Moderator’s Guide

A Guide to Promoting Teacher Conversations on Teacher Evaluation Reform

November 2011
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The following teacher handouts are available in customizable Word format on the Everyone at the Table website:

- Strategies for Recruiting Teachers for the Dialogue
  - Sample Teacher Recruitment Invitation

- “Taking the Temperature” Part 1: Consensogram Activity
  - Consensogram Group Process

- Focus Group Facilitation Activity
  - Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation
  - Discussion Summary

- Carousel Brainstorming Activity
  - Carousel Brainstorming Group Process

- Interview Activity
  - Interview Group Process
  - Interview Recording Sheet

- Storyboarding Activity
  - Storyboarding Group Process

- Additional Resources and Jigsaw Activity
  - Additional Resources on Teacher Evaluation

- Build Your Own Evaluation
  - Group Handout 1
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Promoting Teacher Conversations
Introduction

ABOUT THIS PROJECT

The *Everyone at the Table: Engaging Teachers in Evaluation Reform* project intends to reach out to teachers around the country by facilitating locally based dialogues on teacher evaluation. Too often, teachers’ voices have been left out of the dialogue on teacher evaluation—often because it’s difficult to figure out how to authentically incorporate them.

The materials available through this project provide a way to genuinely include teachers in the conversation about evaluation and teacher quality by facilitating candid and respectful dialogue that gets to the heart of what teachers are thinking. The materials are flexible, practical, and effective, and they can be used successfully in many different ways. They are meant to be tweaked to fit their context—as part of a long-term plan, a way to open discussion, or even to modify new evaluation systems already in place.

The materials for this project include the following: *Everyone at the Table* website, *Moderator’s Guide*, *Leaders Involvement Guide*, slide presentation, discussion-starting videos, and teacher handouts. These materials were developed through careful research with both teachers and administrators by Public Agenda and American Institutes for Research (AIR), both independent and nonpartisan organizations committed to bringing everyone to the table on critical policy issues. Generous support for this project has been provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

What is the No. 1 reason to use these materials? Having teachers involved in the reformation of teacher evaluation will lead to positive changes in improving communication, building trust, and shaping a collaborative culture dedicated to the advancement of high-quality teaching and learning. This project aims to help get teachers to sit down together, talk honestly about the necessary changes for teacher evaluation reform, and take ownership of the implementation of these changes. This important task has been broken down into manageable steps so that anyone can begin this crucial process.

Encouraging teachers to take an active role will help ensure that evaluation policies are of high quality as well as fair and respectful of teachers. We anticipate that involving teachers on this topic will build awareness of and dialogue about what it means to be a strong teacher and the importance of continuous improvement. Moreover, having teachers take part in the policy process increases the likelihood that the implementation of new evaluation systems will be fully supported.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The *Moderator’s Guide* is intended for use by any individual who accepts the task of convening a group or groups of teachers together in dialogue and action related to teacher evaluation reform. The appropriate individual might be a teacher leader, a union building representative, or a leader of a committee or task force for teacher evaluation. This individual should be able to engage teachers,
encourage them to speak up, and then serve as moderator for the discussion. It’s best, however, if the moderator's role is not taken by the principal, superintendent, or other administrative leader. The goal of the dialogue is to allow teachers to speak freely and openly, and the presence of a school administrator at these meetings might have the effect of suppressing the dialogue. However, the moderator should be able to bring teachers’ ideas back to administrative leaders to inform policy decisions.

The materials in the *Moderator’s Guide* are best suited for school districts that are in the very early stages of contemplating teacher evaluation reform. But districts whose reforms are well under way also will find some key takeaways.
Getting Started

If your school district is like most, you may currently have a handful of teachers who actively participate in school or district policy, but the majority of teachers are largely left to focus exclusively on what takes place in their classrooms. How do you, as moderator, go about bringing more teachers to the table and fully engaging those who are seated there? How do you promote constructive conversation on issues such as teacher performance, accountability, and evaluation—which often leave teachers divided?

USING THESE MATERIALS

Bringing up the topic of conversation about teacher evaluation in the staff room is not enough; neither is raising the point at an all-staff inservice or professional development meeting. Instead, this guide provides several options for a moderator to recruit and proactively engage teachers in dialogue and decision making by using the Everyone at the Table materials. There are three ways to use these materials:

- As part of a task force or committee
- With teacher engagement teams
- Independently

Using the Materials as Part of a Task Force or Committee

Typically, if a task force or a committee is charged with addressing teacher evaluation, its membership will include teachers. These teachers should represent the diversity of schools, grade levels, and subjects, as well as the range of genders, cultures, and teacher age or experience levels that exist in your school or district. It should not only be the “usual suspects” who serve on the task force or committee. In cases where teacher representation is limited, the task force or committee can still invite additional teachers to present their views at meetings on specific topics.

As moderator, you can encourage teachers’ active involvement—both as representatives on these committees and as speakers at meetings. You also may be in a position to encourage the task force or committee to involve teachers in this way. To ensure that teachers’ voices are heard, critical decisions should be made by vote, where teacher representatives’ votes comprise a significant weight in the final decision. In addition to these more general guidelines, the materials included in this guide can be integrated into the meetings of the task force or committee to encourage deep and inclusive dialogue on the different options for teacher evaluation.

Using the Materials With Teacher Engagement Teams

To engage the masses of teachers who will not be able to serve on a task force, it is recommended that the district create what we call “teacher engagement teams.” Teacher engagement teams are groups of teachers who convene, ideally on a regular basis, to collaboratively dig more deeply into a policy issue at hand, exploring the pros and cons of various approaches to teacher evaluation and
giving input on a general consensus as to what type of system would best suit the schools in the district. This input then is brought back to the task force or the committee leading the reforms and taken into account when decisions are being made. Teacher engagement teams ensure that not only those serving on the task force but also the wider population of teachers and others affected by the reforms have an opportunity to provide feedback on the new policies that are created.

Depending on the geographic size of your district and the number of teachers in each school, the district might consider convening one teacher engagement team per school, which meets over time. (In that situation, there may be several moderators for several engagement teams.) The materials presented here are specifically designed to facilitate focus group discussions and other activities related to teacher evaluation. But, once convened, these engagement teams also can meet for other communication and consensus-building activities.

**Using the Materials Independently**

If the option of working with a task force or committee or even with teacher engagement teams is beyond the scope of what is possible in your context, using these materials independently is a viable option. This approach could include any number of more informal means of brainstorming what would make for a good teacher evaluation system. As moderator, you can review the materials on your own or send them to a few teacher colleagues for collective consideration. Even if your outcomes are not reflective of the larger body of teachers in your school district, you will emerge with a more structured way of communicating teachers’ ideas about evaluation with whoever is in charge of leading such reforms.

Regardless of how you choose or are able to use these materials in your school or district, it is important to communicate to both teachers and decision makers how the teacher input will be shared. We offer suggestions for how to do this in the “Following the Meeting” section (see page 38 of this guide).

**SAMPLE PLANS FOR TEACHER CONVERSATIONS**

The materials developed for *Everyone at the Table* are extremely flexible and can be used in a variety of situations. Depending on how you choose to use these materials—as an integrated, long-term process on teacher evaluation in your school or district or as a one-time meeting to start the conversation with your teachers—your menu of activities will differ.

Following are three examples of how this process could look in your school or school district:

- Multiple conversations
- A few key conversations
- One core conversation

Tables 1–3 provide sample plans for using the materials, activities, and suggested times for each of these types of conversations. In between each activity, the moderator should prepare for the next session and actively engage with key district decision makers to bring the voice of teachers to the policymaking table.
Sample Plan 1: Multiple Conversations at the Table

You have decided on a semester-long—or even a year-long process—to include teachers’ voices in the dialogue about teacher evaluation in your school or district. You intend to use all the activities we have provided. You are starting this process well in advance of key decision-making time and have a clearly determined plan for how you will share the insight you gather from participating teachers. Table 1 shows how the engagement process may look for you.

Table 1. Multiple Conversations at the Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Timeline</th>
<th>Suggested Time</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weeks 1–4</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Teacher Recruitment</td>
<td>During this time period, the moderator reaches out to all teachers in the school or district. The moderator works with their schedules, determines a calendar that provides enough time for ample discussion, and shares with teachers this plan for using their insight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5 or 6</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>“Taking the Temperature” Part 1: Consensogram Activity and “Taking the Temperature” Part 2: Viewing the Foundations of Evaluation Slide Show</td>
<td>These preliminary activities introduce the concept of engagement to participating teachers and determine their starting points in their knowledge and awareness of teacher evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6 or 7</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>Focus Group Facilitation Activity (which includes viewing the Engaging Teachers in Evaluation Reform video)</td>
<td>These activities present three different scenarios for teacher evaluation. Each scenario contains different elements in different combinations, none of which is fully right or wrong. This approach provides a starting point for conversations about what an effective evaluation system might look like in your school or district. Teachers will work to build consensus, though it is okay if not everyone agrees and no final consensus is met.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–4 weeks later</td>
<td>45 minutes</td>
<td>Carousel Brainstorming Activity</td>
<td>This activity, in which teachers split off into small groups to discuss posted questions, will generate large numbers of responses to questions or issues that teachers have about evaluation reform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–4 weeks later</td>
<td>75–90 minutes</td>
<td>Interview Activity</td>
<td>In this multistep activity, each participant collects information about teacher evaluation by interviewing at least four other teacher participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–4 weeks later</td>
<td>45–90 minutes</td>
<td>Storyboarding Activity</td>
<td>Individuals respond to a specific question about teacher reform in small groups of three or four. This activity facilitates sharing and organizing very concrete and practical ideas about teacher evaluation and is a good way to build consensus.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Sample Plan 2: A Few Key Conversations at the Table

