Labor Management Community Collaboration: Resources for Educators and Community Partners

Massachusetts Education Partnership

Policy ▪ Leadership ▪ Labor-Management Collaboration

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INTRODUCTION

Collaboration is hard work in education. Stakeholders with diverse interests, backgrounds, and experiences must come together to develop solutions better than what they would have come up with working alone. While there is a growing body of research and resources on how to work together more effectively to improve student learning, educators often have a hard time finding relevant and accessible support. Thus, the Rennie Center, with support from the Massachusetts Department of Secondary and Elementary Education, compiled this Toolkit on labor-management-community (LMC) collaboration. The Toolkit brings disparate research and resources on collaboration together in one place for educators, community partners, and policy-makers with the goal of accelerating student achievement.

There are many different ways to engage in and sustain collaboration. This Toolkit summarizes a number of tools, cases, research reports, and organizations available to help facilitate collaboration. However, it is not exhaustive. There may be some resources not listed that educators find helpful. Moreover, we do not expect users of the Toolkit to find every resource valuable. The Toolkit might be viewed more as a menu than a recipe. There are plenty of options for educators to choose from to help enhance or initiate collaboration. The big challenge is moving from collaborating on specific issues or topics to developing a system of continuous improvement grounded in a collaborative culture. While the Toolkit doesn't provide a roadmap for building a collaborative culture, we do hope it will make getting there easier.

Putting Collaboration in Context

In the years following the 2007-2008 financial crisis, there has been a significant infusion of federal dollars into public education, greatly increasing the pace and expectations of reform. This focus on public education speaks to its prominence as a universally recognized driver of economic and social change. The resulting reforms have fundamentally changed the landscape of public education. Race to the Top federal grant competitions, the adoption of the Common Core State Standards and their corresponding assessments, the implementation of new teacher evaluation systems, and a dramatic increase in charter and alternative school models have all emerged as approaches to improving student outcomes and decreasing the substantial achievement gap between different student populations.

These and other changes will continue to shape education; however, new initiatives and policies, put into service piece by piece or even as a larger package, often prove insufficient. Their successful implementation and sustainability depends on the capacity and leadership of local educational leaders. More specifically, the effectiveness of any one of these recent reforms—Common Core, teacher evaluation, and new school choice models—is inextricably tied to the ability of school committee members, superintendents, principals, teachers, and union leaders to work together. As the role of the federal and state governments in education has grown, it has created more work and higher expectations for schools and districts. But there has been a lag in the commitment to improve their capacity to carry out the work.

A quickly growing body of evidence demonstrates how effective collaboration between different stakeholders can lead to improved student learning. A group of early studies explored the factors that led to effective collaboration and hypothesized that productive labor-management relationships were a prerequisite to accelerated achievement. Adam Urbanski, the President of the Rochester Teachers' Union and co-founder of the Teacher Union Reform Network (TURN), made a compelling case that any reform aimed at improving outcomes in teaching and learning must rely on teacher engagement and ownership. He wrote that without collaboration between administrators and the teachers union, even the "best efforts of management are tantamount to one hand clapping."[1]

Subsequent research and reports attempted to quantify the effect of collaboration on student learning. Yet scholars' attempts to pinpoint the impact of labor-management relationships on learning were thwarted by the complexity and diversity of policies and practices across states and districts.[2] In addition, there was a paucity of research on the topic and results were inconclusive and mixed.[3] The only takeaway from these early studies was that labor-management collaboration seemed to matter, but no one was really sure how.

Notably, one report from the NEA Foundation published in 2007 attempted to show how districts could use labor-management collaboration to improve equity and reduce the achievement gap.[4] The authors attempted to draw the link between enhanced collaboration in Clark County School District in Nevada and Hamilton County, Tennessee and improved outcomes. The report drew heavily from the concepts on "win-win" bargaining outlined in Kaboolian and Sutherland's (2005) work on building collaborative district-union relationships.[5]

Soon after the financial crisis hit, stresses over how to spend depleted resources led to old fights between labor and management in an effort to control costs. The debate was often framed in zero-sum terms. Teachers could either absorb the cuts through reduced pay or job losses, or management could reduce central office staff and redirect funds to teachers. But at the same time, a third way emerged that began to recognize the importance of shared responsibility for shaping policy and making hard choices.

New research emerged that began to unpack the mechanisms of labor-management relationships, and their effects on teacher capacity and student learning. The U.S. Department of Education (2011) compiled evidence of positive impact on student achievement from 12 school districts in its *Local Labor-Management Relationships as a Vehicle to Advance Reform*. They found that districts with strong labor-management partnerships—Baltimore City Schools, Denver Public Schools, Hillsborough County Public Schools, and Montgomery County Public Schools, for example—were able to improve student achievement by collaborating on teacher evaluation, compensation, and career development systems.[6] Montgomery County saw double-digit closure in the gap between black and Hispanic students and their white counterparts in nearly every grade level in reading and math achievement; while multiple initiatives contributed to these improvements, many attributed that performance jump to productive labor-management collaboration.[7]

Similarly, McCarthy and Rubenstein (2011, 2013) analyzed the labor-management relationships in a cross-section of urban and rural, large and small districts to better understand how to enhance planning, decision-making, and problem solving in districts and schools. They show how labor-management collaboration in these districts was created and sustained to improve overall teacher quality and accelerate student achievement.[8]

Drawing from examples in Cincinnati, Ohio and Union City, New Jersey, Anrig (2013) explained how teachers and administrators co-designed curricula, professional development, and evaluation systems to improve student performance. The results in Union City have been remarkable. In a district with nearly 11,000 students—96 percent Hispanic and 85 percent low-income—language arts and math proficiency nearly matched or outperformed statewide averages in 2013. Compared to Hispanic and low-income students in New Jersey, Union City children had double-digit leads in academic proficiency.[9]

The reports were complemented by how-to guides and frameworks for district and union leaders.[10] *Working Better Together* was published as a comprehensive manual for leaders in the public sector to build more effective relationships with employee groups.[11] The U.S. Department of Education developed its own conceptual framework and principles for building productive district-union collaboration.[12] Some states, such as Massachusetts, put forth their own efforts in advocating for enhanced labor-management relationships.[13]

Putting Resources in the Hands of Educators and Their Partners

The challenge for leaders and practitioners is how to take collaborative action that is effective. Teachers, administrators, and community partners are often unaware of the rising tide of research and reports on labor-management collaboration; those that know of it, struggle to make sense of it. But many leaders know they want to get better at this work: after the popular U.S. Department of Education 2011 labor-management conference in Denver, participants—representing the K12 educators in the U.S. who are most passionate about this work—indicated a strong need for technical assistance on how to collaborate. Nearly 90% of participants said they wanted help on collaborating to accelerate student achievement.[14] There is also rising attendance at meetings in the Teacher Union Reform Network (TURN), an organization dedicated to helping all children learn through enhanced stakeholder collaboration. Furthermore, political leaders, including President Barack Obama, are calling for greater educator voice in policy decisions.[15] Despite this demand, practical and accessible resources on labor-management collaboration are still hard to find. *This toolkit was designed to bring the disparate research and resources together in one place.*

Of course, the criticisms and questions about the tradeoffs of labor-management collaboration must also be acknowledged. For example, Moe (2006–2011) has written extensively about the disproportionate amount of influence teachers' unions have on politics and educational policy in the United States.[16] In addition, Brill (2012) has raised awareness about dysfunctional teacher dismissal policies that he attributes to the self-interests of teachers' unions.[17] More importantly, there are practitioners on the ground who are skeptical that the benefits of labor-management collaboration outweigh its costs. Some

superintendents and principals may think collaboration erodes their authority and capacity to lead. Teacher union leaders might believe collaboration means capitulation or "selling out." Ordinary teachers may feel overwhelmed, undervalued, and frustrated, and unsure the investment in collaboration will change anything. It is important to keep these concerns and practitioners in mind when moving toward labor-management-community collaboration. However, in this toolkit we emphasize collaboration as a decision-making process. We intend the toolkit to be used by practitioners wanting to work more productively with their counterparts toward the goals of accelerating learning and improving equity for all students.

It is also important to acknowledge that labor relationships in the United States emerged within a challenging context when compared to Europe and elsewhere.[18] Teachers unions in the United States grew with the rise of mass production, and current collective bargaining laws were designed with the tenets of industrial unionism in mind—labor relations in schools are historically adversarial, and roles in school leadership are often quite rigid. This contrasts with the "social partner" perspective in Europe, where teachers unions were viewed as essential partners with government/management in educating students. Teachers also have higher professional status in many European countries, compared to educators in the United States.

Despite the difficulties inherent in this challenging context, significant progress is achievable. Collaboration is not easy; it asks a lot from anyone who participates. People must be willing to trust each other, be open to compromise, and strive toward common ground.

The Important Role of Community in LMC Collaboration

There is tremendous opportunity when labor, management, and community work together productively. When community members and organizations partner with a school or a district, they often do so through their ties to a single entrepreneurial leader in the system—frequently a principal, a teacher, or a central office administrator. Broadening out the number and diversity of school and district partners is not often easy, but it has the effect of engaging a more inclusive team, often including labor and management. Fortunately, there are rich and compelling examples of this type of collaboration, which we call labor-management-community collaboration, or LMC.

