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A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE TEACHER IN EVERY CLASSROOM

**Creating Talent Development
Systems That Drive Instructional
Excellence**

March 2010

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ABOUT NEWSCHOOLS & THIS PUBLICATION

NewSchools Venture Fund is a national nonprofit that is working to transform public education through powerful ideas and passionate entrepreneurs so that all children – especially those in underserved communities – have the opportunity to succeed. NewSchools does this by supporting education entrepreneurs – a special breed of innovators who create new nonprofit and for-profit organizations that redefine our sense of what is possible in public education. Founded in 1998, NewSchools has since raised nearly \$150 million and invested in a portfolio of more than 30 entrepreneurial organizations. In each of our funds, we have focused our investments in key leverage areas where social entrepreneurs can have a meaningful impact on some of the toughest challenges facing public education. We take an active role with each venture in our portfolio to create healthy organizations that generate breakthrough results for the students they serve, and connect their work to the broader landscape of public education reform.

This publication was produced by consultant Julie Obbard, together with NewSchools team members Gwen Baker, Renuka Kher and Julie Mikuta. In addition, team members from the organizations profiled in this publication provided instrumental content knowledge through interviews and access to background materials. NewSchools would like to express its deep appreciation to Maia Heyck-Merlin, Sarah Coon and Sara Keenan from Achievement First, as well as Joseph Ferguson, Jeff Pestrak and Molly Eigen from Mastery Charter Schools for their time and energy in making this toolkit possible.

This publication is the latest installment in NewSchools' ongoing efforts to highlight the work of the entrepreneurial ventures we support and others who are pioneering new ways to dramatically improve public education. By enabling entrepreneurs to share their ideas, knowledge, and practices with one another and with the wider field, we hope to accelerate the improvement of public education for underserved students. We hope this case study and related toolkit will inform your organization's work.

To access a .zip file containing the raw source documents included in this toolkit that you may repurpose in your own organization, please visit <http://www.newschools.org/about/publications/talent-development>

For more publications like this one, see:

- *Practices from the Portfolio, Volume 1*
<http://www.newschools.org/about/publications/practices-from-the-portfolio-volume1>
- *Practices from the Portfolio, Volume 2*
<http://www.newschools.org/about/publications/practices-from-the-portfolio-volume2>

INTRODUCTION

Great teaching matters. In fact, an increasing body of evidence suggests that teacher quality is *the* single most important factor in determining student outcomes. Research has found that a student with an effective teacher for three years in a row will score 50 percentage points higher on achievement tests than a similar student who is assigned three ineffective teachers during that same period.¹ However, we know that excellent teachers are in scarce supply, particularly for low-income and minority students who so desperately need them. Research shows that the odds of a child being assigned highly effective teachers five years in a row are one in 17,000.² The reasons for this have been hotly debated for decades, but there is nearly universal agreement on one thing: our current education system does not set teachers up for success. A report by NewSchools venture The New Teacher Project (TNTP) entitled *The Widget Effect: Our National Failure to Acknowledge and Act on Differences in Teacher Effectiveness* found that teachers often do not receive the support they need. Evaluation systems fail to recognize differences in performance, and few teachers receive actionable feedback about how to improve their practice. With poor performance going unaddressed, and excellence rarely recognized, it's no wonder teaching quality is so uneven.

Fortunately, this critical area is receiving new attention from practitioners, philanthropists and policymakers. “Great teachers are the bulwark of America. They should be valued and they should be honored,” noted President Barack Obama in a recent speech. “In too many places, we have no good way of distinguishing good teachers from bad ones. ... Success should be judged by results.”³ Meanwhile, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation announced a new major initiative focused on teacher quality.⁴

As charter school management organizations (CMOs) and other school operators increase in size and scope, many are grappling with the growing need to develop and retain high-performing teachers and instructional leaders. This challenge demands a comprehensive and integrated talent development system that includes not just recruitment and selection of teachers that are most likely to be effective, but all of the activities required to ensure that current teachers improve, high performers are retained and working with the highest need students, and low performers are dismissed fairly and efficiently.

¹ Hanushek, E. A., Kain, J. F., O'Brien, D. M., & Rivkin, S. G. (2005, November). *The market for teacher quality*. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research. www.nctq.org/nctq/research/1112806467874.pdf

² Walsh, K. (2007, September). *If wishes were horses: The reality behind teacher quality findings*. Washington, DC: National Council on Teacher Quality. www.nctq.org/p/publications/docs/wishes_horses_20080316034426.pdf

³ http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-at-the-Department-of-Education

⁴ <http://www.gatesfoundation.org/annual-letter/Pages/2009-united-states-education.aspx>

PURPOSE & SCOPE OF THIS TOOLKIT

This case study and toolkit examines the talent development strategies that have been developed by Achievement First and Mastery Charter Schools – two high-performing CMOs in NewSchools Venture Fund’s portfolio – and are being shared in an effort to inform the work of other schools and school systems as they address this issue. The graphic below illustrates the key elements that should be part of a school’s comprehensive talent development system; it was adapted from frameworks created by The New Teacher Project (TNTP) and Achievement First.



Historically, much investment and emphasis has been placed on the “front end” of the talent development chain – recruitment, selection, placement and induction. To augment this coverage, this toolkit focuses on the “back end” elements – **evaluation, development, recognition, and promotion**. All of these activities should be embedded in a comprehensive, integrated system that includes clear and measurable performance expectations, ongoing reflection and feedback, data-driven decision making, and strong cross-functional collaboration in pursuit of commonly understood goals. Organizations will benefit from increased attention on these “back end” elements, as they strive to ensure that there is a great teacher in every classroom and a strong instructional support system in every school.

ABOUT THE FEATURED ORGANIZATIONS

Achievement First



Achievement First (AF) is a nonprofit charter school management organization that operates a growing network of high-performing, K-12 public schools in Connecticut and New York. AF was founded in 2003 by the leaders of Amistad Academy, a nationally acclaimed charter school in New Haven, CT.

Geography: New York and Connecticut
Grades Served: K-12
Number of Schools: 17
Teachers: 340+
Students Served: 4,600+

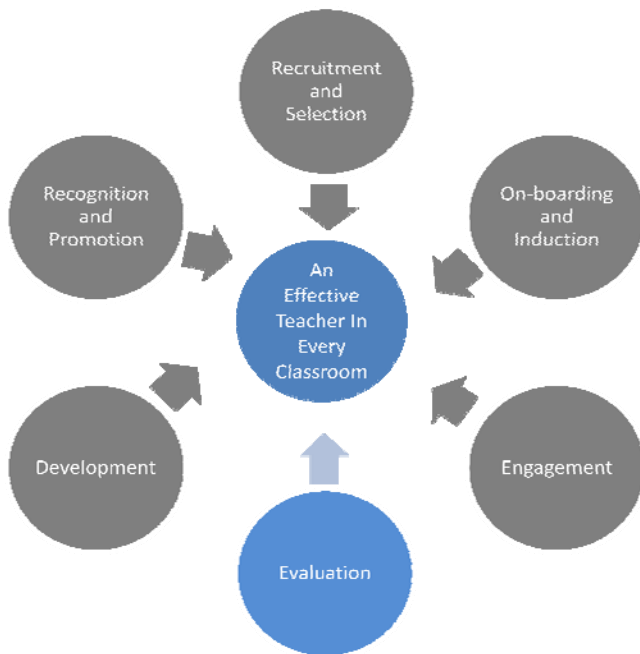
Mastery Charter Schools



Mastery Charter Schools, founded in 2001, is a growing network of college preparatory, middle-high schools that serves 1,750 neighborhood students throughout Philadelphia. Mastery operates new charter schools, as well as several “turnaround” schools for the School District of Philadelphia. Mastery combines a rigorous academic curriculum with a “sweat the small stuff” culture and a proactive attention to culture.

Geography: Philadelphia
Grades Served: 7-12
Number of Schools: 6
Teachers: 120+
Students Served: 2,500+

EVALUATION



Key Components of an Effective Evaluation System

Clear, measurable performance standards using multiple indicators

Consistent assessment of each teachers' strengths and weaknesses based on multiple sources of data, including classroom observations, lesson plans, and teacher self-assessments

Frequent, ongoing feedback aligned with performance standards

Training for evaluators

Research shows that evaluation and feedback are *the* most powerful levers for improving performance and increasing engagement in the workplace⁵, yet in schools and school systems, teacher evaluation is typically an area of significant underinvestment. *The Widget Effect* highlighted that classroom observations are infrequent, teachers rarely receive specific or meaningful feedback on ways to improve their practice, and nearly all teachers receive positive ratings despite clear differences in performance. To address this, CMOs and other education organizations have begun to invest much more heavily in comprehensive teacher evaluation systems that provide teachers with **meaningful, actionable feedback**. These systems include clear and consistent performance expectations built on a range of indicators – including not just student test scores but also the results of regular observations – together with both ongoing feedback and data systems that link performance evaluations with learning and development activities. These features allow teachers to receive targeted support aligned with the areas in which they need to develop.

Feedback drives performance more than any other learning and development tool and has the greatest impact on a person's intent to stay in their job.

Jean Martin, Corporate Leadership Council

Achievement First developed an evaluation system that encompasses all of these elements and is a central component of its overall talent development strategy. It informs all talent-related activities, including how potential candidates for teaching positions are evaluated, how performance goals and development activities are established, and how decisions about promotion and compensation are made. The evaluation process helps the Achievement First team monitor teacher and principal performance, build the capacity of instructional leaders to become strong evaluators and coaches, and flag performance issues so that dismissals (where appropriate) are not a surprise at the end of the year. The primary set of evaluation tools that Achievement First uses is called Performance Growth Plans (PGPs).

⁵ Jean Martin, Executive Director, Corporate Executive Board's Corporate Leadership Council (<https://clc.executiveboard.com/>)

Performance Growth Plans (PGPs)

Developed and implemented during the 2008-2009 school year, the PGP is a set of evaluation tools that were designed to support the evaluation of all team members, at both the school site and in the central office. The PGP encourages teachers to identify their own strengths and growth areas, but also gathers thoughtful written feedback from managers and supervisors, facilitates participation in a meaningful feedback conversation about performance, and supports the creation of ambitious, achievable development goals. PGPs evaluate performance against seven categories (see right) that are tied closely to organizational goals. The data collected from PGPs inform professional development planning as well as recruiting and hiring practices.

PGPs: Seven Categories of Evaluation

1. Student Achievement and Character Development
2. Core Instructional Excellence
3. Classroom Culture
4. Planning and Data Analysis
5. Student and Family Relationships
6. Personal Organization and Effectiveness
7. Core Values and Responsibilities

The PGP allows Achievement First staff to clearly communicate expectations for contract renewal and identify growth areas early in the school year. If a teacher receives a low PGP score, a “coach” – either an assistant principal, a dean or a grade-level lead – works with that teacher to develop a performance improvement plan (see the next section, “Development,” for more information) and monitors it closely. Teachers are informed about both their performance concerns, and the steps required for mitigating concerns, well in advance of the end of the school year, when new offer letters for the following year (issued to both new and returning teachers) are discussed.

Administering the PGP

The PGP is administered over the course of four months, from November to February. This process begins with principal evaluations in November, followed by teacher evaluations in January and February. The entire process is overseen by Achievement First’s Director of Evaluation and Organization Development. This person is responsible for preparing coaches to conduct evaluations and frequently communicating with those evaluators to ensure that expectations are clear. This collaborative approach helped principals feel engaged with and supportive of the process. “We don’t want evaluations to be a surprise,” says the current director, Sarah Coon. “The biggest thing is letting people know early where they stand, and being really clear about performance issues.”



The PGP is administered as follows:

- Individuals complete a self-evaluation of their own performance;
- Coaches complete a performance summary for each teacher. Returning teachers and leaders also complete a one-page reflection on progress toward their goals since the last PGP;
- Teachers participate in a feedback conversation with their coaches within two weeks of completing the self-evaluation; the conversation covers goal-setting, how and when progress will be assessed, and what support is needed to reach the goal.

It is important to note that the review of progress and goals identified in the PGP continues beyond the formal process, with teachers revisiting their performance goals and progress with their coach year-round.

Developing Evaluators

The process and tools were designed to be used by a range of staff members – assistant principals, deans and grade-level leads – that evaluate and coach teachers. By engaging a variety of faculty in the process, Achievement First creates leadership opportunities for high-potential teachers to take on new roles and further develop their leadership and management skills. This also reduces the demand on principals, who in some other schools must evaluate each teacher in a school – no small task as a school grows to scale.

All evaluators receive thorough training on the process, including the overall evaluation cycle, how PGPs fit into the cycle, the process for completing the PGP document, and best practices for both written feedback and feedback conversations. A number of tools were developed to guide evaluators through the process, including training slides, evaluation forms, sample emails, optional reflection and goal-setting documents, and video of successful PGP conversations. (For more about the selection and preparation of coaches/evaluators, see page 11; for copies of many of these tools, see the full toolkit beginning on page 22.)

Data collected from the PGP informs Achievement First's development activities, including coaching and performance improvement, which are described in the next section.

Advice and Lessons Learned

As an organization that places high value on reflection and continuous improvement, Achievement First acknowledges that their evaluation system is a work in progress, and they have identified several key lessons learned to date:

- ✓ **Get school leaders engaged in the design:** During the first year of implementation, Coon went to every school to walk the coaches through the PGPs, and created a master schedule to help schools sequence the different steps of the process. "I sat down with every principal to get their input on what it should and should not include," she says. Soliciting input from principals on the tool continues to be a key component of building buy-in and support from school sites.
- ✓ **Don't let too much time elapse between the self-evaluation and the PGP conversation:** For some teachers, there was a big gap between when they completed their self-evaluations and the feedback conversation. Since teachers change a lot over a few months, it's important to have the PGP conversation within two weeks of the self-evaluation.
- ✓ **Conduct instructional leader PGPs first:** Evaluators found that they were able to provide much more effective feedback after going through the process themselves, and having a good feedback conversation modeled for them.
- ✓ **Conduct evaluations more than once a year:** The central office found that conducting evaluations only once a year was not enough. Starting in 2009, they added a second reflection and goal-setting cycle for returning teachers at the beginning of the year.

Toolkit Highlights: Evaluation

The toolkit at the end of this document includes many resources related to evaluation. These include:

- Professional Growth Plans (PGP): Coach Training Toolkit (Achievement First)
- Professional Growth Plans (PGP): Evaluation Forms for Teachers and Leaders (Achievement First)
- Professional Growth Plans (PGP): Sample PGPs for Low and High Performers (Achievement First)

For the full list of tools, see pages 20-21.

DEVELOPMENT



Key Components of a Development Process

Clear, measurable professional development goals linked to performance standards

Differentiated support based on individual teacher performance challenges

Consistent coaching and feedback for all teachers, not just low performers

Development activities must be directly tied to evaluation so that teachers receive customized support that meets their individual performance challenges; development is a dynamic process that adjusts as teachers' professional goals and growth areas evolve. In most schools and school management organizations, professional development is too often a "one-size-fits-all" model that does not account for individual differences in teacher performance. It is rare that feedback about teachers' performance is used to inform the content and structure of professional development activities, which are often very disconnected from teacher evaluation; as a result, most teachers do not experience professional development as a meaningful way to improve their practice. Research from *The Widget Effect* confirms this: less than half of surveyed teachers who had development areas identified on their most recent evaluations received useful support to improve in those areas.

Coaching has done a lot for relationships and engagement.

Sarah Keenan, Director of Leadership Development, Achievement First

Achievement First ties its coaching model and activities directly to teacher performance data gathered via the PGP process. As noted in the previous section, the PGP requires that teachers set specific learning goals and they receive targeted support to address those goals and growth areas. This section describes Achievement First's coaching program, as well as its Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs), which have been designed specifically to provide additional support to struggling teachers.

Developmental Coaching

At Achievement First, every teacher – regardless of experience or ability – is matched with a coach. "We're trying to shift away from just focusing on struggling teachers," says Sara Keenan, Director of Leadership Development. After a teacher and coach are matched, coaches enter a data-gathering phase to collect information about teachers' practice from a number of sources, including classroom observations, lesson plan reviews, and direct conversations. After that, teachers and coaches meet during structured sessions using a Teacher Learning Plan that prioritizes 1-2 development areas. Achievement First strongly believes

that effective coaching limits the number of development goals, and uses multiple, differentiated strategies to support teachers “A really good coach uses multiple strategies, such as modeling, feedback and observation” says Keenan.

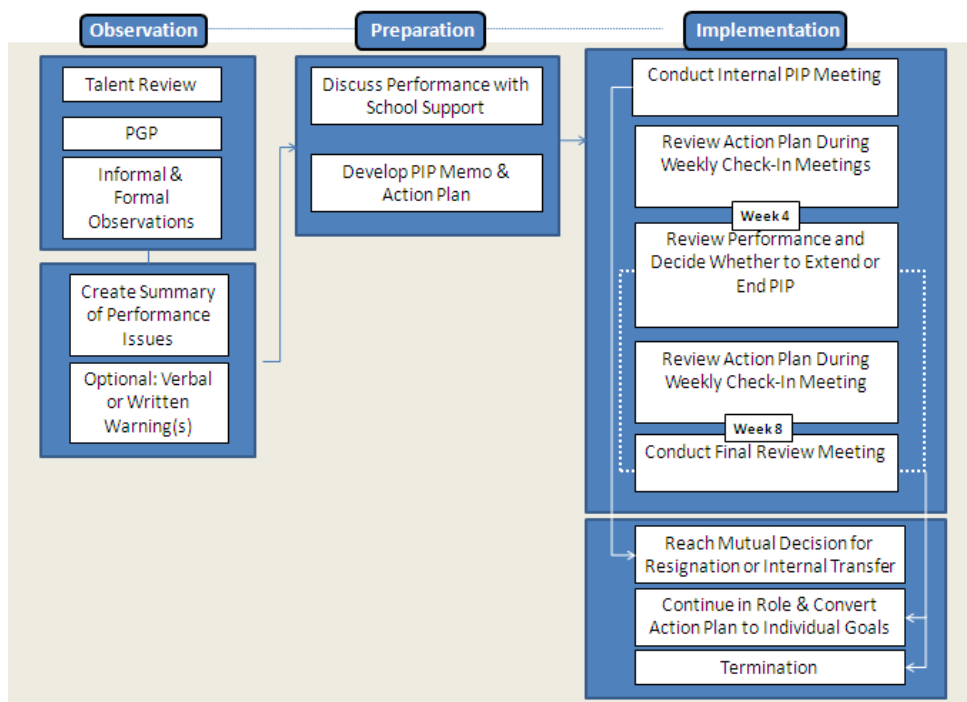
Selection and Development of Coaches

Each school selects its own coaches from amongst the principal, assistant superintendent, academic dean, and grade-level leads. In order to be selected as a coach, they must have a proven track record of instructional excellence, relationship-building and communication skills. Each coach works with 6-10 teachers over the course of the year.

Because this is a critical role, Achievement First invests heavily in the selection and development of coaches. Coaches participate in workshops three times a year that address topics such as creating focused coaching plans, modeling effective instructional practice, coaching veteran teachers, managing time, and staying organized. Workshops are conducted in a small-group format and participants engage in collaborative problem-solving related to a specific learning goal (e.g., How can I be more supportive and less intimidating in my feedback to new teachers while still being direct about their many areas for growth? How can I become a stronger co-planner with my teachers in order to improve their lesson planning skills?). Workshops are led by coaches, who present a challenge they are struggling with and include a 10-15 minute video excerpt of a coaching session. Participants provide feedback and specific suggestions. Principals and academic deans also participate in professional development workshops with their cohort (principals and deans at other Achievement First schools).

Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs): Additional Support for Struggling Teachers

There are times when additional support beyond coaching is required. Achievement First uses Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) to provide such tailored support to struggling teachers. Although performance improvement begins before this official process, at the first sign of need, PIPs are used when principals believe there is a need to bring about a drastic change in employee performance – and when they believe that the teacher has the capacity to make the change. The PIP process grows out of the PGP process described in the prior section (see left-hand column of figure below), and the groundwork is laid through a discussion and an action plan; implementation of the process includes regular check-in meetings that progress toward one of three outcomes: ending the PIP process and converting its goals into regular developmental goals in the same role, resignation or a transfer to another position, or termination.



Advice and Lessons Learned

Reflections on the coaching program reveal a number of important lessons learned and advice for other organizations:

- ✓ **Trust is an essential element:** Establishing trust between the evaluator and teachers is essential to the success of the PGP process, so coaches need targeted training focused on how to be an effective coach, such as skills related to developing evaluations, setting goals, giving feedback and general communications.
- ✓ **Make sure that coaches are not overloaded:** Good coaches need significant time to observe and build trusting relationships with the team members they are coaching. This requires them to limit the number of teachers they work with.
- ✓ **Coaches should use multiple teaching strategies:** Coaching sessions are much more effective if coaches use a variety of modalities to strengthen instructional practice, such as modeling, observation, and feedback.
- ✓ **Don't just focus on struggling teachers:** Even mid- and high-performing teachers can benefit from targeted support, and schools tend to see greater overall student achievement gains when they focus on supporting *all* teachers, not just those who are struggling.

Toolkit Highlights: Development

The toolkit at the end of this document includes many resources related to development. These include:

- Coach Role Description and Workshop Agendas (Achievement First)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP): Performance Improvement Tools Guide (Achievement First)
- Teacher Learning Plan Template and Samples (Achievement First)

For the full list of tools, see pages 20-21.

RECOGNITION AND PROMOTION



Key Components of Recognition and Promotion

Career pathways that provide high performers with multiple options for advancement, both within and outside of the classroom (e.g. master teacher, grade-level lead or chair, principal)

Leadership development programs designed to provide potential leaders with key management and communications skills

Compensation systems that use multiple performance indicators and data points to reward teachers based on performance and student achievement gains where possible

Research by The New Teacher Project and others has found that high-performing teachers are rarely recognized for their contributions – and that the absence of recognition and advancement opportunities is a common reason for teacher dissatisfaction and ultimately, attrition due to loss of motivation and engagement.⁶ This problem is compounded by the fact that ambitious teachers who want to continue to grow professionally have limited career pathways, forcing some of the most talented teachers to switch schools or leave education altogether. Finally, teacher promotion is most often determined by tenure, not by performance – a fact that can be highly discouraging for high-performing teachers with fewer years in the classroom.

Achievement First and Mastery Charter Schools have responded to these challenges by creating systems that recognize and reward high performers regardless of their tenure, and that include a variety of career advancement opportunities. Achievement First's Leadership Fellows Program, Career Conversations and Management Tune-Ups, and Mastery's performance-based promotion and compensation system, are all profiled here. It is important to emphasize that these systems were not created in isolation, but are closely aligned with each organization's overall talent development systems. Both organizations monitor and develop effective teachers and other instructional leaders through the use of consistent definitions of effectiveness and clear performance expectations, and link those to a well-defined career ladder.

Leadership Fellows Program

Achievement First designed its Leadership Fellows program as a way to recognize high-performing teachers while also proactively building a robust leadership pipeline. The program develops and recognizes the best teachers in the Achievement First network of urban charter schools, focusing on great teachers who want to stay in the classroom as well as those who want to become deans or principals. To apply for participation in the program, Leadership Fellows must have at least two years of teaching experience and demonstrated leadership ability, the latter as measured by PGPs and informal assessments, and must be nominated by a principal. Fellows selected by the Leadership Development team are invited to apply to the program, alongside select competitive candidates from outside of Achievement First's network of schools.

⁶ <http://widgeteffect.org/>

The program is a year-long series of professional learning experiences that include skill-building workshops focused on time management, building staff engagement, problem-solving, and other topics, alongside team-building and a range of opportunities to interact with and shadow different types of school leaders. Participants analyze their strengths and growth areas through a 360-degree feedback process, and use that information to guide their exploration of different career pathways.

Career Conversations

As a way to recognize, reward, and retain high-performing teachers, Achievement First also encourages school administrators to conduct “career conversations” with teachers. These conversations allow managers to explore what employees like and don’t like about their jobs, and what might make them remain in the profession at Achievement First.

These conversations also help solidify the manager/employee relationship and build employee loyalty. “Sometimes just having a manager who listens and is willing to work with them to discover solutions is what team members really need,” explains Maia Heyck-Merlin, Achievement First’s Chief Talent Officer. Career conversations usually take place in the late fall during a teacher’s annual performance evaluation – it is critical that they take place early in the year so that principals can proactively address teacher dissatisfaction and increase the odds of retaining high performers.

Common Career Conversation Questions:

What do you like about your work?

Am I fully using your talents?

What can I do to make your job more satisfying and rewarding?

What motivates you to excel in your position?

What do you want to learn this year?

How can I support your career goals?

Management Tune-Ups

In fall 2009, Achievement First piloted a new leadership development resource called *Management Tune-ups*, a series of internally developed optional workshops designed to help existing leaders such as principals, deans and central managers refine their management skills. Workshop topics include: Personal Effectiveness for Managers, Delegation, Interviewing Skills, and Having Difficult Conversations.

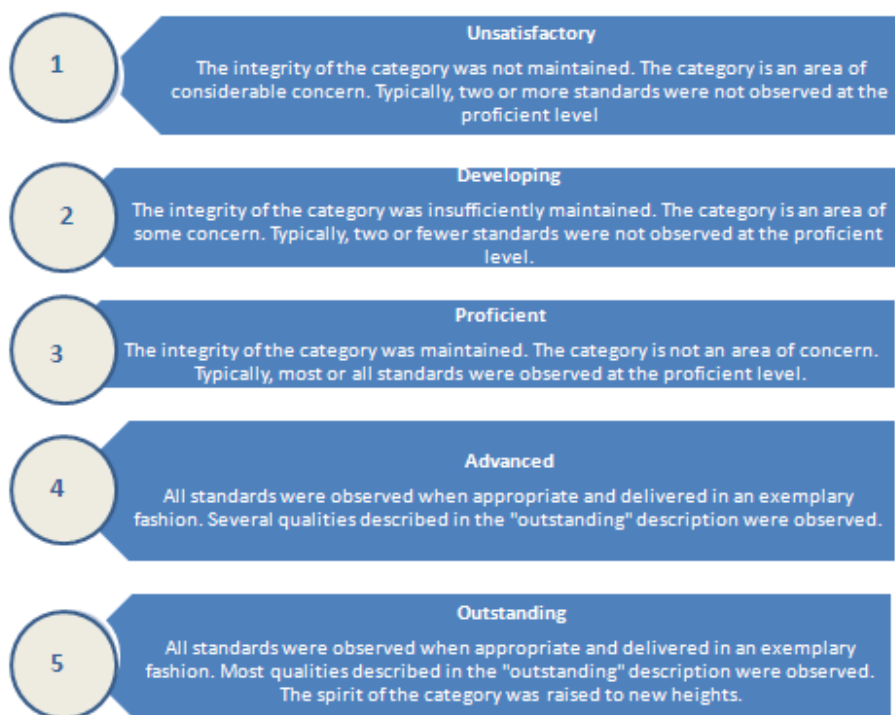
Mastery Charter Schools: Performance-Based Compensation and Promotion

While it may not be the single most important determinant of retention, compensation obviously matters to teachers – in large part because it acts as a meaningful signal of the extent to which teachers are recognized and respected as professionals.

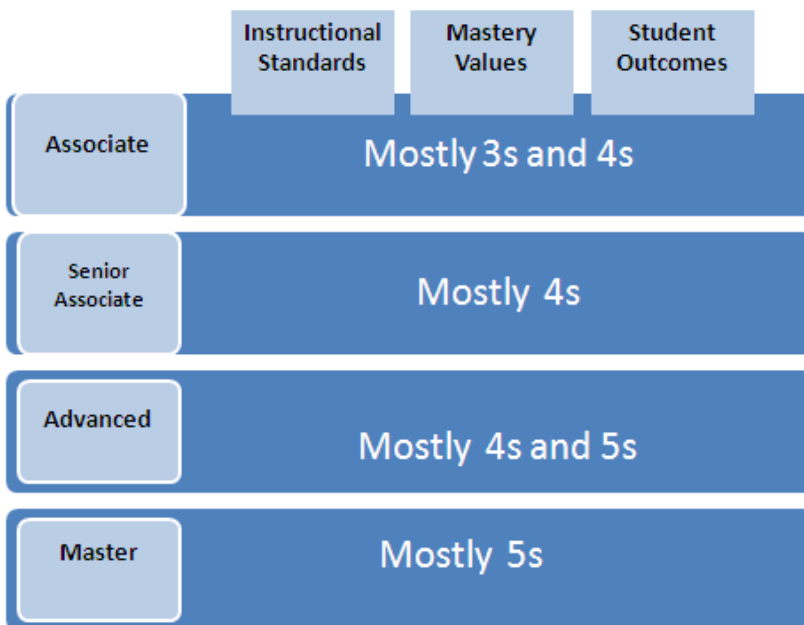
Mastery Charter Schools has introduced a performance-based promotion and compensation model designed to reward high-quality teaching, support instruction that drives student achievement, attract and retain excellent teachers, and make contract renewal and promotion a more transparent process. The system uses explicit teacher performance standards and an in-depth evaluation process that includes goal-setting, ongoing formal and informal observations (15-20 per year), feedback, and coaching designed to move teachers through a structured career pathway that includes a published salary scale linked to ratings. The school year begins with a goal-setting meeting in which teachers and their coaches establish specific, measurable performance goals for the year, and create a development plan for meeting these goals.

When hired, teachers are assigned to one of four experienced-based teacher categories – Associate, Senior Associate, Advanced, and Master Teacher – with most starting as Associate or Senior Associate. In order to advance to the next category, teachers must meet specific performance expectations, as defined by Mastery’s Performance Standards, which include instructional standards, Mastery values, and student outcomes. Each of these is measured using a five-point scale which is detailed on the following page.

Category Rating System



At end of the school year, teachers are given an overall rating in each of these categories, based on cumulative observations, coach feedback, and student performance results. In order for a teacher to advance to the next classification on the career ladder, they must receive the following overall ratings:



If a teacher does not meet performance expectations, they stay at the same level and do not receive a raise beyond a cost of living allowance (COLA). If a teacher consistently fails to meet expectations, they are either not offered a new contract, or may be offered a contract at a lower level. A teacher may also jump a level (e.g. Associate to Advanced) by consistently outperforming expectations.

These ratings are then used to guide feedback discussions between managers and teachers about development needs, and the steps that need to be taken in order to advance to the next level. As Mastery's Chief Academic Officer Jeff Pestrak explains, there is no set formula that determines advancement or dismissal decisions. "It's a conversation that uses the data to make informed decisions," Pestrak notes, adding that ratings should never be a surprise, because teachers are constantly getting real-time feedback about their performance, including a formal mid-year evaluation in January and February, based on observation and assessment data gathered to date. The decision-making process about advancement takes place during April and May, ending with Year-End Evaluation and Contract Renewal for the following school year.

Advice and Lessons Learned

Findings from the pilot year of Mastery's performance-based compensation and promotion program revealed that teachers performed at higher levels and therefore advanced more rapidly than in previous years. Average teacher salaries rose from \$51,000 to \$55,000, and the percentage of teachers in the Advanced and Master categories more than doubled. Additional findings include:

- ✓ **Over-communicate to your staff:** Establish guidelines and clear expectations for promotion and share them early.
- ✓ **Coach your principals:** Provide support and training on having difficult conversations and effective communication.
- ✓ **Quality HR oversight is critical:** Human resources policies should be in place to ensure the promotion process is fair, and that good grievance/appeals processes are in place.
- ✓ **Allow time for proper evaluation:** Make sure that mid-year and final evaluation periods are spaced far enough apart to allow teachers to demonstrate improvement based on feedback.

Toolkit Highlights: Recognition and Promotion

The toolkit at the end of this document includes many resources related to recognition and promotion. These include:

- Leadership Fellows Program: Overview and Activities (Achievement First)
- Management Tune-ups Email Announcement (Achievement First)
- Teacher Development and Advancement System (Mastery Charter Schools)

For the full list of tools, see pages 20-21.

INVESTING IN TALENT

As the practices in this toolkit highlight, talent development is a complex process that requires a significant investment of money, time, energy, and infrastructure to be carried out effectively. While these are real challenges, the upside of making an organizational commitment to talent development is significant. Not only can hundreds of thousands of dollars be saved by reducing turnover costs and maximizing team member output and engagement, bolstering teacher effectiveness will lead to breakthrough results in student learning. A great teacher in every classroom means that millions more children will have access to an excellent education, and to the promising future they deserve. To conclude this toolkit, key elements that influence the effectiveness of Achievement First and Mastery’s talent systems are outlined below.

Organization Design

In order to develop and implement all of the processes and activities described in the previous pages, organizations need strong systems and structures at the central office or “network” level to support and sustain talent development efforts. At Achievement First in particular, this has meant the creation of a robust talent development team with extensive management and operations experience whose exclusive focus is on cultivating team members throughout the organization.

Achievement First’s Talent Team Vision

Each AF classroom and school will have awesomely talented educators working hard to make academic and character gains with their scholars. These educators, and their supporting team members in operations and network roles, will be excited to come to work each day because they will feel connected to our mission. Our talented Team & Family members will choose to remain at AF because we will be an environment that contains multiple career and learning opportunities and regularly recognizes excellence. As we build our team, we will invest wisely in infrastructure for the future and share broadly with our friends in education reform.

Key positions include:

Role	Responsibilities Include:
Chief Talent Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oversees recruitment, development and evaluation of school leaders, teachers and operational team members
Assistant Superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Select, support, coach, train, and supervise principals ▪ Help to supervise the development and modification of Achievement First’s curriculum and assessments ▪ Ensure that all schools have world class operational support ▪ Provide organizational development support to the AF Central staff and the schools to ensure that schools are getting top-quality service from AF Central
Director, School Leader and Teacher Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lead school leader recruitment, selection, and cultivation of candidates ▪ Strategically deploy the right people to events, matriculate and train principals ▪ Lead search for emerging markets ▪ Communicate with principals and school leaders ▪ Manage 2-3 Teacher Recruiters ▪ Maintain relationships with top candidates
Director, Talent Strategy & Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinate all recruitment and talent goal setting and planning processes ▪ Ensure we are being data-driven in all choices ▪ Oversee and liaise for all marketing efforts ▪ Study and articulate what makes our best people truly our best ▪ Develop a systematic talent identification approach ▪ Build back office infrastructure systems to support growth

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinate AF Central hiring processes and selection tool support ▪ Manage relationships with external talent sources
<p>Director, Engagement & Evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design and execute evaluation process for AF Central and schools ▪ Lead AF Central Management and Leadership Training ▪ Lead organizational health and network support surveys ▪ Lead school evaluation efforts ▪ Ensure we have a real-time understanding of the talent landscape (create, develop, execute Talent Reviews, systematic succession planning) ▪ Strategic compensation (development of compensation philosophy, communication, articulation, and design) ▪ Champion engagement of our team
<p>Director, Leadership Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lead all aspects of Leadership Fellows program ▪ Develop instructional excellence ▪ Lead our competency development process and definition of excellence ▪ Maintain a list of needs and design additional training modules for schools as needed ▪ Help Team Recruit by maintaining a list of great external PD sessions we can offer ▪ Develop and support additional teacher leader opportunities ▪ Coordinate, development and manage syllabus for Dean, Principal, and Principal in Residence trainings ▪ Consider a culturally consistent teaching excellence award (research, design, implement, reflect)

Building a strong team is an important step, but is only one piece of the puzzle. For organizations to truly build and sustain a highly effective teacher workforce, they must make talent development a top organizational priority by building buy-in and support from senior leadership, central office staff and principals. One way Achievement First signals the importance of this work is by creating an organizational structure that places investment in people at the center. The Chief Talent Officer (CTO) is a member of the Senior Leadership team, and reports directly to the Co-CEOs, both of whom serve as champions for the work that the CTO and her “talent team” are doing. The direct line of communication between the CTO and Co-CEOs facilitates the integration of talent development efforts into all aspects of the organization and makes it easier to get input and support for key talent initiatives. For example, Dacia Toll, the co-CEO in charge of the organization’s annual strategic planning process, has made talent development a core objective by which *all* team members – not just those directly focused on this work – are evaluated.

Strong communication also flows between senior leadership and directors responsible for the implementation of particular talent development programs. The talent team and senior leadership team meet monthly for “Talent Brat Pack” meetings to provide updates on talent development efforts and solicit input and support where needed. Topics for these meetings include topics debriefing coach and grade level chair training, discussing the selection criteria and activities for school leader candidates, and reflecting on key lessons learned and areas for improvement for the PGP process.

In addition, there is a strong linkage between the central office and school sites, which helps ensure that program goals and expectations are well-communicated, and that principals and teachers have a voice in the design and implementation of talent development activities, which strengthens program design and engagement among school-based team members. For example, after Achievement First completed one full cycle of their Performance Growth Plan (PGP) evaluation process, they gathered both survey data and informal feedback from teachers and principals about what worked, what didn’t work, and how to improve the process. Central team members then met to reflect on the feedback, establish goals for the following year, and identify process improvements based on the data they collected. The Assistant Superintendent, also a member of the senior leadership team, is a critical link between the central office and schools. In this role, he or she is manages a portfolio of 3-6 schools and is responsible for selecting, training and developing principals and ensuring that schools have the operational support required be successful. Because Assistant Superintendents spend most of their time with principals, they have an in-depth understanding of school-level needs and challenges, which they can communicate directly with central team members.

Data-Driven Decision Making

Another important success factor in talent development is an ongoing commitment to reflection and data-driven decision making – a practice that both Achievement First and Mastery take very seriously. Both of these organizations regularly convene staff to reflect on data as a way of evaluating the efficacy of programmatic decisions. For example, every year Achievement First conducts a “Talent Review” to ensure that principals and Assistant Superintendents are systematically managing the talent of their schools, and that the central office is taking appropriate action to develop and retain top talent. Assistant Superintendents work with their principals to review every member of their team, and complete a Talent Review Worksheet, which the Director of Leadership Development uses to create “Talent Snapshots” of each school. This information is used by principals to spur action at the school level, and is also aggregated across the organization to identify strengths and gaps in the talent pool across the organization. Team Talent identifies the top 20% of talent network-wide to regularly review the actions they are taking to develop and retain these individuals. They also use this data to systematically track the development of high-potential leaders.

We needed to have a real-time understanding of our talent for our network as a whole, and we needed our principals to think about their talent almost like their budgets.

Maia Heyck-Merlin, Chief Talent Officer,
Achievement First

Toolkit Highlights: Building a Talent Development Team

The toolkit at the end of this document includes many resources related to building a talent development system and team. These include:

- Comprehensive Talent Strategy Framework (The New Teacher Project)
- Talent Team: Key Roles and Responsibilities (Achievement First)
- Talent Team: Basic Information (Achievement First)
- Talent Team Job Descriptions (Achievement First)
- Talent Team: Talent Brat Pack Meeting Agendas (Achievement First)
- Talent Review Process Documents (Achievement First)

For the full list of tools, see pages 20-21.

FULL TOOLKIT

Evaluation

- Professional Growth Plans (PGP): Coach Training Toolkit – Overview, Written Feedback Guidelines, Written Feedback Best Practices, and Conversation and Goal Setting (Achievement First)
- Professional Growth Plans (PGP): School Leader PGP Evaluation Form (Achievement First)
- Professional Growth Plans (PGP): Teacher PGP Evaluation Form (Achievement First)
- Professional Growth Plans (PGP): Goal-Setting Document (Achievement First)
- Professional Growth Plans (PGP): Sample PGP – Low Performer (Achievement First)
- Professional Growth Plans (PGP): Sample PGP – High Performer (Achievement First)

Development

- Coach Role Description (Achievement First)
- Coach Workshop Agenda – July (Achievement First)
- Coach Workshop Agenda – November (Achievement First)
- Video Analysis Protocol for Coaches (Achievement First)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP): Performance Improvement Tools Guide (Achievement First)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP): Action Plan Template (Achievement First)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP): Final Review Template (Achievement First)
- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP): Initial Memo Template (Achievement First)
- Teacher Learning Plan Template (Achievement First)
- Teaching Learning Plan Sample – Classroom Routines (Achievement First)
- Teaching Learning Plan Sample – Rigorous Questions (Achievement First)

Recognition and Promotion

- Leadership Fellows Program: Overview (Achievement First)
- Leadership Fellows Program: Sample 360° Feedback Report (Achievement First)
- Leadership Fellows Program: Activity – Leadership Stories (Achievement First)
- Leadership Fellows Program: Activity – Leadership Dilemmas (Achievement First)
- Leadership Fellows Program: Challenge Activity (Achievement First)
- Management Tune-ups Email Announcement (Achievement First)
- Instructional Standards (Mastery Charter Schools)
- Teacher Development and Advancement System (Mastery Charter Schools)
- Teacher Advancement Status (Mastery Charter Schools)

Investing in Talent

Accelerating Student Achievement Through a Comprehensive Talent Development Strategy (The New Teacher Project)

Talent Team: Key Roles and Responsibilities (Achievement First)

Talent Team: Basic Information (Achievement First)

Talent Team Job Description: Assistant Superintendent (Achievement First)

Talent Team Job Description: Director of Human Capital Management (Achievement First)

Talent Team Job Description: Director of Talent Strategy (Achievement First)

Talent Team Job Description: Director of Talent Management and Engagement (Achievement First)

Talent Team Job Description: Director of Leadership Development (Achievement First)

Talent Team: Talent Brat Pack Meeting Agenda, November 2008 (Achievement First)

Talent Team: Talent Brat Pack Meeting Agenda, December 2008 (Achievement First)

Talent Review: Overview (Achievement First)

Talent Review Template (Achievement First)

Talent Snapshot (Achievement First)



Professional Growth Plans Overview 2008-2009

This year, AF will provide Professional Growth Plans to every school and central office team. PGPs are created with the valuable input of your colleagues and are designed to be a simple process for obtaining rich feedback for every person in our network.

