

Conference Evaluation Results

February 15th-16th, 2011

Sponsored by:

The U.S. Department of Education in collaboration with National Education Association, American Federation of Teachers, Council of the Great City Schools, American Association of School Administrators, National School Boards Association, and Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service

Overview:

School districts from across the country were invited to attend a federally-sponsored conference in Denver, CO on February 15th and 16th to identify ways that collaborative labor-management relationships, policies and agreements can drive student achievement. The event was co-sponsored by the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the Council of the Great City Schools, the American Association of School Administrators, the National School Boards Association, and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

For a district to be eligible to attend, the school board president, superintendent, and teacher union or teacher association leader all had to agree to be present at the conference. In their RSVP, all attendees further pledged to:

"Collaboratively develop and implement policies in such areas as: setting strategic direction to advance student achievement and aligning all labor-management work with this overarching focus, including ways to share responsibility and hold each other accountable for results; more effectively supporting the work of teachers, leaders, and administrators in advancing student achievement by improving such systems and structures as organizing teaching and learning time and schedules, and processes for the hiring, retention, compensation, development, and evaluation of a highly effective workforce."

The event was oversubscribed and 150 districts were selected from among the many that RSVPed.

At the conference participants attended a variety of panels and several breakout sessions where districts modeling collaborative labor-management practices presented on their work.

I. Conference Agenda

Day One – February 15, 2011

- 2:00-2:30pm **Welcome, Framing and Overview**
- 2:30-3:30pm **The Principles in Action: Structuring Labor-Management Collaboration for Student Success**
- 3:30-3:45pm **Break**
- 3:45-4:45 **Breakout #1**
- 5:00-6:00 **Breakout #2**
- 6:00-9:00pm **Networking Dinner & District Team Time**

Day Two – February 16, 2011

- 8:15-8:30am **Welcome/Agenda Review**
- 8:30-9:30am **Breakout Sessions #3**
- 9:30-10:30am **The Difference You Can Make: The Positive Impact of Reform from the Perspective of Students, Parents, Teachers, and Principals**
- 10:30-10:45am **Break**
- 10:45-11:45am ***For District Teams:* District Reflection and Commitment**
***For Supporters:* Supporting Labor-Management Collaboration**
- 11:45-12:15pm **Break & Pick Up Boxed Lunch**
- 12:15-1:15pm **Leading a Movement to Advance Student Achievement through Labor-Management Collaboration**
- 1:15-1:30pm **Next Steps and Closing Remarks**

II. Conference Attendees

In early January 2011, invitations went out to 2,135 school districts that secured federal funding in the past year under key programs, including Race to the Top, the Teacher Incentive Fund, School Improvement Grants, and Investing in Innovation.

Of those districts invited, 241 expressed interest in attending the conference. The Department randomly selected 150 districts from among those who applied while ensuring diversity in terms of district type, size, and geography.

The 150 districts selected to attend were:

State	District Name
AK	Chugach School District
AR	Little Rock School District
AZ	Amphitheater Unified School District
AZ	Deer Valley Unified School District
CA	Escondido Union School District
CA	Fresno Unified School District
CA	Lindsay Unified School District
CA	Lucia Mar Unified School District
CA	Monterey Peninsula Unified School District
CA	Pomona Unified School District
CA	Ravenswood City School District
CA	San Juan Unified School District
CA	Twin Rivers Unified School District
CO	Adams County School District 14
CO	Colorado Springs School District
CO	Jefferson County Public Schools
CO	Weld County Reorganized School District RE-8
CT	Consolidated School District of New Britain
CT	Stamford Public Schools
DE	Caesar Rodney School District
DE	Delmar School District
FL	Charlotte County Public Schools
FL	Duval County Public Schools
FL	Lake County Schools
FL	Miami-Dade County Public School District
FL	Pasco County Schools
FL	Pinellas County Schools
FL	Seminole County School District
FL	Sumter District Schools
FL	Volusia County Schools
GA	Gainesville City Schools
HI	Hawaii State Department of Education
IA	Des Moines Public Schools
IA	Marshalltown Community School District
IL	Chicago Public Schools
IL	DePue Unified School District 103
IL	Thornton Township High School District 205
IN	Clarksville Community School Corporation
IN	Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation
IN	South Bend Community School Corporation
KS	Topeka Public Schools
KY	Boone County Schools
LA	St. Helena Parish School District
MA	Barnstable Public Schools
MA	Boston Public Schools
MA	Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District
MA	Fall River Public Schools
MA	Quabog Regional School District
MA	Springfield Public Schools
MA	Swampscott School District
MA	Wakefield Public Schools
MA	West Springfield Public Schools
MA	Worcester Public Schools
MD	Allegany County Public Schools
MD	Anne Arundel County Public Schools
MD	Prince George's County Public Schools
MD	Wicomico County Public Schools
ME	Maine School Administrative District 61
ME	Maine School Administrative District 74
ME	Regional School Unit 12
MI	Adrian Public Schools
MI	Mount Clemens Community School District
MN	Minneapolis Public School District
MN	Red Lake School District 38
MO	Ferguson-Florissant School District
MO	Normandy School District

MO	St. Louis Public Schools	OH	ADA Exempted Village School District
MT	Lodge Grass Schools	OH	Akron City School District
NC	Gaston County Schools	OH	Cincinnati City School District
NC	Madison County Public Schools	OH	Cleveland Heights-University Heights City School District
ND	Mandaree 36 School District	OH	Cleveland Municipal School District
ND	West Fargo Public School District 6	OH	Columbus City Schools
NM	Albuquerque Public Schools	OH	Coventry Local Schools
NM	Santa Fe Public Schools	OH	Eastern Local School District
NM	Socorro Consolidated Schools	OH	Fairfield City School District
NV	Clark County School District	OH	Lorain City Schools
NV	Washoe County School District	OH	Sandusky City Schools
NY	Amityville Union Free School District	OH	Toledo Public Schools
NY	Avoca Central School District	OH	Tri-Valley Local Schools
NY	Bay Shore Union Free School District	OK	Crutcho Public Schools
NY	Beaver River Central School District	OK	Oklahoma City Public Schools
NY	Bedford Central School District	OR	Beaverton School District
NY	Buffalo City School District	OR	Ontario School District 8C
NY	Cattaraugus-Little Valley Central School District	OR	Portland Public Schools
NY	Cobleskill-Richmondville Central School District	OR	Salem-Keizer Public Schools
NY	Cortland Enlarged City School District	PA	Duquesne City School District
NY	Dobbs Ferry Union Free School District	PA	Southeast Delco School District
NY	Fort Ann Central School District	PA	The School District of Philadelphia
NY	Geneseo Central School District	PA	William Penn School District
NY	Grand Island Central School District	RI	Cranston Public Schools
NY	Greenburgh-Graham Union Free School District	RI	Providence Public School District
NY	Harrison Central School District	RI	Tiverton School District
NY	Hauppauge School District	RI	Woonsocket Education Department
NY	Hilton Central School District	SC	Spartanburg School District 7
NY	Holland Patent Central Schools	SD	Wagner Community School
NY	Islip Union Free School District	TN	Hamilton County Department of Education
NY	Ithaca City School District	TN	Marion County School District
NY	Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District	TN	Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
NY	Lyncourt Union Free School District	UT	Salt Lake City School District
NY	Mount Pleasant Central School District	VA	Fairfax County Public Schools
NY	New Lebanon Central School District	VA	Westmoreland County Public Schools
NY	New Paltz Central School District	VT	Lamoille North Supervisory Union
NY	Norwood Norfolk Central School District	VT	St. Johnsbury School District
NY	Sackets Harbor Central School District	VT	Windsor Southwest Supervisory Union
NY	Saranac Central School District	WV	Hampshire County Schools
NY	Solvay Union Free School District		
NY	Spackenkill Union Free School District		
NY	Spencer-Van Etten Central School District		
NY	Syracuse City School District		
NY	Watkins Glen Central School District		
NY	Webster Central School District		