In the influential article, "Collective Impact," Kania and Kramer (2011) lay out the characteristics of deep community-wide collaboration which they call Collective Impact. This type of collaboration is defined by long-term commitments by a group of important actors from different sectors—teachers unions, school districts, businesses, and community organizations—to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem. Their actions are supported by a shared measurement system, mutually reinforcing activities, and ongoing communication, and are staffed by an independent backbone organization. In one of the nation's most noted examples of Collective Impact, the city of Cincinnati, and in particular its public school system, have achieved dramatic improvements in student outcomes using this deep and broad collaborative approach.[19]

Community involvement is not new to education. Many of the U.S. districts that have made progress in closing achievement gaps, reducing dropout rates, increasing graduation rates, improving the quality of early education and literacy, or advancing college and career readiness and success have done so through their partnerships with community-based organizations, higher education, philanthropy, and government. For many years, in many locations, teachers' unions have been proponents and active supporters of parent, family and community participation in education. Recent reports from the NEA and NEA Foundation illustrate how community involvement can help improve student outcomes and close the achievement gap.[20] A strong foundation of research also shows that family and community partnerships can promote student learning.[21]

Despite the demonstrated success of school-community collaborations, the number of meaningful LMC collaborations in the country is modest. Since labor-management collaboration—just between unions and management—is still the exception rather than the rule, it stands to reason that collaborations that involve all three parties are even more unusual. Regardless of its purpose, involving the community in labor-management collaboration is complex and time-consuming. It can be hard for some communities to imagine LMC collaboration. Recent case studies on LMC collaboration in Cincinnati, OH; Springfield, MA; and McDowell, WV shed light on LMC collaborations, and make it clear that for all their promise, most LMC partnerships have much more work to do to achieve high levels of impact.[22]

Getting Started with the Basics: Understand Collaboration and Assess your Readiness

Collaboration has many different definitions depending on whom you ask. Some equate it with compromise, others with negotiation. The first step to engaging in LMC collaboration is understanding what collaboration is and is not.

We use the definition provided by collaboration expert Barbara Gray (1989). For the purposes of the toolkit, we see collaboration as a process through which stakeholders who see parts of the problem differently can explore these differences and construct solutions that are better than what they could have come up with on their own. True collaborations have five features:[23]

1. The stakeholders are interdependent. They rely on each other to get work done and accomplish goals.

2. Solutions to problems emerge as the stakeholders work through their different conceptions of the problem.

3. There is joint ownership of the decisions made by the stakeholders.

4. Stakeholders assume collective responsibility of the outcomes of those decisions.

5. The collaboration process is emergent, dynamic, and develops over time.

A critical distinction between collaboration and collective bargaining must be recognized. Collective bargaining—the legal contract negotiations between an employee group (teachers' union) and management—could involve collaboration, but it very often does not.[24] Similarly, collaboration between management and labor can take many forms, from open communications and transparency, to the creation of single or multiple labor-management teams or projects, to the inclusion of teacher leaders in key decision-making processes of a school or district, to the formation of policies and structures that embed collaboration in the fabric and daily practice of the district. Collaboration certainly does not require contract negotiations.

For example, in far too many cases, the stakeholders engaging in collective bargaining do not assume collective responsibility for their decisions, nor do they view bargaining as emerging and dynamic. Collective bargaining is often carried out in one-off negotiations that focus on "bread-and-butter" issues, such as salary, hours, and working conditions.

Before engaging in true collaboration, it is essential to assess readiness to do so. Understanding the relational starting point between stakeholders is critical to knowing which next steps to take. Answers to key questions such as, "What is the level of trust between key leaders?" and "What perceptions do people have of who owns the work?" will help educators make smart choices about how to collaborate. There are several resources available to assess your readiness to integrate collaboration into collective bargaining or engage in labor-management collaboration.

Tools to Assess Readiness

The Mooney Institute offers resources focused specifically on labor-management collaboration. One tool is their description of "three frames" of unionism. The useful chart characterizes three approaches to collective bargaining and labor-management relationships—Industrial Unionism, Professional Unionism, and Social Justice Unionism.[25]

Industrial Unionism emphasizes separation of management and union roles in defining teacher work. The role of the union is to limit what teachers can be asked to do and to increase the pay they get for doing it. In contrast, Professional Unionism emphasizes developing professional learning communities and building the profession of teaching. The union promotes and protects high quality teaching as a craft, resists threats to teacher professionalism and asserts teacher leadership. Conflicts between teachers and administrators can become de-emphasized.

Finally, Social Justice Unionism emphasizes alliances with parents and the community to organize for social justice to help all children succeed—schools and the conditions around schools must both change to improve educational outcomes. Race and class challenges and socio-economic segregation must be addressed if achievement gaps are to be narrowed.

The Mooney Institute's "Constructing 'Progressive Unionism' Out of Three Frames" chart provides an overview of the types of unionism, useful in evaluating a current labor-management climate and in describing a model of unionism that has the capacity for constructive school-improvement collaboration. Table 1, below, is an abridged version of that chart.

Table 1: Constructing "Progressive Unionism" Out of Three Frames

Industrial Unionism	Professional Unionism	Social Justice Unionism
"Collective power to meet bread-and-butter needs and ensure fairness from management"	*"Control of the profession to ensure quality"*	*"Equity for our students through active engagement in the community"*
ORIENTATION • Emphasizes separation of management and union roles in defining teacher work. "Boards make policy, administrators lead, teachers teach." • Union role is to limit what teachers can be asked to do and to increase the pay they get for doing it.	**ORIENTATION** • Emphasizes building professional learning communities, building craft and profession of teaching. • Union promotes and protects high quality teaching as a craft, asserts teacher leadership, and resists threats to teacher professionalism. Conflicts between teachers and administrators can become de-emphasized.	**ORIENTATION** • Emphasizes alliances with parents and community to organize for social justice to help all children succeed—schools and conditions around schools must both change to improve educational outcomes. • Race and class challenges and socio-economic segregation must be addressed if achievement gaps are to be narrowed.
VIEW OF MANAGEMENT • Assumes labor-management relations are hostile and adversarial. Defends teacher rights & responds to grievances. • Fights for teacher priorities and standard of living in the budget. Organize teachers as an independent force.	**VIEW OF MANAGEMENT** • Values labor-management collaboration and partnership to improve and preserve public education and the profession. • Emphasizes programs and priorities to improve school quality and student achievement in the public interest	**VIEW OF MANAGEMENT** • Management and labor partner in engaging families, community and ethnic groups to build support for public education. • Advocate together for levy referenda, grants, foundation support, and to resist inequitable solutions based on race & class.
ROLE OF PARENTS • Parent outreach when we're in bargaining crisis or labor/mgmt. conflict. • Limit parent intrusions into the classroom to protect teacher autonomy.	**ROLE OF PARENTS** • Works with parents to improve individual parent support for their child's learning, but believes professionals have unique expertise.	**ROLE OF PARENTS** • Reaches out to community allies in strategic alliances to improve the quality of teaching and teacher cultural competency. • Seeks to maximize parent role in improving school effectiveness.
BARGAINING • Win/lose bargaining. • Limit scope of bargaining to bread and butter issues of salary, hours, and "working conditions." • Views the teacher contract as way to institutionalize all changes.	**BARGAINING** • Broad scope and interest-based bargaining are a way to address teaching quality and support issues. • Agreements outside contract. • Contracts are a way to codify change once the bugs have been worked out.	**BARGAINING** • Infuse bargaining with concerns that address race, class, democracy, empowerment and equity issues. • Change can only be institutionalized and sustained by organizing rank-and-file members and the community.
DECISION MAKING • Management prerogatives respected on a school and district level. Teachers grieve management decisions through their union.	**DECISION MAKING** • Expands teacher decision-making and instructional leadership at school and district level. Joint decision-making expands teacher and union ownership.	**DECISION MAKING** • Democratic input by all stakeholders creates processes for institutionalized teacher, parent, and student empowerment.

A complementary tool for the frames is a description of the criteria and practices that represent more collaborative labor-management relationships. That figure, adapted below in Table 2, is drawn from the Mooney Institute's "Criteria for Progressive Union Practice."

