Linking Teacher Evaluation and Professional Growth

Institute for Educational Leadership
Washington Policy Seminar

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Center on
GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS
at American Institutes for Research ■

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  - Special education (seventh and eighth grades, Tunica, Mississippi)
  - Language arts (seventh grade, Memphis, Tennessee)
- Graduate of University of California Berkeley's Policy, Organizations, Measurement, and Evaluation doctoral program
- Research scientist in the Understanding Teaching Quality Research Group at ETS
- Senior research and technical assistance expert for the federally funded Center on Great Teachers and Leaders

Center on Great Teachers and Leaders Mission

The mission of the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders (GTL Center) is to foster the capacity of vibrant networks of practitioners, researchers, innovators, and experts to build and sustain a seamless system of support for great teachers and leaders for every school in every state in the nation.

GTL Center Partners and Leadership

- The GTL Center is administered by American Institutes for Research (AIR) and its partners: Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and Public Impact.

- Leadership
  - Director: Angela Minnici, Ph.D., AIR
  - Deputy Director: Lynn Holdheide, AIR
  - Senior Policy Expert: Sabrina Laine, Ph.D., AIR
  - Senior Research and Technical Assistance Expert: Laura Goe, Ph.D., ETS
  - Project Lead: Bryan Hassel, Ph.D., Public Impact
  - Project Lead: Janice Poda, Ph.D., CCSSO

GTL Center Goals

- Goal 1: Identify the most pressing state and district needs for teacher and leader systems of support.

- Goal 2: Provide high-quality technical assistance to regional centers and state education agencies (SEAs) to build SEA capacity.
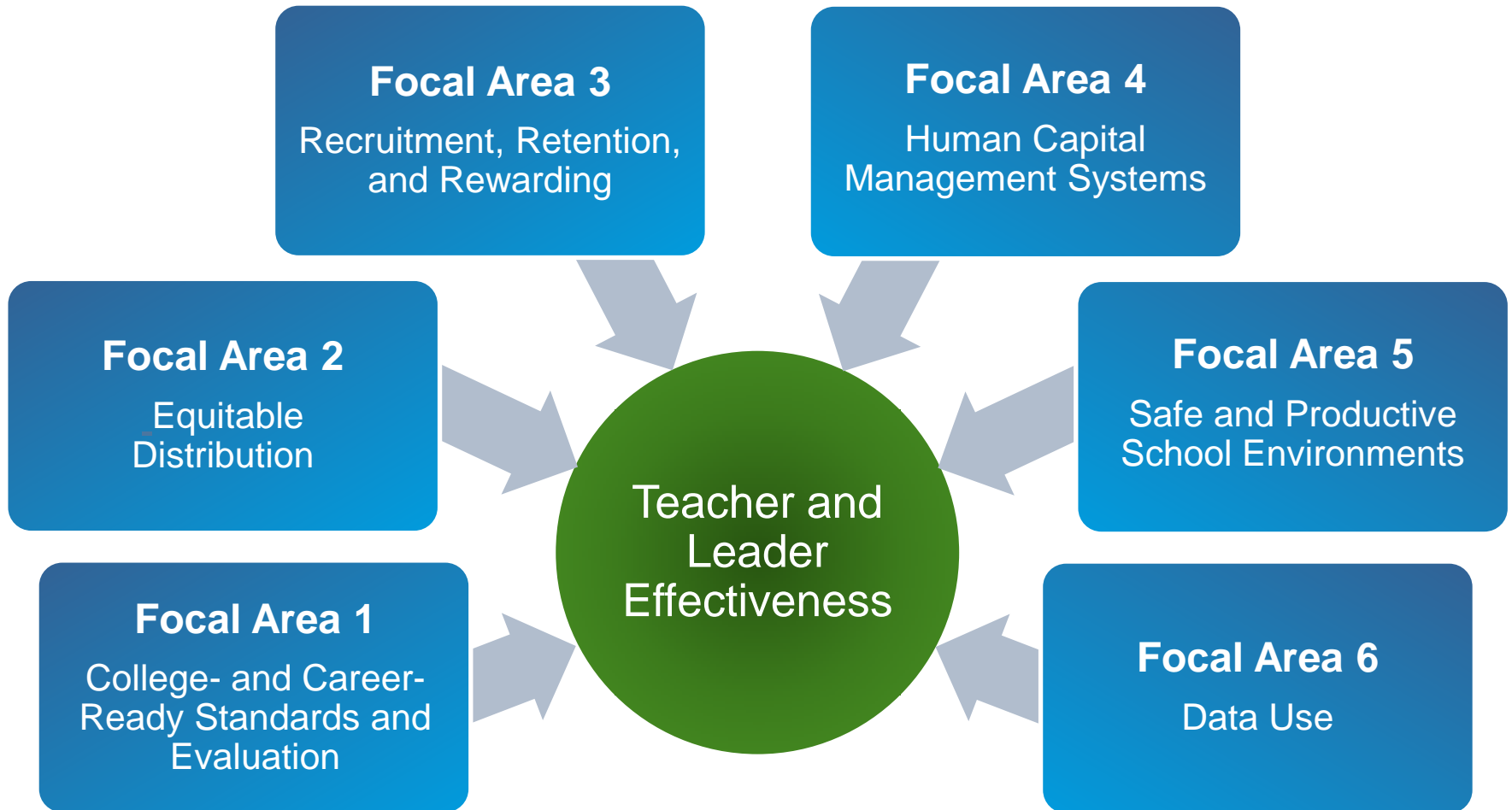
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GTL Center Goals

- Goal 3: Facilitate collaboration and coordination of efforts among regional centers, SEAs, experts, national organizations, preservice and inservice education providers, and other relevant stakeholders.

