

Name	Ms. Washington	<p>Ms. Washington is an assistant principal at South Capitol City High School (SCCHS), an historic school in the largest city in East Carolina. Ms. Washington has been in her position for 3 years and was a teacher before she took an assistant principal position at a nearby grade school. She was delighted to rejoin the SCCHS staff and once again walk inside the limestone arches and red brick façade of the Georgian architecture that reminds her so much of college days at East Carolina State University. Some mornings, she will adjust the large framed sepia-toned photographs of graduating classes of years gone by. The students in their mortar boards look very little like the current study body.</p> <p>Ten years ago, more than 80% of SCCHS students were upper-middle income, White students. However, more than half of the current students at SCCHS come from low-income families. Many students are recent immigrants from South Sudan or Nepal. Other students were born to families from various Central and Latin American countries where Spanish and indigenous languages are spoken in the home. Although Ms. Washington is newer to the school, the average teacher has worked at SCCHS for 15 years. In no small part due to generous contributions from local philanthropic organizations and a small army of community service groups with a rainbow of color-coordinated jackets, the school has substantial resources. Ms. Washington is focused on instilling a college-going culture in this Title I school.</p>
Title	Associate Principal	
Organization	South Capitol City High School	
Context	Large urban high school; >50% of students are low SES, and >50% of students are ESL	
Locale	Urban	
Problem of Practice	Path to Graduation	
Funding Source	Title I School	

Tier 1 Program	Outcome	Reason for Selection
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Tier 2 Program	Outcome	Reason for Selection
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Tier 3 Program	Outcome	Reason for Selection
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Name	Dr. Adams	<p>Dr. Adams, the executive director of research and evaluation at Capitol City Public Schools (CCPS), looks a lot more like a college professor than the one-time high school English teacher he was in a different life. The teachers and school administrators of CCPS think of him as a misplaced academic that is quick to pull up an Excel worksheet or ask for a citation during casual conversations. The truth is, Dr. Adams is just more comfortable working with numbers than with students. He gravitated toward methods courses during his PhD program at East Carolina State University. He even picked up the fashion of his teachers and their wool coats. He still believes he is a teacher at heart.</p> <p>The new teacher evaluation system in the district has had a rough rollout. Teachers are worried that they are being judged by one number. If they would only look at the spreadsheets, Dr. Adams thinks, they would see so much more complexity and nuance. It's just like how the students feel. The end-of-course assessment gets the headlines, but it's the progress over time and interim assessments that tell the deeper story. As he prepares for a big presentation to the CCPS school board to discuss the teacher evaluation system at the district's Title I schools, Dr. Adams puts on a combination of musical soundtracks, hip-hop, and 1990s punk music to calm his nerves and focus.</p>
Title	Executive Director of Research and Evaluation	
Organization	Capitol City Public Schools	
Context	Large urban district; >50% of students are low SES, and >50% of students are ESL	
Locale	Urban	
Problem of Practice	Teacher Excellence	
Funding Source	Title I Schools identified as priority district for improvement	

Tier 1 Program	Outcome	Reason for Selection
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Tier 2 Program	Outcome	Reason for Selection
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Tier 3 Program	Outcome	Reason for Selection
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Name	Mr. Jefferson	<p>Mr. Jefferson parks his car in an empty parking lot in the early hours outside of Capitol City Heights Elementary School nearly every morning. A fresh cup of coffee in hand, he savors the quiet and calm of the day. Yesterday was such a headache. It is almost like the parents sent out a group chat when the first of them noticed his car was absent from his parking space. The lack of coffee and numbness in the side of his mouth after a visit to the dentist were doubtlessly contributing factors. He replayed the experience in his mind and determined that he needed to send an apologetic e-mail to the mother of one third grader.</p> <p>The other issue on his mind this morning is a proposal due to the state and a presentation to the school's teachers and parents. East Carolina was a recipient of a Striving Readers Grant. Although many parents belonged to the country club across the street from the school, a growing number of families from Capitol City were relocating to the suburbs. The school has enough students to qualify for the grant, and the district is eager to tap into a new spigot of cash. A new literacy program is needed to meet the requirements of the program, but the teachers have not been pressed to roll out a new program in quite a number of years. He feels like he is trading in an old headache for a new one. Not only will he have to convince the teachers, he will also have to answer questions from parents. Maybe the root canal would be a better way to spend the day.</p>
Title	Principal	
Organization	Capitol City Heights Elementary School	
Context	Wealthy inner-ring suburb of large urban area with a small (15%) but growing share of low-SES families	
Locale	Suburban	
Problem of Practice	Literacy	
Funding Source	Striving Readers Grant sub-awardee from the state	