Purpose: In order to achieve our ambitious goals, Achievement First is committed to investing in our most important resource – our talented people. Research indicates that feedback drives performance more than any other learning and development tool and has the biggest impact on a person’s intent to stay in their job. As a result, we are committed to providing consistent, aligned, on-going feedback throughout the network.

Result: The talent development team will compile all the data to provide helpful summaries for schools. This data will also be used to make correlations with the organizational health survey and student achievement data. It will also inform future trainings and provide valuable selection data.

Key Components:

- Self evaluation
- Manager Evaluation
- Feedback conversation
- Goal-Setting
- Ongoing check-ins on goals

Areas of Evaluation:

- Achievement First: Student Achievement and Character Development
- The Essentials of Effective Teaching: Core Instructional Excellence
- The Essentials of Effective Teaching: Classroom Culture
- The Cycle of Highly Effective Teaching: Planning and Data Analysis
- The Center of the Cycle: Student and Family Relationships
- The Center of the Cycle: Personal Organization and Effectiveness
- The Center of the Cycle: Core Values and Responsibilities

Sample Cycle II PGP Timeline:

Nov 12 – 20	School leaders PGP training
Nov 12 – 20	PGP materials received
Nov 21 – Dec 5	Teacher Self-Evaluations
Dec 5 – Jan 1	Manager Evaluations
Jan 1- 30	PGP conversations
Jan 30	All PGPs complete and sent to PGP@achievementfirst.org

Overall Evaluation Timeline:

Nov 6 – Jan 30	PGP - Teachers (Cycle I Nov-Dec, Cycle II Dec-Jan)
Dec 1 – Jan 30	PGP – Special education
Dec 4 – Dec 16	Organization health survey and school leadership survey
Jan 1 – Feb 27	PGP – School leaders (Principals and Deans) and Operations
April	Teacher check-in and salary communication

PGP Written Feedback Guidelines 2008-2009

Ratings:

4 - Mastery: Teacher consistently exceeds expectations and is an exemplar for this standard.

3 - Proficient: Teacher consistently meets expectations and is solid for this standard.

2 - In Progress: Teacher meets this standard some or most of the time but is not yet consistently solid.

1 - Does not meet: Teacher consistently does not meet expectations for this standard. This is an area for teacher growth; the teacher should work with supervisors and/or colleagues to improve in this area.

N/A – Not applicable: Teacher is not responsible for meeting this standard. If N/A, leave the rating blank in this section.

Specific, Evidence Based Comments:

Comments help team members to internalize their behaviors and are most effective when they are very specific and ideally when related to student achievement data. Comments are required at the end of each section and should include both areas of strength and growth areas. Include comments for indicators where the self- and manager evaluations are not the same.

Adding Additional Indicators:

The PGP was designed to include indicators for the most essential elements of a team member's position, however, space has been provided at the end of each section for you to add indicators that you feel are critical for evaluation.

Goal Setting:

Goal setting will be completed during the PGP meeting with your team member. Again, the more specific, the better; "parent involvement" is not an appropriate goal because it is not specific enough to provide your team member with a roadmap to get there. A better goal would be "I will call 5 families a week with a positive message about their scholar. All families will receive at least one positive call a month". Work through the goal setting document during the PGP feedback conversation.

PGP Written Feedback Best Practices 2008-2009

Professional growth plans are an opportunity for self-reflection, performance review and goal setting. Thoughtful written feedback is the first step in the PGP cycle and provides team members with clear evidence of their strengths and areas for growth.

What have you learned are best practices for providing written feedback?

Observe and Pre-Write:

1. Gather information over time

Feedback should not be based on one observation from one person, but rather from multiple interactions and observations from more than one person. Review the PGP form to identify key areas for evaluation. Then, review observation notes and gather input from the pre-identified resources.

2. Sketch out the big takeaways

Before rating the team member on individual PGP indicators, think about the greatest strengths and areas of improvement that you want to convey to the team member. This is not your PGP summary, but it is a helpful way to get started and to ensure that the team member receives the intended message.

3. Discuss big takeaways with your school leadership team

Meet with your team to quickly discuss the big strengths and weaknesses of each member of your portfolio. This will help with calibration across your school leaders.

General Best Practices:

1. Use specific examples.

In discussing strengths and areas for growth, use clear examples of past behavior to illustrate your points.

2. Communicate progress against goals

Team members should have a clear sense of whether or not they are meeting expectations with regard to their goals. Commentary can range from speed and efficiency in reaching goals, quality of the achievement, ability to draw on outside resources, and/or comparison to past goal achievement.

When Highlighting Strengths:

1. Showcase areas of achievement

Too often when receiving feedback, people focus on their areas for improvement and make light of their strengths. Make sure that strengths gain attention and become a list of actions to continue.

2. Compliments bear repeating

Regardless of whether or not a success has been celebrated in the past, it is always worth reminding people of the impact and importance of their contributions.

3. Sometimes areas of growth are strengths

If major progress has been made in improving an area of weakness, feel free to celebrate it, even if that area may still be an ongoing concern. Sincere efforts and progress should be applauded.

When Writing About Areas for Growth:

1. Identify CLEAR areas for growth and improvement

Regardless of overall performance, every person has areas of growth. Be specific about growth areas and provide evidence to support the feedback. Objective evidence helps the person receiving feedback to better understand and change the behavior.

2. Offer suggestions for improvement

Once an area for growth is identified, offer potential hypotheses and solutions for applying corrective action. Suggestions—not decisions—should be a springboard for constructive dialogue and discovering the root causes. The team leader should always act as a key resource in addressing such situations. For example, you might have a staff member who has missed several deadlines. After reviewing the history that led up to these events, you might jointly conclude that the issue is one of poor organization systems (such as systems for creating action plans). You would then brainstorm possible solutions. To be a resource, you might offer to review the action plan for the first few weeks.

3. Get it all out there

Many of us find it hard to communicate negative feedback, fearing the ramifications of making explicit criticisms. When we do not put all of our cards on the table, we hamper that team member in their efforts to succeed. That said, nothing in the PGP process should be a surprise, and the overall process should not just be a laundry list of concerns.

PGP Conversation and Goal Setting 2008-2009

How do you want your teachers to FEEL after the feedback conversation?

What do you want your teachers to DO after the conversation?

Your relationship with your team members and the PGP conversation are the most important part of the evaluation cycle. Please use this step-by-step process for the conversation and also the tips for giving effective feedback.

Meeting Goal

Ultimately, the goal of the conversation—whether with a high-performer or a low-performer, is to help them move to the next level. Focus your conversation on delving into the root causes of strong and weak behavior, and see if you can identify patterns.

Prior to Meeting:

1. Schedule 60 to 90 minutes with each team member.
2. Send copy of blank evaluation to team member and request they evaluate themselves prior to meeting. Send the PGP to teachers as early as possible so they know how they are being assessed.
3. Review and organize key results, evidence, and notes. Gather input from resources.
4. Complete the written PGP, including ratings and comments.
5. Write the summary. Identify the team member's greatest strengths and areas for improvement. Consider the 20% of growth areas that will make 80% of the difference.



6. Do not complete the next steps/goal setting part of the summary. This part will be completed collaboratively during the meeting.

During Meeting:

1. Review each section
 - Give your team member the opportunity to present their thoughts first by walking you through their self PGP. That way, they've had the opportunity to paint the fullest picture of their performance and you can add your commentary with full-information. You could also go section by section.
 - Discuss your observations of performance in each focus area and the rating that you have assigned using clear evidence and specific examples. Make sure to highlight positives as important "keep doing" areas as well as areas for improvement.
 - Discuss discrepancies in your rating vs. the team member's ratings. If check-ins are occurring regularly, discrepancies should be minimal.
2. Review summary
 - Discuss the summary of strengths and weaknesses with your team member. Discuss any additions or changes based on the feedback conversation. Make sure that your team member really understands the heart of each issue.
3. Set goals:
 - Discuss and write next steps to build on strengths and to leverage those strengths for the school.
 - Discuss and write specific goals to be reached in this area of growth.
 - Determine how goals will be measured, support needed, and progress benchmarks.
4. Feedback for yourself:
 - Make sure that you take the time to solicit your staff member for thoughts on your own leadership. This is a valuable opportunity to learn about how you can be an effective resource in supporting your team member.

After Meeting:

1. Make any changes to the PGP and type the goals on the last page.
2. Save the final PGP as:

"08PGP_School Name_Team Member First Name_Last Name"

Example: **0809PGP_Endavor_John_Doe**
3. Save all PGPs for the school in a folder titled **0809PGP_School Name**



4. Zip file and email to PGP@achievementfirst.org.

Directions to Zip a folder:

- Create the folder and name it using the format above
- Right click on the folder
- Choose "Send To"
- Choose "Compressed (zip) folder"

5. Keep the signed hard copy on file at your school.

What next steps will you take with your team to prepare for the PGPs?

What and how will you communicate with your teachers about the PGP?

How will your school continue to use the PGP throughout the year?



**Achievement First
Professional Growth Plan
School Leaders
2009-2010**

School Leader

Coach

Leadership Role

School

Date: Self-Evaluation Submission

Date: PGP Conversation

Purpose

In order to achieve our ambitious goals, Achievement First is committed to investing in our most important resource – our talented people. Professional Growth Plans are one step in providing consistent, aligned, on-going feedback and training throughout the network.

Directions for School Leaders

- ✓ Click on the header at the top of this page and change "School Leader" to your name.
- ✓ For your self-appraisal, please rate your performance this school year. Include your rating and comments in the WHITE sections. Mark each rating with a capital letter "X". Thoughtfully reflecting on your performance and completing this document will take approximately 2 hours.
- ✓ When completed, email your PGP to your coach at the date specified in the timeline. Your coach will add his/her appraisal directly underneath yours, in the YELLOW sections, thus creating a written dialogue.
- ✓ For each indicator, select and mark the rating that most accurately describes your performance during the 2009-2010 school year. You may select 1, 2, 3, or 4 only. You may not assign a fraction (e.g. 3.2, 1.5 etc.)
- ✓ Cite specific evidence to support your rating. Whenever possible, tie the evidence to student achievement data. Please note that you do not need to include examples or comments for each rating. Comments are required at the end of each section and should focus on areas of greatest strength and growth.
- ✓ Principals and deans all use the same School Leader PGP. If you are a dean and an indicator does not apply to your role, do not rate yourself on that indicator. Principals should rate themselves on all indicators.
- ✓ Do not complete the "Performance Summary and Goal Setting" section on the last page. Your coach will complete the summary and then discuss it with you during the PGP feedback conversation. The summary can be edited based on that discussion. You and your coach will work together to complete the goal setting section during your meeting. It will be helpful to start thinking about your goals before the meeting.
- ✓ The PGP feedback conversation is an opportunity to discuss both your own self-ratings and your coach's ratings of your performance. It is an opportunity to identify strengths, to identify areas for improvement, and to set goals for your learning and development. This meeting will occur within 2 weeks of the date you submit your PGP self-evaluation to your coach.
- ✓ After the PGP feedback conversation and any revisions to the PGP, coaches will email electronic versions of the completed PGP to: PGP@achievementfirst.org.

Ratings

4 - Mastery: School Leader consistently exceeds expectations and is an exemplar for this standard. Note: It is rare for a school leader to receive a rating of 4 and even the very best will only have a few 4s on their entire PGP.

3 - Proficient: School Leader consistently meets expectations and is solid for this standard. Note: Very strong school leaders will have mostly 3s on their PGP.

2 - In Progress: School Leader meets this standard some or most of the time but is not yet consistently solid.

1 - Does not meet: School Leader consistently does not meet expectations for this standard. This is an area for growth; the school leader should work with supervisors and/or colleagues to improve in this area.

N/A – Not applicable: School Leader is not responsible for meeting this standard or the manager does not have enough data to evaluate the standard. If not applicable, the school leader and the manager will both leave the rating blank.

School Leader Name

Data Sources for Evaluating School Leader Success

Self-evaluations and manager evaluations are grounded in data. Please review supporting documents before completing your PGP. When possible, include specific data to support your ratings in the comment section. The following is a list of data sources that will help you to complete your PGP.

Student Achievement

- ✓ State Assessments
- ✓ BHAGS
- ✓ IAs
- ✓ AF Report Card

School Leadership Survey and Organization Health Survey Responses (sample)

- ✓ How well does your principal articulate clear priorities/goals and provide strategic direction for the school?
- ✓ How well does your school leader exemplify core values?
- ✓ How present is your school leader in the school (eg. classrooms, hallways and other areas)?
- ✓ How well does your school leader recognize and appreciate talented staff?
- ✓ In the last week, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work from a colleague or leader.
- ✓ My school uses data strategically to drive student achievement.

Core Documents

- ✓ AF-ization Plan
- ✓ Staff Handbook/Systems
- ✓ Roles and Responsibilities
- ✓ School Culture Plan

External Evaluations

- ✓ Evaluations from state
- ✓ Evaluations from district

Co-Observation Days

- ✓ Observation notes and debriefs

Informal Reviews

- ✓ Observation notes and debriefs
- ✓ Principal inter-visitations
- ✓ AF-wide events

Section I. Achievement First: Student Achievement & Character Development

Please add your school BHAGs and then evaluate your progress toward goals, using student data to support your ratings.

Focus Area	Indicators	Specific Student Data to Support Rating	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Student Achievement (Meets or exceeds rigorous standards on AF report card. Achievement rivals that of other top urban and top suburban districts)	BHAG 1:	• :				
	BHAG 2:	•				
	BHAG 3:	•				
	BHAG 4:	•				
	BHAG 5:	•				
Student Achievement Improvement	Students show progress toward significant growth in all subjects.	•				
Student Character Development	Students are Respectful: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treat teachers like platinum Are nice to each other; never tease, laugh at, or put down others Patient and raise their hands Keep their desk, classroom and school clean 					
	Students show Enthusiasm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow all directions the first time SLANT and participate actively in class Always bring a positive attitude 					
	Students exemplify Achievement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absolutely do their best on all assignments Work is always neat and complete Homework completion percentage is high 					
	Students model Citizenship: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take responsibility for their actions Tell the truth at all times Celebrates the achievement of others and support teammates 					
	Students model Hard Work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Come to school every day and are never late Have all necessary materials and are wearing uniform properly at all times Don't complain about working hard (and even celebrate it) Student show grit and perseverance 					
	Students are bought into and love their school.					
	Students are bought into and excited about going to college.					
	Students are bought into and excited about going to college.					
Attendance	Students have at least 97% attendance.	•				
	Teachers have at least 97% attendance.	•				

School Leader comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:

Manager comments:

Section II. Instructional Expertise and Leadership

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Goal Setting	Sets clear, measurable, motivating BHAGs at the beginning of the year for every grade/subject and every class.				
	Ensures team is bought into the goals and feels motivated by and accountable to them.				
	Keeps goals front and center and regularly assesses student progress toward goals.				
Professional Development Leader	Accurately identifies and prioritizes professional development needs through careful analysis of student data, teacher growth areas, and school needs.				
	Maximizes the impact of formal PD time and ensures that all sessions are thoroughly and thoughtfully planned, engaging and actionable with effective use of "repeatedly do" activities (e.g. achievement meetings, video analysis, planning, etc).				
Content Knowledge	Knows essential content, standards, and highly effective teaching strategies in at least two subject areas and can effectively coach teachers using this knowledge.				
Data Analysis	Rigorously collects and analyzes data on student and school performance; guides teachers in effectively using the data to inform instruction.				
	Structures and runs highly effective data days and achievement meetings.				
Program and Curriculum Development	Thinks strategically about designing the school schedule, making sure time allocations match school priorities and that every minute is maximized to meet clear achievement goals.				
	Engages thoughtfully in school-site and network-wide curriculum and program design questions and positively contributes to the evolution of best practice at AF.				
Unit and Lesson Planning	Effectively plans both full units and individual lessons with teachers, guiding them through the entire backwards planning process.				
	Ensures that teachers think with the end goals in mind and develop manageable, bite-sized aims that flow in a logical sequence.				
Modeling Great Teaching	Models top-quality instruction and planning in the class that he/she teaches daily and/or at other times when he/she is teaching.				
Interventions	Ensures that there are systematic interventions happening whenever students are struggling. Monitors the quality and effectiveness of these interventions to ensure that they are rigorous, disciplined, and high-impact. Evaluates students on a regular cycle.				
Regular, Meaningful Instructional Feedback and Coaching	Has a keen "instructional eye" and is able to identify the strengths and shortcomings of specific lessons and to prioritize the "Big Rocks" that would most improve the lesson.				
	Regularly provides clear, targeted, actionable feedback to teachers on areas of strength and specific suggestions for improvement in such a way that the teacher receives the feedback well and is able to translate it into improved instruction.				
	Employs the Essentials of Effective Instruction as a basis for instructional feedback and is thus able to give feedback that is applicable to future instruction (and not simply limited to that lesson).				
	Regularly meets with their coaching portfolio of teachers and provides effective support to lead teachers to mastery of clear learning goals				
Great Teaching Culture	Creates a "buzz" in the building about great instruction and creates an atmosphere where teachers are always pursuing great lessons and great results for students.				
School Leader comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:					
Manager comments:					

Section III. School Culture and Character Development

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Relentless Around a Common Picture	Has an incredibly clear vision of what a great school culture is and regularly articulates this vision to students and staff.				
	Persistently, insistently, and consistently reinforces the school's high expectations for student behavior with all students all the time.				
Systems Around School Culture	Has clearly articulated systems for how the school will function (attendance, homework, behavior/SDs, recognition, consequences, etc.).				
	Ensures that every staff member understands and uses systems consistently and effectively.				
Student Investment	Invests students in Achievement First's goals and core values; ensures that all students care deeply about their AF community, about their own academic performance, about graduating college, and about becoming the next generation of leaders in their communities.				
	Seeks opportunities to make the learning relevant to students; preaches core AF messages in 1-on-1, class/advisory, grade level and school-wide venues.				
Character Development	Develops a culture and a program that intentionally teaches and reinforces the REACH values and essential character strengths as a part of teachable moments and dedicated class, advisory, and/or grade/school celebration time.				
J-Factor for Students and Families	Actively develops a school culture where students find joy in learning and are curious, enthusiastic, and engaged.				
	Ensures that their AF school is a place where students want to be and where it is "cool" to be smart; makes sure students and parents have fun along the journey up the mountain.				
Student Relationships	Creates a culture in which teachers build strong and lasting relationships with students, especially Kids We Love the Most.				
	Clearly communicates in words and actions his/her personal commitment and love for every child; builds personal relationships with a number of students and inspires these students to work hard and model good character.				
Parent Relationships	Creates systems for effective communication between families and the school around student behavior and academic performance.				
	Engages families in support of the school's goals.				
	Creates a culture and an expectation so that teachers reach out to parents and enlist their proactive support in the dream – and the hard work – of getting all our scholars to college.				
School Leader comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:					
Manager comments:					

Section IV. Talent Leadership

Note: Not all talent leadership indicators apply to all deans. If an indicator does not apply to you, please skip it.

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Performance Management	Ensures that each team member has clear, measurable, outcome-oriented performance goals for the year and a mechanism for tracking progress against those goals.				
	Designates strategic checkpoints for all staff members (both formal and informal) to measure progress against goals and identify ongoing challenges.				
	Ensures that every staff member has a formal mid-year professional growth plan.				
	Ensures that there is a system in place to keep accurate, up-to-date records of progress or lack of progress of all staff.				
	Engages aggressively when staff members are struggling and employs a transparent process to help them improve.				
	Removes persistent low performers.				
	Works hard to recognize, stretch, retain, and career plan for top performers.				
Recruiting and Selecting	Has a strong eye for talent and a track record of hiring outstanding teachers who share the AF core values and beliefs and consistently deliver excellent instruction and support for all our students.				
	Does "whatever it takes" to recruit top talent, participates actively in Team Recruit events, is very responsive to candidates, and inspires people to work for AF.				
Management of Coaching	Ensures that every person in the school has a clearly defined coach with whom they meet regularly.				
	Develops other coaches' skills through conducting co-observations, providing feedback, and /or facilitating a coach meeting.				
Distributed Leadership	Recruits and develops a strong leadership team that jointly leads and manages the school.				
Leadership Pipeline	Identifies high-potential leaders among staff, cultivates leadership skills of these staff members through coaching and stretch opportunities.				
	Actively seeks to identify and prepare future leaders for their own school and for other AF schools.				
Talent Retention	90% of teachers who did or would have received an offer letter return to school.				

School Leader comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:

Manager comments:

Section V. Vision and Inspiration

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Keeps the Mission Front and Center	Actively seeks ways to reinforce the mission with staff and inspire them to act on the mission every single day.				
	Celebrates successes and uses the mission to spur improvement; exudes urgency, excellence, and optimism so that they become baked into staff culture.				
	Uses the mission as a litmus test for school-based decisions and to provide focus for the team when prioritizing what will have the greatest impact on students.				
	Walks the talk; aligns own behavior with the explicit mission and vision of the school; instills staff with a feeling that they are contributing to something greater than themselves.				
	Leader is an engaging public speaker with strong presence when addressing both adults and students.				
J-Factor	Cultivates joy by fostering relationships between staff members.				
	Models joy by being the one of the most positive people in the building.				
Recognition, Relationships, and Air Cover	Ensures staff know they are cared for and valued; Compliments individual staff members and the team as a whole constantly on specific strengths and contributions they have made to the mission, both in public and in private.				
	Regularly checks in with staff; listens and has a keen sense for how everyone on the team is doing.				
	Builds strong relationships with staff, takes care of them and backs them up when they need air cover.				
Network Leadership	Models investment in the larger Achievement First mission and vision; works to support the success of all the Achievement First schools.				
	Supports common decisions and works to foster a trusting relationship across the broader AF family.				
	Acts as a thought leader for the network by sharing solutions to complex problems with other school leaders and positively contributing to the evolution of the AF model.				
School Leader comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:					
Manager comments:					

Section VI. Management

Note: Not all management indicators apply to all deans. If an indicator does not apply to you, please skip it.

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Creative Problem Solving	Constantly identifies areas of school or team weakness and finds ways to establish or revise processes to address those weaknesses.				
	Relentlessly pushes through brick walls to find new solutions to complex problems, or to seek best practices from other AF schools.				
	Creatively and calmly handles unanticipated issues or ambiguity.				
Clear Roles and Responsibilities	Develops a strong leadership team that jointly leads and manages the school; distributes tasks in ways that maximize strengths of individual staff members or provide opportunities for growth.				
	Embraces and effectively manages a model of distributed leadership. Defines clear roles, responsibilities, and outcomes so all staff are clear and invested in what they "own" and on how their performance will be evaluated; Resists the impulse to "do it on my own," freeing time to tackle the most critical issues.				
Public Accountability and Transparency	Clearly, publicly outlines timelines and goals for major initiatives; schedules "review days" to discuss progress on major initiatives and problem solve around closing gaps.				
Differentiated Approach	Recognizes that all staff are not equal in their skills and experience; identifies which staff members need more hands-on work and which need less; identifies which projects require more intervention and which need less.				
Purposeful Team and Individual Meetings	Maximizes meeting time so it is a productive, positive experience for team members.				
	Sends out agendas in advance and clearly communicates the purpose and outcomes of the meeting, including action items, decisions reached, and open questions.				
Fiscal Responsibility	Works with the school Director of Operations (and subsequently, the teachers) to ensure that the school operates within its budget and is a model of fiscal responsibility.				
School Leader comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:					
Manager comments:					

Section VII. Personal Organization & Effectiveness

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Reflection Constant Learning	Reflects on his or her actions and adjusts behavior and systems accordingly.				
	Regularly asks for feedback; models humility and admits mistakes; seeks out thought partners.				
Organization and Self- Management	Has a robust personal organization system that ensures all tasks or "To Do" items are captured, prioritized, and ultimately accomplished.				
	Plans each day and week to ensure that top priorities are addressed and that he/she models excellent follow-through by accomplishing tasks efficiently and on time.				
	Doesn't miss meetings or deadlines (or proactively reschedules when necessary).				
	Breaks down priorities and large projects to make them manageable.				
Communi- cation	Ensures religious distribution of a monthly staff calendar, weekly staff memo, and at least a monthly parent memo.				
	Communicates key messages, events, and procedures multiple times through different vehicles (land, sea, and air) to make sure that everyone is on the same page.				
Planning	Develops a school-wide calendar before the beginning of each school year that can be easily referenced by all staff and incorporates all major milestones, yearly tactics, and monthly priorities.				
	Is a master of short-term, medium, and long-term planning, and regularly communicates plans with staff, students, families, and AF Central.				
Timeliness / Responsive- ness	Returns calls and emails to staff within 48 hours, even if to say "I need more time"; meets deadlines for assignments, including PGPs, master calendars, etc.				
	Arrives on time and ready to work at all meetings.				
Technology Skills	Proficient in Microsoft Office programs (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Internet Explorer) and in typing. Uses an effective folder system for documents and emails.				
School Leader comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:					
Manager comments:					

Section VIII. Core Values & Responsibilities

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Results without Excuses or Shortcuts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works hard every day to deliver on the urgent promise to provide an outstanding education for all students, an education that will help them graduate from college, enhance their lives, become leaders in their communities, and enjoy real freedom and citizenship. Owens shortcomings when falling short, admits mistakes, and does not seek to blame external forces; is not satisfied with "better" results that still leave students behind their suburban, private school, or international peers; works to level the playing field so that students defy all the excuses and enjoy the full privileges of an outstanding education. 				
People Matter - Mightily	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Puts extraordinary resources into finding, developing, and retaining great people. Creates work environments that are exceptionally professional, collegial, and stimulating and where everyone has sufficient support, a real voice, and the tools they need to be successful; recognizes and honors personal, family, and community commitments and models the importance of personal priorities. Does not look for individual martyrs or super-humans, but gives our teachers and staff the tools and support they will need – as a team – to accomplish our ambitious goals for students. 				
Excellence is a Habit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strives to set the industry standard in all aspects of what he or she does; relentlessly pursues excellence and does not settle for "so-so" from students or from him or herself. Recognizes the importance of being a disciplined, making clear plans, establishing tangible goals, and having documented replicable systems in order to sustain excellence over time. Does not lurch from one educational fad or new idea to another, but understands the importance of continuous, thoughtful improvement and always strive to do better than before. Carves out time for reflection, research and development, and knowledge documentation in order to make excellence more predictable; ensures excellence in every aspect of his or her work. 				
Sweat the Small Stuff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Believes that countless unseen or often overlooked details are the difference between mediocre and magnificent. Pays attention to even the smallest details to ensure smooth, predictable, and effective outcomes. Is motivated by the fact that students pay the price when the school fails to get the details right. 				
Team and Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views school not as an island, but as an integral part of the larger AF team and family; shares in AF's collective success while celebrating the individual strengths of each person and school. Cares about others, treats others with respect, and works hard to preserve a sense of family; remains positive, even when responsibilities are taxing. Collaborates and shares best practices, never letting competition overshadow the ultimate goal of excellence for every student and school; respects and celebrates differences, knowing that we are stronger as a team because of them; pitches in when teammates are struggling. 				
First Things First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizes that the needs of students always come before the interests of adults. 				
Whatever It Takes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not take "no" for an answer easily; finds a way; does whatever it takes to help students be successful along their journey as they climb the mountain to college. Gives 100 percent every day and goes the extra mile to make the difference in the lives of our students. Understands that "whatever it takes" is a team mandate, with different individuals taking the lead at different times to ensure that all goals are accomplished. 				

School Leader Name



Many Minds, One Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works together with parents and supporters, striving to ensure that AF's efforts are part of a larger effort to improve the communities in which we work. • Understands that we cannot do this alone, and collaborates with others around the country working to make a difference in the lives of children by learning from their best practices and sharing effective strategies 				
Everything With Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values integrity and always models it for students. • Does not merely post the REACH values – Respect, Enthusiasm, Achievement, Citizenship, and Hard Work – but makes sure that they drive words and actions. • Considers the impact his or her actions will have on others and works carefully to be transparent and fair; admits mistakes and works to make them right. • Is humble even when successful and understands that he or she always has more to learn. 				
School Leader comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:					
Manager comments:					

Teacher Name

Performance Summary and Goal Setting 2009-2010



Key Strengths	Next Steps to build this strength and to leverage this strength for the school

Based on the key areas of growth identified in your PGP, what are the specific GOALS you hope to reach by the end of the school year?	WHEN and HOW will we assess progress toward your goals?	What SUPPORT do you need in order to reach your goals?

(Optional) What are your PERSONAL PRIORITIES?	HOW will you maintain your priorities?	What SUPPORT do you need?



**Achievement First
Professional Growth Plan
Teachers
2009-2010**

Teacher

Coach

Grade and/or Subject

School

Date: Self-Evaluation Submission

Date: PGP Conversation

Purpose

In order to achieve our ambitious goals, Achievement First is committed to investing in our most important resource – our talented people. Professional Growth Plans are one step in providing consistent, aligned, on-going feedback and training throughout the network.

Directions for Teachers

- ✓ Click on the header at the top of this page and change "Teacher Name" to your name.
- ✓ For your self-appraisal, please rate your performance this school year. Include your rating and comments in the WHITE sections. Mark each rating with a capital letter "X". Thoughtfully reflecting on your performance and completing this document will take approximately 2 hours.
- ✓ When completed, email your PGP to your coach. Your coach will add his/her appraisal directly underneath yours, in the YELLOW sections, thus creating a written dialogue.
- ✓ For each indicator, select and mark the rating that most accurately describes your performance during the 2009-2010 school year. You may select 1, 2, 3, or 4 only. You may not assign a fraction (e.g. 3.2, 1.5 etc.) for the specific performance factors.
- ✓ Cite specific evidence to support your rating. Whenever possible, tie the evidence to student achievement data. Please note that you do not need to include examples or comments for each rating. Comments are required at the end of each section and should focus on (1) areas of greatest strength and growth and (2) "foundational areas" if you are a new teacher (foundational areas are those shaded in gray).
- ✓ Do not complete the "Performance Summary and Goal Setting" section on the last page. Your school leader will complete the summary and then discuss it with you during the PGP feedback conversation. The summary can be edited based on that discussion. You and your coach will work together to complete the goal setting section during your meeting. It will be helpful to start thinking about your goals before the meeting.
- ✓ The PGP feedback conversation is an opportunity to discuss both your own self-ratings and your coach's ratings of your performance. It is an opportunity to identify strengths, to identify areas for improvement, and to set goals for your learning and development. This meeting will occur within 2 weeks of the date you submit your PGP self-evaluation to your coach.
- ✓ After the PGP feedback conversation and any revisions to the PGP, principals will create one file for all teachers and leaders in the school and will email electronic versions of the completed PGP to: PGP@achievementfirst.org.

Ratings

4 - Mastery: Teacher consistently exceeds expectations and is an exemplar for this standard. Note: It is rare for a team member to receive a rating of 4 and even the very best teachers will only have a few 4s on their entire PGP.

3 - Proficient: Teacher consistently meets expectations and is solid for this standard. Note Very strong teachers will have mostly 3s on their PGP.

2 - In Progress: Teacher meets this standard some or most of the time but is not yet consistently solid.

1 - Does not meet: Teacher consistently does not meet expectations for this standard. This is an area for teacher growth; the teacher should work with their coach and their colleagues to improve in this area.

N/A – Not applicable: Teacher is not responsible for meeting this standard or the coach does not have enough data to evaluate the standard. If not applicable, the teacher and the coach will both leave the rating blank.

Teacher Name _____



Section I. Achievement First: Student Achievement & Character Development

Please add your school BHAGs and then evaluate your progress toward goals, using student data to support your ratings.

Focus Area	Indicators	Specific Student Data to Support Rating	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Student Achievement	BHAG 1:	•				
	BHAG 2:	•				
	BHAG 3:	•				
Student Strength of Character	Students are Respectful: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat teachers like platinum • Nice; never tease, laugh at, or put down others • Patient and raise their hands • Keep their desk, classroom and school clean 					
	Students show Enthusiasm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow all directions the first time • SLANT and participate actively in class • Always bring a positive attitude 					
	Students exemplify Achievement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absolutely do their best on all assignments • Work is always neat and complete 					
	Students model Citizenship: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take responsibility for their actions • Tell the truth at all times • Celebrates the achievement of others and support teammates 					
	Students model Hard Work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Come to school every day and are never late • Have all necessary materials and are wearing uniform properly at all times • Act like a college student today 					
Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:						
Coach comments:						

Section II. The Essentials of Effective Teaching: Core Instructional Excellence

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Great Aims and Student Mastery of Aims	Consistently uses rigorous, bite-sized, measurable, standards-based AIMS to drive instruction; writes AIMS on the board and reviews them with scholars.				
	Systematically assesses every student's mastery of the aim(s) at the end of each lesson and diagnoses areas of student misunderstanding (usually exit ticket).				
Content Knowledge and Strategy	Demonstrates strong content knowledge; all information conveyed to students is factually accurate.				
	Consistently uses the most effective and efficient strategies to guide students to mastery.				
	Moves students briskly from one part of the agenda to the next; there is a palpable sense of urgency and purpose in the room.				
Modeling and Guided Practice	Consistently delivers a well-planned and efficient mini-lesson (think aloud, explicit modeling, heavily guided practice, etc)				
	The mini lesson is captured in a visual anchor so students can reference it during independent practice.				
	Leads students through guided practice with declining scaffolding so students eventually provide both the answers and the thought process.				
	Regularly checks for understanding during guided practice so that students transition to independent practice when ready.				
Sustained, Successful Independent Practice	Designs independent practice so that students have ample, successful "at bats" to practice the AIM (at least 50% of each lesson).				
	Moves around the classroom constantly during independent practice to assess mastery and provide individual help.				
Rigor	Consistently includes a high ratio of teacher to student activity with students doing most of the "heavy lifting" of work and explaining their thinking.				
	Plans his/her questions in advance with a range of both low and high level questioning and regularly stretches questions.				
	Accepts only high quality student responses; doesn't allow students to "opt-out" because teacher cycle backs to students who didn't answer.				
	Posts examples of top-quality work for reference and celebrates great student work.				
Student Engagement	Insists and motivates so that 100% of students are on task and at least 80% of hands are in the air.				
	Uses high-engagement strategies (e.g. rapid fire questioning, non-verbal responses, etc) to ensure that all students are accountable for engagement; limits use of strategies that engage only one student at a time.				
Cumulative Review	As part of the lesson and homework routine, students get fast, fun opportunities to systematically review and practice skills that they have already mastered.				
Differentiation	Works to ensure that the needs of every student are met, providing extra support, enrichment, or variation of work.				
Assessment	Gives regular assessments (tests, quizzes, etc.); assigns homework every night and collects, grades and returns assignments on a regular basis. Each student receives regular, detailed and individualized feedback about their academic work.				
Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:					
Coach comments:					

Section III. The Essentials of Effective Teaching: Classroom Culture

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
High Expectations, Clear Routines	Sets and reinforces clear expectations and routines so that 100 percent of students are safe, on task and follow direction instantly.				
	Sweats the small stuff (SLANT, no call outs, no laughing at other's mistakes) and insists students <i>Do it Again</i> if not great.				
Joy Factor	The class is a fun, joyful place where kids are enthusiastic and excited about learning.				
Positive-Correction Ratio	Uses <i>Positive Framing</i> to correct behavior and narrate class activity; there is a high ratio of positive to corrective comments.				
	Students are nice and respectful to each other, and the teacher is nice and respectful to the students.				
Students Own It	Students are given the responsibility, tools, and strategies to fix problems they have or created. The teacher resists the temptation to be the sole problem-solver; students who make mistakes must own and fix them.				
Teachable Character Moments	Uses key moments in class to explicitly talk about, celebrate, and reinforce character skills; these moments flow naturally from the lesson and are quick and high-impact.				
	Strategically picks examples, texts, and activities that, when appropriate, reinforce key messages (e.g. going to college, REACH values, etc.).				
Classroom Space	The classroom space purposefully reinforces the school values and culture. There are obvious posted examples of both outstanding academics and character. The space is bright and inviting; it shows museum-like attention to detail and problems are swiftly addressed.				
School Culture Leader	Focuses on school-wide discipline and addresses student behaviors when they come up regardless of whether the student is "yours" or not.				
School Culture Systems	Embraces and effectively uses school culture systems (e.g. scholar dollars, transitions, classroom removal, dismissal, etc); thoughtfully problem-solves adjustments to school culture systems with team members.				
	Uses incentives appropriately to encourage and reinforce student effort and cooperation; sees incentives as a tool, not the core management technique.				
Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:					
Coach comments:					

Section IV. The Cycle of Highly Effective Teaching: Planning & Data Analysis

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
BHAGS	Teacher sets measurable, ambitious, yet attainable BHAGS for the year and for each IA cycle.				
	Makes students aware of the BHAGs and invests students in class and individual goals.				
Standards and Scope and Sequence	Deeply knows the standards and the scope and sequence (for own grade/subject and the grades one year before and one year after) and knows how standards are assessed.				
Year Planning	Creates a long-term plan that breaks the year into units with clear dates.				
Unit Planning	Designs rigorous, end-of-unit assessments that effectively measure mastery of standards and include both high and low level questions.				
	Designs sequences of aims that build on prerequisite skills; correctly anticipates the amount of time necessary for student to master each aim.				
Lesson Planning	Has a thorough, written, daily lesson plan based on the essentials of effective instruction; uses or includes all relevant elements of appropriate lesson planning templates.				
Daily and Weekly Data Analysis	Effectively uses data from exit slips, quizzes, and informal assessments to plan interventions and adjust future aims.				
	Has a clear and accessible system for tracking daily and weekly student data.				
IA Data Analysis	Reviews previous data-driven plan (e.g., from six weeks prior) to determine in detail how effective each part (cumulative review, re-teaching, intervention groups, new standards) of that data-driven plan had been.				
	Creates thoughtful data-driven plan each IA cycle that diagnoses why students did or did not master standards; develops specific remedies for whole-class re-teach and review, and develops targeted and differentiated student interventions.				
Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:					
Coach comments:					

Teacher Name



Section V. The Center of the Cycle: Student & Family Relationships

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Effective Student Relationships	Students understand unambiguously that the teacher cares about them and their progress.				
	Develops specific, effective strategies to teach and support KWLMs; regularly checks in with KWLMs and works school-wide, class, and students-specific systems.				
	Helps all students set clear academic and character goals.				
	Systematically returns throughout the year to academic and character goals and has students reflect and problem-solve based on progress toward the goals.				
	Puts in the extra effort outside of class to build relationships (e.g. lunches with scholars, special events).				
Effective Family Relationships	Works actively to build relationships with families and respects family members' role as partners.				
	Parents know about BHAGs for the class and specific goals for their child.				
	Regularly communicates both success and challenges and tracks communication with families.				
Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:					
Coach comments:					

Teacher Name _____



Section VI. The Center of the Cycle: Personal Organization & Effectiveness

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Reflection Constant Learning	Constantly reflects on successes and areas of growth around all areas of teaching; seeks to improve performance; is eager to get feedback and incorporates feedback in a positive, non-defensive way.				
Organization and Self- Management	Has a system for capturing and checking action items and uses them to prioritize work appropriately and minimize stress.				
	Maintains accurate and clear attendance, homework and grade book records on the student information system.				
	Is on-time for meetings; completes and turns in assignments on-time.				
	Has exemplary attendance and timeliness.				
Communi- cation	Effectively communicates with school leaders and fellow staff in order to positively problem-solve and advocate for the school's agenda.				
Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:					
Coach comments:					

Section VII. The Center of the Cycle: Core Values & Responsibilities

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Results without Excuses or Shortcuts	Works hard every day to deliver on the urgent promise to provide an outstanding education for all students; owns shortcomings and does not seek to blame external forces.				
Team and Family	Cares about others and treats everyone with respect, and work hard to preserve a sense of family. Has fun with team and celebrates differences. Collaborates and shares best practices; pitches in when teammates are struggling.				
People Matter - Mightily	Honors his or her own personal, family and community commitments and those of others. Contributes to an environment that is exceptionally professional, collegial stimulating and supportive.				
Excellence is a Habit	Strives to set the standard in all everything he/she does. Relentlessly pursues excellence and does not settle for "so-so" from students or self.				
Sweat the Small Stuff	Pays attention to even the smallest details to ensure smooth, predictable, and effective outcomes in everything he or she does.				
First Things First	Recognizes that the needs of students always come before adults and prioritizes students first.				
Whatever it Takes	Is persistent, insistent, and deliberate in his or her actions; gives 100% every day and goes the extra mile to make the difference in the lives of our students.				
Many Minds, One Mission	Sees self as a partner in a national effort to improve the communities in which we live and work; eager to learn best practices from other high-performing schools.				
Everything with Integrity	Values integrity and models it for students; does not merely post the REACH values but allows them to drive actions and words; is humble, honest, and admits mistakes.				
Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:					
Coach comments:					

Teacher Name

Performance Summary and Goal Setting 2009-2010



Key Strengths	Next Steps to build this strength and to leverage this strength for the school

Based on the key areas of growth identified in your PGP, what are the specific GOALS you hope to reach by the end of the school year?	WHEN and HOW will we assess progress toward your goals?	What SUPPORT do you need in order to reach your goals?

