

# **Labor-Management Collaboration Conference Toolkit**

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Prepared by the U.S. Department of Education

## **Labor-Management Collaboration Conference Toolkit**

In planning the conference on *Advancing Student Achievement through Labor-Management Collaboration* that took place in February of 2011, the Department of Education (ED) and our six co-sponsors were committed to orchestrating an event that would catalyze a larger state and local reform movement. This goal---to use the conference as a lever to spur reform---raised unique design questions and challenges. The purpose of this toolkit is to share the approach we took and the lessons we learned in the process in hopes that our work might be helpful to others undertaking similar endeavors.

We identified five key levers related to the conference that could be used to drive reform in advance of, during, and after the conference: 1) The conference planning process itself, 2) the bar set for conference attendance, 3) interest in attending the conference, 4) work carried out at the conference, and 5) conference follow-up. This toolkit outlines each of these levers and describes how they might be used strategically to advance the goal of increasing the number of student achievement-centered labor-management policies.

### **Lever 1: A Collaborative Conference Planning Process**

Collaboration and communication among state and regional co-sponsors during the planning process is essential to embracing the practices and attitudes promoted at the conference (i.e., practicing what you preach); but it can also serve as a tool to advance the reform agenda. We found our conference planning process served as tool to advance reform in four ways: First and foremost, the planning process built trust and opened lines of communication among the co-sponsors. Second, the planning process necessitated the development of a common agenda to advance at the conference and provided a forum for developing that agenda. Third, the planning process provided a space to advocate for ideal outcomes, anchoring the agenda to more ambitious reforms. Finally, the planning process helped co-sponsors to construct and adopt a common theory of change around collective bargaining that could accelerate progress nationally.

#### *A. Building Trust and Communicating*

The conference planning process required intense collaboration among the co-sponsoring entities---often around complex and sensitive issues challenging the education field. By talking and meeting on a regular basis, relationships between co-sponsors were strengthened and deepened. Trust was essential to making progress in the planning process. As all parties became increasingly invested in the success of the conference, the stakes for breaking trust or jeopardizing partnerships rose. This created a productive pressure to continue to collaborate even when challenges arose.

#### *B. Advancing a Common Conference Agenda*

The planning process necessitated co-sponsors to agree to various components of the conference content, which included common goals for labor-management collaboration and definitions of what success looked like. The result was that the conference generated a body of jointly developed and agreed upon work that co-sponsors could rely on as common ground going forward, even beyond Denver. (See [Appendix A: Statement of Purpose](#), [Appendix B: Tenets of the Compact – Conditions for Student Success](#), and [Appendix C: Principles in Action](#)).

### *C. Bringing Ideal Outcomes to the Planning Table*

The planning process provided a space for co-sponsors to advocate for ideal outcomes, anchoring the agenda to more ambitious reforms. While it is useful to anticipate where co-sponsors might push back, by bringing desired outcomes to the table, we found that all parties had an opportunity to make genuine compromises and move closer to a shared agenda. By setting our sights high (within reason) we felt we were able to make compromises more deliberately and the result was a more ambitious agenda than if we had come to the table with what we thought co-sponsors might agree to without reservation.

### *D. Generating a Common Theory of Change with Potential for Broad Implementation*

The planning process helped co-sponsors to construct and adopt a common theory of change around the principles in action that could be implemented through collective bargaining. As a result, the principles serve as a platform for implementing the reform agenda on a wide scale, accelerating change across the U.S.

### Planning & Implementation Lessons Learned:

#### 1. Who Needs to Be at the Table?

We recommend convening a committee comprised of representatives from state or local management and labor organizations that are not only committed to collaboration, but also vested with the authority and credibility necessary to inspire and lead state and local efforts that move beyond the traditional collective bargaining parameters. We also found the following roles to be useful:

- A lead sponsor who is well-positioned and has the political cover to push the status quo and the capacity to manage the logistics for the conference.
- Co-sponsors who can and will support the on-going efforts of state/local work in the form of political cover, technical assistance and ideological leadership.
- Relevant stakeholders willing to engage and support this event.

#### 2. Roles and Responsibilities among Co-sponsors

We found it was helpful to create a planning structure that made all decision-making and planning a collaborative process that we would want stakeholders to emulate. We recommend a structure with the following components:

- A committee that includes designees from all of the sponsoring organizations. This group would be responsible for driving the planning process and making program and content decisions about the event on an ongoing basis.
- A committee within the lead sponsoring organization to perform the time and resource intensive work of leading the development of conference content and planning event logistics (as well as staffing the event).
- *Optional:* Depending on the composition of the joint committee, an additional level of committee participation may be useful to provide approval and ownership of the event at the highest levels of leadership within the sponsoring organization.

### 3. Defining What Success Looks Like

A major outcome of conference planning was a common notion of “success.” Initially we tried to generate jointly agreed upon definitions for each of the conference principles, and then flesh those definitions out with real world examples. This turned out to be very difficult and eventually caused us to back up and take a different tact: We looked across the twelve district exemplars that all of the co-sponsors had agreed upon and---with the help of those districts---pulled from their work a list of what they had done that was innovative. We then put each item into our “principle” framework. The result was that, in the end, we never published a singular “definition” of success, but instead relied on readers to use the examples we provided to identify the principles practiced by successful districts (see [Appendix C: Principles in Action](#)). This path was our best option, but your planning process might allow for others. However you get there, shared notions of success are important to frame the work of the conference and to select presenters to serve as models for conference attendees.

In selecting potential districts to present at the conference, we recommend generating a list of districts that have embraced the conference principles (see [Appendix B: Tenets of the Compact – Conditions for Student Success](#)) and are implementing reform-oriented collective bargaining agreements, MOUs, or student-centered policies using the following process:

- Bring your initial list to the joint committee for consideration and potentially nomination of other school districts to add to the list.
- Identify a “must have” group of districts that is diverse by districts size, geography, type (i.e., k-8, 9-12), area (i.e., rural, urban, suburban), and union affiliation, if relevant.
- Create an “alternate group” based on diversity categories so that as districts accept or decline the invitation to present, the representative distribution can be maintained.

### **Lever 2: Setting the Bar for Conference Invitation and Attendance**

There are two ways that we used the bar for conference attendance strategically to advance reform. The first relies on the parameters for receiving an invitation and the second on the RSVP process.

First, our invite list in effect prioritized districts with a demonstrated interest in reform. Concerns over federal overreach meant extending conference invitations only to districts awarded or signed onto one of the U.S. Department of Education’s reform and innovation focused grants (RTT, i3, SIG, or TIF). The result was to maximize the impact of the conference by inviting districts better-positioned to absorb and take action on conference learning. While the grant restrictions were unique to our conference, developing invitation parameters that are fair and yet prioritize districts poised to learn and take action could be useful, particularly where spaces are limited.