Table 2: Criteria for Developing Progressive Union Projects and Practices

Criteria	What Well-Developed Practice Will Look Like:
1. Based on Evidence and Data Gathered by the Local Team	The choice of issues and strategies were based on data gathered about the local's capacity to carry out a project or program, its membership, and its potential community allies. Program or practice was developed after a rigorous analysis of the issues.
2. Aligned with Our Definition of Progressive Unionism	Incorporates aspects of all three frames of unionism (industrial, professional, and social justice) where judged useful; a balance is found to make this a progressive union undertaking.
• Positions the union as the voice for elevating and improving the profession	As a result of the work done, the union is viewed (or beginning to be) as a voice of the most accomplished teachers and the voice of the teacher perspective on curriculum, assessment and instruction (teaching and learning).
• Helps the union make a contribution toward grappling with issues of race and class	Explicitly recognizes the roles that race, class and gender will play both in the union itself and throughout the program or partnership with district. Reflects a focus on helping grapple with inequities and gaps.
3. Will Improve Student Learning or Student Outcomes	Can show the link between its "theory of action" and student outcomes. Provides a way to account for student outcomes.
• Relates to other union and school-system initiatives, priorities, or crises.	The project, program or practice can demonstrate how it fits into long-term union priorities for improving teaching and learning, as well as school system priorities.
• Is perceived by teachers as being helpful to them in doing their jobs	Provides an opportunity to involve the most accomplished teachers in union work and to link the work of the union with the improvement of teaching and learning.
4. Builds Capacity of Members, Leaders, and of the Local Itself	The plan includes ways to get more members involved, acquiring new skills and exploring new leadership roles, is focused on issues important to the local, and could re-prioritize staff time and union resources.
• Builds support from members	Members have multiple opportunities to learn about and support the program, practice or project, and there are avenues to monitor member feedback.
• Involves collaboration and consensus-building among union leadership in the project planning and decision-making	The union's leaders are deeply involved in making the progressive work happen and assessing its results. Leadership structures are considered and integrated into the project.
• Provides for a division of labor, accountability, and is measurable, document-able and doable. • Determines what support it needs from external helpers, and describes a plan for getting it.	A clear work plan is outlined with a timeline, detailed division of labor, data collection and documentation with responsibility for follow up, and it can be realized within the one-year timeframe. Union planners have determined what they will need in terms of support from a core local support team and from the national Mooney Institute resources.
5. Builds Progressive Strategic Alliances with the Community	New and potentially ongoing alliances have been structured into any project.

Criteria	What Well-Developed Practice Will Look Like:
• Utilizes a critical analysis of power, issues and needs in the broader community	The plan is guided by a power analysis of the external forces and stakeholders who might interact with the project. Other "players" in the community see this work as important.

The NEA has also put together its own research-based assessment called KEYS 2.0, which has been used successfully by a number of districts to jump-start collaboration. The KEYS survey, which comes with a comprehensive facilitation guide, uses 42 indicators to measure teachers' perceptions of six keys to school improvement work:[26] shared understanding and commitment to high goals; open communication and collaborative problem solving; continuous assessment; personal and professional learning; resources to support teaching; and curriculum and instruction.

Results from the KEYS 2.0 survey show an individual school's average, standard deviation, the average of all schools in the district, and the average and 90th percentile in a national validation study on each of the indicators and keys. Several case studies document the survey's use to improve labor-management relationships, including one on Springfield Public Schools in Massachusetts, summarized below.

Survey instrument spurs and enriches collaboration: Case study

Using KEYS 2.0 District-Wide: A Springfield, Massachusetts Case Study

Springfield, Massachusetts was a very contentious place to implement a collaborative labor-management initiative, with a polarized relationship between administration and union leadership that resulted for a long time in deadlock at the bargaining table and stalled hopes for school improvement. This case study explores the experience of school district leaders of Springfield using the KEYS 2.0 staff survey and planning tool. Developed by the National Education Association, KEYS 2.0 is a survey instrument that allows for the gathering of specific data, useful for districts in the service of systematic inquiry and problem-solving. The study documents the district's process of adopting the survey, implementing the survey, and using the data gathered at the school and district level in planning. Ultimately, the experience of using KEYS 2.0 allowed the district's leadership—administrators and unions—to build on and deepen collaboration. Previously volatile labor-management relationships were strengthened, and teachers and administrators together used data for fostering school improvement planning.

This district-level perspective shines a light on a school system in turmoil, a highly contentious labor-management divide, serious economic problems, and the loss of local control. Useful lessons outside of that local context are applicable to other districts wishing to implement the KEYS survey instrument productively for district-wide change.

Churchill, A. & Rallis, S. (2009). Using KEYS 2.0 District-wide: A Springfield, Massachusetts Case Study. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Center for Education Policy.

To assess the readiness of large multi-stakeholder groups, a group at the Amherst Wilder Foundation has compiled a comprehensive research-based questionnaire that identifies the key factors in effective collaborations.[27] The questionnaire asks stakeholders to rate the readiness of their collaborative group on six dimensions: vision, goals, communication, composition, purpose, and resources.

Excerpts from the survey are below. Respondents score each of 40 statements (scale not shown) on a range from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Disagree" (2) to "Neutral, No Opinion" (3) to "Agree" (4) to "Strongly Agree" (5). Here each dimension and a representative factor are given, along with corresponding statements for scoring. Description of dimensions and factors from Mattisech (2001) supplied here for context.

The Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory

Collaboration Readiness Dimension	Sample Factor	Statement(s) Corresponding to Sample Factor
ENVIRONMENT "*Environmental characteristics* consist of the geographic location and social context within which a collaborative group exists. The group may be able to influence or affect these elements in some way, but it does not have control over them."	**HISTORY OF COLLABORATION OR COOPERATION IN THE COMMUNITY** "A history of collaboration or cooperation exists in the community and offers the potential collaborative partners an understanding of the roles and expectations required in collaboration and enables them to trust the process."	• Agencies in our community have a history of working together • Trying to solve problems through collaboration has been common in this community. It's been done a lot before.
MEMBERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS "*Membership characteristics* consist of skills, attitudes, and opinions of the individuals in a collaborative group, as well as the culture and capacity of the organizations that form collaborative groups."	**APPROPRIATE CROSS SECTION OF MEMBERS** "To the extent that they are needed, the collaborative group includes representatives from each segment of the community who will be affected by its activities."	• The people involved in our collaboration represent a cross section of those who have a stake in what we are trying to accomplish. • All the organizations that we need to be members of this collaborative group have become members of the group.
PROCESS AND STRUCTURE "*Process and structure* refers to the management, decision-making, and operational systems of a collaborative effort."	**MEMBERS SHARE A STAKE IN BOTH PROCESS AND OUTCOME** "Members of a collaborative group feel 'ownership' of both the way the group works and the results or products of its work."	• The organizations that belong to our collaborative group invest the right amount of time in our collaborative efforts. • Everyone who is a member of our collaborative group wants this project to succeed. • The level of commitment among the collaboration participants is high.
COMMUNICATION "*Communication* refers to the channels used by collaborative partners to send and receive information, keep one another informed, and convey opinions to influence the group's actions."	**OPEN AND FREQUENT COMMUNICATION** "Collaborative group members interact often, update one another, discuss issues openly, and convey all necessary information to one another and to people outside the group."	• People in this collaboration communicate openly with one another. • I am informed as often as I should be about what goes on in the collaboration. • The people who lead this collaborative group communicate well with the members.
PURPOSE "*Purpose* refers to the reasons for the development of a collaborative effort, the result or vision the collaborative group seeks, and the specific tasks or projects the collaborative group defines as necessary to accomplish. It is driven by a need, crisis, or opportunity."	**SHARED VISION** "Collaborating partners have the same vision, with clearly agreed upon mission, objectives, and strategy. The shared vision may exist at the outset of collaboration, or the partners may develop a vision as they work together."	• The people in this collaborative group are dedicated to the idea that we can make this project work. • My ideas about what we want to accomplish with this collaboration seem to be the same as the ideas of others.
RESOURCES "*Resources* include financial and human 'input' necessary to develop and sustain a collaborative group."	**LEADERSHIP** "The individual who provides leadership for the collaborative group has organizing and interpersonal skills, and carries out the role with fairness. Because of these characteristics (and others), the leader is granted respect or 'Legitimacy' by the collaborative partners."	• The people in leadership positions for this collaboration have good skills for working with other people and organizations.

There are several other tools and resources available to understand the labor-management collaboration context. The

Organizational Health Index is used across industries to measure the strengths and weaknesses of management practices, and the overall health of labor-management relationships. Some states also implement their own surveys to understand the climate of learning in schools and districts. Massachusetts, for example, conducts the statewide Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) survey to understand if teachers have the supports they need to help students learn. Finally, the National Education Association Foundation has developed a series of online classes to help educators engage in more effective collaboration, and the first three sessions focus exclusively on understanding readiness. The courses address such questions as: Why collaborate?; What is the work?; and Who owns the work?

Interest-based Bargaining: The Promise of Process and Trust Building

Described in Roger Fisher and William Ury's 1991 classic *Getting to Yes,* interest-based bargaining (IBB) focuses on the needs and priorities of the parties negotiating, rather than the positions they take.[28] The basic idea is that the sides define their common interests and work together to craft mutually beneficial solutions. This is in contrast to traditional bargaining, where sides bring specific demands to the table and conduct a zero-sum process until settling.

The key tenets of IBB are: separate people from the issues; identify and consistently refer to those interests that all parties have in common; generate many options before making decisions; and define success on an objective standard.[29] In IBB, participants act as problem-solvers, and process is key. Steps include diagnosing and analyzing the problem, planning, and then discussing.

IBB has been prominently featured in education, particularly in the 1990s and early 2000s. Case studies and research on its use in Rochester, NY, Montgomery County Public Schools, MD, and several other districts illustrate many of the rewards and positive outcomes of engaging in IBB.