(Optional) What are your PERSONAL PRIORITIES?	HOW will you maintain your priorities?	What SUPPORT do you need?

Goal Setting: 2009-2010

Please complete with your coach. Goals may be new goals or may be related to your goals from your 2008-2009 PGP.

BHAGs: What are your STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND STUDENT CHARACTER GOALS for 2009-2010?	BENCHMARK: What do you plan to achieve by your mid-year PGP?	STRATEGY: What will you do to get there?	SUPPORT: What support do you need?
By the end of school year, 100% of my students will be on grade level as measured by the STEP assessment and 40% of my students will be above grade level.	By my mid-year PGP, 100% of my students will be on grade level as measured by the STEP assessment and 40% of my students will be above grade level.	Pre-test all students in September and group students based on initial STEP levels. Daily DI in homogeneous groups and ongoing assessment to target individual student needs.	This is my first time using STEP, so I need support from my grade level chair to ensure I'm accurately testing students and applying the appropriate interventions.
90% of students will meet 80% or more of the IA 5 math objectives.	At least 80% of students will meet 80% or more of the IA 3 math objectives in December.	Request feedback from my coach on math lessons and work with my coach to alter Saxon math lessons to best meet student needs.	I need frequent mathematics lesson observations from my coach.
100% of students will be able to describe the REACH values and will follow classroom procedures and rules.	All the REACH values will be taught, modeled and revisited. Classroom procedures and rules will be taught through a full lesson cycle.	For September, I have designed a unit for students to learn and practice classroom procedures and rules. Students will be rewarded for meeting classroom expectations.	I need support from my co-teacher as we design and implement our procedures.

What are your PROFESSIONAL GOALS for 2009-2010 that will help you to meet your student achievement and student character goals?	BENCHMARK: What do you plan to achieve by your mid-year PGP?	STRATEGY: What will you do to get there?	SUPPORT: What support do you need?
<u>Student Engagement:</u> 100% of students are on-task and at least 80% of students' hands are in the air because aims are student-focused and instruction is engaging. I will use strategies that engage all students rather than one at a time.	All lessons are student focused and use strategies to engage all students. 90% of students are on-task and 75% of students' hands are in the air.	I will observe lessons of master teachers in my school. I'll also review engagement materials on the shared server and re-connect with teachers I met during PD day to share engagement strategies. I will request feedback from my coach on engagement; specifically the percent of students on task and percent of student participation.	I need master teachers to allow me to observe their classes and I also need feedback from my coach on this area. I know this is going to be challenging for me, so I need to talk with my coach frequently about how I'm doing toward this goal.
<u>Parent Involvement:</u> I will call every family during the first two weeks of school with a positive message about their scholar. All families will receive at least one positive call a month.	I will call every family during the first two weeks of school with a positive message about their scholar. In addition, all families will receive at least one positive call in October.	Before the school year begins, I will create a tracking sheet with completes a list of family names and numbers. I will reserve an hour every Wednesday evening for calls. I'm going to meet with the Dean of Students to learn more about how to best communicate with parents. I'm also going to challenge another teacher to work on this same goal with me.	I hope I can get other teachers excited about sharing this goal – particularly my co-teacher. I will also be reaching out to our Dean of Students for parent communication strategies.

SAMPLE TEACHER

<p><u>Exit Tickets:</u> I will plan and use an effective exit ticket for every lesson and will analyze the results to plan for future lessons.</p>	<p>By November, I will have an exit ticket for every lesson and will have a tracker for capturing student proficiency and errors.</p>	<p>I will work with my co-teacher to develop exit tickets for math and reading lessons. As part of my coach meetings, I will get feedback on a sample of exit tickets and will get help with using the results to plan for future lessons.</p>	<p>Both my co-teacher and coach will be great supports. I also look forward to learning more about exit tickets this semester at Teacher U.</p>
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<p>What are your PERSONAL GOALS for 2009-2010? (Optional)</p>	<p>BENCHMARK: What do you plan to achieve by your mid-year PGP?</p>	<p>STRATEGY: What will you do to get there?</p>	<p>SUPPORT: What support do you need?</p>
<p>I will run the Brooklyn half-marathon in May 2010.</p>	<p>I will be able to run at least 8 miles by January.</p>	<p>I will run with my friend four days a week.</p>	<p>I need positive peer pressure from my coach. I'd love to have him ask me how I'm doing toward meeting this goal.</p>
<p>I will read at least one book a month for pleasure.</p>	<p>I will have read at least 5 books and will have chosen at least 2 more books to read.</p>	<p>I will choose my books in advance and will set aside time to read three days a week.</p>	<p>I need great book recommendations from my colleagues.</p>



Achievement First Professional Growth Plan 2008-2009

SAMPLE LOW PERFORMING TEACHER

Principal

School Leader

AF Roosevelt Elementary School

School

1/25/09

Date

Low Performing Teacher "Alexis"

Teacher

Kindergarten

Grade and/or Subject

1/5/09

Date

Purpose

In order to achieve our ambitious goals, Achievement First is committed to investing in our most important resource – our talented people. Professional Growth Plans are one step in providing consistent, aligned, on-going feedback and training throughout the network.

Directions for Teachers

- ✓ Click on the header at the top of this page and change “Teacher Name” to your name.
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- ✓ When completed, email your PGP to your school leader at the date specified in the timeline. Your school leader will add his/her appraisal directly underneath yours, in the YELLOW sections, thus creating a written dialogue.
- ✓ For each indicator, select and mark the rating that most accurately describes your performance during the school year. You may select 1, 2, 3, or 4 only. You may not assign a fraction (e.g. 3.2, 1.5 etc.) for the specific performance factors.
- ✓ Cite specific evidence to support your rating. Whenever possible, tie the evidence to student achievement data. Please note that you do not need to include examples or comments for each rating. Comments are required at the end of each section and should focus on (1) areas of greatest strength and growth and (2) for “foundational areas” if you are a new teacher (shaded in gray).
- ✓ Do not complete the “Performance Summary and Goal Setting” section on the last page. Your school leader will complete the summary and then discuss it with you during the PGP feedback conversation. The summary can be edited based on that discussion. You and your school leader will work together to complete the goal setting section during your meeting. It will be helpful to start thinking about your goals before the meeting.
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Ratings

4 - Mastery: Teacher consistently exceeds expectations and is an exemplar for this standard.

3 - Proficient: Teacher consistently meets expectations and is solid for this standard.

2 - In Progress: Teacher meets this standard some or most of the time but is not yet consistently solid.

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N/A – Not applicable: Teacher is not responsible for meeting this standard or it is his/her first year of teaching at Achievement First and does not yet have end-of-year student achievement data. If N/A, leave the rating blank and N/A in the comment section.

Section I. Achievement First: Student Achievement & Character Development

Focus Area	Indicators	Specific Student Data to Support Rating	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Student Achievement	Students show progress toward very strong growth based on student standardized data (IAs, Fountas & Pinnell, Step, etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are, as a general statement, achieving, however there were several areas in math where they did not and some students in reading did not make progress in the last IA. 			X	
	Students show significant progress on classroom tests, quizzes and other assignments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students do not have a strong sense of independent work during my lessons and therefore, their assignments often get low scores. 				X
Character Development	Students are Respectful: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treat teachers like platinum Nice; never tease, laugh at, or put down others Patient and raise their hands Keep their desk, classroom and school clean 					X
	Students show Enthusiasm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow all directions the first time SLANT and participate actively in class Always bring a positive attitude 			X		
	Students exemplify Achievement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absolutely do their best on all assignments Work is always neat and complete 			X		
	Students model Citizenship: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take responsibility for their actions Tell the truth at all times Celebrates the achievement of others and support teammates 				X	
	Students model Hard Work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Come to school everyday and are never late Have all necessary materials and are wearing uniform properly at all times Act like a college student today 				X	

Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:
 It's difficult to explain to a kindergartener what it means to be respectful or a good citizen.

School Leader comments:
 We must teach each of the above values to scholars of all ages; that is at the core of the teaching responsibility. Scholars in your reading group made very little progress in the first semester. The overall class has learned very little math or vocabulary. The class culture in Temple is currently not focused on our REACH values, and in fact reinforces bad choices since these choices are so routine throughout the day and also met with few consequences.

 It is an excuse to say that it is difficult to explain to a kindergartner respect or citizenship. Teaching our scholars each of these values is fundamental to the job.

Section II. The Essentials of Effective Teaching: Core Instructional Excellence

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Great AIMS and Student Mastery of AIMS	Consistently uses rigorous, bite-sized, measurable, standards-based AIMS to drive instruction; writes AIMS on the board and reviews them with scholars.			X	X
	Systematically assesses every student's mastery of the aim(s) at the end of each lesson and diagnoses areas of student misunderstanding (usually exit ticket).			X	X
Content Knowledge and Strategy	Demonstrates strong content knowledge; all information conveyed to students is factually accurate.		X	X	
	Consistently uses the most effective and efficient strategies to guide students to mastery.			X	X
Modeling and Guided Practice	Consistently delivers a well-planned and efficient mini-lesson (think aloud, explicit modeling, heavily guided practice, etc) and the mini lesson is captured so students can reference it during independent practice.			X	X
	Leads students through guided practice with declining scaffolding so students eventually provide both the answers and the thought process; provides visual anchors				X
	Regularly checks for understanding during guided practice so that students transition to independent practice when ready.			X	X
Sustained, Successful Independent Practice	Designs independent practice so that students have ample, successful "at bats" to practice the AIM (at least 50% of each lesson).				X
	Moves around the classroom constantly during independent practice to assess mastery and provide individual help.			X	X
Rigor	Consistently includes a high ratio of student work to teacher talk with students doing most of the "heavy lifting" of work and explaining their thinking.				X
	Teacher only accepts high quality student responses; doesn't allow students to "opt-out" because teacher cycle backs to students who didn't answer.			X	X
	Teacher plans his/her questions in advance with a range of both low and high level questioning and regularly stretches questions.				X
Student Engagement	Insists and motivates so that 100% of students are on task and at least 80% of hands are in the air.				X
	Teacher uses high-engagement strategies (e.g. rapid fire questioning, non-verbal responses, etc) to ensure that all students are accountable for engagement; limits use of strategies that engage only one student at a time.				X
Cumulative Review	As part of the lesson and homework routine, students get fast, fun opportunities to systematically review and practice skills that they have already mastered.				X
Differentiation	Teacher works to ensure that the needs of every student are met, providing extra support, enrichment, or variation of work.			X	X
					X

Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:
 I think that I have great content knowledge. I don't think there's a question of whether or not I understand the material. Engagement I think has gone down since the beginning of the year. Morning Math Meeting used to be a time when at least 80% always had their hands in the air.

School Leader comments:
 One of the core reasons your class culture has reached the place it has is that the fundamental essentials of instruction are weak. At the start of the year, you struggled a lot with management – voice, tone, presence. We focused on that for a while, but there was a point when you had to transition to building effective lessons in order for scholars to have a reason to listen. The main reason I arranged for Joe, Alice, and Dwayne to support you in reading, math meeting, and writing was so you could focus on the fundamentals of good instruction and also help to get the classroom / group back in control.

 You have not taken this time to plan carefully, prepare classroom materials in advance, and write up your aims. You do know the material you are teaching Kindergartners, but part of the knowledge includes what that concept means in the realm of instruction. Since you have not sent me many plans or reached out for feedback or reflected on your plans, you have not developed much this first semester in terms of knowing the most effective and efficient ways to teach the aims. There is not much evidence of a mini-lesson structure in your lessons. This is partly because of behavior, but also because the lesson was not structured in an I-We-You format.

Section III. The Essentials of Effective Teaching: Classroom Culture

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Relentless Around High Expectations	Effectively designs, teaches, and reinforces expectations, routines and procedures; routines are brisk and automatic in class.				X
	Teacher sweats the small stuff (SLANT, no call outs, no laughing at other's mistakes)			X	X
J-Factor	There is a very positive, energetic, joyful tone in the classroom with a high ratio of positive corrective comments.				X
	Expects positive interactions among students and teaches social skills (REACH).				X
Consequences and Follow-Through	Assigns and follows-through on consequences that are reasonable, logical, customized and that consistently work to change student behavior.			X	X
	Responds to behavior issues with persistence, insistence, and consistency; spends the time necessary outside of class to practice desired behaviors with students.			X	X
Classroom Environment	Organizes the classroom set-up to promote a learning environment and ensures that students keep the room neat and orderly.			X	
School Culture Leader	Focuses on school-wide discipline and addresses student behaviors when they come up regardless of whether the student is "yours" or not.			X	
School Culture Systems	Embraces and effectively uses school culture systems (e.g. scholar dollars, transitions, classroom removal, dismissal, etc); thoughtfully problem-solves adjustments to school culture systems with team members.			X	
	Uses incentives appropriately to encourage and reinforce student effort and cooperation; sees incentives as a tool, not the core management technique.				X
					X

Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:
 I'm really working on a lot of these areas. I try to be consistent and logical, although I realize that my J-Factor has been low.

School Leader comments:
 There is very little evidence of effective routines established in your class in Morning Math Meeting, math class, or text talk. You have established some routines that work fairly well in DI. You certainly are not quitting and continuing to address negative behaviors in your class by practicing lines and having scholars sit with you during HW folder time, but you are not noticing a lot of what is happening in your room, establishing a positive culture, or using consequences effectively. You also have not found an authoritative, but positive teacher voice.

Section IV. The Cycle of Highly Effective Teaching: Planning & Data Analysis

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
BHAGS	Teacher sets measurable, ambitious, yet attainable BHAGS for the year and for each IA cycle.			X	
	Makes students aware of the BHAGs and invests students in class and individual goals.			X	
	Regularly checks in on progress against goals, celebrates successes, and adjusts plans and instruction accordingly.			X	
Standards and Scope and Sequence	Deeply knows the standards and the scope and sequence (for own grade/subject and the grades one year before and one year after) and knows how standards are assessed.				X
Year Planning	Creates a long-term plan that breaks the year into units with clear dates.			X	
Unit Planning	Designs rigorous, end-of-unit assessments that effectively measure mastery of standards and include both high and low level questions.				X
	Designs sequences of aims that build on prerequisite skills; correctly anticipates the amount of time necessary for student to master each aim.			X	
Lesson Planning	Has a thorough, written, daily lesson plan based on the essentials of effective instruction; uses or includes all relevant elements of appropriate lesson planning templates.			X	
Daily and Weekly Data Analysis	Effectively uses data from exit slips, quizzes, and informal assessments to plan interventions and adjust future AIMS.			X	
	Has a clear and accessible system for tracking daily and weekly student data.			X	
IA Data Analysis	Reviews previous data-driven plan (e.g., from six weeks prior) to determine in detail how effective each part (cumulative review, re-teaching, intervention groups, new standards) of that data-driven plan had been.			X	
	Creates thoughtful data-driven plan each IA cycle that diagnoses why students did or did not master standards; develops specific remedies for whole-class re-teaching and reviewing, and develops targeted and differentiated student interventions (small-group or one-on-one).			X	
					X
<p>Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth: I've been working on my lesson plans to get them back on track. At times I have full lessons for each class, but sometimes I don't. I don't have very rigorous end-of-unit assessments.</p>					
<p>School Leader comments: You have been working to collect and record data from exit tickets and assessments into your tracker. You are doing this sometimes, but not consistently. You are also doing few / no academic interventions and little adjustment of lessons based on the data you see.</p> <p>You spend focused time on Data Days planning based on the data you have. During the regular school days, you are overwhelmed with behavior issues and are not able to maintain the planning and data analysis, even though you want to.</p>					

Section V. The Center of the Cycle: Student & Family Relationships

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Effective Student Relationships	Students understand unambiguously that the teacher cares about them and their progress.			X	
	Develops specific, effective strategies to teach and support KWLMs; regularly checks in with KWLMs and works school-wide, class, and students-specific systems.			X	
	Helps all students set clear academic and character goals.				X
	Systematically returns throughout the year to academic and character goals and has students reflect and problem-solve based on progress toward the goals.				X
	Puts in the extra effort outside of class to build relationships (e.g. lunches with scholars, special events).			X	
Effective Family Relationships	Works actively to build relationships with families and respects family members' role as partners.			X	
	Parents know about BHAGs for the class and specific goals for their child.			X	
	Regularly communicates both success and challenges and tracks communication with families.			X	
					X

Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:

School Leader comments:
 Your tone has become very negative, constantly relying on phrases like "That is rude and disrespectful!" "I can't trust you." "How dare you..." I don't believe that scholars overall feel unambiguously that you care about them and their progress. I know that you do care in this way, and that Temple's situation is extremely disappointing to you.

You do not have effective strategies for teaching and supporting KWLMs and have drafted no plans to establish specific goals or accommodate for their needs. For the last month, you regularly have up to 8 scholars leaving your room to come to my office or other classrooms for long periods of time (over 30 minutes).

You do continue to spend time during specials, cooperative play, and HW folder time to sit with your most challenging scholars, but I don't believe this is working to build better relationships. Also, you do communicate with families, but do not have a strategy for this and do not track these communications. For example, if you see families in the pick-up line, you speak with them and you reach out to communicate about negative behavior, but you do not have a plan for engaging families overall with an emphasis on positive communications.

Section VI. The Center of the Cycle: Personal Organization & Effectiveness

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Reflection Constant Learning	Constantly reflects on successes and areas of growth around all areas of teaching; seeks to improve performance; is eager to get feedback and incorporates feedback in a positive, non-defensive way.		X		
				X	
Organization and Self-Management	Has a system for capturing and checking action items and uses them to prioritize work appropriately and minimize stress.			X	
	Maintains accurate and clear attendance, homework and grade book records on the student information system.				X
	Is on-time for meetings; completes and turns in assignments on-time.			X	
	Has exemplary attendance.	X			
Communication	Effectively communicates with school leaders and fellow staff in order to positively problem-solve and advocate for the school's agenda.	X	X		
				X	
				X	

Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:
 I have never missed a day of school! I think that in general terms, I am a good communicator, which allows me to listen to others and relay my ideas to them. I hardly ever use infinite campus, though. Aside from report cards and progress reports, I don't have much use for it.

School Leader comments:
 You have not missed a day of school. You are a good communicator in many ways, but what has been challenging is that you do not approach discussions with a problem-solving mindset. Your first semester has been difficult, but you have continued to focus on the current unacceptable state of things and look to others to find solutions for you. I understand that you do not know what the solutions are, but after all our various conversations, if this continues to be the case, that is a problem. I think part of the challenge is that you are not reflecting deeply on your successes and areas for growth, but are stuck in the negative behavior you see from your scholars. While I think you can be goal-oriented, I do not think you have approached this first semester with a focus on specific goals for your scholars, academically or behaviorally, or for yourself.

You have not turned in lesson plans on time and you have missed deadlines including missing the REACH sections of the report cards. I believe this PGP also was done at the last minute resulting in short or missing comments. Infinite campus could be a powerful tool to take charge of scholar behavior notes and family communications. Also, it could be a great place to get information about HW completion which would help you to minimize the number of scholars that miss cooperative play. One other area of promptness is in keeping to the daily school schedule. You are usually late in changing from one class to another. Harvard scholars are usually last to be ready on the grade for reading group transitions, end-of-day dismissal, going to writing, moving from math to cooperative play, and going to and from specials.

Section VII. The Center of the Cycle: Core Values & Responsibilities

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Results without Excuses or Shortcuts	Works hard everyday to deliver on the urgent promise to provide an outstanding education for all students; owns shortcomings and does not seek to blame external forces.		X		
			X		
Team and Family	Cares about others and treats everyone with respect, and work hard to preserve a sense of family. Has fun with team and celebrates differences. Collaborates and shares best practices; pitches in when teammates are struggling.	X			
		X			
People Matter - Mightily	Honors his or her own personal, family and community commitments and those of others. Contributes to an environment that is exceptionally professional, collegial stimulating and supportive.		X		
			X		
Excellence is a Habit	Strives to set the standard in all everything he/she does. Relentlessly pursues excellence and does not settle for "so-so" from students or self.			X	
					X
Sweat the Small Stuff	Pays attention to even the smallest details to ensure smooth, predictable, and effective outcomes in everything he or she does.			X	
					X
First Things First	Recognizes that the needs of students always come before adults and prioritizes students first.		X		
				X	
Whatever it Takes	Is persistent, insistent, and deliberate in his or her actions; gives 100% every day and goes the extra mile to make the difference in the lives of our students.		X		
			X		
Many Minds, One Mission	Sees self as a partner in a national effort to improve the communities in which we live and work; eager to learn best practices from other high-performing schools.	X			
		X			
Everything with Integrity	Values integrity and models it for students; does not merely post the REACH values but allows them to drive actions and words; is humble, honest, and admits mistakes.			X	
				X	
				X	

Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:
 I think that I am certainly a team-player. I am constantly trying to help the team and do what's best for AF Roosevelt Elementary School.

School Leader comments:
 You work hard, are team-oriented, and mission aligned. You certainly have fun with the team, celebrating differences, sharing and collaborating.

 You also do work hard, but unfortunately without enough efficiency or effectiveness. Part of this may be in not being as goal-focused or as detail-focused as you need to be. You need a clear vision of how you want your class culture and instruction to help you drive towards this goal, motivate others towards the goal, and prioritize everything on your plate. You also need to be very detail-oriented, working efficiently and effectively to get the prioritized elements in place to reach the goal.

 Also, at this point, you are settling for an unacceptably low bar for scholar academics and behavior. You also are falling towards a low bar for your own professional responsibilities including planning, promptness in following the daily schedule, writing up aims and preparing materials. I know this is because you believe you have no other choice, but that does not change the fact that it is happening.

Teacher Name

Performance Summary and Goal Setting 2008-2009



Key Strengths	Next Steps to build this strength and to leverage this strength for the school
Reflection Constant Learning	Own the learning process, push forward with trying to come up with strong solutions, solicit feedback on those attempts.
Communication: good listener.	Be able to express own ideas effectively and efficiently without so much processing time. Be more purposeful in communications, to drive towards your goal of classroom teacher with AF HEA.
Team and Family	Reaching out and asking for help.

Key Areas for Improvement	What is the specific GOAL you hope to reach in this area of growth?	How will you MEASURE your progress and growth in this area?	WHEN will we assess progress toward your goal?	What SUPPORT do you need in order to reach your goal?
Essentials of instruction: aims, mini-lesson structure, planning in advance	Meeting planning deadlines for all reading block (GR, RC) with strong lesson plans that match aims sequence, using standard template	Seeing the plans on time; Teacher will provide plan for how he will catch up Teacher will have extra copy of the lesson plan for each day to Principal	In 2 weeks	Fri, 1/ 30: CS give feedback on Thurs / Fri lesson plans Teacher will let CS know plan for getting on track, and when he will need feedback
Student Engagement	100% of students are on-task and at least 80% of students' hands are in the air because aims are student-focused and instruction is engaging Use strategies that engage all students rather than one at a time.	Observations of instruction: 100% engagement and 80% hands in the air	In 4 weeks	Feedback and ideas in daily emails and coaching meetings
Relentless towards high expectations and teaching scholars respect	Scholars don't leave their seat without permission Scholars listen to your directions the first time and answer respectfully	Observations of instruction in reading group	Assess along the way daily In 5 weeks	Feedback and ideas in daily emails and coaching meetings

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Direct Instruction (at least 40 min)	Maximizes the number of "at bats" that the entire class and each student gets; there are a large number of repetitions per minute (at least 10/minute, ideally 15-20) of both sounds and words; ensures the "at bats" are successful.		X		
	Assesses the DI progress of students using the Phonics and Fluency IAs, daily check outs, and in-program assessments; ALL students show firm mastery.		X		
Guided Reading (at least 20 minutes)	Chooses text that is at the appropriate Guided Reading level and is appropriate to work on the skill/strategy necessary to take students to the next STEP level.		X		
	Students in Guided Reading groups are reading almost the entire time; students read in a variety of ways (pairs, individual, whole class).			X	
	The bulk of teacher time is spent conferencing with students, asking them questions and providing mini-instruction on a 1-on-1 basis; the teacher assesses and tracks each student's mastery of the aim and how each student is doing on skills specific to his/her own development.				X
Independent Reading (at least 40 minutes)	Teacher works with students to set goals to build up reading stamina so that students are reading for at least 20 minutes a session by first grade; the total IR time by first grade should be at least 40 minutes (e.g. 20 minutes of the 2 nd half of GR plus 20 more minutes).				X
	Teacher has modeled / kids practice each day what a great IR reader looks like; students read with their books on their desks, stay focused on reading, and realize that non-reading activities are not allowed.			X	
	All students are READING the entire time during the IR block. Teacher quietly praises students and subtly redirects students who are not 100% focused and reading.				X
	Teacher hypes reading with students and they are motivated to read. Leverages school-wide and grade-wide reading events. Students are CRAZY about reading.				X
Reading Comp. (at least 20-30 minutes)	Students are READING a lot in reading comprehension class.				X
	Reads aloud very engaging texts OR uses texts at scholars' independent levels; the texts chosen match the aim.		X		
	Maximizes the number of AT BATS IN TEXT for students to practice the skill that is the focus of the lesson; students get a lot of successful practice.			X	
Word Work (5-15 min per day)	The aim for my word work class is bite-sized (one or two sounds or concepts) and determined by either a set program (i.e. Open Court) or the skills on which my students are weak (based on STEP and Phonics/Fluency IAs).				X
	Class maximized successful repetitions for both cumulative review concepts and the aim. The class as a whole and individual students have many successful "at bats". Teacher tracks student mastery of the aim.				X

Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:

School Leader comments:
 We have worked very closely on improving your DI instruction. Your scholars were stuck on a mastery test after repeated reteaching and retesting. You were not implementing DI correctly or paying attention to scholar work on Take-Homes. We Xeroxed the first 40 Take-Home lessons and started over. With very close support, your DI is now usually meeting expectations.

You struggled with setting up guided reading groups and recently did so, based on information about scholar needs. But you are not planning for those different needs, taking notes on how scholars read, or planning specifically for how to build scholars' reading stamina and tools. You also are not building scholars' independent reading in reading comprehension or conferencing. Reading comprehension lessons are not strong mini-lessons that focus on a specific aim and guide scholars to mastery of that aim.



Achievement First Professional Growth Plan 2008-2009

SAMPLE HIGH PERFORMING NEW TEACHER

Principal

School Leader

AF Roosevelt Elementary School

School

January 25, 2009

Date

High Performing New Teacher "Hilary"

Teacher

1st Grade

Grade and/or Subject

January 13, 2008

Date

Purpose

In order to achieve our ambitious goals, Achievement First is committed to investing in our most important resource – our talented people. Professional Growth Plans are one step in providing consistent, aligned, on-going feedback and training throughout the network.

Directions for Teachers

- ✓ Click on the header at the top of this page and change “Teacher Name” to your name.
- ✓ For your self-appraisal, please rate your performance this school year. Include your rating and comments in the WHITE sections. Mark each rating with a capital letter “X”. Thoughtfully reflecting on your performance and completing this document will take approximately 2 hours.
- ✓ When completed, email your PGP to your school leader at the date specified in the timeline. Your school leader will add his/her appraisal directly underneath yours, in the YELLOW sections, thus creating a written dialogue.
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1 - Does not meet: Teacher consistently does not meet expectations for this standard. This is an area for teacher growth; the teacher should work with supervisors and/or colleagues to improve in this area.

N/A – Not applicable: Teacher is not responsible for meeting this standard or it is his/her first year of teaching at Achievement First and does not yet have end-of-year student achievement data. If N/A, leave the rating blank and N/A in the comment section.

Section I. Achievement First: Student Achievement & Character Development

Focus Area	Indicators	Specific Student Data to Support Rating	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Student Achievement	Students show progress toward very strong growth based on student standardized data (IAs, Fountas & Pinnell, Step, etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students have passed STEPs 2 & 3 Minimum goal for first grade scholars is to pass one STEP level every six weeks. Between IA2 and IA3, approx. 5 out of 11 scholars passed at least 1 STEP level in the Pears. On Math IA2, 8 out 13 scholars scored an 80% or above. 		X		
	Students show significant progress on classroom tests, quizzes and other assignments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 89% of students are mastering weekly math test 94% of students mastered 85% of site words Writing albums show considerable growth in ideas and ability to brainstorm and develop a lengthy story. Less growth in conventions such as handwriting, when to use capital and lower case letters, and punctuation. 			X	
Character Development	Students are Respectful: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treat teachers like platinum Nice; never tease, laugh at, or put down others Patient and raise their hands Keep their desk, classroom and school clean 			X		
	Students show Enthusiasm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow all directions the first time SLANT and participate actively in class Always bring a positive attitude 		X			
	Students exemplify Achievement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absolutely do their best on all assignments Work is always neat and complete 				X	
	Students model Citizenship: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take responsibility for their actions Tell the truth at all times Celebrates the achievement of others and support teammates 		X			
	Students model Hard Work: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Come to school everyday and are never late Have all necessary materials and are wearing uniform properly at all times Act like a college student today 			X		
						X

Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:
 My students have been progressing pretty well in literacy, moving up at least one level with each IA. Besides that, I have not assessed them consistently enough to determine progress on tests and quizzes. This is something I would like to make a stronger part of our routine. In general, students are aware of what is valued by me, our classroom, and the school. They can identify the values, and most always want to show them. However, there have been some issues with particular values—for example, Aaliyah and Marquise with telling the truth and taking responsibility for their actions (Citizenship, Respect), Keon and Makhail with neatly completing their work/trying their best (Achievement and Hard Work). I would say the strongest values I see in my kids is Enthusiasm, and for the most part, Respect and Hard Work.

School Leader comments:
Strengths
 Your students are respectful, enthusiastic, and learning how to be a good citizen in the classroom. This is a reflection of all that you model for them. During lessons, you constantly appear to be having fun and act excited about the material being covered. When you introduce a new Guided Reading book, a new math term, or a new Social Studies unit, you present the material as though the whole class just won the lottery and you always make sure to give a reason why this new "information" is really important. Your students see this constantly and mirror your joy and excitement for learning. With Princeton's weekly king and queen of kindness and your calm, cool, collected ways of talking students through their conflicts with others, you are developing a class of problem solvers who are kind to each other. When students come to you with a problem, you never try to solve the problem for them, but rather, you explain to them some possible ways that they might be able to solve the problem for themselves. You highlight hard work in your class by saying things like, "Friends, I just noticed one of our friends just worked really hard to sound out his word." Last week in your Reading Comp. class, you forgot to give Keon a marker and then gently apologized, hugged him, and gave him a marker and he smiled because he knew he is loved. You are always modeling kindness and love in every inch of your lessons and students mimic this when they are around you. I frequently hear students using kind words like "excuse me" and "thank you." In these ways, you exemplify the REACH values on a daily basis.

Section II. The Essentials of Effective Teaching: Core Instructional Excellence

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Great AIMS and Student Mastery of AIMS	Consistently uses rigorous, bite-sized, measurable, standards-based AIMS to drive instruction; writes AIMS on the board and reviews them with scholars.		X		
	Systematically assesses every student's mastery of the aim(s) at the end of each lesson and diagnoses areas of student misunderstanding (usually exit ticket).		X		
Content Knowledge and Strategy	Demonstrates strong content knowledge; all information conveyed to students is factually accurate.		X		
	Consistently uses the most effective and efficient strategies to guide students to mastery.		X		
Modeling and Guided Practice	Consistently delivers a well-planned and efficient mini-lesson (think aloud, explicit modeling, heavily guided practice, etc) and the mini lesson is captured so students can reference it during independent practice.				X
	Leads students through guided practice with declining scaffolding so students eventually provide both the answers and the thought process; provides visual anchors			X	
	Regularly checks for understanding during guided practice so that students transition to independent practice when ready.			X	
Sustained, Successful Independent Practice	Designs independent practice so that students have ample, successful "at bats" to practice the AIM (at least 50% of each lesson).			X	X
	Moves around the classroom constantly during independent practice to assess mastery and provide individual help.		X		
Rigor	Consistently includes a high ratio of student work to teacher talk with students doing most of the "heavy lifting" of work and explaining their thinking.			X	X
	Teacher only accepts high quality student responses; doesn't allow students to "opt-out" because teacher cycle backs to students who didn't answer.			X	
	Teacher plans his/her questions in advance with a range of both low and high level questioning and regularly stretches questions.		X		
Student Engagement	Insists and motivates so that 100% of students are on task and at least 80% of hands are in the air.		X		
	Teacher uses high-engagement strategies (e.g. rapid fire questioning, non-verbal responses, etc) to ensure that all students are accountable for engagement; limits use of strategies that engage only one student at a time.		X		
Cumulative Review	As part of the lesson and homework routine, students get fast, fun opportunities to systematically review and practice skills that they have already mastered.			X	X
Differentiation	Teacher works to ensure that the needs of every student are met, providing extra support, enrichment, or variation of work.			X	X

Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:
 There is a lot of variance in this area between strengths and weaknesses, and I find that the great distinction comes from the teacher/student ratio, and how much work the students are doing or how many "at bats" they are getting. I really find the balance between strong modeling/setting students up for success, while still leaving ample time for them to do the heavy lifting to be difficult. Hence, my AIMS are always written and stated in every lesson, the mini lesson is pretty thorough and students are engaged (for the most part—sometimes I can tell that they too want to get to work), we do not always make it to the independent practice (or at least enough time to show true mastery).

School Leader comments:
Strengths:
 Hilary, your expectations for student participation are top notch—you want 100% hands in the air and because you use so many engagement strategies throughout your lessons, there are frequently 80%+ hands in the air and students are eager to show you what they know. Your aims are always posted and you consistently start your lessons by going over the aims with the students. You post them in kid-friendly language and refer back to these goals during the lesson. You consistently ask planned questions in Guided Reading and push students with higher order thinking questions in Reading Comprehension class. Last week in reading comprehension class, when Jamani told you that, "both pictures have different houses," you ask her to tell you more and to be specific. You push students with questions like "why" and "how did you know" and expect them to use complete sentences to express their ideas. You often use excellent instructional strategies; for example, during last week's reading comp. lesson, you had students use Total Physical Responses (movements) for the "same" and "different."

Rigor

You are doing a lot of the talking in lessons which decreases the work and “heavy lifting” that students are doing. For example, during your reading comp. lesson, you were writing student responses on the poster Venn diagram on the easel. The students had told you that one of the pictures had a roof made of candy. Because you have such high expectations for student work, you wanted students to understand that many more details and specifics could be added to that statement. Instead of saying “Tell me more about this house,” you said, “Okay scholars, let’s look at what we wrote under this picture. We wrote ‘This roof is made of candy.’ Maybe we could add even more next time. Maybe we could add more details so that everyone knows what kind of candy is on the house. That would make our sentence a lot better.” This is an example of a time when you increased your teacher talk instead of increasing the amount that students were doing the thinking. By working on your economy of language and choosing the most important and most essential words to say during the lesson, you will increase the amount of time that students are speaking, thinking, and completing tasks.

Differentiation

You make sure to give your students time for independent practice in your lesson and you consistently use windshield wiper eyes (looking back and forth across the U table again and again) to make sure that everyone is on task. You are acutely knowledgeable about your KWLMs needs and go straight to these students to help them get on task. For example, in reading comp. last week, as soon as students started working independently, you went to Makhail and asked him if he knew what to do, waiting for him to respond correctly, and then asked him what the purpose for reading was. In math class and guided reading class, you use independent work time as your chance to conference with students. However, in reading comprehension I have not consistently seen you use independent practice time as a conferencing time with students. This is your 20 min. to get down at the students’ level and address individual and unique academic needs. This individual conferencing is what will push your students forward.

Section III. The Essentials of Effective Teaching: Classroom Culture

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Relentless Around High Expectations	Effectively designs, teaches, and reinforces expectations, routines and procedures; routines are brisk and automatic in class.			X	
	Teacher sweats the small stuff (SLANT, no call outs, no laughing at other's mistakes)		X		
J-Factor	There is a very positive, energetic, joyful tone in the classroom with a high ratio of positive corrective comments.		X		
	Expects positive interactions among students and teaches social skills (REACH).		X		
Consequences and Follow-Through	Assigns and follows-through on consequences that are reasonable, logical, customized and that consistently work to change student behavior.			X	
	Responds to behavior issues with persistence, insistence, and consistency; spends the time necessary outside of class to practice desired behaviors with students.			X	
Classroom Environment	Organizes the classroom set-up to promote a learning environment and ensures that students keep the room neat and orderly.			X	X
School Culture Leader	Focuses on school-wide discipline and addresses student behaviors when they come up regardless of whether the student is "yours" or not.			X	
School Culture Systems	Embraces and effectively uses school culture systems (e.g. scholar dollars, transitions, classroom removal, dismissal, etc); thoughtfully problem-solves adjustments to school culture systems with team members.		X		
	Uses incentives appropriately to encourage and reinforce student effort and cooperation; sees incentives as a tool, not the core management technique.		X		

Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:
 I feel like the children in my group receive a lot of positive verbal reinforcement from myself and each other for kind and respectful behavior. We are currently working on being "respectful" in the Pears, and every week in Princeton we announce a king and queen of kindness. Praise is typically specific, and I try to keep the bar constantly rising—i.e. not just tracking the teacher while she speaks, but also our classmates while we speak. One area I would really like to work on is classroom organization—just making the most of the physical space for teacher and student efficiency, convenience, and comfort. I feel like my U-table area tends to get very cluttered with papers and posters everywhere. I haven't figured out a system for storing old templates, visuals etc. and they end up in the corner or in random shelves.

School Leader comments:
Strengths
 Hilary, you have extremely high expectations with your students and you hold them to those expectations. When sweat the small stuff with students like Makhail—making sure that he keeps his eyes on you while you are talking—and this has a positive impact on your students' behavior during your lessons. You point out students who are doing exactly what you want and you do not settle for mediocre. For example, during partner talk time in reading comp. last week, you did not settle for students merely participating with each other; instead, you have a specific image of how exactly you want them to be positioning themselves and behaving during this partner talk time. You complimented students who were doing exactly what you wanted and this got the rest of the students to mimic the same specific behaviors. You said, "I just wanted to compliment 2 partners Immanuel and Jamani and Shakir and Joseph because they made sure that their bodies were facing each other. I also liked that they complimented each other. That must have made them feel really good." Students know the routines and expectations. For example, during partner talk time, they know that they are supposed to whisper in each other's ears. You have 100% of students following this routine.

Additionally, the joy factor in your classroom is consistently high. Partners give each other high fives before starting to brainstorm together, students pick and do cheers with you, students are recognized weekly through the king and queen of kindness, smiles are abound during your classroom circle time, and you are always sure to make your own joy apparent in the classroom through your smiles and praises. Your positive to corrective ratio is consistently high.