The districts selected represented forty U.S. states. The sample comes close to mirroring the nation, with approximately 35% of districts from cities, 33% from

suburbs, 8% from towns, and 24% from rural areas. Finally, approximately half of the participating districts have fewer than 10,000 students and half have more than 10,000 students.

These 150 districts serve some 3.8 million students in total, including approximately 30,000 American Indian/Alaskan Native students, 292,000 Asian/Pacific Islander students, 1,055,000 African American students, and 1,075,000 Hispanic students (see Figure 1).

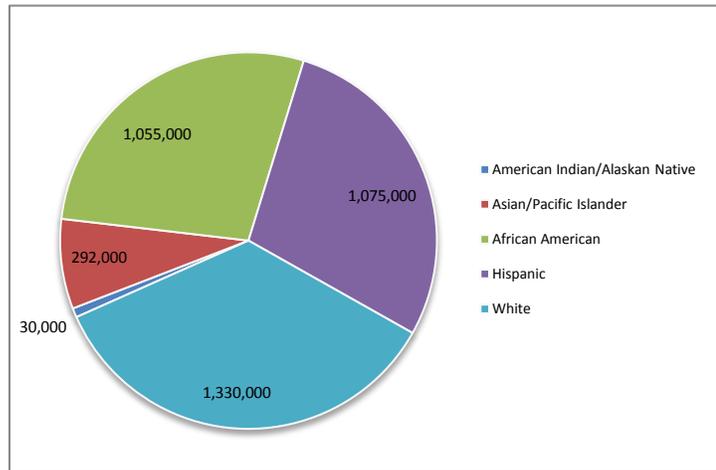


Figure 1. Students served by race/ethnicity

In addition to the 150 districts invited to participate in the conference, twelve districts were invited to present their work at the conference. These districts were chosen by the co-sponsors for the how closely their work mirrored key portions of the conference’s “principles” for effective, student outcomes focused, labor-management collaboration. (See <http://www.ed.gov/labor-management-collaboration/conference/principles-action>.) The twelve presenting districts were:

State	District Name
CA	ABC Unified School District
CA	Green Dot Public Schools
CO	Denver Public Schools
CO	Douglas County School District
CT	New Haven School District
FL	Hillsborough County Public Schools
MD	Baltimore City Public Schools
MD	Montgomery County Public Schools
MN	Independent School District 15 St. Francis
MT	Helena School District
NC	Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools
NY	Plattsburgh City School District

III. Conference Evaluation Response

The conference was attended by approximately 700 people. Conference evaluations were handed out near the end of day two and collected as attendees exited the conference. Approximately 332 evaluations were returned – a very high

response rate of close to 50%. All responses were anonymous. (See Appendix A for the full survey.)

All district roles were represented in the sample of evaluations returned: 31% were superintendents, 29% school board leaders, 34% teacher/union leaders, and 6% were “other guests.”

A significant majority of respondents were attending the conference as participating districts (87%), while only 4% of those filling out the evaluation were from presenting districts, and 9% were guests of other kinds (foundation, research organization, or co-sponsor guests).

IV. Conference Evaluation Result

A. Comprehensive Figures

Overall, the majority of respondents were satisfied with all aspects of the conference. In general, they reported that they were glad they attended and that the conference content was relevant and useful to their work. Most respondents were satisfied with the logistics and materials for the meeting and the only area of notable dissatisfaction was the sound system used at the conference, which many respondents indicated made the conference plenary sessions challenging to hear and understand. Nonetheless, the majority of conference guests indicated that they left the conference with an improved sense of how to collaborate and, to a slightly lesser extent, a plan for how to proceed when they returned home.