At the same time, engaging in IBB is not a decision to take lightly. IBB takes time and requires a minimal foundation of trust and transparency between stakeholders. And in some cases, state laws and policies may actually impede communities wanting to implement IBB.[30] That is why some educators may want to start by using Interest-based Practices. Whereas IBB is rooted in contracts and negotiations, Interest-based Practices (IBP) can be used in non-contract collaboration at all levels. IBP has the same basic tenets of IBB—separate people from the issues, etc.—but can be used daily by teams of labor and management leaders to pursue common interests and lead meaningful high impact education improvement work. For example, a team of teachers and administrators might use IBP to devise the next schoolwide curriculum innovation. Similarly, schools partnering with a local united way and regional grantmaker might employ IBP to support stronger parent-teacher relationships. IBP is an essential piece of LMC that often gets overlooked, but it can help build and sustain a culture of collaboration at all levels.

In a review conducted in 2003, Klingel and the NEA compiled one of the most comprehensive summaries about how IBB is used in education.[31] Findings about how IBB emerges and whether it contributes to different outcomes in contracts or relationships were mixed. Some evidence suggested IBB was popular during resource-rich periods; other data saw increases in IBB during economic downturns. There were similarly contradictory results about whether IBB changed outcomes for unions or districts. Some studies showed no differences between communities that used traditional approaches and those that used IBB. Others noted improved relationships and significantly different contract language. The only clear takeaway was that a number of criteria needed to be in place in order to implement IBB well. These included:

- Orientation sessions for broad cross-sections of constituents and stakeholder groups prior to the agreement by parties to utilize IBB, with an emphasis on developing awareness and gaining commitment from constituents to try the process;

- Intensive training for bargaining teams in the techniques, behavioral skills, and concepts of IBB before commitment to the process;

- Development of clear ground rules for behaviors and protocols before engaging in bargaining;

- The use of facilitators to help craft negotiating protocols and guide bargaining sessions;

- Clear process for developing information needs, sources, and analysis of information;

- Clear process and format for collecting, presenting, and prioritizing issues for bargaining;

- Post-bargaining training for constituents in implementation of the contract and use of IBB techniques in contract administration to institutionalize both the agreements and the problem-solving process.

There are a number of resources available for districts, teachers unions or local communities who want to learn more about IBB or want support implementing it. For example, the Massachusetts Education Partnership offers an Interest-Based

Bargaining Institute. The Interest-Based Bargaining Institute (IBBI) offers training and direct technical assistance to school districts wishing to transform the way they engage in contract negotiations, moving from a positional and often adversarial process to one grounded in a full exploration of the parties' shared and competing interests.

The IBBI provides an intensive training/implementation program model to district labor-management teams that consists of two full-day sessions. The first day covers basics in styles, models, and methods of negotiation and collective bargaining, including the positional model, the concessional model, and the interest-based bargaining model. The second day moves parties directly into negotiations using the IBB process.

The Massachusetts Education Partnership also provides videos and reports about how IBB works and its benefits. In one example, a video conversation between Franklin, MA Education Association President Chandler Creedon and Nancy E. Peace, former MEP executive director, explores the Franklin school district's embrace of interest-based bargaining. Creedon describes his introduction to interest-based bargaining during the run-up to a new union contract, including training and facilitator assistance. "What I found was a whole different approach to bargaining," he said. The use of interest-based bargaining led to increased understanding and improved relationships between stakeholders.

Another report by Peace examines the history and possibilities of interest-based bargaining. Peace describes the shared benefits realized by both parties when focusing on common and even competing interests, leading to an improved climate between district and union. "While seeking mutual gains and using an IBB process do not necessarily go hand-in-hand, where they do, it is more likely that parties will achieve a durable shift in both their bargaining and their day-to-day relationships," Peace says.

The Federal Mediation & Conciliatory Service is another resource for communities wanting to use IBB. The mission of the independent agency is "to preserve and promote labor-management peace and cooperation." The agency offers professional mediators who can train and facilitate parties on implementing IBB in their communities. Mediators begin by meeting the bargaining groups during an orientation, and if IBB is a viable alternative, they conduct training on the goals and methods of the new approach, then facilitate the planning of the IBB process.

The NEA and AFT also provide support and training on IBB. Most of these services are delivered through state or local support staff and training institutes. For example, the California Teachers Association offers a three-day training session for union and district leaders on using IBB. There are also some technical reports and how-to guides, including the Illinois American Federation of Teachers' report, How to Negotiate an Interest-Based Contract. At Harvard Law School, the Program on Negotiation (PON) is recognized as the birth of interest-based bargaining practices. The PON has regular executive education training sessions on negotiation and the use of interest-based bargaining, and also provides free resources at its website.

Finally, there are several case studies detailing school district and teacher union use of IBB. These include a case study on "The Unions in Montgomery County Schools," summarized below.

Solving problems together with interest-based bargaining: Case study

The Unions in Montgomery County Schools

In contrast to labor-management relationships in large districts in other parts of the country, the union and district in Montgomery County, Maryland, experienced often productive working relationships. Interest-based bargaining was part of the bargaining process since the late 1990s, among a complex negotiation environment that featured three separate unions representing three separate contracts for administrators, teachers, and support staff. Collaboration among units, including among the presidents of the three unions, set a tone and process for achieving mutually satisfactory outcomes. Between district and union interests, collaboration helped alleviate budget problems and focus efforts on teacher training and student achievement.

The recession that began in 2008 introduced new challenges to maintaining a productive and collaborative spirit of enterprise, but recent bargaining for a 2010-2011 three-year contract proved successful, based on a long-won trust that endured through local political seasons, multiple changes in leadership and economic hardships.

Marietta, G.E. (2011). The unions in Montgomery County Public Schools. S.M Johnson (Ed.), Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Another useful case study comes from J.E. Koppich, a selection from the book, "A Union of Professionals: Labor Relations and Educational Reform." The author examines the Rochester, New York school district's seminal efforts at teacher-performance and student-achievement reform, achieved through collaborative bargaining.

A model moment in labor-management collaboration: Case study
Rochester: The Rocky Road to Reform

A pivotal moment in school-management reform, a 1987 agreement in Rochester, New York ushered in unprecedented salary gains for the district's teachers, as well as a host of initiatives to boost professional development, student achievement, and site-based planning. New York State's third-largest school district at the time of writing, Rochester enjoyed productive industries and lively civic engagement, but also faced real challenges of a student population living in high rates of poverty and increasing stratification along racial lines next to the city's suburbs. The superintendent, himself a veteran of the Rochester Teachers Association and a champion of "new unionism," sought a partnering relationship with the union. The head of the union pushed for a new, collaborative approach from his organization. And the business community implemented a new partnering plan.

Future contracts tested the limits of reform through contract negotiation, emphasizing accountability and teacher evaluation. Economic and social factors also continued to exert pressure on the viability of the changes. However, Koppich finds that the negotiating dynamic was permanently altered in the favor of collaboration as opposed to "zero-sum" confrontation, and reform efforts have coincided with gains in student achievement.

Koppich, J.E. (1993). "Rochester: The Rocky Road to Reform." In C.T. Kerchner, & J.E. Koppich, A Union of Professionals: Labor Relations and Educational Reform. *New York: Teachers College Press, pp. 136-157.*

Expert Facilitation: The Power of Perspective

At the heart of any successful LMC collaboration is a group of people from a diverse set of constituencies who have taken on a shared venture. For the vast majority of successful groups of this kind, an expert facilitator is essential to success. Often, it is a third-party facilitator, but this is not always the case. The role of the internal or external facilitator is the same. They set the foundation for productive conversations about difficult problems and monitor dynamics within the group.

The expert facilitator's main goal is to make sure everyone remains engaged in the collaborative process. Expert facilitators do not serve as messengers of bad news between parties. Rather, they help create the conditions necessary for those conversations to happen at the table face-to-face between the various stakeholders.[32]

More fully, expert facilitators play four key roles in advancing LMC collaboration. They encourage leaders to build their dialogue on common ground, hold stakeholders accountable to keep moving forward with the collaboration, serve as an outlet when conversations break down, and help leaders and teams to develop and master collaboration skills and practices. The true success of third-party facilitators is to reach a point when the multiple parties to the collaborative relationship no longer need them.

There are two types of resources available for expert facilitation. One is access to third-party facilitators. The other is protocol on how to facilitate better meetings, improve relationships, and build skills and institutional capacities.

Some the third-party facilitation resources, mentioned previously in the section on IBB, include trained facilitators from the FMCS, NEA, or AFT. The FMCS, for example, offers facilitators for conflict resolution, partnership building, and interpersonal communication.[33] The goal of FMCS facilitators is threefold:

1. Help the parties expand and improve the working relationship, the ability to resolve grievances and to deal effectively with pre- and post-negotiation problems.

2. Work with the parties to enhance joint problem-solving and decision-making capabilities, overcome barriers to quality and productivity, manage change collaboratively, jointly address work design and enhance employee job satisfaction and employment security.

3. Promote effective operation of area and industry-wide labor-management committees, addressing as appropriate the development of a community and/or industry through labor-management cooperation.

Some local nonprofits and initiatives also use facilitation as a core element of their strategic approach to labor-management collaboration in schools and districts. For example, the Massachusetts Education Partnership started the District Capacity Project (DCP), which is premised on the idea that labor and management are ideal partners in the design and implementation of school and district improvement strategies that can affect student achievement. DCP ignores the contract, and instead focuses on the common vision and aspirations of the leadership, and pursues a proactive agenda for improvement based on that shared vision. DCP pairs skilled facilitators with strong knowledge of K12 schooling with local district-based labor-management teams. Working together, district and local union leaders co-develop work plans; make use of data; engage content experts and leading practitioners on evidence-based solutions; and implement new programs, schools, improvements and initiatives.

