

# Compilation of Stakeholder Input from March 29th and 31st RTTT Phase II Stakeholder Meetings

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## COMMON THEMES/SUMMARY OF THE BREAKOUTS

- Common Standards and Assessments
- Longitudinal Data Systems
- Great Teachers and Leaders: Comprehensive Evaluation System Plan
- Great Teachers and Leaders: Teacher and Principal Preparation and Equitable Distribution
- Turn-Around Schools
- State Success Factors: Building and Sustaining Strong Statewide Capacity
- Public School Choice (e.g. Charters; Magnets; CommPACT Schools; and Other Innovative Schools)

## COMMON STANDARDS AND ASSESSMENTS

### What type of supports will be needed to implement the common core state standards?

- The term “rural” should be added to this question.
- Looking at SRBI – implementation was the most important part.
- We’ve learned from other districts that did well with SRBI and then they implemented it. Use a similar district that implemented SRBI (by DRG) and use them as a model. Invite teachers to talk to each district to share and train side-by-side (peer-to-peer).
- It would be helpful to find a district that’s successfully implemented SRBI for transparency purposes.
- Anchor sets for whatever teachers can bring and also share with parents. It’s important to give something to teachers/parents so they understand what they’re seeing.
- Would like to see documents showing the difference between common standards and current SDE practice to determine what’s OK to keep and what will be changed.
- In addition to the lowest/highest performing districts, think about small districts versus large districts. The smaller ones don’t have the same resources.
- Kindergarten instruction – districts that don’t have full-day kindergarten won’t be on an equal level across the state. Until full-day kindergarten is addressed, that’s a huge issue.
- From a RESC standpoint, don’t think district-by-district. There are common concerns that could be addressed on a regional basis.
- From an economic standpoint, regionalism makes sense.

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- Common Core Standards versus what we're doing now? More information is needed before the Standards can be addressed.
- Take a look at prekindergarten.
- It's difficult to find information on the Department's or the USDE Web sites.
- Glad Connecticut had as rigorous standards as the one the Feds put out.
- People need to know how to use BEST practices to instruct teachers.
- Need support for curriculum. Support would be extremely helpful.
- Standards for whom? There are possibly different curriculums being taught.
- Curriculum professional development is important to make sure all students meet the standards. Money for curriculum could be spent on professional development.
- Shift focus to teaching kids. Implement a standardized curriculum.
- Would our assessments be different than other states that adopt the Common Core of Standards?

CSDE "Training Wheels" model works. Intensive instruction as a cohort group, then they go back to their school and a coach works with them to implement what they learned in the PD. Classroom coaching piece has really been a key to helping teachers implement what they learned in the PD.

Develop a community of learners with a culture of learning. Change culture from assessment as something punitive to a needed part of curriculum and instruction.

Discovery teams consisting of community members, educators and municipal people provide support.

How can we scale up these small program models to something statewide?

Think about resources; it is expensive to have job-embedded coaching. How do we overcome this obstacle?

Informal education groups need better access to information about state assessments. Could build in activities to support improvement in achievement. How can this be achieved? Culture needs to

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change to more fully engage informal educators in assessment development. Will allow informals to align their programming to meet state or district needs.

We are also responsible to reach out to CSDE to access standards and assessment data to design programs.

Parents have not traditionally been focused on standards so much as access to high-quality ECE programs. Attributes of effective programs? Parents need simple, straight-forward benchmarks for child learning across the years. How do ECE providers better understand how to bring information to families.

Community communication should not use education jargon, should give examples.

## **What State policy decisions does CT want the next generation of assessments to inform?**

- Disaggregate data to see what areas of a test students are doing good/bad in. Data is useful if people have it.
- Reading section. It would be good to know what areas of the tests students are excelling at.
- Expand the model - CT benchmark system – three times a year. It's important to have immediate results and broken down by areas.
- In terms of helping students, how should the funding follow the assessments – schools that score low or high?
- An issue is getting data back to the teachers themselves that translate easy enough to not take up a lot of their time.
- Assessment – transparency. Other states give better examples of what assessments should look like. Give better examples and give people the capacity to build.
- Data related to dropouts. There's a tendency of a system when challenged to go back and polish the same stone (even though it's wrong to begin with).
- The less diverse we become with more focus on math/writing. If we don't have assessments in other critical areas, we'll lose it. There are other important skills as well as math/writing.

CMT/CAPT are good tests. But we don't give teachers enough time to reflect on the results. Use online assessing tools. Teachers need more time in planning.

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- If we have a common national curriculum, wouldn't it be natural that we'd have a common assessment for curriculum?
- Pre- and post-assessments every year versus CMTs. Hold pre- and post-tests for a particular year so districts can measure the actually learning in the classroom - where kids started out and where they ended.
- We're spending a lot of effort on common formative assessments. It would be helpful to have a model and more direction than we have now.
- Look at universal screenings.
- CMT and CAPT – there is not a lot of information to use.
- Goals and objectives have changed over the years. CMTs for special education students are sometimes not a true assessment. It's more realistic to assess the individual child.
- Whatever the assessments are, they should be appropriate for the child (especially special education). Kids need to take assessments at the level they are functioning.
- Universal CALI – grade level and assessment tools. They're not meaningful if you don't see results. Develop tests at some level for accountability.
- Beginning of the year and end of year assessments should be developed at the state level.
- Common formative assessments. Collaboration with other districts is viable. Districts are spending more time looking at standards and common core than CAPT. Help to intertwine common formative assessments at the freshman level.
- Get data back to people. Immediate feedback is important in terms of formative assessments. Utilize technology.
- If we move to Secondary School Reform – we need to look at the sophomore level.

Now we test in reading, math and writing. What would you like to see in place for state assessments, assuming resources were not a limiting factor?

Higher order thinking, invention, problem-solving. Challenges that have many solutions; failure is an opportunity to learn. Not about filling in bubbles for right/wrong.

Are our children developing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills; not so focused on content knowledge. Science is the ideal platform for this. Assessing science, not from a content level, but from the process

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level, automatically focuses on these skill sets. Change to a more holistic approach that doesn't silo math and science. Content and principles should be added in layers.

Need to look at students' performance, long-term projects; more modalities should be tested so we get a better picture of their skill sets.

Readiness for kindergarten – should the state create a readiness “standard” and identify appropriate assessments to determine readiness. Should we revisit state policy about 4-6 year olds starting kindergarten based on their competencies rather than their age? Another example, should we have indicators for college readiness?

Traditional assessments are very quantitative; wish there could have been more qualitative measures (although this is more expensive and time-consuming). Assessments could reflect different ways people learn and develop.

