central

Before defining the specific goals of the evaluation system, consider (or articulate) the school system's values and overall vision. This step is an important prerequisite to actually designing the evaluation system. It will build a commonly shared understanding of where the evaluation system fits within the larger system, how it reflects the larger system's values, and how it contributes to realizing the vision. The questions below can be useful to guide these conversations:

- ▶ What are the system's most important values?
- ▶ What is the system's vision for what it is trying to make possible for students? What are the implications of this vision for teachers?
- ▶ How does the evaluation work fit/support the values and vision?

The success of the evaluation system is also directly related to how clearly it is linked to other critical work in the district. A new evaluation system can support critical systemic work — drive preparation for and implementation of the Common Core State Standards, a commitment to individualize instruction, and a more data-driven approach to instruction — if everyone in the system sees the relationships among the different streams of work and works to bring them together to accomplish something greater than any single effort could achieve on its own. That is what is required to realize a vision.

Values and vision drive school system culture and norms.

Developing a new evaluation system can be an opportunity to reinforce the school system's prevailing culture or to try to change it. In some systems, professional collaboration and teachers working in teams are valued. In others, teachers typically operate as individual professionals without a clear mandate or support for group work.

If the goal is cultural change, this must be explicitly addressed in the goals of the evaluation system, and the implications for current, prevailing practices must be acknowledged and anticipated. Being explicit in the goals about what you want the evaluation system to accomplish helps stakeholders understand what changes are expected and why; it also can provide a powerful touchstone to which the system will continually refer to keep the work on track.

Developing a new evaluation system can be an opportunity to reinforce the school system's prevailing culture or to try to change it.

➔ Setting Goals

Once you have developed a sense of how the teacher evaluation work can support the school system's values and vision, you are well positioned to articulate the goals for it. The goals define the purpose of the evaluation system — what you want it to do. Use the questions below to guide these conversations:

- ▶ What issue(s) or problem(s) are we trying to address with a new or improved evaluation system? Why are we working on this issue right now?
- ▶ How much of what we want to accomplish is about giving every teacher an evaluation rating vs. supporting teacher growth and development?
- ▶ What would it look like if the evaluation system was organized to support teacher growth and development? How would teachers know this was the system's commitment?
- ▶ What do we want our evaluation system to tell teachers about their performance and practice?
- ▶ What do we want our evaluation system to tell schools and the school system about their performance and practice?
- ▶ Who is best suited to conduct observations and provide feedback to teachers?

- ▶ Is the evaluation system intended to spur significant changes in how the school system operates? What will be different if the new/improved evaluation system is implemented successfully (e.g., the role of and relationship with the union; the knowledge, skills, and role of the principal, school system, and/or state policies)?
- ▶ If all the teachers improved and nothing else changed in the system, would we be where we want to be?

The goals define the purpose of the evaluation system — what you want it to do.

These questions are helpful in beginning to build a shared understanding of the purpose of the evaluation system. From the discussion, goals may begin to naturally emerge.

Use Template 1 on p. 12 as you work on defining your goals.

POSSIBLE GOALS FOR A TEACHER EVALUATION SYSTEM

Starting with concrete goals and having stakeholders react to them may help guide conversations. Listed below is a variety of possible goals for an evaluation system. The list, which is undoubtedly incomplete, is intended as a starting point:

- ▶ Develop a common definition of effective teaching;
- ▶ Tell teachers how well they are performing;
- ▶ Remove weak performers;
- ▶ Recognize high performers;
- ▶ Support career-ladder decisions;
- ▶ Develop a cadre of instructional experts;
- ▶ Differentiate support and accountability for teachers based on their experience and/or performance;
- ▶ Create a cadre of teacher leaders who play a role in teacher evaluation;
- ▶ Build principals' and/or teacher leaders' expertise in observing and analyzing instruction and supporting teacher development;
- ▶ Engage teachers in reflection and self-assessment regarding their own performance;
- ▶ Provide teachers with information and guidance to inform their development;
- ▶ Provide information on trends in teacher performance to support planning and assess professional development and other supports;
- ▶ Develop a culture of collaboration among teachers;
- ▶ Create a culture of continuous improvement among teachers, school leaders, and system administrators; and
- ▶ Inform school staffing.

Completing This Step

As the team identifies and agrees on its goals, prioritize them and record them in rank order in the top row of Template 1. Prioritization is essential because the system's hopes for the evaluation system will likely be bigger than its current capacity to realize them. In prioritizing the goals, systems must think through what is most important and what is realistic to set as goals for the first, second, and third years of design and implementation. Clarifying what must be done first helps because this serves as the foundation for subsequent work and what goals can be best realized once the system gets deeper into the work.

With your prioritized goals listed, fill out the rest of the template. "Outputs" refer to the tangible things that will happen or be put in place to achieve the goal. "Outcomes" are the information and metrics that will be used to demonstrate achievement of the goal. The final two columns ("Work the system needs to do" and "Individuals/departments that need to be involved") help you identify where there is work under way that supports the goal and where work needs to be done to realize the goal. These two columns encourage you to begin to identify where capacity is in place and where capacity needs to be built. These are issues that will be examined in much more detail in subsequent steps, referring back to and building on what you list here.

SAMPLE TEMPLATE 1

To get you started with this step, here is an example of how you might begin to fill out the template.

	<i>Goals in priority order</i>
	1. Create a common, widely understood definition of effective teaching to which teacher evaluation, support, and development can be aligned
Outputs: Products and work streams that will be created	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Creation of teaching standards ■ Conversations among teachers and administrators/evaluators are grounded in common understanding of the teaching standards
Outcomes: How we will know if the goal is being achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Teachers self-report understanding of the standards ■ Consistent rating of teachers against the teaching framework
System work under way that supports goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Development of teaching standards
Work the system needs to do to support goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Development of rubric to illustrate the standards at different levels of implementation ■ Educating everyone in the system about these standards
Individuals/departments that need to be involved to achieve goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Curriculum and instruction ■ Professional development ■ Principals ■ Teachers and teacher leaders ■ Principal supervisors
Included in what phase of implementation (1, 2, or 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Phase 1

→ Completing the Next Steps

Refer back to your vision and values for the school system, and your goals for teacher evaluation as you continue through the steps of this guide. Use them as a touchstone to help you identify when some aspect of the evaluation system you are developing supports one goal but undermines another, so you can wrestle with the tension that arises with competing goals.

Refer back to your vision, values, and goals for teacher evaluation in your school system as you continue through the steps of this guide.

For example, the need to support consequential human resource decisions can push districts to adopt formal procedures and documentation protocols regarding observations, while a developmental focus might suggest more frequent, unannounced observations. These goals aren't mutually exclusive, but the possible tension between them must be acknowledged and the trade-offs considered, especially in light of limited resources. Doing this work up front is essential to creating a system that seamlessly and holistically addresses all of the goals and limits implementation challenges that can compromise the credibility and effectiveness of the entire effort.

Articulating goals will also help you identify critical strategic decisions. For example, will you roll out a new teaching framework and a high-stakes evaluation system aligned to it in the same year? Or will you pilot the system to work out kinks and go to implementation with stakes in the next year? The answers to these questions and many others like them will be informed by the system's values, vision, culture, and capacity, as well as its beliefs about the role and value of evaluation ratings.

Similarly, defining goals will help determine the pace of implementation and sequencing; achieving one goal may be a prerequisite for addressing another (e.g., providing every teacher a rating is a prerequisite to using performance ratings for differentiated career opportunities). This also will be addressed in subsequent steps.

As you work through each step, use the *Important Issues to Consider* worksheet on p. 22 to keep track of ideas or issues that don't fit neatly into the templates.

TEMPLATE 1: Defining the Goals for the Evaluation System

Directions:

- ▶ As the team identifies and agrees on its goals, prioritize them and record them in rank order in the top row.
- ▶ With your prioritized goals listed, fill out the rest of the template. Note: “Outputs” refer to the tangible things that will happen or be put in place to achieve the goal. “Outcomes” are the information and metrics that will be used to demonstrate achievement of the goal.
- ▶ After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions on the next page.

Please make as many copies as you need to complete this step. Or you can download an interactive version of this file at www.aspeninstitute.org/MeansToAnEnd_blank_templates.

	<i>Goals in priority order</i>		
	1.	2.	3.
<i>Outputs: Products and work streams that will be created</i>			
<i>Outcomes: How we will know if the goal is being achieved</i>			
<i>System work under way that supports goal</i>			
<i>Work the system needs to do to support goal</i>			
<i>Individuals/ departments that need to be involved to achieve goal</i>			
<i>Included in what phase of Implementation (1, 2, or 3)</i>			

Reflection Questions

1. How can these goals be integrated to create a coherent evaluation system?
2. Can we imagine any of the goals listed in the template being in conflict with one another? What might this conflict look like? How should the system manage the tension among goals?
3. How does what we have done in this step support teacher growth and development?

Evaluation systems need to be built based on a theory of action. Articulating your theory of action — a simple statement that says, “If we do X, Y, and Z, then teaching will improve and student achievement will rise” — makes explicit the implicit beliefs about how teachers improve and what steps they and others in the system must take to support this improvement. A thoughtful, well-articulated theory of action provides the foundation for building an evaluation system that supports teacher growth and development.

Some systems believe that individual teachers are responsible for interpreting their evaluation information and pursuing learning opportunities that respond to their needs and help them improve. Other places expect teachers, evaluators, and classroom-focused instructional coaches to work together on specific goals for improvement. Some systems organize teams of teachers into professional learning communities to support this work. Many

systems believe some combination of the ideas above facilitates teacher growth and development. An evaluation system that assumes individual teachers are responsible for improving based on evaluation data will look quite different from one that is built on the assumption that schools and systems have an important responsibility in helping teachers improve.

GROUP VS. INDIVIDUAL

Assigning performance ratings to individual teachers for accountability and fostering cultures that value teamwork, public practice, and continuous improvement are both important — and not mutually exclusive — but there are serious tensions and trade-offs between them. Prior evaluation systems in public education have had no accountability, consequences, or incentives, but they also have not been characterized by public practice or teamwork — both are needed.

Individual teachers vary significantly in their effectiveness, and the range in performance is bigger within a school than across schools. Acting on these differences is important; school systems need to recognize the contributions of outstanding teachers and to identify “free riders” who skate by on the accomplishments of colleagues. On the other hand, complex challenges (like teaching) are more effectively pursued by teams than individuals. Especially when challenges are dynamic and demand innovation, adults develop new practices and improve their performance most effectively when working and learning with other adults.

Focus on Values and Theory of Action

The district’s values and theory of action for improving instruction should be front and center in determining how to reconcile these issues. Consider the system’s challenges in improving instruction: if teachers and school leaders need to develop core knowledge and skills

to increase student achievement, then make sure they have adequate support and incentives to work as a school community and within teams. If the challenges are seen largely as a lack of accountability and consequences, then greater emphasis on individual performance may be warranted. If both are issues, evaluation could include both individual and team/school measures.

Different systems are including group or team goals in different ways:

- ▶ **Massachusetts** requires at least one goal related to improving professional practice and at least one goal related to student learning, growth, and achievement. Teachers are encouraged to meet with their teams and determine if there are team goals they want to propose. Supervisors can also determine that a group of teachers must pursue a team goal.
- ▶ In the **Achievement First Charter Network**, teachers are evaluated, in part, based on their contributions to the school’s mission and core values, including collegiality.
- ▶ In the **District of Columbia Public Schools**, teachers are evaluated, in part, based on commitment to school community (5 percent of the overall rating) and overall school results (5 percent) to signal the significance of teamwork.

Systems need to balance measuring and acting on individual performance with creating incentives for teamwork and cultures that build collegiality and shared responsibility.

→ Theory Development

In trying to articulate a theory of action, gaps in reasoning need to be examined to identify all of the things that must be attended to (the *If* statements) to realize the desired outcome (the *Then* statement). The following theory of action offers an example:

IF we observe every teacher multiple times each year and provide each one a performance rating that is fair and has integrity, and

IF we reward teachers who do well and create consequences for persistent underperformers,

THEN instruction will improve and student achievement will rise.

This theory of action includes some strong elements, but it needs to be further developed. It assumes that observations are the primary means of evaluation and that a rating and the promise of rewards or consequences facilitate teacher learning and improvement. It does not address whether teachers are getting feedback that is specific and actionable, what teachers are supposed to do with the information they get to improve, and their capacity to do these things.

A thoughtful, well-articulated theory of action provides the foundation for building an evaluation system that supports teacher growth and development.

The theory includes no mention of any responsibility the system might have in helping teachers translate the feedback into actionable steps or connecting them with resources to support improvement.

Taking the time to articulate your theory of action pays tremendous dividends. It requires conversations about what you believe about how teachers improve their practice; what the system's responsibility is relative to supporting instructional improvement; and what all of that means for the work of teachers, principals, and

other key players in the system. From these conversations, you can lay out a cycle of improvement that includes the elements of the *If* statements and how they build to the *Then* statement. In doing this, you can identify the information the system needs to be able to generate and provide for each step in the improvement cycle and the infrastructure and organizational capacity required.

For example, if the theory of action links feedback on performance with support to improve practice, it means that:

- ▶ Some of the feedback on classroom observations needs to be specific enough to guide improvement — a simple rating score won't be sufficient;
- ▶ Individual schools and the system need to align (and sometimes fundamentally re-envision) their professional development infrastructure to the teaching framework and create a mechanism for teachers to get support on specific teaching standards and sub-standards; and
- ▶ There needs to be a way to track whether teachers who get feedback and support actually improve.

Each one of these things has implications for how the evaluation system is designed.

Start the process of developing and examining your theory of action by engaging a variety of people (system leaders, central office staff, principals, teachers) in articulating it, using Template 2.1 to capture the results of your discussions. Seeing what

is similar and different about the way each group thinks about this issue is fascinating. Broad engagement that includes teachers ensures a robust and thoughtful theory of action and provides insights about the work the system will need to undertake to build a strong evaluation system.

Use Template 2.1 on p. 19 as you work on articulating your theory of action.

➔ Preliminary List of Implications for Information, Infrastructure, and Capacity

Each of the *If* statements included in the theory of action has implications for the information, infrastructure, and capacity the system needs. Beginning to consider these implications prepares you for subsequent steps in this process, during which each issue will be explored in greater depth. At this point, the goal is to surface the needs so that you clearly understand them and can figure out, later in the process, how to address them.

Key Questions

Information Requirements: What do you want to know about teachers' performance?

Information — both quantitative and qualitative — can be generated through classroom observations; analysis of student achievement results; artifacts from the teacher's (and students') work; surveys of students, peers, and parents; etc.

Key questions to consider include:

- ▶ What information about teacher performance is needed? Is the needed information different depending on the tenure status and/or performance level of teachers?
- ▶ Is there information that is needed for evaluations that is not useful for supporting teacher growth and development, either because it is not in a format that facilitates improvement or because it is not available in a timeframe that supports improvement? How can these issues be addressed to ensure they don't undermine the focus on growth and development?
- ▶ Is there information that is used exclusively for improvement and should not be factored into formal evaluations?
- ▶ Based on the information needed, what data need to be collected and disseminated? To what extent do we need information at different levels of granularity for different purposes?
- ▶ What demands do these information requirements place on the district's information management system?
- ▶ What are the implications of when data are available and how they can be used for evaluation?

As you work through this step, use the *Important Issues to Consider* worksheet on p. 22 to keep track of ideas or issues that don't fit neatly into the templates.

Infrastructure Requirements: What are the tools, structures, and systems that need to be in place to support the design and implementation of an evaluation system?

Infrastructure includes things like the framework on which teachers will be evaluated, the actual components of the evaluation and how they may be differentiated for teachers, professional development aligned to the framework for teachers and evaluators, the time required of evaluators to implement the system, and any reorganizing of central office departments to support the evaluation work (e.g., research and assessment, curriculum and instruction, principal supervisors).

Key questions to consider include:

- ▶ What is the work that needs to be done to respond to the *If* statements, and who is expected to do it? Are there roles and responsibilities for central office staff?
- ▶ Does the theory of action require you to be able to link the evaluation information with other information management systems (e.g., professional development, human resources)?
- ▶ To what extent are key roles in the system (principals, principal supervisors, curriculum and instruction, research and assessment) currently defined and organized to support evaluation? What would need to happen to align the roles to the evaluation work articulated in the theory of action?
- ▶ Is there a framework of teaching standards and a rubric defining various levels of performance to guide classroom observation? Does it reflect the system's vision and values as well as its goals for teacher evaluation? Does it reflect shifts in instruction expected under the Common Core State Standards?
- ▶ Is the rubric specific enough to support a clear, shared understanding of the system's expectations regarding instruction?
- ▶ Is there a process for training observers and verifying their competence in applying the frameworks?
- ▶ What are the design and implementation phases (and pilot phase, if applicable) of the evaluation work going to require in terms of existing departments, development of additional roles, etc.?
- ▶ What are the time requirements of observations and any pre- and post-observation meetings envisioned in the system and the implications for the evaluators?
- ▶ How should professional development be connected or aligned to the evaluation, and what are the implications for current systems and structures?

Capacity Requirements: What capacity does the system have to both design and implement the evaluation system?

