Insights from the i3 Pilot Districts:
Resources, Tools, & Lessons Learned from Teacher Evaluation and Development Systems

Across America, AFT teachers have risen to the challenge of defining their profession, taking responsibility for student achievement, and strengthening the teacher corps by embracing a "systems" approach to teacher learning, growth and evaluation. The task has required school communities to rethink teacher career development, insist on evidence-based evaluations and meaningful professional growth opportunities, engage in collaborative labor-management problem-solving, and explore new mechanisms that support teacher effectiveness and talent development.

Funded by a federal i3 grant, **E3TL** is a partnership of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT), and the Rhode Island Federation of Teachers and Health Professionals (RIFT). Collectively, these state federations have mobilized 12 district teams to design and implement research-based, comprehensive teacher evaluation systems, and model effective labor-management. Each district has taken its own journey; AFT has provided funding, coordination, guidance and support.

The primary goal of the i3 work is to support the full-scale implementation of a comprehensive teacher evaluation and development system. By doing so, the system will ensure that every teacher receives a career-long continuum of evaluation, feedback, and most importantly, support. Research has demonstrated that evaluation systems linked with increases in student achievement are based on standards of professional practice and multiple sources of evidence.

Now in its second year, the E3TL partnership has developed both "lessons learned" and resources. Tailoring these resources to meet local conditions often characterizes successful teacher evaluation and development efforts. Below, we highlight key insights and the tools that support them:

1. Building district-level competence is critical for high-quality teacher evaluation.

Educator training prepares and supports teachers for observation and evidence collection, acquaints them with the rubric, and empowers them with critical professional development designed to optimize their experience.

Stakeholder training ensures that all stakeholders have an understanding of their state regulations, professional teaching standards, and the evaluation process.

Evaluator training covers bias-free evidence collection, rubric analysis and scoring, and strategies for conducting professional conversations. Performance assessments throughout the training ensure that participants meet state requirements.

Featuring extensive practice in video scoring, **master scorer training** refines the

skills of evaluators by improving observation, evidence collection, and rating discrimination skills, and fosters a deep level of understanding of the standards, rubric and performance expectations for teachers. In building a district-based cadre of master scorers, the foundation is laid for sustainable district evaluator training. This training calibrates evaluators for inter-rater reliability in order to ensure accurate ratings.

2. New teacher evaluation and development systems must support effective teachers to serve learners with special needs.

A set of considerations has been developed for evaluators who observe teachers of English Language Learners or Students with Disabilities.

3. Successful implementation of a new teacher evaluation and development system is a step-by-step, iterative process focused on continuous improvement.

Launching a new system requires time, attention, focus, and planning. **"It's Elemental: A Quick Guide to Teacher Evaluation System Implementation"** was produced by AFT to support local districts in making the transition from design to real-world application.

4. In an effort to ensure secure, efficient, accessible, and shareable record-keeping, an electronic, bias-free evidence capture tool has been created.

Developed by AFT for its affiliates, **EvidencePRO, a free, stand-alone electronic evidence capture tool** provides evaluators with the means to record and score observation evidence on a laptop or tablet. The digital data is securely stored and can easily be shared with teachers. A webpage with an introductory video, FAQs, and guidance for downloading the **free** app can be found at www.evidencepro.org

5. A comprehensive electronic platform can support and integrate teacher talent development, evaluation efforts, video banks, observation evidence collection, schedules, and data for whole school communities.

Working with our supportive partners from **My Learning Plan (MLP),** AFT recognizes that centralized data management promotes integration, alignment, and efficient management of the teacher evaluation and development process is essential. Together we continue to build a management system to support the growing needs of participating districts, including the need for continuous evaluator skill development.

6. AFT and the 12 E3TL pilot districts are committed to mobilizing our resources to assist states, districts and schools to build and implement teacher evaluation and development systems.

How can we help your district? In the coming years, as we continue to refine the work of the E3TL partners, we can support your work with customizable resources, tested experience, and evidence-based guidance.