**As CSDE builds new generation of assessments, what design features should be a priority for CT?**

- Online assessments may penalize some students.
- Expand premise of helpful assessments. If we're chasing CMT reliability, it's almost impossible to assess. We used a system to assess teachers (BEST). Technical reliability vs. usable intelligence. Critical skills cannot be assessed.
- State/RESCs could facilitate use of rubrics, which should be put on-line.

Regarding 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, it's hard to measure in a quantitative way.

- On-line testing.
- We currently test Grades 3-8 and Grade 10. What areas do we want to test?
- The plan is getting hammered for STEM. Need to develop science/mathematical connection in the early grades. We're always trying to catch up.
- Universal assessment that assesses students' skills on one continuum - from 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> grade to 10<sup>th</sup>/11<sup>th</sup> grade. Have the assessment at the beginning and end of the year on specific skills. Will have formative information as well as standards. Use different disciplines (literacy/reading/math/science), so they can identify exactly where students are.
- On-line universal screenings would be invaluable. But need to have flexibility.
- Maybe all kids won't need to take CAPT if we're able to choose which assessment tool is used. Imbedded \_\_\_\_ works much better.

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- Standards-based reporting? Outcomes would be in relationship to standards.
- Did we look at other states in terms of assessment designs that make sense and are different that we can bring to the table?
- Less is more (in terms of the RTTT application itself).
- Should be more formative – more tasks embedded.
- Fidelity of assessments. Districts spend a lot of time on common assessments. The more SDE can facilitate a process the better.
- What's the best possible strategy where everyone is not doing different things?
- If moving toward a national curriculum, wouldn't everybody be using that?
- Should assessments be looked at in earlier grades?
- Common core of science – can we help with bringing back Marine Science to STEM?
- A lot of time is spent on assessments. Teachers will look at standards, do assessments and then look at data. It's a lot of time.
- Teachers really need to understand the standards.
- There is not enough time for professional development.
- Spend time on the content but not the system.
- NASCE – we also have to answer to other organizations.
- Since the SDE has shrunk over the last few years, RESCs now have more gaps to fill. Talk about regionalism.
- Do we get to the point structurally that RESCs have too much to do?
- Are RESCS also duplicating each other?

Less filling in bubbles. Needs to be a performance piece that measures long-term work. Should be given at key junctures over time. Cross-disciplinary (science/math). For example, assess information presented and analyze it, maybe use technology.

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Region 12 has a capstone project that is a great experience. PK to kindergarten transition experience has presented challenges to find valid and reliable tools.

Performance assessments should reflect work over time; working with a team, communicating to others, projects that require regrouping, redirecting and continuously rethinking how to solve challenges and move forward. Project-based learning that focuses on thinking and not memorizing.

The arts seem so lost now. Should involve design. Need to send the message that the arts are not “extra”.

How can test scores be so high and yet students enter college not being able to read and write. Something appears to be “broken”. How do we use the data to continually improve educational programs. Capstone projects are difficult to “capture” to make them equally important to the test scores.

Currently a proposal to test sophomores to identify possible remediation needed prior to entering college.

Must ensure that what K-12 believes is “college-ready” and what IHEs believe.

Need better coordination between PK and K and K-12 and IHE.

Challenge is to scale up small pockets of success. CT is a “bottom-up” state. Difficult to replicate because of local control. State should give incentives (or something) to scale up initiatives with fidelity.

Systemic change requires a convergence of local needs and state requirements. Teachers are not given enough time to master new practices. So many competing learning initiatives. Release time is not available. Need more creative ways of delivering PD and prioritize initiatives. Teachers are on initiative overload.

SATs changed in the last 4 years to include a writing component. What’s tested (and what counts) is what’s taught. This is why the arts have disappeared.

Assessments drive formal instruction and also informal educators. Have to get better at working together around the policy. Get the message out and create a synergy and align resources by working together. Include business/industry, IHE, informals.

## **How can we make more explicit the relationship between standards, instruction and assessment?**

Standards-based report card will help to determine what assessments will be needed. Make sure to get data back to teachers quickly.

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Look at the whole child – not just a test score.

At the secondary level, use NASCE evaluations.

Use embedded tasks. Have multiple ways of assessing.

Universal screening for SRBI. Do only one set of meaningful tasks.

- Why are we doing this? It's a critical step for everyone to get on board.
- The "whys" are very important.
- Teachers have to buy into it.
- Add into this section a phrase about "connecting into college and career readiness".
- We can assess all we want, but we need to address social distractions teachers face every day. It's a real issue. It's something that needs to be recognized. Social influences are much different than 20 years ago.
- Focus on early literacy.

Gets at the culture of assessment as a critical component of teaching and learning. Can't achieve this by issuing documents. Have to go out and bring folks to the table and show them how it works. Get out into communities – go directly to teachers. Different dynamic – jeans and not suits, inclusive discussions, not talking heads. Need a culture shift. Can't put it in a PowerPoint; you have to actually model it being done.

Need to involve students more in understanding standards, what they need, and what they need to do to get there. Parent/teacher conferences where the student leads the conversation.

Students must take ownership of their learning. Kids feel manipulated and feel that they're cogs in the system.

Have to change default of assessment as punitive to assessment feedback as a way to improve learning.

Need to change the system to make it more responsive to all kids. We have too many kids who are not successful in the current system.

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## LONGITUDINAL DATA SYSTEMS

### **What data about the educational system in Connecticut do you want or need to know about?**

Having the independent colleges in the data system is important especially at the front end.

Having the child enrolled in the data system from birth is important.

Do the LEA and school personnel have access to the same set of records?

Teacher identifies match to students districts should be encouraged to use the state's method for establishing a teacher-identifier.

Serious issues around data security needs to be paid attention to.

The data linkage to higher education is important because there must be a way for the state to curb remedial coursework at the college level.

Evaluating principals on using the vertical scale will require that the scale be redone. What does 1 pt, 2 pt etc. on the scale mean? Practitioner needs to know SDE does not have a vertical scale for the CAPT. How does vertical growth work going from CMT to CAPT. Review the vertical scaling on the CMT.

Examine the New York BOCES system, too many LEA(s) on different systems.