You have several months to engage your teachers in a teacher evaluation plan for your school or school district. It is not a lot of time, but it is enough time to include a few key activities. You are starting this process well in advance of the decision-making time and have a clearly determined plan for how you will share the insight you gather from participating teachers. Table 2 shows how the engagement process may look for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Timeline</th>
<th>Suggested Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weeks 1–2</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Teacher Recruitment</td>
<td>During this time period, the moderator reaches out to all the teachers in the school or district. The moderator works with their schedules, determines a calendar that provides enough time for ample discussion, and shares with teachers the plan for using their insight.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2. A Few Key Conversations at the Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Timeline</th>
<th>Suggested Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1–4 weeks later</td>
<td>45–90 minutes</td>
<td>Additional Resources and Jigsaw Activity</td>
<td>This activity brings research-based findings to the table as teachers weigh in on the ideal evaluation system. Using a “divide and conquer” approach, teachers read different resources prior to the meeting and bring the key takeaways to the rest of the group in two-person and small groups and then with the entire group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–4 weeks later</td>
<td>45–60 minutes</td>
<td>Build Your Own Evaluation: Meeting 1</td>
<td>Drawing on the scenarios from the Focus Group Facilitation Activity as a template, participating teachers reach consensus about which features should be included in the evaluation plan for your school or district. The results are compiled in Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 1 and Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–4 weeks later</td>
<td>45–60 minutes</td>
<td>Build Your Own Evaluation: Meeting 2</td>
<td>The moderator brings printed copies of the Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 2 and shares it with the whole group. Additional teachers may be invited to this meeting. For further clarification, the group may wish to complete Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 3. Based on these reactions, the moderator makes any necessary modifications before sharing the “ideal” evaluation system with the task force or committee or other leaders in the reform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggested Timeline</td>
<td>Suggested Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3 or 4</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>“Taking the Temperature” Part 1: Consensogram Activity and “Taking the Temperature” Part 2: Viewing the Foundations of Evaluation Slide Show</td>
<td>These activities introduce the concept of engagement to participating teachers and determine their starting points in their knowledge and awareness of teacher evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4 or 5</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>Focus Group Facilitation Activity (which includes viewing the Engaging Teachers in Evaluation Reform video) (You also may conduct a single, longer meeting combining the “Taking the Temperature” activities with the other key activities.)</td>
<td>These activities present three different scenarios for teacher evaluation. Each scenario contains different elements in different combinations, none of which are fully right or wrong. This approach provides a starting point for conversation about what an effective evaluation system might look like in your school or district. Teachers will work to build consensus, though it is okay if not everyone agrees and no final consensus is met.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1–4 weeks later    | 45–90 minutes | One optional activity chosen from “Optional Activities for Promoting Teacher Conversations” (Section 4 of this guide) | The moderator chooses the optional activity that will best benefit the participating teachers, based on their input, attitudes, personalities, and knowledge gaps. For example:  
- Do the Additional Resources and Jigsaw Activity if the teachers enjoy reading more about issues of teaching, reform, and evaluation.  
- Try the Interview Activity if teachers have a great rapport with each other and seem eager to chat. |
| 1–4 weeks later    | 45–60 minutes | Build Your Own Evaluation: Meeting 1 | Drawing on the scenarios from the Focus Group Facilitation Activity as a template, participating teachers will reach consensus about which features should be included in the teacher evaluation plan for your school or district. The results are compiled in Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 1 and Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 2. |
| 1–4 weeks later    | 45–60 minutes | Build Your Own Evaluation: Meeting 2 | The moderator brings printed copies of the Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 2 and shares it with the whole group. Additional teachers may be invited to this meeting. For further clarification, the group may wish to complete Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 3. Based on these reactions, the moderator makes any necessary modifications before sharing the “ideal” evaluation system with the task force or committee or other leaders in the reform. |
Sample Plan 3: One Core Conversation at the Table

Perhaps you do not have a lot of time to work with teachers—you have to report to your task force in a few weeks. Perhaps this is an informal process for you, and you would like to just get a cursory read on what your teachers think. Perhaps you want to talk things over with your fellow teachers, in a structured format, and intend to meet at a coffee shop to brainstorm. Table 3 shows how the engagement process may look for you.

Table 3. One Core Conversation at the Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Timeline</th>
<th>Suggested Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Days 1–2</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Teacher Recruitment</td>
<td>During this time period, the moderator sends some e-mails to colleagues, employees, and teacher friends; posts the invitation in the staff room; and tries to gather as many RSVPs as possible to have a ballpark figure for how many teachers will show up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anytime between Day 3 and your deadline</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td><strong>Focus Group Facilitation Activity</strong> (which includes viewing the <em>Engaging Teachers in Evaluation Reform</em> video)</td>
<td>These activities present three different scenarios for teacher evaluation. Each scenario contains different elements in different combinations, none of which are fully right or wrong. This approach provides a starting point for conversation about what an effective evaluation system might look like in your school or district. Teachers will work to build consensus, though it is okay if not everyone agrees and no final consensus is met.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you have time</td>
<td>45–60 minutes</td>
<td><strong>Build Your Own Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>Drawing on the scenarios from the <strong>Focus Group Facilitation Activity</strong>, participating teachers will reach consensus about the preferred approach to teacher evaluation in the school or district. The results are compiled in <strong>Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 2</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STRATEGIES FOR RECRUITING TEACHERS FOR THE DIALOGUE

As the moderator of this teacher evaluation initiative, you may have the responsibility to create and facilitate teacher engagement teams (see sidebar at right) or other forms of teacher involvement, such as focus groups. The following recommendations are intended to help you recruit teachers for the dialogue:

- Reach out to *all* teachers. If the dialogue includes only the “usual” group of teachers, the vital voices of other teachers will be left out. As a result, the overall message brought to the table by teachers may become less credible to teachers and administrators alike.

Teacher Engagement Teams

Teacher engagement teams are groups of teachers who convene, ideally on a regular basis, to collaboratively dig more deeply into a policy issue at hand, exploring the pros and cons of various approaches to teacher evaluation, and giving input on a general consensus as to what type of system would best suit the schools in the district.
Determine the time and location of meetings to accommodate as many teachers’ schedules as possible and to be as convenient as possible. It might make sense to vary the time and location of these meetings so that all teachers can participate. Although not ideal, it is also possible to hold these conversations during all-staff inservice or professional development days when nearly all teachers are present.

Plan for enough time to allow discussion and brainstorming. Typically, one class period would not be enough. Most of the recommended activities require at least 1.5 hours.

Provide coffee, pizza, pastries, or other refreshments to create a more relaxed atmosphere. Food also can convince teachers who are on the fence to come along for the discussion.

Let teachers know from the beginning how their input will be shared. Be specific—indicate the precise ways that their feedback will be presented to the task force or other decision makers.

Use e-mails, flyers, and word of mouth to spread the word about the discussions and their purpose. You may wish to use the Sample Teacher Recruitment Invitation (page 11). If the role of the teachers union is significant, seek a union partnership to recruit teachers to the dialogue.

Communicate information about this initiative with district officials, task force leaders, or others heavily involved, especially in smaller districts.

Start getting teachers engaged now. It is never too late to involve teachers, but earlier is definitely better.

More About Teacher Engagement Teams

Following is additional information for convening teacher engagement teams:

Ideally 10–15 teachers are recruited for each teacher engagement team. Of course, no teachers should be turned away, so larger teams or multiple teams should be accommodated.

It may be appropriate in your context to divide engagement teams between elementary, middle, and secondary levels because their evaluation needs and the appropriate evaluation measures may differ considerably. Alternatively, depending on the geographic size of your district, it may be appropriate to convene engagement teams based on location.

A school or district can have as many teacher engagement teams as it desires, depending on the number of teachers and their interests. It may make sense to convene one engagement team per school.

If there are several engagement teams, several moderators also may be needed.

Depending on your timeline and your district’s policy design schedule, the discussions can take place over one semester or over two years.
SAMPLE TEACHER RECRUITMENT INVITATION

(A downloadable and customizable Word version of the Sample Teacher Recruitment Invitation is available on the Everyone at the Table website under “Recruitment Strategies” at www.everyoneatthetable.org/gs_recruiting.php.)

Join the Conversation on Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness!

Please join your colleagues for a lively and important focus group discussion about approaches to evaluating teacher effectiveness.

Who: All teachers at [insert school or district name]

What: This [insert name of activity, such as a focus group discussion or other activity] is intended to provide teachers with an opportunity to engage in thoughtful, constructive dialogue on the important topic of measuring teacher effectiveness. The key ideas raised in this dialogue will be brought back to [insert who key decision makers are (e.g., the task force or the school board)] by way of [insert how you will share teacher input]. Input from this [insert activity] will inform the conversation as key decisions are made about the design of a new evaluation system for [insert name of district or school].

When: [insert date and time]

Where: [insert place]

Why: So that your voice can be heard!

Light refreshments will be served.

Please RSVP by [insert date] to [insert name] at [insert e-mail or phone number].
Before the Conversations

The *Everyone at the Table* project is designed to help get teachers to sit down together, honestly talk about necessary changes, and take ownership of their evaluation implementation. The role of the moderator is incredibly important in accomplishing this task, and it may seem daunting at first. We have broken down the process into manageable steps for you.

Once you have accepted the responsibility of convening teachers to discuss teacher evaluation and have managed to recruit teachers for the occasion, your biggest concern as moderator is probably that the conversation could disintegrate into a session for gossiping, venting, blaming, or arguing. This situation can happen at the best of times, but it is a particular threat for a sensitive topic such as teacher evaluation. The following information will help you facilitate open, inclusive, and constructive conversations.

**THINGS TO CONSIDER PRIOR TO THE MEETINGS**

**Room Setup**
Set up the room in a way that is conducive to discussion and sharing. For example, arranging the seats in a large circle, around a table if possible, allows everybody to see one another as they interact. Having the option of moving chairs or using breakout rooms for smaller group brainstorming sessions also is recommended. Any distracting background noises should be minimized.

**Audiovisual Equipment**
Several activities require audiovisual equipment. Set up a screen on which you can present the *Foundations of Evaluation* slide show and play the introductory video titled *Engaging Teachers in Evaluation Reform*. Verify that the slide show and video projector work, and test for quality sound projection.

**Goals and Processes**
Establish clear and specific goals and processes for how teacher input will be shared with school or district decision makers prior to each meeting, and communicate these clearly and frankly to participants. We have explained the intended goals for each activity in this guide. To avoid any misunderstandings, these goals should be communicated at the time of recruitment and at the start of each meeting. You also may have some of your own goals to add.

**Note Taking**
Plan to have somebody other than the moderator take notes of the discussion so that subsequent teacher meetings can build off the ideas raised. The notes also can be used at meetings with the task force or other key decision makers to accurately capture and communicate teachers’ ideas and concerns.
GENERAL STRATEGIES FOR CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE

The following tips are intended to help you avoid common pitfalls that could interfere with building constructive, open dialogue on hot-button issues:

- Encourage participants to ask questions.
- Practice using “wait time”: Provide three to five seconds of silence after asking a question or starting a discussion.
- Acknowledge all responses either passively or actively and with a neutral demeanor.
- Rephrase each question or discussion topic instead of merely repeating it.
- Withhold criticism when responding.
- Share key findings and “learning points” on chart paper to demonstrate the good progress taking place.
- Make sure to move the conversation forward through healthy discussion; avoid arguing over the same topic for too long.

BUILDING CONSENSUS

Although a decision on the many components of a teacher evaluation system will take time, it is still a goal to come to consensus on the topics discussed and the next steps. Table 4 gives some clarifications on consensus building.

Table 4. Clarifications on Building Consensus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building consensus means...</th>
<th>Building consensus does not mean...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All group members contribute.</td>
<td>All group members agree.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone’s opinion is heard and encouraged.</td>
<td>The result is everyone’s first choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences are viewed as helpful.</td>
<td>There are no differences in opinion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everyone can paraphrase the pros and cons.</td>
<td>Everyone possesses a complete understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who disagree agree to give the group’s choice a try, at least for a certain period of time.</td>
<td>Conflict and resistance will be overcome immediately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All members share the final decision.</td>
<td>All members lend their full-fledged support for the decision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All members agree to take responsibility for implementing the final decision.</td>
<td>All members must advocate for the decision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MANAGING CHANGE

Teacher evaluation reform can represent a significant change for many teachers, and change can be unsettling and anxiety producing. Teachers’ involvement in the change process is absolutely necessary, however. Participation ensures that teachers have the opportunity to actively shape and develop the system that centrally affects their working lives. To this end, the following assumptions about change should be remembered:

Change

- Change is a process, not an event.
- Change is made by individuals first and then by organizations.
- Change is a highly personal experience.
- Change entails developmental growth in feelings and skills.

Source: Adapted from Hall and Loucks (1979), as cited in Regional Educational Laboratory Network Program (1995, p. 12-9)

UNDERSTANDING CHOICEWORK

The material presented in this guide draws on “choicework.” Choicework is a central element in Daniel Yankelovich’s conception of how people learn and begin to cope with change (see Yankelovich, 2001, 2002). Specifically, the Everyone at the Table materials include various alternative approaches to evaluation for teachers to consider, each having trade-offs. These approaches are described in more detail in the Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation handout (see page 28 of this guide), which is part of the Focus Group Facilitation Activity (see page 23 of this guide).

