



**Carnegie Foundation** for the Advancement of Teaching

# **REVISITING TEACHER EVALUATION:**

A Leadership Forum on Using Data  
to Improve Teaching and Learning

## **Meeting Summary**

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**September 20-21, 2012**

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching  
Washington, DC Office

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Revisiting Teacher Evaluation Forum  
September 20-21, 2012  
Washington, DC

### OVERVIEW

On September 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 2012, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching convened 150 researchers, policymakers, and practitioners at the Foundation's new Washington, DC, offices to explore the teacher evaluation movement's progress to date and to discuss possibilities for the next wave of evaluation reforms.

While previous Carnegie convenings have engaged small groups of thought-leaders in discussions about the instruments, methodologies, and challenges of measuring teaching and learning, our goal for the Revisiting Teacher Evaluation Forum was to broaden both the scope and audience of these conversations, sharing Carnegie's views on evaluation and improvement, while simultaneously learning from others' work and encouraging the networking of ideas among leaders in the field. The Forum was also an important opportunity to introduce Carnegie's new Washington, DC, office to the Washington policy community.

Specifically, our objectives for the Revisiting Teacher Evaluation Forum were to:

- Promote discussion of next-generation teacher evaluation and improvement systems among a large, diverse, and influential audience of policymakers, practitioners, and experts
- Share Carnegie's thinking on evaluation and improvement systems
- Introduce Carnegie's Washington, DC, office to the Washington policy community.

### FORUM AGENDA

The range of perspectives at the forum was a tremendous asset, providing opportunity to examine key issues from several vantage points. Likewise, the design of the agenda allowed us to engage participants in two different discussion formats: large, plenary sessions and smaller, more intimate discussion groups. While the

large sessions tackled major political issues surrounding teacher evaluation reform, the smaller sessions explored the more technical aspects of our current and future systems.

To kick off the event, President Tony Bryk's opening plenary (Appendix A) outlined the evolution of the modern teacher evaluation movement, from early research on value-added models in the 1990s to today's Measuring Effective Teaching (MET) project and Race to the Top reforms. Subsequent plenary sessions dove more deeply into specific aspects of this evolution, reflecting on the federal government's role in evaluation (Plenary 1) and teachers' and other practitioners' perspectives on the first wave of reforms (Plenary 2). To push participants to look forward and consider challenges facing the next generation of evaluation systems, the final two plenary sessions explored the potential for evaluation to drive improvement in the quality of instruction (Plenary 3) and the enormous obstacle the introduction of the Common Core State Standards will pose to testing and evaluation systems nationwide (Plenary 4).

In addition to these plenary sessions, attendees participated in their choice of breakout sessions on Thursday afternoon and Friday morning. Thursday's sessions explored the role of non-cognitive factors in students' success; the strengths, weaknesses and future of value-added models; and the cost of designing and implementing evaluation systems. Friday's sessions focused on providing effective feedback to teachers, the role "Improvement Science" might play in advancing teacher quality, and the use of data to improve teaching and learning. Though the breakout sessions were not designed solely to promote Carnegie's work on these topics, each session provided an opportunity for us to share some of the valuable knowledge we have generated through our various strands of research.

For a complete agenda, brief descriptions of each session and a list of panelists, please see Appendix B. A complete list of participants follows in Appendix C.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

Despite the range of session topics and the diversity of perspectives present, a number of points of consensus emerged over the course of the forum. Likewise, our discussions uncovered a number of crucial points of disagreement. Some of the most popular and most salient issues are summarized below.

- There wasn't strong consensus around what evaluation systems will or should look like in the future, particularly if they are going to improve teachers' practice. Folks agreed that value-added measures will probably be used differently as more powerful evaluation tools emerge, though exactly *how* they should be used was a subject of some debate. No one seemed to disagree that systems relying on

multiple measures (whether in addition to or in place of value-added measurements) will generate more data, making them more accurate measures of teacher performance, more valuable tools to advance teachers' practice, and more palatable politically.

- Some participants felt that while most principals lack the expertise or capacity required to evaluate all of their teachers effectively, peer observation and self-evaluation may be less expensive, more efficient alternatives that could provide feedback (whether formal or informal) to drive improvement. Participants supporting these approaches also noted the approaches have the advantage of including teachers directly in the evaluation and improvement processes—a feature several panelists mentioned was crucial to achieving buy-in and promoting productive revisions of systems.
- As states begin to implement the Common Core State Standards, two significant challenges will emerge: (1) how to evaluate teachers based on students' performance on the new assessments and (2) how to train teachers to use a plethora of new data to improve their practice. Panelist and participants reiterated the need for state, district, and building-level leaders to approach these issues with patience, transparency, a willingness to iterate thoughtfully, and recognition that this is a “huge learning task”—a step outside of traditional comfort zones—both for themselves and for their teachers.
- There was unresolved tension between the need for evaluation to focus on individual- or system-level improvement issues, given that systems-level changes tend to have a greater impact than changes at the individual level.
- As evidence about the importance of non-cognitive factors of student success continues to grow, the field will need to learn how to account for these factors in evaluating and improving teachers' preparation and practice.

