



PRINCIPLES *in* PRACTICE:
STATE EXAMPLES *of*
TEACHER SUPPORT
AND EVALUATION
SYSTEMS

THE COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nonpartisan, nationwide, nonprofit organization of public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five U.S. extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO provides leadership, advocacy, and technical assistance on major educational issues. The Council seeks member consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress, and the public.

Principles in Practice: State Examples of Teacher Support and Evaluation Systems

COUNCIL OF CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICERS

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and our members is to make sure every child in our public education system – regardless of background – graduates prepared for college, careers, and life. This work begins with an effective teacher in every classroom.

State education chiefs across the country know that great teachers inspire, educate, and open doors of opportunity for children of all backgrounds. Achieving the aspiration of a great teacher in every classroom requires state leadership. States can create comprehensive teacher development systems that continuously improve over time, ensure equitable instruction to a diverse student body, and strike a balance between support and accountability.

Taking this expectation to scale requires states to set and implement policy that provides teachers with feedback on instruction along with professional learning, coaching, and other supports to help them meet the needs of each student.

CCSSO's [Principles for Teacher Support and Evaluation Systems](#) focuses on developing teachers through support and evaluation systems. Building on this work, CCSSO has produced a series of briefs based on interviews with state education agency officials and published materials. The briefs demonstrate the CCSSO principles in practice and offer examples of how teacher support, development, and leadership opportunities enable that goal. The three states and the corresponding principles are summarized below:

1. **Iowa:** State law allows school districts to opt into the Teacher Leadership and Compensation System (TLC). Though optional, all 338 of Iowa's school districts are now implementing TLCs and deploying teachers in new systemic ways. Iowa's approach exemplifies principle **1.C** by strategically connecting teacher support to teacher leadership and compensation. Teachers lead school-based professional development activities, either as full-time release instructional coaches, part-time release instructional leaders, or full-time teachers who open up their classrooms as models to their colleagues.

2. **Washington:** State initiatives embody both opportunities in [Leading for Equity: Opportunities for State Education Chiefs](#) and principle **1.D** by aligning their support and evaluation processes to student standards, curricula, and assessment. In Washington's case, the state is inspiring school districts to do more to help teachers meet the needs of their diverse student bodies by integrating cultural competencies into the evaluation systems, and the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction is developing tools to help them do so.

3. **Wisconsin:** State policy for teacher evaluation demonstrates principle **2.A** by ensuring support and evaluation is an ongoing process with high-quality feedback. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction produces statewide events on how districts can build collaborative cultures based on feedback and highly recommends that districts designate coaches to help evaluators give effective formative and summative feedback.

IOWA:

TEACHER LEADERSHIP AND COMPENSATION SYSTEM

Iowa by the Numbers

Schools: 1,364

Teachers: 34,725

Districts: 338

Students: 480,772

BACKGROUND

2013 was a big year for teacher leadership in Iowa. The Iowa State Department of Education (IDE) and a large stakeholder group's year-long effort – backed by strong support from the state's governor – paid off in groundbreaking legislation, [House File 215](#). The omnibus bill created for school districts a voluntary Teacher Leadership and Compensation System (TLC), which established a framework for differentiated leadership roles and compensation.

At the heart of TLC is the system's commitment to making teacher leaders the agents of the development of their teaching colleagues. The law expects teachers to take on responsibilities for the design and delivery of professional development – which includes playing a role in the induction of new teachers.

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

The law provides state model frameworks for career pathways but allows districts to develop their own. Almost all districts have chosen their own paths, acknowledging their unique needs, while still using the frameworks for guidance. IDE required districts that volunteered to participate in TLC – and all 333 districts did opt in – to engage in an extensive planning process which included how they would use prior demonstrated measures of effectiveness and professional growth in the selection of teacher leaders and descriptions of the roles teacher leaders will play in the creation and delivery of professional development.