- Need to have teacher's professional development activities integrated into the data system data;
- Having teacher data tied to student is important;
- Consistent use of the CT Preschool Assessment Framework – strive toward consistency between public and non-public settings;
- How will a school system get into the software of the Power School Data System if Power School becomes the norm;
- District personnel have inadequate skills to pull information out of existing data sets. Many school personnel lack ability to use data to observe students performance longitudinally and training for them will be critical.
- We need to let teachers know their students' achievement, as well as time in class, support services, and the loss of instruction time etc. The data system for student performance needs to incorporate parent satisfaction as another;

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- Make the state system user friendly in order to pull information out of Connecticut reports;
- Guidance on using the vertical scale scores to make it user friendly. The SDE should issue statements of expectations when using the vertical scales;
- A data warehouse is critically important but districts need the ability to upload programmatic data, EMETRIC has an approach to handle this need. Each community should be able take what's important to them and correlate to data variables that the SDE may need;

What questions do you need data to assist in answering? **What support and resources are need for the LEAs to use and analyze data to support student learning and achievement?**

Releasing information that is limited to 20 students reported in a subgroup has been a problem for researchers. SDE should reassess the processes for researchers to get better information regarding the Modified Assessment System (MAS) and administrators' CAT and reading results for teachers.

- Teachers (locally) need to be able to use the data;
- One system for all school systems to use is a great idea;
- School districts have many different data systems, could they be part of the playground approach;
- Getting a common data system for the preschool assessment system;
- Having some way to follow children from birth through pre-k is important; and
- Records on the students in a statewide model would be helpful.

Teacher evaluation is dependent on student progress. It would be nice to show how teachers are moving students along based upon how the students enter the school systems.

There is good information on the SDE website, if you know where to go.

College admissions officers could get a better sense of student's high schools with a robust site.

Going through the school system to get data on students before grade 3 is difficult.

- Early literacy program for Latino parents would be good to capture;
- It would be good if community program effort could be incorporated into the data system;
- Getting parenting skills information into a database would be helpful;
- Measuring parent involvement; e.g. attendance at parent teacher conferences; and
- People who are data savvy will be needed to present the outcome of the parent involvement.

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- Data warehousing project (TETRA) was a great idea and it needs to be reintroduced;
- The state of Maine has adopted Infinite Campus 90. Some school districts in Connecticut are using Power School. The school districts need the leverage of the state to establish a common reporting system that will allow districts to enter data. In such a system, the SDE can conduct extractions and school districts can conduct their own special collections.
- School districts will need to work with the SDE on the features of longitudinal data system;
- The disadvantage is that not one size fits all. An open standard for information exchange might be a better way to go;
- The data system will have to be a standards base system that demonstrates how a student grows across the standard and not a performance indicator; (e.g. the letter grade of B is a performance indicator but it does not communicate well to other teachers how well the student has done on the standard) The data system has to stay in the discourse of the standard.;
- The districts want everything that is known about a student; and
- Having current information is a large issue and direct system to system mechanism is required.
  
- There is too much inequality in state with regard to school districts' ability to link into the state system. Permitting the school districts to continue on their own is not fair;
- School districts will need the ability to formulate an essential question and have the skill to bring up data that can answer the query (e.g. crystal analysis or to make your own queries) ;
- Would like a data dashboard that is user friendly for teachers and students so that both can see where the student stands on achievement expectations;
- Incorporate student work such as narrative, benchmarks, smart goals as well as achievement into the data system;
- Online professional development so a teacher can easily see the progress of their students;
- If a teacher goes to dashboard, put into the system intelligence e.g. If the student deviates 10 percent lower than the expected the system will warn. It will ease the burden on analysis; and
- Put the top ten queries into the dashboard.

**How do you prefer to access this information? For example, through reports that can be downloaded, or by creating your own spreadsheet of selected data elements.**

- Each of the examples listed in the question stem are needed; and
- CMT reports gives ability to access information in a variety of ways.
  
- The system should be web-based but it has to be robust so that information can move to the state system;

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- Discussion with school district data personnel on connecting to SDE is needed;
- CAPPS technology recommendations have encountered resistance from SDE in the past because SDE has wanted to build its own; and
- State should commit to a statewide vendor.
- Districts want a unified system for reporting e.g. preformatted reports will be helpful and districts could set their own custom queries – attention must be paid to system interface;
- Cross platform / Web-Based;
- CSDE should work through the legal authority to allow districts to query; and
- CSDE grants arrangement has a good user-friendly system and it is fairly current follow that example.

Districts have a tremendous need to train teach teachers how to access student data information. How do you get the data?

Think about short tutorials (e.g. infor tube) so that teachers know how to access.

See comments:

- Series of webinars on different modules would be good;
- Follow NCES systems example for training modules; and
- Have practitioners who helped developed the new CEDAR site give a statement of support would be useful for training.

Is the vision to have compatible data systems? SDE will make it easier for the data systems of local and SDE to talk with each other.

**What recommendations do you have about developing linkages between P-8, secondary school and post-secondary data? What resources are needed?**

- The school districts need to know the deficits of students who go to Community Colleges – this type of information is vastly needed.
- What are the costs to develop?
- Make the system as universal as possible;
- Keep to the principal of flexibility;
- Portfolio for UCONN and other college admissions offices should be linked to the guidance offices of the high school to collect coursework, SAT and other critical information;
- Linkages for follow-up information are needed, for example the data of the National Student Clearinghouse should be part of a longitudinal data system;
- We don't have a system of what teachers do day-to-day, week-to-week and month-to-month that improves instruction and student achievement e.g. can the RTI and PBS work get incorporated, integrated into the data system.

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## GREAT TEACHERS AND LEADERS: **COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION SYSTEM PLAN**

**What measures of student growth should be aggregated into the student growth model that will be used to measure teacher effectiveness and principal effectiveness in a new evaluation system?**

- Triangulate the data across 3 sources of data (common formative assessments, etc.) developed by the state
- One instrument for all teachers across subject areas would be troubling
- Look at teacher evaluation data over 2-3 year period, not just year to year; use whole school approach to measuring growth, not just individual teacher growth; invest in all students' learning
- Use team approach to measuring growth
- Use assessment data appropriate to the students, especially special education students; don't test above learning level –affects special ed students' self-esteem
- Instrument used in schools and classes should be specific to the content area; problem with turnaround of CMT/CAPT data—not instructionally useful for the teacher whose students take the test; look at ways to use the CMT data to develop growth models
- Look at growth versus achievement; beyond a test score and measures beyond CMT
- Use Grade Level Expectations to provide instant feedback to inform instruction; put more \$\$ toward curriculum based assessments; GLEs are clear, timely
- Don't use benchmark assessments-too limited; high school assessments are limited; consider that under Scientific Research Based Interventions (SRBI) many adults are responsible for student growth—team approach to supporting students

Tool that measures where a child starts and where finishes – assess a couple of key content measures

Need to include all educators (esp. school support staff); must include student success plan including student transitions and how student progresses through; cumulative student portfolio

Three ways to measure effectiveness – student growth, student diagnostic data and content mastery bar (how many grade levels they have mastered at beg of year and set goal in each content area)

Personal (resilience, self-efficacy, student motivation to learn)

(Is the) individual student plan being met? Then can evaluate all teachers against individual plans

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What does student growth mean? Need a school-by-school definition first then collect measures against the definition. Individual school assessments can then be developed. Then through consensus develop a state definition of student growth.

