

**Summary Report: Exploring the
Potential Impact of the *Colorado
Healthy Human Capital Self-
Assessment* in Rural Districts**

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Executive Summary

*Only a teacher? Thank God I have a calling to the greatest profession of all! I must be vigilant every day lest I lose one fragile opportunity to improve tomorrow. Ivan Welton
Fitzwater*

Many states, across the nation, are passing legislation, in response to a national urgency to create and implement comprehensive, strategic systems for enhancing education's performance outcomes that identify, support, and develop educator effectiveness and student growth. In Colorado, S.B. 191, frames the heart of our legislation to improve student achievement – *great teachers and leaders*.

Understanding that educator effectiveness is driven by much more than evaluation, the Educator Effectiveness Unit at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), has developed a “best-practices”, research-based, self-assessment tool for districts to use to evaluate their school- and district-wide human capital system: the *Self-Assessment for a Healthy Human Capital System in Schools and Districts*. The tool has been designed to provide a roadmap for districts to help build their capacity, recognize capacity strengths and gaps, and to identify technical assistance and resources that CDE might deploy to meet district and regional needs. The *Human Capital System* includes the following five strategies for optimizing educator effectiveness:

1. Optimize the new educator supply by hiring graduates from preparation programs whose graduates achieve better student outcomes.
2. Boost the effectiveness of ALL educators through effective evaluation and targeted professional development.
3. Retain and leverage the most effective educators.
4. Prioritizing effective educators for high-need students.
5. Improve or exit persistently less effective educators.

This instrument is designed to frame conversations among school and district teams as they review the extent to which the five strategies for optimizing educator effectiveness are inherent in policies and practices of districts and schools. It may be used by district and school teams to identify readiness related to human capital system best practices and to enhance current practices in the transition to fully implement and achieve the intent of S.B. 191.

The CDE Educator Effectiveness Unit, commissioned Benchmark One, Inc. and its lead consultant, Helen Ryley, to conduct nine focus groups engaging 80 administrators and Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) staff in rural Colorado districts. Particularly targeted were those non-participants in the educator effectiveness pilot groups. The purpose for the focus groups was to listen for, assess and make recommendations to CDE related to rural district:

- **Awareness:** to increase district and BOCES staff awareness of and engagement in the use of the Human Capital self-assessment tool;
- **Intervention:** to explore district readiness for implementation of best practices in support of educator effectiveness and embark on change management activities to develop educator effectiveness best practices;
- **Concerns:** to discover rural concerns regarding their challenges and capacity to develop and implement local educator effectiveness best practices; and
- **Support:** to focus on rural needs for CDE tools, resources, training, other support for local readiness and capability to implement S.B. 191 on the timeline established by the legislation.

The focus group findings are reflected in three categorical areas divided clustered within each of the Human Capital tool strategies:

- What Works in Rural Colorado Districts
- Challenges / Concerns
- Proposed Solutions/Recommendations

While each section in the report is rich with insights and suggestions regarding the Human Capital tool, several major themes rose to the surface throughout the report:

What Works in Rural Colorado Districts

- The focus group process contributed to the awareness and stimulation of conversation regarding practices described in the Human Capital Self-Assessment tool and the tool will be helpful as districts roll-out their own solutions for S.B. 191 implementation.
- Hiring and retaining new and veteran staff in rural districts requires attention to critical factors such as selecting candidates that have connections or inclined to make connections in rural environments along with close attention to the development and nurturing of an engaging and supportive culture and climate within the district.
- Cross-district collaboration through sharing of resources and the enhanced capacity derived through CDE support particularly in aspects related to educator recruitment, retention, training and coaching are essential to achieving the intent of S.B. 191 and accomplishing the essential elements of the Human Capital tool.

Challenges / Concerns

- Hiring, retention, training and evaluation of staff given the realities of limited resources and capacity in rural districts.
- Designing an overall roll out plan that contributes to the implementation and realization of the goals of S.B. 191 at state and district levels.

Proposed Solutions/Recommendations

- Identification and sharing of “what works”, particularly in rural districts, with examples and tools, related to all strategies and practices identified in the Human Capital tool.
- Increased focus in rural districts on the practices identified by the Human Capital tool with emphasis on developing strategies at the district level and supportive training programs and tools at the state level to formalize informal practices and implement additional ones.
- Development of a complete set of tools and resources (a toolbox) to support successful implementation of the Human Capital System in districts and schools.

The general consensus of most this study’s focus group respondents is that the support the Human Capital Self-Assessment Tool can give to districts and schools as they move toward implementation of S.B. 191 has tremendous potential . . . AND the tool is just that – a tool. How we wield it will make the difference in how it impacts educators in schools and students in the classroom.

Introduction

Policy Shapes Practice

An exceptional education for our children starts with exceptional teachers and leaders. S.B. 191 (The Great Teachers and Leaders Bill) – educator evaluation – is at the crux of making our education agenda come together to improve student achievement. ¹

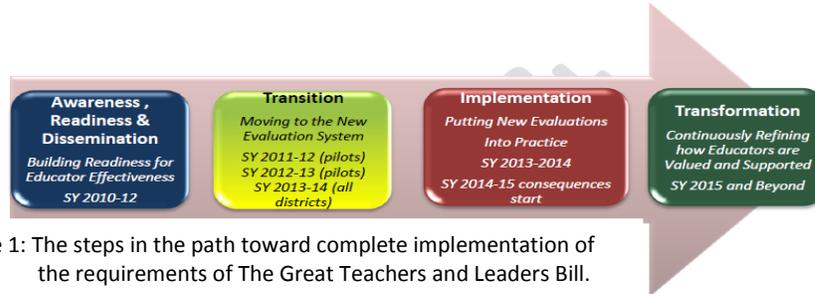


Figure 1: The steps in the path toward complete implementation of the requirements of The Great Teachers and Leaders Bill.

Educator Effectiveness Requires Much More Than Evaluation²

As a component of the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Educator Evaluation System Implementation Toolkit, the Educator Effectiveness Unit has developed a “best-practices”, research-based, self-assessment tool for districts to use to evaluate their school- and district-wide human capital system: the *Self-Assessment for a Healthy Human Capital System in Schools and Districts*. The tool has been designed to provide a roadmap for districts to help build their capacity, recognize capacity strengths and gaps, and to identify technical assistance and resources that CDE might deploy to meet district and regional needs. The *Human Capital System* includes the following five strategies for optimizing educator effectiveness:

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Recognizing the Voice, Challenges and Needs of Rural Districts:

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) is committed to supporting Colorado school districts in the transition to the new requirements of S.B. 191. The Department recognizes that many districts will require substantial changes in order to implement the provisions of this legislation. The Department also recognizes that rural districts in Colorado generally reflect comparatively small student populations and educator staff with commensurate per-pupil

¹ CDE Educator Evaluation System Transition Toolkit, Draft 1.0, March 2012

² <http://www.cde.state.co.us/EducatorEffectiveness> 3/12.

operating revenue which leads to significant challenges and concerns as they juggle federal, state and local priorities and their capacity to provide high quality education for all students, meet compliance and accountability requirements, implement new state and federal policies and initiatives, and do this in an economy of diminishing resources.

The CDE Educator Effectiveness Unit, commissioned Benchmark One, Inc. and its lead consultant, Helen Ryley, to conduct focus groups targeting rural Colorado districts, particularly those non-participants in the educator effectiveness pilot groups, to listen for, assess and make recommendations to CDE related to:

- **Awareness:** to increase district and BOCES staff awareness of and engagement in the use of the Human Capital self-assessment tool;
- **Intervention:** to explore district readiness for implementation of best practices in support of educator effectiveness and embark on change management activities to develop educator effectiveness best practices;
- **Concerns:** to discover rural concerns regarding their challenges and capacity to develop and implement local educator effectiveness best practices; and
- **Support:** to focus on rural needs for CDE tools, resources, training, other support for local readiness and capability to implement S.B. 191 on the timeline established by the legislation.

The Focus Group process³

The state of Colorado has approximately 142 school districts recognized as rural dispersed across 104,000 square miles. The expectation for the work scope of this study was to solicit information from a significant number of these district's administrative representatives in response to a defined set of interview questions. Focus groups were set up in collaboration with BOCES directors providing access to 80 Superintendents, Principals and BOCES staff representing a broad range of rural districts across Colorado. Nine focus groups were set up with seven of them completed as site-based, face to face focus groups and two virtual focus groups. Findings from all of the sessions is included in the APPENDIX of this report (p. 19). Focus Group participants are included in the report APPENDIX (p.35).

Handout packets of focus group materials included: The *Self-Assessment for a Healthy Human Capital System in Schools and Districts* instrument, focus group questions (included in the APPENDIX on p. 18); and a January 2012, Educator Effectiveness Unit e-newsletter which summarizes S.B. 10- 191 and its implementation timelines.

Getting Ready/ Data Summaries by Focus Group (in the APPENDIX):

- E mail to BOCES to use with District leaders for Focus Groups
- BOCES - arrange for a meeting place and times that worked for the participants
- Handouts ready / recorded meeting and transcribed/summarized data gathered.
- Some comments included in the data found in the APPENDIX are a synthesis or summary of actual comments made by several participants. Interview questions provided a guide for the conversation but, did not limit it.

³ Adapted from a process developed in collaboration with Ann Foster, Center for Educational Research, Colorado State University, June, 2000.

Agenda:

Because most of the participants in the focus groups were central office administrators and time for the interviews was limited, the conversation and comments targeted the “District Level Self-Assessment of the Human Capital System”. Findings are not reflective of the “School Level” document. However, this section of the Self-Assessment was included in the handout materials for each participant to review and use with their district and school staff at another time. The agenda included:

- Explain the focus group purpose, review packet materials, timeline – about an hour.
- Experience the self-assessment instrument – rate individual district readiness; note concerns, challenges, strengths, recommendations.
- Communicate purpose for recording sessions and process for transcription, opportunity to review by each group, anticipated dissemination of report, and anonymity of individual responses.
- Norms for the conversation in the focus group:
- Focus group questions w/ follow-up questions as needed
- Close / thank you.

Findings and Recommendations

Change Management and the Human Capital Self-Assessment Tool

Change Management

Change management is defined as a structured strategy for moving individuals, teams, and organizations from a present state to a desired, future state. Change management entails thoughtful planning and sensitive implementation, and above all, consultation with, and involvement of, the people affected by the changes.

CDE developed the Human-Capital Self-Assessment Tool to support district readiness and guide implementation for the changes they might need to make as they approach the transition from current practices for supporting effective educators in every classroom to the full implementation of the tenets, policies, and practices embodied in the S.B.191 legislation. (See Figure 1, p. 3, CDE timelines for change through implementation of S.B. 191.)

When establishing readiness for organizational change, districts might frame initial staff and community discussions around the following questions: What will we achieve with this change? Why and how will we know that the change has been achieved? Who is affected by this change, and how will they react to it? How much of this change can we achieve ourselves, and what parts of the change do we need help with?

