

Inclusive Design

Building Educator Evaluation Systems That Support Students With Disabilities





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Special Issues Brief

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Building Educator Evaluation Systems
That Support Students With Disabilities

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Lynn Holdheide

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Integrating for Inclusion

A Design Dilemma: Building Educator Evaluation Systems That Support the Academic and Social Growth of Students With Disabilities

Across the nation, states and districts are developing and implementing new models of teacher evaluation as a means to improve teacher effectiveness. Although teacher evaluation holds great potential for positively impacting teacher and student performance, few new evaluation models specifically address the unique challenges for evaluating teachers and other personnel charged with educating students with disabilities (see the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality [TQ Center] Research & Policy Brief *Challenges in Evaluating Special Education Teachers and English Language Learner Specialists*).

Making certain that the needs of students with disabilities and their teachers are fully represented within performance evaluation from the very beginning is central to ensuring that the evaluation process leads to quality feedback regarding teacher performance. Special educators serve in a multitude of capacities (e.g., coteaching, resource room, consultant, and self-contained classroom), making their roles and responsibilities varied across educational contexts. Likewise, other personnel, in addition to special education teachers, are responsible for the academic progress of students with disabilities. Therefore, designing the system to evaluate performance in ways that will accommodate the breadth and variety of all personnel who work with students with disabilities is important.

To assist states in making thoughtful policy decisions, the Center on Great Teachers and Leaders developed this special issues brief to provide states with considerations, resources, and state and district case studies about including teachers of students with disabilities and specialized instructional support personnel within performance evaluation systems. All considerations and examples are intended as resources to stimulate discussion. The considerations provided could be modified based on the needs, culture, climate, and context of school districts.

It is important to note that this brief represents our best knowledge and thinking about this issue, at this time, and provides some thoughtful next steps to creating a system of support for teachers of students with disabilities and specialized instructional support personnel. None of the considerations included within have undergone a thorough validation process at this time. Therefore, states and districts should create a thoughtful and deliberate plan of research that, when implemented, can validate these considerations. We encourage states and districts to take an active role in participating in studies of this nature.

Why Is This Guidance Important?

Fairly and accurately measuring educator effectiveness for all teachers is critically important to promote growth and development for all teachers. Evaluation systems need to be designed so that meaningful information can be gleaned to assess instructional practice, identify professional learning needs, and provide teachers and leaders with information about the extent to which students are meeting stated learning goals. It is, therefore, critically important that the evaluation measures of practice are grounded in evidence-based instructional practice so that teachers' use of these practices can be assessed, promoted, and fostered. If there is a misalignment—which could potentially be the case when considering the evidence base for instruction of students with disabilities—evaluation systems could inappropriately or inadvertently reinforce instruction not grounded in the research and disproportionately categorize teaching performance as ineffective. For example, if teachers of nonreaders are using direct, explicit reading instruction using the five scientifically based instructional principles, how will a teacher's performance be rated in the development and use of higher order thinking skills for that particular lesson?

Likewise, policy decisions concerning the use of growth of students with disabilities could potentially impact teacher recruitment, retention, and performance. If growth measures are not used with students with disabilities, then accountability for students with disabilities could be inadvertently removed from the performance evaluation process. Yet, if evaluation systems include measures of growth that cannot accurately capture the performance of students with disabilities, teachers resisting the inclusion of students with disabilities in their classroom could be an unintended consequence.

Overarching Considerations

Challenges in teacher evaluation implementation fidelity, in many cases, can be reduced when a singular evaluation system for all teachers is in place. In particular, there are several advantages to employing the same evaluation system for teachers of students with disabilities:

- **Inclusion.** Creating a separate evaluation framework may prevent the creation of an inclusive environment in which all administrators and teachers are accountable for the progress of students with disabilities.
- **Integration.** Evaluation results, if designed properly, should drive professional learning, feedback, and support for all teachers and leaders. Such alignment and coherence is essential in promoting the use of evidence-based instructional strategies by all teachers.
- **Collaboration.** For students with disabilities to grow socially and academically, special and general educators and support personnel need to work collaboratively with other professionals to ensure that students receive the specialized instructional supports and accommodations needed. Designing the evaluation model to be all-inclusive promotes such collaboration.

- **Shared understanding.** Strong evaluation systems provide shared expectations and guidelines for teachers' practice; therefore, including the skills all teachers need to know and be able to do fosters a better understanding of how to promote the academic and social growth of students with disabilities.

That is not to say that a singular design ensures fairness and consistency among all teacher types. For example, do the evaluation systems account for and promote the use of evidence-based instruction for students with disabilities, or is there a misalignment in which measures of teacher practice inappropriately or inadvertently reinforce instruction not grounded in research and disproportionately categorize teachers as ineffective?

States and districts should contemplate several dimensions and action steps that consider the needs of students with disabilities and their teachers when designing educator evaluation systems, specifically for measures of: (1) teaching practice (e.g., classroom observation, performance rubrics, and teaching artifacts) and (2) student growth.

The following sections provide the key design considerations and potential action steps for each of these measures. In addition, each design consideration discussion includes links to case studies that illustrate how states have currently implemented the consideration in their evaluation designs. Each case study was reviewed and approved by the respective state education agency and has been provided for use in this special issues brief with the agency's permission. The case studies are located at the end of the brief; however, you may quickly and easily jump to the appropriate case study by clicking on the case study icons that accompany each consideration. The case studies include the following evaluation systems:



CASE STUDY A. District of Columbia Public Schools: IMPACT



CASE STUDY B. Pennsylvania Department of Education: Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN)



CASE STUDY C. Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: Model System for Educator Evaluation



CASE STUDY D. Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: Model Guide to Evaluating Building Administrators and Teachers



CASE STUDY E. Delaware Performance Appraisal System II (DPAS II)



CASE STUDY F. Nevada Department of Education



CASE STUDY G. Educator Evaluation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning Consortium

Measures of Teaching Practice

Teaching Practice Consideration 1

Strengthen Existing Rubrics by
Augmenting With Explicit Examples



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Considering how the various measures of instructional practice (e.g., observation protocols, student and parent surveys, and evaluation of artifacts) are appropriate for use with teachers of students with disabilities is important to ensuring that the measures represent quality practice and mitigate the potential that teachers of students with disabilities are disproportionately categorized within performance rubrics. Therefore, measures should remain constant for all instructional providers (e.g., teachers) and should be strengthened to include explicit examples of how the standard or indicator would be demonstrated according to student ability and need by taking into account the following:

- Specific evidence-based instructional practices for students with disabilities (e.g., direct and explicit instruction and learning strategy instruction)
- Specific roles and responsibilities of special educators (e.g., individualized education program [IEP] facilitation, development, and implementation and coordination of related services personnel)
- Specific curricular needs (e.g., secondary transition services, social and behavioral needs, and orientation and mobility)



Potential Action Steps for States and Districts

Step 1: Establish a state and/or district stakeholder group and/or collaborate with other districts to augment existing protocols by developing explicit examples of how the indicators and standards would look in the following situations:

- Supporting specific student populations through the use of evidence-based instructional strategies
- Performing roles and responsibilities specific to the position

Step 2: Create guidance documents for teachers and evaluators inclusive of evidence-based instructional strategies and the examples generated in Step 1. Consider creating a “bank” of specific examples created and catalogued throughout implementation (e.g., using assistive technology and/or alternative communication devices to determine prior knowledge of students with significant cognitive disabilities). Consider providing for discrete trial instruction on prerequisite skills, where needed, or recognizing that student progress may consist of less assistance over time (e.g., verbal as opposed to hand-over prompts).

Step 3: Establish validity. Ensure content and face validity of augmented rubrics through content expert and stakeholder review and feedback. Pilot augmented rubrics and obtain feedback from both teachers and evaluators. Conduct checks for improvements in interrater reliability using the performance rubrics.

Teaching Practice Consideration 2



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Leverage the Preobservation Conference

Performance and observation measures—inclusive of the previous explicit examples—cannot realistically depict every type of instruction or classroom management strategy appropriate to each classroom context and student population. Therefore, the use of the preobservation conference can be instrumental for the teacher to review the students’ needs and the selection of the evidence-based instructional practice used prior to the observation. For example, a teacher working with nonreaders would describe the empirical evidence supporting direct, explicit, scientifically based reading instruction. This would allow the educator the opportunity to provide the rationale and evidence for the instructional choice and a potential deviation from the observation rubric in particular indicators (e.g., higher order thinking skills).



Potential Action Steps for States and Districts

Step 1: Create a structure within the preobservation conference that establishes an expectation that teachers will provide the rationale and supporting evidence for the instructional strategies chosen per the content and student population.

Step 2: Provide guidance and professional learning opportunities to prepare teachers to guide and facilitate discussions concerning the selection of instructional strategies based on students’ needs during the preobservation conference.

Step 3: Promote coherent and aligned professional learning opportunities, beginning with preservice preparation and throughout the career continuum, that provide multiple opportunities for exposure to and application of evidence-based practices.

Teaching Practice Consideration 3



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Integrate Special Education Content Into Evaluator Training, and Incorporate the Use of Peer Evaluators

Teacher confidence can be increased when evaluators have the appropriate qualifications, experience, and/or training to make accurate judgments concerning teacher performance. The provision of high-quality training for evaluators and the use of peer reviewers can strengthen teachers' trust in the evaluators' feedback and the validity of their evaluation results. Moreover, the use of peer observers may positively impact evaluator credibility among teachers and is likely to have a positive impact on both the teacher's, and peer observer's instructional practice.



Potential Action Steps for States and Districts

Step 1: Identify a stakeholder group to consider and design evaluator training specific for teachers of students with disabilities. The examples used to augment the existing protocols could be used as the basis of the evaluator training.

Step 2: Establish the role of the peer observer. For example, determine whether the peer observer's review is included as part of the summative rating.

Step 3: Establish requirements for peer observer selection and training. For example, determine the level of experience and history of performance required to be considered as a peer observer.

Step 4: Establish the structural supports to employ the use of peer observers. For example, determine how time will be allocated for peer observers to conduct observations.

For more information about evaluator training and using peer observers in teacher evaluation, check out the [GTL Center's Ask the Team](#) briefs: *Leveraging Teacher Talents: Peer Observation in Educator and Evaluation* and *High Fidelity: Investing in Evaluation Training*.

Teaching Practice Consideration 4



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Modify Rubrics to Reflect the Roles and Responsibilities of Specialized Instructional Support Personnel

Specialized instructional support personnel are integral to the academic and social success of students with disabilities. Therefore, evaluation models should reflect the respective roles and responsibilities of that discipline and represent a fair and appropriate assessment of performance. This is often guided by the professional association standards. Although these modified rubrics are not validated by research to date, states and districts are modifying existing rubrics to better reflect the specialist roles and responsibilities. This process has entailed the actual modification of indicator language within existing teacher performance rubrics by representative stakeholders.



Potential Action Steps for States and Districts

Step 1: Establish groups of specialized instructional support personnel to review and modify the rubrics to account for roles and responsibilities and local job context (e.g., job descriptions and job assignments).

Step 2: Use professional association representatives and standards to establish face and content validity for the modified rubrics.

Step 3: Create guidance documents for both specialists and evaluators.

Step 4: Establish validity. Ensure content and face validity of modified rubrics through content expert and stakeholder review and feedback. Pilot the modified rubrics, and obtain feedback from both the specialists and evaluators. Conduct checks for improvements in interrater reliability using the modified rubrics of performance.

Additional Resources: Measures of Teaching Practice

CEC Position on Special Education Teacher Evaluation (2012)

http://www.cec.sped.org/~media/Files/Policy/CEC%20Professional%20Policies%20and%20Positions/Position_on_Special_Education_Teacher_Evaluation_Background.pdf

Council for Exceptional Children 2012 Policy Manual; Section Four; Part 3; Page L-9

This brief from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) outlines their position on how to incorporate special education teachers into state and district evaluation systems in a way that fairly assesses the special education teacher role in the classroom. Specifically, CEC emphasizes the need for evaluation systems to identify that the special education teacher has a complex role, and evaluations must take into account performance expectations based on the population served. Evaluation systems for special educators also must use multiple measures of evidence that are related to their complex role. CEC also emphasizes that special education teachers must be involved in the development and implementation of evaluation systems.

Challenges in Evaluating Special Education Teachers and English Language Learner Specialists (2010)

<http://www.gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/docs/July2010Brief.pdf>

Authors: Lynn R. Holdheide; Laura Goe, Ph.D.; Andrew Croft; Daniel J. Reschly, Ph.D.

This brief provides the results of an inquiry conducted by the TQ Center with support from the Council for Exceptional Children and several national experts in the context of current research and practice in teacher evaluation. It offers policy and practice recommendations for regions, states, and districts to help in their efforts to create valid, reliable, and comprehensive evaluation systems for all teachers as they work to improve the achievement of all students.