Create incentives for local pilots to help with first year.

Focus on rigorous and relevant data; FL is doing this well. Local associations have developed a state definition for their content area so that all districts in state are using the same definition in that content. Not school-by-school basis, need statewide definition.

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## What are the top 2 or 3 components beyond student growth to be included in a redesigned teacher evaluation system?

- Different needs for Beginning Teacher/Mid career/Veteran; teacher growth should also be tied to professional development and areas of instructional need; hold institutions of higher education (IHEs) accountable; SRBI is tied to accountability and those supporting students at Tier 2 and 3 should be part of growth model; need to provide supports to teachers
- Measure collaboration with others in teaming structures
- Self-reflection is necessary; don't see how technology should be connected since teachers should not be held accountable for the absence/lack of technology resources or in cases when it is broken
- Provide incentives to stay in the classroom
- Use peer review—teachers observe other teachers
- Technology is used at different levels but need baseline data for analysis of student growth data
- Technology should be used for analysis of student data; students are wired; we are remiss if we don't hold teachers accountable for technology
- Local union was uncomfortable signing RTTT application; don't want merit pay attached to evaluation of teachers by principals; principals have their favorites; don't agree with merit pay; do think education is underfunded beginning with teacher salaries
- CCT and CALI skill set on how teacher collaborate, use assessment and track student growth
- Need CCT rubric continuum
- Teacher Educator And Mentoring (TEAM) Program CCT rubrics in pilot now are very helpful
- Don't link TEAM to teacher evaluation
- The Connecticut Competency Instrument (CCI) assessment (used between 1988 and 1996) was a minimum standard for beginning teachers; need higher expectation for veteran staff
- SRBI interventions are fluid—different students have different needs; similarly, need 3 tier approach to teacher evaluation
- One size fits all doesn't work for teacher evaluation
- Retention and development huge part of evaluation but need recruitment/certification; training and residency programs important
- Content area passion and creativity can be demonstrated without use of technology; no technology should not be part of teacher evaluation
- Can show you people who can be more effective if they either “plug in” or just buy a computer

How did teacher utilize community resources including parents (how facilitation at state level to identify resources; training needed. Types of PD that teachers participate in and how they relate

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that in classroom. Need to have chance to engage in best practices; teachers should be seeking to grow

CCT provides strong skill set; assess through observation (need better picture to see what it looks like); how do these skills correlate with student achievement

Parent engagement in student's education through whole career of child

Gates foundation – correlation between 5 different data and – student engagement (particularly in HS), peer relationships correlated with student growth, self-assessment and correlating with student growth; teachers need to understand outcomes and how to achieve the outcomes to impact student achievement

Need to begin with the newest teachers; need standard to move kid's achievement and parents need to understand process.

Need to partner with business and provide funding to sustain the evaluation system and provide technology to all teachers

Collaboration with other teachers; PD plan that they work on with principals including multicultural education, principal observation

Student voices should be included; student engagement (attendance, expulsion rate for school, classroom environment, etc. . . )

Teacher and principal self-reflection; need teacher and principal input into the development of new evaluation plan.

**Should the identified evaluation components differ for beginning teachers, mid-career teachers and/or veteran teachers?**

CRE – much variability

UConn – need to differentiate between beg teacher, mid-career and veteran teachers

CONCANN – treat everyone as a beg teacher during first year or two of new evaluation system; don't assume that time in classroom means that the teacher has progressed in the development of skills

**Should teacher's effective use of technology in their daily instruction be included as part of a teacher's annual evaluation?**

Absolutely, kids are engaged by use of technology.

Teachers should be using technology to communicate with families.

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Concerned about how few teachers have newest technology to use.

## **What are the top 2 or 3 components beyond student growth to be included in a new principal evaluation system?**

- Align teacher and principal evaluation
- Rapport of principal with staff, school climate
- Classroom environment of teachers—is it positive or negative—how does it related to climate
- Are principal and teachers inspiring the students to aspire to high levels of learning; principal as leader needs to inspire
- Is principal a visionary leader; utilize distributed leadership
- Use data to drive instruction—extremely important—not always an acquired skill
- Look at administration structure—need to redefine how administrators work—need one school manager and one instructional leader
- Don't spend enough \$\$ on administration; do we really need an intermediate administrator 092 or superintendent 093 to handle certain functions?
- Some administrators can't identify teachers with qualities to assume a leadership role; diversity the leadership team to utilize teaching or other staff
- Sympathetic to superintendent and principals—they have a high burden
- Should we not look at European models; disenfranchised from private/business sector; when teacher not connecting the dots, takes a few years to engage with private/business sector; not one model perfect for every district; different demographics and mindsets; business community frustrated because they find that students graduating without skills needed for workforce

NYC has a good principal evaluation plan in place; survey teachers in the principals school – survey used to evaluate

Student growth and success of school; teacher growth; climate/culture of school through surveys (parents, students, bus drivers, maintenance staff, etc. . .); performance of new principals should be different therefore, need to distinguish beg from mid from veteran with different expectations.

Principals need rudimentary foundation, need to have PD to build skills regarding support and supervision before evaluation, use of technology in classroom, how do I look for this in walk-throughs

Engage parents in community both in school classroom and after-school activities; develop partnerships with community resources which bring them into school or take students out into community

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Need to set goals and how those goals are achieved within school; Vanderbilt University has a developed principal evaluation system.

Chicago has schools that do these things effectively; should visit and see what they are doing.

Models in NYC – principal out in community, but not sustainable if principal leaves; each school is its own entity. How does the principal develop sustainability for community engagement and other school reform efforts.

