

How to: Speaking with Colleagues about Evaluation Reform

With all teachers juggle on a daily basis, finding time to dive into a deep discussion with colleagues about evaluation reform and education policy can be difficult. Nevertheless, teachers should seek to talk with each other about policies, like teacher evaluation, that will affect them and their classrooms. Here are several easy steps for jumpstarting this important conversation.

Starting the conversation

Pose a question

- Have you heard that we are going to have a new evaluation system?
- Do you think that the new evaluation system will support our work in the classroom?
- How do you think the support provided to teachers be different with the new evaluation system?
- How do you think the new evaluation system will affect you?

Make a statement

- I understand that the new evaluation system will be more supportive of our work and of us.
- There sure are a lot more supports built into this new evaluation system.
- I think this new evaluation system will be more fair.

Promote information about new evaluation system

- Find literature or articles in the paper supporting the new evaluation system. Leave a copy in the staff lounge or copy room, post on a bulletin board, or email it out to your colleagues asking for their thoughts and feedback.

Involve your principal

- Plan with your principal how to disseminate information.
- Encourage him/her to add it to staff meeting agendas.
- Ask your principal how you can get involved in the design of the evaluation program and to share the information during staff meetings.
- Suggest holding small focus groups where teachers can talk about their reactions to the evaluation system and make suggestions for implementation.

Continuing the conversation

Know your facts

- Visit your state's Department of Education website for more information.
- Determine how your new evaluation system aligns with guidelines developed by teachers across the nation in [Hope Street Group's 2009 Teacher Evaluation Report](#).
- Be prepared to recommend additional resources like the 2009 report and the Hope Street Group Playbook to interested teachers.