Including Students With Disabilities and English Learners in Measures of Educator Effectiveness (2013 Educational Researcher Article)

<http://edr.sagepub.com/content/early/2013/02/20/0013189X12468211.full>

Authors: Nathan D. Jones, Heather M. Buzick, Sultan Turkan

This essay reviews the challenges of include students with disabilities and English learners in state and district evaluation systems, focusing specifically on challenges related to observation and student growth measures. The authors present concerns about the validity of value-added scores for both student populations, particularly as it relates to inconsistency in testing accommodations, potential for measurement error, and attributing special student populations to just one teacher. As it relates to

observations of teacher performance, the authors highlight that observation rubrics might not take into account specific instructional practices that benefit English learners or students with disabilities and issues of inter-rater reliability. The authors also provide recommendations for state and district policymakers in addressing these concerns.

National Alliance of Pupil Services Organizations (NAPSO) Policy Statement: Utilizing Multiple Measures in Determining Professional Performance of Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (2011)

<http://www.napso.org/personnel-systems.html>

Statement on Evaluation and Differentiated Compensation Systems

In an effort to promote fair and appropriate performance assessments of specialized instructional support personnel, NAPSO developed this document to provide guidance to the field concerning the development of meaningful evaluation systems that provide school professionals with relevant, supportive, and instructive feedback.

Performance Assessment of Contributions of Effectiveness of Speech-Language Pathologists (2013)

<http://www.asha.org/uploadedFiles/SLPs-Performance-Assessment-Contributions-Effectiveness.pdf>

Produced by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association's Value-Added Project Team

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association released a document to provide speech-language pathologists more information about value-added systems and about the Performance Assessment of Contribution and Effectiveness of SLPs (PACE), an evaluation tool developed by the organization. The document is organized into an overview that includes an articulation of the roles and responsibilities of speech and language pathologists and a review of value-added assessment research, a background of PACE, a guide to help speech-language pathologists advocate for using PACE, and a copy of the rubric.

A Practical Guide to Designing Comprehensive Teacher Evaluation Systems (2011)

<http://www.gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/docs/practicalGuideEvalSystems.pdf>

Authors: Laura Goe, Ph.D.; Lynn Holdheide; Tricia Miller, Ph.D.

This tool is designed to assist states and districts in constructing high-quality teacher evaluation systems in an effort to improve teaching and learning. It is intended to facilitate discussion and promote coherence in the development process. The guide

begins with an overview of the factors influencing teacher evaluation reform today and continues with a discussion of approaches to balancing state accountability and district autonomy. The remainder of the guide is structured around the essential components of the design process as supported through research and practice. Each subsection includes an overview of the component, resources and practical examples, and a series of guiding questions designed to help states organize their work and move strategically toward an evaluation system that functions to improve student learning and teacher performance.

Measures of Student Growth

With current requirements to include student growth as a significant component in educator evaluation, states and districts also must determine how growth can be measured for students with disabilities. A number of approaches to measuring student growth currently are being implemented:

- **Value-added or growth modeling.** This is a statistical approach that uses student test scores to estimate educator contributions to student academic growth, taking into account student academic achievement in previous years. This approach typically is possible only for teachers of students with readily available test scores over multiple time periods. Scores from alternate assessments for students with significant cognitive disabilities may or may not provide sufficient information to be used in a value-added model.
- **Student learning objectives (SLOs).** Through the SLO process, a teacher or a group of teachers identifies the expected learning outcomes for a group of students (within a school district, a school, a single classroom, or across classrooms) over a period of time. The use of SLOs often requires a process whereby teachers conduct a thorough analysis of students' present levels of performance and determine appropriate classroom, school, or skill-based goals to be accomplished within the year. This approach can be used by teachers in any grades or subjects in which teachers can identify a goal based on students' prior or current performance.
- **Gains measures.** Some districts and states are purchasing commercial assessments or developing new assessments (including performance assessments or portfolios) that will allow them to measure student growth without using a statistical approach such as value-added. For example, some assessments may be able to measure student growth directly; other assessments may be able to measure changes in proficiency levels.

There are unique challenges in accurately measuring and attributing achievement growth of students with disabilities (including those participating in general assessments and alternate assessments) that can have an impact on educator evaluation results. Additional research is needed about specific practices or approaches that will be most effective for evaluating educators of students with disabilities, but included here are initial considerations for states and districts in this area.

Student Growth Consideration 1



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Include Students With Disabilities in Growth Measures and Review Data

Although students with disabilities present unique challenges in measuring growth, it is important that students with disabilities be included in growth measures. Doing so ensures accountability for growth of students with disabilities within educator evaluation.



Potential Action Steps for States and Districts

Step 1: Create policy and messages to the field that students with disabilities must be included in measures of growth, whatever the measures may be (e.g., SLOs, other assessments).

Step 2: Disaggregate and review growth data. Examine how learning trajectories for students with disabilities may differ from other students. Analyze the relationship between educator evaluation scores and the number and types of students with disabilities educators teach.

Step 3: Review how well teacher-course-student linkage data captures instructional contributions of special educators (e.g., coteaching, pull-out support), and analyze how these contributions can best be captured in growth measures.

Student Growth Consideration 2



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Ensure That Multiple and Appropriate Measures of Growth Are Used

States and districts should consider combining multiple measures (both student growth and teacher practice). In addition, it is particularly important to select measures that can accurately measure growth of students with disabilities.



Potential Action Steps for States and Districts

Step 1: Provide guidance in the selection and weighting of measures for teachers of students with disabilities.

Step 2: Provide guidance on good practice in assessment selection and/or development concerning alignment, ability to measure growth, and validity and reliability concerning students with disabilities. Specifically, ensure that the measures selected were created with universal design principles to improve accessibility.

Step 3: Provide training and guidance for teachers to ensure that accommodations are used and recorded accurately so that student knowledge can be appropriately measured and that the effect of accommodation use can be monitored.

Step 4: Establish professional development in assessment literacy, specifically the assessment of students with disabilities to assure assessments are accessible and that students with disabilities can accurately demonstrate growth.

Student Growth Consideration 3



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Account for Students With Disabilities in the SLO Process

The SLO process has the potential to become particularly complex when considering the wide variety of instructional contexts in which students with disabilities receive services and, therefore, how student growth can be attributed to educators.



Potential Action Steps for States and Districts

Step 1: Provide guidance concerning SLO development, implementation, and accountability across the various service delivery models.

Step 2: Establish groups of special educators, institution of higher education faculty, and special education administrators to develop example SLOs.