Classroom environment
 During reading classes, you are heavily focused on the Pears and the area by the U shaped table. It is harder for you to see and manage the students on the computer and I don't often hear you taking a lead in making sure that the overall classroom environment is as calm and focused as the Pears are. By moving the bookshelves out of the way, you will be able to see the rest of the room better. I'd love to see you take this leadership role in your classroom as a whole, and help keep not only your group at 100% but also help keep all students in your room at 100%.

Section IV. The Cycle of Highly Effective Teaching: Planning & Data Analysis

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
BHAGS	Teacher sets measurable, ambitious, yet attainable BHAGS for the year and for each IA cycle.		X		
	Makes students aware of the BHAGs and invests students in class and individual goals.			X	X
	Regularly checks in on progress against goals, celebrates successes, and adjusts plans and instruction accordingly.			X	X
Standards and Scope and Sequence	Deeply knows the standards and the scope and sequence (for own grade/subject and the grades one year before and one year after) and knows how standards are assessed.			X	X
Year Planning	Creates a long-term plan that breaks the year into units with clear dates.			X	X
Unit Planning	Designs rigorous, end-of-unit assessments that effectively measure mastery of standards and include both high and low level questions.			X	X
	Designs sequences of aims that build on prerequisite skills; correctly anticipates the amount of time necessary for student to master each aim.			X	X
Lesson Planning	Has a thorough, written, daily lesson plan based on the essentials of effective instruction; uses or includes all relevant elements of appropriate lesson planning templates.		X	X	
Daily and Weekly Data Analysis	Effectively uses data from exit slips, quizzes, and informal assessments to plan interventions and adjust future AIMS.			X	X
	Has a clear and accessible system for tracking daily and weekly student data.				X
IA Data Analysis	Reviews previous data-driven plan (e.g., from six weeks prior) to determine in detail how effective each part (cumulative review, re-teaching, intervention groups, new standards) of that data-driven plan had been.			X	X
	Creates thoughtful data-driven plan each IA cycle that diagnoses why students did or did not master standards; develops specific remedies for whole-class re-teaching and reviewing, and develops targeted and differentiated student interventions (small-group or one-on-one).			X	X

Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:
 I really do not integrate data fully into my teaching practice—especially in the day-to-day and weekly practice. Although I analyze student data, and use it for planning and restructuring after the IA cycle, I do not go back and look at it consistently while I do my weekly aims and lesson plans. Similarly, I often track observations for classes (Guided Reading, Writing) but I do not store them or go back to them often.

School Leader comments:
Strengths
 Your lesson plans are thorough and aim driven. Your reflective nature is apparent in each of your lesson plans and you consistently seek to improve your plans from week to week. You never settle for mediocre activities, but rather consistently seek to find the best possible instructional strategy to include in the lesson plans. You carefully consider how to word each part of the lesson and the key points that you want students to walk away with. These are many of the reasons why I am so excited about you taking the lead on writing lesson plans for the first grade.

Weekly data analysis
 As you stated above, an area of growth is to consistently collect data in each subject, store data from week to week, and use data to purposefully guide your conferences with students. At times, I see you collecting data on your computer during lessons and sometimes on paper; through our check-in conversations and observations, I know that you have not yet found your perfect system that is working for you on a consistent basis. Last week during reading comp. I did not see you recording notes on student work or checking in with students on aims they struggled with in previous lessons. I'd like to see you use your data on a daily basis to implement individual conferences and interventions, based on specific student needs. This is going to make a significant impact on rapid student growth.

Section V. The Center of the Cycle: Student & Family Relationships

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Effective Student Relationships	Students understand unambiguously that the teacher cares about them and their progress.	X	X		
	Develops specific, effective strategies to teach and support KWLMs; regularly checks in with KWLMs and works school-wide, class, and students-specific systems.	X	X		
	Helps all students set clear academic and character goals.			X	X
	Systematically returns throughout the year to academic and character goals and has students reflect and problem-solve based on progress toward the goals.			X	X
	Puts in the extra effort outside of class to build relationships (e.g. lunches with scholars, special events).			X	
Effective Family Relationships	Works actively to build relationships with families and respects family members' role as partners.			X	X
	Parents know about BHAGs for the class and specific goals for their child.			X	X
	Regularly communicates both success and challenges and tracks communication with families.			X	X

Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:
 Though my students know I care about and appreciate them through verbal praise, accessibility (i.e. giving them all my phone number and encouraging them to call me whenever they want), I have not made efforts to truly invest each and every single family. I never call as often as I would like; there are still parents from my reading group I haven't spoken to yet.

School Leader comments:
 Your students clearly know that you care about them and their progress. You are constantly telling them how happy you feel when they succeed and smiles light up on their faces when you praise them in this way. Although Makhail and Keon continue to struggle, you have poured your heart and energy into helping these two KWLMs succeed in your reading group. Yes, I know that you are not yet satisfied with their academic performance but you have certainly made a huge impact on helping these two students adjust to the behavioral expectations of AF Brownsville. Additionally, you have helped turn around Eon and Ajamo and you consistently check in with both of them on their behavior goals and charts. You have done wonders with turning around Princeton this year. I am so grateful that you are a part of our team and family and that our students get to have you as their teacher.

Effective Family Relationships
 The more you strengthen relationships with parents and families and the more you communicate your academic goals for their students, the more your students will succeed and the faster they will grow.

Academic and Behavior Goals
 I know you and the first grade team have set goals for communicating and investing students in their STEP goals. You have begun the process of investing your reading groups in their STEP level. Students should also know what aims they still need to master in math and how they did on exit tickets. By visually tracking student growth (either on a poster in the classroom or on individual, private charts) students will get invested in their own growth and will increase their efforts in during lessons and at home on homework.

Section VI. The Center of the Cycle: Personal Organization & Effectiveness

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Reflection Constant Learning	Constantly reflects on successes and areas of growth around all areas of teaching; seeks to improve performance; is eager to get feedback and incorporates feedback in a positive, non-defensive way.		X		
		X			
Organization and Self-Management	Has a system for capturing and checking action items and uses them to prioritize work appropriately and minimize stress.		X		
	Maintains accurate and clear attendance, homework and grade book records on the student information system.		X		
	Is on-time for meetings; completes and turns in assignments on-time.			X	
	Has exemplary attendance.		X		
		X			
Communication	Effectively communicates with school leaders and fellow staff in order to positively problem-solve and advocate for the school's agenda.			X	
				X	

Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:
 My flexy friend allows me to track all of my tasks and appropriately allocate time for them, in order to be as efficient and less stressed as possible. Though, I do find myself overwhelmed at times, resulting sometimes in slow communication and delayed lesson plan submissions. Similarly, I feel that I am pretty receptive to feedback, and often engage in reflection on my own; however, sometimes I have trouble making time to truly synthesize and implement the feedback or changes I want.

School Leader comments:
Strengths
 Hilary, you are the exemplar of a reflective teacher. You constantly ask yourself, "how could I do that better?" and seek out advice and thoughts from others on ways to improve. At the beginning of the year, you and I spoke about prioritizing tasks in order to minimize stress and over the course of the year, I have seen you find more and more systems that help you do this.

Section VII. The Center of the Cycle: Core Values & Responsibilities

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)
Results without Excuses or Shortcuts	Works hard everyday to deliver on the urgent promise to provide an outstanding education for all students; owns shortcomings and does not seek to blame external forces.		X	X	
Team and Family	Cares about others and treats everyone with respect, and work hard to preserve a sense of family. Has fun with team and celebrates differences. Collaborates and shares best practices; pitches in when teammates are struggling.		X	X	
People Matter – Mightily	Honors his or her own personal, family and community commitments and those of others. Contributes to an environment that is exceptionally professional, collegial stimulating and supportive.		X		
Excellence is a Habit	Strives to set the standard in all everything he/she does. Relentlessly pursues excellence and does not settle for “so-so” from students or self.		X		
Sweat the Small Stuff	Pays attention to even the smallest details to ensure smooth, predictable, and effective outcomes in everything he or she does.		X		
First Things First	Recognizes that the needs of students always come before adults and prioritizes students first.		X		
Whatever it Takes	Is persistent, insistent, and deliberate in his or her actions; gives 100% every day and goes the extra mile to make the difference in the lives of our students.		X	X	
Many Minds, One Mission	Sees self as a partner in a national effort to improve the communities in which we live and work; eager to learn best practices from other high-performing schools.		X		
Everything with Integrity	Values integrity and models it for students; does not merely post the REACH values but allows them to drive actions and words; is humble, honest, and admits mistakes.		X		
<p>Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth: I know that my expectations of myself and my students are high (and I hope this is clear to my students as well), which means I try to pay attention to the details that truly make a difference, and always look at issues from my position (“why can I do?” “how did I cause this?”) first. At the same time, when I become overwhelmed, I tend to see the external factors more, and find it difficult to reach those extra difficult scholars (i.e. Keon and Makhail) and uphold them to the same high expectations. I also have not reached all my students outside of school</p>					
<p>School Leader comments: You exemplify so many core values---it is a fabulous honor to have you as an integral member of our AF Brownsville team and family. If we could, we would clone you and put you in schools all over the country.</p>					

Performance Summary and Goal Setting 2008-2009



Key Strengths	Next Steps to build this strength and to leverage this strength for the school
High Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video taping • Holding the outliers to the same expectations (i.e. Makhail and Keon)
Investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video taping • Math Investment- chart • STEP ?
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

Key Areas for Improvement	What is the specific GOAL you hope to reach in this area of growth?	How will you MEASURE your progress and growth in this area?	WHEN will we assess progress toward your goal?	What SUPPORT do you need in order to reach your goal?
Less Teacher Talk; More Economy of Language→ more heavy lifting by students	Make sure the extended talking aligns with the AIM <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If so, ask the students to TMM • If not, save it for a later time when it does align with an AIM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timing of teacher talk: student talk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach observations 	
Data Systems (Collection)	Find a system of tracking student mastery of daily AIMS in all classes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observation collection • For purposeful conferencing/intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a new template/organization system • Use it daily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present raw data at coach meetings • Explain how data was used in specific conferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestions for templates/systems
Meaningful Conferencing	Use collected data to purposefully plan I-WE-YOU style mini-conferences with all students during IP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will be a part of my data system— from where I can put specific student goals and check them off as they are addressed/met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coach meetings • Coach Observations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some modeling (esp during particular classes—i.e. Reading Comp)

Focus Area	Indicators	M (4)	P (3)	IP (2)	DNM (1)	
Direct Instruction (at least 40 min)	Maximizes the number of "at bats" that the entire class and each student gets; there are a large number of repetitions per minute (at least 10/minute, ideally 15-20) of both sounds and words; ensures the "at bats" are successful.		X			
	Assesses the DI progress of students using the Phonics and Fluency IAs, daily check outs, and in-program assessments; ALL students show firm mastery.		X			
Guided Reading (at least 20 minutes)	Chooses text that is at the appropriate Guided Reading level and is appropriate to work on the skill/strategy necessary to take students to the next STEP level.		X			
	Students in Guided Reading groups are reading almost the entire time; students read in a variety of ways (pairs, individual, whole class).		X			
	The bulk of teacher time is spent conferencing with students, asking them questions and providing mini-instruction on a 1-on-1 basis; the teacher assesses and tracks each student's mastery of the aim and how each student is doing on skills specific to his/her own development.				X	
				X		
Independent Reading (at least 40 minutes)	Teacher works with students to set goals to build up reading stamina so that students are reading for at least 20 minutes a session by first grade; the total IR time by first grade should be at least 40 minutes (e.g. 20 minutes of the 2 nd half of GR plus 20 more minutes).			X		
	Teacher has modeled / kids practice each day what a great IR reader looks like; students read with their books on their desks, stay focused on reading, and realize that non-reading activities are not allowed.		X			
	All students are READING the entire time during the IR block. Teacher quietly praises students and subtly redirects students who are not 100% focused and reading.			X		
	Teacher hypes reading with students and they are motivated to read. Leverages school-wide and grade-wide reading events. Students are CRAZY about reading.			X		
Reading Comp. (at least 20-30 minutes)	Students are READING a lot in reading comprehension class.			X		
	Reads aloud very engaging texts OR uses texts at scholars' independent levels; the texts chosen match the aim.		X			
	Maximizes the number of AT BATS IN TEXT for students to practice the skill that is the focus of the lesson; students get a lot of successful practice.			X		
Word Work (5-15 min per day)	The aim for my word work class is bite-sized (one or two sounds or concepts) and determined by either a set program (i.e. Open Court) or the skills on which my students are weak (based on STEP and Phonics/Fluency IAs).		X			
	Class maximized successful repetitions for both cumulative review concepts and the aim. The class as a whole and individual students have many successful "at bats". Teacher tracks student mastery of the aim.			X		

Teacher comments on areas of exceptional performance and areas of growth:

School Leader comments:

Strengths
 Your DI is fast passed and students have many at-bats at sounds and words. You consistently use appropriately leveled texts and questions during reading comp. and Guided Reading. Your word work aims are purposefully chosen to push your students towards the next STEP level and towards your ambitious goals for them. Due to your successful word work lessons, your students have shown great growth in spelling and decoding skills on the STEP assessments. This is paying off in their overall reading growth.

Data and Conferencing
 As described in sections above, I'd love to see you find a consistent and sustainable data gathering system to use and to check in with students on a daily basis in each of your subject areas. You already do this on a consistent basis on guided reading and by gathering data on each student during independent practice in each subject area, you will be able to make purposeful choices on how to intervene with them during conferencing time in future days and weeks. This will help you see even more rapid growth occur with each student.

Independent Reading
 During independent reading time, your students are mostly focused on their books, but often become distracted; their eyes start to wander around the room instead of staying focused on the books. You have such a great system set up already with your independent reading "libraries" and it is so impressive how each student has their very own bin carefully matched to their reading levels. Right now, students are reading with their backs to you so it is difficult to tell when they are truly reading and when they are distracted. By repositioning the spots that students independently read, you will be able to help keep students focused and increase the amount of time that students are reading independently.

Achievement First Coach

Importance of the role

The success of our students depends most importantly on the knowledge, skills, and mindsets of AF's talented teachers and school leaders. AF wants every teacher to be continually learning and developing through clear goal-setting, consistent, regular feedback on his/her teaching, regular reflection and problem-solving, and the opportunity to plan with and learn from their colleagues and subject-area experts. The AF coach will work with the teachers in his/her portfolio to ensure that this happens in a clear, consistent, and systematic way.

Core Responsibilities

Long-Term Teacher Development

- Collaborates with teacher to develop, implement, and reflect on sustained learning plans based on lesson observation and student achievement data
- Meets at least once every other week to check in on progress, debrief learning activities, and adapt plan as necessary
- Supports teacher in developing BHAGs for each class based on subject/grade level BHAGs
- Provides teacher with multiple forms of support over the course of the year, such as videotaping teacher, co-observing other teachers, watching video of exemplars, and sharing curricular or pedagogical resources
- Leads teacher through PGP process and conversation, targeting areas of strength and growth
- Tracks teacher learning and coaching support over time

Co-Planning

- Identifies unit goals and develop unit plans and/or aims sequences to address each goal
- Supports teacher in developing lesson aims, exit tickets, and/or instructional activities
- Provides written feedback on lesson plans as needed

Lesson Observation and Feedback

- Conducts at least one informal observation of 10-20 minutes each week
- Conducts at least four full-class observations over the course of the year
- Follows up on each observation with feedback in person and/or in writing, highlighting specific unlimited positives and 1-2 "big rocks" for future growth

Data Analysis

- Supports teacher in examining student work, observation checklists, exit tickets, and formal assessment data to identify student growth, diagnose challenges, and plan for future instruction and intervention
- Conducts one-on-one data analysis and planning session with teacher each Data Day
- Reviews and approve the teacher's

Other potential responsibilities

Friday Professional Development Leadership

- Provide school leaders with input on how Friday PD activities can best meet the needs of teachers in coaching portfolio
- Lead Friday PD sessions on selected aspects of instruction
- Facilitate grade level/subject area achievement meetings

Data Day Team Leadership

- Facilitates team analysis of achievement data and diagnosis of needs
- Supports team in using the data to collaboratively plan instruction and leverage available resources for intervention

Support

AF Central Support

- AF Central coaching workshops on lesson observation and feedback, long-term teacher development, and instructional practices
- Individualized support as needed from the Director of Teacher Leadership Development

School Site Support

- Frequent communication with school leaders on instructional issues
- Periodic meetings with a school leader and/or other coaches to review coaching goals and problem-solve challenges
- Stipend and potentially one additional prep period (principal discretion)
- Coaches who have additional responsibilities or two or more teachers in their coaching portfolio, could receive an additional stipend and/or additional prep periods

Coach Workshop 2009

Saturday, July 11th

Time	Topic	Owner
9:30 – 10:00	Gather and Breakfast	
10:00 – 11:45	Coaching Teachers to Mastery: Aim: Great Coaches WBAT create focused coaching plans for teachers that lead teachers to mastery of the essentials	Doug and Sara
11:45 – 11:55	Break	
11:55 – 1:15	Coaching the Essentials: Rotation One Aim: Great Coaches WBAT provide hands-on individual professional development that leads teachers to mastery of an Essentials-based learning goal. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims and Exit Tickets – Nancy • Modeling - Guided Practice (I/We) – Kathleen • Student Engagement – Chi 	
1:15 – 1:45	Lunch	
1:45 – 3:05	Coaching the Essentials: Rotation Two <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims and Exit Tickets - Nancy • Modeling - Guided Practice (I/We) – Kathleen • Student Engagement – Chi 	
3:10 – 3:50	Staying Organized as a Coach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you have to keep organized? • Three Coaches' Systems 	Maia
3:50 – 4:00	Feedback and Closing	

**Coaching Workshop
Amistad Academy Middle School
November 14, 2009**

- 9:00-9:10** **Welcome**
- 9:10-10:30** **Coaching Teachers to Mastery (Dacia)**
- 10:30-10:45** **Break/Transition**
- 10:45-11:30** **Video Analysis Protocol**
- Katie – Amistad Multi-Purpose Room
 - Sarah – Amistad Conference Room
 - Morgan – AF Central Conference Room
- 11:30-12:10** **Lunch Discussion Groups**
- Managing time as a coach – Amistad Multi-Purpose Room
 - New coaches – Amistad Conference Room
 - Coaching veteran teachers – AF Central Conference Room
 - Coaching brand new teachers – AF Central Small Meeting Room
- 12:10-1:40** **Coaching to the Essentials Breakout Sessions**
- Attention Getting Moves (Chi) – Amistad Multi-Purpose Room
 - Questioning Scripts (Nancy) – AF Central Conference Room
 - Aligning Instruction to Aims (Alex) – Amistad Conference Room
- 1:40-1:45** **Break/Transition**
- 1:45-2:00** **Closing and Appreciations**



Focus on Coaching Video Analysis Protocol

Why this repeatedly-do?

1. **To continue improving your own coaching skills:**
 - o As a participant, you'll get to see four other coaches in action and regularly participate in collaborative problem solving around how to become more effective coaches.
 - o As a presenter, you'll have the opportunity to get feedback and support from other coaches on a particular challenge or growth area you're working on.
2. **To develop the coaches at your school:**
 - o This repeatedly-do models a protocol that you might use with your own cohort of coaches at your school.
 - o As you discuss what great coaching is with other coaches, you will get ideas and strategies to take back to the coaches at your school.
3. **To leverage the expertise of the principals/coaches in the room:**
 - o This protocol provides a structure for peer-to-peer support and feedback.
 - o Through participating in one small group for the year, you can build on a sustained conversation about how to become more effective coaches.
 - o It's rooted in research on effective adult learning.

As the presenting coach, how should I prepare?

Step One: Think about what your most significant challenges or growth areas are in terms of your coaching skills or strategies. What would you really appreciate getting a small group of smart academic deans/coaches to help you work on? This is a pretty rare opportunity; how can you make it most useful for you?

Examples:

- o Getting teachers to do the heavy lifting during coach meetings
- o Effectively co-planning with teachers
- o Sustaining a focus on a clear learning priority for a teacher over time
- o Differentiating coaching for my most talented teachers
- o Landing the plane
- o Not intimidating or threatening teachers when I land the plane
- o Prioritizing learning needs for a very struggling teacher

Step Two: Decide what aspect of your coaching would be helpful for people to see in order to help you work on this.

Examples:

- o Coach meeting
- o Co-planning session
- o Lesson observation and feedback session
- o Real-time coaching
- o Modeling/co-teaching a lesson

Step Three: Videotape yourself coaching. If you're a novice with a video camera, ask someone with more experience at your school to help.

Step Four: Choose a 10-15 minute excerpt from your video that you think will be most helpful to get feedback on. Remember that the video won't be the only information people will respond to when discussing your focus area. It is just meant to ground the discussion in the real context/practice of your coaching. You may also want to bring materials referred to in the video that would be helpful for your group (agenda, notes, plans, student work, etc).

How can I best choose this excerpt?

- For some focus areas, it will be easy to choose the excerpt. For example, if I'm working on being more direct in landing the plane, I want to share the part of the feedback session where I'm trying to give direct feedback.
- For some focus areas, it will be trickier. For example, if I'm working on better prioritizing learning needs for a struggling teacher, I might show:
 - Us make a learning plan for the next couple weeks together.
 - A feedback session when I'm giving the big rocks
 - The last 10 minutes of the meeting where we focus in on next steps.
- It will lead to a more productive conversation if you show a moment where you struggle or a moment that was complicated or difficult.
- If you're struggling with what excerpt to show, feel free to reach out to Sara for help.

Step Five: Narrow down your focus question to set the small group discussion up to be most helpful. The question should be addressing your coaching skills and strategies. The word "I" should be in the question.

Examples:

- How can I be more supportive and less intimidating in my feedback to new teachers while still being direct about their many raise-the-bars?
- How can I become a stronger co-planner with my teachers in order to improve their lesson planning skills?
- How can I get my teachers to do more of the heavy lifting during coach meetings?
- How can I better maintain a sustained focus on clear learning goals for teachers?

Video Analysis Protocol

Roles

Presenting Coach (whose video is being viewed and discussed by the group)

Facilitator (who participates, but also moves the group through the protocol)

1. Presenting Coach Introduction (10 min)

Present Focus Area

- Presenting coach shares their own current learning goal that they're working on to become a stronger coach. Coach shares any helpful context/examples to illustrate this challenge.
- Participants ask questions to understand the challenge. Coach responds.

Present Video

- Coach shares any helpful context for the excerpt of the video we'll be watching and why they chose the question they did.
- Coach shares focus question for participants to pay attention to when they watch the video.

2. Watch Video (10 - 15 min)

- Participants take notes on video, focusing their observations on the presenter's focus question.

3. Discussion of the Focus Question (20 min)

- Whip Around: Participants share positives from the observation.
- Whip Around: Participants share the evidence that they saw in the video that is relevant to the question.
- Coach asks any follow-up question of the group to better understand their observations.
- Coach and participants engage in conversation directly about focus question and the coach's challenge.

4. Clarify Specific Goals and/or Next Steps for the Coach: (5 min)

- Coach shares what they see as their specific goals as a coach and potential next steps in their work with teachers.
- Whip Around: participants share a take-away they have for their coaching practice.

Performance Improvement Tools Principal's Guide

Purpose



The quality and commitment of our teachers, school leaders, and other staff are what make the real difference in the lives of our scholars. An important component of instructional leadership is providing tailored support to struggling staff members. While this can be a difficult task, identifying staff members who need help and taking the right steps to address their challenges is a critical part of running a successful school. Team Human Capital Management is here to help – we hope that the attached tools and guidelines will be of assistance to you in working with struggling staff members in a supportive and effective way.

Although we invest heavily in recruitment and selection and hope every staff member will be successful, inevitably every principal will encounter staff members with performance issues, ranging from ineffectiveness in the classroom to a lack of professionalism in their workplace. The performance improvement tools should not be viewed as punitive, but as an additional coaching tool that establishes a very clear agreement between you and a struggling staff member. Reasons to adopt guidelines for performance improvement include:

- ✓ Providing a struggling staff member clear guidance on exactly what must happen in order to improve his/her performance
- ✓ Providing everyone involved (e.g., teacher, coach, principal) an additional opportunity to determine if there are optimal alternate arrangements and/or whether this role is appropriate
- ✓ Maintaining a positive school culture by having a transparent and fair Performance Improvement process
- ✓ Ensuring performance issues are dealt with in a way that meets all legal and professional standards

Your best resource through this process is your School Support person, so you should review the performance of any teachers in consideration for a performance improvement plan with your School Support person. Additionally, if you need any more guidance, please feel free to reach out to Erica Williamson, Director of Human Capital Management. If necessary, we can obtain legal advice on any particularly difficult issues.

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When should I use performance improvement tools?

Overview

You should thoroughly review all the contents of this tool in order to prepare to handle a number of performance issues. Ideally, the performance improvement process begins **before** a staff member is placed on performance improvement plan. Performance improvement plans are best used when you would like to see a drastic change in an employee's performance and you also believe that they can make this change. Please keep in mind that these are guidelines, and you'll need to decide what works best in your particular school. Additionally, if there is egregious misconduct or poor performance, there may be a need to act more quickly than going through the entire performance improvement process. Use your discretion and talk with your School Support Person.

Throughout the year, there are several Performance Management activities that will help you systematically identify low performing staff members:

- Talent Review: October
- PGPs: January-March
- Staffing Plan Discussions: December – February

In addition to these activities, you should regularly review the progress of staff members, check-in with coaches of new teachers and meet with other leaders in your school to identify low performing staff members in the early stages.

Identification of Low Performing Staff Members

Generally, there are two categories that performance issues fall into: Instructional performance issues or lack of professionalism. Often a struggling staff member may exhibit behaviors that fall under both categories. In addition to examples listed in the chart below, the metrics on the PGP can be a useful resource for identifying specific behaviors of struggling staff members.

<i>Instructional performance issues*</i>	<i>Lack of professionalism</i>	<i>Recommended Action</i>
Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students not showing progress towards strong academic growth (e.g., IAs, classroom tests, HW) • Not understanding/using Essentials of Instruction after intense coaching • Not understanding/using Cycles of Highly Effective Teaching after intense coaching • Not making steady progress towards individual goals • Failure to engage parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missing meetings or unapproved absences • Tardiness • Negative attitude • Lack of collaboration with other team members • Delayed email and voicemail responses • Improper conduct with students 	If these behaviors persist after coaching or are not typical for someone with a comparable level of experience (e.g., 1 st year teacher), begin the performance improvement plan.
Serious Offenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor classroom management that leads to unsafe conditions • Unethical behavior (e.g., fabricating student assessments) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple unapproved absences • Harassing coworkers, students or parents • Engaging in illegal behaviors while working (e.g., drinking) 	Grounds for termination and not suitable for performance improvement plans

*teacher specific behaviors

How should I use performance improvement tools?

Summary of Toolkit Contents

In addition to the guide for principals, the following items are provided to you in the [Performance Improvement Toolkit](#).

- ✓ Performance Improvement Plan Memo & Action Plan
- ✓ Performance Improvement Plan Review Memo
- ✓ Case Studies including completed Performance Improvement Plans & Action Plans (In Progress)

Dos & Don'ts of using performance improvement tools

If used properly, performance improvement tools will help you ensure that there is a great teacher in front of every classroom. However, improper usage can potentially damage a promising teacher's self-confidence and hurt the overall school culture.

Do's

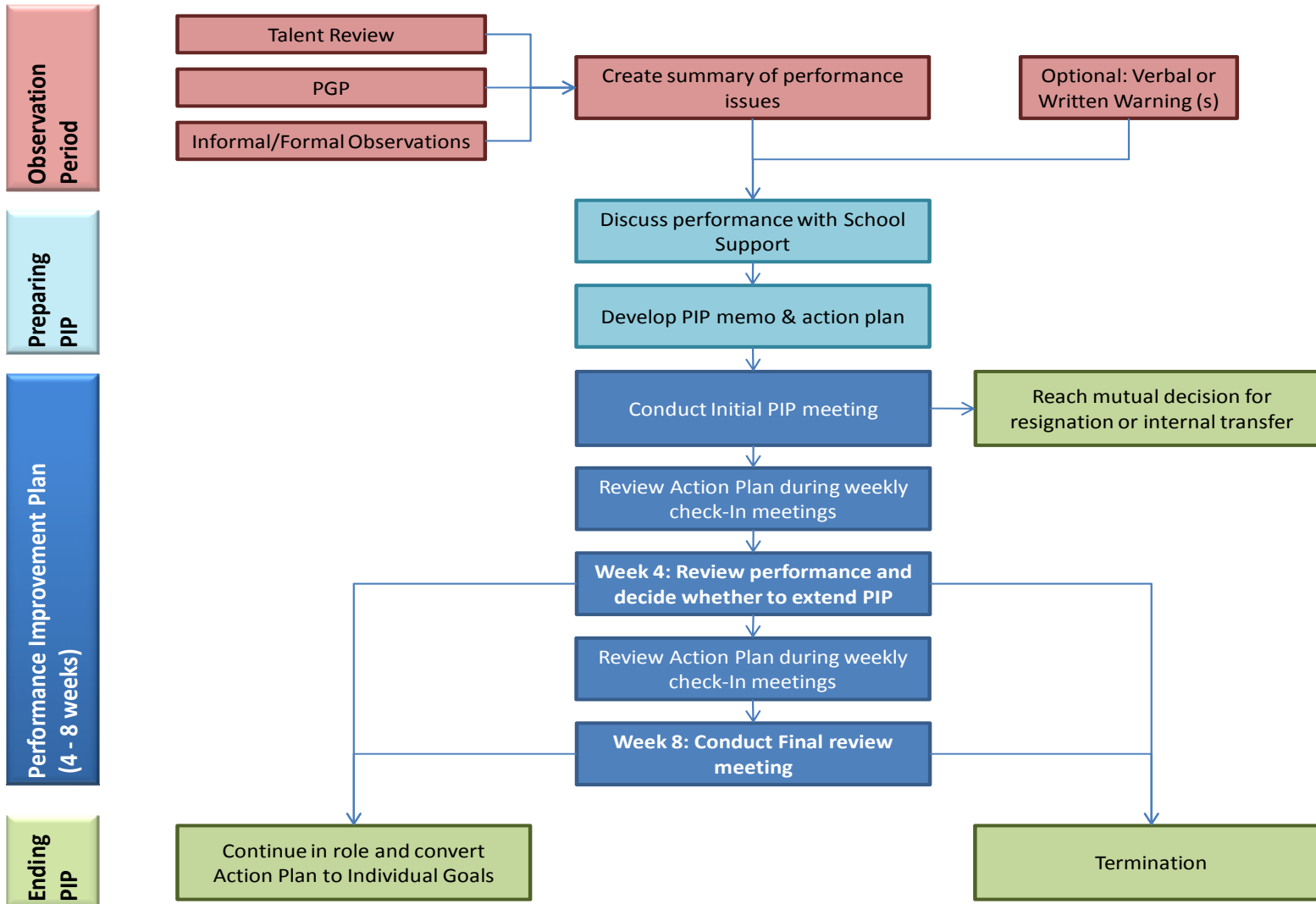
- ✓ **Use discretion.** PIP's should only be shared with your school support person, other members of the school leadership team and Erica Williamson (Team Human Capital Management). Also, a PIP does not mean someone will lose their job so discussions about a person on a PIP should remain positive and constructive.
- ✓ **Show compassion.** Sometimes, letting someone out of the wrong job is the best thing you can do for your school and the staff member. Find out what you can do to support the staff member through the process.
- ✓ **Act consistently.** If there is a performance issue, it should have been brought to the teacher's attention before in a PGP, coaching session, verbal warning, etc. Nothing in a PIP should be a surprise.
- ✓ **Act early.** While warnings are helpful in most cases, there are some expectations that have been clearly laid out for teachers and could warrant a PIP if missed. For instance, if a teacher has done zero planning for a class with no explanation, this is rationale to start a PIP.
- ✓ **Link to AF Values.** Frame performance issues with AF values in mind. Provide the struggling staff member with the implications of his or her performance on AF's mission.
- ✓ **Stay objective.** Focus on behavior not personal characteristics. (e.g., "It takes Stephanie longer than expected to..." vs "Stephanie is lazy")
- ✓ **Get buy in.** Someone starting a PIP must be committed to dramatically improving his or her performance. After introducing the PIP & action plan, give the staff member 24 hours to reflect on their desire to stay at AF in this role before starting.
- ✓ **Remember documentation is important.** If everything is well documented, we can feel confident that we have transparent systems that other staff members believe in, which is a good management practice.

Don'ts

- ✓ Staff members should not be placed on multiple performance improvement plans. If this happens, we need to seriously consider his/her continuation at AF.
- ✓ Do not have difficult conversations on Friday. Generally, it's better to give someone the opportunity to follow up the next day instead of letting them stew all weekend.
- ✓ Do not create unnecessary work in order to document the process. Documentation should include existing evaluations, email exchanges or summaries of your observations. Other inputs into this process can include:
 - Parental Complaints
 - Peer Reviews (360)
 - Work Samples
- ✓ Do not send any disparaging or non-constructive emails to colleagues that you would not want shared in a legal setting.

Recommended process for performance improvement plans

Below is the recommended process for performance improvement plans. Please review this process in light of each specific situation as you may have to make modifications.



Observation Period

Recommended Time Period: Highly variable

Once you've identified problematic performance issues that cannot be addressed through the regular coaching process:

1. Fill out a preliminary summary of performance issues (template provided in PIP Initial Review Memo)
 - a. **Objective: Comprehensively capture all persistent performance issues as well as double-check that reasonable efforts have been made to make the staff member aware of the performance issues through coaching and feedback.**
 - b. It's important to identify performance issues early, so you should begin creating this summary as early as possible.
 - c. Using discretion, share this with any other school leaders who supervise the staff member (e.g., coach) for feedback.
2. Provide the staff member with a written warning that summarizes the performance issues to date (see example in appendix).
 - a. **Objective: Clearly communicate that the performance to date has been below expectations and his or her job is at risk if there is not significant improvement. Often a staff member recognizes they are struggling, however, a written warning letter will put his or her performance into perspective.**
 - b. Note, this step is not necessary to begin a performance improvement plan, however, before you start a PIP, you will want to make sure reasonable effort has been made to communicate expectations to the staff member.
 - c. This warning should not be used to introduce new strategies for improvement – the primary purpose of this warning is to clearly express the severity of the situation (however, you can reference any strategies that had been discussed previously).
 - d. (Optional) This can also be a verbal warning and communicated by another school leader (e.g., during a coaching session) however, you should follow-up the verbal warning with an email, if possible.
3. Continue to monitor the struggling staff member for improvement.

Modifications for starting performance improvement plans after PGPs:

The PGP can serve as the written warning and the summary of performance issues. There should be strong language in the PGP that the staff member is underperforming and will need to begin a performance improvement plan to continue at AF (e.g., they should not have mostly 1's and 2's).

Preparing PIP

Recommended Time Period: 1 week or less

After continued lack of improvement using coaching and feedback:

1. Use the summary of performance issues to create the PIP memo and action plan. Templates and examples are available [here on the shared server](#).
2. In some situations, you may need to reduce someone's work or teaching load. If this is the case, you'll need to create an alternate plan ahead of time to ensure that the staff member's responsibilities are still covered.
3. Review PIP memo, action plan and any warning letters with your School Support person.
4. Send the PIP memo and action plan to Erica Williamson (Team Human Capital Management).
5. As soon as possible, schedule a meeting with the staff member to discuss their performance. Do not send the memo and action plan before the meeting.

Performance Improvement Plan

Recommended Time Period: (4-8 weeks)

1. Conduct initial performance improvement plan meeting with staff member.
 - a. **Objective: Review performance issues and inform the staff member that the only way they can stay in his or her role is to go on a PIP.**
 - b. This meeting should be in person, at least 60 minutes, and cover the entire PIP memo and action plan.
 - c. After the meeting, email the PIP memo and action plan.
 - d. Since buy-in is really important for improvement, give the staff member until the next day to decide whether they want to continue and propose any modifications to the action plan (Note, avoid scheduling this meeting on Friday).
 - e. (Optional) You may want to consider modifying the action plan based on feedback from the staff member.
2. Begin performance improvement plan once the teacher has signed the PIP memo.

Helpful talking points for the PIP meeting

- Get straight to the point and begin by describing performance issues using your summary in the PIP Memo.
- Provide implications of his or her poor performance on your school's overall impact.
- Ask the staff member to say, in his own words, what specifically he will do to change his behavior. "In your own words what you will do differently as a result of this discussion? What will the outcome that I can anticipate look like if you are successful in making the changes? (This can empower the employee to change himself. By approaching the change in this way, the employee is setting his own standards by which he will assess his own behavior.).
- Supplement the staff member's assessment with your own thoughts on specific actions using the prepared action plan.
- If it becomes clear during this discussion that successful completion of the PIP is not likely, you can offer severance to the staff member if he or she resigns now.
- End on positive note by emphasizing that you believe the staff member can meet your high expectations with additional hard work.

During the 4 weeks:

1. Observe staff member's performance several times per week.
2. Optional: Ask your school support person to observe their performance, planning documents etc.
3. Schedule weekly check-ins to review progress on the action plan.
 - a. Make modifications to the action plan, as necessary. You and the staff member should agree on any modifications.
 - b. When reviewing performance on action plan, make sure to highlight accomplishments as well as areas for continued growth.
4. Staff member should continue any existing feedback or coaching sessions.

Performance Improvement Plan, cont.

After 4 weeks:

1. Review progress to date with your school support person to determine whether there has been sufficient improvement. If the staff member has shown no improvement, you should end the PIP and move to termination. Only staff members who have shown progress should be allowed to continue for 4 more weeks.
2. Depending on the outcome of the PIP, draft the PIP review memo and send it to your school support person and Erica Williamson (Team Human Capital Management).
 - a) Outcome 1: Successful Improvement – End PIP and transfer the items on the action plan to individual goals
 - b) Outcome 2: Modest Improvement - Update the original PIP memo to reflect the extended end date for the PIP. Meet with the staff member to review the action plan and progress to date. Staff member will need to resign the revised PIP Memo.
 - c) Outcome 3: Termination – Draft PIP review memo to reflect the decision to terminate for poor performance. See the termination guidelines for Performance Improvement Plans for more information.
3. Conduct the PIP Review
 - a. **Objective: Clearly communicate next steps for the staff member**
4. Have the staff member sign the PIP review and put a copy in his or her personnel files.

After 8 weeks:

4. Review progress to date with your school support person to determine whether there has been sufficient improvement
5. Draft the PIP review memo and send it to your school support person.
 - a) Send to Erica Williamson (Team Human Capital Management) for review.
6. Conduct the PIP Review
 - b. **Objective: Clearly communicate next steps for the staff member**
 - 1) If there has been significant improvement, end the PIP and transfer the items on the action plan to individual goals
 - 2) If you believe the staff member is not going to improve, tell the staff member they will be terminated
5. Have the staff member sign the PIP review and put a copy in his or her personnel files.

Ending PIP

Continuing with AF

1. Modify the action plan into a weekly planning document.
2. Although the PIP has ended, you should still pay close attention to this staff member for any warning signs.

Termination

1. Refer to the Termination Guidelines for Performance Improvement Plan for more information.

Additional guidance for difficult situations

It's impossible to anticipate all possible scenarios for performance improvement plans, however, several common difficult issues are addressed below. If you still have questions, please reach out to your school support person.

What if a staff member wants to contest his or her placement on a PIP or a termination decision resulting from the PIP?

Talk with your school support person.

What if a staff member feels they are being singled out for any reason?

Tell the staff member that the Performance Improvement Plan is a standard process used across AF that has been vetted by other principals, AF Central leaders and our legal counsel.

If someone asks this question, you'll want to understand whether he or she believes there is unfair treatment. Generally, there are two major categories for wrongful terminations that a disgruntled employee may claim led to his or her termination:

- **Discrimination:** defined as discrimination based on an individual's race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, disability, genetic information, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, age, sex, or on any other classification protected by law.
- **Retaliation:** punishment of an employee for engaging in a protected activity, such as filing a discrimination charge or opposing unlawful employer practices.

If you are concerned that one of your staff members feels they are being treated unfairly for one of the above reasons, tell your school support person or Erica Williamson (Team Human Capital Management)

What do I do if someone requests to have his or her lawyer become involved in this process (e.g., attend check-in meeting, revise PIP language, etc)?