Managed by the Rennie Center, the DCP currently engages seven districts serving approximately 65,000 students on projects designed to leverage labor-management collaboration in a way that drives systemic change. The teams meet monthly as they work on focused projects, such as re-inventing teacher compensation, creating a dynamic lead teacher program, and developing professional learning communities that aspire to be powerful engines of effective teaming. DCP is dedicated to the idea that effective labor-management-community collaboration can make substantial contributions to improved student achievement; its next few years of work will test that premise.

There are numerous free, online resources that give tips and protocol for improving facilitation. We sought out those resources that focus explicitly on LMC collaboration in education and grouped them by topic.

One of the most important aspects of expert facilitation is *understanding the role of the facilitator.* A handy guide provided by the Massachusetts Education Partnership (MEP) called "The Role of a Facilitator in Effective Meetings" describes what a facilitator is and is not.

The MEP suggests that, "A facilitator is not a chairperson to whom comments are addressed, a parliamentarian whose job it is to interpret and enforce rules, a mediator who makes judgments about the content issues being discussed by the group, or a content expert who has opinions to share on the substance of what the group is discussing."

The facilitator is there to help establish and monitor an environment if possible. The MEP describes a facilitator as "a process expert who uses his or her skills to make it easy for the group to work together effectively and efficiently. His or her role is to elicit or make suggestions on how to proceed in a discussion, not to contribute ideas related to the content of the discussion. A facilitator's effectiveness and credibility rest on his or her ability to remain neutral in regard to the content of the discussion." The following checklist provides a guide.

Getting the Meeting Off to a Good Start	Keeping a Meeting Going

Below is a list of interventions a facilitator may wish to use in getting a group meeting started:
 	
• Clarify for the group that the facilitator's role is to assist the group with process, not to be a content expert.
• Establish who will serve as the recorder and timekeeper.
• Determine whether the group wishes to review its ground rules or norms or to establish any new ones.
• Remind group members of any commitments or agreements they made for this meeting.
• Remind group members of any new behaviors they want to try out in this meeting.
• Summarize where the group left off in the last meeting.
• Clarify the agreed-upon purpose of this meeting.
• Help the group to build an agenda for this meeting. Specifically, help it to:
  • Determine which tasks to do first.
  • Establish specific outcomes or products expected from the meeting.
  • Establish criteria for determining when expected outcomes are achieved or expected products are acceptable.
  • Clarify the group's tasks (what), and determine the processes (how) the group will use to complete the tasks.
  • Establish time frames for each task, activity, or process to ensure that the group has enough time to complete all of them.
  • Identify the other group members who can assist the group in completing the tasks.
• Check for agreement of all group members on all of the above before tackling the first agenda item.
	While the group is working on a task, the facilitator-and each participant in his or her facilitating role-will assist the group by intervening as needed to:
	
	• Keep the group clear on what the task is.
	• Question the relevance of discussion or contributions to reaching the outcomes the group has chosen.
	• Guard the integrity of the process the group has chosen to complete its task.
	• Check for agreement or disagreement.
	• Summarize where the group is in terms of its agenda, tasks, or process.
	• Identify changes or deviations from the group's agreed upon agenda, tasks, or processes.
	• Protect the group from domination by a few individuals.
	• Call on silent members to participate.
	• Protect individuals and the group from personal attacks.
	• Suggest alternatives or options.
	• Surface conflicts.
	• Ask for process checks to determine how group members feel about what is going on at a given moment.
	• Call for time-outs or breaks.
	• Assist the recorder and timekeeper.
	• Identify when a suggestion has been made that the group has ignored.
	• Identify when a decision needs to be made.
	• Identify when a decision has been made.

Giving and receiving feedback is another key feature of expert facilitation. Feedback should occur within a problem-solving process that involves identifying the problem, diagnosing its root causes, developing and selection solutions, implementation, and testing. Several resources outline the problem-solving processes, including:

• A Group Problem-Solving Model: This report proposes a series of steps for effective problem-solving: identify and address the problem; develop a theory of action; design the strategy; plan for implementation; implement the strategy; assess progress; and adapt and modify for continuous improvement. At each step, critical questions are identified, with

application examples given.

- A Problem-Solving Approach to Designing and Implementing a Strategy to Improve Performance, by Stacey Childress and Geoff Marietta (2008), Harvard University Public Education Leadership Project. This study examines the steps to designing and implementing a strategy using the problem-solving approach.
- Facilitating Effective Labor Management Teams: This NEA Foundation course leads educators through the skills and roles of an effective facilitator. It includes protocols that help participants identify strengths and areas of need in the facilitation process.

In preparation for and during meetings, protocol and checklists can be helpful for any facilitator. In the table below, there are examples of effective and ineffective feedback, based on the information provided by the Massachusetts Education Partnership.

Effective and Ineffective Feedback Behaviors

Effective Feedback	Ineffective Feedback
Describes the behavior which led to the feedback: "You are finishing my sentences for me…"	Uses evaluative/judgmental statements: "You're being rude," Or generalized ones: "You're trying to control the conversation…"
Comes as soon as appropriate after the behavior - immediately if possible. Later if events make that necessary (something more important going on, you need time to "cool down," the person has other feedback to deal with, etc.).	Is delayed, saved up, and "dumped." Also known as "gunny-sacking" or ambushing, the more time that passes, the "safer" it is to give the feedback. Induces guilt and anger in the receiver because after time has passed there's usually not much she or he can do about it.
Indirect; ricocheted (Tom, how do you feel when Jim cracks his knuckles?)—also known as "let's you and him fight."	Indirect; ricocheted (Tom, how do you feel when Jim cracks his knuckles?) - also known as "let's you and him fight."
Is "owned" by the sender, who uses "I messages" and takes responsibility for his or her thoughts, feelings, reactions.	Ownership" is transferred to "people," "the book," "upper management," "everybody," "we," etc.
Includes the sender's real feelings about the behavior, insofar as they are relevant to the feedback. "I get frustrated when I'm trying to make a point and you keep finishing my sentences."	Feelings are concealed, denied, misrepresented, distorted. One way to do this is to "transfer ownership" (see No. 4). Another way is to smuggle the feelings into the interaction by being sarcastic, sulking, competing to see who's "right," etc. Other indicators: speculations on the receiver's intentions, motivations, or psychological "problems": "You're trying to drive me nuts"; "You're just trying to see how much you can get away with"; "You have a need to get even with the world."
Is checked for clarity, to ensure that the receiver fully understands what's being conveyed. "Do you understand what I mean when I say you seem to be sending me a double message?"	Not checked, Sender either assumes clarity or—fairly often—is not interested in whether receiver understands fully: "Stop interrupting me with 'Yes, buts!'"
Asks relevant questions which seek information (has a problem-solving quality), with the receiver knowing why the information is sought and having a clear sense that the sender does not know the answer.	Asks questions which are really statements ("Do you think I'm going to let you get away with that?") or which sound like traps ("How many times have you been late this week?"). Experts at the "question game" can easily combine the two ("How do you think that makes me feel?" or "Do you behave that way at home too?")
Specifies consequences of the behavior -present and/or future: "When you finish my sentences I get frustrated and want to stop talking with you." "If you keep finishing my sentences I won't want to spend much time talking with you in the future."	Provides vague consequences: "That kind of behavior is going to get you into trouble." Or specifies no consequences, substituting instead other kinds of leverage, such as "should" ("You shouldn't do that").
Is solicited or at least to some extent desired by the receiver.	Is imposed on the receiver, often for her or his "own good."

Effective Feedback	Ineffective Feedback
Refers to behaviors about which the receiver can do something ("I wish you'd stop interrupting me,"), if she or he wants to.	Refers to behaviors over which the receiver has little or no control, if she or he is to remain authentic: "I wish you'd laugh at my jokes."
Takes into account the needs of both sender and receiver: recognizes that this is a "process," that it is an interaction in which, at any moment, the sender can become the receiver. Sender: "I'm getting frustrated by the fact that often you're not ready to leave when I am." Receiver: "I know that's a problem, but I'm concerned about what seems to be your need to have me always do what you want when you want."	Is distorted by the sender's needs (usually unconscious or unconsidered) to be safe (not rejected): "Now, I don't want you to get angry, but…"; to punish: "Can't you ever do anything right?"; to win: "Ah-ha, then you admit that you do interrupt me?"; to be virtuous: (Watch this one!) "I'm going to level with you, be open with you…"; etc. In short, most ineffective feedback behaviors come either from lack of skills or from the sender not seeing the process as an interaction in which both parties have needs that must be taken into account.
Affirms the receiver's existence and worth by acknowledging his or her "right" to have the reactions she or he has, whatever they may be, and by being willing to work through issues in a game-free way.	Denies or discounts the receiver by using statistics, abstractions, averages; by refusing to accept his/her feelings: "Oh, you're just being paranoid." "Come on! You're over-reacting." "You're not really as angry as you say you are."
Acknowledges and, where necessary, makes use of the fact that a process is going on, that it needs to be monitored and sometimes explored and improved: "I'm getting the impression that we're not listening to each other. I'd like to talk about that and try to do this more effectively."	Either does not value the concept of "process" or does not want to take time to discuss anything other than content. Consequently does not pay any attention to the process, which can result in confusion, wasted time and energy, and lots of ineffective feedback.