## **PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK**

In keeping with Carnegie tradition, we closed the event by collecting feedback from our participants. Using a brief survey, we gauged attendees' views on the content, agenda, and location of the forum. The table below displays participants' average response scores.

Question	Average (out of 5 possible points)
Did this forum provide you with insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the first wave of teacher evaluation reforms?	4.28
Did this forum encourage you to think about the use of evaluation to improve teaching and learning?	4.38
Did this forum introduce you to new ideas or perspectives on the application of information about teacher performance?	3.86
Were the conference spaces conducive to productive discussion?	4.30
Was the format of the forum (a mix of plenary and breakout sessions) effective?	4.30
<b>Average Overall Score</b>	<b>4.22</b>

People appreciated the range of perspectives, the mix of large and small sessions, and the diversity of topics covered by the agenda, though some remarked that many of the ideas discussed were not “new” to them (as reflected by the 3.86 points out of 5 on the question “Did this forum introduce you to new ideas or perspectives...?”). Several indicated that they would have liked more time to network informally between sessions and more time to engage in longer discussions in the smaller, more intimate sessions. Given the importance and complexity of the issues covered during the forum, this sentiment is not surprising and should be taken into account when planning similar events in the future.

## CONCLUSION

Carnegie President Tony Bryk closed the forum with the suggestion that the next generation of evaluation systems should be designed not only to assess teachers’ practice but, more importantly, to improve it. The Revisiting Teacher Evaluation forum, by facilitating provocative conversation about the political and technical challenges of teacher evaluation, succeeded in generating strong consensus on this point.

## APPENDIX A: Agenda

### REVISITING TEACHER EVALUATION

A Leadership Forum on Using Data to Improve Teaching and Learning  
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September 20	
8:15–9:00am	Breakfast
9:00–9:10am	Welcome and Introduction to the Day
9:10–9:40am	Introductory Remarks Anthony Bryk, President, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
9:40–10:40am	Opening Plenary <i>The Obama Administration's Perspective on Teacher Evaluation and Improvement</i> An interview with Joanne Weiss, Chief of Staff to the U.S. Secretary of Education
11:00–12:30pm	Plenary Session Two <i>First Wave of Evaluation Reforms: Issues and Insights</i>  <i>Teachers' Perspectives</i> Seven minute video capturing the perspectives of teachers working in school districts with new teacher evaluation systems  <i>The view from states and districts</i>  <i>Panelists:</i> Steve Cantrell, Head of Research & Evaluation, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Robin Gelinas, Senior Policy Advisor, EducationCounsel Kaya Henderson, Chancellor, District of Columbia Public Schools Heather Peske, Vice President for Programs, Teach Plus  <i>Moderator:</i> Chris Thorn, Director of Assessing-Teaching Improving-Learning Program, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
12:30–1:30pm	Lunch and Networking
1:45–3:00pm	Breakout Sessions 1: Lessons From the First Years of Teacher Evaluation Reform

Americas	<p><i>1A: Are We Evaluating the Right Things?</i></p> <p>New evaluation systems focus on value-scores and classroom observations. Are these the right areas to emphasize? What other information is important to capture? It's increasingly clear, for example, that qualities like grit, self-control and a growth mindset are important contributors to student success. How should we measure teachers' success in teaching such attributes?</p> <p><i>Panelists:</i>  Kate Belden, Principal, KIPP King Collegiate, San Lorenzo, CA  Angela Duckworth, Assistant Professor, University of Pennsylvania  Ronald Ferguson, Senior Lecturer in Education and Public Policy, Harvard Graduate School of Education and Harvard Kennedy School of Government</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i>  David Yeager, Assistant Professor of Psychology, University of Texas at Austin and Fellow, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching</p>
European Union	<p><i>1B: What's the Value of Value-Added Scores?</i></p> <p>What have we learned so far about the use of value-added scores in evaluating and improving teachers and teaching? How good are the measures? How good do they need to be? What about teachers in non-tested grades and subjects?</p> <p><i>Panelists:</i>  Matthew Di Carlo, Senior Fellow, Albert Shanker Institute  Douglas Harris, Associate Professor of Economics, Tulane University  Eric Isenberg, Senior Researcher, Mathematica Policy Research</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i>  Elena Silva, Senior Associate, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching</p>
Alaska	<p><i>1C: The Cost Factor: Making Evaluation Systems more Efficient</i></p> <p>Many states and school districts are facing the challenge of implementing expensive new teacher evaluation systems in an era of fiscal austerity. How can policymakers and practitioners make evaluation systems as efficient as possible? What would more efficient systems look like? Is there a role for "triage" in teacher evaluation? What are the ingredients of a "thin" evaluation system?</p> <p><i>Panelists:</i>  Anthony Bryk, President, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching  Robert Pianta, Dean, Curry School of Education, University of Virginia  Keith Dysarz, Director of Teacher Effectiveness, Baltimore City Public Schools</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i>  Chris Thorn, Director of Assessing-Teaching Improving-Learning, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching</p>