**RTTT requires that student growth be a “significant factor” in a teacher and principal evaluation system. How should student growth be weighted in the teacher and principal evaluation system so as to meet this “significant” requirement (e.g. 50%, 34% in a 3 component system, etc. . .)**

- Assigning % weight to measures is arbitrary
- How are we measuring what teachers in non-core areas are doing?
- This is why unions not signing on to the RTTT; we are not looking at whole child
- As a profession, we haven't rigorously evaluating educators on our own; if we don't we will be told what to do
- Hate to see evaluation based on what students bring in terms of instruction needs (lack of pre-school, social/emotional needs, etc.) and have teachers evaluated based on the disadvantages that students bring
- The different student/growth data should be collected first, then establish the guidelines
- If a teacher get really challenging students, student motivation is an issue; that teacher is going to be put in jeopardy and concerned about the % or weight of student growth measure
- There must be growth every year; if don't take it into our own hands, principal and school will do so
- Teachers need to own the responsibility for evaluation and growth measures
- Need to take this more slowly rather than rush to put it into RTTT application
- Growth models are not new; if NEA has not researched this, then we need to be ahead of the game
- Developing teacher evaluation in New Haven and looking at-- how clear is the student achievement data, who are the high flyers and those struggling year in and year out
- Weight the measures across teams of teachers, not individual teachers
- Not everybody teaching a subject that is assessed; not against bonuses [merit pay] for school district which shows growth
- Don't we use student achievement as part of evaluation already?

More than 51% - schools are there to educate kids; student plans based upon education but other factors impact that outcome

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Another phrase is learning; learning must be central to teacher evaluation process – therefore, not sufficient if learning does not occur in classroom; TN more than 50%; DE did not develop a %. CT should set a percentage to force this question – will make people take learning seriously

Takes immense effort to close achievement gap; should be upwards of 80%

How do we compare relevant progress versus raw growth

Torn with putting a % on student growth because education should be a partnership with parents; how many kids go onto higher learning; everyone needs to be accountable for where they are

If we define student growth well, it should be a healthy %; if define it narrowly, it should be a smaller percentage. Narrow is only test scores. What are the other assessments that we adopt to define student growth; teachers pay is determined by school's growth

New Haven has adopted the CO student growth model

High performing students we also have a gap.

Don't mix inputs with outcomes when weighting the percentages for student growth.

Need to define role of superintendents are instructional leaders; without it, you don't get positive change

Agrees with superintendent's role needing to be defined.

Providing great pathways – no discussion about pathways.

## **GREAT TEACHERS AND LEADERS: TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL PREPARATION AND EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION**

**What data/information about educator preparation programs is needed for the public to make informed decisions about the quality of each program's candidates?**

Student performance data, diversity of populations in program

Types of multi-cultural courses and types of cultural competencies

Backtrack student growth measures to TPPrograms (Teacher Preparation Programs)

Course syllabi at TP programs – need to make sure that they align with scientifically-based interventions/strategies that we know about, particularly assessment courses to include common formative assessments and teach them how to truly grade for learning

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Do students have background in math and world language; PD being cut, therefore, they need to come out of TPP with knowledge; Districts don't have money for PD

What accountability should IHE share with providing students with knowledge needed to provide prepared teachers; what about out-of-state teachers?

Inquiry based pedagogy supports learning in all areas; inquiry based supports teaching ELL (Imperial Valley, CA)

Are teachers prepared to teach ELL (English Language Learner) students

**Are the number and focus of the eight ARC (Alternative Route to Certification) offered in CT sufficient? If not, for what shortage area(s) should new ARC programs be developed?**

World languages

What are the shortage areas

Which programs are producing the most effective teachers and how to incentive (vise) the expansion of those programs

Train career changers in inquiry based pedagogy; good base of people in sciences

Find way to bring people into advanced technologies or trades; treat technology as a shortage area.

**How might we encourage college students/career changers to enter teacher preparation programs in a shortage area?**

Incentives – forgive part of loans

Recruit; don't hear about education opportunity from professors; develop a network about developing career opportunities in science and other shortage areas. Need to market "education" as a career opportunity.

Impress that teaching is an awarding career and new teachers can make a difference. A lot of different avenues (charters, magnets, etc. . .) available to people in teaching.

Scholarship, loan forgiveness for career changers; need to recruit in MS and HS and offer experience to work with students (future teacher clubs); allow all students to declare interest in teaching.

Change focus from shortage area to effectiveness of candidates defined as student growth; TFA places student growth as center and allows them to recruit higher level candidates into teaching.

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Incentives for students to enter the shortage areas; many want to teach in a specific content area but want to teach elementary school.; partnership with state and IHEs about recruiting new people into area and providing PD

Include parent engagement – provide information to parents at early age of children about benefits of entering education

Districts should come to campus to recruit new teachers; ARC should come to the colleges campus to recruit candidates

## **How might the state and LEAs recruit effective and highly effective teachers and principals to work in districts that have socio-economic challenges and/or high minority populations?**

Partnership (between) CT Ctr for School Chg and Fairfield Comm Foundation's principals forum to lever improve school and student achievement; all principals come from 4 urban districts

Offer preservice teachers a practicum in an urban district; barrier is the late hiring in urban districts; offer financial incentives to new teachers and transfer teachers to teach in urban district

Is this a recruitment issue or a working conditions problem?

Urban education is difficult work; requires special principal and teachers to work in urban districts; incentives needed; training offered.

Work with CAS to place principals in urban districts; over the 2 year mentorship period, new principals need additional induction. Considering candidates to split one year in urban and 1 year in suburban – allows some to recognize passion for working in urban districts. Incentives are necessary with a lot of support (sabbatical after 4<sup>th</sup> year), etc. . . .

Hinges on definition of teacher and principal effectiveness; teacher effectiveness are being provided with bonuses for demonstrating student growth

Teacher leadership academies; mentorship should include building community affiliations.

Turn around schools are closed and re-opened with new staff. This may not be an incentive for teachers/principals to take jobs in those schools.

Application process must demonstrate student growth; retaining effective teachers – teachers need to be able to show that they are part of school setting.

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## TURN AROUND SCHOOLS

### **How can this section of the RTTT application be strengthened – additional strategies/recommendations?**

The language regarding the questions above should be strengthened in the application

Possibility of adding PLC (Professional Learning Communities?) among school leaders?

Some reference to LEA supports, what's the role of CSDE? CSDE to continue to intervene at a district level.

Recruitment and distribution of teachers -- Strategy of legislation of affairs

Incorporation of RBA (results based accountability) model into this section (– or somewhere else)?

Can you have a turnaround school become turnaround schools? Can you apply the money to multiple schools? For example K-8 school, make them two smaller academies

There are ways that Federal 21<sup>st</sup> century for Tier 1 schools to receive funds. In terms of RTTT – for Tier 3, accentuate the after school program piece to get those schools involved.

RTTT funding in the big picture to encourage inter-project program collaboration.