- Goal 4: Raise public and policymaker attention and encourage support for state-led initiatives to build seamless systems of support for teachers and leaders.

Focal Areas

Focal Area 3
Recruitment, Retention, and Rewarding

Focal Area 4
Human Capital Management Systems

Focal Area 2
Equitable Distribution

Focal Area 5
Safe and Productive School Environments

Teacher and Leader Effectiveness

Focal Area 1
College- and Career-Ready Standards and Evaluation

Focal Area 6
Data Use

The Goal of Teacher Evaluation

*The **ultimate** goal of all teacher evaluation should be…*

TO IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

Two Important Goals for Evaluation

Accountability: We are interested in ensuring that measures are comparable and rigorous and that they correctly identify students' learning growth compared to other students in same grade or subject.

Instructional improvement: We are interested in ensuring that teachers actively and regularly collect data on student performance toward standards and adjust and differentiate instruction accordingly.

Teaching Standards

- A set of practices to which teachers should aspire

- A teaching tool in teacher preparation programs

- A guiding document with which to align

  - Measurement tools and processes for teacher evaluation, such as classroom observations, surveys, portfolios and evidence binders, student outcomes

  - Teacher professional growth opportunities, based on evaluation of performance on standards

- A tool for coaching and mentoring teachers

  - Analyze and reflect on teacher strengths and challenges and discuss with consulting teachers

Evaluation That Promotes and Supports Instructional Strategies

- Identify evidence-based instructional strategies that promote student learning of the Common Core State Standards.

- Include the instructional strategies within measures of teacher practice.

- Determine teacher effectiveness in implementing instructional strategies and conduct correlation studies to determine the effect on student achievement.

- Focus on a few high-leverage instructional principles within educator evaluation systems—depth and breadth.

Instructional Shifts With the Common Core State Standards

- Engage students in critical thinking.

- Shift from procedures and rules to reasoning.

- Think across grade levels.

- Help students reason quantitatively.

- Emphasize disciplinary literacy.

- Prioritize students' use of evidence.

How Can Evidence Used for Teacher Evaluation Help Teachers Grow?

- **Observations**
  - The observation itself will probably contribute little to teacher growth.
  - Having a conversation about the lesson helps teachers grow!
- **Teachers' contributions to student learning**
  - Student learning results will contribute little to teacher growth.
  - Analyzing results in relation to specific teaching practices helps teachers grow!

Aligning Results With Teacher Professional Learning Options

- Requires ability to determine or link student outcomes to what happens instructionally

- Requires ability to "diagnose" instruction and recommend or provide appropriate professional growth opportunities

  - Individual coaching and feedback on instruction

  - Participation in professional learning communities

  - Observing "master teachers"

  - Targeted group professional development (when several teachers have similar needs)

Measures That Help Teachers Grow

- Aligned directly and explicitly with teaching standards
- Motivate teachers to examine their own practice against specific standards
- Allow teachers to participate in or coconstruct the evaluation (such as portfolios)
- Give teachers opportunities to discuss the results with evaluators, administrators, colleagues, teacher learning communities, mentors, coaches, etc.
- Are aligned with professional development offerings
- Include protocols and processes that teachers can examine and comprehend

Effective Feedback

- Regardless of the data and measures, feedback should be:
  - Tied to specific teaching standards
  - Immediate
  - Specific and detailed
  - Focused on specific data and evidence
  - Constructive and not just critical

Questions to Ask About Local Efforts to Link Evaluation and Professional Learning

- Are evaluation results discussed with individual teachers?

- Do teachers collaborate with instructional managers to develop a plan for improvement or professional growth?

  - All teachers (even high-scoring teachers) have areas which they can grow and learn.

- Are effective teachers provided with opportunities to develop their leadership potential?

- Are struggling teachers provided with coaches and given opportunities to observe or be observed?

Aligned Evaluation and Professional Development System Example: Memphis

- Memphis Teaching and Learning Academy began April 1996.

- Nationally commended program intended to "…provide a collegial place for teachers, teacher leaders and administrators to meet, study, and discuss application and implementation of learning…to impact student growth and development."

- Practitioners propose and develop courses.
  - Responsive to school and district evaluation results
  - Offerings must be aligned with National Staff Development Council standards
  - Approximately 336 online and in-person courses that cover many topics

Resources

- Memphis professional development system
  - Main site: http://www.mcsk12.net/pd/
  - Avatar system: http://memphiscsd.avatarlms.com/login.html#[0]
  - Course catalog (pdf): http://www.mcsk12.net/pd/docs/Pro%20Dev%20%20Final%20Catalog%202012.pdf
  - Individualized professional development resource book: http://www.mcsk12.net/pd/docs/Resource%20guide%2011-11.pdf
- The GTL Center has numerous publications regarding the topic of professional learning generally as well as a publication about linking teacher evaluation to professional learning: http://www.tqsource.org/

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