The Human Capital Self-Assessment Tool

There is general agreement among most focus group participants that the nature of rural districts makes some elements of the Human Capital tool difficult to apply and/or assess. Participants repeatedly indicated that, “in rural Colorado, districts support meeting the major categories of S.B. 191 and the strategies of the Human Capital tool in particular. And, the tool may need to change some to fit the rural reality.” In most districts elements of the Human Capital tool are already in use (for some, as a result of turnaround experiences), either as formal or informal practices. Some districts are leading the way with a variety of activities designed to enhance their current recruitment practices in combination with efforts to pilot use of educator evaluation tools.

Stories of the results and experiences from these districts include:

In a larger rural district: We did mid-year evaluations using a tool we created on our own, with inter-rater reliability via four evaluators/ person and then all four got together to agree on the evaluation ratings. That is pretty powerful because you get down to a pretty true picture of that person's current practice abilities.

What we are working on this year as a Pilot district is the Principal Evaluation and it is fantastic. When staff first sees it, the process seems massive. However, the process is really quite simple. Also, the tool does what rubrics are supposed to do which is to help individuals and supervisors know what is to be done to move to the next level. The problem is how the student performance will be integrated into the ultimate score for all educators.

The Human Capital tool is quite thorough. It's a good "tool" – the key word being tool vs. district accountability assessment.

There is excitement about S.B. 191 because provides rural districts with a strong evaluation plan and tools to use.

Staff expressed concerns at first; however, we believe that with this tool's elements in place, it will help relieve some of the anxiety, concern, and negative impacts of the overall SB 191 implementation.

Getting the district practices aligned before we fully implement the evaluation process could be very important to our overall success with staff.

To some degree, all of the tool's elements are possible, particularly those related to evaluation.

Everything that is in the rubric – if you are doing them; you are going to get results.

General Findings

District administrators and BOCES staff responses to focus group interviews suggested the following related to the changes required for transition to full implementation of the strategies identified in the Human Capital Self-Assessment tool:

What Works in Rural Colorado Districts

- Having this (CDE/BOCES sponsored) focus group conversation leading to:
 - Learning what's expected through the tool;
 - Exploring what we're doing and what we need to do;
 - Networking to get the work done;
 - Finding out how districts are getting pieces done and what works best in rural districts; and
 - Identifying resources re: what are others are doing across the country, particularly, in rural areas that work.
 - Using the tool will provide a good way to review & assess current Human Capital (HC) practices w/district staff.
- Planning for district roll-out for S.B. 191 and auxiliary practices
 - Develop a PD committee to create plan for improvement of teacher and student performance (18 people volunteered)
 - Build a common language and goals across the district.

Challenges/Concerns

Concerns for legal issues if we don't do this right:

- Interpreting tool language may lead to difficulty when dismissing educators for poor performance or determining that adequate support has been provided for ineffective or probationary educators: i.e., terms like, "high quality", "differentiated" professional development, "fair" evaluation; "robust", etc.;

- Ensuring inter-rater reliability re: administrators' decision-making processes – particularly as move into exit decisions in compliance with S.B. 191 and the potential for status moves to “non-probationary” or “probationary” for educators become a reality.

General agreement from respondents indicates a need to make the Human Capital tool simpler and shorter. However, respondents also agree that, “We should be trying to do most of the elements in this tool.”

Suggestions for changing the Self-Assessment Tool sections/statements that don't fit rural district reality include:

- Identify which parts are required and which parts could be optional.
- “Rewarding effectiveness with compensation”:
 - not a reality, at least in this economy
 - need a definition of “effective” levels that might warrant additional compensation?
- Tracking data on hiring practices is not practical, because we have so few new hires.
- Single person departments/grade levels = slim to no opportunities to network, share, provide differentiated professional development, and/or align support i.e., coach/mentoring
- Wonder how evaluation by teams that include teachers who teach together (collaborative evaluation) will work in a small district?
- “Robust” induction/mentoring dependent on BOCES in many cases since there are not enough staff/new hires to do this.
 - Same issue with mentor training, all staff / differentiating professional development
 - Same issue when targeting new specials teachers
- Evaluation issues:
 - inter-rater reliability issues
 - training needs
 - strategies for using cross-district teams
- “Hiring/retaining the highest quality” incongruous with rural district reality
- Like the ideas – hard to implement in rural districts without additional resources
- It will take time to get this done.

Alignment for the new Colorado academic and common core standards, SB 191, and new assessments timelines are not in sync. This leads to the following questions:

- How will growth be measured during the transition?
- How will any of the comparative measures work without completion of the new assessments and how will this impact educator evaluation practices?
- If a district is a high achieving district, is adequate growth enough?
- Is it possible to change deadlines to align better?
- When are collaborative assessments re: student growth & non-tested areas available?

Proposed Solutions/Recommendations

- Develop a Glossary of Terms for language that is open to interpretation.
- Reformat the document/tool similar to the Educator Evaluation documents with an overarching statement so can districts or schools can skip that part of the tool if doesn't fit or the district doesn't do what the item specifies for reasons of size, numbers, etc.
- Make state recommendations for priorities for staging the transition/change to S.B. 191 implementation.
- Clearly define what support will be offered to districts through CDE and what resources/support should be available through regional sources. Duplication of effort

currently occurs when both the state and regional levels attempt to provide the same training and support to districts.

- Consider state provision of tools, examples, frameworks, content collaboratives resources, and (a toolbox) to begin with various facets of the work resulting from the Human Capital tool.
- Develop regional training and funding to build BOCES' capacity to support their districts in this work.
- Continue to inquire re: what works in small districts related to each of the sections in the Human Capital Tool.
- Share/communicate regularly with all rural districts i.e., blog for questions, what works, and networking across districts.
- Need but often not available in rural districts: HR staff support i.e., guidance and training on selection/oversight and norming of new educator hiring/selection decisions that are available in larger districts with HR staff.
- Make SB 191 progress a SAC agenda item.
- Completion of the implementation of the elements of the tool might be a component of a Superintendent's evaluation.

Initiative Fatigue:

Across the states, there is unprecedented momentum towards developing and implementing teacher evaluation systems that factor student achievement into teacher ratings⁴ such as Colorado's S.B. 191. However, administrators in rural Colorado districts report feeling like the plane is flying while the runway is being constructed. They report concern that evaluation of educators is dependent, in part, upon the availability of a guaranteed and viable curriculum with reliable, adequate instructional resources, aligned to the new standards, and formative and summative assessments to support, inform, and evaluate ongoing instruction.

Proposed solutions/recommendations:

- Slow down and get it right. Get dependent pieces i.e., SB 215 and others finished so everything fits together.
- Place a moratorium on new initiatives while districts work to comply with existing mandates.
- Create a clearly defined state plan with anticipated outcomes for all parts before rolling out the pieces.
- Include support from CDE for professional development
- Add tools, and other resources as well as links to district "best practices" to support readiness, compliance and ongoing implementation of current mandates to the CDE Educator Effectiveness website.

Findings Aligned with Strategy 1: Optimizing New Educator Supply

Recruitment and Retention:

"Hiring and retaining the highest quality educators is the goal and intent of all of our administrative staff, however; practices identified in the Human Capital Tool are incongruous in many instances with the rural district reality."

⁴ State of the States: Trends and Early Lessons on Teacher Evaluation and Effectiveness Policies, National Council on Teacher Quality, October 2011.

Colorado is a very diverse state, not only geographically but also in population, resources, employment opportunities, ideology, politics, lifestyle and culture⁵. Recruitment and hiring by nature varies across the state, not only between rural and urban areas but also in various geographical areas i.e., the Eastern Plains, Southern Colorado and the Western Slope (everything west of the Continental Divide).

Concerns/Challenges

In rural areas, there is a significantly smaller pool of applicants with many of those applicants being “home grown” either by entering teaching from another field or returning to the area in which they were raised. While this increases the insight for teaching in a rural environment and retention for some teachers over time, it often leads to minimal or no applicants in specific subjects or areas such as languages or special education. Teachers frequently need expertise in more than one content area or specialty. Elements considered prior to hiring vary from a review of academic records to performance interviews which include demonstration lessons.

The reality of rural district “selection” of candidates is that there are few positions available and fewer candidates to fill them.

Retaining teachers is difficult not only because of the rural and often isolated nature of these districts, but also as a result of staff reductions due to the economy. Salary schedules are lower and for some, there is a lack of appreciation for life in rural, isolated areas. Small districts serve as training grounds for educators to gain the experience needed to move on to larger districts where they can access more pay, a better location, and additional growth opportunities.

What Works in Rural Colorado Districts

- Develop partnerships with Colorado and contiguous states’ colleges and universities to educate, prepare, and graduate teacher and administrative candidates for placement in rural districts.
- Enhanced local hiring practices and retention with performance interviews i.e., teaching segments in front of a teaching panel; providing scenarios for interpreting data; in addition to the formal interview process.
- Most of our veteran teachers have a connection to the community. New teachers who come in and develop that connection or come with an understanding and appreciation for rural communities.
- Districts reporting significant attention paid to the monitoring and maintenance of the culture and climate of their school/district also report greater success in retaining their staff.
- Educators have changed. They are much more mobile. Getting them in the game and into the work of the district quickly is critical.
- Developing tools to support the interview process i.e.,
 - Using the elements in the state Principal evaluation rubric, write several interview questions to fit each standard/category.
 - Give interview questions to dist. Principal interview teams.
 - Supports consistency, clarity of expectations.
 - Provides research-based framework for interviews
 - Ensures hiring practices aligned with evaluation rubric/performance expectations.

⁵ Fox, P. and Van Sant, D., “A Rural Needs Study: Improving CDE Services to Rural School Districts, prepared for the Colorado Department of Education, January, 2011.

Proposed Solutions/Recommendations

- Develop statewide plans to provide incentives to and assist rural districts in recruiting and retaining qualified teachers and administrators.
- Utilize and share recruitment and applicant management software hosted through CDE or regional collaboration i.e., BOCES, to assist in advertising, application, tracking and hiring processes.
- Provide training for Administrators in:
 - Best practices, resources and tools for all sections of this strategy i.e., screening tools, hiring practices, resources, etc.
 - The knowledge and skills larger districts might have available through their Human Resource departments – designed specifically to meet the needs and realities of rural districts and communities.
 - Match hiring expectations with performance expectations using situational interview questions developed through CDE that are aligned with performance expectations embedded in the educator rubrics.
- Develop strategies for advertising of Colorado positions in other states and marketing support specific to rural districts collaboratively and through CDE.
- Increase CDE support to rural districts i.e., resources to:
 - Create a broader advertising base
 - Conduct job fairs for rural areas only
 - Identify and share strategies that work in rural, isolated areas in other parts of the country or the state to support recruitment, hiring and retention in rural districts.
- Identify, through CDE, research based tools for competency based selection, defined criteria for educator effectiveness, screening/hiring tools are cost prohibitive

New Educator Support

Rigorous induction programs, differentiated by needs are increasing teacher retention in schools across the country. The Human Capital Tool calls for providing “robust, differentiated induction and mentoring support for new educators and experienced educators new to the district/school”. While this is a goal and reflective of best practice; it is not reflective of the reality for rural districts.