Second, we used the RSVP process to set a high bar for conference attendance. We included a boilerplate condition for labor-management collaboration focused on student achievement that district leaders had to jointly sign onto in order to RSVP to attend the conference (see [Appendix E: Conference RSVP Form](#)).

By setting a bar for conference attendance, the conference RSVP process becomes a tool to: 1) ensure that only the most interested districts applied, 2) use scarcity and competition to create “demand,” 3) begin to reframe the conversation in advance of the conference; and 4) motivate leaders to collaborate in preparation for the conference. Beginning to reframe the labor-management relationship in advance of the conference poised attending districts to do more serious work at the conference. Requiring attendees to sign on to a basic tenet in advance also established some common ground we hoped could serve as a jumping off point for additional conference learning. Finally, requiring the commitment to be jointly signed necessitated some preliminary conversation around labor-management collaboration between district leaders. For some districts even this small step represented a change from the status quo.

#### Planning & Implementation Lessons Learned:

##### 1. Diversity Among Conference Attendees

In addition to selecting districts well-positioned to act on conference learning, ensure a representative body of conference attendees that matches the particular goals of your conference. This might entail balancing your list of attendees on characteristics like district location (e.g., state or region), type (e.g., urban, suburb, and rural), size and, if appropriate, union affiliation. A representative body of conference attendees will create a representative body of models for reform going forward.

#### Lever 3: Building Interest in Conference Attendance

A third lever important to a successful labor-management collaboration conference is building strong interest in the conference. This entails attracting attendees and generating interest in advance of and following the convening. Conference interest is not only important to filling up the conference hall; it is central to inspiring districts unable to attend to do the work necessary to be in a position to attend next time. A conference garnering a lot of interest signals that this kind of work is desirable and supported. There were three primary ways in which we sought to push on this lever.

##### *A. Marketing and Promotion*

Conferences on the topic of labor-management relationships run the risk of being fraught with traditional labor-management tensions. To head off these tensions we aimed to build excitement and a sense of anticipation for the work to be done. We did so by labeling both the conference itself and the districts attending the conference as courageous and groundbreaking. Because the convening in Denver was the “first of its kind” at a national level, we were able to characterize the conference as a historic event and those attending the conference as leaders in the field. The sense of “demand” created by our RSVP process (described above as the product of scarce conference spots and competition to meet a stiff conference attendance bar), helped to further this characterization.

##### *B. Credibility in Stakeholder Communities*

A second key to driving interest was relying on union and management co-sponsors to activate their membership at the local level. This served two important purposes: 1) Being invited by the national organizations other than ED helped to increase the engagement of locals; and 2) the conference itself gained significant credibility in the eyes of districts and their labor and management groups. Knowing

the national organizations not only supported, but partnered and encouraged attendance was key to building interest in attending.

### *C. Diverse and Reputable Presenting Districts*

The inclusion of well respected and diverse presenting districts generated interest among others anxious to see their “road maps” and have access to districts currently doing the work for the purpose of ongoing networking and support. Diversity among presenters – in terms of district size and type (i.e., k-8, 9-12, rural, urban, suburban) – is critical to encouraging attendees to identify with presenting districts whose circumstances are close enough to their own that they can see themselves reflected in the presenters. Another type of diversity that is equally important, but often overlooked, is diversity of approach to this work – look for presenters who were successful based on different types of relationships (e.g., relationships that are well-established and date back years, others that sprang from crisis response or were spurred by new leadership), different approaches to collaboration, and different solutions to similar problems, whether embodied in contract, policy, or practice.

### *D. Foundation Interest and Access*

Inviting foundations served two critical purposes in terms of building conference interest. First and foremost, their attendance provided an opportunity for both foundations and districts to network and build relationships that could support future district work. Second, it stoked foundation interest in the conference by offering them a glimpse into the work of districts that foundations aren’t often privy to, particularly with regard to labor-management collaboration. This perspective informs foundations about the environment critical to the success of the education reforms they choose to fund. Likewise, this interaction positions districts doing progressive work to learn about foundations’ specific interests in potential grant making.

### Planning & Implementation Lessons Learned:

#### 1. Importance of Support from Co-Sponsor Leadership

Secretary Duncan and other co-sponsor leaders not only participated in conference panels, they sent out a number of communications penned under their name in advance of the conference and stayed for the entirety of the event. This kind of support from leadership made it clear that this convening was a significant priority for all of the groups involved.

### Lever 4: Work Performed at the Conference

The purpose of the conference was to inspire and support participants in making actual changes in policies, practices, and agreements for the upcoming school year and beyond. Nonetheless, we felt it was essential that some of this work began *at* the conference, before any newly acquired sense of optimism, collegiality, or urgency could dissipate back home. This priority was reflected in two ways: 1) The RSVP process and conference materials included an explicit expectation that planning work would occur during the conference and that districts would be asked to share their plans after the conference; and 2) we built in time on the conference agenda for reflection and action planning after district teams had attended several breakout and plenary sessions. But explicit expectations and time alone could not guarantee that

real work would take place; in addition to these structural supports, we strove to provide content that would get real issues under discussion and spark genuine conversation. However, ultimately it was a series of comedy sketches included in the conference agenda that put the most controversial and taboo issues on the table (more on this below).

### Planning & Implementation Lessons Learned:

#### 1. Conference Structure and Agenda

We planned a mixture of plenary sessions spotlighting the commitment and role of major stakeholders and breakout sessions providing a more intimate environment for districts to ask questions. We also included time for a networking reception at the end of Day 1 and district reflection on Day 2. Based on feedback from conference attendees, the value of time to network and talk with teammates can't be understated. We recommend the following:

- Plenary sessions provide an opportunity for key state, national, and local leaders to set the tone and make a public commitment to this work.
- Breakout sessions are a good place for districts to model the Principles of Student-Centered Labor-Management Relationships. We would recommend meeting with presenting districts in advance to guide them in tailoring their presentation to the conference principles. (See [Appendix I: Sample Presenting District Powerpoint](#))
- Breakout sessions also provide an opportunity for districts to ask questions that are too specific or too sensitive to ask in the context of the larger sessions. These sessions were rated as more useful than the plenary session across the board on conference evaluations.
- In addition to plenary and breakout sessions, we strongly recommend setting aside time for district leaders to reflect together on what they are hearing and learning. Reflection time allows conference participants to process and apply conference content and, most importantly, to converse with district counterparts about a shared experience. This time was among the most highly rated “sessions” of the Denver convening on the conference evaluations filled out by participants.