By using scenarios, some unfamiliar teacher evaluation concepts have been made clearer and more concrete. The process of considering choices compels people to look at different ideas for addressing an issue side by side. It also gives people context, focuses their attention, and staves off repetitive venting and argument by anecdote. In addition, choicework explicitly highlights the pros and cons of a range of options, so people get the “lay of the land” more quickly and move away from easy answers. Because there are rarely perfect solutions to policy problems, choicework engenders a more practical frame of mind.
Preliminary Activities for Promoting Teacher Conversations
“Taking the Temperature” on Teachers’ Current Knowledge of Evaluation Concepts

The key goal of Everyone at the Table is to engage teachers meaningfully in dialogue to shape their teacher evaluation systems. To ensure their familiarity with evaluation concepts, you as moderator can assess teachers’ current knowledge and then provide an initial overview of the topic to help develop a shared understanding of the options and a common language for discussion. If you do have time to include this step, it should take place prior to the Focus Group Facilitation Activity (see page 23) or any other activity.

You may wish to first provide an introduction (see “Introductory Talking Points” on page 22 of this guide). It is then suggested that you “take the temperature” of teachers’ current knowledge and then inform teachers about key concepts in which their current knowledge may be lacking. To do so, use the following activities:

- “Taking the Temperature” Part 1: Consensogram Activity (see page 17 of this guide)
- “Taking the Temperature” Part 2: Viewing the Foundations of Evaluation Slide Show (see page 20 of this guide)

Together these two activities can comprise the first engagement team meeting (1 hour). It also is possible to condense these (30 minutes) and tack them on to the start of your Focus Group Facilitation Activity.
“Taking the Temperature” Part 1: Consensogram Activity

A consensogram is a chart that indicates a group’s perception of various topics. Members of the group place stickers on the chart to show their responses. By observing the stickers, one can tell the consensus of the group at a glance.

MODERATOR’S LESSON PLAN: Consensogram

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purposes</th>
<th>The specific purposes of this activity are as follows:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Assess teachers’ knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Build a common vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Room Setup | You will need an easel and 1 sheet of chart paper in a central place in the room. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- 1 sheet of chart paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Easel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Magic markers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Several sheets of circle-dot stickers (red, yellow, green, and blue)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Copies of the Consensogram Group Process (see page 19 of this guide)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructions Before the Activity</th>
<th>1. Position the moderator area front and center so that it is easily visible to all participants.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Using the magic markers, write the following teacher evaluation topics on chart paper before the session. (The following topics are suggested as starters.) Leave plenty of space between items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Peer assistance and review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Value added</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Observation rubrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Multiple measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Multiple performance levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sole evaluator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Measure weights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Familiarize yourself with the topics so that you are fully able to make any needed clarifications.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Instructions During the Activity**

1. Point out the teacher evaluation topics written on the chart paper.

2. Demonstrate your own knowledge of each topic by putting a circle-dot sticker next to it:
   - **Red:** Help! What is this?
   - **Yellow:** I vaguely know what this means.
   - **Green:** All is well; this makes sense to me.
   - **Blue:** I could stand up and explain this in my sleep!

3. Ask participants to take their stickers and place the appropriate color sticker next to each topic.

4. Let participants know that there are no right or wrong answers. The purpose is simply to indicate how familiar they are with different concepts so that you can speak more about the areas in which there is not a lot of current understanding.

5. Lead the discussion to determine which concepts are more or less understood.

6. Focus additional time on less understood topics.
TEACHER HANDOUT: Consensogram Group Process

(A downloadable and customizable Word version of the Consensogram Group Process is available on the Everyone at the Table website under “Teacher Handouts” at www.everyoneatthe table.org/gtt_handouts.)

Consensogram Group Process

**Step 1.** For each term on the chart, place your appropriate circle-dot sticker to indicate the level at which you understand the concept relating to teacher evaluation.

- **Red:** Help! What is this?
- **Yellow:** I vaguely know what this means.
- **Green:** All is well; this makes sense to me.
- **Blue:** I could stand up and explain this in my sleep!

**Step 2:** After everyone has posted their stickers, the group will analyze and synthesize the information through the following questions:

- Which concepts are well understood?
- Which concepts are not well understood? Who can explain them?
- What other terms have you heard that you do not fully understand?

For more information, visit www.everyoneatthetable.org.
“Taking the Temperature” Part 2: Viewing the *Foundations of Evaluation* Slide Show

The *Foundations of Evaluation* slide show (available on the *Everyone at the Table* website at [www.everyoneatthetable.org/gtt_powerpoint.php](http://www.everyoneatthetable.org/gtt_powerpoint.php)) should be used early on to provide teachers a basic overview of key teacher evaluation concepts that are being considered in your district. It helps develop a common language about the elements of an evaluation system. It also includes notes so that you, as the moderator, can minimize the amount of time spent familiarizing yourself with each slide.

*Note:* The slide show is very appropriate to present after teachers have completed the Consensogram Activity, when you have a sense of teachers’ current knowledge base. It is recommended to present the slide show prior to the Focus Group Facilitation Activity (see page 23 of this guide).

### MODERATOR’S LESSON PLAN: *FOUNDATIONS OF EVALUATION* SLIDE SHOW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>About 30 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>Teachers will view the <em>Foundations of Evaluation</em> slide show and be able to ask questions as needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purposes</td>
<td>The specific purposes of this activity are as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Increase teachers’ knowledge of evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Build a common vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Room Setup</td>
<td>You will need chairs set up so that participants can easily view the slide show.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>- Laptop, projector, and screen for slide presentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Copy of the <em>Foundations of Evaluation</em> slide show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions Before the Activity</td>
<td>1. Test-run the slide show, making sure that the projector works.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Make sure that you are familiar with the content (notes are provided in the slide show).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Modify the slides in advance to include district background and other state- and district-specific information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions During the Activity</td>
<td>1. Provide a short introduction about the slide show.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. When presenting, spend more time on the slides that address less understood concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Allow time for additional questions and discussion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Essential Activities for Promoting Teacher Conversations
Overview of Essential Activities

The process that you (as moderator) use to engage teachers in your school or district can draw from any number of activities—both essential and optional. This section of the guide walks you through the key activities of the Everyone at the Table project and includes moderator “lesson plans” and teacher handouts. (Optional activities are provided in Section 4.) If you choose only one activity, the Focus Group Facilitation Activity (see page 23 of this guide) is certainly the most crucial, and insightful, step. The “Guide to Next Steps” section (see page 38 of this guide) will help you envision what to do with the insight you have gathered.

INTRODUCTORY TALKING POINTS

The following talking points can help you break the ice with the teachers, regardless of your starting point.

- Provide the agenda or handouts for the meeting.
- Welcome the teachers and thank them for joining the dialogue.
- Indicate the purpose of the discussion.
- Provide information about the national and district backdrop.
- Emphasize the importance of teachers being involved in decisions about teacher evaluation reform.
- Indicate that notes will be taken to be brought back to the superintendent or the evaluation task force or the teacher representative on the task force. (It is recommended that you carefully think through how teachers’ ideas and concerns will be shared prior to this meeting.)
- Explain to participants how their input will be shared with decision makers. Typically, leaders will take teachers’ input on board but ultimately make their own decisions about the evaluation design. To avoid misunderstanding, it is recommended that you state upfront that teachers are likely not making a policy decision but rather informing those who are making the decisions.
- Explain the focus group rules:
  - Be respectful and give everyone a chance to speak.
  - Build off each other’s ideas, but do not speak over one another.
  - Turn off your phones and be fully present.
  - Share your views openly.
Focus Group Facilitation Activity

At this point, you have recruited teachers to the discussion and you have reviewed strategies for constructive dialogue and consensus building. If you were able to conduct the preliminary “Taking the Temperature” on Teachers’ Current Understanding of Evaluation Concepts (see page 16 of this guide), you feel confident that the teachers now have a common understanding of key concepts and terminology. Now it is time to discuss the big question: What should your district’s evaluation system look like? *If you do no other activity, this is the one to do!*

This activity consists of four parts:

- Making introductions.
- Watching the video *Engaging Teachers in Evaluation Reform* (available on the *Everyone at the Table* website at www.everyoneatthetable.org/gett_video.php).
- Reading and discussing *Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation* (see page 28 of this guide). In addition, we strongly recommend completing *Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 1* (see page 63 of this guide).
- Filling out the Discussion Summary (see page 34 of this guide). This task is completed by the moderator and note taker.

About the Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation

To help structure this intense and important conversation, we have developed three teacher evaluation scenarios along with questions based on these scenarios. We also recommend that before the focus group convenes, you designate one participant to be a note taker throughout the conversations.

These three approaches to teacher evaluation are provided to give some context to kick off your discussion. The purpose of these scenarios is not to choose which approach is best but rather to provide a platform for discussing the pros and cons of various options in a more concrete—rather than theoretical—manner. They tease out teachers’ reactions to ideas and policies that often are unfamiliar to them. The three scenarios are as follows:

- A **principal-centered approach**, in which a strong principal serves as the sole evaluator. He or she is strict but constructive in his or her feedback.
- A **teacher-centered approach**, with peer observations by “consulting teachers,” observations by the principal, teacher-written professional growth plans, and a degree of customization.
- An **external approach**, relying on highly trained, external evaluators who sometimes observe via video and take into account student test score growth.
The Role of the Focus Group Moderator

The main tasks of the moderator are to (1) make sure the participants in the small-group discussions understand what they are supposed to be talking about and (2) keep the discussions focused and on schedule. Beyond this, the moderator should make the conversations as participatory and productive as possible. A successful moderator is comfortable with the goal of an open dialogue without a predetermined conclusion. It is essential to the credibility of the dialogue that the moderator does not direct the outcomes of the conversations and remains neutral and unbiased.

Following are some additional guidelines that are specific to focus group facilitation:

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**Guidelines for Facilitating the Focus Group**

- Without controlling what is said during the conversation, think through the process to keep the time productive and the tone collaborative and respectful.

- Encourage the active participation of all involved; do not let one person dominate the conversation. Consider calling on participants randomly. Encourage participants from the start to speak openly and chime in if they have something to say in response to someone else.

- Give everyone a chance to speak, calling on participants if necessary.

- Make sure that you get through all three scenarios; keep time and limit the discussion of each to no more than 20–25 minutes.

- Encourage participants to build on each other's ideas.

- Foster critical, reflective thinking through probes such as the following:
  - Can you elaborate on that?
  - Why do you think that was the case?
  - Tell us more.

- Steer the conversation to focus on solutions and problem solving rather than airing grievances, with probes like How would you suggest getting around that? or What would you suggest instead?

- If participants grow negative or disgruntled, use a similar tactic for questioning.

- If participants are quiet, walk through each prompt question instead of just letting the conversation flow. Again, call on participants if necessary, and use prompts for other participants to build on each others’ points.

- Continually ask the group to compare and contrast aspects of the scenarios to keep all options at the forefront of their minds.

- Play devil’s advocate if the discussion seems to veer toward one specific idea.

- Do not be frustrated if consensus is not reached in this one meeting. Remain calm, positive, constructive, and solutions-oriented.
MODERATOR’S LESSON PLAN: Focus Group Facilitation Activity

Time

2 hours

Overview

This is the key activity for engaging teachers. If you do nothing else, this is the activity to do! After the participants introduce themselves and watch the Engaging Teachers in Evaluation Reform video, you will provide the handout Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation (see page 28 of this guide). Scenario A is a principal-centered approach in which a strong principal serves as the sole evaluator; the principal is strict but constructive in his or her feedback. Scenario B takes a more teacher-centered approach, with peer observations by “consulting teachers” and the principal, teacher-written professional growth plans, and a degree of customization. Scenario C is a more external approach, relying on highly trained, external evaluators who sometimes observe via video and take into account student test score growth. For each scenario, prompts are provided (see pages 29, 31, and 33 of this guide) so the moderator can keep the discussion moving forward constructively.