Jersey like CT was not successful with state take over. So what are we going to do? Success is happening now in his district, so why change everything now based on dollars.

It's not just monitoring, or looking at where you need support. Look at the issue of removing the principal and 50% of teachers....are they going to buy into this? Some schools will get 2 million and school down the block won't....how does this impact on equity issues.

Something has to come down from heaven to say this is what should be done. Are we going to change everything that is working to go after these dollars.

The state is up here, and they don't see what is happening on a daily basis....you must put some skin in the game and know why things may not be working....certain schools get more resources and others don't....teachers will gravitate to schools where they get the support they need....so schools with kids with most need get the least.

Add data on the success of those schools. CALI data was added, but they are looking at it through another lens.

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They (the federal government) want a level of aggression to show that there is immediate change.

## **Things that would be helpful in implementing requirements for Turn Around Schools**

The parents.

The State University system – i.e., Naylor and their partnership with Central.

The principal grew up in that community and there is true integration and partnership with Naylor. When you look at turn around schools, we are talking about these communities. Civic organizations, faith based org, criminal justice system....they want to get into the school partnership, but it's not happening. We can work together for the family and really support the teachers. Have we done the appropriate assessment of the situation to support the teacher.

Look at the Harlem project----they partnered with churches etc., we have wrap around models but have not been able to bring it to scale around the country. We know this wrap around project works.

The chamber should also be a partner.

When training the teachers, they need to be taught how to work with families....teacher quality is key and they are not being prepared in working with diverse families.

## **How might the application be expanded to schools/districts beyond those impacted by the SIG – school improvement grants?**

Parental involvement is key and where and when will we put some of the focus on parents to expand to schools/districts beyond those impacted by the SIG (school improvement grants)?

Everyone should experience what we have.

How will federal government hold parents accountable?

Parents are already upset over schools closing due to budgetary issues.

We shouldn't be chasing this for points. We don't want to own something that we're stuck with when the money runs out.

We can't keep doing trial and error....this is an opportunity to look at the research before scaling up so that we have good traction.

Making some of the support and flexibility for Tier 1 & 2 is some of the same that we could give to Tier 3 without necessarily giving them grants.

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## **What external services/supports/partners in the state would be helpful in implementing the turn around school requirements?**

Unions need to be on board with this

Better relationships with the superintendent

There is no trust, need trust

RESCs, CAS, ACES,

Listen to Data Team language,...it's a whole new way of teaching.

Teachers are starting to see success in both math and reading...using more of a team approach.

They are partnered with CAFE ....we could only go up.

- Casey Cobb, UCONN-representing the institutions of higher ed

Tap into the groups that have the most expertise in order to produce more collaboration with community

Be sure to include the family organizations

To some extent the media needs to be involved

There are 13 city level groups that meet –youth groups

## **What external organizations need to be kept up to date regarding the state's work in school reform?**

Board of taxation that controls all the money....they need to know all that is mandated (to) be done.

Boards of Education needs to know what is going on and it needs to come from the State Dept, not from the superintendent.

They canvassed the community with flyers etc, and no one comes out until it affects them.

Foundations, companies i.e. – Travelers.

Anyone who would be a stakeholder based on the organization: for example a parent organization who can pass along the message in other organizations that they are a part of. ....so any group that is concerned about the community, taxes, etc.

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Ten years ago, industry got involved with education. Industry put money into getting educators trained for a smoother transition for students when they graduate.

There is an evening series with PIRC – one session is around SIG Grant, CALI and SRBI.

## **BUILDING AND SUSTAINING STRONG STATEWIDE CAPACITY**

### **Besides providing funding, what can the Department do to support LEAs in implementing the proposed plans?**

There was not much time to get information out during round 1. SDE had from 11/19/09 – 1/19/10 to complete the MOU process. Forums were held at the Dept. and union presidents and superintendents were invited. It was a challenge to move forward with the process while still developing the documents. Feedback from the unions is that they didn't know enough about the process to feel comfortable signing on. Today is about changing that and sharing information and getting feedback through SDE's RTTT website and email.

EA and AFT were involved in a review of the application and advising local unions to provide edits and support to SDE

What sort of conversation is there now about concessions that might be made?

Today is the beginning of a new conversation and being available to be a part of the process.

Maybe SDE was not clear about what stakeholder buy-in meant to the local unions. The feedback from Round 1 let us know that support from superintendents and boards of education were not sufficient. It elevated the need for support from unions.

Consider getting on the unions' agendas so that we can go to them and share information?

CABE, AFT, CEA need to convince local unions through phone calls, letters, etc...

SDE did get sign on support from the lead organizations

Unions that had more time with the information did sign on. The leaders of larger organizations expressed support of the application and let the local unions decide if they want to sign on too.

**Is it realistic to dictate to the whole state?** CT has urban and suburban and rich and poor areas. The urban areas are targeted in the grant and rightfully so for the greater part because there is a lot of need there. Before a final decision, the State should consider looking at the statewide

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climate in terms of differences in finances and union priorities. **If we comply and there are no results, what is the recourse?**

SDE should consider offering a succinct, clear presentation of practices that will result in improved outcomes for children. **Who is making the compelling case for practices that will work? Where is the evidence that what we propose has had success at improving outcomes for children?**

Even a brief outline of outcomes is better than none.

Consider using the logic that it is good for kids to get buy-in.

The State makes requirements without an evidence base. It can become robotic. Consider where we have had success improving outcomes.

Districts need consistency and continuity. There is too much movement from practice to practice. We need time to see progress with the things we are doing that we know will work. E.g. Private and parochial schools do not have issues with consistency. Supplemental support should not automatically mean a change in focus.

Can we use the RBA format to present the information to the unions?

Communication is key between superintendents and boards. There needs to be ongoing conversation after the initial information is shared. Coventry realized that these practices are good for CT regardless of RTTT.

Make a provision for technical assistance in coaching.

Since the State Board of Education has a five-year plan ending in 2011, start looking at the results of what we actually want to accomplish.

Be reminded that RTTT is not a grant – this is a plan.

There is concern as to why all districts didn't sign up. Possibly because we asked districts to sign MOUs while dealing with their own budget crisis. Also, a significant amount of additional reporting will be required by districts. It's a burden. Some districts possibly felt that it wasn't worth the extra dollars to be involved.

Whatever the Department does, we need to have coherence in it. Everything can't rest with the Commissioner. Building capacity shouldn't be seen as the Department's role alone.

It would help the appeal if the State Board offered to audit the required information.

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Should wait until we hear what the Feds say. Education is bigger than STEM, but the Feds are focusing on it. We need a system to support students.