Step 3: Provide guidance in how to differentiate learning targets established through the SLO process that take into account past learning trajectories and students' current levels of performance. Differentiated or tiered targets create an opportunity to factor in any unique learning trajectories for students with disabilities.

For more information on setting business rules for SLOs, check out the [GTL Center's Ask the Team](#) brief: *Flexibility for Fairness: Crafting Business Rules for Student Learning Objectives*.

Student Growth Consideration 4

Leverage Existing Systems and Reform Efforts

Quality teaching practice includes monitoring of student data and modifying instruction accordingly. Existing systems that monitor student progress (e.g., response to intervention, multi-tiered systems of support) can be capitalized on as an important lever to identify measures and determine rigorous yet achievable learning targets.



Potential Action Step for States and Districts

Step 1: Repurpose established data collection or monitoring teams to aid in the process of establishing, monitoring, and reporting student learning trajectories and targets.

Student Growth Consideration 5

Specify That IEPs Are Not Measures of Growth

Inform educators that an IEP should not be used to measure student growth for the purpose of teacher and leader evaluation; however, an IEP could be used as a source of evidence to develop SLOs and appropriate learning targets.



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Potential Action Step for States and Districts

Step 1: Provide guidance on how IEPs can and should be used to inform the selection of measures and the establishment of appropriate learning targets within educator evaluation.

Additional Resources: Measures of Student Growth

Challenges and Considerations in Measuring the Growth of Students With Disabilities (2012)

<http://www.gtlcenter.org/products-resources/challenges-and-considerations-measuring-growth-students-disabilities>

TQ Center Webcast

This webinar discussed important challenges and considerations that states should contemplate when using or designing various state and district approaches to measuring the growth of students with disabilities for the purpose of teacher evaluation. State examples were highlighted.

Forum on Evaluating Educator Effectiveness (2012)

<http://www.cehd.umn.edu/nceo/OnlinePubs/EdEvalForumReportDecember2012.pdf>

Authors: Sandra Warren, Martha Thurlow, Sheryl Lazarus, Laurene Christensen, Anne Chartrand, Rebekah Rieke

This report summarizes the information provided to participants of a forum on addressing educator evaluation for teachers of students with disabilities. Topics covered include a national overview of teacher evaluation design, highlighting the need for more information on measures of student growth for students with disabilities, measures of instructional practice related to the specific roles of special education teachers, and considerations for evaluating coteachers. The report also highlights examples of lessons learned from three states (Arizona, Delaware, and Minnesota). Finally, the report provides a summary of themes that emerged from breakout sessions on assessment results for students with disabilities, benefits and concerns related to using IEP goals as SLOs, and multiple measures that would provide a balanced evaluation model for special education teachers.

Measuring Teachers' Contributions to Student Learning Growth for Nontested Grades and Subjects (2011)

<http://www.gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/docs/MeasuringTeachersContributions.pdf>

Authors: Laura Goe, Ph.D.; Lynn Holdheide

This brief was developed to help states consider options for assessing student learning growth for the majority of teachers who teach content not assessed through standardized tests. It provides information about options for states to explore as well as factors to consider when identifying and implementing measures. The brief also

focuses specifically on federal priorities to help ensure that evaluation systems meet the high expectations set for teacher evaluation. Finally, the brief emphasizes the importance of fairly measuring all teachers, including them in the evaluation process, and ensuring validity in measurement.

Measuring the Growth of Students Participating in the Alternate Assessment (2012)

<http://www.gtlcenter.org/products-resources/measuring-growth-students-participating-alternate-assessment>

TQ Center Webcast

This webinar provided information related to specific challenges in measuring the growth of students participating in the alternate assessment for the purpose of teacher and leader evaluation. A distinguished group of presenters shared their insights into lessons learned from early efforts to measure student growth using alternate assessment results.

Summary of “Using Student Growth to Evaluate Educators of Students With Disabilities: Issues, Challenges, and Next Steps” (2012)

http://www.gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/docs/TQ_Forum_SummaryUsing_Student_Growth.pdf

Prepared by: Lynn Holdheide, Diane Browder, Sandra Warren, Heather Buzick, Nathan Jones

In an effort to inform state and district practices, the TQ Center, the Council of Chief State School Officers Assessing Special Education Students State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards, and ETS collaboratively convened a two-day forum (September 26–27, 2011) for select stakeholders to discuss the challenges and help inform policy, practice, and research regarding the use of the growth of students with disabilities for measuring teacher effectiveness. This brief documents the results of this forum including a description of the benefits, the challenges, state and district considerations, implementation implications, and needed research in the current methods used to measure student growth for the purposes of teacher evaluation.

CASE STUDY A

District of Columbia Public Schools: IMPACT

In 2009, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) launched a rigorous evaluation system, IMPACT, designed to measure the effectiveness of all school-based personnel. Through IMPACT, DCPS aims to do the following:

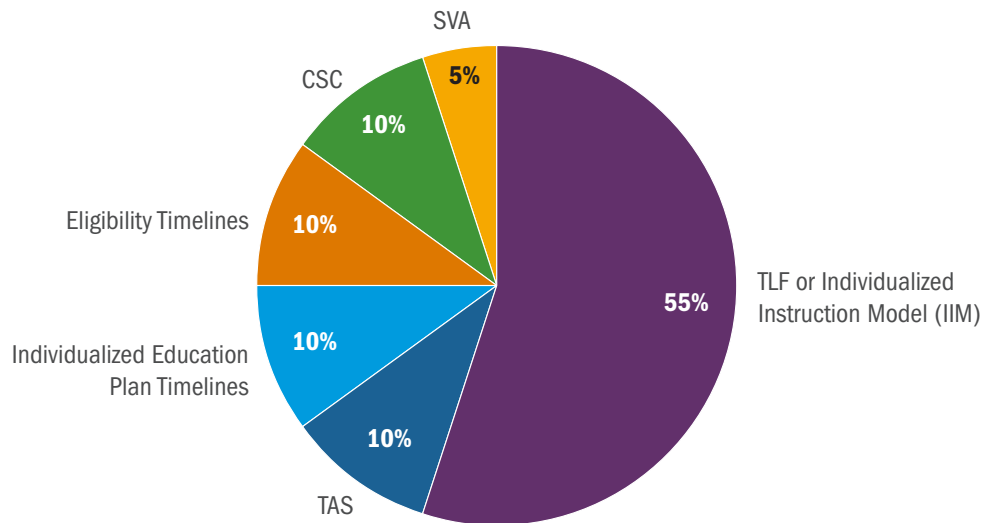
1. Identify the best educators in DCPS and then do everything possible to keep them.
2. Identify which educators need help and provide them with robust support.
3. Transition out the lowest performing educators.