If you have time, we strongly recommend that you begin to “build your own evaluation” immediately after discussing the three scenarios, using Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 1 (see page 63 of this guide). This activity involves using a tool from which teachers choose “à la carte” the various components of an ideal teacher evaluation system for your district.

Purposes

The specific purposes of this activity are as follows:

- Build a common vocabulary.
- Encourage reflection and critical thinking.
- Build group consensus.

Room Setup

You will need a large meeting table with chairs around it.

Materials

- Laptop, projector, and screen for video Engaging Teachers in Evaluation Reform
- Copies of the Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation (see page 28 of this guide) for all participants
- Copies of Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 1 (see page 63 of this guide) (optional, but strongly recommended)
- Prompt questions (see pages 29, 31, and 33 of this guide) to promote discussion
Instructions Before the Activity

1. Test to make sure that the video works, including lighting and sound quality. It is recommended that you familiarize yourself with the video prior to showing it to the group.

2. Review the three scenarios and the question prompts in detail.

3. Before the focus group begins, designate one participant as a note taker. The moderator and the note taker will later work together to fill out the Discussion Summary (see page 34 of this guide).

Instructions During the Activity

Making Introductions

1. Introduce yourself and indicate the purpose and rationale of the meeting.

2. Allow teachers to introduce themselves, especially if the teachers present are not already well acquainted. A suggested way to begin is to have each participant state his or her name, the subject(s) and grade(s) taught, years in the classroom, and school (if participants are from more than one school).

3. You may wish to follow up with the following bulleted talking points, modifying them for your context.
   - What made you decide to come to this meeting today?
   - Do you consider yourself an effective teacher? Why or why not?
   - Do you think that most teachers in the profession are effective? What makes you think that?
   - What initially influenced you to become a teacher? What do you like best/least about this profession?

Watching the Video

1. Let the teachers know that the next part of the activity is to view the video Engaging Teachers in Evaluation Reform (available on the Everyone at the Table website at www.everyoneatthetable.org/gtt_video.php). This nine-minute video is intended to get teachers thinking about the different ideas presented and excited about the conversation.

2. Before showing the video, provide a short introduction for the group. For example, share that the video is about including teacher voices in the discussion of evaluation reform and that it is meant to provoke thoughtful discussion. It was filmed with teachers and administrators from around the country who had conversations very similar to the one that your group will be having after the video. It is hoped that the group will feel inspired after the video to have a very engaging dialogue.

3. Show the video.
Reading and Discussing the Scenarios

1. Let participants know that the next activity is to discuss each scenario presented in the video. Distribute Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation (see page 28 of this guide) to each participant.

2. Ask the teachers to focus on one scenario at a time and to not jump ahead in the scenario handouts. Explain that, as a group, you will discuss each scenario in turn, for purposes of structure, and everyone will have time at the end to talk about the scenarios as a whole and build an evaluation system from the various components.

3. Read Scenario 1 and use the related questions to prompt discussion. Repeat for Scenarios 2 and 3. (It is recommended that you spend 20–25 minutes discussing each scenario.)

4. If time allows, distribute the Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 1 (see page 63 of this guide) and ask teachers to individually complete the worksheet about what components of evaluation they think are most important.

5. Let the teachers know that you will be summarizing the results of the discussion and filling out a Discussion Summary that will be shared with administrators or other stakeholders. However you decide to share the information, it is critical that you share this fact upfront with the teachers in your meetings.

6. Make sure that the note taker takes careful notes of the discussion.

Filling Out the Discussion Summary

1. After the teachers have finished discussing the ideal teacher evaluation approach for the school or district, thank them for their input.

2. As moderator, you then have the task of completing the Discussion Summary. We suggest that the moderator fills out this form within 24 hours of the focus group meeting in collaboration with one other participant who is designated as a note taker prior to the meeting.

3. You may wish to send the completed Discussion Summary to all the teachers to confirm that it accurately represents their viewpoints. Ultimately, this summary should be shared (verbally or in writing) with key decision makers in the school or district.
TEACHER HANDOUT: Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation

Scenario A

(A downloadable and customizable Word version of Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation is available on the Everyone at the Table website under “Teacher Handouts” at www.everyoneatthetable.org/gtt_handouts.php. For the moderator’s ease, the three scenarios are provided separately within this guide.)

Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation

Scenario A: Principal-Centered Approach

What if... your principal implements a new system of teacher evaluation that she says gauges the quality of the faculty in a rigorous but equitable way? The principal is the sole evaluator, and she tries to match up the teachers’ evaluation scores with fair and equitable rewards (and, if necessary, sanctions). She uses the following measures to create robust evaluations for every teacher:

Frequency

- The principal formally observes all the tenured teachers on her staff at least once per year and up to four times a year for nontenured teachers.
- She also conducts informal “walk-throughs” of teachers’ classrooms, often visiting without warning.

Measures

- The principal uses a four-point rating system (Distinguished, Proficient, Needs Improvement, Unsatisfactory) that incorporates the following:
  - Formal observations (completed by the principal)
  - Teacher-submitted portfolios, chronicling growth over the year and any formal professional development
  - A student survey conducted at the end of the year

Consequences

- The principal is not shy about giving more than a few teachers’ unsatisfactory ratings on their year-end evaluations and giving critical—but in most cases effective—feedback. On the flip side, she regularly praises teachers openly during faculty meetings if they are doing well, and her feedback always comes very soon after an observation.
- She is well known for denying tenure to a high proportion of new teachers but is willing to coach them toward tenure for the future.
Questions for the Moderator to Ask About Scenario A. Following are some recommended questions to get the discussion started (and keep it going):

- **What do you think about Scenario A? What do you like about it? What do you dislike about it?**
- Some say that principals are the ones who ought to do all the formal observations that count as your evaluation. After all, they are the leader of the school, and it is their responsibility. Others worry that principals just do not have the time to evaluate the entire staff and still handle their other responsibilities. What do you think?
- **Who else should be responsible for observations?**
- If more than one person is conducting observations, how can you make sure that each person is using the same criteria for evaluation?
- Some say that experienced teachers who have done well on past evaluations do not need to be observed every year, and it takes time away from the principal observing teachers who really need it. Others say that all teachers could benefit from being observed at least once a year (if not more) regardless of their experience. What do you think?
- **How often should new teachers be observed? How often should tenured teachers who have received good evaluations be observed?**
- Some say that teacher-created portfolios give teachers a chance to highlight the work and professional development they have done outside the classroom and should be part of the evaluation; others say that portfolios are very subjective, they do not really illustrate what a teacher has done, and they show only how much time the teacher has spent making a portfolio. What do you think?
- Some say that it makes a lot of sense to have student surveys as part of the evaluation, as long as the questions are written in a way that is fair and nonbiased, because students are the ones who know best how the teacher is teaching. Others say that students can never really be unbiased; they will favor the teachers they like, regardless of whether teachers are good at teaching or not. What do you think?
- Some people like the idea that the principal often gives unsatisfactory evaluations and blunt feedback, as it helps give teachers the tools and the desire to be more effective. Others say that this type of scoring and feedback is not helpful; the negativity is actually a barrier to improvement. What do you think?
- **Do you like the idea of having a four-point rating scale (Distinguished, Proficient, Needs Improvement, Unsatisfactory)? How would that make the evaluation different from what you have now?**
- Now that we have discussed Scenario A, what do you think about the features described in this approach? Does anyone have a different opinion? Please share.
SECTION THREE
ESSENTIAL ACTIVITIES FOR PROMOTING TEACHER CONVERSATIONS

TEACHER HANDOUT: Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation

Scenario B

(A downloadable and customizable Word version of Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation is available on the Everyone at the Table website under “Teacher Handouts” at www.everyoneatthetable.org/gtt_handouts.php. For the moderator’s ease, the three scenarios are provided separately within this guide.)

Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation (continued)

Scenario B: Teacher-Centered Approach

What if... your district takes a teacher-centered approach to developing evaluations? This system was created with teacher input; in fact, several faculty members sit on the Evaluation Task Force, a committee that oversaw the design and the implementation of the system as well as any subsequent modifications. The faculty members on the Evaluation Task Force serve as liaisons with their colleagues in their schools. The evaluation system includes an appeals process by which teachers may work with the Evaluation Task Force and administrative team to produce actionable strategies following a poor review.

The robust evaluations have the following characteristics:

Frequency

- All teachers are formally observed three times a year—once by the principal and twice by their peers.
- Every teacher writes and submits a professional growth plan for each nine-week period, as well as a final professional growth plan at the end of the year. These documents include a teacher’s goals for that nine-week period plus a reflection on the feedback given during observations.

Measures

- Principal Observations. The data collected during principal-led observations translate directly into targeted professional development sessions.
- Peer Observations
  - Consulting teachers (experienced teachers in different grades/subjects in your school who have performed well on past evaluations) conduct peer reviews several times each year; these reviews are accompanied by meetings in which the reviewed teachers have the opportunity to respond to feedback and ask questions.
  - Several of the consulting teachers serve on the Evaluation Task Force, so these peer-review meetings also offer an opportunity for teachers to provide critical feedback on the program itself.
  - Teachers may “customize” their evaluation plan each year, choosing (with the input of their consulting teachers and within certain guidelines) to weigh some measures more heavily depending on their subject area and other factors.

Consequences

- Struggling teachers are assigned to an in-house mentor.
- If a struggling teacher continues to receive low marks on peer reviews for three years in a row, he or she is counseled out of the profession (i.e., fired but in a nicer way).

For more information, visit www.everyoneatthetable.org.
Questions for the Moderator to Ask About Scenario B. Following are some recommended questions to get the discussion started (and keep it going):

- **What do you think about Scenario B? What do you like about it? What do you dislike about it?**
- Some say that it is important that teachers are extremely involved in the evaluation process, from defining their own goals and documenting performance to doing observations themselves and being involved in defining the review goals. But others point out that teachers work such long hours as it is (often with low compensation and little prep time) that it is wrong to ask them to do so much more. What do you think?
- Some say that writing and revising professional growth plans is an important way for teachers to understand, incorporate, and reach their goals. Others say that sharing professional growth plans and using them as part of the evaluation is time consuming for the teacher and really offers no value. What do you think?
- Some say that having your peers evaluate you is a good idea because your fellow teachers know more about teaching in your school than anyone else. Others say that having teachers evaluate other teachers can lead to competition and less collaboration among peers. What do you think?
- Some say that counseling teachers out of the profession, even after three years of poor evaluations and professional development, is too harsh. Some teachers need more time to succeed. Others say that this response makes sense; even teachers with tenure who do poorly on evaluations three years in row should leave. What do you think?
- Now that we have discussed Scenario B, what do you think about the features described in this approach? Does anyone have a different opinion? Please share.
TEACHER HANDOUT: Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation

Scenario C

(A downloadable and customizable Word version of Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation is available on the Everyone at the Table website under “Teacher Handouts” at www.everyoneatthetable.org/gtt_handouts.php. For the moderator’s ease, the three scenarios are provided separately within this guide.)

Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation (continued)

Scenario C: External-Centered Approach

What if... teacher effectiveness is determined on the basis of student test scores and observations by a core group of external evaluators? The evaluation system does not allow for teacher input, but it does come with hefty financial rewards. Teachers who receive high evaluation scores and have good test results are given a significant bonus.

The robust evaluations have the following characteristics:

Frequency

Teachers are formally evaluated at the end of each year based on both their students’ test score growth and the ratings they received from external evaluators who conducted four observations throughout the year.