We're falling behind in world competition. STEM is a big part in going back to #1. Ask ourselves what motivates individual students to learn?

There are faculty concerns. We care about the quality of education, but some could care less about graduation rates.

Use P-20 for all things – not just for data. We need to bring in that kind of coherence for high-level work to be done.

We're missing an opportunity if we don't start looking at P-20. The state has great systems that could support each other.

Look at the Department of Labor and Workforce Development Boards. When creating a database, don't just look at education – look at the broad picture.

## **How might technology be used to help districts succeed in plan implementation and continuation?**

Any way to help bridge the lack of understanding will have to be invested. Including, sending out field people and networking electronically.

Whatever is needed to help report back to the Feds would help dramatically.

Students and schools need to be on the same playing field. For instance, students that attend a STEM middle magnet school and then go to a standard high school. There needs to be some level of consistency and not put children in positions that take them steps back if going to different schools. Need to align all students.

No matter what the study is – all fields require technology. Must put technology in the equation.

Data must be easily accessible. Message boards. Have live persons responding from school districts.

Very important is to get data back that is meaningful and understanding how the data is used.

Have interventions before situations become remedial.

Just because kids are tech-savvy, it doesn't mean they're using the information carefully.

Need to be more discriminating and be cautious when using the word "technology".

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Use data to target specifically where we stand.

We have the knowledge, but not necessarily the ability to use the technology. Young children don't have problem-solving capabilities because of all the new technology.

People now look at the Strategic School Profiles for a snapshot. Find a way to loop data into the SSPs to figure out what school districts are actually doing vs. other districts/DRGs. Figure out what data/information is to be used – don't have data just sitting out there with no purpose.

## **How might technology be used to help districts succeed in plan implementation and continuation (for building and sustaining strong statewide capacity)?**

Any way to help bridge the lack of understanding will have to be invested. Including, sending out field people and networking electronically.

Whatever is needed to help report back to the Feds would help dramatically.

Students and schools need to be on the same playing field. For instance, students that attend a STEM middle magnet school and then go to a standard high school. There needs to be some level of consistency and not put children in positions that take them steps back if going to different schools. Need to align all students.

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## **How might existing federal, state and/or local funding sources (and which ones) be reallocated or repurposed to align with the RTTT goals?**

Please don't take away the current funding that we have. Without a budget increase it will be difficult to keep doing the basics and add more.

Support staff are being cut. Support staff is key in all districts to address the social emotional needs of students and families. Teachers are left to deal with the social emotional barriers to educational success.

Teacher evaluation tied to test performance only accounts for reading and math. **How do we hold all teachers accountable?**

SDE looks beyond reading and math for evaluation and will look at all subject areas. SDE is talking about how evaluation affects all teachers and about using multiple measures. CT won't tailor the application just to get points.

Consider disconnecting the necessary funding and RTTT funds. RTTT funding is insufficient for the change in behavior that needs to happen. We should implement practices because they are good regardless of the funding. Small towns in CT are not going to allow a change in CT funding mechanism.

## **Are there other funding streams to realign?**

The RTTT funding is insignificant in comparison to our need. We are investing a lot of time and energy so we need a plan that we can make work.

What about the interface of early graduation and school reform?

The Federal critique clearly speaks to early graduation and school reform practices.

Get other state agencies involved, such as the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. Meet with other Commissioners, especially those involved with health and human services, to create a larger awareness. Aggressively survey other agencies to see what they are doing.

Stretch out partners – need strong families/communities/schools. All three working towards alignment.

P-20 should be imbedded.

If ECS is changed due to the court case, have an incentive award that shows growth by disadvantaged youth.

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Have strategic goals and pair up resources to meet those goals. Need to be more systematic in how things are funded.

Cultural issues need to be addressed.

Take an inventory of assets since the whole conversation began. United Way has been involved for many years (Success by Six – Takes a Village, etc.) All infrastructures were not accounted for, including utility companies/police departments, etc.

Coordination could be better.

Use Perkins grant and matching funds for curriculum development. Align expectations with high schools and community colleges.

There are different pots of funding. Don't systematically look at all funding for Connecticut's children. We need to do better and look at the total amount spent – it's all state funding.

DRAFT

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**How can we garner support from a broad range of stakeholders (CT legislative leadership, business and community leaders, non-profits, higher education institutions, foundations, media, other) to increase our chance for successfully implementing reform efforts?**

“Harness” is a one-word answer. All swirling around without adequate leadership.

Need legislative leadership and need to deliver the message. Governor should call everyone together.

Has the State Board bought in as much as the Commissioner? Have the Education Committee co-chairs bought in as much as the Commissioner?

Seems to get jumbled up when it’s a political agenda. There’s a great deal of apprehension due to turf/money/prestige as opposed to just thinking about the children.

When there’s criticism, a special commission is always appointed. It diminishes people’s energy for the work. And they ask themselves “Will the work ever be implemented?”

Don’t write a proposal that creates a lot of political things that can’t work. Please write a plan that Connecticut can carry.

What’s the mission? We need to drive at something and have a logical approach to get there.

**Across all reform areas, what STEM and technology initiatives can be used to strengthen our reform efforts**

Hartford has a partnership with businesses and universities. CT doesn’t have a university system that supports STEM education. CT lacks the expertise to provide that level of professional development. Universities should be more prescriptive about funneling resources for new and existing teachers. CT needs streamlining and organization around P-20.

MA is ahead of CT. We need to talk in terms of P-20

High school turnaround needs support to implement at a high level. We should be bringing industry professionals in to supplement teaching. It is difficult to find qualified principals with leadership skills and strong STEM support. E.g. culinary education is for moving on to higher education not preparation for workforce after high school.

There is a connection between education and business.

Students need the opportunity for internships.

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## **How can these same stakeholders help continue reform efforts after RTTT funding has been exhausted?**

Everything that's already been said - with or without the money.

Have technology in place.

It is totally sustainable.

## **PUBLIC SCHOOL CHOICE (E.G. CHARTERS; MAGNETS; COMPACT SCHOOLS; AND OTHER INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS)**

Charter schools are not the root of choice in CT, nor are they properly tasked in legislation. They are not funded properly and they are like orphans as are OPEN Choice and magnet schools. All three state funding streams are a joke.

Innovative schools are not free. Race to the Top forces us to sing for our supper while we haven't gotten lunch yet. There are not enough dollars in RTTT to really fix the problems in our districts. The federal government is forcing us to fight for our own money back.

Why not an entire innovative school district? I don't want some schools in town being less innovative.