#### 2. Conference Materials

We found that conference materials could be used to facilitate and capture conference learning and create plans for action. We recommend the following:

- Summarize key conference messages (see [Appendix B: Tenets of the Compact – Conditions for Student Success](#)) and provide background information about presenters (see [Appendix H: Presenting District Summaries](#)) so that the conference program serves as both a tool to prepare for work at the conference and a record of the most critical information shared.
- Provide districts with notetaking materials that mirror the structure of conference sessions to document their own learning.
- Provide districts with materials to document their plans for action going forward (see [Appendix F: Action Plan](#)). Providing districts with a template facilitates the application of conference learning to district planning and may spark conversation between district leaders about district

goals and actions. Providing an action plan template will also encourage district leaders to put their plans into writing, which will in turn increase commitment to making the changes included on the plan.

### 3. Getting Sacred Cows on the Discussion Table

We invited Second City Comedy Troupe as a means to add levity to otherwise serious and possibly tense discussions. However, we quickly discovered that they served a very important purpose beyond mood lightening: As education outsiders, Second City actors were able to openly discuss topics that those in the room with a strong connection to education policy were reluctant or unable to raise. Using “stereotypes” of district superintendents, board members, and union leaders, the Second City actors put real issues about predispositions and potential disagreements on the table. In short, five minute skits woven throughout the agenda, the actors “modeled” the process we were putting our attendees through, though in extreme, and therefore funny, ways. While a comedy troupe might not fit every conference, consider creative ways to get the toughest and most taboo issues on the table for discussion. Addressing these issues is important to making real progress and getting beyond the superficial.

### 4. Post-Conference Accountability for Plans Made at the Conference

We felt it was important to maintaining momentum after the conference to put in place some form of accountability for plans made at the conference. After debating numerous “reporting out” options for action plans that relied on peer and public pressure to hold districts accountable for their commitments (e.g., verbal reports at the end of the conference), we opted for collecting and posting action plans online after the conference. However, technology delays made posting immediately after the conference impossible; moreover, reflecting on our plan after the conference, we decided asking districts to post plans online felt stilted and closer to busywork than the real action we were hoping to inspire. Without any kind of reporting more than a month after the conference ended, we decided our window had closed and refocused our efforts on moving the work that *is* taking place forward, rather than holding districts accountable for work promised at the conference. This is a challenge that future conferences might be able to better tackle. While there is a limit to the “real work” that can take place at the conference due to the limited time and circumstances, accountability in some form can ensure that even small steps made at the conference have an impact on the ground when districts return home.

## Lever 5: Conference Follow-up

Conference follow-up is essential to a conference focused on creating a movement as opposed to an event. A critical outcome and stated desire on the part of the organizing group of sponsors was to inspire a movement for labor and management to work together to advance student achievement as well as to capitalize on the opportunity to provide a powerful counter-narrative to the divisive politics and practices that states and districts are currently experiencing. Since Denver there have been some signs that this work is gaining momentum: a couple of state-level of conferences on the topic of labor-management collaboration have been held already and several more are in the works. Continuing to grow this movement and write a new labor-management narrative is a work in progress. This section includes descriptions of several of our current projects, the success and impact of which remain to be seen.

#### *A. District Case Studies*



Teacher Ambassador Fellows at ED were assigned to work with each of the twelve presenting districts to write case studies that reflected the progress these districts had made as well as the processes by which they were able to make significant improvements in student achievement through their collaborative work. Significant resources were committed to documenting the information that was presented in the breakout sessions for each of the presenting districts. In addition to providing a profile for each of the presenting districts in the conference program, we felt that it was critical to capture the content that was shared during the breakouts so that the information could be shared broadly with the education community. The need for this kind of story-telling is particularly critical in this field given dearth of information about “how” districts can successfully transform their relationships. We hope that highlighting the tools and practices of these diverse districts will help to fill this void and bring the conference learnings to districts who didn’t attend the event.

### *B. Building Communities of Practice*

Several months after the conference in Denver, we are finally on the verge of launching a website that we hope will support an online community of practice. This community will begin with the districts attending the conference in Denver and, in line with our goal of creating a movement, with time hopefully grow to include districts across the U.S. interested in collaborating to improve student achievement. When districts were asked what they needed to collaborate more effectively around student achievement, the most common response was “best practices from districts already doing this work successfully.” This website---intended to help districts share resources and models of success---is our current best thinking on to respond to this expressed need.

### *C. Communication and Outreach*

Post-conference communications fell into two categories: 1) Follow-up with conference attendees, and 2) outreach to districts who did not attend. A major role for the co-sponsoring organizations after the event in Denver was to broadcast information and resources from the conference to their members. This outreach amplified the conference message and helped to reach the districts not in attendance. Our plan after Denver was to be in continuous contact with attending districts so that the conversation would never fall silent. We sent several communications around conference resources, presentation materials, video footage, evaluation results, and networking directories in the weeks following the event. Nonetheless, turnaround for promised projects has been slower than anticipated and, as a result, communications have been less than frequent. Most recently the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) worked with Denver conference co-sponsors to send out a survey to districts attending or interested in attending the conference. We asked about the kind work districts were doing, their timeline for completing that work, and their greatest needs. Our next step is to use the survey results to prioritize our own work and respond to specific, addressable needs identified in district responses.

### *D. Continued Collaboration with Conference Co-Sponsors*

Since the conference, the co-sponsors have continued to meet around the topic of student-centered labor-management collaboration on a regular basis. All co-sponsors continue to view this work as central to their respective agendas. Moreover, starting a movement together, versus jointly hosting an event, means building relationships that outlast the conference. While the agenda of this group going forward remains a work in progress, the value of continued conversation and a shared commitment to this work is undoubtedly immense.

### *E. Future Labor Management Collaboration Convenings*

Denver was never intended to be a one-off event. We hope that support from the Department and the co-sponsors will spark others to host similar regional, state, and local events. Unfortunately the literature and history of events focused on student-centered labor-management collaboration is limited and, as a result, some trailblazing is required. We are working on resources like this paper that we hope will save others time and energy. Additionally, we hope that with continued support we might host a second conference on this topic in the future.

#### Planning & Implementation Lessons Learned:

##### 1. Follow-up Project Timeline

Despite the value we placed on continuing communications, an overly ambitious post-conference agenda and a late start to planning post-conference work meant that communication with districts after the conference has been intermittent at best. To avoid this, it might have been useful to spend some time in advance of the conference laying the groundwork for follow-up after the conference. Generating some simple resources and communications to be sent out in the weeks and months immediately following the conference could have helped to maintain continuity while larger projects are in the works.

##### 2. Conference Evaluation

As guests exited the conference we collected the conference evaluation forms that were distributed at the end of the final day. These conference evaluation forms provided a significant jumping off point for post-conference work. Items on our evaluation form not only asked for information about the quality of conference logistics and the utility of the event, but also inquired about the kind of next steps districts were most interested in and the tools districts needed to continue this work at home (See [Appendix G: Conference Evaluation Form](#) and link to evaluation results).