Although the specific evaluation criteria vary based on a teacher's grade and/or subject area, *all* teachers are assessed in some way according to student achievement data, instructional expertise, collaboration, and professionalism. These common measures include:

- **Teaching and Learning Framework (TLF).** TLF is a measure of instructional expertise assessed through the TLF rubric. The TLF rubric comprises nine teaching standards that provide common language and clear expectations for instruction.
- **Teacher-Assessed Student Achievement Data (TAS).** TAS is a measure of students' learning over the course of the year, as evidenced by rigorous assessments other than the state standardized test. These assessments must be approved by principals and may include a range of standardized and teacher-created assessments, including but not limited to the Text and Reading Comprehension (TRC) assessment, the Woodcock-Johnson achievement tests, student portfolios, and end-of-course exams.
- **Commitment to the School Community (CSC).** CSC is a measure of core standards that reflects the extent to which an employee supports and collaborates with the larger school community.
- **School Value-Added Student Achievement Data (SVA).** SVA is a measure of a specific school's impact on student learning over the course of the school year, as evidenced by the DCPS Comprehensive Assessment System (CAS).
- **Core Professionalism (CP).** CP is a measure of four basic professional expectations for which all school-based personnel are held accountable.

In certain situations, some of the components listed previously may be modified, or additional components may be added to allow for a better assessment of the specific roles and responsibilities. For example, special education teachers also are evaluated according to their ability to complete students' IEPs in a timely manner. In addition, the TLF rubric has been slightly adjusted for situations in which special education teachers are supporting students while another teacher leads whole-class instruction. See the example in Figure A-1.

Figure A-1. IMPACT Components for Special Educators



DCPS has specifically identified several categories related to special education (e.g., special education teachers, special education teachers—autism program, special education teachers—early childhood education, special education coordinators, and related services providers) in which the evaluation process is modified to accurately measure effectiveness according to more specific roles and responsibilities. Specific information regarding each of the categories of personnel evaluation is located at [http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/In+the+Classroom/Ensuring+Teacher+Success/IMPACT+\(Performance+Assessment\)/IMPACT+Guidebooks](http://dcps.dc.gov/DCPS/In+the+Classroom/Ensuring+Teacher+Success/IMPACT+(Performance+Assessment)/IMPACT+Guidebooks).

CASE STUDY B

Pennsylvania Department of Education: Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN)

The new Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) Teacher Effectiveness Evaluation System for professional employees holding instructional certificates will be implemented beginning with the 2013–14 school year. The observation and evidence instrument is the Danielson Framework for Teaching. PDE has not mandated any specific edition of the framework.

All instructionally certified staff in the Commonwealth will be evaluated, utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching, starting in the fall of 2013. PDE recognizes that educators holding instructional certifications serve in various capacities across the Commonwealth. In order to ensure that there is consistent alignment across the Commonwealth, PDE is working with stakeholders to develop what evidence statements and examples might look like for those educators who have more unique roles and functions within a broad array of educational settings.

Since February 2012, PaTTAN has been working with stakeholder groups to develop rubrics for specialists and licensed professionals. Specifically, PaTTAN has been working with instructionally certified staff and educational specialists to develop evidence and possible examples that honor the unique roles and functions of these professionals as defined below:

1. Group 1: Instructionally Certified Educators

With this group of educators, the Danielson Framework for Teaching would not be modified; however, the framework would be strengthened through the development of evidence statements and examples for the following instructionally certified educators:

- 1) Gifted Teachers
- 2) Special Education Teachers
- 3) English as a Second Language Teachers
- 4) Reading Specialists
- 5) Early Childhood and Early Intervention Teachers
- 6) Career Technology Education Teachers
- 7) Speech Language Pathologists
- 8) School Librarians

2. Group 2: Educational Specialists

With this group of specialists, PaTTAN has been working with stakeholder groups from across the Commonwealth to revise the Danielson Framework for

Teaching to reflect the specific roles and functions of the identified specialist groups as follows:

- 1) Dental Hygienist
- 2) Elementary School Counselor
- 3) Home and School Visitor
- 4) Instructional Technology Specialist
- 5) Secondary School Counselor
- 6) School Nurse
- 7) School Psychologist
- 8) Occupational Therapist
- 9) Physical Therapist
- 10) Social Worker

Subject matter experts were recruited through Pennsylvania Intermediate Units, PSEA (Pennsylvania State Education Association), and professional organizations. All subject matter experts volunteered their time and effort and received reimbursement for travel expenses only. A representative from the Danielson Group provided professional development at PaTTAN to all participants in large-group format. In addition to large-group training, committees had the opportunity to work in small groups on the modifications to their rubrics at PaTTAN and were brought together during summer and fall (five days). Committees were encouraged to meet virtually in order to produce a product within the designated timelines. Danielson rubric materials were provided to each committee for reference. Committees also were encouraged to reference their national professional standards. When available, samples from other states were provided.

PaTTAN is in the process of conducting second- and third-level independent, third-party reviews relative to content, alignment with professional standards, conciseness, consistent terminology, format, and clear exemplars that reflect “proficiency.” The modified evaluation rubrics will be used in accordance with Danielson Framework Evaluation guidelines (e.g., preconference, observation, postconference). The purpose of the model is to have ongoing conversation about efforts, progress, and evidence that the person being evaluated is contributing to systems and individual level outcomes through their services. Thus, even though modifications are being made to the rubrics, the intent of the Danielson Framework as per its use within a comprehensive evaluation system will be preserved.

The large-scale pilot is planned for fall 2013 through spring 2014, and PaTTAN currently is developing a Web-based data warehouse base for the purpose of helping PaTTAN to conduct a program evaluation and inform performance evaluations.

