FOSTERING A PRODUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION AND UNION
Presenters

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Session Objectives

• To equip participants with new knowledge about initiatives taking place around the country that showcase district-union collaboration around challenging educator quality issues.
• To provide participants with an opportunity to brainstorm with colleagues solutions to their challenges relating to productively working with unions.
• To inspire participants to proactively work on building relationships and jointly advancing teaching and learning with union partners.
About the TQ Center

The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (TQ Center) serves as the premier national resource to which the regional comprehensive centers, states, and other education stakeholders turn for strengthening the quality of teaching—especially in high-poverty, low-performing, and hard-to-staff schools—and for students with special needs.
Quiz Question 1

• Approximately what percentage of teachers are union members?
  A) 60-65%
  B) 70-75%
  C) 80-85%
  D) 90-95%
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Quiz Question 2

• In 1959, which state was the first to pass collective bargaining legislation?

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B) Massachusetts
C) New York
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- What percent of teachers would be “open to” or would “welcome it” if their union put more focus on broader academic issues?

A) 89%
B) 76%
C) 52%
D) 39%
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Research

• Study by CCSSO and OECD (2011)
  – Ontario, Canada

• Study by NCTAF and NEA (2007)
  – Clark County, NV
  – Hamilton County, TN
Joint Study by the AFT and AIR

• Purpose of study is to demonstrate that school and union leaders at every level can and must work together to transform schools into the kinds of organizations that are well fitted to Generation Y.
A Few General Notes about Gen Y

• Members of Gen Y are team-oriented and thrive on collaboration.

• Members of Gen Y are idealistic and optimistic, and want to change their workplaces, and the world, for the better.

• For characteristics of Gen Y teachers visit: www.RetainingTeacherTalent.org
Gen Y Teachers Want High-Performing Workplaces that…

- Ensure teachers receive regular feedback on their effectiveness
- Support peer learning and shared practice
- Recognize (and reward) high performance
- Have fair, rigorous, and meaningful evaluation systems
- Leverage technology intelligently to enhance performance
St. Francis, Minnesota

- Student Performance Improvement Program
  - Mentors for new teachers for first 3 years
  - 5 observations by performance review team
  - Participation in Teacher Academy
  - Initially sparked by teacher frustration with low-quality professional development
  - Large union role in policy development, roll-out, and communication
Austin, Texas

• REACH Program
  – Teacher-developed and principal-approved Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)
  – Financial bonuses based on meeting SLOs or working in high-need or high-growth schools
  – Mentors for new teachers
  – Initially sparked by school board and the state, but union advice was taken on board to take the time to do it right
  – Superintendent asked union president to co-chair the task force
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

- 2010 Teacher Contract
  - The district and union jointly travelled to study peer-assistance-and-review programs
  - A “leap of faith” was taken with site-based selection
  - Improved mentoring and professional development
  - School-wide value-added compensation
  - Incentives for achieving National Board Certification

- Strong Beginnings ER&D Induction Program
10 Keys to Promoting Collaboration between Unions and Districts

1) Long-term relationships between district and union leaders
2) Charismatic, competent, committed teacher leaders who can build trust among staff
3) Support of the school board
4) Shared goals of improving student achievement
5) Start with issues of mutual concern (e.g., spending funds more wisely to improve teaching, applying jointly for additional funding)
10 Keys to Promoting Collaboration

6) Union involvement in initiatives from the very start
7) Gentle, well-thought-through introduction of new program, including joint presentations to staff by district and union
8) Constant communication with union and all teachers (even through disagreements)
9) Independent surveys of teachers
10) Collaborative or interest-based bargaining
Everyone at the Table: Working Collaboratively on Teacher Evaluation

• Project jointly conducted by Public Agenda and AIR to promote collaboration between teachers and districts on evaluation reform.

• Videos and binder material to promote dialogue and collaboration will be available this summer.

• Initial finding: Talking about controversial teacher quality issues can make teachers more open to new ideas and can show administrators how helpful the teachers’ voice can be.
Moving Forward

• “A leader is someone who steps back from the entire system and tries to build a more collaborative, more innovative system that will work over the long term.”
  -Robert B. Reich
References


Discussion Questions

1) What kind of relationship do you have with your union – collaborative or adversarial?

2) What are the key obstacles to working better together to advance teaching and learning and what would have to change for these obstacles to be overcome?