They are welcome to review any documents you provide to an employee however, it is our policy to not meet with lawyers during routine review meetings. If they insist, contact Erica Williamson, Director of Human Capital Management, who will notify our legal counsel.

What if a staff member improves while on a PIP but almost immediately returns to performing poorly after the PIP has ended?

You will have to use your discretion and talk with your school support person to determine whether this person should be placed on another PIP or terminated. Generally, if the staff member is showing the same signs of poor performance and there haven't been any significant work changes (e.g., changing grade level) you do not need to start another PIP.

Appendix: Written warning email

Dear <Enter Name>,

This letter serves as notification that some of your recent behaviors have not met my expectations for you. On <date>, you <specify actual issues or incidents that led to the warning>.

Immediately, I would like to see an improvement in your performance by <detail specific actions for improvement>.

You are not being placed on a formal improvement plan and I believe you can improve your performance to meet my expectations. However, I wanted to use this letter to clearly inform you of several missed expectations. If immediate and sustained improvement in your behavior is not realized, you will be subject to further disciplinary actions up to and including placement on a performance improvement plan or termination of employment. I consider this to be confidential and will only share this letter with <your manager>.

Please let me know if you would like to further discuss your performance and necessary actions for improvement.

Sincerely,

<Your Name>

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN

Staff member's name:

Staff member's position:

Manager's name:

PIP Start Date:

This document accompanies the PIP Memo. When the manager begins writing the Performance Improvement Plan, he/she should fill in the first two columns of the action plan. As the action plan progresses, the manager will fill in the status columns at the end of weeks 1, 2, 3 and 4. At the end of week 4, the manager and staff member will review overall progress during the PIP final review.

Expectation/Goal for Improvement Period	Specific Key Steps	Status at end of Week 1	Status at end of Week 2	Status at end of Week 3	Status at end of Week 4

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN MEMO

This document contains SAMPLE WORDING highlighted in yellow

Staff member's name:

Staff member's position:

Manager's name:

Date:

This memo serves as a summary of performance concerns to date and as written notification of the resultant action plan. The concerns that triggered a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) are based on my observations over the last <time period>, our conversations over that time period, and significant concerns raised by <other parties> during that time.

Summary of Performance Concerns

The primary purpose of this memo is to summarize our discussion on <date> about your performance. Your performance has been below expectations given your experience and your level of responsibility. My expectations for the level of your work are high and I believe you have the experience and skills to succeed as <title>. Additionally, I know you feel the same sense of high expectations for your own performance, and I want to be clear that we are trying to meet a high level of performance rather than just getting things done. It is in the best interest of our scholars that we create a plan for your immediate improvement.

Although, these performance concerns have been previously raised to you several times before in <regular check-ins/coaching session/etc>, you have not improved your performance to meet expectations. Moreover, these concerns were raised to you in the <written/verbal> warning email I shared with you on <date>. For the purposes of creating the PIP, I would like to review a detailed summary of my concerns with your performance to date, which is included below. I've only included a subset of all expectations required of teachers. All of these expectations have been laid out for you in the Essentials of Effective Teaching.

<Insert summary of performance concerns using template below or other detailed summary of performance>

Project/Job Responsibility Area	Relevant Expectations	Your Performance (including specific meetings, dates and interactions)
Planning & Data Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sends all thorough, written, daily lesson plans to your coach at the beginning of the week 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your coach did not receive lesson plans the following weeks: January 1, January 21, January 28. During the other weeks, between January 1 and now, your coach sporadically received lesson plans. When the superintendent visited your class on February 7, you could not provide a written lesson plan.
Instructional Excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of students are on-task and at least 80% of students' hands are in the air 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During many of my observations you only lectured scholars and were not asking enough questions. During your coaching session on February 1, your coach specifically addressed this issue with you. Your coach recorded class participation for your classes last week and on average, 75% of students are on-task and 25% of students' hands are in the air

Parent Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call 5 families a week with a positive message about their scholar. Each family receives a positive phone call each month. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In January, you only called half of your scholar's parents.
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Next Steps

Decision Point

You have two possible next steps. First, if you decide after reflection that the job is not a good fit for your skills and interests, then we should establish a reasonable transition plan. Alternatively, if you determine that you want to remain in your current position and work to improve your performance then we should immediately start working towards the action plan, which is summarized below and detailed in an attached document.

You will need to reflect on your commitment to work towards improving your performance and let me know your decision before the end of **<tomorrow's date>** by returning this signed memo. If you choose to not return this signed memo by tomorrow, we will need to immediately begin discussing a transition plan.

Performance Improvement Action Plan

Below I've outlined my expectations for your performance over the next four weeks. These expectations are also included on the attached action plan, which clearly explains key next steps in order for you to be successful. If you decide you would like to continue in your role, this plan will begin immediately. Please let me know as soon as possible if you have any questions about this, or if you would like to discuss further where your focus should be over the next four weeks.

<Copy expectations to action plan>

• **Planning Data & Analysis**

- o Completes thorough, written, daily lesson plans at the beginning of the week
- o Deeply knows the standards and the scope and sequence (for own grade/subject and the grades one year before and one year after) and uses this information to modify plans.

Changes to Work Responsibilities

In order to ensure you can improve your level of performance as well as make sure we're keeping the interest of our scholars first, I am making the following changes to your work load:

- Reduce teaching load from 4 classes to 3 classes
- **<2nd Change>**

Additional Support Provided

If you decide that you would like to work towards the action plan, I am committed to providing you with the resources necessary to help you meet your goals. You will receive the following types of additional support:

- Training on XY date
- **<2nd Support Provided>**

Weekly Check-Ins and Formal PIP Review

Every week, you, **<any other school leaders involved>**, and I will have a check-in to review progress against the action plan. On or before, **<PIP End Date (4 weeks)>**, we will have a formal review of your progress on the Performance Improvement Plan. The potential outcomes are that we could determine that we are pleased with the progress and want to set a longer work

plan to keep working toward full improvement. Or we could determine that the position is not an appropriate fit and that it does not make sense for you to continue in your role.

Conclusion

We are implementing this PIP in an effort to help you to operate at a level that will allow you to perform at a high level that meets expectations and ultimately, ensure the best outcomes for our scholars. My concerns are catalogued above and the goal of this plan is to more carefully explain my expectations for your work. However, I am hopeful that you can make the changes necessary to improve your work and to make your work experience successful and more satisfying

I encourage you to really think critically about whether you have the desire and drive to do this job effectively given the constraints inherent in the position. We talked about some of the struggles you have had in your role. If you do, then I think this plan will provide a good starting point. If you do not, though – if you decide with an honest assessment that this role is not the right fit for you, then I think we should talk about a transition timeline that would work for you.

Performance Improvement Period

This document and the attached action plan serve as official notification that I am placing you on a Performance Improvement Plan. We will work under this plan for a period of four weeks beginning <X> and ending <X>. I consider this to be confidential and will share it only with my manager <your manager> and the school leadership team. Additionally, a record of this PIP will be placed in your Personnel Records.

Commitment to Performance Improvement Plan

By signing this Performance Improvement Plan Memo, I attest that I understand all the expectations of this role, as they have been explained in this document, and commit to following the steps laid out in the action plan, with the goal of improving my performance over the next four weeks.

Staff Member Signature

Date

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN REVIEW MEMO

This document can be used for 3 PIP outcomes – choose 1 and change the highlighted sections

Staff member's name:

Staff member's position:

Manager's name:

Date:

This memo serves as a summary of your progress on the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), beginning on **<start date>** and ending on **<end date>**. The purpose of this review is to assess your progress and determine the next steps for your role at AF.

Summary of Performance to Date

On **<date of initial meeting>**, we outlined clear expectations and key next steps for the previous four weeks in action plan. Every week, we met to review your progress on the action plan as well as update the next steps to continue pushing you to a higher level of performance. Based on your performance over the past four weeks, I have summarized my assessment of your performance on the PIP below. **<Choose 1 from below or insert your own summary>**

- Outcome 1: Overall, you have met or exceeded my expectations for your performance. I feel you have made sufficient progress on the PIP so it will end on **<date>**. We will transfer the next steps from the action plan to your individual goals. Although, you will not longer be on a PIP, you must still keep up the same level of work since I expect this type of performance from you in your role.
- Outcome 2: Overall, you have made modest performance improvements on the PIP, however, you still have not fully met my expectations for your role. I do believe that you are capable of growing to meet my high expectations for you; however, you will need to remain on a PIP for another four weeks. If you decide that you still want to continue in this role, we will need to update your action plan, which will begin immediately.
- Outcome 3: Overall, you have not met my expectations for your performance and I do not believe that an additional period on a PIP will result in the necessary improvement for you to succeed in your job. I've outlined my expectations and assessment of your performance in the initial PIP memo and the action plan.

Next Steps

Choose one outcome below:

<If outcome 1: Successful Improvement>

I'm glad that you will be continuing with us in your current role. As I have mentioned earlier, I truly believe you have the skills to be successful in this role. Your performance over the past four weeks has shown that you can perform at a high level; however, you will need to sustain this level of performance to continue to be successful. We will transfer the next steps from the action plan to your individual goals. You will return to a normal feedback cycle with intense coaching starting today.

We made the following modifications to your job responsibilities. <Describe any alternate arrangements that were agreed on during the PIP>. Going forward, we will <Provide rationale for alternate arrangements going forward>.

As I mentioned earlier, I believe that you can be successful in this role and help us fulfill our mission at AF. If you ever feel like you need additional support, please feel free to reach out to me at anytime.

I acknowledge that I understand the review of my performance on the PIP and I am committed to remaining at AF in my current role with the alternate arrangement that have been described above.

Staff Member Signature

Date

<If outcome 2: Continued PIP>

Update the original PIP memo to reflect the extended end date for the PIP. Meet with the staff member to review the action plan and progress to date. Staff member will need to resign the revised PIP Memo.

<If outcome 3: Termination>

I regret having to inform you that you will no longer be able to continue in your role at AF. I have been very clear about my expectations and given you multiple opportunities to improve your performance. This memo serves as written notification that the effective date of your termination will be <termination effective date>.

You will be paid your earned compensation through the Termination Date. This payment will be made to you on the next payroll disbursement, which will be {Next Payroll Date}. AF coverage of your benefits will end on your Termination Date, however, you have the option to elect to continue coverage under COBRA.

You are eligible for severance pay, which is described in more detail in the Separation Agreement and General Release. You will only receive this severance pay if you sign and return this agreement. Except for the compensation, payments and benefits set forth in this memo, you shall not to be entitled to any future compensation, payments or benefits from AF.

On or before the Termination Date you will return to AF cardkey passes, door and file keys, computer(s) with all files complete and intact, computer access codes or disks and instructional manuals and other physical or personal property that you received in connection with your employment with AF that you have in your possession, and you shall not retain any copies, duplicates, reproductions or excerpts thereof. AF will reimburse you in accordance with its existing policies for any legitimate expenses you incurred on AF business prior to the Termination Date.

It is AF's policy to protect its student information and other confidential information as vigorously as possible. [Please remember that you've agreed to a confidentiality policy in the AF Employee Handbook on condition of your job offer].

Should you have any questions regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact me, either in writing or by telephone.

Sincerely,

Manager Name
Title

Date

Teacher Learning Plan

Teacher:

Coach:

Date:



Teacher Learning Focus Area(s):

Aligned to the Essential:

What are the indicators of excellence/mastery?	Support for the Teacher		
	Weeks	Focus of Coaching Meetings	Other Support
<hr/> <p>How will we assess this?</p>			
Next Potential Learning Goal:			

Teacher Learning Plan

Teacher: Sara Newbie

Coach: Doug

Date: September 28th



Teacher Learning Goal(s): **Create and Maintain Tight Classroom Routines (esp. first 10 minutes & IR)**

Aligned to the Essential: **Classroom Culture**

What Are the Indicators of Excellence/Mastery?	Support for the Teacher		
	Weeks	Focus of Coaching Support	Other Support (observations, readings, study groups, external PD, etc.)
<p>Routines During First 10 Minutes of Class:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher has a clear, written plan that details routines Automatic and Calm – kids know what to expect/how to come into room/how to start class, have practiced routines, 100% on task Supported by materials that have already been prepared to save time (aims, do-now, visual anchor) 	1	<p><u>Regular Coaching Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting clear on what excellence will look like – watch Taxonomy clips together <p><u>Extra two-hour coaching/planning session</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ultra-specific co-planning for a few routines focused on first 10 minutes of class Initial planning for how Sara will explicitly teach routines to students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch Janice Jones teach – come back with detailed notes on her routines Watch additional Taxonomy videos on own – topics of Strong Voice & 100% Bring issue to Grade Level Team meeting to ask for help
<p>Routines during Independent Reading Are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tight – and ensure that 100% of scholars are reading, in the zone, with no/minimal distractions Ensuring that all scholars begin IR prepared with their books Not wasting time with scholars looking for books – scholars check out books at other times 	2 - 3	<p><u>Coach Models Teaching</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doug models first 10 minutes routines Debriefing and reflection of modeling <p><u>Real-time coaching on 3-4 lessons</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doug provides real-time coaching Debrief and reflection of real-time coaching <p><u>Regular Coaching Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-planning for re-teaching of IR routines Debrief of Sara's observation of Janice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued observations of beginning classroom routines of Janice Jones Talk to grade level team members to ask for best practices / common norms around for independent reading
<p>How will we assess this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through a thoughtful detailed plan that outlines the what and why of the above routines Through 3 lesson observations that assess the above indicators 	4	<p><u>Lesson Observation and Feedback</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued lesson observations and feedback (3 20 min chunks) focused on beginning of class and IR <p><u>Regular Coaching Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-assessment: are we seeing tight routines/improvement/excellence? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observations of Mike Michaels's stellar IR classroom Reading short excerpt of Fountas and Pinnel's <i>Guiding Readers</i>
Next Potential Learning Goal	Create and Maintain Tight Classroom Routines for Dismissal and Transitions		

Teacher Learning Plan

Teacher: Doug Veteran

Coach: Sara

Date: October 3rd



Teacher Learning Focus Area(s): **Increase Academic Rigor through Rigorous Questioning**
 Aligned to the Essential: **Academic Rigor**

What are the indicators of excellence/mastery?	Support for the Teacher		
	Weeks	Focus of Coaching Meetings	Other Support
<p>Teacher Preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doug plans questions into lesson in advance with a range of low-level and high-level (analysis, interpretation, evaluation) questions Doug creates high-level essential questions that drive student learning throughout a unit. 	1-2	<p><u>Regular Coach Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Getting clear on what excellence looks like for this Essential/learning goal Reconnect with Mr. Bloom ☺ <p><u>Focused Lesson Observation</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sara observes lessons, gathering data on questioning types (Bloom's) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doug videotapes his lesson and gathers data on his questioning types (Bloom's)
<p>Instruction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doug stretches questions and student answers (Why? How did you come to that conclusion? Where do you find evidence in the text for that?) while still maintaining a well-paced and focused lesson Students are engaged, thinking critically and deeply understanding content and concepts 	3-4	<p><u>Regular Coach Meeting</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sara and Doug share data on frequency of questioning types they saw in Doug's lesson Sara and Doug look at lesson plans for next week and plan high-level question types and stretch-it opportunities into lessons <p><u>Lesson Observation and Feedback</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sara observes lessons and gives feedback on questioning types and Doug's use of the "stretching it" instructional strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doug observes rockstar Valerie Vaughn focusing his observation on questioning types Doug gathers examples of strong lesson plans with rigorous questions from Valerie Doug watches the Taxonomy videos around "Stretching It"
<p>How will we assess this?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through analysis of lesson plans Through lesson observations by multiple people focused on questioning types 	5-6	<p><u>Feedback on Lesson Plans</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sara focuses her feedback on Doug's lesson plans around questioning types <p><u>Regular Coach Meeting/Co-Planning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sara and Doug brainstorm key essential questions for an upcoming unit Co-Assessment: Are we seeing increased rigor/excellence? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Doug asks Valerie to come and observe his lesson and give him feedback on his questioning
Next Potential Learning Goal:	Develop Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions for Future Unit Plans		



AF LEADERSHIP FELLOWS PROGRAM 2009-10

Purpose

The Achievement First Leadership Fellows program is designed to recognize and support our stellar teachers who are interested in developing and exercising their school leadership skills. Fellows will participate in a one-year program of professional learning that seeks to develop the essential knowledge, skills, and mindsets identified in the AF Leadership Success Factors. The purpose of the Leadership Fellows program is to invest in strong teachers who serve our schools as team leaders, instructional coaches, and future school leaders.

Program Themes and Components:

1. Leadership Fellows will **deepen problem-solving skills and knowledge** by:
 - Exploring leadership dilemmas with a small group of colleagues
 - Analyzing case studies from the perspectives of various stakeholder
 - Taking on “stretch opportunities” and new responsibilities at their school sites

2. Leadership Fellows will **build communication skills** by:
 - Sharing their own leadership stories
 - Learning how successful leaders give feedback, share their visions, and build community at their schools
 - Trying out observation and feedback strategies at their school sites

3. Leadership Fellows will **practice aligning time to values** by:
 - Participating in workshops with network leaders
 - Practicing personal effectiveness strategies in the context of their everyday work
 - Reflecting on and sharing best practices throughout the year

4. Leadership Fellows will **explore career pathways** by:
 - Analyzing their own strengths and growth areas through a 360° feedback process
 - Interacting with a wide range of school leaders in workshops, panels, and informal social settings
 - Shadowing school leaders in a variety of roles

5. Leadership Fellows **develop support networks** by:
 - Working collaboratively with peers to develop innovative responses to leadership challenges
 - Consulting with school-site leaders
 - Participating in cohort learning and social events



Achievement First
Leadership Fellows 2008-2009
360° Feedback Report

Feedback For: [Name]
Report Generated: [Date]



360 Feedback Overview

Achievement First Leadership Fellows

Goal-Setting and Planning

Overall: 3.3

Sets clear, smart goals around instruction and school culture and invests the planning and organizing time needed to reach those goals; aligns their time to their long-term goals and builds action plans for the future based on reflection and lessons learned.

Communication and Feedback

Overall: 3.4

Has strong interpersonal skills and can communicate effectively to large groups, as well as to individuals in one-on-one difficult conversations; understands the importance of feedback, regularly giving positive and constructive feedback and actively seeking feedback from others.

Investment and Vision

Overall: 3.5

Invests students, families, and staff in an organization's mission, core values, and everyday work; has a clear vision of academic and school culture excellence and builds people's commitment to working towards that vision.

Analytic and Creative Problem Solving:

Overall: 3.4

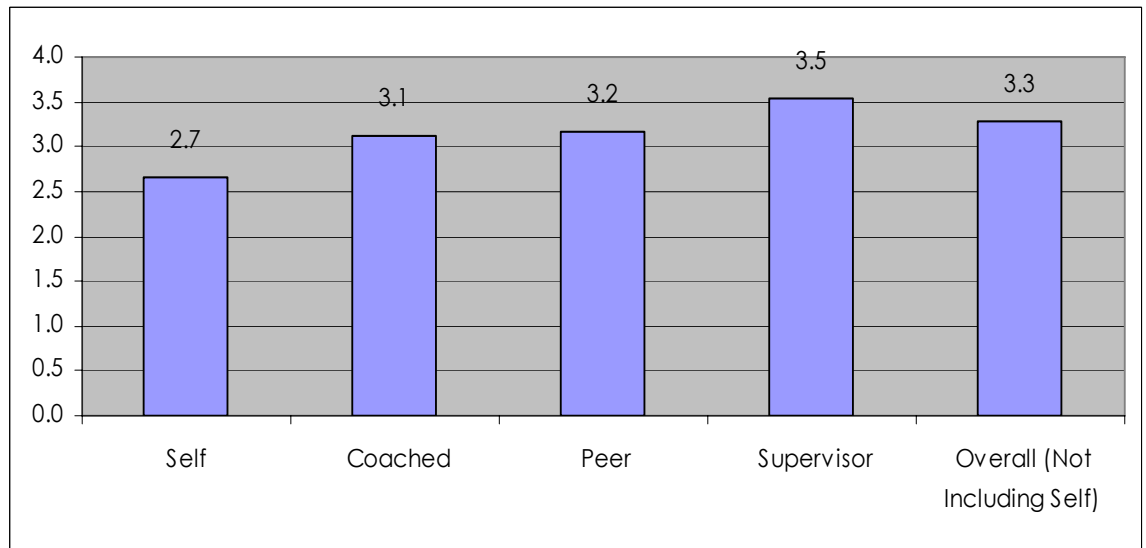
Approaches problems with a solution-oriented attitude and is able to maintain calm and optimism in the face of conflicts and challenges; responds flexibly to changes in the school environment and considers the impact of his or her actions and decisions on the many stakeholders in the school community.

360 Feedback: Overall Comments

- She was extremely influential in my success as a teacher. She led by example, was willing to help out and created an extremely welcoming environment for anyone she encountered. My first year of teaching would not be the same without her. She was a leader and a friend. She gave tough feedback and slipped me helpful advice on a regular basis. She is a natural leader.
- She has a fantastic natural ability to relate to students with exceptionally struggles.
- She is a pro. I love working with her. She challenges me, respects me, disagrees with me, listens to me and we solve problems together. I'd like to see her start to guide other teachers to the "right" or "best" answers and ideas as well as lead them to drawing conclusions. We as a leadership group often "tell" the "answers" rather than lead our teachers to their own answers which is more lasting and powerful.
- She is a major asset in our school. This is a huge year for her as she is taking on multiple new leadership roles in the school. I look forward to watching her grow and would love to see her aggressively pursue her own professional and personal growth this year. She has lots of talent and immense potential. She has been a key player in building the school from the ground up. She can leverage this knowledge in many ways to push us further as a school and to push herself further as a teacher-leader.

Goal-setting and Planning

Key	
Exceptional	4
Meets Expectations	3
Some Improvement Needed	2
Considerable Improvement Needed	1



Competencies	Self	Coached or Led By	Peer	Supervisor	Overall (Not Self)
Sets and models high expectations for student behavior and character development.	3.0	3.5	4.0	4.0	3.8
Sets clear, measurable, motivating BHAGs (Big Hairy Audacious Goals) for student academic achievement at the beginning of the year.	3.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	3.7
Keeps goals front and center and regularly assesses student progress toward them.	2.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Never makes excuses when goals aren't met, but rather, rallies his/herself and the team to improve and recommit to achieving them.	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.5	3.3
Aligns their time spent to their long term goals.	2.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Rigorously analyzes data on student and class performance in order to inform instructional goals and planning.	3.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	3.7
Has a robust personal organization system that ensures all tasks or "To Do" items are captured, prioritized, and ultimately accomplished.	2.0	2.5	2.0	3.5	2.7
Breaks down big priorities and large projects to make them more manageable.	3.0	2.5	3.0	3.5	3.0
Follows through on commitments.	3.0	3.0	3.0	4.0	3.3
Is on time and prepared for meetings and other deadlines.	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Carves out regular time for reflection.	2.0	2.5	2.0	3.5	2.7
Thoughtfully builds action plans for the future based on reflection and lessons learned.	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.5	3.2
OVERALL	2.7	3.1	3.2	3.5	3.3



Goal-setting and Planning: 360 Feedback Comments

Areas of Strength:

- She has big goals set at the beginning of the year as well as personal goals for each student. She does a good job of being prepared for her classes and seems to be well planned for each lesson.
- She evaluates and regular refers to data driven results when determining student strategies for academic success.
- She is incredibly sharp in responding to individualized student needs. She quickly puts into effective action any data she gets. She knows where she wants to take the kids and that is the driving force of her instruction and inspiration in the day to day. She's very invested in and thoughtful about goal-setting and the planning required to get there.
- She LOVES Data and she uses all of the data collected to inform and drive her planning and goal-setting. It makes goals realistic and attainable.
- She has high standards for achievement and has become the champion of the "struggling learner" at the school. She has a clear picture of what an excellent classroom culture looks like and she models it in Georgetown, on the 6th grade team, and as a school culture leader. She is reflective and has very solid follow through. She uses data well -- but I would still like her to develop her expertise in both reading data and in guiding us to collect the right data for assessing our struggling learner progress.
- She is prepared and organized coming into any meeting. She insist on forward planning from herself but also from the team. This ensures that our projects runs smoothly and our goals are accomplished.
- **Self:** I have a clear vision and goals for where our scholars should be by the end of the year.

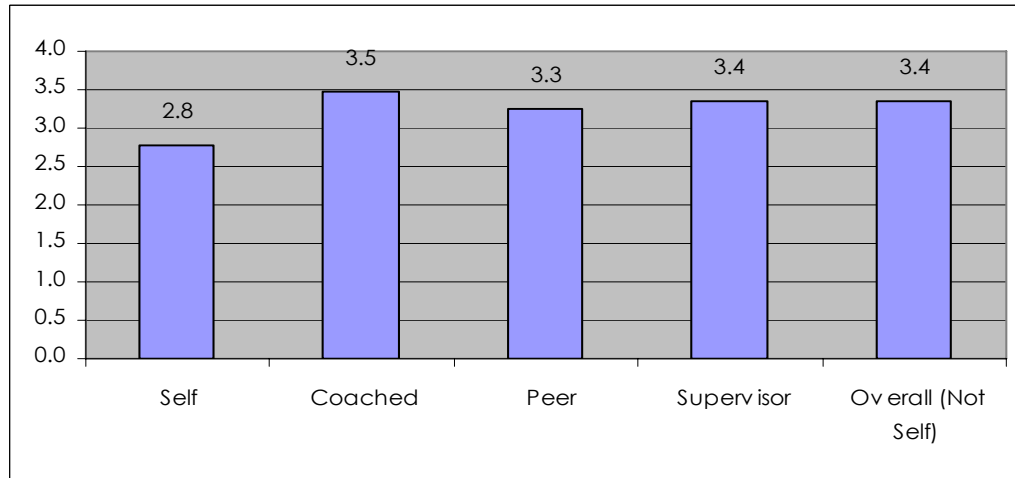
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Areas for Growth:

- Maybe work on creating clear long term plans for each of the classes.
- She could get even further ahead in planning and then catalogue it. She could look beyond her class (and is beginning to do so) and think grade-wise, subject-wise, school-wide.
- She is great at figuring out what needs to be done and getting things done eventually. Being more timely about tasks.
- While she has been tireless in her pursuit of achievement for her students, she/we still haven't been able to make life-transforming academic impacts on these students. As her experience / expertise grows, I hope she will be able to assess "potential" in learners and be able to set realistic stretch goals for her/our "struggling learners." We haven't yet been able to figure out quite how much impact we can have on these students, and as a result, it has been difficult for her/us to set clear goals. It would be great for her to further develop her Learning Specialist expertise so that she can guide us / her students in both setting goals and creating a program that will align our time with activities most impactful for achieving those goals.
- It seems she takes on too many things at once. She has shown improvement in her delegation, but could still use some work in choosing the right people to delegate specific jobs to. I think giving the right team members the responsibilities and tasks that suite them the best will be a great way for her to help our team increase our productivity and accomplishments.
- **Self:** Determining and reaching intermittent benchmarks, long term academic planning.

Communication and Feedback

Key	
Exceptional	4
Meets Expectations	3
Some Improvement Needed	2
Considerable Improvement Needed	1



Competencies	Self	Coached or Led By	Peer	Supervisor	Overall (Not Self)
Speaks with confidence and credibility.	2.0	3.5	3.5	4.0	3.7
Exudes a strong, positive presence in a group.	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Writes clearly, concisely and with influence.	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Listens to and acknowledges communication from others.	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.5	3.3
Responds to calls, emails, and other forms of communication in a timely manner.	3.0	3.5	4.0	3.5	3.7
Communicates effectively with others from diverse backgrounds.	3.0	3.5	2.5	3.0	3.0
Uses a variety of communication mechanisms such as meetings, one-on-ones, emails, phone calls and letters home to achieve goals.	2.0	3.5	3.5	4.0	3.7
Creates systems for effective communication between families and the school around student behavior and academic performance.	3.0	3.5	3.0	4.0	3.5
Effectively manages sensitive/confidential information shared by students, parent, colleagues, and others.	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.5	3.3
Gives on-going and specific positive feedback to colleagues.	3.0	3.0	3.5	2.5	3.0
Does not shy away from the most challenging conversations and provides targeted feedback to colleagues on problem areas.	2.0	3.5	3.0	2.0	2.8
Actively seeks feedback from superiors and colleagues.	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.0	3.2
Proactively works to improve in areas of weakness.	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Admits mistakes.	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.5	3.3
OVERALL	2.8	3.5	3.3	3.4	3.4



Communication and Feedback: 360 Feedback Comments

Areas of Strength:

- She builds positive relationships with everyone she works with students, parents, and colleagues. She is open and honest about problems or areas of improvement.
- She's very approachable and makes herself available to answer questions.
- She is incredibly insightful and thoughtful. She shares this with the team and it makes us stronger. She also has an excellent sense of talking through different perspectives in approaching a problem. Though she may solve it differently, she listens and respects the other points of view, knowing that the intentions and hoped for outcomes are the same.
- Communication with parents, students and home. Having difficult conversations with other teachers.
- She always asks for feedback on ideas and programs before implementing anything new. She is quick to respond to e-mails and phone calls as well as easy to communicate with in a one-on-one setting.
- She has made considerable progress in this area. She has always been a strong voice among our staff. In many ways, she has been a cultural watchdog and has been forthright in pushing both the leadership and broader staff to see and grapple with challenges. With parents and students, she maintains a very high bar and she isn't afraid to give critical feedback. In most cases she has built wonderful, positive relationships and leveraged them to push her students further. She sends students home with lots of warm-fuzzy posi notes and I hope she will do the same with her coachees.
- **Self:** Giving positive feedback, listening and communicating with others.

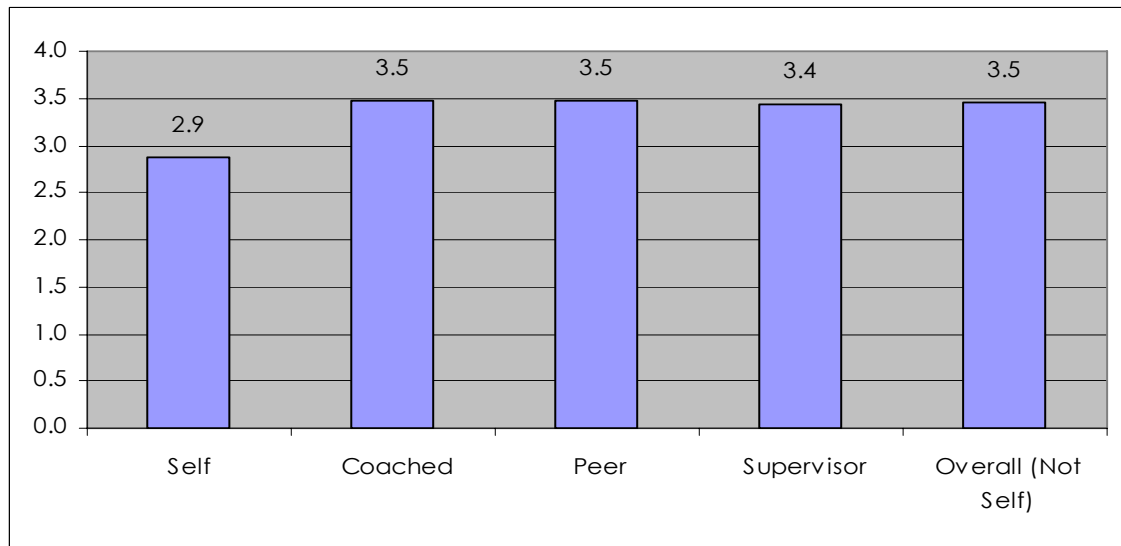
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Areas for Growth:

- Giving ongoing and specific feedback on a regular basis.
- Try to communicate recognized potential issues before a negative situation arises. (prevention as opposed to explanation)
- She could work to share information across the board, seek out and respond to challenging conversations when they arise and continue to ask for feedback.
- Communicating with parents when differences arise
- I think she is great at asking for feedback, but still needs to improve in giving feedback. Mainly giving more feedback and also making sure it is taken as feedback and not criticism.
- In the past, her tone in staff meetings was sometimes a bit aggressive -- she would occasionally interrupt others and interject her ideas. She has matured and come into her own -- her contributions this year are comfortable, confident, and feel constructive. Most of her professional relationships are very positive. She can work on building a strong team among the 6th grade teachers -- finding ways to help each of them feel successful, contributing, and connected. As a coach and grade level team leader this year, she is getting the opportunity to build her feedback skills (both positive and constructive). It isn't a weakness, but rather an area of lesser experience. I hope she will really focus on developing her feedback skills this year.
- **Self:** I need to "land the plane" when giving what I think might be difficult feedback.

Investment and Vision

Key	
Exceptional	4
Meets Expectations	3
Some Improvement Needed	2
Considerable Improvement Needed	1



Competencies	Self	Coached or Led By	Peer	Supervisor	Overall (Not Self)
Invests students in Achievement First's core values and community.	3.0	3.5	4.0	3.5	3.7
Ensures that all students care deeply about their own academic performance, and graduating from college.	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.5	3.3
Makes sure that students have fun along the journey up the mountain to college.	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Forms lasting bonds with students.	3.0	3.5	3.5	4.0	3.7
Builds supportive relationships with parents.	2.0	3.5	3.5	2.5	3.2
Invests families in support of the school goals for their children.	2.0	3.5	3.0	3.0	3.2
Has an incredibly clear vision of what a great class and school culture is and regularly articulates this vision to students and colleagues.	4.0	3.5	4.0	4.0	3.8
Talks passionately about great instruction, helping to create a "buzz" in the building about great teaching and inspiring other teachers to be masters of their craft.	2.0	3.5	3.0	3.0	3.2
Recognizes the accomplishments of other staff members, regularly complimenting people and pointing out their strengths and contributions.	3.0	3.5	3.5	2.5	3.2
Builds strong relationships with colleagues.	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Builds dedication and commitment among colleagues to a course of action.	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.5	3.2
Is a vital leader in creating a work environment that is collegial, joyful and professional.	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.5	3.3
Makes decisions and encourages others to make decisions with the well-being of students in mind.	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Makes sure that REACH values drive words and actions . . . does not only post REACH values, but lives them.	3.0	3.5	3.5	4.0	3.7
Walks the walk. Leads by example.	3.0	3.5	4.0	3.5	3.7
Demonstrates passion for the mission to deliver on the promise of educational opportunity for all children.	3.0	3.5	4.0	4.0	3.8
OVERALL	2.9	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.5



Investment and Vision: 360 Feedback Comments

Areas of Strength:

- This is her in a nutshell! She is awesome at investing others and builds wonderful relationships with everyone she encounters.
- She absolutely commits herself to the education environment and is a consistent source of support within it.
- She embodies everything the school is about. She is a true professional, caring friend and dedicated instructor. She loves not only her students, but everything about what she has been so instrumental in building here.
- Leads by example! She has incredibly high expectations for herself, the staff and for the student.
- She has a great passion for teaching the scholars of this school. It is clear every time she talks about them. I believe this is one of her biggest strengths. She also is great at getting the kids excited about their education. She works hard to build relationships with the children and it shows up in the form of laughter and caring.
- As I stated before, she has a crystal clear picture of what a great class and a great school look like and she models it with great skill. Her class is an assemblage of struggling learners, and she helps them to, for the first time in their lives, believe in their potential. She gives them bite-sized learning experiences so they feel successful and motivated. She's a model of the REACH values and deeply believes that EVERY child can learn and achieve greatness.
- **Self:** A clear and detailed vision of what constitutes great school culture and academics, investing colleagues in a course of action.

Continued →

Areas for Growth:

- Keep it up!
- Making sure her commitment doesn't lead her to the path of "burning out."
- She can leverage what she lives in order to spread it through and within other teachers. She should scale her thinking from students to teachers. What makes her great in the classroom with her students will also make her great in the school with fellow teachers. She's already great, but this is an area where she can even go further.
- More positive leadership involving the whole school.
- She is wonderful at getting the kids motivated, but I think there is some room for improvement in getting the team motivated. We are all invested, but sometimes the techniques used for the kids doesn't work with adults and I feel this sometimes slips her mind.
- There are some wonderful areas here in which she can really contribute more to our school. In her new roles, she has the chance to inspire others on her team to build their skills and cultivate the next generation of teachers who aren't just deeply committed to the AF school, but feel real ownership and investment. This is something that she has always demonstrated. The challenge for her (and really all of us) is translating that magical feel to others who have come on board more recently. As for parent relationships, she has built some very positive ones. At times, parents have felt talked down to. This is by no means a big problem, but she can deliver the same tough messages in a gentler way, and really make sure the relationship is strengthened through the interaction.
- **Self:** Greater parent investment, creating a buzz about great instruction.

Analytic and Creative Problem-Solving

Key	
Exceptional	4
Meets Expectations	3
Some Improvement Needed	2
Considerable Improvement Needed	1



Competencies	Self	Coached or Led By	Peer	Supervisor	Overall (Not Self)
Approaches problems, challenges, and change with a productive and solution-oriented attitude.	3.0	3.5	4.0	3.5	3.7
Regularly pushes through "brick walls" to find thoughtful and creative solutions to complex problems.	3.0	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.3
Seeks best practices and advice from other teachers and schools.	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.5	3.2
Chooses the best course of action from available alternatives.	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Remains optimistic in the face of challenges.	3.0	3.5	3.5	4.0	3.7
Maintains calm and composure and works effectively under stress.	3.0	3.5	2.5	3.5	3.2
In the moment, responds effectively to challenging situations (such as in controversial staff meetings or difficult conversations with parents).	3.0	3.5	2.5	3.5	3.2
Manages conflict effectively.	2.0	3.5	3.0	3.0	3.2
Identifies areas of school or team weakness and finds ways to establish or revise processes to address those weaknesses.	3.0	3.5	3.0	3.0	3.2
Responds flexibly to changes in the school environment such as changing student needs, staff and student turnover, school growth.	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Thinks through the micro-details of the school environment without losing sight of the whole school perspective.	4.0	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.3
Thinks about and acts with the mindset of benefiting the whole school community and not just his/her own classroom.	3.0	3.5	4.0	3.5	3.7
Considers the impact his/her decisions may have on multiple constituents.	3.0	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Does whatever it takes to help students be successful along their journey as they climb the mountain to college.	3.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
OVERALL	3.0	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.4



Analytic Thinking and Creative Problem Solving: 360 Feedback Comments

Areas of Strength:

- She is good at coming up with solutions to problems and is composed when things get tough.
- She consistently thinks outside the box to address difficult issues.
- She puts people first in problem solving--what's best for the students and what's best for the teachers. Her problem solving is directly in sync with our values and core beliefs.
- She does whatever it takes to help the students at the AF school. She is very global (helps all students in the school and not just in her classroom).
- Her biggest strength is her ability to show grace under pressure. In a situation where unexpected problems occur she remains calm and her true leadership comes out. She is calm and composed and can efficiently get the situation under her control.
- She has seen a lot in her years at this AF school. She has taught all of our most challenging students and she has been there during many moments of crisis. She stays cool, collected, level-headed when times are tough. She is very reliable and when an extra hand is needed, she always offers to help out. She truly serves the school.
- **Self:** Thinking through micro-details.

Areas for Growth:

- I think she does what comes naturally when it comes to problem solving, she could probably seek out best practices and research.
- She should be conscience of the need to remain open to accepting alternative sources for suggestions.
- She should view the school in a more visionary sense. This will mitigate and maximize effective responses to challenges in the day to day.
- Step back from situations to think more clearly about them before coming to a solution. Dealing with challenging parents.
- I think the biggest way for her to improve is during situations of unexpected conflict or problems she has trouble effectively communicating to the adults around her. She can easily take control of a situation, but it is difficult to follow her lead and give her assistance.
- She is great at identifying areas of weakness and helps us analyze school performance. I would like her to take a bit more initiative in problem-solving some of the big challenges we face. As the resident expert on all things phonics / struggling reader, she could contribute more to the conceptualization of our reading strategies for struggling learners. We can certainly invite her to take more of this on. She is very smart, has an analytical mind, and can contribute more in this realm.
- **Self:** I would like to improve in managing conflict in the moment.



AF LEADERSHIP FELLOWS: LEADERSHIP STORIES

Overview:

Telling our Leadership Stories is one of the repeatedly-do components of the Leadership Fellows program. Each Saturday that we meet, several people will share their personal leadership stories with the rest of the cohort. Speakers will capture the formative experiences, core values, and professional growth that have led them to this time in their career and to potential future plans and goals.