Measures

- **Formal Observations.** Formal observations are conducted solely by a team of external evaluators: former teachers who have been extensively trained and have experience with the content and the grade level. They have little or no background knowledge on a school’s context. At least one of these observations is conducted remotely via video. The evaluators rate each teacher on a four-point scale (Distinguished, Proficient, Needs improvement, Unsatisfactory) four times per year and provide extensive written feedback about the lesson, highlighting areas of strength as well as where teachers could improve. Teachers also can review the video to get a better understanding of what the evaluators are seeing.

- **Informal Observations.** The principal conducts informal walk-through evaluations. These walk-throughs are not taken into account during evaluations or bonus-pay decisions.

- **Growth-Based Testing.** Teacher effectiveness also is measured according to students’ gains in test scores. Tests are given to students at the beginning of the year and toward the end of the year, and the growth of a student is measured by the difference in the two scores.

Consequences

- For teachers who score low on the rating scale multiple times in one year, the principal also will conduct formal observations, provide his or her own feedback to those teachers, and suggest any individual professional development that is needed.

- In addition, the external evaluators will help shape the overall schoolwide professional development planning and implementation based on all teacher evaluations.)
Questions for the Moderator to Ask About Scenario C. Following are some recommended questions to get the discussion started (and keep it going):

- **What do you think about Scenario C? What do you like about it? What do you dislike about it?**

- **Some people say that having external observers is really the only fair way to perform teacher evaluations. External evaluators will have knowledge in a particular subject and grade level. Others say that unless the observers really know a particular school and its students well, they cannot do a good observation. What do you think?**

- **Does having a video of your teaching, that you can review as well, make a difference in the usefulness of your evaluation?**

- **Some people think that using student test scores as part (but not all) of the teacher's evaluation is important; they believe that such scores measure student growth and aptitude and are essential for determining if students are really learning or not. Others think that student testing, in any form, should never be part of a teacher's evaluation. What do you think?**

- **Are there other ways to tell if teachers are really helping students grow? What are those ways?**

- **Some people say that having a bonus based on individual evaluations allows teachers who do well, regardless of seniority, to get more money than they would otherwise. Others say that having bonuses takes away from the collaborative nature of teaching and will hurt the profession overall. What do you think?**

- **What if the bonus is very large, but to fund the bonus, teacher raises are then smaller?**

- **Now that we’ve discussed Scenario C, what do you think about the features described in this approach? Does anyone have a different opinion? Please share.**

**Helpful Hint**

After completing the discussion on Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation, a good way to round out the conversation is to use Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 1 (see page 63 of this guide). Teachers are likely to find that there are aspects of Scenario A, Scenario B, and Scenario C that they prefer. Using Group Handout 1 will help them take the next step of considering the ideal evaluation system for the district by allowing them to choose evaluation components from an “à la carte” menu and then weighting those components.
TEACHER HANDOUT: Discussion Summary

(A downloadable and customizable Word version of the Discussion Summary is available on the Everyone at the Table website under “Teacher Handouts” at www.everyoneatthetable.org/gtt_handouts.php.)

Discussion Summary

Instructions: The moderator should fill out this form within 24 hours of the focus group meeting in collaboration with one other participant who is designated as a note taker prior to the meeting. Note that it may not be possible at this point to answer all questions in Part 2.

Part 1: Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation

On ______________________, 20____ a group of ________ (grade-level) teachers from ________________________School District convened for a focus group discussion on measuring teacher effectiveness. In the discussion, we reviewed three scenarios for teacher evaluation: a principal-centered approach, a teacher-centered approach, and an external-centered approach.

- On most topics, the teachers: □ 1 (agreed) □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □ 5 (disagreed)

- The top three priorities that emerged in the conversation were:

  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________

- Of the three approaches reviewed, teachers were most in favor of approach ________________

- The reasons they like this approach were:

  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________

- However, their concerns about this approach included:

  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________

- Participants had a high level of agreement for the following:

  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________

- Participants disagreed over the following:

  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
  __________________________________________________________
• Participants were most excited and enthusiastic about:
  
  
• Participants were least excited and enthusiastic about:
  
  
• Other aspects of evaluation that they supported or had concerns over—and the reasons why—were as follows:
  
  
• We [can/cannot] envision creating a system that would satisfy the group overall because:
  

**Part 2: An Ideal Evaluation System for Our District**

On ________________, _____________, a group of _____ (#) teachers from __________ School District convened for a focus group discussion on measuring teacher effectiveness. In the discussion, we discussed the merits of different components of an ideal teacher evaluation system.

• On most topics, the teachers: □ 1 (agreed) □ 2 □ 3 □ 4 □ 5 (disagreed)
  
• It was generally agreed that an ideal evaluation system for ____________ School District would include the following:
  
  
• The individuals who should conduct observations are (e.g., principal, peers):
  
  
• The frequency of observations for tenured teachers should be _____ announced/year; __________ unannounced/year.
  
• The frequency of observations for non-tenured teachers should be _____ announced/year; __________ unannounced/year.
  
• Aside from teacher observations, the evaluation system would include the following measures of teacher effectiveness (e.g., surveys, teacher portfolios, and student test score growth):
  
  
For more information, visit www.everyoneatthetable.org
The weighting of these measures would be approximately as follows:


The evaluation results would be tied to professional growth and development in the following ways:


The evaluation results also would be tied more tightly to the following (e.g., career ladder, dismissal, tenure, and compensation or nonmonetary rewards):


Other aspects of the evaluation system would include the following:


Additional Things to Consider

TROUBLESHOOTING

It is most likely that a thoughtful, reflective, and constructive conversation will occur, with many good ideas raised and legitimate concerns expressed. However, should something go wrong, here are some troubleshooting pointers:

- **What if nobody shows up?** To avoid this problem, be sure to advertise widely, request RSVPs, and send a reminder one or two days before the meeting. However, depending on where the meeting is taking place, there is no problem bringing in non-RSVPs at the last minute if the turnout is low. (The smell of pizza can help!) If the turnout is low, the conversation still can take place with as few as two or three teachers.

- **What if the teachers are quiet and do not speak up or engage?** If teachers are not contributing voluntarily, consider calling on individuals randomly. Also, you can relate the materials to their own current evaluation systems and their experiences with it by asking *How does this compare to the way you currently are evaluated?* This approach might help them shape their opinions.

- **What if the teachers will not stay on track?** With a contentious topic such as teacher evaluation, it is possible that the participants may get hung up on things like a bad evaluation that they had, performance-related compensation, or student tests. If this situation occurs, let them know that these topics will be covered after the scenario discussions, when determining the ideal evaluation for the district (see *Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 1* on page 63 of this guide). Other ways to move the conversation forward are to remind them that everyone needs a chance to speak, or to ask *What would you propose as a solution?* and then change the topic after they have had an opportunity to briefly make their points.

- **What if the teachers are hostile toward one another or toward you?** Again, on a hot-button topic such as teacher evaluation, it is not unrealistic that there will be tension among teachers. Topics such as using student test scores to evaluate teachers and bonus pay for teachers are especially likely to evoke strong emotions. If this happens, it is best to acknowledge the issue with a statement such as *It’s good that everyone is here because you obviously have a lot of strong opinions about these issues.* Then change the topic to something more neutral, such as whether to use student surveys, what type of feedback should emerge from evaluations, or what can be done to bring more teachers into the dialogue and/or decision-making process.
FOLLOWING THE MEETING

Having this discussion is seen as the beginning, not the end, of teachers’ engagement in evaluation reform. Following this activity, it is recommended that you take additional steps to further engage teachers. The *Everyone at the Table* website contains a variety of additional activities under “Teacher Handouts” at www.everyoneatthetable.org/gtt_handouts.php. Of particular note, we recommend that you engage in *Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 1* (see page 63 of this guide).

In addition to further engaging teachers, you must see to it that the outcomes of this and subsequent conversations are incorporated in the decision-making process. As the moderator, you should determine these steps *prior to meeting with teachers and inform them of these steps from the start.*

Following are helpful ideas for presenting teacher input to a task force or other group of decision makers:

- Tally quantitative data from *Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 1* (see page 63 of this guide).
- Summarize the top five most common responses from teachers, supported with quotes from the focus groups.
- Have each engagement team moderator give a presentation to the task force, school board, or other group of decision makers.

GUIDE TO NEXT STEPS

It is all well and good to convene teachers in dialogue around what their evaluation system should look like, but the important thing is to make sure that their voices are heard and that they are able to genuinely influence the decisions that are made. Probably one of the first questions you will be asked is “How will you do this?”

Although it goes without saying, there may be strong personalities among the key decision makers in your school or district who will play a part in the scope of influence that teachers possess. Thoughtful and empowering leaders would welcome input from teachers when making such important decisions. To assist this process, we also have created the *Leaders Involvement Guide* (www.everyoneatthetable.org/leadersGuide.php) and the *Why Engaging Teachers in Evaluation Reform Is Important: Leaders’ Perspectives* video (www.everyoneatthetable.org/leadersVideo.php) aimed at helping district administrators, school principals, and other local education leaders see the need to engage teachers in the evaluation reform process.

At the very least, it is suggested that you share the outcomes of the *Focus Group Facilitation Activity* (see page 23 of this guide) with key decision makers. You can share the discussion and its outcomes with the superintendent, the evaluation reform committee or task force, or other leaders via an in-person meeting, e-mail, or other format. *These individuals should be informed from the start that teachers are discussing the topic and providing input.* The *Discussion Summary* (see page 34 of this guide) is intended to assist you in clearly and concisely articulating the outcomes of the discussion.
Optional Activities for Promoting Teacher Conversations
Overview of Optional Activities

In all likelihood, a single meeting will not be sufficient to engage as many teachers in as much depth as you, and they, would wish. Therefore, we suggest using one or more additional activities that are intended to engage teachers on teacher evaluation reform over a several-month period. It is suggested that you review these activities and choose those that will best suit your context.

These activities are intended to foster engagement and produce healthy conversations around the hot-button topic of teacher evaluation. Keep in mind that these interactions are intended to help explore multiple perspectives, reflect on experiences, start discussions, engage teachers in the process, and build consensus and momentum. Some activities will help with more than one purpose. Feel free to read through the summary of each activity and then decide which, if any, would be useful to your engagement team, task force, or other format you may be using.

Following these activities, information about the dialogue can be brought back to the task force, the committee, or other local education leaders. Alternatively, you may wait to complete the final Build Your Own Evaluation (see page 60 of this guide) before communicating teachers’ ideas and concerns back to the key decision makers.

The following optional activities are included:

- Carousel Brainstorming Activity
- Interview Activity
- Storyboarding Activity
- Additional Resources and Jigsaw Activity
- Build Your Own Evaluation
Carousel Brainstorming Activity

Carousel Brainstorming is a group process that generates large numbers of responses to questions or issues that teachers have. It involves posting on chart paper around the room a number of different questions. Participants are divided into small groups and assigned to one of the questions to begin the brainstorming process. After a few minutes of brainstorming as a small group, they move on to the next question and repeat the brainstorming process. At each “station,” they make notes on the chart paper to summarize their brainstorming. This process continues until each group has had an opportunity to brainstorm on each question.

Carousel Brainstorming can serve as a warm-up process for highlighting an agenda or as a synthesis of learning at the end of a session. It is also physically active and good for times when the energy of the participants is low.