Tier 1 Program	Outcome	Reason for Selection
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Tier 2 Program	Outcome	Reason for Selection
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Tier 3 Program	Outcome	Reason for Selection
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Name	Dr. Madison	<p>Dr. Madison was passionate about two things: the Dave Matthews Band and students with disabilities. Their brother had cerebral palsy. The two of them would go to concerts together at East Carolina State University, and the Dave Matthews Band was a favorite. The quintessential college jam band of the 90s and early 2000s provided a positive atmosphere and something that kept the two siblings close. A career in special education followed undergrad, before Dr. Madison eventually moved to leading services for students with disabilities at Capitol City Heights School District.</p> <p>Although Capitol City Heights is an objectively wealthy community, it is not static. New families are moving in, and many of them are low socioeconomic status or speak languages other than English at home. The influx of new families has not yet changed the demographics enough to qualify the district for the big pots of federal funds some nearby districts have been able to access. Dr. Madison also knows that the focus on English learners is diverting district leadership's attention from students with disabilities. Dr. Madison won't lose focus, on either the newer residents or the students with disabilities. They pop in a live recording of Dave Matthews Band at ECSU Memorial Stadium and starts thinking of what they can do serve the newest members of the community and students like their own brother.</p>
Title	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction	
Organization	Capitol City Heights Public Schools	
Context	Wealthy inner-ring suburb of large urban area with a small (15%) but growing share of low-SES families	
Locale	Suburban	
Problem of Practice	Children and Youth With Disabilities	
Funding Source	None identified	

Tier 1 Program	Outcome	Reason for Selection
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Tier 2 Program	Outcome	Reason for Selection
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Tier 3 Program	Outcome	Reason for Selection
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Name	Dr. Monroe	<p>Dr. Monroe is the chief performance officer for the East Carolina Department of Education, a role that she has held for the past 5 years. She moved east over the Appalachian Mountains from West Carolina for college and found the warm Atlantic breezes to her liking. After achieving an undergraduate degree at a small liberal arts college, she earned her doctorate in sociology at East Carolina State University. That resulted in a job at the education department, due to her interest in social policy, and a slow but steady ascent to her current post. The shifting winds of the intercoastal region mirror the shifting politics of the state. Lately, the traditionally rural state with its singular urban center in Capitol City has given way to a more suburban population of voters. The new suburban education advocates have brought with them an interest in charter schools. The timing seems right because the U.S. Department of Education is administering a new pot of money for the Charter Schools Program bestowed by Congress.</p> <p>More specifically, the state is exploring the rollout of a virtual charter school. The rural areas have been clamoring for more options for their students while the suburbs of Capitol City seem content with their schools as they are. Dr. Monroe is preparing to meet with the Board of Education, newly installed after recent elections, to discuss options for establishing a virtual charter school or other opportunities to access these federal funds. Some board members ran on a platform of bringing choice and flexibility. Other board members are skeptical of too much screen time for students. It is hard to tell if the board members with competing interests feel inclined to listen to each other, but perhaps they are willing to listen to the latest research?</p>
Title	Chief Performance Officer	
Organization	East Carolina State Department of Education	
Context	Oversees a largely rural state with one large urban area and several medium-sized cities in a state that recently launched an online charter school	
Locale	Various	
Problem of Practice	Charter Schools	
Funding Source	Charter School Program Grant	

Tier 1 Program

Outcome

Reason for Selection

Tier 2 Program

Outcome

Reason for Selection

Tier 3 Program

Outcome

Reason for Selection

Name	Ms. Washington	Dr. Adams	Mr. Jefferson	Dr. Madison	Dr. Monroe
Title	Associate Principal	Executive Director of Research and Evaluation	Principal	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction	Chief Performance Officer
Organization	South Capitol City High School	Capitol City Public Schools	Capitol City Heights Elementary School	Capitol City Heights Public Schools	East Carolina State Department of Education
Context	Large urban high school; >50% of students are low SES, and >50% of students are ESL	Large urban district; >50% of students are low SES, and >50% of students are ESL	Wealthy inner-ring suburb of large urban area with a small (15%) but growing share of low-SES families	Wealthy inner-ring suburb of large urban area with a small (15%) but growing share of low-SES families	Oversees a largely rural state with one large urban area and several medium-sized cities in a state that recently launched an online charter school
Locale	Urban	Urban	Suburban	Suburban	Various
Problem of Practice	Path to Graduation	Teacher Excellence	Literacy	Children and Youth With Disabilities	Charter Schools
Funding Source	Title I School	Title I Schools identified as priority district for improvement	Striving Readers Grant sub-awardee from the state	None identified	Charter School Program Grant