##### 3. 2011 Denver Labor-Management Conference Presenting Districts as Post-Conference Resources

The twelve district teams presenting in Denver can serve as excellent resources for post-conference technical assistance when districts return home. Their stories contain the details that districts need to hear and understand as they navigate their own path to collaborative reform. Ideally presenting districts can help struggling leaders problem solve and be the ones they turn to when challenges arise. In many states there are insufficient numbers of local teams ready to share or model their work. We would suggest supporting networking during and after the conference so that districts have the opportunity to talk to the district leaders who are walking the talk and can speak earnestly about the local work that teams must do.

## **Appendix A: Statement of Purpose**

Successful labor-management relations in public education should enable school boards, district administrators, principals, and teachers – each in their own roles – to design and enact policies that optimize the academic success of their students. To do this, districts and teachers' unions must forge new compacts – compacts in which school boards, district and building administrators, and teachers' union leaders acknowledge their shared responsibility to establish a strong and stable school environment, and give educators resources and tools to transform all schools so that all students receive a genuine opportunity to obtain a high-quality education.

The fundamental strength of a constructive labor-management relationship is its reciprocal nature. Through the new compact, boards, administrators, and teachers can build on this strength and use it as a vehicle to uphold rigorous academic standards, elevate the teaching profession by advancing teacher quality, drive school and instructional improvement, and *make student achievement the heart of their relationship*.

Looking forward, the new compact will raise expectations, and the collaborative process, including collective bargaining, will become a tool of innovation, creating new ways to improve academic outcomes for students and the work of educators. Moreover, under the new compact, the context for labor-management interaction will extend well beyond collective bargaining; it will influence the way collective-bargaining and non-collective-bargaining school systems operate – in board meetings, at the union hall, in committees, on school leadership teams, and with parents, students, and the community. In each of these settings, and in all settings where teachers, board members, and administrators do their work, the compact will serve to create a renewed focus on the conditions of student, teacher, and school success.

## **Appendix B: Tenets of the Compact – Conditions for Student Success**

- Shared responsibility for, and clear focus on, student success
- A culture of high academic expectations
- Rigorous curriculum that meets or exceeds state standards and international benchmarks
- A belief in education as a valued profession
- A culture of respect for education professionals
- An effective leader in every school
- An effective teacher in every classroom
- Professional development aimed at continuous improvement
- A collaborative culture of innovation
- Resources appropriate to local school needs
- Empowered local leadership with respect to those resources
- A safe, secure, and supportive professional environment
- Students taking responsibility for their own learning
- Parents engaged in their child's education
- Accessible, timely, and relevant information on school and student performance

## Appendix C: Principles in Action

### 1. Strategic Direction-Setting

**ABC Unified** – The district’s strategic plan consists of five major directions that are evaluated each year by the community – including teachers, administrators, parents, students, and the board of education. The strategic plan focuses on the involvement of all stakeholders in raising student achievement.

**Denver** – The contract calls for a partnership focused on improving student outcomes; collaboration between the district and union, with shared professional responsibility for improvement. The contract also clearly outlines standards for behavior in the district-union partnership, making clear that all stakeholders share professional responsibility for the district’s goals, policies, and practices.

**Douglas County** – The district and the board of education signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the union to develop and implement a continuous improvement model for teacher development and evaluation. This historic agreement will help further develop the pay-for-performance system to better support Douglas County’s teachers and students. The Continuous Improvement for Teacher Effectiveness (CITE) initiative is a continuation of the pay-for-performance system developed in the early 1990s. This initiative focuses on a differentiated teacher evaluation tool aligned to performance pay and professional development, and includes multiple measures of teacher effectiveness and student learning. The evaluation tool will be used to inform employment decisions and develop teacher leaders. This evaluation tool will ensure that expectations are clear, processes are implemented with fidelity, results are measurable, and, most importantly, the system is aligned with the district’s vision throughout the process.

**Green Dot** – The contract establishes that the school will consider staff input, and decisions will be made collaboratively. In addition, the contract contains language recognizing that the union and school leadership maintain fluid communication and a willingness to work through issues and concerns. The parties affirm that this collaboration is particularly important during the formative years of a school.

**Helena** – The contract calls for “consensus negotiations” that bring all parties together to express a shared vision for the district, including a transparent, common understanding of the financial resources (including salaries and benefits) available to achieve that vision.

**Montgomery County** – The contracts with each of the three employee associations provide a detailed description of the labor-management relationship. They focus on the principles of interest-based bargaining in a collaborative, respectful culture in which there is a mutual commitment to a self-renewing organization dedicated to continuous improvement and performance excellence for staff and students. Language in each contract affirms a commitment to work through issues and concerns. Each association provides input in the updating of the strategic plan and in the setting of annual performance targets associated with that plan.

**New Haven** – New Haven’s School Change Initiative was discussed and shaped by the district, the city, and the New Haven Federation of Teachers outside of contract negotiation, in the context of a larger strategic and operational partnership. Ongoing work, including the shaping and monitoring of reform directions and the delivery of specific reform products (*i.e.*, the Teacher Evaluation and Development System) happen through formal cross-constituency committees.

\* \* \*

**Ideas From Other Districts** – Create specific roles for unions and other stakeholder groups in district goal-setting and strategic planning processes. Create collaborative policy review and development bodies that consider policies in real time and through vehicles other than the collective bargaining agreement or board policy. Create outcome oriented agreements that tie large-scale incentives to large-scale increases in agreed-upon performance goals as a vehicle for creating shared ownership of significant outcomes, such as increases in overall district student performance, enrollment or graduation rates, or fiscal stabilization.

### 2. Clear and Shared Responsibility for Academic Outcomes of All Students

**ABC Unified** – The district has a Charter Agreement that promotes the partnership between labor and management. The goals of the partnership are to work collaboratively in improving student achievement and to enhance the teaching and working environment for teachers, staff, and administrators.

**Baltimore** – The district and the teachers’ union will work together to develop the Baltimore Professional Practices and Student Learning Program (BPPSLP) with the goal of increasing student learning. Two labor-management committees (the Joint Oversight Committee and the Joint Governing Panel) will develop and facilitate the various components of the contract.

**Denver** – Denver’s School Performance Framework, which was created with input from the union and other stakeholders, is used to assess school performance and includes metrics that are aligned with teacher performance measures. Incentive pay for teachers is fully aligned with incentive pay for principals and each is aligned with the School Performance Framework.

**Douglas County** – The contract commits both parties to the “common value” of upholding “the best interests of students” when making decisions. Building relationships is integral to an overall strategic plan that recognizes the importance of a coherent partnership among all educators to accomplish the common good for children.