MODERATOR’S LESSON PLAN: Carousel Brainstorming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>45 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overview</td>
<td>The Carousel Brainstorming Activity informally assesses the teacher evaluation knowledge of the participants and frames the learning regarding this focus. The process begins with several questions about teacher evaluation posted around the room on chart paper. Participants are divided into small groups and assigned to one of the questions posted around the room. At each “station,” participants read their question, brainstorm together, and make notes on the chart paper to summarize their brainstorming. After completing this task, the participants move on to the next question and repeat the brainstorming process. This process continues until each group has had an opportunity to brainstorm on each question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purposes</td>
<td>The specific purposes of this activity are as follows:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Assess knowledge, needs, interests, and attitudes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Build a common vocabulary on teacher evaluation reform.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Explore multiple perspectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Tap prior knowledge and beliefs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Carousel brainstorming activity and materials are adapted from Blueprints: A Practical Toolkit for Designing and Facilitating Professional Development CD-ROM, developed through the Eisenhower Regional Consortia for Mathematics and Science Education and the Eisenhower National Clearinghouse. Copyright © 2000 North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.
SECTION FOUR

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR PROMOTING TEACHER CONVERSATIONS

Room Setup

You will need 8 sheets of chart paper taped on the various walls of the room, along with markers at each station.

Materials

- 8 sheets of chart paper for the eight questions
- An additional sheet of chart paper to indicate guidelines for effective brainstorming
- Magic markers
- Chimes or a timer, if desired, to let participants know that it is time to move to the next station
- Copies of the Carousel Brainstorming Group Process (see page 44) for each participant.

Instructions Before the Activity

1. Position the moderator area front and center so that it is easily visible to all participants.
2. Write the following Carousel Brainstorming questions (or your own questions) on separate sheets of chart paper and post around the perimeter of the room:
   - What aspects of the current evaluation system should be retained?
   - What aspects of the current evaluation system are most in need of changing?
   - What are the benefits and drawbacks of having the following individuals involved in evaluations: principals, assistant principals, district administrators, other teachers, students, parents, and external evaluators?
   - How often should evaluations be conducted? How often should classroom observations be conducted?
   - Who should conduct teacher observations?
   - What should be included in evaluations other than teacher observations?
   - What is the surest way to make sure that evaluations lead to teacher growth and development?
   - What other policies should take into account evaluation results (e.g., tenure, termination, teacher leadership positions, salaries, or other policies)?
3. Make sure that there is space for participants to move from station to station.
Instructions During the Activity

**Making Introductions**

1. Introduce the discussion topic and the purpose of this group process.

2. Inform the whole group that they will be brainstorming ideas and sharing those ideas with a small group of three to five people (depending on the size of the whole group). They will be asked to record their ideas on the chart paper—either building on an idea that is already listed or adding a new idea.

3. Ask the group to give some examples of guidelines for effective brainstorming. Record them on another piece chart paper and post them for all to see.

4. Distribute the **Carousel Brainstorming Group Process** (see page 44) to all participants. Ask group members to count off (based on the number of questions) and then explain the steps in the process.

5. Review the questions that are posted on chart paper around the room, letting groups know where they will begin the brainstorming process. You can walk from station to station as you read the questions.

6. Develop a signal (by using chimes or a timer) to let groups know when it is time to move to the next question. It is recommended that later rounds be given less time than early rounds. (For example, rounds one and two may take four minutes each as participants get used to the topic; round three may take three minutes; rounds four and onward may take two minutes each, as participants become eager to share their thoughts with the wider group.)

7. When each group has responded to each question, ask groups to return to their starting question and review all the ideas presented. You might ask each small group to identify common themes and clusters of ideas.

8. Finally, ask each group to report to the whole group, briefly summarizing the themes, big ideas, and important applications that emerged from brainstorming around their specific question.
TEACHER HANDOUT: Carousel Brainstorming Group Process

(A downloadable and customizable Word version of the Carousel Brainstorming Group Process is available on the Everyone at the Table website under “Teacher Handouts” at www.everyoneatthetable.org/gtt_handouts.php.)

Carousel Brainstorming Group Process

Along the perimeter of the room, there are sheets of chart paper containing various questions relating to teacher evaluation. The moderator will ask the participants to divide into groups and move to a particular question.

Step 1. Brainstorm responses to your question, and record your ideas on the chart paper.

Step 2. At the signal, move clockwise to the next question. Brainstorm responses, building on ideas already listed and adding new ideas.

Step 3. Repeat this brainstorming process until each group has responded to all questions.

Step 4. Return to your original question and analyze the results of the brainstorm. Identify themes that have emerged in response to that question.

Step 5. Briefly summarize those themes by reporting to the whole group.

For more information, visit www.everyoneatthetable.org.
Interview Activity

The Interview Activity is a multistep group process in which each participant interviews at least four other participants. The interviewers are then grouped with others who asked questions on the same topic, for the purpose of analyzing the responses in depth. In the final step, each group shares its response with the whole group in a debriefing session. This activity is used for generating information on many questions or issues at once. It balances participation and requires active involvement and critical thinking skills. It works well with a group of 12 or more people.

MODERATOR’S LESSON PLAN: Interview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>75–90 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Overview

In this activity, each participant first collects information (ideas, opinions, or experiences related to the topic) about teacher evaluation by interviewing at least four other participants, using generic interview questions provided by the moderator. Some interviewers focus their questions on the logistics of the evaluation system, some on the use of the evaluation results, and some on strategies for working with other teachers and administrators to ensure that reforms are implemented in a positive manner. The interviewers are then grouped with others who asked questions on the same topic, for the purpose of analyzing the responses in depth. In the final step, each group shares their response with the whole group in a debriefing session.

Purposes

The specific purposes of this activity are as follows:

- Assess knowledge, needs, interests, and attitudes.
- Explore multiple perspectives.
- Start conversations.
- Sustain thinking.
- Tap prior knowledge and beliefs.

Interview activity and materials are adapted from Blueprints: A Practical Toolkit for Designing and Facilitating Professional Development CD-ROM, developed through the Eisenhower Regional Consortia for Mathematics and Science Education and the Eisenhower National Clearinghouse. Copyright © 2000 North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.
Room Setup
- The moderator area should be front and center so that it is easily visible to all participants.
- Tables and chairs should be arranged for small groups of participants (which may need to be rearranged to accommodate the following configuration):
  - The arrangement of chairs in preparation for the interviewing varies. When there are 6 questions, divide the number of participants by 12 and arrange 2 sets of 6 chairs facing one another for each group of 12. An ideal number of participants would be 12, 24, or 36. When the number of participants is not evenly divisible by 12, adjustments can be made by either reducing the number of questions used or adding a chair at the end of a row to form an interview triad.

Materials
- Copies of the Interview Group Process (see page 48 of this guide), one for each participant
- Copies of the Interview Recording Sheet (see page 49 of this guide), one for each participant
- Chimes or a timer, if desired, to let participants know that it is time to move to the next interview
- Chart paper and markers

Instructions Before the Activity
1. Create a set of interview questions. Some suggested questions are as follows:
   - In what ways can the current evaluation system be improved? What kind of improvements would you like to see?
   - Have you or a colleague been evaluated in the past using a different system? If so, what aspects of that evaluation system would you suggest incorporating into the current system?
   - What concerns you the most about evaluation reform?
   - What do you think should happen if a teacher is found to be ineffective in the classroom?
   - What would be needed to help you grow as a professional as a result of the evaluation system?
   - Describe how the ideal evaluation system would work. What would the evaluation system include, and how would the evaluation results be used?
2. Copy the Interview Group Process and the Interview Recording Sheet for the appropriate number of people.
3. Set up the room.
Instructions During the Activity

1. Frame the purpose of this group process and introduce the content topic and related questions.

2. Pass out copies of the Interview Group Process (see page 48 of this guide) and the Interview Recording Sheet (see page 49 of this guide).

3. Ask participants to move to the prearranged chairs.

4. Outline the steps of the process, as follows:

   - **Step 1: Interview**
     
     - Begin the interview process by asking each person to introduce himself or herself to the person sitting across from him or her. Let participants know that they will have about three minutes per person (i.e., about six minutes per pair) to conduct the interviews. During the first round, you may want to give a subtle signal or reminder at the two-minute mark.
     
     - After the first set of pairs have interviewed, designate that the individuals in one row remain seated while the other row moves one seat to the right to interview a new partner (the individual seated in the last chair walks around to be at the first chair). The new pairs begin the second interview, with the interviewer posing the same question and responding to a new question. Continue this process for three to five rounds.

   - **Step 2: Analysis.** When the interviews have been completed, the analysis process begins. Ask participants to join with others who have been asking the same question. Groups should begin by sharing the results of their interviews, analyzing and synthesizing the data, and looking for common themes and important ideas. Ask each group to create a summary metaphor or a visual depiction of their findings on chart paper. This task could involve text, a visual, or a metaphor.

   - **Step 3: Share.** During the last phase of the process, groups should take turns reporting their findings. Ask each group to take 2–3 minutes to share their visuals. After each presentation, ask the whole group to look for common and different ideas among the reports. You may wish to summarize and record important ideas on chart paper.
TEACHER HANDOUT: Interview Group Process

(A downloadable and customizable Word version of the Interview Group Process is available on the Everyone at the Table website under “Teacher Handouts” at www.everyoneatthetable.org/gtt_handouts.php.)

Interview Group Process

Step 1: Interview

- Using your Interview Recording Sheet, interview your partner and record responses (2–3 minutes).
- Respond to your partner’s question (2–3 minutes).
- Change partners as directed by the moderator, and repeat the interview process.

Step 2: Analyze and Synthesize

- Assemble question-alike groups, share data, and identify themes or trends.
- Summarize group conclusions and prepare a group presentation.

Step 3: Share

- Share your presentation with the whole group.
- Look for commonalities and differences across groups.
TEACHER HANDOUT: Interview Recording Sheet

(A downloadable and customizable Word version of the Interview Recording Sheet is available on the Everyone at the Table website under “Teacher Handouts” at www.everyoneatthetable.org/gtt_handouts.php.)

Interview Recording Sheet

Directions

Using the question at the bottom of this handout, interview the person sitting across from you. Record the responses in the space under the question and, if necessary, on the back on this page. You will have 2–3 minutes to conduct each interview. Use your best interviewing skills and questioning techniques, including active listening, paraphrasing responses, and probing, among others.

After you have had a chance to interview your partner and your partner has interviewed you, one of the rows will rotate to the right so that everybody has a new partner. Repeat the interview process with your new partner, getting a second perspective on the question that you asked. There will be three to five rounds of interviews.

Question

[Insert one of the following interview questions (or your own question) here.]

- In what ways can the current evaluation system be improved? What kind of improvements would you like to see?

- Have you or a colleague been evaluated in the past using a different system? If so, what aspects of that evaluation system would you suggest incorporating into the current system?

- What concerns you the most about evaluation reform?

- What do you think should happen if a teacher is found to be ineffective in the classroom?

- What would be needed to help you grow as a professional as a result of the evaluation system?

- Describe how the ideal evaluation system would work. What would the evaluation system include, and how would the evaluation results be used?

For more information, visit www.everyoneatthetable.org.
Storyboarding Activity

Storyboarding is a process for sharing and organizing ideas through a visual display. It can be a powerful method for building consensus within a team. Frequently used in team decision making and strategic planning, storyboarding involves individuals responding to a specific question in small groups of three or four. Later, each small group shares its ideas with the whole group.

MODERATOR’S LESSON PLAN: Storyboarding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>45–90 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Overview**

The Storyboarding Activity is used to facilitate, share, and organize concrete, practical ideas about teacher evaluation among participants. To start, individuals respond to a specific question about teacher evaluation reform. Small groups of three or four are formed, and participants take turns sharing individual ideas, brainstorming, and recording group ideas on sticky notes. The ideas are then sorted, clustered, and categorized within each small group. Finally, each small group shares its ideas with the whole group.