Challenges:

With new expectations for teacher effectiveness, it may become more difficult to “grow our own” staff through alternative teacher programs and hiring the best quality we can access with the expectation that over time, they will “grow into” meeting the effective teacher expectations.

Hiring “marginal talent” requires coaching and mentor resources that are very limited in small, rural schools. In many cases, a department and sometimes a grade level will be limited to “one-of-a-kind” staff which does not allow for job-alike mentors for new teachers or coaches for struggling teachers.

What Works in Rural Colorado Districts

- BOCES often provide districts with this service i.e., professional development from on-line classes, tracking and managing the induction process. However, distances from one corner of some BOCES regions to the other may be as much as a multiple hour drive so collaboration and networking for these activities across districts becomes a challenge as well.

- BOCES directors report utilizing a variety of virtual software solutions to support “meeting” across distances which are moving toward solving some of the distance problems and providing additional collaboration. As bandwidth issues are resolved and software use/availability becomes more universal, expectations for technology solutions become increasingly viable.
- Alternative Education Programs are another service delivered through the BOCES i.e., professional development courses on-site or online, mentor support and tracking/managing the requirements for Alternative Education candidate licensure.

Proposed Solutions/Recommendations

- Through BOCES, the creation of cross school/district teams is increasing inter- and intra-district collaboration, access to mentors and coaches, and thus, support for teacher growth.
- Through CDE, identify and make mentor training available to rural districts via on-site training and coaching, multimedia training programs, online classes, online mentor partnering across the state.

Findings Aligned with Strategy 2: Boost Effectiveness of All Educators

Professional Development

There is a general feeling that the Human Capital Self-Assessment tool being developed is a step in the right direction. There are concerns regarding training with suggestions for CDE to produce videos demonstrating best practice for implementation of many of the tool’s elements and to provide training for inter-rater reliability, particularly for evaluation. It was also suggested that videos showing teachers modeling best practices for evaluation rubric components would be helpful. There are concerns regarding the workload required as frequently evaluators are already taking on more than one position. Providing induction programs, mentoring, differentiated and targeted professional development will look different in rural districts with limited resources, staff, time and funds. For example, providing a rigorous professional development program for special education teachers or those teaching music, art, languages, or a broad range of science or math classes means something very different in small, isolated, rural areas than it does for an urban district. Distance and travel time add to the challenges.

What Works in Rural Colorado Districts

- Collaboration/Communication:
 - Getting teams together at the district and BOCES levels to talk about what is working, our needs and what we can do to improve our current practices. The more we get people engaged in the process, the better it will work.
 - Enhancing collaborative efforts and break down isolation – the tool helps build awareness of tools & programs to target for future collective purchases i.e., networking teachers across districts for staff development, curriculum planning, etc. Also creates efficiencies in time, \$, personnel, and professional development resources
- Effective local Professional Development strategies:
 - Online instructional programs supporting “highly qualified” and staff transition across grade level in content areas.
 - Guided staff book studies

- Walk throughs with non-negotiables i.e., student engagement, classroom mgmt.
 - Walk-through objectives set. Collect data re: the degree objective(s) seen in action. If the goal is not met, Principals model the objective in action for staff to emulate in their classrooms. Results in very effective professional development.
- Training to ensure understanding/use of learning objectives aligned with state standards; the goal is 85% alignment of instruction with standards.
- Professional Development aligned with educator evaluation rubric: Teacher teams are dissecting the teacher rubric in combination with *Understanding by Design*. As teachers' skill sets rise to the surface, we have asked them to develop training modules so that expert teachers train other teachers in their areas of expertise. These areas are aligned directly with the categories in the rubric and linked to *Understanding by Design* strategies. The district is in the design phase now. The strategy targets expertise in the district and lends credibility to our teachers.
- Screening educator applications for participation in professional development opportunities based on the elements in the evaluation rubrics and UIP improvement strategies. The professional development that we invest in will be closely aligned to the district goals in this way.
- Clear, rigorous, consistent expectations for staff/students with diligence in training for them, maintaining, and modeling them.
- Developing annual professional growth plans for all teachers in the fall as a condition of employment, then monitoring them.
- Content Area collaboratives potential for development of materials and documents to support SB 191 i.e., assessments, sample curriculum guidelines, etc. potentially helpful. Need rural representation on these teams.
- Strong professional learning communities locally and across districts.

Challenges/Concerns

- Need more time internally . . .
 - To work on coaching for improved instructional practice
 - To support workload increase currently rendering people unable to do the critical parts of their job and do this too.
- Need Common Core Curriculum
 - Planning to utilize RTT \$ to develop a common curriculum – support for effective teaching (2 BOCES groups)
 - Districts need an effective, guaranteed and viable curriculum to offer staff to use for instructional purposes, prior to implementation of evaluation process.
 - Develop state-wide curriculum with “meet or exceed” flexibility for districts?
- Training / certification of School Board members re: SB 191 and district requirements?
- Need clarification: Principal role in the evaluation process? Teacher and district role? Will there be a measure for the evaluation of the Superintendent?

Proposed Solutions/Recommendations

- CDE video-segments for professional development
 - Tied to educator evaluation rubric elements for effective instruction.
 - Administrative training in “look fors” tied to evaluation rubrics.
- CDE designed training modules, aligned with evaluation criteria and traveling specialists (coaches) to train teachers & administration multiple times in regions.
- Funding might go to regions/districts targeting instructional /content area coaches.

- Offer specific content area effective instruction vs. general instruction; training to support teachers' transition for teaching across grade levels; webinars / videos focused on good teaching practices.
- Offer mentor training at state or BOCES levels.
- Year ahead Professional Development planning by CDE leading to an annual Professional Development plan from CDE (dates, times) so districts could plan ahead, prior to adopting their school calendars, to get staff there i.e., face-to-face and online.
- Develop a series of training videos for local district use:
 - Teachers modeling "best practices" for each of the evaluation rubric components
 - Identify teachers who are willing to serve as role models for other teachers – do some matching of these teachers with district needs across the state.
 - Create similar training for various sections of the Human Capital tool so people can see "best practice" in action. i.e., HR functions not familiar to rural administrators. Answers the question, "What does it look like when it is done well?"

Evaluation

Rural district's employ a wide range of strategies in support of their evaluation and coaching practices i.e., videotaping teachers for specific feedback, having principals model instructional strategies or teaming teachers with mentor teachers. However, there is a need for additional assistance with dealing with ineffective teachers, creating principal time and resources to support great teachers and providing support for remaining teachers so that growth occurs at all performance levels. Utilizing CDE developed tools that provide authentic, best practice examples of elements of the Human Capital tool are needed. Generating and training teams across districts to develop inter-rater reliability and increase communication are also needed.

Challenges/Concerns

SB 191 pressure re: the educator evaluation process:

- May destroy trust and administrator/teacher working relationships in small districts.
- Insufficient numbers and quality of trained people are available to form effective evaluation teams.
- What do we do if we have a couple of ineffective teachers in each building? Develop tools that help use the data re: teacher performance once we come up with it.
- Putting teachers on an improvement plan creates an inordinate amount of work to document and provide the needed assistance for staff that is already overwhelmed.
 - How do we resolve this dilemma? Hire staff through the BOCES to help principals? AND how do districts and BOCES pay for it?
- When do we have time and resources to support our stars and provide support for the rest of our teachers? We have a responsibility to ensure that "growth" occurs at all performance levels.
- Evaluation every year will change the role of a principal significantly.

Proposed Solutions/Recommendations

- Trained cross district administrative teams to help each other with teacher evaluation.
 - Requires cross district agreement re: evaluation criteria and performance expectations.
- Train teams for inter-rater reliability and to give feedback.
- Build a "building teacher effectiveness" professional development model for district use.

Working Conditions

Some rural districts hire well and keep their teachers over time. District administrators attribute this to hiring locally grown candidates that come back to the area knowing what they are getting into, what the community is like and/or their families are part of the community. Other administrators attribute staff longevity and retention to their focus on elements of culture and climate in their district. Some districts audit their culture and climate annually using stakeholder survey tools provided from a variety of sources.

Findings Aligned with Strategy 3: Leverage and Retain Effective and Highly Effective Educators

Most rural district administrators question the reality of this and ensuing sections in the Human Capital Tool for reasons identified in the Challenges and Concerns sections of Strategies 1 and 2 of this document. During the focus group conversations, it was difficult to move the conversation to Strategies 3-5 of the tool when recruitment and retention issues loom so largely as the priorities to be resolved before the effects of the rest of the tool can be reconciled.

What's Working in Rural Colorado Districts

Several district administrators, in various parts of the state, identified strategies that they have found effective in retaining teachers, indicating that attention to district culture and climate, working conditions, community engagement in nurturing and welcoming new teachers, and other strategies cited in the foregoing section under Working Conditions, at the top of this page, contribute significantly to retention of rural district teachers.

Other administrators indicated that the reality of “successful” retention in rural districts is approximately five years and therefore, it is important to focus attention on “getting them in the game”, accustomed to district practices and supported to the full capacity of the resources available quickly so that student benefits for learning are realized.

Challenges/Concerns

- Resources:
 - Some Districts are continuing to struggle with state data re: who's mining it, monitoring it, using it, when, and what are sources of reliable local data.
 - Need to tighten up practices currently done informally into more formal practices where practical.
- Pay for performance: is that a real consideration in Colorado?

Potential Solutions/Recommendations

- CDE developed state data base/dashboards of tools & information i.e., formative, interim assessments, student attendance, curriculum, etc.

Findings Aligned with Strategy 4: Prioritize Effective Teachers for High Needs Students

Rural districts, while they do not question the validity and importance of this Strategy, find that most often, it does not fit with rural reality both because of issues of size as well as those related to recruitment and hiring. For high needs students, BOCES are a common resource for staff and support. However, they also report similar issues to those of districts in the areas of recruitment and hiring. They also struggle with providing effective Professional Development for many of the reasons previously cited in this report.

What Works in Rural Colorado Districts

One BOCES has grouped their Special Education specialists into Special Education (SPED) teams that deliver services on specified days, arriving at the district together in BOCES owned vehicles. This strategy has been found to contribute to teacher collegiality and communication, job satisfaction, and collaboration in student services as well as decreased travel costs and increased staff accountability.

Findings Aligned with Strategy 5: Improve or Exit Ineffective Educators

The realities of this whole process cause anxiety so, district administrators report being clear and concerned about the need to be very thoughtful about rolling-out and communicating how the strategy and its criteria will be managed and how the process work with staff. Bringing as many staff as possible into process and moving forward together to create a culture focused on continuous improvement with a focus on growth over time for the benefit of students and educators versus evaluation in its more traditional and finite definition as an end of year scoring process is imperative.

In Summary . . .

CDE support for the roll-out and implementation of S.B. 191 and all of its implications for districts and schools is critical. The more district administrators and teachers can be educated regarding the change, the better chance we have as a state to realize the intent of the legislation for our children. District administrators and BOCES staff are adamant that resource development, training and communication through multiple venues continue to be ongoing, regional, and repetitive.