Rationale:

Creating and sharing your leadership story has several purposes:

- As leaders, our ability to communicate our own stories – the experiences and histories that have shaped us and the values and motivations that drive our work and goals – is an essential skill that helps us connect with others, build our credibility, and inspire people to action. Communicating to a larger audience and developing your presence as a storyteller are valuable skills in your leadership practice. Through creating and presenting their stories, Leadership Fellows will have the opportunity to practice and get feedback on this key communication skill.
- By seeing a range of people share their story, Fellows will observe and learn from people with different communication styles and different approaches to telling one's personal story.
- Telling our leadership stories is an opportunity to reflect on where we are now in our careers, what brought us here, and where we are going, both as individuals and as a group. It brings us together and reminds us of our shared purpose, as well as the diversity among us.

Process:

- Each time we meet, five or six people will have five minutes each to share their personal leadership stories with the cohort. Presenters will prepare ahead of time, deciding how to frame their stories for the group.
- Fellows will reflect on what they learned from the presenters – both from the content of their story and from their style or manner of presentation.
- Throughout the year, the cohort will reflect on the elusive but powerful mindset of a leader's "presence."

For ideas on how to tell your own leadership story, please see the next page.



Assignment: Create and share your leadership story with the cohort. Your main goal is to give your audience a compelling understanding of who you are and how you've gotten to this point in your career with a limited amount of time.

As you plan your story, draw from the example outline of a leadership story below, but do not treat it as a checklist. You will not be able to address all of the below suggested components in five minutes, so choose which aspects you will incorporate. Also, leadership stories should be personalized, so please be creative or use a different structure if it makes sense for you.

An Example Outline of a Leadership Story

- **Engaging introduction**
 - A quote, story, anecdote, or similar hook to engage the audience that introduces a theme that runs throughout your story. Gives the audience an idea of who you are without giving away the story, and creates anticipation.
- **Your history**
 - This could include critical experiences and/or people that shaped your core beliefs, characteristics, or career path. Stories and examples of growing up should not just be isolated events, but should be tied together with some type of structure that illustrates who you are today.
- **Your professional experiences**
 - This could include the job experiences, mentors, or lessons learned that shaped your core values, career path, and leadership strengths today. Pivotal experiences are more important than comprehensiveness.
- **Your work today and in the future**
 - What does all of this mean for you? Why do you like what you do? In what ways is it most important for you to contribute your efforts? What would make you most proud in the future?
- **Conclusion**
 - Your audience will most frequently remember your introduction and conclusion more than any other part of your story. Make this clear, strong, and well-planned.

Guidelines:

- While you should plan beforehand and may use some notes, your story will be most compelling if you talk directly to your audience.
- We will only have 5 minutes per person, so please don't plan too much into your story. While 5 minutes may seem short, it is actually a fairly realistic reflection of the time that leaders regularly have to connect with an audience.
- You will have the opportunity to receive informal feedback group about your presentation. This is in no way evaluative . . . just a tool to help you develop this important leadership skill.

AF LEADERSHIP FELLOWS: LEADERSHIP DILEMMAS



Overview:

Leadership Dilemmas are one of the repeatedly-do components of the Leadership Fellows program. Each Saturday, one group member will share a complex leadership challenge and question with his or her small group. The discussion group will discuss each dilemma in-depth and confidentially.

Rationale:

Ronald Heifetz, a professor at the Kennedy School of Government, describes two types of leadership work: technical and adaptive. Technical work involves problems for which there are known solutions. Adaptive work involves complex problems for which there are no easy answers or solutions. When analyzing a problem, Heifetz asks: "Is this a problem that an expert can fix (technical), or is this a problem that is going to require people in the community to change their values, their behavior, or their attitudes (adaptive)?"

In the Leadership Fellows program, we want to give you tools and strategies for both technical and adaptive work that will help you exercise leadership at your school. Examples of technical work in your position might include organizing your time and priorities, creating clear meeting agendas, and creating school culture systems around like behavior. Examples of adaptive challenges might include dealing with a conflict between parents and teachers, mobilizing teachers around a significant change in school culture, and addressing racism or homophobia in your school.

Leadership Dilemmas are designed to build our understanding of adaptive leadership, to help us address current challenges, and to prepare ourselves for difficult situations when we will not have the answers but will, nonetheless, need to act and lead. The process of writing deepens our understanding of our own dilemmas; the process of sharing our writing with caring colleagues helps us gain new perspectives on what these dilemmas entail. We share our questions and challenges with each other to develop our capacity to manage the complexities of leadership, schools and their many stakeholders.

Process:

- One person will write a description of his/her dilemma, including a focus question that will guide the discussion group and help them get to the heart of the matter. (See following pages for support and examples.) S/he will send that dilemma to Alex no later than the Wednesday before the Saturday session at which s/he will present.
- On Saturday, presenter will read his/her dilemma out loud to his or her small group. Once the dilemma has been shared, the group will ask clarifying and probing questions.
- After the presenter has answered their questions, group members will discuss the focus question with each other, while the presenter listens quietly and takes notes.
- At the close of the discussion, the presenter will reflect on what s/he has heard and is now thinking, sharing with the group anything that particularly resonated for him or her.
- Finally, group members will share what they have learned from the process.



Assignment: Write a description of a dilemma you're facing at your school.

Step 1: Choose a dilemma to bring to your small group. Dilemmas involve issues with which you and/or your school are struggling or that you are unsure about. People have found it most useful to write about a dilemma that remains unresolved. Some criteria for a dilemma might include:

- What conflict or challenge in your school do your thoughts regularly return to?
- Is it something that is important to you? Is it something you are willing to work out?
- Is it a complex and challenging situation, one that will be helpful to explore and problem-solve with a group?
- Does this situation involve negotiating the needs of multiple stakeholders (e.g., students, school leaders, teachers, families, teams)?

Step 2: Do some reflective thinking and/or writing about your dilemma. Feel free to check in with Alex for help thinking this through!

- Why is this challenge a dilemma for you or your school? Why is this dilemma important to you?
- What have you done already to remedy or manage the dilemma? What have been the results of those attempts?
- What is the focus question that will guide your discussion group in their consideration of the dilemma? Is it open-ended? Does it avoid implied solutions? Does it directly address the dilemma you are grappling with?

Step 3: Write the description of your dilemma – also called a personal case study (See case studies of past dilemmas on the following pages).

Your Case Study *Should*:

- Provide a *brief* description of the context of this experience
- Describe the dilemma in a way that respects all parties involved.
- Describe your thoughts and feelings about the experience
- Explore complexity and get to the heart of the challenge facing you
- End with a focus question to help your group get to the heart of the matter
- Maintain confidentiality as appropriate

Your Case Study *Should Not*:

- Provide a solution to the challenging experience
- Be a list of grievances about your school.
- Be more than 2 pages
- Take you more than 1 hour to write

Step 4: Send your description of your dilemma to Alex three days before you present, so she can make copies for your group.

Step 5: Prepare to present your dilemma to your group.

- Reread your case study
- Make sure to be prepared with a strong focus question to guide the discussion
- Come prepared to take notes, listen and learn



Case Study: Leadership Dilemma #1

So far this year, my grade level team has received several compliments about its organization, instruction, and especially its positive tone with the scholars. These words of praise from school leaders were clearly meant to encourage and strengthen the team. However, as the grade level chair, I felt a sense of dreadful déjà vu when I heard these compliments. Last year, we received essentially the same praise at the beginning of the year for our great tone. As the year progressed, the teacher-to-scholar tone deteriorated significantly. By the spring, our tone had taken on a tone that was often negative, unpleasant, or even disrespectful. I am afraid of repeating the mistakes of last year, and again creating a culture of negative teacher tone (which in turn affects all aspects of school culture).

I spoke with many of the returning teachers to try to understand how our tone became so negative last year. I also reflected on the question myself. I want to identify some of the mistakes we made last year because I do not make the same ones this year. All of the teachers said that they started to feel physically and mentally exhausted by the early spring. They found that they were more likely to yell or be negative with their classes when they were tired. The teachers also said that they found it more frustrating when scholars misbehaved toward the middle and end of the year. The school sets expectations for behavior that are very high, and the scholars and teachers are told that there is zero tolerance for disrespectful behavior. When scholars continue to exhibit certain disrespectful behaviors (refusing to do work, talking back/sucking teeth/rolling eyes after a correction, telling another scholar to "shut up" or making fun of them, purposefully disrupting a lesson by calling out repeatedly, destroying or writing on school materials) throughout the year, teachers feel frustrated. While at the beginning of the year, we responded to these behaviors with reminders, we began to feel like they might not change when scholars continued to do them in February, March, April, May, etc.

To give one example that can stand for many others I will share one incident that happened in my classroom in May. At one point in late-May, I yelled at my class because they were not completely focused on our aim for the day in problem solving. I told them that I could not have them in my classroom any longer, sent them into the hallway, and called the principal. Then I left. Looking back, I feel completely embarrassed and ashamed by my behavior. It is something I never would have imagined doing in September, or ever, for that matter. I think I reacted so negatively because I was tired. I felt like the scholars "owed" it to me to be good because I felt like I had done so much for them during the year. I also felt disillusioned because a scholar that I had a very close relationship had been expelled that week. None of these reasons justifies what I did.

Another issue that contributed to our negative tone was that we did not receive enough feedback about the change in our tone until late in the year. We had a "School Culture Audit" in September, but never again. The Leadership Team at my school did not observe any of us regularly. They were focused on other grades and teachers who were failing, whose classrooms were more obviously falling apart. Finally, the teachers mentioned that their tone was influenced at least in part by the tone of the Leadership Team, particularly our Dean of Culture and Principal, who regularly used yelling and negative tone as a way to scare/discipline scholars. Upon later reflection, none of the 5th grade teachers found yelling to be as effective as it was for the Leadership Team. All of these aspects of school culture contributed to our shift in tone last year, from positive to negative.

Focus Question:

They say that those who fail learn from the past are doomed to repeat it, so my question is, what do I need to do (as the GL Chair) to maintain positive teacher tone on the 5th grade team - how do I avoid the mistakes of last year?



Case Study: Leadership Dilemma #2

One of the top priorities that we (the teachers) decided to focus on this year was more parental involvement in/out of school and a lot more (positive) communication. We wanted to make sure that we were being proactive in our correspondents with parents and if necessary, thought-partner around the best course of action needed to make sure that their child(ren) received the best education possible.

There is one parent in I would like to focus on. Last year, I came to know Ms. X as one of our most difficult parents to talk to about her children (twins). Ms. X does a great job of pushing her children to do their best work, be respectful, and to follow the rules here at the school. However, at the same time when she disagrees with the rules she will instruct her children to do what she is thinks is best which compromises our rules and way. For example, Ms. X has told her children that no matter what if they need to go to the restroom, they are instructed to go. Taking this instruction and twisting it to the fit their needs, these scholars would often walk out of teacher's classrooms, citing that "My mom told me to me to go to the bathroom if I had to go! No teacher would ever tell a student not to listen to his or her parent. Therefore, we're placed in a pretty tough position.

The relationship between Ms. X and her children's teachers became even more strained during the course of the last school year. If there was a situation in which either of her children were corrected for a mistake they made at school or they received an incomplete on an assignment they would go home and tell their mother. Naturally, being a middle school student they would explain the situation from their perspective and in a way most beneficial to them. Even though Ms. X would be somewhat aware of this, she would still come to the defense of her children in a harsh, nasty, and disrespectful tone. There have been many altercations where Ms. X would show up to the school unannounced and proceed to vocalize her opinion to teachers, in front of her children and other scholars. The conversations never felt productive or conclusive. It felt as if no matter what I said or how hard I tried to explain I, the teacher was always at fault and the one to blame for the actions of her children. Ms. X would often say "well maybe my son would do his homework if he understood it, so maybe you're not explaining it well enough for him to get. I would explain how I'm available for help if he needs help and that he call me whenever he needed it. She would immediately reply "well he shouldn't have to call, he should be able to get it right away." The conversations would always lead back to what the teachers and/or what the school was doing wrong. It has been proven that Ms. X has completed homework assignments for her children and that she has even assisted them in plagiarizing essays and research papers. In mom's mind, it was our fault that those things had to happen. The situation reached the level to where teachers did not want to work with these children because of who their mom is.

Now I am in my second year and I was determined not have that kind of ugly relationship with Ms. X this year again (I teach both of her children this year). I am happy to report that Ms. X and I have a great dynamic this year. The conversations are always polite and friendly and good work is being done. I didn't do anything differently from last year. My methods of communication remain the same. However, all of our new teachers/staff members who have to interact with Ms. X are experiencing the same kind of disrespect and horrible conversations with as I did last year. No matter what they try things are strained. Recently, one staff member left a meeting with Ms. X in tears. Since Ms. X and I have a better relationship this year, she shares with me her dislikes of these teachers and other things about our school that she absolutely cannot stand. I have to wonder to myself, how long will it be before Ms. X turns back on me?

Focus Question:

How can I support my colleagues and address the issue with Ms. X WITHOUT damaging the great relationship Ms. X and I have now?



Case Study: Leadership Dilemma #3

Even in our fifth year, our school still has had a fairly high amount of staff turn-over. More than half of our teachers are in their first or second year at an Achievement First school. Consequently, we have spent a significant amount of time ensuring that all teachers share a common vision for student behavior. Moreover, we had intended to use our move to a new, permanent school site to reset student expectations for hallway transitions, meals, etc. Breakfast has always been a silent time for students to mentally prepare themselves for the day. However, now that all of our students eat breakfast together in a fairly packed cafeteria, it is obvious that we lack consistent expectations for student behavior. The seventh and eighth grade students are in constant communication with each other, even when teachers are in proximity. When they are addressed about their behavior they, rightly, are upset and confused because “Mr. So-and-So” was just here and he didn’t have a problem.” Similarly, students struggle to maintain an appropriate volume during hallway transitions. The fifth and sixth graders see their “big brothers and sisters” ignoring rules and expectations, and sadly, it is difficult to use the upper school as a positive example.

We have discussed this issue in our weekly Grade Level Team Leader meetings since the very beginning of the school year. Team leaders and administrators have addressed the challenge in grade level team meetings and with individual teachers, but there has been little, if any improvement. During breakfast, I find myself gravitating towards the seventh grade tables because of the number of low-level behaviors. Whenever possible, I try to approach a seventh grade teacher and gently point out the problem, but that is difficult to do because often the teachers are nowhere near our students. An AF dean from another school had the opportunity to observe both upper school and lower school lunches and pointed out that the lower school (5th and 6th grade) teachers are generally more engaged in conversations with scholars, while the upper school teachers tended to sit together and talk or “model reading,” which suggests, in my opinion, a larger issue.

My concerns are two-fold. First, there are people on our team who, even after receiving extremely straightforward feedback, persist in not consistently upholding school-wide expectations. Most of them are new teachers, though several are in their second or even third year. The excuse has been made that many are coming from a high school environment and are not used to interacting with students as much – but we’re now at the end of November, and the issue, though somewhat improved, is in no way resolved. Given the lunch dynamics, it also seems like teachers are not actively developing positive relationships with students. The issue is not glaring, but it does persist and, as a broken window, is eroding some facets of school culture.

Focus Questions:

- 1) How do you motivate/invest adults in upholding a common vision?**

- 2) What is my role in helping to resolve this, knowing that the issue impacts everyone in the school, but not actually being a part of the upper-school team?**



Leadership Fellows Challenge #1

As you head into the week of September 14 with your Quadrant 2 goals in place, the challenge before you is great. Make sure your Weekly Worksheet is easily accessible at all times.

1. Week of September 14: Exercise Integrity in the Moment of Choice

- *Preview the day:* Spend a few moments at the beginning of the day to revisit your schedule, look at the day in the context of the week, and renew the perspective that allows you to respond to unanticipated challenges or opportunities
- *Prioritize:* Identify your activities as Q1 or Q2. If it is helpful, prioritize them further.
- *Use some form of T-planning:* Use some form of T or Four Square Planning for your day.

2. Weekend of September 19-20: Evaluate to Close the Loop

- Send the following reflection to your partner (with a cc: to Alex Freidus) by Monday, September 21, at 6 p.m. Consider the following questions:
 - What goals did I achieve?
 - What challenges did I encounter?
 - What decisions did I make?
 - In making decisions, did I keep first things first?

3. Week of September 21: Create another Weekly Worksheet

- Try the habit of creating a Weekly Worksheet for the second time.
- Feel free to adjust the template or reach out to Sara/Alex/Emily for different versions (also available on the Shared Server under Personal Effectiveness).



Management Tune-ups Email Announcement

September 2009

Achievement First Principal and Deans,

I hope you have had a great first week with your scholars! A shout out to you and your teams for all the hard work that has gone into making this first week of school a strong one.

I am writing to announce a new offering of learning and development workshops that we're calling Management Tune-Ups.

Why Tune-Ups?

I am sure many of you have been managing others for years and then realize one day, that you're getting a little rusty on your delegation skills or organization skills. Managers of people – like teachers of students – must be constant learners because the work is so complex. We decided to offer these workshops broadly to managers after getting numerous one-off requests on these topics. Our hope is that all our managers have the option of coming in for a tune-up on certain management skills that might be a bit rusty (or a bit green ☺).

What are Management Tune-Ups?

- Management Tune-Ups are a series of leader-requested workshops on key management skills.
- These are optional workshops for any principals, deans, or AF Central managers. You can opt-in to whichever sessions align most with the skills that you need to tune-up.
- Each Tune-Up will be held in both New York and CT.
- Workshops will be held from either 4:30 – 6:30 or 5:00 – 7:00 on a weekday after school.
- If we don't have at least 10 attendees RSVP, we will cancel the workshop.

What do we currently have planned for Management Tune-Ups?:

- Personal Effectiveness for Managers (CT) – 9/24 – Maia
- Personal Effectiveness for Managers (NY) – 9/30 - Maia
- Delegation (NY) – 11/4 – Maia
- Delegation (CT) – 11/5 – Maia
- Interviewing Skills - January – exact date TBD – Becca
- Having Difficult Conversations (and Getting your Team to Have Them Too) – February exact date TBD – Sara

I will be sending invites out shortly for the September and November workshops. We hope you're energized by this additional learning opportunity. We look forward to seeing you as we "tune up" our management skills together.

In partnership,

Sara



Mastery Charter Schools- Instructional Standards 2009-2010

What are the Instructional Standards?

The Instructional Standards are a compilation of fundamental best teaching practices, successful teacher traits as well as common measures of student success. The standards have been distilled from a wide variety of resources and are supported by Madeline Hunter's classic instructional text: Mastery Teaching. Each standard is designed to create an objective-driven, rigorous and effective classroom experience that will serve to prepare students for higher education, the global economy and the pursuit of their dreams.

How are the Instructional Standards Organized?

Instructional Standards	1. Objective Driven Approach
	2. Classroom Systems
	3. Instruction
	4. Student Motivation
	5. Rigorous Engagement

There are 5 Standards: Each standard is followed by a series of strands that are subdivided into *Student Outcomes* and *Teacher Actions*. *Student Outcomes* convey the expected result of successful routine implementation of the standard. *Teacher Actions* convey the requisite implementation practices for the standard. Each strand is described at a level 3 (proficient). A level 5 (outstanding) description is included for each standard. Under select *Teacher Actions* suggested strategies are bulleted. Further explanation regarding these suggested strategies can be found within the Mastery Charter PD Library.

How are the Instructional Standards used?

Teachers are encouraged to routinely reflect on their practice in light of the Instructional Standards. The standards provide a common language and expectation to facilitate peer and administrative observations as well as coaching and professional development. At the student level, the standards serve to create a common instructional experience across classes by instituting valuable rituals and strategies.

Classroom Observations:

During observations, success is measured by comparing teacher and student actions against the practices described in the Instructional Standards. During formal observations, each category is separately rated. An overall observation rating is also provided. **The overall rating is not an average but rather a determination of the degree to which all categories were delivered with success.** The following describes the category and overall rating systems for formal observations.

	Individual Standard Rating System	Overall Observation Rating System
1=unsatisfactory:	The integrity of the standard was not maintained. The standard is an area of considerable concern. Typically, two or more strands were not observed at the proficient level.	One or more standards were rated a 1.
2=developing:	The integrity of the standard was insufficiently maintained. The standard is an area of some concern. Typically, two or fewer strands were not observed at the proficient level.	All standards were rated at least a 2.
3=proficient:	The integrity of the standard was maintained. The standard is not an area of concern. Typically, most or all strands were observed at the proficient level.	All standards were rated at least a 3.
4=advanced:	All strands were observed when appropriate and delivered in an exemplary fashion. Several qualities described in the "outstanding" description were observed.	All standards were rated at least a 3 with three or more standards rated a 4 or 5.
5=outstanding:	All strands were observed when appropriate and delivered in an exemplary fashion. Most qualities described in the "outstanding" description were observed. The spirit of the standard was raised to new heights.	All standards were rated at least a 4 with two or more standards rated a 5.

Objective-Driven Approach		Mastery lessons are objective-driven! Instruction serves to meet the objective in an efficient and urgent manner. The objective is measurable and addresses content/skills that are prioritized by the curriculum and student data. Success is determined at the end of every lesson. Objective- Instruction- Assessment. We're focused!...Super focused!	
		3- proficient	5- outstanding
STRANDS	STUDENT OUTCOMES	Objective Focus	Students understand and maintain focus on the objective throughout the lesson.
	TEACHER ACTIONS	Appropriate Objective	The objective(s) was selected based on identified instructional need via curricular pacing, BM analysis, and student achievement data. The objective is rigorous and consistently above the students' independent work level.
		Well-Constructed Objective	The objective(s) is student centered, action oriented, and measureable.
		Conveyed	The objective(s) is introduced to students at the start of class and continually reinforced throughout the lesson.
		Driving Objective	The objective(s) serves as the overt driving force of the lesson. Minimum of 75% of lesson time is allocated to directly addressing lesson objective(s). DI, GP and IP directly reinforce the objective. Background information, supportive review and management are limited to less than 25% of the lesson.
		Objective Assessment	By the end of class, students are assessed to determine their success in meeting the objective. Either through IP, exit slips, sampling, etc. students and teacher are made aware of the success of the lesson. Objective and Assessment are 100% aligned. Quantitative data informs regarding the number of students who experienced success.
		Instruction focuses on a rigorous learning objective that was expertly designed and selected to meet the needs of the students and serve the school goals. Students and teacher connect the lesson objective with future larger goals. The cycle of objective- instruction- assessment is implemented with integrity. The teacher is highly in tune with the students' experience and is very aware of what is being learned and who is learning it. Throughout the lesson, students are keenly aware of the purpose of the lesson and how content/skills will be acquired and assessed. Progress is apparent and conveys inevitable success. The objective(s) pervade all aspects of instruction. Homework, posters, worksheets... all communication is centered around and focused on the objective(s). Assessment confirms that an instructionally transformative experience occurred.	

Classroom Systems		Excellence begins at the door and continues until the last student leaves! Classroom procedures and the physical environment drive student achievement. Instruction is organized and efficient. Urgency, organization, and an academic focus are ever-present. There is not a minute to lose!	
		3- proficient	5- outstanding
STRANDS	STUDENT OUTCOMES	Ready to Learn	100% of students are prepared and ready to learn. The students' body language conveys buy-in. They are properly uniformed and prepared with the correct instructional materials, books, pens, etc... Distractions such as bags, food, beverages, electronics, etc. are out of sight.
		Following Procedures	Once entered, students start working with minimal verbal prompting. Throughout the lesson, students follow well established routines and rituals.
	TEACHER ACTIONS	Routines	Predetermined classroom procedures regarding instructional routines, student organization, and behavior are consistently reviewed, retaught and enforced in an effort to increase efficiency and maintain discipline.
		Introduction	The introduction is limited to 10 minutes and consists of a) greeting students at the door, b) conducting a "do now" and c) reviewing the agenda board and objective.
		Seating	Chair/table organization is designed to match current instructional/management strategy (group/pair work, testing, teacher centered, etc.) Chairs are facing instructional source.
		Board	Agenda board and general boardwork font is visible from all student seats. Information is complete, updated daily and addresses the current class. The agenda board is prominently displayed, organized, informative and contains the following: a) greeting, b) date, c) do now, d) objective e) day's agenda f) homework.
		Neat	The classroom is neat, organized and clutter free.
		The classroom is neat and orderly. The lesson runs like a well-oiled machine. From the minute they enter, all students are intensely engaged in academics. Routines, rituals and strong organization serve to maximize time and increase achievement. Student actions and behaviors are the result of positive well-rehearsed procedures and significant student buy-in. Teacher prompting is replaced by positive ingrained student habit. The agenda board informs students and maintains teacher-student alignment. The physical environment is expertly used to support instruction and motivate students. No opportunity is missed. Teacher directed systems positively influence student organization regarding note-taking, daily planning, materials maintenance, etc... The classroom, students and teacher create a refreshing, inviting and highly efficient feel.	

Instruction		Effective instruction means all students learn. Great lessons are focused and responsive. Instruction provides the modeling, guidance and practice required for students to meet the objective. Students are engaged and challenged. Instruction results in students' ability to independently demonstrate skill and/or content knowledge. Mastery teachers believe in the transformative power of instruction!		
		3- proficient	5- outstanding	
STRANDS	STUDENT OUTCOMES	Mastery	All students display evidence of significant progress or mastery of the objective.	Independent student success is the goal and it is achieved. Modeling provides clear guidelines for success and GP addresses misconceptions and struggles. Efficient and clear communication results in desired student actions. Instruction supports full release of responsibility during independent practice. Examples, models and practice assignments are highly purposeful in design and confirm the students' ability to transfer skill from one scenario to multiple other scenarios. Student concerns and pitfalls have been forecast and resources have been proactively put in place to facilitate student independence. Reliance on handouts, teacher guidance and visuals is evident as a necessary intermediate step but never an end goal. Instruction is rich and dense, filled with experiences that are precisely aligned to the objective. Checking for understanding is constant, efficient and inclusive of all students. Instruction is differentiated in response to assessment and other data sources. Academic visual aids are exemplary in function and presentation. Homework provides multiple and varied experiences to practice and develop content knowledge and skills.
	TEACHER ACTIONS	Direct Instruction	Instructor delivers information needed for students to meet lesson objective. Direct instruction models learning/cognitive process and expected student end products.	
		Guided Practice	Instructor provides opportunity for students to demonstrate new learning or review while under direct supervision and in collaboration with the instructor. The instructor is constantly assessing students. If student success is determined, independent practice is implemented. If students display a lack of success, additional direct instruction or guided practice is provided.	
		Independent Practice	Instructor provides opportunity for students to independently demonstrate new learning. Independent practice is focused on short, meaningful chunks with high repetitive frequency. Full release of responsibility is experienced. Confirmation of understanding during independent practice is rewarded rather than completion of examples or speed during practice.	
		Checking for Understanding	Teacher frequently checks for understanding using appropriate, strategic and efficient strategies. • Whole Questioning • Wait Time • Scanning	
		Clear Directions	Directions regarding student actions and behavior are frequent, clear, specific, sequential and observable. Directions are often communicated both verbally and visually. Directions regarding student behavior focus on what to do rather than what not to do.	
		Visuals	Transparencies, slide shows and other visuals are prepped to guide instruction. Key words & graphics are presented to clearly stand out and are isolated in an effort to focus student attention. Relevant permanent & semi-permanent visual aids are visible from all student seats and not encumbered by or accommodating less relevant information.	
		Homework	Assigned homework is estimated to require a minimum of 45 min for major and 30 min for minor subjects. Homework is provided at the students' independent work level and focuses on review and the practice of confirmed learned skills. Homework is not used to introduce new content/skills. Homework is assigned every day.	

Student Motivation		Mastery teachers motivate their students to greatness! Classroom management sets the stage for quality instruction. Direct communication, relationships and proactive/reactive strategies are consistently employed to motivate and require active participation in the lesson. High expectations are matched by equally high support and positive student-teacher rapport. The ship is sailing and everyone is on board! Ahoy!		
		3- proficient	5- outstanding	
STRANDS	STUDENT OUTCOMES	Respect	Student engagement is respectful and goal oriented.	The teacher is clearly in command and well respected. 100% of students are participating and on task. Students are engaged, displaying urgency, motivation and focus. Student ownership of learning and classroom involvement is exemplary. Misbehaviors are always addressed and always with confidence and respect. The bar for student performance is high and never provides room for off-task behavior. Student behaviors reflect the teacher's high expectations. Teacher interventions and motivating strategies focus on raising the bar not merely meeting it. The classroom rapport is positive and motivating as well as compliant and orderly. Individual student needs are considered when providing motivation. Students don't merely believe they can be successful; they are provided with the plan and the rationale. Displays of student work are common, recent and exemplary. They serve to push the bar higher. Public tracking systems conveniently assist the students and teacher in determining progress and maintaining focus on the goals. The teacher's persistence, determination and dedication to all students pervades all aspects of the lesson.
		Participating	≥95% of students are actively participating in the lesson, engaging the instructor and playing a non-passive role in the class.	
		On Task	100% of students are actively on task, displaying academic posture and maintaining appropriate focus.	
		Urgency	Students display a sense of organized urgency during all parts of the lesson.	
	TEACHER ACTIONS	Strong Presence	The teacher's presence is commanding, respectful and purpose-driven. • Economy of Language • One Voice • Stay on Track • Face and Focus • Calm Before the Storm • Registers	
		Positive	Praise and motivating messages are presented in multiple and sincere forms. A positive tone permeates the lesson. A minimum ratio of 3 positive comments to 1 negative comment is employed. • Assume the best • Narrate the positive • Speak Success and Challenge • Motivation and Praise	
		Pacing	Activities are openly timed and time constraints are enforced and respected. All parts of the lesson are adequately delivered. "Down time" is avoided. A sense of urgency is evident during all parts of the lesson.	
		Redirection	Students exhibiting inappropriate/off task behavior are addressed. • Proximity • Group Reminder • Anonymous Reminder • Signaling • Quick Word • Quick Public Correction • Consequence	
		Sweat It All	Posture, uniform and other nondisruptive yet non-compliant issues are readily addressed. The bar is set high and maintained.	
		Rapport	The teacher displays positive professional relationships with all students and consistently models appropriate communication skills.	
	Displaying	Classroom is adorned with recent student work, recognition of student achievement and tracking systems. Displayed student work is exemplary and grade appropriate.		

Rigorous Engagement		Challenge is the name of the game! Mastery teachers know that instructional time is best utilized when students are reaching for that next rung on the ladder. Rigorous student engagement means academic sweat. This isn't a maintenance workout. We're always stepping it up! Students are constantly facing new challenges along with the opportunities to practice and the motivation to be successful.		
		3- proficient	5- outstanding	
STRANDS	STUDENT OUTCOMES	Work Hard!	Students are consistently cognitively engaged and working hard. Students actively address the challenges provided.	All students are being challenged and working hard throughout the lesson. The lesson, from design to execution, is characterized by rigor. The objective is ambitious yet still met with success. The teacher, skillfully challenges students without frustrating or demotivating them. The lesson is made instructionally dense by taking advantage of opportunities to engage students and push the majority of the cognitive work onto their plates. When questioning/engaging students, the teacher, consistently and effectively asks for more. Less than excellent responses are seen as opportunities for further engagement. High order questioning is frequent and exemplary. The bar is high and the pervasive message is- we must reach it.
	TEACHER ACTIONS	Instructional Density	Direct and instructionally dense activities are chosen over less efficient or artful activities. Instructional choices maximize students' cognitive engagement and encourage students to bear the load of as much of the work as possible. All facets of the lesson (objective, instruction, questioning, assessment, etc...) push students to work, engage, think and focus. "Busy work" is avoided.	
		Release of Responsibility	The tide of instruction is overtly moving towards student independence. As success is observed, the teacher reduces support in an effort to reach full independent student proficiency.	
		Grabbing Engagement	During review or GP, the teacher constantly identifies opportunities for students to engage and share the cognitive load. • What's next? • Stopping Short • Puppeting • Whole Questioning	
		High Order Engagement	High order engagement accounts for a minimum of 1/4 of all verbal questioning. High order is defined as comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation as opposed to knowledge (basic recall). • On The Hook • Specific, Complete and Well-Presented Answers • Defend Support and Improve	

Mastery Charter Schools

Teacher Development and Advancement System



Teacher Development and Advancement System

Performance based management and promotion

Professional Development, Coaching, and Feedback

Clear Performance Expectations

Performance based management and promotion

Professional Development, Coaching, and Feedback

Clear Performance Expectations

Instructional Approach

Instructional Standards

- Measurable student outcomes
- Measurable teacher actions

Quantitative Goals

Benchmarks

End of Year Assessments

Performance based management and promotion

Professional Development, Coaching, and Feedback

Professional Development

New Teacher Orientation

Ongoing systematized PD

Weekly vertical and horizontal collaboration

Coaching

Diagnostics and focus areas

Individualized Interventions

Feedback

Observation Feedback

Student Achievement Data Analysis

Clear Performance Expectations

Performance based management and promotion



Professional Development, Coaching, and Feedback

Clear Performance Expectations



Documents

- Clear Performance Expectations
 - Instructional Standards
- Professional Development, Coaching, and Feedback
 - Sample Observation Form
 - Sample Professional Development Library Chapter



Mastery Charter Schools
Excellence. No Excuses.

Teacher Advancement Status (2009-10 Academic Year)

Instructor Categories			
<i>BEFORE the 09-10 process...</i>		<i>AFTER the 09-10 contract renewal process...</i>	
Associate	48 41%	Associate	25 24%
Senior Associate	51 44%	Senior Associate	44 42%
Advanced	15 13%	Advanced	29 27%
Master	3 3%	Master	8 8%
	<hr/> 117	Non-Renewals	5
		Notified Mastery they were leaving during process	6
			<hr/> 117



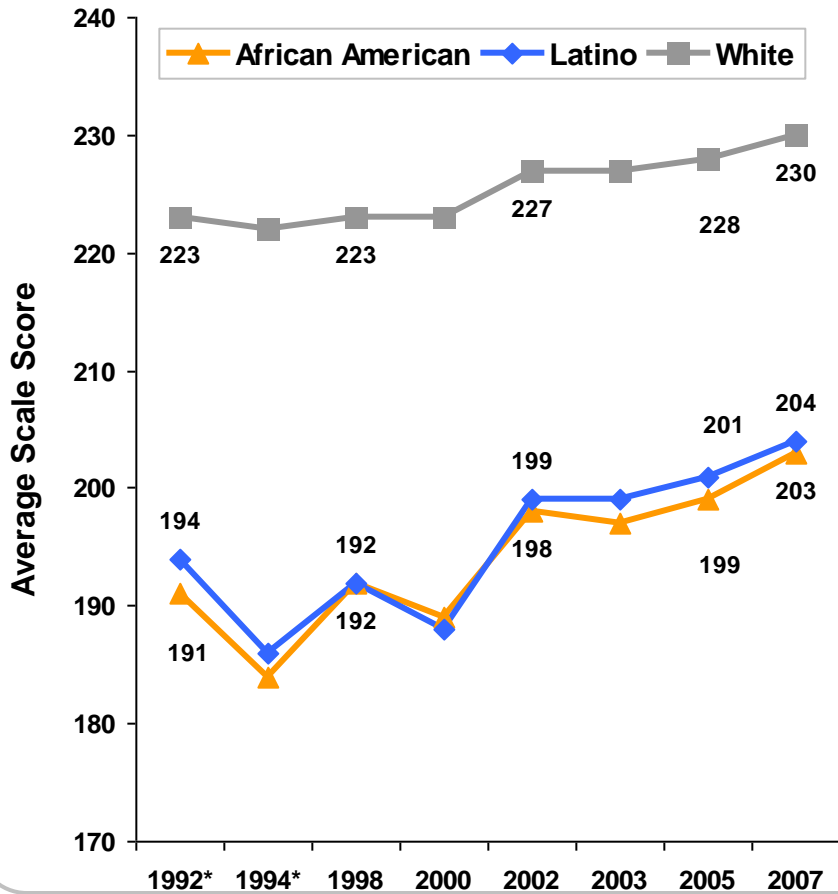
Accelerating Student Achievement Through A Comprehensive Human Capital Strategy

Discussion Document | April 2009



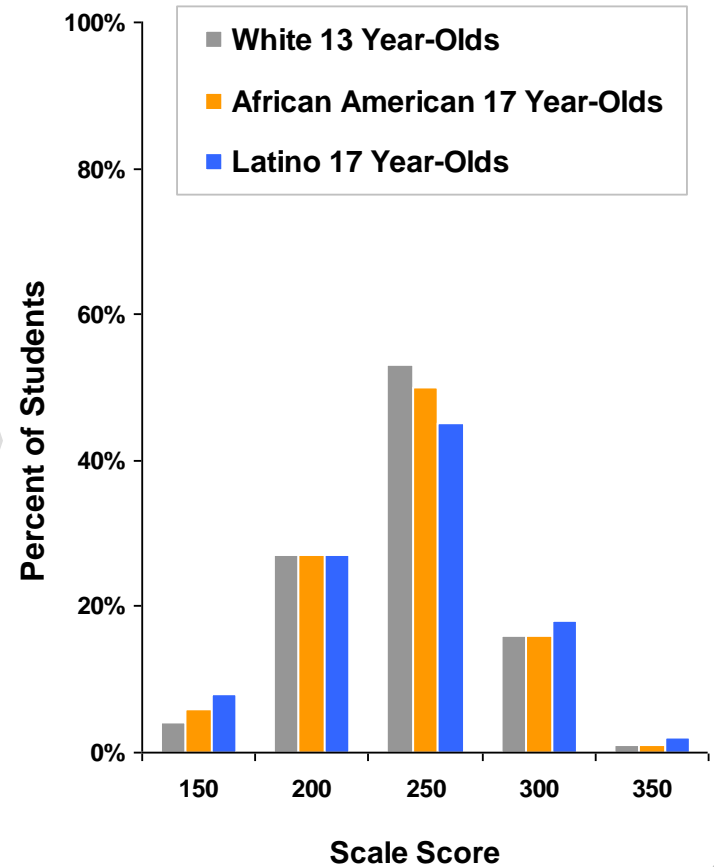
A significant achievement gap separates white and minority students. By high school, minority students are four years behind white students.

NAEP Grade 4 Reading



At age 17, African American and Latino students read at the same levels as 13 year-old white students.

NAEP Reading



Notes: *Accommodations for students with disabilities and English language learners not permitted; Trends similar for Math.

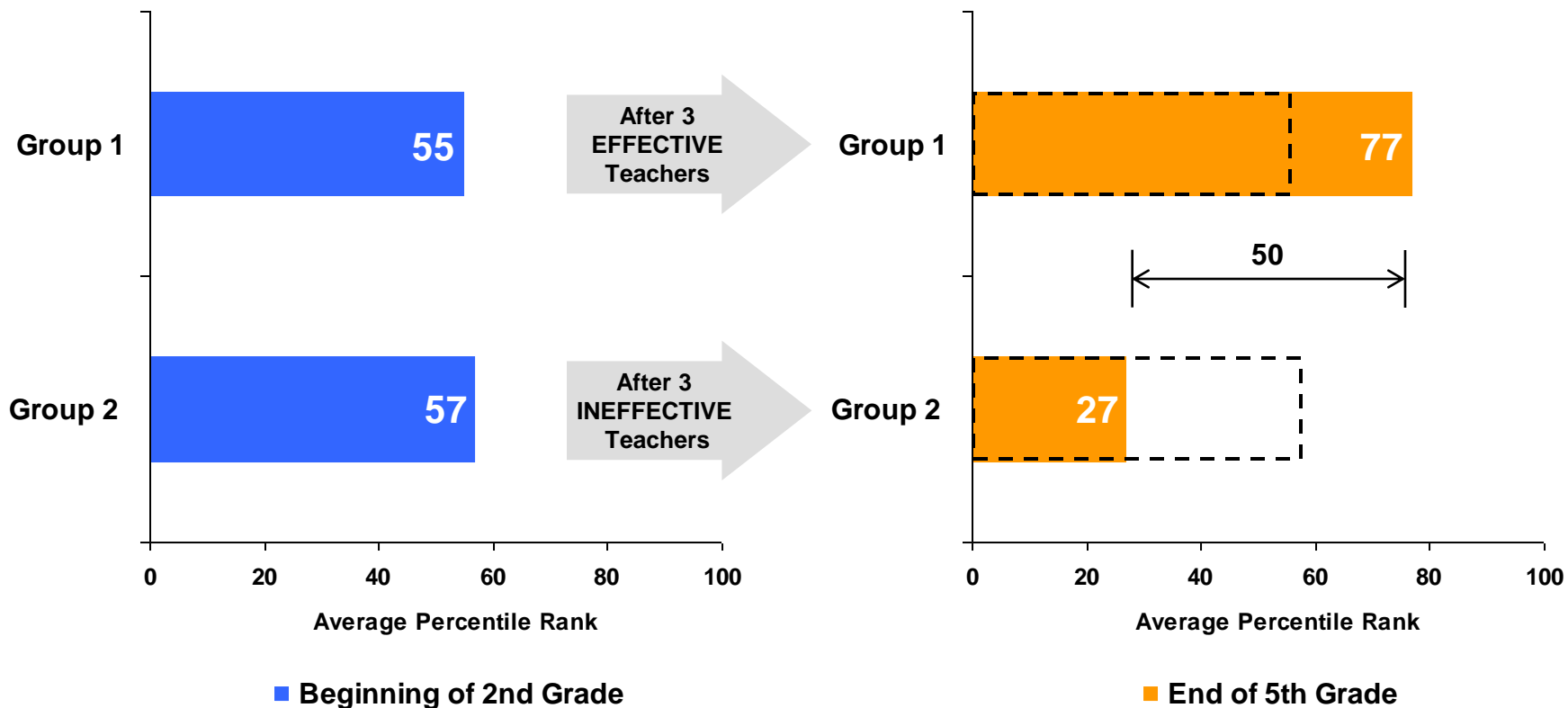
Source: Original analysis of the Education Trust based on Long-Term Trends NAEP ; National Center for Education Statistics, NAEP Data Explorer, <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde>, NAEP 2004 Trends in Academic Progress



Research has shown that effective teachers are the solution.

