
Policy 2.0:

Using Open Innovation to Reform Teacher Evaluation Systems

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hope Street Group is a new generation of leaders dedicated to building an Opportunity Economy, where anyone who works hard and invests in themselves has the opportunity to succeed and our nation prospers as a result. We convene leaders from business, government, and civil society to develop action plans that expand economic opportunity.

Teacher effectiveness is intimately connected to our mission of building an Opportunity Economy. Knowing what makes teachers effective, understanding how to measure that effectiveness, helping create opportunities for all teachers to improve, and attracting and retaining the most effective teachers would transform our education system. Teaching would become a more attractive — even iconic — profession, student achievement would rise, and America's schools could reclaim their rightful place among the best in the world.

Ensuring a great teacher is at the front of the classroom is a critical step we can take to help students excel academically. However, the reality is that we do not know which teachers are effective because we do not know how to appropriately measure that quality. Our country's current teacher evaluation systems are inadequate.

Hope Street Group believes that new online collaboration tools have an important role to play in surfacing new ideas and voices to make a positive difference on many issues, including teacher effectiveness. To that end, this summer Hope Street Group launched a virtual education policy team using Policy 2.0, our collaborative web platform. We recruited a diverse policy team of educators and professionals from the private and civic sectors across 17 states. Through an in-depth process of discovery and research over three months, the policy team devised targeted recommendations for improving teacher evaluation systems. Policy 2.0 allowed us to connect busy practitioners from across the country to a library of resources, to national experts, and to each other, through a tool that gave them a unique

platform for engaging in education policy, with far-reaching implications.

Working from the premise that teacher evaluations are a meaningful part of ensuring that all students have access to a high-quality education, Hope Street Group's policy team developed the following recommendations and principles for teacher evaluations:

- 1) Objective measures of student achievement gains must be a major component of teacher evaluation.
- 2) Clearly defined standards of quality instruction should be used to assess a teacher's classroom performance.
- 3) Teachers, teacher groups and unions should be included in developing and implementing teacher evaluation systems.
- 4) Teacher evaluation systems themselves must be periodically evaluated and refined.
- 5) Teacher evaluation systems should reflect the importance of supportive administrators and school environment to effective teaching.
- 6) Components of teacher evaluation that rely on observation and discussion must be in the hands of instructional leaders who have sufficient expertise, training and capacity.
- 7) Evaluations must differentiate levels of teaching efficacy to identify opportunities for professional growth, and drive rewards and consequences.
- 8) Information from teacher evaluations should be comparable across schools and districts, and should be used to address equity in the distribution of teaching talent.

This report captures in more depth the recommendations of Hope Street Group's virtual policy team on teacher evaluation. Over the next three years, we intend to expand our Policy 2.0 platform to hundreds of educators and other professionals to adapt and apply these principles to at least 10 education systems in the United States. Visit Policy 2.0 online at www.hopestreetwork.org to learn more or to join our efforts.