At the design level, this question may relate to the system's capacity to design the actual elements of the evaluation. At the implementation stage, it relates to ensuring that teachers and evaluators are prepared to use the new teaching framework, that the appropriate training and development is in place, that principal supervisors are able to support principals in this work, and that the people in other departments (e.g., human resources, professional development) are ready to use the evaluation information as expected (e.g., to track and report performance by schools and/or by teacher experience level; to trigger intervention for low performers; to align professional development to identified weaknesses).

Key questions to consider include:

- ▶ As we think about the changes in practice the evaluation system will require of teachers, principals, principal supervisors, and central office staff, what support is needed to ensure everyone can meet these new requirements?
- ▶ Are there people in the system who are not currently in roles that are pivotal to the evaluation work who possess the knowledge and skills required for evaluation and could be repurposed to do these tasks? Could creating a new role facilitate their involvement?
- ▶ What are principals and other evaluators going to need to learn about the teaching framework, effective observation practices, talking with teachers about their observations, and supporting teachers to improve their practice? How do you prioritize building these capacities? Who will teach them what they need to learn, and when will they be taught?

- ▶ Will we need to “right-size” the principalship or other roles to make this work possible? Will we need to hire additional staff or repurpose existing staff?
- ▶ How will we assess evaluators’ competence in using the tools? What will we do when they struggle to do this work effectively?
- ▶ To what extent and in what ways are the people who are in the roles identified as critical to implementing the evaluation system prepared to do this work? What capacity needs to be built?
- ▶ How are human resources functions going to need to change to integrate the evaluation work into recruitment, hiring, staffing, dismissal, etc.?

Use Template 2.2 on p. 20 to keep track as you identify system needs.

Completing This Step

Use Template 2.2 to list the information, infrastructure, and capacity the system needs to provide what is described in the *If* statements. Steps 3, 4, and 5 will address each of these needs. As you complete this grid, other ideas or issues may arise that don't neatly fit into one of the categories but feel important. Use this as an opportunity to start a running list (use the *Important Issues to Consider* worksheet, p. 22) of ideas, questions, or considerations that you want to make sure your evaluation design process addresses. Add to this list as you progress through each subsequent step and as things come up that don't fit into the templates provided. Also, refer back to the list at each step to see if any of the issues you have identified can be addressed in the context of the step you are beginning.

**SAMPLE
TEMPLATE
2.2**

To get you started with this step, here is an example of how you might begin to fill out the template, using classroom observations.

<i>If statement</i>	<i>Information needed</i>	<i>Infrastructure needed</i>	<i>Capacity needed</i>
If we regularly observe teachers' practice and provide them specific, actionable feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Specific feedback on performance on standards and sub-standards, using rubric ■ Suggestions of strategies to improve instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Teaching standards and aligned rubric ■ Format for giving specific feedback (written, oral) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Evaluators who are trained to observe and analyze instruction using standards and rubric; give specific, evidence-based feedback; and make useful recommendations for improvements ■ Teachers trained in standards and sub-standards ■ Data-gathering protocols for determining whether regular observations are occurring and whether the write-ups provide teachers with specific, actionable feedback

TEMPLATE 2.1: Your Theory of Action

Directions:

- Engage a variety of people (system leaders, central office staff, principals, teachers) in articulating your theory of action.
- Synthesize and record the results of your discussion in the *If* and *Then* statements below.
- After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions below.

Please make as many copies as you need to complete this step. Or you can download an interactive version of this file at www.aspeninstitute.org/MeansToAnEnd_blank_templates.

If:

If:

If:

If:

If:

Then:

Reflection Questions

1. How does the theory of action support teacher professional growth and development?

2. To what extent and in what ways does this theory of action address every teacher in the system?

TEMPLATE 2.2: Information, Infrastructure, and Capacity

Directions:

- Review your theory of action in Template 2.1.
- List each of the *If* statements in each of the boxes in the left column.
- List the information, infrastructure, and capacity the system needs to provide what is described in each *If* statement. (You will examine each of these needs in more detail in Steps 3, 4, and 5.)
- Use the *Important Issues to Consider* worksheet to keep track of other ideas or issues that don't neatly fit into one of the categories.
- After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions on the next page.

Please make as many copies as you need to complete this step. Or you can download an interactive version of this file at www.aspeninstitute.org/MeansToAnEnd_blank_templates.

<i>If statement</i>	<i>Information needed</i>	<i>Infrastructure needed</i>	<i>Capacity needed</i>

Reflection Questions

1. What does the way we filled out Template 2.2 tell us about which aspects of the evaluation design and implementation we are going to focus significant attention on because of their importance to the success of the entire endeavor?
2. Which departments and which categories of employees are going to be most affected in the development and then the implementation of the evaluation system? How will they be affected?
3. How will the system respond to the opportunities and challenges highlighted in questions 1 and 2?

Important Issues to Consider

Use this worksheet to keep track of ideas or issues that surface as you work through each step that don't neatly fit into the templates you are working on. Refer back to it as you begin each step to see if there are things you have recorded that can be addressed with the step you are beginning.

STEP 3

Determine Information Requirements

Step 3 digs deeply into what you listed in the “Information needed” column of Template 2.2 to determine what information will be included in the evaluation and how it will be *collected* and *presented*.

To help you with this step, this guide has identified five categories of information — student outcomes; teacher inputs; professionalism; feedback from students, parents, and peers; and development of students’ character and habits of mind — that are currently used in teacher evaluation systems around the country and that you will want to consider. There is a brief introduction to each of these categories of information below. A more detailed explanation of each of the categories and considerations and trade-offs associated with each can be found in Appendix A.

Student Outcomes: Measures of teachers’ impact on student learning

- ▶ Value-added measures: individual, team, school
- ▶ Other standardized measures of achievement and/or growth
- ▶ Student work/portfolios/research projects/presentations

Teacher Inputs: Measures of the quality of teachers’ planning, delivery of instruction, and assessment of student learning

- ▶ Observations against teaching frameworks: announced, unannounced
- ▶ Lesson plans
- ▶ Assignments
- ▶ Graded student work

Professionalism: Measures of both basic professional responsibilities and how the teacher contributes to work with colleagues and the instructional program and to the overall health of the school

Feedback from Students, Parents, and Peers (360 Degree):

Measures of the perceptions of other people in the school community regarding the effectiveness of the teacher

- ▶ Student survey
- ▶ Parent survey
- ▶ Peer survey

Development of Students’ Character and Habits of Mind:

Measures of teachers’ impact on things that are highly valued by the school system and considered core to its definition of a well-educated student who is prepared for success

The specifics of what are included in this category may be customized to the school system, but a sample of the issues to consider include:

- ▶ Perseverance and determination
- ▶ Engagement/investment/love of learning
- ▶ Character development
- ▶ Oral communication skills
- ▶ Ability to collaborate and take on multiple perspectives

As you work through this step, refer back to the *Important Issues to Consider* worksheet on p. 22 to see if you can address any items you already have recorded and to keep track of ideas or issues that don’t fit neatly into the templates. You also can use the *Capacity Demands* worksheet on p. 38.

MEASURES OF PROFESSIONALISM

The District of Columbia Public Schools developed a two-pronged approach to tackling the issue of professionalism. “Commitment to school community” is one of the four components of the evaluation and makes up 5 percent of the overall evaluation rating. It consists of the five elements listed at right, and teachers are assessed through the use of a four-point rubric. “Core professionalism” was developed to focus on basic responsibilities of employment (see four elements listed at right) and is not included in the initial calculation of a teacher’s evaluation rating. Teachers are rated on “Core professionalism” on a three-point rubric. A rating of less than three on “Core professionalism” negatively affects a teacher’s overall performance rating.

Commitment to school community	Core professionalism
1. Support of local school initiatives	1. Attendance
2. Support of special education and English language learners program	2. On-time arrival
3. High expectations	3. Policies and procedures
4. Leadership with families	4. Respect
5. Instructional collaboration	

PRIORITIZING CHARACTER AND HABITS OF MIND

As a mission-driven organization that prioritizes students' character development and employees' commitment to the organization's core values, **Achievement**

First (AF) Charter Management Organization included both of these priorities in its evaluation system to complement the elements focused on student achievement and quality instruction. The grid below shows how AF did this.

Priority	Weighting	How assessed
Student character	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student surveys on their experience in the classroom Parent survey of relationships and character development
Core values and contributions	15%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer survey on core values and contributions to the mission Principal assessment of core values and contributions to the mission

Additionally, "Teaching character" is one of the 20 indicators in the AF observation rubric. It addresses student ownership, respect, teachable character moments, and embedded character development. AF's rubric uses a four-point scale and includes the following note: "If the classroom is generally respectful, but there is no explicit mention or reference to teaching character then the maximum Teaching Character score is a 2." This underscores the expectation that the development of character is frequently and explicitly addressed in classrooms.

Information to be Included

A first step in determining information needs is to consider the information available to use for evaluation, make choices about what information you want to focus on improving, and decide what new data you want to make available in the short and long term.

Using Template 3.1 on page 30, you first need to list what you included in the "Information needed" column in Template 2.2 into the appropriate categories of evaluation information using the descriptions and considerations outlined at the beginning of Step 3. Including all five categories in your evaluation system is not necessary, but ensuring that the information included supports teachers in improving their practice is critical. Add additional information you think will be important to include in the evaluation system to support teacher growth and development. Remember that data that support teacher growth and development will be most useful if they point clearly toward action steps and improvement opportunities, if teachers have direct access to them, and if teachers can participate in interpreting them.

As you list information in each category, indicate if you currently collect it and whether it is readily available for use. If it is not currently available, then note when it could be made available and in what phase of implementation it would be introduced.

As you complete this grid, other ideas or questions about capacity may arise. Use this as an opportunity to start a running list (use the *Capacity Demands* worksheet, p. 38) of ideas, questions, or considerations regarding capacity demands you want to make sure your evaluation design process addresses. Add to these notes as you progress through each subsequent step and things come up that don't fit into the templates provided. Also, refer back to the list at each step to see if any of the issues you have identified can be addressed in the context of the step you are beginning.

Use Template 3.1 on p. 30 to keep track of information you want to include.

SAMPLE TEMPLATE 3.1

To get you started with this step, here is an example of how you might begin to fill out the template, using the example related to classroom observations introduced in Sample Template 2.2.

Information proposed to be included in evaluation system	Best for development (D) or accountability (A)	Frequency	Currently available Y/N	If "not yet available," when could it be?	Included in what phase of implementation (1, 2, or 3)
2. Teacher inputs					
Overall observation ratings based on a teaching framework	A	2-5 times/year based on performance and experience	Y, but not consistently applied across evaluators and schools		
More frequent, informal observation feedback that is specific and actionable	D	Every 4-6 weeks	N	In first year of implementation	Phase 1

Connecting Evaluation Information to Your Goals

Having determined the information you want to include in the evaluation, now you need to ensure that that information addresses each of the goals you have established for the evaluation system. To do so, first go back to the goals you identified in Step 1 to see which information supports which goal.

To begin this process, refer back to Template 1 and fill in the various goals you established for your evaluation system in Template 3.2 on page 32 (in the cells numbered 1, 2, 3 ...). Teacher growth and development is listed as a goal to get you started. Then, in the left column, list the information sources and measures you identified in Template 3.1. Add a check mark in the appropriate boxes to indicate

the goals for which you want to use the information. It is likely that you will want to use some information for multiple goals. For example, is there classroom observation data that you want to use for both teacher growth and development and for assigning summative performance ratings?

The checks in the goals columns on Template 3.2 signal which data are going to be used for specific goals. List the specific pieces of information, one per line (e.g., value-added measure based on state assessment; student learning objectives; performance on school-wide interim assessments). To ensure the credibility and integrity of the evaluation system, ensure that: (1) each column in Template 3.2 includes multiple measures and (2) the measures taken together tell a rich, composite story.

Use Template 3.2 on p. 32 to help you connect evaluation information to your goals.

SAMPLE TEMPLATE 3.2

To get you started with this step, here is an example of how you might begin to fill out the template.

	<i>Goals for evaluation</i>				
	1. Teacher growth and development	2. Accountability for teacher performance	3. Reward high performers	4. Inform school- and system-level professional development priorities	5. Inform differentiated roles and assignments
<i>Evaluation sources/measures</i>					
Value-added estimates		✓	✓		✓
Summative observations ratings		✓	✓	✓	✓
Frequent informal feedback	✓			✓	
Student work/portfolios					
Student surveys					
Peer surveys					
Total					

➔ Presentation of Information

Having identified the different goals for which you want to use evaluation information, now you need to determine how these uses influence the presentation and display of the information. This step will help you create a clear image of when (and how often) you want the information to be available and how you want to present it to various actors in the system.

The individual measures are critical for teacher growth and development. Teachers need specific and nuanced information to know the areas in which they need to improve. But the composite

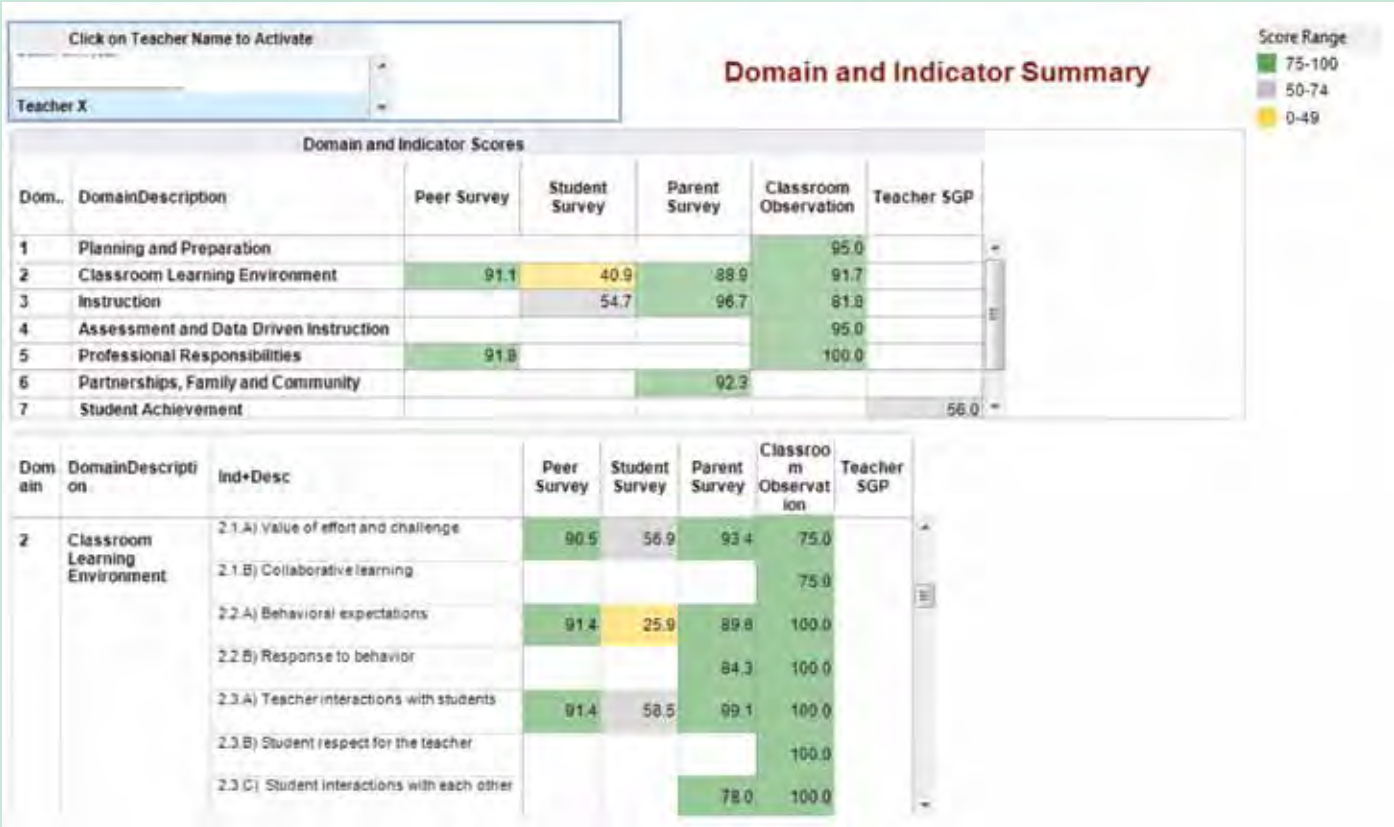
story is necessary for accountability. Work to build the system to prioritize the specific and nuanced data, knowing that in so doing you will have what you need for accountability. If you decide you need a single evaluation score, then you will need to decide what growth and development information that you have collected you want to include. The trick here is to ensure that you don't compromise the data's usefulness for growth and development by using them for accountability purposes.

Use Template 3.3 on p. 34 to keep track of decisions about how you want to present the information.

BALANCING SPECIFIC AND OVERALL RATINGS

Aspire Public Charter Schools has an electronic dashboard teachers can access to see their evaluation data. It lists a teacher's scores on all of the domains used in the evaluation by measure: peer survey, student survey, parent survey, classroom observations, and student growth percentile. Below the scores is a pull-down menu, which allows teachers to look at detailed information about each domain and sub-domain by all of the measures.