Dallas students who start 2nd grade at about the same level of math achievement...

...finish 5th grade math at dramatically different levels **depending on the quality of their teachers.**



Original analysis by the Education Trust.

Source: Heather Jordan, Robert Mendro, and Dash Weerasinghe, *The Effects of Teachers on Longitudinal Student Achievement*, 1997.



School districts can employ a three-pronged strategy to increase the average efficacy of their teacher workforce.

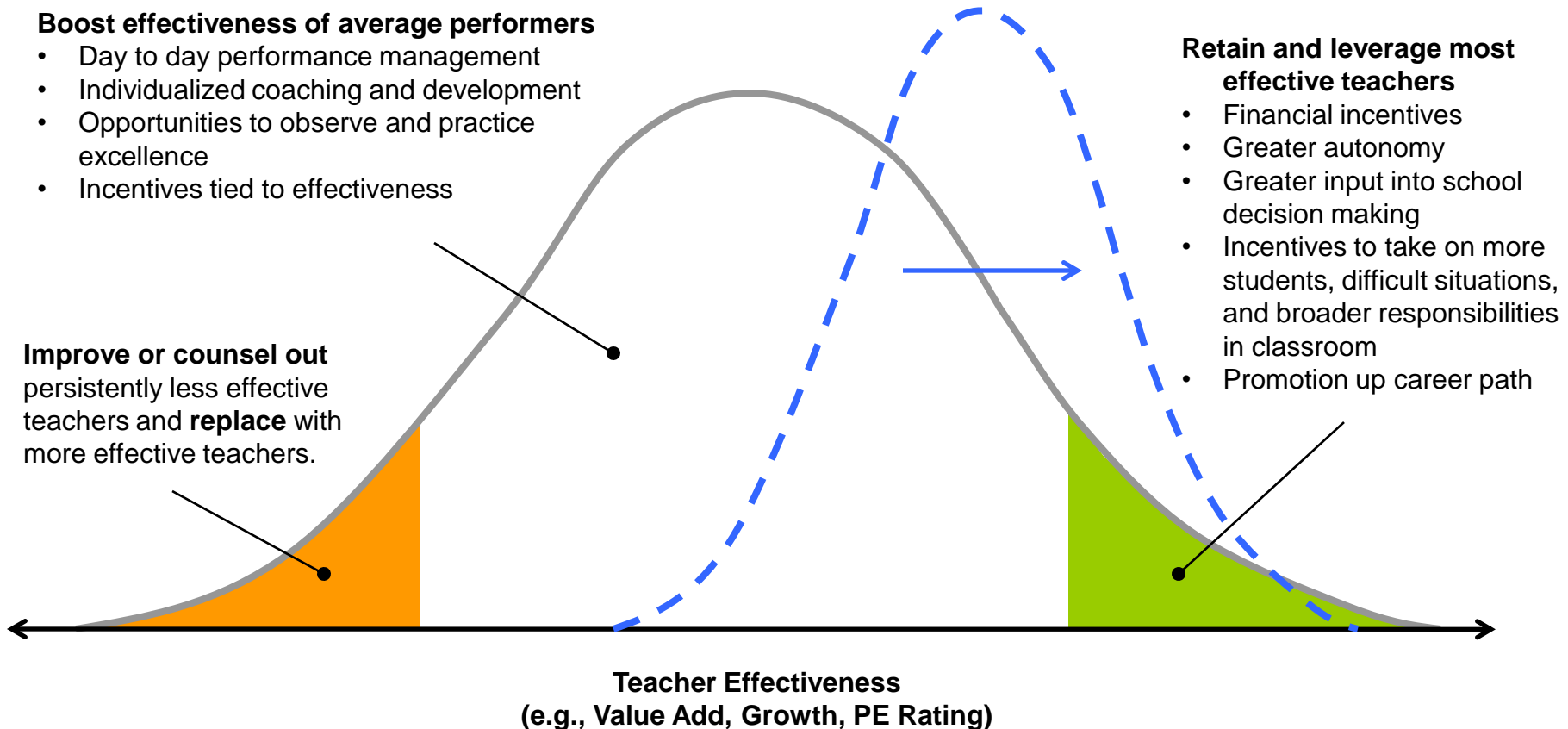
Boost effectiveness of average performers

- Day to day performance management
- Individualized coaching and development
- Opportunities to observe and practice excellence
- Incentives tied to effectiveness

Improve or counsel out persistently less effective teachers and **replace** with more effective teachers.

Retain and leverage most effective teachers

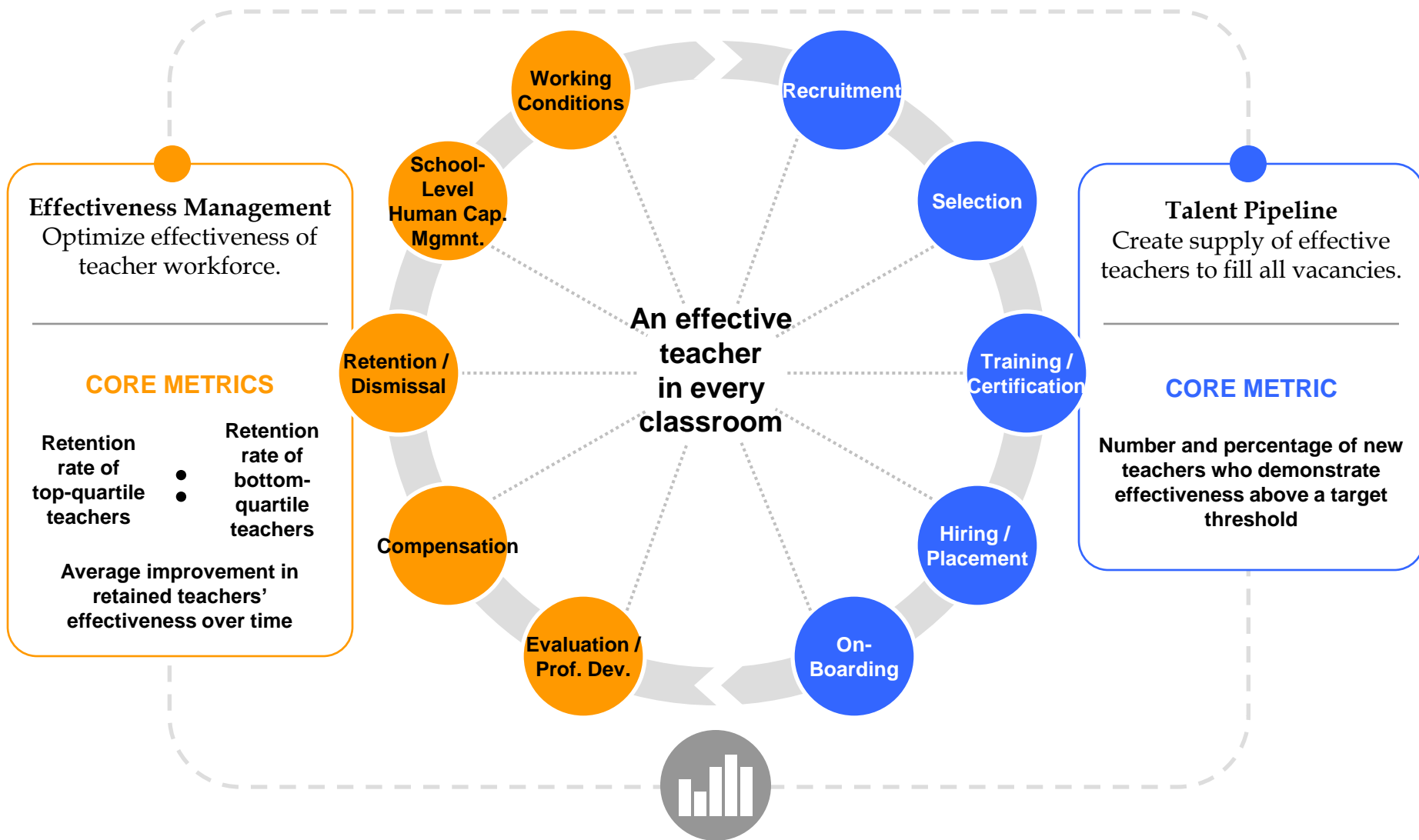
- Financial incentives
- Greater autonomy
- Greater input into school decision making
- Incentives to take on more students, difficult situations, and broader responsibilities in classroom
- Promotion up career path



These levers can boost performance and consistency of the teacher workforce.



To realize sustainable improvement, effective teaching must be the guiding concern behind all elements of a district's human capital system.





A comprehensive approach to managing human capital will ensure that every classroom has an effective teacher.

Working Conditions

- Safe, healthy learning environments.
- Sufficient resources and technology to facilitate effective instruction.

School-Level Human Capital Management

- Informed, accountable decisions on hiring and retention
- School-level performance management (direction-setting, coaching, peer to peer collaboration).
- Accountability of principals and other personnel who affect teacher effectiveness

Retention / Dismissal

- More effective teachers are rewarded non-monetarily.
- Probationary periods last long enough to assess effectiveness comprehensively.
- Tenure based on effectiveness.
- Fair but efficient process for exiting poor performers throughout career.

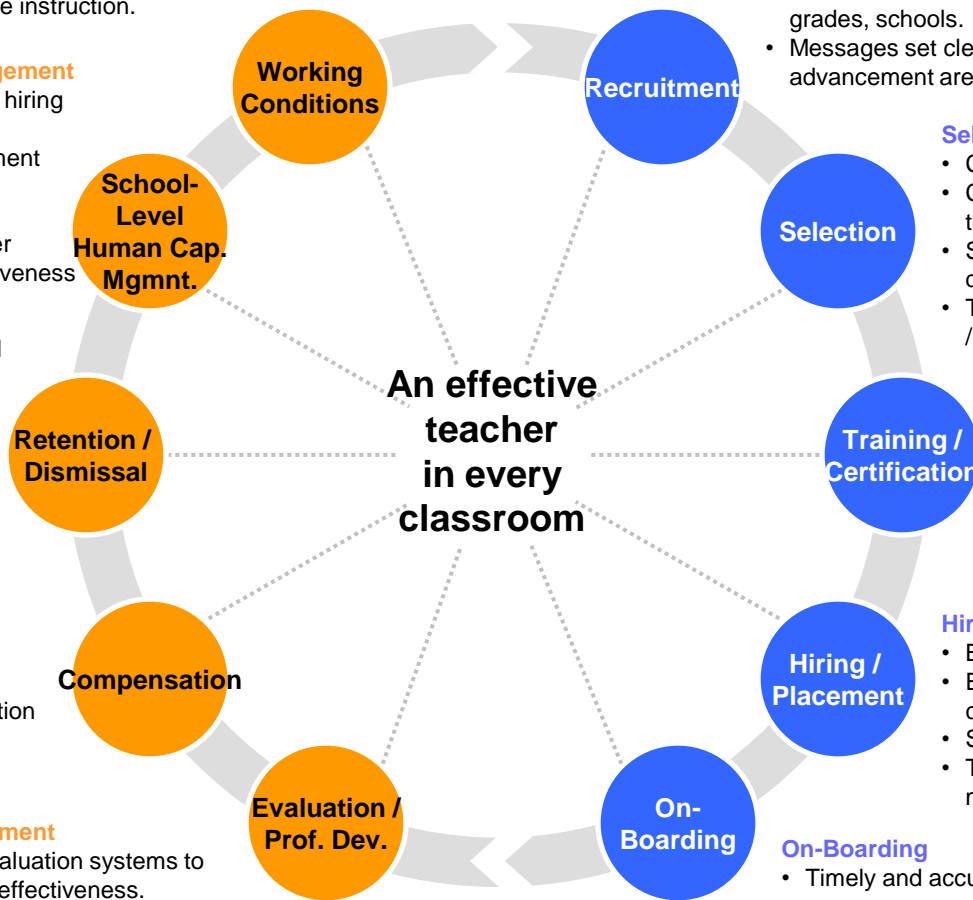
Compensation

- Responsive to supply/demand.
- Differentiated to drive strategic retention of top performers and attrition of less effective teachers.

Evaluation / Professional Development

- Assess teachers using credible evaluation systems to differentiate levels of instructional effectiveness.
- Link effectiveness to key decisions such as development, compensation, job security, and career ladder.
- Recognize excellence and immediately offer support-focused interventions when there is evidence of ineffectiveness.
- Development tailored to each teacher's unique performance challenges.

District Governance
Timely and coherent governance and budget decisions aligned with HC goals.



Recruitment

- Prioritizes sources of most effective teachers.
- Cultivate candidates who have the qualities linked to effectiveness and are qualified for high-need subjects, grades, schools.
- Messages set clear expectation that employment and advancement are based on performance.

Selection

- Competency-based selection model.
- Criteria aligned with research findings on teacher effectiveness.
- Standardized tools and rubrics to support differentiation of candidates.
- Training and periodic norming for HR staff / principals.

Training / Certification

- Backwards design approach that explicitly emphasizes instructional effectiveness.
- Student growth data a primary factor in recommendation for certification.
- Tailored to district needs

Hiring / Placement

- Based in mutual consent – no forcing.
- Early, efficient hiring to avoid loss of top candidates.
- Selection training and norming for principals.
- Technology supports and facilitates effective matching of candidates and schools.

On-Boarding

- Timely and accurate payroll, benefits and other new-hire processes.
- Induction differentiated by subject, grade, and school and that drives internalization of objectives, behavioral norms, and performance expectations.

Measures of Student Learning
Accurately measures student mastery of important standards (including those that can't be measured on multiple-choice tests).



An upcoming TNTP study will show that teacher performance assessments are used only for punitive purposes in most districts.

When is teacher performance information taken into account?

	District A	District B	District C	District D	District E	District F	District G	District H	District I	District J	District K	District L
Recruitment												
Hiring/ Placement			x									
Professional Development												
Compensation					x							
Granting Tenure					x							x
Retention												
Layoffs												
Remediation	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Dismissal	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x



Indifference to variation in teacher effectiveness dooms us to mediocrity – at best.

“When it comes to measuring instructional performance, **current policies and systems overlook significant differences between teachers**. There is little or no differentiation of excellent teaching from good, good from fair, or fair from poor. This is the **Widget Effect: a tendency to treat all teachers as roughly interchangeable**, even when their teaching is quite variable. Consequently, teachers are **not developed as professionals** with individual strengths and capabilities, and **poor performance is rarely identified or addressed.**”

From “The Widget Effect,” to be published June 2009



Characteristics of The Widget Effect

- Performance evaluations are perfunctory and infrequent
- Primary use of evaluations is to identify incompetence
- Teachers expect to receive the highest possible rating, even during their first years in the classroom
- Evaluations do not yield meaningful feedback for teachers, and professional development is not aligned to evaluations
- Administrators are poorly trained to evaluate and do not prioritize the process
- Teachers who get feedback for improvement tend to feel singled out, often unfairly



Systematic de-professionalization of teachers



One symptom of the Widget Effect is that having two performance ratings for teachers is no different than having just one.

Site	S Number of Satisfactory Evaluation Ratings SY03-04 - SY07-08 ¹	U Number of Unsatisfactory Evaluation Ratings SY03-04 - SY07-08 ²
District A	2,676	22 (0.8%)
District B	246	0 (0%)
District C	1,284	2 (0.2%)
District D	1,768	3 (0.2%)

All data for tenured/non-probationary teachers.

1 Source: District extant data supplied between April 2008 and March 2009

2 Source: District extant data supplied between April 2008 and March 2009

3 Number evaluation ratings assigned between SY 2003-04 to SY 2007-08

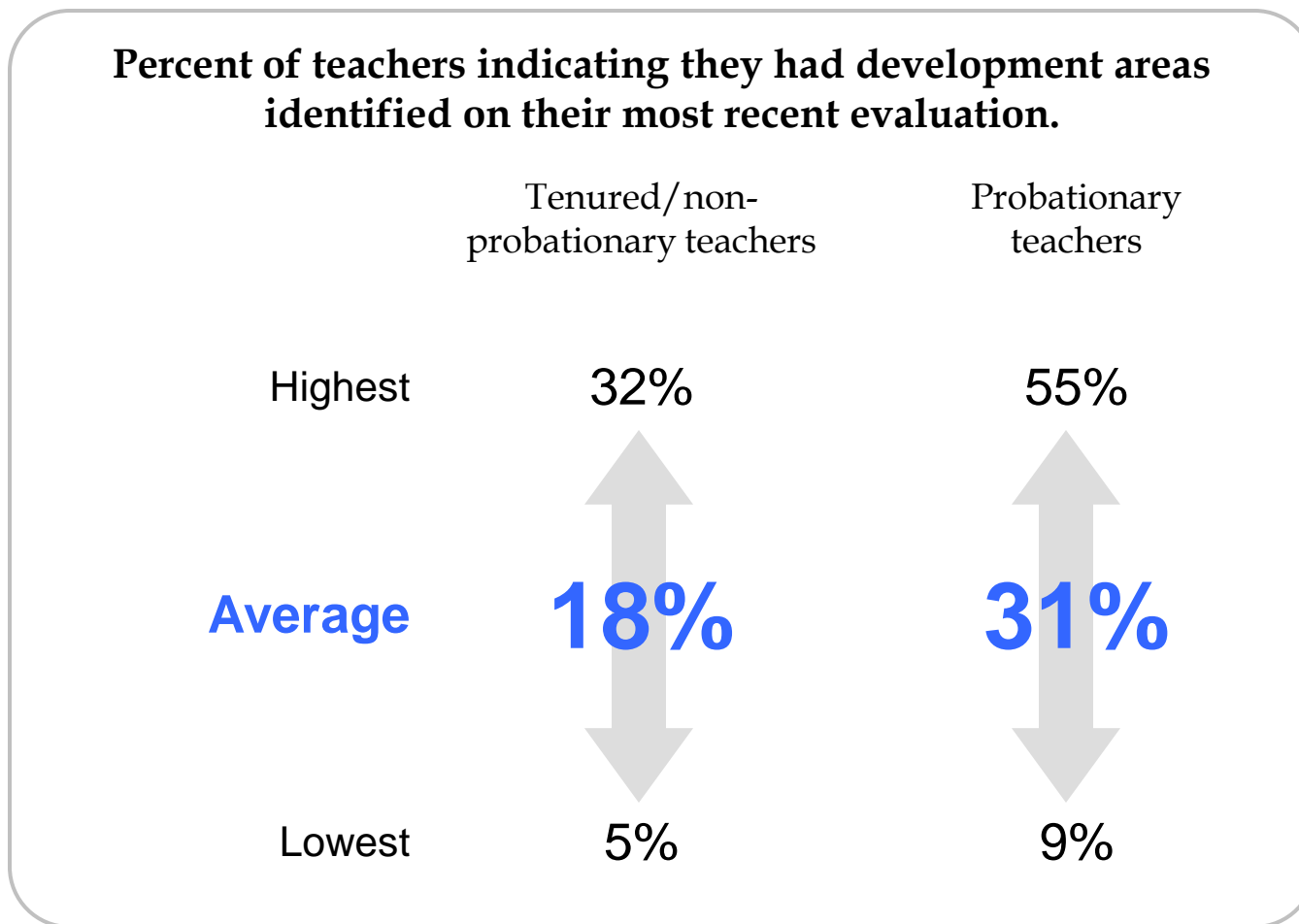
4 Number of evaluation ratings assigned between SY 2003-04 to SY 2005-06

5 Number of evaluation ratings assigned between SY 2005-06 to SY 2007-08

6 Number of evaluation ratings assigned between SY 2005-06 to SY 2007-08



Weak evaluation practices and systems mean that many teachers receive little meaningful feedback.



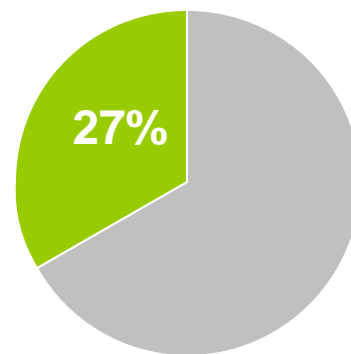
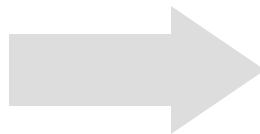
Source: TNTP survey of 9,631 teachers across 10 sites conducted May 2008 to March 2009



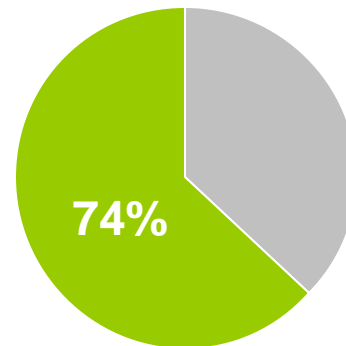
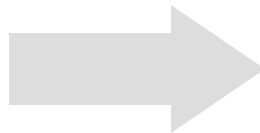
Failure to address poor instruction has a significant detrimental impact on teacher views of district instructional rigor.

Percent of teachers who agree or strongly agree that their district enforces high standards for instructional performance.

Teachers who say **YES**, there are poor performers in my building who should be dismissed.



Teachers who say **NO**, there are not poor performers in my building who should be dismissed.



Source: TNTP survey of 9,631 teachers across 10 sites conducted May 2008 to March 2009



A Better Way



Comprehensive evaluations provide real information about instructional effectiveness to teachers throughout their careers.

- o Teachers are aware of their development areas and receive the support they need to succeed.
- o Teachers constantly strive toward greater instructional effectiveness.



Districts and teachers work together to make effectiveness matter.

- o Professional development is targeted and appropriate.
- o Performance evaluations inform more than dismissal



Teachers are treated like professionals, not widgets.

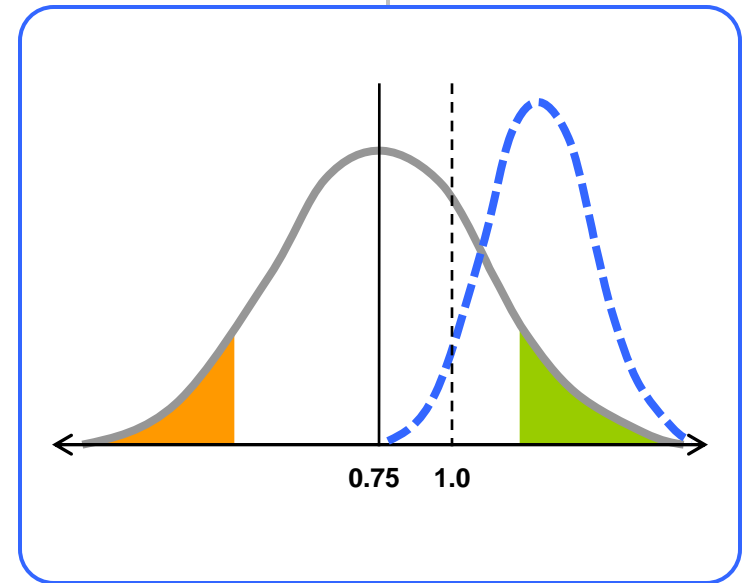
- o The best teachers are recognized, retained and rewarded.
- o Outstanding individuals are attracted to the profession.
- o Acceptance of poor instruction in the classroom ends.



What would it take to get breakthrough performance improvement?

Hypothetical Situation

- The district uses “years of growth” as its primary measure of student learning.
- Currently, the district’s teachers average **0.75 years** of growth.
 - 75th percentile: 0.9 years
 - 25th percentile: 0.6 years
- The district wants to boost average effectiveness so that *at least* 4 out of 5 teacher get 1.0 years of growth.



Not so hypothetical: 0.75 years of annual growth would put a high school graduate at 9th grade level. As we saw on an earlier slide, *this is the reality for African American and Latino 17 year olds in America.*



What would it take to get breakthrough performance improvement?

Scenario 1:

- Incentives to boost retention of top-quartile and performance of lower-quartiles
- Tailored and effective PD for lower quartiles
- Performance management policies to drive dismissal of teachers who do not improve
- Tenure for those who repeatedly generate 1 year growth

Teachers' Starting Quartile	Retention Rate	Improvement of Those Who are Retained	Average Performance of New Hires
1	85%	5%	1.1 years
2	80%	15%	
3	66%	30%	
4	66%	40%	

30% Improvement
1.0 years

Scenario 2:

- More attractive incentives
- More ambitious performance management policies

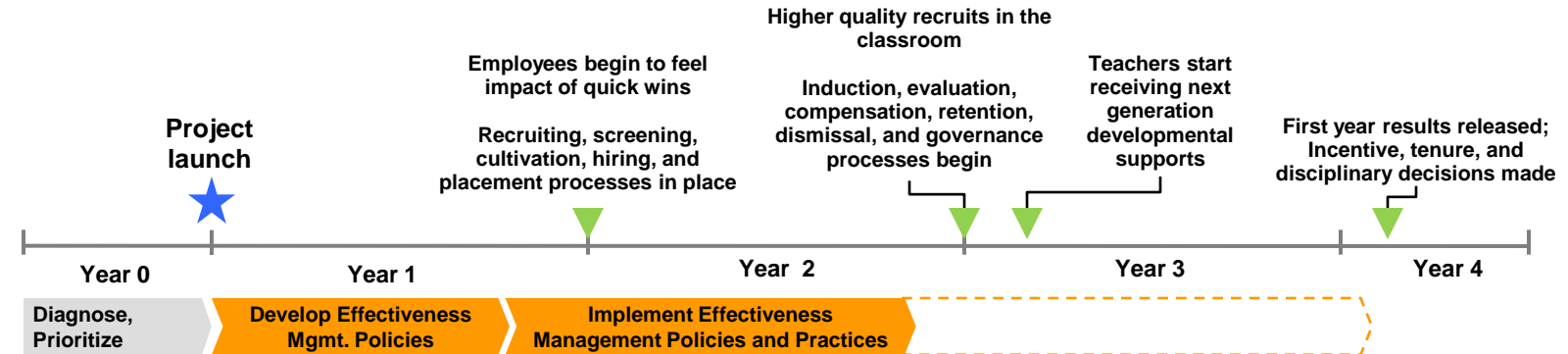
1	85%	10%	1.1 years
2	80%	25%	
3	33%	50%	
4	20%	60%	

40% Improvement
1.1 years
20%tile=1.0 years

Significant effort and commitment is required for breakthrough performance improvement.



Developing and implementing a comprehensive human capital strategy is a significant undertaking. Consider a sample timeline:



- Identify the top performance challenges
- Determine the scope of the effort
- Estimate costs
- Invest leadership team; secure board approval

- Validate the measure of student learning
- Develop performance evaluation policies, process, and tools
- Determine which measures drive summative decisions (e.g., compensation, probation/dismissal)
- Design new incentive plan, non monetary rewards, and career paths

- Negotiate terms with the union
- Obtain necessary degrees of freedom from state education agency
- Reconfigure district governance and align budget processes
- Redesign central and regional T&L and PD functions
- Design and implement changes to information systems
- If necessary, recruit and hire school-level staff to support performance management
- Design and deliver training for new evaluation, comp, development, and governance processes and supporting systems

Design Talent Pipeline Policies and Processes

- Adjust school staffing and placement policies (e.g., transfer request timelines)
- Identify sources of highest quality recruits; align selection model with research on effectiveness
- Design new application process, screening method, cultivation process, and interview protocols

Implement and Execute Pipeline Policies & Processes

- Align recruiting spend to sources of highest quality recruit
- Source any alternate route programs, if necessary
- Set targets by channel
- Train staff on screening, cultivating, and interviewing techniques

Identify and implement quick wins (e.g., eliminate non controversial pain points such as HR transaction quality, low impact PD mandates)



What did we think about when laying out our sample timeline?

- Availability of funding



- Funds need to cover one time design and implementation costs (e.g., info systems), and ongoing costs for incentives and any necessary incremental staff.
- Long-term sustainability must also be considered (e.g., costs associated with maintaining enhanced Human Resources staff).

- Presence, accuracy, and precision of a measure of student learning.



- If the district has not developed measures of student learning we may need to develop those measures or, at the minimum, develop proxies for student learning (e.g., teacher performance during random classroom observations).
- Depending on the starting, we may need to add time to validate these proxies to ensure credibility and fairness

- Scope of any collectively bargained labor agreement; union and management openness to change



- Districts that have either wide-ranging labor agreements (e.g., career paths are collectively bargained) or unions that need to bring along membership may not elect to negotiate, all at once, the full range of human capital policies needed to maximize the impact of the levers.

- Readiness of information systems



- If current systems require lengthy redesigns, district would need to develop workarounds and “bootstrap” new processes until those systems came on line.

- Project approval relative to school calendar



- Project start and several implementation milestones are marked at the start of the school year. If the project can't start with the school year, actual implementation may take up to three years.



Successful implementation requires long-term commitment and ongoing, authentic partnership.

On-Going Activities

- 1 Align and invest teachers through input, communications, and outreach; keep pulse on principal and teacher investment. Actively enlist rank and file educators into the vision for change.
- 2 Boost and maintain investment of parent groups, the press, and other stakeholders through strategic partnerships, communications, and outreach.
- 3 Keep Board informed, maintain Board investment, and facilitate Board decision making throughout the process (e.g., identify which decisions require Board input, set agendas, and facilitate executive sessions).
- 4 Manage overall project to timely and quality completion; identify and resolve roadblocks; facilitate tradeoff decisions.
- 5 Manage project partners and vendors (e.g., software vendors; researchers, alternative certification providers, etc.).
- 6 Ensure sustainability of changes from day one: Actively involve leadership team in the co-development of the HC strategy (e.g., weekly check-ins); configure governance processes (e.g., scorecard metrics) so Board can track how well the district is executing the strategy; ensure investment of influential donors, business leaders, activist, and parent groups.



Success Factors for a Comprehensive Human Capital Strategy

People

- Strong, stable leadership
- Coordination of all HC initiatives under one senior-level leader
- Sufficient capacity and commitment to prioritize HC over other projects

Political Capital

- Willingness and ability to make tough decisions and drive change
- School board support and commitment
- Ability to communicate and generate internal and external support for HC initiatives

Open Policy Landscape

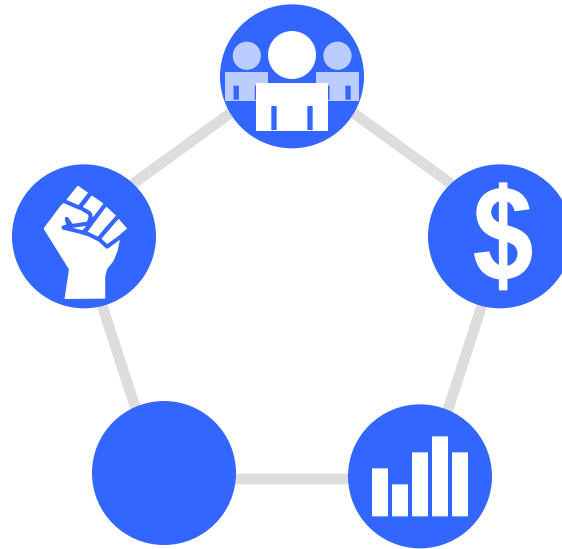
- State laws / regulations amenable to HC reforms
- Possibility of executive action to overcome obstacles
- Opportunities for contract negotiation / amendment
- Opportunities for waivers for pilot projects

Data

- Presence, accuracy and precision of a measure of student learning
- Systems and instruments to measure progress and drive decision-making
- Technology platform that supports efficient reporting
- Fast rollout of short-term tracking solutions while longer-term solutions are in development

Funding

- Long-term plan for faithful implementation and sustainability
- Identify opportunities for re-allocation of existing costs
- Consider new costs stemming from HC initiatives (e.g., incentive pay, increased HR staffing costs)





Each district can develop its own human capital plan.

What Comes Next?

Diagnose

What is the current state of student performance in your district?

For what purposes does teacher classroom effectiveness matter in your district?

What parts of your human capital continuum are neglected or dysfunctional?

Which success factors does your district currently possess, and which does it lack?

What scares you?

Dream

What level will you achieve when your work is fully mature?

As a team, where can you *make it matter*?

On which parts of the continuum can you be the acknowledged national leader?

How can your district collect and sustain the full range of success factors?

What would make you proud?

Talent Dev'p: 2008-09 Director Responsibilities

Dir., School Leader and Teacher Rcrmn—
BH and KT

- Lead School Leader Recruitment, Selection, and Long-Term Cultivation** (build ongoing relationships with organizations, schools, universities)
- Head Hunters** (build relationships in respective geographies and nationally with various schools, non-profits, universities)
- Rally the Troops—Internal and External** (strategically deploy the right people to events, matriculate, train principals etc.)
- Lead search for emerging markets** (where else should we be sourcing, what are untapped sources, what are other pockets of potential)
- Communicate with principals and School Leaders** (communicate regularly and maintain great relationships with schools)
- Manage 2-3 Teacher Recruiters** (led recruitment teams in respective geographies)
- Maintain relationships with top candidates** (sprinkle magic and love on all top candidates in a strategic way)

Dir., Talent Strategy &
Operations –Beth

- Coordinate all recruitment and talent goal setting and planning processes** (co-create goals, strategies, benchmarks, and calendars)
- Ensure we are being data-driven in all choices** (retention statistics and presentation, high yield sources, present recommendations to RDs)
- Oversee and liaise for all marketing efforts** (work with Marketing to get teacher folders, website, opportunities)
- **Study and articulate what makes our best people truly our best** (study our most effective people, refine selection model, create interview templates)
- Develop a systematic talent identification approach** (maintain list of new markets, deploy relationship-builders as needed)
- Build back office infrastructure systems to support growth** (Virtual Rolodex, mass marketing timelines, i-recruiter, clear and inspiring role descriptions)
- Coordinate AF Central hiring processes and selection tool support** (lead senior searches, train directors in hiring)
- Manage relationships with external talent sources** (Broad, Ed Pioneers, Net Impact, etc.)

Director, Engagement and
Evaluation –Sarah C

- Design and execute evaluation Process for AF Central and Schools** (PES, LES, 360 feedback, training, informal structures, tool design, analysis)
- Lead AF Central Management and Leadership Training** (execute high quality trainings for AF Central team leaders)
- Feedback mechanisms --Lead organizational health and network support surveying** (design, execution, analysis, recommendations)
- **Lead our school evaluation efforts** (lead and coordinate annual school review process)
- Ensure we have a real-time understanding of the talent landscape** (create, develop, execute Talent Reviews, systematic succession planning)
- Strategic Compensation** (development of compensation philosophy, communication, articulation, and design)
- Champion Engagement of our Team** (design and execute a monthly communication mechanism, recognition of team, clear on-boarding processes, AF “volunteers”)

Director, Leadership
Dev'p—Sara K

- Lead all aspects of Leadership Fellows program** (attract, recruit, design, execute, coach in an ongoing and supportive basis)
- Develop instructional excellence** (design, identify, plan and manage our group of master teachers)
- Lead our competency development process and definition of excellence** (teachers, leaders, etc.)
- Maintain a list of needs and design additional training modules for schools as needed**
- Help Team Recruit by maintaining a list of great external PD sessions we can offer**
- Develop and support additional teacher leader opportunities** (grade level leads, coaches, Saturday tutors)
- Coordinate, development and manage syllabus for Dean, Principal, and Principal in Residence trainings** (develop objectives, scope and sequence, combination of project management, etc.)
- Consider a culturally consistent teaching excellence award** (research, design, implement, reflect)



Basic Info: Talent Team

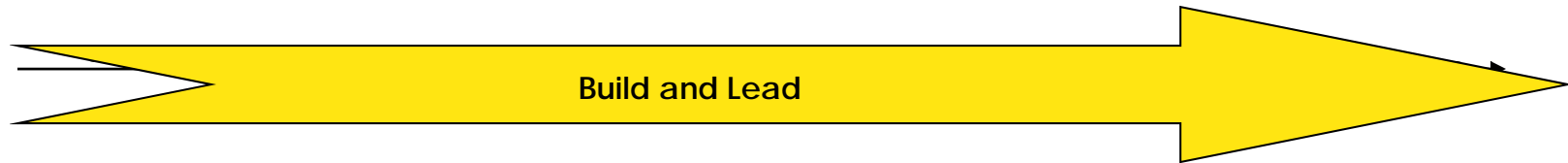
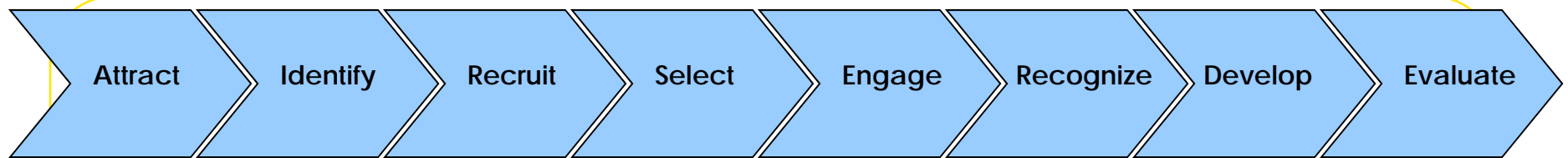
April 2009

Bridgeport, CT • Brooklyn, NY • Hartford, CT • New Haven, CT

Basic Info: Team Talent Vision

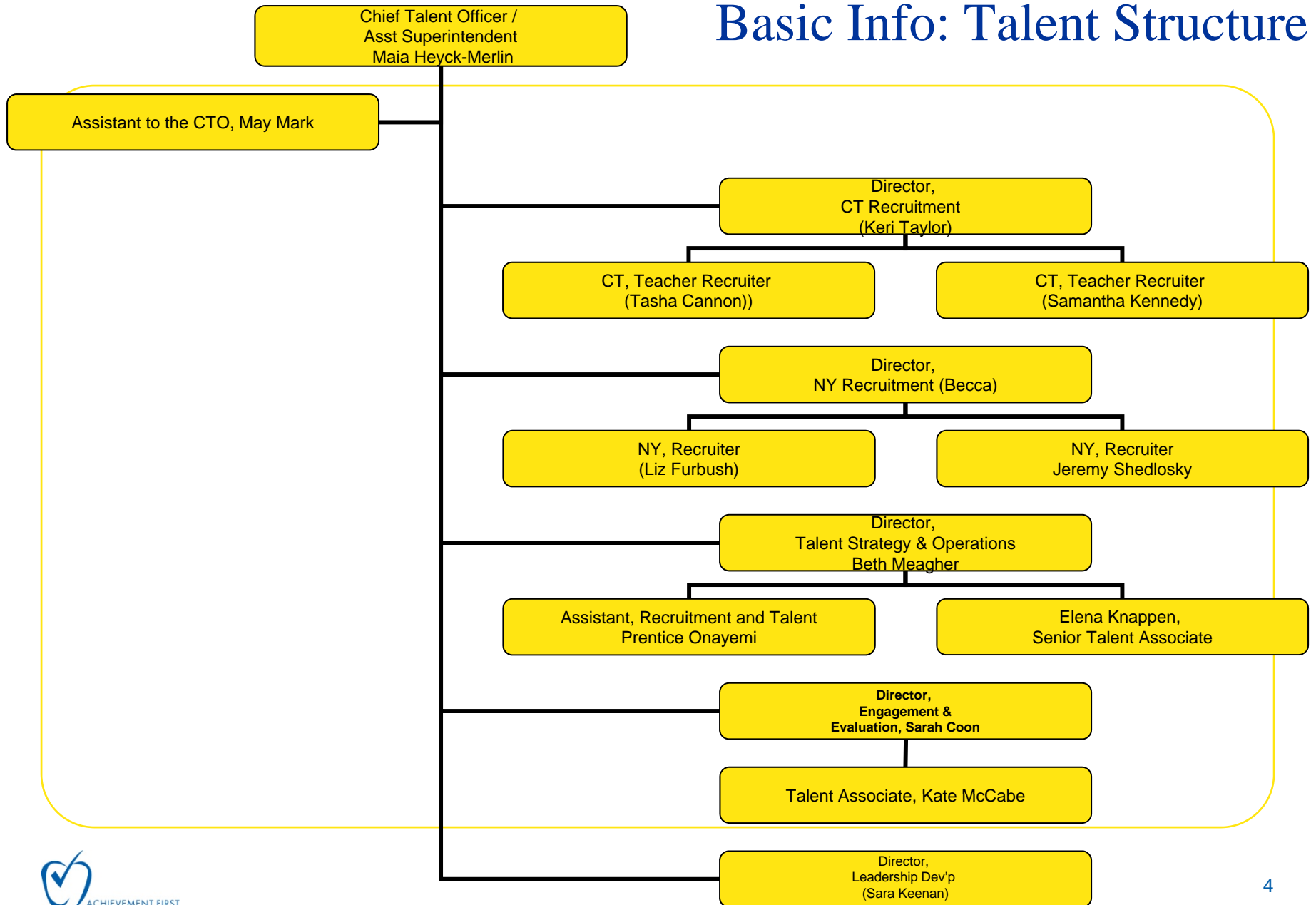
Each AF classroom and school will have awesomely talented educators working hard to make academic and character gains with their scholars. These educators, and their supporting team members in operations and network roles, will be excited to come to work each day because they will feel connected to our mission. Our talented Team & Family members will choose to remain at AF because we will be an environment that contains multiple career and learning opportunities and regularly recognizes excellence. As we build our team, we will invest wisely in infrastructure for the future and share broadly with our friends in education reform.

