



Regional Educational Laboratory at EDC

Northeast Educator Effectiveness
Research Alliance



Research Agenda

2012–2016

The Northeast Educator Effectiveness Research Alliance (NEERA) has identified the goal of providing research to support states' and districts' educator evaluation systems and to build states' and districts' capacity to evaluate their own systems.

To address that goal, the alliance's Core Planning Group engaged in discussions to develop a five-year, common research agenda that would guide current and future projects and more specifically define the direction of the alliance. The draft research agenda outlined below is a roadmap for alliance work with REL Northeast & Islands and other potential research partners. It proposes work that is directly useful to alliance members, supplies research that informs policy and practice, and seeks to build capacity of alliance members to conduct and use research to support work in the area of educator evaluation. NEERA identified the following topics as high priorities for its work for the next five years:

- **Educator evaluation system processes and measures**
This topic focuses on the elements of the educator evaluation system, including the evaluation system measures, such as student learning objectives or student and peer feedback, as well as issues related to the training of evaluators.
- **Relationship between evaluation system, teacher professional development, and teacher practice**
This topic focuses on two important relationships: the relationship between the evaluation of teachers and their professional development and the relationship between the evaluation systems and the teachers' practice. Questions of interest include the systems' effectiveness at linking evaluations with professional development as well as questions about how teachers' practice changes, if it does, as a result of these more rigorous evaluation systems.
- **Implementation of educator evaluation systems**
This topic addresses issues of implementation of new evaluation systems, with a specific focus in the initial years on the pilot of New Hampshire's new educator evaluation system. Questions include descriptions of the district-designed systems, fidelity of implementation of these systems, and professional culture as it relates to the implementation of the educator evaluation system.

In addition to the three topics that NEERA identified as potential REL Northeast & Islands work over the next five years, there was also interest in an additional topic that, while not within the scope of work that REL-NEI will pursue, may be of interest to alliance members to pursue by other means, such as partnerships with other researchers:

- **Relationship between teacher/leader preparation and evaluation systems**
Questions raised by the group included the appropriate role of teacher preparation in readying teachers for the new evaluation systems, the degree to which preparation programs can be judged based on the evaluations their graduates receive, and the characteristics of preparation programs judged to be effective.

TOPIC I: Educator evaluation system processes and measures

Subtopic	Questions	Project	Timing
Evaluator training and reliability	What are the mechanisms for quality control of evaluators in the region? Nationwide?	<p>Convening: Presentation with Center on Great Teachers and Leaders and District Practitioners</p> <p>Descriptive study: The Role of Teacher Characteristics in Educator Evaluation</p>	<p>Convening held June 2013</p> <p>Publication expected in 2016</p>
	What types of evaluator/principal training do states and districts in the region provide?	Convening: Presentation with Center on Great Teachers and Leaders and District Practitioners	Convening held June 2013
Evaluation instruments and measures	What are the measures that states and districts are using to evaluate teachers?	Face-to-Face Event: Measuring Educator Effectiveness: Lessons from Research and Practice	Bridge Event delivered June 2012
	How are student learning objectives (SLOs) being used in teacher evaluations? What is the level of rigor of SLOs?	<p>Technical Assistance: How States Use Student Learning Objectives in Teacher Evaluation Systems: A Review of State Websites</p> <p>Face-to-Face Event: Student Learning Objectives – Implementation and Measurement</p>	<p>Published 2013</p> <p>Bridge Event delivered September 2013</p>
	How can a system employ student and staff feedback surveys in educator evaluation? What role does self-assessment play in evaluation systems?	Technical Assistance: Use of Surveys in Educator Evaluation Systems	Published for limited distribution in 2015

TOPIC II: Relationship between evaluation system, teacher professional development, and teacher practice

Subtopic	Questions	Project	Timing
Mechanisms for establishing links between evaluation and professional development	How are states linking educator evaluation and professional development? What are the systems that have been established to ensure educators receive professional development linked to the evaluation system?	Descriptive Study: Aligning Teacher Evaluation and Professional Learning in a Large Urban District	Expected early 2016
Relationship between evaluation and professional development	<p>What types of differentiated support are available to teachers? To what extent does professional development align with needs identified in the evaluations?</p> <p>Do (“low proficient”) teachers improve (ratings on evaluations) over time with targeted PD (that is linked to the evaluation system)?</p>	<p>Technical Assistance: Data Catalog to Examine District Data for Possible Study</p> <p>Descriptive Study: Aligning Teacher Evaluation and Professional Learning in a Large Urban District</p>	<p>Completed December 2012</p> <p>Publication expected early 2016</p>
	What is the relationship between induction and mentoring on teachers’/leaders’ evaluation?	Convening: Presentation on induction and mentoring	Convening held June 2014
Relationship between evaluation and teacher practice	What is the relationship between the evaluation system and teacher practice?	Future REL-NEI work	

TOPIC III: Implementation of educator evaluation systems

Subtopic	Questions	Project	Timing
Features of systems	What are features of the teacher evaluation systems in NH districts with SIG schools in 2012–2013?	Descriptive Study: Redesigning Teacher Evaluation: Lessons from a Pilot Implementation	Published 2015
	To what extent do districts implement the evaluation processes and multiple measures as intended?		
	What are the features and processes of the REL states' educator evaluation systems?	Meeting Materials: Educator Evaluation Crosswalk	Completed August 2012
Fidelity of implementation	What are the factors that influence implementation?	Descriptive Study: Redesigning Teacher Evaluation: Lessons from a Pilot Implementation Face-to-Face: Implementation of Educator Evaluation Systems: Examining Problems of Practice	Published 2015 Bridge Event delivered October 2014
	What is the role (and what are differences in outcomes) of state policy driving a system vs. a district designing its own system?	Future REL-NEI work	
Professional climate	How does the professional climate of the school, as reported by teachers, change the implementation of the teacher evaluation system?	Descriptive Study: Implementation of New Teacher Evaluation Systems and Changes in Professional School Climate	Publication expected 2016
	What is the impact of the evaluation system on principals?	Future REL-NEI work	

TOPIC IV: Relationship between teacher/leader preparation and evaluation systems (this topic is not within REL-NEI capacity to explore but may be an issue of interest to the alliance to pursue through other avenues)

Subtopic	Question
Teacher Preparation	(1) What is the relationship between teacher preparation programs and teacher evaluation results?
	(2) What are features of preparation programs (or districts programs) that prepare highly effective teachers?
Leader Preparation	(1) What is the relationship between teacher preparation programs and teacher evaluation results?