In the small 800-student Marcus-Meriden-Cleghorn-Remson Union Community School District (MMCRU) in northwest Iowa, four teachers have taken on differentiated roles to support its four schools. One math and one reading instructional interventionist help teachers differentiate instruction, a technology interventionist develops staff capacity to integrate technology into instruction, and a curriculum specialist oversees induction and the district's effort to align curriculum and instruction across grades K-12. Together, they plan, design, and implement professional development activities, and mentor and coach their colleagues.

In the West Des Moines Community Schools, Indianola Community Schools, and Johnston Community Schools in central Iowa, the teacher leaders who receive the most additional compensation are instructional coaches – annual stipends ranging from \$2,500-6,000. In Indianola, a typical day for a coach finds him or her in classrooms observing instruction, using

videotapes of lessons to debrief the observations, and developing plans to help teachers meet their goals. The coach also takes on responsibilities for working with the principal to plan building-wide professional development activities. Johnston places teacher-leaders in hybrid roles, released from classroom duties 25 percent of their time to work directly with teachers in specific content areas, while the full-time coaches are generalists.

West Des Moines, Indianola, and Johnston also pay small stipends to other teacher leaders who maintain full teaching loads and take on a range of responsibilities for professional development activities: collecting and synthesizing data to help leadership teams make decisions about what professional development activities to provide, conducting model lessons, mentoring new teachers, providing guidance on behavior interventions, and helping teachers integrate new technologies such as iPads or the arts into instruction, to name just a few.

The Johnston Community Schools District's Summit Middle School Principal Joy Wiebers sums up what the additional support for teachers means to her school, "Before TLC, being a principal could be lonely. Now our school has a large group of teacher leaders that works together to help all of us have a greater impact on student learning."

Each district has an oversight committee, which must be populated by both teachers and administrators. Typical is the Johnston TLC Site Committee. Its members include four administrators: the executive director of teaching, learning, and innovation; the executive director of human resources; one elementary school principal; and one secondary principal – and four teachers: one elementary, one middle, and one high school teacher joined by the TLC Facilitator, who is also a teacher and responsible for implementation of TLC.

Like other TLC site committees, Johnston's uses a rigorous process to select its teacher leaders. Some sites supplement

BACKGROUND ON HOUSE FILE 215

The teacher leadership section of the law has several goals: attracting and retaining effective teachers, promoting collaboration, rewarding professional growth and effective teaching, and improving student achievement by strengthening instruction. The legislation staged the rollout of TLC and appropriated funding for an initial-year of planning for school districts. The 2014-15 school year saw the first set of schools begin implementation, with second and third cohorts following in 2015-16 and 2016-17, each year supported by successive stages of state-funding of \$50, \$100, and \$150 million. That \$150 million will roll over into the state's per-pupil allocation in 2017-18, guaranteeing that districts will be able to fund their programs in perpetuity. Districts use the funding to pay for additional teacher leadership positions, stipends, release time, professional development for teacher leaders, and raising the minimum teacher salary to \$33,500.

written applications with videos of teaching or actual performance tasks such as leading a professional development activity or teaching a mini-lesson. “Districts have taken the selection process very seriously,” reports IDE Director Ryan Wise. “They really are getting the best teachers into these positions.”

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—Ryan Wise, Education Director,
Iowa Department of Education

IMPACT

Highlights from the department’s January 2017 [status report](#), which draws in part from an outside evaluation conducted by the American Institutes for Research and compares results for the first two cohorts of school districts with districts that had yet to begin TLC implementation, include

Retention: 79 percent of teacher leaders reported that they are more likely to stay at their schools and in the teaching profession as a result of TLC. TLC districts retained slightly greater percentages of teachers in the first five years of teaching – a finding made even more significant by the fact that the first two cohorts included all of Iowa’s urban school districts, where mobility and turnover is the highest.

Effectiveness of Teacher Leaders: 87 percent of teachers and 96 percent of leaders indicated they agree somewhat or agree strongly that teacher leadership roles established through TLC are effective. Teachers and leaders in TLC districts were significantly more likely to agree strongly that teacher leadership roles are effective.