**Green Dot** – The contract grounds all Green Dot schools on six tenets of highperforming schools, and establishes shared ownership of the overarching goal that all graduates will attend a four-year college.

**Helena** – The Helena Education Association works collaboratively with the board of trustees, community members, and administrators to establish strategies to increase student achievement and improve graduation rates.

**Montgomery County** – Each of the three association contracts articulates a shared commitment to the five goals in the district’s strategic plan, including ensuring success for every student and providing an effective instructional program. The district publishes an annual report on progress toward collaboratively established benchmarks and a “Results Book” that summarizes student performance outcomes. These provide transparency for students, staff, and the community.

**New Haven** – Early in the reform process, New Haven established a clear statement of shared beliefs between the district and the New Haven Federation of Teachers, including the urgency and the potential for significantly improved academic outcomes, and the individual and collective responsibility for achieving those outcomes. Those beliefs translate into aligned evaluation and development at all levels of the district.

**Plattsburgh** – The contract creates an Education Policy Council that serves as an avenue for dialogue among the union, administration, and school board.

**St. Francis** – The district’s Assessment, Curriculum and Teaching Committee meets quarterly to provide shared engagement in the review of the district’s instruction and curriculum plan, and makes recommendations to the school board on how the district can make progress toward its goals.

**Winston-Salem** – Uses information from an expanded version of the Governor’s Working Conditions Survey to initiate and support district projects, such as a common code of conduct and staff development initiatives. Union leadership works closely with the superintendent and the board, and serves on the staff policy committee as well as on other standing and ad hoc committees.

**Ideas From Other Districts** – Create explicit shared commitment for measurable academic performance goals in areas such as college-going success rates or high school graduation rates, student attendance, academic achievement gains, and achievement gap closing. Commit to other high priorities, shared goals, and metrics, and to processes for metric development. Develop common datasets to inform policy concerns in the collective bargaining agreement. Jointly develop school progress reports and school improvement planning processes. Establish shared policy commitments to transparency for both the district and the union. Jointly develop parent, student, and teacher feedback mechanisms, such as rigorous engagement surveys, for quality assurance and policy development purposes. Create joint opportunities to recognize highly successful schools, principals, and teachers. Join forces with local nonprofits, universities, and government agencies to build civic investment in shared academic goals and in joint labor-management ventures.

### **3. Supporting the Growth and Improvement of Teachers and Leaders**

**ABC Unified** – The Annual PAL (Partnership between Administrators and Labor) Retreat is created jointly by teachers and administrators to provide a shared professional development opportunity. The focus of the retreat is raising student achievement in the district.

**Baltimore** – The contract creates leadership opportunities for teachers who have demonstrated results. The leadership opportunities include increased responsibilities and salary increases. Former salary lanes have been replaced in the contract by a four-tiered career ladder (Standard, Professional, Model, and Lead Teacher), and opportunities for advancement through “achievement units” tied to evaluation and evidence of leadership and learning. The contract also establishes a joint committee that oversees district professional development initiatives.

**Denver** – The contract emphasizes site-based shared decision-making on professional development, school schedules and calendars, and other topics. It creates a school-based “Collaborative School Committee,” which has specific charges, including the development of School Improvement Plans and Professional Development Plans.

**Douglas County** – The union and the district share joint ownership of the district’s “Center for Staff and Community Development.” The contract creates a wide range of teacher leadership assignments, including instructional coaches, curriculum coordinators, and administrative supports.

**Green Dot** – Professional development is school-based and overseen by a committee that includes union members and school leadership. The contract creates teacher leadership positions, including teacher mentors.

**Helena** – The contract establishes a career and professional development system for teachers that is aligned with district goals and supported by the jointly developed Professional Compensation Alternative Plan. The district and employee groups jointly participate in the implementation of a district-wide mentorship program that links together experienced and newly hired educators.

**Hillsborough County** – The contract provides for a career ladder compensation system based on performance that enables teachers to make more money and take on more responsibility. The contract also creates three new categories of full-time positions: one enables teachers to act as full-time mentors to other teachers; one provides peer evaluators who share with principals the responsibility of observing and evaluating teachers; and one gives teachers the opportunity to become “teacher leaders” who teach half the day and work the other half with administration on instructional and curricular issues.

**Montgomery County** – Each employee association contract articulates the importance of professional development for all employees in creating and sustaining a high quality workforce, focused on student learning, in a self-renewing organization. Each contract establishes the shared responsibility of the district and the respective association to jointly plan and implement relevant professional development that supports employee advancement through career pathways (support staff); or establishes a career lattice (teachers) that identifies three stages of professional growth (induction, skillful teacher, lead teacher); or promotes the development of effective school and district leaders (administrators’ association).

Professional development plans are created by each staff member with guidance from appropriate evaluators and/or lead teachers.

**New Haven** – The contract calls for a number of professional development initiatives designed to promote teacher growth. Among these are: a teacher induction and mentoring program, school-based instructional coaches, teacher professional development centers, and additional training on special education inclusion, classroom management, data-driven instruction, differentiation, and instructional technology.

**Plattsburgh** – A school-based planning committee makes recommendations to school administrators, and a district-wide professional development committee supports the professional development efforts at each school.

**St. Francis** – The contract calls on teachers to develop an annual 30-hour professional development plan. The contract establishes a Teacher Academy that offers development opportunities in alignment with state and district goals.

The contract also establishes an aligned career ladder for teachers, which offers leadership roles that include curriculum and instructional specialists, mentors, and district coordinators.

\* \* \*

**Ideas From Other Districts** – Develop local standards of excellence for teachers and administrators. Agree on common workforce metrics to inform hiring and career or professional development decisions. Define supervisory roles for teachers in the bargaining agreement. Permit educators with supervisory roles in the bargaining unit. Create cooperative career development initiatives with other education organizations, such as local universities, other government agencies and nonprofits.

#### **4. School Design, Schedules, Teacher Workload, and Time**

**Baltimore** – The district and union are piloting a program where schools can modify school working conditions – for example, extend their school day and year – provided there is support from 80 percent of the school staff. Teachers will be compensated for additional hours. The pilot will be expanded to all schools in the 2011-12 school year.

**Denver** – School schedules and calendars are developed by site-based Collaborative School Committees. Schools may seek waivers from the teacher contract, board policies, or state law by a vote of the teachers in that school to become an Innovation School. Several Innovation Schools in Denver set their own calendars, professional development time, work week, and work day.

**Green Dot** – The work day and week are defined by teacher responsibilities, such as classroom instruction, preparation, and staff meetings, not increments of time. Preparation must be at least one-sixth of the teacher’s total instructional time.

**Montgomery County** – Teachers are provided with designated professional days for grading and planning, with some opportunity to telework on those days. In addition, two 8-hour unstructured days are provided to each 10-month teacher for collaborative planning to improve instruction and close the achievement gap.