In general, superintendents scored the event a little more favorably than other district team members. School board leaders responded slightly more favorably than union team members overall, but this difference was not consistent across all areas of the conference.

Plenary Sessions: Plenary sessions were evaluated on their utility and received average scores ranging from 3.4 to 4.0. Most conference guests rated them as “useful” or “very useful.”

Breakouts Sessions: Respondents found the breakout sessions to be useful overall, with a number of comments indicating that they were among the most useful sessions of the conference. All twelve of the presenting districts received

high marks, with average scores ranged from 3.5 to 4.5 across the presenting districts.

District Reflection Time: Emphasizing the importance of dialoguing with district counterparts, 92% of respondents found this time useful or very useful and, with an average score of 4.6, it was the highest scored session of the conference.

Second City Skits: The team of co-sponsors who planned the event felt that humor – in the form of skits performed throughout the two days by a Second City comedy troupe – could help relieve stress and possibly increase honest conversation on difficult subjects. The idea was well-received by conference guests, who gave the performances an average score of 4.34. Comments indicated that most guests appreciated the levity and candor added by the skits.

Future Support/Convening: When asked whether they would be interested in a website where districts might share action plans and questions, further information on organizations supporting labor-management collaboration initiatives, district contact information for networking purposes, a future convening, or another form of future follow-up, conference guests expressed the greatest interest in a website (82%). However, more than half (approximately 60%) were also interested in information on supporting organizations and district contact information, and 39% expressed interest in a future convening.

Logistics: The majority of participants agreed or strongly agreed that logistics and pre-meeting communications were effective (69%). The most frequent response was a score of 5, although roughly 10% of attendees gave a score of 1 or 2. Frequent critical comments concerned the sound system, the bus schedule to and from the airport, and the proximity of the hotel to the conference center.

B. Conference Evaluation Responses by Item

The evaluation included six broad questions targeting the conference's value and effectiveness. These items were evaluated on a five point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" (rating of 5) to "strongly disagree" (rating of 1).

Item	5	4	3	2	1	Avg.
1. The conference as a whole was informative and useful – I am glad I attended.	57.2%	28.0%	7.8%	2.4%	4.5%	4.31
2. Overall, the conference content was relevant and applicable to my work.	43.9%	39.6%	11.0%	3.0%	2.4%	4.20
3. I have an improved sense of how to build collaborative labor-management relations focused on student achievement.	32.1%	37.6%	20.0%	7.3%	3.0%	3.88
4. I have a plan for how to proceed with this work when I return home.	31.5%	40.1%	18.7%	7.6%	2.1%	3.91
5. The program materials were informative and will serve as a tool as I continue this work.	21.8%	42.3%	25.2%	8.9%	1.8%	3.71
6. The meeting logistics and pre-meeting communications were effective.	36.5%	32.3%	18.6%	6.3%	6.3%	3.87

Additionally, each conference plenary session had a corresponding survey item, scored on a five point Likert scale ranging from “very useful” (rating of 5) to “not useful” (rating of 1).

Session Title	Average Score
1. Keynote (Secretary Arne Duncan)	4.01
2. The Principles in Action: Structuring Labor-Management Collaboration for Student Success	3.44
3. The Difference You Can Make: The Positive Impact of Reform from the Perspective of Students, Parents, Teachers, and Principals	3.41
4. Supporting Labor-Management Collaboration	3.82

5. Leading a Movement to Advance Student Achievement through Labor-Management Collaboration	4.03
6. District Reflection Time (For Participating Districts)	4.60
7. Second City Performances	4.34

Breakout sessions were scored using the same five point scale and broken down by presenting district.