CASE STUDY C

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: Model System for Educator Evaluation

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE) is committed to supporting effective implementation of newly designed, comprehensive educator evaluation systems and has recently released *The Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluation*. Although specific information about the model system is beyond the scope of this practical example, it is important to note that ESE has made concerted efforts to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities and their teachers are considered during the design and implementation process. In fact, ESE has specifically addressed the recommendations located within the TQ Center Research & Policy Brief *Challenges in Evaluating Special Education Teachers and English Language Learner Specialists* as follows:

- **Recommendation 1.** Include special education administrators and teachers when revamping or designing evaluation frameworks.
 - Prior to developing the regulations passed in June 2011, Massachusetts established a task force to recommend a framework for the evaluation of teachers and administrators that included special education representation.
- **Recommendation 2.** Consider modifying existing statute and/or policy to allow for considerations for special educators.
 - The new Massachusetts regulations allow for considerations as follows: “The district shall adapt the indicators based on the role of the teacher to reflect and to allow for significant differences in assignments and responsibilities” (as per 603 CMR. 35.03).
- **Recommendation 3.** Identify a common framework that defines effective teaching for all teachers. Where appropriate, include differentiated criteria for special educators.
 - The Massachusetts framework defines standards and indicators of effective teaching practice that are common to all teachers. The model system includes rubrics that are designed to include all teachers who work with special populations (e.g., students with disabilities, students with significant cognitive disabilities, and English language learners), and additional guidance on customizing the rubrics for use with special populations is under development.

- The rubric for Specialized Instructional Support Personnel can be located here: http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/model/PartIII_AppxD.pdf
 - One example of role-specific indicators for school counselors can be located here: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/eval/model/PartIII-AppxE.pdf>
- **Recommendation 4.** Ensure that the evaluation framework can identify and provide the professional development needs of special educators.
 - 603 CMR 35.06(3)(d): “Educator Plans shall be designed to provide educators with feedback for improvement, professional growth, and leadership.”
 - Under development: Outreach to identify needs and priorities specific to evaluators to build knowledge and professional development needs of special educators and a variety of professional development supports for district capacity building
- **Recommendation 5.** Establish evaluator training that includes explicit training on the special teacher effectiveness measures used for special educators.
 - Under development: Guidance on measures of teacher effectiveness, including those specific to special educators

Although Massachusetts would stress that much of its work is under development, concentrated efforts to ensure meeting the needs of students with disabilities and their teachers are under way. Massachusetts also intends to continue to garner feedback from early implementers to ensure that the model system accounts for the unique aspects of educators who serve students with disabilities.

CASE STUDY D

Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education: Model Guide to Evaluating Building Administrators and Teachers

Rhode Island developed an educator evaluation system to ensure that the state has effective teachers in every classroom and effective leaders in every school. The Rhode Island Model uses multiple measures to assess performance and provides feedback on many dimensions of professional practice, professional responsibilities, and student learning. Specific information regarding the model can be located on the [Rhode Island Educator Evaluation website](#), under the Guidebooks tab.

Teachers, with guidance and approval from administrators, establish student learning objectives that measure and assess the growth of student learning in every classroom. Student learning objectives are specific, measurable goals based on Rhode Island's content standards and aligned with specific school or district initiatives. More information regarding the student learning objectives can be located within *The Rhode Island Model Educator Evaluation System: Student Learning Objectives—Frequently Asked Questions*.

Rhode Island is noteworthy because the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education tried to keep the needs of students with disabilities, as well as the needs of their teachers, in mind when developing the student learning objective framework. The consistent messaging has been that special and general educators use the same process to establish student learning objectives for their students. This can be noted in several ways:

- First (and foremost), it is a requirement that all students are covered under a student learning objective. Teachers can set goals for subgroups as long as no subgroup is disproportionately excluded. General education teachers are responsible for the progress and mastery of all students on their rosters—including students with disabilities.
- Second, teachers are encouraged to set tiered goals so that targets are differentiated according to students' present levels of performance and needs. General and special educators are encouraged to work collaboratively to construct objectives that are in alignment with those of the general education class but accommodate for the specific learning needs and levels of performance for students with disabilities. Example student learning objectives for students with disabilities are located at <http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/SLO.aspx>. The Rhode Island Department

of Elementary and Secondary Education partnered with special educators in early adopter districts and local institutions of higher education to draft sample student learning objectives.

- Third, guidance on how special educators should establish student learning objectives can be located within *Rhode Island Educator Evaluation: Student Learning Objectives—Special Education—Frequently Asked Questions*. As in many states, special educators serve in many capacities (e.g., coteacher, resource room, and self-contained), so this guidance document provides recommendations on how student learning objectives should be established across the various contexts.

CASE STUDY E

Delaware Performance Appraisal System II (DPAS II)

DPAS II is Delaware's statewide educator evaluation system. As a statewide system, DPAS II establishes consistent educator and student performance expectations and outcomes across all schools. There are three versions of DPAS II:

1. DPAS II for Teachers
2. **DPAS II for Specialists**
3. DPAS II for Administrators

For the purposes of DPAS II, a *specialist* is defined as an educator other than a teacher or administrator who holds a Delaware teaching license (either initial, continuing, or advanced); holds a Delaware certificate (either emergency or standard) in a particular area, such as school counselor or library media specialist; and is employed as either a part-time or a full-time specialist in a Delaware public school.

All educators who meet these criteria will follow the evaluation procedures outlined in DPAS II for Specialists (see the *DPAS II Guide for Specialists*: <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/csa/dpasii/specialist/DPASIISpecialistFullManual-9-27-11.pdf>). The seven specialist categories are school counselors, instructional support specialists, library media specialists, school psychologists, speech pathologists, school nurses, student support specialists, and therapeutic services specialists.

Delaware Administrative Code §107A requires all school districts and charter schools to evaluate specialists using the *DPAS II Guide for Specialists*. This regulation also requires all evaluators to complete DPAS II training, as developed by the Delaware Department of Education, and to be credentialed by the Delaware Department of Education.

Delaware's framework for specialists defines professional practice and outlines essential criteria among the five separate components of professional practice. DPAS II is used to assess and support student improvement by evaluating a specialist's current practice, identifying ways to support that specialist's professional growth, and measuring student growth for each specialist. The five components have been differentiated for specialists as demonstrated in the Table E-1.

Table E-1. The Five Components of Delaware's Framework and DPAS II

The Five Components of Delaware's Framework and DPAS II	
Teachers	Specialists
Planning and Preparation	Planning and Preparation
Classroom Environment	<i>Professional Practice and Delivery of Service</i>
Instruction	<i>Professional Consultation and Collaboration</i>
Professional Responsibilities	Professional Responsibilities
Student Improvement	Student Improvement

The Delaware Framework for Specialists, the basis for DPAS II, was developed by the Delaware Department of Education. The one Delaware Framework for Specialists was drawn from the seven separate frameworks and is consistent, to the extent possible, with the Delaware Framework for Teaching.

At its core, the expanded approach (DPAS II [R]) emphasizes the academic growth of all students. In 2010–11, the Delaware Department of Education began collecting data to measure student academic growth based on the Delaware Comprehensive System (DCAS). This measure makes up one portion of Component V of DPAS II (R) and is based on the change in performance of students in Grades 3 through 10 on DCAS reading and/or mathematics assessments from fall to spring.