**New Haven** – In turnaround schools, there is an ability to completely re-craft work rules and compensation, and the decision of staff to apply or reapply represents their agreement to those terms. In other schools, staff has the ability to modify work rules with the vote of 80 percent of the staff.

**Winston-Salem** – School week and planning time are allocated in flexible week long blocks that can be adjusted at the school level within the limits established by board policy.

\* \* \*

**Ideas From Other Districts** – Create school design competitions or solicit charter school proposals from teachers and other district educators. Enter into partnerships with local universities, government agencies and nonprofits to invest in innovative school designs, including “wrap-around” services for students that support the academic mission of the school. Create joint projects to rethink school and schedule organization in light of emerging teaching and learning technology.

## 5. Teacher Evaluation

**ABC Unified** – The evaluation document for teachers was developed jointly by the teachers and administrators. The Peer Assistance Support System (PASS) is available to struggling teachers and to teachers who request additional support and coaching.

**Baltimore** – Teachers earn “achievement units” (AUs) through a range of achievements and activities, including positive evaluations; earning AUs leads to salary increases. All teachers are evaluated annually, and state law requires student growth data to inform 50 percent of the evaluation.

**Denver** – The district is piloting a new teacher observation and evaluation framework designed by a set of joint district and union design teams. In the pilot, teachers will be observed and receive feedback from both peer observers and principals.

**Douglas County** – Teachers on performance improvement plans receive support from a team of four administrators and five peers.

**Green Dot** – Teachers are evaluated twice annually. Teacher evaluations include the examination of a portfolio of teacher work.

**Hillsborough County** – The district and union have jointly developed a teacher evaluation system that is based on three components: students’ learning gains (40 percent), ratings by the principal (30 percent), and ratings by a master teacher holding the position of peer evaluator (30 percent). The evaluation system is aligned with professional development so that teachers receive the supports that best meet their needs.

**Montgomery County** – The district and the teachers’ union have developed a framework for teaching based on Jon Saphier’s *The Skillful Teacher*. Standards of performance in the Professional Growth System (PGS) are based on six standards derived from the core propositions of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Two standards include student performance data as part of the evidence considered in the evaluation. The PGS provides for a three-year professional growth cycle consisting of an evaluative year followed by two years devoted to targeted professional development. A Peer Assistance and Review component offers support to novice and underperforming teachers and provides for dismissal of teachers who continue not to meet the standard.

**New Haven** – The union and the district introduced a new evaluation system this year that takes into account growth in student learning, classroom observation, and professional values. The weight carried by student learning growth depends on the consistency of that data across years and across metrics. This process solidifies the professional relationship between the manager and the teacher, increasing interactions and conferences. The process includes a third-party validation of instructional practice for those teachers who are potentially classified as “needs improvement” or “exemplary.”

**Plattsburgh** – The district is piloting a Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program with novice teachers that will be expanded to include struggling teachers. All new teachers work with a “consulting teacher” who has the full responsibility to formally evaluate the new teacher. The building administrator may conduct informal evaluations. Final decisions are made by the PAR panel.



*St. Francis* – The jointly initiated Student Performance Improvement Program serves as a vehicle to integrate teacher evaluation, peer review, induction, and compensation. Every teacher has an assigned Performance Review Team made up of two career-ladder teachers (a team leader and a specialist) and one administrator. The team helps the teacher set an annual growth goal, conducts four classroom observations, reviews the teacher’s evidence of student growth, provides an annual rating (which is tied to compensation advancement), and plans the teacher’s next professional development focus.

\* \* \*

*Ideas From Other Districts* – Establish a shared commitment to evaluation systems that consistently predict that highly rated teachers are also getting high rates of student growth. Collaboratively create and implement training for administrators and peers to be consistent raters of teacher performance; use this information and student growth evidence to inform career decisions. Jointly develop methods for the long-term validation of evaluation instruments and processes.

## **6. Administrator Evaluation**

*Baltimore* – Baltimore is currently negotiating a new contract for administrators and hopes to mirror the historic reform shown in the teacher contract.

*Denver* – The district will be piloting a new principal evaluation system later this year, designed by a joint district and union design team, which will be fully aligned to the district’s new teacher evaluation system.

*Helena* – The district is piloting the Vanderbilt Assessment for Leadership in Education (VAL-ED). The conceptual framework for VAL-ED is based on a review of the learning-centered leadership research literature and alignment to the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards.

*Hillsborough County* – In alignment with reforms to teacher evaluation, the district and union are initiating a “360-degree” principal evaluation system that takes into account feedback from school faculty, student growth data, and feedback from area directors. Data for the 360-degree evaluation is gathered in part through surveys completed by staff and administrators.

*Montgomery County* – Administrators are evaluated based on performance standards specific to their role, defined in the Administrative and Supervisory Professional Growth System. The A&S PGS operates on a three-year cycle including an evaluative year followed by two years devoted to professional development. The district supports the professional development of administrators by providing opportunities for leadership development and through support of professional learning communities specific to each administrative group. The PGS includes a Peer Assistance and Review component through which support is provided to novice or underperforming administrators.

*New Haven* – In alignment with reforms in teacher evaluation, the district and union are developing a principal evaluation system that is based, in part, on student learning and school performance. It also includes 360-degree feedback from teachers and other staff through annual school climate surveys.

*Winston-Salem* – Feedback from the expanded Governor’s Working Conditions Survey are used to inform principal evaluations and to identify outstanding principals.

\* \* \*

*Ideas From Other Districts* – Collaborate with principals and other stakeholders to define multiple measures of principal performance and suitable evidence of student growth for informing principal evaluations. Create fair and transparent quality assurance measures for administrative processes (like customer service in human resources offices). Do the same for key central office administrator positions.

## **7. School Board Evaluation**

*ABC Unified* – The district conducts an evaluation of progress on the strategic plan annually. The superintendent’s evaluation by the board of education is also tied to progress on the strategic plan.

\* \* \*

*Ideas From Other Districts* – Collaborate with board members and community stakeholders to develop fair and open methods for making transparent the school board’s standards of practice and for identifying and reporting key indicators of district health and success.

## **8. Transfer, Assignment, and Reduction in Force**

**Baltimore** – The contract places a high priority on shared agreement between teacher and principal for all transfers—voluntary and involuntary. Forced placement is possible but it is not the district’s current practice, which emphasizes mutual consent.

**Denver** – Teacher selections and reductions for program and enrollment changes are conducted by a committee that includes teachers and the principal. Classroom performance is considered as a part of these decisions, and seniority is not. Under a new Colorado state law, all transfers/hiring of teachers in schools must be by mutual consent of the teacher and the school. Teachers reduced in a building have the longer of two hiring cycles or one year to find a mutual consent placement before being placed on unpaid leave. Teachers on unpaid leave who find mutual consent positions return at the same salary level and seniority as when they went on leave.