Quality of Professional Development: Teachers in TLC districts were significantly more likely to agree that the professional development they received was of high quality.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Stakeholder Engagement: The department built and is now implementing TLC on a foundation of strong stakeholder engagement. A team of 25 stakeholders designed TLC and recommended policy to the state legislature. Area and professional associations sit on the TLC Support Team. Districts applying for funding for TLC were required to engage stakeholders in the design of

their own TLC programs, and, within school districts, teams of teachers and administrators work together to select the teacher leaders and oversee their TLC programs.

Sustainable Funding: State policy mandates that dollars earmarked for start-up will roll into the regular school funding scheme, making all district programs sustainable.

Overcoming Misconceptions: IDE Director Ryan Wise reports that it has been a challenge for school communities to overcome concerns that TLC will hurt student learning by taking the best teachers out of the classroom. The department, he reports, will do more in the future to help school districts communicate that teacher leaders will have an impact on far more students than just those in their classrooms.

State Support: The department's TLC unit has two full-time staffers who oversee implementation. They facilitated the staged rollout of three individual cohorts of school district TLC systems over a period of three years. They coordinate a statewide TLC support team consisting of area education agencies (AEAs), school board, administrator, and education associations to coordinate the supports AEAs deliver to districts. The staff review and approve all revisions to district TLC plans, evaluate annual reports submitted by each district, visit schools to identify supports AEAs and other partners can deliver, and oversee the state's Administrator Support Program. This program provides MMCRU's Principal Jason Tongues and select colleagues from West Des Moines, Indianola, other school districts trainings and individual coaching sessions twice a month to help them implement TLC in their schools – in particular how to work with instructional coaches. The department also developed an [online suite of tools](#) to support implementation. The tools include a self-assessment to help teachers and administrators identify professional development needs, articles, learning modules, websites, videos, and space for community forum discussions.

“Some of our strongest teacher association members became teacher leaders and saw the benefits. As the Association saw the benefits, it really opened up our lines of communication with each other.”

*—Graham Jones, Principal, Hillside Elementary,
West Des Moines Community Schools*

WASHINGTON STATE: PROMOTING EQUITY THROUGH TEACHER EVALUATIONS

Washington by the Numbers

Schools: 2,354

Teachers: 64,323

Districts: 295

Students: 1,088,969

BACKGROUND

Washington State long ago committed itself to closing the opportunity gap for students. In 2010, the revised *Code of Washington 28A.410.270* enabled the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) to create performance standards for effective teaching to improve student

learning. Those standards are calibrated along an entire career continuum including standards of cultural competency.

PESB subsequently [adopted cultural competency standards](#) for teachers across the career continuum, from pre-service training, to the two-year induction period, to professional certification in years 3-5, to career teaching afterwards. These standards include “knowledge of student cultural histories and contexts, as well as family norms and values in different cultures,” the ability to adapt “instruction to student’s experiences,” and “identify cultural context for individual students.”

THE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY GAP OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE ([EOGOAC](#))

The Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee is Washington State’s unique committee that focuses on closing the opportunity gap. The committee is made up of bicameral and bipartisan legislative members, representation from the African American, Asian, Hispanic, and Pacific Islander ethnic commissions, as well as the Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs and

The Four Components of Washington’s Cultural Competency Standards Development Matrix

1. Professional ethics within a global and multicultural society. Ethical and moral concepts and practices that undergird Equity, Civil Rights, and Cultural Competence for education professionals and systems.
2. Civil rights and non-discrimination laws. An understanding of state and federal civil rights and non-discrimination laws.
3. Reflective practices, self-awareness and anti-bias. Awareness of one’s own cultural background and how it influences perception, values and practices. Understanding of structural benefits and privileges and how they mold educational practices and organizations. Ability to find and use tools, processes, and programs that promote professional, and organizational self-examination and assessment in order to mitigate behaviors and practices that undermine inclusion, equity, and Cultural Competence in education.
4. Repertoires of practices for teaching effectiveness in culturally diverse populations. An understanding of the broad range of experiences and groups that students bring to the classroom and how these experiences impact learning.

the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. The EOGOAC is the first committee in the nation of its kind. In its [2016 Annual Report](#), the EOGOAC recommended a comprehensive framework to close the opportunity gap, which resulted in the passage of [Engrossed Fourth Substitute House Bill 1541](#) and a focus on cultural competency and equity in teacher evaluation and support.