The following example shows the details for Domain 2: Classroom Learning Environment. Currently, Aspire does not aggregate all of these scores into a final cumulative evaluation rating. Instead, teachers and their supervisors analyze and discuss the performance information to celebrate areas of effectiveness and prioritize areas for growth and support.



To get you started with this step, here is an example of how you might begin to fill out the template, using classroom observations as the measure.

Evaluation sources/measures	Tied to which goals	When needed and how frequently	How to provide and display information
Classroom observation data	Growth and development	Every 4-6 weeks	Ratings by standard and sub-standard based on a widely understood rubric (written and oral feedback)
	Accountability	2-5 times/year based on performance and experience	Overall rating of practice

**DIFFERENTIATION
BASED ON
PERFORMANCE?**

Deciding if every teacher will be evaluated in the exact same way or if treatment will be differentiated based on prior performance and/or experience level is an important decision

each school system needs to make. Some argue that, for reasons of fairness and equity, every teacher should be treated the same. Others define equity as giving each teacher what he or she needs: lower performers receive more directed attention, while high performers have “earned” the right to a less directive or a more self-directed approach. The reality of finite resources and the question of where focusing attention will have the greatest return will inform this decision.

When the **District of Columbia Public Schools** first instituted its new teacher evaluation system (IMPACT) in 2009, every teacher received five observations. In 2011, the district decided to adjust the schedule of observations for teachers who had received the highest possible rating – Highly Effective – for each of the two years of IMPACT implementation. Any teacher in this category who obtains a similarly high rating in his or her first two observations in school year 2011-12 has the choice to opt out of the remaining three observations.

In **Hillsborough County (FL) Public Schools**, the observation schedule was differentiated from the beginning, based on teachers’ performance rating in the prior evaluation system and their experience level. The number of observations ranges from five for the highest-performing teachers to 11 for the weakest performers. First-year teachers are observed six times.

HILLSBOROUGH TEACHER EVALUATION OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

Prior year evaluation score	Administrative formal observations	Administrative informal observations	Peer formal observations	Peer informal observations	Supervisor formal evaluations	Total formal/informal/total
36.0-60.0	1	1	1	2	0	2/3/5
23.0-35.99	2	2	1	2	0	3/4/7
18.0-22.99 (or designated a “NI”)	2	2	3	2	0	5/4/9
0-17.99 (or designated a “U”)	2	2	4	2	1	7/4/11
***Teachers with experience who are new to district	1	1	1	2	0	2/3/5

Source: The Design and Implementation of the Hillsborough County Public Schools’ Teacher Evaluation System, *Rachel Curtis, Aspen Institute, December 2011.*

Once you identify your information needs, consider how each piece of evaluation information will be collected, when it will be collected, and who will be responsible for collection. Information collection is critical because the way you want to present information (frequency and specificity) may have implications for how it is collected and who collects it. For example, imagine you want teachers to sit down four times a year with an observer, get specific feedback on their practice, and discuss strategies for improvement. This work is very labor intensive. Responsibility will likely need to be shared beyond school administrators, which has implications for who collects the data.

Key Issues and Questions

This is the moment in the design of the evaluation system when you build out the particulars of how the system will be implemented. Listed below are some critical issues to consider and questions to ask to help you make decisions.

Student Learning Outcomes: If you are including non-standardized measures of student learning and progress, who will be responsible for collecting and analyzing the data and ensuring consistency and quality control across the system? Systems that have a tradition of collegial examination of student work, and rigorous expectations for what constitutes work that is “good enough,” might want to devote relatively less capacity to an audit function that safeguards the integrity of the process. Systems in which these practices are novel or that have struggled with disparate expectations and levels of rigor across classes and schools need to focus more on building system-level capacity to guide this work so the process is meaningful and credible.

Use Template 3.4 on p. 36 to keep track as you consider how information will be collected.

ACTIVELY ENGAGING TEACHERS IN EVALUATING THEIR PERFORMANCE

Aspire Public Charter Schools puts teachers in the driver’s seat of their evaluation for two reasons. First, as with all learning experiences, teachers are more likely to take ownership and have buy-in when they arrive at the findings on their own. Second, principals are extremely strapped for time, and having teachers lead the work makes it more manageable for principals.

Several key points in the process ensure that teachers are driving the learning.

- ▶ Teachers start the evaluation process by sending their lesson plans and supporting material to their observer.
- ▶ Teachers receive the tagged/aligned raw evidence from the observer and complete a self-rating before they receive any ratings or feedback from the observer.

Evaluators: Who will collect what information? Will a single person be responsible for each teacher’s evaluation rating? In reality, few people (particularly principals) have time to observe large numbers of teachers along with their current job responsibilities, and having a single evaluator can create reliability and objectivity challenges.

While principals are initially the most logical people to charge with observing and assessing teachers’ planning and instruction, they may not be the best prepared to do so. Other people may be better positioned to serve as evaluators. In addition, if principals are going to have a central role in evaluation, their capacity to do this work needs to be built, which in turn has implications for resources and pacing of the work. When considering using multiple observers for each teacher, ask why a second observer is needed. If you determine that additional observers are necessary to balance the workload and/or ensure fairness, determine who is best suited to serve in that role and how capacity and calibration of ratings will be ensured across observers.

Actively engaging teachers in their own evaluation helps build their ownership of the evaluation process and outcome.

Teachers’ Role in Evaluation: Actively engaging teachers in their own evaluation helps them:

- ▶ Reflect on their practice;
- ▶ Build their capacity to talk about their practice in ways that clarify their own thinking and can support colleagues’ development;
- ▶ Deepen their learning;
- ▶ Guide their improvement efforts; and
- ▶ Build their ownership of the evaluation process and outcome.

- ▶ There is no time-consuming written feedback from the principal; rather, the post-observation conference is a conversation driven by the teacher’s reflections, insights, and desired goals. The observer may add guidance, expertise, and resources but does not drive the conversation with his or her observations, judgments, or recommendations unless there are serious performance concerns. Therefore, the teacher is set up to arrive at his or her own “ah-ha,” and his or her interests and concerns drive the collaborative selection of areas of growth. The post-observation conference results in the selection of two to three target indicators to focus development efforts on, and teachers can use the Aspire “Purple Planet” resource portal to find easily accessible videos and resources aligned to their target indicators.

These goals can be accomplished in a variety of ways. Having teachers self-assess their practice and/or collect and present artifacts of their work that reflect their performance against the teaching standards deepens their understanding of the standards and encourages reflection on their practice. Debriefing observations, particularly when teachers are asked to talk about the instructional moves they made and why, also encourages reflection and builds teachers' capacity to talk in concrete terms about their strengths and areas for development. Building this capacity makes them better able to share with colleagues in ways that can support group learning, which has enormous benefits for classrooms within and across schools. It also supports a culture of continuous improvement.

When teachers develop student learning goals and/or teacher practice goals individually or as part of a teaching team, they feel a strong sense of ownership, and these goals often guide their

improvement efforts. There are many other ways to make teachers the drivers (or at least active participants) in the evaluation process. By engaging them in the process, teachers experience evaluation as meaningful, useful, and something done *with* them rather than *to* them.

Completing This Step

With these critical issues in mind, it is now time to complete the grid. To help you get started, following is an example that builds from Templates 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 and the example of classroom observation. In thinking about observations, consider several variables: announced vs. unannounced; time spent in the classroom; accompanied by pre- and post-observation conferences or not; and comprehensive feedback vs. focused, detailed feedback.

SAMPLE TEMPLATE 3.4

To get you started with this step, here is an example of how you might begin to fill out the template.

Evaluation sources/measures	How collected	When collected	Collected by whom
Rating on complete teaching framework	Pre-conference, 30- to 45-minute observation, and post-conference	2 times/year for “highly effective” teachers; 3 times/year for “effective” teachers; 5 times/year for “minimally effective teachers; 6 times/year for “ineffective teachers”	2: 1 principal (P), 1 peer evaluator (PE) 3: 2 P, 1 PE 5: 2 P, 3 PE 6: 3 P, 3 PE
Feedback on elements of teaching framework	Short visits (10-15 minutes) focused on specific standards/sub-standards prioritized by teacher based on rating on complete framework and what he or she is working on	Bi-weekly for all teachers, if resources allow; otherwise, bi-weekly for new teachers and those with the bottom two ratings (assuming a four-point scale), and monthly for teachers in the top two performance categories	Principal, administrative team, department heads, instructional coaches, peers requested by teacher

TEMPLATE 3.1: Information to be Included in Your Evaluation System

Directions:

- ▶ Review Template 2.2 and list what you included in the “Information needed” column under the appropriate categories below. Note: Including all five categories is not necessary, but ensuring that the information included supports teachers in improving their practice is critical.
- ▶ Add additional information you think will be important to include in the evaluation system.
- ▶ As you list information, indicate if you currently collect it and whether it is readily available for use. If it is not currently available, note when it could be made available and in what phase of implementation it would be introduced. (Create phases of implementation that match your process. For example, phase 1 = pilot or first year of implementation, phase 2 = year two of implementation, and phase 3 = years 3-5 of implementation.)
- ▶ Use the *Capacity Demands* worksheet to keep track of ideas, questions, or considerations regarding capacity demands that surface as you complete this template that you want to make sure your evaluation design process addresses.
- ▶ After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions on the next page.

Please make as many copies as you need to complete this step. Or you can download an interactive version of this file at www.aspeninstitute.org/MeansToAnEnd_blank_templates.

<i>Information proposed to be included in evaluation system</i>	<i>Best for development (D) or accountability (A)</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Currently available Y/N</i>	<i>If “not yet available,” when could it be?</i>	<i>Included in what phase of implementation (1, 2, or 3)</i>
1. Student outcomes					
2. Teacher inputs					
3. Professionalism					
4. Feedback from students, parents, and peers (360 degree)					
5. Development of students’ character and habits of mind					

Reflection Questions

1. Does this array of information signal the school system's values and its commitment to teacher growth and development? If not, what changes need to be made to accomplish these two things?
2. Are the available data worth using? (For example, if we have current evaluation data, do we have them for all teachers? Are the data reliable and consistent? Can we link teachers to students in our information management system? Can we figure out which teachers share which students?) If not, can a fix be made to ensure the credibility of the data, or do we need to ask for different data?
3. When we think about the data available, what do we notice about their ability to provide clear signals to *all* teachers about areas for improvement and specificity that can guide improvement efforts?
4. Are there other sources of data that are not being used or considered in this process that should be added?
5. What are the things we want to evaluate for which we don't yet have a good measure (e.g., students' college readiness)? What placeholders can we use so that these factors don't get lost or go unrecognized as important?
6. How confident are we (1=very shaky; 5=complete confidence) that the information that is available now or in the coming school year provides teachers, evaluators, and coaches with meaningful, actionable data to guide teacher growth and development?

TEMPLATE 3.2: Alignment of Evaluation Sources and Measures to Goals for Evaluation

Directions:

- Refer back to Template 1 to fill in the various goals you established for your evaluation system (in the cells numbered 1, 2, 3 ...). Teacher growth and development is listed as a goal to get you started.
- In the left column, list the evaluation sources and measures you identified in Template 3.1, one per line.
- Add a check mark in the appropriate boxes to indicate the goals for which you want to use the information. You may check more than one goal for each evaluation source.
- Add up the number of check marks in each column. To ensure the credibility and integrity of the evaluation system, ensure that (1) each column includes multiple measures and (2) the measures taken together tell a rich, composite story.
- After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions on the next page.

Please make as many copies as you need to complete this step. Or you can download an interactive version of this file at www.aspeninstitute.org/MeansToAnEnd_blank_templates.

<i>Evaluation sources/measures</i>	<i>Goals for evaluation</i>					
	1. Teacher growth and development	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Total						

Reflection Questions

1. How confident are we that we will be able to meet each goal using the information and measures we have identified?
2. Do the information and measures we have identified signal teacher professional growth and development as a top goal?

TEMPLATE 3.3: Presentation of Information

Directions:

- ▶ Refer back to Template 3.2 and list the evaluation sources and measures in the left column.
- ▶ For each evaluation source/measure, list the goals identified in Template 3.2 to which these data are aligned.
- ▶ For each evaluation source/measure and each goal, list when and how frequently you need to present the information (e.g., every four to six weeks) to realize the goals you have established.
- ▶ List how you will display and provide the information (e.g., ratings by standard and sub-standard based on a widely understood rubric with written and oral feedback).
- ▶ After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions on the next page.

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<i>Evaluation sources/measures</i>	<i>Tied to which goals</i>	<i>When needed and how frequently</i>	<i>How to provide and display information</i>

Reflection Questions

1. Where are there tensions in when and how information will be displayed to meet all of the purposes of the evaluation system? How will we balance them and ensure that the focus is on teacher growth and development?
2. What limitations in the data need to be explicitly noted to assist in interpreting them properly? For instance, value-added estimates should always be presented with confidence intervals and/or additional indicators of the reliability of the estimate. Likewise, other assessments of student learning might be flagged if they represent less than a pre-set percentage of students for whom the teacher is responsible.
3. Do any data potentially undermine the focus on growth and development? How will we manage these situations?

TEMPLATE 3.4: Information Collection

Directions:

- Refer back to Template 3.2 and list the evaluation sources and measures in the left column.
- For each evaluation source/measure, list how the information will be collected (e.g., classroom visit, pre- or post-observation conferences, etc.), when it will be collected (e.g., bi-weekly for new teachers and those with the bottom two ratings, monthly for teachers in the top two performance categories), and by whom.
- After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions on the next page.

Please make as many copies as you need to complete this step. Or you can download an interactive version of this file at www.aspeninstitute.org/MeansToAnEnd_blank_templates.

<i>Evaluation sources/measures</i>	<i>How collected</i>	<i>When collected</i>	<i>Collected by whom</i>

Reflection Questions

1. Who will develop and implement the data collection management plan?
2. What issues might arise from this data collection plan that could make the evaluation less effective or negatively affect its integrity?
How can we address them?
3. Who (e.g., principals, coaches, peers) will have access to what data for each teacher?
4. How does what we have done in this step support teacher growth and development?

STEP 4

Identify Infrastructure Requirements

Using evaluation to support teacher growth and development has implications for how the school system is structured and organized.

Back in Template 2.2 you started to identify the infrastructure and capacity required for the successful implementation of the new evaluation. This step digs deeper into the work, specifying the structures, systems, and tools that need to be developed to ensure

the successful implementation of the evaluation. Once these issues are considered, Step 5 helps you anticipate the organizational capacity — staff roles, responsibilities, and training — required.

➔ Synthesizing Information to Identify Needs

Completing this step requires you to synthesize a lot of the information you have laid out in previous steps. Engage a broad group of stakeholders in the district who possess both the technical knowledge and in-the-schools expertise needed to complete the templates in this section. Be mindful as you recruit people for the design work that this is an opportunity to engage those who will later be responsible for building and implementing the infrastructure. The earlier you engage them and help them develop a sense of ownership, the more commitment they will bring to the later work.

In thinking about infrastructure, consider how every part of the school system could support teacher growth and development.

Examples of infrastructure that generally needs to be built or retooled to ensure the success of the evaluation implementation include:

- ▶ **Policies and procedures** both directly and indirectly related to evaluations (process for teachers to confirm or contest the accuracy of student rosters; protocols for establishing measures and setting goals for student learning; etc.);
- ▶ **Data systems** to synthesize and present the evaluation information in useful ways; and
- ▶ **Time and job responsibilities** for carrying out the evaluations.

Job responsibilities and who will conduct the evaluations straddles the infrastructure and capacity lines. The infrastructure side of this issue relates to the creation of new roles and/or changes in job descriptions; the capacity side pertains to the readiness of the people in these roles to do this work, the training and development they need to be effective at it, and if necessary, considerations for how to develop a new pool of candidates for these roles.

In thinking about infrastructure, consider how every part of the school system — the system as a whole, individual central office departments, and individual schools — could support teacher growth

and development. While this step deals with infrastructure and Step 5 attends to capacity, you may find the boundaries between those two things blurry at times. Put things where they make the most sense for you and watch as you work on this step and the next one to make sure that you consider every possible issue; you can move them around later as your thinking evolves.

For each category of infrastructure requirements considered in this step — policies and procedures, data systems, and time and job responsibilities — this guide includes a series of questions. The questions are not comprehensive and are intended to catalyze discussion. Add questions you know need to be considered based on your context, your evaluation design, and your work in the previous steps. After reviewing each category and its related questions, complete the Step 4 templates by defining what infrastructure needs to be developed or changed, who has the authority to do this work, board or union involvement required, and the timeline for the work.

To help you complete each of the templates, refer back to Step 2 to remind yourself of how you were thinking about infrastructure needs initially. Consider the tables you completed in Step 3 to identify assumptions regarding data availability and display. Make explicit the infrastructure needs. Finally, review the running notes you have been keeping on the *Important Issues to Consider* and the *Capacity Demands* worksheets to include infrastructure needs that you have identified as you worked through the previous steps that you haven't known where to put or how to address. Now is the time to address them.

As you work through this step, refer back to the *Important Issues to Consider* worksheet on p. 22 and the *Capacity Demands* worksheet on p. 38 to see if you can address any items you already have recorded and to keep track of ideas or issues that don't fit neatly into the templates.

➔ Policies and Procedures

What formalized, agreed-upon ways of doing business need to be put in place to support the design and implementation of the evaluation system?