The MEP also offers questions and notes for developing guidelines for feedback, with questions that steer collaborators toward attitudes conducive to building trust. A checklist is adapted below.

Guidelines for Feedback: Questions and Behaviors To Use

Giving Feedback	Receiving Feedback
• Is the feedback being given specific rather than general? • Is the feedback being given focused on behavior rather than on a person? (It is important to concentrate on what a person does rather than on what one thinks or imagines he or she is.) • Does the feedback take into account the needs of the receiver of the feedback? • Is the feedback directed toward the behavior which the receiver can do something about? • Is the feedback solicited rather than imposed? • Is the feedback sharing of information rather than giving advice? • Is the feedback well-timed? • Does the feedback involve the amount of information the receiver can use rather than the amount we would like to give? • Does feedback reflect upon the problems/issues at hand? • Is the feedback checked to ensure clear communication? • Is the feedback evaluative rather than judgmental?	• Establish a receptive atmosphere • State why you want feedback • Check what you have heard through parroting, paraphrasing or asking for clarification • Maintain an objective attitude about the feedback even if its about you • Share your reactions to the feedback if practical

Another useful tool is the "Johari Window," a visual model for assessing human relations. Behavior and motivations can be assessed in terms of being known or unknown to one's self, and known or unknown to others. That reflective understanding can direct an individual or groups to more productive relationships.

The Johari Window

	AWARENESS	
	Known to Self	**Not Known to Self**
Known to Others	**Area of Free Activity (F)** Behavior and motivation known to self and known to others.	**Blind Area or Blind Spot (BS)** Where others can see things in ourselves of which we are unaware.
Not Known to Others	**Avoided or Hidden Area (H)** Things we know but do not reveal to others (e.g., a hidden agenda or matters about which we have sensitive feelings).	**Area of Unknown Activity (U)** Neither the individual nor others are aware of certain behaviors or motives. Their existence is assumed because eventually some of these things become known, evidencing that they have been influencing relationships all along.

(vertical axis label: OPENNESS)

In the above adaptation, the quadrants plot out the intersection where that which is known or unknown to the individual is known or unknown to the group. Self-reflection can move an individual toward greater degrees of awareness and openness. As awareness increases, the extent of behaviors and motivations known to one's self increases. In the same way, as openness increases, and individuals and groups function with candor and transparency, the extent to which behaviors and motivations become known increases. In an ideal model for productive group relationships, that which is known to the individual and the group occupies a large sector of the available quadrants, represented below.
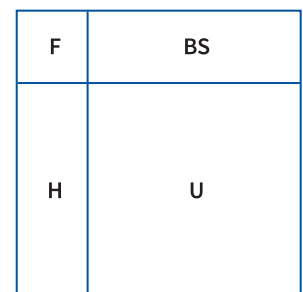
F	BS
H	U

The Ideal

F	BS
H	U

The Interviewer

F	BS
H	U
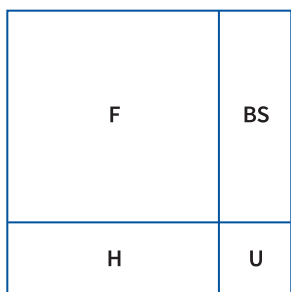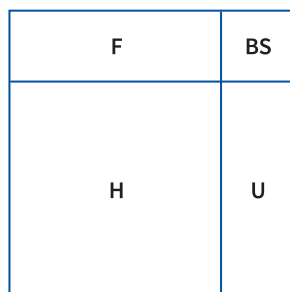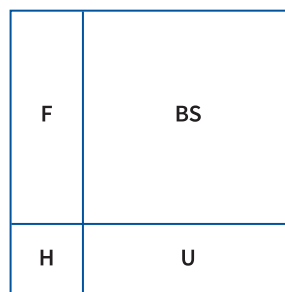
The Bull-in-a-China-Shop
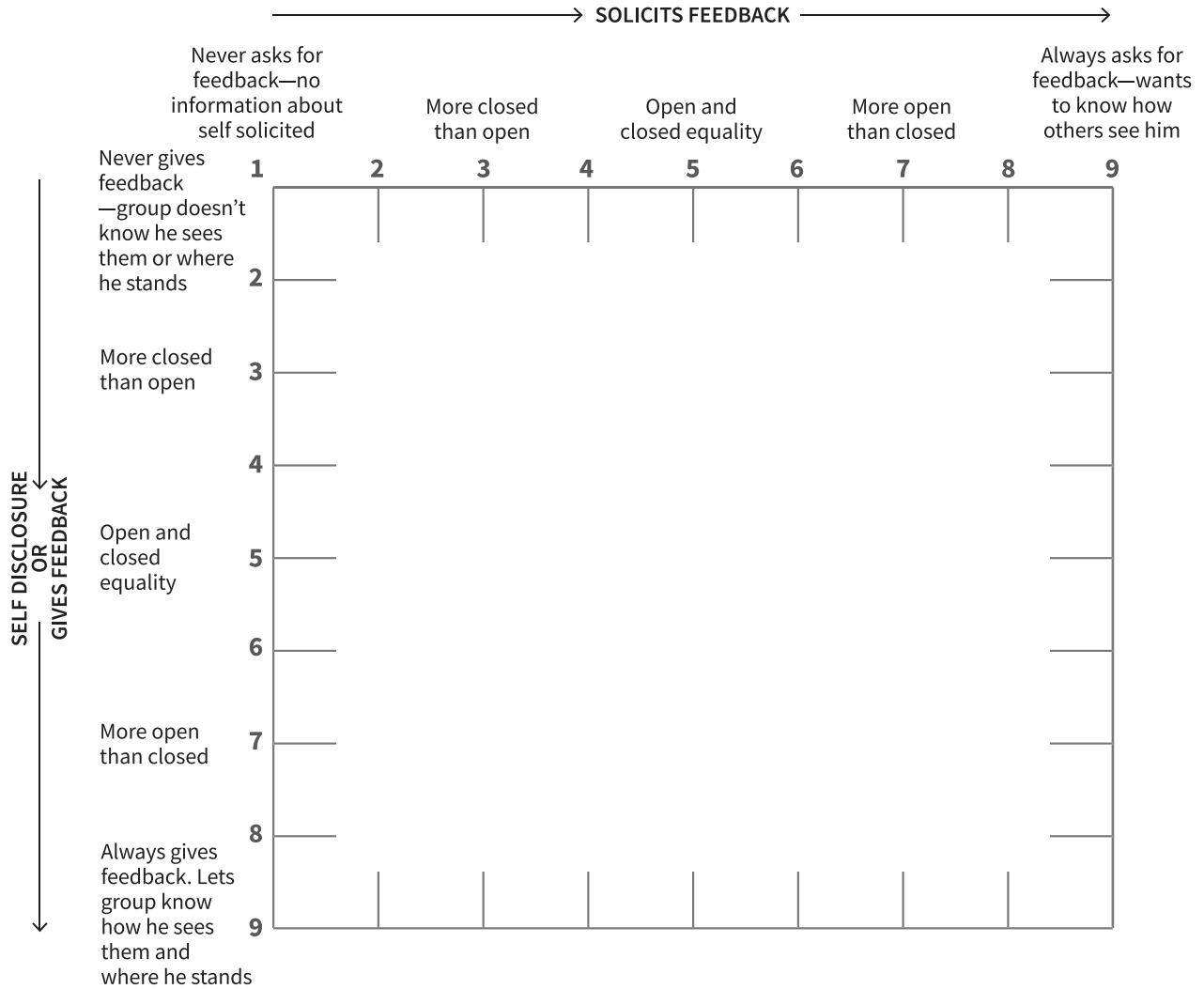
F	BS
H	U

The Turtle

Individuals participating in groups may recognize themselves in one of the above types. Self-reflection offers opportunities to shift quadrant positioning, and maximize positive contributions to a productive group dynamic. "The Ideal" represents a person able to contribute most effectively to the group relationship.

Below is a self-reflection worksheet where individuals can assess their openness and awareness. By ranking oneself 1-9 on each metric, the plotted point at the intersection of the two axes can be compared to "The Ideal" and other types.

Self-Rating Sheet*

SOLICITS FEEDBACK

	Never asks for feedback—no information about self solicited	More closed than open	Open and closed equality	More open than closed	Always asks for feedback—wants to know how others see him

SELF DISCLOSURE OR GIVES FEEDBACK

- Never gives feedback—group doesn't know he sees them or where he stands
- More closed than open
- Open and closed equality
- More open than closed
- Always gives feedback. Lets group know how he sees them and where he stands

Working Together on Meaningful Reforms: Focusing on What Matters to Teachers

The hallmark feature of any successful LMC collaboration is that the stakeholders are working on a problem that is meaningful and connected to student learning.[34] A well-defined and important focus topic not only motivates people to participate in the collaboration, it can also help people get through difficult times. Working on meaningful reforms also brings in a wider and more diverse group of stakeholders.