THE STATE EDUCATION AGENCY ELEVATES EQUITY THROUGH CULTURAL COMPETENCY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In 2016 as required by E4SHB 1541, Washington State’s Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) set out to elevate equity through three commitments that address cultural competency:

- OSPI will create and maintain a website that makes available a professional development program that supports the evaluation systems school districts are implementing. Part of this work will include the creation of modules for teachers, principals, and other administrators that will incorporate elements of cultural competence that focus on multicultural education and the components of English language acquisition – and specifically Native American tribal history and culture-focused curriculum. The content of the training will align to the standards for cultural competence developed by PESB.
- OSPI will collaborate with the Washington State School Directors’ Association and other partners to plan cultural competency training for school board directors and superintendents that aligns to the PESB standards.
- OSPI will outline cultural competence professional development training for school staff and will encourage districts with federal school improvement grants and priority schools to provide cultural competency training to all staff.

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—Chris Reykdal, Superintendent

IMPACT

OSPI and its partners are in the process of designing the trainings and aligning them to the state's cultural competency standards. OSPI is also developing materials to supplement the three state-approved evaluation frameworks: Charlotte Danielson's, Robert Marzano's, and the Center for Educational Leadership's. Maria Flores of OSPI reports that the state's eight criteria for teacher evaluation and the evaluation frameworks already did address cultural competency, but the state "wants to go deeper." As a result, OSPI has been working with the authors of the frameworks and an equity consultant to add examples of evidence of cultural competency to each framework so that principals have clear examples of practices that reflect cultural competency when they evaluate teachers.

STAY TUNED

As of this writing, these materials have not been released. OSPI plans to unveil them by July 2017. It is too early to tell how Washington's substantial and groundbreaking commitment to equity and ensuring the cultural competence of its educators – and its school board members – will pay off. In an ever-diversifying nation, it will be important to watch and see how policy results in practice.

WISCONSIN: IMPROVING PRACTICE THROUGH FEEDBACK

Wisconsin by the Numbers

Schools: 2,215

Teachers: 59,930

Districts: 424

Students: 867,137

BACKGROUND

Established by Wisconsin Act 166 in 2011, the Wisconsin Educator Effectiveness System provides a learning-centered approach to evaluating educators. It supports continuous improvement of educator practice through timely and consistent feedback.

Wisconsin made the strategic decision to roll out the educator effectiveness system with a clear focus on improving educator support and capacity, rather than rankings and ratings, as the right driver to improve student outcomes.

HIGHLIGHTING INDIVIDUAL PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Rolling out the educator effectiveness system involved a few design principles.

Prioritized collaboration: Led by the state superintendent, Wisconsin brought all of the state’s education partners together for early planning and collective buy-in: unions, governor’s office, legislature, educator preparation programs, charter and private school representatives, district leaders, principals, and classroom teachers.

Grounded work in research: Wisconsin designed the system based on research that confirmed that teacher and principal effectiveness are the two most important factors in improving student achievement. Wisconsin also selected the [2013 Framework for Teaching](#) by Charlotte Danielson for use in its evaluation because it was supported by research, designed to support educator learning and growth, and familiar to most Wisconsin districts.

Emphasized educator growth: When designing the system, Wisconsin removed any measures that compared teachers to one another and measures that did not explain how the teacher could improve. The learning-centered evaluation rubric is organized into four domains – Planning and Preparation, The Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities – and describes four levels of professional practice – unsatisfactory, basic,

“We are allowing teachers to be learners, take risks and struggle.”

—Katharine Rainey, Director
Wisconsin DPI Educator Effectiveness

proficient, and distinguished. Instead of providing general feedback at the domain level, the system encourages evaluators to frame feedback around specific critical attributes within the domains. Evaluators link feedback at the critical attribute level directly to higher levels of practice, providing a plan for growth.

