



Phase I Teacher Evaluation Districts Compared to Other North Carolina Districts

Since 2002, the Office of the Governor, the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission, and the North Carolina State Board of Education have made a sustained commitment to listen to educators and reform schools to create the working conditions necessary for student and teacher success. In 2010, over 105,000 educators responded to the NC 2010 Teacher Working Conditions Survey (89 percent), the highest proportion since the advent of the survey in 2002. Data from these respondents were made available in May 2010 at www.ncteachingconditions.org.

In an effort to ensure all educators can provide the 21st Century education necessary for North Carolina's students, the state created new aligned evaluation systems for teachers, principals, superintendents and administrators, the North Carolina Educators Evaluation System (NCEES). The new system replaces the prior, summative approach for teacher evaluation with a much more formative approach, incorporating a continuum of practice for each of the state's Professional Teaching Standards, using rubrics for goal setting and monitoring

progress, and promoting frequent dialog between school administrators and teachers on their teaching practice and development. These new tools utilized the North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey results to inform the redesign of the teacher, principal, and superintendent evaluation processes. The NCTWC data function as an important artifact of evidence in its implementation.

Comprehensive changes to the process in which teacher evaluations are conducted may influence perceptions of working conditions. If the process is implemented with fidelity, it could be expected that educators would perceive the evaluation process as being fairer, that feedback enhances teaching, and that professional development is more targeted and helpful. Additionally, some negative effects on time and paperwork could result. This brief examines if the new coaching-based evaluation process has influenced working conditions.

The NCEES was introduced to teachers in North Carolina districts in three phases. The first phase of training and comprehensive use of the tool began in 13 districts across North Carolina during the 2008-2009

school year¹. Of the remaining districts across the state, 39 implemented the process in the 2009-2010 school year, and the remaining districts will implement it in the 2010-2011 academic year. Phase I districts' results on the North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey were compared to all other districts across North Carolina for both 2008 and 2010 to assess whether there was greater growth in expected areas.

Results from the 2008 survey were used to provide a baseline comparison of the differences in the two groups. A series of tests were conducted to look for significant differences between Phase I districts' rates of agreement (those educators indicating they either 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with the item) on survey items and all other districts' rates of agreement.

Findings

Of the 36 common questions examined, Phase I districts show higher rates of agreement on 35 of the 36 items than in 2008, indicating that the early adopters of the evaluation instrument had more positive supports in place. Seven items have significantly higher rates of agreement in the Phase I districts than the other North Carolina districts in 2010 (Table 1).

- Significant differences are found in items about professional development, specifically related to follow up and the usefulness of feedback to improve instruction. In a related area, differences are also apparent in the item about professional development teachers receive deepening their content knowledge. These findings suggest that either the evaluation is

TABLE 1. COMMON NCTWC SURVEY QUESTIONS SHOWING SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PHASE I DISTRICTS AND OTHER NORTH CAROLINA DISTRICTS IN 2010

Survey Questions	2008			2010			Phase I Growth, 2008-2010
	Phase I Districts	Other NC Districts	Difference	Phase I Districts	Other NC Districts	Difference	
In this school, follow up is provided from professional development.	65.48	66.61	-1.14	79.56	76.49	3.07*	4.21
Teachers have sufficient training to fully utilize instructional technology.	62.64	62.15	0.49	77.86	74.53	3.33*	2.84
Professional development deepens teachers' content knowledge.	75.01	73.09	1.92	87.73	83.79	3.94*	2.01
The procedures for teacher evaluation are consistent.	77.96	76.36	1.60	89.90	86.28	3.61*	2.01
The school improvement team provides effective leadership at this school.	66.55	62.98	3.57	87.85	82.36	5.48*	1.92
An appropriate amount of time is provided for professional development.	65.78	65.13	0.64	80.50	78.22	2.28*	1.64
Teachers receive feedback that can help them improve teaching.	78.87	76.77	2.10	89.57	86.33	3.24*	1.14

* Statistically significant at the $p > .05$ level (two-tailed)

providing more positive feedback and development for teachers or that resulting professional development opportunities are more helpful to educators as they are better aligned to their evaluations and their professional development plans.

- Teachers in Phase I schools are more positive that teacher evaluation procedures are consistent, providing some indication that the evaluation process is being implemented with fidelity.