The challenge, of course, is finding an issue to work on that is important, connected to learning, and within the locus of control of stakeholders. Problems that require federal or state funding or contract or policy changes are often not good places to start for a newly formed LMC collaboration.

Ultimately, the goal is for people at the table to be able to drive meaningful reform through a collaborative decision making process. Many different types of reform work fit the criteria. In this section, we focus on two issues—Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) and Extended Learning Opportunities (ELO)—to illustrate the characteristics of a meaningful reform topic for LMC collaboration.

While not explored here, Common Core State Standards, educator evaluation, alternative school models such as pilot and innovation schools, and turnaround schools are also fruitful examples for study of LMC collaboration. We focus on PAR and ELO to illustrate examples of contentious issues that some communities have solved through collaborative decision-making. They show how labor, management, and communities can work together to drive meaningful reform that empowers teachers and improves learning. They also make specific demands on established teacher practices. Many of the takeaways from LMC collaboration around PAR and ELO can be applied to other issues, such as Common Core State Standards and teacher evaluation.

Peer Assistance and Review

One of the benefits of focusing on PAR is the sheer amount of research and examples on the topic. There are several in-depth case studies, multiple research studies, and a comprehensive implementation guide and website dedicated to PAR.

The basic idea of PAR is the use of expert or mentor teachers to evaluate their peers in the classroom. PAR is a means to ensure the successful development of teachers—both new and veteran—who are in need of growth and improvement in their practice. PAR programs also function as a means of counseling out of the profession those teachers who struggle to be effective, and are not able to improve sufficiently, even with active and focused support. The theory behind PAR is that experienced, highly skilled teachers are the experts closest to effective teaching practice, and are at least as good, and perhaps better, at evaluating and teaching good instruction than a principal or assistant principal who has not taught in years or does not have experience or knowledge in the particular subject. On its face, the concept seems simple. However, implementation is quite complicated.[35]

First, there are typically different programs for novice and experienced teachers. In most PAR systems, all novice teachers participate, while only experienced teachers who are struggling are required to participate. The number and type of evaluations conducted, support provided, and timeline all vary from program to program.

A frequent component of PAR programs is a PAR Panel composed of an equal number of administrators and teachers. The PAR Panel is typically the final decision-maker about whether a teacher is recommended for dismissal or continued employment. PAR programs are also usually bargained for in the contract negotiation process. Consequently, a base foundation of trust is often a prerequisite to implement PAR in a local district.

Across the country, PAR has formed a component of educator evaluation reforms. Trained reviewers, sometimes called consultant teachers and usually drawn from the ranks of existing district teachers, serve as mentors and evaluators for new and veteran teachers. Peer evaluations then become part of the overall teacher's evaluation, along with administrative input and student achievement data, with implications for performance plans, retention, and career advancement. Implementation

of PAR across the country has not been rapid, and has often had to clear the hurdle of resistance from teachers and administrators (who experience a decrease in overall input to the evaluation) and the challenge of resources—time, training, and budgeting for mentors and evaluators.

There are many different types of resources available for districts and unions wanting to implement PAR. These include user guides, research reports, and case studies. The Project on the Next Generation of Teachers at the Harvard Graduate School of Education maintains one of the most comprehensive resources on PAR. The website has a description of PAR, its history, and some examples of case use. Their site also features an implementation guide. The AFT also offers another version of a PAR guide on its website. Additionally, the NEA provides a comprehensive framework for teaching, of which PAR is a component, and the NEA Foundation has its own 8-session course on PAR.

And of course, there are numerous research articles and reports on how PAR works in districts. These include:

- Jennifer Goldstein published "Taking the Lead: With Peer Assistance and Review, Teaching Profession Can Be in Teachers' Hands" in the American Educator in Fall 2008, tracing the history and evolution of PAR programs in school districts.
- In Jennifer Goldstein's 2010 book *Peer Review and Teacher Leadership: Linking Professionalism and Accountability,* the author examines the implementation of PAR in an urban California school district.
- In Marty Lieberman's 1998 book *Teachers Evaluating Teachers: Peer Review and the New Unionism*, the chapter "Peer Review: Summary and Conclusions" offers takeaways on the book's main themes—a critical examination of peer review as it impacts student achievement.
- Susan Moore Johnson's presentation "Ensuring that Teacher Evaluation Provides Both Support and Assessment" explores peer review's contribution to a successful educational environment.
- Daniel Humphrey and others examined the peer assistance and review programs in the Poway and San Juan school districts in California in a 2011 report, *Peer Review: Getting Serious about Teacher Support and Evaluation*.

Finally, guides, contract language, and case studies on districts using PAR are another resource. Baltimore, Denver and Montgomery County, MD are three districts that have successfully implemented PAR. They also illustrate the diversity of how PAR programs can take shape to meet the unique needs of local communities.

Montgomery County has a host of materials available online, including the guide it gives teachers on the PAR program, Teachers guide to the peer assistance and review program and the new teacher evaluation system.

Baltimore recently implemented a new career pathway for its teachers, which incorporated a peer-review process. Below is a synopsis of a case study that examines those changes.

Denver is one of the most recent districts to adopt PAR, and the MOU language agreed upon by the district and the union, which formed the basis of the program, is available at the website of Denver Classroom Teachers Association.

Negotiating, Requiring, and Rewarding Engagement in Career Pathways: Case Study
Career Pathways, Performance Pay, and Peer-review Promotion in Baltimore City Public Schools

This study describes the negotiation and implementation of an innovative teachers' contract in Baltimore. The case follows the decisions that district and union leaders make as they negotiate, plan, and implement a contract that replaced the traditional "step and ladder" salary schedule with a new four-tier career pathway. One central theme in the case is how to transition from a contract that rewarded "passivity" in years of experience and credit accumulation to one that required "engagement" from teachers to progress through career pathways and earn more pay. There are also questions about whether the pathway processes are rigorous enough so the contract doesn't simply default to the status quo where everyone moves up and earns more money. Finally, there are concerns about the sustainability of the contract – financially and in terms of leadership. In addition to these key tensions, students have the opportunity to explore broader themes of labor-management collaboration, the complications of contract ratification, teacher compensation models, and change management.

Johnson, S.M., Kim, J.H., Marietta, G.M., Faller, E., Noonan, J. (2013). Career pathways, performance pay, and peer-review promotion in Baltimore City Schools. Harvard University Public Education Leadership Project, PELP-071.

Extended Learning Opportunities

Extended or expanded learning opportunities (ELO) have emerged as both a promising approach to narrowing achievement gaps, and a potentially contentious issue for districts and unions. The basic premise is that by extending the time students spend at school to increase academic instructional time and after school enrichment activities, schools and communities can significantly improve the learning opportunities and experiences of students. And research does show that more time in school or in out-of-school time learning activities often leads to increased learning and may help close the achievement gap.[36]

In an era of flattening revenues, there is often limited additional money for teachers to receive compensation for their role in extending students' learning time. The problem of meeting the demands for additional learning time without a corresponding increase in revenue is then left to school districts, teachers unions, and communities.

Every community that successfully implements ELO ends up with different solutions. However, most use a similar process that emphasizes active participation from teachers, principals, and community members. As a series of case studies by the National Center on Time & Learning shows, schools with very different demographics arrived at different answers to incorporate more learning time in the day.

Case	Summary	Lessons Learned
The National Center on Time & Learning (NCTL) & Massachusetts 2020: "Clarence Edwards Middle School: Success Through Transformation."	A few years ago, Boston's Clarence Edwards Middle School was on the verge of being shut down. The long-struggling school had among the lowest math scores of any middle school in the city. Like other middle schools in Boston, students left the building at 1:30 p.m. every day. But by 2009, the Edwards had risen to become one of the highest performing middle schools in Boston, dramatically narrowing and even eliminating achievement gaps for its disadvantaged students. How did the Edwards, over the course of just a few years, dramatically boost student achievement and transform the school's culture into one of excellence and engagement? The inflection point in the Edwards' dramatic turnaround can be tied directly to the moment it re-opened its doors with a brand new school day, rebuilt from the ground up, to include 300 more hours of learning and personalized instruction per year.	• More time allows for a differentiated, data-driven approach to instruction that produces dramatic academic gains for Edwards students. • More time for teachers to collaborate ensures that all instructional time, in core subjects, academic support, and enrichment, is used effectively. • More time translates into robust enrichment programs and community partnerships, resulting in positive changes in student engagement, school culture, and family engagement.
The National Center on Time & Learning (NCTL) & Massachusetts 2020: "Kuss Middle School: Expanding Time to Accelerate School Improvement."	In 2004, Kuss Middle School in Fall River, MA became the first school declared "Chronically Underperforming" by the state of Massachusetts. But by 2010, Kuss had transformed itself into a model for schools around the country that are seeking a comprehensive turnaround strategy. Kuss uses increased learning time as the primary catalyst to accelerate learning, deepen student engagement, and improve instruction, and has become a rare example of a school on the path to successful turnaround.	• Since adding time, Kuss has realized more time for core academics, personalized instruction, and individualized support, resulting in achievement gains. • More time resulted in opportunities for more engaging enrichment programming where students develop interests and gain mastery in specialized subjects. • More time for teacher collaboration strengthened instruction. All teachers at Kuss now have time for individual planning, collaboration with colleagues, and professional development built into their expanded weekly schedule.