Key questions to consider include:

- ▶ Does the system have in place a teaching framework (standards and rubric) for assessing teacher practice? If yes, does it reflect the expectations of the Common Core State Standards and the needs of the student population we serve? If not, do we plan to adopt or adapt existing standards or develop our own?
 - ▶ Are exemplars of teaching practice aligned with the teaching frameworks accessible to teachers and evaluators? For example, are videos of instruction, lesson plans, and student-tracking templates available as models?
 - ▶ If the system is developing its own value-added measure, have rules been established to report confidence intervals and acknowledge other limitations of the data? Are rules established to allocate credit and responsibility within teams of teachers and to account for pull-out or push-in remediation and enrichment?
 - ▶ Is a process in place for teachers to confirm or challenge the roster of students for whom they are responsible?
 - ▶ In systems in which teachers and evaluators are expected to jointly develop goals for student achievement and/or professional growth, are rules in place to guide this process?
 - ▶ If student learning objectives will be part of the evaluation process, are there rules, protocols, and templates in place for quality assurance?
 - ▶ Are standards established for collecting evidence and assessing teachers' planning and use of assessment data (where these are expected to be included in evaluations)?
 - ▶ Are rules in place for combining multiple sources of information into a summative rating? Where a formula is used, is there a process for appeals and/or professional judgment to override the result? Where professional judgment predominates, are rules in place to guide the exercise of this discretion? What guidance, if any, is provided for conversations when evaluation information from multiple sources points in conflicting directions?
- ▶ How can the use of technology support real-time, targeted professional learning for teachers?
 - ▶ Are rules in place that limit principals' and other evaluators' access to classrooms (e.g., must observations be announced)?
 - ▶ If pre- and post-observation conversations are part of evaluations, are protocols in place for how these should be conducted? Is the role of the teacher and the evaluator described? For example, do teachers offer a self-assessment first? Are observation rating scores provided prior to the conversation or after?
 - ▶ Are the expectations for growth and development aligned with human resource policies and timelines for teacher transfers and, more generally, employment decisions?
 - ▶ Are there district policies, including contract terms, that impede the use of evaluation information in supporting teachers' growth and development (e.g., coaches cannot have access to evaluation information; professional development is determined solely at teachers' discretion rather than developed as part of professional growth planning)? If so, what needs to be done to align these policies to the goals of the evaluation system?
 - ▶ What do we do when a teacher's performance is rated as ineffective or minimally effective?

Use Template 4.1 on p. 46 to keep track as you identify policies and procedures that need to be developed or changed.

Many of the rubrics that are currently available for adoption or adaptation were developed before the Common Core State Standards were developed.

- ▶ To what extent is professional development currently aligned to the teaching standards that will be used for evaluation? If the alignment is limited, what will need to happen to strengthen it so that professional development can be a valuable resource for supporting teachers to meet the system's expectations?

Choosing the Teaching Framework

Choosing the teaching framework — standards and rubric — is an enormous decision as it defines effective teaching in your school system. Some school systems adopt or adapt existing rubrics, while others develop their own. Developing your own provides the freedom to define the standards; it also requires significant capacity.

Systems that develop their own frameworks often do so because of dissatisfaction with the capacity of existing rubrics to address the specific needs of the school system. For example, Denver Public Schools (DPS) developed its own rubric to more explicitly address the specific instructional strategies required to appropriately serve English language learners (40 percent of its students) and the instructional expectations reflected in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), two priorities that DPS didn't find well represented in existing rubrics.

Many of the rubrics that are currently available for adoption or adaptation were developed before the CCSS were developed. Instructional priorities under the CCSS — e.g., close reading of texts and evidence-based discussions, the ability to construct logical arguments and critique the soundness of others' arguments,

**TEACHING
FRAMEWORK:
HOW SPECIFIC
TO BE**

The level of specificity of the standards and rubrics in teaching frameworks can vary widely. There is a clear continuum that runs from very general to equally specific. **Hillsborough County (FL) Public Schools** decided to use the

standards and rubric developed by Charlotte Danielson, a researcher whose work is widely adopted across the country, while **Achievement First (AF) Charter Management Organization** developed its own Essentials of Effective Instruction. The excerpts (below) from each rubric relate to questioning and discussion techniques and illustrate the differing levels of specificity in these two frameworks.

The specificity of the AF rubric guides evaluators in what to look for and serves an educational role, as it describes in great detail the elements of effective questioning and discussion. AF’s inclusion of rigor, evidence, and academic language and its “stretch it” questions address some expectations of the CCSS. The inclusion of specific strategies and examples of questions teachers can ask provides

evaluators tools they can use to assess instruction. In contrast, the Hillsborough rubric prioritizes checking for understanding, using that information to inform instruction, and probing for higher-level understanding. For teachers and evaluators to be able to use the rubric effectively, they need to be trained in the specific techniques of each. A greater range of activities can fit the rubric’s description, placing higher demands on teachers and evaluators to achieve a shared understanding of performance expectations.

One rubric is not better than the other, but they do have different implications. If you choose a very specific rubric, you need to make sure evaluators understand the rationale behind the specific behaviors so they can make assessments that are more nuanced than simply counting the number of students who have their hands up when a question is asked. Conversely, with a more general rubric, evaluators need to have a shared, consistent understanding of what they are looking for as examples of the broader concepts outlined in the rubric.

Hillsborough County Public Schools (Danielson)	Achievement First Charter Management Organization
Domain 3b. Using questioning and discussion techniques	Essential 8a. Planned, rigorous questioning
<p>Descriptor for exemplary:</p> <p>The teacher checks for understanding of content at all key moments and gets an accurate pulse of the class’s understanding from <i>every</i> check such that the teacher has enough information to adjust subsequent instruction if necessary.</p> <p>Questions reflect high expectations and are culturally and developmentally appropriate. The teacher <i>frequently</i> responds to students’ correct answers by probing for higher-level understanding in an effective manner. Students formulate many of the high-level questions and ensure that all voices are heard.</p>	<p>Descriptor for exemplary:</p> <p>Planning: Teacher appears to have planned in advance key questions that are aligned to the aim and to have thought through potential scholar responses.</p> <p>Rigor: Scholars ask higher-level follow-up questions of the teacher or peers.</p> <p>Variety: Teacher regularly uses a variety of “stretch it” questions, asking questions like: “Why? What does that relate to? What is your evidence for that? How would you apply this?”</p> <p>Ability to Adapt to Student Responses: Teacher appears to listen carefully to scholar responses and adapts the planned questions as needed.</p>
	8b. Standards for top-quality responses (oral and written)
	<p>Right is Right: Almost all scholars provide high-quality and accurate responses to questions. Teacher consistently reinforces that Right is Right and refuses to accept low-quality or partially accurate scholar oral responses.</p> <p>Evidence: Scholars answer questions using evidence appropriate to support their answer.</p> <p>Academic Language: Nearly all scholar responses are top quality, including the use of standard grammar, complete sentences, and appropriate vocabulary with little to no prompting from the teacher.</p> <p>Accountability: The teacher uses No Opt Out and cycles back to scholars who didn’t answer a question correctly the first time.</p>

and demonstrating perseverance in solving complex problems — are not represented well (if at all) in many of the rubrics currently in use. If your system is transitioning to the CCSS, make sure its expectations are integrated into teaching frameworks.

As you consider existing frameworks or developing your own, ask these three questions:

- ▶ Does the framework address the specific contextual issues (e.g., student population) that affect what needs to be included and prioritized in instruction in our system?

- ▶ How confident are we that if a teacher excels against the framework, his or her students will be prepared to meet the expectations of the CCSS?
- ▶ Is this framework designed primarily to assess performance for the sake of accountability, or can it serve as the foundation for a system that emphasizes growth and development?

**SAMPLE
TEMPLATE
4.1**

To get you started with this step, here is an example of how you might begin to fill out the template.

<i>Policies or procedures that need to be developed or changed</i>	<i>Job position that has the authority to do this</i>	<i>Required board action or collective bargaining</i>	<i>Date by which this will be done</i>
Adopt teaching standards and an aligned rubric	Head of teaching and learning	Board — vote Union — inform	January 15
Establish the measures of student growth/progress in addition to value-added estimates from statewide tests	Lead for teacher evaluation	Collective bargaining Board — vote	February 1
Require demonstration of competence for evaluators	Lead for teacher evaluation and principal (and evaluator) supervisors	No	May

➔ Data Systems

What are the various information management systems — including student, teacher, evaluation, and human resource databases — that are implicated in the design and implementation of a new teacher evaluation? Are they able to speak to one another and share information?

Few school districts currently have the data systems in place that are needed to manage teacher evaluation. Districts have three choices in how to build this required infrastructure:

- ▶ Modify the existing system used by the district or state;
- ▶ Purchase an off-the-shelf system (with limited opportunity for customization); or
- ▶ Build a system from scratch.

In deciding how you want to pursue this, there are several issues to consider. First, recognize that most data systems have a compliance-centered orientation (e.g., they send out “ticklers” to evaluators when their data aren’t up to date or on pace with expected completion rates), but they aren’t set up to give information that can be used for development purposes. Second, data systems tend to be designed to condense and streamline information rather than provide the nuanced data needed to guide improvement.

As you think about the evaluation data system you want, consider what specific information you want to be able to collect and provide teachers to support their improvement and how you want

the system to be able to roll the information up into an aggregate rating. The approach you choose will be informed by your needs, the capacity of the existing data system, the financial resources available, and the time you have before you need to have the evaluation system up and running. Whatever approach you take, ensure that the system you adopt, adapt, or develop can provide data to support teacher development.

Use Template 4.2 on p. 48 to keep track as you identify changes that need to be made to data systems.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR EVALUATION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Critical components	Critical issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mechanism to capture observation information (e.g., completion rates, ratings data) ■ Teacher, school, and system dashboards that track evaluation data ■ Professional development system: on-line resources (articles, courses) aligned to the teaching framework and mechanisms for registering for professional development, tracking participation, and obtaining feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ability to match students to teachers ■ Training teachers, principals, and principal supervisors on the use of the data management system ■ How to display information in a way that is accessible, is transparent, and supports growth and development

Questions to consider relative to data systems include:

- ▶ Can the data system link student and teacher databases and track students' academic histories longitudinally?
 - ▶ What is required to build an information management system in which evaluators can record teacher observation ratings by standard and sub-standard and these data can be made available to teachers, principals, and system administrators in a usable form?
 - ▶ How can the data system integrate various sources of data for a "dashboard" or other holistic look at performance? Are appropriate permissions in place to give access to each actor who needs information and to protect the privacy and confidentiality of information?
 - ▶ Are the data systems organized to provide teachers, evaluators, principals, and the system with information about teachers' growth over time and trends in evaluation results across schools? Can relationships between different measures and other outcomes be analyzed?
 - ▶ Does the data system capture qualitative information? Can the quality and actionability of feedback to teachers be assessed?
- ▶ What does the school system need to know to assess the integrity and efficacy of the data system it implements? Can it track the pace of implementation of the evaluation system? Can it identify low performers as soon as a pattern of poor performance is identified so they can be targeted for immediate support? Can evaluator feedback to teachers be sampled to assess quality? Can evaluator rating patterns and trends be assessed across evaluators, schools, etc.? How will the data system be designed to ensure these functions?
 - ▶ What external help do we need to develop our data systems (e.g., design of value-added model, roster verification of students in classes)?
 - ▶ What training will teachers and principals need to be able to enter data into the new systems and access the new systems and the data they hold?

Whatever approach you take, ensure that system you adopt, adapt, or develop can provide data to support teacher development.

To get you started with this step, here is an example of how you might begin to fill out the template.

<i>Changes that need to be made to the information management system to provide the information prioritized in Step 3</i>	<i>Data sources involved</i>	<i>Job positions/departments that need to be involved in building this system</i>	<i>Date by which it will be built</i>
Need to link students and their achievement data to their teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class rosters, teaching assignments, student achievement data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and assessment, information management 	May 1
Need to build an information management system into which evaluation information can be recorded and from which data about teacher performance can be retrieved and analyzed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher data, evaluator data, student achievement data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information management, teacher evaluation lead, research and assessment 	August 1

➔ Time and Job Responsibilities

How much time will designing and implementing the new evaluation system (i.e., building the information management systems, consistently tracking and reporting trends in teacher ratings, managing the observations schedule if peer observers are used) require of both departments and individuals?

Key questions to consider include:

- What is the right mix of people to adopt, adapt, or develop a teaching framework, and how long will it take?
- What will building the information management system to track student performance data by teacher involve? Who will do it? What are the implications for staffing or current job responsibilities?
- Which central office departments need to be involved in designing the system? In executing it? How will the hand-off from design to execution be managed?
- How much time will it take an evaluator to complete an evaluation? What percentage of that time is focused on growth and development vs. accountability? Does this time commitment reflect the goal of using the evaluation to support growth and development? If not, what needs to change?
- To what extent and in what way will evaluators' current job responsibilities need to be revised to ensure their ability to meet these expectations?

- What are the implications of this for how other job responsibilities might need to evolve and how things get done in the school system?

A school system most likely will not be able to build a robust evaluation system without either allocating additional resources to the endeavor or reallocating existing resources.

- What are the structures we envision for supporting teachers in their growth and development (e.g., common planning time, professional development, coaching, peer support)? To what extent do these structures exist in ways that support this work, and what needs to be done to develop or refine them to foster teacher growth and development?
- Who is responsible for supporting teachers' professional growth and development, and do their job responsibilities provide adequate time to meet these expectations?

Use Template 4.3 on p. 50 to keep track of implications for time and job responsibilities.

Considering these questions makes two things very clear:

- ▶ Building a new evaluation system requires that resources be allocated to this work. A school system most likely will not be able to build a robust evaluation system without either allocating additional resources to the endeavor or re-allocating existing resources. School system leaders who have embarked on this work highly recommend that their colleagues pay for external support to ensure they build strong systems for measuring student growth that have integrity and are credible. Few school systems have the internal capacity to tackle the complex, technical nature of this work effectively, and the quality of these data is integral to the efficacy and credibility of the system.

- ▶ Infrastructure demands are dynamic. What is needed to get the evaluation system up and running is different from what is needed build a more nuanced and sophisticated system over time or to maintain a system in a steady state. Quantifying the need accurately is sometimes hard, so system leaders need to make their best, well-informed estimates and then revisit and refine them when new information becomes available. For example, the time it takes evaluators to complete evaluations initially may be hard to quantify accurately prior to implementation. It might be useful to get a baseline understanding of how principals spend their time currently through a time-use audit. Then, systems can set expectations and track the issue over time.

**SAMPLE
TEMPLATE
4.3**

To get you started with this step, here is an example of how you might begin to fill out the template.

<i>Biggest challenges relative to time and job responsibilities</i>	<i>Job position that has the authority to address them</i>	<i>Method of addressing challenges</i>	<i>Date by which they need to be addressed</i>
Information management staff need to lead the integration of different information systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Chief of operations/deputy superintendent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reprioritize information management’s current responsibilities or add resources 	April 1
Responsibility for observing and evaluating teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Head of teaching and learning in partnership with principal supervisor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify people beyond principal to complete observations and evaluations ■ Consider the creation of a new role focused on evaluating teachers ■ Reconsider existing job responsibilities of principals 	May 1

TEMPLATE 4.1: Policies and Procedures

Directions:

- ▶ Consider what policies and procedures — formalized, agreed-upon ways of doing business — need to be put in place to support the design and implementation of the evaluation system.
- ▶ Record these policies and procedures in the left column.
- ▶ For each policy/procedure, identify who has the authority to make the change, whether the school board or union needs to be involved, and when the policy change needs to happen.
- ▶ After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions on the next page.

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<i>Policies or procedures that need to be developed or changed</i>	<i>Job position that has the authority to do this</i>	<i>Required board action or collective bargaining</i>	<i>Date by which this will be done</i>

Reflection Questions

1. Do we anticipate any opposition to making the policy and procedural changes we have identified? If so, who will it come from, and what form might it take?
2. How can we anticipate concerns that may be raised? How will we learn from them and respond to them?
3. Whom must we engage in this work because they have significant authority over key policies and procedures and/or they may be an important source of opposition?
4. How does the timing we have outlined for attending to individual policies and procedures sync up with the timing required to roll out a system that has integrity?

TEMPLATE 4.2: Data Systems

Directions:

- ▶ Review the information needs you identified in Template 3.1.
- ▶ Consider how the information management system needs to change to meet these needs and record these changes in the left column.
- ▶ For each change, identify whether multiple data sources need to be involved (and which ones), what job positions and departments need to be involved, and by when the change needs to be complete.
- ▶ After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions on the next page.

Please make as many copies as you need to complete this step. Or you can download an interactive version of this file at www.aspeninstitute.org/MeansToAnEnd_blank_templates.

<i>Changes that need to be made to the information management system to provide the information prioritized in Step 3</i>	<i>Data sources involved</i>	<i>Job positions/departments that need to be involved in building this system</i>	<i>Date by which it will be built</i>

Reflection Questions

1. To what extent and in what ways are departments going to have to function and/or collaborate in fundamentally different ways to meet the information management system needs?
2. How can key personnel implicated in these changes be engaged in the evaluation design work to tap their expertise and build engagement and ownership?
3. What are the resource (time, people, money) implications of the information management system needs? Whose support needs to be obtained to make these resource allocation decisions?

