

Making Meaningful Use of Teacher Effectiveness Data

Measuring Teacher Effectiveness*

Observation-based measures of teaching performance

BENEFITS AS AN EVALUATION MEASURE

Standards-based instructional rubrics:

- + Give teachers and principals common language about clear expectations of good teaching
- + Directly assess teachers' classroom and other work behaviors
- + Can yield constructive feedback
- + Tend to be perceived as credible measures by teachers and principal

CONCERNS AS AN EVALUATION MEASURE

- Most reliable with multiple observers and more than four observations
- Observations and post-conferences are very time- and labor-intensive, and different observers (with different content backgrounds) may have different perceptions
- Often little variation in the scores awarded by principals, who may be overly lenient

Measures of teacher contributions to student learning

BENEFITS AS AN EVALUATION MEASURE

- + Teacher-level value-added/growth (VA/G) and student learning objective (SLO) scores are based on the academic growth of students
- + SLO processes seek to promote best teaching practices (e.g., goal setting, formative assessment, progress monitoring, and differentiated instruction)
- + Production of VA/G scores doesn't require additional work from teachers or principals

CONCERNS AS AN EVALUATION MEASURE

VA/G scores:

- Prioritize standardized test scores and tested subjects
- Are dependent on the timing of test score release
- Don't necessarily indicate if student results are due to school, peers, teacher, or other factors
- May be sensitive to the nonrandom assignment of students to teachers
- Vary year to year and by test instrument
- Have limited value in identifying next steps for teacher

SLOs:

- Aren't standardized or comparable across contexts
- Quality/rigor of implementation varies



Collecting and Accessing Teacher Effectiveness Data

DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

- + Districts and schools collect and manage new data from their teacher effectiveness measures/processes
- + Principals have ongoing access to multiple years of teacher results in a centralized, integrated data system, enabling them to systematically track performance, analyze scores across teachers and across time, and identify areas of greatest need
- + Knowledgeable, trained principals ultimately access the right amount of the right type of data at the right time, and know which data to use to inform the various decisions they need to make

KEY CONCERNS

- Overwhelming demands on principals' time, particularly if tasks aren't distributed to other capable members of the school community or if results from different teacher measures must be stored/accessed separately. (Many principals design their own spreadsheets, often by cutting/pasting from multiple reports.)
- The annual timing of teacher-level results can be a problem; although observations are conducted/scored throughout the year, they often aren't compiled/summarized until end of school year, at the same time that standardized and end-of-course tests and student/parent perception surveys are administered, thus delaying final teacher scores until the summer/fall.



Using Teacher Effectiveness Data

More targeted professional development

DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

- + Principals, aware of the full range of available supports for teachers, use recent results from teacher measures to recommend specific learning opportunities in teachers' specific areas of need (with supports aligned with the indicators on the district/school's instructional framework or rubric)
- + Multiple learning opportunities are available, such as coaching/mentoring and/or the modeling of best practices, or online videos, suggested readings, or workshops offered by the district
- + School/district leaders track teachers' PD participation over time

KEY CONCERNS

- Principals may be impeded by a lack of time or financial resources or inadequate training around how to align support with teachers' needs, and/or the district may lack the systems to facilitate such connection

More strategic assignment

DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

- + Principals use recent results from teacher effectiveness measures to strategically place their teachers in the subjects and grades where they can be most effective (with the students who need them most)
- + District and school leaders use results to identify potential teacher leaders

KEY CONCERNS

- Relevant effectiveness data may not be available when decisions must be made, or principals may lack the capacity to assign teachers to subjects, grades, and students and/or grant teacher leadership responsibilities

More selective retention

DESIRED IMPROVEMENTS

- + Principals have honest (sometimes difficult) performance conversations with teachers (supported by evidence that's well documented over time), and do not renew contracts for those who consistently fail to show improvement

KEY CONCERNS

- Relevant effectiveness data may not be available when retention decisions must be made, or principals may lack the capacity to document the appropriate level of evidence to support dismissal

STUDENTS
BENEFIT

* Results from these different measures tend to have low positive correlations, suggesting that although related, each may capture some distinct, unique dimension of effective teaching.

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