Specialists understand that improvement of student learning is their primary responsibility. Further, they recognize that students come to them at different places along the continuum of learning. They understand that in a standards-based environment, the ultimate goal is to move all students toward the standard. In addition, they recognize that student improvement rates will vary during the year. However, it is reasonable to expect that all students will move further toward the standards during the school year. Through careful planning and evaluation of data, specialists modify their practice for both groups and individual students and clients.

For specialists, the application of student growth measures is addressed as described in the following text.

If Part I, Part II, and Part III measures are available, then the following balance of measures will be calculated as follows:

- a) Schoolwide assessment measure (whichever option is higher) 30 percent
 - Option 1: Schoolwide DCAS Reading
 - Option 2: Schoolwide DCAS Mathematics
- b) Student Cohort assessment measure 20 percent

- c) Specialist-specific assessment measure 50 percent Delaware educators, representing the seven specialist areas, developed seven different frameworks for specialists. This group consulted and incorporated national standards for each specialty when developing the frameworks. Charlotte Danielson's book, *Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching* (Second Edition) has included specialist frameworks based on the work of these Delaware specialists.

Evidence Collection Chart for Specialists: <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/csa/dpasii/training/CollectionofEvidChartSpec.doc>

In addition, DPAS II designates three distinct types of teacher categories:

Group I: Includes any educator who instructs reading and/or mathematics in DCAS grades three (3) through ten (10).

Group II: Includes any educator who generally reports student grades in any subject or grade where DCAS reading and mathematics are not administered and/or a Measure B assessment is available.

Group III: Includes any educator who generally does NOT report student grades and any educator who cannot otherwise be categorized into Groups 1 or 2.

There are three (3) different measures that will determine the Component V rating for specialists:

Measure A, Measure B, and Measure C

- Measure A
 - Measure A: DCAS Scores
 - Measure A is based upon DCAS instructional scale scores for reading and/or mathematics in grades three (3) through ten (10).
- Measure B
 - Measure B is comprised of two (2) types of alternate measures:
 1. Internal assessments that are educator-developed and DDOE-approved specific to subjects and grade levels
 2. External assessments that are DDOE-approved and can be used at the discretion of each district.

**See link for a listing of approved assessments in this category: <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/csa/dpasii/training/CompVExtMeasB11-13-12.pdf>
- Measure C
 - Measure C growth goals are educator-developed and DDOE-approved goals specific to content areas and job assignments.

Special Education teachers can fall under each of the teacher type categories and utilize the 3 various measures depending on their role and the students in which they teach.

For Group I, student growth targets were determined based on the average growth made by “similar” students over the first two years of DCAS (2010–11 and 2011–12). “Similar” students are defined as those who had:

- Similar fall DCAS instructional scores; and
- The same grade and subject; and
- The same SWD, ELL, SWD/ELL designation.

For Groups I and II, Delaware Department of Education technical advisors recommend that educators have a minimum of 10 students to use assessments as a measure. It should be noted that all 10 students do not need to be in the same class or grade. Based on a conversation with the administrator, an educator could be in Group 2 and set Measure B goals on at least 10 students who are in different classes and grades.

Group 3 and Measure C goals are administrator approved and are rigorous learning objectives based on past learning trajectories and measured through administrator-approved assessments. The goals are established based upon student needs and demonstrated past and present levels of performance. For students with disabilities, the IEP is a source of evidence in goal development but is not used as a measure explicitly.

CASE STUDY F

Nevada Department of Education

In 2011, Assembly Bill 222—as approved in a bipartisan effort of the Nevada Legislature and embraced by Governor Sandoval—created the Teachers and Leaders Council (TLC) and required this body to create a statewide uniform performance evaluation system for teachers and site-based administrators. The statute requires the state board of education to regulate the system developed by the TLC. The first half of the regulations, which governs the content of teachers' and administrators' evaluations, was adopted in January 2013. The remaining regulations, which will specify the process for conducting observations, making rating decisions, and other administrative elements, are scheduled for adoption in June 2013.

Accordingly, state regulations now stipulate implementation of the Nevada Educator Performance Framework, which requires that Nevada teacher performance be assessed across two overarching categories: (1) Educational Practice and (2) Student Performance. Under the Educational Practice categories are two critically important domains: (a) Instructional Practice and (b) Professional Responsibilities. The Instructional Practice domain sets the parameters for measuring the teacher's behavior in delivering instruction in the classroom, while also specifically monitoring student behavior. The Professional Responsibilities domain addresses the parameters for everything a teacher does outside of the classroom to influence and prepare for students learning at the highest level and to promote effectiveness of the school community.

These domains have been determined in response to a rigorous review of existing standards, including INTASC (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium) and NBPTS (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards) standards as well as examples of other state standards such as those of Iowa, Colorado, and Delaware. A similar process was used to identify the professional practice domain. The TLC reviewed existing standards, removed any duplication with the instructional practice standards, and ensured alignment. The TLC analyzed various exemplars and selected these as the strongest fit with the TLC's established beliefs, goals, and purposes, in order to inform Nevada's Educator Performance Framework.

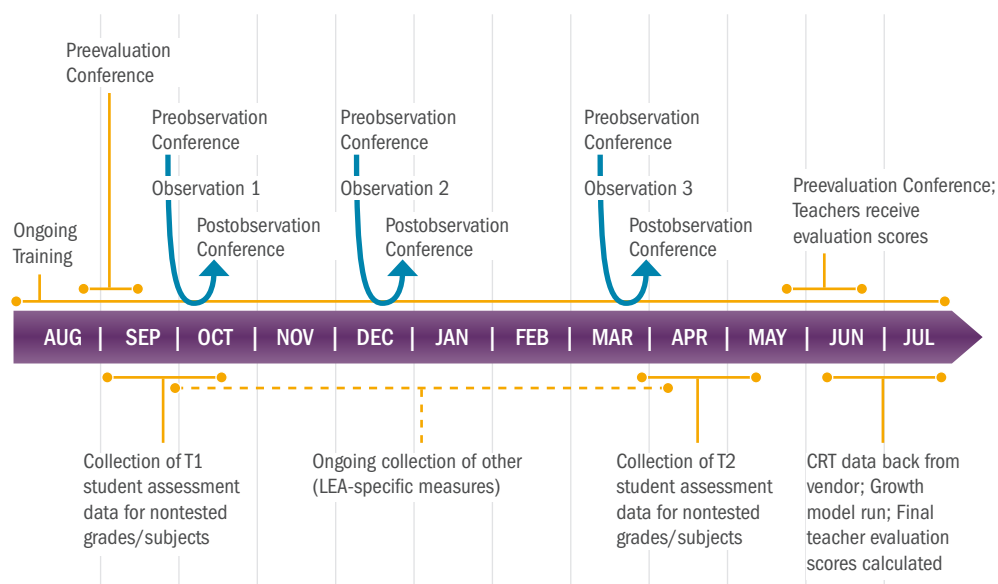
The TLC made a deliberate decision to focus on high-leverage instructional practices based on input from guidance by national experts and with the reinforcement of research, which demonstrates that narrowing the scope to the assessment of instructional practice and professional development will broaden the depth and breadth of the system. In addition, these principles are based on empirical evidence suggesting an immediate and important connection to fostering student success in

postsecondary environments by building students' 21st century skills so that they graduate college and career ready.