Basic Info: What Do We Mean by “Talent,” Anyway?



Organizational investment in our people efforts will pay us back with increasing levels of student success.

Basic Info: Talent Structure





Assistant Superintendent

Start Date: Immediate

Team: School Support

Location: New Haven, CT or Brooklyn, NY

About Achievement First:

Achievement First is a charter school management organization started in July 2003 by the leaders of Amistad Academy, a high performing charter school in New Haven, CT. A non-profit, 501 (c)(3) organization, Achievement First is creating a network of achievement-gap closing charter schools in Connecticut and New York to bring to scale the dramatic, life changing student achievement results produced at Amistad Academy. Achievement First currently operates 17 schools in both NY and CT. Over the next decade, Achievement First will grow to support 30 schools serving over 11,500 students. For more information about the Achievement First mission, model, our schools and team, please visit our website at www.achievementfirst.org.

Summary:

Achievement First seeks an Assistant Superintendent to supervise the instructional and operational program in Brooklyn, NY and/or Connecticut. This is an extraordinary opportunity for an educator to take on meaningful work, focusing closely with a portfolio of three to six schools. The Assistant Superintendent is responsible for ensuring dramatic, life-changing student achievement gains in all these schools. The primary way the Assistant Superintendent ensures this level of excellence is through the selection, coaching, and ongoing development of the principals who s/he supervises. This is a position for someone who loves being in schools, and offers the opportunity to have a major impact on school success. The Assistant Superintendent reports directly to the Co-CEO/Superintendent, and they work together to ensure that all Achievement First schools succeed. The Assistant Superintendent is also a key member of the senior leadership team and will be involved in the overall leadership of AF during its critical multi-city expansion, and will help the leadership team to meet the challenges of scale. This position is located in either New York or Connecticut.

Responsibilities:

- Ensure that all schools achieve dramatic student performance gains in all subject areas by performing coach observations, looking at data, performing classroom observations, planning and sitting in on leadership team meetings, and more. Examples of this work include:
 - Plan frequent co-observation days; highlight areas of strength and improvement in feedback during the day and prepare a more formal write-up after the observation day; work hand-in-hand with principals to address areas of school improvement.
 - Regularly review data to spot strengths and growth areas; work with principals to develop clear plans to address growth areas.

- Work with principals to set teacher professional development priorities for the year and to design outstanding site-based and network-wide professional development.
 - Problem-solve solutions to challenges common to all schools in network-wide forums (meetings, conference calls, etc.).
 - Provide some limited, direct coaching and support of teachers in the schools.
 - Work with principals to design and implement rigorous intervention programs.
- Support, coach, train, and supervise principals:
 - Hold monthly 1-on-1 meetings with each principal (monthly reflection/data review, problem-solve around pressing issues, professional development planning).
 - Provide ongoing informal feedback and support.
 - Work with the other members of the school support and talent development teams to design principal and Dean training; coordinate principal meetings and conference calls.
 - Create mid-year and end-of-year Professional Growth Plans (evaluations) for all principals in your portfolio.
 - Lead School Evaluation Teams for schools.
 - Serve on committee to select new principals; become the primary point-of-contact for top candidates during the process; spend 1-2 days with each final candidate in rigorous final interview process.
- Help to supervise the development and modification of Achievement First's curriculum and assessments:
 - Work with principals and our curriculum team to continually develop world-class curricular materials.
 - Meet regularly with the Director of Curriculum Development.
- Ensure that all schools have world class operational support:
 - Have regular check-ins with the principals and operations staff to ensure excellence in operations.
 - Problem-solve operational challenges, investing both principals and operations staff in changes.
- Provide organizational development support to the AF Central staff and the schools:
 - Understand the concerns and constraints of both the schools and AF Central teams in order to facilitate good working relationships.
 - Ensure that schools are getting top-quality service from all AF Central Teams (recruitment, budget/finance, operations, curriculum, external, IT).

Qualifications:

Required knowledge, skills, abilities and experience include:

- At least four years of highly successful experience as a principal, assistant principal, leadership coach, or similar support position demonstrating a strong track record of student performance gains.
- At least four years of highly successful teaching experience demonstrating a strong track record of student performance gains.
- Strong general management and leadership skills.
- Bachelor's degree from a competitive college or university.

In addition, highly qualified candidates will demonstrate:

- Results-oriented individual – a determined leader willing to do “whatever it takes”.
- Ability to thrive in a fast-paced, entrepreneurial environment; flexible, able to work autonomously as well as take direction as needed.
- Highly motivated and capable of seeing projects through from beginning to end.
- Solid analytical, communication, influence and negotiation skills.
- Belief in the Achievement First mission and educational model.
- Maturity, humility, strong work ethic, sense of humor, and “roll-up-the-sleeves” attitude.

Salary & Benefits:

Salary is competitive and commensurate with experience, and includes excellent benefits.

To Apply:

Achievement First is reviewing applications on a rolling basis – please apply immediately.

Please send resume and letter of interest to:
Sarah Coon at sarahcoon@achievementfirst.org



Director of Human Capital Management

Start Date: TBD
Team: Talent Finance
Location: Brooklyn, NY or New Haven, CT

About Achievement First:

Achievement First (AF) is a charter school management organization started in July 2003 by the leaders of Amistad Academy, a high performing charter school in New Haven, CT. A non-profit, 501 (c)(3) organization, Achievement First is creating a network of achievement-gap closing charter schools in Connecticut and New York to bring to scale the dramatic, life changing student achievement results produced at Amistad Academy. Achievement First currently operates 15 schools serving over 3,700 students in both NY and CT. Over the next five years, Achievement First will grow to support more than 30 schools serving over 11,000 students. For more information about the Achievement First mission, model, our schools and team, please visit our website at www.achievementfirst.org.

Summary:

The Director of Human Capital Management is a new position at AF. Previously, human capital management responsibilities have been split among the Operations, Talent Development, and Finance Teams. The goal of the creation of the Director of Human Capital Management position is to have a single highly qualified individual oversee and execute this critical area reporting directly to the CFO.

The Director of Human Capital Management will ensure the alignment and effective execution of the processes, policies and systems that support AF's entire staff, both at our schools and within our central office. The goals of the position are to ensure our human capital management remains a source of competitive advantage in our ability to attract and retain talent. Too often, organizations hurt themselves through poorly conceived and executed human capital management policies, and end up demotivating the very employees they are designed to support. AF believes that a compassionate, consistent and fairly implemented human capital management program is critical to our success at building a network of high performing schools that can close the achievement gap at scale.

Responsibilities of the Director of Human Capital Management will include:

Strategic and critical issue human capital management (50%)

- **Human Capital Management strategy**
 - Evaluation and benchmarking of Human Capital Management practices against comparable organizations (in coordination with Team Talent)
 - Driver of Human Capital Management policies and changes
 - Driver of compensation policies and changes
- **Systems**
 - Evaluation and implementation of Human Capital Management IS system (in coordination with Team Ops)
- **Benefits ownership**
 - Determines right benefits packages based on annual review

- Owns relationships with key benefits providers (medical, retirement, etc.)
- **Point of contact on serious issues**
 - First point of contact for serious legal issues
 - Coordinator with legal counsel
 - Escalates as necessary to senior management

Day-to-day human capital management execution (50%)

- **Day-to-day functions -- Central**
 - On-boarding new hires
 - Exit interviews for departing hires
 - Benefits administration (e.g., processing new hires, implementing changes to benefits, terminating benefits for departing employees)
- **Support of Human Capital Management functions – Schools**
 - Resource for school Directors of Ops on Human Capital management issues
 - Audit/oversight of school Human Capital Management functions (e.g., record keeping, filing systems, etc.)
- **Policy administration**
 - Maintenance of employee handbook and associated tools
 - Ensure compliance with all relevant local, state and federal regulations
- **Employee support**
 - Resource for questions on benefits, policy issues, etc.
 - Confidential resource for sensitive issues (e.g., manager concerns, harassment complaints, etc.)
- **Compensation**
 - Keeper of salary setting information and executor of key processes

Skills and Characteristics:

- ✓ Focused on results—A flexible thinker and executor who understands the chief metric is student achievement
- ✓ Entrepreneurial and resourceful--Ability to thrive in a fast-paced environment that is breaking new ground
- ✓ Self-starter and solution-oriented—Takes initiative and moves the ball down the court
- ✓ Analytical thinker—Relies on data to make good decisions, and in the absence of data, this person finds a way to gather data
- ✓ Works well with others—Ability to motivate other people to try new ideas, plays as a member of a team
- ✓ Belief in the Achievement First mission and educational model
- ✓ Maturity, humility, strong work ethic, sense of humor, and “roll-up-my-sleeves” attitude

Educational Background and Work Experience:

- ✓ Bachelor’s degree from a competitive college or university
- ✓ Master’s Degree
- ✓ Experience developing a long-term strategic plan for a core business area

This position will require some travel between New Haven and Brooklyn, as well as some seasonal travel to recruitment events. Some evening and weekend work required.

Compensation

Salary for this position is competitive and commensurate with experience. Additionally, Achievement First offers a comprehensive benefits package.

To Apply

Achievement First is an equal opportunity employer.

Send resume and cover letter to:

Maia Heyck-Merlin
Vice President, Talent Development
maiaheyckmerlin@achievementfirst.org



Director of Talent Strategy & Operations

Start Date: June 2, 2008
Team: Talent Development
Location: Brooklyn, NY or New Haven, CT

About Achievement First:

Achievement First is a charter school management organization started in July 2003 by the leaders of Amistad Academy, a high performing charter school in New Haven, CT. A non-profit, 501 (c)(3) organization, Achievement First is creating a network of achievement-gap closing charter schools in Connecticut and New York to bring to scale the dramatic, life changing student achievement results produced at Amistad Academy. Achievement First currently operates 12 schools in both NY and CT. Over the next decade, Achievement First will grow to support 25 schools serving over 7,000 students. For more information about the Achievement First mission, model, our schools and team, please visit our website at www.achievementfirst.org.

Summary:

The Director of Talent Strategy & Operations is a new position on the Talent Development team. The Talent Development team started its work in October 2007, and its mission is to attract, recruit, select, develop, engage, and recognize the best talent for our students. Achievement First already has a robust recruitment and selection function, and the Director of Talent Strategy & Operations is a critical new role on the Talent team as we seek to build processes and systems to support over 25 schools. The Director of Talent Strategy & Operations will coordinate the organization's recruitment goal-setting and planning processes and ensure we are operating in a data-driven way as we build our recruitment and selection processes to support over 25 schools. This Director will also drive our efforts to more effectively articulate and market our value to our potential employees. Additionally, the Director will lead studies, focus groups, and surveying efforts to ensure our talent practices are truly attracting, developing, and retaining the most outstanding role models for our students. The ideal candidate should enjoy being part of the big picture while successfully driving ahead on very specific, detail-oriented work. The Director of Talent Strategy & Operations will report directly to the Vice President of Talent Development, and also serve as a member of the Talent leadership team. This person will also potentially manage a Talent Associate and/or external consultants as needed.

Responsibilities of the Director of Talent Strategy will include:

Attracting & Marketing (30%)

- **Drive all teacher, school leader, and AF Central recruitment message development and execution**
 - Work with a team to identify Achievement First's signature experience, both now and for the future (and potentially manage an Education Pioneer during the summer to define our employee value proposition)
 - Partner with Marketing & Communications Director to effectively market our Teacher University, Leadership Fellows, Summer Fellows, and Principal-in-Residence programs
 - Drive a study to understand what sets us apart from others doing the same work so everyone in the organization can clearly state our employee value proposition
- **Partner with other team leaders and school leaders to ensure our talent practices attract the right people**
 - Partner with our Director of Performance Management to study our compensation and benefits packages to ensure we are both competitive and fiscally responsible

- Research additional matriculation efforts to find additional ways to attract people to apply (signing bonuses, relocation stipends, retention bonuses)
- Identify and create ways to effectively market our harder-to-staff geographies, such as Bridgeport and Hartford
- **Implement an inspiring and informative candidate experience from start to finish**
 - Study and define our current candidate experience and articulate gaps against the ideal
 - Design and execute a strategic and culturally consistent matriculation process for our key hires (think—how do we make new teachers to our network feel like they have joined an elite teaching squad?)
 - Create and implement an applicant survey to ensure we are being efficient, informative, and inspiring during the process
- **Partner with Director of Marketing & Communications to ensure all collateral and web-based recruitment tools are inspiring, inspirational, and widespread**
 - Ensure Achievement First’s public website clearly articulates job responsibilities, value propositions, compelling examples, etc.
 - Develop print ads, pamphlets, videos, giveaways, and snapshots to compel the best applicants to join us and are clearly connected to instructional excellence
 - Be part of a team that works to make Achievement First technologically virile amongst new teachers

Talent Recruitment Strategy (40%)

- **Coordinate Team Recruit’s overall planning, goal-setting and measurement processes**
 - Partner with Directors of Recruitment and Selection to set long-term goals and short-term benchmarks on an annual basis
 - Partner with Directors of Recruitment and Selection to create clear and outstanding annual and long-term plans for teacher and principal recruitment and selection
 - Design and create ways to monitor our recruitment and selection health in a consistent manner
- **Directly oversee key portions of the recruitment process for teachers, leaders, and AF Central**
 - Coordinate all mass marketing efforts to ensure our net is cast as far as possible to high quality pools of people
 - Identify untapped or missed opportunity recruitment markets and partner with Team Recruit to build relationships with senior leaders and talent sources, such as New Leaders, the NYC Teaching Fellows
 - Partner with school leaders and teachers to develop and deliver thoughtful professional development and resources to talented teachers
- **Design and manage the AF Central talent recruitment and selection processes**
 - Funnel talent strategically by managing an associate to know all AF Central current and future positions
 - Develop tools and materials to support AF Central team leaders in their recruiting and selecting processes, including researching an online application system
 - Lead key AF Central searches, such as VP External Relations or Assistant Superintendent
 - Selectively attend and deputize other senior AF leaders to attend career fairs or networking events with high-quality candidates, such as Broad, Net Impact, Education Pioneers, MBA programs, etc.
 - Serve as the point of contact for hot-prospect individuals who want to learn more about the organization

Infrastructure Building and Operations (20%)

- **Study and articulate what makes our best people truly our best people**
 - Lead study of our most and least effective team members to identify key skills and mindsets that make someone successful at Achievement First
 - Audit our current selection models against these competencies and make recommendations for greater alignment of our selection model, interview questions, and performance based activities
 - Partner with the Director of Leadership Development to assess our current competencies with what we see in the recruitment phase
 - Potentially study what makes an outstanding AF recruiter and actively recruit to fill these roles in the short and long-term
- **Create a culture of data-driven operations around recruitment, selection, and people development**
 - Ensures our recruitment and selection processes gather the right data to make smart decisions for the short and long-term, including analysis of high-yield sources and untapped markets
 - Research, test, and implement a contact management system that allows us to maintain a virtual Rolodex of talented people
 - Ensure our resource allocation—both of human capital and financial expenditures—are funneled toward our biggest areas of yield

Talent Development Leadership (10%)

- **Serve as a member of the Talent leadership team to discuss and solve strategic organizational talent issues, such as compensation methods, employee value propositions, teacher retention, and effective marketing**

Skills and Characteristics:

- ✓ Focused on results—A flexible thinker and executor who understands the chief metric is student achievement
- ✓ Entrepreneurial and resourceful--Ability to thrive in a fast-paced environment that is breaking new ground
- ✓ Self-starter and solution-oriented—Takes initiative and moves the ball down the court
- ✓ Analytical thinker—Relies on data to make good decisions, and in the absence of data, this person finds a way to gather data
- ✓ Works well with others—Ability to motivate other people to try new ideas, plays as a member of a team
- ✓ Belief in the Achievement First mission and educational model
- ✓ Maturity, humility, strong work ethic, sense of humor, and “roll-up-my-sleeves” attitude

Educational Background and Work Experience:

- ✓ Bachelor’s degree from a competitive college or university
- ✓ M.B.A., J.D., or Master’s Degree
- ✓ A minimum of five years in a leadership position in a complex organization; proven leadership skills, including the ability to attract, develop, and inspire a team
- ✓ Experience developing a long-term strategic plan for a core business area

This position will require some travel between New Haven and Brooklyn, as well as some seasonal travel to recruitment events. Some evening and weekend work required.

Compensation

Salary for this position is competitive and commensurate with experience. Additionally, Achievement First offers a comprehensive benefits package.

To Apply

Achievement First is an equal opportunity employer.

Send resume and cover letter to:

Maia Heyck-Merlin
Vice President, Talent Development
maiaheyckmerlin@achievementfirst.org



Director of Talent Management & Engagement

Start Date: June 1, 2008
Team: Talent Development
Location: Brooklyn, NY or New Haven, CT

About Achievement First:

Achievement First is a charter school management organization started in July 2003 by the leaders of Amistad Academy, a high performing charter school in New Haven, CT. A non-profit, 501 (c)(3) organization, Achievement First is creating a network of achievement-gap closing charter schools in Connecticut and New York to bring to scale the dramatic, life changing student achievement results produced at Amistad Academy. Achievement First currently operates 12 schools in both NY and CT. Over the next decade, Achievement First will grow to support 30 schools serving over 11,000 students. For more information about the Achievement First mission, model, our schools and team, please visit our website at www.achievementfirst.org.

Summary:

The Director of Talent Management & Engagement is a new position on the Talent Development team. The Talent Development team started its work in October 2007, and its mission is to attract, recruit, select, develop, recognize, and retain the best talent for our students. Achievement First already has a robust recruitment and selection function, and the Director of Talent Management and Engagement is a critical new role on the Talent team as we seek to build processes and systems to support over 25 schools. The ideal candidate should enjoy being part of the big picture while successfully driving ahead on very specific, detail-oriented work. The Director of Talent Management and Engagement will report to the Vice President of Talent Development, and also serve as a member of the Talent leadership team.

Responsibilities of the Director of Talent Management and Engagement will include:

- Ensure all Achievement First Team and Family members are learning and growing in their roles by implementing a rigorous and inspiring annual performance management system
 - Create tools, timelines, and templates for effective annual employee evaluations
 - Create and execute trainings for all AF Team members around effective performance conversations
 - Research, propose, select and implement a robust 360 feedback process for all AF Team members
 - Directly oversee the AF Central Professional Growth Plan process, including template design, key skills, and articulation of values
 - Collect, maintain, and share network trends in areas of strength and areas of growth and consider how to capitalize on strengths and train on growth areas across the network
 - Research and recommend purchase of an integrated Human Resources Information System and/or use existing technology to track our talent efforts
-
- Ensure we are systematically investing in our AF Central team leaders and high potential leaders

- Design and execute AF Central team leader trainings/leadership workshops 2-3 times per year
 - Coach AF Central team leaders as needed on areas of need
 - Ensure each high potential leader is receiving coaching in key areas of need
 - Partner with Director of School Leadership Development to ensure synergies in leadership training are identified
- Ensure we have a culture of ongoing feedback, continuous improvement, and consistent celebrations
 - Design and deliver trainings for AF School and Central team members on effective feedback methods, both written and oral
 - Research, design, execute, and analyze a bi-annual organizational health survey with clear targets and report cards
 - Research, design, execute, and analyze surveys around relationship of schools to network
 - Create clear systems and messages around effective upward feedback
 - Partner with Talent Associate to ensure we recognize birthdays and occasions consistently and network wide
- Ensure we are intentionally and creatively making effective decisions around network retention efforts
 - Research key drivers of school site and AF Central retention and propose systematic solutions for employee retention
 - Collaborate with Directors of Operations to collect, track, and report out on network retention data
 - Build and maintain strong relationships with the NYC Department of Education to ensure clear lines of communication around compensation increases and other retention efforts
 - Partner with Finance team to clearly articulate salary structure, transparency in compensation, etc.
 - Further refine our definition of work-life balance and partner with team leaders to systematically implement solutions to approach this challenge
- Ensure we maintain a pulse on our current and future talent needs as related to our organization's strategic plan
 - Design, execute, conduct and analyze bi-annual talent review with senior AF leaders
 - Ensure the top 25% of talent in all levels, Central and Schools, knows they are valued and are receiving special attention and training
 - Partner with team leaders to project their future workforce needs to meet our collective goals and help them design positions as needed

Talent Development Leadership (10%)

- Serve as a member of the Talent leadership team to discuss and solve strategic organizational talent issues, such as compensation methods, employee value propositions, teacher retention, and effective marketing

Skills and Characteristics:

- ✓ Focused on results—A flexible thinker and executor who understands the chief metric is student achievement
- ✓ Entrepreneurial and resourceful—Ability to thrive in a fast-paced environment that is breaking new ground
- ✓ Self-starter and solution-oriented—Takes initiative and moves the ball down the court

- ✓ Analytical thinker—Relies on data to make good decisions, and in the absence of data, this person finds a way to gather data
- ✓ Works well with others—Ability to motivate other people to try new ideas; plays as a member of a team
- ✓ Belief in the Achievement First mission and educational model
- ✓ Maturity, humility, strong work ethic, sense of humor, and “roll-up-your-sleeves” attitude

Educational Background and Work Experience:

- ✓ Bachelor’s degree from a competitive college or university
- ✓ M.B.A., J.D., or Master’s Degree
- ✓ A minimum of five years in a leadership position in a complex organization; proven leadership skills, including the ability to attract, develop, and inspire a team
- ✓ Significant human resources experience
- ✓ Experience developing a long-term strategic plan for a core business area

This position will require some travel between New Haven and Brooklyn. Some evening and weekend work required.

Compensation

Salary for this position is competitive and commensurate with experience. Additionally, Achievement First offers a comprehensive benefits package.

To Apply

Achievement First is an equal opportunity employer.

Send resume and cover letter to:

Maia Heyck-Merlin
Vice President, Talent Development
maiaheyckmerlin@achievementfirst.org

Director of Leadership Development

Job Description

Location: Brooklyn, NY or New Haven, CT

Reports to: Maia Heyck-Merlin, Vice President for Talent Development

About Achievement First

Achievement First is a charter school management organization started in July 2003 by the leaders of Amistad Academy, a high-performing public charter school in New Haven, CT. A non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, Achievement First aims to bring to scale the dramatic, life-changing student achievement results produced at Amistad by creating a school system of achievement-gap closing public schools in New York, Connecticut, and other high-poverty cities in the Northeast.

Achievement First currently operates twelve academies under six charters in New Haven, CT and Brooklyn, NY, and will open two new schools in September 2007. Over the next five years, AF plans to open 15-20 additional schools, spanning the full K-12 spectrum and creating college-prep opportunities for more than 10,000 students. Beyond our students and schools, Achievement First is an engaged and prominent partner in the larger conversation about how to improve public education and student achievement more broadly.

The Talent Development Team

The Director of Leadership Development will serve on Achievement First's talent development team. This team is charged with developing and implementing a Talent Plan - a comprehensive people recruitment and development strategy - that will prove the single most critical component of the Strategic Business Plan. AF fully understand that our schools and students will only be successful if we put a great teacher in every classroom, a great principal at the helm of every school, a great team of deans to support the principal, and increasingly sophisticated managers in the central office. Our ability to retain such talented people will depend on our ability to deliver opportunities for growth and development. We aspire to have Achievement First set the industry standard for talent development, demonstrating what it takes to attract, develop, celebrate, and retain the high-quality educators and leaders all students deserve. Investments in our people will be paid back in the form of increasingly spectacular results for children at an ever-growing scale.

The Director of Leadership Development

The Director of Leadership development will be a senior member of the talent development team, charged with leading our efforts to develop and retain outstanding school leaders. Specific job responsibilities include:

Leadership Fellows Program (40 percent)

- Design a year-long training program that prepares teachers to successfully and confidently move into leadership positions (usually transitioning to a grade level chair or Dean position)
- Recruit the finest professionals both within and outside the AF network to serve as instructors and mentors for the program
- Ensure that the program is organized, rigorous, and high-quality
- Document and continually improve the program
- Ensure that Leadership Fellows are successfully completing their leadership responsibilities and are getting the necessary support from their mentors

- Design a 360-feedback tool for the Leadership Fellows so that they (and their mentors) get high-quality feedback
- Give feedback to the Leadership Fellows and serve as an informal career coach

Career Paths for Instructional Talent (40%)

- Define the multiple career paths we can offer to talented individuals throughout AF -- What does a rewarding career as a “master teacher” look like? What does the leadership track look like? How can people flow back and forth between school-site and AF-central responsibilities?
- Design and execute a master teacher program by articulating criteria of instructional excellence, creating a selection process, and then building a cohort of Master Teachers
- Determine how teachers & leaders with children can have short-term and long-term flexibility/support so that they can make a rewarding job with AF work for their families
- Determine how best to recognize, celebrate, and compensate outstanding teachers leaders, and AF central staff (Performance bonus system? Teaching excellence awards?)
- Create job descriptions and tools for multiple career paths and opportunities for our teachers, such as mentor teachers, Saturday school directors, content coaches, and grade level team leads

Talent Review Process Design and Execution (5 percent)

- Create and execute a process by which we are cataloguing and celebrating our organization’s teaching excellence and systematically having career conversations with our top talent

Talent Leadership Team (5 percent)

- Serve on the Talent Development leadership team
- Partner with our Recruitment team to ensure our leadership opportunities are effectively marketed and followed through upon

Qualifications:

1) Required knowledge, skills & experience:

- ❖ A minimum of 4 years (more preferred) in a leadership position in a complex organization; proven leadership skills; significant experience managing and developing people, providing feedback and performance evaluations
- ❖ Human Resource experience (recruitment, training, performance evaluation, strategic planning for talent development, etc.)
- ❖ Experience developing and implementing high-quality professional development
- ❖ Experience coaching teachers and leaders
- ❖ Experience evaluating the performance of schools
- ❖ Focused on results – a flexible thinker who understands the chief metric is student achievement
- ❖ Ability to thrive in a fast-paced, entrepreneurial environment; flexible, able to work autonomously as well as take direction as needed
- ❖ Commitment to the Achievement First mission and educational model; direct education background (teaching, school leadership) will be considered a bonus
- ❖ Maturity, humility, strong work ethic, sense of humor, and roll-up-my-sleeves attitude

❖ **Educational background:**

Bachelor's degree from a competitive college or university

To apply:

Interested applicants should send a resume and cover letter to Maia Heyck-Merlin at maiaheyckmerlin@achievementfirst.org.

Talent Brat Pack, Cuz We are Bringin' Talent Back!

Doug, Dacia, Sara, Sarah, Kathleen, Maia, Nancy, Elana (plus Harris sometimes)

Wednesday, November 17, 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Preparation and Pre-Reading:

- Sara's debrief of Coach and Grade Level trainings
- Kathleen's debrief of AF-Wide PD Day
- Sarah's Org Health Survey documents (survey, slides, Principal one-pager)
- Sarah's AF Central PGP processes
- Beth's Leadership Selection questions
- Scope and Sequence for the Talent Brat Pack; notes from last meeting
- Consider a great talent practice you have seen in action

Agenda:

- **9:00 – 9:05 a.m. Agenda review and reminder of purpose (MHML)**
 - Agenda review and reminder of purpose
 - What is one example of a great talent practice you have seen in action?
- **9:05 – 9:25 a.m. Review and make decisions on content and format of Organizational Health Survey (Sarah Coon)**
 - *Outcome: Confirm overall principles and spirit of survey, and answer outstanding questions.*
 - Review Organizational Health Survey, Overview document, and Overarching Principles
- **9:25 – 9:45 a.m. Debrief AF-Wide PD Day workshops (Kathleen Porter-Magee)**
 - *Outcome: Come to shared agreement of debrief of recent workshops and lessons for the future*
 - Review data and gather informal feedback
 - What does this mean for the future?
- **9:45 – 10:00 a.m. Debrief Coach and Grade Level Chair training (Sara Keenan)**
 - *Outcome: Come to shared agreement of debrief of recent workshops and lessons for the future*
 - Review data and gather informal feedback
 - What does this mean for the future?
- **10:00 – 10:20 a.m. Leadership Selection Activities (Beth Meagher)**
 - *Outcome: Determine selection criteria for school leader candidates based on new leadership competencies and brainstorm potential leadership selection activities.*
 - Think about our very best leaders. What qualities did we see at selection that were indicators of their success? Ex. Humility, core values, strong demo lesson, openness to feedback etc.
 - Do you think the list of non-negotiables is comprehensive? Should these be the main focus of selection?

- What are some selection activities or questions that will help us determine if a candidate has these non-negotiable competencies?

Current Leadership Selection Activities:

- *Demo Lesson*
 - *Leadership of People Case Studies*
 - *Culture Fit Interview*
 - *Lesson Observation and Feedback*
 - *Instructional Battle Plan Assignment*
 - *School Data review*
- **10:20 – 10:25 a.m. Confirm AF Central PGP Processes (Sarah Coon)**
 - *May get deferred*
 - **10:25 – 10:30 a.m. Review next steps (Maia)**
 - Next Steps
 - Upcoming Topics

Talent Brat Pack, Cuz We are Bringin' Talent Back!

Doug, Dacia, Sara, Sarah, Kathleen, Maia, Nancy, Elana (plus Harris sometimes)

Friday, December 12, 2:15 – 4:30 p.m.

Preparation and Pre-Reading:

- February Director Days brainstorm—Sarah Coon
- School Leader PGP near-final draft – Sarah Coon
- Consider the brainstorm questions for the Recognizing Instructional Excellence portion
- Scope and Sequence for the Talent Brat Pack; notes from last meeting
- Consider the opening question listed below

Agenda:

- **2:15 – 2:20 p.m. Agenda review and reminder of purpose (MHML)**
 - Agenda review and reminder of purpose
 - Group question: After we master the basics, what would taking our talent practices to the next level look like?
- **2:20 – 2:40 p.m. Review and make decisions School Leader PGP (Sarah Coon)**
 - *Outcome: Improve the effectiveness of the School Leader PGP.*
 - What are your overall impressions of this revised School Leader PGP?
 - How effective is using one document for all school leaders and shading priority areas for the specific role?
 - How can the list of evidence sources be more helpful? (page 3)
 - How effective is collection of student achievement and student growth data? (page 4)

A bit of context for this PGP:

- ✓ This is a draft. You will see a few areas that Doug and I need to clarify.
- ✓ The PGP is based on the school leader success factors.
- ✓ The PGP indicators will be the same for each role (principal, dean of students and academic dean). However, different indicators will be shaded depending on the role. In other words, the academic dean will receive ratings on all the indicators, but we will highlight those indicators which are essential to their current role. This allows leaders to see how they are doing in their current role and to identify stretch areas to build their leadership skills. Specific indicators will be shaded once we have a final draft.
- ✓ Page 3 was added to include sources of evidence to support ratings.
- ✓ Section I requires school leaders to include student data in reading, writing, math, science, and other subjects. This is both achievement data and growth data.
- ✓ Goal-setting will focus on professional leadership goals for the school leader. The goals are connected to school goals, but are not BHAGs.

- **2:40-3:00 p.m. February Director Days (Sarah Coon)**
 - *Outcome:* Identify key content areas for the February 3rd Director Days.
 - What trainings are needed and timely?
 - technical trainings
 - people leadership
 - big picture activities

- **3:00 – 3:20 p.m. Problem Solving: Gathering Feedback for AF Central and School Leader PGPs (Sarah Coon / Maia)**
 - *Outcome:* Identify the most effective way to gather feedback on AF Central staff from multiple perspectives (materials and questions provided at the meeting)
- **3:15 – 3:30 Bio Break and Holiday Singing**
- **3:30 – 4:20 p.m. Brainstorm on Recognizing Instructional Excellence (Sara Keenan)**
 - *Outcome:* A shared vision of how AF wants to recognize instructional excellence.
 - How does a stellar teacher at AF know he/she is a stellar teacher?
 - What are the informal ways we currently recognize instructional excellence?
 - Is this enough?
 - What are other avenues for recognizing instructional excellence that we should consider?
- **4:20 – 4:30 p.m. Review next steps (MHML)**
 - Next Steps
 - Upcoming Topics
 - Spring PD Day
 - New Staff Training
 - What else?

What's the purpose of the Talent Review?

As you know, recruiting, developing and retaining talented teachers and schools leaders is the most important challenge facing our network right now. Managing a network-wide Talent Review is a significant part of our efforts to make progress on our organizational talent priority.

Team Talent Development manages a network-wide Talent Review process in order to:

- o Ensure that principals and asst. superintendents are systematically managing the talent at their schools
- o Ensure that we're taking action steps to develop and retain our most outstanding talent
- o Map the network-wide talent landscape in order to identify strengths and gaps in our talent pool and to build an internal leadership pipeline
- o Inform recruitment needs as early as possible
- o Gather data to assess previous year's recruitment hiring and selection

What's the timeline for the Talent Review?

- o September 30: School Support receives Talent Review template
- o October 1 – October 30: Assistant superintendents work with principals to review the talent of each person on their staff using the Talent Review worksheet
- o October 30: Assistant Superintendents send completed Talent Review worksheets to Sara Keenan
- o November 17 and 18: Principals receive Talent Snapshots at November principal workshop and participate in Managing your Talent workshop
- o November 16 -18: Sara presents network-wide results to School Support Team and principal cohort

How will we use the data from the Talent Review?

- o We will provide Talent Snapshots for each school to principals and assistant superintendents. Principals can use these Talent Snapshots to regularly check-in and update their talent review and action steps. The snapshots can help principals identify:
 - Leadership vacancies for 2010-11,
 - Potential internal dean candidates for 2010-11
 - Potential teacher leaders for 2010-11
 - Possible non-renewals so we can start documentation now
 - Possible rockstar teacher departures that we can prevent
- o We will identify the top 20% of talent network wide to regularly review action steps we're taking to develop and retain these most talented people. We will also use this data to build an internal leadership pipeline where we systematically track the development of our high potential leaders.
- o We will conduct a network-wide analysis of our talent, identifying strengths and gaps in our talent pool. We will then compare this performance data against our new hire data to identify how effective our recruitment and selection efforts have been and to inform our recruitment and selection model.

Keep in mind:

This information will be treated confidentially, and it should be seen as fluid. It may feel strange to rank people, but we see it from a criterion-referenced standpoint, rather than a bell curve, meaning we believe almost everyone can meet the bar.

Reviewing your Talent:

- Walk through each of your deans, teachers, operations staff and support staff.
- Rate your staff on a scale of 5 to 1. Note that we reversed the order of the rankings from last year. For this year's review, a 5 is most talented and a 1 is least talented. This is a holistic rating, using the general criteria below to inform your thinking:
 5. **Rockstar** – Consistently delivers great results and inspires and motivates others. May be a master teacher or on fast-track to becoming one. Possible move to a leadership position in 1 to 2 years.
 4. **Solid** – Solid performer who may struggle in one or two key areas. Potential for a grade level chair or future leadership position.
 3. **Needs Development/High Potential** – Possibly a new teacher, who could improve with additional feedback and coaching. May be a veteran teacher who still struggles in several areas, but has strong potential.
 2. **Needs Development/Concern** – Low performer who has not shown improvement over time.
 1. **Move Out** – Will need to be replaced either this year or next.
- Take some time to respond to the additional columns of the worksheet. These responses can help you plan action steps for developing your people and can provide Team Talent Development with a better sense of our current leadership pipeline. Note that you only need to fill these columns out for the people who you're marking "yes," unlike last year when you were asked to mark yes or no for everyone. There is a column for other notes after these rankings if you would like to add more detail about a staff member, ie. possible moves, desires to work less, or anything else you think would be helpful.

Thank you!

Managing talent through conducting a Talent Review is definitely a Quadrant Two activity. While you are incredibly busy with the day-to-day work of running your school, investing this chunk of time in reviewing and managing your talent is one of the most important ways you can spend their time.

AF School

Talent Review

Deadline: October 30, 2009



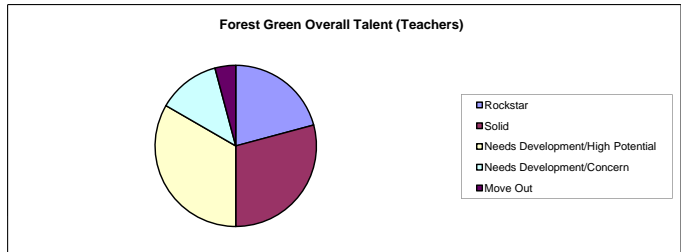
Staff Member		Grade Level and/or Position	Overall Talent	Potential Master Teacher in 1-2 Years	Potential for School Leadership in 1 - 2 Years	Potential for School Leadership in 3- 5 Years
First Name	Last Name					
Leadership						
Teachers						
Support						
Operations						

Mid-Year Departures

Staff Member		Reason For Leaving	Particular Areas of Struggle
First Name	Last Name		

Forest Green Middle School

Total Teachers		24
Rockstar	5	20.83%
Solid	7	29.17%
Needs Development/High Potential	8	33.33%
Needs Development/Concern	3	12.50%
Move Out	1	4.17%



Leadership			Potential Next Steps	Leadership	Retention Risk
First Name	Last Name	Grade Level	2 - Solid	3 to 5 year Principal	
			4 - Needs Development/Concern		
			3 - Needs Development/High Potential		

Teachers					
			3 - Needs Development/High Potential		
			4 - Needs Development/Concern		
			1 - Rockstar	Coach	
			4 - Needs Development/Concern		
			3 - Needs Development/High Potential		
			2 - Solid	Coach	
			5 - Move Out		
			3 - Needs Development/High Potential		
			1 - Rockstar	Coach	
			3 - Needs Development/High Potential		
			2 - Solid	GLC	
			3 - Needs Development/High Potential		
			2 - Solid	GLC	
			1 - Rockstar	Coach	
			4 - Needs Development/Concern		
			1 - Rockstar	Leadership Fellows, Coach	1 to 2 years
			1 - Rockstar	Leadership Fellows, Coach	
			3 - Needs Development/High Potential		Possibly going to law school
			3 - Needs Development/High Potential		
			3 - Needs Development/High Potential		
			2 - Solid	Leadership Fellows, GLC	May want to move
			2 - Solid	Leadership Fellows, GLC, Coach	
			2 - Solid		
			2 - Solid	GLC, Coach	1 to 2 years