TEMPLATE 4.3: Time and Job Responsibilities

Directions:

- ▶ Consider how much time designing and implementing the new evaluation system (i.e., building the information management systems, consistently tracking and reporting trends in teacher ratings, managing the observations schedule if peer observers are used) will require of both departments and individuals.
- ▶ Identify any challenges this commitment will present (in terms of both time and job responsibilities) and record those in the left column.
- ▶ For each challenge, identify who has the authority to address it, the method for addressing it, and by when the challenge needs to be addressed.
- ▶ After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions on the next page.

Please make as many copies as you need to complete this step. Or you can download an interactive version of this file at www.aspeninstitute.org/MeansToAnEnd_blank_templates.

<i>Biggest challenges relative to time and job responsibilities</i>	<i>Job position that has the authority to address them</i>	<i>Method of addressing challenges</i>	<i>Date by which they need to be addressed</i>

Reflection Questions

1. What re-allocation of resources (or allocation of new resources) will be essential to address time and job responsibility challenges?
2. What are the benefits and costs of allocating/re-allocating the necessary resources?
3. Whom must we engage in this discussion because they have the authority to address or block allocation/re-allocation of resources?
4. When we look across the timeline for the work outlined in Templates 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3, what does it make us think about the pacing and sequencing of infrastructure building? What are the infrastructure priorities for phase 1? For phase 2? For subsequent phases? How long do we expect each phase to last?

STEP 5

Identify Capacity Requirements

To ensure that your evaluation system focuses on supporting teacher growth and development, everyone in the organization needs to reinforce this emphasis. This work has capacity building implications for every level of the school system — the system as a whole, individual central office departments, and individual schools.

- ▶ **Evaluators** need to know how to use the evaluation process to facilitate conversations with teachers about their development.
- ▶ **Principals** need to organize teams of teachers to leverage evaluation information for improved instruction.
- ▶ **Professional development leaders** at the school and system levels need to align their activities to the teaching framework on which the evaluation is designed (and trends in teachers' performance relative to it) and ensure that the work is practical and embedded in classrooms, not lecture halls.
- ▶ **Principal supervisors** need to be prepared to monitor and assess principals' evaluation work as well as the conditions they develop to support teacher growth and development, help principals figure out how to integrate this work with their other responsibilities, and provide appropriate support and accountability.

You may have begun to bump into these issues as you completed Template 4.1 and saw how the responsibilities associated with certain jobs would need to evolve to support this work. This step asks you to focus specifically on capacity building priorities associated with successfully designing and implementing the evaluation system and to begin to determine how they will be addressed.

As you work through this step, refer back to the *Important Issues to Consider* worksheet on p. 22 and the *Capacity Demands* worksheet on p. 38 to see if you can address any items you already have recorded and to keep track of ideas or issues that don't fit neatly into the templates.

➔ Sample Roles and Responsibilities

Below are some descriptions of what roles and responsibilities look like in a system with a robust evaluation system. While these might seem utopian, they are not expected to become reality in a year or two. They are intended to provide a sense of just how profound a systemic change the introduction of a new evaluation system can be.

Discuss these descriptions and add to them to build a shared image of what you want people in the system to do. Once you have done this, your team will be well positioned to define the capacity (knowledge and skills) each group needs, determine the areas in which capacity does not currently exist at the levels needed, and begin planning for how that capacity will be developed.

- ▶ **Teachers live the teaching standards.** They deeply understand teaching and have clear images of excellent practice. They talk about their planning, instruction, and assessment in the language of the teaching standards. They are intimately familiar with their performance relative to the standards. They have created growth and development plans that identify specific standards and sub-standards that they are focusing on and have a strategy to do this based on the feedback they have received about their practice.
- ▶ **The evaluation work touches everyone in the system and is one of the system's highest priorities.** Everyone understands that supporting teacher growth and development is a critical strategy for improving student achievement.
- ▶ **The work of designing, implementing, tracking, and continuously improving the evaluation system is cross-functional, not the sole responsibility of a single person or department.** To ensure its centrality, the evaluation work is carefully linked to other critical work in the system, such as implementation of CCSS, English language acquisition, and response to intervention.
- ▶ **Principals and other school administrators, instructional support staff (in schools and the larger system), and principal supervisors are all well versed in the teaching standards and strategies for observing instruction.** They have been trained to ensure their ratings are calibrated so that teachers across the system are treated fairly and to provide concrete, actionable feedback in constructive ways.

- ▶ **Principals and other evaluators talk with teachers about specific aspects of their practice using data from observations and other sources in ways that facilitate teacher learning.** They work collaboratively with teachers to set goals for student learning and teacher development, identify resources to support this work, and monitor progress. They have a clear sense of trends in teacher performance across classrooms and grades in their school as well as the individual needs of teachers and use this information to guide training and development. Principals understand the school system's theory of action regarding teacher learning, or have their own, and they organize school time and operations to support this work.
- ▶ **Outstanding teachers have different roles in supporting novices and struggling teachers.** Expertise among teachers is recognized and leveraged to improve the practices of teachers, teams, and schools.
- ▶ **Teams of teachers form professional learning communities to discuss shared instructional strategies** to refine practice and increase effectiveness.
- ▶ **The principal's role is structured and school administrative responsibilities are reallocated among building administrators and teacher leaders** in a way that makes the principalship manageable and prioritizes the responsibilities of principals related to implementing the evaluation system. These responsibilities include directly supporting teacher development and creating the structural and social conditions for teachers to work together to improve their practice.
- ▶ **Principal supervisors focus their work with principals on supporting and holding principals accountable for developing and retaining teachers, supporting principals' growth and development,** and creating the social structures in school that support teacher growth and development. They have common shared practices regarding school and classroom visits, principal professional development, and their evaluation of principals, and they use a differentiated system of support for principals. Principals who demonstrate a persistent inability to help teachers grow are evaluated as ineffective. Principal supervisors' own evaluation includes an assessment of how well they do this work.
- ▶ **Human resources has a system to flag teachers based on performance for both recognition and intervention and has policies in place that treat teachers differently based on their performance level** (e.g., a low-performing teacher cannot transfer to another school, high-performing teachers can pursue positions in high-needs schools and receive a pay differential). If support and professional development activities are required for consequential human resource decisions (e.g., dismissal), a system is in place to track provision of these services and to alert school administrators and other evaluators of these responsibilities.
- ▶ **Central office staff – human resources, curriculum and instruction, assessment and accountability – work collaboratively to align their work to the new evaluation system.** This alignment is reflected in professional development opportunities that are tied to the teaching standards, respond to system-wide trends in performance, and are designed to do everything from supporting struggling teachers to developing the leadership skills of teachers whose performance makes them eligible to progress on a career pathway.

This work has capacity building implications for every level of the school system – the system as a whole, individual central office departments, and individual schools.

- ▶ **Someone in the system is designated to oversee all the aspects of the evaluation system design and implementation,** providing on a frequent basis user-friendly data that track a wide array of evaluation-related information (e.g., participation and success rates of evaluators in training on the standards and evaluation process; teachers' performance and trends in performance; the pace of teacher growth and improvement; calibration among evaluators; comparative data across evaluators, schools, and areas managed by principal supervisors).
- ▶ **The system's senior leaders (or in a larger system, a subset of this team) regularly review data about teachers' and evaluators' performance and training and development efforts.** They make just-in-time decisions based on data available, and they periodically assess the quality, efficacy, and efficiency of the overall system to continuously improve it.

After discussing these descriptions and creating a shared image of what you want to see happening in your system, consider current practices in place. What skills, knowledge, and abilities need to be strengthened? Where is it most important to focus first?

Building the capacity of evaluators to lead this work is an undertaking almost as big as designing the system itself. Just about every school system that has recently implemented a robust evaluation system including multiple observations for every teacher has been sobered by the enormity of the task of building the skills of a large cadre of evaluators. The challenges include:

- ▶ Building a shared, clear understanding of the teaching framework among all evaluators;
- ▶ Norming ratings and ensuring fair and consistent scoring among evaluators across the system; and
- ▶ Being able to give teachers specific, actionable feedback about their practice.

Who Will Conduct the Evaluations?

The needs related to evaluator capacity building vary depending on who will conduct evaluations and the skills and experiences they bring to the task. Increasingly, school systems are looking beyond principals and other school administrators to identify people in schools and the system with deep understanding of effective instruction and relationships with teachers that may position them to be particularly effective in providing feedback and support. The use of peer evaluators is a growing trend.

The question you need to ask in thinking about who will conduct evaluations is: Who is best suited to conduct observations, provide feedback to teachers, and make evaluation ratings based on those observations? The word “suited” can mean many things:

- ▶ Who has positional authority to do this work?
- ▶ Who has the expertise, experience, and skills to do this work?
- ▶ Who could we most effectively and efficiently train to do this work?

Building the capacity of evaluators to lead this work is an undertaking almost as big as designing the system itself.

Keep in mind that evaluations are just one of many responsibilities principals face, whereas peer observers who assume this job full time focus solely on this work. Therefore, providing peer evaluators longer, deeper training is easier (see Denver example on p. 56), and the sheer frequency with which they are conducting observations and feedback sessions with teachers provides practice that likely supports skill development.

Evaluator Skills

Regardless of whom you choose to conduct the evaluations, the evaluators need to develop a whole host of skills. They need to be able to:

- ▶ Understand the teaching framework and how the standards look in classrooms at different levels of proficiency;
- ▶ Conduct observations and document what they hear and see;
- ▶ Score observations with a level of accuracy that ensures teachers across the system are treated fairly and consistently;
- ▶ Review artifacts of teachers’ work and fairly assess them;
- ▶ Upload evaluation information to the system’s information management data system;
- ▶ Facilitate teachers’ reflection about their practice;
- ▶ Provide specific, actionable feedback to teachers about their performance to guide improvement;
- ▶ Understand what goals for good student learning and/or teaching practice look like and how to write them;
- ▶ Guide teachers to supports aligned to their needs;
- ▶ Create the conditions for teacher collaboration that support improving practice; and
- ▶ Leverage teacher expertise and leadership to build structures and systems that support development.

The list is daunting, and those skills won’t be realized overnight. Start this work as soon as possible. Don’t wait until you have the evaluation system designed or even until you have your teaching framework in place. Have evaluators start by talking about what they think good teaching looks like; they need to review videos of teaching and visit classrooms together to make sense of what they see. If you have a teaching framework in place (or as soon as you do), start educating them about it. Have them observe classrooms and discuss their observations using it. Teach evaluators how to facilitate meetings and engage in difficult conversations, and have them role-play to hone their skills. All of your early efforts will pay off and set the foundation for the deep work that will come with implementing the evaluation system.

Use Template 5 on p. 59 to keep track of job positions that have capacity that needs to be built.

**ENSURING THE
EFFECTIVENESS
OF EVALUATORS:
TRAINING**

Denver Public Schools	Pittsburgh Public Schools
<p>Pre-implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Principal supervisors: 30-40 hours of training on framework, video review. ■ Principals: 16 hours of training exploring assumptions about good teaching, characteristics of good lessons, and video review (led by principal supervisors – with support as needed). ■ Principals: 24 hours of video norming aligned to framework and developing understanding of common reflective feedback protocol. ■ Peer observers: 7.5 weeks of training focused on knowledge of the framework, inter-rater reliability, and providing feedback. 	<p>Pre-implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Principals: 80 hours of training on framework, rubric, and using it to review and rate videos; 24 hours of summer training focused on same themes in preparation for full implementation.
<p>Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Principals: Five, 90-minute sessions on norming and giving reflective feedback. ■ Peer observers: One day every other week focused on inter-rater reliability and providing feedback; co-observations and debriefs with peer observer. ■ Directors of the peer observers on inter-rater reliability, planning feedback session, observing and debriefing feedback sessions. The two directors serve as a norming team, working together to observe, rate, and provide feedback to peer observers. 	<p>Implementation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Principal pre-certification: Danielson Proficiency System – 20 hours of online training and five hours of proficiency testing (scoring videos against master scorers). ■ Rollout of year 1 of two-year “Certification in Instructional Quality Assurance” for principals and teacher leaders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Level 1 certification: Focused on inter-rater reliability, evidence objectivity, evidence alignment to rubric components and sub-components, and accuracy of assessment; performance-based certification based on rating accuracy of five, 30- to 60-minute videos. ◆ Level 2 certification: Focused on giving quality instructional feedback and a written test of curricular knowledge; performance-based certification based on observing three classrooms with a master educator and writing up post-observation conference plans that address: strengths, growth areas aligned to framework, resources to use to support development, questions to engage teachers in inquiry-based conversation, and recommendations and suggestions for the teacher.

Principals

In most evaluation systems, principals play a critical role as evaluators. That role can range from being the sole evaluator to being part of a team that conducts the evaluations. In thinking about how significant a role you want principals to play, consider things you want done as part of the evaluation that they are uniquely positioned to do. Given that principals who serve as evaluators need to develop their capacity in all of the skills outlined in the “Evaluator Skills” section, think about what else you want them to do to ensure the evaluation supports teacher growth and development. Deciding the responsibilities of principals relative to evaluation is a strategic question of leveraging the greatest impact principals can have in the evaluation process.

Creating collaborative communities of learning among teachers in schools is one of the most important things that can be done to support teacher growth and development.

When the focus of evaluation is on growth and development, the question of how teachers will be supported to improve their practice looms large. Research increasingly suggests that creating collaborative communities of learning among teachers in schools and providing them the time and support to plan together, review student work and learning results, and problem-solve about the biggest instructional challenges they face is one of the most important things that can be done to support teacher growth and development. Principals are best positioned to create the time, systems, and structures to support this kind of work. Figuring out how to leverage the teaching talent in the school to raise the overall quality of instruction is one of the most important things a principal can do to support teacher growth and development.

School systems can't assume principals know how to do these things. To build their capacity in these areas, systems need to provide principals models and technical assistance to support this work as well as mechanisms to track progress, assess impact, and make refinements as needed.

Teachers

For teachers to be active participants in the evaluation process — people *with whom* the evaluation is done rather than *to whom* it is done — they need to be thoroughly trained in the teaching framework so that they are clear about the system's expectations of them and can reflect on their own performance relative to those expectations. Self-assessments and growth and development goal-setting are valuable ways for teachers to have a meaningful role in the evaluation process by defining their needs and interests and using them to inform the evaluation and related feedback.

Maximizing the impact of these elements of an evaluation system requires ensuring that all teachers know how to use these tools properly. This requires a strategy to educate teachers about the frameworks and the teacher tools associated with the evaluation, let them practice with the tools in a safe environment that supports their learning, and then deepen their understanding and practice.

Other Employees

Central office staff who are expected to support evaluation implementation also need support. The capacity that needs to be built is quite varied. For example:

- ▶ **Human resources staff** need to understand how the evaluation work will be integrated with their human resources functions and responsibilities.
- ▶ **Evaluator supervisors** need to understand the teaching framework, the characteristics of effective feedback, the overall evaluation process, and what they need to be doing to support their supervisees in this work and assess their performance.

- ▶ **Research and accountability staff** need to expand their orientation and systems to provide qualitative data and information that can support system improvement rather than simply track completion of evaluations and aggregate ratings.

→ Planning Capacity Development

Review the work you have done so far that prepares you to complete this step. It is very similar to the work you did to complete Template 4.1 because it asks you to synthesize information you have been compiling throughout the previous steps and translate it all into a plan for capacity development. Look at Step 2, where you first identified capacity that needs to be developed — this serves as a starting point. Review your work in Steps 3 and 4, as well as the notes you have been keeping on your *Important Issues to Consider* and the *Capacity Demands* worksheets.

Now, try to synthesize all of this information to complete Template 5, which asks you to articulate:

- ▶ Whose capacity needs to be built;
- ▶ What capacity needs to be built for each population;
- ▶ How that capacity will be built;
- ▶ Who will do the capacity building, including what partners can and should be involved in augmenting the district’s capacity to train and certify skills; and
- ▶ By when the capacity will be built.

SAMPLE TEMPLATE 5

To get you started with this step, here is an example of how you might begin to fill out the template, using classroom observations as the measure.

<i>Job positions whose capacity needs to be built</i>	<i>Capacity that needs to be built</i>	<i>How it will be built</i>	<i>Who will build it</i>	<i>Date by which capacity will be built</i>
Principals/ evaluators	Expertise in teaching framework	Training on framework that includes practice using rubric to assess instruction with feedback	Creators of rubric	Start of school year
	Observation methods	Documenting observations using videos; co-observations	Principal supervisor	
	Use of a variety of formats and feedback mechanism	Review of observation ratings and write-ups	Head of evaluation initiative	September-June
	Calibrated scoring	Calibration sessions		
	Providing feedback that is meaningful and actionable	Role-playing provision of feedback	Principal supervisors	November
	Ability to analyze and synthesize multiple data sources and exercise professional judgment	Performance assessment and certification of competence in observation ratings and providing feedback to teachers		
	Time management to find time to do observations	Time-use audit; review data and develop strategies		

TEMPLATE 5: Organizational Capacity Building

Directions:

- Review Step 2, where you first identified capacity that needs to be developed; Step 3; and Step 4, as well as the notes you have been keeping on your *Important Issues to Consider* and the *Capacity Demands* worksheets.
- Based on these results, identify whose capacity needs to be built (e.g., principals/evaluators) and what capacity is needed (e.g., providing feedback that is meaningful and actionable).
- Then identify how that capacity will be built (e.g., role-playing), by whom, and when.
- After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions on the next page.