The Nevada Educator Performance Framework requires the use of preobservation and postobservation conferences. A guided preobservation conference, with the educator reviewing student needs and research behind instructional approach prior to observation of instructional practice, will focus the nature of the observation. This process is essential, because designing measures of instructional practice—inclusive of evidenced-based instructional practices specific to student need—and creating the decision criteria for use would be unwieldy and difficult to narrow in a performance rubric. Therefore, the preobservation conference is intended as an opportunity for teachers to describe the student needs, evidence behind the instructional strategies used, and the primary objectives of the lesson.

The TLC defined teacher evaluation as a year-long process with multiple components. The annual evaluation cycle begins with teacher self-assessment, which includes, but need not be limited to, a self-assessment based on the five high-level instructional standards, and a preevaluation conference between the teacher and supervising administrator that includes identification of an instructional focus as illustrated in Figure F-1.

Figure F-1. Overview of Teacher Evaluation Cycle (Standard)



This evaluation process establishes a structure to improve teachers' awareness, understanding, and application of evidenced practices so that each teacher can articulate to the evaluator prior to the observation what the practice is, the research behind the practice, and why it was chosen.

CASE STUDY G

Educator Evaluation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning Consortium

The Educator Evaluation for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (E3TL) Consortium was jointly formed by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the New York State United Teachers, and the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals. The AFT Investing in Innovation grant specifically addresses the need to determine whether existing or new measures of teacher performance accurately account for the unique learning needs and instructional strategies of special student populations (e.g., students with disabilities and English language learners).

In fall 2010, AFT convened two subcommittees to develop standards of effectiveness in instructing English language learners and students with disabilities in general education classrooms. The subcommittees, composed of practitioners and experts in the field, produced a [shared values brief](#) that outlines the conditions necessary for all students, including students with disabilities and English language learners, to be successful in effective general education classrooms. This publication was designed to highlight how educators in effective classrooms use flexible, proactive, strategies to accommodate students' strengths, challenges, and diversities and regularly examine their own practices for self-improvement to ensure that *all students* are succeeding. Districts can use this guide as a tool for assessing how well they are providing the necessary supports and resources for educating all students in inclusive settings and for developing plans to overcome identified gaps in support.

Other actions taken by each subcommittee included examining the teaching standards used by districts in the E3TL Consortium and modifying the language in the performance indicators and corresponding rubrics ([New York](#) and [Rhode Island](#)) to reflect evidence-based practices in inclusive settings; identifying specific performance indicators for teachers of English language learners and students with disabilities; and proposing areas in which high-quality professional development would be needed.

In December 2011, a smaller working group reexamined the teaching standards, performance indicators, and corresponding rubric modifications and considerations (generated with the larger group) to provide additional guidance and clarification to teachers and evaluators. This group drafted a preliminary [training plan](#) based on the elements of inclusive practice outlined in the shared values brief described previously. The overall goal of the training would familiarize educators and evaluators with English language learners and students with disabilities and the issues involved in instruction and classroom observations. Objectives for each session are listed below.

Session I. All Learners and Equal Access

Participants will:

1. Gain better understanding of legal context of English language learners and students with disabilities.
2. Explore the rights and opportunities for English language learners and students with disabilities to have full access to educational services and necessary support.
3. Examine sample individualized education programs.
4. Identify various terms pertinent to English language learners and students with disabilities.
5. Learn rudimentary information about the Common Core State Standards and look at some examples of how to include English language learners and students with disabilities in standards-based instruction.
6. Define their role as an advocate and supporter of quality education for English language learners and students with disabilities.

Session II. Individual Strengths and Challenges and Supporting Diversity

Participants will:

1. Raise awareness about disabilities and English language learners by helping participants develop a sense of empathy for English language learners and students with disabilities.
2. Identify various stages of developmentally appropriate.
3. Analyze diverse backgrounds of English language learners and their academic needs.
4. Identify student learning styles and develop sensitivity in a responsive learning environment.
5. Identify ways to draw on students' knowledge as a resource in learning.
6. Have a better understanding that learning how to include English language learners and students with disabilities in instruction also helps the general education student population (the general education students also can benefit from learning how to differentiate).

Session III. Reflective, Responsive, and Differentiated and Evidence-Based Teaching Strategies

Participants will:

1. Learn the relevant terminology and acquire the basics about various instructional strategies to understand what they are and how to implement them in instruction and assessment; need to understand students' goals to be able to teach them.
2. Review sample lesson plans for appropriate inclusion.
3. Identify methods of scaffolding instruction.

Session IV. Culture, Community, and Collaboration

Participants will:

1. Learn about communicating with diverse families.
2. Learn about methods to engage and motivate English language learners and students with disabilities so that they can show their strengths and feel successful.
3. Identify unique characteristics of English language learners and students with disabilities to make sure their instructional needs are met.
4. Increase awareness of the need to collaborate with paraprofessionals and school-related personnel, other teachers, and instructional specialists.
5. Develop a plan to ensure other stakeholders have the right information about working with English language learners and students with disabilities.

In February 2013, key stakeholders involved in the E3TL Consortium and external guests from supporting organizations were invited to a 2.5-day pilot training academy to be trained as trainers in the session outcomes described previously and to provide feedback regarding how the sessions could be streamlined to better reflect the immediate needs of educators and evaluators in states and districts across the nation. The subcommittee currently is working to adjust and refine the training plans, supporting materials, and resources, based on the feedback provided, and develop a dissemination plan to reach a wider audience.

Center on
GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS

at American Institutes for Research ■

1000 Thomas Jefferson Street NW
Washington, DC 20007-3835
877.322.8700

www.gtlcenter.org



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