State recommendations for priorities for staging change and support in setting district level priorities will be helpful, particularly as a resource for rural districts.

Additional Solutions and Recommendations for CDE

- Post the Human Capital Self-Assessment as an interactive tool online.
- Post Teacher and Administrator Evaluation rubrics online and make them interactive.
- Ensure alignment of all related tools i.e. Elementary standards, curriculum tools and assessments, Early Childhood standards and assessments, content area assessments. While the level, target audience or content area for these tools may require that they look different, they need to be aligned in direction, outcomes, and expectations.
- Create a list (toolbox) of resources and artifacts tied to Human Capital tool like those included with the Educator Evaluation tools.

The general consensus of most this study's focus group respondents is that the support the Human Capital Self-Assessment Tool can give to districts and schools as they move toward implementation of S.B. 191 has tremendous potential . . . AND the tool is just that – a tool. How we wield it will make the difference in how it impacts educators in schools and students in the classroom.

Appendix
DATA
From
FOCUS GROUPS

Focus Group Questions

Detail Probes or Expanders

<p>1. Do your current practices achieve the results you want re: hiring, developing, retaining and leveraging effective teachers and principals?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re: novice teachers or principals? • Re: veteran teachers or principals?
<p>2. How do your current practices align with best practices identified throughout the Human Capital Self- Assessment tool?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which strategy/strategies do you think have the highest impact on teacher effectiveness? • Which strategy/strategies do you think have the highest impact on principal effectiveness?
<p>3. What would/could you change to increase the alignment of your practices with the tool's recommendations?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What criteria would be difficult for you to implement? • Why?
<p>4. What additional support/resources would be necessary for you to increase the alignment of your current practices with those identified through the Human Capital Self- Assessment tool?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re: specific strategy areas? Specific criteria? • Can you add details to your suggestions for support? • Who needs to work on these?
<p>5. What is your prediction and/or evidence re: the impact of the use of a tool such as this Human Capital Self-Study on your current practices re: hiring, developing and retaining effective educators in your district/school? On student achievement?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give some examples of the impact on novice teachers? • On principals? • On improved student achievement?
<p>6. As someone offering advice to CDE, what would you suggest re: generating District willingness and/or support to commit the time, energy and resources to the implementation of this tool?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on your District's experiences? • In rolling out the tool for District use? • Re: overall school improvement practices?
<p>7. Would you recommend the use of this kind of tool to your colleagues? Why? Why not?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a resource for . . . ? • As support for District efforts to meet their UIP goals? • To improve educator effectiveness district/school-wide?

1/21/12

Data by Focus Group

Focus Groups	+ What works - now	Δ Concerns/Struggles	Recommendations	Comments By Question	Misc. Comments/Qs
<p>UnBOCS – Ridgway (8)</p>	<p>May need to buy-into the philosophy that 5 years is the employment expectation for teachers in our area. Educators have changed – mobile – getting them in the game and into the work of the district quickly is critical – even if it is 10 years it is not very long. Train them aggressively and keep them well coached.</p> <p>Alignment: Currently use Danielson’s work to guide teacher evaluation – got them all done before Christmas. Happy with this process.</p> <p>Hiring: Easier to hire than fire. 2 yrs. ago began perf. Interviews – candidates asked to do a teaching segment in-front of a teaching panel. Give them some data and then listen to how they interpret the data. Then we hold the interview and then we watch them teach. This has helped us <u>do a better job of hiring</u>. (Delta)We hired 38 people last year and we hope to keep all of them. They have all been good. Takes time but much easier to do this before hired.</p> <p>Rigorous Induction Program is critical - important that it is differentiated to meet teachers where they are.</p> <p>Having this Focus Group conversation, seeing what’s expected through the tool, seeing what we’re doing and what we need to do and then networking to get it done, finding out how our BOCES districts are getting pieces done, what works best, sources of recruitment that work, etc. i.e., our website doesn’t work well for us so if I am going to use it for recruitment, what are others doing (both within this group and across the country in other rural areas) that works?</p>	<p>Salary schedules are an issue for our recruiting. Once we get teachers in our district, keeping the good ones with the Induction program, mentoring and training support so they can be effective and then keeping them on for more than five years which is the timeframe when they leave our district.- long term retention</p> <p>Getting the right people who understand our district and community environment. There are certain people who will do well in our area and those who won’t – think they will but ...(single, alone and not many other singles in the area.)</p> <p>Wish had more time to work on coaching for ↑ inst. practice particularly for new teachers. Danielson covers so much, have to stage coaching; meet teachers where they are, etc.</p> <p>Evaluation every year: will change the “look” of a principal – no longer a manager, more an instructional leader. AP may have to do more of the “managing”.</p> <p>District autonomy might be an issue for some districts if the state provides technology systems for us all to use. The point was made that the system provides consistency but how each district uses it leads to that district autonomy.</p> <p>Different district salary /benefit packages can create issues.</p>	<p>Tool is a good way to review and assess our current practices. Good to have the tool for discussions with our administrators to determine what we want to begin focusing on. We can’t add everything at once so how are we going to stage our changes? What are the things we are doing well? How do we do those better? i.e., what can we do to ensure that we are getting quality people in and build the best professional development with those people? Prioritizing the changes. Is this going to be a collaborative effort? That’s how we start aligning our practices with the idea.</p> <p>Talked about the need to walk teachers through the rubric, answering questions, clarifying intent and expectations as well as including a potential self-evaluation and moving toward a collaborative evaluation process with clear understandings regarding what does “this” really mean? (St. Vrain practice w/classified staff) The more we get people engaged in the process, the better it will work.</p> <p>There are technologies to help us do some of this work i.e. AppleTrac application and hiring software ... If the state were to support districts with a package or BOCES with funding for a package – it would be a great thing for applicants to have a single source to go to to find out what positions were available and where. Anyone can take a look at it. You have online assessment and screening tools that could be set up for us to use. These are things that cost \$ but maybe less than sending \$ out to every school district. → an economy of scale in cost and efficiency. Each district</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current practices do not – need to take a look at and define the qualities and criteria we are looking for in our teachers along with the types of people who may apply for those positions in our type of district and those who can be effective in that district. Agreement on this from others present. We are in the process of discovering the strategies currently used and what we need to do to move forward increasing retention and the relationship we build with our staff. 2. Alignment of current practices w/tool? The tool provides a formalized structure for what we currently do intuitively. We haven’t necessarily go through some of the processes to ensure that the applicant is going to be a really good fit. Rely on academic credentials to some extent. Try to keep these things in mind but not formalized.. 3. Changes→ alignment? – comments in other parts of this . 4. Support needed? Introducing the tool to use and having boxes we can check off to determine what we’re doing and what else we might need to do helps. <p>Critical Q: How do we get teachers ready for this change? We can know it’s coming and work on it with principals and administrators but how do we get our teachers ready for it?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Impact of using the tool? Change causes anxiety so getting everyone on board is a real issue and we need to be very thoughtful about how we go about doing that. Bringing as many people as possible into the process and moving forward together will 	<p>We have a lot of work ahead of us Began implementing “Collaboration Days” with teachers last year. <i>Best work we have every done</i>, say Elem. teachers.so continuing this year and bring up into MS and HS.(Ouray) Day long sub so teachers can observe another teachers + debrief lesson between the two.</p> <p>Compensation: under evaluation – uses evaluation results to make decisions such as compensation . . . is that going to be a state goal? i.e., performance pay? Is this best practice? Compensation as well as tenure practices. Harrison doing this? Success with that?</p> <p>It seems like there are going too be lots of layers to this onion (SB 191 implementation) so the checklist helps</p> <p>Re: concerns expressed ...with this tool’s elements in place, .it will help relieve some of the anxiety, concern, and negative impacts of the overall SB 191 implementation.</p> <p>Getting the district practices aligned before we fully implement the evaluation process could be very important to our overall success with staff.</p> <p>Completion of the implementation of the elements of the tool might be a component of a Superintendent’s evaluation.</p> <p>Q re: district adaptations of tool options – “meet or exceed” OK.</p>

Data by Focus Group

Focus Groups	+ What works - now	Δ Concerns/Struggles	Recommendations	Comments By Question	Misc. Comments/Qs
			<p>can have its own set of Qs on the system but the demographics for a region tend to be pretty consistent so applicants may answer different Qs for ea. district but every one will be able to access the system and the applicant pool that is available.</p> <p>Thinking about how a BOCES might share an application/hiring system in which all could enter positions available and source for applicants might also be a great support.</p> <p>Making SB 1919 implementation progress an agenda item for each of this groups BOCES SAC meetings might be helpful to support networking and sharing of what's working, struggles, critical Qs, etc.</p> <p>If CDE could chunk the parts of the tool for us so that we know what they want us to be working on – say in stages, then that would help so that we know that we aren't expected to have it all in place at once.</p> <p>CDE could provide examples and sources of "authentic best practice" for elements of the tool throughout the state – sharing them with districts so they have some idea of what and how do other districts get this done – particularly in rural areas like ours. Providing Supt. with examples vs. a broad statement about "doing this . . ." Saving individual district's time searching for resources and examples – can CDE do this for us? Sharing information in small chunks so that those who don't have something or aren't doing something don't have to reinvent the "wheel".</p>	<p>help.</p> <p>The tool is a tool is just that – a tool. How we wield it will make the difference in how it impacts teachers and students in the classroom. The tool is great. Developing those relationships i.e., our mentoring programs – when someone comes to our community, it's more than just the classroom, it's about the dinners we set up and helping them to become a part of our community quickly makes a lot of difference.</p> <p>6. .CDE support for the roll-out. The more district administrators and teachers can be educated re: the change – i.e., training CDE might provide on a regional, recurring basis. Doing more with less is putting stress on the system and everyone in it. If CDE is asking us if this is a good tool for districts to use, then it is a great tool. If they are asking us if this is a good tool that will be put in tracker to hold districts accountable to its elements before we sent up our evaluation then it can be problematic.</p> <p>7. Recommend the tool? It is an example of what the state wants us to do and of best practice. It's a good "tool" – the key word being tool vs. district accountability assessment.</p>	
SE BOCES – Lamar (13)	Most of our veteran teachers have a connection to the community and	Pool of candidates just doesn't exist. <i>Out of 6-7 hires, one came in highly-</i>	Has CDE considered sign-on bonuses for hard to fill positions or in regions where	1. Current Practices – Looks like all of these steps are designed to help you	The tool is helpful to me because it causes me to think about "where did our