The choice process has made him "frustrated". Lincoln said a house divided against itself cannot stand. The state wants to create innovative, creative schools and close the achievement gap but it causes us to be divided against ourselves. There are not sufficient resources and dollars following the child would be a death knell for towns. We cannot fund three competing school systems: public schools, magnets and charters.

We can create attractive little niches like the Public Safety Academy but we need to focus on literacy and numeracy to cut the achievement gap, not innovation. Before we put more dollars in innovation lets look at higher education institutions for change.

## **Why not create regional public school systems rather than creating three competing school systems.**

Creating local innovative schools is only applicable for larger school districts with multiple schools.

Could there be regional charter schools?

Concerned what Dollars following the students would do to local BOE budgets.

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CT's approach has not been integration throughout the state. We have a Hartford fiefdom.

A good innovative school could be a Saturday academy which provides for parent involvement. Parents need to be brought up to speed. You need parent, union and community buy in. Innovative schools should have a schedule that is set in accordance with the neediest students.

There is frustration in Danbury particularly with their host magnet school and not getting sufficient state subsidies. As Danbury is forced to raise tuition the suburban districts become more reluctant to participate.

Even low cost ideas don't work when districts are experiencing flat funding form year to year. Districts don't have the money. We are cutting good programs like all day kindergarten as we need to do more with less. Fewer teachers and administrators with a wider span, they are over burdened.

Innovative schools should have flexible curriculum. They need to be relevant to the job market and should adapt quickly to the changing environment.

Part of the problem is that the federal government is looking for autonomy. CT has established systems but we don't have autonomy given our union structure. We do not need to develop a broad charter school system.

We must look beyond the Hartford/Sheff system. Choice funding needs to be equitable throughout the state.

Innovative schools need to have community and staff understanding as well as different school year and school day.

Innovative schools need sufficient resources especially in technology. The capacity to go out and experiment, professional development opportunities to integrate in the curriculum partnerships with higher education. Innovative schools should be the means to an end not the end.

In designing innovative schools you need more than the central office to be involved: university partners, parents and all the stakeholders.

Radical school reform affects all schools given the threat of redesign. It may increase productivity across the entire district.

Parents are excited about multiple choice options even within a district.

Innovative schools need to have a hook into the high school level and you need viable options for parents at the elementary level. Choice forces parental involvement, deepens their

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investment. When choice is prevalent its not just choice for the children but for the teachers as well.

We need a systemic way to disseminate STEM practices through our higher education institutions, i.e., the Massachusetts model.

Innovation should provide for an increased use of non-certified staff, such as industry people creating a regional networking of available resources especially for STEM.

Innovative programs should have a college prep goal and funding sources should be tied to university-school partnerships.

Why can't the state facilitate cooperation between districts in starting similar choice programs – facilitate knowledge sharing. The state needs to provide and facilitate the sharing of the various innovative practices taking place throughout the state.

Parent education need to be part of any innovative school. Parents need to have an active role in the school. Parents must be invested.

Waterbury has two compact schools. They need the community, parents, teachers and UCONN. Innovative schools are a collaborative effort. It is not top down as all parties need to have a say.

Innovative schools should not be viewed as a dumping ground for problem students.

Boards of education need to be educated in terms of what the state wants as it is not always the unions that block change, often it is the BOE. Boards of education need to be involved as a lack of understanding results in reluctance to change.

Choice schools should not create a brain drain in the school system.

The school needs to make parents feel successful in their experiences within that school.

Funding is key to innovation. You can't have innovative schools competing with public school dollars.

We need research that demonstrates that the charter school model is successful.

Innovation schools are a two-way collaboration between the district and the university to study best practices. They should provide the model for best practices.

CT needs to be more aggressive in a charter choice model.

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Bloomfield's Big Picture magnet requires extensive effort on the part of the teachers. We needed to redo their contracts as this school is different from the traditional public schools. Proper teacher planning time is a must. Innovation will require collaboration with the teachers.

East Hartford has created new theme schools for our sixth graders: Chinese, Spanish or fine arts. Needed to adjust for their unique schedules. Need to work with the various unions.

We need to think about regional ways of looking at professional development labs, especially in smaller districts.

Application should have more emphasis on magnet schools. It shouldn't be only about charter schools.

Parents of special needs children need more information on choice programs.

The application must provide parental involvement.

Parents must have better information around the differences in our choice programs.

We need unbiased information about what is a "high performance school." How well are these schools performing and the impact of effective teaching.

Children with disabilities historically have not had good experiences in choice programs – read the report card on 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders, which highlight the needs of special education and ELL. Standards and assessments need to be sensitive to children with special needs.

No other large charter operators are willing to come to CT due to low state financial support. You need to compare the charter costs to the city where the charter is located. The current gap between city expenditures and state charter grant is a huge barrier to the other large operators. CT is one of only 3 states where money does not follow the child.

**You can use high performing charter schools to disseminate best practices.** West Hartford school closed achievement gap by sending teachers to Amistad's visitors program. As a result their performance in closing the gap outpaced the entire district. State needs to partner with charters so develop similar programs. This partnership could help with great teachers and leaders as well as turning around poor performing schools.

As an involved district in Sheff and choice you need to know that districts are having their budgets cut and closing schools. The state-local funding piece is the major problem.

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Most parents don't understand or are even aware of RTTT; we need professional development for parents and the community for RTTT.

Given the achievement gap, the state needs to develop more effective ways to provide parents with more information on student choice programs.

Also, all communities need more information on choice programs including the CTHSS.

Sees a connection with the charters to provide best practices, which need to be tied to great teachers and leaders and choice and culturally responsive curriculum

Parents of special needs children need more information on choice programs.

The willingness of suburbs to take urban students is a finance issue. CT has differential funding: Hartford (Sheff) area versus the rest of the state. The Hartford funding level should be the benchmark for the entire state.

Choice schools should look different and provide enhanced opportunities but don't because of the lack of funding. There needs to be a redesign of the entire funding formulae.

Great teachers and leaders are critical and that is what makes the best practices happen.

Compact schools create a relationship between higher education, business and the community. The big difference between charters and compact schools is the involvement of high education and higher education's use of data and assessments.

**Highly effective schools have a clear mission, are very focused, have highly effective teachers and leaders and they evaluate.** Why can't we scale these schools up to the statewide level? We can recreate this climate in other schools.

What do CT and RTTT want from high education institutions in terms of choice programs?

There has been no dialogue and the state has not articulated what it wants the relationship to be. This should be an on-going collaboration even if CT does not get RTTT.