Presenting District	Average Score
ABC Unified, CA	3.87
Green Dot, CA	3.49
Denver, CO	3.73
Douglas, CO	3.93
New Haven, CT	3.84
Hillsborough, FL	4.34
Helena, MT	4.18
Baltimore, MD	4.19
Montgomery, MD	4.50
St. Francis, MN	4.32
Winston Salem/Forsyth, NC	3.90
Plattsburgh, NY	3.90
Average Breakout Score	4.02

Finally, conference logistics were broken down into several components and evaluated on a five point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” (rating of 5) to “strongly disagree” (rating of 1).

Logistics Component	Average Score
1. Online registration tool was easy to access and use.	4.45
2. ESI assistance with air and hotel effective.	4.43
3. Received event information in timely and effective manner.	4.32
4. My questions and concerns were addressed timely and effective	4.47

C. Conference Comments

Future Convenings: Frequent responses to the evaluation item on future convenings included:

1. Next steps: Follow up with attending districts
2. Collaboration successes
3. Best practices around student achievement data and other topics
4. How to work with state rules and laws

Other Future Support: Frequent responses to the evaluation item on “other” fill-in-the-blank future support:

1. Financial impact on districts
2. Particular challenges of rural districts

Additional Comments Section (Top Ten Comments):

1. Interest in state or regional conference of this nature: “Localized meeting where districts facing similar state mandates can share how they are meeting similar challenges.”
2. Best practices and successes: “Sound examples of practices and those practices' relationship to student achievement.”
3. More specific examples: “More time to talk about specifics and see actual samples of evaluations, salary scales, etc.”
4. More specific tools: “We need tools and details on exactly how people are making this work.”
5. Rural schools: “Address the uniqueness of small, rural schools with limited administrative staff.”
6. Funding needed: “We want to do good things but need funding for this to happen.”

7. Follow-up needed: "I really think my district and other districts will need follow-up/next steps coaching."
8. Time for collaboration: "The opportunity to take time to work with the superintendent and union president to discuss new ways of doing business was very positive for our district."
9. Benefit of breakouts: "As a team we would have liked to attend more of the breakout sessions. That was the most valuable part of the conference."
10. Conference audio: "Could not hear panel."

Selected Comments on Collaboration:

1. "It definitely opened my eyes to other ways to conduct business as a team. No longer 'us' or 'them' but 'WE.'"
2. "Thank you for this opportunity-I feel so energized to make real change in my district!"
3. "Keep the ball rolling on student achievement along with effective labor-management arrangements-I'm all in!"
4. "Just traveling together was beneficial but conference allowed us to focus on certain agreed upon priorities. Also the ability to have frank and honest discussions in an informal setting was very beneficial."
5. "I don't want to leave here and be forgotten. We need continuing information and input to help us. I learned that this will not happen overnight."
6. "It was great to be able to interact with other districts. The opportunity to take time to work with the superintendent and union president to discuss new ways of doing business was very positive for our districts."
7. "Thank you for putting this together. Just the time away to talk was very helpful and the presentations were informative."
8. "Thank you- [We] spoke more over these 2 days than the past two years."
9. "Thank you for doing this. My district team learned a great deal about innovation in education that we were not aware of. It was food for thought and opened our minds to many possibilities."
10. "I'm excited about taking home what I have learned and about helping to bring about improvement and change."

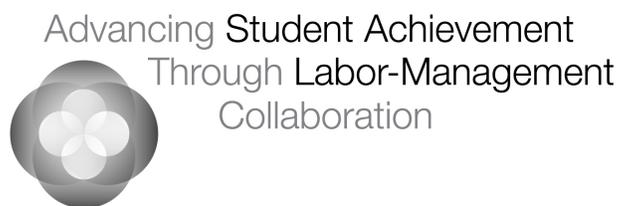
Appendix A – Conference Evaluation Form

See next pages.

Evaluation

Name (Optional): _____

Organization (Optional): _____



Thank you for attending the conference on *Advancing Student Achievement Through Labor-Management Collaboration*. We know your time is valuable and hope you found the conference productive. Please take a moment to fill out the evaluation below. Sharing your opinion will help us to support this important work more effectively going forward.