Please make as many copies as you need to complete this step. Or you can download an interactive version of this file at www.aspeninstitute.org/MeansToAnEnd_blank_templates.

<i>Job positions whose capacity needs to be built</i>	<i>Capacity that needs to be built</i>	<i>How it will be built</i>	<i>Who will build it</i>	<i>Date by which capacity will be built</i>

Reflection Questions

1. Which capacity issues are we most concerned about building because they (a) are essential to the successful implementation of the evaluation system and (b) will present the greatest challenge for capacity building?
2. How can we focus resources to address these areas of concern or redesign the system to tap more existing capacity and lessen the capacity development requirements?
3. As we think about each category of employees whose capacity needs to be developed so they can do this different kind of work, what is our assessment of the capacity of the people in these positions (who may have been hired for a different job) to build these skills and make the transition to a new way of working?
4. How does what we have done in this step support teacher growth and development?

STEP 6

Establish Supervisor and System-Level Accountability for Teacher Growth and Development

Step 5 focuses on how people in the organization need to function and specifies the capacity they need to implement the new evaluation system in a way that supports teacher growth and development. Hand in hand with capacity building is accountability.

The purpose of capacity building is to produce results, both for teaching performance and student learning, and everyone in the system needs to be accountable for what they do to produce the results they attain with their strengthened capacity. Step 6 assists in developing measures for assessing how well employees and departments throughout the organization have executed their responsibilities under the new teacher evaluation system.

It is worth noting that school systems often confuse accountability with compliance. Compliance generally focuses on checking to ensure employees do what they are required to do — i.e., did they complete the observations they are required to complete by the date they are required to complete them? These measures are often captured in deadlines and things that can be counted rather than qualitative information.

School systems often confuse accountability with compliance. Accountability is a more robust and dynamic concept that emphasizes both meeting basic expectations and the quality of the work being done.

Accountability is a more robust and dynamic concept that emphasizes both meeting basic expectations and the quality of the work being done — e.g., reviews of evaluators' observation write-ups and the extent to which they provide teachers with specific, actionable feedback that they can use to improve their practice.

➔ Identifying Information Needed for Accountability

The first thing to do in this step is to imagine what information can be used for accountability. For example, if you want to know:

- ▶ Whether teachers are getting meaningful guidance and support, then an anonymous survey asking teachers to rate principal's effectiveness in these activities can be used both to provide principals feedback and as part of their evaluation.
- ▶ Whether evaluators' feedback to teachers is aligned to standards, specific enough to support teacher actions in response, and connected to meaningful professional growth opportunities offered by the school or district, then reviewing a sample of observation forms is one possible option.
- ▶ How well principal supervisors are monitoring and supporting the evaluation work in the schools they are responsible for, then one possible measure would be to review their work with principals to see whether this issue is prominent in their interactions.
- ▶ How well human resources is supporting the focus on growth and development, then you could conduct a time audit on how much of the staff's time is spent on accountability

versus growth and development activities. A review of the department's communications and systems to see the extent to which they prioritize accountability and compliance versus growth and development would also be informative.

Remember that teachers will understand the system's priorities by what it *inspects* as much as by what it says it *expects*. If implementation is principally assessed with reference to whether observations were conducted and the range in ratings, then teachers will likely perceive accountability as the top priority. If quality and actionability of feedback also are measured and examined, then teachers are more likely to get the impression that their growth and development are high priorities.

As you work through this step, refer back to the *Important Issues to Consider* worksheet on p. 22 and the *Capacity Demands* worksheet on p. 38 to see if you can address any items you already have recorded and to keep track of ideas or issues that don't fit neatly into the templates.

Identifying Whom to Hold Accountable and How

Key Questions

The following questions can be used to begin to identify whom you want to hold accountable for what, how you can hold them accountable, and when you want to hold them accountable. The first two questions are directly aligned to the three columns you are asked to fill in on the template for this step. Answering some of the other questions might require you to revisit Steps 4 and 5 to refine the work you have done thus far.

- ▶ From the work in the previous steps, what are the critical elements required for successful design and implementation of the evaluation system — e.g., a valid and reliable value-added measure, a mix of measures that reflect the system’s definition of effective teaching, equity in evaluators’ ratings of teachers across the system, specific observational feedback provided to teachers in a way that supports improvement?
- ▶ For each of the things noted in our answer to the question above, who is responsible for them, and how can we best evaluate the quality of their work?
- ▶ What is the array of ways — counting, assessing performance, reviewing artifacts, surveying — we can collect accountability information?
- ▶ What areas of accountability can be measured quantitatively and built into the evaluation information management system?

- ▶ How can we design the accountability system to support growth and improvement of employees and practices as much as to hold people accountable?
- ▶ Where would it be easy to focus on compliance and miss important information that affects the quality of the system, and how can we best avoid this?
- ▶ To the extent that entire employee groups (e.g., observers, evaluators) need to be held accountable for specific things, what are the implications for the work of their supervisors?

Expanding Accountability Over Time

While you may not have adequate information right now to do a robust job of holding everyone in the system accountable for their roles in fostering teachers’ professional growth, consider what you can get started with and where additional information is required. This work can be expanded as the evaluation system is implemented. What matters is that from the start, departments and employees have clear, concrete signals that the way their work is done is expected to change to support the design and implementation of the evaluation system and its emphasis on growth and development.

The evaluation of employees whose job it is to evaluate and support teachers’ growth and development is a logical place to insert accountability. For this reason, deep work in teacher evaluation often requires revamping the evaluation systems for principals, principal supervisors, and central office staff so that they are aligned with teacher evaluations.

Some systems are revamping principal evaluation at the same time or on the heels of the development of the new teacher evaluation system. Whether your system has the capacity to do this in the near term or not, you need to develop and communicate clear expectations and aligned accountability measures for principals relative to their role as evaluators at the outset of implementation to ensure success.

Use Template 6 on p. 63 to keep track of whom to hold accountable, how, and when.

- ▶ Where do we want qualitative data to measure effectiveness? How will we capture and analyze this information?
- ▶ Where in the process do we want to place accountability measures, and is there a good reason to include them at multiple junctures?

SAMPLE TEMPLATE 6

To get you started with this step, here is an example of how you might begin to fill out the template.

<i>Characteristics of the evaluation system critical to support growth and development</i>	<i>Job position or department that is responsible</i>	<i>Measures/metrics for assessing whether responsibilities are met</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Calibrated observation ratings across the system ■ Ability to provide teachers feedback on the observations that is clear, is specific, and supports development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Observers ■ Observers’ supervisors ■ Information management department ■ Head of evaluation initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Comparison of observers’ ratings to the normed ratings ■ Audit and qualitative review of observation write-ups ■ Observation of observers’ conversations with teachers after classroom observations (in person, by video) ■ Survey of teachers regarding timeliness, quality, and actionability of feedback

TEMPLATE 6: Supervisor and System-Level Accountability

Directions:

- Identify characteristics of the evaluation system that are critical for the goal of supporting growth and development (e.g., providing teachers feedback that is clear, is specific, and supports development).
- Identify whom you want to hold accountable for each characteristic (e.g., observers) and what measures/metrics you will use to determine whether they have been successful (e.g., audit and qualitative review of observation write-ups).
- After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions on the next page.

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<i>Characteristics of the evaluation system critical to support growth and development</i>	<i>Job position or department that is responsible</i>	<i>Measures/metrics for assessing whether responsibilities are met</i>

Reflection Questions

1. Who are the key players whose buy-in we need to ensure that the work we have outlined in the template is prioritized and done?
2. What are possible obstacles to doing this work? How can we address them?
3. How does what we have done in this step support teacher growth and development?

Supporting professional growth and motivating breakthrough performance demand engaging, informing, and inspiring teachers. And this requires two-way communication — lots of it, with multiple audiences, throughout the process of design and implementation.

Communication as part of the design and implementation of an evaluation system plays multiple roles:

- ▶ Conveying the system’s vision, priorities, and goals;
- ▶ Soliciting input from teachers and other stakeholders;
- ▶ Building ownership;
- ▶ Ensuring clarity regarding expectations and opportunities; and
- ▶ Facilitating feedback from the front lines to guide improvement.

➔ Communicating Early, Often, and Strategically

Communication should happen early and often, taking different forms as the work progresses. Because there will be many decisions and changes in practice from design to implementation, a strategic approach to communication will help build engagement while not overwhelming stakeholders:

- ▶ Think about what various stakeholders need to know — and at what point in the process — so they can understand and participate.
- ▶ Consider what you need to know from stakeholders and when you need to know it to ensure goodwill, the integrity and success of the evaluation system, its continuous improvement, and stakeholders’ engagement.

Don’t wait until you have the entire system laid out to communicate everything, but don’t try to put every issue and every detail on the table at the outset, either.

- ▶ Don’t wait until you have the entire system laid out to communicate everything, but don’t try to put every issue and every detail on the table at the outset, either. (Word to the wise: this work requires an ongoing cycle of continuous improvement, which means everything will never be laid out in a nice, neat, static way.)

Early on, the rationale for working on evaluation systems and the system’s process for design, pilot, and implementation need to be explained. This will be most effective if senior leaders are involved, and if principals and teachers are part of developing and communicating the rationale.

Many systems already have channels for communicating to lots of stakeholders (e.g., newsletters; regular meetings with principals, teacher leaders, and union representatives). While every existing opportunity should be leveraged, consider also whether new forums are needed. Focus groups can be used to test some of the thinking and messages that emerge in early planning efforts, while at the same time expanding the number of stakeholders who feel connected to the work. The key to successful focus groups is creating an atmosphere of openness and listening. Surveys are another strategy for engaging a broad range of stakeholders (and might facilitate more honest input in systems where soliciting input from teachers has been rare and/or trust is low).

As decisions are made, communicating to everyone who is affected is essential. Every opportunity should be seized to explain what’s changing, why, and how success will be measured. If the system does not provide answers and explanations, then rumors and misunderstandings are much more likely. Be explicit when changes are being made in response to feedback from stakeholders; even better, have representatives from those stakeholder groups be part of announcing the changes and framing the changes as a response to their input.

As you work through this step, refer back to the *Important Issues to Consider* worksheet on p. 22 and the *Capacity Demands* worksheet on p. 38 to see if you can address any items you already have recorded and to keep track of ideas or issues that don’t fit neatly into the templates.

Walking the Talk

In addition to expanding support, communication can also impose healthy discipline by forcing system leaders to ask whether they are “walking the talk.” Teachers and other stakeholders pay attention to what the system says but even more to what it does. When words and deeds are consistent, it builds trust and good will. Likewise, where the messages are about professional growth and development but actions emphasize high-stakes accountability, support will wane, and impact will be undermined.

The more system leaders communicate about the work, the more they are forced to consider the alignment of what they are saying and doing and put themselves “on the hook” to follow through on commitments. A deliberate focus on the messages stakeholders receive helps reinforce core values and common goals.

Use Template 7 on p. 68 to lay out your communications strategy.

Keeping Communication Channels Open

Finally, communication needs to be ongoing as new evaluation systems are implemented in the field. Some things won’t go according to plan — indeed, some issues will arise that the design team was unable to anticipate. It’s essential for front-line employees to have a way to communicate concerns and problems early on and regularly.

Systems that listen and respond can increase support while they strengthen the evaluation systems. Aspire Public Charter Schools, for example, surveys teachers every year to get feedback regarding satisfaction with coaches, evaluations, and professional development. The CEO and senior leadership team take the responses and visit every school, every year, for a conversation about the school’s survey data, culminating in specific action steps for the central office as well as for the school. This communication honors the experience of teachers, informs ongoing planning efforts, and creates accountability for responding to employees’ concerns.

AN ARRAY OF COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS

Working under the belief that there is no such thing as too much communication, **Hillsborough County (FL) Public Schools** developed an array of vehicles to keep

teachers well informed and to solicit and respond to their concerns. Strategies include:

- ▶ A toolkit on the district website that provides one-stop shopping for descriptions of each element of its Empowering Effective Teachers (EET) initiative, key documents, tools, etc.;
- ▶ Monthly newsletters to teachers and principals about EET’s current happenings and upcoming attractions;
- ▶ Presentations at schools introducing key elements of the initiative just before they are implemented;
- ▶ Updates at all monthly principal and assistant principal meetings;
- ▶ Quarterly on-line magazine regarding EET;
- ▶ Link from the district’s home page to an EET website with easy access to the most recent webcasts, PowerPoint presentations, etc.;
- ▶ Identification of teacher ambassadors at every school who serve as the communication liaison on EET, sharing information with teachers and sharing teachers’ feedback with the system;
- ▶ Monthly board update reporting progress, results, and next steps;
- ▶ “Greatteachers,” a dedicated email address to which teachers can send any questions (directors of peers and value-added receive those questions directly and reply within 24 hours);
- ▶ EET speakers’ bureau, which provides speakers for faculty meetings, community events, etc.;
- ▶ Video responses to frequently asked questions (FAQs) that feature teachers;
- ▶ Surveys to get teacher feedback, which include a mid-year survey on the peer evaluators and end-of-year surveys on both peers and mentors;
- ▶ Video overviews available on-line of each of the key components of the initiative (e.g., evaluation and compensation, induction, assessment, performance management);
- ▶ Webinars about elements of the teacher evaluation (e.g., observations and scoring, value-added);
- ▶ Podcasts and pop-ups by the superintendent regarding timely issues tied to the new evaluation; and
- ▶ Provision of PowerPoints, FAQs with answers, scripts, tri-fold brochures, and a DVD to guide principals’ presentations to teachers about elements of the initiative.

Key Questions

In thinking about communication, here are some key questions to consider:

- ▶ What have we learned about effective communication from past successes and/or failures?
- ▶ Who are key audiences, and what are their greatest interests and concerns regarding the design and implementation of the new evaluation system?
- ▶ For whom in the central office will the evaluation have significant implications? How can we most effectively communicate with them and gather their feedback to inform improvements?
- ▶ What are/will be the school board's greatest interests and concerns about the evaluation system? How can we anticipate these and communicate effectively with the board about them?
- ▶ What does the public want and/or need to know about the evaluation system, and how can they most effectively be kept informed?
- ▶ What are existing communication channels/venues for keeping stakeholders informed and engaged? Are there regular opportunities for leaders of the evaluation work to talk with and hear from teachers and principals?
- ▶ Will focus groups and/or online surveys lead to more candid feedback from teachers?
- ▶ What are the opportunities to keep stakeholders informed and for them to participate in shaping the work? Are they adequate? If not, what new formats or venues are needed?
- ▶ What are the most important messages we need to convey? Do the messages reinforce the district's focus on professional growth and development? Do communications reflect the district's core values and explain the role of evaluations in this context?
- ▶ Who are the best messengers for different audiences and content?
- ▶ What role can teachers and principals play in designing the communication and communicating about the evaluation system design and implementation?
- ▶ How can we partner with the union to ensure strong two-way communication?
- ▶ What concerns about the evaluation system can we anticipate? How can we proactively address these through communication?
- ▶ How will the system collect feedback from front-line implementers? Are there adequate venues for principals, other evaluators, and teachers to share their perspectives?

Completing This Step

Having considered the questions, you now have the opportunity to lay out a communication strategy for the teacher evaluation work. Use Template 7 to guide you in this work.

SAMPLE TEMPLATE 7

To get you started with this step, here is an example of how you might begin to fill out the template.

Stakeholders	What they need to know	When they need to know it	Various methods for communicating/ most effective messengers	What we need to learn from them	How we can gather this information
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Elements of the evaluation system ■ How the system will affect them ■ How ratings are determined ■ Implications of different ratings ■ Who will be conducting their observations ■ How fairness will be ensured ■ Focus of the system on growth and development ■ What supports they will receive 	Before implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ In writing; electronically; and through presentations, focus groups, FAQs, hotline, school-based liaisons ■ Awareness level can be raised through writing, videos, electronic communications ■ Deeper exploration/ more detailed communication done in person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Their understanding of the system ■ Their sense of the fairness of the system ■ Their experience with different observers and with their evaluator ■ The extent to which they experience the system as an accountability vs. a growth and development mechanism ■ The extent to which they are getting support to grow and develop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Surveys ■ Focus groups ■ Work groups

TEMPLATE 7: Communications

Directions:

- ▶ Identify each stakeholder group that needs to know about the evaluation system (e.g., teachers, parents, human resources department), what they need to know (e.g., elements of the evaluation system), and when.
- ▶ List the current vehicles you have for communicating with each group (e.g., newsletters, quarterly meetings, etc.) and which have been most effective in the past. Imagine new ways of communicating, too.
- ▶ Identify what you need to learn from each group (e.g., their understanding of the system) and how you can gather that information (e.g., surveys, focus groups).
- ▶ After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions on the next page.

Please make as many copies as you need to complete this step. Or you can download an interactive version of this file at www.aspeninstitute.org/MeansToAnEnd_blank_templates.