Data by Focus Group

Focus Groups	+ What works - now	Δ Concerns/Struggles	Recommendations	Comments By Question	Misc. Comments/Qs
	<p>novice teachers who come in and develop that connection stay.</p> <p>BOCES provides the Induction program as districts don't have the resources to do that. Has raised the quality bar re: meeting needs considerably. The program gives teachers w/common needs a chance to come together and share. When Districts doing own Induction each novice was alone without this networking.</p> <p>Most of our candidates – that understand our area – come from rural Kansas and Oklahoma.</p>	<p><i>qualified and the rest, we had to go through an alternative placement. We hire the best teachers we can get. And then with time, they grow into our best teachers.</i></p> <p>Losing some of our teachers because we don't have the funds to keep them.</p> <p>It doesn't look like there is going to be any hiring in the future unless it is from a retirement – due to the economy – we are just not replacing teachers.</p> <p>What worries me about the tool is that it talks about things like “we engage in high quality prof. dev., which I know we are thin in, providing evaluation “fairly ...differentiates levels of instruction” fear that the verbiage changes the probationary pieces of the law and we won't be able to dismiss marginal teachers within the 3 year window and we will be stuck with them forever.</p> <p>Make sure “best practices” fit the rural community. Ideas from the east coast may not be “best practice” for rural districts.</p>	<p>teacher pools are scarce to help these regions be competitive?</p> <p>I think the tool is good IF things turn around and rather than talking about reductions in staff we are talking about sharing programs and teachers across districts and if we can pay a little more to attract candidates.</p> <p>We could initiate the concept of learning communities locally and perhaps across districts, i.e., teachers from various grade levels meeting together to share ideas.</p> <p>The idea of the state department identifying working solutions for some of the items in the tool and sharing them with our districts would be helpful.</p> <p>Matching districts with similar performance demographics to work together particular if one district has solutions that are working and another is struggling with a similar problem. – what are they doing to change issues – perhaps some virtual pairing.</p>	<p>sort through a deep pool of candidates to ensure you are selecting the best candidates and make sure that you're supporting that selection . . . that is just not the reality for us. That deep pool just doesn't exist so the rest of this doesn't matter if we have to take whoever applies no matter what skills we might like to select from. Long range plans include finishing the school year.</p> <p>2. Alignment – w/current practices Some districts hire well and keep their teachers – “hired 2 teachers in the last 6 years.” (Eads) Hire locally grown candidates. Our teachers come back knowing what they are getting into and what the community is like. This is where their families are or they married into a family here.</p> <p>3. Changes - Make the form simpler./ shorter. Which parts of this tool are required and which parts are optional?</p> <p>4. CDE support – CDE might provide more targeted prof. development and bring it to our region. + See recommendations</p> <p>5. Impact</p> <p>6. Advice to CDE</p> <p>7. Recommend use of tool?</p>	<p>teachers come from?”</p> <p>Q from the BOCES – re newer alternative teachers – “providing the programs that they need?</p> <p>It would be exciting to be more progressive and follow some of the suggestions in the tool but we just don't have the resources in either candidates or funds to attract people to our districts.</p> <p>Job fairs – not particularly effective now - can we sort candidates with people who are interested in coming out to our area?</p> <p>I appreciate the work to create and bring a tool to us for our input. Keep it simple as possible to meet the letter of the law.</p>
NE BOCES – Haxton (12)	<p>“Off the shelf” items being developed by the content collaboratives for use by districts.</p> <p>Job Fairs – focused on new hires in rural areas similar to our area demographics. Alternative ed candidates who go through our BOCES Alternative Ed program work better for us. More willing to accept ongoing Prof. dev., work longer hours, work within our systems, - getting our best results i.e., growing our own.</p>	<p>Pool of talented candidates very small. Without an increased pool of qualified candidates, the best evaluation tools are not much use to us. Marginal talent requires coaching resources to help make them successful and we don't have the resources to provide that support. Is anything being done to rectify some of these issues?</p> <p>Our biggest problem is teachers that are burned out and the 2nd career teacher is a boon to the energy and new ideas +</p>	<p>Content collaboratives support in building assessments, sample curriculum guidelines, etc. seen as potentially helpful.</p> <p>Technology collaboratives for candidate application and selection would also be helpful.</p> <p>Provide job fair just for rural schools. Some state (i.e. MI)</p> <p>Also offer incentives to take a job in rural districts.</p>	<p>1.Current practice – selection pool is very small – selecting the best of those available. May hire those who have to complete an alternative ed program. 2nd career candidates more mature and business world understanding of work vs. those right out of college – work better. Having a local college also helps because already local to the area with potential community ties and understanding. College also helps sort out students ready to be in the field. The impact of</p>	<p>Most of our staff changes have been reductions.</p>

Data by Focus Group

Focus Groups	+ What works - now	Δ Concerns/Struggles	Recommendations	Comments By Question	Misc. Comments/Qs
	<p>It works to hire people from the area that know what rural schools are about. Having a college in the area really helps. They know the area, are local, and there is already a relationship between the college and the surrounding districts.</p>	<p>work ethic levels of some of our veteran teachers sometimes is a better form of PD than formal classes..</p> <p>Re: tracking data on hiring practices, I don't see us doing that because of the few new hires that we have. I don't see us doing the data collection = issue of "n" too small to give us meaningful information.</p> <p>Rewarding effectiveness w/compensation – effective? Does this work in rural Am.? What does work as incentives for increased effectiveness? D.C. study results say \$ not effective – not sure of specific study title.</p> <p>With the new expectations for teacher effectiveness, may become more difficult to "grow our own" staff through alternative teacher programs. Diminishes our candidate pool further.</p> <p>The gorilla in the room is our applicant pool. We can measure effectiveness all we want but it doesn't change the teachers we have to choose from and try to retain.</p>	<p>Make it available online –electronically. Don't advise using the tool as an accountability measure. We just don't do enough hiring to warrant the data collecting; to say we have a "system" for doing that.</p> <p>Don't make this a mandatory reporting item.</p> <p>Resources i.e., \$, website, etc – we need to get candidates to want to come to rural America! AND stay.</p> <p>Consider replicating some of the solutions that have been used to get doctors to come to rural America.</p> <p>CDE – Build a more reality based trng program for teachers who are prepared for rural teaching jobs. Work with teacher prep programs to specifically prepare them to work in a rural area with multiple preparations and/or extracurricular activity responsibilities. Not hardly any of this "rural" perspective in higher education.</p> <p>Continue to be patient w/out of state hire paperwork/licensure processing of teachers.</p> <p>Is there a solution for situations like a Spanish teacher who is doing a great job and getting good results teaching Spanish 1 period a day but the district gets dinged on our accreditation because he doesn't meet the state qualifications for "highly qualified". Our other choice is not to teach Spanish. Frustrating.</p> <p>CDE has a hiring website describing the demographics of rural Colorado. What if this site were expanded to advertise positions in CO in other states. ND, SD, TX, Gunnison, etc.</p> <p>Develop PD through CDE specialists</p>	<p>these candidates on older veterans is also positive.</p> <p>2. Alignment – talked about this</p> <p>3. Changes – the more PD support we can get from CDE either directly or indirectly so that we don't always have to do it ourselves would be a benefit. Because our people are wearing different hats, we can't send everyone to something on the same day so, if there were options and multiple opportunities to attend some of the PD , it would help.</p> <p>4. CDE support – training for mentors. We do the best we can but, MN has a great statewide mentor training program. Also Identification and availability of excellent online mentor/Induction training programs – might even share these with other states. Mentor partnering across states for special needs teachers.</p> <p>5. Impact</p> <p>6. Advice tp CDE – We need training for Principals on sections of the tool i.e., hiring, evaluation, etc. Not a part of the administrative training they receive – particularly as it applies to rural vs. larger districts specifically. We need similar trng. re: HR practices that larger districts provide their administrators., i.e. screening tools, hiring practices, & resources.</p> <p>Year ahead PD planning by CDE - Receive a annual PD plan from CDE that would let us know that certain PD would be available on (dates, times) so that we could plan ahead prior to adopting our school calendars, to get our staff there → shared PD with more efficiency and more effective use of these resources. We could chanel a lot</p>	

Data by Focus Group

Focus Groups	+ What works - now	Δ Concerns/Struggles	Recommendations	Comments By Question	Misc. Comments/Qs
			<p>consultants. Student loan forgiveness and \$ incentives up front</p>	<p>of things that already exist in f-t-f as well as distance learning. What if CDE had an “building teacher effectiveness” PD plan for district ineffective teachers that fit the teacher evaluation rubric and the elements of this tool.</p>	
<p>San Luis Valley BOCES – Alamosa (16)</p>	<p>Planning to utilize RTT \$ to develop a common curriculum for those that participate in this in the Valley + pretty standard teacher training re: the fundamentals of teaching the curr. objectives, instructional practice and administrator training on “Look fors” when observing a lesson and how to offer feedback – more rich when done with someone else - so pair up districts and regions to be able to do that. We plan to also train superintendents to support principals in this work i.e., observing instruction and giving feedback. Necessary to achieve improvement.</p> <p>Participated in some group training w/ video-taped instruction scenarios where participants identified/rated the levels of instructional practice – really interesting – poor inst. identified as good inst. by some. SO important to have expertise in instruction as part of the training team for administrators.</p> <p>Re: expectations for staff and students, and a strong belief in our professional educators . . . if admin. is consistent and diligent in maintaining those expectations that effective teachers will rise to meet them.</p>	<p>For a small rural district, administrators are spread so thin that the time, \$ and personnel that it takes to implement this is something that I haven’t seen yet. Collaboration would be welcome.</p> <p>SB 191 puts so much pressure on teachers that in the interest of not destroying trust and working relationships within admin./teachers in small districts, cross district evaluation teams would be a good solution.</p> <p>There aren’t enough trained people to form evaluation teams to evaluation teachers effectively.</p> <p>Teacher concerns that student motivation to perform well on state and local assessments can adversely impact teacher evaluation outcomes. Students may not be motivated to grow and perform well on the local assessments may impact the validity of the scores → teacher anxiety.</p> <p>Test taking expectations don’t allow teacher interaction with student during the assessment to communicate to students about their performance or apparent motivation to perform during the test.</p> <p>Teacher and Administrator’s livelihoods on the line based on assessment results – among other things.</p> <p>Concern that teachers may not follow assessment rules and regs. Knowing that</p>	<p>May be the “elephant” in the room. Need collaboration across districts to implement i.e. cross district leadership teams that will help each other evaluate their district teachers. This kind of approach could also relieve some of the potential legal consequences resulting from evaluation that is not done this way.</p> <p>You really have to have agreement across those districts regarding evaluation criteria and performance expectations.</p> <p>On the collaboratives at the state level, ensure rural representation because curriculum doesn’t necessarily look the same in rural areas as it does in urban areas.</p> <p>The intentions of the Human Capital tool and other tools we are being asked to use are good however, the alignment between them i.e., Elementary and Early Childhood tools – in order to go in the same direction and be where we all want to be . . . tools need to look different and still be aligned in their direction and ultimate outcomes and expectations. The same is true of tools that are used for content areas outside the core content areas.</p> <p>Knowing what the teacher evaluation and the appeals process looks like may</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current practice:: We are going through a turnaround process at the elementary and this rubric looks pretty familiar. And the elements look like all of the things we are being instructed to do.- within section 2,(Boosting Effectiveness) there are some things we haven’t touched on yet i.e., lining up compensation with evaluation, etc. The rest of the elements, we are in the developing to the operationalizing stages. 2. Alignment + 3. Changes – Differences in content areas -- Q re: what does best practice look like in ea. content area and how do we document student growth in those areas? How do you measure effectiveness for teachers w/ students who struggle to achievement? <p>In looking at this tool and the human capital we have available, especially under the circumstances of reduced budgets from the state, and without the ability to field adequate bldg. leadership, some of these elements will be very difficult to get to optimal levels. It will take time to get this done.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. CDE Support – See recommendations 5. Impact - Does Implementation of the tool’s elements make a difference? Absolutely. Having bldg.. leaders continually monitor and support teachers in their implementation of the PD has caused the PD to start 	<p>Everything that is in the rubric – if you are doing them, you are going to get results.</p> <p>For years, we have been training teachers and trusting their professionalism to carry over the PD to their practice. What we know is if we want that to happen, we have to give them continual support.</p> <p>Key – to train bldg.. administrators to do that. Key to evaluation.</p> <p>We did mid-year evaluations using a tool we created on our own with inter-rater reliability via 4 evaluators/ person and then all 4 got together to agree on the evaluating ratings. That is pretty powerful because you get down to a pretty true picture of that person’s current practice abilities.</p> <p>There are parts of the challenges of SB 191 implementation that we can resolve by working together but, it is a big job to come to those solutions.</p> <p>Good teachers find ways to motivate students to perform well on assessments. I.e., sharing with them their current status, engage them in their own goal setting, provide motivation-driven instruction, they want to achieve their goals. In grades K-12. This is about owning student performance and understanding that achieving a sense of wanting to excel and achieve is a part of</p>