THIS EVALUATION FORM WILL BE COLLECTED AS YOU EXIT THE CONFERENCE.

1. At this conference, you were a:

- Participating School District Presenting School District Plenary Session Presenter Other Guest

2. Your role:

- Superintendent or Administrator School Board President or Representative Teacher's Union or Association Leader
 Foundation Leader Research or Support Organization Other:

3. Overall Conference Evaluation

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements, using a 1 to 5 scale where "1" means "strongly disagree" and "5" means "strongly agree."

<input type="radio"/> A	The conference as a whole was informative and useful – I am glad I attended.	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/> B	Overall, the conference content was relevant and applicable to my work.	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/> C	I have an improved sense of how to build collaborative labor-management relations focused on student achievement.	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/> D	I have a plan for how to proceed with this work when I return home.	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/> E	The program materials were informative and will serve as a tool as I continue this work.	1	2	3	4	5
<input type="radio"/> F	The meeting logistics and pre-meeting communications were effective.	1	2	3	4	5

4. Next Steps

Circle any of the items below that would be of interest and value to you as follow-up to this conference.

- A A web site where districts can share their labor-management action plans and questions with each other
- B Information on organizations supporting collaborative labor-management initiatives
- C Contact information for districts doing this work, to enable networking
- D A future convening on the following subject(s): _____
- E Other: _____

(Continued...)

5. Plenary and Breakout Session Evaluations

Please rate the quality, relevance, and usefulness of the following sessions, using a 1 to 5 scale where “1” means “not useful” and “5” means “very useful.” If you did not attend a session, mark “N/A.” Please provide additional comments in the space provided.

A Welcome Keynote, Arne Duncan 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

Comments:

B The Principles in Action: Structuring Labor-Management Collaboration for Student Success 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

Moderated by Charlie Rose

Comments:

C Breakout Sessions: Please circle and rate each of the three presentations you attended

Breakout #1: 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

ABC Unified, CA	Baltimore, MD	Denver, CO	Douglas, CO	Green Dot, CA	Helena, MT
Hillsborough, FL	Montgomery, MD	New Haven, CT	Plattsburgh, NY	St. Francis, MN	Winston-Salem/Forsyth, NC

Breakout #2: 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

ABC Unified, CA	Baltimore, MD	Denver, CO	Douglas, CO	Green Dot, CA	Helena, MT
Hillsborough, FL	Montgomery, MD	New Haven, CT	Plattsburgh, NY	St. Francis, MN	Winston-Salem/Forsyth, NC

Breakout #3: 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

ABC Unified, CA	Baltimore, MD	Denver, CO	Douglas, CO	Green Dot, CA	Helena, MT
Hillsborough, FL	Montgomery, MD	New Haven, CT	Plattsburgh, NY	St. Francis, MN	Winston-Salem/Forsyth, NC

Comments:

D The Difference You Can Make: The Positive Impact of Reform from the Perspective of Students, Teachers, and Principals, Moderated by Brad Jupp 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

Comments:

E For Districts: District Reflection & Commitment Time 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

F For Everyone Else: Supporting Labor-Management Collaboration, Moderated by Jo Anderson 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

Comments:

G Leading a Movement to Advance Student Achievement through Labor-Management Collaboration 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

Moderated by Russlynn Ali

Comments:

H Performances throughout the conference by the Second City comedy troupe 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

Comments:

6. Logistics & Support

1 - strongly disagree 5 - strongly agree N/A - not applicable

A The online registration tool was easy to access and use. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

B ESI assisted me effectively in making travel and hotel arrangements (for district representatives only). 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

C I received conference information in a timely and effective manner. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

D My questions and concerns were addressed in a timely and complete manner. 1 2 3 4 5 N/A

Comments:

7. Other Comments