**Purposes**

The specific purposes of this activity are as follows:

- Build consensus.
- Reflect on ideas.

**Room Setup**

- Arrange tables and chairs for groups of 4–6 participants to be seated at each table. If the whole group is 15 or less, perhaps use one large conference table, or an “L” configuration of small tables so that participants are able to make eye contact.
- Position the moderator area front and center so that it is easily visible by all participants.
- Make sure there is a large, bare wall on which to tape paper and sticky notes.

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3 Storyboarding activity and materials are adapted from *Blueprints: A Practical Toolkit for Designing and Facilitating Professional Development CD-ROM*, developed through the Eisenhower Regional Consortia for Mathematics and Science Education and the Eisenhower National Clearinghouse. Copyright © 2000 North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.
**Materials**

- Cards—plenty of large index cards, custom-made cards, or sticky notes, ideally at least 4”×6” size; one color card/note for idea phrase and another color for category names
- “Fat” markers/pens—one for each small group with tips wide enough so that printing can be seen by everyone in the room
- Masking tape (if needed)—several short lengths rolled into small loops for securing cards to the wall or a chalkboard
- Copies of the *Storyboarding Group Process* (see page 54 of this guide)
- Chimes or timer if desired

**Instructions Before the Activity**

1. Create a question that fits with the goals and purposes of the meeting and will elicit practical ideas from participants. Sample questions are included in the “Instructions During the Activity” section below. *Tip:* Make sure the question is NOT a yes/no question but is instead a question that will prompt practical and usable responses.

2. Distribute file cards or pads of sticky notes to each table, enough cards/notes for five or more ideas per person, as well as several category cards/notes.

3. Write each question on chart paper for each group to consider.

4. Make copies of the *Storyboarding Group Process* (see page 54 of this guide).

5. Set up the room.

**Instructions During the Activity**

1. Outline the steps of this activity using the *Storyboarding Group Process* (see page 54 of this guide).

2. Pose the topic question. The following questions can be used (others can be added as needed):

   - *How often should evaluations be conducted? How often should classroom observations be conducted?*
   - *Who should conduct observations?*
   - *What should be included in evaluations other than observations?*
   - *What is the surest way to make sure that evaluations lead to teacher growth and development?*
   - *What other policies should take into account evaluation results (e.g., tenure, termination, teacher leadership positions, salaries, or other policies)?*
3. Ask each participant to individually brainstorm 3–6 successful tips, ideas, or strategies in response to the question and record each idea on a separate card or sticky note (of the specified color for ideas) using large print and three- to five-word phrases.

4. Form table groups of 3–5 people. Ask each group to share individual ideas; cluster similar ideas into categories; and then name each category, using the specified color cards for category names.

5. Alternative: If the entire group is less than 15 participants, the clustering and categorizing can be done by the whole group, by collecting cards or sticky notes one at a time and creating a “storyboard” on the wall or in the center of a large table. (Note: In this alternative situation, the “tour” and small- to whole-group debriefing described below will not apply.)

6. As participants are organizing ideas, encourage them to talk about why responses are grouped together and discuss the patterns that are apparent.

7. After participants have had sufficient time to cluster and recluster their ideas by category, ask each group to display its ideas for others to review.

8. Begin a “tour”: Ask one team member to remain with the team display. Ask other team members to leave their group and investigate what other groups have created. Allow about five to seven minutes per table for the tour.

9. Ask teams to return and share what they have learned from the work of other groups. Then ask them to revise their work based on what they learned during the tour, adding or reorganizing cards, renaming categories, and so forth. Note: Sometimes the number of ideas and categories is still overwhelming, a decision is needed, or an action must be taken quickly. Though it may interfere with consensus building, it is sometimes necessary to rank the categories or ideas in order of importance. If needed, use the following steps to help teams prioritize their cards:

   - Display all notes/cards/categories so all group members can study them.
   - Ask individuals to identify three to four categories they feel are most significant by circling them.
- Select the ideas or categories with the most circles selected. If there is a tie, the group should decide how ties are broken. Remaining ideas or categories can be consolidated if desired.

- The process can be repeated if further limiting of items is necessary.

- Finally, after all small groups have completed their revisions, ask a representative from each group to share the general insights gained or the commonalities found among group members as they completed this process.

10. Record the list of common ideas on chart paper or construct a storyboard that represents the whole group’s thinking. If appropriate, summarize and distribute this list to others for input and awareness.
TEACHER HANDOUT: Storyboarding Group Process

(A downloadable and customizable Word version of the Storyboarding Group Process is available on the Everyone at the Table website under “Teacher Handouts” at www.everyoneatthetable.org/gtt_handouts.php.)

Storyboarding Group Process

**Step 1:** Consider the question posed individually, and brainstorm three to six responses. Record each response on a card or sticky note.

**Step 2:** In small groups, share and discuss your ideas with each other. Record any additional items on cards or sticky notes.

**Step 3:** Cluster similar ideas into categories and label each category. Then display.

**Step 4:** Designate one team member to remain with the team display to answer questions and clarify the group’s thinking. Leave your group and go on a “tour” to investigate what other groups have created.

**Step 5:** After touring, return to your group’s table to share what you have learned from viewing other groups’ work. Revise your work based on what was learned during the tour.

**Step 6:** Select a representative from your group to share the general insights gained or the commonalities found among your group’s members.

For more information, visit www.everyoneatthetable.org.
Additional Resources and Jigsaw Activity

The Jigsaw is a cooperative learning strategy that enables participants to develop or build upon expertise in a particular aspect of a topic, and then asks them to convey that information to others in a group. A Jigsaw Reading uses a set of additional resources to develop participant expertise.

MODERATOR’S LESSON PLAN: Additional Resources and Jigsaw

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>45–90 minutes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Overview**

The Additional Resources and Jigsaw Activity aims to bring research-based findings to the table as teachers weigh in on the ideal evaluation system. In many ways, policy currently is ahead of research when it comes to teacher evaluation reform. However, to the extent possible, policy reforms should be based on evidence about what works. Several helpful research-based resources can guide your school or district’s successful evaluation reform.

This activity is intended to facilitate teachers reviewing these resources and then sharing what they have learned. It involves “dividing and conquering” the research, whereby each teacher is assigned a few resources to review, and the key takeaways are then brought back to the larger group. Using a “jigsaw” approach, teachers first turn to a partner to share what they learned and determine commonalities and any contradictions they found. Then, in small groups, a second round of sharing takes place in which both partners’ key findings are shared. Finally, there is whole-group sharing in which common themes across all the resources are discussed.

**Purposes**

The specific purposes of this activity are as follows:

- Expand knowledge of best practices.
- Expand knowledge of diversity of practices around the country.
- Build a common language.
- Facilitate critical thinking about the pros and cons of different approaches.
- Aid teachers’ reflection and dialogue.

Jigsaw activity and materials are adapted from *Blueprints: A Practical Toolkit for Designing and Facilitating Professional Development CD-ROM*, developed through the Eisenhower Regional Consortia for Mathematics and Science Education and the Eisenhower National Clearinghouse. Copyright © 2000 North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.
Room Setup
Small tables are required.

Materials
- Copies of the handout Additional Resources on Teacher Evaluation (see page 57 of this guide). Note: This list is not exhaustive; it is intended to provide a starting point for your research.
- Index cards for logging the names of key resources and their takeaways
- Pens
- Chimes or timer if desired

Instructions Before the Activity
1. Using the Additional Resources on Teacher Evaluation, assign each participant a resource to review.
2. As the moderator, it is advisable that you review several resources ahead of time and come prepared to kick off the discussion based on what you have learned.
3. Remind participants several days before to review their assignment(s).

Instructions During the Activity
1. Begin by sharing some of the ideas that you learned from various resources that you reviewed (5 minutes).
2. Ask teachers to turn to a partner to share what they reviewed and determine commonalities and any contradictions they found (10–15 minutes).
3. Ask teachers in small groups at their tables to conduct a second round of sharing, where both partners’ key findings are shared (10–15 minutes).
4. Lead whole-group sharing, where common themes across all the reviewed resources are discussed (10–15 minutes).
5. Ask teachers in small groups at their tables to brainstorm ways to incorporate what was learned through the research into the district’s reform plans (10–15 minutes).
6. Lead a whole-group sharing to brainstorm ways to incorporate what was learned through the research into the district’s reform plans (10–15 minutes).
7. Continue with the sessions. There can be anywhere from one to five sessions aimed at reviewing research, depending on the number of individuals and interest.
TEACHER HANDOUT: Additional Resources on Teacher Evaluation

(A downloadable and customizable Word version of the Additional Resources on Teacher Evaluation is available on the Everyone at the Table website under “Teacher Handouts” at www.everyoneatthetable.org/ gt_handouts.php.)

Additional Resources on Teacher Evaluation

The following resources provide research-based information on teacher evaluation. All are available online at no charge. The publications can be printed out and read. The webcasts provide information in audio as well as print formats.

Approaches to Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness: A Research Synthesis (Publication)

This 2008 research synthesis by Laura Goe, Ph.D., Courtney Bell, Ph.D., and Olivia Little of ETS examines how teacher effectiveness is measured and provides practical guidance for evaluating teacher effectiveness. It evaluates the research on teacher effectiveness and different instruments used to measure it. In addition, it defines components and indicators that characterize effective teachers, extending this definition beyond teachers’ contributions to student achievement gains to include how teachers affect classrooms, schools, and colleagues as well as how teachers contribute to other important outcomes for students.

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

This 2010 brief provides the results of an inquiry conducted by the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (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 school districts to help their efforts in creating valid, reliable, and comprehensive evaluation systems for all teachers.

Enhancing Teacher Evaluation: Effective Practices for Evaluating Teachers of All Students (Webcast)
http://www.tqsource.org/webcasts/evaluatingTeachers/

This 2010 webcast includes an overview of the evaluation of teachers of at-risk populations, a discussion of the existing research, and a review of evaluation strategies and recommendations.

http://www.tqsource.org/webcasts/evaluateEffectiveness/

The TQ Center and REL Midwest cohosted this 2009 webcast for practitioners and policymakers. Douglas Harris, Ph.D., of the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and Laura Goe, Ph.D., of ETS, overview existing and emerging research on teacher evaluation methods, including value-added models and observation protocols. The presentations include a discussion of the quality of the evidence supporting these methods and the applications for each method that are consistent with that evidence. A recording of the webcast, the presenters’ slides, prewebcast presentations, and additional resources on this topic are available online.

For more information, visit www.everyoneatthetable.org.
Improving Instruction Through Effective Teacher Evaluation: Options for States and Districts (Publication)

This 2008 brief discusses the measures used in teacher evaluation and focuses on their strengths, limitations, and current use. It underscores aspects of evaluation policies currently aligned with best practices and illuminates areas in which policymakers can improve evaluation rules, regulations, and implementation, thereby improving teacher instruction and student performance.

Measuring Teachers’ Contributions to Student Learning Growth for Nontested Subjects and Grades (Publication)
http://www.tasource.org/publications/MeasuringTeachersContributions.pdf

The purpose of this 2011 research and policy brief is to help states consider options for assessing student learning growth for the majority of teachers who teach content that is 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. It 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 Teacher and Leader Performance: Cross-Sector Lessons for Excellent Evaluations (Publication)

This 2010 report by Public Impact reports on the staff evaluation systems used by government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and for-profit companies and suggests how they can inform the development and implementation of teacher evaluation systems.