3:15– 4:45pm	<p>Plenary Session Three <i>Employment <u>and</u> Improvement?</i></p> <p>Can emerging state and local teacher evaluation systems do double duty? Can they be the basis of employment decisions <u>and</u> help teachers improve their practice? Should evaluation systems used to improve practice differ from those used to make employment decisions? If so, how? What do we know about improvement <i>systems</i>?</p> <p><i>Panelists:</i>  Tom Nolan, Associate, Associates in Process Improvement  Theodore Quinn, Vice President, Strategy &amp; Research, Teach for America  Beth Schiavano-Narvaez, Deputy Superintendent, Office of School Support and Improvement, Montgomery County Public Schools  Scott Thompson, Director of Teacher Effectiveness Strategy, DC Public Schools</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i>  Alicia Grunow, Senior Managing Partner, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching</p>
5:00– 7:00pm	Rooftop Reception Hosted by the Carnegie Foundation

## September 21

8:00– 8:45am	Breakfast
8:45– 10:00am	<p>Plenary Session Four <i>Teacher Evaluation and the Common Core</i></p> <p>The introduction of the Common Core State Standards and new, more rigorous testing systems represents a tremendous challenge to the designers of new teacher evaluation systems, affecting both value-added metrics of teacher performance and classroom evaluations. How should policymakers and teacher-evaluation designers respond to the Common Core?</p> <p><i>Panelists:</i>  Mitchell Chester, Commissioner of Education, Massachusetts  Susan Moore Johnson, Jerome T. Murphy Professor of Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education  Brad Jupp, Senior Program Advisor on Teacher Quality Initiatives, U.S. Department of Education  Laura Slover, Senior Vice President of Achieve, Director of the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers Consortium (PARCC)</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i>  Marshall Smith, Senior Fellow, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching</p>
10:15– 11:30am	Breakout Sessions 2: Using Data to Improve Classroom Instruction



Americas	<p><i>2A: Effective Feedback for Teachers</i></p> <p>What strategies for sharing evaluation results with teachers are most likely to improve the quality of teachers' instruction and increase student learning? Are we using the right evaluation strategies and collecting the right performance information to provide teachers the best possible feedback?</p> <p><i>Panelists:</i>  Sarah Coon, Senior Director, Talent Development, Achievement First Public Charter Schools  David Kauffman, Principal, Perez Elementary School, Austin ISD  Tamera Malone, Special Education Teacher, Kirby High School, Memphis Public Schools/Teach Plus  April Stout, Lead Mentor, Ravenswood, New Teacher Center</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i>  Jeannie Myung, Research Associate, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching</p>
European Union	<p><i>2B: Bringing "Improvement Science" to the Teacher Quality Conversation</i></p> <p>Health care and other industries have used "continuous improvement" strategies to achieve substantial increases in performance and productivity. How could these "user-centered" strategies improve teacher and teaching quality?</p> <p><i>Panelists:</i>  Laura Baker, Assistant Director of Professional Development, Austin ISD  Jarred Bolte, Director of Teacher Supports and Development, Baltimore City Public Schools  Roberta Trachtman, Director, Teacher Certification, New Visions for Public Schools</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i>  Sandra Park, Director of Building a Teaching Effectiveness Network Program, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching</p>
Alaska	<p><i>2C: Using Student Data to Improve Instruction</i></p> <p>Advances in technology have led to greatly expanded uses of data in decision-making throughout American life in recent years, and educators and technology advocates are eager to bring the data revolution to education. What have we learned to date about the ability of data-driven instruction to inform teaching and improve student learning?</p> <p><i>Panelists:</i>  Kathryn Boudett, Director, Data Wise Project, Harvard Graduate School of Education  Emma Doggett, Chief Program Officer, The Achievement Network  Jeff Pestrak, Chief Academic Officer, Mastery Charter Schools</p> <p><i>Moderator:</i>  Thomas Toch, Senior Managing Partner, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching</p>
11:45–12:15pm	<p>Closing Summary  Anthony Bryk, President, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching</p>
12:15–1:30pm	<p>Networking Lunch and Event Evaluation</p>

## APPENDIX C: Registrant List

# REVISITING TEACHER EVALUATION

A Leadership Forum on Using Data to Improve Teaching and Learning  
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