



**Session Title:** Reforming Teacher Support and Development Using 21st Century Tools

### **Overview of the Session**

This session provided opportunities for participants to discuss challenges and share ideas related to teacher support and development. The presenters from American Federation of Teachers and Texas Tech University shared their experiences designing and implementing new teacher evaluation systems. They discussed four key themes in their work that are central to teacher support efforts more broadly: shifting educator mindsets, aligning systems of support and development, using technology to support the work, and building capacity for sustainability. Participants then had an opportunity to discuss challenges from their own work related to these themes and brainstorm solutions with colleagues.

### **Session Presenters and Facilitators**

#### *Grantees:*

Dawn Krusemark, American Federation of Teachers  
Shirley Matteson, Texas Tech University

#### *i3 TA Liaisons:*

Nicole Breslow, Education Development Center  
Karen Shakman, Education Development Center  
Clarissa McKithen, Westat

### **Materials**

In addition to these notes from the table discussions, you can find the PowerPoint presentation, a summary of the presenters' grants, and a description of teacher evaluation resources available to you through the AFT posted on the Teacher and Leader Effectiveness i3 Community of Practice.

### **Key Issues and Challenges (Focused on the Four Theme Areas)**

#### **Role of Technology**

- Variability of technology can be a challenge.
- Lack of tech-savvy and resistance to learn
- Lack of funding for technology can be a barrier. Technology is expensive and becomes out of date quickly. How do we sustain the ongoing investment in technology that is needed?
- Actual technology in buildings (infrastructure) is a challenge.
- How is online engagement different from face-to-face engagement and how do you support effective online engagement?
  - In-house PD (one-on-one)
  - Hands-on support
  - Virtual and video (Skype/Google hangout)
- What platform will support scalability? The platform is not always selected based on its purpose and what it is needed to do.
- Hiring and retention of trainers is a challenge.



- Low usage rate of videos
  - “not my classroom,” “not relevant”
  - alignment of teachers' need vs use
- Finding the right Learning Management System can be a challenge. It needs to include many components, including classroom instruction, professional development, and evaluation.
- Career path models
- Identify top strategies and purpose

### **Shifting Educator Mindsets**

- Focus on evaluation rubric often clutters thinking about professional development.
- Culture of compliance mindset restricts ability to grow.
- AFT discussed its rigorous and ongoing rater training to ensure that scores are consistent and reliable. This is not the norm. Many systems do not have adequate training for principals that includes ongoing recalibration. This is a major challenge.
- How do we make sure the evaluation system is fair when principals often don't have enough time to be adequately trained?

### **Building Capacity for Sustainability**

- Helping teachers understand the coaching model and how it supports professional development and continuous improvement is a challenge. The feedback loop stops at a certain point in the process without a good leader to carry it through.
- Finding money at the district level to sustain the work is a challenge.
- It is important to have people in the building who can continue the coaching and leadership after the i3 program is gone. Need to build capacity within the school.
- An instructional approach may be embraced by teachers, but administrators do not always buy in. Need support from school leaders.
- Providing feedback to teachers can be challenging. Helpful strategies:
  - Using video to identify places where a teacher's practices support or do not support a skill that is being discussed (such as higher order questioning). This keeps the conversation focused on evidence.
  - Use language in teacher feedback that removes the personal element. For example, “in this lesson we saw....”
- How do we navigate friction between our interventions and current practices in districts/states? Teachers are getting inconsistent messages.
- How do we find time to build the systems we need?

### **Aligning Systems of Support and Development**

- Using data from teacher evaluation systems to make high-stakes decisions (including about compensation) without taking the time to validate the system is a concern.



Means of Engaging (circle all that apply,  $n = 5$  individuals commented)

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|--|---|
| a. Contribute to active online community     | 3 |
| b. Hold regular conference calls             | 0 |
| c. Attend webinars                           | 3 |
| d. Participate in online small-group meeting | 2 |
| e. Share resources to support other grantees | 3 |
| f. Find resources shared by other grantees   | 4 |
| g. Other                                     | 0 |