RILS 2012: Evaluating Educator Evaluation Systems

Bridging Theory and Practice:

5 Tentative Conclusions

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Teacher Evaluation System is a:

- Weapon
  - Drone system to identify and destroy low performing teachers
    - Collateral damage?
- Tool
  - Used by teachers and principals to improve practice, not public accountability
    - Performance reviews are rarely shared publicly
- **Conclusion 1: It will only work if teachers own the system as their tool for their own improvement**
  - Denver and Montgomery Co. versus Hawaii

Comparisons

- Context matters to comparisons among teachers
  - Comparability in students served
  - Comparability in support received
  - Comparability in a lot of other things as well
- **Conclusion 2: Strongest comparisons are within teacher across years.**
  - Is my practice improving?
  - Reinforces use as a tool for teachers

Trickle Down Approach?

- **Conclusion 3: Teaching cannot be improved without first improving school leadership**
  - Helping leaders to observe, rate, coach teaching practices
    - Cannot coach what is not seen
  - Helping leaders to understand, interpret, and coach for improvement in student outcomes
- Good leaders also promote collaboration among teachers
  - Consulting teachers!

Student Learning Objectives

- **May be an end**
  - Quality of SLOs as an indicator of teaching effectiveness
  - Collaboration in creating SLOs may help target and improve instruction
- **As well as a means**
  - Of measuring student outcomes
- **Conclusion 4: More work on development and impact of SLOs is needed**

Complex System

- Requires coherence among
  - Training in system inputs
  - Interpretation of results
  - Use of results (Coaching, etc.)
- **Conclusion 5: Success will require systematic design and adequate time for implementation**
  - Possibly phased implementation: practice and feedback before consequences
    - Opportunity for teachers and principals to learn?

Suggestions:

- Push back against accountability uses
  - Later, if at all
- Push back against unreasonable timelines for implementing accountability uses
  - At least later