Data by Focus Group

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		<p>their livelihood is on the line based on assessment results. May be the “elephant in the room”.</p> <p>Reminded that there is nothing in the law that says after Ineffective for 2 years, you have to dismiss a teacher. Can disaggregate those students who tried from those who didn’t to determine whether a teacher problem or a student problem – and make decisions accordingly.</p> <p>Q: As we approach the new standards, how are we going to measure growth during the transition? As the deadlines approach for SB 191 implementation and the new assessments, how will it work? Will the growth model restart? Etc. The plan? AND with different district’s levels of achievement, does the state have ways to measure what effective growth is? In a higher achieving district, is adequate growth enough?</p> <p>If not ready . . . is there any consideration for moving back the timelines.</p> <p>Concerns for legal issues if we don’t do this right.</p>	<p>help diminish the anxiety and help districts know what to prepare for. Teacher Evaluation Rubric is now available on the CDE website.</p> <p>Since we know that guaranteed and viable curriculum is a critical component of improvement reform, therefore, as a district, we need an effective, guaranteed and viable curriculum to offer our staff to use for instructional purposes, prior to implementation of their evaluation process.</p> <p>Would like to see a state-wide curriculum come out to support what the state is asking us to do. Maybe some flexibility for districts to “meet or exceed” but districts need a curriculum with assessments tied to it that districts can use. AND training to support its effective instruction. EX. Aligning new standards to current curr. and then because of curr. renewal cycle, knowing that will have to do this again next year.+ have to have the \$ to purchase new materials when there is no money. Stuck!</p> <p>Being asked to measure teachers when we don’t have a common foundation (curriculum) upon which to measure them. There is a curriculum on the CDE website – seems to be difficult to teach to. There are curr. frameworks but didn’t roll-out until Nov. with clocks ticking on some school districts re their accreditation rating – being accredited on something that didn’t know until November – and in small system can possibly get retooled with curriculum and resources to teach with. Just not possible!</p>	<p>being applied</p> <p>6. Advice to CDE- That districts not be asked to dive into this without a clear plan for how all of this would work and what we can expect in results and outcomes as well as state expectations for the processes we are to follow rather than initiatives that are developing as we are being expected to implement them .i.e., assessments in place; what is the evaluation tool; common curriculum so that we can collaborate and all be on the same page,; Don’t want to build an airplane while it is in the air.</p> <p>Q re: what outcomes are expected from the Pilot districts?</p> <p>7. Recommend the tool – ran out of time.</p>	<p>professional practice. Incumbent upon Principals to have teachers who can motivate students to want to learn and do well.</p> <p>Discussion re: rules and regs related to proportion of student</p> <p>Concern performance that will be measured by state vs. local assessments.. Referred to “Jump Start” program as a form of accountability for performance effort and achievement results on tests like CSAP – come back to school 3 wks early to get help. Incentive to do as well as they can.</p> <p>What we are working on this year as a Pilot district, is the Admin evaluation and it is fantastic. When first see it, seems massive. The process is really quite simple. Also does what rubrics are supposed to do which is to help individuals and supervisors know what is to be done to move to the next level. The problem is how the student performance will be integrated into the ultimate score.</p>

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Mt. BOCES – Virtual Salida – a Pilot District (6)	<p>One thing a district does is in the spring, to work with teachers on a professional growth plan for the fall of the year as part of their conditions of employment. Provides follow-up monitoring during the year.</p>	<p>Pool of applicants is very limited. We have a lot of “stepping stone teachers” who come to get a little experience and then go to other districts where they can move on. The cost of living and limited salary options add to the challenge. Teacher applicants for students w/special needs are scarce and various consultants are spread out across the BOCES but limited as well.</p> <p>One of the common retention practices, is to find employees a spouse ☺</p> <p>The other problem is going to a job Fair and you might have 10 districts competing for the same applicants to fill positions. We might be able to do better at that if we worked together more effectively.</p> <p>We also have a limited PD budget and the consideration that if the teacher is not going to stay very long, how much can we invest in their training?</p> <p>One of the things we struggle with is our data, who’s mining it, monitoring it, using it, when, etc. We tend to look at it in August. We also need to look at local data, i.e., attendance, behavior, etc. We are struggling with back filling the student performance data with really good, reliable local data.</p>	<p>On the Principal and Teacher evaluation tools, there are lists of artifacts. It would be really helpful if there were lists of resources and artifacts tied to this tool as well. Examples where districts are doing these things well tied to each element.</p> <p>Rationale for the elements of the tool and what fidelity of use looks like would be helpful as well as information supporting impact and results when these practices are in place – giving districts a rationale for why they might set the elements as a priority to ensure their implementation. Would help “sell” the use of the tool. Good stuff.</p> <p>The work that we need to do implement this in small school districts. Suggest that the state decide whether support structures are going to be offered regionally or from a state source vs. the duplication that may occur when regional efforts don’t get completed so the state does them as well. This means that regions and the state ends up duplicating efforts. i.e., there is support around helping districts develop their evaluation process. The state could support building capacity for regions to do this work or if it is going to be a state led effort, the advice is not to duplicate training and resources using the two approaches. Regional support systems often fail because people go to the state led efforts. Reduces “spinning our wheels” together.</p> <p>Provision of collective Prof Dev. Opportunities across districts particularly in areas such as speech/language and other special needs services where the numbers of teachers/district is very limited. The problem is that budgets and</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current Practices - Current practices don’t achieve the results we want. We have a 1 track Professional Dev., very few hours dedicated to PD. Mentoring program is weak.- not tailored to individual needs. Recruiting and hiring – we hire the test teachers we can get but, the choices are really thin. At the BOCES we don’t really have the staff, even though those we have are very good, to meet the needs and we have so few vacancies across the BOCES that trying to create efficiencies in the selection process is really difficult. The same thing with Induction , mentoring, etc. where you are dealing with 1 or 2 people economies just don’t happen. There are opportunities to collaborate, we just have to get people to work together to do that. Most districts have an electronic system for applications but they are not integrated and are don’t include being selective. 2. Alignment – To some degree all of the tool’s elements are possible particularly those related to evaluation. We haven’t really thought far enough to figure out what support looks like following the evaluation process for educators. Talked about the quality of the evaluation especially when moving teachers to probationary status. 3. Changes – spend more time with the schools in terms of where we all think we are. We have to change the evaluation system as a result of SB 191 – maybe there are some other pieces, even if they are small, that we can put into place i.e., sharing recruitment 	

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			<p>people resources are limited and setting these kinds of things up is labor intensive.</p>	<p>needs and potential applicants.</p> <p>One thing I feel good about is that we have some of these pieces in place already. We need to get our teams together to talk about .what’s working,, our needs and what we can do to improve our current practices.</p> <p>4. CDE support – See recommendations</p> <p>5. Impact</p> <p>6. Advice tp CDE – See recommendations</p> <p>7. Recommend use of Tool?</p>	
<p>EC BOCES – Virtual (13)</p> <p>The sound for a good bit of the conversation had an echo attached to it that deciphering what people were saying after the fact was very difficult. If I misinterpreted, please correct your comments for me.</p> <p>When the sound cleared up, the process was great!</p>	<p>Perhaps the major categories in the document are appropriate but the elements might need to change to fit the capacity and/or need for small districts to perform or engage in them.</p> <p>RE: SB 191 – in rural Colorado, we are very much interested in meeting the intent of the law, where we are struggling is that we need a stronger cadre/pool of effective teachers and that this is a rural vs. urban issue.</p> <p>I can see where many aspects of this and the law fit. But in a small district where the Superintendent and the Principal the same person and we only have one teacher per department, the recruitment, the support, the professional development – all have to look different.</p> <p>Portablility, issues of the culture and climate of our area, are all issues and part of the first things we have to ask applicants – are you sure you know where we are located?</p>	<p>The application pool is so limited and at times there are several school districts competing for the same qualified candidates.</p> <p>There are premises built into the document that are really not applicable to small rural school districts.</p> <p>Also, we try to hire teachers for specific positions and they have to take substantial pay cuts to take our positions in the school districts vs. the pay schedules that are available in the nearby prison.</p> <p>With the suggestion for added compensation for highly effective performance – when you don’t have resources it is difficult to reward excellent performance.</p> <p>Since our pool of candidates is so small, supporting them and making them feel successful is a real challenge. We have our whole staff working together and working to help our new hires.</p> <p>When you only have one person in a particular content area, support and professional development in that content areas becomes even more difficult – particularly to provide the kind of support in their content area that</p>	<p>We want effective teachers in rural Colorado. Perhaps what CDE can do to support us is to help with how do the elements of the Self-assessment tool work in a rural setting.</p> <p>A more systematic way of looking at Professional Development:</p> <p>Perhaps some of the CDE \$ could be allocated to help rural districts provide instructional and content area coaches.</p> <p>AND perhaps some of the professional development offered might be content specific vs. a general approach to instructional strategies.</p> <p>In addition, coaches who could help teachers with the transition across grade levels in a content area would also be helpful.</p> <p>Training programs for principals re: evaluation and developing inter-rater reliability. (See FL evaluator credentialing.)</p> <p>Teacher and principal evaluation rubrics available electronically – i.e. on iPads</p> <p>Also training in providing instructional feedback – from administrators and coaches.</p> <p>Also webinars and videos re: what does</p>	<p>1. Current Practices – Everyone is trying to address the elements of the Self-Assessment tool with the resources available to them. With SB 191, with the limitations we have with our salary schedules, we get as highly qualified staff as is available to us. We are limited in achieving these goals by the salaries / money we have available to attract staff.</p> <p>2. Alignment – A lot of the aspects of this document and the evaluation tools are just not very real for the smaller school districts because of staff, small numbers of hires as well as candidates for the positions we have available and then to evaluate based on effectiveness when our hires may be the best we can get. Professional development is limited as well at the local level however; we have created a pretty strong prof. dev. component within our BOCES for that support.</p> <p>3. Changes – Philosophically, we like some of the ideas but they are not very practical for us because of staff and budget constraints. It is really hard to implement them without additional resources.</p> <p>4. CDE support – See recommendations</p>	<p>When you only have one math teacher, the idea of shifting that person to another position or role to ensure a better “fit” for the position is not realistic in small districts. We don’t have the kind of infrastructure that larger districts have because we are so small.</p> <p>The data gathering and some of the decision making i.e., layoff, excessing decisions, instructional coaching, just don’t apply when you only have one teacher performing in a particular content area.</p> <p>At the same time, small districts may have an advantage in knowing their teachers’ strengths and weaknesses well so that administration can provide timely support and remediation related to improving instruction in the classroom.</p> <p>Some of the document accountability pieces are already in place in some of our rural districts. And our communities tend to hold our teachers accountable – so perhaps we are being asked to add more work to our staff for legislation that is potentially more for urban districts that for rural districts.</p>