<i>Stakeholders</i>	<i>What they need to know</i>	<i>When they need to know it</i>	<i>Various methods for communicating/ most effective messengers</i>	<i>What we need to learn from them</i>	<i>How we can gather this information</i>

Reflection Questions

1. Whom do we need to engage in designing and executing the communication strategy?
2. Where do we need to develop new methods for communicating information and gathering feedback?
3. How does what we have done in this step support teacher growth and development?

STEP 8

Plan to Monitor Progress and Make Mid-Course Corrections

Your work in each of the preceding steps prepares you well to develop or strengthen a teacher evaluation system focused on growth and development. Yet there is much that you can learn only through implementing your design.

You can't anticipate everything, so it is critical to the integrity of the system you are developing and the buy-in of key stakeholders that you build into the system, up front, a strategy for learning rapidly from implementation and using that learning to drive improvement.

This step is designed to help you think about what information you want to track and review to be able to maintain a clear sense of how things are going and make mid-course corrections as challenges are identified.

→ Anticipating Consequences

In the process of tracking implementation, you should try to anticipate consequences that might arise. Examples include:

- ▶ Principals are spending less informal observation time in classrooms and feel less connected to their teachers and what is going on daily in classrooms because they are devoting extensive time to following the evaluation process; and

- ▶ Teachers are inordinately focused on raising students' scores on the standardized assessment, which figures more prominently than before in their evaluation rating.

The first example is likely something you want to watch to see if it goes away as principals get more skillful and efficient in the evaluation work or if their concerns about this lessen as they begin to see the positive outgrowths of working with teachers in this new way. It might also prompt examination of their other job responsibilities and consideration of whether there are other ways to assign these responsibilities. The second example requires immediate action and may cause some soul searching about how the system has been designed and whether additional measures of student learning and/or additional training of teachers are required to make sure rigorous high-quality instruction is encouraged.

Build into the system, up front, a strategy for learning rapidly from implementation and using that learning to drive improvement.

→ Issues to Track

A couple of issues should be tracked proactively by every system:

- ▶ The distribution in teacher evaluation ratings; and
- ▶ The correlation of various measures of teacher effectiveness to each other.

While the goal is to improve human capital pipelines and support systems so that every teacher is highly effective, we are far away from that reality right now, and evaluation results should reflect this. If ratings indicate that almost all teachers are near the top of the rating scale in the next few years, these results should raise red flags that evaluators and teachers aren't getting adequate guidance.

Tracking how multiple measures of teacher effectiveness relate to each other is also important. For an individual teacher, the measures might point in different directions — after all, they are

measuring different things — but broad correlation should be tracked and examined. No single source or type of data should be privileged, but system leaders need to know whether patterns are emerging that require recalibration or reconsideration of the multiple measures being used.

As you work through this step, refer back to the *Important Issues to Consider* worksheet on p. 22 and the *Capacity Demands* worksheet on p. 38 to see if you can address any items you already have recorded and to keep track of ideas or issues that don't fit neatly into the templates.

While identifying problems as quickly as they arise is critical so we can promptly address them, identifying and analyzing successes is equally important to see what they can teach us that will help us strengthen other parts of the system. Finally, identifying things that need ongoing monitoring is important because it is not yet clear if they signal problems.

Identifying and analyzing successes is equally important to see what they can teach us that will help us strengthen other parts of the system.

Four simple questions, adapted from the Army's after-action review process, can be used to guide this inquiry:

- ▶ What was planned?
- ▶ What happened?
- ▶ Why did it happen?
- ▶ What can we learn from what happened and apply to improve the system?

The beauty of these questions is that they facilitate learning from both successes and failures and can very simply become the questions you always ask to start the learning cycle every time you do something.

TRACKING LEARNING IN THE EARLY STAGES OF IMPLEMENTATION

In the first three months of **Denver Public Schools'** full implementation of its teacher evaluation system, it collected the following information to inform mid-course improvements:

- ▶ Teacher ratings and principal completion rates;
- ▶ Average ratings by network (group of schools overseen by an instructional superintendent), school, and school's area of focus (school-chosen aspects of the teaching framework prioritized for focus);
- ▶ Random sampling of write-ups to assess quality and time required to complete;
- ▶ Surveys of teachers and principals to assess their experience of the observation process including its fairness, appropriateness, and usefulness in supporting growth and development; and
- ▶ Comparison of alignment of observation data to student outcome data.

Developing Your Plan

Key Questions

The questions below are broader than the after-action review questions and are important ones to consider as you think about building a system for tracking learning to inform improvements.

- ▶ What are the most critical elements of the evaluation system design and implementation that we must track carefully and refine immediately to build and maintain buy-in and ensure success?
- ▶ Who needs to be involved in tracking learning and adapting each of these critical elements of the system? Who needs to be involved in tracking learning and adapting the overall design and implementation? What overlap in membership do we need in the two groups?
- ▶ How do we ensure that the experiences of people on the ground — principals and teachers — are captured in our tracking and that their thinking informs refinements?
- ▶ How do we include senior leaders in tracking learning or keep them informed and ensure their support if significant mid-course corrections are required?
- ▶ What structures (e.g., work groups, standing meetings, surveys of school staff to evaluate central office services) are currently in place that could be used to track learning and inform improvements?
- ▶ How will we define and respond to the infrastructure and capacity implications of what we learn and want to improve?
- ▶ How can we explicitly and consistently communicate that the evaluation system is dynamic, that it will evolve to be responsive and reflect our learning, and that this dynamic nature is a strength (not a liability) of the system?
- ▶ How much change is reasonable, and how frequently is change feasible (i.e., will we refine the teaching framework at the end of year one to reflect feedback and learning and then keep that version 2.0 stable for several years)?

Use Template 8 on p. 74 to lay out and refine your plan to monitor progress and make mid-course corrections.

Completing This Step

With your conversation about these questions in mind, completing the template on the next page will help you articulate what specifically you want to know about the implementation of the system you have designed, when you want to know it, how and who will gather the necessary information, and with whom and for what purpose it will be shared. To orient you to the template, we have illustrated how to complete it by revisiting our example of classroom observations.

As you complete this template, know that it needs to remain dynamic. You will continually add to the list of what you want to know about how implementation is going as you keep learning about the nuances of implementation. For example, at first you will want to know if classroom observations are getting done at the pace required. Once you know implementation is, in fact, happening at that pace, you will become much more interested in knowing about the quality of the observation write-ups and the calibration of ratings across evaluators. Once you are confident about the calibration, you will likely want to track the usefulness of the information being provided to teachers.

SAMPLE TEMPLATE 8

To get you started with this step, here is an example of how you might begin to fill out the template, using classroom observation as the measure.

What we want to know about implementation	When we want to know it	How we will gather this information	Who will gather it	With whom this information will be shared	Process for using this information to improve design and implementation
Are observations happening and at what pace relative to the pace expected?	Weekly or bi-weekly	Weekly tracking of observation data inputted into information management system	Information management lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Head of evaluation initiative ■ Principal supervisors ■ Trainers working with principals 	Data will be used to inform principal training and supervision, examination and revision of the teaching framework, and principal responsibilities
Is there a range of rating reflecting the range of instructional quality in the system?	Bi-weekly or monthly	Bi-weekly or monthly analysis of ratings to assess distribution of teacher performance			
Is the calibration among evaluators increasing over time?	Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Frequent trainings with observers that include review of normed video to assess calibration 			
Are there evaluators whose ratings are spot on/outliers?	Monthly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Review of evaluation write-ups ■ Information management system tracking and comparing ratings 			

TEMPLATE 8: Tracking Learning

Directions:

- ▶ Identify the things about system implementation that you know you will need to track regularly (e.g., completion rate of evaluations, aggregated ratings of teacher performance in standard areas, relationship of scoring in different elements of the evaluation, certification rate of evaluators). This list should draw from the information, infrastructure, capacity, and accountability work you undertook in Steps 3 through 5.
- ▶ Talk through each of the other columns in the template to determine when, how, and by whom this tracking will be done. The final column is critical, as it asks how you will use what you learn from the tracking to improve the system.
- ▶ Remember that this template will be dynamic, with you revising it frequently as you begin implementing the evaluation system.
- ▶ After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions on the next page.

Please make as many copies as you need to complete this step. Or you can download an interactive version of this file at www.aspeninstitute.org/MeansToAnEnd_blank_templates.

<i>What we want to know about implementation</i>	<i>When we want to know it</i>	<i>How we will gather this information</i>	<i>Who will gather it</i>	<i>With whom this information will be shared</i>	<i>Process for using this information to improve design and implementation</i>

Reflection Questions

1. What are the information management implications of the tracking outlined in the template?
2. Who needs to be involved in developing the tracking mechanisms?
3. How will we ensure that the information is used to drive continuous improvement?
4. How does what we have done in this step support teacher growth and development?

STEP 9

Develop and Implement the Work Plan

This final step of the evaluation design process asks you to synthesize all of the work you have done in the preceding steps and lay it out in a work plan that you can use to guide and track the actual design and implementation of the evaluation system.

As you have worked your way through the steps of the guide and completed the templates you have defined the:

- ▶ Vision and goals of the evaluation system (Step 1);
- ▶ Theory of action that underlies it (Step 2);
- ▶ Information you want to include in the evaluation and how you want to present and collect it (Step 3);
- ▶ Infrastructure required (Step 4);
- ▶ Capacity that needs to be built (Step 5);
- ▶ Accountability for ensuring the system is functioning effectively (Step 6);
- ▶ Strategy for communicating with stakeholders (Step 7); and
- ▶ Plan for monitoring progress and making mid-course corrections to improve the system (Step 8).

Along the way, you also have been tracking other ideas, questions, and concerns on the *Important Issues to Consider* and *Capacity Demands* worksheets.

Now you need to weave all these pieces together into an actual plan that will take you from where you are right now to bringing to life a robust evaluation system focused on teacher growth and development that has credibility and strong buy-in. This plan needs to be quite detailed so that it can be used to guide the work.

As you work through this step, refer back to the *Important Issues to Consider* worksheet on p. 22 and the *Capacity Demands* worksheet on p. 38 to see if you can address any items you already have recorded and to keep track of ideas or issues that don't fit neatly into the templates.

➔ Synthesizing the Pieces

This final step is messy and dynamic because synthesizing all of the pieces you have designed in the earlier steps is a bit like putting a puzzle together. To make all the pieces fit, you will need to wrestle with how to sequence the work and what the pace of design and implementation will look like. You will need to assess what your current capacity and resources (time, people, and money) allow and how resources will need to be re-aligned (and how quickly that can be done) to support this work. The questions of how to integrate this work with other work under way in the system, and what political issues will need to be considered, must also inform the layout of the work plan.

As you prepare to develop the work plan, it is important to assess your confidence in the thinking you have done in each of the previous steps and the infrastructure and capacity that exists in the system to realize the vision you have laid out. Your rating for each of the steps will inform how you lay out the work plan, the timelines you establish for specific pieces of the work, whether you decide to pilot the work initially, and how you think about sequencing and pacing the work.

Have each participant in the team working on the evaluation design fill out Template 9.1 independently to surface areas of consensus and divergence. When you share the ratings you will learn more about areas that need attention than if you rate as a group.

The questions of how to integrate this work with other work under way in the system, and what political issues will need to be considered, must also inform the layout of the work plan.

Use Template 9.1 on p. 81 to rate your confidence in the work to date in Steps 1-8.

To get you started, here is an example of how one team member might fill out the template.

Step	Confidence rating: Your level of confidence in the planning and/or existing infrastructure and capacity to implement the evaluation system (1=shaky; 5=complete confidence)				
Step 1: Vision and goals for your evaluation system	1	2	3	4	5
Step 2: Theory of action	1	2	3	4	5
Step 3: Information requirements					
Information to be included	1	2	3	4	5
Presentation of information	1	2	3	4	5
Information collection	1	2	3	4	5
Step 4: Infrastructure requirements					
Policies and procedures	1	2	3	4	5
Data systems	1	2	3	4	5
Time and job responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5
Step 5: Capacity requirements					
Evaluators	1	2	3	4	5
Principals	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers	1	2	3	4	5
Other employees	1	2	3	4	5
Step 6: Supervisor and system-level accountability for teacher growth and development	1	2	3	4	5
Step 7: Communications	1	2	3	4	5
Step 8: Plan to monitor progress and make mid-course corrections	1	2	3	4	5

Revisiting Steps as Needed

Review the results on Template 9.1. For any step you assigned a high confidence rating, work planning will likely be a fairly straightforward task of outlining the work to be done and integrating it with the other steps. A rating of 3 may require more conversation and detailed planning to ensure that work is fleshed out and you have thought through all of the steps required to bring

that aspect of the evaluation to life. For steps where you rated your confidence as low (1-2), look back at your work in that step to identify about what you are specifically unsure. These issues may need to be addressed early in the work plan to provide you a strong foundation on which to develop the rest of the system.

→ Developing and Revising the Work Plan

Developing the work plan is a dynamic task because the initial version reflects your best thinking at a moment in time. You will make your best guesses about who will take responsibility for particular pieces of the work, how long each piece of work will take, and how things will fit together. Once you are in the thick of actually putting in place the system, the work plan will need to be revisited and revised repeatedly as the realities of implementation — how long certain things take, how easy or hard it is to build critical capacity, unexpected opportunities to accelerate or integrate the work in powerful ways — become apparent.

While the plan will evolve to reflect how the work actually happens, having a plan to guide action — first in the evaluation system design and then in its implementation — and to benchmark progress will make concrete how your grand vision will be realized. As you lay out the plan, you will need to establish timelines and responsibility for specific pieces of work. The timelines help you determine what is expected to happen during different phases of implementation — this school year, next summer, and the coming years. The responsibilities make explicit who (department, individuals) is responsible for executing aspects of the plan.

Refer back to your system's vision and your goals for the evaluation system that you outlined in Step 1 as you develop the work plan. Are they reflected in it?

Key Questions

The questions below identify important things to consider in drawing up your action plan:

- ▶ How do we sequence and pace the building of infrastructure and capacity to ensure that we have everything we need in place for the smoothest possible implementation?
- ▶ What are the advantages and disadvantages of piloting the evaluation system initially so that we can refine it before moving to full-scale implementation?
- ▶ What things that we want to address require other pieces of the design to be in place, and what does that mean for pacing the work?

- ▶ To what extent do current staffing and budget allocations support the work plan? What shifts in resource allocation will be required to implement the plan, and how will we generate support for this? If this shift requires a reassignment of people, what are the capacity development implications?
- ▶ What elements of the evaluation design and implementation have contractual (teacher/administrator/central office union) implications, and what does this mean for the pacing of the work? Will we be able to impact bargain, or will we have to wait for the next round of contract negotiations to put certain pieces of the design in place?
- ▶ Are things happening at the state or federal level that should inform our work plan?

Developing the work plan is a dynamic task because the initial version reflects your best thinking at a moment in time.

- ▶ Where might we generate additional resources to support this work?
- ▶ Who will be critical partners with us in this work, and how does their capacity and way of working need to inform the work plan?
- ▶ Who needs to be part of the overall management team for this work? What are the responsibilities of this team?
- ▶ What project management and oversight structures do we need to put in place to ensure the work plan is implemented, tracked, and refined?
- ▶ At what level does the system's senior leadership need to be involved to be kept informed and prepared to make any critical decisions?

Use Template 9.2 on p. 83 as you develop your work plan.

Completing This Step

With your thoughts about these questions fresh in your mind, begin the work plan template. The initial development of the work plan will be iterative as you engage a variety of players in the process.

You will need to refine the plan based on ongoing conversations and efforts to concretely identify what will be required to bring each element of the evaluation design to fruition and weave them together to create a thoughtful and coherent experience for both teachers and evaluators.

SAMPLE TEMPLATE 9.2

To get you started with this step, here is an example of how you might begin to fill out the template.

Action step	Project leader/sponsor	Partners	Completion date	Progress checks	Deliverable/output
Determine how many observations will be conducted for each teacher and what the mix of short/long, announced/unannounced, etc. will be	Head of evaluation initiative (HEI)	Human resources (HR) staff, principals, teacher leaders, union	November 1	October 15 share draft proposal with leadership team for feedback	Matrix of number and types of observations by different categories of teachers and who will conduct observations
Identify who will conduct the observations	HEI	HR, union, teaching and learning lead (T&LL)	November 1	Same as above	
Develop observer training program (decide elements, competency levels) to ensure all observers will be ready for rollout of observations	HEI	T&LL, professional development (PD) lead, or external training contractor	December 15	RFP by November 15, update to management team by December 1	Observer training program curriculum
Identify trainers	HEI	PD	January 15	Proposal to management team by January 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identification of trainers to meet demand required by matrix (above) ■ Certified observers and their supervisors
Train the observers (and their supervisors) in the teaching framework, observation techniques, and rating	Trainers	PD or external training contractor	April 30	Round 1 results February 28; round 2 results March 31; round 3 results April 30	All observers certified; those who cannot meet expectations addressed
Develop and implement additional support system for observers who do not meet expectations initially	Trainers	HEI, observers' supervisors	June 30	April 30 share proposal for additional training	
Conduct calibration training to ensure ratings are normed	Trainers	Research and assessment staff	8 days (August-June)	Track calibration data monthly	June 30 calibration within 0.1 of normed scores
Develop system to track observations, assess competence of observers, flag concerns, etc.	Research and assessment staff	HEI, PD, information management staff, observer supervisors	August 15	Monthly review of observers' performance in management meeting	Observers rated on observations in evaluation
Integrate evaluation of observations into the work of the supervisors of observers	Supervision of supervisors and HEI	HR, PD	October 15	Pilot in spring in conjunction with assignments in training program	

TEMPLATE 9.1: Confidence Scale

Directions:

- Rate your confidence on the thinking you have done on each of the steps (and sub-steps) you have previously completed. Circle the appropriate number from 1 (shaky) to 5 (complete confidence).
- Review your results. Any items with a rating of 3 may require more conversation and detailed planning to ensure that work is fleshed out and you have thought through all of the steps required to bring that aspect of the evaluation to life. For steps where you rated your confidence as low (1-2), look back at your work to identify about what you are specifically unsure.
- After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions on the next page.