Created a cycle of continuous improvement: Teachers complete a one-year, two-year, or three-year educator effectiveness cycle that emphasizes regular (e.g., weekly, monthly) coaching throughout the year that focuses less on a specific lesson and more on educator practice (teachers who are new to the district complete a one-year cycle). The initial year (or years) of a cycle focuses on professional goal setting, educator effectiveness planning, ongoing collaborative discussions with peers and evaluators, and adjustments based on data, observations, and reflection. Teachers have discussions based on the evaluation rubric and measures of student learning throughout a cycle with colleagues and coaches and in the final year of a cycle with an evaluator or supervisor. The goal of every cycle is to connect a teacher’s current level of practice to that teacher’s desired level of practice.

“I am able to reflect on my practice with a focus on specific categories and not just as a whole. Being able to talk through scores with my administrator has helped in a big way.”

—Anne Dolph, Southwood Glen Elementary Teacher

Supported Implementation: Wisconsin developed the [Wisconsin Educator Effectiveness Implementation Guide](#) to assist local leadership teams in self-assessing implementation progress. Wisconsin also drafted the [User Guide for Teachers and Teacher Evaluators](#) (to be finalized June 2017) to help teachers, evaluators, and coaches plan and carry out learning-centered evaluations. Interactive trainings on writing learning-centered goals and engaging in formative feedback, sample student learning objectives, and planning templates live on the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction’s [website](#).

To ensure consistent messaging and training, the state also launched [WOW \(Working on the Work\) Events](#) – statewide professional development streamed live to the 12 regions across the state. The series initially focused on building collaboration and feedback culture, recognizing that no system will be effective without a positive and growth-oriented culture. The series shifted to differentiate support based on educator needs identified through statewide data, such as assessment and data literacy.

IMPACT

The state is measuring impact of the educator effectiveness system in three areas:

1. Educator perceptions of the system
2. Change in educator practice
3. Change in student outcomes

Still early in the implementation process, survey data indicate that Wisconsin has had the most success in shifting educator perceptions of the system. State leadership also feels that conversations around practice are more productive and consistent and that feedback is improving. Initial evaluation results suggest the system not only improves educator practice, but, when implemented well, is a successful retention strategy helping districts keep their best educators.

“The process of evaluation as a whole has never been better than it is right now.”

*—Joe Schroeder, Associate Executive Director
Association of Wisconsin School Administrators*

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Climate of Trust: Districts that implement the system around a culture and climate of trust and collaboration are better able to benefit from evaluation feedback. Evaluation results also suggest educators in these districts have higher rates of job satisfaction.

Regular Feedback: Although formal check-ins at the beginning, middle, and end keep an evaluation on track, informal and regular observations, data review, reflection, and adjustments have significant impact on practice.

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RESOURCES

CCSSO

CCSSO Principles for Teacher Support and Evaluation Systems: <http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/2016/Principles%20for%20Teacher%20Support%20and%20Evaluation%20Systems.pdf>

Leading for Equity: Opportunities for State Education Chiefs: www.ccsso.org/equity

Iowa

House File 215: <https://coolice.legis.iowa.gov/linc/85/external/govbills/HF215.pdf>

The Iowa Department of Education's suite of online tools to support TLC: https://www.educateiowa.gov/teacher-leadership-and-compensation-system#TLC_Documents_and_Resources

Teacher Leadership and Compensation Status Report: <https://www.educateiowa.gov/documents/legislative-information/2017/01/teacher-leadership-and-compensation-status-report-january>

Washington

Cultural Competency Standards Matrix: <http://www.pesb.wa.gov/cultural-competency>

Information about the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee and links to annual reports: <http://www.k12.wa.us/Workgroups/EOGOAC.aspx>

Engrossed Fourth Substitute House Bill 1541: <http://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=1541&Year=2015>

Wisconsin

Charlotte Danielson's *2013 Framework for Teaching*: <https://www.danielsongroup.org/framework/>

Wisconsin Educator Effectiveness Implementation Guide: <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/ee/pdf/ImplementationGuide.pdf>

User Guide for Teachers and Teacher Evaluators [draft]: <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/ee/pdf/teacherprocessmanual-draft.pdf>

WOW (Working on the Work) Events: <https://dpi.wi.gov/ee/training-support/wow>



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