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		<p>effective Induction and content area knowledge requires.</p> <p>Networking, sharing data, creating improvement strategies in collaborative ways is also difficult.</p>	<p>good teaching look like.</p> <p>Developing assessments around student growth and non-tested areas. If the content collaboratives are going to do that when is it going to happen? How are the banks going to be shared with us? What if our curriculum is different from district to district? How will that work?</p>	<p>5. Impact</p> <p>6. Advice tp CDE – With all of the current legislations in place that impact the way districts do business, perhaps, we should slow down and work on getting these things in place rather than continuing to add to the workload on the system. i.e., for SB 191 to be in place, 215 needed to be completed – with all of the new assessments in place. AND we’re not sure if the resources to do that will be in place. We are being expected to implement 191 when the precursor to it, 215 is not complete. We are building a house of cards without setting the framework in place before going on to the next section.</p>	
<p>NW BOCES – Kremmling (12)</p>	<p>Collaborative purchases have been done in the BOCES in the past. This tool helps build awareness of some tools that we might be aware of for future purchase i.e. technology-based and curriculum mapping tools.</p> <p>Preparation of an instrument that can be useful in the selection process. Developing an instrument using the elements in the state Principal evaluation rubric; writing several interview questions to fit each standard/category. Given to dist. Principal interview teams. → Consistency, clarity of expectations, research-based, alignment with rubric.</p> <p>Collective collaboration and communication – getting teachers together across districts for staff development, curriculum planning, etc. works well to break down isolation, ↑ sharing and networking.</p> <p>PD aligned with eval rubric: Dissecting the teacher rubric in combination with</p>	<p>Tools to support inter-rater reliability to support administrators’ decision making processes – particularly as move into SB 191 and the potential loss of non-probationary status, potential questions re: inter-rater reliability within a district and if not there the district should be a greater risk of teacher’s being able to file an appeal – will become more of our reality as district administrators and districts as a whole.</p> <p>Roll-out planning so that everyone understands the plan and is on the same page. Have developed a PD committee to develop a plan for improvement of teacher and student performance (18 people volunteered to participate) build a common language and goals across the district.</p> <p>We are so far away from CDE that it is really difficult to tap into them and their resources easily. If we were closer, we would just call them and have them</p>	<p>Re: interviews for Principals and teachers – need situational interview questions that you might see in CO schools, aligned with performance expectations of the rubric. Thinking that sharing these across districts/around the state would be very helpful. Probably some districts already have them. Need to share. Matches hiring expectations with performance expectations.</p> <p>Need clarification: Understand the Principal role in the evaluation process. What is the teacher and district role in the process? Is this a measure for the evaluation of the Superintendent?</p> <p>Tools, examples, frameworks, content collaboratives (a toolbox) etc. that give us a place to begin with various facets of the work resulting from the HC tool criteria will be very helpful. We may adapt it but it gives us a place to start without having to do this from scratch.</p> <p>Develop a series of videos with teachers</p>	<p>1. Current Practices – notice that performance pay is being noted as a part of the document –is that something the state is anticipating in the future? An area that came up for me re: research-based tools that would be helpful in making better decisions – that we do not have now i.e., Having tools for competency based selection, defined criteria for educator effectiveness, screening/hiring tools are cost prohibitive – a set price whether the district is large or small.</p> <p>Discrepancy between what we formally do and informally do leading to inconsistencies i.e., between Elem and 2ndary level hiring, etc. which we will need to tighten up and standardize our processes. AND some of the formalizing i.e. charting of some of the data collection sited would not be practical in a small district. SB 191 will</p>	<p>Discussed clarification of “mutual consent” –re it’s application to positions where a teacher may not have the qualifications but, is the only candidate.</p>

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	<p><i>Understanding by Design</i> - as teachers' skill sets rise to the surface, we have asked them to develop training modules so that expert teachers train other teachers in their areas of expertise aligned directly with the categories in the rubric and linked to <i>Understanding by Design</i> strategies. In the design phase now. Targets expertise in the district, lends credibility to our teachers.</p> <p>Walk-through objectives set – collect data re: to what degree see that objective in action. If doesn't meet goal, Principals model objective in action for staff to emulate in their classrooms. Find that Principal modeling is quite effective PD.</p> <p>We will be screening applications to participate in PD based on the elements in the evaluation rubrics and UIP improvement strategies. The PD that we invest in will be closely aligned to the district -goals in this way.</p>	<p>come out. It means we have to figure out how to do this with the resources we have.</p> <p>There is definitely a workload increase with the evaluation requirements and then to add all of the HC tool elements it becomes overwhelming to the point of rendering people unable to do the critical parts of their job and do this too.</p> <p>Trying to come up with some tools that help use the data once we come up with it. i.e., what do we do if we have a couple of ineffective teachers in each building. What do we do with them? Put them on an improvement plan – which is an inordinate amount of work to document and provide the needed assistance. So this is on-top-of all of the other evaluations and mgmt. of the building every day. How do we help with this? Hire staff through the BOCES to help principals? AND how do we pay for it?</p> <p>While we are working with the struggling teachers, when do we have time and resources to support our stars and provide support for the rest of our teachers? Same issues as teachers have with a classroom full of students. We want to support everyone so that "growth" occurs at all performance levels.</p> <p>Remote, isolated, small districts don't have a screening problem. We just call and hope candidates are willing to come to our district. More resources won't help this problem</p>	<p>modeling "best practices" for each of the evaluation rubric components as well as teachers who are willing to serve as role models for other teachers – do some matching of these across the state. Could also do this for various sections of the HC tool so people can see "best practice" in action i.e., trng. for Principals re: inter-rater reliability. Answers the question, "What does it look like when it is done well?"</p>	<p>take us in the direction of some of the elements rather quickly.</p> <p>Another area where we will need work is the ongoing reality of providing inter-rater reliability training for our administrators.</p> <p>Induction through the BOCES – w/mentors, coursework, etc. Not sure how effective it is. Mentor matching in small districts particularly difficult sometimes. Questions re: what need to do to strengthen that program to support and keep new educators? Pretty much the same program for everyone. HC tool refers to differentiation in program.</p> <p>2. Alignment – see what's working</p> <p>3. Changes – set/clarify expectations for various elements in the tool so more clear. Use the tool as guide (1338) for some of our admin. meetings – have the tool as an agenda item for review and action.</p> <p>4. CDE support and 6. Advice – Tool elements are really helpful and good but in small districts to try to do it all with current staff (not sure more staff would solve the problem) is very difficult. Some of it can be done through SB 191 and some of it can't.</p> <p>Tool seems to have a fairly extensive HR portion to it and most of us have part time or no HR staff. How do you create fidelity to the tool without this?</p> <p>5. Impact – "Robust" PD could mean that we share our eval. ratings – not by name but by identified needs/strengths so that we could pool</p>	

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				<p>our training needs and/or goals and determine our collective PD in based on that data.</p> <p>It will help to focus some of our discussion re: components and gaps that we might need to consider locally and at the BOCES levels.</p> <p>Wondering about the reality of the impact of all of this on student achievement. . . will it make a difference? Example: highly motivated, skilled teachers working to become National Board Certified. Great teachers are the ones that really make the difference in student achievement [<i>1st Break All of the Rules – book</i>]</p> <p>Good training will be critical to the results.</p>	
<p>SC BOCES – Pueblo W (4)</p>	<p>Culture and Climate (This is a nice place to live and work.)CDE survey adapted this year – contributes to retention in our district. Average tenure for a teacher in our district 12 years. Monitoring and fitting new hires to the culture is essential. As well as ensuring the culture that works is maintained. Assessed Professional collaboration, affiliative collegiality, self-determination and teacher efficacy. Started the dialogue re: a healthy culture and Supt. role in keeping it healthy.</p> <p>“Highly qualified” and transition across grade levels are issues in content area i.e., math . We have included a program called <i>NBC Learn</i> in our UIP plan to provide alternative instruction to support, improve, and accelerate student learning .Students, teachers and parents access the data base (a subscription</p>	<p>Sometimes rural school districts struggle mightily with hiring and you may be left with what you can find. This varies from subject to subject, particularly in specialty areas. But, for the 1st time, we might struggle to find a Social Studies teacher. It is such an isolated region and houses to live in may even be hard to find. Also, we must attract people that can do more than 1 preparation within a content area.</p> <p>The logistics of the community and distance from “civilization” are frequent issues in finding qualified and effective applicants to fill our jobs.</p> <p>Special education and specialists in general, at least in our districts, is one of the most difficult positions for us to fill with effective or “trainable to be effective” candidates. We do advertise</p>	<p>Need training to determine inter-rater reliability and training for effective interviewing and evaluation.</p> <p>Hope to see that CDE will develop a walk-through process based on the evaluation rubrics. Critical because some rural admin. may be thinking of the eval. process as a pre/post vs. an ongoing process. This approach will ruin a lot of the positive things we are talking about.A walkthrough typ process may help with these people who are wearing a variety of hats in the district re: the evaluation process.</p> <p>Really counting on the state to develop as many of the assessments, and other tools as possible so we don’t have to try to do that at the local level i.e., the content area collaboratives.</p> <p>We need a significant state data base</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current Practices – Significant number of practices in place for a district of 1000 students AND for one with less than 300. 2. Alignment – While we may not be able to justify the expenditure of a literacy coach, i.e., reading – we utilize programs like <i>Literacy Plus</i> which develops fluency, accuracy, speed, etc. in reading through technology-based programming. Easy to monitor and easy to use. Comprehension becomes more of an issue in the middle school area. 3. Changes – Think the document is pretty thorough. Excited about SB 191 because it will provide rural districts with a strong evaluation plan. Rural admin. Lack a chance to be trained and supported in the evaluation practices every year with a common rubric 	<p>Prefer N/A eliminated. We should be trying to do most of the elements in this tool. Employee advancement in a rural district is not likely and monetary rewards seem almost ridiculous right now. If there is money, it is more of a Christmas bonus rather than something based on expertise and ability.</p> <p>Used a financial incentive plan for a couple of years to support student performance i.e., attendance, grades, and CSAP scores. Surplus TANIF funds as gift cards. Significantly, increased attendance and student grades as well as provided a source of income for families that supported their child’s education.</p> <p>Consider application of Elwood’s Instructional Rounds book as a driver for effective learning and a move toward improvement within a school faculty.</p>