Please make as many copies as you need to complete this step. Or you can download an interactive version of this file at www.aspeninstitute.org/MeansToAnEnd_blank_templates.

Step	Confidence rating: Your level of confidence in the planning and/or existing infrastructure and capacity to implement the evaluation system (1=shaky; 5=complete confidence)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Step 1: Vision and goals for your evaluation system	1	2	3	4	5
Step 2: Theory of action	1	2	3	4	5
Step 3: Information requirements					
Information to be included	1	2	3	4	5
Presentation of information	1	2	3	4	5
Information collection	1	2	3	4	5
Step 4: Infrastructure requirements					
Policies and procedures	1	2	3	4	5
Data systems	1	2	3	4	5
Time and job responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5
Step 5: Capacity requirements					
Evaluators	1	2	3	4	5
Principals	1	2	3	4	5
Teachers	1	2	3	4	5
Other employees	1	2	3	4	5
Step 6: Supervisor and system-level accountability for teacher growth and development	1	2	3	4	5
Step 7: Communications	1	2	3	4	5
Step 8: Plan to monitor progress and make mid-course corrections	1	2	3	4	5

Reflection Questions

1. What patterns do we notice about where we are most/least confident?
2. What are the implications of these confidence levels for the work we need to do as a design team and the people we need to engage in this process with us?
3. How does our assessment inform our thinking about the pacing and sequencing of the implementation plan and the possibility of piloting the system initially?

TEMPLATE 9.2: Work Plan

Directions:

- Identify action steps needed to develop and implement your evaluation system, when each step needs to happen, and who will be the lead.
- Also identify others who need to be involved in each step, how you will track progress, who is responsible for monitoring progress, and how you will know the step is complete. Note: The initial development of the work plan will be iterative as you engage a variety of players in the process.
- After completing the grid, discuss the reflection questions on the next page.

Please make as many copies as you need to complete this step. Or you can download an interactive version of this file at www.aspeninstitute.org/MeansToAnEnd_blank_templates.

<i>Action step</i>	<i>Project leader/sponsor</i>	<i>Partners</i>	<i>Completion date</i>	<i>Progress checks</i>	<i>Deliverable/outcome</i>

Reflection Questions

1. Is this plan manageable? If not, how do we re-allocate resources to make it doable or revise it?
2. Does the plan make clear our commitment to supporting teacher growth and development?

Conclusion

Going from a vision and a theory of action to a fully functioning, effective evaluation system is a complex process. This guide is intended to facilitate conversations, elevate important issues, and ensure that key stakeholders are engaged along the way. It is also intended to reinforce the importance of continuous improvement; new systems will change over the course of design and planning, and existing systems need to be periodically examined to respond to lessons learned through implementation.

To fully realize the potential of evaluations, the work needs to be situated in a comprehensive human capital system that fully develops each teacher's capacity, ensures schools are collaborative and highly professional workplaces, and seeks to retain the most effective teachers for as long as possible. Seen through this lens, we can appreciate that teacher evaluation is a means, not an end, on the path toward educating every student for success in college, career, and active citizenship.

Appendix A: Categories of Evaluation Information

STUDENT OUTCOMES: Measures of teachers' impact on student learning

- ▶ Value-added measures: individual, team, school
- ▶ Other standardized measures of achievement and/or growth
- ▶ Student work/portfolios/research projects/presentations

Considerations: There is intense interest and pressure on school systems to include student learning in teacher evaluation ratings. It's easy to see why this is a priority: teachers' most important role is to ensure that students learn, and individual teachers vary significantly in their effectiveness. But putting the theory into practice presents serious challenges. Some revolve around the logistics and methods employed in measuring teachers' impact on student learning, but many of the issues also involve political and policy questions that demand discussion and deliberation. In crafting the measures of student learning for teacher evaluations, referring back to the overall values of the system and to the specific goals for evaluation is essential.

State assessments are a logical place to start in assessing teachers' contributions to student learning. These tests are comparable across all schools and classrooms, providing levels of reliability that are hard to match with other measures. Tremendous attention has been brought to bear on creating fair estimates of teachers' contributions to student achievement on standardized tests, often referred to as "value-added estimates" because they seek to isolate the value added by a teacher to his or her students' progress. Keep in mind, however, that these estimates (1) usually come months after the end-of-year summative assessments; (2) increase significantly in stability and reliability when several years of data are aggregated; and (3) provide rankings relative to other teachers but do not provide much information about why or how a teacher can improve practice. While value-added estimates provide an important source of rigor and consistency in teacher evaluations, these measures are of limited utility in supporting teachers' professional growth and development.

Moreover, state test-score data generally are available for fewer than 40 percent of teachers — and in some systems much fewer. In some states, these tests cover only reading and math, failing to assess contributions of teachers of other subjects (and elementary teachers' effectiveness in teaching science, social studies, and other subjects), as well as teachers in grades that are not included on the state tests. Yet policy in many states requires that 40 percent to 51 percent of every teacher's evaluation be based on student outcomes. This leaves school systems to figure out how to meet this expectation in a way that supports student learning and teacher growth and development and reflects the systems' values.

In trying to figure out how to gather student learning information for students in grades and subjects that are not part of state tests, it is reasonable to look at all of the assessments used in the school to see if they measure growth in a way that can be used in evaluation. In doing such a review, consider the original purpose of assessments and the possibility of undermining it by overlaying an evaluative purpose. Diagnostic and formative assessments are often designed to inform instruction. Using them for evaluative purposes may negatively affect their diagnostic use because pressure to get high scores might limit the ability to identify areas of student weakness. Similarly, these assessments are often teacher administered and/or corrected. Beginning to use them to assess teacher performance runs the risk of creating perverse incentives for teachers (e.g., affecting how assessments are graded by teachers, exercising inappropriate influence on what is taught) that undermine the original intent of the assessments. There is no clear answer about how to best address the issue of assessments for non-tested grades and subjects, but it demands careful consideration of the costs, benefits, and trade-offs.

Many systems are using or developing additional measures of student achievement to assess teacher performance. Student learning objectives (SLOs) provide a framework for teachers and supervisors working together to set goals and establish metrics for tracking success. They can also be developed at the level of teacher teams, which creates a sense of interdependency as teachers share the score for that element of their evaluation. This can be a powerful way of recognizing and promoting collaboration.

Having teachers develop goals for their students' learning actively engages them in setting the conditions for their evaluation and becoming active agents in their growth and development. When teachers are guided to develop individual goals that are aligned with school goals (i.e., in school improvement plans), it shows teachers how their individual and/or team work affects the school goals and creates a level of coherence that can set the stage for meaningful gains in student achievement. SLOs are labor intensive and require a high level of teacher, principal, and principal supervisor capacity to implement effectively.

Other systems use common assignments at key points in the year, with some mechanism for auditing quality and rigor across schools and classrooms. Thinking beyond scores on a single standardized test to measure teacher impact on student outcomes requires systems to determine how they will ensure comparability across the system and the infrastructure and capacity the system will need to develop to ensure this work is done with integrity.

Student outcomes measures included in evaluations must align with the school system's values. Several values tensions may arise. The first one relates to the system's comfort in relying on state assessments in terms of their quality and coverage. For some districts, the expectations reflected in these assessments reflect a floor (as opposed to a ceiling) that is necessary but not sufficient for assessing student achievement, so there is discomfort in relying on them too heavily. For other school systems, the state assessments focus on only some of what the system wants to ensure students learn. In response, systems often supplement state tests with other measures.

The second tension relates to the individual versus group emphasis of the outcome measures. Will teachers' impact on student outcomes be measured on the scores of the children they teach, the scores of the students they and their colleagues — with whom they work most closely to plan instruction, develop assessments, and problem-solve instructional issues — teach, the scores of all the students in the school, or some combination of these things? How will team-teaching and re-grouping of students be accounted for?

These decisions reflect how systems prioritize the individual contributions of teachers as compared to their contributions to the grade, content area, or the larger school. They also send important signals to teachers about where they should focus their attention and energy. A heavy emphasis on the work of individual teachers will foster a culture of individualism and, possibly, competition. Including some focus on groups of teachers or the performance of all the students in the school will signal that teachers are responsible for supporting one another and accountable for one another's work.

TEACHER INPUTS: Measures of the quality of teachers' planning, delivery of instruction, and assessment of student learning

- Observations against teaching frameworks: announced, unannounced
- Lesson plans
- Assignments
- Graded student work

Considerations: The foundation of this category is a set of teaching standards that focus the observations of teachers in the classroom, augmented by artifacts of instruction (e.g., lesson plans, student assignments) and student work. Deciding whether to develop or adopt standards requires school systems to define what they believe are the elements of effective instruction and assess the extent to which existing standards reflect their values or can be adapted to do so. Denver Public Schools, for example, developed its own rubric in large part because extant frameworks were not explicit enough to reflect Denver's focus on *all* teachers' responsibilities for developing

students' full English proficiency. Adopting existing standards is initially much easier because it doesn't require the internal capacity necessary to develop standards. Systems that decide to adopt standards have to find meaningful ways to build staff's ownership of and commitment to the standards so that the standards really become their own.

The standards being used currently include a broad continuum of specificity regarding instructional practices. Some standards explicitly reference specific instructional strategies (e.g., open class with a "Do Now" activity; check for understanding every day with an end-of-class assessment or "Exit Slip") while other standards are much more general (e.g., use assessment data to inform instruction). Thinking about the advantages and disadvantages of each approach and which best fits your organization's culture, capacity, and vision for the evaluation work is important.

Moving beyond classroom observations to artifacts of teachers' planning and instruction, school systems need to consider to what extent they want to be directive with evaluators about how these artifacts are assessed versus allowing evaluators to use their professional judgment. This decision is often related to the extent to which the system feels it has a commonly shared understanding of effective instruction that would support similar approaches and ratings of this work across evaluators.

Assignments and examples of graded student work can be important sources of information regarding teachers' expectations. For example, evaluators can examine whether worksheets are used when writing assignments would be more appropriate or whether grades signal success even when students aren't meeting or progressing toward the expectations embedded in the content standards. Some of these issues might surface in observations that include pre- and post-observation conferences, but this will happen consistently only if the system has articulated these expectations explicitly.

What is abundantly clear about the use of teacher inputs is that it depends on the capacity of evaluators (many of whom are principals) to assess these inputs fairly and consistently. When a teacher gets an observation rating of 3.6 at one school, it needs to mean the same thing as a 3.6 at another school. The credibility of the entire system rests on being able to guarantee this consistency. For systems deep in the evaluation work, this has proven to be one of the most important and most challenging building blocks for successful implementation. Assumptions cannot be made about what principals and other evaluators know and are able to do. Initial training programs that focus on understanding the teaching standards, what they look like in action, and how to use the rubric and include significant practice through the use of videos or guided actual classroom visits are essential. Many systems are certifying

evaluators, allowing them to graduate and begin observations only after they have demonstrated proficiency; this is, for many school systems, a very different way of doing business.

PROFESSIONALISM: Measures of both basic professional responsibilities and how the teacher contributes to work with colleagues and the instructional program and to the overall health of the school

- ▶ Professional responsibilities (e.g., attendance, punctuality, adherence to school rules)
- ▶ Collaboration with colleagues
- ▶ Contributions to school

Considerations: This category relates to basic professional responsibilities — attendance, arriving at work on time, following the rules, and acting ethically — as well as teacher collaboration, teacher leadership, and the assumption of school-wide responsibilities. A key consideration related to this category is what you signal through what you include. If you limit these measures to basic, foundational behaviors, that is what you will get. If you use them as a way to encourage and recognize collaboration, teacher leadership, initiative, going the extra mile on behalf of students and colleagues, and a culture of shared responsibility, you are more likely to realize those things.

Sometimes, “professionalism” is included in the teaching framework and is covered in the observational rubric (usually through additional data collection) as its own standard area. Some systems have chosen to single it out as its own distinct element of the overall evaluation. The decision to single it out can be a strategic and symbolic one aimed at being very explicit about how much the system values these behaviors. Thinking about the vision for professionalism will guide the decision about how to include it.

In addition to thinking about how professionalism is measured, consider how much impact the assessment of teachers’ professionalism has on their overall evaluation score. If it is one standard of many, each of which represents only one dimension of the overall evaluation, it gets limited attention, and teachers who prioritize professionalism will have little opportunity to be recognized. Similarly, teachers who are notorious for being “free agents” will have little incentive to change.

FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND PEERS (360 DEGREE):

Measures of the perceptions of other people in the school community regarding the effectiveness of the teacher

- ▶ Student survey
- ▶ Parent survey
- ▶ Peer survey

Considerations: The idea of customers and colleagues commenting on teachers’ performance is fairly novel in education but is well established in other sectors. In school systems that are customer focused and/or used to surveying people for feedback on work and using that information to drive improvement, this is simply another tool that can be used to support their culture. In systems where feedback from colleagues and customers is unfamiliar, this category provides a rich opportunity that needs to be pursued with care.

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation’s *Measures of Effective Teaching* study found that survey data that measure students’ perception of what happens in classrooms in terms of teacher-student relationships, teacher expectations, and academic press is significantly correlated with student achievement growth measures. This finding has encouraged many school systems to start surveying students. Adopting or adapting the Tripod Project’s student survey, developed by Harvard University’s Achievement Gap Initiative, has been a popular approach.

Conversely, no data yet indicate the impact of parent surveys. They are also the hardest of the three types of data reflected in this category to obtain, given that parents are not a captive audience in the way that students and teachers are and that many school systems have a difficult time establishing and maintaining communication with parents.

Teacher surveys that assess peers’ perceptions of a teacher’s contribution to the school community, commitment to colleagues and collaboration, and professionalism can be a valuable tool in reinforcing a commitment to teamwork and collaboration. Teacher peer surveys ask adults in the system to assess the behavior and performance of other adults. If this idea is already in action in your system through surveying principals and teachers about central office staff services, the concept will not be foreign, though it may still be initially uncomfortable. If this is a system’s first foray into employees assessing one another’s performance, expanding this concept will be essential so that teachers can assess others in the system whose job it is to support them. This expansion will give surveying credibility and ensure it doesn’t feel like an unfair burden is being placed on teachers.

Regardless of who — students, parents, peers — is surveyed, it is important that they clearly understand the purpose of the survey and the importance of fair and accurate assessments. Create incentives for participating and being honest and demonstrate how the information can be used to support teacher growth and development as much as accountability. This limits the likelihood of creating perverse incentives where teachers’ interactions with students, parents, and colleagues are driven by fear of ratings rather than what is in the best interest of the student. There are also strategic issues to consider in terms of whom you survey, what you ask them to comment on, and how you use the information.

DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS' CHARACTER AND HABITS OF MIND:

Measures of teachers' impact on things that are highly valued by the school system and considered core to its definition of a well-educated student who is prepared for success.

This measure relates to the student dimension of the instructional core triangle: the relationship of teacher, student, and content that drives learning. In some cases, these areas can be assessed in student learning outcomes and teaching practices, but it is important to consider if you want to address them separately to further call out the school system's aspirations for students and expectations of teachers in this arena. The specifics of what are included in this category may be customized to the school system, but a sample of the issues to consider include:

- Perseverance and determination;
- Engagement/investment/love of learning;
- Character development;
- Oral communication skills; and
- Ability to collaborate and take on multiple perspectives.

Considerations: This category is powerful because it allows school systems to capture what they value beyond content knowledge. It is also hard to do and will require some creative thinking about what to measure and how to measure it. One consideration is how to fairly measure these things, some of which are conceptual. Another consideration is whether the system is using this category to reinforce beliefs that are already part of the culture of the school system or to introduce character and habits of mind as priorities.

Systems that have already publicly prioritized these skills and worked to build them into classroom curricula and pedagogy likely have developed resources that can inform this work. For these systems as well as systems that are just beginning to prioritize these skills, the Common Core State Standards can serve as a resource as some of these skills and habits are explicitly prioritized in the standards. In fact, Common Core implementation will require that these skills be integrated into teacher performance expectations. Given this reality, the strategic question to consider for school systems that are trying to measure these things for the first time: *How and at what pace should these ideas be introduced, and how can teacher ownership and commitment to these ideas be most successfully developed if they are new ideas being seeded in the evaluation system?*

Appendix B: Participant List

This guide was inspired and informed by discussions at the Aspen Institute Education and Society Program 2011 Summer Workshop; the guide does not represent the opinions or endorsement of individual participants or their organizations.

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