**Green Dot** – The contract places high priority on shared agreement between teacher and principal when selecting teachers, but Green Dot does permit forced placements. Teacher evaluation is a factor in transfer decisions; seniority applies only when all other factors are equal.

**New Haven** – When turnaround schools are reconstituted, all teachers must compete along with other interested teachers for a position in the school. Teachers maintain employment rights if they choose not to apply or are not selected. Careful coordination between HR and the teachers’ union occurs to avoid bumping and involuntary transfers.

## 9. Compensation and Benefits

**Baltimore** – Teachers earn salary increases by earning “achievement units” granted through a range of achievements and activities, including professional development, strong evaluations, gains in student learning outcomes, and completion of eligible coursework. The new compensation system also creates four career “pathways” through which teachers progress based on their performance (Standard, Professional, Model, and Lead Teacher).

**Denver** – The Professional Compensation System for Teachers (ProComp) replaces the single salary schedule with a system of incentives (both base-building and non-base-building) for specific accomplishments. ProComp includes incentives for school-wide and classroom student growth, working in hard-to-serve schools and hard-to-staff assignments, acquiring and demonstrating skills and knowledge, and earning a satisfactory or better evaluation.

**Douglas County** – The district has one of the longest-running performance pay programs in the nation. It was developed in 1993-1994 in collaboration with the union. The performance pay program is not a “this or that” compensation model for teachers to select one or the other component. The district goes above and beyond the traditional compensation schedule by using the performance pay program as a personal and group development model that leads to recognitions that are financial rewards. The plan begins with desired skills for staff and cascades to a level of rewarding teacher portfolio and student achievement results.

**Helena** – The district and union have replaced the single salary schedule with the Professional Compensation Alternative Program, a compensation system that permits teachers to build salary increases for “positive evaluation, career development and education, and professional service.” The district board has remained committed to maintaining the Helena schools’ compensation package as the flagship program in the state, ensuring the recruitment and retention of the highest-quality educators.

**Hillsborough County** – The contract includes performance pay and “differential pay” for teachers who work in high-poverty schools. The district is moving toward a career ladder under which teachers will be compensated based on three years of value-added student learning gains. Teachers employed by the district during the 2009-2010 school year will have the opportunity to choose between the old and new compensation systems, while new hires will be under the new compensation system when it takes effect in 2013.

**Montgomery County** – The district encourages teachers to earn National Board of Professional Teaching Standards certification by providing specific supports during the certification process and a salary stipend upon achievement of NBPTS certification.

**New Haven** – The contract calls for the development of a compensation system that include group-based bonuses. The contract also permits incentives to be offered to exemplary teachers who take on teacher leadership positions.

**Plattsburgh** – The district offers a flexible spending account to cover the cost of insurance premiums, and offers a cash-out option for teachers who decline health insurance.

**St. Francis** – Placement and advancement on the district’s “career lattice” is determined in large part by student performance data, which is based on the specific teacher’s assignment and professional goals.

\* \* \*

**Ideas From Other Districts** – Create flexible salary schedule placement rules that allow experienced teachers with track records of results in education and other fields to enter at a rate of pay commensurate with their

accomplishments; develop shared methods to ensure the rigor of knowledge and skill compensation; negotiate total compensation systems that recognize the full earnings value of insurance, pension, and other benefits; create portable savings plan options for teachers with mobile careers, so they don't lose the employer contribution to their pension; jointly encourage pension portability agreements with nearby states, local pension systems or other public employment pension systems, thereby creating more career opportunities for educators.

## 10. Dynamic Decision-Making and Problem-Solving

**ABC Unified** – The district and union have a history of collaboration extending more than a decade. This collaborative partnership involves a systemic, districtwide effort involving Business Services, Human Resources, School Services, and Academic Services in making decisions and problem-solving. Collaboration and shared decision-making also occurs at the school-site levels.

**Baltimore** – With the goal of improving professional practice, increasing student learning, and enhancing career acceleration and opportunities, City Schools and the teachers' union will work together to develop the Baltimore Professional Practices and Student Learning Program (BPPSLP). The contract creates two labor management committees – the Joint Oversight Committee and the Joint Governing Panel – to develop and facilitate the various components of the contract.

**Denver** – The district and the union have created a contractual basis for a labor management partnership. It calls for interest-based bargaining, a process that has been used occasionally in the last decade to negotiate the agreement. The district and the union have negotiated provisions that govern aspects of school turnaround and portfolio management initiatives, and the union has begun operating a teacher led school created through the district's New Schools Development Initiative. State law provides a way for schools to seek waivers from the teacher contract, board policy, and state law when requested by at least 60 percent of the teachers in the school. This provision has been used to create "Innovation Schools," schools that operate largely outside of the labor agreement regulations on time allocation, transfer, non-probationary status and other board policies.

**Douglas County** – In an effort to meet its unique student population's needs, DCSD sought and received waivers from the Colorado State Board of Education from current teacher licensure procedures. This precedent-setting decision allowed current DCSD/DCF teachers to teach and train teachers and enable them to be hired for "hard-to-fill" positions such as world language, science, math, special education, career and technical education, and other areas where highly qualified staff are needed to meet 21st century workforce demands. The waivers have allowed the District to establish a streamlined alternative teacher licensure and endorsement program. Waiver teachers must complete identified courses taught by many of the union's Educational Research and Dissemination trainers. The program's success was recognized by the Independence Institute for pioneering specialized alternative teaching paths for Colorado. In addition, the program just won the Colorado Department of Education Commissioner's Choice Award for excellence in educator preparation.

**Green Dot** – All decisions at the school are to be transparent and made in a collaborative fashion. Union and management have established a shared decisionmaking framework in which teachers (and parents and students) play a role in shaping administrative, curricular, and extra-curricular decisions. The intention is for the majority of key decisions to be made at the school site.

**Helena** – The district and the union have a long history of collaboration grounded in the interest-based process, and extended into a model Helena calls "consensus negotiations." The "consensus negotiations" process is ongoing; with the direction and approval of the board, employee groups and administration work together to create solutions to issues of mutual interest. The district and the union developed their model with the support of Bob Chadwick and have used other consultants to help develop their alternative compensation system. The district administration, employee groups, board, and community members participate in "shared governance" structures on both the building and district levels to encourage collaborative decision-making in all aspects of running the schools and the district. The board supports and respects the decisions created through these processes.

**Hillsborough County** – The district and the union are developing their evaluation and compensation systems with the support of an Intensive Partnership for Effective Teaching Grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. For many years, the district and union have developed a close working relationship that includes regularly scheduled problem-solving meetings, as well as union representation on all district committees and union input into textbook adoption.