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	<p>program) that brings the world to our community and expands learning and worldly horizons for our students. This + the instructional process we have put in place, we expect to see dramatic jumps in learning for our students.</p> <p>We (at the BOCES) have created special education/specialists teams that travel to districts as a group from the BOCES – in BOCES transportation – to provide services.</p> <p>Saves on gas and camaraderie - makes the long distance drives more pleasant and actually increases accountability.</p> <p>Also contract with schools like the School for the Deaf and Blind and the teacher stays overnight. This is an option teams might take doing 2 days at a district instead of making two trips.</p> <p>Have a strong Alternative Licensure Program – explicit coaching and mentoring as a strong part of the program.</p> <p>To maintain quality (Good is the enemy of great!) in a good school or district: Used <i>Teach Like A Champion</i> as a book study. Modeled a lot of the strategies during before school PD time. Had fun with the strategies. Then every 4 weeks, teachers would choose two strategies to use in their classrooms which became the “look fors “ for classroom walkthroughs culminating with a debrief and feedback on those strategies.</p> <p>Our walkthrough non-negotiables are student engagement, classroom mgmt., etc. They changed as I understood better the caliber of staff I was working with. Some of mine were under-the-bar they had already set for themselves.</p>	<p>for these positions through the BOCES. Just not the available applicant pool for rural areas.</p> <p>Driving for specialists and perhaps others - mileage = 8 times around the world/year! The magnitude of “rural” distances.</p> <p>Don’t feel that online school is the answer so avoiding it at this time. – especially for preschoolers. Need the connections to adults and each other.</p> <p>Band width is an issue with a number of our districts and not a good instructional solution for us as yet. Eagle net will be a tremendous boon to us when it arrives – approximately 18 months out.</p> <p>Wonder how evaluation by teams that include teachers who teach together (collaborative evaluation) will work in a small district? Has the potential to be very difficult and disruptive. May create appeasement issues with other adults instead of encourage more effective instruction.</p> <p>Due to budget cuts, Supts are having to become Principals as well as performing the job of Supt. They are two very different roles. Becomes problematic in terms of the principal evaluation.</p> <p>Budget cuts to BOCES have hampered their ability to respond collaboratively to the intent of SB 191.</p> <p>Higher education prep. Programs are critical. When we send colleges students who aren’t ready, they call it remediation. When they send teachers who aren’t ready we call it professional development.</p> <p>The advancement/extra compensation sections don’t apply for us now. May be</p>	<p>with everything connected (i.e. formative assessment that can be used to drive instruction by grade level and content area based upon student deficits; benchmarks that are given 3 x per year; attendance data that can be uploaded or downloaded from the different sources you may have;)integrated In a way so that we can get longitudinal student data so that we can track students after High School to determine the impact of what we have done in school and what needs to be continued or changed.</p> <p>There are systems that have dashboards that have all of this information along \with assessments and a curriculum as well.MD has a system like this.</p> <p>Recommend a model curriculum from the state that a rural district can choose to use. Creates a common language that could lead to training in instruction and perhaps lead to common language in evaluation, etc. Using RTT \$ to develop their own through the BOCES. Have completed Social Studies PreK – 12. Suggest CDE send support/resources to groups working on these model curricula so that ultimately they can be shared statae-wide.</p> <p>Also recommend evaluation training for Principals. Don’t have the time and expertise to get this done effectively and efficiently. One Supt. requiring that Principals evaluate all teachers this year so begin to get used to that as part of their workload – need to be able to evaluate effective instruction in the classroom.</p> <p>Would like to have a Supt. evaluation that is as detailed and clear as the principal and teacher evaluations. Would</p>	<p>instead of the school or district itself trying to develop that.</p> <p>Issues w/hiring, selecting and retaining teachers. Marketing the district, its attributes, and benefits more aggressively and effectively might help with recruitment at Job Fairs, w/job postings and media support – doing this collectively and/or through the state since most districts cannot afford to do this by themselves. i.e., advertising nationally, CDE website, etc.</p> <p>There are some good screening and hiring tools i.e., STAR recruitment system, Apple Tracx, etc. hosted by BOCES or the State Department. ALSO marketing specifically for rural districts.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. CDE support – training for effective evaluation. 5. Impact 6. Advice tp CDE 	<p>Common Core Curriculum – have a strong effort in this direction in progress through the BOCES and district “buy-in”.</p> <p>Cross district/external evaluators – would need to be highly organized and clear interpretation of evaluation indicators. Not an easy thought.</p> <p>Principal coaching/evaluation process: Supt. requires principals to be in classrooms 2 hours a day (1.5 hrs of observation across classrms); document walkthroughs and the feedback they are giving the teachers throughout the year. Supt. holds a Princ. goals conf. at 1) the beginning of the year (review data & interventions and set goals); 2) mid-year conf (when Princ. brings interim student perf.data aggregated in the core content areas, compares it to goals set for student groups, analyzes who met the goals and students that did not.at various quartiles- ratchet up instruction and interventions for those not achieving interim goals and review 8 wks later for gains.); 3) then evaluation of the Principal in Spring.</p> <p>Monitor the goals , formative assessments used, etc. using a 5-6 pg. eval. document throughout the year. Interim coaching every mo. or more often. providing feedback and determining next steps + they sign it. Begin with this report when Supt. goes back a month later to repeat the cycle again.</p> <p>Supt. campus visit process: 1) Meet approx.. 1 hr.w/Principal re: data review;- from walk throughs, formative data, interventions, etc. 2) Meet w/Leadership Team w/7 Qs for their response. 3) Cross ref. info from SLT and</p>

Data by Focus Group

Focus Groups	+ What works - now	Δ Concerns/Struggles	Recommendations	Comments By Question	Misc. Comments/Qs
	<p>We have spent a lot of PD time with our teachers focusing on their understanding and use of learning objectives that are aligned with the state standards. We are looking for 85% of our teachers' alignment of their learning objectives with the state standards.</p>	<p>best practice later. Moving teachers from probationary to non-probationary – need strong evaluations to do this Inter-rater reliability – who does this in rural districts with few staff? Recognition? No \$ to reward effectiveness. Strategy 5 –District too small to track data in these elements – no HR resources for support</p>	<p>possibly help deal with some of the disparate requirements of Superintendents by School Boards. Recommend certification for School Board membership. Concern that School Boards could derail the intent of the law by ignoring the evaluation of staff and its outcomes. Certification would help hold School Board members accountable even while maintaining their autonomy. Everyone needs to be on the team for the benefit of our student. Hiring effectiveness rubric Supt./Principals trained in interview process. Schedule this summer? CDE needs to provide this. Re: formal process for mentor training – Q who does this? Most rural districts too small to do it.</p>		<p>data; 4) Visits classrooms & triangulates data from 1-3 with classrm. observations. Principal signs 5 pg. document and receives recommendations and next steps. A very intentional process.</p>
<p>Centennial BOCES – Greeley (12)</p>	<p>In some cases as review the functions described in the tool, we allocate those functions to the BOCES rather than trying to do them ourselves. In our district, building a culture that nurtures the educators we hire is what works best for us. Perhaps the question should be . . . what is being done in districts that works well for them i.e., how we do HR when we don't have an HR department – what works? Identify these resources and ideas and share them.</p>	<p>Issues related to too much on our plates already; district economic conditions. We don't have staff to do this, particularly in very small districts where there might be just one administrator – who does all of the work identified here. Point of clarification, the tool reflects "best practice" in a comprehensive system for implementation of SB 191, The tool provides suggestions for districts to consider as they implement the tenets of the law. We interview based on local criteria and understanding of what will work for our district rather than being able to select a standard "best" candidate. We don't have HR departments in many districts.</p>	<p>Create a rural version of the tool. For example re: format, create an overarching statement for each section similar to the standards layout of the educator evaluation tool. Then, a district might be able to answer that overarching statement with a yes/no response and if the response is no, then they would not have to complete the rest of that section. i.e., if we do very little hiring or don't have our own induction program and thus, data collection doesn't make sense, we could say "no" at least to some part of that section and go on to another section saving time and angst. Give districts options, given district size and staff constrictions, to complete / perform the functions described – more on an "as appropriate" basis.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current Practices – we are small and can only do so much. The tool does give us a place to start 2. Alignment 3. Changes 4. CDE support – and 6. Advice to CDE As a first year Superintendent, this is a great tool for me to create a structure for what's needed. Would really like to hear what others are doing and what districts are doing given the budget and other constraints that smaller districts contend with. 5. Impact 	

Data by Focus Group

Focus Groups	+ What works - now	Δ Concerns/Struggles	Recommendations	Comments By Question	Misc. Comments/Qs
		<p>“Mentor” doesn’t work very well in small districts as described in the tool because we have just one of each role in the district so we have to be creative, perhaps match roles across districts, work through the BOCES to do this, etc.</p> <p>Smaller districts become a training ground for Principals so that they have experience to move on to bigger districts that pay more. That + budgets make “hiring and retaining” the highest quality ... doesn’t resonate well right now.</p> <p>What might be best practice somewhere else doesn’t necessarily mean “best practice” in rural Colorado. It is hard to see how a tool like this will be useful to our district. Perhaps information re: how using the tool makes a difference in districts like ours would help.</p> <p>The way the tool is currently designed, it may be a helpful tool for reflection but it may not move us forward in its current structure. Reformatting may be very helpful.</p>	<p>Concern regarding some of the terminology in the tool and a suggestion that perhaps there needs to be a glossary of terms for some of the words in the tool i.e., what does the term “competencies”, “robust” Induction program.</p> <p>Create some models that describe “best practice” and examples of an “ideal system” that will help us get our arms around what is expected and will make the tool more useful.</p> <p>Would like additional references they can go to for ideas, what “best practice” looks like, etc.</p> <p>Creation of toolkits that support improvement in areas of the tool i.e., hiring practices, establishing a successful mentor program, creating a more robust PD program, with strategies that work in rural districts so they could be used to help improve district gaps in their current practices. Another thought: Toolkits on How to . . . i.e., <i>How to establish a strong Induction program</i> in smaller or isolated rural districts.</p>		

SCHOOL CONTACT PHONE, FAX & EMAIL REPORT

CDE - ALL Focus Groups

Organization	Contact	City	State	Phone	Position	E-Mail
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SCHOOL CONTACT PHONE, FAX & EMAIL REPORT CDE - ALL Focus Groups

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SCHOOL CONTACT PHONE, FAX & EMAIL REPORT

CDE - ALL Focus Groups

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Total Records: 78

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