3) What resources do you have in place to help facilitate the desired relationship between the district and the union?
Collaboration and School Reform in New Haven
Progress Driven by Cross-Group Input and Discussion

Winter/Spring 2009
- Launch of New Haven reform, and conflict in State Capital over Charter Schools

Summer 2009
- Reset of reform with joint reform discussions - Contract negotiations overlapping and in parallel

Sept 2009
- NHFT reform contract agreement (Approved by 855 to 42)
  - Multi-party committees created by contract agreement (Reform, Teacher Evaluation and Development or TEVAL, and Survey – also PEVAL), with Teacher Committees in parallel

Fall/Winter 2009
- District surveys on Central Office Effectiveness & on evaluation and coaching

Dec 2009
- First Tiering of Schools, identifying 7 pilot schools with significant flexibility

Mar 2010
- Recommendations on TEVAL and PEVAL approved by NHPS Board of Education
  - First Climate survey of schools, including 360 feedback on School Leadership

Spring 2010
- Launch of new school year with revised NHPS evaluation and development systems

Today
- On-going multiparty dialogue and strengthening of reform program
What has “Collaborative Approach” Meant in NHPS?

Start with Common Goals
- Reform discussions began with a Joint Statement of Beliefs
- At start of TEVAL process, we established a common frustration with existing evaluation and development, and aligned ambitions for a new system

Validate Concerns
- There are teachers in the district who are struggling…but there are also administrators that are struggling, and so teachers need mechanisms of both protection (3rd party validation) and feedback (climate surveys)

Don’t Demonize Partners
- The vast majority of both teachers and administrators are capable, competent people, capable and eager for professional coaching relationships

Connect Relevant Issues
- Administrators need time and focus to be effective coaches and evaluators – which means other issues need a lower priority
- Similarly, need for high-quality and timely student assessments

Put the Time In
- Collaboration means time, commitment, and patience – in order to demonstrate commitment to teamwork and to common objectives
## Primary Concerns and their Response

### Primary Concerns

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEACHERS</th>
<th>ADMINISTRATION</th>
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| • Teacher tenure, or protection of basic due process  
• Use of test scores in a teachers evaluation  
• Top to Bottom Accountability, including principals and central office  
• Translation from teacher input to actual action in the district | • Practical and actionable process for teacher coaching and consequential evaluation within one academic year  
• Meaningful school-level flexibility, including the buy-in of faculty and staff  
• Avoiding the “blame-game”, of parents, teachers, principals, or central office  
• Building momentum for change and improvement |

### Response

| • Format: Clear contract language to delineate reform measures  
• Input: Creation of Citywide committees, with parallel teacher working groups  
• Reform Elements:  
  • Top to Bottom Accountability, including aligned processes/materials, all the way to superintendent  
  • In TEVAL, 3rd Party Validation, multiple measures of student performance, and weight of student performance depending on consistency of result  
• Style: Emphasis on Comer principles of “No Fault” discussion, and use of broad input (survey, committees, etc) to identify consensus rather than extreme positions |
All New Haven School Change materials are available at www.nhps.net, under the School Change Tab

- Joint Statement of Beliefs
- TEVAL Documents
Joint Statement of Beliefs (as of 7/30/2009)

Goal: Be the best urban district in the country, as measured by the performance and learning gains achieved by all public school students

We believe that:

• substantial improvement in student learning is needed in New Haven, that improvement is possible, and that there is urgency to making changes to accomplish those improvements
• a sharper focus and greater priority on student learning is needed at all layers of the organizations
  • High expectations for the performance of all students are essential, as are the complementary expectations for adult performance.
• the people in the system – teachers, principals, and other staff – are the district’s most important resources, and that their individual and collective effectiveness is the most important factor in improving student results
• schools are the most important organizational units in the system, and that our policies and systems need to support the individual excellence of each school
• that the best outcomes will come through the ongoing collaboration of the adults in and around the school system, all of whom are motivated to help students learn – including teachers, administrators, central staff, parents, and the Unions
Moving Forward

We are conscious that both our reform and our relationship must continue to evolve. Areas of focus include:

- Expanding the capacity (i.e. time) and the capability (i.e. expertise) of school leaders to coach and collaborate with teachers
- Ensuring long term development and career trajectory for teachers, and strengthening the professional community among teachers to emphasize collective professionalism in balance to individual rights
- Ensuring a tone of respect and professionalism, even in the face of our urgent work to improve student results, and especially in difficult conversations
- Ensuring deep collaboration with other adults responsible for students, including parents and nonprofits/agencies
New Evaluation and Development System Highlights

The teacher evaluation and development system was created in partnership with the New Haven Federation of Teachers (NHFT), and includes a number of significant important changes and components:

- Prioritizes instructional coaching and development of teachers through professional feedback relationships with managers, prioritizing a periodic conferencing process for all teachers, rather than simply classroom observations for teachers in certain cycles;
- Encourages administrators to provide frequent, concrete feedback to teachers about their performance against a clear, detailed performance rubric, through multiple classroom observations;
- Incorporates student growth as measured by objective assessments as a factor in evaluations; and
- Uses an innovative validation process, so that third party experts validate administrator judgments about both exemplary and needs improvement teacher performance.
TEVAL Components

- Multiple components of teaching included in evaluation and coaching
- Student Learning Growth, Instructional Practice, and Professional Values evaluated from Needs Improvement (i.e. “1”) to Exemplary (i.e. “5”), and synthesized to a summative rating

TEVAL Process

Professional Interactions: Observation and Situational Feedback

Identification of ‘NI’ and ‘EX’ teachers triggers Validation Process

Sept
Goal Setting Conference

Nov 1
Mid-year Conference

Mar 1
End of Year Conference

July
Assessment of Teacher Performance (Summative)

The ratings for the three evaluation components will be synthesized into a final summative rating at the end of each year.

*Ratings with this degree of mismatch should be the subject of focused policy review, outside the context of the specific teacher’s evaluation, to determine why such a mismatch is occurring and what, if anything, needs to be corrected. The individual ratings themselves will also be reviewed to ensure that the given rating in these situations is fair and accurate based on the preponderance of evidence shared by the instructional manager and teacher. Individual ratings may be adjusted for unfairness or inconsistency.

Note: Instructional Practices will make up 80 percent of the combined Instructional Practices and Professional Values rating. Professional Value will account for 20 percent.
PEVAL Components

**Summary Rating**

**PEVAL Process**

- **Student Learning and School Performance:** Goal setting includes CMT or CAPT, and school performance on climate survey
- **Leadership practices instead of Instructional Practices**
- **Professional values are the same for teachers and school administrators**

**Professional Interactions: Observation and Situational Feedback**

- **Sept**: Goal Setting Conference
- **Nov 1**: Mid-year Conference
- **Mar 1**: End of Year Conference
- **July**: No validation process for principals and APs, so first official rating comes at the end of the year

*In first year, goal setting and mid-year conference combined*
SIG Turnaround School: Brennan/Rogers

Perspectives from the Principal
SIG Turnaround and Work Rules

- March 2010 NHPS classifies Brennan-Rogers as a Tier 3 Turnaround School. Teaching staff were presented with “turnaround” work rules.
- April 2010 staff were required to reapply if interested in returning to Brennan-Rogers under the new work rules.
- During the recruitment and hiring process the work rules were paramount to establishing a new school culture/identity.
- The principal was given total discretion in all matters pertaining to re-hires and new hires.
- The actual hiring process entailed a review of the work rules, face to face interviews and actual model lessons.
Turnaround and Work Rules

• The work rules establish a culture of collaboration and joint responsibility which are critical elements to turnaround work.
• Extended school hours, arrival/dismissal and lunch supervision, daily collaboration times embedded PD and data analysis are cornerstones to the new culture at Brennan-Rogers.
• The challenge and the structure set forth in the work rules provided a clear picture of the personalization and dedication required of staff.
• Work rules provided flexibility for the school administration rather than strict confines that can contradict the focus on student needs.
• Creativity is needed in developing the school master schedule.
Turnaround and TEVAL

• TEVAL has provided a new framework for the teacher evaluation process – one that is predicated on mutual input and perceptions which provides teachers with an active rather passive role.

• TEVAL can be explained as a collaborative process which aligns perfectly with the work of a turnaround school.

• TEVAL provides a great outline for new teachers to help them clearly know what domains they are being evaluated upon while establishing that actual classroom observations can happen at any time (i.e. more frequent).

• TEVAL also complements the work of a turnaround school in keeping a sharp focus on goal setting, data analysis and data collection – which is a great complement/reinforcer.
TEVAL/Work Rule: Lessons Learned

• Work Rules being addressed/extended to all school staff such as paraprofessionals and itinerant staff
• Readjusting the early rating/identification process in October which proved problematic for a turnaround school with many new staff members/first year teachers
• Developing and monitoring teacher improvement plans/PD plans so to meet the needs of the diversity of the teaching staff
• Aligning teacher student learning goals to the School Improvement Plan for greater focus and to increase individual teacher accountability to the School Improvement Plan (SIP)

• Time….more of it
Questions for the New Haven Team
In groups of 3 at your table, discuss:

• What relationships do you see between the AFT/AIR paper and what is happening in the New Haven Public Schools?

• From these relationships, or from either of the 2 presentations, identify 2-3 key issues that you think would be critical to moving your school/district forward and that you would want to bring to the attention of your school or district. Why these?
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