Case	Summary	Lessons Learned
The National Center on Time & Learning (NCTL) & Massachusetts 2020: "Tumbleweed Elementary School."	Once hailed as one of the highest performing schools in Palmdale School District (PSD), Tumbleweed had turned into one of its lowest-performing during the 1990s and first decade of 2000. In the span of just two years, Tumbleweed Elementary School has undergone dramatic improvements. Alongside other key reforms, more time for students and teachers has led to promising student achievement gains. While student performance school-wide rose only modestly in the 2011-2012 school year—proficiency rates in ELA and math improved by 4 and 2 percentage points, respectively from the previous year—Tumbleweed continued to see substantial gains among particular student populations.	• More time has allowed for increased staff communication, academic supports, and math instruction. • New and returning teachers took advantage of more time for professional development and collaboration. • Dedicated time afforded more opportunities for teachers to analyze and respond to data, which led to more targeted instruction. • High academic and behavioral expectations and steps to increase parent participation improved the culture for students and staff.
The National Center on Time & Learning (NCTL) & Massachusetts 2020: "Orchard Gardens K-8 Pilot School."	For years, Orchard Gardens K-8 Pilot School was plagued by low student achievement and high staff turnover. Then, in 2010, with an expanded school schedule made possible with federal funding, Orchard Gardens began a remarkable turnaround. Today, the school is demonstrating how increased learning time, combined with other key turnaround strategies, can dramatically improve the performance of even the nation's most troubled schools.	• More time was available for structured teacher collaboration and redesigned professional development. • More time allows use of improved data systems and increased opportunities for data analysis and planning. • More time strengthens school culture, rewarding and reinforcing positive student behavior, and improving staff culture.

It is important to note that collaborative work to reform education often requires access to and use of outside resources to carry out specific strategies. These resources are helpful in getting the work started. But the ultimate goal is to use them in a way that transfers knowledge and skill to local actors, building their capacity to do the work themselves.

The Ecosystem of Support Organizations Ready and Willing to Help

These are just a few tools and approaches to enhance LMC collaboration. To help communities work together better to accelerate learning and improve equity, an entire ecosystem of organizations exists for teams to draw on: many are ready and willing to help. These include teachers unions, foundations, institutes, nonprofits, and university research programs. There are also many state and local organizations not listed here that can help.

What follows are summaries and links to these support organizations, as well as a list of topics covered by the organization's resources.

Support Organizations

Case & Topics Covered	Organization Summary
American Federation of Teachers TOPICS: Member information; publications; resources for teaching, safe schools, standards and assessment, NCLB, special needs, school improvement, etc.	An affiliate of the AFL-CIO, the American Federation of Teachers was founded in 1916 and today represents 1.5 million members in more than 3,000 local affiliates nationwide. Five divisions within the AFT represent the broad spectrum of the AFT's membership: pre-K through 12th-grade teachers; paraprofessionals and other school-related personnel; higher education faculty and professional staff; federal, state and local government employees; and nurses and other healthcare professionals. In addition, the AFT represents approximately 80,000 early childhood educators and nearly 250,000 retiree members.
The Consortium for Educational Change TOPICS: Training and development opportunities on student, teacher, leader, system effectiveness, as well as school and district transformation.	The CEC was formed 25 years ago in Illinois by union leaders, administrators, and school board members, with support from local universities and philanthropic organizations. In 2006, the CEC laid the groundwork for several education policy initiatives, including the Burnham Plan, which established a comprehensive reform agenda for the state, and PERA, the Performance Evaluation Reform Act signed into law in 2010. PERA requires all districts to implement multiple measure teacher evaluation systems that include observations by trained evaluators and evidence of student academic growth.
Federal Mediation & Conciliation Service TOPICS: Training, courses, conferences, and workshops. Helpful links, speeches, and presentations.	The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, created in 1947, is an independent agency whose mission is to preserve and promote labor-management peace and cooperation. Headquartered in Washington, DC, with two regional offices and more than 70 field offices, the agency provides mediation and conflict resolution services to industry, government agencies and communities.
Labor and Employment Relations Association TOPICS: Labor-management focused publications, including labor news, blog posts, reports, newsletter. Meetings and awards information, links to resources. Membership information and services.	The Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA) is the singular organization in the country where professionals interested in all aspects of labor and employment relations network to share ideas and learn about new developments, issues, and practices in the field. Founded in 1947 as the Industrial Relations Research Association (IRRA), the National LERA provides a unique forum where the views of representatives of labor, management, government and academics, advocates and neutrals are welcome. LERA constituencies include professionals in the areas of academic research and education, compensation and benefits, human resources, labor and employment law, labor and management resources, labor markets and economics, public policy, training and development, and union administration and organizing.

Case & Topics Covered	Organization Summary
Massachusetts Education Partnership (MEP) TOPICS: Conferences, news, reports on labor-management issues and student achievement, information related to interest-based bargaining, including training and tools.	Housed at the Rennie Center, the Massachusetts Education Partnership seeks to improve student achievement and success in school districts across the Commonwealth through the application of effective models of labor-management collaboration, interest-based bargaining, and district capacity building. The Partnership's purpose is to help labor-management teams of superintendents, union leaders, school committee members, teachers and administrators to develop active collaborations in the area of labor-management relations and school-site operations, in order to: A) accelerate student achievement and promote student success; B) increase teacher engagement and leadership in school and district governance; C) improve the productivity of bargaining practices; and D) institute policies, structures and practices for sustainable collaboration and reform.
National Education Association TOPICS: Education news, teaching resources, research reports and policy briefs, grants and event information.	The National Education Association (NEA), the nation's largest professional employee organization, is committed to advancing the cause of public education. NEA's 3 million members work at every level of education — from pre-school to university graduate programs. NEA has affiliate organizations in every state and in more than 14,000 communities across the United States.
The NEA Foundation TOPICS: Online courses, briefs, reports, info on sessions and conferences. Grants to educators. Education news and blog features. Fellowship and initiative info, awards, membership info.	The NEA Foundation is a public charity supported by contributions from educators' dues, corporate sponsors, and others. They offer grants to educators, invest in multiple labor-management collaboration initiatives in school districts and states, and provide resources on issues around collaboration, teacher quality, and educational policy. The Foundation's Institute for Innovation in Teaching and Learning has developed a series of Online Courses in labor-management collaboration, specifically designed to support the learning, development and leadership of educators—administrators, teachers, union leaders, school committee members—in using labor-management collaboration to improve student outcomes.
The National Center for Time and Learning TOPICS: News and info about the impact of time on student learning, including instructional resources, research, videos, school profiles, and blog updates.	The NCTL is dedicated to expanding learning time to improve student achievement and to ensure access to a well-rounded education. Through research, public policy, and technical assistance, NCTL supports national, state, and local initiatives that add significantly more school time for academic and enrichment opportunities to help children meet the demands of the 21st century.
Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, PAR User Guide TOPICS: Profiles of PAR-implementing districts, User's Guide with extensive overview, labor-management info, and implementation FAQs. Links to data and resources.	A website based on the experiences of seven local districts with Peer Assistance and Review. To gather information for the User's Guide, the researchers interviewed key stakeholders in seven school districts that had established teacher Peer Assistance and Review. They focused on districts whose PAR programs went beyond mentoring and where teachers reviewed the performance of their peers, sometimes leading to dismissal.
The Albert Shanker Institute TOPICS: Blog featuring education news and issues, topical seminars, hosted events on issue areas, weekly "conversations."	The Albert Shanker Institute is a nonprofit organization established in 1998 to honor the life and legacy of the late president of the American Federation of Teachers. The organization's by-laws commit it to four fundamental principles—vibrant democracy, quality public education, a voice for working people in decisions affecting their jobs and their lives, and free and open debate about all of these issues. The institute brings together influential leaders and thinkers from business, labor, government, and education from across the political spectrum. It sponsors research, promotes discussions, and seeks new and workable approaches to the issues that will shape the future of democracy, education, and unionism. Many of these conversations are off-the-record, encouraging lively, honest debate and new understandings.

Case & Topics Covered	Organization Summary
Teacher Union Reform Network (TURN) TOPICS: Meetings for nationwide regional networks, e-newsletter, resources on education issues such as Common Core, school and union reform, and more.	Teacher Union Reform Network is a union-led effort to restructure the nation's teachers unions to promote reforms that will ultimately lead to better learning and higher achievement for all students. The primary goal of TURN is to create new union models that can take the lead in building and sustaining effective schools for all students. "Because teachers are closest to students, to the learning process, and because of their link to parents and the larger communities, we are in a unique position to stimulate the necessary changes."
Tom Mooney Institute for Teacher and Union Leadership TOPICS: Resources include tools, articles, reports and studies on education reform, unionism, and practice.	The Tom Mooney Institute for Teacher and Union Leadership is an effort by seasoned local leaders within the teacher union movement to develop the leadership skills and organizational capacity of the next generation of reform minded teacher unionists. They promote a progressive vision of the role of the teachers' union. Their goal is to help local union leaders to be bold, collaborative, creative advocates for the improvement of public education.

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