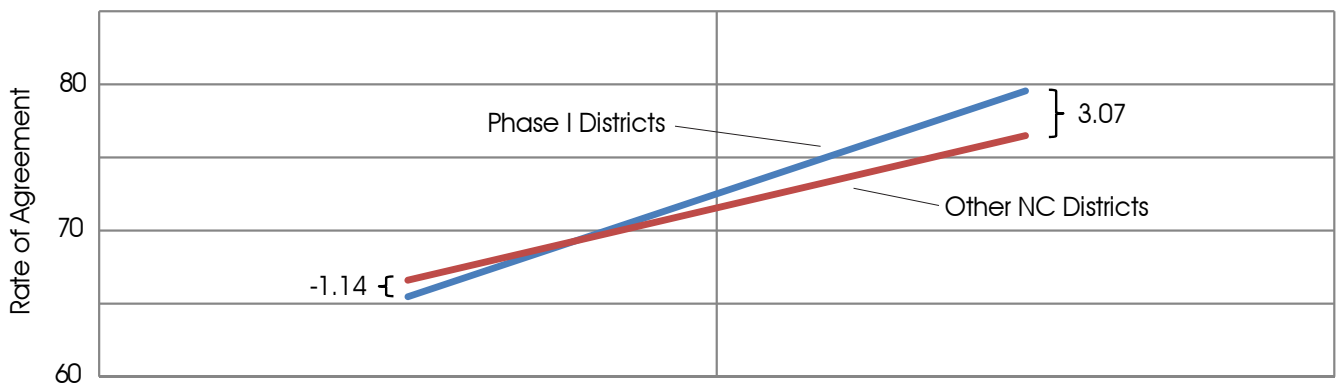
The greatest change in perceptions in working conditions in Phase I districts is in reporting that follow up is provided from professional development in the school (Figure 1). While Phase I districts were slightly (and not significantly) less likely to agree that follow up was provided in 2008, in 2010 they are significantly more positive than other districts in the state (79.56 percent versus 76.49 percent, respectively).

While these findings are insufficient to conclude that the evaluation caused these changes in perceptions of professional development, they do suggest that there may be a relationship between the teacher evaluation process and improved perceptions of the quality of feedback, consistency of evaluation and professional development in districts where it has been fully implemented.

The Impact of the Evaluation System on Issues of Time

Changes to teacher evaluation which include more frequent and specific discussions of teacher practice *do not appear* to be negatively impacting teachers' perceptions of time (Table 2). On all three questions addressing the issue of time, Phase I districts reported significantly higher rates of agreement in 2008 prior to the implementation of the new system. While both groups saw increases in agreement rates, Phase I districts continued to maintain a significantly higher rate over other districts through 2010.

FIGURE 1. CHANGE IN RATE OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN PHASE I DISTRICTS AND REMAINING NC DISTRICTS TO THE SURVEY ITEM 'IN THIS SCHOOL, FOLLOW-UP IS PROVIDED FROM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT'



- The gap between Phase I districts and other districts in North Carolina widened 3.8 percent on the condition that efforts are made to minimize the amount of paperwork teachers are required to do. However, this gap increase represents that Phase I districts in 2010 are more positive that efforts are made to minimize paperwork, whereas all other districts are more negative on average, suggesting that the new evaluation system did not negatively impact educators’ perceptions of additional paperwork.
- The new evaluation system appears to have no negative impact on perceptions of the availability of non-instructional time in Phase I districts compared to others in the state.
- While a one percent reduction in the gap between the two groups occurred around the issue of teachers having time available to collaborate with colleagues in 2010, the reduction was small. Phase 1 districts

maintained a significantly higher rate of agreement on this item over other North Carolina districts.

Conclusion

Initial trends suggest that fully integrated use of the new teacher evaluation instrument may be contributing to more positive agreement in important areas of teacher working conditions. The North Carolina Teacher Evaluation System’s content (<http://www.ncptsc.org>) indicates that the evaluation process is designed to improve and enhance the areas of leadership and teacher support. Districts which have been using this instrument the longest are showing higher rates of agreement in those areas. A more rigorous and formative approach to teacher evaluation, aligned to standards, may be contributing to significant gains in teachers’ rates of agreement that include professional development implementation, the teacher evaluation process, and school improvement efficacy. Additionally, the new system and processes used to implement it appear to

TABLE 2. COMMON NCTWC SURVEY QUESTIONS PERTAIN TO THE ISSUE OF TIME

Time Survey Questions	2008			2010			Phase I Growth, 2008-2010
	Phase I Districts	Other NC Districts	Difference	Phase I Districts	Other NC Districts	Difference	
Efforts are made to minimize the amount of routine paperwork teachers are required to do.	61.75	57.32	4.43*	63.57	55.33	8.23*	3.80
The non-instructional time provided for teachers in my school is sufficient.	59.26	51.00	8.26*	71.62	62.74	8.88*	0.60
Teachers have time available to collaborate with colleagues.	68.73	62.22	6.51*	78.30	72.89	5.41*	-1.10

* Statistically significant at the p > .05 level (two-tailed)

have a negligible impact on teachers' perceptions of planning time.

Given that initial findings show some positive effect on areas of teacher development and professional development, continued promotion, training of the system and its processes, and analysis of the new

evaluation system should be maintained to assure the system is used effectively and consistently. Continued longitudinal analyses should be conducted as more districts adopt and successfully integrate the new evaluation system into practice to assess its ramifications on teaching conditions and instructional practices.

Note

1. Phase 1 of the teacher evaluation implementation process included Alexander, Jones, Alleghany, Newton-Conover, Camden, Orange, Cherokee, Rutherford, Elkin City, Scotland, Hertford, Wilson, and Iredell-Statesville school districts.

About the New Teacher Center

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