**Montgomery County** – Each of the three association contracts is developed in a climate of interest-based bargaining and includes provisions, through institutionalized committees, for ongoing discussion in areas of concern. All three

associations are represented on district leadership teams, including those that revise the school system's strategic plan and associated annual performance targets, as well as on leadership teams providing input to the development of the operating budget. All union contracts support a commitment to a culture of continuous improvement, mutual respect, and a shared responsibility for employee success and student achievement.

*Plattsburgh* – Establishes a commitment to shared decision-making at the district level through the Education Policy Council, and at the school level through school improvement teams.

*St. Francis* – The district has an Education Cabinet, which meets monthly to act as a think tank to advise the superintendent on issues related to program improvements. Three teacher representatives and the union president serve as members of the cabinet. The Student Performance Improvement Program Coordinator acts as the non-voting facilitator for the group.

*Winston-Salem* – Develops input at the district level through a Teacher Advisory Council and a Parent Advisory Council. Collaboration occurs at the school level through a school improvement team. Board policy emphasizes the district's commitment to site-based decision-making about school plans and budgets.

\* \* \*

*Ideas From Other Districts* – Establish joint central committees that make interim contract implementation decisions between negotiating rounds, and take full responsibility for the successful implementation of all contractually agreed upon provisions proactively. Establish processes for granting latitude to schools from district policies, including policies established in the labor agreement. Develop timely dispute resolution processes in exchange for fair decisions that bind both parties.

## **Appendix D: Letter of Invitation from the Secretary**

January 3, 2011

### **CONFERENCE ON ADVANCING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH LABOR-MANAGEMENT COLLABORATION**

Dear Superintendent, Teacher's Union or Association Leader, and School Board President:

In the last year, your school district successfully secured federal funding to pursue reforms that require a rethinking of the traditional labor-management relationship. Whether it was for Race to the Top, the Teacher Incentive Fund, School Improvement Grants, Investing in Innovation, or Promise Neighborhood grants, you have shown the commitment to pursue bold reforms that drive student success in a collaborative manner, and I salute your courage, your persistence, and your capacity to work together on behalf of children.

To further support your important efforts, the U.S. Department of Education is working in collaboration with the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, the National School Boards Association, the American Association of School Administrators, the Council of the Great City Schools, and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service to sponsor a conference in Denver, Colorado, on advancing student achievement through labor-management collaboration. This event begins on the afternoon of February 15, 2011, and concludes the afternoon of the 16th. Our cosponsors and I will be there along with national foundations and support organizations that are interested in fostering progressive partnerships that strengthen educational outcomes and opportunities for students. We are most grateful to the Ford Foundation for its support of the conference. Please see the preliminary conference agenda, attached.

You are invited to this historic gathering on behalf of your district, with costs of travel and accommodations provided. In order to attend, we ask two things of you. First, all three of you – the superintendent, teacher's union or association leader, and school board president – must agree to attend the event together. Second, you pledge to build on the progress you have already made by working to turn your labor-management relationships into tools for advancing student achievement. (Please see the attached RSVP form.)

This is a big request, but the urgency to improve and the opportunity for progress have never been greater. Recent international test results show that American students are falling further behind their counterparts from across the globe each year. At the same time, rank and file teachers across America are responding enthusiastically to cooperative labor-management relationships that offer a positive and professional school culture built around shared goals and better student outcomes. Despite the financially challenging times in which we find ourselves, innovative and reform-oriented school districts like yours must continue to lead the way.

If you are interested in attending, please return the attached RSVP form by January 14, signed by all three parties. If we are oversubscribed, we will randomly select attendees from among those who RSVP; you will receive final confirmation of your attendance no later than January 21. We expect this will be the first of a series of events aimed at developing and strengthening labor-management partnerships. I hope to hear from you and look forward to seeing you in Denver.

Sincerely,

Arne Duncan

**Appendix E: Conference RSVP Form**

**Conference on Advancing Student Achievement through Labor-Management Collaboration**

***Background:***

District Name \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

NCES (Federal LEA) ID \_\_\_\_\_

Union or Association Affiliation:  NEA  AFT  Both NEA & AFT  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

***Statement of Intent:***

We agree to attend the Conference together, and we pledge to work to improve student achievement through our collective bargaining agreement or other jointly developed district policies and related labor-management practices. As we fulfill this pledge, we will 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 sharing responsibility and holding 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.

***School Board President (or equivalent):***

***Teacher’s Union or Association Leader:***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

***Superintendent (or equivalent):***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return this completed form by fax to (202) 205-0676 “attention: collaboration” or scan and e-mail this page to [Collaboration2011@ed.gov](mailto:Collaboration2011@ed.gov). To be considered, your RSVP must arrive by midnight Eastern time on Friday, January 14, 2011.*

## Appendix F: Action Plan

### WORKSHEET: District Action Plan

Presenting District:



**GOALS**

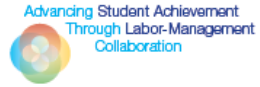
To what measurable expectations is your team committing?

**CURRENT STATUS**

What policies and practices are already in place in your district and local union/association that shape how you address these goals? Would you classify each of these pre-existing policies and practices as assets or challenges?

### WORKSHEET: District Action Plan

Presenting District:



<p><b>ACTION</b></p> <p>What will your team do together to meet these goals?</p>	<p><b>ANALYSIS</b></p> <p><i>Indicate actions that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Will be easiest to accomplish;</li> <li>Are most likely to lead to the meeting of your goals;</li> <li>Would require policy action; and</li> <li>Could be done under existing authority.</li> </ul>	<p><b>TIMELINE</b></p> <p><i>Indicate actions that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can accomplish before the beginning of the 2011-12 school year;</li> <li>Before the renegotiation of the next labor-management agreement or any other shared policy; or</li> <li>As a part of the formal renegotiation of any agreement or shared policy.</li> </ul>
▶		
▶		
▶		
▶		
▶		

## Appendix G: Conference Evaluation Form

### 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."

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

### **Appendix H: Presenting District Summaries**

A summary of background information about each of the presenting districts can be found at:

<http://www.ed.gov/labor-management-collaboration/conference/district-background-information>

### **Appendix I: Sample Presenting District Powerpoint**

Presentation Powerpoints and materials for all Denver 2011 presenting districts can be found at:

<http://www.ed.gov/labor-management-collaboration/conference/presentations>

### **Appendix J: District Case Studies**

The district case studies paper written by Jonathan Eckert and the U.S. Department of Education Teaching Fellows can be found at:

<http://www.ed.gov/labor-management-collaboration/district-case-studies>

### **Appendix K: Conference Evaluation Results**

A conference evaluation results Powerpoint presentation and summary paper can be found at:

<http://www.ed.gov/conference-evaluation-results>