College- and Career-Readiness
Aligning Standards and Educator Effectiveness Policies

Reform Support Network

Reflections from the Reform Support Network
Teacher and Leader Effectiveness/Standards and Assessment Community of Practice
April 25–26, 2012 Convening

What does it take to translate college- and career-ready (CCR) standards from policy adoption by the State to reality in the classroom? What does it take to design and implement educator evaluations that embody and honor those standards? Race to the Top grantees simultaneously implementing CCR standards and evaluations of educator effectiveness have an unprecedented opportunity to align their aspirations for student learning with expectations for effective instruction.

At the April 25–26, 2012 convening of the Reform Support Network's Teacher and Leader Effectiveness/Standards and Assessment Community of Practice, held in Boston, Massachusetts, State leaders and experts provided insights about their expectations for the professionals tasked with implementing CCR standards and the support required to effectively evaluate CCR-aligned teaching and learning.

Panelists included:

- Sandra Alberti, Director, State and District Partnerships Initiatives/Director, Professional Development, Student Achievement Partners

- Amy Briggs, Chief Operating Officer, Student Achievement Partners

- Kate Gerson, Senior Fellow, Regents Research Fund

- Katya Levitan-Reiner, Senior Coordinator, Performance Management, New Haven Public Schools

- David Weiner, Deputy Chancellor, New York City Department of Education

The following excerpts from panelists' commentary highlight the key alignment issues that were addressed.

On the importance of alignment:

CCR standards and educator evaluations cannot be two trains traveling on separate tracks. View a presentation by David Weiner, Deputy Chancellor, New York City Department of Education ▶

There are three trains on the track: CCR standards and teacher evaluations—and student assessment. How students perform on CCR assessments is the bottom line and the real test of alignment. View a presentation by Sandra Alberti, Director, State and District Partnerships Initiatives/Director, Professional Development, Student Achievement Partners ▶

The Common Core will soon permeate every aspect of teacher evaluation—from student achievement and value-added results to classroom observations to student learning objectives and goals set by teachers. View a presentation by Katya Levitan-Reiner, Senior Coordinator, Performance Management, New Haven Public Schools ▶

On the culture change required by CCR standards and new evaluations:

Our purpose is to support teachers, not comfort them. The Common Core requires real shifts in teaching and learning. Leaders might best resist the urge to engage in calming messages that convey to teachers "you are already doing this." View a presentation by Amy Briggs, Chief Operating Officer, Student Achievement Partners ▶

School leaders have had to reallocate their time toward instruction and teacher effectiveness, up to 50 percent of their workload. View a presentation by David Weiner, Deputy Chancellor, New York City Department of Education ▶

On the need for building evaluator capacity:

When evaluation moves from the design phase into implementation, it is time to focus on building the capacity to assess effectively. The effective evaluator will understand how the common core looks in the classroom and how to collect objective evidence of its presence, a labor-intensive and emotional process. View a presentation by Kate Gerson, Senior Fellow, Regents Research Fund ▶

The effective evaluator has deep content knowledge and understanding of the changes required by the Common Core. View a presentation by Kate Gerson, Senior Fellow, Regents Research Fund ▶

On effective implementation:

Dealing with transition requires tolerance for imperfect and difficult work, but States, local educational agencies, school leaders and educators need to press forward, for however hard the work, it is worth doing. View presentations by Kate Gerson, Senior Fellow, Regents Research Fund; Sandra Alberti, Director, State and District Partnerships Initiatives/Director, Professional Development, Student Achievement Partners ▶

There is no one way for every single school to accomplish this change: there are multiple paths to the final goal. LEAs have a balance to find between autonomy and conditions for success in schools. View a presentation by David Weiner, Deputy Chancellor, New York City Department of Education ▶

Teacher engagement is critical in the cultural change required to effectively implement CCR standards and evaluations. View presentations by Amy Briggs, Chief Operating Officer, Student Achievement Partners; Kate Gerson, Senior Fellow, Regents Research Fund ▶

Start with manageable: one unit each semester of CCR-aligned instruction. Because teachers have the most authentic experience of implementation, provide a menu of aligned support materials and training. View a presentation by Kate Gerson, Senior Fellow, Regents Research Fund ▶

This will not be a linear process, but that is all right. View a presentation by David Weiner, Deputy Chancellor, New York City Department of Education ▶