Methods of Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness (Publication)

This 2009 brief is intended to help state policymakers as they consider evaluation methods to clarify policy, develop new strategies, identify effective teachers, or guide and support districts in selecting and using appropriate evaluation methods for various purposes. It includes a five-point definition of teacher effectiveness that the authors developed by analyzing research, policy, and standards that address teacher effectiveness and by consulting experts in the field.

The Other 69 Percent: Fairly Rewarding the Performance of Teachers of Nontested Subjects and Grades (Publication)
http://ocr.ed.gov/guides/other69Percent.pdf

This 2008 paper from the Center for Educator Compensation Reform addresses the means by which states, school districts, and individual schools can fairly and effectively include all teachers in a performance-based compensation system. It specifically focuses on those who teach a grade level or subject area for which standardized achievement tests are not administered and those who teach English language learners or students with disabilities.
A Practical Guide to Designing Comprehensive Teacher Evaluation Systems (Publication)

This 2011 guide from the TQ Center outlines eight key steps for developing and implementing comprehensive teacher evaluation systems. These steps consist of specifying evaluation system goals, securing and sustaining stakeholder investment and cultivating a strategic communication plan, selecting measures, determining the structure of the evaluation system, selecting and training evaluators, ensuring data integrity and transparency, using teacher evaluation results, and evaluating the system.

A Practical Guide to Evaluating Teacher Effectiveness (Publication)

This 2009 guide offers a definition of teacher effectiveness that states and school districts may adapt to meet local requirements, provides an overview of the many purposes for evaluating teacher effectiveness, and indicates which measures are most suitable to use under different circumstances. The guide also includes summaries of the various measures, such as value-added models, classroom observations, analysis of classroom artifacts, and portfolios. The summaries include descriptions of the measures, along with a note about the research base and strengths and cautions to consider for each measure.

Retaining Teacher Talent: Convergence and Contradictions in Teachers’ Perceptions of Policy Reform Ideas (Publication)

This 2010 report by Learning Point Associates and Public Agenda informs policymakers about teachers’ views on the policies that greatly affect their daily lives. It highlights the teacher perspective on the pressing policy issues of assessing, rewarding, and improving teacher effectiveness, with the goal of keeping teachers themselves at the heart of debates about the profession.

The Widget Effect: Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act on Difference in Teacher Effectiveness (Publication)

This 2008 report from The New Teacher Project argues that teacher evaluation systems systematically rate all or nearly all teachers satisfactory or excellent, and this failure to differentiate between the effectiveness of teachers is harmful to our nation’s students.
Build Your Own Evaluation

After engaging teachers in exploring the evaluation topic from various angles, the final suggested activity is to start from “square one” and, armed with substantial reflection and dialogue, build your own evaluation scenario. This activity may be done immediately following your discussion of the Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation (see page 28 of this guide) or after further engaging teachers with additional activities. Following this activity, the decisions of the discussion group(s) or engagement team(s) should be brought back to the key decision makers in your school or district (e.g., the task force, the committee, the superintendent, or the school board).

Ideally, two final teacher engagement team meetings will take place for this activity. In the first of these final two meetings, it is suggested that teachers use the Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 1 (see page 63 of this guide) to reach consensus about which features should be included in a teacher evaluation system. Then, using Scenarios A, B, and C from Three Scenarios for Teacher Evaluation (see page 28 of this guide) as a template, the group should collaboratively take the findings from this activity (informed by the focus group around the three scenarios and any other additional activities) and begin to outline a one-page scenario for teacher evaluation in your school system using the Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 2 (see page 65 of this guide).

If there is time and interest in delving into greater detail about the different components of the evaluation system and determining how teachers can be involved in the process of making these more detailed decisions, it is suggested to use Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 3 (see page 66 of this guide). This handout will help to work through additional teacher evaluation details that those implementing the new policy will need to address.

Prior to the final meeting, the moderator should type up, polish, and print out the teacher-created scenario (Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 2) and share it with the group. At this stage, additional teachers can be invited to also share their reactions to this created scenario. Based on their reactions, further modifications can be made if appropriate, before sharing the “ideal” evaluation system with the task force or other leaders of the reform.

Having participated in ongoing facilitated discussions about teacher evaluation in the context of your school or district, the teachers should be in a strong position to defend their choices and communicate their rationale to other teachers, district leaders, the community, and beyond.
MODERATOR’S LESSON PLAN: Build Your Own Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Two meetings, 45–60 minutes each</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Overview      | **Group Meeting 1.** This final activity brings together the previous discussion(s) that considered teacher evaluation from many angles by facilitating teachers in building their own scenario for evaluation in their school or district by using a menu of “à la carte” components of teacher evaluation. First, using **Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 1**, teachers rank the importance of each aspect that could be included in the system, revisiting the pros, cons, and rationales that were brought up in prior discussion(s). Then, having selected the ideal components, the group should collaboratively outline a one-page scenario for teacher evaluation using the **Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 2**. This scenario will look similar in format to Scenarios A, B, and C used in the key **Focus Group Facilitation Activity**. An optional additional component to this activity is to flesh out in greater detail the different components of the evaluation system, and how teachers can be involved in deciding them using **Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 3**.  
  
**Group Meeting 2.** If possible, the moderator should type up and polish this new, locally developed, teacher-created scenario for **Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 2** (and the additional details from **Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 3** if appropriate) and share it with the group to confirm that they agree with what is written. If possible, these documents can be shared with additional teachers at a subsequent meeting. Ultimately, these materials should be shared with the key decision makers in the school or district. |
| Purposes      | The specific purposes of this activity are as follows:  
  - Build group consensus.  
  - Determine the approach and components of the teacher evaluation system that would best meet the needs of your school or district. |
| Room Setup    | You will need a large meeting table with chairs around it. |
OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR PROMOTING TEACHER CONVERSATIONS

Materials
- For Group Meeting 1: All three group handouts
- For Group Meeting 2: Polished copy of Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 2 (and Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 3 if appropriate)

Instructions Before the Activity
- For Group Meeting 1: Review previous notes from discussions that the groups had around the evaluation approaches and other activities.
- If relevant, invite additional teachers to participate in reacting to the new teacher-created ideal evaluation system scenario. You may adapt the invitation language from the Sample Teacher Recruitment Invitation (see page 11 of this guide).
- For Group Meeting 2: Type up and polish the scenario created by the group and additional details, if relevant, so that it can be clearly read by participants.

Instructions During the Activity
- Refer to the detailed instructions for the moderator in the Focus Group Facilitation Activity (see page 23 of this guide).
- Remember that if additional teachers join the conversation for Group Meeting 2, revisit the “Introductory Talking Points” (see page 22 of this guide) to bring these newcomers up to speed on the background and purpose of this initiative.
# TEACHER HANDOUT: Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 1

(A downloadable and customizable Word version of the Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 1 is available on the Everyone at the Table website under “Teacher Handouts” at www.everyoneatthetable.org/gtt_handouts.php.)

## Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 1

We have spent much time now exploring teacher evaluation, and particularly looking at three different scenarios for teacher evaluation. Now it’s your turn to build the ideal policy from scratch. In the following table, which components would you select as part of the ideal evaluation? Is anything missing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Essential to Have</th>
<th>Important But Not Essential</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
<th>Bad Idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal observations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher observations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External evaluator observations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impromptu walk-through observations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student surveys</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher portfolios</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional growth plans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video recording of classes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Growth-based testing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A four-point evaluation scale (Distinguished, Proficient, Needs Improvement, Unsatisfactory)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance bonuses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted professional development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful, critical feedback</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public praise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denial of tenure for new teachers with poor evaluations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling out of the profession for teachers with poor evaluations over multiple years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information, visit www.everyoneatthetable.org.
Now that you have considered what should be included in your evaluations, discuss the weight (by percentage) that the various components should hold.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Evaluation Component</th>
<th>Percentage of the Total Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal observations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher observations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External evaluator observations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impromptu walk-through observations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student surveys</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher portfolios</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional growth plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Video recording of classes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student test score growth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher attendance and contributions to school community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other measures:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TEACHER HANDOUT: Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 2

(A downloadable and customizable Word version of the Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 2 is available on the Everyone at the Table website under “Teacher Handouts” at www.everyoneatthetable.org/gtt_handouts.php.)

Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 2

Teachers’ Preferred Approach to Evaluation in [Your School District]

What if…
[Write a two-to-three sentence overview of the nature of the evaluation system. What does it prioritize?]

Frequency
- Teachers are formally evaluated x times per year by y.
- Teachers are formally observed x times per year by y.
- Teachers are informally observed for formative purposes x times per year by y.

Measures
- The measures included in teachers’ evaluations include the following:
  - Measure 1 [write a detailed description of each measure]
  - Measure 2 [write a detailed description of each measure]
- These measures will be weighted as follows:
- There will be [2, 3, 4, 5] levels of performance.

Rewards
- For teachers who receive a strong rating, what will happen?

Consequences
- For teachers who receive a poor rating, what will happen?
- For teachers who consistently receive a poor rating over time [defined how], what will happen?

For more information, visit www.everyoneatthetable.org.
TEACHER HANDOUT: Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 3

(A downloadable and customizable Word version of the **Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 3** is available on the *Everyone at the Table* website under “Teacher Handouts” at www.everyoneatthetable.org/gtt_handouts.php.)

### Build Your Own Evaluation—Group Handout 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Decisions</th>
<th>What Teachers Think</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How will we define <em>educator effectiveness</em>?</td>
<td>• Who should decide this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How should teachers be involved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What are some key considerations that must be included?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are the primary goals of the teacher evaluation system?</td>
<td>• Who should decide this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How should teachers be involved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What are some key considerations that must be included?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How will we communicate about policy changes and incorporate feedback on an ongoing basis?</td>
<td>• Who should decide this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How should teachers be involved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What are some key considerations that must be included?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As we implement the new system, what are our data infrastructure needs?</td>
<td>• Who should decide this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How should teachers be involved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What are some key considerations that must be included?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What policy/contractual changes are required by the new system?</td>
<td>• Who should decide this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How should teachers be involved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What are some key considerations that must be included?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the system aligned with state, federal, or professional requirements?</td>
<td>• Who should decide this?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How should teachers be involved?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What are some key considerations that must be included?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information, visit www.everyoneatthetable.org.
References and Acknowledgments
References


Acknowledgments

The Moderator's Guide was written by Ellen Behrstock-Sherratt, Ph.D., Gretchen Weber, Molly Lasagna, and Jill Shively, of American Institutes for Research (AIR); Jonathan Rochkind, of ETS; Allison Rizzolo and Jeremiah Hess, of Public Agenda; and Amber Ott, independent consultant; with support and guidance provided by the following people:

- Sabrina Laine, Ph.D. (AIR)
- Jean Johnson (Public Agenda)

The Moderator's Guide was edited by Jan Gahala and designed by Laura King, both of AIR.

The authors would like to thank the following people who served as key reviewers and critical friends:

- Catherine Barbour (AIR)
- Jane Coggshall, Ph.D. (AIR)
- Ellen Cushing (AIR)
- Lisa Lachlan-Haché, Ed.D. (AIR)
- Sheri Frost Leo (AIR)
- Sara Wraight, J.D. (AIR)
- Lynne Peloquin (consultant)

Thanks also are due to Maria Fenwick, of TeachPlus; Cranston Public Schools in Rhode Island; the Hazelwood School District in Missouri; the Illinois Large Unit District Association; Prince George’s County Public Schools in Maryland; and the Recovery School District in New Orleans. Each district provided assistance facilitating and convening focus groups for this project. Last but not least, this project would not have been possible without the time and insight that dozens of teachers and leaders around the country provided in focus group and interview discussions.